

# Floyd Gibbons' ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!



## Murder Ship

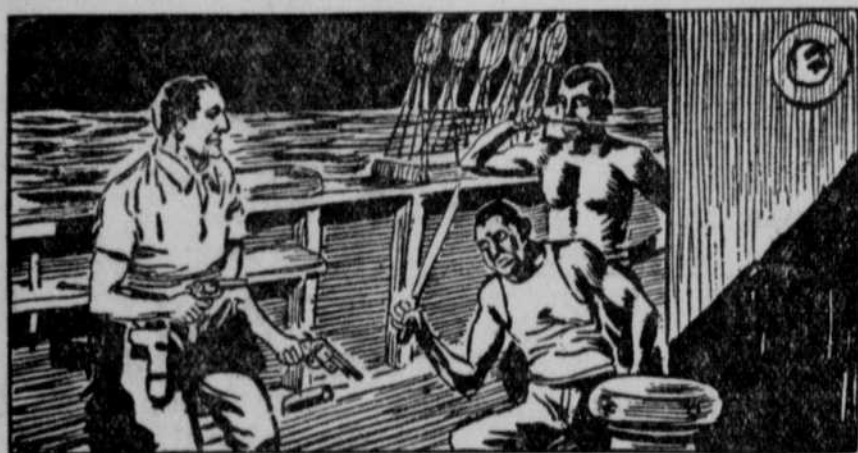
**HELLO EVERYBODY:**  
You know, boys and girls, there are two kinds of adventures—the kind that hits you like a ton of bricks and is all over in about five seconds, and the kind that sneaks up on you slowly and subtly and sticks with you until you're worn down to the point of exhaustion. And it's the latter sort of tale you're going to hear today—the story of how Charles Mahler of Brooklyn, N. Y., stepped onto a boat weighing a hundred and forty-five pounds on a bright day in the winter of 1921, to stagger off it five days later weighing a scant one hundred and ten. Not many reducing addicts would want to follow Charley Mahler's formula for growing thin, though, for it was sheer unadulterated terror that took the pounds off his body. Five days and nights of the most helpless fear he had ever experienced in his life.

The story starts in the Dominican Republic, down in the West Indies. Charley had been working there for a sugar concern in La Romana, for about six months. He was off on a week's vacation in Santo Domingo City when orders came transferring him to Barahona, in the same country, where a new project was being started.

### Books Passage on Sailing Vessel.

At about that time a strike in the steamship industry had tied up all the boats. Charley was told that there wouldn't be a steamer sailing for Barahona for three weeks. There are darned few railroads or motor roads in the Dominican Republic, and none of them went where Charley wanted to go. It was a boat or nothing. So Charley did the only other thing he could do. He strolled down to the waterfront and booked a passage on a sailing vessel which was leaving port that night.

It was supposed to be an overnight trip. Charley had heard strange tales about these sailing packets, so he left his belongings behind to be shipped by freight. With two guns in his pockets and a round of ammunition under his shirt he walked aboard the vessel. It was pitch



He saw two dark figures on the deck.

dark. His bed—the only accommodation the boat afforded—was a common wooden box placed on deck. Charley sat down on the box and watched the boat glide out of the harbor. They had barely reached the ocean when a storm blew up. Dark shadows began rising from the deck. There were 40 Haitian natives, also bound for Barahona.

It was then that Charley discovered he was the only white man on the boat—and the natives of those parts have been known to kill a white man for his shoes. The storm was now knocking the little sailing craft around with all the fury of a tropic cyclone. "Scared?" says Charley. "I was ossified." The captain himself was jet black, but I slipped him ten dollars for protection. He offered me the hospitality of his cabin. The odor of it damned near killed me. It was crawling with bedbugs and roaches and alive with rats and mice. When I awoke next morning I was really sick from sleeping there, but it was a safer bet than sleeping outside."

That morning there wasn't a breath of air stirring. The captain had had news for Charley when he awoke. The ship had been blown ten miles off its course and the steering gear was out of commission. The captain was depending entirely on the wind. If they waited long enough it would eventually blow them to Barahona.

"That whole day," says Charley, "I sat staring at the natives and they sat looking at me. There was no food on the boat and the water had turned hot in the tropic heat. Toward evening I noticed several natives holding a conference and I felt trouble brewing. The blacks were getting hungry, and they'd take it out on me."

And what was Charley going to do for sleep that night? He knew darned well he could never stand another night in the filthy, stuffy cabin. He spoke to the captain again and made another bargain. The captain stood the night watch at the wheel, and he agreed to watch over Charley while he slept near him on deck, his body lashed to the rail of the vessel.

### The Natives Become More Restless.

But you don't get much sleep lashed to a railing. All night long Charley lay awake listening to the snores of the natives around him and thinking of the comforts of home. The next day was hot and humid. Hunger gnawed at his innards, but he had to make the best of it. The natives were getting more and more restless. They eyed Charley's clothes with covetous looks that became more and more insolent and apparent. And still there was no sign of the wind that would blow them into Barahona.

That night, worn out by two days and nights of wakefulness, Charley fell asleep. Sometime in the dark hours he woke up suddenly, by sheer instinct. In the dim light of a tropic moon he saw two dark figures creeping along the deck toward him—two natives—great, husky blacks with machetes in their mouths!

"They didn't know my eyes were open," he says, "if they had known it I wouldn't be alive today. But their ignorance gave me an opportunity to draw my guns."

Charley got those guns out just as the natives were taking their machetes from their mouths. He whipped up one gun and fired twice. In an instant, two men were dead on the deck and the whole ship was in an uproar. Dark figures came swarming toward him. The captain was a big, powerful fellow. Charley says he was built on the style of Harry Wills in his prime. He picked Charley up with one hand, threw him into his cabin head first, and then, with the aid of a revolver and his powerful physique, held that furious mob at bay.

### Captain Threatens to Sink the Ship.

The next morning the captain held an inquiry, announced that Charley had shot in self-defense, and threatened to sink the ship if any more attempts were made on his life. "Calm was restored at last," says Charley. "And in the meantime, for four solid days and nights we had nothing to eat and little to drink."

On the fifth day they sighted land—but when they tied the boat up to shore later on that day, Charley was too weak to walk the gangplank. They carried him up it, weighing a hundred and ten pounds—all that was left of the hundred and forty-five pounds of good solid flesh he had carried when he got aboard that lugger at the waterfront of Santo Domingo City.

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## Christmas Around the World

### Picture Parade



Each land has its own Yuletide customs. Above, at New York's Rockefeller Center, carolers sing nightly before Christmas. In the Italian Alps, right, children pray before a shrine.



Above, dressed in fancy costumes, Polish children stage scenes from biblical lore and sing religious songs, serenading villager's homes.



At tropical Cairo, in Egypt, European visitors erect their Christmas tree in the shadow of the pyramids. Left: Swedish street decorations.



Few ceremonies are more colorful than those of Rumania, where villagers portray the wise men, shepherds and angels.



At Tromso, Norway, most northern part of Europe boasting a radio station, residents listen to the story of Christ's birth.



Christmas service in a Russian Orthodox church.

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Reviewed by CARTER FIELD

Arthur E. Morgan, former T. V. A. chairman, is tough proposition for friend or foe . . . Arnold takes up cudgels to defend Sherman law . . . Says it needs more teeth . . . Little prospect of further devaluation of the dollar . . . World dumps its gold on us.

WASHINGTON.—The showings that Arthur E. Morgan, the former chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority deposed by President



Roosevelt at the urging of David E. Lilienthal and Harcourt A. Morgan, always makes before committees is due strangely enough to the very element in his mental makeup that made him such a nightmare to Lilienthal as a fellow administrator.

His critics call it cantankerousness. Even his friends shake their heads over it. But when he is on the witness stand his friends and champions—even though they have at times suffered from this very trait—glory in it.

This trait consists of a meticulous insistence that everything be precisely and exactly, all the way down to astronomical fractions, as he wants it. Nothing else will do. It makes not the slightest difference to Morgan what the purpose of the person trying to get him to agree is. He is just as difficult for friend as for foe. It is the nature of the man.

Anyone who has served on a committee which must make decisions has encountered fellow committee members who had something of this stubborn insistence on having his own way down to the last detail in a course of action and as to the precise form of the resolution.

### Trouble Makers Reckoned Without Their Morgan

Morgan is that type of committee member carried to the nth degree. An amusing instance developed down at Knoxville last summer when the congressional committee, which is supposed to be investigating TVA, had him on the stand. It so happened that for nearly two hours the only committee members present were the four Republicans, two of whom were frankly out to make trouble. Here was a golden opportunity! A hostile witness—in fact the chief critic of TVA—on the stand, and no Democratic members of the committee to interfere. True, Francis Biddle, the committee counsel, was present, and Biddle's desire is to protect TVA from every attack, but Morgan had already demonstrated that Biddle could not handle him.

So the trouble makers started to make medicine. But they reckoned without their Morgan. Somehow they could not get their questions phrased just to suit the ex-chairman. He spent so much time straightening them out that finally they gave up in disgust.

That's Morgan all over. He doesn't want any help, either in smearing TVA or anything else. In fact, he rather resents any other attack on TVA. After all, it is by way of being his baby. The only other hostile testimony he likes is when some employee or outsider is proving that some particular thing Morgan said is true. And even then he is unhappy most of the time because the witness generally goes a little further than he wants to go, or else does not phrase his testimony just to suit him.

### Arnold Takes Up Cudgels To Defend Sherman Act

Just why Thurman W. Arnold, trust buster-in-chief for the department of justice, should have taken up cudgels to defend the Sherman anti-trust act, despite his arguments day in and day out for a couple of years now that the law must be amended, is somewhat surprising to Washington observers.

Mr. Arnold was obviously annoyed, and driven into one of the poorest showings he has made in any argument since he came to Washington, either in public or private, because an economist insisted the Sherman law had actually operated to force business combinations. The witness pointed out that under the anti-trust law five corporations making suspenders, to use an illustration, could not agree among themselves either as to prices or as to allocation of territory.

But if the five, among them, controlled only half of the total suspender-making business of the United States, they could legally be merged into one company. Then there would be no question of allocating territory or price fixing among them. Both functions would be performed by the president or general manager, and as long as the combined plants did not have so large a percentage of the coun-

try's total production in that line as to make it a monopoly, the anti-trust laws would not bother it at all.

Clearly, therefore, the witness pointed out, the very law which aims at preventing trusts does by the same token encourage bigness, to which the New Deal objects almost as much as to monopoly.

### Declares Anti-Trust Law Must Be Given More Teeth

Mr. Arnold has been holding for these many months that the anti-trust law must be strengthened, must have more teeth, must aim at results of corporate actions as well as the intrinsic iniquity of the actions themselves. But in all his private and public discussions he has never touched on the particular point that the present law was bad, from the New Deal standpoint, in that it encouraged bigness as a result of the very precautions it takes to prevent monopoly.

Some observers are unkind enough to believe that Mr. Arnold is of the type President Coolidge once described when he was attacking the would-be solvers of the farm problem.

"You can't get them to agree with each other," Coolidge complained. "Nearly every one of them would rather let the farm problem go unsolved than to have it solved by anybody else."

### Little Prospect of Further Devaluation of the Dollar

Despite reports to the contrary, there is very little prospect of any further devaluation of the dollar. President Roosevelt has the right to devalue it down to 50 per cent of the old dollar (it was devalued to only 59.06 cents by the first action). He will retain that legal right until June 1 under the present law. After that he would have to have new congressional approval.

But the situation that holds the United States firmly to the present gold valuation of the dollar is very simple. The President has the power to increase the value of the dollar in gold—that is to move it back towards what it once was—or to decrease it, carrying out the final step contemplated by congress, which would then make the dollar just half as valuable, in gold, as it was in 1932.

To increase the value of the dollar in gold—or move backward—is unthinkable for political reasons. In the first place, the farmers of the country have been told by the New Deal for six years that this devaluation helped farm and commodity prices—that to make the dollar less valuable obviously made their crops worth more in dollars. As their mortgages and debts and purchases are in dollars, this seems like a good thing to them. And while it might be argued that decreasing the value of the dollar might increase the prices the farmers have to pay for everything they buy, this argument would not affect the easing of their debts.

Another political objection to increasing the gold value of the dollar is that it would, on paper, reduce the treasury showing. It would increase, in dollars, the value of that tremendous hoard of gold the government has under ground in Kentucky. And it would subject the administration to the criticism that it had bought billions of dollars' worth of gold from the rest of the world at \$35 an ounce, and now was admitting it had paid too much for the gold! Regardless of its merits, this would be a very difficult attack to answer on the stump.

### The President

bought billions of dollars' worth of gold from the rest of the world at \$35 an ounce, and now was admitting it had paid too much for the gold! Regardless of its merits, this would be a very difficult attack to answer on the stump.

### Entire World Is Dumping Its Gold on United States

But there are strong objections to the other course also. If the President should further decrease the gold value of the dollar, that of course would automatically mark up the price of gold from its present level, \$35 an ounce. One of the chief difficulties of the present situation is that the entire world is dumping its gold on the United States at \$35 an ounce. We don't want the gold, but to keep the price of gold at that level, and also to keep the dollar down in relation to the British pound sterling and the French franc, we have to keep on buying it.

So the question presents itself, when we are virtually the only buyer in the world for a commodity and when we are buying billions of dollars' worth of it that we really do not want, why we should raise the price still further.

A middle course has been suggested: that the United States stop buying gold, but do nothing about the price. That of course would promptly result in the price of gold, there then being no big buyer, going down in terms of dollars. It would also bother the British no end. The pound has been sliding down rapidly. This stoppage of gold buying by the United States would result in accelerating the slide. Then, too, Britain is financing the big armament purchases she is making in the United States by shipping us South African and other gold. If she could not pay in gold, what would happen?

Certainly nothing helpful to the United States. So the prospect is that the present policy will be continued for some months to come, at any rate.

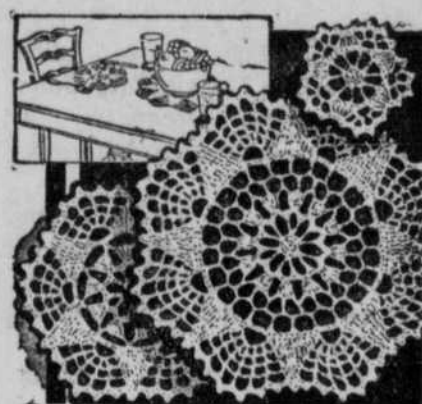
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## CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT

### PATENTS—INVENTIONS

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### Wise and Otherwise

A rumor is often very skimpy, but it soon gets round all the same.

It's not much of a brag when a man tells another he has forgotten more than he has ever known.

Courtship makes a man spoon, but marriage makes him fork out.

Work is the secret of success, says the millionaire. Yes, but you've got to get other people to do it for you.

Have you heard of the absent-minded gangster who held his machine-gun on his lap and fired his secretary.

### Means and Opportunity

The greatest blessings to ourselves and others, when they are rightly used, are our time and our money. These talents are continual means and opportunities of doing good.—Law.

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### Solitude's Effect

Solitude affects some people like wine; they must not take too much of it, for it flies to the head.—Mary Coleridge.

## That Nagging Backache

### May Warn of Disordered Kidney Action

Modern life with its hurry and worry, irregular habits, improper eating and drinking—its risk of exposure and infection—throws heavy strain on the work of the kidneys. They are apt to become over-taxed and fail to filter excess acid and other impurities from the life-giving blood.

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## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

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**Meaning of Word Beccaficos**  
The word beccaficos literally means fig-picker and is applied to a small, sparrowlike bird found in Cyprus. They arrive from Syria in enormous flocks to gorge on figs and become so fat they can scarcely fly. Their plump bodies are salted and spiced and made into an excellent pickle by a rare recipe handed down from the Crusaders. In the process of pickling, the bones are softened and the whole bird is eaten.

**Tusks Shipped to London**  
Elephant tusks from the African and Indian jungles are shipped to London, says Pearson's London Weekly. Here an age-old trade, the cutting and selling of ivory to buyers from all over the world, goes on unchanged, much as it has for years. It takes 1,200 elephants to provide the market with ivory for one year. Few elephants are killed for their tusks. Most of the ivory is collected by natives from dead elephants found in the jungles.