

# VALIANT DUST

by Percival Christopher Wren

**SYNOPSIS:** Major Napoleon Riccoli of the Foreign Legion has head full of plans to annihilate his enemies in a 24-hour traitorous agreement with the powerful Kaid of Mekazzen. Years before the Secret Service had found Riccoli out and forced him out of the French regulars. Now the man who came to the motor from the Kaid, though apparently an Arab, is in possession of a passport that identifies him as a colonel of the Secret Service to Otto Bellme, English gentleman enlisted in the Legion. Bombelli, orderly to Riccoli, is apparently known to the Arab as "Lassero" and Bombelli deserts immediately after the Arab leaves. Riccoli discusses plans with his cronies Vittorelli.

"When I am master of Mekazzen, and have garrisoned it with the rest of my command, will be the time to find out who is for me, and to make it clear that he who is not for me is against me. Also the exact fate of him who is against me."

"And the other detachments, mon Commandant? When will they arrive?"

"When I send for them. When I have completely won the confidence of the Kaid, and he believes that they are marching to join his banner under my command."

"Why not assemble the whole column before marching from here, mon Commandant?" asked Vittorelli, eager, hopeful, but not yet wholly convinced.

"All, why not, indeed, mon enfant? Because the Kaid will not bear of it. If I cross the border with one man more than the garrison of this post, it is war. We shall be surrounded, cut off, ambushed and annihilated in one of the deserts. My first proposal was to march in, bag and baggage, horse, foot, and guns—and that was the Kaid's answer through the mouth of his own son who visited me at Post Three."

"That young man, Prince Raisul (a clever lad, by the way, who speaks English, French and Spanish as well as I do), made it clear that we should all be welcome—and the more the merrier—but we must come in small detachments and on different days."

"Tracherous swine, these Arabs," he added. "They trust nobody."

"So having marched into the place, we mark time until the other detachments arrive," mused Vittorelli. "H'm! What about treachery? We shall have to sleep with our eyes open."

"You are right, my friend. Until the Kaid sleeps with his eyes shut, and for all. But don't you see the prettiness of my plan? If the Kaid intends treachery, and would capture the whole column—for its rifles, ammunition and kit, guns, horses, stores and cash—and such of the men as would join him to escape torture and death—he's got to wait until I send for the other detachments. I shall have to Mekazzen a force quite big enough to do our business, and settle his hash. Though what I hope and intend to do is to seize the Citadel before I send for the other detachments."

"Then I can present an accomplished fact to the Sergeant-Majors and Sergeants, and to the N.C.O.'s of the native troops as well as to the *légionnaires*, when I have to show my hand."

Silence fell between the two men.

"Our rascals here can think they are seizing the Castle for France, of course," observed Vittorelli at length.

"They can think what they like, as I said before," replied Riccoli sharply. "Think what they like and do what they're told. Though that is where you will be most useful, mon enfant. Sounding them; talking them over; showing them what they have to gain on the one hand and what to lose on the other—their lives; separating the sheep from the goats; forming a group of those upon whose personal loyalty I can absolutely rely."

"H'm! . . . I can pretty well do that now, mon Commandant. Our good Corsicans, whom you so wisely selected, will be trustworthy; and I can answer for the Italians. I've no doubt the Germans will be all right, and more willing to fight against France than for her. I can get the Russians over, I expect; and, I think, the Spaniards and the Belgians. . . . Where we shall have trouble will be with two French *généralistes*, two silly old fools with about a hundred years' service between them, and four Englishmen—stubbish mullah creatures, who can only entertain one idea at a time. Yes, we shall have trouble with them."

"On the contrary, my dear Sergeant-Major," replied Major Napoleon Riccoli, as he rose to his feet. "It is they who will have trouble with us."

Bugles! . . .

The stirring notes of the rousing call have such an effect upon the post, as does the fall of a great rock into the quiet tarn.

To the *légionnaires* it is the signal for departure, and man, particularly the type of man who chooses the profession of soldiering, loves departure.

"Here we are, thank God," says he upon arrival.

"Let's go somewhere else," he soon adds.

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And again, tomorrow, the Legion marches to honor, or treach-

## SCENERY FOR OPERA AT HIGH SCHOOL GETS SPECIAL ATTENTION

Preparations of the scenery to be used in the opera H. M. S. Pinafore to be presented by the Medford high school's glee club at the high school auditorium on Friday, Feb. 24, has been progressing the past three weeks under the able guidance of Leonard Mentzer and Miss Louise Hollenback.

Much of the success of the opera will be determined by the appearance of the stage and from all present indications there will be no flaw in the construction of the scenery and the cabin which is situated in the middle of the stage several feet back of the curtain.

by calling at the high school office or by telephoning the office. A special performance will be presented Feb. 23 for grammar and junior high school students, and only students will be admitted. Due to the fact that Wednesday afternoon is a holiday in commemoration of Washington's birthday, all school children will be free to attend the performance.

For the Friday night performance the general public is not only invited but urged to attend what bids fair to be the outstanding musical production in Medford this winter.

## ARIZONA FOR EARLY PROHI LAW REPEAL

PHOENIX, Ariz., Feb. 21.—(AP)—A joint resolution calling for an Arizona convention to ratify the repeal

of the 18th amendment was introduced in the house of representatives at 11:32 a. m., today, three minutes after the legislators greeted announcement of the Blaine resolution vote in congress with applause. The resolution was sponsored by Representative Frank W. Beer of Maricopa county.

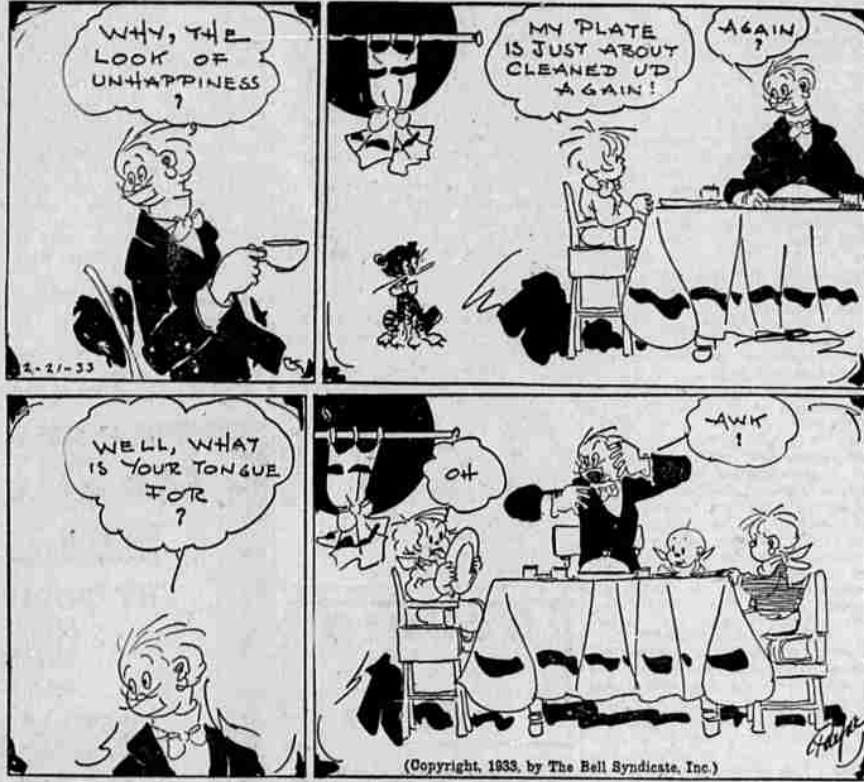
Children's frocks made. Gladys Natwick Shelby, 15 Gargill Court.

## Wyoming Ahead In Repeal Race

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21.—A head start for Wyoming to be the first state to act on prohibition repeal resolution was sought today by Senator Carey (R. Wyo.) who planned to telegraph a copy of the resolution to Governor Leslie A. Miller.

## S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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## THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

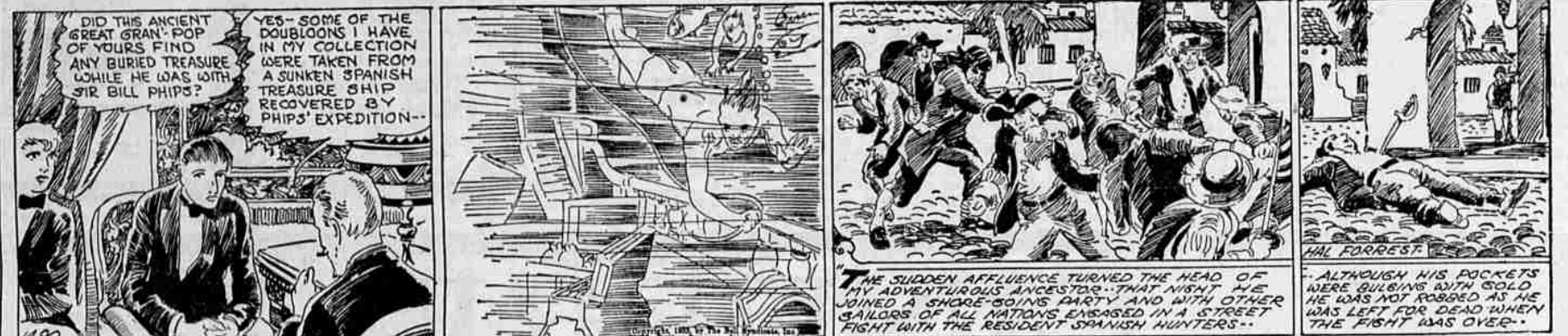
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Sudden Wealth And How To Spend It

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



## BOUND TO WIN—Stop!

By EDWIN ALGER



## THE NEBBS—The Lilliputian

By SOL HESS



## BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



## Dallas Business Area Hit By Fire

DALLAS, Ore., Feb. 21.—(AP)—A fire causing damage estimated at \$10,000, destroyed a women's clothing shop here Sunday and damaged several other buildings in the center

of the Dallas business district. Just a week previous to the fire, flames swept through a quarter block of wooden buildings here, destroying all in its path.

Gladys Natwick Shelby, modiste. Gowns remodeled. Attractive prices. 15 Gargill Court.

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