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THE YELLOW SEVEN A GAME OF CHANCE

BY EDWARD SNELL.

BEGIN HERE TODAY.

Captain John Hewitt is Commissioner of Police at Jesselton, British North Borneo. Monica Viney, Hewitt's widowed sister, is engaged to marry Peter Pennington, detective. Pennington is detailed by the government to apprehend Chai-Hung, the leader of the Yellow Seven, a gang of Chinese bandits. Major Armitage comes to Jesselton and announces that he is sent on a very important mission. He explains that his business will keep him in Borneo for several days.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

Armitage frowned. "You'll have to alter that, Hewitt. I should give him a week in which to improve and if by that time there's no sign of improvement—fire him right away."

Monica, catching the light in her brother's eye and scenting danger, chimed in quickly.

"Do you golf, Major Armitage?" "My dear Mrs. Viney, the man who carries out his duties thoroughly has no time for games. Which brings me back to my original subject. I want to get away as soon after lunch as possible, Hewitt. I shall need some bearers, a week's rations and a platoon or so of native infantry. I shall require also an interpreter with a thorough knowledge of Chinese, Malay and English."

"I see," said Hewitt. "Might I take the liberty of inquiring the nature of the expedition you propose making into my country—and why this tremendous haste?"

The major hesitated and looked at Monica, who had already risen from her chair.

"I'll see if I can hurry that boy," she said.

Major Armitage produced a cigar from an upper pocket of his tunic, bit off the end, and ignited it carefully.

Presently the preposterous circle of glass fixed itself upon Hewitt.

"Mrs. Viney mentioned the name of Pennington just now," he snapped. "I suppose this fellow's still on your strength, wasting government money and making an infernal hash of this Yellow Seven business?"

The Commissioner flushed.

"I'm afraid I must disagree with you," he said. "Chinese Pennington is one of the most efficient men it's ever been my luck to meet."

Armitage had a knack of hearing only those people who agreed with his views.

"I heard of this affair when I passed through Singapore. It didn't take me five minutes to see that the thing had been hopelessly bungled. The way that man was making out status in the East look ridiculous simply ate into my nerves. I could see for myself that it wanted a soldier at the head of affairs. I offered my services and the offer was accepted."

Captain John Hewitt gasped.

"They've sent you out here to rout out Chai-Hung?"

"Those are my instructions."

The Commissioner's hand had slipped suddenly across his mouth and his shoulders heaved convulsively.

"Sorry!" he apologized presently.

"Bit of 'bacca went the wrong way." With an heroic effort he choked down the mirth that consumed him. "So you're setting out this afternoon with, let's see, a week's rations, a platoon of native soldiers and some bearers. Oh, I was forgetting the interpreter. You'll scour the country, of course, until you knock across the bandit and— I say, isn't a week's rations cutting it a trifle fine?"

"When you know me better," returned the other with dignity, "you'll understand that when I'm on a job—I got straight at it."

"That's extremely comforting! I only wondered if you quite realized that the area of Borneo is roughly 290,000 square miles?"

Major Armitage waved his cigar in the air.

"Naturally I'm relying on you to give me every possible assistance. I have a letter in my dispatch-case to that effect from Trevelyan. I shall want a pushing-off place, so to speak."

"Such as?"

"The exact spot where your pet bandit was last located. A list of his places of refuge would be of service and a rough memorandum as to his appearance, personal habits, etc."

"You can have a photograph, if you like, together with a copy of the circular I sent round to all white settlers. There's a slight amendment, by the way: Chai-Hung has lost his left hand during the last few days. This gentleman was once the most respected Chinaman on the island. He enjoyed liberties only extended to white people—and he would still be enjoying them if it hadn't been for young Pennington. Chai-Hung is a big, fat Oriental, speaking perfect English with a fairly guttural accent. He is unscrupulous, merciless and has a distinct aversion to Britishers. His sign is a yellow Chinese playing-card with seven black dots upon it and he dishes these out as a warning of death or an indication that the assassination of a victim was carried out by the Yellow Seven. With scarcely a single exception every Chinaman on the archipelago is in league with Chai-Hung. It means that any undertaking against the bandit must be carried out with the utmost secrecy."

The other pressed the tips of his fingers together in front of him.

"All exceedingly interesting, Hewitt. I must admit; but, if I may say so, a little far-fetched. Reading between the lines, you're all scared to death of this Chai-Hung fellow because you have every new outrage fresh on your memory. You mentioned the area of Borneo just now. That has very little bearing on the present question, because more than half the place is under Dutch management and the Yellow Seven confine their activities to British North Borneo, the area of which—if considerable—is certainly not vast." He emitted a little, self-satisfied chuckle.

Five minutes later, when the major

had retired to the quarters, the head of Chinese Pennington was thrust through the office window followed almost immediately by that of Monica.

"Oh, I say, Jack, isn't it perfectly priceless? Chai-Hung'll eat his eyeballs and all!"

"He won't," retorted the Commissioner, "because you're going with him!"

"Know any more jobs like that?" "I'm not joking. I'm deadly in earnest. Where if you imagine I'm likely to discover an interpreter who speaks Chinese, Malay and English—except among the Chinese population, and I've already explained to the gibbering idiot that no Chinaman's to be trusted. Ring up the barracks, there's a good chap, and get me on to Fyfe."

Monica caught her brother's sleeve. "Are you really serious?"

"Rather! I can't allow Armitage to make a fool of himself over Chai-Hung. Penn's got to act as guide, philosopher and friend to this already misguided lunatic. Hes to change into suitable gear for the part and gently lead this disciple of blood and iron into all portions of the island where the bandit's least likely to be."

"Ye gods!" murmured Pennington. "Is this stunt going on indefinitely?"

"Until he gets so completely fed up with the entire concern that he decides to chuck his hat." At any rate, he'll be back for rations within a week."

"Before we start," insisted the other, "there are just one or two points I'd like to mention. This Chinese interpreter of yours is going to be of the high-brow variety; one of the sort, you understand, that squats round camp-fires with dirty bearers. He's entitled, moreover, to a tent to himself—and full rations."

Hewitt grinned.

"I think I can manage that for you."

Chinese Pennington carried out instructions to the letter. It was no easy matter to avoid Chai-Hung's band of brigands, because a crowd such as Armitage insisted on taking with him could not fail to attract attention.

There were other difficulties that beset their troubled path through the stunted jungle wastes, difficulties for which Armitage was directly responsible and which he treated with such fatuous unconcern that Pennington wanted to knock the offending monocle into the eye that it adorned. Together with his other faults—Major Lacy Armitage lacked grace. He was the exact opposite to that type of British officer men will follow to the ends of the earth, taking the smooth with the rough of it, recognizing errors but still following, drawn on by their leader's personality and persistent optimism. One by one the bearers began to drop

and on the morning of the fourth day it was apparent that two of the native soldiers had deserted. The bearers took their load of supplies with them—and the two defaulters were eventually tracked to a clearing where they lay side by side, their throats slit from ear to ear, and the sign of the Yellow Seven pinned to their breasts.

It stands to Armitage's credit that he did not turn a hair. The discovery had, as a matter of fact, the opposite effect to that which Pennington had imagined. It merely whetted the other's appetite and encouraged him to push forward, unmindful of the fact that he was already four days' march from his original base—with about two and a half days' rations still in hand.

"We'll get him yet, Sing-Ho," he declared. "I may as well inform you, now we're on the subject, that up to this moment I'd regarded you as an unholly fraud."

The interpreter evinced considerable surprise.

"A fraud, tuan?" he echoed blankly. "I'm not a man accustomed to making mistakes. I have been gradually dawning upon me that you were out to earn your money easily. You never intended to encounter this countryman of yours and you had fully made up your mind to profit by my unfortunate ignorance of local languages. I have a habit of inspecting the camp before turning in. On three occasions recently I've found your tent empty. (To be continued.)"

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Thief Caught by Woman Scenting Stolen Perfume

Berlin.—Three gentlemen burglars, their pockets bulging with booty, were leisurely descending the staircase of an apartment house in the Berlin suburb of Steglitz one night when a couple, occupants of the apartment just rifled, came walking up. The thieves excited no suspicion until the wife sniffed the air. "Why, that's my own scent," she exclaimed. Then the men started to run. On being caught they confessed having in the course of their operations liberally dosed themselves from the scent bottles in the woman's boudoir.

Hope Yet Oil Made From Dogfish Livers Said to Keep Mosquitoes Away

Mosquitoes, black flies, mites and other insect pests are kept away, it is said, by the application of an oil being manufactured at Vancouver, B.C., from the livers of dogfish. In early days the Coast Indians used dogfish oil as a preventive against the onslaughts of insects but the cure was worse than the disease, as it was rankly offensive. Cree Indians of Northern Ontario have also found dogfish oil most effective for similar purposes, although disagreeable because of the extremely strong smell. By a new process, however, all the virtues of the oil are retained and an agreeable aroma added. The markets for such an oil are almost unlimited. In New Zealand and Australia the dairy herds have no surcease from the insect pests. Northern Quebec and Northern Ontario are expected to absorb quantities of the palliative, while sportsmen and prospectors of British Columbia are potential buyers.

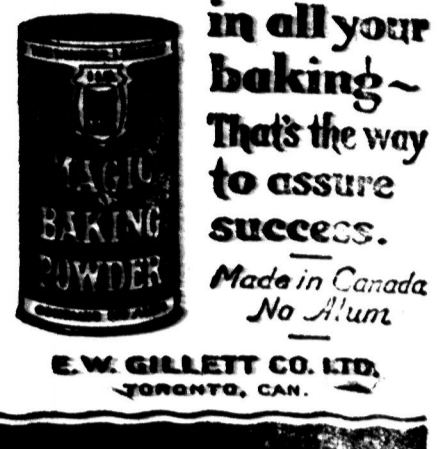
Fish oils are growing in importance every year as new uses for them are discovered by science and industry. The great increase in the number of small landing plants wherever there are fishery interests of any importance may eventually solve the so-called dogfish problem. These small sharks, sculpins, silver hake and other trash fish without food value are all legitimate grist for the mill. Fish meal for live-stock food, fish fertilizer for the land, and fish oil for a diversity of purposes are in growing demand.

Byrd's Paper Supply Totals 60,000 Sheets

Holyoke, Mass.—Materials upon which to record permanently a 20,000-page story were carried south by Commander Richard E. Byrd's antarctic expedition, it has been learned here. Sixty thousand sheets of paper were placed aboard the City of New York, two-thirds of which were for carbon copies, according to officials of the American Writing Paper Company, which supplied this material. The 20,000 sheets on which Commander Byrd will inscribe his log and other members of the expedition will record their scientific data, are said to be made of components which will resist wear. If the expedition is successful, it is expected that these records will be of high historical value.

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Boundary Timber Cleared To Expose Rum Runners

Blaine, Wash.—Rum runners and smugglers will encounter even more difficulty crossing the border between Canada and the United States. A crew of woodsmen is at work clearing all growth for twenty feet along the international line, starting at the western end. With vision unobstructed, customs and immigration patrolmen will be able to see much farther along the border, and also develop a trail and possibly a highway. The boundary will be cleared from Washington to Minnesota, it is reported.

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