

# Two Men and a Shark

By H. P. BAILEY.

[Imprisoned in a cave, with a shark keeping guard outside and only waiting for the rising of the tide to enter and seize his victims! Such was the position in which the author and his companion found themselves. What happened afterwards is graphically told in the subjoined narrative.]

I was in San Francisco taking my late employer's advice—a rest. One morning he had failed to meet his liabilities—and me. He just left a clean pair of heels and a little note. The note advised me to follow his seceding example, or remain and take a moneyless rest. I acted on the latter; I had to.

After a week's very active "rest" my liabilities were sold to a newly-formed copper syndicate, "The San Francisco and California Copper Company." I was to accompany another gentleman as a surveyor on a copper prospecting expedition in Southern California.

That week one of the Pacific Mail Company's boats—the City of Panama, I think—sailed for Mexico and Peru, and in her we took berth. In a few days we were dropped at Mazatlan, a port on the west coast of Mexico. From there we crossed the Gulf of California to La Paz—an idle-born, listless town, having then but little, if any, excuse to offer for its existence. Here we procured some over-ripe Mexican "plugs"—a species of quadruped, or, rather, active volcano on four legs—to jolt us into the mountains. I do not intend to inflict upon the reader the results of a scientific expedition which had for its object the examination of the copper-bearing rocks in that region; let it suffice to say that during this metal-chasing trip Dr. Butler, geologist, of Chicago, and myself were the unsparring victims of a very nerve-trying adventure, which befell us on the southwest coast of the Gulf of California.

One sun-bathed morning fifty or sixty miles south of La Paz, Dr. Butler and I found ourselves upon the coast. He was examining and obtaining specimens of basaltic and irachytic rock. I accompanied him, ready to take bearings and measurements of the locality if necessary.

We had just wended our way around the foot of a bluff and rocky island when we saw before us a shallow inlet, rock-girt on three sides, about 150 feet across at its widest part, the cove penetrated several hundred feet into the rocky coast. Precipitous were its sides and sullen its outlines, but its deep and sparkling waters looked cool and inviting.

In the blank and shrubless cliff across the inlet we discerned the gaping mouth of a cavern, with its lower lip, to the extent of a few inches, appearing above the water's edge.

"I should like to examine the rock formation of that cavern's interior," said the doctor, presently, half to himself and half to me. Then, after a momentary pause, he added, "But how the dickens are we to get there, Bailey?"

It could be seen at a glance that there was no land approach to the cavern. Neither was there any material around us with which to construct a raft. However, it needed no sixth sense to solve the problem.

"I guess there is only one way, doctor," said I, "and that is to swim!"

Both of us were fairly good swimmers and cared little for the watery stretch that separated us from our object; indeed, the project incited within us great and pleasant expectations. In the overweening fit of enthusiasm that inspired us we considered danger of every sort out of the question. Accordingly, we stripped, dived, and struck out with all the vigor commensurate with our high spirits.

Up the other side we crawled, and together prepared to enter the dark unknown. With my eyes attuned to business I noticed that the cavern was about thirty feet long and shaped like a trumpet. Inside it was about fifteen feet wide by six or seven feet high. Once we were well inside, the damp, salt-laden air, together with the half-lit shadowy rocks, had a depressing effect upon my spirits. Next to a tomb, I decided, it was the most uncomfortable place in which I had ever been.

However, in this ocean cubicle Dr. Butler pursued his investigations, for it promised something tangible to our business hopes. Meanwhile, accoutred in the unobtrusive costume of Adam, I squatted on the floor and watched him. He flitted from one point to another with businesslike zeal. Presently he commenced to trace towards the entrance a side fissure in the rock. So intent was his mind on his task, and so glued were his eyes to the fissure, that he took little heed as to where and how he placed his feet, with the unfortunate result that, moving quickly forward he stepped heavily upon a sharp conical point and lacerated one of his bare feet severely. Some of the rocky scale penetrated the wound, and to wash this extraneous matter from the cuts he limped to the cavern's mouth and bathed his bleeding feet in the water, in which task I assisted him.

The wound bled profusely; there was no stopping it for some time. Eventually, however, Butler got up,

re-entered the cavern, and resumed his investigations.

Not wishing to return into the cold and gloomy interior of the cave, I remained at the entrance, basking in the warm sunshine.

Except for a few sea birds that whirled in giddy flight far above me in the clear blue heavens, not a living thing gave signs of its existence. The transparent waters of the mighty Pacific, with the sun's rays dancing on the tiny waves, lapped melodiously at my feet. Farther seaward, and as far as the eye could reach, the solemn, stupendous grandeur of the ocean lulled one's senses into a benign forgetfulness. One felt one's helplessness, one's utter insignificance.

But hark! What was that strange swishing sound that broke the silence? It was quite close to me—beside me. Horrors! I sprang to my feet with a sharp exclamation, for there, not a dozen feet away, was a tall, triangular fin—the dorsal fin of a huge shark!

A cry from me brought Dr. Butler quickly to my side. "Great heavens!" cried he, visibly affected, as he gazed upon the hideous creature. "What a bloodthirsty brute he looks! The blood from my foot must have attracted him from the open."

A moment more and a terrible thought flashed simultaneously through our brains. This horror-creating denizen of the deep was our jailer! So long as he remained there our only avenue of escape was closed.

The doctor turned and looked at me in silence, and in silence I returned his scrutiny. Each knew only too well that for us there was no way of gaining the opposite shore and liberty except by swimming across the inlet. We knew, moreover, that if we assayed the passage one of us must be taken by the monster to pay the price of the other's liberty.

But, the reader may ask, why not, in preference to such a horrible death, stay indefinitely in the cavern, even to the point of dying of starvation? Unfortunately for us, however, we had no alternative, for we knew, from the marks on the rocks, that when the tide rose the shark would be able to invade the cavern!

No; as surely as the waters ebbed and flowed, a certain and horrible death awaited one or other of us. Not a hair's breadth backward or forward did the creature move from his post outside the cave. Grim and expectant he lay there in all his repulsiveness, the vanguard of death. Once he tilted himself slightly, and by so doing showed us his horrid grey eyes and his more horrid mouth—a mouth that bristled with many rows of teeth. The great brute seemed to root us to the spot with a fascination of horror, for time passed and we knew it not. How long we remained staring at the creature I cannot say, but when we woke from our terror induced stupor our feet were being laved by the incoming tide.

"Bailey!" cried Dr. Butler, suddenly. "Come into the cavern. An idea has struck me which may save us. Quick!"

Leaving the brink, padding through the rising water, I dumbly followed my companion. Already his face had become pale and haggard; mental anguish unrelieved soon pallid the brightest face.

"Well, doctor," murmured I, as we stood inside, "what is it?"

"Why, this," he answered, quietly. "Maybe if we keep ourselves out of his sight in this cave, and remain absolutely silent, he may get the impression we have departed, and then perhaps he will leave the inlet. I can suggest nothing better. What do you think about it?"

"I guess we'll try it," said I, with a little hope stealing back to me.

"Right; now let us take seats on these ledges."

"Doctor," said I, a moment afterwards, "don't you think you had better take your injured foot out of the water?" By this time a few inches of water covered the entire floor of the cavern. "I notice it still bleeds a little, and no doubt the shark will stay as long as he scents the blood. Try that ledge higher up."

"How thoughtless of me!" cried Butler, changing his seat. "And now, Bailey, old friend"—his voice grew grave—"give me your hand. It may be the last shake for one of us in this world, so let it be a long one and a good one." Solemnly we shook hands.

"And now, mum's the word," added Butler, calmly.

After that we maintained a deathlike silence as we crouched there in that ice-cold and tomb-like hollow, each busy with his own sombre thoughts. Occasionally, during this terrible death watch, I glanced towards the mouth of the cavern and the sweet, alluring sunshine beyond. I thought of our position and shuddered. If our ruse failed, then every moment was bringing us nearer to that last awful scene, when the waiting monster would be able to enter the cave in quest of his victim.

Soon—it seemed but five minutes, yet it must have been at least an hour—the water rose within the cavern sufficiently high to enable the shark to swim inside. From our ledges above the surface we scrutinized the sunlit entrance with straining eyes. Every instant we expected

to see that ominous dorsal fin enter and cleave the water of the cave, and thus raise our sensations to the climax of horror before ending forever our nerve-racking vigil. But it came not. And so we commenced to hope that our trick had been successful; to hope with an intensity that shut out all other emotions.

Now, if ever, the moment for leaving the cavern had come. Yet we felt loath to go, for blood still trickled occasionally from the doctor's wounded foot—manifestly a state of things that enhanced our danger tenfold. Still go we must, and each must take his chance.

Calming myself as best I could, I whispered: "Doctor, who leads the way?"

"You, if you like," he rejoined.

In this reply there was nothing suggestive of cowardliness, for to follow in the wake of a trail of blood left by the doctor's foot was, in the event of the keen scented shark being absent from the inlet, equally as dangerous as swimming in the lead in case the brute was still present. So I decided to lead.

Quietly I slid down into the water and anxiously commenced to breast the tide. At the cavern's mouth I heard a quiet splash behind me—it was the doctor entering the water. The ordeal of our lives was now commenced in earnest.

Passing through the entrance with a prayer on my lips, I swam into the sunlit zone of my danger. For a moment I was blinded by the myriads of dazzling lights that danced upon the surrounding wavelets, and in that moment my consciousness became dimmed over with the fear of death. With an effort I regained my self-control and struck out boldly. With what soul-harrowing dread during those first few strokes I scanned the waters no pen of mine can adequately describe; never, I hope, shall I experience the like again. Then, with mixed feelings of pleasure and grave concern at finding the death-bringing fin absent, I headed for the opposite shore with all my might and main. Would the shark scent us and return? That was the thought that rankled in my mind.

Half-way across, as I turned my head seawards, I fancied I saw the dreaded fin projecting above the even surface of the ocean. To fancy it led me to dwell upon the horrible reality of it, and my speed, in consequence, soon diminished. With a great mental effort I forced my thoughts into other channels; then I commenced to forge ahead again.

It was not far now—a few more feet and I would be safe.

A moment more and I touched a rock, and pulled myself ashore. I was saved.

But what about my poor friend the doctor? Turning, I beheld him about thirty feet from the shore, swimming very feebly. In his wake floated a crimson stain and a clot or two of blood—his death scent. His face was ghastly pale, and his expression painfully haggard; and although a flash of courage spasmodically illuminated the features I could see it betokened a speedy collapse. No doubt, seeing that I was safe, he had taken an extremely pessimistic view of his own position. He commenced to swim lower in the water, and I realized he was about to drown! "Doctor, doctor!" I shouted. "Buck up! Don't be afraid! There's nothing dangerous near you. Everything's quite clear. Fire away!"

The spasm of despair had passed. Well for him that it had, for at that moment I was about to plunge in to help him the deadly fin suddenly appeared close at hand. There, a few dozen feet from the inlet's mouth, seeking the deep water ingress. My eyes traveled from the fin to the doctor, and I tried to weigh up the chances between them. If the shark delayed a little there was a chance—just a chance.

Meanwhile the doctor, innocent of his danger, was swimming a great deal better. But suddenly as I glanced furtively seaward, the huge fin abruptly turned its thin edge towards the entrance, and the brute came tearing up the entrance passage in a series of tacks as it crossed and recrossed the scent of blood. What was I to do? A few moments more and all would be over.

With a voice into which I tried to force an air of calmness I cried, "Swim up, old man! Put up more strength behind those strokes—that is better!"

Out of the corner of my eye I saw the fin drawing steadily nearer. "Keep your eye on me—don't let it stray!" I called again. "Make for this rock."

The fin was now heading directly toward him.

Beads of cold perspiration stood on my brow; I ran into the water up to my waist and fairly shrieked at him. "Doctor! for the love of heaven—swim! Swim—swim for your life—quick! Ah! Thank God!"

I bent down and seized him, swinging him by a mighty effort clear out of the water.

An instant later the teeth of the shark clashed as he whisked by in all his hideousness. And then, saved from the very jaws of death, Butler and I fell upon the sand, utterly exhausted and unnerved.—The Wide World Magazine.

**Dogs in Church.**

In comparatively recent years north country shepherds often attended church accompanied by their dogs. At times fierce quarrels would break out. So common was this that in some churches long iron dog tongs were part of the furniture, these articles being used to seize the dogs without the danger of being bitten and carry them outside the building.—Country Life.



## Two Ways of Pruning Grapevines.

In all grape growing localities the Kniffin system is the best and cheapest for strong growing varieties, such as Niagara. It is best because it requires less care and work, and it is cheap. It saves money in time and labor. Only two wires, instead of three or four, are required for the trellis. Slow growing varieties, such as Delaware, are better trained on the fan system, as they must be renewed from a point nearer the ground. When following the fan system the pruner can always cut to good wood; when following a more definite system, as the Kniffin, sometimes he must cut at a loss.

The fan system is briefly as follows: When planting, cut the vine back to two buds; next spring, again cut back to two buds; second spring after planting, if vine is strong, leave one cane about two or three feet long, and tie up to trellis wires. When growth on this is about six inches long, rub off all sprouts below the point on the upright where it is desired to start the fan. Third spring, prune back to six or eight buds the strongest canes that arise from near a central point below the first wire; tie about three of these fan-shaped to the wires and remove all the rest. The following seasons, renew the wood from as near the trunk as possible and increase the number of arms to five or more if growth is strong.

A vine trained by the Kniffin system consists of an upright trunk or standard and four arms. To produce this result the young vine is treated similar to the fan system for two seasons. The second spring after planting, select the strongest cane and tie it straight and firmly to the top wire, cutting everything else away. The third spring, select four arms, two on opposite sides of the standard near the lower wire and two similarly placed near the upper wire, cut these back to six or eight buds according to the length of the points on the cane, tie them to the wires, and remove all other canes. The fourth and subsequent years renew the arms with wood that arises from a point as near to the central standard as possible.—Canadian Horticulturist.

## Sweet Potato Hotbed.

The most convenient size for a sweet potato hotbed is one that will hold three barrels of potato seed. Take for the back a board sixteen feet long and one foot wide and for the front a board the same length, eight inches wide, the end boards twenty-six inches long, to come even with the front and back boards, nailed to a solid stake at each corner, also a stake in the middle of each sixteen-foot board. Then take a spade and dig the dirt out so as to make the bed twenty inches deep from the top of frame boards; the same all over the bed. Then fill in with fresh stable manure and tramp down to ten inches in thickness. The manure should have considerable bedding in it and stay heaped up at least twenty-four hours before it is packed in the pit, when it should be shaken well and thoroughly mixed, as some of the manure will heat sooner than other parts and will cause an uneven temperature and consequent uneven sprouting.

After the manure has been placed and well tramped so that it slopes to the south, put in four inches of loose earth evenly all over the bed. Let this stay until the dirt becomes warm, then place the potatoes on so as not to touch each other and then cover two inches deep with fine loose earth. If you find in a few days that your bed is too hot, make a sharp stick and run it to the bottom of the bed and leave several holes through the centre and the heat will soon escape; then fill the holes again. As for sprinkling or wetting them, it is not required, nor should they be rained on until plants are well up; the steam from the manure furnishes all moisture that is needed. The bed should be kept covered until sprouts are well up, but the top may be removed to give the plants air and light when the temperature is not so cold as to injure the plants.—The Epitomist.

## Raising Carrots.

It has always seemed strange to the writer that carrots were not more universally grown, for not only are they remunerative commercially, but they are most excellent for feeding live stock, especially horses. It is a well-known fact that carrots when fed to horses improve their wind greatly.

The gross profit from an acre of well-grown carrots should be about \$300. A light loam or sandy soil suits them best, with a moderate application of manure. For general cultivation, the writer prefers the Rubicon, Danvers and Long Orange, for if grown in excess of the market, they can be profitably fed to the live stock.

It requires from three to four pounds of seed per acre, depending on the distance between the rows. The plants should be from three to six inches apart in the rows, and the rows wide enough apart for a horse

cultivator to be used. A good bit of hand thinning can be saved by going through the rows first with a hoe and cutting out a hoe's width, leaving about three or four plants between the first hoe's width and the next. Carrots are free from insect or other enemies, as a rule, and demand no extra attention.

There is no farm-raised animal that doesn't relish carrots, from the fowls up. The writer still believes, at the risk of being called old fashioned, that we would have healthier and more contented live stock if we fed more roots and less mill feed; also that our farms would pay better if we didn't put all our eggs in one basket. For example, if a man goes in for dairying exclusively and is by chance unfortunate enough to have to kill all his herd on account of tuberculosis, he faces temporary embarrassment, to say the least; whereas, if he had fewer cows, and other crops to depend on, such as beets, carrots, strawberries, potatoes, etc., he would feel the loss so much less.—A Farmer, in the Country Gentleman.

## Beginners in Horse Breeding.

In an article of caution to beginners in this line of work, the English Live Stock Journal concludes as follows:

As a general rule it is not desirable for a commencement to be made with more than one breed, even though the soil and climatic conditions may favor the course. The beginner, no matter how extended his theoretical knowledge may be, will have much to learn when it comes to a question of practice, and although the experienced man may succeed with several varieties in his stud at the same time, the prospects of the newcomer will not be advanced by adopting this course. He may remember, too, that, if making money be his object, he will probably succeed better by taking up a breed that is in demand in his district, as by doing so he will probably be able to dispose of his misfits more easily and upon more advantageous terms. When he has made his name, purchasers will come from all parts for his good horses, and therefore distance is practically no object. The misfit, however, will always be with him, and, though the number of these undesirables may be limited, they will continually be making their existence felt. There is no royal road for extinguishing the misfit, but the best way to limit his appearance is to breed only from the best and best-bred stock, following out the lines upon which the most famous families of the Stud Book have been produced, and by avoiding all fantastic experiments. By adopting a policy such as the above the horse breeder may rest practically assured that success will ultimately attend him; though possibly he may be called upon meanwhile to exercise the golden gift of patience.

## How to Forecast the Weather.

The Farmers' Club of the American Institute has issued the following rules for forecasting the weather:

- The wind never blows unless rain or snow is falling within 1000 miles of you.
- When cirrus clouds are rapidly moving from the north or northeast there will be rain within twenty-four hours, no matter how cold it is.
- Cumulus clouds always move from a region of fair weather to a region where a storm is forming.
- The wind always blows from a region of fair weather to a region where a storm is forming.
- When the temperature suddenly falls there is a storm forming south of you.
- When the temperature suddenly rises there is a storm forming north of you.
- Cirrus clouds always move from a region where a storm is in progress to a region of fair weather.
- It is said when the cumulus clouds are moving from the south or southeast, there will be a cold rain-storm on the morrow, if it is in summer; if it is in winter there will be a snowstorm.
- Whenever heavy, white frost occurs, a storm is forming within 1000 miles north or northwest of you.
- The wind always blows in a circle around a storm, and when it blows from the north the heaviest rain is east of you; if it blows from the south, the heaviest rain is west of you; if it blows from the east, the heaviest rain is south of you; if it blows from the west, the heaviest rain is north of you.

## Proposal Postal.

As a labor-saving appliance the new proposal card has much to recommend it. It is in the form of an ordinary invitation and reads as follows:

—requests the honor of \_\_\_\_\_'s hand in marriage.

R. S. V. P.

—Argonaut.

Sig. Blancheri, the venerable president of the Italian Chamber, finds a hobby in horticulture.

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## Ordering the Seasons.

Among the strange duties of the Emperor of China is one that necessitates his ordering the seasons. It is summer in America when the sun warms the earth, and not till then, but in China it is summer when the Emperor says it is summer. As soon as the Son of Heaven declares that summer has come, everyone in China puts off winter clothing and arranges himself in summer garb, no matter what his feelings may say on the subject. All domestic arrangements are made to suit the season, as proclaimed by His Imperial Majesty, although they may not suit the individual at all.

The nearest approach to the Chinese custom of ordering the seasons is the practice observed in France in all public buildings. There it is winter on and after October 1. Fires are then lighted in all government offices and the servants exchange their white summer waistcoats for the thicker and darker ones of winter. At that date the public libraries are closed at 4, and in the streets the sellers of roasted chestnuts make their appearance. In official France it is winter, no matter what the weather may say and no matter what unofficial France may think.—Philadelphia Record.

## "Big Four" Among Gems.

In the gem kingdom the ruby, the diamond, the emerald and the sapphire constitute "the big four" and take precedence—and in the order named—of all other precious stones. The pearl is, of course, not a stone; it has a standard of its own. The expert test of the gem is its color, its degree of clearness and its perfection of cutting; upon the last depends its brilliancy. In the diamond the "brilliant" cutting holds first place. The other stones are cut together differently—they are crystallized in different systems; in fact, they differ in another respect, the diamond being a mineral carbon, the finer ruby (the Oriental) a variety of corundum, the emerald a variety of beryl, and the sapphire a colored variety of corundum. What is technically known as the "step cut" is an essential to bring out the fire of the last three.—Chicago Journal.

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