POLK COUNTY OBSERVER

The Poonga-Poonga men's laughter died down, and they regarded the spectacle with glittering eyes and giutton ous expressions. The Tabitians, on the other hand, were shocked, and Adamu Adam was shaking his head slowly and grunting forth his disgust. Joan was angry. Her face was white, but in each cheek was a vivid spray of red. Disgust had been displaced by wrath, and her mood was clearly vengeful. Sheldon laughed.

said. "You mustn't forget that he

"It's nothing to be angry over," he

Adventure A Romance of

CHAPTER XIX-Continued.

.92

TWO

Never had runaways from Berande been more zealously hunted. The deeds of Gogoomy and his fellows had been a bad example for the 150 new recruits. One by one the boys were captured. Gogoomy alone remained on him, he conquered his fear of the bushmen and headed straight in for the mountainous backbone of the island. Sheldon, with four Tabitians, and Seelee, with thirty of his hunters, followed Gogoomy's trail a dozen miles into the open grass lands, and then Seelee and his people lost heart. He confessed that neither he nor any of his tribe had ever ventured so far inland before, and he narrated for Sheldon's benefit most horrible tales of the bushmen.

"Gogoomy he finish along them fella bushmen," he assured Sheldon. "My word, he finish close up, kai-kai altogether."

So the expedition turned back. Nothing could persuade the coast natives to venture farther, and Sheldon, with his four Tabitians, knew that it was madness to go on alone.

That night, after dinner, Sheldon and Joan were playing billiards when Satan barked in the compound and Lalaperu, sent to see, brought back a tired and travel stained native who wanted to talk with the "big fella white marster." Sheldon went out on the veranda to see him

"What name you come along house belong me sun he go down?"

"Me Charley," the man muttered apologetically and wearily. "Me stop along Bing.

"An. Binn Charley, ch? Well, what name you talk along me? What place big fella marster along white man be stop?"

Joan and Sheldon together listened to the tale Binu Charley had brought. He described Tudor's expedition up the Balesuna, the dragging of the boats up the rapids, the passage up the river where it threaded the grass lands, the innumerable washings of gravel by the white men in search of gold, the first rolling foothills, the man traps or spear staked pits in the jungle trails, the first meeting with the bushmen who had never seen tobacco and knew not the virtues of smoking, their friendliness, the deeper penetration of the Interior around the flanks of the Lion's Hend, the bush sores and the fevers of the white men, and their madness in

haul the dunnage room for a small shelter tent for Joan's use. It was oulte a formidable expedition that departed from Berande at break of day next morning in a fleet of canoes and dingeys. There were Joan and Sheldon, with Binu Charley at large, and, as the pursuit closed in | and Lalaperu, the eight Tahitlans and the ten Poonga-Poonga men, each proud in the possession of a bright and

The South Seas

BY ·

JACK LONDON

Copyright, 1910, by Street & Smith

Copyright, 1911, by the Macmillan Company

shining modern rifle. Binu Charley led the way onward into the rolling foothills, following the trail made by Tudor and his men weeks before. That night they camped well into the hills and deep in the tropic jungle. The third day found them on the runways of the bushmen -narrow paths that compelled single file and that turned and twisted with endless convolutions through the dense undergrowth.

Here, in the midmorning, the first casualty occurred. Binu Charley had dropped behind for a time and Koogoo. the Poonga-Poonga man who had boasted that he would eat the bushmen, was in the lead. Joan and Sheldon heard the twanging thrum and saw Koogoo throw out his arms, at the same time dropping his rifle, stumble forward and sink down on his hands and knees. Between his naked shoulders, low down and to the left. appeared the bone barbed head of an arrow. He had been shot through and through. Cocked rifles swept the bush with nervous apprehension, but there was no rustle, no movement; nothing but the humid, oppressive silence.

"Bushmen he no stop," Binu Charley called out, the sound of his voice startling more than one of them.

"My word! Look 'm that fella." he continued, brushing aside the leafy wall of the runway, and exposing a bow so massive that no one bushman could have bent it.

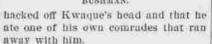
The Blau man traced out the mechanics of the trap and exposed the hidden fiber in the tangled under growth that at contact with Koogoo's foot had released the taut bow.

They were deep in the primeval for-Biau Charley took the lead as est. they pushed on, and trap after trap yleided its secret lurking place to his keen scrutiny. The way was beset with a thousand annoyances, chiefest among which were thorns, cunningly concealed, that penetrated the bare feet of the invaders. Once, during the afternoon, Binn Charley barely ad haine incatad in a st mis ked pl times when all stood still and waited for half an hour or more, while Binu Charley prospected suspicious parts of the trail.

PARKERA IN FRONT OF IT CHOUCHED A BEARDED

A)

BUSHMAN.



"And don't forget," Sheldon added, "that he is the son of a chief and that as sure as fate his Port Adams tribesmen will take a white man's head in payment."

"It is all so ghastly ridiculous," Joan finally said.

"And-er-romantic," he suggested slyly.

up

She did not answer and turned away, but Sheldon knew that the shaft had gone home.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HEAD HUNTERS. "HAT fella boy he sick." Binu Charley said, pointing to a

Poonga-Poonga man whose shoulder had been scratched by an arrow an hour before.

The boy was sitting down and groaning, his arms clasping his bent knees, his head drooped forward and rolling painfully back and forth. For fear of poison, Sheldon had immediately scarified the wound and injected permangaunte of potash; but in spite of the precaution the shoulder was swelling rapidly.

We'll take him on to where Tudor is iying," Joan said. "The walking will help to keep up his circulation that undermined the trail. There were and scatter the poison. Adamu Adam, you take hold that boy. Maybe he will want to sleep. Shake him up, If he sleep he die." The advance was more rapid now, for Binu Charley placed the captive bushman in front of him and made him clear the runway of traps. Once, at a sharp turn where a man's shoulalong there short way little bit." was der would unavoidably brush against a screen of leaves, the bushman displayed great caution as he spread the leaves aside and exposed the head of a sharp pointed spear, so set that the casual passerby would receive at the least a nasty scratch. The sun sinking behind a lofty western peak brought on an early but lingetting twilight, and the expedition plodded on through the evil forestthe place of mystery and fear, of death swift and slient and horrible. of brutish appetite and degraded instinct, of human life that still wallowed in the primeval slime, of savagery degenerate and abysmnt. They turned aside from the runway at a place indicated by Binu Charley and came to an immense banyon tree half an acre in extent that made in the invermost heart of the jungle a denser jungle of its own. From out of its black depths came the voice of a man singing in a cracked eerie voice. "My word, that big fella marster he no die!"

fixed in her determination to push on. third day, traveling with the current With Tudor, Adamu Adam and Arahu were to stop as guards.

Binu Charley led the way, by proxy, however, for by means of the poisoned spear he drove the captive bush-man ahead. They plodded on, panting and sweating in the humid, stagnant air. They were immersed in a sea of wanton, prodigal vegetation,

Caught by surprise fifteen feet in the air above the path in the forks of a many branched tree, a bushmau dropped like a shadow, naked as on his natal morn. It was hard for them to realize that it was a man, for he seemed a weird jungle sprite, a goblin of the forest. Only Binu Charley was not perturbed. He flung his poisoned spear over the head of the captive at the flitting form. It was a mighty cast, well intended, but the shadow, leaping, received the spear harmlessly between the legs and, tripping upon it, was flung sprawling. Before he could get away Binu Charley was upon him, clutching him by his snow white hair. He was only a young man and a dandy at that, his face blackened with charcoal, his hair whitened with wood ashes, with the freshly severed tail of a wild pig thrust through his perforated nose and two more thrust through his ears. His only other ornament was a necklace of human finger bones. At sight of their other prisoner he chattered in a high querulous falsetto, with puckered brows and troubled, wild animai eyes. He was disposed of along the middle of the line, one of the Poonga-Poonga men leading him at the end of a length of bark rope.

"Close up he stop." Binu Charley warned them in a whisper.

Even as he spoke, from high overhead came the deep resonant boom of a village drum. But the beat was slow There was no panic in the sound. The runway now became a deeply worn path, rising so steeply that several times the party paused for breath.

"One man with a rifle could hold it against a thousand." Sheldon whispered to Joan. "And twenty men could hold it with spears and arrows."

They came out on the village, situated on a small, upland plateau, grass covered and with only occasional trees. There was a wild chorus of warning cries from the women, and spears and arrows began to fall among the invaders. At Sheldon's command the Tahitians and Poonga-Poonga men got into action with their rifles. The spears and arrows ceased, the last bushmen disappeared, and the fight was over almost as soon as it had begun. On their own side no one had been hurt, while haif a dozen bushmen had been killed. "Poor brutes," Joan said. "They act

only according to their natures. To eat their kind and take heads is good morality for them." "But they should be taught not to

take white men's heads," Sheidon argued

She nodded approval and said: "If we find one head we'll burn the viiinge fley, you, Charley! What felia place head he stop?"

house," was the answer. "That big fella house, he devil-devil."

lage. Into it they went. Crouched before a slow smoking fire. In the littered dynamiting fish with Joan, spent hours ashes of a thousand fires, was an old with her hunting pigeons, trapping

and shooting the rapids, the expedition arrived at Berande. Joan, with a sigh, unbuckled her revolver belt and hung it on the nall in the living room, while Sheldon, who had been lurking about for the sheer joy of seeing her perform that particular homecoming act, sighed, too, with satisfaction. But the homecoming was not all joy to him, for Joan set about nursing Tudor and spent much time on the veranda when he lay in the hammock under the mosquito netting.

The ten days of Tudor's convales cence that followed were peaceful days on Berande. The work of the plantation went on like clockwork. With the crushing of the premature outbreak of Gogoomy and his following all insubordination seemed to have vanished. Twenty more of the old time boys, their term of service up. were carried away by the Martha, and the fresh stock of labor, treated fairly, was proving of excellent quaiity. As Sheldon rode about the plantation acknowledging to himself the comfort and convenience of a horse and wondering why be had not thought of getting one himself, he pondered the various improvements for which Joan was responsible.

There were times when he was dizzy with thought of her and love of her, when he would stop his horse and with closed eyes picture her as he had seen her that first day in the stern sneets of the whaleboat, dashing madly in to shore and marching belligerently along his veranda to remark that it was pretty hospitality, this letting stran-

gers sink or swim in his front yard. It was patent to Sheldon that Tudor had become interested in Joan. Often after his morning ride over the plantation or coming in from the store or from inspection of the copra drying, Sheldon found the pair of them together on the veranda, Joan listening intent and excited and Tudor deep in some recital of personal adventure at

the ends of the earth. Sheidon noticed, too, the way Tudor looked at her and followed her about with his eyes, and in those eyes he noted a certain hungry look and on the face a certain wistful expression. and he wondered if on his own face he carried a similar involuntary advertisement. He was sure of several things-first, that 'Tudor was not the right man for Joan and could not possibly make her permanently happy; next, that Joan was too sensible a girl really to fall in love with a man of such superficial stamp, and, finally, that Tudor would blunder his love making somehow. And at the same time, with true lover's anxiety, Sheldon feared that the other might somehow fail to blunder and win the girl

with purely fortuitous and successful meretricious show.

The situation was very unsatisfactory and perplexing. Sheldon played the difficult part of walting and look ing on, while his rival devoted himself energetically to reaching out and grasping at the fluttering prize. He "S'pose he stop along devil-devil did not belong to Berande, and, now that he was well and strong again, it was time for him to go. Instead of it was the largest house in the vil- which Tudor had settled himself down comfortably, resumed swimming, went man who blinked apathetically at the crocodiles and at target practice

"He-he"- she attempted to dicate her deeper indiguation whirled abruptly away and pas the rear door and down the sta Sheldon sat and mused lies trifle angry, and the more be upon the happening the sage grew. Joan was the last was the world to attempt to the be The thing smacked of the been anyway-a sordid little rough haps, but to have tried it on Jon nothing less than sacrilege. The should have had better sease. It was while in this mood that screen door banged loudly beind heels of Tudor, who strode the

room and paused before him. "Well?" 'Tudor demanded default And on the instant speech m to Sheldon's lips.

"I hope you won't attempt my like it again, that's all-except the shall be only too happy any the extend to you the courtesy d whaleboat. It will land you in h in a few bours."

"As if that would settle it," what retort. "Now, let me tell you the Solomon islands are not big as for the pair of us. This thing's pa be settled between us, and it an well be settled right here and use

"I can understand your fire an manners as being natural to p Sheldon went on wearily, "but you should try them on me is min can't comprehend. You surely to want to quarrel with me." "I certainly do."

"But what in heaven's name for" Tudor surveyed him with wither disgust.

"You haven't the soul of a love ! suppose any man could make lose your wife"_ "But I have no wife," Sheiden ins

rupted. "Then you ought to have. The due

tion is outrageous. You might she marry her, as I am honorably with to do.'

For the first time Sheldon's the anger bolled over.

"You"- he began violently, in abruptly caught control of himself went on soothingly. "I'll all a boat's crew and launch a boat is be in Tulagi by 8 this evening"

He turned toward the door as #a put his words into execution, but m other caught him by the should al twirled him around.

"Look here, Sheldon, I told ya m Solomons were too small for the pa of us, and I meant it."

"Is that an offer to buy Benk lock, stock and barrel?" Sheldon up ried.

"No, it isn't. It's an invitation h fight."

"But what the devil do you wanth fight with me for?" Sheldon's into tion was growing at the others m



trusting the bushmen. One morning Binu Charley noticed that the women and children had disappeared. Tudor, at the time, was lying in a stupor with fever in a late camp five miles away, the main camp having moved on those five miles in order to prospect an outcrop of likely quartz. Binu Charley was midway between the two camps when the absence of the women and children struck him as suspicious.

"My word," he said, "me savvee too much trouble close up. Me run. My word, me run."

Tudor, quite unconscious, was slung across his shoulder and carried a mile down the trail. Here, hiding new trail. Binu Charley had carried him for a quarter of a mile into the heart of the deepest jungle and hidden him in a big banyan tree. Here, and from the direction of the main camp, he had heard two rifle shots. And that was all. He had never seen the white men again.

"There is only one thing to do." Sheldon said to Joan. "I'll start the first thing in the morning."

"We'll start," she corrected. "I can get twice as much out of my Tahitians as you can, and, besides, one white should never be alone under such cir-COMSTANCES."

Sheidon sent for a gang boss and told him to bring ten of the biggest, best and strongest Poonga-Poonga men.

"Not sait water boys." Sheldou cautioned, "but bush boys-leg belong him strong fella leg. Boy no savvee musket, no good. You bring 'm shoot musicet strong fella."

They were ten picked men that filed up on the verands and stood in the giare of the lanterns. Their heavy, muscular legs advertised that they were bushmen. Killing was their nat- laughed. ural vocation, not weed cutting; and, the Guadaleanar bush alone, with a ed. white man like Sheidon behind them, and delightful time. Besides, the great master had told them that the eight gigantic Tabitians were going along.

warned them in conclusion

They grinned and shifted delighted-25.

"S'pose bushmen kal-kat along you?" he queried.

"No fear," answered their spokes-

Where a slight runway entered the main one Sheldon paused and asked Binu Charley if he knew where it led.

"Plenty bush fella garden he stop the answer. "All right you like 'm go look 'm along. Walk 'm easy," he cautioned a few minutes later. "Close up, that fella garden. S'pose some bush fella he stop, we catch 'm."

Creeping ahead and peering into the clearing for a moment, Binn Charley beckoned Sheldon to come on cautiously. Joan crouched beside him and together they peeped out. On one edge of the clearing was a small grass house, open sided, a mere rain shelter. In front of it, crouched on his hams before a fire, was a gaunt and bearded bushman. The fire seemed to smoke excessively, and in the thick of the smoke a round dark object hung suspended. The bushman seemed absorbed in contemplation of this object. Warning them not to shoot unless

the man was successfully escaping. Sheldon beckoned the Peenga-Poonga men forward. Before the bushman could shoot his swift enemies were upon him. He was rolled over and over and dragged to his feet, disarmed and helpless.

"Why, he's an ancient Babylonian?" Joan cried, regarding him. "He's an Assyring, a Phoenician' Look at that straight noss, that narrow face, those high check bones and that slanting. oval forehead and the beard and the eres too.

"And the snaky locks," Sheldon

"My word, bush fells ksi-ksi along while they would not have ventured that fells boy," Binn Charley remark

So stolid was his manner of utterand a white Mary such as they knew ance that Joan turned carelessly to see Joan to be, they could expect a safe what had attracted his attention and found herself face to face with Gogoomy. At least it was the head of Gogoomy-the dark object they had "Plenty strong feils fight," Sheldon seen hanging in the smoke.

Nor was Joan's horror lessened by the conduct of the Poonga-Poonga boys. On the instant they recognized the head, and on the instant rose their wild hearty hughter as they explained to one unother in shrill faisetto voices. man, one Koogoo, a strapping, thick- Gogreeniy's end was a joke. He had gather strength while the expedition startled deer, they plunged down the been foiled in his attempt to escape. Prongs-Poongs boy kal-kal bush buy?" He had played the game and lost. And they might rescue even one solltary and dismissed them and went to over- that the bushmen should have eaten

The singing stopped, and the voice faint and weak, called out a hello, Joan answered, and then the voice explained:

"I'm not wandering. I was just sing-

Tudor, having pulled through the fever and started to mend, was still frightfully weak and very much stary- and Sheldon wondered what forgotten ed. So hadly swotlen was he from mosquito bites that his face was up trader had gone to furnish that ghastrecognizable. Joan had her own olut- ly trophy. ments along and she prefaced their application by fomenting his swollen carrings and directing the Poongafeatures with hot clothes. Sheldon. Poongn men to carry out the old fire and felt the pange of jealousy at ev- house was blazing merrily, while the ery contact of her hands with Tudor's Incient fire tender sat upright in the face and body. Somehow, engaged in sunshine, blinking at the destruction

longer seemed to him boy's hands. The morning's action had been set and it was a long, dark way out of the tled the night before. Tudor was to head hunters' country. Releasing their stay behind in his banyan refuge and two prisoners, who leaped away like proceeded. On the far chance that steep path into the steaming jungle.

invaders. His task, it seemed, was to tend the fire, and, hung in the smoke. they found the object of their search. Joan turned and stumbled out hastily. deathly sick, reeling into the sunshine and clutching at the nir for support.

she had seen.

task of tallying the heads. They were all there, nine of them, white men's heads, the faces of which he had been familiar with when their owners had camped in Berande compound and set up the poling boats. Blau Charley, hugely interested, lent a hand, turning the heads around for identification. noting the hatchet strokes and remarking the distorted expressions.

Other heads, thoroughly sun dried and smoke cured, were found in abundance, but, with two exceptions, they were the heads of blacks. "Me savvee black Mary, me savvee

white Mary," quoth Binu Charley, "Me no savvee that fella Mary. What name belong him?"

Sheldon looked. Ancient and withered, blackened by many years of the smoke of the devil-devil house, nevertheless the shrunken, mummylike face had come there was the mystery. It was a woman's head, and he had never heard of a Chinese woman in the his- goomy. tory of the Solomons. From the ears Sheldon's direction the Blnu man rubbed away the accretions of smoke ing to keep my spirits up. Have you appeared the polished green of jade, the sheen of pearl and the warm red of oriental gold. The other head, equally ancient, was a white man's, beche-der-mer fisherman or sandalwood | in reply to his look of inquiry.

Telling Bisu Charley to remove the their heating ministrations, they no of his village. Every member of Tudor's expedition was accounted for Sheldon shock his head, laughing, what greater joke could there be than survivor of Todor's party. Joan was with Todor, and at high noon of the shamed blood. That night found them back in camp forchead finned with the rush of the

rifle and revolver.

But there were certain traditious of hospitality that prevented Sheldon from breathing a hint that it was time for his guest to take himself off. And In similar fashion, feeling that it was "See if all are there," she called back not playing the game, he fought down faintly and tottered aimlessly on for a the temptation to warn Joan. Had he few steps, breathing the air in great known anything, not too serious, to drafts and trying to forget the sight | Tudor's detriment, he would have been unable to utter it, but the worst of it Upon Sheidon fell the unpleasant was that he knew nothing at all against the man.

> CHAPTER XX1. BURNING DAVLIGHT. ND then it happened. Tudor

made his blunder. Never divining Joan's fluttering wild-17 ness, mistaking the warmth and enthusiasm in her eyes aroused by his latest tale, for something tender and acquiescent, he drew her to him, laid a forcible detaining arm about her waist and misapprehended ter frantic revolt for an exhibition of maldenly reluctance. It occurred on the veranda after breakfast, and Sheldon, within, heard the sharp exclamation of Joan, followed by the equally

sharp impact of an open hand against a cheek. Jerking free from the arm that was all distasteful compulsion. was unmistakably Chinese. How it Joan had slapped Tudor's face resoundingly and with far more vim and weight than when she had cuffed Go-

Sheldon had balf started up, then hung two inch long earrings, and at controlled himself and sunk back in his chair, so that by the time Joan entered the door his composure was recovered. Her right forearm was clutched tightly in her left hand, white the white cheeks, centered with the spots of flaming red, reminded him of the time he had first seen her angry.

"He hurt my arm." she blurted out He smilled involuntarily. It was so like her. so like the boy she was, to come running to complain of the physical hurt which had been done her. with an eye to the camp and the tender. Sheldon cleared the devil-devil in the ways of man and in the ways of preparations for the night, looked on house and set fire to it. Soon every handling man. The resounding slap she had given Tudor seemed still echoing in Sheldon's ears, and as he looked at the girl before him crying out that

her arm was burt his smile grew broader. It was the suffe that did it, convicting Joan in her own eyes of the silliness of her cry and sending over

her face the most amazing blush he had ever seen. Throat, cheeks and

"HE HORT MY ARM." SHE BLOBTD #1 sistence. "I've no quarrel with rate

And what quarrel can you have will me? I have never interfered with pa You were my guest. Miss Lacting? my partner. If you saw it to min love to her and somehow falled is an ceed, why should you want to his with me? This is the twentisth or tury, my dear fellow, and dueling wat out of fashion before you and i and born."

"You began the row." Inder don't ly asserted. "You fired me est d par house. It won't do, I teil pon in started it, and I am going to set through."

Sheldon smilled tolerantly and P ceeded to light a cigarette. "There isn't any row. It ists " to make a row, and L for one, nonto have anything to do with sat in

footner " (To be Continued next Tasky)

If your children are subject to a tacks of eroup, watch for the in symptom, hoarseness. Give One berlain's Cough Remedy as son a the child becomes hears and o

attack may be warded off. Fir so by all dealers.

Engraving.

Orders for engraved visiting cat invitations or announcements of be left at Observer offen deliveries and reasonable rate p

"Rooms for Rent" cards is so at the Observer Job Office

Legal blanks for sale at the de-