

THE LAND OF "PRETTY SOON."

I know of a land where the streets are paved With the things which we meant to achieve, It is walled with the money we meant to have saved; And the pleasure for which we grieve. The kind words unspoken, the promises broken. And many a coveted boon Are stowed away there in that land some- where— The land of "Pretty Soon."

THE LONG SPARK.

The big day finally arrived—the day on which we were to start for the island to pitch our tents for the summer camp. Doc laughed. "Well," he said: "going camping is a thing that most boys can't resist. Anyway, that young man Velky has a good look, and he can be depended upon, I believe. I'm sure they will come, but we will not wait for them. Write a note, Hawkins, and leave it where they will find it, and tell them that they are to come to the island and land on the sandy beach. They will have no trouble finding us, for we won't be far from that spot." I wrote a note, as Doc had ordered, and after all the boys had gone down to the river I locked the clubhouse and tacked the note on the door. Then I followed the others down to the old landing. It was a beautiful sight—the canoes dancing on the water, the boys all happy and laughing, as they shoved off and bore down on their paddles, waiting the signal from Doc to start. And one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen was the red motor boat that Jeckerson had brought. It was brand new and shiny—and longer than most motor boats that we had ever seen on this river. Doc waved his hand and shouted to the first canoe, in which were Dick Ferris, Shadow, Loomis and Jerry Moore. They drove their paddles into the water, and our trip to the island began. We went in single file, and by the way the boys laughed and shouted while they paddled I knew they were all in a happy frame of mind. But somehow, while I too felt happy over the prospect of a few weeks camping out, there was something on my mind that made me a bit uneasy. I turned around to Perry Stokes, who was in the canoe with me. "Perry," I said, "you don't happen to feel uneasy, do you? Sort of like something is goin' to happen?" Perry's eyes widened. "No, sir I do not," he said: "do you feel that way, Hawkins?" "Oh, I'm always fearing things, I suppose," I said, and then I turned back to my paddling and said no more until we reached the island. The old sandy beach looked bright and sparkling in the sunlight; the great trees lifted their green-fringed tops into the opal sky and made a lace border around the beautiful picture wherein we were to pitch our tents, and where there was to happen some of the most exciting adventures that I have ever experienced. There were four tents—the old big one, in which we boys were to live; the old kitchen tent, and two new ones. Doc explained that the two new ones were for Jeckerson and the young man who was to look after Herman and Fiddler. The old big tent we boys took care of, and it was a surprise to find that it had been somewhat changed. Instead of a wooden tent poles Doc had bought a steel frame work which insured sufficient strength to weather all storms, no matter how high the wind might be. "Iron is stronger than wood," said Doc, as we began to lay out the tent. While we were at work the sound of a motor boat caused us to pause and turn our eyes toward the river. Coming from below the island was a white launch, and upon its nose flew the flag of the Black Lion. There were four boys in it; the one at the wheel I knew by the way in which he wore his cap pulled sharply down over his right eye. His companions, however, I had never seen before. They all stood in the boat, and I could see that the three were much taller than the Black Lion boy. They landed upon the sandy beach, and came up to where we were working. "Hello," sang out the Black Lion boy, in a cheerful voice, and he smiled. "Making a camp?" "Yes," I answered, eying him carefully. "Any objections?" "Ah!" he exclaimed. "I hope you don't feel that way about it. I am sorry we ever had any hard words, Hawkins—" "So am I," I broke in. "I don't like hard words, boy. I don't like quarrels." "You see," he continued, "I always wanted to be a friend of yours. It just happened that we always met when I had business with my enemies. It put a bad look on things for me, didn't it?" "I don't look at it that way," I said: "you know your own business, I guess." He laughed and shook his head.

"I hope we can be friends," he said; "there's no reason for us to be on the outs. Let's shake hands on that. Will you?" "I'm the best hand shaker you ever saw," I said, with a smile, as I took the hand he stretched out to me. "But you have it on me; you seem to know me pretty well, but I never have heard your name—" "My name," he said, with a little laugh; "ah, yes! You should know my name. I'm Blanken—Haley Blanken, junior—that's my name. But the fellows gave me a nickname, didn't you, boys?" He turned to the three tall, thin fellows behind him. They all nodded, but not one said a word. "Your nickname," I said; "I'd like to know it, Blanken." "They call me Prince," he said, softly. Jerry Moore looked up from the place where he was fastening a rope to an iron stake. "I had a dog by that name once," he said. Blanken turned a swift look at Jerry; for a moment I thought that I saw a hard glitter in Blanken's eye. But the next I thought I was mistaken, because Blanken's face was smiling as he said: "A very good dog, I suppose, wasn't it?" Jerry gave an added tug to the knot he had tied in the rope, as he replied without looking up: "No! Just a cur." Blanken bit his lip, and I was quick enough to see his hands double into fists, although he did not make an attempt to raise his arms. I thought it time to interfere. "My boys like to make jokes," I said, with a laugh. "Jerry Moore, there, is the biggest joke maker in our club." "Yeah," said Jerry, bending back and turning his head over his right shoulder. "I'm the joker! You got to watch out for me, Prince." And with that, then, he turned and walked quickly toward the spot where the rest of the stakes and things were piled. Blanken turned to me with a smile. "Quite an interesting outfit, you have here, Hawkins," he said; "that fellow Jerry is an entertainment in himself. I should like to see more of him, and I shall certainly try to do so." "I hope you won't overlook the rest of us," I said, laughing. "We shall be camping here for quite some time, and we are always glad to have visitors." "How long did you say you'd be here?" inquired the "Prince," with a serious face. "I didn't say," I replied. "We never set a time. We stay until we get tired, or until the weather gets bad. We've had some wet summers, you know, and this old island is not a pleasant place when the river comes up." "It's not a pleasant place at any time," said Blanken, in a dull tone. "We have just broken camp. We've been here for a week, but we're going back home today. We've had enough of it." "Enough of it?" I asked. "Plenty and then some!" exclaimed Blanken, and at once he seemed to grow animated with excitement. "Hawkins, perhaps you don't trust me, and perhaps you don't think I'm fair and square with you, but I'll give you some advice that you will thank me for, some day. This island is the worst place in the world for you to camp." "Why?" demanded Shadow Loomis, who had stood behind me, listening quietly while all this talk had been going on. It was Shadow's first word. "Why is this island the worst place?" "I can't answer the question," said Blanken. "I shall not try to answer it. I'll tell you this much, and it's as much as I or any of my gang knows: That you will find very strange things going on. We were the only living beings on this island for a whole week; and I know what happens is not being done by anything or anybody. It just happens." "Can't you give us just one inkling," I said; "you know, tell us something that happened to you, while you were camping here?" Blanken shook his head. "We were not camping on this exact spot," he said, "and perhaps that has something to do with it. But we camped down there by the old backwater pool—you know where that old rotting houseboat is?" "We ought to," I said; "it's the old houseboat of a fellow who used to belong to our club—we called him the Skinny Guy." "Well," went on Blanken, "we were camping just a hundred yards from that old houseboat. The first night we saw a strange fire inside that houseboat. It was a bluish glow—we did not understand it. We went there next day. But you know what a rotten old wreck it is—a fellow hates to step inside that mouldy thing. There are a million lizards living under the floor—they scamper like so many rats when you shove open the door. That in itself gave me the creeps. But that isn't all. This island is lightning struck!" "Lightning struck!" I repeated. "Just what could you mean by that, Blanken?" "Lightning is what I mean!" he exclaimed. "Lightning lives here. You can't get away from it. You can expect lightning when it storms. But you don't look for it in the bright sun, do you? I never did. But I saw it. And at night, when the air was calm, and the moon shone down on our tent—it's lightning, I tell you. And it comes out of a clear sky—no clouds at all—but there's lightning, and I'm terribly afraid of it." "Lightnin' killed six sheep in one stroke once, under a tree on my father's farm," broke in Jerry Moore, as he brought up a fresh supply of stakes. "But it was thunderin' for half-an-hour before it struck." "But this lightning comes without thunder!" exclaimed Blanken. Jerry dropped the stakes in a tumbled heap and stared at the speaker. "You mean you want us to believe that?" he asked, with a stare.

Old World Charm Meets New World Conveniences



PLACING your house according to your lot is the privilege of the person who builds this practical dwelling of the English farm house type. The entrance is so arranged that the house may either be placed lengthwise for a thirty-foot city lot or crosswise for a 60 or 75 foot lot. The design here calls for a combination of stucco and stained-wood siding with roof of dark weathered shingles. The pleasing features of the living room include its windows on three sides, open fireplace and built-in book shelves. The open porch or sunroom may open off from either the living or dining room. The kitchen has all the details that delight the housewife—cupboards, broom closet, breakfast nook and double windows over the sink. The three bedrooms all have double exposures and are well provided with clothes and linen closets. The bathroom is so placed as to be equally accessible from each bedroom. The attic is ventilated and makes a serviceable storage or playroom by sheathing the rafters and sides with celotex, which serves both as a wall-board and insulating material. This small home so light and spacious, yet compact and adapted to doing without a servant, is a typical 1926 product. The poky, dark houses of fifteen or even ten years ago with their ratty little hallways and poor planning would be scorned by the modern housewife who has learned to expect comfort built right into her home and to have everything planned for her convenience in working. Cold, draughty houses are also out of date. All well built houses, are insulated as this one is, with celotex sheathing on the exterior walls under the stucco. This effects a great saving in fuel in the winter and resists the intense heat of the sun in summer. © Celotex Institute, Chicago, 1926.

"You boys better believe it," said Blanken with a light laugh, as he turned his back on Jerry and came forward. "Hawkins, I am your friend. I am giving you this information, but I don't want you to let it frighten you, if you think you can live on this island in spite of it. As for me, I told my boys we would not stay another day. That's why we're leaving. Our tent was pulled down this morning; the other fellows have it up in Watertown by this time, and we follow as soon as we bid you goodbye—" "Good," said Jerry, not even looking around. "Don't pay any attention to Jerry," I said to Blanken, as we shook hands. "I thank you for what you have told us. Perhaps we, too, will be pulling up stakes tomorrow and going back. But we will weather one night, at least. Goodbye, Blanken, and I am glad to have had this talk with you. Come down tomorrow, if you have a chance, and see what we have to report. I believe we want to see what's going on here first." "That's a brave spirit, anyway," said Blanken, as he shook my hand. "Well, you will find that I have not lied to you. And until I see you again—" "Goodbye, Prince," broke in Jerry Moore, without looking up, as he busily laid down stakes where they were to be struck. Blanken turned it off with a laugh. But I was greatly relieved when I saw his white launch with the Black Lion flag disappear around the bend in the river. The day passed serenely, and the tents were all up. Tired out with an honest day's work, the boys had sought their cots early, and were soundly asleep in the big tent. But with that same feeling of uneasiness that I had felt when we had set out in the morning, I continued to pace up and down outside the big tent. The moonlight fell in splashes through the trees, and made an irregular checkerboard upon the ground, and I caught myself stepping from a light spot on to a dark spot, and figuring out in my mind very clearly a play upon the checkerboard by which Lew Hunter had beaten me so many times last winter in the clubhouse. "That's it!" I exclaimed, half to myself. "I see it now. By Jinks! Lew, will never beat me by that play again." "What?" came a voice. And, looking up, I saw Doc Waters, in his dressing gown and slippers, standing in front of the tent-flap. I explained to him the checker-puzzle that I had figured out. "What you had better figure out," said Doc in a slow, steady voice, "is how we are going to steer clear of your friend, the Black Lion boy." I laughed. "Oh, Doc!" I said. "You don't mean to say that I am not an even match for the 'Prince.' He isn't a bad sort. I'm watchful. He won't put anything over on me. But I think he means well. He may not be smart enough—" "He's smart enough, all right," broke in Doc, and as the moonlight

the pale moonlight we stood, looking into the sky that seemed so serene and calm.

"Hawkins," said Doc, softly, "get you to your bed. Whatever that forked lightning may be, we have nothing to fear from it. Go to sleep, and tomorrow we will talk. Of this I am sure—we shall find out why this island is lightning-struck before we leave it."

Which we did.—By Robert Frank Schulkers, in the Philadelphia Ledger.

April Fool Joke is Centuries Old.

Swift, in his journal, to Stella, entered, according to the Mentor Magazine, under date of March 31, 1713, that he, Doctor Arbuthnot, and Lady Masham had been amusing themselves that evening by contriving "a lie for tomorrow." A man named Noble had been hanged a few days before. The "lie" concocted by these three was that Noble had come to life again in the hands of friends, but was held once more by the sheriff, and now lay at the Black Swan in Holborn, in the custody of a messenger. "We are all," says Swift, "to send to our friends, to know whether they have heard anything of it, and so we hope it will spread." On the following day, April 1, the learned dean sent his servant to several homes to inquire among the footmen, not letting his own man into the secret. But nothing could be heard of the resuscitation of Noble; when he concluded that "his colleagues did not contribute" as they ought to have done. One April fool joke that failed!

The first day of April, All Fools' day, has long been in America and most European countries a day that enjoys a character all its own, in that it is consecrated to impositions upon unsuspecting persons. While the date is well remembered, yet the origin of the custom cannot be traced with any degree of certainty. In the literature of the past century there are many references to it, and yet beyond that it is scarcely possible to go.

April fooling is an immemorial custom in India. The Hindus practiced precisely similar pranks on March 31, when they held what is known as the Huli festival. There is an old tradition among the Jews that the custom of making fools on the first day of April rose from the fact that Noah sent out the dove on the first day of the month corresponding with our April, before the water had abated. To perpetuate the memory of the great deliverance of Noah and his family, it was customary on that anniversary to punish persons who had forgotten the remarkable circumstances connected with the date by sending them on some fruitless errand similar to that on which the patriarch sent the luckless bird from the ark.

Leviathan Selected for Legion Paris Trip.

The United States liner Leviathan was selected last week by the France convention travel committee, meeting at Vinal Haven, Maine, at the summer home of Alton T. Roberts, as the flagship for the convoy of 24 vessels which will carry more than 30,000 former doughboys next year to Paris for the annual national convention of the American Legion. This decision according to John J. Wicker, Jr., national travel director, followed that of the committee to go ahead with plans for the trip to France.

"The new national commander of the legion who will be elected this fall at the national convention in Philadelphia will travel on the flagship, with a delegation of the Legion representing every State in the union. The official guard of honor also will make the trip both ways in the Leviathan," Mr. Wicker said.

While Mr. Wicker would not comment it was the belief of a number of legion officials that General John J. Pershing will be elected to lead the second A. E. F. Legionnaires from many parts of the country are said to be in favor of his election in order that he may once more head Americans on their arrival in France. Not until the capacity of the American ships is exceeded will foreign vessels be assigned to carry delegates and visitors to the convention said Wicker.

First 17-Year-Old Locust Found.

The 17-year-old locust is here or rather an advance guard, since the insects in droves are not scheduled until next year. Bessie Roth, daughter of Mrs. R. A. Roth, 1143 Walnut St., Allentown, found one of the locusts on the lawn in front of her home. The insect was alive, but weak, having just emerged from the cell. This is believed to be the first of the 17-year-old locusts to be found in the State, since the State department has recently issued a bulletin stating that none of these pests had been seen.

This breed of locust, scientifically known as the Cicada (silk a'da) is not as harmful as supposed, according to the encyclopedia, since it does not feed on leaves of trees or plants, nor upon the farmer's grain fields.

Its eggs are laid in slits cut in young branches of trees. This slitting in the twig is the only harm done, and it is because the cicada appears periodically in great hordes they are somewhat dreaded.

—What a 150 lb. man would look like if bottled:
98 lbs. - - - - - Water
22 lbs. - - - - - Protein
20 lbs. - - - - - Fat
7 1/2 lbs. - - - - - Mineral salts
2 1/2 lbs. - - - - - Sugar

FARM NOTES.

—Dairy cattle are markets for farm crops. Prices are good or poor according to the quality or producing ability of the cattle on the farm.

—Silage is one of the best and cheapest feeds for milk production. Anyone keeping a dairy herd can well afford to ensile a portion of his crop for next winter's feeding.

—Grading fruit pays. The small, as well as the large, sell best if by themselves and not mixed with several other sizes. A sign soon pays for itself in the increased value of the crop.

—There is nothing like outdoor range, either in green yards or on sod, to keep up the health of a flock of hens. This is especially true of hens that are to be used as breeders. Incidentally, it answers the question of green feed.

—Spinach may be planted in cold-frames until the middle of September. Make the rows four inches apart and thin the plants to four inches in the row. Be sure the soil is kept fairly moist and is well supplied with lime and fertilizer.

—Soybeans for hay cure best if cut just after the pods form. If permitted to stand until the beans in the pods are fully developed, the pods cure much more slowly than the rest of the plant. Then, too, short days and poorer curing weather are encountered.

—Be sure that there is a supply of crates, picking baskets or bags, and ladders for the winter apples; Clean out the storage, and if it is not sweet or sanitary, sweeten it with white-wash, bordeaux, or a disinfectant, taking care to ventilate thoroughly before using.

—Set Pansies this month—Pansies may be planted out this month. Sow the seeds in well-fertilized soil, cultivate carefully to encourage strong growth this fall, and cover the plants with a light mulch before freezing weather sets in this fall. You will be rewarded with blooms early next spring.

—Flies are particularly bad at this time of the year. Keep them out of the house by using a teaspoonful of 40 per cent formaldehyde in a pint of milk which has been diluted with an equal quantity of water. Put in shallow pans in which pieces of bread are placed to provide lighting places for the flies. The flies should have no other access to water. Keep the pans out of reach of the children.

—How many vegetables will be available in your garden in October? A Cambria county gardener last season had more than twenty ready for use when the first freeze came. In a southern Pennsylvania garden recently 32 vegetables were counted, all of which should be available late in the fall. There is a greater possibility for variety of products in the fall garden than in the early one.

—The best layers on Pennsylvania poultry demonstration farms in July were the 194 White Leghorns owned by P. W. Gleason, of Osceola. They led the 50-hen division, the Pennsylvania State College poultry extension monthly report shows.

I. E. Waltman's 102 White Leghorns at New Albany led the flocks of 100 or more pullets, and 358 White Leghorns on the farm of Paul G. Eshelman, Camp Hill, topped the flock of 100 or more hens and pullets.

—Every farm should have a suitable place in which to handle and care for milk. Milk ordinances and sanitary regulations of boards of health in many communities require that milk houses or spring houses be part of the regular dairy equipment. Milk or dairy houses separate from other buildings give the best satisfaction. Extension Circular 107, which tells how to build them, will be mailed free by the Pennsylvania State College, if you send your request to the agricultural publications office of that institution at State College, Pa.

—In some of the recent experiments reported from the South Dakota experiment station, ground soy beans were found to be similar in effect in the ration to linseed meal, and of somewhat greater value for milk production. Soy-bean hay was found to be more valuable for milk production than alfalfa hay. The ground soy beans do not appear to have any effect on the qualities, although with some cows they tended to increase the percentage of butter fat.

—Since the development of oil factories in Illinois, the feeding of soy beans cake from which the oil has been extracted is likely to be considered more practicable than the feeding of the whole ground soy bean.

—There is a growing demand on the part of consumers for a high-testing milk. This, says the dairy department of the New Jersey College of Agriculture, makes of interest to dairymen some recent experiments which seem to prove that it is possible to increase a cow's fat or "cream" production.

A series of tests at the University of Missouri shows that cows in fat condition at calving time will produce milk testing higher in butterfat during the year. Seven Jersey cows beginning their lactation in this condition gave milk averaging 5.5 per cent butterfat. Another group of Jerseys beginning lactation in a thin condition, averaged 5.2 per cent butterfat. The same relation held true with Holsteins and Ayrshires.

—Three-tenths of one per cent does not seem very much comments the college, but with a herd producing from 50,000 to 100,000 pounds of milk a year the increase in butterfat is an appreciable item.

Contrary to the opinion of some the butterfat content of a cow's milk cannot be raised by feeding certain products. Numerous tests at several experiment stations have established this.

The conclusion is made that giving cows a good rest and fitting them for the following lactation is a saving proposition.