

Switch your order to buttermilk and keep cool.

The demon of the air is busy these days reaping his gruesome harvest.

The man who doesn't worry is generally a man with nothing to worry about.

This season's most popular song seems to be just as inane as its predecessors.

Notwithstanding their heavy fur coats, the bears are active on the stock exchange.

This would be a happy, happy world if garden truck could be raised as easily as dandelions.

If thy tight collar grievously afflicteth thy neck, take it off. Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

During the heated term, however, it is perfectly safe to indulge in light exercise, such as swatting flies.

New York is booming itself as a summer resort and here and there we understand people are falling for it.

The new flag of forty-eight stars points with pride, confounding superstition, to the fact that it started with thirteen.

Excitable people should not talk politics during the hot weather. There will be cool days for that sort of thing presently.

Newport lately had a lobster famine, from which it appears that the rich also have their share of the sufferings of life.

Speaking of family tangles, the Ohio man who married his son's widow now knows how it feels to be his wife's father-in-law.

Perhaps Rudyard Kipling's latest magazine story was worth a dollar a word, but personally we would rather have the \$5,000.

A medical authority informs us that there are only 146 lepers in the United States, but in the matter of leprosy, a little goes a long way.

A historian breaks into print with the claim that the liberty bell is a fake. All of which goes to show how easy it is to break into print.

The New York police department has been enlisted in the fly-swatting campaign. Now every member of the force can boast that he is a fly cop.

A foreign count now visiting this country says that he has found only one real gentleman in the United States. How much does he owe him?

Burglars broke into a London jail and stole the warden's money from his office desk. After this, it is not quite fair to say the British have no sense of humor.

The death rate of New York has been reduced one-half since 1866. But then most of the visitors in New York manage to get back home before they die.

People who have waited to buy a flag until all the stars were on may spend their money without hesitation now. The 1912 model is likely to stand for a good many years.

A man in Germany was sent to jail for turning the face of a bust of the emperor to the wall. The lese majeste business, which languished for awhile, must be looking up.

Why go away for the summer when there is a perfectly good one at home?

What is the connection between holidays and accidents? Is it that things are rushed or because the holiday spirit is a reckless one?

A modern Trilby breaks into print with the claim that she can be hypnotized into singing like a grand opera star. Why not make her debut before an audience of marines?

One professional aviator has given up his dangerous pursuit to win a bride. Naturally enough, his prospective wife did not like the idea of a husband always up in the air.

The pedestrian may be weary and worn with the heat, but the motor car pursues him with all its old time ferocity. We yearn for the sight of a motor car overcome by a sunstroke.

A fisherman claims that he has caught a catfish 131 years old in the Mississippi. Ordinary fishermen prevaricate about the weight of their catch, but this angler has originality.

A book agent, who is 100 years old and still on the job, declares his longevity and enterprise are due to buttermilk. But when it comes to buttermilk encouraging book agents to live a hundred years, it is time to put it under ban.

A Pennsylvania physician proclaims that "the family cat must go." We have no grudge against the family cat, but we are strong for the extermination of the cat which deserts its family and sings on the back fence all night.



The POOL of FLAME

by LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

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SYNOPSIS.

The story opens at Monte Carlo with Col. Terence O'Rourke, a military free lance and something of a gambler, in his hotel. Leaning on the balcony he sees a beautiful girl who suddenly enters the elevator and passes from sight. At the gaming table O'Rourke notices two men watching him. One is the Hon. Bertie Glynn, while his companion is Viscount Des Trebes, a duelist. The viscount tells him the French government has directed him to O'Rourke as a man who would undertake a secret mission. At his apartment, O'Rourke, who had agreed to undertake the mission, finds a mysterious letter. The viscount arrives, hands a sealed package to O'Rourke, who is not to open it until on the ocean. A pair of dainty slippers are seen protruding from under a doorway curtain. The Irishman finds the owner of the mysterious feet to be his wife, Beatrix, from whom he had run away a year previous. They are reconciled and opening the letter he finds that a Rangoon law firm offers him 100,000 pounds for a jewel known as the Pool of Flame and left to him by a dying friend, but now in keeping of one named Chambret in Algeria. O'Rourke warns the nobleman in a duel. The wife bids O'Rourke farewell and he promises to soon return with the reward. He discovers both Glynn and the viscount on board the ship. As he finds Chambret there is an attack by bandits and his friend dies, telling O'Rourke that he has left the Pool of Flame with the governor general, who at sight of a signet ring given the colonel will deliver over the jewel. Arriving at Algeria the Irishman finds the governor general away. Des Trebes makes a mysterious appointment, and tells O'Rourke that he has gained possession of the jewel by stealing it. In a duel O'Rourke masters the viscount, secures possession of the Pool of Flame and starts by ship for Rangoon. He finds the captain to be a smuggler who tries to steal the jewel. It is finally secured by the captain and O'Rourke escapes to land.

CHAPTER XVI.

At midnight the muezzin in a neighboring minaret turned his face to the windswept sky and summoned the faithful to prayer and meditation.

O'Rourke pulled thoughtfully at his pipe until the musical, melancholy wail had been whipped away by the breath of the khamsin, and there was silence save for the dull, heavy roaring overhead. Then he resumed the conversation where it had been interrupted.

"And ye say ye love the young woman, Danny?"

"I do that, yer honor."

"And ye would marry her?"

"Wid yer honor's consent—I'm ready, sor."

"I bless the banns. Ye may have her on one condition."

"Aw-w?"

"I've need of ye, as I've pointed out—"

"Sure, yer honor knows ye can count on me to the last breath in me, sor."

"Then ye'll come with me to Burma?"

"Do you think, sor, I could slape of nights, after hearin' from your own lips what ye've been through and suspectin' what more ye must go through with before ye've won? Will I be comin', is ut? Faith, I'll go whether ye want me or not."

"And afterwards ye can come back to Miss Psyche here, or whatever her name may be."

"Yiss, yer honor, and thank ye kindly." . . . Abruptly Danny started up. "They'll be comin' now, sor," he said in an excited whisper. "I'm thinkin' I hear thim blundering down the alley."

He turned toward the rear of the house, and as O'Rourke rose to follow him, the signal sounded on the metal door. Danny quickened his steps, and as he disappeared his master slipped quietly into the shadows beneath the overhanging gallery. From this point of seclusion he could hear distinctly the jar of the bolts as Danny opened the iron door, followed by his hoarse whisper: "Whist! is ut yerselves, now?"

Hole's voice answered him huskily: "Who the hell else would it be? Let us in, you damn harp."

The door creaked upon its hinges; and was cautiously closed. The bolts rattled again. Footsteps shuffled slowly, as of men heavily burdened, over the floor of earth. Then, while O'Rourke gathered himself together, exultation in his heart, and the foretaste of revenge sweet in his mouth, two cloaked figures scuffled into the courtyard, breathing hard beneath their burdens of smuggled drug.

Hole promptly dumped his share of the load down upon the bench and swung upon Danny. "Where's Niccovie?" he demanded, evidently in as ugly a mood as he could muster.

"Where is 'e? Stop standin' there and starlin' with yer balmy trap open, yer—"

"That will be about enough," suggested O'Rourke pleasantly, in a conversational tone, stepping from his place of concealment. "Don't call names, Hole—ye're too near yer god—if ye have one, which I misdoubt."

In the clear, bright starlight the pistols in his hands were plainly evident; and one stared the captain in the eye; one covered the head of the Pelican's first officer.

"Ye will not move!" said O'Rourke,



Young

sharply, "save and except to put your hands above your heads. So—don't delay, Mr. Dennison; I've never known me temper to be shorter."

Hole began to splutter excitedly. "Save your breath, ye whelp!" O'Rourke counseled him curtly. "Ye'll have need of it before I'm done with ye."

He added: "Search and disarm them, Danny."

The servant set about his task with alacrity; it is safe to say that he left not so much as a match in the pocket of either. While he was about it, Hole, with his eyes steadily fixed upon the unwavering muzzles of O'Rourke's revolvers, managed to master his emotion enough to ask coherently:

"What are you going to do with us?"

"Ye'll see in good time," returned O'Rourke grimly. "Have ye found it, Danny?"

Danny backed away from Hole, whom he had searched after Dennison. "Yiss, sor," he returned. "At least, I think so. Is it ut?"

"I can't look at this moment, Danny. Is it a leather bag with something hard inside, the size of a hen's egg, or a bit larger?"

"The very same, yer honor."

"Very well," O'Rourke suppressed the tremble of relief in his voice. "Put it in your pocket, Danny—the very bottom of your pocket. Did ye find a gun on either of them?"

"One on each, sor."

"Loaded?"

"Yiss, sor."

"Then cover them, Danny."

For himself O'Rourke put down his pistols and calmly stripped off his coat, rolling up his sleeves.

"Hole," he said, tersely, "don't move. If ye do, Danny will puncture ye. Your turn comes last, Dennison, ye may step out."

"What for?" demanded the Scot, advancing.

"To receive payment, with interest, for that blow ye gave me this evening, me man. Put up your hands. I'm going, in your own words, Mr. Dennison, to hammer the fear of God into as cowardly and despicable a pair of scoundrels as I've ever encountered. And," reflectively, "I've met a good many. But most of the others were Men."

CHAPTER XVII.

Two battered and sore sailors sat back to back, their arms lashed to one another and to the central upright so that neither could move, both half-submerged in the fountain of Niccovie the Greek.

"Ye'll find the bath quite refreshing," O'Rourke told them, preparing to depart, "as well as a novel experience. 'Twill do ye a world of good, Captain Hole, as anyone will tell ye who has ever had the misfortune to stand to leeward of ye. Your money

and other belongings ye'll find on the bench here, if ever ye are loosed, which I doubt. I call your attention to the fact that I take nothing but me property, of which ye sought to rob me. On the other hand, because of that attempted robbery, I hereby refuse to pay my bill for passage from Athens to Alexandria. If ye care to dispute it, me solicitors in Dublin will be pleased to enter into litigation with ye. Gentlemen!" he bowed ironically, "I bid ye good night."

He was still chuckling over the outcome when, twenty minutes later, he and Danny were trudging through the silent streets of Alexandria, a full mile away from Danny's lodgings.

"Danny," O'Rourke pursued, with just a hint of anxiety in his tone, "would ye happen to be having a bit of lining in your pocket, now—be accident, as they say?"

Danny drew himself up proudly. "I've eight hoondred and fifty pounds, Aygyptian, sor, and two-hundred ay that is yours be rights, bein' what ye lent me, yer honor, while all the rist is yours for the taking."

"That's fine, Danny, fine!" sighed O'Rourke. "Tis yourself will never regret investin' it in Pool of Flame, Unlimited. I'll personally guarantee the income from it, Danny."

"Shure, sor, don't I know?"

"And in the morning, early, Danny, ye and I will take boat and go out to the Pelican for me kit-box."

But in the morning, as it happened, the Pelican had discreetly left the harbor.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was mid-afternoon of a sultry day. No air stirred. The Panjab was coaling at Port Said.

O'Rourke eyed the vessel with disfavor from the shore; then dropped into a harbor dinghy, ensconced himself at the tiller-ropes, and caused himself, with his luggage and his man-servant, to be conveyed alongside the steamer.

Near the gangway he was held back; another boat had forestalled him, another passenger was shipping for the East. O'Rourke was interested idly.

He saw a woman, a slight, trim figure becomingly attired in white, with a veil about her head, leave the boat and mount the gangway steps with a springy, youthful step, a cheerful and positive air, a certain but indefinable calm of self-possession. At the top she paused, turned, looked down, watching the transfer of her luggage and her maid. . . . From sundry intangible indications O'Rourke assumed the second woman's figure to be the lady's maid. And so did Danny. The one eyed the mistress, the other her servant, both with interest.

The woman on deck threw back her

veil. She seemed to promise uncommon beauty of the English type, full-colored and of classic mold. . . . The Irishman was much too far away to be certain, but he fancied that her gaze wandered toward him and—but this, of course, was only imagination—that she started slightly.

At all events, she was quick to drop the veil and turn away. Her maid joining her, both vanished beneath the canvas awnings. The boat that had brought her sheered off, and O'Rourke was permitted to board the Panjab.

It was a glad day, the O'Rourke told himself, as he trod those decks; it saw him definitely started on his way to the East.

O'Rourke roused upon his elbow and peered out of the port of his stateroom. The steamer was plowing through the Bitter Lakes. He saw a string of buoys, a width of water like a jade, a vista of sand, flat, gray, patched with gray-green desert shrub, bounded only by the horizon. . . . "Damn . . ." said he listlessly. He slipped down again upon his back, panted, and wiped his brow.

Danny, recognizing that he was not expected to respond, and being a young man remarkably acute to diagnose his master's moods, prudently refrained from comment. He sat hunched up on a cabin stool, his intensely red, bullet-shaped head bent low over a bit of chamois skin, which he was sewing into a rough, sturdy bag.

As the sun dipped beneath the rim of the horizon, a pleasant shadow invaded the stateroom, until that moment blood-red with its level rays. And Danny straightened up, dropping thimble and thread, announcing the completion of his needlework by a brief, contented: "There!"

O'Rourke glanced at the article dangling from his valet's fingers, and slammed the book against the bulkhead at the foot of his berth.

"Finished, is it?" he exclaimed. "Faith, 'tis about time, ye lazy good-for-naught!"

Danny smiled serenely. "And a good job, too, sor," said he proudly. "Manin' no onrespect to yer honor," he added hastily.

O'Rourke took the subject of discussion in his fingers and examined it searchingly.

"'Twill do," he announced. "'Twill serve its purpose, if no more. Lay out me evening clothes now."

He stood up, stopping to stare through the port. "Good enough," he commented on what he discovered without; "'tis passing Suez we are this blessed minute. Praises be, we caught a boat that doesn't stop here."

Danny scratched an ankle thoughtfully. "Yiss, yer honor," he assented, dubious. "But, for all that, phwat's to hinder anywan from boardin' us be boat, if they sh'd want to?"

O'Rourke turned and eyed the man keenly. "'Tis a great head ye have on your shoulders, Danny," he said. "Sometimes ye betray almost canine intelligence. I'm be way of having hopes of ye. Now get ye on deck and watch to see who does come aboard, if anyone, and report to me."

"Yiss, yer honor."

O'Rourke bolted the door after Danny and assured himself that the key-hole was properly wadded, that no crack existed through which his movements might be observed from the gangway. Shrugging his broad shoulders he returned to the seat vacated by his valet and thrust a hand beneath the coat of his pajamas, withdrawing it a moment later, fingers tightly wrapped about a rather bulky object.

And the Pool of Flame lay glittering and stabbing his eyes with shafts of blood-red light.

Into its depths of pellucid fire O'Rourke gazed long and earnestly, in the most profound meditation.

But at length, slipping the ruby into the new receptacle and drawing the lanyard tight about its puckered throat, he stood up and threw the loop over his head, permitting the bag with its precious contents to fall beneath the folds of his jacket; and, shaking off the sober mood inspired in him by the study of the stone, rang for a steward, to whom, when he responded, he entrusted a summons for Danny—"If so be it we're clear of Suez."

In the course of five minutes or so Danny himself tapped on the door and presented to his master a beaming face.

"Divvie a sow!" he announced triumphantly. "Sure, 'tis ourselves have given thim the slip entirely!"

He fished a brand new kit-box from beneath the berth and, opening it, began to lay out O'Rourke's clothing.

His master indulged in a sigh of relief. "Then no boat put off to us at all?" he questioned idly.

"Only wan," replied the servant, "and that wid no wan in ut but a naygur."

"A negro?" demanded O'Rourke, frowning about. "What do ye mean? Did he come aboard?"

"Sure and he did that, yer honor, and caught us be no moore thim the skin av his tathe and—"

O'Rourke bent over the man and seizing him by the shoulders swung him around so that their eyes met. "What the divvie!" demanded the adventurer, "did ye mean by tellin' me nobody boarded us, then? What—"

"Sure, yer honor. . . . Aw, yer honor! . . . 'Tis meself meant no harm at all, at all!" protested Danny. "Didn't I say that divvie a sow! came aboard? Sure, thim, is a naygur a human?"

With an exasperated gesture O'Rourke released the boy. "'Tis too much for me ye are," he said helplessly. "Now and again I believe ye have the makings of a man in ye, and then ye go off and play the fool! If I didn't believe ye a pure simpleton with not an ounce of mischief in your body, I'd take that out of your worthless hide. Get on with ye! Tell me about this 'naygur.' What sort of a black man is he?"

"Sure, sor," whimpered Danny, "'tis meself that w'd die rather thim have ye talk to me that way, yer honor. Upon me sow, I niver thought ye'd worry about a poor divvie av a naygur, come aboard wid nothin' but a say-chist and the clothes he walks in, beggin' for a chanst to work his passage to Bombay, sor."

"Did they let him sign on, then?" inquired O'Rourke.

"Divvie a bit, rayspicks to ye." More cheerfully Danny struggled with the studs in O'Rourke's shirt. "The purser was all for kickin' him back into his boat, sor, whin he offered to pay passage in the steerage. So they let him stay, sor."

"Seemed to have money—eh?"

"Aw, no, yer honor. 'Twas barely able he was to scrape ut all together."

"Lascar?"

"I believe so, yer honor. 'Tis hard for me to say. Wan av thim naygur's as much like another as two paws, sor; 'tis all tarred wid the same brush they be."

"Ah well," he resumed more pacifically, "belike he's with us, Danny, and has no concern with us at all. Whether or no, care killed the cat. . . . D'ye mind, Danny, he swung off on one of his characteristically acute tangents, "the little woman with the red hair? Though 'tis meself should beg the lady's pardon for mentioning the color of her hair in the same room with that outrageous headlight of yours, Danny. . . . D'ye mind her, I mean?"

"The wan ye observed at Poort Said, sor? The wan ye told me to discover the name av?"

"'Tis a brave detective ye would make, Danny. Ye have me merrin' entirely!"

"Aw, yiss." Danny's lips tightened as he laced O'Rourke's patent-leather shoes. He cast up at his master's face an oblique glance of disapproval. "I mind the wan ye mane," he admitted.

He rose, and as he did so, O'Rourke gently but firmly twisted him around by the ear and as deliberately and thoughtfully kicked him.

"What the divvie is the matter with ye, Danny?" he inquired in pained remonstrance. "It is mad ye are, or have ye no judgment at all, ye scut, that ye speak to me in that tone?"

Solicitously Danny rubbed the chastened portion of his person, grumbling but unrepentant.

O'Rourke grinned tolerantly, retaining his hold upon the servant's ear. "Her name?"

"Ow, yer honor, leggo! . . . Missus Pryne, sor!"

The wanderer gave the ear another tweak, by way of enforcing the lesson. "Pryne, is it? And how did you learn that, Danny?"

"'Twas her maid told me, sor. Leggo, yer honor, please—"

"And how did her maid come to tell ye, ye great ugly, long-legged omadhaun?"

"Sure—ow!—'twas only a bit av a kiss I was by way av givin' her, sor—"

"That'll do, Danny," O'Rourke chuckled.

The peal of the trumpet announcing dinner interrupted his contemplated lecture on the ethics of investigation and the perils of flirtation as between maid and man servant.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Same Thing.

"And he said he was willing to die for me?"

"Not exactly in those words, but that was the impression he was evidently trying to convey."

"What did he say?"

"He said he was ready to eat your cooking any time you said the word."

—Houston Post.