

THE RIVER of SKULLS — by George Marsh—

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WNU SERVICE

"How far are we from the head

"All right, we camp here," rasped

in his gaunt face with the fire that

Eight hours later, with the team

"Today, we'll reach her, Rough!"

said Alan, lashing his belt about his

lean waist. But in his heart he knew

that his dogs were fast reaching the

The four huskies, lean as timber

wolves, started stiffly with the light

sled. They had not traveled far

through the dusk of the river valley

when they passed the frozen effigies

McQueen's camp of the night be-

"Trouble over gold. Dogs weak

Desperate with the realization

"We're going to see Heather,

soon, boys!" he said, dropping his

mittens to stroke the massive heads.

'She's only a few miles away.

There're seven dogs ahead of us.

but we're going to run them off their

bone in their legs. We're going to

run and run and run with the light

Then Alan said to the black lead-

dog: "It's going to be all we've got

into the night-all we've got left for

Heather! Then there'll be no more!

Far in the southeast the sun lifted

ice. And yet, men and dogs held to

sled-until we find her!"

Marche!"

the trail.

doned on the trail.

The Ungavas win!"

bones. "We see dem soon!"

and go on, their numbed legs shift-

The stars lit the river ice. The

spruce went indigo black and still,

like six avenging furies, four wolf-

lean dogs, and two men with eyes

glittering with the light of victory,

crawled wearily on. Then, as they

"Look! Eet ees ovair! De fire-

Ahead, in the blackness of the

It seemed to Alan as if his heart

would burst. She was there, there

by that fire-Heather! They had

reached her-at last! His brain went

giddy with joy. It couldn't be true!

He turned and threw his arms

about Noel's shoulders, while his

her!" he sobbed. "John! John!

Their plans were quickly made.

They moved into the timber and,

throwing a salmon to each of the

exhausted dogs, made them fast

with wire leashes which they could

neither chew nor break. While they

rested, for the swift shooting that

was coming would call for steady

nerves, they wound rawhide around

the inside length of the bows of their

showshoes to muffle any possible

shoulder holster, with the automat-

ic, to his belt and, taking their rifles.

the two men began the stalk of Mc-

"We've got her, Noel! We've got

knees shook with his weakness.

ing woodenly back and forth.

turned a bend, Noel cried:

scrub, was the glow of a fire!

They had reached Heather!

We've got-Heather!"

light on de spruce!"

that he must reach her at once, if

of the river? I remember this coun-

days to the lake."

abandoned.

The Indian nodded.

would burn to the end.

bottom of their stamina.

Come quick! H."

CHAPTER XV-Continued

Noel pointed to the rugged Ungavas panting on the trail, still in the pink of condition, their coats dem! Dey are good as w'en we start! Dat ees from plentee grub. Let's have a look at it!" Een t'ree four day, dey show Mc-Queen how dey can travel."

But that day the sun set in a leaden sky and, later, the warning of the alders and over the heaped the ringed moon flicked the men with fear. In the night they were waked by the roar of the "drifter" that drove across barrens and river paw, snowshoe prints in the new valley burying their camp in snow. When they rolled out of their drifted startled eyes. sleeping-bags, the fire was out and four white mounds marked the spots where the dogs slept, and from bad!' which they burst, when called, in from water.

"Today we gain on you, Mc-Queen!" cried Alan, starting his dogs. "Today, you won't travel with frost-burned face grayed. your tired dogs, but old Rough and the pups'll show you what bone and | iere." beef'll do through the drifts! Marche, boys!"

Steadily, hour after hour, with the white slant of the norther on their plodded up the river ice. In places | dogs!" the boys broke trail ahead of the team through drifts heaped shoulder high by the wind, but most of the river ice was brushed clear of snow as if swept by giant brooms. Later, the treacherous ice over strong rapids drove them ashore over tumbled boulders, up steep banks, to buck and flounder through elly sapped the strength of men and with the willing Ungavas as they fought with their load, until exhaustion forced them to camp.

Through the night the "drifter" pounded the valley. In the gloom of the bitter dawn, two lean-faced, McQueen would never wallow day." and rest his team, thinking the me chance to gain on the sled ahead the short day he mercilessly drove himself and his team, trotting over the good going of the swept river ice and lifting and hauling at the heavy sled up over the boulderpiled shores where the river was Blinded by snow constantly masking their tortured faces, bucking the deep drifts of the portages, panting men and dogs pushed on and on until the black night fell like a tent and drove them to shelter.

At dawn the wind had blown itself out and the snow stopped. Stiff in every muscle from the long strain, Alan dragged himself out of his sleeping bag, the pinched face in their sled was light. But the tough his hood black from frostbite and Ungavas with the heavier load had from open jaws, while their tails his lips cracked from the two days in the stinging wind and snow.

"How far do you guess we travthe Indian who limped as he brought wood for the fire.

"Eet was all gain! McQueen nemile for sure. Oh-oh!" groaned Noel, dropping the wood to rub a leg. "I got de mal-racquette!"

"I'm stiff as a spruce stick, myself," replied the other. "Wrenched my shoulder with all that lifting! Let's have a look at the dogs! Here, Rough, Shot!"

Slowly the dogs responded to the calls of their master. One after another they broke from their snow blankets to shake themselves but the iron bodies of the Ungavas were, after all, but blood and thews and days' battle with the drifts and the up-hill slavery of the river shores. Poor Shot, who had never faltered snow and after a careful inspechis strength, limped around with a Rogue and Powder, growing thinner | but jes' look and start hard up rivday by day, hobbled on stiff legs. The veteran Rough, lean as a lynx, still carried his plume of a tail bravely arched above his back, but he failed to frisk and roll in the snow at the call of Alan. The "drifter" had taken its toll of the Un-

"They're pretty stiff, Noel, but we've got to go on-on!" insisted

He made the dogs lie on their backs, feet in the air, while he and Noel examined their shaggy bodies, banded with muscles like wire cables, and searched their paws for the toes which would cripple them. Then, over the young snow left by the storm, the sled pushed on up the river, drawn by its crippled team, and led by two men with tightened belts, and in the eyes of their

Toward noon Noel, who was in the lead, raised his hand, stopping the against the skull of the husky.

team, then pointed to the shore ahead. The two men tore their ri- he groaned, "what's left for you fles from their cases.

"Fresh trail, made this morning!" said Alan. "But that can't be Mcshimmering with vitality. "Look at Queen. He's a day ahead of us the man, who held the lead-dog's yet, if he never moved in the blow.

> They started the team and soon reached the toboggan trail which led down from the spruce through shore snow to the river ice. Back tracking to shore, the two men stared in amazement at the bearsnow; then gazed into each other's

"Naskapi!" "By gar! Dat ees bad-veree

"If they're headed up river far, showers of snow, as a salmon leaps they're going to strike his trail where he started in the young snow after the drifter! They'll follow him and sneak on his camp!" Cameron's

"Mabee dey not hold to de riv-

"They will and we've got to overhaul them, Noel-travel all night! If the Naskapi get her, my God! It's too horrible! We've got to reach her, backs the snow-sheathed Ungavas Noel, if we kill ourselves and the

On went the stiff and foot-sore Ungavas at their master's urging. But, when the early dusk fell, it was evident that the Indians were traveling fast with a light sled. Stopping for an hour to rest the dogs and boil the kettle, Alan pushed on under the freezing moon that hung above the tundra, tortured with the thought the drifts, and the heavy sled cru- of the despairing girl who waited. But the trail of the sled ahead did dogs. Lashed to the bow by thongs not swing to the shore to a camp Alan and Noel strained and pulled ground but continued on over the white shell of the river ice.

"They're traveling too fast for us!" Alan admitted, at midnight, wiping the frost from his face and the wolf-hair rim of his hood. "They had hours start this morning and tightly belted men again hitched the must have five or six dogs and a dogs and started into the snow light sled. Stiff as we are, we must smoke. With his exhausted dogs have come forty or fifty miles, to-

through the shifting drifts which | The disheartened Noel nodded his blocked the portages. He would wait | hood in agreement. It looked hopebehind would do the same, until the Naskapi in time. "Dey have run wind blew itself out. Here was the dere dog all day. Dey mus' know McQueen ees ahead by de way dey with his stronger huskies and Alan travel. Our dog got to have rest. made the most of it. On through We all make beeg feed now and sleep. Tomorrow we travel hard." "But we've got to reach them, quick!"

"Dey are long piece from Mc-Queen, yet, w'ere dey camp tonight. We reach dere camp early tomorstill open or the ice dangerous. row, you see," urged the Montag-

So, against his will, but knowing he must rest his dogs, Alan agreed to camp. Starting later, in the murk of the bitterest part of the night, the hour before dawn, they reached the camp of the Naskapi. But they had gone. The sleep-holes showed they had six dogs and the trail in the new snow of the shore proved that

Later, white foxes on the ice faded to the shore at the approach of the eled in that drifter, Noel?" he asked team. There the bones and hair of two huskies told the grim story.

"McQueen's down to three dogs, now! He's licked, Noel! But the Invaire move. We travel t'irty-forty dians know, now, that a dog-team's lower and Powder and Rogue beahead of them."

McQueen was killing his dogs but that meant, also, that the trailing Indians would soon overtake him.

The Ungavas were working out of their stiffness. At noon they reached McQueen's blizzard camp, for they ering flews. found his trail in the new snow leading out from the shore. Desperate for word from the girl who could not now be more than thirty or forty miles away, Alan searched the drifted camp-site. The ashes of the fire lay in the large snow-hole bedded bone and, along with the men, with spruce boughs, over which had they had paid the penalty of the two been spread a tent supported by spruce logs. The marks of moccasins were everywhere in the young when asked for the last ounce of tion Noel said: "Onlee t'ree w'ite man, here! No Indian! De Naskapi wrenched shoulder. The foot-sore nevaire step out ov dere snowshoe

> iere. Dey are aftair McQueen!" "That means that McQueen brought but one Montagnais to the Koksoak and we left him on the River of Skulls."

"Ah-hah! But look, Alan! Somet'ing undair de snow ovair dere!"

Alan, who had been searching everywhere for a message from Heather, looked in the direction Noel pointed. Near the camp in the spruce was a suspicious looking mound of snow. Cameron suddenly sickened with dread. Could that mound of snow hold all that life held dear to him? Had McQueen left pad cracks and balled snow between her there while he made for the coast with the gold?

"See-what it-is!" ordered Alan, brokenly. Turning from his friend, he walked slowly to the shore where the team lay resting on the ice. Rough lifted his massive head and pinched faces, the fire of despera- his tail brushed the snow in greeting. Kneeling beside his dog, Alan thinks he'll run away, now, with until they reached the fire. Then i' pressed his frost-blackened face the fresh dogs!"

"If it is-if she's there-Rough," | and me? She loved us both, Roughy | try. It can't be more than three -loved us both!" Two great tears stood on the wind-burned cheeks of head in his arms, and froze, as he the white man whose eyes glittered waited, hardly breathing, for Noel's

"Alan! Come 'ere!" cried Noel.

Noel stood waving his arms in rested, two men, with sunken eyes manifest excitement. The dread in faces bitter with grim resolve. which chilled the heart of the man started in the gloom with barely on the ice vanished like river mist enough dog food to reach the cache before the sun as he leaped to his at the headwaters. The rest was feet and ran to the camp.

"Trudeau!" said Noel, standing beside the frozen body he had uncovered. "Shot tru de head!"

Alan bent over the grimacing face of the dead man sprayed with powder burns, to study the bullet hole in the forehead. Then he turned quizzically to his friend. "You don't shoot a man in the

forehead with a rifle at close quarters, you shoot him in the body. This of what had been two dogs, driven was a pistol bullet and smaller than until they died in harness, and then a 45. McQueen and Slade carried cut loose. At daylight they reached

"She-" Noel stared into the glit- fore. And there in a bush was a tering gray eyes of the other. message. It read: "Yes," said Alan, "she has hadto use-her gun!"

Through the day the team put the miles of spruce shores behind, urged on by the grim faced men who ran he hoped to save her-reach her bewith them. With his three tired fore the madmen, ahead, destroyed



ing," said Alan.

dogs McQueen was coming back, coming back to the Ungavas who were moving faster and faster, led by the iron Rough with his pacing gait that ate up the miles. But while McQueen faltered, the Naskapi were gaining as well as the team in the rear. It might be that night that the Indians would overtake the two men and the girl ahead. The thought drove Alan on and on through the day until the heads of the dogs slowly dropped and their tongues swung to and fro brushed the snow. But the man who urged them on shared the punishment with the dogs he loved.

At last, when the muzzle of the black lead-dog who had paced and run through the day as if his stamina knew no end, sagged lower and gan to falter while the game Shot, with his hurt shoulder, stumbled on. reeling in his traces, Alan called a halt. Exhausted men and dogs sprawled on the trail while the ice froze to the panting huskies' slav-

They had given their all and it was not enough. Still, there was no camp that night while unspeakable misery menaced the girl who waited for their coming.

When dogs and men had rested, Alan tossed a huge bag of frozen salmon into the snow and started again on his hopeless quest. As they traveled, but one thought burned in his brain: "We must reach them tonight! Tomorrow will be too late!"

The sun went out in the southwest and the spruce of the river shores went black with dusk. The slowly moving team was approaching a bushy point where the river made a sharp turn. Beyond rifle shot from the point, Noel entered the spruce with his gun to reconnoitre while Alan waited with the team, for they were taking no chances of be-

ing surprised. Presently Noel appeared at the point and waved the team on. Rounding the bend with the dogs, Alan gaped at the river trail, ahead. He drove the team to the spot where Noel stood staring at two stiffened shapes that lay shot, beside an empty sled.

"The Naskapi!" Alan gazed in stunned amazement at the bodies on the ice. "He was expecting us, Noel, and ambushed them, instead!" "But now he have more dog!" la-

mented Noel. "He's got nine dogs and the fish Queen's camp from the timber in and meat the Indians carried. He's the rear. They counted on the dogs laughing at us tonight, Noel! He being too dead with fatigue to wake

would be quick work. Noel only groaned. (TO BE CONTINUED)

WHAT to EAT and WHY C. Houston Goudiss Discusses Vitamins gerous not only to themselves and And Vision; Explains How and Why

You Should Feed Your Eyes By C. HOUSTON GOUDISS

FOR a number of years, scientists have stressed the importance of a well-balanced diet as a means of maintaining health, promoting growth and preventing disease. Recently, an even more significant development has occurred. It has been determined that a carefully chosen diet is absolutely tage of the wonderful discoveries necessary to preserve the general health and efficiency of every bodily function and that there is

good diet and good eyesight.

Your Food and Your Eyes Many people regard their eyesight as one of the five senses

which operate in stored the vision to normal. some mysterious from indigestion, they recognize that are troubled with stomach, liver or they quickly appreciate that pro-

longed dietary indiscretions may be at the root of the trouble. But it never occurs to them that what as profoundly as it affects the internal organs.

It is not uncommon, during an attack of biliousness, to suffer a disturbance of the vision. But that disturbance usually disappears with the disorder that caused it. each other and her, Alan went to On the other hand, a deficient diet may produce eye troubles that have a far reaching effect upon health, efficiency, and even personal safety.

Night Blindness Explained

For example, it has been estabfeet. They haven't got Ungava hearts in their chests and Ungava lished that there is a definite relation between your vision and the vitamins in your diet; between your ability to drive a car safely at night, and the amount of vitamin A-containing foods that you left, Rough-you and I. All day and

To understand this astonishing fact, it is necessary to know that vision under faint illumination is accomplished by means of chemimen were near the end. The long, back of the eye. This is known as odds against the Ungavas was con- and one of its important compoquering at last. The iron bodies and nents is carotene, which is the acstout hearts in the shaggy chests tive form of vitamin A.

were giving their all. Soon, like The visual purple might be comthe dogs they had passed on the pared to the film in a camera. trail, they, too, would reach their When you are in a dim light and last mile; soon, the legs of the halfthe eyes are suddenly exposed to crazed man who urged them on bright light, the visual purple is would crumple under him on the greatly reduced or bleached. This change results in a stimulation of the optic nerve and enables you to see clearly.

Cautiously the two men watched the bends in the river, sweeping the When an adequate supply of vitamin A is present in the body, snow far in advance with the glasses to look for a sudden angling of the the visual purple is rapidly regenerated. But when the supply sled tracks to the shore which might mean an ambush. Then, in the aftis inadequate, a much longer peernoon, to their astonishment, they riod elapses before the corrective found the bodies of three dogs abanchemical change takes place. During the intervening time, many "Noel, we've got them! We've got people find it difficult to see.

them, now!" Cameron cried exult-That is the condition known as antly, hugging the Indian, then the "night blindness." And it accounts lead-dog. "It's four dogs to four! for the fact that a large proportion of serious motor accidents oc-"Dey are done!" panted the grincur at night. Victims of this dening Indian, whose swart skin sank ficiency disease are first blinded in hollows beneath his high cheekby approaching headlights, then cannot quickly readjust them-Through the early dusk, like famselves after the oncoming car has ished wolves close to their kill, passed. Their ability to drive marched four dogs, tails down, safely is subsequently impaired for they cannot clearly see the tongues lolling, following two stifflegged men, belts pinching gaunt road ahead, and they may miss waists, who often stumbled as they dangerous curves, pedestrians or walked, only to catch themselves other vehicles.

> A Common Complaint Unfortunately, the prevalence of night blindness is not generally recognized, though it is held that urban dwellers are more conscious of it than those living in the rural areas. This is borne out by the fact that ocular disorders from vitamin deficiency are less common in urban than in rural areas.

> > Children Often Victims

Since the discovery of the close connection between vitamin A and the ability to see in dim light, scientists have tested large numbers of school children to determine whether vitamin A was present in their diet in adequate amounts. It was revealed that from 26 to 79 per cent of the children examined had incipient night blindness.

The same deplorable conditions were found among adults. Mild

a close relationship between a to moderate degrees of vitamin A deficiency were present in from

> group tested. Yet here is the remarkable thing Give Kitchen Towels —in nearly every case, a diet rich in vitamin A for a few weeks re-

An even more striking example manner of their of the power of food to affect the own! If they suffer eyesight is to be found in the report of an experiment in which breeding sows were given food in it is quite apt to be abundance but lacking vitamin A due to something for 160 days before and for 30 they ate. If they days after breeding. In three litters of 35 pigs, all were blind. In another litter of 14 pigs, all were kidney complaints, sightless. But under normal feeding, the same animals produced litters of pigs with normal eyes and vision. This experiment justifies the conclusion of one of our most noted food scientists, that they eat may affect the eyes just the deficiency of essential food elements may so alter vital processes that even pre-natal changes may

> Cause of Other Eye Disorders Night blindness is not the only

eye disease caused by an improper diet. Xerophthalmia or conjunctivitis, characterized by excessive dryness of the eyeball, has long been known to be caused by a vitamin A deficiency. It is also well known that a liberal amount of this vitamin will prevent that serious disease and will even effect a cure where destruction of the cornea has not pro- 6113 contains a transfer pattern of gressed too far.

This suggests the tremendous importance of including in the diet | tions of stitches; color schemes. foods rich in vitamin A-cod- and other fish-liver oils; milk and other dairy products; green leafy and yellow vegetables; and egg yolk.

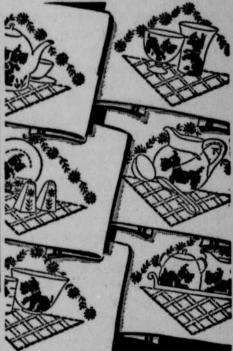
Experiments with rats, whose dietary requirements are similar on their last long day, for dogs and cal changes in the pigment at the to those of man, show a close connection between cataract and a up-hill, Koksoak trail with its cruel the "visual purple" of the retina deficiency of another vitamin—vitamin G. This is found most abundantly in meat, milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables. Were she concerned about pro-

tecting the blessing of good eyesight alone, that would be sufficient reason why every homemaker should plan meals that are rich in vitamins. But it is not only the eyes which are dependent upon vitamins, for they have many other functions to perform. An improper diet may cause people to drive automobiles blind-

ly at night so that they are dantheir passengers, but to everyone on the streets and roads. A deficient diet will also send them through life with half-efficient bodies, half-efficient brains, half-effi-

cient senses. That is why I urge you to learn everything you can about food, so that in planning meals you will not only feed your eyes, your husband's eyes and your children's eyes, but will take advanof nutritional science to make every member of the family so efficient that they will enjoy the best of health each day of their fives. C-WNU-C. Houston Goudiss-1938-33. 10 to over 50 per cent of each

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