

Tropical Waters

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

I was at anchor in my yacht one night near the mouth of the great Yaqui river, in Santo Domingo. I had put in there in obedience to storm signals and was waiting for the storm to come and go. But it did not appear. The night I speak of was clear, and there was a full moon. Of course it was hot. It is always hot in that region.

There were rumors of negro insurrections and revolutions in Haiti, which is the western part of the island and not far from where I was lying, and I was not enjoying my stay, for, being at no great distance from either shore, I did not know when a party of lawless negroes would come aboard for murder and loot.

Unfortunately during the day we had heard of a dance that was to take place at the house of one of the small planters living in that region, and the whole crew asked me for leave to go. I preferred that none of them should leave the yacht, but reluctantly consented that half should go in charge of the quartermaster, leaving me the other half. They had not been gone long before I saw a boat coming with a single man in it, who told me that some negroes were looting his house and begged me to send a force to drive them off. I could not refuse such a request, and my men all wished to be permitted to go. I sent four of the five, retaining one man, Erickson, who was not very well and therefore perfectly willing to remain with me.

The second detachment had not been gone long when, packing the stern deck dissatisfied with myself for letting my crew leave the yacht unprotected, I saw a boat evidently well loaded with human beings leave the north bank of the river and pull directly for me. I smelled danger at once and called to Erickson, who was in his bunk in the forecabin, to bring up an armful of weapons and ammunition.

He soon came up the companionway staggering under his load and distributed them in different parts of the yacht. When the approaching boat came near enough to distinguish her crew and I could see that they were all blacks, it flashed across me that the information that had been given my men as to the dance and the story about the attack on my visitor's home were simply ruses to get my men away in order that a party might come out and loot the yacht. I took position with a repeating rifle astern and ordered Erickson to place himself further forward. If I fired I would pick a man in the bow, and he was to fire at a man in the stern.

When the boat came within range I ordered the men to keep off, but they paid no attention to the order, pulling right along. All but the helmsman had their backs to me and every oarsman was busy with his oar; consequently I had the advantage of them, for they could not both row and fight, while I could pour lead into them at lib. The boat was a yawl and there were eight oarsmen in her, each man pulling a single oar.

I gave a second order before firing, and still not being obeyed I took aim at the bow oarsman as near as I could distinguish him from the others and fired. My shot was followed by one from Erickson. We could not see just what damage we had done, but it was evident that we had thrown them into confusion. They stopped rowing and some of them were evidently ministering to wounded men, while others were jabbering at each other in a lingo we did not understand. At least we were not near enough to do so.

Not wishing to hurt any more men than necessary, I ordered them to turn about and pull away. But the steersman, who was evidently their leader, was yelling at them to pull for the yacht, for most of them gave way. I fired again and saw a man fall backward. Erickson duplicated my shot, but apparently did no damage. Seeing that our enemy was bent on rushing us, I dropped my rifle and picked up a couple of hand grenades, calling to Erickson to do the same.

I had scarcely changed my weapon when by a spurt the blacks came up and rounded alongside. Both Erickson and I met where they touched the yacht and each tossed a hand grenade into the boat. A terrible havoc was produced, but I did not stop to see just what damage was done, for I heard was pulling with a quick stroke on the other side of the yacht. Shouting to Erickson to defend that side, I ran to the other side, carrying an armful of weapons with me.

I saw another boat coming which I did not doubt was an auxiliary force to the one I had been opposing. Without waiting to hail them, I fired a shot at them. I don't think I hit any one, but in another moment I heard a halloo and the sound of oars in another direction. This I knew to be some of my crew returning. The boat on my side changed its course and pulled away as fast as it had come. The boat on the other side in which most of the men had been disabled had already dropped off, seeing Erickson's arm raised with another grenade.

When I got my crew together again I put them in our small boats, with hawsers attached to the yacht, with orders to pull down the river. They did so, and when day broke we hoisted sail and put out to sea. I had had enough of that island, and I have never visited it since.

WEARING A CROWN

By JOHN Y. LARNED

"What do you think, doctor, of this statement that metal worn on the head of one afflicted with hysteria when the same is placed on the head of another person will produce a like effect?"

"I don't believe it."

"I do."

"Why?"

"Because, in the first place, it has been demonstrated by medical men in Paris, and, in the second place, I once had a case of it in my own practice."

"Give me the case."

"This was the doctor's story:

"There were two sisters. I do not care to give their names, so I will give fictitious names—Lillian and Louisa. Lillian was the older. During a certain winter it was proposed to give an entertainment for charity, and the sisters were among the performers. Among other attractions were living tableaux. In one of these tableaux Lillian took the part of Queen Mary of Scotland, seated in a room of Holyrood palace at Edinburgh, surrounded by courtiers. Lord Darnley, whom she afterward married, was among them.

"Now, the man who personated Darnley was a very tall man—Darnley himself was long, you will remember—whom Lillian had never seen before rehearsal. Strange to say, she fell violently in love with Darnley. There was but one rehearsal before the performance, and, while those who took part were being posed, it was noticed that the queen's eyes were bent on Darnley lovingly. Perhaps you have never seen a woman so infatuated with a man that she can't keep from showing it. I have.

"Nobody thought of the crown the queen of Scots wore or where it came from. I certainly did not then, but since I have hunted the matter up and have learned all about it. Lillian by her evident predisposition for this fellow who personated Darnley attracted the attention of all present at rehearsal. When the tableau was given before an audience she looked at him so lovingly that all except those who knew supposed it to be a part of the performance and were delighted with the representation.

"This performance was such a success that it was determined to repeat it the following week. The day it was to be given again I was called on to visit Lillian professionally. I found her in an abnormally nervous condition, with other symptoms. I forbade her taking part in the tableau, which was to come off that evening, and it was decided that her sister Louisa was to assume the part in her place.

"What do you suppose happened? Louisa was very like her sister, and during the few moments that the picture was exposed to the audience she regarded Darnley with the same infatuated look that her sister had worn, so that most of the audience supposed that it was Lillian who personated the queen and was assuming the same love-lorn expression as when she had exhibited before. I was in the audience and was astonished to see a real lover look such as I had seen in Lillian.

"Among the performers the matter made a good deal of talk, for it was evident to most of them that these lover's looks of the sister were real. I, being a brain specialist, at once saw a problem before me. It seemed to me that there must be something in the relative position of Darnley and the queen known to each of the sisters that produced the love or an effect similar to the emotion felt by the real Queen Mary for the real Darnley. But on inquiry I learned that Lillian knew nothing of the historical relationship between Mary and Darnley, while Louisa had supposed that Mary hated him.

"I talked with both girls and, without accusing them of being in love with the man who had personated Darnley, drew from them their feelings while in the tableau. Both admitted that they had felt a strange emotion which had disappeared as soon as the curtain was rung down and they took off the crown. I made bold to ask them the nature of this emotion; but, it being a matter on which a woman would shrink from speaking, I got no definite information. But from different admissions coming from one or the other of the two I gathered that they felt an emotion the nature of which they did not understand themselves.

"The matter passed so far as remark was concerned, but not from my mind. Yet, seeing no solution of it, I finally dropped trying to solve it. Then came the announcement of these fellows in Paris. I had no sooner read it in the newspapers than I reverted to the tableau, and I immediately thought of the crown worn by the two sisters. I went to the man who had furnished the costumes for information about it. He referred me to a certain theater and gave me his card introducing me to the property man. I asked him to tell me something about the crown that had been used in the tableau.

"There's a history to that crown," he replied. "It was worn by an actress who committed suicide for love. She played a part requiring her to wear it at many successive performances."

"Was she in love with an actor who played with her?" I asked.

"No," was the reply; "he had nothing to do with the stage."

There were a few moments of silence, after which the narrator said:

"You may think what you like about this discovery, doctor; I believe there is something in it."

A Telegraph Joke

By SARAH BAXTER

No one knows of the serious and comic episodes that have occurred between telegraph operators. I refer more particularly to those of the opposite sex. I have been a telegraph operator for twenty years, and I can count five marriages between operators that I know of personally. And three of these began by the sending of messages between persons who had never seen each other.

When I was a young man I was located at a railroad station in a quiet place where there was no recreation whatever. I spent most of my time in the office, and in order to get away with the time when I was not busy I kept books there. I read everything I could get to read and even then there were times when I was hungry for something to do. One evening I was called on for some information about a train by an operator some distance down the road and, being particularly lonesome, asked if there was anything going on "at your station." I was dying for something to break the monotony of my existence, and if there was a ball or a barn dance I would run over by the next train.

My correspondent replied that there was nothing on hand for that evening, but there would be a dance in Aeolian hall in a few days. I asked if he would get me an invitation, but he replied that it was a pay dance, the tickets being for sale to any one who could pass the committee, and he didn't think I would have any trouble.

I had said nothing over the wire about whether I was man or woman, nor had my correspondent. I assumed that he was a man, and he talked to me as though he supposed me to be a man also. But presently he said something that sounded feminine, and I wondered if I was not talking with a woman. I asked to which sex he belonged, and the reply came, "A man." But there was a hesitancy between the "a" and "man" which led me to believe that my suspicions were correct. Then it occurred to me to say that I was a woman.

Upon this my correspondent began to say some very gallant things to me. Some of them were without a manly ring and couched in phrases that a woman rather than a man would use. I replied, using as feminine language as I could command, and I flatter myself I was very successful. Then came a request for my photograph, and I consented to an exchange. I have a number of pictures of relatives and friends and sent one of my sister's, who had the name of being a very pretty girl. I received one of a fairly good looking young man. Then my correspondent and I indulged in any quantity of flattery, he telling me that I was pretty enough to kiss and I telling him that he was "just too handsome for anything."

After several days, with occasional chats over the wire, I was still uncertain whether I was chatting with a man or a woman. As to my correspondent, I couldn't infer from anything he said that he didn't believe me to be a woman. He invited me to go with him to the dance in Aeolian hall, and I accepted the invitation with thanks. He asked what train I would come on and promised to have a carriage at the station to take me to the dance. I took a lady friend into my confidence, and she wrote out a number of questions for me to ask my correspondent as to how I should array myself.

When the evening came round I got myself up in the best clothes I had and provided myself with a bouquet. If my correspondent should turn out to be a man our episode would have little savor; if he were a woman it would be interesting. I wondered if he were in doubt about my sex and how, if a woman, she would receive me. My train arrived at the station at 8 p. m., and the dance was to begin at 8:30. As the train drew up to the station I saw from the window several girls in their best dresses standing together on the platform. One in the center of the group held a bouquet. I made up my mind at once that my correspondent was a girl and the one with the bouquet. If she expected a girl she would not be looking out for one. I alighted from the train and walked right past the group, none of them taking any notice of me, but still on the lookout.

It was evident to me that they expected one of their own sex, upon whom they would have the laugh. I stepped up to them, my hat in one hand and my bouquet in the other, and asked the center one if she were expecting me. The look of surprise on her face gave way before a twinkle in my eye to one of defeat; then the whole party broke into a laugh. I handed the center figure my bouquet and accepted hers.

"You've lost, Kit!" cried one of the girls, and the rest followed with good natured taunts.

"I have a carriage for you, as I promised," said Kit. "Come!"

Going to the other side of the station, I got into a carriage with her, while her friends entered another. Then we all drove to the dance, and I found myself an object of interest to every one there, the secret having been told how a joke was to have been played on a girl telegrapher and how the joker caught a tartar.

I was made acquainted with every one in the hall and passed a delightful evening.



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