

# THE LOST WORLD

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

(Continued from Yesterday.)

"It is a waste of energy to do anything else," growled Summerlee from behind his pipe. "Let me remind you that we came here upon a perfectly definite mission, entrusted to us at the meeting of the Zoological Institute in London. That mission was to test the truth of Professor Challenger's statements. Those statements, as I am bound to admit, we are now in a position to endorse. Our ostensible work is therefore done. As to the detail which remains to be worked out upon this plateau it is so enormous that only a large expedition, with a very special equipment, could hope to cope with it. Should we attempt to do so ourselves, the only possible result would be that we shall never return with the important contribution to science which we have already gained. Professor Challenger has devised means for getting us on to this plateau which it appears to be inaccessible; I think that we should now call upon him to use the same ingenuity in getting us back to the world from which we came."

I confess that as Summerlee stated his view it struck me as altogether reasonable. Even Challenger was affected by the consideration that his enemies would never stand confuted if the confirmation of his statements should never reach them.

"The problem of the descent is at first sight a formidable one," said he, "and yet I cannot doubt that the intellect can solve it. I am prepared to agree with our colleague that a protracted stay in Maple White Land is at present inadvisable, and that the question of our return will soon have to be faced. I absolutely refused to leave, however, until we have made at least a superficial examination of this country, and are able to take back with us something in the nature of a chart."

It was at that moment that I had my inspiration. My eyes chanced to light upon the enormous gnarled trunk of the ginkgo tree which cast its huge branches over us. Surely its bole exceeded that of all other trees which commanded the whole country? Now, ever since I ran wild as a lad in Ireland I have been a bold and skilled tree-climber. My comrades might be masters on the rocks, but I knew that I would be supreme among its branches. Could I only get my legs on to the lowest of the

## New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE

On the Atlantic, March 3.—All my life I have wanted to be in an ocean storm. It was not bravery. Merely a supreme faith that trans-Atlantic boats do pull through. Last night my ambition was realized. It was no sudden tempest. We rode in the teeth of a heavy gale before it broke.

With all the stoicism inbred in English seamen you sense disturbance. There is something taut and tight-lipped about them in an emergency. Nothing to them is "more than a bit of wind, sir." So the boat began to pitch, lunge and shiver.

Furniture, dishes and what-not skidded across the floor and back again. I improvised a strap for myself to hold me in bed. There were strange scurrying sounds down companionways and the soft patter of feet in the halls. "Do you remember what I said about wanting a storm?" I said to my wife.

There was a feeble, "Yes." A dipping drop and then from me: "Well, I was just kidding." The door flew open with a mighty bang, lights went out and down the hall a baby began to cry. A 10 months old boy ill with tonsillitis, who will land at Plymouth for another 14-day journey to Cape town.

All night we were tossed about without sleep. The wind shrieked like the sirens on New York fire wagons. There were times when we seemed to poise for indeterminate minutes, like a toe dancer, on the crest of a wave and then that long despairing plunge.

I could not help but think of that lonely soul in the crow's nest—peer- ing ahead into a world of snow like the white of eggs whipped to a creamy puff. There were many agonizing wails and cries for the ship's surgeon.

It grew worse toward morning. Yet there was a strange reaction. You begin not to care. We hold life dearly but when we feel it slipping away, somehow we rise above our fears. If I were a religious person I should say: "That is God's way." At noon came calm.

In the hall I met an Englishman. "Gallant old girl!" he remarked. "I'll say she is," I replied, and whistling walked out into the bright sunshine.

The ship's surgeon is a ruddy-cheeked, powerfully built Englishman. When the storm began a young lady from New York was calling on us in our stateroom. A door crashed against her fingers gripped to a ledge. She grew white and slumped to the floor. The surgeon came and tried to examine the injured digits as the boat rolled. He seemed like a huge pacing bear in a cage as the boat swayed and rocked. He was on his way, he said, to perform an emergency operation in the steerage as the storm raged.

A storm completely disorganizes a ship so far as services go. No one goes into the dining room and the effort to serve meals in rooms is a mighty task. Wet napkins are put on trays to hold dishes yet when the food arrives it is a scrambled mess. For instance, I found a dish of potatoes mixed up with my dessert. But I ate it just the same.

Every now and then a man from the wireless station pops into the lounge crying: "The following wire- less messages have been received." He calls them off with the enunciation of a subway guard and dashes out again. And a howl of laughter goes up.

There is a sweet-faced old lady and her white-haired husband aboard. She calls him "Hikbec." He calls her "Matilda." They are going to France to visit the grave of their grandson. It is pleasant to watch them thrilling to their first sea voyage. I thought of them quite a lot during the storm, too.

giant offshoots, then it would be strange indeed if I could not make my way to the top. My comrades were delighted at my idea.

"Our young friend," said Challenger, bunched up the red apples of his cheeks, is capable of acrobatic exertions which would be impossible to a man of a more solid, though possibly of a more commanding appearance. I applaud his resolution."

"By George, young fellow, you've put your hand on it!" said Lord John, clapping me on the back. "How we never came to think of it before I can't imagine! There's not more than an hour of daylight left, but if you take your notebook you may be able to get some rough sketch of the place. If we put these three ammunition cases under the branch, I will soon hoist you on to it."

He stood on the boxes while I faced the trunk, and was gently raising me when Challenger sprang forward and gave me such a thrust with his huge hand, that he nearly shot me into the tree. With both arms clamping the branch, I scrambled hard with my feet until I had worked, first my body, and then my knees, on to it. There were three excellent footholds, like the huge rungs of a ladder, above my head, and a tangle of convenient branches beyond, so that I clambered upwards with such speed that I soon lost sight of the ground and had nothing but foliage beneath me. Now and then I encountered a check, and once I had to shin up a creeper for eight or ten feet, but I made excellent progress, and the booming of Challenger's voice seemed to be a great distance beneath me. The tree was, however, enormous, and, looking upwards, I could see no thinning of the leaves above my head. There was some thick, bush-like clump which seemed to be a parasite upon a branch up which I was swarming. I leaned my head round in order to see what was beyond, and I nearly fell out of the tree in my surprise and horror at what I saw.

A face was gazing into mine—at the distance of only a foot or two. The creature that cowered in had been crouching behind the parasite, and had looked round at the same instant that I did. It was a human face—or at least it was far more human than any monkey's that I have ever seen. It was long, whitish, and blotched with pimples, the nose flattened and the lower jaw projecting with a bristle of coarse whiskers round the chin. The eyes, which were under thick and heavy brows, were bestial and ferocious, and as it opened its mouth to snarl what sounded like a curse at me, I observed that it had curved, sharp canine teeth. For an instant I read hatred and menace in the evil eyes. Then, quick as a flash, came an expression of overpowering fear. There was a crash of broken boughs as it dived wildly down into the tangle of green. I caught a glimpse of a hairy body like that of a reddish pig, and then it was gone amid a swirl of leaves and branches.

"What's the matter?" shouted Roxton from below. "Anything wrong with you?"

"Did you see it?" I cried, with my arms round the branch and all my nerves tingling.

"We heard a row, as if your foot had slipped. What was it?"

I was so shocked at the sudden and strange appearance of this ape-man that I hesitated whether I should not climb down again and tell my experience to my companions. But I was already so far up the great tree that it seemed a humiliation to return without having carried out my mission.

After a long pause, therefore, to recover my breath and my courage, I continued my ascent. Once I put my weight upon a rotten branch and swung for a few seconds by my hands, but in the main it was all easy climbing. Gradually the leaves thinned around me, and I was aware, from the wind upon my face, that I had topped all the trees of the forest. I was determined, however, not to look about me before I had reached the very highest point, so scrambled down until I had got as far as the topmost branch was bending beneath my weight. There I settled into a convenient fork, and, balancing myself securely, I found myself looking down at a most wonderful panorama of this strange country in which we found ourselves.

The sun was just above the western skyline, and the evening was as particularly bright and clear one, so that the whole extent of the plateau was visible beneath me. It was, as seen from this height, of an oval contour, with a breadth of about thirty miles and a width of twenty. Its general shape was that of a shallow funnel, all the sides sloping down to a considerable lake in the center. This lake may have been ten miles in circumference, and lay very green and beautiful in the evening light, with a thick fringe of reeds at its edges, and with its surface broken by

several yellow sandbanks, which gleamed golden in the mellow sunshine. A number of long dark objects, which were too large for alligators and too long for canoes, lay upon the edges of these patches of sand. With my glass I could clearly see that they were alive, but what their nature might be I could not imagine.

From the side of the plateau on which we were, slopes of woodland, with occasional glades, stretched down five or six miles to the central lake. I could see at my very feet the glade upon the iguanodons, and farther off was a round opening in the trees which marked the swamp of the pterodactyls. On the side facing me, however, the plateau presented a very different aspect. There the basalt cliffs of the outside were reproduced upon the inside, forming an escarpment about two hundred feet high, with a woody slope beneath it. Along the base of these red cliffs, some distance above the ground, I could see a number of dark holes through the glass, which I conjectured to be the mouths of caves. At the opening of

one of these something white was shimmering, but I was unable to make out what it was. I sat charting the country until the sun had set and it was so dark that I could no longer distinguish details. Then I climbed down to my companions waiting for me so eagerly at the bottom of the great tree. For once I was the hero of the expedition. Alone I had thought of it, and alone I had done it; and here was the chart which would save us a month's blind groping among unknown dangers. Each of them shook me solemnly by the hand.

But before they discussed the details of my map I had to tell them of my encounter with the ape-man among the branches.

"He has been there all the time," said I. "How do you know that?" asked Lord John.

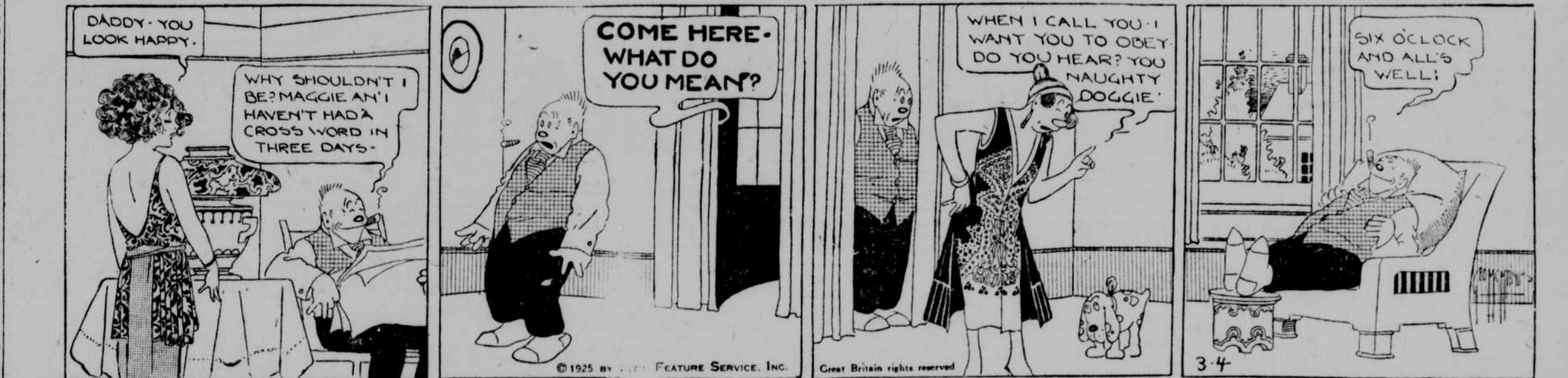
"Because I have never been without the feeling that something malevolent was watching us. I mentioned it to you, Professor Challenger."

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

## THE NEBBES



## BRINGING UP FATHER



## JERRY ON THE JOB



## TILLIE, THE TOILER



## Oh Man! Oh Woman!



## ABIE THE AGENT

