

THE LOST WORLD

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

(Continued from Yesterday.)

So it seemed to us; and yet we were mistaken. We had hardly closed the thornbush door of our zereba, gazed each other's hands, and thrown ourselves panting upon the ground beside our spring, when we heard a patter of feet and then a gentle, plaintive crying from outside our entrance. Lord Rotton rushed forward, rifle in hand, and threw it open. There, prostrate upon their faces, lay the little red figures of the four surviving Indians, trembling with fear of us and yet expressing a protection. With an expressive sweep of his hands one of them pointed to the woods around them, and indicated that they were full of danger. Then, darting forward, he threw his arms round Lord John's legs and rested his face upon them.

"By George!" cried our peer, pulling at his moustache in great perplexity. "I say—what the deuce are we to do with these fellows? Get up, little chaps, and take your face off my boots."

Summerlee was sitting up and stuffing some tobacco into his old briar. "We've got to see them safe," said he. "You've pulled us all out of the jaws of death. My word! It was a good bit of work."

"Admirable!" cried Challenger. "Admirable! Not only as individuals, but European science collectively, owe you a deep debt of gratitude for what you have done. I do not hesitate to say that the disappearance of Professor Summerlee and myself would have left an appreciable gap in modern zoological history. Our young friend here and you have done some excellent work."

He beamed at us with the old paternal smile, but European science would have been somewhat amazed could they have seen their chosen child, the future, with his tangled, unkempt hair, his bare chest, and his tattered clothes. He had one of the meatings between his knees, and sat with a large piece of cold Australian mutton between his fingers. The Indian looked up at him, and then, with a little yelp, cringed to the ground and clung to Lord John's leg.

"Don't you be scared, my bonnie boy," said Lord John, patting the matted head in front of him. "He

can't stick your appearance, Challenger; and, by George! I don't wonder. All right, little chap, he's only a human, just the same as the rest of us."

"Really, sir?" cried the Professor. "Well, it's lucky for you, Challenger, that you are a little out of the ordinary. If you hadn't been so like the king—"

"I beg, sir, that you will change the subject. Your remarks are irrelevant and unintelligible. The question before us is what are we to do with these Indians? The obvious thing is to escort them home, if we know where their home was."

"There is no difficulty about that," said I. "They live in the caves on the other side of the central lake."

"Our young friend here knows where they live. I gather that it is some distance."

"A good twenty miles," said I. "Summerlee gave a groan."

"I, for one, could never get there. Surely I hear those brutes still howling upon our track."

As he spoke, from the dark recesses of the woods we heard far away the gibbering cry of the apemen. The Indians once more set up a feeble wail of fear.

"We must move, and move quick!" said Lord John. "You help Summerlee, young fellow. These Indians will carry stores. Now, then, come along before they can see us."

In less than half an hour we had reached our brushwood retreat, and concealed ourselves. All day we heard the excited rattling of the apemen in the direction of our old camp, but none of them came our way, and the tired fugitives, red and white, had a long, deep sleep. I was dozing merrily, when someone plucked my sleeve, and I found Challenger kneeling beside me.

"You keep a diary of these events, and you expect eventually to publish it, Mr. Malone," said he, with solemnity.

"I am only here as a Press reporter," I answered.

"Exactly. You may have heard some rather fatuous remarks of Lord John Rotton's which seemed to imply that there was some—some reason—"

"Yes, I heard them."

"I need not say that any publicity given to such an idea—any levity in your narrative of what occurred—would be exceedingly offensive to me. I will keep well within the truth."

"Lord John's observations are frequently exceedingly fanciful, and he is capable of attributing the most absurd reasons to the respect which the natives show by the most undeveloped races to dignity and character. You follow my meaning?"

"Entirely."

"Leave the matter to your discretion. Then, after a long pause, he added: "The king of the apemen was really a creature of great distinction—a most remarkably handsome and intelligent personality. Did it not strike you?"

"A most remarkable creature," said I.

And the Professor, much eased in his mind, settled down to his slumber once more.

We had imagined that our pursuers, the apemen, knew nothing of our brushwood hiding place, but we were soon to find out our mistake. There was no sound in the woods—not a leaf moved upon the trees, and all was peace around us—but we should have been warned by our first experience how cunningly and how patiently these creatures can watch and wait until their chance comes. What ever fate may be mine through life, I am very sure that I shall never see the light of day again this morning. But I will tell you the thing in its due order.

We all awoke exhausted after the terrific smoke and scanty food of yesterday. Summerlee was still so weak that it was an effort for him to stand; but the old man was full of a sort of surly courage which would never admit defeat. A council was held, and it was agreed that we should wait quietly for an hour or two where we were, have our much-needed breakfast, and then make our way across the plateau and round the central lake to the caves where my observations had shown that the Indians lived. We relied upon the fact that we could count upon the good word of those whom we had rescued to insure a warm welcome from their fellows. Then, with our mission accomplished and possessing a fuller knowledge of the secrets of the Maple White Land, we should turn our whole thoughts to the vital problem of our escape and return. Even Challenger was ready to admit that we should then have time all for which we had come, and that our first duty from that time onwards was to carry back to civilization the amazing discoveries we had made.

"We're able now to take a more

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

Paris, March 11.—One is always appalled at the human wreck to be seen along the Paris boulevards, especially those who are your own countrymen. Many of them are left over of the war and others more recently caught in the web of Paris nights.

They drift from cafe to cafe, shivering husks living upon husks. For them the pipes are smoked with the amazing custom of paying the toll of the furious pace. Their shoes are soles and coat collars turned up to hide the ignominy of a shirtless back.

They have become brazen in their beggary and no rebuff is too much for them. I asked one, a young fellow in his twenties, if he did not long to go home. "Why should I?" he replied apparently conscious of the depths to which he had sunk.

Their sole preoccupation is drink and shelter. One of their stands is the American express where Americans go for their mail. The easy hospitality of Paris prevents any police give aims are likely to be insulted.

Many Americans, sad to relate, have reached the lowest level of the Parisian social status and have become guides—those conscientious creatures who tag you at street corners to act as cicerones for the flood of naughty peep shows.

These peep shows are one of the astounding contrasts of Paris. It seems so incongruous that a city that is the mistress of poets and painters, the city of Victor Hugo, of Balzac, of Du Maurier should countenance these depraved exhibitions.

Almost any gendarme will direct you to them as casually as he would direct you to an address.

I had the pleasure of meeting a little French boy of six years today. He was the most perfectly mannered child I have ever seen. He kissed the lady's hands when introduced and is a model of decorum all during his call—speaking only when spoken to. The French children are gently raised. They all become what we know as a "sweet child." I asked him if I might not give him some toy sinnerack given away as a souvenir. His thanks were profuse but he explained he could not accept it as he had received many, many gifts for Christmas. I learned later that it was a breach of manners to offer the French child a gift. The great playground of the children is in the gardens of Luxembourg. Here in charge of the pretty nannies they sail boats and fly kites and there is never any quarrelling among them.

In Louisa's, where I like to go for their special dish—a jellied pig's foot concoction—I saw an old fellow who has been pensioned by a New York newspaper publisher with a salary of 18 francs a week. That was in the days before the franc began to sink. Yet he continues to live not on his few dollars a week but on sheer nerve. He never offers to pay for his meals and he is welcomed in a hundred cafes because of his brilliant aptitude for conversation. He manages to buy his own clothes and pay for humble quarters on his salary. He is said not to have paid for a meal in ten years.

I find myself understanding French. People who come here say that in three months without lessons they are able to understand and converse fairly well.

The imperfections of the telephone systems here give up a wholesome respect for the American telephone. Five minutes is the average time to get a connection. But there is compensation in the telegraph pneumatic—which delivers a letter as speedily as a telegram for 60 centimes.

I missed the legless beggar so well known in Place Vendome. His smile and "Bon jour" are known to thousands of Americans. Each winter he goes to Monte Carlo, where he is a figure at the gaming tables, squandering the fruits of his beggary.

leisurely view of the Indians whom we had rescued. They were small men, wiry, active and well-built, with black hair tied up in a bunch behind their heads with a leather thong, and leather also were their loin clothes. Their faces were hairless, well-formed and good-humored. The lobes of their ears, hanging ragged and bloody, showed that they had been pierced for some ornaments which their captors had torn out. Their speech, though unintelligible to us, was fluent among themselves, and as they pointed to each other and uttered the word "Acocla" many times over, we gathered that this was the name of the nation. Occasionally, with faces which were convulsed with fear and hatred, they shook their

clenched hands at the woods round and cried, "Doda! Doda!" which was surely their term for their enemies.

"What do you make of them, Challenger?" asked Lord John. "One thing is very clear to me, and that is that the little chap with the front of his head shaved is a chief among them."

"The type of these people," said he in his sonorous fashion, "whether

judged by cranial capacities, facial angle, or any other test, cannot be regarded as a low one; on the contrary, we must place it as considerably higher in the scale than many South American tribes which I can mention. On no possible supposition can we explain the evolution of such a race in this place. For that matter, so great a gap separates these ape-

men from the primitive animals which have survived upon this plateau that it is inadmissible to think that they could have developed where we find them."

Professor Summerlee for once was too depressed to argue, though he shook his head violently as a token of general disagreement. Lord John merely scratched his scanty locks with the remark that he couldn't put up a fight as he wasn't in the same weight or class. For my own part I performed my usual role of bringing things down to a strictly prosaic and practical level by the remark that one of the Indians was missing.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

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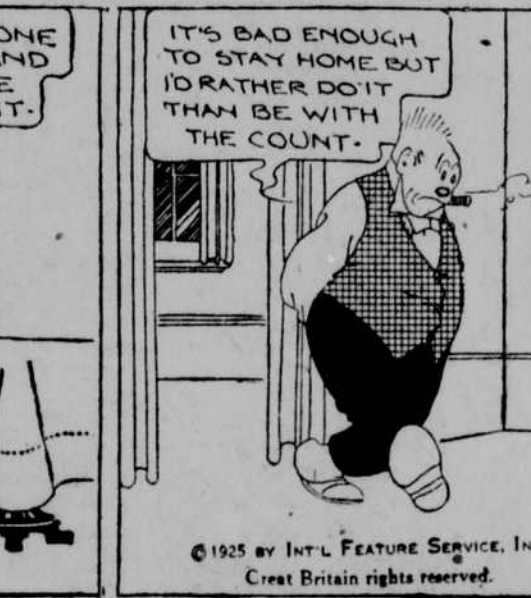
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