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Prince in Papua

By C. ROSS JOHNSON

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This happened when his serene about three feet from the ground, "I highness, Prince Carl of Barataria, was visiting his Britannic majesty's There was a sudden commotion in

possessions in New Guinea. He came—Prince Carl—in the Baratarian cruiser Konigin Hildebrande, and with him was a gorgeous staff plump and beautifully gilded over its plumposity. The Konigin Hildebrande

anchored off Port Moresby and waited for the British governor to arrive. Meanwhile the prince and his staff went ashore to have some shooting. They got it—after the continental fashion, which consists of blazing away at everything, sitting shots preferred. Not a bird could be seen around Port Moresby for some time afterward, but they brought many na

afterward, but they brought many back with them, big and little. And they called it sport. When the governor came in a little

excursion was planned to show the prince something of the interior. So the horses were saddled and early one morning they started.

The white servants of the prince were sent on ahead with natives carrying delicate viands and the camping gear, with instructions to await the main party at a certain place at midday.

For a short way the others could ride two abreast and after he had somewhat thawed Count Bierundonner found in Mr. O'Brien a fafrly congenial companion. O'Brien was the secretary for lands in British New Guinea, and, when a young man, had been to Barataria; so he and the count found a common subject of interest. Moreover, in the matter of women and wine their tastes were similar. At noon, tired and thirsty after his p

exertions, the prince heard with languid joy that they were near lunch. They soon struck the rendezvous and the Englishmen perspired freely when they beheld only one native sitting there, his swag beside him. Him they "W

rapidly questioned. As Mr. O'Brien afterward told his

chum, "Those damned Dutchmen had got lost, and after waiting some time the 'boys' concluded that they must be in the wrong place, so cleared off ahead."

The Englishmen raved and the gilded staff used Baratarian oaths that were 18 inches long and would sink in mercury. His serene highness sulked and looked anything but his title.

"Open his swag and see what he has got," said his excellency the British governor. "It is no good," and he gave vent to a lurid burst of blasphemy—"it is no good using bad language."

The swag contained but a few tins of meat and biscuits intended for the baser sort. The fowls and leg of goat and other delicacies, alas! were miles ahead. Months afterward in the whirl of a Baratarian ballroom the Count von Bierundonner confided to the beautiful Baroness von Homburg that he would never forget the sight of his royal master sitting in his shirt sleeves on a log, with a sheep's trotter in one hand and a ship's biscuit in the other, while he occasionally sipped muddy

It was strange that the principal figure should get lost without anyone noticing it, but being in a bad temper no one had felt particularly anxious to go near him and each concluded that he was with the other. His excellency hurried along the

path. It was a trying moment for him and his prophetic eye saw internationoal trouble in the near future. "Follow me," he said. He had already sent the natives out in different directions and the camp was resounding with the crack of riffe and gun to the unspeakable delight of small native boys. They wandered through the bush for nearly an hour. Then

suddenly they found him. There was a glimmer ahead from a hut in a small clearing. "Alec's place," said the governor. "He might know something."

They pushed open the door and entered. There was a flaring lamp in the dirty room. In one corner, gazing blankly at a figure at the rickety table, stood Alec—a negro from the Muritius. Over his shoulder peered his Papuan wife and Jimmy Japan, while Mac, a half-caste, stood on one bare foot and thoughtfully scratched his woolly poll. Seated on the table, dismally sucking two feet of sugarcane and glaring at his hosts, was the prince. His shirt was in rags and his fore was scratched and dirty, while two little pigs rubbed themselves

grunting against his spurs. "We thought your serene highness-"

"Would like something to eat," snapped the other.

Twenty minutes later a very disheveled and exhausted heir-apparent was helped into camp. He had gone through enough to tire a man—not to mention a prince.

Dinner was over and the prince seemed recovering. On the bank of the river O'Brien was in earnest conversation with the native corporal. "This place," said O'Brien to the

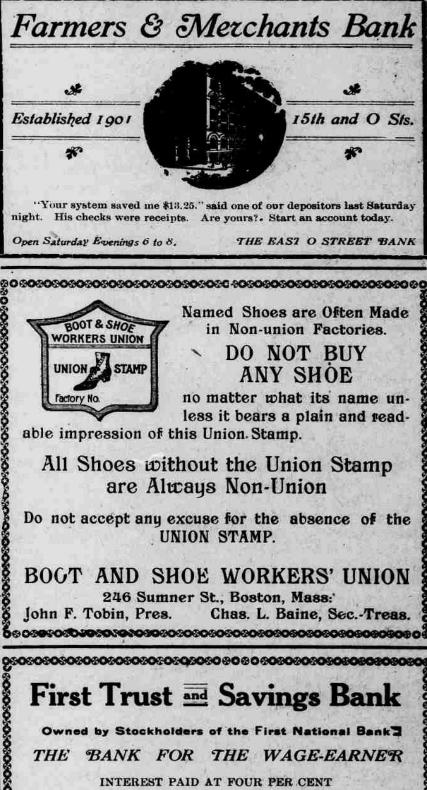
Count Bierundonner, who strolled up, "this place is the very devil for alligators."

"Du lieber Gott!" ejaculated the latter piously. "Yes; but you are all right in your hammock, you know. It's worse for me on the ground. It's only a few

yards from the river, you see, and they might sneak up and nip me." "What do you propose doing?" asked the count, much moved. "I shall put a barricade round my

bed; then they can only fool round outside and smell at me, but won't be able to get in."

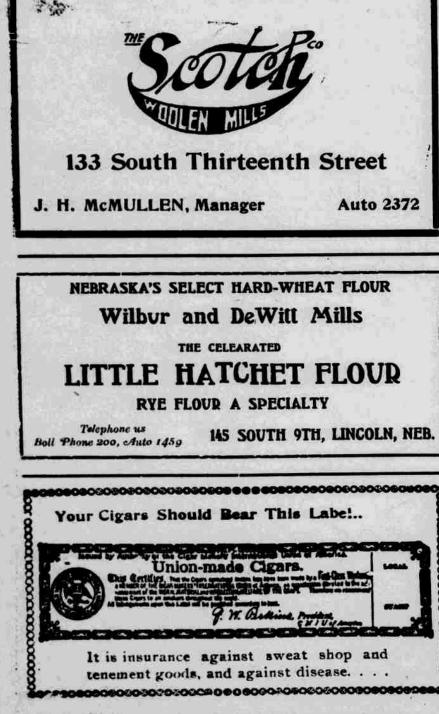
"Dear God," thought the count. "The monsters might climb this barricade and nip me." He seemed depressed, but, recollecting that he was a soldier, comported himself bravely. Tired out, every one turned in early.



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water out of a jam tin. "I hope," said his excellency polite-

ly, "that your serene highness' servants have come to no harm."

"Pray God they have broken their necks," said his serene highness with much earnestness, and pulled viciously at a small, red mustache. Mr. O'Brien and the native were sent rapidly forward to collect the carriers and see that they camped at the right place for the evening; also, incidentally, to find the "Dutchmen."

Chastened and resigned, the prince and his attendants rode slowly on. They crossed a stream and ascended a hill, but refrained from expressing any delight at the view, as was manifestly their duty. Capt. Freiherr von Kladerdatch rode under a lawyer vine, and was unable to keep his horse quiet. His remarks, which embraced the animal and vegetable kingdom. were comprehensive, and brought a tired smile to the careworn face of the prince. They passed the nipa palm hut of a south sea islander, and here. by common consent, they left their Christmas tree decorations.

The scrub was more open now, and, riding over a plain, the party scattered somewhat. His serene highness evinced alone, while his excellency discussed the anti-Semitic question with the chamberlain. Shortly after five they met Mr. O'Brien riding back. He had found most of the carriers and the three "Dutchmen"—the latter in a speechless and semi-paralytic condition. Joyfully they rode into camp, to find their flies pitched and fires burning.

"I am very sorry to say," said Mr. O'Brien to Count Blerundonner, "that the carrier with your tent and hammock cannot be found, but as I am accustomed to roughing it, I will be very glad if you will make use of mine. I have had your things put in," he added. "Impossible, my dear friend," said the other, and went on to explain how, being a soldier and the son of a soldier, he was inherently adapted to sleeping under a tree with his spurs for a pillow. But Mr. O'Brien was firm and overruled the count's objections. They entered the small fig.

"You see," said O'Brien, pointing to well-chosen the tightly stretched hammock swung its interrupte

The count watched with fascinated interest Mr. O'Brien's preparations for the night. This gentleman had collected everything he could lay his hands on and built them like a wall round where he lay, under the count's hammock—boxes, swags, biscuit tins and buckets. The count examined it critically and with a knowledge of strategy and the art of war.

"Look," he said: "I will move a little this box—so." "Thanks very much, old man," re-

plied Mr. O'Brien from inside. "Is it better now?"

"Yes," said the count, "yes—much better—for me," he muttered, as he crawled into his hammock. "The brutes might have come upstairs as it was," and he sank into a sweet sleep.

"Downstairs," O'Brien moved restlessly on his rugs. He was stiff after the unaccustomed ride, and the bed was hard. He dreamed that the prince was lost and that he was being led off to instant decapitation. He dozed off again and dreamed that the alligators were crawling up and sitting on his chest (tinned lobster). He awoke with a start and a yell. There was a crash-then something got him firmly by the arm. With a convulsive shrick he brought both legs together and put all his soul into one last kick. There was an answering shriek from above as the Count von Bierundonner, receiving the full force of the kick in the small of his back, was hurled bodily out of his hammock and landed groaning some yards outside the tent. The whole camp turned out in con-

"What's the matter?" queried Dallas, the private secretary, hurrying up with a lantern.

"An alligator," gasped O'Brien, who was pinned down with two boxes on his chest. "Save me, old chap. It has got me by the arm."

"An alligator," said Dallas. "You essence of an idiot! Why, you driveling ass, you have knocked over a bucket and the handle has closed over your arm. Get up, you juggins, and f will take your arm out."

Then an irate and scornful camp, after having told Mr. O'Brien exatly what it thought of him and provided for his future in a few powerful and well-chosen expressions, returned to its interrupted slumbers

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