

# INTO THE PRIMITIVE

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## SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—The story opens with the shipwreck of the steamer on which Miss Genevieve Leslie, an American heiress, Lord Winthrop, an Englishman, and Tom Blake, a brusque American, were passengers. The three were tossed upon an uninhabited island and were the only ones not drowned. Blake recovered from a drunken stupor.

CHAPTER II.—Blake, stunned on the boat, because of his roughness, became a hero as protector of the helpless pair. The Englishman was suing for the hand of Miss Leslie. Blake started to swim back to the ship to recover what was left.

CHAPTER III.—Blake returned safely. Winthrop wasted his last match on a cigarette, for which he was scolded by Blake. Their first meal was a dead fish.

CHAPTER IV.—The trio started a tent on a hill for higher land. Thrust attacked them. Blake was compelled to carry Miss Leslie on account of weariness. He taunted Winthrop.

CHAPTER V.—They entered the jungle. That night was passed roosting high in a tree.

CHAPTER VI.—The next morning they ascended to the open again. All three constructed huts to shield themselves from the sun. They then feasted on coconuts, the only procurable food. Miss Leslie showed a liking for Blake, but detested his roughness.

CHAPTER VII.—Led by Blake they established a home in some cliffs. Blake found a fresh water spring.

CHAPTER VIII.—Miss Leslie faced an unpleasant situation. They planned their campaign.

CHAPTER IX.—Blake recovered his revolver's magnifying glass, thus insuring the cliffs by burning a jungle fire, killing a large leopard and smothering several cubs.

CHAPTER X.—In the leopard's cavern they built a small home. They gained the cliffs by burning the bottom of a tree until it fell against the heights.

CHAPTER XI.—The trio secured eggs from the cliffs. Miss Leslie's white skirt was decided upon as a signal.

CHAPTER XII.—Miss Leslie made a cross from the leopard skin. Blake's efforts to kill antelopes failed.

CHAPTER XIII.—Overhearing a conversation between Blake and Winthrop, Miss Leslie became frightened.

CHAPTER XIV.—Blake was poisoned by a fish. Jackals attacked the camp that night, but were driven off by Genevieve. Blake returned, after nearly dying.

"Quick!—into the tree!" she called. Still frantic with terror, Winthrop struggled to his feet. She thrust him towards the baobab, and followed dragging the mass of interwoven bamboos. Emboldened by the retreat of their quarry, the snarling pack instantly began to close in. Fortunately they were too cowardly to rush at once, and fear spurred their intended victims to the utmost haste. Gropping and stumbling, the two felt their way to the baobab, and Miss Leslie pushed Winthrop headlong through the entrance. As he fell, she turned to face the pack.

The foremost beasts were at the rear edge of the bamboo framework their eyes close to the ground. In stinct told her that they were crouching to leap. With desperate strength she caught up the canopy before her like a great shield, and drew it in after her until the ends of the cross bars were wedged fast against the sides of the opening. Though it seemed so firm, she clung to it with a convulsive grasp as she felt the pack leaders fling themselves against the outer side.

But Blake had lashed the bamboos securely together, and none of the beasts was heavy enough to snap the supple bars. Finding that they could not break down the barrier, they began to scratch and tear at the thatch which covered the frame. Soon a pair of lean jaws thrust in and snapped at the girl's skirt. She sprang back with a cry: "Help! Quick, Mr. Winthrop! They're breaking through!"

Winthrop made no response. She stooped, and found him lying inert where he had fallen. She had only herself to depend upon. A screen of sharp sticks which she had made for the entrance was leaning against the inner wall, within easy reach. To grasp it and thrust it against the other framework was the work of an instant.

Still she trembled, for the eager beasts had ripped the thatch from the canopy, and their intrust jaws made short work of the few leaves on her screen. Unaware that even a lion or a tiger is quickly discouraged by the knife-like splinters of broken bamboo, she expected every moment that the jackals would bite their way through her frail barrier.

She remembered the sharpened stakes of her screen, hidden under the leaves and grass of her bed. She groped her way across the hollow, and uncovered one of the stakes. In her haste she cut her hand on its razor-like edge. All unheeding, she sprang back towards the entrance. She was none too soon. One of the smaller jackals had forced its head and one leg between the bars, and was struggling to enlarge the opening.

Fearful that the whole pack was about to burst in upon her, the girl grasped the bamboo stake in both hands, and began stabbing and lunging at the beast with all her strength. The jackal squirmed and snarled and snapped viciously. But the girl was now frantic. She pressed nearer, and though the white teeth grazed her wrist, she drove home a thrust that changed the beast's snarls into a howl of pain. Before she could strike again, it had struggled back out of the hole, beyond reach.

Tense and panting with excitement, she leaned forward, ready to stab at the next beast. None appeared, and presently she became aware that the pack had been daunted by the experience of their unlucky fellow. Their snarls and yells had subsided to whines, which seemed to be coming from a greater distance. Still she waited, with the bamboo stake upraised ready to strike, every nerve and muscle of her body tense with the strain.

So great was the stress of her fear and excitement that she had not heard the first gray lessening of the dawn came streaming out of the east in all its red effulgence. Above and through the bamboo barrier glowed a light such as might have come from a great fire on the cliff top. Still tense and immovable, the girl stared out up the cleft. There was not a jackal in sight. She leaned forward and peered around, unable to believe such good fortune. But the night prowlers had slunk off in the first gray dawn.

The girl drew in a deep, shuddering sigh, and sank back. Her hand struck against Winthrop's foot. She turned about quickly and looked at him. He was lying upon his face. She hastened to turn him upon his side, and to feel his forehead. It was cool and moist. He was fast asleep and drenched with sweat. The great shock of his pain and fear and excitement had broken his fever.

With the relief and joy of this discovery, the girl completely relaxed. Not observing Winthrop's wounds, which had bled little, she sought to force a way out through the entrance. It was by no means an easy task to free the wedged framework, and when, after much pulling and pushing, she at last tore the mass loose, she found herself perspiring no less freely than Winthrop.

She was far too preoccupied, however, to consider what this might mean. Her first thought was of a fire. She ran to her rude stone fireplace and raked over the ashes. They were still warm, but there was not a live ember among them. Yet she realized that Winthrop must have hot food when he awakened, and Blake had carried with him the magnifying glass. For a little she stood hesitating. But the defeat of the jackals had given her courage and resolution such as she had never before known. She returned into the cave, and chose the sharpest of her stakes. Having made certain that Winthrop was still asleep, she set off boldly down the cleft.

At the first turn she came upon Blake's thorn barricade. It stretched across the narrowest part of the cleft in an impenetrable wall, 12 feet high. Only in the center was a gap, which could have been filled by Blake in less than two hours' work. The girl's eyes brightened. She herself could gather the thorn-brush and fill the gap before night. They no longer need fear the jackals or even the larger beasts of prey. None the less, they must have fire.

Spurred on by the thought, she was about to spring through the barricade when she heard the tread of feet on the path beyond. She crouched down, and peered through the tangle of brush in the edge of the gap. Less than ten paces away Blake was plodding heavily up the trail. She stepped out before him.

"You—your! Are you alive?" she gasped.

"Live? You bet your boots!" came back the grim response. "You bet I'm alive—though I had to go Jonah one better to do it. The whale heaved him up; I heaved up the whale—and it took about a barrel of sea water to do it."

"Sea-water?"

"Sure . . . I tumbled over twice on the way. But I made the beach. Lord! how I pumped in the briny deep! Guess I won't go into details—but if you think you know anything about seasickness—Whew! Lucky for yours truly, the tide was just starting out, and the wind off shore. I'd fallen in the water, and the Jonah business laid me out cold. Didn't know anything until the tide came up again and soured me."

"I am very glad you're not dead. But how you must have suffered! You are still white, and your face is all creased."

Blake attempted a careless laugh. "Don't worry about me. I'm here, O. K., all that's left—a little wobbly on my pins, but hungry as a shark. But say, what's up with you? You're sweating like a— Good thing, though. It'll stave off your spell of fever a while. How'd you happen to be coming down here so early?"

"I was starting to find you."

"Me!"

"Not you—that is, I thought you were dead. I was going to make certain, and to—to get the burning glass."

"Um-m. I see. Let the fire go out, eh?"

"Do not blame me, Mr. Blake! I was so ill and worn out, and I've paid for it twice over, really I have. Didn't those awful beasts attack you?"

"Beasts? How's that?" he demanded. "Oh, but you must have heard them! The horrid things tried to kill us!" she cried, and she poured out a half incoherent account of all that had happened since he left.

Blake listened intently, his jaw thrust out, his eyes glowing upon her with a look which she had never before seen in any man's eyes. But his first comment had nothing to do with her conduct.

"How's that?—sorry Win got roused out of his nice little snooze—Why, don't you know, we'd been all alone in our glory by tonight if it hadn't been for those brutes. He was in the stupor, and that would have been the end of him if the beasts hadn't stirred him up so lively. I've heard of such a thing before, but I always thought it was a fake. Here you are sweating, too."

"I feel much better than yesterday. I did not tell you, but I have felt ill for nearly a week."

"Fraid to tell, eh?—and you were so scared over the beasts— Scared! By Jiminy, you've got grit, little woman! There's two kinds of scaredness. You've got the Stonewall Jackson kind. If anybody asks you, just refer them to Tommy Blake."

"Thank you, Mr. Blake. But should we not hasten back now to prepare something for Mr. Winthrop?"

"Ditto for yours truly. I'm like that sepulchre you read about—white outside, and within nothing but bare bones and emptiness."

## CHAPTER XV.

### With Bow and Club.

THE fire was soon re-lit, and a pot of meat set on to stew. It had ample time to simmer. Winthrop was wrapped in a life-giving sleep, out of which he did not awaken until evening, while Blake, unable to wait for the pot to boil, and nauseated by the fishy odor of the dried seaweed, hunted on the jerked leopard meat, and having devoured enough to satisfy a native, fell asleep under a bush.

The sun was half down the sky when he sat up and looked around, wide awake the moment he opened his eyes. Miss Leslie was quietly placing an armful of sticks on the fuel heap beside the baobab.

"Hello, Miss Jenny! Hard at it, I see," he called cheerfully.

"Hush!" she cautioned. "Mr. Winthrop is still asleep."

"Good thing for him. He'll need all of that he can get."

"Then you think—"

"Well, between you and me, I don't believe Win was built for the tropics. This fever of his, coming on so soon, wouldn't have hit nine men in ten half so hard. He's bound to have another spell in a month or two, and—"

"But cannot we possibly get away from here before then? Is there no way? Surely, you are so resourceful—"

"Nothing doing, Miss Jenny! Give me tools, and I'd engage to turn out a sea-going boat. But as it is, the only thing I could do would be to fire-burn a log. That would take two or three months, and in the end we'd have a lop-sided canoe that'd live about half a second in one of those tropic squalls."

"Do not the natives sail in canoes?"

"Maybe they do, and they make fire by rubbing sticks. We don't."

"But what can we do?"

"Take our medicine, and wait for a ship to show up."

"But we have no medicine."

"Have no— Say, Miss Jenny, you really ought to have stayed home from boarding-school and England long enough to learn your own language. I mean, we've got to take what's coming to us, without laying down or grouching. Both are the worst things out for malaria."

"You mean that we must resign ourselves to this intolerable situation—that we must calmly sit here and wait until the fever—"

"No; I'll take care we don't sit around very much. We'll go on the hike, soon as Win can wobble. Which reminds me, I've got a little hike on hand now. I'm going to close up that barricade before dark. Me for a quiet night!"

Without waiting for a reply, he took his weapons, and swung briskly away down the cleft.

He returned a few minutes before sunset, with what appeared to be a large fur bag upon his back. Miss Leslie was pouring a bowl of broth from the stew-pot, and did not notice him until he sang out to her: "Hey, Miss Jenny, spill over that stuff! No more of that in ours!"

"It's for Mr. Winthrop. He has just awakened," she replied, still intent on her pouring.

"And you'd kill him with that slop! Heave it over. He's going to have beef juice."

"Oh! what's that on your back? You've killed an antelope!"

"Sure! Bushback, I guess they call him. Sneaked up when he was drinking, and stuck an arrow into his side. He jumped off a little way, and turned to see what'd hit him. I hauled off and put the second arrow right through his eye into his brain. Neatest thing you ever saw."

"You surely are becoming a splendid archer!"

"Yes; Jim dandy! I could do it again about once in 10,000 shots. All the same, I've raked in this peacherino. Trot out your grill and we'll have something fit to eat."

"You spoke of beef juice."

"I've a dozen steaks ready to broil. Slap 'em on the fire, and I'll squeeze out enough juice with my fist to do Win for to-night."

He made good his assertion, using

several of the steaks, which, having lost less than half their juices in the process, were eaten with great relish by Miss Leslie and himself.

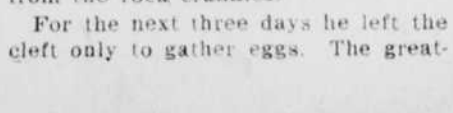
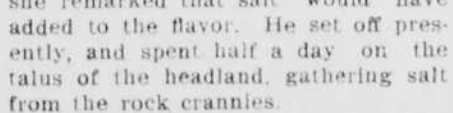
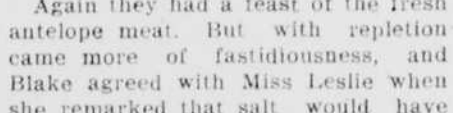
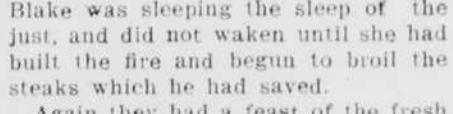
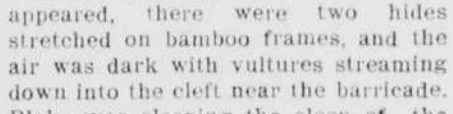
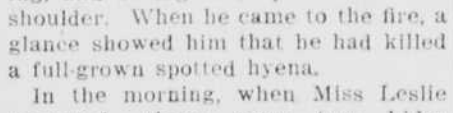
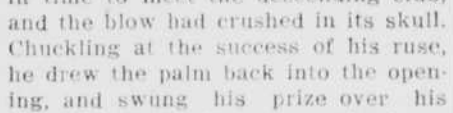
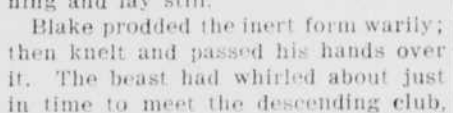
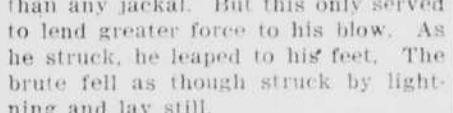
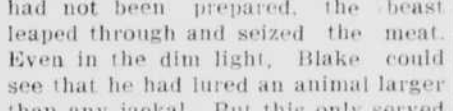
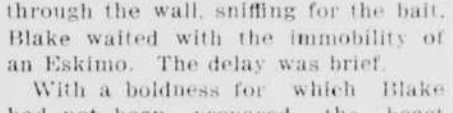
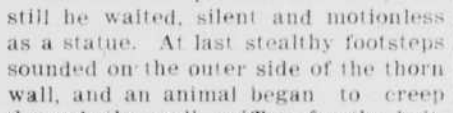
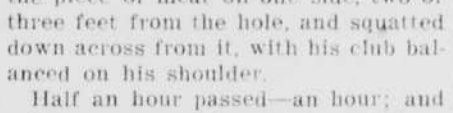
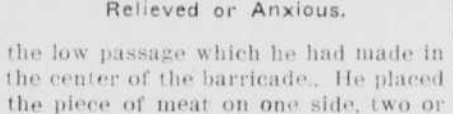
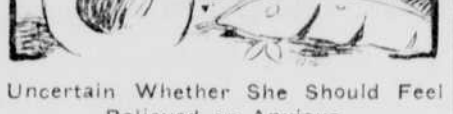
Winthrop, after drinking the stimulating beef juice and a quantity of hot water, turned over and fell asleep again while Blake was dressing his wounds. None of these was serious of itself; but Blake knew the danger of infection in the tropics, and carefully washed out the gashes before applying the tallow salve which Miss Leslie had tried out from the antelope fat.

The dressing was completed by torchlight. Blake then rolled the sleeper into a comfortable position, took the torch from Miss Leslie, and left the cave, pausing at the entrance to mutter a gruff good-night. The girl murmured a response, but watched him anxiously as he passed out. A step beyond the entrance he paused and turned again. In the red glare of the torch, his face took on an expression that filled her with fright. Shrouded by the gloom of the hollow, she drew back to her bed, and without turning her eyes away from him, groped for one of her bamboo stakes.

But before she could arm herself, she saw Blake stoop over and grasp with his free hand the mass of interwoven bamboos. He straightened himself, and the framework swung lightly up and over, until it stood on end across the cave entrance. The girl stole around and peered out at him. He had spread open the antelope skin, and was beginning to slice the meat for drying. Though his forehead was furrowed, his expression was by no means sinister. Relieved at the thought that the light must have deceived her, she returned to her bed and was soon sleeping as soundly as Winthrop.

Blake stung the greater part of the meat on the drying racks, built a smudge fire beneath, and stretched the antelope skin on a frame. This done, he took his club and a small piece of bloody meat, and walked stealthily down the cleft to the barricade. Quiet as his approach, it was met by a warning yelp on the farther side of the thorny wall, and he could hear the scurry of fleeing animals.

He kept on until the barricade loomed up before him in the starlight. From cliff to cliff the wall now stretched across the gorge without hole or gap. But Blake grasped the trunk of a young date-palm which projected from the barricade near the bottom, and pushed it out. The displacement of the spiky fronds disclosed



er part of his time was spent in tanning the hyena and antelope skins. Meantime Miss Leslie continued to nurse Winthrop and to gather firewood. Under Blake's directions, she also purified the salt by dissolving it in a pot of water, and allowing the dirt to settle, when the clarified solution was poured off and evaporated over the fire in one of the earthenware pans.

At first Winthrop had been too weak to sit up. But treated to a liberal diet of antelope broth, raw eggs, hot water, and coconut milk, he gained strength faster than Blake had expected. On the fourth day Blake set him to work on the final rubbing of the new skins; on the fifth, he ordered him to go for eggs.

Much to Miss Leslie's surprise, Winthrop started off without a word of protest. All his peevish irritability had gone with the fever, and the girl was gratified to see the quiet manner in which he set about a task which seemed an imposition upon his half-recovered strength. But the very motive, seemingly, prevented him from protesting, impelled her to speak for him.

"Mr. Blake!" she exclaimed, "Mr. Winthrop is going off without a word; but I can't endure it! You have no right to send him on such an errand. It will kill him!"

Blake met her indignant look with a sober stare.

"What if it does?" he said. "Better for him to die in the gallant service of his fellows, than to sit here and rot. Eh, Win?"

"Do not trouble yourself, Miss Genevieve. I hope I shall pull through all right. If not—"

"No, you shall not! I'll go myself!"

"See here, Miss Leslie," said Blake, somewhat sternly; "who's got the responsibility of keeping you two alive for the next month or so? I've been in the tropics before, and I know something of the way people have to live to get out again. I'm trying to do my best, and I tell you straight, if you won't mind me, I'm going to make you, no matter how much it hurts your feelings. You see how nice and meek Win takes his orders. I explained matters to him last night—"

"I assure you, Blake, you shall have no cause for complaint as to my conduct," muttered Winthrop. "I should like to observe, however, that in speaking to Miss Leslie—"

"There you are again, with your everlasting talk. Cut it out, and get busy. To-morrow we all go on a hike to the river."

As Winthrop started off, Blake turned to Miss Leslie, with a good-natured grin.

"You see, it's this way, Miss Jenny—he began. He caught her look of disdain, and his face darkened. "Mad, eh? So that's the racket!"

"Mr. Blake, I will not have you talk to me in that way. Mr. Winthrop is a gentleman, but nothing more to me than a friend such as any young woman—"

"That settles it! I'll take your word for it, Miss Jenny," broke in Blake, and springing up, he set about his work, whistling.

The girl gazed at his broad back and erect head, uncertain whether she should feel relieved or anxious. The more she thought the matter over, the more uncertain she became, and the more she wondered at her uncertainty. Could it be possible that she was becoming interested in a man who, if her ears had not deceived her— But no! That could not be possible!

Yet what a ring there was to his voice!—so clear and tonic after Winthrop's precise, modulated drawl. And her countryman's firmness! He could be rude if need be; but he would make her do what he thought was best for her health. Was it not possible that she had misunderstood his words on the cliff, and so misjudged—wronged—him?—that Winthrop, so eager to stipulate for her hand— But then Winthrop had more than confirmed her dreadful conclusions taken from Blake's words, and Winthrop was an English gentleman—

She ended in a state of utter bewilderment.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### The Savage Manifest.

AS WINTHROPE had succeeded in dragging himself to and from the headland without a collapse, the following morning, as soon as the dew was dry, Blake called out all hands for the expedition. He was in the best of humors, and showed unexpected consideration by presenting Winthrop with a cane, which he had cut and trimmed during the night.

Having sent Miss Leslie to fill the whisky flask with spring water, he dropped three coconut-shell bowls, a piece of meat and a lump of salt into one of the earthenware pots, and slung all over his shoulder in the antelope skin. With his bow hung over the other shoulder, knife and arrows in his belt, and his big club in his hand, he looked ready for any contingency.

"We'll hit first for the mouth of the river," he said. "I'm going on ahead. If I'm not in sight when you come up, pick a tree where the ground is dry, and wait."

"But I say, Blake," replied Winthrop, "I see animals over in the coppices, and you should know that I am physically unable—"

"Nothing but antelope," interrupted Blake. "I've seen them enough now to know them twice as far off. And you can bet on it they'd not be there if any dangerous beast was in smelling distance."

"That is so clever of you, Mr.

Blake," remarked Miss Leslie. "Simple enough when you happen to think of it," responded Blake. "Yes; the only thing you've got to look out for's the ticks in the grass. They'll keep you interested. They bit me up in great shape."

He scowled at the recollection, nodded by way of emphasis, and was off like a shot. The edge of the plain beneath the cliff was strewn with rocks, among which, even with Miss Leslie's help, Winthrop could pick his way but slowly. Before they were clear of the rough ground, they saw Blake disappear among the mangroves.

The ticks proved less annoying than they had apprehended after Blake's warning. But when they approached the mouth of the river, they were alarmed to hear, above the roar of the surf, loud snorting, such as could only be made by large animals. Fearful lest Blake had roused and angered some forest beast, they veered to the right and ran to hide behind a clump of thorns. Winthrop sank down exhausted the moment they reached cover; but Miss Leslie crept to the far end of the thicket and peered around.

"Oh, look here!" she cried. "It's a whole herd of elephants trying to cross the river mouth where we did, and they're being drowned, poor things!"

"Elephants?" panted Winthrop, and he dragged himself forward beside her. "Why, so there are; quite a drove of the beasts. Yet, I must say, they appear smaller—ah, yes; see their heads. They must be the hippos Blake saw."

"Those ugly creatures? I once saw some at the zoo. Just the same, they will be drowned. Some are right in the surf!"

"I can't say, I'm sure, Miss Genevieve, but I have an idea that the beasts are quite at home in the water. I fancy they enjoy surf bathing as keenly as ourselves."

"I do believe you are right. There is one going in from the quiet water, but look at those funny little ones on the backs of the others!"

"Must be the baby hippos," replied Winthrop, indifferently. "If you please, I'll take a pull at the flask. I am very dry."

When he had half emptied the flask, he stretched out in the shade to doze. But Miss Leslie continued to watch the movements of the snorting hippos, amused by the ponderous antics of the grown ones in the surf, and the comic appearance of the barrel-like infants as they mounted the backs of their obese mothers.

Presently Blake came out from among the mangroves, and walked across to the beach, a few yards away from the huge bathers. To all appearances, they paid as little attention to him as he to them. Miss Leslie glanced about at Winthrop. He was fast asleep. She waited a few moments to see if the hippopotami would attack Blake. They continued to ignore him, and gaining courage from their indifference, she stepped out from behind the thicket, and advanced to where Blake was crouched on the beach. When she came up, she saw beside him a heap of oysters, which he was opening in rapid succession.

"Hello! You're just in time to help," he called. "Where's Win?"

"Asleep behind those bushes."

"Worst thing he could do. But lend a hand, and we'll shuck these oysters before rusting him out. You can rinse those I've opened. Fill the pot with water, and put them in to soak."

"They look very tempting. How did you chance to find them?"

"Saw 'em on the mangrove roots at low tide, first time I nosed around here. Tide was well up to-day; but I managed to get these all right with a little diving. Only trouble, the skeets most ate me alive."

Miss Leslie glanced at her companion's dry clothing, and came back to the oysters themselves. "These look very tempting. Do you like them raw?"

"Can't say I like them much any way, as a rule. But if I did, I wouldn't eat this mess raw."

"Yes?"

"This must be the dry season here, and the river is running mighty clear. Just the same it's nothing more than liquid malaria. We'll not eat these oysters till they've been pasteurized."

"If the water is so dangerous, I fear we will suffer before we can return," replied Miss Leslie, and she held up the flask.

"What?" exclaimed Blake. "Half gone already? That was Winthrop."

"He was very thirsty. Could we not boil a potful of the river water?"

"Yes, when the ebb gets strong, if we run too dry. First, though, we'll make a try for coconuts. Let's hit out for the nearest grove now. The main thing is to keep moving."

As he spoke, Blake caught up the pot and his club and started for the thorn clump, leaving the skin, together with the meat and the salt, for Miss Leslie to carry. Winthrop was awakened by a touch of Blake's foot, and all three were soon walking away from the seashore,