

THE LOST WORLD

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

(Continued from Yesterday.)

"What you admit, sir, or what you do not admit, is really of inconceivably small importance. I am glad to perceive that the plateau itself has actually obtruded itself upon your intelligence." He glanced up at it, and then, to our amazement, he sprang from his rock, and, seizing Summerlee by the neck, he tilted his face into the air. "Now, sir!" he shouted, hoarse with excitement. "Do I help you to realize that the plateau contains some real life?"

I have said that a thick fringe of green overhung the edge of the cliff. Out of this there had emerged a black, glistening object. As it came slowly forth, and over the chasm we saw that it was a very large snake with a peculiar flat, spade-like head. It wavered and quivered above us for a minute, the morning sun gleaming upon its sleek, sinuous coils. Then it slowly drew inward and disappeared.

Summerlee had been so interested that he had stood unresponsive while Challenger tilted his head in the air. Now he shook his colleague off and came back to his dignity.

"I should be glad, Professor Challenger," said he, "if you could see your way to make any remarks which may occur to you without seizing me by the chin. Even the appearance of a very ordinary rock python does not appear to justify such a liberty."

"But there is life upon the plateau all the same," his colleague replied in triumph. "And now, having demonstrated this important conclusion so that it is clear to anyone, however prejudiced or obtuse, I am of opinion that we cannot do better than break up our camp and travel to westward until we find some means of ascent."

The ground at the foot of the cliff was rocky and broken so that the going was slow and difficult. Suddenly we came, however, upon something which cheered our hearts. It was the seat of an old encampment, with several Chicago meat tins, a bottle labeled "Brandy," a broken tin-opener and a quantity of other trappings. A crumpled, disintegrated newspaper revealed itself as the Chicago Democrat, though the date had been obliterated.

"Not mine," said Challenger. "It must be Maple White's."

Lord John had been gazing curiously at a great tree-fern which overshadowed the encampment. "I say, look at this," said he. "I believe it is meant for a sign-post."

A slip of hard wood had been

nailed to the tree in such a way as to point to the westward.

"Most certainly a sign-post," said Challenger. "What else? Finding himself upon a dangerous errand, our pioneer has left this sign so that any party which follows him may know the way he has taken. Perhaps we shall come upon some other indications as we proceed."

We did, indeed, but they were of a terrible and most unexpected nature. Immediately beneath the cliff there grew a considerable patch of high bamboo, like that which we had traversed in our journey. Many of these stems were twenty feet high, with sharp, strong tops, so that even as they stood they made formidable spears. We were passing along the edge of this cover when my eye was caught by the gleam of something white within. Thrusting in my head between the stems, I found myself gazing at a fleshless skull. The whole skeleton was there, but the skull had detached itself and lay some feet nearer to the open.

With a few blows from the shafts of our staves we cleared the spot and were able to study the details of this old tragedy. Only a few shreds of clothes could still be distinguished, but there were before me the bones of a man of the type of the man who was a European. A gold watch by Hudson of New York and a chain which held a stylographic pen lay among the bones. There was also a signet ring, with "J. C." from A. E. S., upon the lid. The state of the metal seemed to show that the catastrophe had occurred no great time before.

"Who can he be?" asked Lord John. "Poor devil! Every bone in his body seems to be broken."

"Poor fellow! He must have grown through his smashed ribs," said Summerlee. "It is a fast-growing plant, but it is surely inconceivable that this body could have been here while the rains grew to be twenty feet in length."

"As to the man's identity," said Professor Challenger, "I have no doubt whatever upon that point. As I made my way up the river, I reached you at the fazenda. I instituted very particular inquiries about Maple White. At Paris they knew nothing. Fortunately, I had a definite clue for there was a particular signature in his sketch-book which showed him taking lunch with a certain ecclesiastic at Rosario. This priest I was able to find, and though he proved a very argumentative fellow, he took it absurdly amiss that I should point out to him the corrosive effect which modern science must have upon his beliefs, he nonetheless gave me some positive information. Maple White passed Rosario four years ago, or two years before I saw his dead body. He was not alone at the time, but there was a friend, an American named James Colver, who remained in the boat and did not meet this ecclesiastic. I think, therefore, that there can be no doubt that we are now looking upon the remains of this James Colver."

"No," said Lord John. "Is there much doubt as to how he met his death. He has fallen or has been chucked from the top, and impaled. How else could he come by his broken bones, and how could he have been stuck through by these canes with their points so high above our heads?"

A hush came over us as we stood round these shattered remains and realized the truth of Lord John Roxton's words. The heeling head of the cliff projected above the level of the sea. Undoubtedly he had fallen from above. But had he fallen? Had it been an accident? Or—already ominous and terrible possibilities began to form round that unknown land.

We moved off in silence, and continued to coast round the line of cliffs, which were as even and unbroken as some of those monotonous Antarctic ice fields which I have seen depicted as stretching from horizon to horizon and towering high above the mast-heads of the exploring vessel.

In five miles we saw no rift or break. And then suddenly we perceived something which filled us with new hope. In a hollow of the rock, protected from the rain, there was drawn a rough arrow in chalk, pointing still to the westward.

"Maple White again," said Professor Challenger. "He had some presentiment that worthy footsteps would follow close behind him."

"He had chalk," then?"

"A box of colored chalks was among the effects I found in his knapsack. I remember that the white one was worn to a stump."

"That is certainly good evidence," said Summerlee. "We can only accept his guidance and follow on to the westward."

We had proceeded some five more miles when again we saw a white arrow upon the rocks. It was at a point where the face of the cliff was for the first time split into a narrow cleft. Inside the cleft was a second guidance mark, which pointed right

up it with the tip somewhat elevated, as if the spot indicated were above the level of the ground. We ordered the camp.

It was a solemn place, for the walls were so gigantic and the silt of blue sky so narrow and so obscured by a double fringe of verdure, that only a dim and shadowy light penetrated to the bottom. We had had no food for many hours, and were very weary.

With the stony and irregular journey, but our nerves were too strung to allow us to halt. We ordered the camp to be pitched, however, and leaving the Indians to arrange it, we four, with the two half-breeds, proceeded up the narrow gorge.

It was not more than forty feet across at the mouth, but it rapidly closed until it ended in an acute

angle, too straight and smooth for an ascent. Certainly it was not this which our pioneer had attempted to indicate. We made our way back—the whole gorge was not more than a quarter of a mile deep—and then suddenly the quick eyes of Lord John fell upon what we were seeking. High up above our heads, amid the dark shadows, there was one circle of deep

er gloom. Surely it could only be the opening of the cave, and his ill-fated comrade had made their ascent.

We were too excited to return to the camp, but must make our first exploration at once. Lord John had an electric torch in his knapsack, and this had to serve us as light. He advanced, throwing his little clear circle of yellow radiance before him,

while in single file we followed at his heels.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

Anglers Organize.
Scottsbluff, Feb. 23.—Deputies of anglers met at the American Legion hall tonight to organize a local chapter of the Inzak Walton league.

THE NEBBS

LIFE'S A FUNNY PROPOSITION AFTER ALL.

Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



BRINGING UP FATHER

Registered U. S. Patent Office SEE JIGGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus



JERRY ON THE JOB

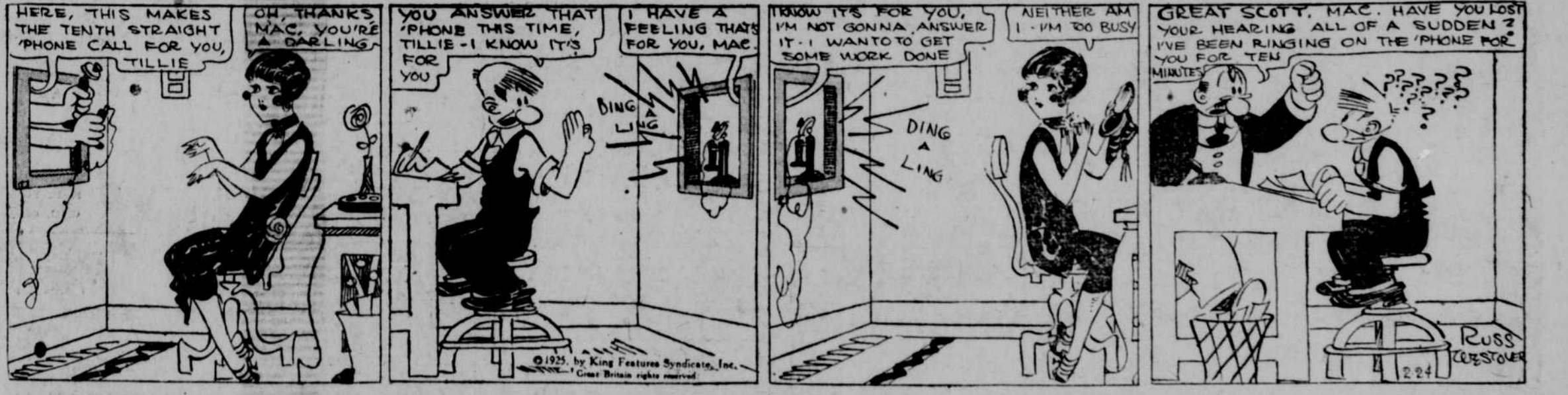
TRIMMING THE GOVERNMENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



TILLIE, THE TOILER

By Westover



Movie of a Man Who Decides He Won't Shave Today.

ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield



New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE

New York, Feb. 23.—One of the most appealing things about New York is its lack of self-consciousness. You see it among the hand-holding lovers on the bus tops, among fathers who roll on the grass with their children in public parks.

It is not unusual to see the arm of a young swain around his only girl at the theater. Lights come on and there is no effort at concealment. Thousands of women stop before window mirrors to use powder and other cosmetics.

Anti-business of blushing—some of the flappers do not hesitate to take another roll in their boss on the paves. In such a hurrying city one has little time to notice one's neighbor and even if he does he may never see him again.

Along that famed strutting Fifth avenue a man may walk from one to the other encased in a barrel and few would turn their heads. It is only when a crowd gathers that New York becomes curious. Let a pedestrian stop to look for a penny and the police reserves have to be called.

Yet if the same man wore rings in his nose and ladies pantaloons he would not create a ripple. Animals of all kinds stir the New York curiosity. A pony, an elephant or a camel will block traffic.

Although for years midtown New York is used to seeing them due to the daily exercising on public streets given the animals quartered at the Hippodrome. A monkey in a window on Forty-ninth street was ordered removed. The street became impassable.

The inspirations for these observations came today. On Thirty-fourth street I saw a typical comic strip Frenchman—high heeled shoes with red tops, a coat fitting waspish at the waist, checked trousers, silk hat pointing at the top and black mustache and goatee. No one turned to look at him.

Three blocks from Thirty-fourth street on Broadway two chauffeurs began a quarrel. There was a flood of epithets and other illa chauffeurs clotted around them. In three minutes three policemen had to come on the run from Herald Square to disperse the gathering.

A Broadway cosmetic shop advertises a "Beauty in Distress Package." It contains an eyebrow pencil, lipstick and box of rouge.

He comes every night to one of the tearooms in Fifth street. He has graying pompadour hair and the swarthy complexion of the Turk. His mustache is waxed and a gold rimmed monocle rests in one beady eye. In a rather startling way he is handsome, yet one has the idea he is either a fanatic or a dreamer. The few times I have talked to him he discussed his collections. He has picked up bits of Persian porcelain and many Turkman rugs. On the little finger of his left hand he wears a huge cabochon emerald. Whenever he talks he turns the stone in to the palm of his hand and when he has finished he turns it out again. It is no doubt some superstition. Some day I'm going to muster courage to ask him.

The bed of the dramatic reviewer is not always heated. Fred Stone once threatened to whip Percy Hammond although they are now friends. The late Acton Davies had his thumb bitten by the angry husband of an actress he had panned. George Jean Nathan has had his ear tweaked and Burns Mantle has been assed in public. Most of the attacks are verbal but now and then the belligerents take to the physical. Of course, it is a lady there is nothing the gentleman reviewer can do but stand the lashing whether it be a tongue lashing or one with a horse whip.