

# Jumping Meridians

By LINTON WELLS and NELS LEROY JORGENSEN

The thick carpets had muffled the footsteps of each. They came together. Each was silent with surprise. In the next second, drawing off, even the mask of Jimmy's features was dissipated, and, in the same second, he was conscious of a gasp of recognition from the other.

It was the secretary to the commissar!

"Monsieur Brandon! You!"

It was not, as Jimmy assured himself, a moment for the observance of the conventionalities. Particularly not when, blending with the high-pitched tone of the secretary's surprised voice, there issued from the far end of the corridor, in the direction from which Jimmy had just come, a cry of warning that aroused every dull, deadened echo of the old palace. One of the guards had summoned sufficient courage to sound the alarm.

"This is too charming!" breathed Jimmy, his eyes narrowing fiercely and his features freezing.

His right foot went out and kicked forward the left leg of the young secretary. With the same motion, his forearm bore the man backward, tumbling against the wall and into the corridor from which he had emerged, helpless except for a cry of rage and chagrin. Blended again with his voice was commotion from farther down the hallway. Jimmy cast one swift look about him, gave a swift salute to the befuddled secretary; and then, seeing a man emerge from the room in which he had lately been prisoner, made for the outer doorway.

The guard there had just been aroused. Jimmy hurried up to him and the fellow stared wildly.

"Get the commissar quick!" the American gasped.

The sentry transfixed him with a stare of astonishment. He did not understand the English words, of course, but he knew the title of his chief. Jimmy's air of swift command, however, held him for the moment. Without another word, the latter hurried down the steps, aware that, behind him, confusion was growing.

Decidedly, he told himself, he had upset soviet officialdom in Viatka! It meant that now he must play his mad game through to its ultimate finish. To be recaptured would spell complete disaster.

The deep shadows of the poorly lighted street swallowed him mercifully, as soon as he reached the sidewalk. It was but a matter of moments, however, before hot pursuit would be on his trail.

He was not, he observed gratefully, anywhere near the populated district. The dark street was practically deserted. His head bent, he walked on, content not to run until it became necessary. After all, it would not be a matter of distance covered, at this stage; it was purely a case of eluding his pursuers.

There was but one course for him to pursue, one way to make an exit from the city. He had decided on it beforehand, aware of the extreme danger of the attempt, the innumerable chances against success. It was not even a wild hope which carried him on; simply a grim determination not to surrender in the face of adversity. So long as he was able, he was in the long race to win; so long as there was a chance, it was Jimmy Brandon's nature to take it.

There was little to guide himself by, except an infallible sense of direction and a general idea as to the spot where he had seen the airplane descending to the ground.

As he hurried on, however, he was aware that the casual quiet of the streets was becoming disturbed. Far behind him, borne on the faintest of breezes, there were shouts and cries, and once he heard a rifle discharge. A moment later, the night was startled by the raucous bellow of a deep-lunged siren, and the sound, like the baying of bloodhounds, sent a chill through his entire being.

From somewhere, a bronze bell, made for mellow chiming, sounded in the grotesque clang-clang of an alarm. It blended with his quickening pulse beats. It was a new sensation, this of being hunted down by men, and far from a pleasant one. The knowledge that he would be dealt with sternly if recaptured only made it worse. Jimmy had a profound respect for the methods used by the new rulers of Russia. They were swift and sure, and he had given grave affront.

It seemed that he had been walking for an hour, his pace gradually quickening, though the watch on his wrist told him that it was barely a few minutes past eight-thirty. He dove into a darkened street at the end of which a single yellow gaslight gleamed. This, he reasoned, must lead to some spot near the flying field, if his memory had served him faithfully.

Out of the darkness, as he approached the end of the street, a harsh voice hailed him. Jimmy thought rapidly. Behind him, the echoes of pursuit were growing more definite with each passing second. Before he halted, he took a few slow steps forward, until the yellow light gleamed with a sullen radiance along the length of a rifle barrel, and fell lightly on the regimental ornament of a man's cap.

Then he held his breath. He had not understood the hail, but it had been Russian for "Who goes there?" he had no doubt. Comprehension of this came in the same second; for, as he reached the end of the street and got a view beyond, the darkness fell away before a score of gleaming lights placed in a wide circle. One of the lights let its rays rest with a shimmering wave of invitation on the outspread aluminum wings of an airplane.

The cry of "Halt!" came. Jimmy hesitated. He was very close to the soldier; evidently the flying field was being guarded. Had the man, he wondered, been informed of a prisoner's escape?

He was not left long in doubt. The sentry stepped forward, and Jimmy saw that the rifle was now pointed at his breast. Longingly he looked again at the field beyond, and the silver wings under the lights. A mechanic passed by, whistling at his duties, and the sight gave Jimmy a little pang that was quite akin to homesickness.

He had hoped to gain the field and bribe one of the pilots, at no matter what price, to take him to Moscow that night. There was, he hoped, more than one plane, possibly some rickety machine cashiered at the end of the recent hostilities. He would have taken a chance with anything.

But now . . . The sentry was peering at him; he was very close. Jimmy saw claw-like fingers curved about the trigger of the rifle, heard, in the same moment, cries behind him, shouts, commands. The fellow was staring at his face; Jimmy's fingers crept to the pistol he had taken and stuck in his belt.

It was a chance. But—

shook his head. No shooting. He had never shot a man yet, except in self-defense. To begin now would be madness. Even his friends in Moscow could never save him; he could never get out of Russia alive. The soldier's breath sucked inward avidly and he gave a short little exclamation.

"Amerikanets?"

"Parlez-vous Francais?" Jimmy thought of his money belt. Bribery was infinitely better than shooting.

The man shook his head, staring and repeating some guttural phrase, all the while that his eyes devoured his captive. Jimmy motioned with his fingers to indicate cash. The fellow's eyes gleamed. His heart leapt. Perhaps there was still a chance.

But rudely—suddenly and without warning—this last hope was snatched away. From behind him there came a loud cry to the sentry. The man's face, greedy a moment since, froze without transition; his rifle was at the American's throat. Another call came, which he answered with a growling hail. Then the running feet were hurrying down the street.

Jimmy took a last look at the flying field and cast a swift glance around him. But there was no escape. The muzzle of the rifle touched his throat just under the chin. The least move would doom him. His last chance had gone.

He heard another cry—this time couched in a voice he knew, and turned with a grin that he could not dispel, to meet the youthful leader who had captured him that afternoon.

"This is too touching, mon ami!" he grinned. The soldier's face was white and angry. His former suavity of manner vanished as he gazed at the man who had once eluded him.

"So, Monsieur Brandon! This time the gallant gentleman shall have more careful hospitality!"

He turned, grim-faced, and two more soldiers came running up. Jimmy saw manacles gleam under the lamplight, and his face hardened. The smile was gone. He was face to face with the grimmest kind of reality. Even thought of the race he had lost was dispelled. From this moment on, he was fighting for life and freedom.

The leader spoke a quick word of commendation to the guard who had made the arrest, jerked the pistol from his captive's belt, and then turned back to his men. Four of them rapped themselves about the captive.

"March!" ordered the officer, in French. Jimmy Brandon, his hands manacled behind his back, obeyed. Back up the street they proceeded, toward the office of the commissar from which Jimmy had so recently taken his unceremonious departure.

## CHAPTER XVIII

Jimmy had had visions of the Viatka Bastille; but he did not reach it at once. Instead, he was made reasonably comfortable for a time, with space to think over his predicament, in the same room from which he had escaped scarcely an hour before. Dark stains on the floor, where the samovar had upset, gave him a moment of grim amusement; but that was all.

Two guards paced outside now; he had discovered that they must have received orders not to communicate with him, for his every attempt to talk with them through the barred doorway proved useless. He had been at first mildly flattered at this attention.

The results of the investigation, which had taken place with swift precision immediately upon his return, had been as surprising to Jimmy as to any one else—more so, probably, he reflected. He had ample time to go over them, and to speculate on the cause

behind his present predicament. Someone had taken pains to have him put definitely out of the way.

The commissar had not been present when the young soldier returned with his prisoner. Jimmy, his hands manacled behind him, had entered the office and surveyed the oldish-young man behind the desk with supercilious eyes.

His first reaction of despair was gone. He knew well the value of an aggressive front, and before he had reached the palace, he had summoned all of his courage and coolness. They must never know he was afraid; to the very end he must keep them in fear of his influence. After all, he was possessed of influence in Moscow, though how far it would carry him, he could only hope.

The man behind the commissar's desk, he was informed in clipped French syllables, was assistant to the chief. He had the face of a scholar, the lips of a dreamer, and the cold eyes of an executioner. These eyes surveyed Jimmy with the aloof gaze of a professor in anatomy.

"Monsieur Brandon is pleased to be impetuous." Behind the grim words there lurked an ironic admiration.

Jimmy nodded. "I haven't been treated with any particular courtesy," he said coolly. "and I'm not quite in a position to light a cigaret. Will you have our young friend here, please?"

The young man had started with surprise, but Jimmy's expression never altered, and the assistant commissar, with a grim smile, beckoned to his subordinate to fulfill the request. Jimmy drew a long inhalation.

"I have asked," he said, "to communicate with Moscow, and my friends there. I took leave of your charming hospitality a short time ago because that request was not granted. I am in a great hurry, monsieur, and I must insist upon attention."

The officer studied him intently. Jimmy could have no knowledge of what was going on behind those stony blue eyes. Finally he nodded.

"That we will consider, monsieur," he said quietly. "At the present moment, I must remind you, you are under grave suspicion. Your possessions must be searched at once."

Jimmy shrugged and watched, with an indifference which was not entirely assumed, while two soldiers rifled his single bag. Certainly they would find nothing there. He was beginning to regain his confidence. He had already impressed this officer as he had the others; if they found nothing, there was still a chance. He began to be less perturbed about his ultimate safety. Two things occupied his thoughts while the soldiers went on with their work and the assistant commissar sat in an icy silence.

The first was: How could he make up for the time he was losing, provided he could buy the officials here into doing what he wanted? By the time he would be able to communicate with Moscow and his friends there could return a statement of his character, it would be too late to do anything. At seven in the morning, the passenger ship hopped off for Konesberg, and it would carry Austin Rogers!

The second question was, now that he had time to think: What was the cause of his predicament?

Both seemed equally insoluble. In his wild dash for freedom, he had hoped to buy the use of a plane; but he had seen, in his one glimpse of the small field, that there was only a government ship there.

TO BE CONTINUED

ALL GONE TO WASTE  
North Carolina has 1,500,000 acres of idle farm land and about 4,000,000 acres of cutover burned forest and waste land, according to R. W. Graeber, extension forester at North Carolina State college.

## Ten Rules for Prosperity.

1. Pay labor the highest possible wages. Prosperity is intimately related to a liberal wage scale.
2. Treat labor as a business partner. Successful industry depends more on human relations than upon the organization of money and machines.
3. Conduct business in the full light of day. Public confidence and public suspicion may be separated only by a door.
4. Remember that the law of supply and demand is inexorable. And it would also be well to remember that there is no necessity for producing an excess.
5. Live and help live. Even prosperous industries cannot afford to have the backward industries too far behind the procession—prosperity to be permanent must be equably distributed.
6. Welcome new ideas. To establish permanent institutions we must always be prepared for change.
7. Never be satisfied that what has been achieved is sufficient. Smugness and complacency do not promote progress.
8. Operate business on the most economical basis. Price-cutting, over-expansion, uneconomical methods of distribution are just as harmful to business and to the public as price-fixing monopolies and rebates.
9. Look ahead and think ahead. It is easier to avoid depression than it is to cure it.
10. Smile, be cheerful, and work upon the basis that the fundamental purpose of business is to promote the happiness of human beings.

## The Day's Work

Terre Haute Tribune  
There hangs over the desk of the manager of a Terre Haute industry a little frame in which is the following legend:  
"Another day is here. Help us to meet the rugged requirements with cheerful faces. Give us the patience to serve faithfully and well; and at night lean to us sound and undisturbed sleep, that we may serve better tomorrow."  
It sounds like a prayer, and it is. But not to the good God alone; it strikes the eye of the beholder. It touches a new note in his being. It gives him a new angle on the manager and the establishment, your constant business partner. It puts the man on the outside of the desk into a mood to do business quickly, generously and fairly. It is, also, a constant reminder to the manager himself that he is there not so much to be served, as to serve. It is a fact that both customer and employee can take to heart. It is the best analysis the platform upon which that firm does business.  
And it is a good prayer, and a good platform, for service is the keynote of modern business.  
He profits most who serves best," wrote Paul Harris, of Chicago, some 17 years ago and men in every country the world over are at this time cheered by the thousands under the banner which bears that legend.

To be sure every business man strives to make a profit. Profit is the badge of service. Dollars are the insignia of success. They, in this day and generation, are garnered by those who give to the public the best service. "Caveat emptor," the old-time slogan of the trade world, has become so obsolete that millions do not even know what it means. Everywhere industries have come to the understanding that fair play means better business, and as a general rule they are living up to it.

The man who sits behind the manager's desk has these things constantly before him. He knows that between men, as between classes of men, anger works madness in the brain and puts poison on the tongue. He knows that bitterness of thought and action are a weak man's argument. The way of the ever has no place in his life. He strives to be a constructive force in the community. He must be a cheer as well as a thinker. A mere desire to serve gets him nowhere; he actually must serve. Carnegie, Schwab, Edison, Wanamaker—all their names suggest action. The demand of business is to keep ahead of competition—to do something and do it first and profitably. After all, this is only another form of service—giving the public something better than the other fellow is offering and at a smaller price, where possible.

## Plant Doctors Gather

At New York Meeting  
New York.—The plant doctors of the United States will be called into consultation here December 28-31 to consider the new diseases of plants and new methods of controlling old ones.

Nearly 100 papers bearing on these problems which literally reach the roots of the nation's food supply will be read before the American Phytopathological society during the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Cereal, fruit and vegetable diseases will receive the greatest amount of attention. Consideration also will be given to the problem of plant quarantines, and the ailments of ornamental plants and tobacco, cotton, pineapple and other miscellaneous crops.

Organized 20 years ago by a small group of plant pathologists, the society now has 750 members, including investigators in every country in the world.

Pellagra in human beings and black tongue in dogs are fundamentally the same disease.

Well Said, George.

From Tit-Bits.  
"Well, George," said a country clergyman to an old man who sat by the wayside breaking stones, "that pile doesn't seem to get any smaller."

"No, vicar," replied the old man, "them stones is like the Ten Commandments; you can go on breaking 'em, but you can't get rid of 'em."

Q. How long has the Marcel wave been used in dressing women's hair?  
A. C.

The custom of a woman wearing a wedding ring originated in Egypt.



## Makes Life Sweeter

Too much to eat—too rich a diet—or too much smoking. Lots of things cause sour stomach, but one thing can correct it quickly. Phillips Milk of Magnesia will alkalize the acid. Take a spoonful of this pleasant preparation, and the system is soon sweetened.

Phillips is always ready to relieve distress from over-eating; to check all acidity; or neutralize nicotine. Remember this for your own comfort; for the sake of those around you. Endorsed by physicians, but they always say Phillips. Don't buy something else and expect the same results!

## PHILLIPS Milk of Magnesia



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This new powder kills rats and mice but nothing else

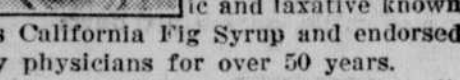
Get rid of rats without danger to your children, livestock, pets or poultry. Think what this means to you! K-R-O may be used freely in the home, barn or poultry house with absolute safety. Actual tests have proved that it kills rats and mice every time but other animals and poultry are not injured by the largest doses.

Not a Poison  
K-R-O does not contain arsenic, phosphorus or barium carbonate. Made of quill bulbs—the new safe way urged by government experts. At your druggist, 75c. Large size (4 times as much) \$2.00. Or sent direct from us for \$1.00 if we cannot supply you. Satisfaction guaranteed. K-R-O Company, Springfield, Ohio.

## Optics and Romance

"Do you believe in love at first sight?"  
"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne. "I also believe in permitting your affection to look off once in a while, to avoid getting near-sighted."—Washington Star.

## Girl at the Top in Health Test



Millions of boys and girls all over the world, thousands of them right here in the West are being restored to health and strength by the purely vegetable tonic and laxative known as California Fig Syrup and endorsed by physicians for over 50 years.

Children need no urging to take it. They love its rich, fruity flavor. Nothing can compete with it as a gentle, but certain laxative, and it goes further than this. It gives tone and strength to the stomach and bowels so these organs continue to act normally, of their own accord. It stimulates the appetite, helps digestion.

A Kansas mother, Mrs. Dana Allgire, 610 Monroe St., Topeka, says: "Bonnie B. is absolutely the picture of health, now, with her ruddy cheeks, bright eyes and plump but graceful little body and she stands at the top in every health test."

Each of the credit for her perfect condition is due to California Fig Syrup. We have used it since babyhood to keep her bowels active during colds or any children's ailments and she has always had an easy time with them. She always responds to its gentle urging and is quickly back to normal."

Ask your druggist for California Fig Syrup and look for the word "California" on the carton so you'll always get the genuine.

## Feel Dizzy?

Headachy, bilious, constipated? Take N-R-NATURE'S REMEDY—light, this mild, safe, vegetable remedy will have you feeling fine by morning. You'll enjoy free, thorough bowel action without a sign of griping or discomfort.

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## PISO'S for Coughs

Quick Relief! A pleasant, effective syrup—15c and 60c sizes. And externally, use PISO'S Throat and Chest Salve, 35c.

## Old Age Pension.

From Ohio State Journal.  
Much will be heard during the next few weeks in the various states on the subject of old age pensions. Arrangements have been completed for the introduction of bills providing these pensions in each of the 44 legislatures in session this winter. There is an organized force ready to give support and supply argument why these bills should be sanctioned. That organization is prepared to raise the same question in congress if opportunity is provided.

Many people pass through their productive years without accumulating funds to sustain them in their years of dependence. There will be no disagreement on that point. But there are other questions that should be raised and studied with care before any state embarks on an old age pension experiment. If there is any disposition to rush such a measure through to passage, it should be stopped until the facts are known. It would be worse than folly to undertake a haphazard experiment. The utter collapse of the bank guarantee deposit laws in a number of states proves the folly of trying something before the state is in readiness and understands the nature and method of directing the new task. In the bank guarantee

case some eager enthusiasts rushed the bill considered plans through and the failure has been complete and costly to the people the law was supposed to protect.

Economists have warned the public many times there is no economic Santa Claus to supply funds for new plans and adventures. Every dollar that might be gathered into the old age pension fund would first have to be taken by law from some other person.

Ohio, for instance, has pension funds for police and fire departments in all the larger cities, but there is trouble with these funds. They were not given a solid fundamen-

tion sentiment and friendship were used in planning, when there should have been actual experience. Sentimental plans to not stand the test of the years.

Before any state is justified in giving serious attention to any of the new social pension legislation there should be an insurance survey of the field made, that the state may know the nature and importance of its new task. Any other course would be folly and would insure disaster.

The custom of a woman wearing a wedding ring originated in Egypt.