THE SEA-HAWK

A Forthcoming First National Picture. Part Two *By Rafael Sabatini.*

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Instinctively his arms went round her, and a moment he held her thus, calling the last occasion on which he had held his against his breast, on a evening five years and more ago under the gray wall of Dodolphin Court above the river. What prophet would have told him that when next he so held her the conditions would be these? It was all grotesque and incredible, like the fantastic dream of some sick mind. But it was all true, and she was in his arms again.

He shifted his grip to her waist, heaved her to his mighty shoulder, as though she were a sack of grain, and swung about, his business at Arwenack accomplished—indeed, more of it accomplished than had been his intent, and also something less.

"Away, away!" he cried to his rovers, and away they sped as fleetly and silently as they had come, no man raising now so much as a voice to hinder them.

Through the hall and across the courtyard flowed that human tide; out into the open and along the crest of the hill it surged, then away down the slope towards the beach where their boats awaited them. Sakh-el-Bahr ran as lightly as though the swooning woman he bore were no more than a cloak he had flung across his shoulder. Ahead of him went a half dozen of his fellows carrying his gagged and pinioned brother.

Once only before they dipped from the heights of Arwenack did Oliver check. He paused to look across the dark shimmering water to the woods that screened the house at Penarrow from his view. It had been part of his purpose to visit it, as we know. But the necessity had now been removed, and he was conscious of a pang of disappointment, of a hunger to look again upon his home. But to shift the current of his thoughts came then came two of his officers—Othmani and Ali, who had been muttering one with the other. As they overtook him, Othmani set now a hand upon his arm, and pointed down towards the twinkling lights of Smithick and Penycumwick.

"My lord," he cried, "there will be lads and maidens there should fetch fat prices in the Sok-el-Abeed."

"No doubt," said Sakh-el-Bahr, scarce heeding him, heeding indeed little in this world but his longings to look upon Penarrow.

"Why, then, my lord, shall I take fifty true believers and make a raid upon them? It were an easy task, all unsuspicious as they must be of our presence."

Sakh-el-Bahr came out of his musings. "Othmani," said he, "art a fool, the very father of fools, else wouldst thou have come to know by now that those who once were of my own race, those of the land which I am sworn, are sacred to me. Here we take no slave but those we have. On, then, in the name of Allah!"

But Othmani was not yet silenced. "And in our perilous voyage across these unknown seas into this far heathen land to be rewarded by no more than just these two captives? Is that a raid worthy of Sakh-el-Bahr?"

"Leave Sakh-el-Bahr to judge," was the curt answer.

"But reflect, my lord: there is another who will judge. How shall our Pasha, the glorious Asad-ed-Din, welcome thy return with such poor spoils as these? What questions will he set thee, and what account shalt thou render him for having imperiled the lives of all these True-Believers upon the seas for so little profit?"

"He shall ask me what he pleases, and I shall answer what I please and as Allah prompts me. On, I say!"

And on they went, Sakh-el-Bahr conscious now of little but the warmth of that body upon his shoulder, and knowing not, so tumultuous were his emotions, whether it fired him to love or hate.

They gained the beach; they reached the ship whose very presence had continued unsuspected. The breeze was fresh and they stood away at once. By sunrise there was no more sign of them than there had been at sunset, there was no more clue to the way they had taken than to the way they had come. It was as if they had dropped from the skies in their swift, silent passage, but for the absence of Rosamund and Lionel Tressilian, the thing must have been accounted no more than a dream of those few who had witnessed it.

Aboard the carack, Sakh-el-Bahr bestowed Rosamund in the cabin over the quarter, taking the precaution to lock the door that led to the stern gallery. Lionel he ordered to be dropped into a dark hole under the hatchway, there to lie and meditate upon the retribution that had overtaken him until such time as his brother should have determined upon his fate—for this was a matter upon which the renegade was still undecided.

Himself he lay under the stars that night and thought of many things. One of these things, which plays some part in the story, though it is probable that it played but a slight one in his thoughts, was begotten of the words Othmani had used. What, indeed, would be Asad's welcome of him on his return if he sailed into Algiers with nothing more to show for that long voyage and the imperiling of the lives of two hundred True-believers than just two captives whom he intended, moreover, to retain for himself? What capital would not be made out of that circumstances by his enemies in Algiers and by Asad's Sicilian wife who hated him with all the bitterness of a hatred that had its roots in the fertile soil of jealousy?

This may have spurred him in the cool dawn to a very daring and desperate enterprise which Destiny sent his way in the shape of a tall-masted Dutchman homeward bound. He gave chase, for all that he was full conscious that the battle he invited was one of which his corsairs had no experience, and one upon which they must have hesitated to venture with another leader than himself. But the star of Sakh-el-Bahr was a star that never led to aught but victory, and their belief in him, the very Javelin of Allah, overcame any doubts that may have been begotten of finding themselves upon an unfamiar craft and on a rolling, unfamiliar sea.

This fight is given in great detail by my Lord Henry from the particulars afforded him by Jasper Leigh. But it differs in no great particular from other seafights, and it is none of my purpose to surfeit you with such recitals. Enough to say that it was stern and fierce, entailing great loss to both combatants; that cannon played little part in it, for knowing the quality of his men Sakh-el-Bahr made haste to run in and grapple. He prevailed of course as he must ever prevail by the very force of his personality and the might of his example. He was the first to leap aboard the Dutchman, clad in mail and whirling his great scimitar, and his men poured after him shouting his name and that of Allah in a breath.

Such was ever his fury in an engagement that it infected and inspired his followers. It did so now, and the shrewd Dutchmen came to perceive that this heathen horde was as a body to which he supplied the brain and soul. They attacked him fiercely in groups, intent at all costs upon cutting him down, convinced almost by instinct that were he felled the victory would easily be theirs. And in the end they succeeded. A Dutch pike broke some links of his mail and dealt him a flesh wound which went unheeded by him in his fury; a Dutch cutlass found the breach thus made in his defences, and went through it to stretch him bleeding upon the deck. Yet he staggered up, knowing as fully as did they that if he succumbed then all was lost. Armed now with a short axe which he had found under his hand when he went down, he hacked a way to the bulwarks, set his back against the timbers and, aware of voices ghostly of fare, spattered with the blood of his wound he urged on his men until the victory was thine—and this was fortunately soon. And then, as if he had been sustained by no more than the very force of his will, he sank down in a heap among the dead and wounded huddled against the vessel's bulwarks.

Chief-archers his corsairs love him back aboard the carack. Were he to die then was their victory a barren one indeed. They laid him on a couch prepared for him amidships on the main deck, where the vessel's pitching was least discomforting. A Moorish surgeon came to tend him, and pronounced his hurt a grievous one, but not so grievous as to close the gates of hope.

This pronouncement gave the corsairs all the assurance they required. It could not be that the Hardener would already pluck so fragrant a fruit from Allah's garden. The Pitiful must spare Sakh-el-Bahr to continue the glory of Islam.

Yet they were come to the straits of Gibraltar before his fever abated and he recovered complete consciousness, to learn of the final peak of that hazardous flight into which he had led those children of the Prophet.

The Dutchman, inhumant informed him, was following in their wake, with All and some others aboard her, sparing ever in the wake of the carack which continued to be navigated by the Nazarat Aga, Jasper Leigh. When Sakh-el-Bahr learnt the value of the capture, when he was informed that in addition to a hundred able-bodied men under the hatches, to be sold as slaves in the Sok-el-Abeed, there was a cargo of gold and silver, pearls, amber, spices and ivory.

(To Be Continued Monday.)

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. M'INTYRE.

New York, May 3.—A shuffling figure of the underworld with a dragging leg and a withered arm appears at police headquarters twice a week. He is expiating a past in such a way that even calloused criminal hunters are heartened.

A year ago he was one of the brood of Broadway jewelers whose little shops are "fences"—a hole in the wall for thieves' loot. He participated in a $350,000 jewel robbery. In that he received the plunder and hid it in his safe.

The keenest sleuths were on the chase but they found only blind alleys. The jeweler was going home one night. There was a thump at the base of the brain and he sagged to the sidewalk, the victim of a paralytic stroke.

While he was in the hospital an assistant opened the safe and stole the jewels. When the jeweler recovered sufficiently to discover his loss he made underground overtures to headquarters to return the jewels in exchange for what he called "peace of mind."

He was given a chance. Bit by bit he has made good. More than $200,000 worth of the various jewels have been returned. He exacted a promise that he should not be shadowed and the police have kept their word. They refuse to tell where he lives. They only say "uptown."

The underworld received word from the jeweler that the doctor had given him a short time to live—nine months at most. "I want to go out square," he wrote, "and I am going to clean up my last job. If those I have 'stood by' don't stand by me I won't squeal but somebody is going out with me."

The denizens knew him as a man of his word—one who would turn killer if necessary. The jewelry had been broken up and distributed to various other "fences" but piece by piece it is being recovered and taken to headquarters.

Nothing takes the average man back to the Stone Bruise Age so much as an old-fashioned cookie. There is a little cookie shop on Twenty-ninth street that does a thriving business. Children of this generation do not patronize it. But its customers are mostly men past middle age who go there to buy a paper poke of cookies and perhaps go to their homes to munch them and dream of the days when the world was young.

The speakeasy has found lodgement in many big skyscrapers downtown. On the glass door may be a sign in gold letters reading: "John Jones, Cement Contractor." Inside a clerk or so carries on what looks as though it might be a legitimate business, but there is another door always locked which may only be entered by signal raps.

"Rain" started a flood of plays depicting primitive, unvarnished life in the tropics. Only one other—"White Cargo"—has caught on. As a result a theatrical costumer has a window filled with South Sea island costumes with a sign reading: "Tropical costumes at less than one-third the original cost." It has also been discovered that there is only one Hawaiian orchestra in town. Six years ago one musical agency had 64 playing at various resorts.

It is only 35 minutes by motor from Forty-second street to a village that offers the peace of an isolated village that might be thousands of miles miles away. There is the humble wooden church and the little country store where loungers gather and chaff is flung from group to group. There are old men rocking out their last days on ivy clad porches. Silver haired women quietly knitting at front room windows. Chickens peck about in the road. It is the one spot near New York not despoiled of small town atmosphere by the automobile.

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THE NEBBS

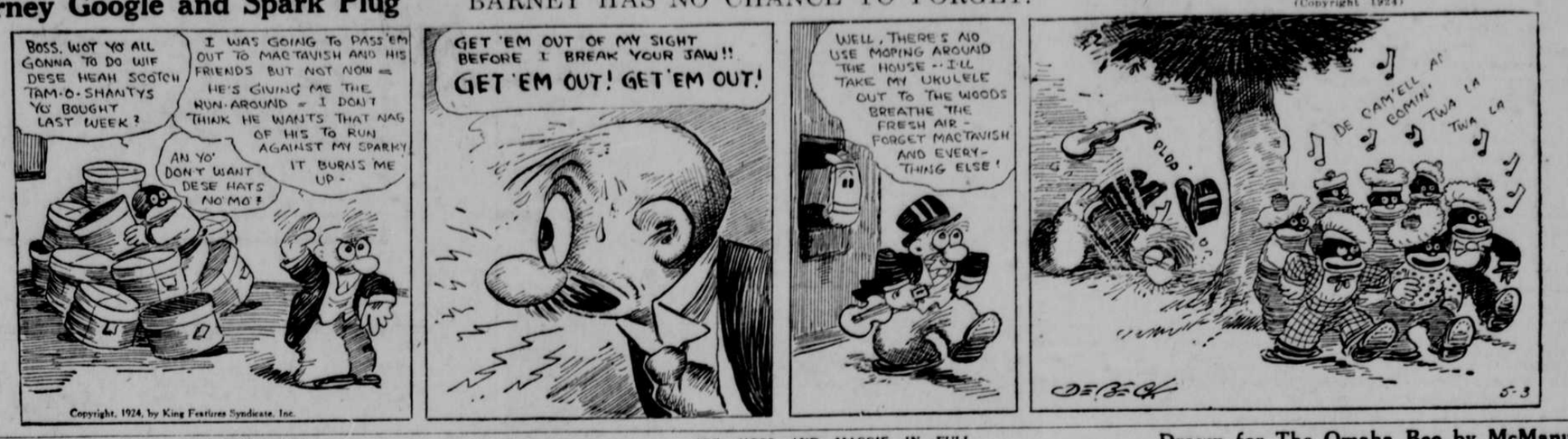
HEAVY DOUGH.

Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

Barney Google and Spark Plug

BARNEY HAS NO CHANCE TO FORGET.

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck (Copyright 1924)

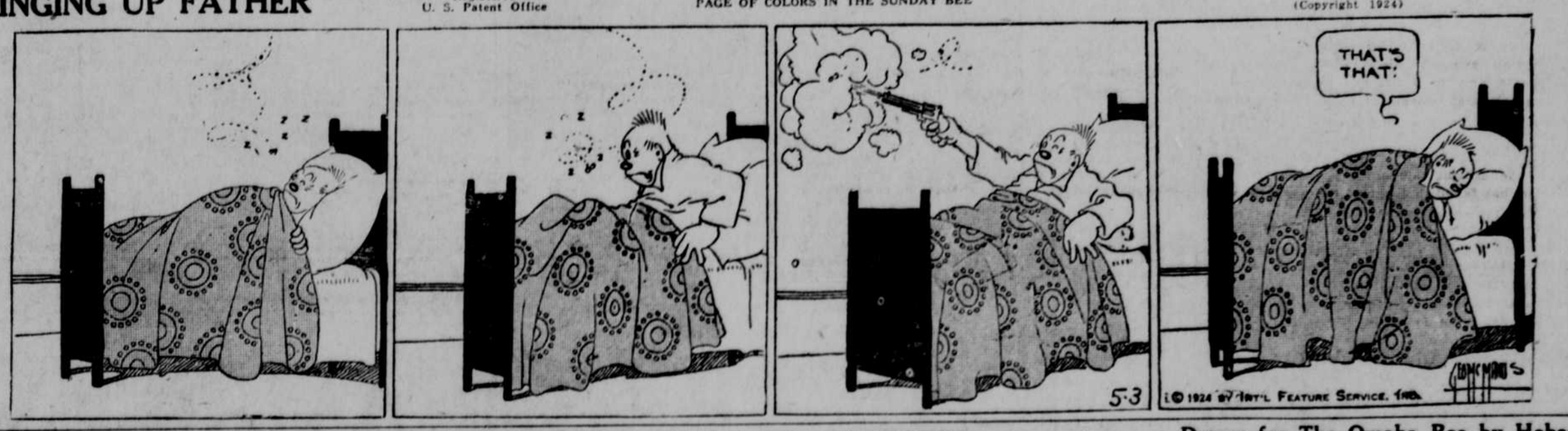


BRINGING UP FATHER

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 (Copyright 1924)



JERRY ON THE JOB

MORE THAN HE EXPECTED

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban (Copyright 1924)

Me and Mine

By Briggs

ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield

He Said Something.