

der. Then he turned and fled for the other side of the lake.

He could not remain idle on the lake for fear of being tipped over by that swarm of crocs, and he dared not go ashore and reveal himself now he knew the Hindus were fanatics and secret worshippers of a forbidden god. He had dropped in upon the illegal rites of a Hindu sect who believed in making human sacrifices, and it seemed that one of Jim's own countrymen was destined to fill the leading role.

Something must be done about it, but first of all he had to find some spot where he could think.

The back of the lake was in total darkness, and there he discovered a narrow ledge about four feet above the water, where he managed to pull himself up into comparative safety.

For the first time he noticed a narrow archway to one side of the god. It seemed to lead to a small tunnel, and he at once guessed that was the way out, the way by which the secret worshippers reached the cave from the surface.

It was good to know there was a way out, but the knowledge was not much good to him just now. He could never hope to get through that horde and escape, and he had made up his mind that he would make no effort to escape until he had saved his fellow countryman.

Some other way must be found. He racked his brains, and wished that he had not lost his revolver down in Calcutta. Thinking he was going to travel through only peaceful country, he had not troubled to obtain another.

He had only his bare hands and his wits to aid him.

The Hindus had risen from their knees, and were crowding forward round the prisoners. Something was going to happen.

Jim crouched miserably on his ledge. What could he do against fifty or sixty men?

Ghatra Chand let out a hoarse laugh as he made towards the prisoners.

"Now, sahib. Show us how the sahibs die, and die happy, knowing you are bringing good luck and prosperity to all the plantations in the district."

Many hands seized the white man and loosened his halter.

Handley Sahib fought like a fiend. He must have known there was no chance for him if they once got him in the water. He fought tooth and nail to prevent this from happening, using hands, feet, and head.

The crowd of Hindus rocked and swayed about the tall, lean figure they were trying to drag down to the water, where the hungry crocs waited with many splashes of impatience.

They triumphed by sheer weight of numbers, and dragged him to the brink. The next second he would have been hurled down the slight slope.

"Stop!" boomed a voice from the center of the lake. Stop, dogs!"

The grip of the fanatics on their intended victim relaxed. Their knees wobbled, their eyes grew big as they started towards the strange interruption.

Out there on the shadowy part of the black lake a figure was standing on the water, the tall figure of a white

man wearing the usual khaki shorts and open-necked shirt. There was nothing unusual about the garb of this mysterious person, but the marvel was that he was standing on the water, moving forward with slow, deliberate strides.

It was dark enough out there for the canoe-shoes that supported Jim Brewster to be unnoticed. He deliberately kept back in the shadows as he pointed his finger at the Hindus.

"Release Handley Sahib at once! Set him free."

The Indians recoiled from the edge

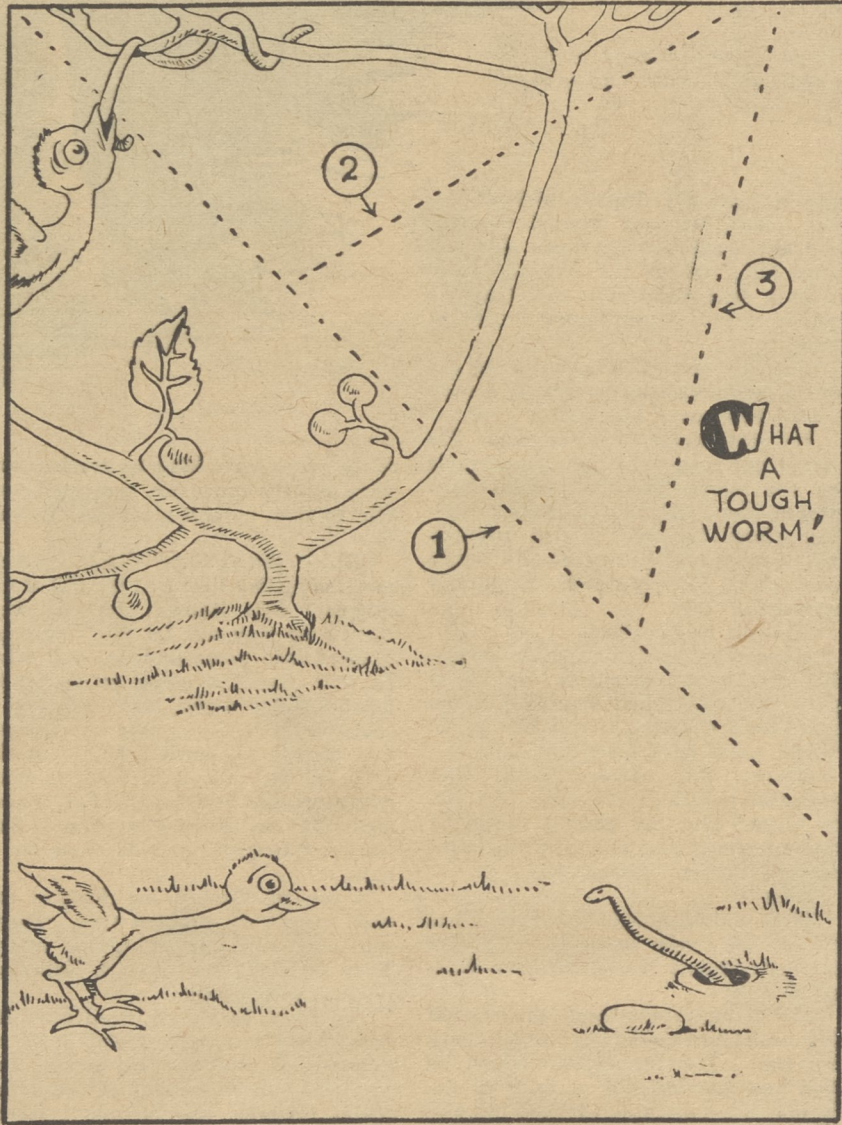
the Water-Walker, sliding nearer. "Back before you're shot."

Just for a moment Ghatra Chand thought there was a revolver in the boy's hand; he recoiled a step or two. Jim Brewster darted in towards the shore with all possible speed, wending his way in and out among the crocodiles, who were raging at this delay.

Handley was not a yard from the water's edge.

"Roll into the water, Handley!" he yelled, and heaved a sigh of relief when he saw the man move.

## MOVING PICTURES



Little Nancy bird up in the tree has caught her breakfast but Brother Jim is still hunting his. It looks as if the worm might get away yet, too. If you want to know what really is going to happen, cut out the picture. Carefully fold dotted line 1 along its entire length; then dotted lines number 2 and 3. Be sure to fold each section underneath accurately. When completed, turn over and you will find a surprising result.

of the lake, all except Ghatra Chand, who remained where he was, staring towards the shadowy form which had challenged him in his own stronghold. He had paled a little, but the torchlight showed an ugly scowl on his face.

"Who are you to venture into the temple of the Many-Handed One?" he demanded.

"Never mind about that," rasped

But now the torchlight was fully on the intrepid youngster, and not only Ghatra Chand, but the others of his followers could see the canoe-shoes which made it possible for Jim to perform this seeming "miracle." Ghatra Chand also noticed that the lone white boy was empty-handed.

With a yell of fury he darted forward, and his followers swept out in a yelling band from the shelter of the

big idol, where they had darted at the first sight of the Water-Walker.

"It is a trick. He is but a young sahib and unarmed!" shouted the Hindu leader.

Splash! Handley had rolled into the water just as Jim glided alongside. There was an excited flurry of ugly snouts being thrust towards the bound man, but Jim was quicker. Stooping, he exerted all his strength and lifted Handley clear of the water, only just in time.

The next second he was standing 'midst a raging, champing horde of crocs, any one of which could have knocked him over with a thrust from its long, scaly head.

Luckily for Jim and the man he carried in his arms, the crocs were suspicious of each other. They believed one of their own number had snatched the prize, and they began to fight. Not one of them for the moment connected those long, canvas canoe-shoes with anything human.

The rush of the Hindus had been so fierce that one of the foremost was pushed into the water by the others. Wildly he clawed at the rock to get out, but he was not quite quick enough. There was a flurry of scaly crocodile backs, a snapping sound, and then the brutes really had something to fight over.

During the confusion Jim darted across the width of the lake to his ledge, thrust Handley up on it and pulled himself after him.

"Gosh!" breathed the other. "That was a near thing. Who are you? When I saw you standing on the water like that I was as scared as the Hindus."

Jim laughed a little grimly as he told his amazing story and the older man's face showed surprise at the recital. Across the other side of the lake the horde of Hindus was yelling and raging, some of them dancing with wild fury on the edge of the water, but not one of them dared attempt to cross that stretch of lake. There were no boats in the Temple of the Many-Handed God.

While Handley rubbed the cramp from his limbs he told Jim that his name was Ralph Handley and that he owned a tea plantation about 6 miles distant. He had been travelling the Habi River with some of his men on a duck-shooting expedition, when they had been seized by this ex-over-seer of his.

"I've lived not six miles from this mountain for ten years," he declared, "and I never knew anything about this underground lake or about this accursed temple. Now I come to think of it I can remember stories of men mysteriously disappearing, but I thought nothing of it at the time. I bet my last dollar they've been fed to the crocs in this lake."

Several of them were swimming around below the ledge, puzzled by the movement caused by the water that dripped from Jim's canoe-shoes, which he had taken off and placed near the edge.

"They brought you down through that tunnel over there?" questioned Jim. "I thought so. But we'll never get out that way. Ghatra Chand will have the entrance blocked. What are we going to do?"

By this time it must have been black night up above, and Handley

## ANIMAL CRACKERS

By Lane

