SCRAPPLE

The Young Lady Across the Way

The young lady across the way says that when she goes away for any length of time she always prefers to go by one of the trunk lines, as it's so inconvenient to have one's baggage come on a later train.

Calling Names

"Shall I call you a taxi?"

"Call me anything you want to, I don't care."—Lehigh Burr.

Just So

"Do you often change your environment?"

"Shure an' I do, ivry Saturday night."—Punch Bowl.

THE PADDED CELL

SCHOOL DAYS

Verily Time Doth Bring Changes

In 1907—You are bound to find him there. He wears tortoise-shell glasses.

In 1917—You can't miss him. He doesn't wear tortoise-shell glasses.—Lehigh Burr.

Activity in the Seed Trade

—London Opinion.

Local seedsman mixing grass seed ready for suburban early spring lawn sowing enthusiasts.

PROOF POSITIVE

—The Sketch.

The magistrate (to the diminutive prisoner)—There is no use your denying that you struck the policeman and that you were drunk.

The prisoner (looking at the big policeman)—Is this the policeman I struck, your Worship?

The magistrate—Yes.

The prisoner—Then I must have been drunk.

The Day After

"Oh, Gee, last night I had a lovely dream. I dreamt I had passed every darn exam, and I was in heaven."

"Did you see the rest of the class there?"

"Every one, and then I knew it was only a dream."—Lehigh Burr.

So Homelike

—Ideas.

Lieutenant Henpeck (writing home)—My dear wife: Everything that is going on here seems to remind me of you.

How Tragic!

There once was a farmer from Maine
Who walked through Paree in the rain.
In crossing a river
He was hit by a Flivver,
Which tended to drive him in Seine.

—Lampoon.

FAMILIAR TERMS ILLUSTRATED

—Harvard Lampoon.

THE AFTERGLOW

A Sequel to "Beyond the Great Oblivion."

By GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

SUMMARY OF PRECEDING STORIES

Allan Stern, a consulting engineer, and **Beatrice Kendrick**, his stenographer, wake from a long sleep in his office in the tower of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, New York city; they look about them and see the office interior fallen to decay, while below they behold a vast forest of great trees where New York city once stood. It is evident that their sleep has lasted through centuries, and that during this unconscious lapse the city has been destroyed by some great catastrophe. They seem to be the only survivors of the inhabitants of the western continent. They clothe themselves primitively and subsist on food which has withstood the ravages of centuries in glass jars.

After a time a troop of malformed savages appears. They storm the tower and a desperate battle ensues. Stern and Beatrice escape, finding a refuge in a ruined mansion on the Hudson. After a time they set sail for Boston in a boat which Stern has built. He hopes to find the telescope of the Harvard University by which to verify his discovery of the earth's changed relations with its astral neighbors. They reach what was once the city of Providence, where they find rusty firearms still serviceable, and an aeroplane which Stern repairs.

In an expedition of exploration in the machine they are drawn into a terrible abyss, where the sun never shines, and are captured by strange people and condemned to death. In a great battle Stern uses his firearms and repels his captors' enemies, thus gaining their friendship. After many further adventures Stern and Beatrice escape from the abyss in the aeroplane and regain the land of the sun.

THE STORY THUS FAR

Once more on earth, Allan and Beatrice bury the patriarch who was their friend in the abyss and who accompanied them to the old world, only to die at the first touch of the sun. Around the patriarch's neck is a chain and small locket which contains instructions where to find the records of the lost civilization. The paper crumbles as they read, but the two gather enough to direct them. They start for their old home on the banks of the Hudson, only to find it occupied by the hordes. The beast-savages destroy the building while Allan and Beatrice are attacking from the Pauillac. In despair they make for Storm King, the mountain which is the sight of the great Gothic Cathedral. Here it is that some of the records are stored.

After many trials the two discover the remains of the records and a leaden chest which has kept a phonograph and several records intact. Among the records is the marriage service, and there, in the ruins of the old cathedral, Allan and Beatrice become man and wife. Then they return to the edge of the abyss, where they prepare a raft on Settlement Cliffs. It is to this place that Allan hopes to bring the Merucaans, the folk of the bottom of the pit. He reaches the village in the chasm safely.

CHAPTER XII—(Continued)

FIRST, Vreenya sprinkled the open space between the poles and the dungeon with a kind of sea-weed swab dipped in the waters of the boiling vat, then with a bit of the coarse brown cloth washed Allan's lips—a pledge of truth.

The councilor raised both hands toward the roaring flame back there by the cliff, and all inclined themselves thereto, the only trace of any religious ceremony still remaining among them.

Allan likewise saluted the flame; then he faced the multitude.

"O my people," he began, striving to speak clearly above the noise of the firejet, his voice sounding dull and heavy in that compressed atmosphere, "O Folk of the Merucaans, I greet you! There be many things to tell that you must know and believe. I have come back to you with great peril in my flying boat to tell you of the upper world and all its goodness.

"Easily could I have stayed in those places of light and plenty, but my heart was warm for my people. I thought of my people night and day. The woman Beatrice thought of you. The ancient man thought of you. Alone, we could not enjoy those happy places. So I returned to tell you and to show you the way to liberty. Thus have we proved our love for you, my folk!"

He paused. Silence overhung the assemblage save for the fretful cry of children here and there, squeezed in the press or clinging to their mothers' backs after the fashion of the Merucaans.

Afar, on the walls, the faint and raucous quarreling of the sea birds drifted through the fog. Allan drew breath and began again:

"In those places, my people, those far places whence your forefathers came, are many wonders. Betimes it is dark, as always here. Betimes a great fire mounts into the upper air and makes the whole world brighter than around your flaming well. In the dark time lesser fires travel in the air. Of birds there are many kinds, strangely colored. Of beasts, many kinds—I cannot make you understand because none of you have ever seen any animal but fish and bird. But I speak truth. There be many other creatures with good flesh to eat, and the skins of them are proper for soft clothing.

"Here you have only weeds of the sea. There we have tall growing things, many hundred spedi high, and rich fruit, delicious to the taste, grows on some kinds. In a few words, it is a place of wondrous plenty, where you can all live more easily than here, and with more pleasure—far—"

Again he ceased his discourse, but still continued to pace up and down the open space under the swaying skeletons on the poles above.

Through the dense press of the Folk murmurs were wandering. Man spoke to man, and many a new thought was coming now to birth among those white barbarians.

The elders, too, were whispering together: "So runs the ancient tradition. So said the ancient man! Can it be true, indeed?"

Stern continued, more and more earnestly, with the sweat now beginning to dot his brow:

"It were too long, my people, to tell you everything about that land of ours above. Only remember it is richer far and far more beautiful than this, your place of darkness and of clouds. It is the ancient home of your fathers in the very long ago. It is waiting for you once again, more fertile and more beautiful than ever. My errand is to carry you thither—two or three at a time. At last I shall be able to take you all.

"Then the world will begin to be as it once was, before the great explosion destroyed all but a few of your people, who were my people once. Will any of you—any two bold men—believe my words and go with me? Will any be as brave as—the patriarch?"

He flung the veiled taunt loudly at them, with a raising of both arms.

"I have spoken truth! Now answer!"

He ceased, and for a short minute there was silence. Then spoke Vreenya:

"O Kromno, master! We would question you!"

"I will answer and say only the thing that is."

"First, can our people live in that other, lighter air?"

"They can live. We have prepared caves for you. At first you shall not see the light. Only little by little you shall see it, and you and your children will change, till at last you shall be as I am and as your people were in the old days!"

Vreenya pondered, while tense interest held the elders and the folk. Then he nodded, for his understanding—like that of all—was keen in spite of his savagery.

"And we can eat, O Kromno? This flesh of beasts you speak of may be good. This strange fruit may be good. I know not. It may also be as the poison weeds of our sea to us. But, if so, there are fish in those waters of the upper world?"

"There are fish, Vreenya, and of the best, and many! Near the caves runs a river—"

"A what, master?"

"A going of the waters. In those waters live fish without number. At the dark times you can catch them with nets, even as here. The dark times are half of each day. You shall have many hours for the fishing. Even that will suffice to live; but the flesh and fruits will not hurt you. They are good. There will be food for all, and far more than enough for all!"

Vreenya pondered again.

"We would talk together, we elders," he said, simply.

"It meets my pleasure," answered Allan. "And when ye have talked, I desire your answer!"

He crossed his arms, faced the multitude, and waited, while the elders gathered in a little group by the dungeon and for some minutes conferred in low earnest tones.

Outwardly, the man seemed calm, but his soul burned within him and his heart was racing violently.

For on this moment, he well knew, hung the world's destiny. Should they decide to venture forth into the outer world all would be well. If not, the long labor, the plans, the hopes were lost forever.

Well he knew the stubborn nature of the Folk. Once their minds set, nothing on earth could ever stir them.

"Thank God I managed that lie about the patriarch!" thought Allan quickly. "If I'd slipped up on that, and told them he died at the very minute the sunlight struck him, it would have been all off, world without end. Hope it doesn't make a row later. But if it does, I'll face it. The main and only thing now is to get 'em started. They've got to go, that's all there is about it.

"Gad! After all, it's a terrific proposition I'm putting up to these simple fishers of the Abyss. I'm asking them, just on my say-so, to root up the life, the habits, the traditions of more than a thousand years and make a leap into the dark—into the light, I mean.

His eyes, wandering nervously along the front ranks of the waiting folk, dimly illumined by the dull blue glow of the firewell that shone through the mist, suddenly stopped with apprehension. His brows contracted, and on his heart it seemed as though a gripping hand had suddenly laid hold.

"H'yemba, the smith, again! Damn him! H'yemba!" he muttered, in sudden anger strongly tinged with fear.

The smith, in fact, was standing there a little to the left of him, huge and sinewed hands loosely clasped in front of him, face sinister, eyes glowing like two malevolent evil fires.

Allan noted the defiant poise of the body, breadth of the shoulders, the heavy hang of the arms, biceped like a gorilla's.

For a minute the two men looked each other steadfastly in the eye, each measuring the other. Then suddenly the voice of Vreenya broke the tension.

"O Kromno, we have spoken. Will you hear us?"

Stern faced him, a strange sinking at his heart, almost as though the foreman of a jury stood before him to announce either freedom or sentence of death.

But, holding himself in check, lest any sign of fear or nervousness betray him, he made answer:

"I will hear you. Speak!"

"We have listened to your words. We believe you speak truth. Yet—"

"Yet what? Out with it, man!"

"Yet will we not compel any man to go. All shall be free—"

"Thank God!" breathed Allan, with a mighty sigh.

"—Free to stay or go, as they will. Our village is too full, even now. We have many children. It were well that some should make room for others. Those who dare, have our consent. Now speak you to the people, your people, O Kromno, and see who chooses the upper world with you!"

Once more Allan turned toward the assemblage. But before he had found time to frame the first question in this unfamiliar speech, a disturbance somewhat to the left interrupted him.

Then came a jostling, a pushing, a sound of voices in amazement, anger, approbation, doubt.

Into the clear space, H'yemba the smith. His powerful right hand he raised on high. And boldly, in a loud voice, he cried:

"Folk of the Merucaans, this cannot be!"

CHAPTER XIII

The Ravished Nest

"IT CANNOT be? Who says it cannot be? Who dares stand out and challenge me?"

"I, H'yemba, the man of iron and of flame!"

Stern faced him, every nerve and fiber quivering with sudden passion. At realization that in the exact psychological moment when success lay almost in his hand this surly brute might baffle him he felt a wave of murderous hate.

He realized that the dread catastrophe had indeed come to pass. Now his sole claim to chieftainship lay in his power to defend the title. Failure meant—death.

"You?" he shouted, advancing on the smith.

His opponent only leered and grimaced offensively. Then without even having vouchsafed an answer, he swung toward the elders.

"I challenge!" he exclaimed. "I have the right of words!"

Vreenya nodded, fingering his long white beard.

"Speak on!" he answered. "Such is our ancient custom."

"Oh, people," cried the smith, suddenly facing the throng, "will ye follow one who breaks the tribal manners of our folk? One who disdains our law? Who has neglected to obey it? Will ye trust yourselves into hands stained with law-breaking of our blood?"

A murmur, doubtful, wondering, obscure, spread through the people. By the greenish flare-light Stern could see looks of wonder and dismay. Some frowned, others stared at him or at the smith, and many muttered.

"What the devil and all have I broken now?" wondered Allan. "Plague take these barbarous customs! Jove, they're worse than the taboos of old Maoris, in the ancient days! What's up?"

He had not long to wonder, for of a sudden H'yemba wheeled on him, pointed him out with vibrant hands, and in a voice of terrible anger cried:

"The law, the law of old! No man shall be chief who does not take a wife from out our people! None who weds one of the Lanskaarn, the island folk, or the yellow-haired Skeri beyond the Vortex, none such shall ever rule us. Yet this man, this stranger who speaks such great things very hard to believe, scorns our custom. No woman from among us he has taken, but instead, that vuedma of his own kind! What? Will ye——"

He spoke no further, for Allan was upon him with one leap. At sound of that word most injurious in their tongue, the fires of hell burst loose in Stern.

Reckoning no consequences, staying for no parley or diplomacy, he sprang; and as he sprang, he struck.

The blow went home on the smith's jaw with a smash like a pile driver. H'yemba, reeling, swung at him—no skill, no science, just wild, barbaric, sledge-hammer sweep.

It would have killed had it landed, but Allan was not there. In point of tactics, the twentieth century met the tenth.

And as the smith whirled to recover, a terrible lefthander met him just below the short ribs.

With a grunt the man doubled, sprawled and fell. By some strange atavism, which he never afterward could understand, Allan counted, in the Folk's tongue, "Hathi, ko, zem, baku—" and so up to "Lamnu"—ten.

Still the smith did not rise, but only lay and groaned and sought to catch the breath that would not come.

"I have won!" cried Allan in a loud voice. "Here, you people, take this green, this child, away! And let there be no further idle talk of a dead law—for surely, in your custom, a law dies when its champion is beaten! Come, quick, away with him!"

Two stout men came forward, bowed to Allan with hands clasped upon their breasts in signal of fresh allegiance, and without ceremony took the insensible smith, neck and heels, and lugged him off as though he had only been a net heavily laden with fish.

The crowd opened in awed silence to let them pass. By the glare Allan noticed that the man's jaw hung oddly awry, even as the obeah's had hung, in Madison forest.

"Jove, what a wallop that must have been!" thought he, now perceiving for the first time that his knuckles were cut and bleeding. "Old Monahan himself taught me that in the Harvard gym a thousand years ago—and it still works. One question settled, mighty quick; and H'yemba won't have much to say for a few weeks at least. Not till his jawbone knits again, anyhow!"

Upon his arm he felt a hand. Turning, he saw Vreenya, the aged counselor.

"Surely, O master, he shall not live, now you have conquered him? The boiling pit awaits. It is our custom—if you will!"

Allan only shook his head.

All customs change, these times, he answered. "I am your law! This man's life is needed, for he has good skill with metals. He shall live, but never shall he speak before the Folk again. I have said it!"

To the waiting throng he turned again.

"Ye have witnessed!" he cried, in a loud voice. "Now have fear of me, your master! Once in the Battle of the Walls ye beheld death raining from my fire-bow. Once ye watched me vanquish your ruler, even the great Kamrou himself, and fling him far into the pit that boils. And now for the third time, ye have seen. Remember well!"

A stir ran through the multitude. He felt its potent meaning, and he understood.

"I am the law!" he flung at them once more. "Declare it, all! Repeat!"

The thousand-throated chorus: "Thou art the law!" boomed upward through the fog, rolled mightily against the towering cliff and echoed thunderlike across the hot, black sea.

"It is well!" he cried. "One more sleep, and then—then I choose from among ye two for the journey, two of your boldest and best. And that shall be the first journey of many, up to the better places that await ye, far beyond the pit!"

Straining his eyes in the night, pierced only by the electric beam that ran and quavered rapidly over the broken forest-tops below, Allan peered down and far ahead. The fire, the signal-fire he had told Beatrice to build upon the ledge—would he never sight it?

(CONTINUED MONDAY.)

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

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"The trouble with you, sir, is—if you will pardon me for saying so—that you think nobody is good enough for your daughter."

"Yes, sir, and that is where we differ so radically. You appear to think anybody is."

Farmer Smith's Column

BOOKS

My Darlings—I hope you never tire of having me talk to you about myself, for I never tire of talking to you about myself.

The other day I had the pleasure of entertaining the kinder-garten (Mister Printer—Please put a cute little dash between kinder and garten—I like to spell it that way) in a school where I love to speak.

I had not learned any "piece" so I went to the dears from a book, and when I was through I told the teacher how sorry I was that I had not learned a "piece" so that I might recite to the children. The good woman told me that it seemed to her much better to READ from a book, because that made the children interested in books and gave them the idea that stories were to be found in books.

What a beautiful thought!

In olden times the people sat around the fire and told stories, while today we have newspapers, magazines and books.

I hope you love to read to your little brothers and sisters and I pass on the thought from the kinder-garten teacher so that you may know why you should READ instead of TELL stories.

What books should YOU read? Who do you like to read? What will be HELPFUL to you?

I would be glad to tell you what books my own children read and then you will know what they like, for being the son and daughters of a really truly children's editor, THEY must know what is best to read.

It's lots of fun reading out loud—to make your little hearers SEE the things which are happening as you go along.

Always, your loving editor,

Farmer Smith.

HOME ONCE MORE

By Farmer Smith

"It seems so good to see you home once more," said Mrs. Bumpus to her husband as he slipped in the door and started toward the telephone.

"Never mind. Never mind."

Billy was so frightened at hearing the telephone bell that he didn't want to answer.

"Hello!" he ventured cautiously. "Is it you, is it? How are you?"

After the conversation was over, Mrs. Bumpus asked Billy who it was he had been speaking to. "It was Dr. Goat," answered Billy.

"That shows it does not pay to be frightened until you know what you have to be afraid of."

"Yes, yes, but what about that brickbat soup? My nose tells me that there's something cooking and it smells good to my ears." Billy began to sniff.

"What have your ears to do with it?" asked his wife.

Billy laughed outright. "Can't you hear the dinner bell with your ears? The very idea of asking me what my ears have to do with my stomach! Don't you know what your appetite is composed of?"

"I have never given my appetite much thought. I have always been too busy trying to fill YOU up."

"There, there, wife, dear, don't be so hard on me. I have been away from you a long, long time without anything to eat. PLEASE give me a tiny plate of brickbat soup." Billy went over and put his arm around his wife.

"What did you have to eat in the police station," asked Mrs. Goat.

"They did not give me a thing to eat. Weren't they cruel?" Billy looked up with a sorrowful smile.

"You didn't understand the question. Listen, if your ears aren't too hungry, I asked you what you had to eat in the police station."

"Nothing much," replied Billy.

"How much do you call 'nothing much?' asked Mrs. Bumpus.

"Well, I had the leg of my cot and about eight bars out of the window. I don't call that very much, do you?"

"Not for you, my dear," replied his wife with a smile. "But let's have a midnight lunch. It seems cozy to be eating at midnight."

"It does, indeed," said Billy as he sat down and poked his napkin in his vest. "We had a hard time getting this dish and I propose to enjoy it."

"It cost a trip to the police station for you."

"Yes, and I would have been there had it not been for you, my dear, my wife. Is there any more of that delicious brickbat soup?"

Mrs. Bumpus returned in a few minutes with another plate and asked Billy, "Where does your appetite end?"

"In my toes," answered Billy with a laugh. "That first plate only went as far as my ankles."

"I hope this one will be enough," said Mrs. Bumpus. Then she added, "How did it feel to be locked up all night?"

"I don't know," said Billy. "I was locked up only for a short time. That is long enough for me, for I never want to be away from you for that length of time again. I never really love people or find out how much we do love them until we are taken away from them or they are taken away from us."

"How sweet of you to say that, dear," said Mrs. Bumpus.

"May I have another plate of soup?" asked Billy.

"Four if you want them. One for each foot—enough for ALL your toes."

"Let's eat all the soup NOW and have some more brickbat tomorrow," said Billy, little realizing what [illegible]

FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

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Officer commanding trench—Look out, Bunny! We're going to have a gas attack. [illegible]