The Aztec Mystery

A Thrilling Story of the Old West

BY MURRAY LEINSTER

SYNOPSIS.

Sonny Holman, believing he is the rightful owner of the Aztec mine, holds up the mine's payrolls. Janet Laurier, who holds legal title to the Aztec, tries to stop his activities.

Rustlers run off some cattle and Sonny, riding in pursuit, is cornered by Janet's mine guards. He escapes, but his horse is shot. Janet has the horse doctored and pleads with Holman to leave the country. Tilford, mine manager, apparently falls in with her plan but in reality schemes to deliver Janet over to a cutthroat named Garcia.

Janet finds Sonny, just as Garcia's men are closing in. They take refuge in a cave. Meanwhile, a search party has been organized and Tilford is made to go along and find the way.

CHAPTER XXI.—(Cont'd)

A sudden uproar came thinly to his ears. The distant barking and yelping of dogs, frenzidly excited. Somehow it did not sound like the noise of dogs trailing. It sounded more like dogs being beaten, and the uproar they would make when leashes prevented their escape.

"Tha'd be your gang, Janet," said Sonny. "There's their dawgs. An' they ain't so far away, either."

The yelping ceased suddenly, as if the beating had stopped while a consultation was held as to another way of making them trail.

"I won t let them hurt you," said Janet uncertainly, "but if they can catch you, it's what I hired them to do."

"Y' won't call 'em off?" asked Sonny, smiling. His smile became fixed, suddenly, when the horse he rode stumbled and wrenched his body.

She shook he head. "I'm going to make you leave the mine alone," she said resolutely. "I love you, but I've got to!"

"An y' still won't tell me why?"

She shook her head, her eyes misting suddenly.

"Then yuh' kidnapped," said Sonny soberly. "Come on."

He led the way, but alertly. A dash for freedom even had she dared to make one, would not have gotten her far. Sonny fell silent, listening intently. They way was narrow here and there was no chance to pick and choose a path. When the last of the led horses kicked aside a stone, it rolled and rumbled, gathering companions until a small sized landslide went roaring down the hillside, making a noise that was audible for a long distance.

"Dawggone!" murmured Sonny. "I hope nobody was listenin'."

He had chosen this route for exit from his hangout for perfectly sound reasons. Not knowing where Garcia or his men might be, he had elected to come out of the back exit from his hangout, a tortuous path among the fallen boulders which had been unsuspected by the Mexican. But this route, when once embarked upon, admitted of no deviation lest the rider find himself in a blind alley. Sonny now was committed to the route and it bothered him that the noise had advertised his movement. The mine guards might not have noticed it, of course, or they might attribute it to any of a myriad natural causes.

The little cavalcade of two riders and three led horses went clattering loudly over the stony way, while Sonny's frown grew deeper and deeper. Twice they heard the barking of a dog, and once a shrill and startled yelp. Each time the sound was faint, but each time Sonny's expression grew a trifle more grim. And suddenly the trail ended abruptly in a rocky chute down which the horses picked their way gingerly. They came out abruptly into a space of level ground in which stunted trees grew sparsely and through which the stage road ran for a space.

Hardly had they merged from the hillside chute when there was a yell and a bullet whined over Sonny's head. A moment later another gun took up the fusillade, and there were shoutings showing that still others were taking up the pursuit.

"Get goin' to yuh frien's, Janet," drawled Sonny. "I aim t' do a li'l shootin'."

"I won't, she returned. "While I'm here they'll have to try not to hurt you. I want you caught, but not—"

Sonny grinned, though his face was white from pain. "It wouldn't be playin' fair to plug them while you kep' 'em shootin' high," he drawled. "What say we mosey along?"

He swerved to the right and began to tear through the thin undergrowth, which soon gave way to knee-high grass and then to the road itself. Janet spurred her horse and rode deliberately beside him. Sonny whistled and Gunpowder ranged up alongside, running splendidly with his head up and no trace of a limp. Even the horses the Mexicans had been riding and which Sonny had captured with their masters, seemed to consider this a race, and rested by a night's idleness, they came along in a bunch behind.

"Lordy," drawled Sonny, "I reg'n we look like a herd o' antelope."

"Sping-ng-ng!" Something whistled viciously a yard from his elbow. "Hun-unnhn o-n!" Another bullet whined by. There was a sudden shriek from one of the horses romping behind and it rolled over upon the ground, kicking, the heavy stirrups of its empty saddle flapping as it struggled desperately.

"They ain't carin' where they shoot," said Sonny suddenly, his voice deadly. "Janet, ride off t' one side. I'm goin' t' do some shootin' now."

He swung in his saddle and blazed away. Five of the mine guards were in full cry after them, shooting as they came. The sixth came half riding and half tumbling from the mountain side to join in. He spurred his mount.

Janet called loudly and frantically. It was the scar-faced man who had been with Gleason when Jake Hornaby was killed.

The scar-faced man scowled and lent lower, urging his horse on. His revolver came up. His gun and Sonny's went off together, and the scar-faced man reeled from his mount and toppled to the ground. Sonny's horse stumbled, but as it went down Sonny flung himself clear. Gunpowder came racing to his side.

Sonny leaped to the stallion's back and was away again, shoving shells into his gun with his lips compressed. He seemed to be planning grimly. But his face was ashen from the pain of broken rib ends grinding upon each other from his movements.

The stage road narrowed here and went along the side of a hill for a long way, winding and dipping, disappearing for long spaces as it followed the only practical grade, and finally disappearing toward Gila Valley and the town of Molevile. It was unspeakably isolated here. No living thing was to be seen except a soaring creature far away which might have been some feathered scavenger, waiting for something to die. There was no sound but the clattering hoofs of three horses—Gunpowder, the horse Janet rode, and the remaining mount taken from the members of Garcia's gang left bound in Sonny's hang-out.

"'S long as they keep far enough ah'ad," drawled Sonny, "they can't do nothin' here. But you better drop back. They're shootin' mighty reckless, those fellers. The stage road ought to be kinda safe. You drop behind an' let 'em pass yuh. Don't follow 'em too close. I'll lead 'em on a ways."

He stopped. Far in the distance a dark mass of men and animals had appeared. Too many men to be accompanying the ore wagons, and wearing undeniable sombreros, the sombreros of Garcia's men. Sonny swung his head about as if trapped. He was. The hillside above and below the road was nearly precipitous. The mob of Garcia's men ahead would stop at nothing to pull down the pair of them. The five mine guards behind would never stop to listen to their own danger before they had killed Sonny, leaving themselves with Janet to be overwhelmed by the bandit gang.

There was no turning. Sonny and Janet were being driven into the arms of Garcia's men by her own guards. The horses galloped swiftly down the winding road. The Mexicans ahead were shut out of sight momentarily by a shoulder of the hill.

"They've took the ore train," drawled Sonny very quietly indeed. "They'll be bringing it to Garcia's hangout to unload, an' then they'll take the wagons on an' dump 'em in Buttercreek Canyon. By the time it's all figured out, that ore'll be outer the country. An' them an' us, and your frien's back yonder, Janet, are all right likely to come together."

"I'll tell my men not to fight you," said Janet, "and together we may retake the ore train."

Sonny shook his head grimly. "Riskin' you? Not much! I got me a idea. See where there's a break in the rock wall? We drive in there. Con aprisa. Your gang'll ride past an' slap into Garcia, an' you come out behind an' ride like hell for help. Meantime I go sky-ootin' into the fracas, like I had a million Rangers behind me. An' if your gang is any good at all, we'll hold that mob till you get back with all o' Gila County to clean 'em up."

Down the roadway the three horses clattered, galoping swiftly. The heavy saddle bags on the lead horses flopped clumsily as the saddle rose and fell from his stride.

"Here, now, ma'am," drawled Sonny. They swung to the right and into the little canyon. "Garcia's home grounds," said Sonny grimly. "If your gang don't ride past, ma'am, y're sure out o' luck. We'll get behind these rocks."

He crowded the three horses out of sight behind a tumbled mass of reddish rocks fallen from the canyon walls. Gunpowder stood instantly docilely still. Janet's mount stood with drooping head, panting. The third animal moved skittishly up to them, away from them, and as Sonny reached out his hand to grasp its bridle seemed to remember again the habits of its Mexican owners. It jerked its head away and danced off into the middle of the canyon.

And as Sonny raced after it, and having caught it, back with it, the live mine guards swept past the canyon entrance.

(To be Continued)

Storm

All other storms were playthings to this storm.
It was as if God broke the moulds of Form
And the huge fragments, hurtling, whizzed like wires,
Confusion stalked across the blotted shires.
Now they joined hands. They doubled the wild din.
They fought once more. Earth's crust seemed fallen in.
What could withstand such turmoil? Rocks only could
By twining their stone roots. Nothing else stood.
Trees groaned like mandrakes. Sap in sweaty beads
Stared from their barks. Boughs broke. But the crude weeds,
Hemlock and ragwort, plantain, parsley and dock,
Held out more grimly against the furious shock
Than those gnarled trees that like a leather tether
Knit the broad acres of this land together.

—Louis Golding, in Time and Tide.

Peace

How shall a man think on that which belongs to his peace, if he yields himself wholly a servant to those things which be without; and how shall he carry any message to others, who cannot hearken to the voice of his own soul?—Lady Dilke. (The Book of the Spiritual Life).

Custom

Custom is the great enemy of faith, and of Reason likewise; and one of the worst tricks which custom plays us is, making us fancy that miraculous things cease to be miraculous by becoming common.

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ISSUE No. 34—3'2

Premature Discoveries

By Friedrich Freksa in Die Woche, Berlin

Similar to a great, unyielding army, humanity forges ahead on its march towards progress. It is preceded by the scouts, in our case the geniuses. Over the heads of the vanguard these scouts push ahead into time. History of human progress teaches us that its pioneers were sometimes two or three centuries ahead of the masses, if not more.

After the pioneers comes the vanguard, scientists, explorers, poets, philosophers, the host of methodic workers and searchers, who in their turn are far ahead of the so-called educated class. Their thoughts and ideology are handed over to the teachers, in whose following march the columns of students, the latter at least one generation ahead of the educated class, whose ranks they join after completing their studies. After that they apply in practice the knowledge and experience acquired in schools and universities and make it accessible to the great masses of the people.

Round these practical workers, the jurists, physicians, engineers, technicians, journalists, the educated classes are grouped, who are moved by the desire to make the wisdom of the former their own. Still, they remain way behind the explorers. After the educated classes comes the mass of the people, who assimilate the former's ideology, doctrines, mode of speaking. Usually the masses are more fanatical followers of a doctrine than the class from which they took it, and they continue to profess a faith long after it is discarded by scholars and scientists.

Thus materialism was born from the observation of nature itself. The conception of matter is a theory which goes back to the pre-Christian era, to the Greek philosopher Democritus, who believed that the universe consisted of a substance, composed in its turn of infinitesimal particles or atoms, the differentiation of the bodies being determined by the various degrees of density of these atoms. The alchemists of the middle ages based their research on this ancient theory and studied the means of converting plain metals into gold through condensation of the atom.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, which saw the triumph of physical science, the idea of force was born, and a new theory on the origin and composition of the world gradually evolved from the combination of the two principles, atom and force. From this purely materialistic conception Marx and Engels drew the inspiration for their social teachings, and their doctrine is still the creed of their socialist and communist followers.

But the great physicists of modern times reject this theory of crude materialism and of the infinitesimal and indivisible particle. Inspired by the glamorous discoveries in the electrical and electrochemical fields, scientists evolve a new theory, whereby the simple atom became the complicated electron. In the imagination of the twentieth century physicist this infinitesimal particle the electron has acquired the likeness of a whole world in itself, in which other particles revolve round the nucleus at a terrific speed. Thus the electron has acquired the likeness of our stellar system, in other words, it is a little sun, with the planets revolving round it.

The day will come when even this audacious theory will seem obsolete and will have to make place for another conception. Newton's ideas are slowly but irresistibly being replaced by Einstein's relativity theory. The scientist is aware, however, that the theories with which he works are but expressions of the philosophy of the period in which he lives, and suited to it.

The scientist does not erect his hypotheses into articles of faith. He is satisfied with having found a workable one—at least for a time—and he lets his thoughts wander through an imaginary, not through the real world. This is in opposition to the methods of the layman, who wants, above all, to believe, even though, he proudly calls himself an atheist. All misunderstandings and spiritual troubles which afflict the so-called educated classes come from this desire to believe. The misuse that was made of Darwin's theory in the beginning of the past century is one aspect of it. Yet the evolutionary idea of Darwin's work goes back to 1800, to Hegel. However, only one hundred years later did the words "development" and "evolution" become part of our current language.

Every great idea that was put into circulation as a rare gold coin has finished by becoming a worn out small coin. The intellectuals glorified the American Constitution of July 4, 1776, as a symbol of greatest dignity and highest civilization, because it was inspired by the philosophy of fifty years before the slogans of which became familiar to the peoples only in the second half of the eighteenth century.

In our time of triumph of technique, which is still under the influence of the World War, our vocabulary is rich with technical and martial terms. We speak of economic wars, political fronts and lines-ups, and even the pacifists do not seem to be able to get along without this bellicose terminology.

A striking example of how an invention may be made ahead of its time is television. It has now come to stay. In 1865 a German magazine published the picture of a camera invented by a certain Caselli which transmitted a perfect picture of the great physicist Ampere. Yet it took another 67 years to make television an everyday occurrence.

All inventions and discoveries are the result of man's dreams. They mature through millenniums and are anticipated by myth and legend. Dedalus built wings for himself and soared up, but his son Icarus, having come too near the sun, paid for his temerity with his life. Yet it was his dream that showed mankind the road towards the realization of flying. Dreams become ideas and, through the process of research and experience, they bear fruits after many centuries.

280 B.C. a Greek philosopher proved with calculations that earth and planets revolved round the sun. His theory, developed by his disciples, remained confined to a narrow circle, as it was in opposition to the current belief of the revolving sun. At that time humanity was better prepared to listen to the Egyptian Ptolemy, who proved with elaborate and artificial calculations the truth of the established theory. The Greek principle was therefore entirely forgotten until Galilei and Copernicus revolutionized the middle ages with their sensational discoveries. Despite persecutions and anathemas, the new teachings sent a thrill through mankind, and they finished by being accepted.

When Columbus discovered America the world had already forgotten that in the year 800 A.D. Eric the Red and his Norsemen had come as far as Labrador and settled there, but were subsequently wiped out by cold, starvation and the hostile natives.

The nineteenth century is justly hailed as the era of the steam engine. Yet how many people know that at the time of the Emperor Adrian, about 100 A.D., Roman engineers built pump works in Egypt operated by steam. At that time, however, human labor was so cheap that the value of mechanical force was no made the object of further investigation, and the project was dropped.

The above are but a few examples of how ideas and inventions may come too early, and, humanity not being ready to absorb them, lay idle for centuries.

Man's thought, his inventions and discoveries, are ruled by the immutable laws of maturity. All that is born outside of this state of maturity invariably passes unheeded. This explains the tragic fate of so many great geniuses, to whom success was denied, sometimes almost at the threshold of it. Robert Mayer, the thinker to whom science owes the law on conservation of forces, was declared insane by his contemporaries.

We humans live together and each of us is convinced that his world is the same as the world of his neighbor. Therefore, the creative genius who strives to give humanity something new, something it had never seen before, meets with a harsh reception.

Sport A-La-Mode

Three young damsels show the way to keep cool and get plenty of exercise in addition. Rainier National Park is the place, if you were enquiring.

"SALADA" ICED TEA is delicious

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Population 8,203,942, London Census Reveals

London.—The population of greater London now totals 8,203,942 as revealed by the first analytical report compiled from the census figures of last year. The increase in population, compared with 1921, has been 9.7 per cent., or nearly three times the increase of the preceding decade, as nearly twice the current increase of the nation at large.

Greater London's population numbers 4,371,026 females and 3,832,916 males. The report advances no reason for this predominance of women.

The largest contributor to the increase is Dagenham, for during the ten years in question it went from a meager 9,127 to 89,362. It is one of the few districts in which men outnumber women.

Figures for the City of London and the twenty-eight metropolitan boroughs which comprise the "administrative County of London" (as distinct from "Greater London") show a decline of 87,520 for the ten-year period. This population is now 397,003.

Important deductions to be drawn from the report are that families are growing much smaller than formerly (families of eight persons are 50 per cent. less numerous, while the one-person family has increased enormously); that there is much more living accommodation a person, with a best, drift to apartment houses; and that living conditions are much improved.

Dogs and Sheep

Numerous cases of sheep being infested with the cysts of the dog tape worm were reported this past winter. Another reason why dogs should be kept away from sheep, of course, is sheep infested with these hydatid worms, which locate on the lungs, died. If a sheep is so unfortunate as to pick up the eggs of a single segment of a dog tape worm, her chances of continued life are poor. Dogs infested with tape worm drop the segments containing the tape worm eggs about the fields and yards, these picked up by the sheep while feeding or drinking, and then the trouble begins. The remedy is to kill the tape worms that the dogs carry by feeding every dog at least three times a year with a suitable worm remedy. Many sheep died in one community, where some wormy hounds were allowed to run at large. If you are a sheep owner, keep your eye on the dogs and are dangerous to the well being of sheep in more ways than one.

Cigarette as Bait Used By Pennsylvania Anglers

Fish like cigarettes and lose caution when the white-wrapped rolls of tobacco are used as bait, according to the Pennsylvania Fish Commission. Oliver Deibler, Fisheries Commissioner, circulated the story of the bait as told him by S. W. Frank Doyette, in relating the experience of his brother, Dr. Claude Frank Doyette. As told to Deibler, Dr. Frank discovered the bait qualities of cigarettes accidentally when he threw one into the water. A large trout, that had disregarded other lures, struck at it eagerly.

Frank then baited a hook with a cigarette. He caught a trout within a short time. Before he finished he had landed three brook trout, ranging in length from 12 to 16 inches. Fishermen believe the trout were attracted by the white paper wrapping of the cigarettes.

Vacationist—"I want to ask you a question."

Ticket Agent—"Yes, madam?"

Vacationist—"Can I send a trunk case by a trunk line?"

For a long while after a person's bereavement our only consolation is with the lost one.

Sunday School Lesson

September 4. Lesson X—Evils of Intemperance—Isaiah 5: 11-14, 22, 23. Golden Text—*Do not drink wine nor strong drink.*—Leviticus 10: 9.

ANALYSIS.

I. INTEMPERATE LIVING, vs. 11, 12.

II. A TERRIBLE "THEREFORE," vs. 13-16.

III. DRUNKENNESS AGAIN, vs. 22, 23.

INTRODUCTION.—"To the prophet was granted," says Professor T. H. Robinson, "the insight born of direct communion with God to see with startling clarity that a given type of conduct, and still more a given attitude of mind, carried within itself the seeds of prosperity or disaster." Isaiah of Jerusalem had plenty of opportunity to exercise this prophetic insight. He lived in one of the most critical periods of Israel's history. The Assyrian empire was swiftly subjugating one after another of the smaller nations and bringing them under her ruthless sway. The little kingdom of Judah was in imminent danger from that ferocious quarter. Yet her leaders were stupidly blind to the danger. In the place of giving real leadership, they were living intemperately. They were guilty of grave social abuses, greed, drunkenness and the exploitation of the weak and defenceless. Isaiah saw clearly that such corrupt conduct on the part of the nation's leading classes, especially in view of the critical international situation, would involve the whole country in ruin. Against the great men of Jerusalem he delivered a series of powerful "woes," vs. 8-24.

I. INTEMPERATE LIVING, vs. 11, 12.—Life has become easy for the financial and business magnates of Jerusalem. They have had mortgages on the farms of the small independent peasants; now they have foreclosed these and have grown rich. Success breeds indolence; indolence begets careless and dissolute living. With elemental courage Isaiah confronts these men with their shameful sins. Seven times (vs. 8-24) he pronounces on them the weird and terrible word, "woe." That "woe" on the lips of a prophet is so ominous a warning that if these profligate grandees have any conscience they will tremble and tremble. With biting irony (of which he is a master) Isaiah attacks them. They are early risers, the great men of Jerusalem—but not to go about their work, not from any useful or noble pursuit! They rise early indeed, but only to seek their drink. Even among Israel's heathen neighbors who knew nothing of Israel's righteous God, such conduct would be a scandal. But so low have these privileged men of Jerusalem sunk that their drinking bouts last all day. In the cool of the night they are still sitting there, heating themselves with wine, v. 11. In the evening their drunken carousals become everything, more abandoned. Great harps are spread; orchestral music adds to the unusual frivolity. The tuneful peace of Jerusalem's nights, the sweet of her hard-working laborers are disturbed with the loud buffoonery and the voluptuous music of her drunken leaders. Wine has befuddled their senses; it has dulled their faculty of spiritual perception. For is God even now at work among the nations, ceaselessly weaving the pattern of the web out of the processes of history? But bleary eyes can never see "the signs of the times"; nor can besotted minds trace eternal purpose.

A TERRIBLE "THEREFORE," vs. 13-16.—Terrible is this word "therefore" on the lips of a prophet. Invariably it produces coming doom. There is no place for repentance here. Isaiah realizes that the leading men of Jerusalem have gone too far in trifling with God's righteousness. Retribution is already at the door. Their destiny in exile is sealed. Further, the leadership of the wine-bibbers is bringing ruin on the whole nation. With its strength impaired through dissolute living, it will fall an easy prey to Assyria. It will be driven into exile. As invariably happens in history, the innocent suffer with the guilty. The oppressed masses must share in the retribution overtaking their corrupt leaders—this "honorable" gentlemen of Jerusalem. Yet the sin of the latter is to be punished in kind. They have been licentious; now in exile they will face starvation. They have been winebibbers; now they will feel a maddening thirst, v. 13. Nor is this all. Death will take its fearful toll. Sheol, the shadowy abode of the dead—personified by Isaiah as a greedy monster opens its hungry maw, and down go the once glorious Jerusalem-classes and masses together! v. 14. Such ruin of a nation is neither accidental nor meaningless. It is nothing less than the vindication and triumph of the righteousness of God. In his grim judgment of the nation, God's holiness is made manifest, v. 16. At the same time the presumption of man, who feels no sense of his contrariness before the holy majesty of God, but rather rises up in his pride to live without God or to defy him, is shown in all its futility, v. 15.

III. DRUNKENNESS AGAIN, vs. 22, 23.—With withering words Isaiah returns to his attack on the drunkards. Heroes they are—but only in consuming wine! Men of might—but only in mixing a bowl of drink! Only of such exploits can they boast, v. 22. The prophet tracks the drunkards from their cups to the courts of justice. There they sit as judges. Oh, the irony of it! The guilty they dismiss for a bribe; the innocent they condemn. They have lost even the sense of the distinction between right and wrong.

Truth in Fiction

By Andre Maurois, in Petite Gironde, Bordeaux

Is this a true story? Are your characters taken from life? These are a few of the questions that the reader usually asks the novelist.

It so happens that the relationship between action and reality is far too complicated to be settled with a few superficial questions, even if it were possible to give an exhaustive reply to them.

An event that has actually occurred may be the starting point for a long meditation, the outcome of which will be action. In "War and Peace" Tolstoi described the love stories of his youthful sister-in-law when he created the character of Natasha. Merimee was inspired to write "Carmen" by a story told to him by Madame De Montijo. But neither a real occurrence nor a story told casually provides the necessary stuff for a novel. They can be told or described in a few words. What is really important is the physical process of transformation of this initial cell into a complete and perfect literary creation.

The fact, the occurrence of real life, acts on a novelist's imagination like the fecundating shock on the ovum. The novelist is ceaselessly tormented by the demon of the untold. He harbors in himself a painful past, an unsatisfied craving, or unsolved problems. He strives to find some form of expression for the thoughts which haunt him, and very often even an ordinary occurrence is just that proving force which will release these hidden thoughts. This explains why there is always a link, a relationship, between the successive books of a great novelist. Again and again Stendhal turns to the conflict between success and happiness. Tourgeneff clings to the theme of the weak male, prey to a strong and ardent female. Andre Gide sees in everything the conflict between puritan conscience and unfettered sensuality.

Once the fecundation has taken place the inner development of a novel is just as mysterious a process as that of the child in the mother's womb. Most of this work is unconscious. Often it happens that at a certain point the writer suddenly stops because he cannot find the right form for an episode. He lays the novel aside and takes it up maybe many months later. In the meantime his thoughts have taken a definite shape, if not on paper, then in his mind. What we call "atmosphere" is mostly the fruit of long and patient observation of the surroundings into which the novelist intends to place his hero. Slowly but systematically definite characters, types of flesh and blood, emerge from the depth of the writer's mind. The process is often reversed, that is, a type across whom the writer comes in real life strikes his imagination. The action must then be built up around this type, although it seldom happens that a character of fiction is copied after one model only. Several "real" types are usually necessary for the writer to be able to create his imaginary hero. The mistake the public only too often makes is that it picks out a type or an episode from a book and very definitely associates it with a type or an occurrence of real life, forgetting that there are many replicas of the same picture in nature, and that the best drama is that of all ages. However, this illusion is beneficial for the writer because it helps to enhance the veracity of fiction. Convinced of the historic truth of a minor detail, the reader lavishes upon a book more attention and emotion than he would otherwise do.

There comes a moment when the character has taken such definite shape in the author's mind that it becomes independent. It then speaks for itself, and the novelist can do nothing but listen. So Dickens must have listened to Mr. Pickwick and Balzac to Pe Grandet. They could not have spoken differently, even if they had found themselves in different situations. They are characters modeled after innumerable types of real life. But they are given life by the breath of the writer's soul, which is always the same.

There is, of course, something that must be taken from reality. That is the atmosphere, or rather the background of the historical novel. A novelist cannot and should not invent history. That is why the so-called political novel has always been considered the most difficult form of fiction. Perhaps the only writers that have more or less satisfactorily solved this problem were Disraeli and Barres. They took their characters from history, from reality. They placed a real Wellington or Peel next to an imaginary Coningsby. This trick helped to gain the confidence of the reader.

To our mind fiction should never be in open conflict with reality, but neither should it attempt to create an illusion of reality. A picture never steps out of its frame, and, similarly, a character of fiction should not speak and behave like a human being in flesh and blood. Reality stimulates action, while fiction invites meditation and contemplation. Therefore, if the reader asks whether a story is true, the writer should reply: "No, not quite, for, if it were a true story, it would be poor fiction."

Old Houses Have Secrets

Old houses, like old gentlefolk, are shy,
For stubbiness and quaint, old-fashioned ways
Mark them the relics of those other days
Before men worshipped speed's efficiency.
They seem to sit apart ,to draw aside from life's insistent urge. In musings deep
They dream; and tender rendezvous they keep
With all the treasured memories they hide.
A footstep—whispers—scent of rare perfumes—
An old love song—faint rustle of a gown—
A sobbing cry—gay laughter drifting down—
A sobbing cry, like old hearts, are loath to tell
Dear secrets they have hidden long and well.

—Pearle R. Casey.

A strong will is firmness. A strong wont is obstinacy.

For Trans-Africa Service

The Atalanta, first of a fleet of eight machines constructed for service on 5,500-mile route of the Imperial Airways trans-African service. The four air-cooled engines develop 1,400 horsepower and 150 miles per hour.

Why We Take Soup Before Fish

A man some time ago, to win a wager, ate a dinner backwards, beginning with the coffee and liqueurs and ending with the hors d'oeuvre.

Was the meal a freak one, or is there any justification for assuming that the order of the courses sanctioned by tradition is more than a convention?

Fashions in food change. In the eyes of the heroes of Homer, for example, fish had little favor, and 3,000 years ago a starving king swallowed a fish, under protest, for lack of anything better suited to his kingly appetite. Today fish is a staple article of diet.

Psychic Influence

Is there any reason, therefore, why soup should be regarded as an excellent first course for dinner or porridge for breakfast? The answer is yes. The active work of digestion begins in the stomach, and the digestive medium is the gastric juice, the production of which is governed by two factors, one psychic and the other chemical.

The psychic factor operates first. A well-liked dish makes the mouth water and initiates the production of gastric juice before any food enters the stomach. Hence it is true to say that, as a general rule, we best digest the foods we best like.

This psychic influence is soon succeeded by a chemical one, and it has been definitely proved that meat extracts and soups—the traditional first courses of the largest meal of the day—effectively stimulate the secretion of gastric juice. To begin dinner with a small portion of soup is an insurance policy which guarantees that the stomach will be in the fittest possible condition for dealing with the later courses.

There are three bulky types of foods: Carbohydrates, such as bread; fats, such as butter, and proteins, such as lean meat. Meals fall into one or two classes. They either consist in the main of carbohydrates and fats, such as tea, or of Carbohydrates and proteins, such as dinner.

The nature of a food determines the speed with which it is digested. Carbohydrates are digested more quickly than proteins, and proteins more quickly than fats. To mix fats with carbohydrates delays the digestion of the carbohydrates and lives to such a meal a satisfying quality which it would not otherwise possess.

Rules of Digestion

Again, carbohydrates are not stimulating foods in the sense of encouraging the production of gastric juice. It is, therefore, desirable that the protein portions of a meal (fish or meat) should be in the lower or active part of the stomach while the secretion of gastric juice is at a maximum. For these and other reasons, porridge as the first course at breakfast, the addition of bread, potatoes, and other vegetables to the meat course at dinner, the taking of meat before pudding and dessert at the end of a meal are all sound rules which help to ensure a good digestion.

Fishes Do Not Drink

When you say a man "drinks like a fish," you really imply that he does not drink. For fishes swallow no water for refreshment. When you see a fish opening and closing its mouth it is merely breathing. Water is taken in, but it does not pass down the throat to the body. While the fish breathes, its gullet is tightly constricted at the back by means of muscles encircling the throat, and the water flows away over the gills. While water does not pass the closed gullet, solid food can force an entrance. When it presses against the back of the gullet, the muscles relax enough to allow it to force a way down into the stomach. Fishes require fresh air as much as humans do.

Yankees in Argentina ..

The Review of the River Plate, an excellent weekly published in Argentina, in a recent number, gives some interesting details of American influence in Argentine history. We find that during the British invasions, when General Beresford with his handful of British soldiers was besieged in the fort of Buenos Aires, an American, William White, was the first to intercede in an endeavor to arrange terms for the pacific withdrawal of the British garrison. William Wheelwright, another American, descendant of one of the Mayflower emigrants, was a great benefactor to this country. In addition to founding the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, Mr. Wheelwright developed the Central Argentine Railway in Argentina, as well as coal mines in the neighboring Republic of Chile, and had proposed the cutting of a canal across the isthmus of Panama long before De Lesseps and the Suez Canal were heard of. This latter anecdote shows clearly how everyone speaking English in those days was considered an "Ingles" or "Ingles loco," according to his ordinary or extraordinary capabilities, and after a time Mr. Wheelwright found it difficult to establish his identity as an American. Thus, on the occasion of the Civil War in his native country, when he placed £1000 at the disposal of the American Minister in Buenos Aires, for the care of the wounded, he wrote, "Though generally considered an Englishman, I cannot forget that I was born in Massachusetts."

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is said to be power. Knowledge is power in the same sense that wood is fuel. Wood on fire is fuel. Knowledge on fire is power. There is no more power in knowledge than there is in the stones or stars which you know, unless there be a spirit and life in the knowledge, which gives it its energy. In proportion as men have this spiritual power do they become strong in this world.—Alexander McKenzie.

Scout Tales

About Fires

Every man who goes camping or hunting must, of course, be able to cook his own food; otherwise he would be very helpless.

Every Wolf Cub, before he can become a Scout, must also be able to cook.

The best way to begin is to go and help your mother or cook in the kitchen, and see how to peel potatoes and to prepare the meat, and to make dough; how to fry, roast, bake and stew.

Then, when you know all that, you can go and practice it for yourselves out in the open, making your own fires and using a billy or camp cooking things.

To make a cooking-fire out in the open you want to get a pile of red hot embers. This you do by making your fire with lots of stout sticks, or with logs which, when half-burnt, breaks up into good embers.

Very dry cow-dung makes excellent fuel; so do old boots if its rot.

It is generally best to make your fire in a trough between two rows of bricks or stones or logs. It burns more easily and keeps hotter than an open fire; and if the sides are firmly made they do to rest your kettle and cooking-pots upon.

Then you should make your own pot-hooks and hangers for holding your cooking-pot over the fire or for roasting your food. Many an old camper carries his pot-hook about with him on his belt.

Another good way of making a fire is to use an old iron bucket as a fire-place, with lots of holes punched in its sides.

We used them in South Africa when travelling over the veldt, where you went for days over open plains without seeing a tree or a bush with which to make a fire; so we carried our fire with us, slung under the wagon and we fed it now and then with dry grass-roots, cow-dung, old ox-skins, old boots, or anything we could find as we went along.

Grass and Forest Fires

Another advantage of a bucket fire is that it leaves very little mess when you have done cooking, and also it gives less risk of setting fire to the grass round about your camp; and this in summer-time is a great danger.

Old Scouts are very careful about burning bit by bit or cutting away the grass round the spot where they are going to make their camp-fire; so that when it is alight it will not spread to the surrounding veldt.

Then, when they have finished cooking, old campers are very careful indeed to pull their fire to pieces and to tread it all down, and to pour water over the smouldering ashes so that there is not a spark left which might later start a new fire.

Grass and forest fires are never started by true Scouts, but by silly, careless Tenderfeet.

WORSE THAN EVER

Miss Thortlebury had been invited to be a bridesmaid at a smart wedding, and spent much time planning her new frock. At last it was ready; and when she tried it on she asked Mrs. Jones, from next door, to come and see it.

"It's sweet, my dear!" said Mrs. Jones, admiringly. "And certainly you look a lady, whatever you are."

Miss Thortlebury's face told her she had made a mistake, so she corrected herself hurriedly.

"No. I mean you are a lady, whatever you look!"

GONE!

The employer called his staff together and informed them that owing to taxation and bad trade there would have to be a further reduction in wages.

"This will mean that we shall have to tighten our belts," he said, and then, more sharply, to a junior clerk who did not appear to be listening, "Do you understand what I'm saying, Smith?"

"Sir," replied Smith, "it's no good telling me that. My belt broke at the Budget before last."

And With a Voice on the Air.

MUTT AND JEFF— By BUD FISHER