

The Quest of Betty Lancey

By MAGDA F. WEST

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CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)
"Your name?" asked Morris. "Benoni," answered the black. "Just Benoni."
"American?" asked Larry.
"I've lived there," volunteered Benoni. "Where are we going now?"
"Anywhere to get away from them," replied Johnny.
"Then don't go so far to the right. Turn at the next crossing—there—now turn to your left again—see? Beyond those hills we'll find a snug den! Here we are!"
The motor wheezed and grunted and turned awkwardly into the debouchement of the mountain side.
"How'd you come to get in such a scrape?" asked Larry. "Ever see that woman before? Do you know her at all? What was her animus?"
Benoni nodded. "Yes, I gave her passage money to go back to Maine to her family once, and she gambled it away. Then she came to me again, and wanted some more money and I refused to give it to her, and she's hated me ever since, I guess. I hadn't seen her for years."

"Like a woman," commented Johnny.
Larry smoked in silence, till Benoni asked: "Exploring? Or just touring?"
"How long since you've been in the States?" asked Johnny.
"Just came from there a week ago," replied Benoni.
"Then you heard of the Wayne murder mystery, of course? Well, we're hunting for the abducted Miss Lancey. We think she's in Africa here."

Benoni raised his woolly eyebrows. "You're a nice hunt," he observed.
"Have you any trace of where she might be? Africa is very large, larger even than your vaunted State of Texas."

"I know," responded Larry, curtly. "But if a man's heart's in the hunt he doesn't stop to reckon the length of the chase."

Benoni smiled. "You are related to Miss Lancey?"
"Not yet," said Johnny. "He's just hoping that way."

Benoni sprung out of the car. He paced by its side nervously for a few seconds, and then stopped beside Larry.
"Hello, what's this?" asked Johnny.

"I'm always finding things—now ain't I? Look at this, and in the desert, too!" He held up to view a plump pigeon. Apparently it had been hurt in a fight with some heavier denizen of the air. For it was quite dead, and its head was severed almost from its body. Benoni reached out his hand for the bird.

"Doves like that nest in but one place in all this continent," he remarked, and his face became ashen gray as he noted the odd markings of purple and brown on its spiny breast. "Only one place," he repeated.

Johnny had been turning the bird over and over, rumpling up the helpless wings. Something caught his eye, and he held the dead dove out with upraised wing for the others to see. Scratched on its wing in rude letters they read:

"Betty Lancey, Africa!"
"Betty!" cried Larry. Then he seized Benoni by the wrist. "If doves like that nest in but one place on this continent, take us there, take us at once. What place is it? Where? Would she be safe? Or in the hands of savages?"
"That is where we have been traveling to, my friend," answered Benoni. "I had suspected, but I had not certainly known. We will not even rest for the hour, if you wish."

"I must," answered Johnny. "Safety razors! I'm beat out. I'm not a camel in the legs, if I can go without a drink for six months!"

"Tell me, tell me something," pleaded Larry.
But the sands were not more silent. Benoni made but one reply. "I dare not. It might destroy all hope!"

Day after day, clinked off this arduous travel. Once they met a caravan and Benoni bargained for fresh horses. The erstwhile novelty was succeeded by a feverish unrest. Both Americans were dead with fatigue, the little Arab stood the journey well, and Benoni was in the pink of condition. Ten days later they found a second pigeon.

This one was alive and fluttered to their very luncheon table. Larry covered it with his hat, and bent its wings back fiercely only to find a bitter disappointment, for there was no message traced upon the wing.

Two days later they reached a native village, hanging tassels-like upon the borders of an immense jungle. Benoni hired beaters to break the way for them, and for a week they journeyed in a setting of tropic grass and dusky skies. One morning Larry awoke to find the camp deserted of all but Benoni and Johnny. The horses were gone and even the little Arab had disappeared.

"What! are we lost in this jungle? Betrayed and deserted?" questioned Larry.

"No, indeed, I sent them away. We cannot leave here till nightfall, so sleep again or lounge till I return," replied Benoni. "I will be back in a few hours."

Divesting himself of his garments, Benoni swathed his loins with a girdle of flexible grass, and strode away into the fastnesses of the thicket.

Larry roused the sleeping Johnny rudely. "Firehead, get up, and tell me what you think of it," he commanded. Johnny, roughly disturbed from dreams of home, kicked viciously in Larry's grasp.

"Can't you let a fellow sleep when

he's having a pleasant dream?" he demanded. "You're worse than an alarm clock!"
"Look around and go to dream again," growled Larry.
Johnny sat up. "Safety razors!" he cried. "What's become of them?"
"What's going to become of us?" grunted Larry. "Benoni said he'd be back."

"Then I think he will," allowed Johnny. "Did he leave us anything to eat?"
"There's some dates, that confounded meal cake they make in this country and some figs," itemized Larry. "and, say, Johnny, these look like hen's eggs!"

"Well, you can sample them, I won't!" declared Johnny, with visions of the stomachic illness that had beset him early on the route, thanks to an overly curious appetite. "I'll stick to the viands that have come the least near to killing me during our African peregrination. Were we fools to come, Larry, or not?"

"Oh, I don't know, quit your kicking," said Larry. "I suppose if Benoni don't come back we might stay here all night."
"I reckon we will," added Johnny, grimly.

For the want of a better occupation, their meal finished, they fell to playing mumble-peg in the clearing where camp had been struck. Mumble-peg falling as a time-killer, they tried rolling marbles out of the soft clay, and had put up a very passable game of "Mits" when they heard a rustling and cracking in the brush and foliage around them.

"Bets on a lion," said Johnny.
"Oh, make it a cannibal king or a boa constrictor," suggested Larry. "Something novel!"
Benoni appeared at the edge of the clearing.

"Larry wins," was Johnny's greeting. "I bet on a lion—he said 'twas a cannibal king approaching."
"I'm neither," answered Benoni. "I want to sleep. I worked all night while you fellows rested. Will you keep watch for me? Wake me at the slightest sound. And if I'm not up by starlight, call me then. Don't forget."

Long before that hour, though, the great black was up and ready. All of their luggage he stacked in a great heap and set fire to it. They waited till the pile gave signs of thorough ignition, then led by Benoni the trio set out through the jungle.

The walk was a fight for breath. There were briars that pricked, gnats that stung, knotted vines that trapped unwary feet. Sometimes the foot stepped upon a sodden snake, causing the reptile to coil around the ankle in a horri-fying snarl. But Benoni paused for nothing. With one arm plunged forward, with the other he grasped hold of Larry and bade him pull Johnny in their wake. This nightmare struggle lasted not longer than a quarter of an hour, but when they had come out of the jungle Larry was shaking like a leaf in the wind and Johnny was too far gone for words.

A tramp over an arid plain brought them to a loathsome, turgid stream. From a small cove in the bank Benoni punted out a flat-bottomed scow with small sail. He leaped into it and bade the others follow. Then began a pull to which the struggle through the jungle was as child's play. The days and the nights had all the furies' tortures far outdone. And through it all they lived! This was the wonder that came to Larry afterward. For they fought hand to hand battles with snakes and hideous water reptiles, fat crocodiles leered at them and more than once sent them scurrying high on the bank. Once the punt overturned and Benoni stood breast high in water, a black, slimy ooze that reached to Harry's chin and almost overflowed into his mouth. Poor Johnny, the shortest of the three, was carried off his feet and almost drowned, but they got ashore somehow, but all their food except two tins of biscuits in waterproof cans were soaked. This happened their third day on the river, and they had yet another day's travel ahead of them.

The next day the rains commenced and the river teemed with the floods. Benoni moored the punt at the mouth of a cave that yawned from a little hillock on what had once been the river's bank.

(To be continued.)

CURRENT EVENTS OF THE WEEK

Doings of the World at Large Told in Brief.

General Resume of Important Events Presented in Condensed Form for Our Busy Readers.

Count Apponyi, a leading Hungarian politician, has warm praise for Roosevelt.

The first death from bubonic plague in three years has occurred in Honolulu.

President Taft has withdrawn 35,073,164 acres of coal land in North and South Dakota.

A receiver has been named for the Boston Herald, which is bankrupt with \$2,200,000 indebtedness.

A new opera by Wagner, son of the famous composer, nearly caused a riot at its first production in Berlin.

Experts say that oiling of roads and streets goes a long way toward exterminating flies and mosquitoes.

A Chico, Cal., man has twice attempted suicide on account of disappointment at the defeat of Jeffries.

San Diego, Cal., would elect A. G. Spalding, veteran sport and sporting goods manufacturer, for U. S. senator.

A select commission from parliament has recommended a raise of \$65,000 per year in the salary of King George.

Without warning or explanation the Western Union cut off its bucket shop brokerage wires in ten of the large cities of the East.

Oklahoma has won its suit against the Waters-Pierce Oil company, which has agreed to pay a fine of \$75,000 and obey the laws hereafter.

Miss Nellie Anbeuser, daughter of the St. Louis brewer, is fighting her dentist over a bill of \$500. The dentist charged \$25 an hour for his work.

The Pullman Palace Car company will fight the proposed reduction in rates by the Interstate commerce commission, claiming that under the proposed new rates some lines would be operated at a loss.

Director Newell is to be dropped from the reclamation service.

David Starr Jordan denounces college football as sordid and degrading.

The headquarters of the Independence league in Chicago have been abandoned.

It is believed that a train dispatcher caused the Big Four wreck in which 21 persons were killed.

A toy balloon set fire to the town of Newburg, Indiana, and destroyed the principal business buildings.

Roosevelt plainly implies that he will support Miles Poindexter, for U. S. senator from the state of Washington.

It is believed beyond doubt that ex-Governor Hughes, of New York, will be appointed chief justice of the United States, to succeed the late Chief Justice Fuller.

A miner in Colorado Springs now claims to have ascended Mt. McKinley and found the records Dr. Cook claims to have left there. Dr. Cook's backers will investigate the story.

Premier Canalejas will submit to the king of Spain a bill forbidding further religious orders to enter that country pending negotiations at the Vatican for the revision of the concordat.

Race riots growing out of the Reno fight have caused the death of 14 negroes and two white men, and it is feared that more trouble will follow whenever the moving pictures of the fight are exhibited.

Twenty were killed and nine injured in a train wreck in Ohio.

Ballinger promises that Oregon shall have full share of the \$20,000,000 reclamation fund.

Melville W. Fuller chief justice of the Supreme court of the United States, is dead.

Receipts from the sale of seats at the Reno fight are estimated to have been not less than \$250,000.

Only nine fatalities are reported as the result of the Fourth throughout the country as against 45 last year.

The standing army of Greece is in chaos owing to many dismissals of old men to make room for younger ones.

New York City will have permanent public exhibit of insects which spread disease and menace health and comfort.

Lumber for 10,000 cars has been ordered by the Hairman lines from the Booth-Kelley Lumber company at Eugene, Oregon.

Exultation of negroes over the victory of Johnson in the great fight at Reno, have caused many race riots and no less than nine negroes are reported killed and many injured in various cities throughout the country.

Bryan says he doesn't know whether he will ever again run for the presidency or not.

Harvard university beat Yale in the great annual boat race, before an audience of 20,000.

Obeyed Orders.

"What," said the Magistrate, severely, to the prize fighter arraigned before him, "made you knock your own child into a state of unconsciousness?"
"Didn't mean to hurt the kid," responded the repentant parent, "but I jest forgot myself when me wife told me to put the boy to sleep."—Baltimore American.

Water Power.

"So you are in favor of protecting water power?" said the forestry expert.

"I am," answered Mr. Dustin Staak. "A man don't appreciate the power there is in water till he has had as much to do with the stock market as I have."—Washington Star.

Keeping Time.

"What's the trouble?"
"Big crowd waiting for tables," explained the head waiter.

"Tell the orchestra to strike up something lively," ordered the proprietor. "Maybe it'll make these people chew faster."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

In Self-Defense.

"You didn't really need a wig."
"I was driven to it. Now the barber won't try to sell me any tonics or hair restorer."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

CURTISS SAILS OVER SEA.

Mishap on First Trial Nearly Dumps Aviator in Ocean.

Atlantic City, N. J.—Glenn H. Curtiss made an eight-minute flight directly over the ocean at 6:23 Tuesday evening. The trip included a flight along the entire front of the city, about a mile off shore, and 1,500 feet above the ocean.

The successful flight was the second one attempted, the first resulting in a mishap that nearly sent Curtiss into the ocean. While he was making an attempt to turn from the beach to go to sea, an air eddy caught the plane and dropped it within ten feet of the water. Curtiss made a quick turn and drove his machine on the beach with such force that a wood standard alongside his seat was snapped.

The drop in the air and the jar as he struck the beach unseated Curtiss, and might have thrown him out but for a new brace built across his shoulders and lashed to the machine.

MANY DYING IN CHICAGO

Water in Lake Too Warm to Afford Relief.

Buildings Are Heated Through—Wheat Damaged to 50 Per Cent.

Chicago—With the mercury soaring and no air stirring, Chicago had a great bakeoven. Five persons killed by the heat Saturday night prostrated. Dogs were driven from the streets and hit a number of sons.

There is no prospect for weather for two days. The streets and roofs are crowded with seekers a breath of air.



FIGHT FILMS MENACED.

Movement Starts in Boston to Put Ban on Pictures.

Boston—Declaring that Independence Day was dishonored by a brutal prizefight, that the moral sense of the nation was outraged, but that this harm is nothing compared to that which will be done by allowing children and women to view the reproduction of the Jeffries-Johnson fight by moving pictures, William S. Shaw, general secretary of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, in a formal statement, announced a campaign against the exhibition of these pictures.

Telegram calling attention to the race riots that have followed the fight were dispatched to Theodore Roosevelt, Governor Hughes and Mayor Gaynor, of New York, asking their co-operation in suppressing the pictures.

Mayor Fitzgerald, of Boston, will be asked to prevent the exhibition in Boston.

Telegrams will be sent to the governors of all the states, making a similar request.

London "Plays Up" Fight.

London—The London newspapers gave more space to the Reno prizefight than they gave to the biggest battle of the Boer war. The rounds were described in detail, and the scenes at the ringside fully pictured. Opinions of the affair were quoted from both Britons and Americans and nearly every paper discussed the fight in long editorials.

The sporting world is less surprised at the fact that the negro won than that the whites at the ringside permitted him to win.

Forest Fires Hem Town.

Duluth, Minn.—Cornucopia, Wis., on the south side of lake Superior, is entirely surrounded by forest fires on its land sides, and there is no way of getting out of the town, except by boat. The steamer Barker arrived at Bayfield having on board 35 women and children from the village. When the boat left the village, all roads out of the town were cut off and the flames were approaching, borne along by a strong wind.

Wheat Advances in New York.

New York—The local wheat pit was much excited over the absence of rain in spring wheat states during the holidays, and prices advanced 3 1/2c per bushel. September reached \$1.07 3/8, December sold at \$1.08 3/8. Corn was quiet and not much affected by the wheat advance.

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bathing beaches and every spot contain sweltering humidity. Dences have now become so dense, heated through by the long night, no relief is to be obtained in houses.

A woman, while being taken to hospital suffering from sunstroke in an Illinois trainshed while waiting for a train. Her body was taken to undertaker's instead of the hospital.

A man was struck by the while working on a roof. He fell the ground and died shortly after reaching a hospital.

Another man was struck by heat and fell down an elevator three stories.

Of the many prostrated fully half will die after illness of a less lingering degree.

For the first time the water in lake was too warm for comfort to bathe. This is the surf water, boiling about 600 feet out. The heat of hot water nullifies the faint breeze off the lake.

The continued hot weather is drying the grain crops of the Middle West and the most conservative estimate of the fields admit that all grain is aged between 30 and 50 per cent. Every day without rain will increase this ratio at a much faster rate. Wheat is being forced to ripen stalks no more than a foot below the grain is badly shriveled at the base.

Cotton Mills Curtail Heavily.

Boston—Many of the cotton mills of the United States are shut until July 11 for the purpose of curtailing production. The corporations which closed employ about 200,000 operatives, and include the mills of the four-score mills in Fall River, Mass., 18 mills of the Amoskeag corporation of Manchester, N. H., and several factories in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. The curtailment agreed upon reduces the cotton interests in this city affect about 150,000 operatives.

Blow at U. S. Planned.

Caracas, Venezuela—A cable patch received from Senator Rogers, Mexican minister to the United States, in which he reported that Venezuela delegates to the Pan-American conference, which will begin at Buenos Aires July 9, had advocated in Chile and American alliance against the United States, has caused great excitement here. Foreign Minister Matias had a cable message to the delegates, admonishing them for their action.

Ontario Forests Swept.

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Bush fires invaded the towns of Devil and Rainy, in the Rainy river district of Ontario, although hundreds of men and railway men tried to fight them.

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