

THE LOST WORLD

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

"I have been a blind idiot," said he, bitterly. "It's my folly that has brought you all into this trouble. I should have remembered that these people have long memories for blood feuds, and have been more upon my guard."

"What about the other one? It took two of them to lever that tree over the edge."

"I could have shot him, but I let him go. He may have had no part in it. Perhaps it would have been better if I had killed him, for he must, as you say, have lost a hand."

Now that we had the clue to his action, each of us could cast back and remember some sinister act upon the part of the half-breed—his constant desire to know our plans, his arrest outside our tent when he was overhearing them, the furtive looks of hatred which from time to time he still displayed, his endeavoring to adjust our minds to these new conditions, when a singular scene in the plain below arrested our attention.

A man in white clothes, who could only be the surviving half-breed, was running as one driven half by fear and the other half by a mad desire to escape. Behind him, only a few yards in his wake, loomed the huge ebony figure of Zombo, our devoted negro. Even as we looked, he sprang upon the back of the fugitive and flung his arms round his neck. They rolled on the ground together. An instant afterwards Zombo rose, looked at the prostrate man, and then, waving his hand joyously to us, came running in our direction. The white figure lay motionless in the middle of the great plain.

Our two traitors had been destroyed, but the mischief that they had done lives after them. By no possible means could we get back to the plateau. We had been natives of the plateau, and the two things were separate and apart. There was the plain which led to the canoes. Yonder, beyond the violet, hazy horizon, was the stream which had been our civilization. But the link between was missing. No human ingenuity could suggest a means of bridging the chasm which yawned between ourselves and our past lives. One instant had altered the whole conditions of our existence.

It was at such a moment that I learned the stuff of which my comrades were composed. They were grave, it is true, and thoughtful, but of an invincible serenity. For the moment we could only sit among the bushes in patience and wait the coming of Zombo. Presently his honest face topped the rocks and his Herculean figure emerged upon the top of the pinnacle.

"What I do," he cried. "You tell me and I do it."

"No, no," he cried. "I will not leave you. Whatever come, you always find me here. But no able to keep Indians. Already they say too much. Curupul live on this place, and they go home. Now you have them me no able to keep them."

It was a fact that our Indians had shown in many ways of late that they were weary of their journey and anxious to return. We realized that Zambo spoke the truth, and that it would be impossible for him to keep them.

"Make them wait till tomorrow," Zambo, I shouted, "then I can send letter back by them."

"Very good, sir! I promise they will wait till tomorrow," said the negro. "But what I do for you now?"

There was plenty for him to do, and admirably the faithful fellow did it. First of all, under our directions he undid the rope from the tree stump and threw one end of it across to us. It was not thicker than a clothes line, but it was of great strength, and though we could not make a bridge of it, we might find it invaluable if we had any climbing to do. He then fastened his end of the rope to the package of supplies which had been carried up, and we were able to drag it across. This gave us the means of life for at least a week, even if we found nothing else. Finally he descended and carried two other packages of mixed goods—a box of ammunition and a number of other things, all of which we got across by throwing our rope to him and hauling it back. It was coming night when he had climbed down, with a final assurance that he would keep the Indians till next morning.

As so it is that I have spent nearly the whole of this first night upon the plateau writing up our experiences by the light of a single candle lantern.

We stopped and camped at the very edge of the cliff, quenching our thirst with two bottles of Apollinaris which were in one of the cases. It is vital to us to find water, but I think even Lord John himself had had adventures enough for one day, and none of us felt inclined to make the first push into the unknown. We were to light a fire or to make any unnecessary sound.

On the morning after our being trapped upon the plateau by the villainous Gones, that is to say, necessary to make our arrangements with the faithful negro, who appeared presently on the pinnacle with a number of tins of cocoa and biscuits, which he tossed over to us of the stores which remained below he was ordered to remain as much as would keep him for two months. The Indians were to have the remainder of a reward for their services and as payment for taking our letters back to the Amazon. Some hours later we saw them in single file far out upon the plain, each with a bundle on his head, making their way back along the path we had come. Zombo occupied our little tent at the base of the pinnacle, and there he remained, our one link with the world below.

And now we had to decide upon our immediate movements. We shifted our position until we came to a small clearing, thickly surrounded by trees on all sides. There were some flat slabs of rock in the center, with an excellent well close by, and there we sat in cleanly comfort while we made our first plans for the invasion of this new country.

It was midday before we had made ourselves secure, but the heat was not oppressive, and the general character of the plateau, both in its temperature and in its vegetation, was almost temperate. The beech, the oak and even the birch were to be found among the tangle of trees which girt us in. One huge gingko tree, topping all the others, shot its great limbs and maidenlike foliage over the foot which we had chosen for our camp. By the way, what shall we call this place? I suppose it is up to us to give it a name.

There were several suggestions, more or less happy, but Challenger's was the final.

"It can only have one name," said he. "It is called after the pioneer who discovered it. It is Maple White Land. I became, and so it is named in that chart which has become my special task. So it will,

I trust, appear in the atlas of the future. The peaceful penetration of Maple White Land was the pressing subject before us. We had the evidence of our eyes that the place was inhabited by some unknown creatures, and there was that of Maple White's sketch book to show that more dreadful and more dangerous monsters might still appear. That there might also prove to be human occupants and that they were of a malevolent character was suggested by the skeleton impaled upon the bamboo, which could not have got there had it not been dropped from above. Our situation, stranded without possibility of escape in such a land, was clearly full of danger, and our reasons endorsed every measure of caution which Lord John's experience could suggest. Yet it was surely impossible that we should halt on the edge of this world of mystery when our very souls were tingling with impatience to push forward and to pluck the heart from it. We therefore blocked the entrance to our zebra by filling it up with several thorny bushes, and left our camp with the store entirely surrounded by this protecting hedge. We then slowly and cautiously set forth into the unknown, following the course of the little stream which flowed from our spring, as it should always serve us as a guide on our return.

Hardly had we started when we came across signs that there were indeed wonders awaiting us. Suddenly Lord John, who was walking first, halted with uplifted hand. "Look at this!" said he. "By George, this must be the trail of the father of all birds!"

An enormous three-toed track was imprinted in the soft mud before us. The creature, whatever it was, had crossed the swamp and had passed on

into the forest. We all stopped to examine that monstrous spoor. If it were indeed a bird—and what animal could leave such a mark?—its foot must be so much larger than an ostrich's that its height upon the same scale must be enormous. Lord John looked eagerly round him and slipped two cartridges into his elephant gun.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow)

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THE NEBBS



PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW.



THE NEBBS



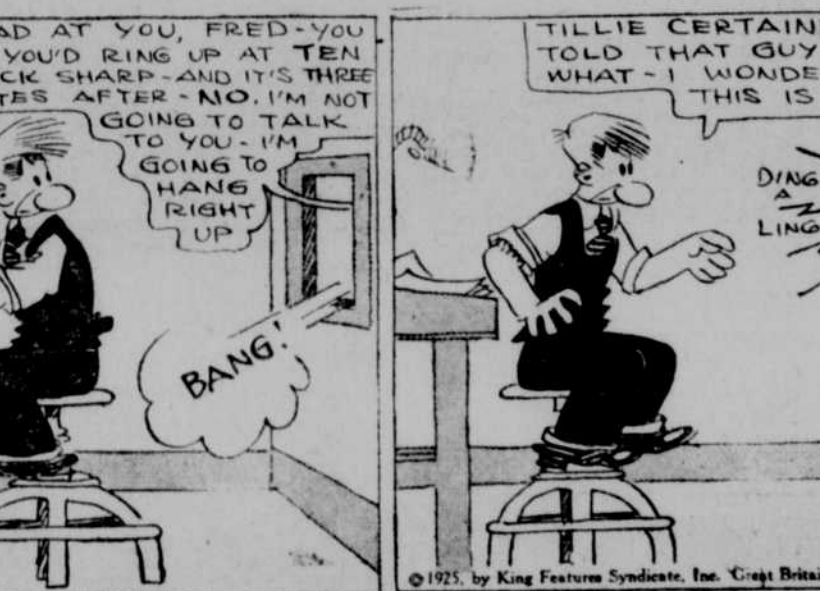
BRINGING UP FATHER



JERRY ON THE JOB



TILLIE, THE TOILER



THE Days of Real Sport



ABIE THE AGENT



ABIE THE AGENT



New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. M'INTYRE.
New York, Feb. 26.—Thoughts while strolling around New York: A flock of collegiates with raccoon coats. And Basque caps. Aglow with youth. A harp in a taxi. Hippodrome dancing girls on the fire escapes for fresh air. And a crowd collects. Gypsy beggars—tart of speech and slatternly dressed. White heads and white shirtsfronts in club windows. Arthur Train, the novelist. The hotel doorman who looks like Secretary Hughes. Curbetone comedians around the Automat. Ed Wynn and A. L. Erlanger. And why should a clown like Wynn have such a scrupulously studious face? A fire in a manicule parlor. White, tired faces. Wonder who bricked that window? An athletic club with the usual crowd of "pork and beans." All the street gamins selling parodies of "It Ain't Goin' to Rain No More." Silly looking synthetic dogs. With siller looking people. Whatever became of "Stuffy" Davis! A little alley bristling with cobblestones. The only one I know in New York. An interpretive dancer who does those "dryad dancing to the dawn" things. And gives corn beef and cabbage dinners to friends. A dull day in Tin Pan Alley—only three pianos being thumped. The old Broadway Roman—Cap Churchhill. The White Way's million dollar dance hall. And a flock of dramatic schools. Also a tearoom institute. Where young ladies are taught to manage tearooms. But the trouble in the most of them don't sell tea. Skirts still growing shorter. And handkerchiefs smaller. The quick, vivid and haphazard life that swirls about the Winter Garden. All night boot, hat and clothing shops. A chestnut vender nodding over his charcoal burner. The most colorless types in all the city. A 23-story building at Broadway and Exchange place recently sold for \$5,000,000. It was discovered that the property once sold for \$87. Peter Stuyvesant's widow sold this property to Gerret Leydecker in 1655 for 25 Colonial pounds. And yet an expert mathematician has discovered that what is known as the "good old six per cent" jumps faster. At 6 per cent compound interest the account figured Gerret Leydecker's \$57 would have grown in 233 years to \$97,159,741.71. As a matter of curiosity I answered in person the following "Help Wanted" ad in an office in Thirty-fourth street: "Live wires. Hot sales. Quick profits. Here's your chance for a clean up." A brisk middle-aged man examined the applicants. The job was to sell patented pants pressers. He said it was easy to make \$50 a day. It was interesting to see the type of men lured by the advertisement. They were all well dressed and prosperous looking. Yet all were evidently jobless. Then there is the morning picture show at 10 o'clock—mostly patronized by well-dressed men out of work. They are not night workers or they would no doubt be sleeping. When the lights are on they study the "Help Wanted" columns. Mrs. Fanny Menchel is the East Side Hotty Green. She migrated to America 33 years ago, married a watchmaker who made \$5 a week and bore him nine children. To increase the family income she became a janitress, rent collector and finally a dealer in real estate. She cannot read or write yet she engineers deals involving many hundreds of thousands a year. Her income is said to be more than \$100 a week. (Copyright, 1924.)

WHEN SHE GAVE YOU THE RARE PRIVILEGE OF TIGHTENING HER SKATES.