

THE YELLOW SEVEN THE PASSING OF ZARA-KHAN

By EDWARD SNELL.

Illustrations by
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This unusual series of stories deals with the exploits of "Chinese" Pennington, a detective sent by his government to British North Borneo to hunt for the Yellow Seven, a gang of Chinese bandits.

James Varney's bungalow was a landmark. It stood on the summit of a hill at the foot of which the turbid Tembakut River—sweeping from some mysterious point of origin in the Borneo hinterland—swerved abruptly and, leaving in its wake a muddy delta infested with crocodiles, continued its onward course to the sea.

Varney knew that river and had started it as accurately as was possible to chart anything in the lesser-known regions of a perplexing Orient. He understood the habits and customs of the Dyak villagers whose dwellings clustered along the palm-girt banks. It was possibly for these reasons that a discriminating syndicate in London—that exploited the coconut from its outer husk to the oil that trickled beneath its hard exterior—had seen fit to entrust him with their interests.

Varney was thirty-seven; he was short, moreover, and stockily built, with a rugged, kindly countenance upon which the tropical sun had set its unmistakable sign and superscription. He had a dog—a shaggy, friendly animal of unknown breed—an extensive library of faded, cloth-bound books, and a marked preference for Dutch tobacco. Varney—who decried all other forms of personal adornment—had from time to time solicited the aid of the most skilled tattooer on the island—one Zara-Khan—and, excepting for a space the size of a dinner-plate on his broad chest with a corresponding vacancy between his shoulders, his bodies were covered with the grim masterpieces of Zara-Khan.

Before the cyclone came, Varney had been worrying over those two blank spaces. Zara-Khan—a tall, slim, brown-skinned scoundrel, with an ingratiating smile, a gaudy turban and a suit of white ducks—had looked in on one of his "periodical" visits to Varney's area. He had passed on to a neighboring rubber estate, hoping on the return journey to find his lucrative client less exercised in mind. Coming swiftly on the heels of a perfect tropic afternoon, the storm-flood had spread its cloak over the entire heavens.

It seemed that nothing short of a miracle could have spared Varney's house; but, as luck would have it, the frenzy of the gale had merely lifted the sagging thatch until it stood on end, allowing the ensuing deluge to pour in; had deposited Varney's dog in the river a couple of hundred yards away, and left half the crockery in the bungalow intact. The more sheltered buildings—offices, clerks' quarters, store-houses, and the like, had crumpled like a pack of cards.

Chang—the dog—had crawled back to the verandah and crouched in a corner over a chunk of raw meat pillaged from a ruined store. Varney, returned from a preliminary investigation of damage, was greeting the imminent fall of darkness through a tumbler of amber fluid wherein countless silver bubbles scurried merrily upward. A half-dazed Chinese boy—bare to the waist—endeavored from a complete packet of matches to discover one that would serve to ignite the wick of the oil-lamp. Something sputtered feebly, then leapt into flame and the servant emitted a grunt of satisfaction.

The Chinaman shuffled beyond the

rays of the lamp; the dog growled with sudden fierceness and bounded toward the entrance, where the trader intercepted it skilfully—and, as if tossed by an unseen hand over the verandah-rail, a piece of pasteboard fluttered through the crowd of lamp-swinging insects that encircled the lamp and came to rest on the sodden boards almost at Varney's feet.

Varney raised his voice.

"Chong-Hee! Come here! go down and see who's prowling around outside."

He stooped and picked up the card. It was as long as his middle finger—a narrow, flexible thing with rounded corners. He turned it over curiously between his fingers—then started back in horrified amazement.

"The Yellow Seven!"

A second later he was turning over a jumbled heap of moist documents, searching for the circular he had received only two days before from Captain John Hewitt—Commissioner of Police at Jesselton—a kind of formal warning that this yellow seven was the sign employed by a powerful secret organization—and that its receipt signified a warning of death!

He hooked forward a chair and pouring himself out a generous helping from the square bottle, examined the document and the card in turn.

Presently he folded the document carefully over the pasteboard and, thrusting both into a tunic pocket, leant back in his chair.

It was fully ten minutes before Chong-Hee returned. He stood on the

threshold, shivering like a man with the ague, and Varney beckoned him to approach.

"I saw nobody, great tuan, but I heard the voice of a spirit."

The trader started.

"The voice of a spirit?" he echoed.

"Yah, tuan. It was a powerful spirit for its words rose above the wind in the trees and the flowing of the river."

"Ah!" The trader set his back firmly against the wall and stuck both hands into his pockets. "And the spirit said?"

"I have come with a message for the white man who lives on the hill and who—up to a point—is good."

"Extremely kind of him, I'm sure! go on!"

"He spoke also of another white man, tuan, one whom the natives have called 'He Who Sees in the Dark,' who is evil and the spirit would seek to destroy. This is the message the spirit gave to me: tell the white lord that should he continue to live as he has lived—all will be well; but should he receive this other white man into his house or seek to help him—all will be ill."

"I see," said Varney. "In other words, your friend has a pretty good notion in his head that this white man intends counting here and hopes, if I agree to chase him back into the open, to have a prolonged opportunity of sitting his throat! Was that all?"

"All, tuan."

"Bi-la, Chong-Hee! You can clear out."

The dog growled again, then dashed into the night, barking. For reasons best known to himself, Varney did not attempt to stop it. He turned in order to gauge more easily what was going on outside—and Chong-Hee waited fearfully.

A quick step was audible along the path and the dog's infuriated baying had turned into a joyous greeting. A tall, slim man took the steps in a couple of strides and halted on the threshold, his solar topee set at a jaunty angle over eyes that might have belonged to a Celestial, but not the remainder of the newcomer's appearance, which was obviously British.

Varney hurried forward.

"Pennington! Peter Pennington! Man alive, I'm mighty glad to see you!"

your this, I haven't a scolding intact. One of my clerks got his leg broken and a couple of coolies have to be buried in the morning. Chong-Hee! Take Mr. Pennington's cane and hat and make it bath and dinner for two. Tabu!"

Pennington's glance lit upon the square bottle.

"Next to your admirable self," he admitted, "there's nothing on earth I more wanted to see than that! I've had the devil's own time—and the devil's own luck."

"How's that?" demanded the other, pushing forward a chair.

"I haven't seen you for months, Varney, so I expect you're wondering what particular stunt is interesting me at present." He lowered his voice.

"I'm trying to tackle the toughest proposition I've ever been my luck to strike. Hewitt's got me chasing round after Chai-Hung and his Yellow Seven."

"Got your work cut out! Here's luck!"

"Cheerio! This afternoon—to get it off my chest—I was on the verge of bringing off the final coup. I'd had the Commissioner down to see the fun. He got collared by the Chinks! Luckily I had wind of that almost as soon as it happened and laid my plans accordingly. After that everything went well. Dawson was rounding up the bunch. I'd Chai-Hung in the district officer's bungalow, neatly trapped in the act of venting his hatred of myself upon my fiancée—Mrs. Viney. He had brought a nasty-looking reptile in a Chinese tea-pot and I knocked it into his lap, covering him at the same time with my automatic. believe me or not, old son, but that confounded cyclone arrived just in time to spoil anything. It smashed Dawson's place to matchwood. I had my hands full saving Mrs. Viney. It was an hour and a half before the Commissioner and Dawson joined us—and I packed them all off to Jesselton before going back to the ruins. Three of my agents and myself turned the bungalow inside out. We found what was left of Dawson's boy, but there wasn't a trace of our friend Chai-Hung—except his red umbrella and a battered metal tea-pot!"

"Then you think he succeeded in getting clear?"

To (be continued.)

Canada's Municipal Year Book

The current issue of the Canadian Municipal Directory has just come to hand and this annual is of the greatest value as a work of reference. It is serving a most useful purpose as a valuable work of reference, as there is no such other publication.

The contents of the book have been standardized throughout and the alphabetical arrangement makes the information contained therein easily accessible. In the introduction, the point is made that there are 4,300 self-governing communities in Canada with 50,000 officials engaged in conducting the affairs of these many cities, towns and villages. It comes as a surprise that there are so many individual urban and rural communities and there is undoubtedly great credit due to the editor, Mr. H. Wisely Bragg, for the excellent manner in which this vast amount of material has been collected together, and so carefully classified.

The contents of the book are so arranged as to give municipal men the most comparative information and cannot fail to be of the greatest possible assistance to elected and appointed officials, enabling them to compare our community with others of a similar size and population. It is further a book of considerable importance in every municipal office for no other work of this kind is published in the Dominion, and no man interested in municipal progress can afford to be without it.

It is interesting to note that this Municipal Year Book, is to be followed up by the publication, in about four months time, of a new work entitled "Municipal Who's Who in Canada," which will be an interesting biographical book of reference, profusely illustrated, and constantly made use of in every busy newspaper office.

The publishers are The Wisely Bragg Publishing Company Limited, at 616 Lagacatiere St. West, Montreal, and the price \$2.50.

Science Seeks Cloth Tough as Cable Steel

Cloth with a tensile strength comparable to a network of steel cable is the dream aroused by recent partial successes in solving the mystery of the carbohydrate molecule. What causes the molecule to arrange itself into certain relationships with its fellows to produce certain substances, and how these arrangements can be produced by artificial means is one of the problems with which Professor Sponner and Professor Dore, of the University of California, are now concerned. While they are chiefly interested in the scientific phase of the experiments it is said that such a discovery should be of incalculable value to industry.

Beauty of Life

Let those who thoughtfully consider the brevity of life remember the length of eternity.—Bishop Ken.

Minnard's Liniment—A reliable first aid

Motor Touring Can be Suited to Any Purse

Club Statistics Indicate Average Expense of \$3.21 Daily for Each Passenger

Campers Are Congenial Americans Spend Half Billion a Year on Wandering

If you're one of the fresh thousands of greenhorns planning to begin your first long motor tour during the vacation holidays, says "The Washington Star," what follows may offer you a modicum of wisdom gained from experience, even if you do as you darn please about the matter.

One fact is that those who feel the urge of the wide open spaces can wander along the road comfortably in a motor car day by day, "as cheaply as they can live at home," the paper continues. "Touring club statistics indicate that for one year the average tourist car carried 2.66 persons, and each of these campers spent an average of \$3.21 a day for food, shelter, amusement, general necessities and running expenses. For economy, those figures speak for themselves.

"Your personal tastes and the efficiency of the automobile you drive will, of course, govern whether your operating expenses exceed or drop below the average of \$3.21 a day."

Rode 4,500 Miles for \$246

The case of one man who made a 4,500-mile journey with his wife and seven-year-old son is indicative of how much can be accomplished at an astonishingly low price. This tour, lasting five weeks and two days, carried the party through twelve states and into thirty-six camps between New York and San Francisco. Their operating expenses were \$245—less than \$7 a day for all three, and no effort was made to economize.

The cost of a return trip by automobile would have amounted to little more than it cost to make the one-way trip back to New York by the shortest rail route. The camp outfit for three, serviceable for many years, was purchased for \$200—neither a minimum nor a maximum figure.

This equipment filled three duffel bags and overflowed onto the tonneau rear seat. Two of the duffel duffel bags were borne on the running boards with the small suit case in which were packed the groceries.

Carried Tent

The tent was of the marquee or umbrella variety, eight feet square and nine feet high, with jointed poles. Nine blankets were carried. Beds and pillows were pneumatic, being inflated by air pump. The gasoline stove had two burners, and a refrigerator basket permitted the use of perishable foods.

In addition to the suitcase container for groceries, the party purchased a wall pocket for toilet articles, folding table, three chairs, ax, folding candle lantern, folding water bucket, desert water bag, clothesline and pins, blanket safety pins, folding rubber washbasin, whisk-broom, shovel, cooking and eating utensils nested together in a space the size of a silk hat, electric torch and medicine kit.

The driver may be profoundly ignorant of the internal mechanism of his car, but why worry if it is a make which engineers have endowed with performance, dependability and long life, and as long as courteous dealers dot the countryside, as eager to render service as the factory itself? Be prepared by driving an automobile that is fleet on the open highways, powerful on the angling inclines, strong under tough road conditions and safe at all times. Then trouble isn't likely to mar your pleasure.

People must believe that Providence takes care of children and "fools" when they venture forth in a machine that they aren't sure will be able to cope with all the exigencies that can arise on a long tour. Besides, it's a relief to drive a car which your neighbors in camp can't regard with dubious glances!

Tourists Spend \$500,000,000

Motor wandering has become so popular as an outdoor sport that it now ranks in the \$500,000,000-a-year class. This season it is estimated that 44,000,000 persons will make long motor tours, of which number a large percentage will camp en route.

Tourist camps have sprung up like mushrooms. Since this business is highly competitive there is a noticeable absence of gouging which, of course, rebounds to the benefit of the patrons' pocketbooks. There are exceptions, but these are frequently in out-of-the-way places where a monopoly is enjoyed. Foodstuffs are expensive in remote points, and to avoid paying fancy prices the tourist must be watchful to stock up in advance of his visit to such places. Within the last few years numerous well-equipped camps have appeared, giving tourists the option of setting up their own tents or renting a cabin for 50 to 75 cents extra. Progressive towns offer space free in their own municipal camping grounds. In the more modern camps, up-to-date laundries, shower baths, kitchens and rest rooms are available.

Rich and poor alike now leave their fireplaces to play "motoring gypsies." Around evening camp fires in the tour-

"SALADA" TEA

Dark-colored molasses—glowing sunlight—cool mountain tops—great ships ploughing through tropic seas—these things all come to mind when a cup of "SALADA" is sipping before you. Such flavour—such fragrance. Try "SALADA".

It grounds you'll find men of all classes from a half dozen states rubbing elbows. At these times you'll become convinced, as did one tenderfoot, that what cynics have dubbed "the so-called human race" is really a kindly, friendly people, all democratic and ready to accord innumerable favors. The secret is to be a gentleman and "the world is yours."

Calls Campers "Decent"

The superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, who in the last eight years has seen the number of visitors increase from 50,000 a year to nearly 200,000—of whom 60 to 70 per cent. were campers—has gone on record by stating that "people, as a rule, are pretty decent." One reason why motor camping is as reasonable as it is financially desirable is because tipping is unnecessary.

Such excellent work in improving the highways has been done that these are scarcely comparable with those of even five years ago. Up-to-date touring maps, distributed by automobile clubs, chambers of commerce, automobile dealers, and so forth, and the 1928 Automobile Blue Book, indicate plainly the roads' condition and afford other valuable information.

To make the first expedition run speedily and comfortably, lend an ear to a few small pointers, some of which may explode a number of illusions about "what's going to happen."

Insure your sleeping comfort by purchasing beds you can tolerate more than one night. Take plenty of blankets, for, although you may need none one night you'll be surprised how chilly it can be the next. After securing your camp equipment, try "rehearsing" with it. Don't wait until you roll into camp after dark the first night out and discover, to your agitation, that you can't find the proper eyelets through which to run the tent ropes.

Leave as many of the conventionalities at home as you can. You'll soon get used to shaving or having your tent blow over right in full sight of native onlookers in the hamlets route. And "civilized" raiment in a tourist camp is as out of place as fire hydrants in the desert.

Toy Trains

(Written for The Christian Science Monitor)

Around the track the toy trains go To Memphis and to Buffalo, The long freight stops on its mountain haul

To take the switch for the Cannon Ball.

And over the bridge and the river bed Glow the lamps of the Limited. Swinging along with its cars of green,— It's the Overland or the Wolverine.

The end of the track where the station stands May be anywhere in a hundred lands; New York—St. Louis—Montreal— Or any place you choose at all. —Gordon Hillman.

Minnard's Liniment for Blistered Feet.

The Undeveloped Empire

London Observer (Ind.): The reconstruction of the Colonial Office is a corollary of the creation of the Dominion Secretaryship. Freed from the embarrassment of dual function, the department can buckle to its task of developing the tropical Empire. The work is novel, the right men will not be found in a day, the new services will cost money. But no one knows better than Mr. Amery that it would be the falsest economy to postpone their establishment.

Purpose.

For every purpose, whether for action or speculation, I hold that quality to be most valuable which it is quite within our own power to acquire, and which nature unassisted never yet gave to any man—I mean a perfectly accurate habit of thought and expression. Such is as far as I can see, one of the very rarest acquirements. —Lord Stanley.

Poetry.

She comes as hush and beauty of the night, And sees too deep for laughter; Her touch is a vibration and a light From worlds before and after. —Edwin Markham.

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Of decided appeal is this charming frock. The skirt, having the fullness shirred in the front, is joined to the bodice, while the back is in one piece. View A employs contrasting material for the convertible collar, the sleeve puffs, belt across the back, and is applied on the lower part of the bodice. The modish sleeveless bolero jacket ties in a chic bow in front. In View B the frock has short sleeves of contrasting material and a round neck. No. 1561 is for misses and small women and is in sizes 16, 18 and 20 years. Size 18 (36 bust) requires 4 yards 39-inch, or 2 1/2 yards 54-inch plain material, and 3/4 yard 38-inch contrasting material for View A, and 3/4 yard for View B. Price 20 cents the pattern.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred); wrap it carefully for each number and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide-St., Toronto. Patterns sent by return mail.

Virtue.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul, Like season'd timber never gives; But though the whole world turn to coal,

Then chiefly lives. —George Herbert.

Mother: "My dear boy, never put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day." Young Hopeful: "Let's eat the jam tart to-night."

We'll have to concentrate on the development of another Dempsey, or a card like him.—Tex Rickard.

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