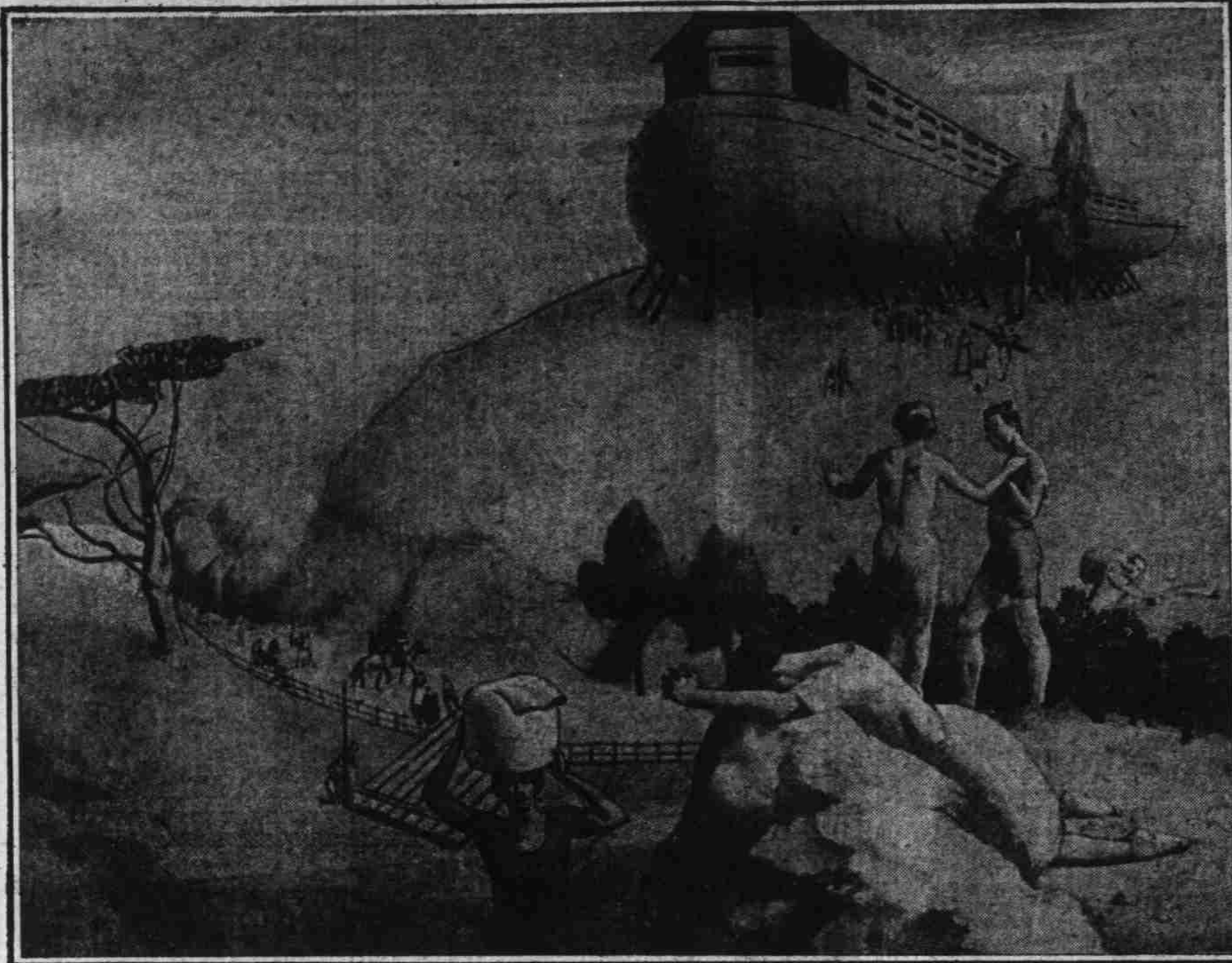


Old Noah and the Animals in the Ark



Ready and Waiting for the Floods to Come

NOAH'S ARK.

Old Noah he built himself an ark,
There's one wide river to cross!
He built it all of hickory bark,
There's one wide river to cross!

CHORUS:

There's one wide river, and that wide
river is Jordan,
There's one wide river,
There's one wide river to cross.

The animals went in one by one,
And Japhet with a big bass drum.

The animals went in two by two,
The elephant and the kangaroo.

The animals went in three by three,
The hippopotamus and the bumblebee.

The animals went in fives by fives,
Shem, Ham and Japhet and their wives.

The animals went in seven by seven—
Said the flea to the elephant, "Who are
you shovin'?"

And when he found he had no sail,
He just ran up his old coat tail.

And as they talked on this and that,
The ark it bumped on Ararat.

PROBABLY nothing in the Old Testament appeals so strongly to the imagination as the Biblical narrative of Noah and his ark. The story of the Deluge never fails to hold the attention of the youngest Sunday school scholar and the mental picture of old Noah constructing the ark, gathering his family together, and finally selecting two animals of all the living species and making room for them in his great houseboat, never fades from the human mind.

It was a great opportunity when the British School of Artists at Rome, in their exhibition in the academy galleries, offered a prize for the best painting on the subject of the Deluge.



Noah and His Family and the Animals in the Ark.

Four of the best pictures in the competition are printed on this page to-day, together with the well-known painting called "The Great Flood," by the artist Poussin, which much more vividly portrays the sombre terror of the scene when the heavens opened and the rains descended and the flood spread over the surface of the earth, and all living creatures, except God's chosen few, were swept into eternity. None of the young artists who competed for the prize undertook to depict the agony of the situation, but confined themselves to more or less conventional conceptions.

According to the Biblical narrative, as given in Chapters vi. and vii. of Genesis, God directed Noah to collect two of every sort of living things and to bring them into the ark. Of fowl after their kind and of every creeping thing on the earth after its kind Noah must secure two, male and female, and keep them alive during his journey in the ark. But there was some discrimination in favor of certain animals, as follows:

"Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls, also, of the air by sevens, the male and the female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth."

According to the Scriptural story, Noah and his family and the great collection of animals tossed about upon the troubled waters until at the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark and sent forth a raven, which went to and fro. A little later Noah sent out a dove, and when the dove did not return he knew that the bird had found a resting place somewhere and that it was time to seek a landing.

The Bible story tells, with considerable circumstantiality, that the ark was to be made of gopher wood, and that Noah was directed to build rooms in the vessel and "pitch" it within and without with pitch. As to the exact dimensions we have this:

"And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above. And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second and third stories shalt thou make it."

As the cubit was about twenty-one inches in length, the actual size of the ark would be about 625 feet in length, about 83 feet in breadth, and about 53 feet in height. But artists are not bound by rules of arithmetic or the exact phrases of Bible statements. The young competitors for the Deluge prize used their imagination, with the results shown elsewhere on this page. Nor do poets confine themselves strictly to established facts, as will be noted by the wide liberties taken by the author of the well-known amusing song on Noah and his passengers printed at the head of this article.

Noah's Family Hurrying to the Ark as the Floods Rise.

"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen the righteous before me in this generation.

"And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

"And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth."

—Genesis vii.



"The Great Flood," by the Artist Poussin.

A Scientific Reconstruction of Noah's Ark.

Thanksgiving After Confinement in the Ark.