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FLASH

The Lead Dog

By
George Marsh

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CHAPTER I

What the Goose Hunters Saw

"What's that, Gaspard, off shore there?"

The black eyes of Gaspard Lacroix shifted from the incoming flock of snowy geese out to the gray water of James bay, beyond the marshes where the boys lay in a "hide."

"Schooner, I t'ink," muttered the half-breed, watching the distant object for a space through eyes narrowed to slits.

"What in thunder's a schooner doing on 'is coast in September?" demanded Brock McCain. "Something queer here!"

"Ah-hah! Eet ees queer." "Must be free traders! They can't get through Hudson's straits now; they've got to winter on the bay. I wis' my father knew about this," regretted the white boy, "but 't's too late to turn back now."

"Eef we going to trap de Yellow-Leg hendwater dis long snow we got no tam to lose."

"Right you are, old partner! But I'd like to know what these people are doing on this coast. You don't suppose we'll run into them on the Yellow-Leg?"

The swart face of Gaspard Lacroix went darker. The small eyes glittered as he said: "My fader die on de Yellow-Leg! I dese peop' hunt dat cuntry, last spreeng, dey—"

"But that was two hundred miles inland, Gaspard," objected Brock. "These people would not leave the coast."

"Ah-hah, mebbe not," sighed the half-breed, saddened by the thought of the father he had lost.

Over the marsh which reached from the black spruce guarding the muskeg inland, to the wet flats where myriad shore birds fed behind the ebbing tide, the flock of "snowies" which the boys were watching, drifted lazily in from the sea.

Then, in quick succession two shots roared beneath them and before the beating pinions of the bewildered geese lifted and swept them out of range, again two guns exploded in the "hide." Falling vertically, two birds struck the grass flats stone dead; two angled down from the retreating "snowies," wings moving mechanically, to hit the marsh with a thud a hundred yards from the aiders.

"Four more," said Brock, rising to stretch his stiff legs. "That makes twenty this morning, Gaspard."

"We eat all we can 'ry. I wish we had bigger boat."

"Oh, we'll find caribou on the Yellow-Leg, and if we make 'is take in time, we'll net plenty of whitefish and trout. I don't see why you worry about grub," demurred Brock.

Gaspard shook his head good-naturedly at the optimism of his friend. "De caribou ees here todny; tomorrow gone. We mus' get feesh or we have hard tam to feed de dog in de winter," he replied. "We got wan mouth to de freeze-up, Brock. We must hurry."

Then, each with a back load of birds suspended by a leather tump-line passing over the head, the boys started for their camp a mile across the marsh.

At the camp, a chorus of husky yelps halted them. "Hello, Flash, old pup!" called Brock, tossing his geese to the platform cache high above the reach of the dogs. As his master went to the stake where he was tied, the big Eskimo puppy wriggled in ecstasy, alternately growling and yelping his delight.

At neighboring stakes three grown dogs fretted and yelped, jealously demanding recognition. Brock left his puppy, and with a pat on the head and pull at the ears, spoke to each.

"Well Kona, old girl!" he said to a snow-white female who greeted him no less eagerly than the slate-gray and white Flash. Hello Silt-Ear, you rascal!" he cried to a black and white dog with an ear which had been ripped by the razor-like claws of a lynx. The fourth, a hulking yellow and white husky, the red lower lids of whose oblique, amber colored eyes marked a near strain of the wolf, crouched at his stake.

"Yellow-Eye! You've been chewing at that wire again!" And the youth seized the gnawing lower jaw of the dog and looked into the awny eyes raised to his. "You're king-dog of this team, now, old boy, but some day that pup Flash'll make your old bones crack."

By the time they had finished their dinner of boiled geese, corn bread and wild cranberries, the returning tide had backed up the water in the stream to a depth sufficient to float the loaded canoe out through the channel. Ther with their freight of geese, flour and provisions; traps and camp outfit, on top of which was lashed a toboggan sled, they started for the mouth of the unknown and

mysterious Yellow-Leg, forty miles up the coast. Following along shore, tails up, and in full cry, as they revelled in their freedom after days of tethered idleness, the dogs drove frightened flocks of shore-birds, duck and geese into the air, as they traveled.

"You're a big, able lad, Brock, for your age," Angus McCain, factor of Hungry House, on the Starving river, had replied in July to the pleading of his son to be allowed to winter on the Yellow-Leg with Gaspard; "but you're too young to trap strange country."

Somewhere far to the north, in the unexplored lake country of the interior, from which flowed the great Wintek and the Carcajou, the Yellow-Leg was thought to have its sources. But no Indian trading at Hungry House had ever ascended the river, from the bay, and of the hunters who wintered in the Starving river country but one had the hardihood to cross the divide and enter the unknown and, therefore, mysterious land to the north—and he had not returned. That man was Pierre Lacroix, father of Gaspard.

With his dog team he had started on the March crust to explore the nameless valleys beyond the last blue hills for signs of fur; and until the trails went soft in the April thaw, Gaspard and his brother had followed



So Early September Found the Boys on Their Way to the Yellow-Leg.

his father's trap-lines, confident of his safe return. But when the days of sled travel had passed, they knew that somewhere beyond the grim hills to the north, tragedy had overtaken the best bushman and hunter on the Starving—that a fate, unimagined, mysterious, had stricken the veteran who would not starve where caribou roamed the muskies.

"But Pierre was alone," objected Brock. "That was the trouble, I believe. He got sick or hurt, and couldn't hunt."

"But don't forget dat dat one winter, twenty years ago, the rabbit plague and the disappearance of the caribou gave this river 'is name. Many of de 't'ees starved out so de 't'ou party men sent to build this post the next summer called it Hungry House. You might get caught in a northern-snow, on your trap-lines—"

"And get lost, you think?" broke in Brock, the blood showing in his brown face as his frank eyes met his father's doubtful look.

"Yes, and get lost—snowed up in a big blow, far from your camp, without grub," answered Angus McCain, dryly. "Many a good man, older, stronger and wiser than you, my lad, has starved out after a big snow—lost."

For a space Brock frowned down at his moccasins, then his pride spurred him to answer. "Of course, I've got plenty to learn from Gaspard. He's part Cree and it's uncanny all he knows about the bush. He'd be boss on this trip, and we're like brothers. It's time, too, I made something for myself, fader."

Slowly the grey eyes of the elder McCain softened as his son begged for the chance to risk his life in the hinterlands of the Yellow-Leg. At last he said, reluctantly: "If you'll promise to take the dogs and make for the coast and home when your grub gets low instead of trying to stick it out, I'll consent."

"Good old dad!" Brock impulsively wrung his father's hand.

So it was that early, September found the two boys on their way to the wilderness of the Yellow-Leg. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Fine Art of Living

Is Greatest of All

A Texas woman, Mrs. Nellie Miller, says some interesting things about the finest art of all—the art of living. "To live finely," she says, "is to choose between things of passing interest and those of lasting value; to be glad to work because it is making a life rather than a living. . . . We have it within us to make life rich, if while facing our difficulties we can see the beauty there is in the world. The Texas woman expresses this idea when she says, 'Whatever of beauty the heart is feeling, whatever of beauty the mind is thinking, whatever of beauty the hand is doing—this is art—and to live in conscious co-operation with the music of a living and joyous universe is to make life itself the finest of all fine arts.'—Capper's Weekly.

Hair brushes should be washed in cold water to which a little ammonia has been added.

Siam's Temples



Priests of Lampan at the Base of Wat Luang.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

MANY Western ideas have taken hold in Siam, but to the traveler from the West the country is still a quaint land of the East, much of its life colored by Buddhism which is the state religion.

The chief charm of Bangkok, the capital, lies in its wonderful temples, of which the Royal Wats are the most gorgeous. The most interesting and historic of these wats is the king's own place of worship, Wat Phra Keo. A wall with battlements and ancient gates of queer design surrounds this and a number of other wats, including the old Royal palace. Only the roofs of the temples and the graceful golden prachedis (votive spires) are visible from without, but their gorgeous colors permit the imagination to conjure a picture of even more gorgeous interiors.

The full name of Wat Phra Keo is Phra Sri Ratana Satsadaram. It was begun by Phra Puttha Yot Fa Chalalok "as a temple for the Emerald Buddha, the Palladium of the capital, for the glory of the king and as an especial work of royal piety," in the year 1783.

To go into detail describing the glories of this wat would take many pages; suffice it to say that its tile roof is of Chinese yellow bordered with indigo blue; that the columns are mosaic and its heavy doors of carved wood. The center of interest is its sacred image, the "Emerald Buddha," a green jade figure which sits enthroned under many golden umbrellas, surrounded by praying devas. The image was unearthed in 1430, at Kiang Hai, and brought to Bangkok, whence it was once stolen by invading Cambodians, but was recovered by a victorious Siamese army.

The mural decorations of the temple are exquisite. The floor is of tessellated brass, and the walls are covered with frescoes. Surrounding the gilded and carved altar are innumerable offerings which remind one very much of those found in old Christian churches renowned for miraculous healings.

Wat Luang at Lampan.

Wat Luang is the chief glory of the city of Lampan. Its votive spire has an outer casing of brass and is about eighty feet in height. The structure is surrounded by a brass railing and at the corners are small temples with stone figures. Before each of these guardian angels there stands a huge gilt umbrella.

The road from Lampan to Chienngai leads through small villages and beautiful groves of Mal Yang trees, which later give place to planted Rain or Monkeypod trees, as they are known in Hawaii.

Chienngai, situated on the banks of the Meh Ping, "Giver of All Prosperity," is a sort of second capital of Siam presided over by a royal viceroy.

The viceroy's garden parties vie with court entertainments. Flags and lanterns decorate the trees, and to the soft murmur of the peaceful waters of the river, on whose placid surface the moon is reflected, old Lao orchestras play weird chords which harmonize with the fantastic movements of strangely costumed Lao spear and sword dancers. These agile and graceful Lao ladies wield long spears with great dexterity.

Chienngai boasts of some fourscore temples, of which the most important is Wat Luang, which was built in 1881, on the same compound with the ruins of an earlier temple. In this city, as probably elsewhere in Siam, there is no "merit" in repairing a prachedi or wat; hence the numerous ruins and the activity displayed in the erection of new temples. Wat Phra Sing, second in importance, was built about a hundred years ago. The main building is now in such a dilapidated state that entrance to it is prohibited.

To the right of this building there is a less pretentious structure, where the priests take their vows. In it is a long, narrow box in which lies a roll about twenty-five feet long and fifteen feet wide, on which is painted the figure of a huge Buddha on a lotus flower. It is explained that in times of severe drought this picture is taken to the top of Dio Sootep, a

sacred mountain, where a magnificent wat was erected many years ago, and there, to the accompaniment of incantations, it is held on high by priests, and invariably rain descends to refresh man and beast and save the rice crops.

Libraries of the Temples.

Very interesting are the libraries in every temple compound. They are the repository of Buddhist scriptures written by some devout hand with brass or iron stiles on the leaf segments of the Talipot palm. These palm-leaf scriptures are carefully wrapped, usually in yellow cotton cloth or silk, and placed in these libraries as a meritorious act. They are read only rarely and on special occasions. Like the temples, the libraries are rarely repaired.

Chienngai was founded more than 600 years ago. It soon gained in importance and attracted the attention of the Burmese and the Shans, who alternately conquered and sacked it.

A hundred years ago several princes, all brothers, came from Lakon, founded the last Lao dynasty, and raised Chienngai to its former importance, which was greatly advanced under the wise rule and guidance of the Siamese government.

A railway has recently been completed connecting Chienngai with Bangkok opening up the rich Meh Ping valley for development. The forests of this region abound in teak, the logs of which are now floated down the Meh Ping river through gorges and over rapids which necessitate the employment of elephants to dislodge them from the rocks and banks of the river.

The north of Siam around Chienngai is rich and life is easy. Many claim that the railway, while a great blessing, will destroy the quaintness and charm of the city. It is as yet not visited by many tourists, for there are few hotels or boarding-houses.

The chief point of interest in the vicinity of Chienngai is Dio Sootep. It is reached by a splendid road, which leads through old gates to the ruined wall of the ancient city, with its moat filled with lotus flowers, and across rice fields covered with temple ruins, now the habitat of snakes and lizards and overgrown with trees and vines. Travelers pass the only remaining glory of an ancient dynasty, numerous tombs of former Lao princes. Their ashes are buried under splendid monuments, of which the central and largest marks the spot where sleeps cruel Kowilarat, the last Lao king.

Trip to Dio Sootep.

The sun's rays descend mercilessly from an azure sky, and so travelers hurry on to Dio Sootep, where they are soon embraced by the cool shades of its majestic forests.

The ascent is at first steep and rocky. Gorgeous flowering crane myrtle trees border the trail, while higher up trees with mighty trunks and spreading crowns give the landscape a bold aspect. Nature writes its story with a mighty hand, and orchids and graceful vines on the wayside are the commas and exclamation points of a harmonious composition. It would require a book of many pages to tell the story of the flora of this wonderful mountain.

Dio Sootep is really the name of a small mountain top crowned by a magnificent wat, which is visible from any place in the Meh Ping valley. Lao Buddhists have always been great lovers of nature, and, like the great Kobo Dashi of Japan, who built his retreat and place of worship among the sacred pines, and Koyamakia of Koya San, they have retired to the sacred forests and hills to worship the teacher of the law and of the middle way.

Dio Chom Cheng is the summit of this mountain range crowned with pines, oaks and chestnuts. The chestnuts reach a height of 70 feet and their fruit is excellent. Apparently the trees have not been attacked by the chestnut blight, which has wrought so much havoc in the forests of the eastern United States. Several species of edible oaks and thousands of chestnut trees from this region have been introduced into the United States.



OLD FOLKS SAY
DR. CALDWELL
WAS RIGHT

The basis of treating sickness has not changed since Dr. Caldwell left Medical College in 1875, nor since he placed on the market the laxative prescription he had used in his practice.

He treated constipation, biliousness, headaches, mental depression, indigestion, sour stomach and other indispositions entirely by means of simple vegetable laxatives, herbs and roots. These are still the basis of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, a combination ofenna and other mild herbs, with pepsin.

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Braking Time

Feari White, the former movie star, was about to sail for her Paris home after a visit to America, and in answer to a reporter's questions she said:

"It's safety first with the movie stars nowadays. Why, if they have to skip a rope they hire a double. It wasn't so in my time.

"Yes," Miss White ended, "our movie stars aren't what they were ten or fifteen years ago. Some of them, in fact, are quite two years older."

Pigeon Made Time

A pigeon beat a telegram from Hinsdale to Sanford, Maine, in a 100-mile race of the Sanford, Maine, Racing Pigeon club. A telegram from Hinsdale stating that the pigeons had started was delivered in Sanford twelve minutes after the first bird had arrived.

Should Sunday clothes make you feel more religious, by all means wear them.

It May Be Urgent



When your Children Cry for It

Castoria is a comfort when Baby is fretful. No sooner taken than the little one is at ease. If restless, a few drops soon bring contentment. No burn done for Castoria is a baby remedy, meant for babies. Perfectly safe to give the youngest infant; you have the doctors' word for that! It is a vegetable product and you could use it every day. But it's in an emergency that Castoria means most. Some night when constipation must be relieved—or colic pains—or other suffering. Never be without it; some mothers keep an extra bottle, unopened, to make sure there will always be Castoria in the house. It is effective for older children, too; read the book that comes with it.

Fletcher's
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Lots of folks who think they have "indigestion" have only an acid condition which could be corrected in five or ten minutes. An effective anti-acid like Phillips Milk of Magnesia soon restores digestion to normal.

Phillips does away with all that sourness and gas right after meals. It prevents the distress so apt to occur two hours after eating. What a pleasant preparation to take! And how good it is for the system! Unlike a burning dose of soda—which is but temporary relief at best—Phillips Milk of Magnesia neutralizes many times its volume in acid.

Next time a hearty meal, or too rich a diet has brought on the least discomfort, try—

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From Baby Days to Manhood His Mother Guarded Him

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