

Eugen Sandow Writes for This Number.



A BRIGHT AND UP-TO-DATE PAPER FOR ALL BRITISH BOYS AND YOUNG MEN.

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EVERY SATURDAY—ONE PENNY.

[SATURDAY, APRIL 28TH, 1906.

It Starts To-day!

Don't Miss It!

THE UNKNOWN SEA!

A TALE OF
THE SARCASSO.
BY
Cecil Hayter.

THE 1st CHAPTER. Scuttled.

A BRAZEN sun in a sky of brass. A heavy, lumpy, rolling sea, running two hundred yards from crest to crest, dazzling sapphire on the upper slopes beneath the white foam, deep lurid purples in the trough, and an underengined, undermanned, ill-found tramp steamer with rust-streaked sides, nosing her way northwards up the African coast-

line, which lay in a thin, dark, monotonous line on her starboard bow.

Behind the dirty canvas dodger on the bridge, within easy reach of the open chart-house door, lounged a long, wirily-built man, with a deeply-tanned face. He was lying asprawl in a rickety deck-chair, glancing alternately at a much-tattered, well-thumbed volume on his knees, and at the onrushing crests of the big Atlantic rollers, the remnants of a two-days'-old storm.

He was airily dressed in a suit of pyjamas and an old rush hat, for the wind had blown itself out, and the heat of the sun was so great that unprotected metal-work seared the bare hand.

Suddenly he frowned heavily as from the chart-house behind him there came the sound of a popping cork, the tinkle of glass against glass, and a low murmur of voices.

"Old man's began good and early; that's his fourth this morning, to my knowledge," he mut-

tered to himself. "He'll pile this old kettle up yet before he's through. By James, what a fool I was ever to set foot on her cranky deck-plates! There's something going on off the square, too. The old man's been as nippy as a two-year-old kitten for these last forty-eight hours, and I don't fancy it's just an ordinary, straightforward case of pink rats and cobras, either; he looks scared—real, genuine scared!"

(Continued on the next page.)



FOSTER FOUND THE BODY OF THE CASTAWAY—DEAD OR ALIVE, HE HAD NOT TIME TO QUESTION—AND GRABBED IT FIERCELY!

Splendid Short, Complete Tale.

JUNGLE FOES.

A Story of the Dacoits.

BY A POPULAR AUTHOR.

Hunted Down.

"Ah, a tiger at last!" Dick Evelyn grasped his rifle as he muttered the words. The full round moon sailed high over the Jumna, and silver light glimmered upon vast stretches of jungle. Where a jungle path, thickly marked by the tracks of wild animals, ran down to the river, Dick Evelyn had waited for a long hour—waited and watched for the tiger that did not come.

But suddenly, through the night silence, came the patter of feet upon the trodden path.

In an instant the young Britisher was on his knee, his rifle to his shoulder, covering the approach to the stream. His finger was on the trigger, ready to speed the death-shot as soon as the striped body should appear.

The next moment a look of disappointment overspread his face, and he lowered the rifle.

It was not the tiger he had long expected. A running figure came into view—the figure of a man. He stopped at sight of the gleaming waters that cut off his further flight, and uttered an exclamation of dismay.

"Lost! Lost!"

Crack!

It was a shot from the jungle. The man staggered and fell upon his face on the margin of the moonlit water.

Dick Evelyn was petrified for a moment. But he sprang to his feet with a cry of rage as a dark figure came bounding from the jungle, and a clubbed rifle whirled in the air over the prostrate form of the white man.

With gleaming eyes Dick pulled trigger. There was a sharp, yelping cry, and the Hindoo fell like a log. He did not stir again.

Dick ran forward. One swift glance he gave up the jungle path, to see whether other foes were at hand. But nothing was stirring in the moonlight. The white man, raising himself upon his elbow, stared wildly at Dick.

"Who are you?" he gasped. "What are you doing here?"

"My name is Dick Evelyn. I was waiting for a man-eater when you came. But let me see to your hurt."

The man waved him back.

"Never mind that. Listen. You are a stranger to me, but you are a Briton, and that is enough. A woman is in danger. I cannot stir. Will you save her?"

The young Britisher did not require to think before answering a question like that. He simply nodded, and the man's face lighted up.

"Thank you." His hand was feebly outstretched. Dick took it in a firm grasp. "I am Gervase Lawrence. I am collector at Burrumpore. I was warned to-day that Koumi Din, the dacoit, was planning an attack upon my bungalow. Hurree Das gave me the warning, and I knew I could trust him. My sister is there, and I have been unable to reach her."

He broke off with a gasp.

Dick Evelyn listened with a grave face. He began to understand how matters were.

"I hurried homeward at once. But I feared that Koumi Din's men might intercept me, and so I sent Hurree Das by another path to warn my sister of her peril. You see, I was right; they were watching for me in the jungle. I barely escaped their tulwars when they rushed upon me, and they pursued me through the jungle. I thought I had eluded them, but one villain, you see, was still upon my track, when the Jumna stopped my flight. I had hoped to escape them and still reach the bungalow; now here I lie as helpless as a log." He groaned.

"Will you save my sister?"

"I will save her, or die in the attempt," said Dick quietly.

"God bless you! I will give you the best directions I can. I have but little doubt that Hurree Das has eluded the dacoits and reached the house. The bungalow stands close to the Jumna; if they have time they will take to the boat. If not, they will defend the house with the servants as best they can. If you escape the dacoits, you can get there in an hour if you know the ground."

"I know all this region well."

"Good! Heaven help you!" He panted out directions with feverish haste. "Now, go; there is not a moment to waste."

Dick hesitated.

"But you? You are wounded sorely! How can I leave you?"

Lawrence made an impatient gesture.

"You must leave me. I am hard hit, but I may live. If the dacoits come upon me I am doomed. It matters little so long as you save Helga. Go, I say! I am an Englishman, and I know how to face death. But you must save Helga."

Dick hesitated no longer. He carried the wounded man out of the path of any animals that might come down to the river to drink, and loaded his revolver in every chamber and placed it in his hand. He pillowed his head upon a heap of grass, and placed a full gourd of water by his elbow. Then, with a last grip of the hand, he left him.

Through Direct Peril.

A FLARE of dancing flame stabbed the sky, and the ruddy gleam was reflected upon the wide waters of the Jumna.

"They have fired the bungalow!"

The words fell from Dick Evelyn's lips as he saw the red glare against the sky from afar in the jungle.

By devious routes, helped by Lawrence's directions and his own intimate knowledge of the country, he had reached the vicinity of the collector's bungalow without falling in with any of the members of Koumi Din's lawless band.

But the flare of the fire from the distance warned him that the dacoits had been already there. With a grim, set face he pushed on, till he reached an open point whence he had a view of the burning building.

The whole house was in flames, and many dark figures were moving to and fro in the red, wavering light of the conflagration. The sound of the dacoits' triumphant yelling came to his ears.

His glance went to the river. If Hurree Das had arrived in time, Helga Lawrence had taken to the boat. He now discerned the dark figures of the dacoits moving along the bank, and heard them shouting to each other.

Dick gritted his teeth.

"The boat is there, and they know it. Ah, they are firing. The hounds!"



Crash! The boat, hurried along by the current, had struck upon a huge log, floating submerged, and hidden by the shining surface of the water.

A crackle of rifle-fire came from the Jumna. A shot answered from far out on the river, and in the light of the burning house a dacoit was seen to throw up his hands and fall prone. A burst of savage yelling followed.

Keeping in the cover of the vegetation, Dick skirted the radius of light from the house, and reached the margin of the river. Far out on the river a little isle rose dark in the moonlight, covered with the thickest vegetation. A dozen dacoits on the shore were firing towards the isle, and Dick could not doubt that the boat was there, hidden in the dense shadows of the trees.

But how was he to reach it?

As he stood in the thicket, reflecting, there was a splash in the water, followed by another and another.

Dark heads dotted the shining surface of the river as three, four, five dacoits swam out from the shore towards the hidden boat.

Dick did not hesitate. He knew that if they reached the boat all was lost, and his rifle was at his shoulder in a moment.

A sharp crack rang over the Jumna.

One of the swimmers half raised himself from the water, turned over, and went down like a stone. The others stopped, struck by amazement, and as they did so there came a shot from the isle, and a second man floated helplessly down the Jumna.

That was enough for the dacoits. Taken between two fires, the swimmers scrambled back to the shore with frantic haste, and dragged themselves from the water.

The attack upon the boat had been abruptly stopped; but Dick had revealed his presence to the dacoits, and he could hear them shouting and pushing their way through the dark thickets, rapidly approaching him.

He could have darted away into the jungle, but his object was to reach the boat at any risk. He slung his rifle, and slipped quietly into the water without a splash, and swam with steady strokes towards the isle.

He had entered upon a task of terrible danger. Once out from the shore, he was revealed by the bright moonlight, as well as the ruddy glare from the burning bungalow. As soon as the dacoits saw him, he would be a target for their rifles, and he was by no means sure that those he sought to befriend would not take him for an enemy.

But it was useless to think of the danger. He set his teeth, and swam on steadily.

Crack! A bullet splashed into the water close by him, and he knew he was discovered. He sank immediately, and the water was splashed up by a dozen balls in the next few minutes; but Dick Evelyn was swimming onward underwater, and when he came up he was within a dozen strokes of the isle. He gasped for breath, and called out:

"Don't shoot! I'm a friend. Look out!"

"Come in safety, sahib."

It was a soft, purring Hindoo voice—the voice of Hurree Das. And a sweet, musical girl's voice followed it:

"Brave—brave friend, hasten!"

Crack! A sharp cry left Dick's lips. He felt a burning, searing pain along the side of his head, and a warm rush of blood. He swam on blindly, not knowing whether he was fatally hurt or not, only knowing that he would not give in while life lasted.

His senses were reeling. He struck out blindly. He went under once, and choked, as the water filled his gaping mouth. He felt that he was going to his death, that he was slipping away helplessly into darkness, when suddenly he felt the strong grasp of a hand, and he was dragged through the water; and then another hand seized him, and he was drawn into a boat.

"Dick Evelyn. I met your brother in the jungle."

The girl drew a deep breath.

"Is he safe? Did he escape the dacoits?"

"He was alive when I left him," said Dick reluctantly. "He was wounded. I did not like to leave him, but he thought only of your safety, and I came to help you."

"My poor Gervase! Tell me all!"

He did so quickly and simply. The girl listened quietly, with clasped hands, and tears trembling upon her lashes. He could see in her white face how her brother's danger moved her; more, probably, than her own, for she had been very calm when he joined her.

Shots were still ringing out from the shore, and some of them went perilously near the boat.

Dick had lost his rifle in the water. He had his revolver in his hand now, and his fingers tingled to use it; but he did not wish to guide the fire of the dacoits.

Suddenly the boat gave a quiver, and before they could realise what was happening, it shot out of the shelter of the isle into the broad, moonlit river. Dick's hand fell on Helga's shoulder.

"Lie down—lie down!" he whispered tensely.

For a minute or more the dacoits did not realise what had occurred; but they could not fail to see the boat as it glided swiftly in the moonlight, and a yell of triumph went up from the bank. There was a savage burst of firing.

Hurree Das was using his paddle. Dick threw up his revolver and blazed away at the dark figures crowding on the bank.

He heard a yell of pain, and then another; and then his own lips set hard to keep back a groan, as a bullet went searing through his shoulder.

He was on his knees now, holding to the gurt-wale with his left hand to keep upright, his face white as death, his eyes gleaming wildly. His revolver was still ringing out, and the yell of another dacoit showed that his aim was still good.

"You are hurt! Oh, you are hurt!"

"It is nothing," said Dick between his teeth, striving hard to keep back all sound of pain—"nothing! Keep down, Miss Lawrence, I beg of you!"

The dacoits were racing along the bank to keep pace with the boat; but masses of tropical vegetation obstructed the path, and they fell behind. The boat glided out of the zone of the firing.

Dick's brain was reeling. He knew that he was hard hit; but a woman's safety depended upon him, and he would not give in.

Helga's hand was holding him, or he would have fallen. The girl was blind with tears. Dick mechanically reloaded the empty chambers of his revolver. Hurree Das wielded the paddle with perfect coolness. The strong current bore the boat swiftly along, and the little Hindoo kept her steady. From the shore the yells of the dacoits still rang through the night.

Crash! The boat, hurried along by the current, had struck upon a huge log, floating submerged, hidden by the shining surface of the water.

Crash! In a moment there was a rush of water through the broken timber, and the occupants of the boat were struggling in the Jumna. A fierce yell rang from the shore. The Dacoits were at hand again, and they had seen the catastrophe.

Was all lost? The contact with the cool water seemed to revive Dick, and clear his dizzy brain. In a moment Helga was in his grasp, and he was striking out for the opposite shore.

His feet dragged through thick mud. He felt a trailing branch whip across his face. He struggled ashore, still with his burden. Now for a moment's breathing-space ere he turned to face his relentless foes.

But what was this? What were the dark faces, the glistening eyes, that rose around him in the shadow of the trees? He had run into the very arms of a fresh party!

He brandished the clubbed revolver.

"Come on, you, dogs—you cowardly dogs! You shall never—"

They were drawing back. A hand touched his arm. It was Hurree Das's.

"Sahib"—the little Hindoo was nearly crying with joy—"sahib, we are saved! They are the Ghoorkhas!"

Dick gave a shout.

"The Ghoorkhas! Hurrah!"

Not foes, but friends, though in the gloom Dick's mistake had been natural. It was a party of Ghoorkha police.

Quickly Helga and Dick, with Hurree Das, were on their way to the shelter of a friendly bungalow; while a party of the Ghoorkhas crossed the river, routed the dacoits, and, having received directions from Dick, sought for Gervase Lawrence, and found him. They found him living, and ere dawn was in the sky, he had joined Helga.

Dick's adventure by the Jumna was ended; but Dick himself lay long in the pain of an illness, and more than once it seemed that he must pass into the dim land of shadows.

But Helga devoted herself to him, and at last he turned the corner; and one day, when he was on the high road to recovery, he said, as he held her hand in his:

"You have saved my life, Helga. Now will you make it happy?"

And Helga promised that she would.

THE END.

(Next week Mr. Montague Holbein's Swimming Articles will commence.—Your Editor.)

CAN YOU SWIM? If not, read Montague Holbein's Grand Articles, the first of which appears next Saturday.