



A Split Second Later He Was Sprawling on the Deck.

Slippery Eels

By James J. Montague

THE whistle had blown, the gong had sounded. From his post by the gang plank a sailor man had repeatedly cried "All ashore that's going ashore," and turned away to other duties. The captain and his subordinates were on the bridge, and the engineer himself presumably stood by the throttle, for this was a small liner and required no gold braid on the engine room or costly fittings of tug boats to swing her out into the stream. Deep within the belly of the craft sounded a gong, and on deck one felt a slight tremor. Obviously we were on our way.

Looking toward the shore I observed a human figure approaching, and gesticulating as it approached. Its occupant wasted no breath in sound, but applied himself only to the serious and obviously important business of joining our vessel before it was everlastingly too late. He ran low to the ground, only glancing up now and then to note how wide a gap the ship had opened between her and himself. There was perhaps four or five feet to clear when he set his right foot on the string piece. While the passengers stood gasping, the runner slightly coiled his figure, then opened it swiftly out and took off. A split second later he was sprawling on the deck, engaged in a violent effort to regain the breath that had been knocked out of him by his contact with the deck.

Presently he succeeded in this highly important undertaking, and looked up, at first in repudiation at the bridge, afterward curiously at those of us who stood near his allighting place. His eye met mine. After a second look to make sure he said, slowly and painfully:

"Always late, ain't it?" "But this time you at least managed to arrive," I said, while the spectators, having been deprived of the spectacle of a man plunging into the uttermost depths of the harbor had begun to walk slowly away.

"Yep," said the informal visitor, "I'm improvin'." He was, indeed, for he was a regular member of the crew, and that meant a job at least as long as it required the ship to journey from New York to Savannah. And for this young man that was considerable.

The next day I found him engaged in polishing the brass work and other shining metal trimmings on the boat deck. Anxious to learn where and how he had occupied himself since we last had foregathered on another ship and in another port, I inquired of him if it would be too violative of ship's discipline if he dropped in on me in my room during his watch below. He said that it could be managed, and that night he arrived, bearing in a newspaper under his arm a package which it would be permissible to open after we passed the ten-mile limit.

Having nothing of any import to tell about himself, I asked him to pick up his story from the time I had last seen him, almost on the other side of the world.

I listed my questions in the order of their importance.

"What had become of the whale farming enterprise?"

"Had he got any steamship magazine to listen to his scheme to have a trout pool, and a thicker for grouse shooting on a great lake?"

"Had he perfected his fire lap to the mile track so that small motor cars could be raced on ship board during a voyage?"

"And had he pursued any further his researches into the possible usefulness of electric eels?"

"All of 'em was fops but the eel idea," he said. "And that would of been all right if I'd of had sense enough to get out in time. An' you can't hang that on me very hard, for look at all them birds in the stock market who thought a good thing was goin' to last forever. Where are they now?"

"But what about the eels?" I insisted.

"Well, I was wrong about one thing, an' that was that you could

You can't get away from the fact that the juice is in 'em, but gittin' it out an' makin' it of commercial use was the trouble."

"About five years ago when I was in the tropics I stepped off the freighter I was servin' on without speakin' to the skipper about it, an' got some boys ashore to show me where these here eels was doin' their stuff. After giffin' for 'em for three weeks I had enough to start, an' build me a pond so I could get them at work. But I ain't no engineer, an' though I tried every way I could think of to get the juice out of them wriggling fish an' into a storage battery, it wasn't no good."

"But I ain't no quitter. What does a promoter do when a scheme blows up on him? I says to myself, 'He outloads it onto somebody else' I answers back. An' that was what I started out to do. I got a feller who runs a newspaper down in one of them island towns to do my printin' for me, an' we sent out circulars about our eel farm, an' how before very long all the machinery in them parts would be run by eel power, an' when a eel give out, which he seldom done, you could get enough meat off of him to pay all the overhead."

"By an' by I got a few bites from people who lived on some of the big islands, but most of 'em wanted to know how they was to tell if these was real electric eels I had to sell, or just common eels without no kick into 'em. So I wrote 'em all that if they would get somebody on my island that they knew an' trusted to see a demonstration I'd prove that my eels was the real McCoy an' would supply power as advertised. By that time it struck me it might be a good plan to find out something myself about them fish before I took a chance on a public exhibition."

"Well, I got some ship engineers, an' other educated fellers to come an' see the rest, an' to bring compasses along which would point to any place, an' so prove eels was electrical. An' blast me if ary eel made the least impression on any compass you could rig—not even on a magnetized needle floatin' on a crock in a basin of water."

"Of course I didn't want to be stuck with a lot of useless eels on my hands, so I did what anybody else would of done in my place. I advertised in newspapers in countries thousands of miles away—countries where they didn't have no electric power, but needed it bad. An' by an' by I began to get letters of inquiry, and not only that but letters with money in 'em. I kept up supplyin' 'em with information about our plant an' how we was improvin' the breed of eels, an' how before five years you could send eels all over the world to run little local electrical machinery, an' the money come in so fast that I figured I had my fortune all made."

"An' then one day a quiet little feller comes along an' asks to see the eels work. I tried to stall him off, but he insisted, so I took a chance and let him come to the plant. He just looked at my stock once, an' then says: 'What country does this island belong to?'"

"Well, I told him. What else could I do? An' the next week a cablegram come to the main office, an' a bunch of local cops come out an' looked me over an' give me two days to get out of the place an' take my eels with me. What do you think of that?"

"Here I was doin' what many a supposed big business man has done, an' I got kicked practically off the ocean for it, an' had to go back to work as a deck hand. It ain't right, I tell you. No wonder there's so many Reds an' Soviets and things growin' up all around us."

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Landing Fields Close Together
Landing fields and airports in the United States mathematically average only 13 1/2 miles apart, according to figures received by the operations department of Eastern Air Lines from the Bureau of Air Commerce. There are 2,297 landing fields and 30,000 miles of air routes over which fly passengers, air mail and express planes day and night. Of the total number, the Bureau of Air Commerce estimates the landing

Uncommon Sense

By JOHN BLAKE
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It has been a long time since parents believed that it was the duty of a school teacher, entrained with the education of young people to "lick 'em, an' larn 'em."

I am told that corporal punishment is nonexistent in the schools today.

In my time it was pretty prevalent, too much so for the happiness of myself and my fellow pupils.

But I do not believe it ever did any good.

Today, the teachers' profession, while still not paid as highly as it should be, is the most important calling in any civilized country.

The teachers themselves have been taught scientifically. They know better how to gain and hold the attention of their pupils.

They are more tolerant with dullards, who, from no fault of their own, are slow to learn.

School teaching is a highly important business.

It is important because it arouses in the minds of young people a desire for knowledge.

Convince a youngster that the more he knows, the happier, and, probably, the more successful he will be, and more than half the battle is accomplished.

The teachers in this country are very well paid, according to the old standards.

But they are not as well paid as chauffeurs, or horse trainers, or baseball players, whose value to the world is very much less than their own.

Today, fortunately in this country, education is compulsory.

But compulsory or voluntary, you must want it, or you will not get it.

You must be interested and ambitious, and determined to get out of yourself the best results possible.

Otherwise the time you have spent in learning will be of no possible use to you.

In these days of colleges and educational institutions of all kinds it is getting harder and harder for a half-taught boy or girl to get any position at all.

This has been especially evident in the last year or so.

But those who suffer the least from the conditions out of which we are now passing are those who have used their opportunities to stock their minds.

If every young man or woman, starting out in life knew exactly in what direction to go, there would not be nearly so many failures in life.

But unfortunately, what one wants to do, and what one can do best, are not always the same. If you asked the average high school girl today what her chosen walk in life would be, she would probably tell you that she would rather be a motion picture actress than anything else.

And one time out of a hundred, a motion picture actress' life might be open to her if she worked hard.

In the other ninety-nine cases, if she persisted and got as far as Hollywood, the result would only be disappointment, perhaps tragedy.

The people who do not know what they want to do are still in a majority, and they are to be pitied. They may have real intelligence and ability, sometimes actual talent.

But if they try this thing and that, and are hoping that some new opportunity will turn up to give them a chance, their whole life may be wrecked.

Today conditions of this kind are not so serious as they used to be.

There are wider opportunities for women. Indeed, in many cases, women are doing the same kind of work that men are and gaining fame and fortune.

But these are exceptions. What the average girl ought to do is to get married and have a family of her own.

And that is what she usually does, if she has the chance. But if the chance doesn't come along, and it often doesn't, the future looks very dark.

But the clouds are not so menacing as they were.

You find shops of all kinds, once operated only by men, with women at their head, often the owners of the place.

One of the largest chain of restaurants in New York is run by a woman, with great success.

Women have wide opportunities when they go to work in big department stores, and often earn salaries that would put some of their male workers in the shade.

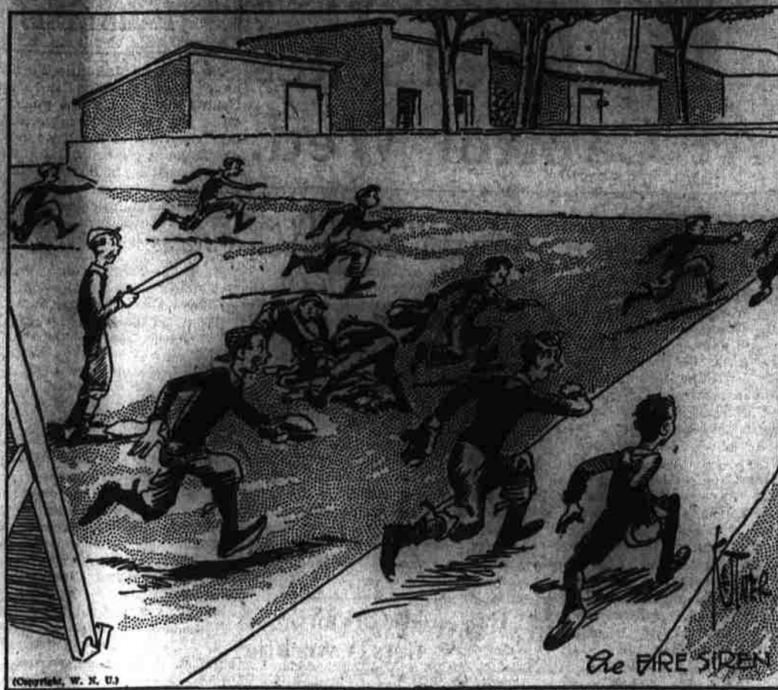
And all this has been accomplished within the last twenty or thirty years.

And as a result men is beginning to find out that the words "superior" are an overstatement.

Women in fact are quite able to look out for themselves, and many

OUR COMIC SECTION

Events in the Lives of Little Men



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Wind Out of Her Sails



Charing Cross' Name
Up to the time of Charing Cross stood among the fields in London. The name was derived from the Saxon word "charing," meaning a turning. In the reign of Edward I erected at Charing Cross, the last of 18 crosses which marked the route of the funeral procession of his wife, Eleanor, from Grantham, Lincolnshire, to Westminster. A modern memorial stands in the Charing Cross station yard. It will be remembered that Eleanor journeyed with Edward I to the Holy Land and sucked the poison from a wound dealt her husband by a Moor.

Longest Lease on Record
Without parallel is a lease for 20,881 years that is held on a farm in the old parish of Kirkhill, Scotland. Drawn up about 200 years ago, reports Collier's Weekly, it was declared to be legal and valid by the highest Scottish court when the government attempted to confiscate the land after the Jacobite rebellion of 1745.

Starlings Are Mockers
The Bureau of Biological Survey says that the starling belongs to a different family Sturnidae from the mocking bird family Mimidae; however, almost all members of the starling family are mockers. The starling has been known in England to imitate as many as 53 bird songs.

Once Under Sea
Early in the formation of this continent the interior lowlands of North America were under sea. When the water receded, there were left layers of sedimentary rock. In most areas the main drainage was on the surface, cutting what was once a level ocean floor into its present contours.

Giantism Among Animals
Giantism exists among animals as among men. The famous Lincolnshire ox exhibited in London in 1790 stood five feet six inches at the shoulder and was nearly twelve feet in length. It is said to have weighed two tons eighteen hundred-weight.

First English Colony
The first English colony in North America was established on Roanoke Island August 17, 1585. It is within a few miles of Kill Devil hill, marked by a monument commemorating the Wright brothers' first flight in an airplane.

Chinese "Fu" Dogs
The dogs which appear in Chinese sculpture and art are known as "fu" dogs. Their origin is unknown, but one of the meanings of the word "fu" in Chinese is "good luck," and they probably have a good omen symbolism.

SMILES

HARDLY EXPECTED

"I want to be honest, sir. I can't support your daughter, but she has her heart set on marrying me."
"Never mind; do your best. I can't support her either."—Kansas City Star.

Too Much Imagination
"What is your idea of Utopia?"
"It's an imaginary state of existence," said Senator Sorghum, "is liable to fall down if you finance it with imaginary money."

Probably Not That Quickly
How quickly could a national referendum on declaring war be taken? Before the Japanese could move from San Francisco to Denver?

And How!
"Can your daughter play the violin?"
"No, she can't; but she does!"

Perpetual Motion
Teacher—My goodness, Willie! How did you get such dirty hands?
Willie—Washin' my face.

