

CURLING AMERICA'S SPINE With DEATH-DEFYING

THRILLERS BY WILLARD W. GARRISON



TAKING A TRIP ON A THRILLER

"WOW, whee-ee, oo-oo, gee-ee-whizz, but that was a bump!" It was our friend from the sand dunes of Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, or any other state with plenty of farming districts, trying out a thriller at Coney Island, Atlantic City, one of Chicago's big four amusement parks or for that matter at any city or town which supports these summer devices for extracting coin of the realm from these plebeians.

No matter how stolid he may be in life's ordinary pursuits or how emotionless in an interurban wreck, his spine curls, his sympathetic nerve system tickles and he is compelled to give himself up to thrills. You can find him in every resort where there are scenic railways, roller-coasters, velvet-coasters, figure-eights, shoot-the-chutes, dip-the-dips, leap-the-gaps, ticklers and scores of other modes for shooting the electric currents up and down the spinal cord of the laughing, howling public.

He is a source of amusement for his tutored city brother who tickles the day ledger with a pen during daylight and cavorts about on amusement devices throughout the summer evenings. The city pleasure-seeker has much of this sport and the thrills fail to rise up in his anatomy the way they do in that of the man, woman and child who are taking their first turn at the game.

Statisticians claim that there are so many actual thrillers of different caliber and variety at work daily in the United States that if one should travel on every one of them, just once, the trip would take all summer. There were more this year than ever before. If all of the rides were strung out they would reach clear across the continent, high broad scientists claim.

But that only goes to show that America is amusement-crazy. The populace and the elite, too, can't get enough thrill. Not long ago, an Illinois man with an idea proposed to install an automobile in the parks of the country and this device was scheduled to run down an incline, turn a double somersault and alight upon its wheels again. America's thrillers are terrific and getting more so each year, but the man from the middle west was perhaps a bit premature with his death-defying machine. Sometimes it didn't alight as per program.

The process of starting a thrill through the pleasure-seeker's frame consists of laying out a device which combines both speed and the unexpected. This subject has been studied by every amusement manager in the United States and they can't get the jumps, drops and bumps long enough or fast enough to attract your shekels from your bank account to their coffers with the desired rapidity.

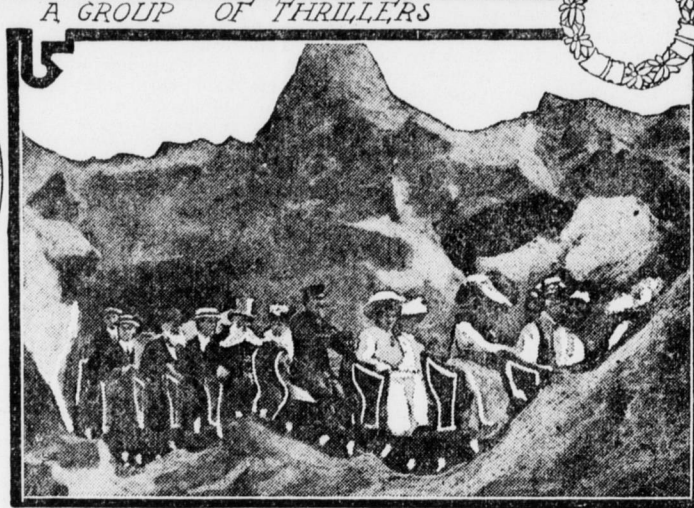
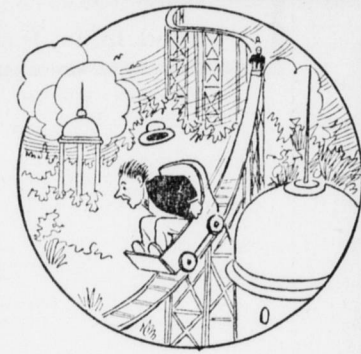
"Say, by heck, I'm afear'd to ride on that shebang. It don't hev a safe look to me."

Well, hurtling through the air faster than an aeroplane in working order certainly doesn't look safe, but at the same time the visitor to the city who made that remark did not know whereof he spoke. Every single device, no matter how small, how large or how "safe-looking," is required to undergo a rigid test by the building commissioners, before being allowed to accept the public's dimes. There must be a block system of lights, much the same as that used by railway systems, also stoppage devices on every incline to prevent cars, chairs or other seating vehicles from sliding backwards down an incline.

The framework of the device is tested for its strength and made to support far heavier weights than are ever



A GROUP OF THRILLERS



THE SCENIC RAILWAY

ride-lady" 20 cents for another trip for yourself and friend.

Then there's the tickler. That's a new ride just put on in the west this season. You get into a round car and the device is dragged up an incline for the downward thrill. Starting down it enters a labyrinth of rails, the car revolving in one direction and the descent carrying it in another. This gives a remarkable opportunity to learn how it feels to be jerked in two directions at the same time.

Perhaps the scenic railway is known more generally to those who would line their interiors with momentary thrills. This ride consists of a series of cars strung together. There are brakes between each car and the levers are manned by strong-armed boys from the railway yards. To them there are no thrills. It's monotonous as driving the cows home from pasture for them. Even catching a pair spooning while the train is running through the blackness of a mimic Canadian forest, can't make them feel weary. It happens on every trip.

The average scenic railway runs up a 45-degree incline or rather is hauled up by a chain and you are ready for the first dip. The brakemen release their levers and down the cars go faster than the New York-Chicago 18-hour limited. If the uninitiated puts his head between his knees he is apt to kick himself in the face on the journey up the hill which follows every dip. Therefore if you haven't yet been bounced around in this manner, hang to the iron grid, stick your hat under your arm, grit your teeth and make up your mind not to care if your hair does get mussed.

After the train has completed the first series of dips there is usually a journey through a dark recess, tragically known as the "cavern," this being installed to give the spooners a chance to gloat over their nerve. The rest is a repetition, generally.

Next in line as a death-defying contrivance is the coaster. There are fewer cars and not so many seats in each vehicle. Then, too, the coaster needs no hauling up a second incline, for there is only one, the difference being noticeable in the length of the descents. In some parks in both east and west there has been a tendency of late to turn the coaster into a semi-loop-the-loop, that is to say, the cars drop off the top of the runway onto a descent at an angle of about 70 degrees, dropping about 80 feet, and then start up the ascent at an angle which is not quite so abrupt. Some coasters have only one of these terrifying dips, while others have about 20—it seems to be the first-nighter. Well, one isn't so bad, but about the third jump you begin to calculate that the seat must have slipped out the bottom of the car—you're so high in the air most of the time.

Passing on to another part of the resort you strike the figure-eight. Every hamlet has its figure-eights these days. That contrivance is fashioned like an "8" and much resembles the coaster, except that the cars follow the lines of the figure, the dips are smaller and you naturally don't get so fussed up. It's tamer in fact, and for that reason graduation from the figure-eight entitles you to prestige, which should carry you fearlessly over the jumps which the coaster takes and allow you to blandly hand the "second-

of the room. If it moves backwards from you, intuition tells you to step forward. Don't step too speedily or you'll find yourself walking on the ceiling, head down. Finally an opening is reached. You step out onto a floor which bounces up and down as you meander along. A moment later you walk upon what seems to be the top of an airship, loosely inflated. By that time, if you're one of the fair sex, you need protection. The recesses are all pitch dark.

Then, perhaps you are swayed by a wave-like motion of the entire room, which very naturally elicits very proper screams from the women folks. Freed from ocean-liner imitation, you are immediately introduced to a 200-miles-an-hour cyclone, coming from the floor, ceiling, walls and in fact from all sides. The floor begins to move sideways with a quick-jerky motion. You try to steady yourself on a rail, just perceptible in the blackness. Ouch! It's charged with electricity.

Ahead are several staircases and you feel rather relieved to think you're out of it at last. Reaching them safely you start up when, without warning, the whole contrivance begins to move backward and forward, compelling you to grab the rail for safety. In darkness again, you try to make your way through a typical labyrinth of rooms. Feeling along the wall with one foot ahead of you to ascertain the nearness of bottomless pits, etc., for your mind's eye sees lots that don't exist, you bump your nose against a few barriers and eventually push against a wall, which gives way and you find yourself alone in a turnstile, inclosed on all sides. When your terror has reached a burning point someone else behind pushes the wall as you did and you are liberated, only to again find yourself in the midst of weird ghostlike cries and see skeletons darting hither and thither (on pulleys). A little scream just at this moment might be appropriate. Just to get your mind off the terrors of the place, the next few turns are tame, when suddenly your feet slide out from under you and you find yourself shooting down a chute in a sitting position. Daylight ahead and once again, before you have time to think it over, you've landed among the crowds outside, thanks to the manly strength of the splieler, whose arms received you where the chute ended.

COW BROKE UP BARN DANCE

Of course, realism is all well enough in its way, but it can easily be carried to an excess. Here, for instance, is the case of that barn dance in the east, where an actual barn was the scene of revelry.

And in the midst of the fun a blooded cow broke away from her stall and took an active interest in the proceedings, ripping the shirt waist from a college youth and hooking a roomy hole in the big fiddle. After which she pranced up the middle with her

head down, and six girls and three boys crawled onto the feed box and fell off in a shrieking heap, and the athlete of the party, with wild yells, broke the record on a quick climb to the hayloft, and four girls hid under the straw cutter, and there was the merry mischief to pay. The cow quickly had her gambol out, and then backed into her stall with a satisfied moo and immediately resumed her cud.

But the barn dance was effectually broken up.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

THE INDOMITABLE

ENGLAND'S SHIP OF MYSTERY NOW IN AMERICAN WATERS.

Prince of Wales' Visit to Canada Gives Naval Officers of United States Chance to Gratify Their Curiosity.

The prince of Wales has come to America, and incidentally has brought with him England's great ship of mystery, the Indomitable, or rather the big, fast, all big gun battleship cruiser has brought him to Canada to take part in the Quebec centennial celebration, and the coming of the great fighting ship will give our naval chiefs the opportunity they have long wanted of prying into the secrets of this vessel around which England has thrown so much mystery.

This new ship, built on the lines of the Dreadnought, is a combination of battleship and armored cruiser, and, what is more remarkable, she is regarded by those experts who have managed to learn something of her armor, armament, and speed, as being efficient both as a battleship and as an armored cruiser. She is bigger than any other completed battleship except the British Dreadnought, and she is swifter than any armored cruiser yet sent afloat. Previous to her advent our three fast scouts of the Salem class were reckoned as the fastest warships in the world. Of this trio the Bath-built Chester recently maintained a gait of 26.52 knots an hour. Designed for a speed of 25 knots an hour, this British racer is now credited with 28 knots.

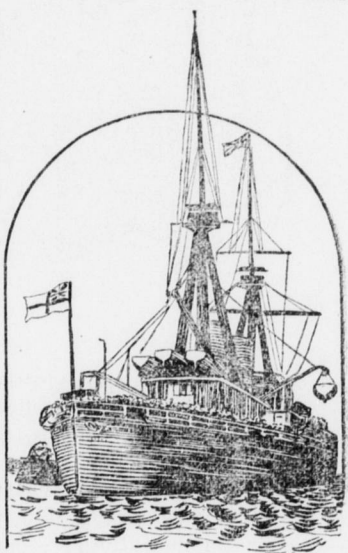
The Indomitable is the first of the all big gun cruiser-battleships to go afloat. The Michigan, the first of our all big gun just plain battleships, was launched a few weeks ago. The Michigan is rated as a "Dreadnought." This Dreadnought cruiser of Great Britain carries a battery equal to that of the Michigan, and her speed is such that she can easily outrun any of our much boasted scouts.

As the British Dreadnought revolutionized naval construction, so doubtless will this new type of cruiser Dreadnoughts revise naval programs. The Dreadnought is the most powerful battleship now in existence. She mounts ten 12-inch rifles. The Indomitable carries eight guns of this caliber, and in actual fire is equal to the Dreadnought. Moreover, while the Dreadnought has a speed of only 21 knots an hour, the Indomitable can steam nearly six knots an hour faster. And whereas the Dreadnought has only 12-pounders for repelling torpedo attack, the cruiser battleship has

an anti-torpedo argument consisting of 16 25-pounders.

The Indomitable is driven by turbine engines, which have an estimated horse power of 41,000. Her great freeboard would seem to enable her to maintain high speed in almost any kind of weather. Forward the vessel measures 32 feet above waterline. The amidship freeboard is 29 feet; aft it is 20 feet.

The armor protection consists of a belt seven inches in thickness. Prior to the advent of the Dreadnought the officers of all ships of war had their quarters aft. This custom is as old as the navy itself. But new types demand new arrangements, and in the Dreadnought all of the officers, including the admiral and the commanding



The Indomitable, Showing After Tripod Mast and Method of Hoisting and Stowing Boats.

officer, have their quarters forward, in the space formerly occupied by the crew. The Indomitable has the same arrangement.

Still other unusual features that give the vessel a singular appearance are the tripod masts.

The representative of our shipyards which has gone to meet the Indomitable in Canadian waters is the New Hampshire. This is the newest battleship which we have in commission. The vessel is of 16,000 tons, has a speed of 18 knots, and is armed with four 12-inch rifles, eight eight-inch, and 12 seven-inch. The cruiser battleship of Great Britain is superior to her in speed, and her eight 12-inch guns just double the four of that caliber carried by the New Hampshire.

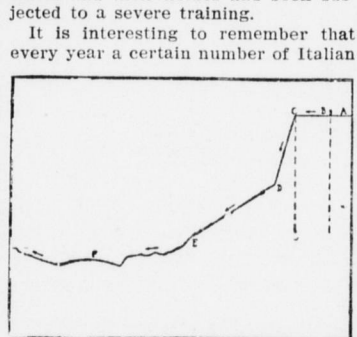
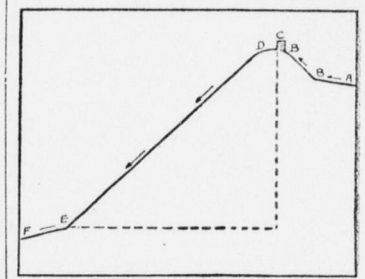
Are Fine Horsemen

Nothing evoked more genuine admiration at the great international horse show at Olympia recently than Italian officers who took part in the display. They were especially remarkable for a firm seat and a very strong grip with the leg, and nothing seemed to move them in their saddles. In the jumping competitions they particularly distinguished themselves — in the most perpendicular drop of 16 Feet.



Down an Almost Perpendicular Drop of 16 Feet.

hours over rough, hilly and broken country, with banks, ditches, and very formidable unbreakable rail fences, and at the end of the ride the whole number follow him up and



Vertical Section of Course Followed During Riding Exhibition.

A.—Level hard grass. B.—Oak rail fence 24 feet to 3 feet high. C.—Level hard grass about 9 feet wide. D.—Almost perpendicular drop of 16 feet to 18 feet. CRF of hard, pebbly soil, and quite dry. E.—Slope of soft soil 25 feet long. F.—Gravel road with rough grass 15 to 20 yards wide. The officers rode in three squads of about 12 each at a hand gallop, and there were no falls or accidents on this occasion. The horses slid down the cliff C to D immediately following the jump. Twelve went down nearly in a line.

Vertical Section of Another Course. A.—A gentle gravel slope. B.—A steep gravel slope, about 12 feet vertical height, a bit rounded at top to C, a strong stone wall 2 feet to 2 1/2 feet high and about 2 feet thick, with flat top. D.—Rounded bank falling away from wall. E.—Slope at angle of 45 degrees. F.—Gentle slope at bottom. The officers rode the of firm grass about 80 feet vertical height same horses as for the other course—mostly Irish hunters, some very well bred, others more common—and here also there were no accidents to record, the really fine horsemanship of the

down steep declivities interspersed with the jumps around the hill on which the buildings of the Cavalry school stand.



Horse Taking a Slope After Jumping Low Fence at Upper Edge.

From the top of this hill the king can see clearly the whole of this truly wonderful display of pluck, nerve, patience and judgment—which is an admirable training for the horses and for the men who ride them. The first portion of the ride may be described as similar to a fast run with foxhounds in a dale country, while the latter part constitutes a series of achievements which are unique.

The Allotment of Benefits. "You believe in the greatest good for the greatest number, do you not?" said the altruist. "Yes," answered Mr. Dustin Stax. "But this is a mercenary age. The greatest number doesn't count unless it has a dollar mark in front of it."—Washington Star.

A Business Hint. She (bitterly)—That mineral magnate who is trying to get you to invest in his enterprise, is a snake. He (interested)—Copper head, I suppose.



Going Down Fast on a 45 Per Cent. Grade, 80 Feet in Length.

officers—about 30 or 40—Join the Cavalry Riding school of Tor di Quinto, just outside Rome, and there qualify as instructors of riding for various regiments. At the end of the course the king, who takes great interest in the perfection of detail in his army, holds an official examination, which is a serious and very businesslike affair. The officers of the year have to follow a guide—who is a first-rate horseman and admirably mounted—for about two