

A Libelant Marat Stranded Was Found Later in the Neighborhood of the Tropics, Together With Some Dead Crustaceans, a Life Buoy and a Pear

crabs, and that did the trick. Of course it is splendid to be on such a coequal errand, but I wish it wasn't with such an animated mummy as Marat. He is inhuman in his isolation and his devotion to his work. "The world's stiffest stuff," says Bill Scanlon. And yet you can't but admire such complete devotion. Nothing exists outside his own science. I remember that you laughed when I asked him what I ought to read as a preparation, and he said that for serious study I should read the collected edition of his own work, but for relaxation Haeckel's *Phanerozoic Studies*.

"I know him as better now than I did in that little parlor looking out on the Oxford High. He says nothing, and his gaunt, austere face—the face of a Savonarola, or rather, perhaps, of a Torquemada—never relaxes into geniality. The long, thin, aggressive nose; the two small, gleaming gray eyes set closely together under a slouch of eyebrows; the thin-lipped, compressed mouth; the cheeks worn into hollows by constant thought and ascetic life—are all uncompanionable. He lives on some mental mountain top, out of reach of ordinary mortals. Sometimes I think he is a little mad. For example, this extraordinary instrument that he has made — But I'll tell things in their due order and then you can judge for yourself.

"I'll take our voyage from the start. The *Stratford* is a fine sawtooth little boat, specially fitted for her job. She is 1200 tons, with clear decks and a good head beam, furnished with every possible appliance for sounding, trawling, dredging and tow-netting. She has, of course, powerful steam winches for hauling in the trawls, and a number of other gadgets of various kinds, some of which are familiar enough, and some are strange. Below these are comfortable quarters, with a well-fitted laboratory for our special studies.

"We had the reputation of being a mystery ship before we started, and I soon found that it was not undeserved. Our first proceedings were commonplace enough. We took a turn up the North Sea and dropped our trawls for a scrape or two; but as the average depth is not very deep over sixty feet, and we were specially fitted for much deeper sea work, it seemed rather a waste of time. Anyhow, save for familiar table fish, dogfish, squid, jellyfish and some terrific bottom deposits of the usual algal-clay mud, we got nothing worth writing home about. Then we rounded Scotland, sighted the Faeroes and came down the Wyville Thomson Ridge, where we had better luck. There we worked south to our proper cruising ground, which was between the Alban coast and these islands. We nearly grounded on Faerøventures one moonless night, but save for that our voyage was uneventful.

"During these first weeks I tried to make friends with Marat, but it was not easy work. First of all, he is the most absorbed and absent-minded man in the world. You will remember how you smiled when he gave the elevator boy a penny under the impression that he was in a street car. Half the time he is utterly lost in his thoughts and seems hardly aware of where he is or what he is doing.

Then, in the second place, he is sensitive to the last degree. He is continually working at papers and charts which he shuffles away when it happens to enter the cabin. It is my firm belief that the man has some secret project in his mind, but that so long as we are due to touch at any port, he will keep it to himself. That is the impression which I have received and I find that Bill Scanlon is of the same opinion.

"Say, Mr. Headley," said he one evening when I was seated in the laboratory testing out the salinity of samples from our hydrographic soundings, "what if you figure out that this guy has in his mind? What if you reckon that he means to do?"

"I suppose," said I, "that we shall do what the Challenger and a dozen other exploring ships have done before us, and add a few more species to the list of fish and a few more entries to the bathythermic chart."

"Not on your life," said he. "If that's your opinion, you've got to pass again. First of all, what am I here for anyhow?"

"In case the machinery goes wrong," I hazarded.

"Machinery nothing! The ship's machinery is in charge of MacLaren, the Scotch engineer. No, sir, it won't be run a dandy engine that the Merzbach folk sent out their star performer. If I fall down fifty backs a week, it's not for his. Come here, and I'll make you wise to it."

"He took a key from his pocket and opened a door at the back of the laboratory, which led us down a companion ladder to a section of the hold which was cleared right across save for four large glittering objects half exposed amid the struts of their huge packing cases. They were flat sheets of steel, with elaborated bolts and rivets along the edges. Each sheet was about ten feet square and an inch and a half thick, with a circular gap of eighteen inches in the middle.

"What is that for, I?" I asked.

"Bill Scanlon's queer law—he looks halfway between a vanderbilt comic and a prize fighter—broke into a grin at my astonishment.

"That's my baby, sir," he quipped. "Yes, Mr. Headley, that's what I am here for. There is a steel bottom to the truck. It's in that big case yonder. Then there is a top, kind of arch, and a great ring for a chain or rope. No look here at the bottom of the ship."

"There was a square wooden platform there, with projecting screws at each corner which showed that it was detachable.

"There is a double bottom," said Scanlon. "It may be that this guy is clean loco, or it may be that he has more in his black than we know; but if I read him right, he means to build up a kind of room—the windows are in storage here—and lower it through the bottom of the ship. He's got electric searchlights here, and I show that he plans to shine 'em through the round portholes and see what's 'goin' on around."

"He could have just a crystal ball into the ship, like the Catalina Island boys, if that was all that was in his mind," said I.

"You've said a mouthful," said Bill Scanlon, scratching his head. "I can't figger it out either. The only one sure thing is that I've been sent to be under his orders and to help him with the darn fool thing all I can. He has said nothing up to now, so I've said the same, but I'll try soon around, and if it wait long enough I'll learn all there is to know."

"So that was how I first got onto the edge of our mystery. We ran into some dirty weather after that, and then we got to work doing some deep-sea trawling northwest of Cape Juba, just outside the Continental Shelf, and taking temperature readings and salinity records. It's a spring proposition, this deep-sea dragging with a Peterson otter trawl' going twenty feet wide for everything that comes its way—sometimes down quarter of a mile and bringing up one lot of fish, sometimes half a mile and quite a different lot, every stratum of ocean with its own inhabitants as separate as so many continents.

"Sometimes from the bottom we would just bring up half a ton of clear pink jelly, the raw material of life; or maybe it would be a scum of pteropod ooze, breaking up under the microscope into millions of tiny round reticulated balls with amorphous mud between. I won't bore you with all the bryozoa and marconaris, the sardines and Polysa and echinoderms—anyhow, you can reckon that there is a great harvest in the sea and that we have been diligent reapers. But always I had the same feeling that the heart of Marat was not in the job and that other plans were in that queer, high, narrow Egyptian mummy of a head. It all seemed to me to be a try-out of men and things until the real business got going.

"I had got so far as this in my letter when I went ashore to have a last stretch, for we sail in the early morning. It's an awfully perfect, that I did go, for there was so end of a harvest going on on the pier, with Marat and Bill Scanlon right in the heart of it. Bill is a bit of a scrapper, and has what he calls a mean walk in both suits, but with half a dozen Dagoes with knives all round them, things looked ugly and it was time that I batted in. It seems that the doctor had hired one of the things they call cabs and had driven half over the island, inspiring the country, but had clean forgotten that he had no money on him. When it came to paying, he could not make these country kids understand and the cabman had grabbed his watch so as to make sure. That brought Bill Scanlon into action, and they would have both been on the floor with their backs like pikepoles if I had not squared the matter up, with a dollar or two over for the driver and a five-dollar bonus for the chap with the mouse under his eye. So all ended well, and Marat was more human than ever I saw him yet. When we got to the ship he called me into the little cabin which he reserves for himself and he thanked me.

"By the way, Mr. Headley," he said, "I understand that you are not a married man."

"No," said I, "I am not."

"No one depending upon you!"

"No."

"'Good!' said he. 'I have not spoken of the object of this voyage, because I have, for my own reasons, desired it to be secret. One of those reasons was that I feared to be foreshadowed. But now we are on the eve of our great adventure and no rival has time to steal my plans. Tomorrow we start for our new goal!"

"'And what is that?' I asked.

"He leaned forward, his asseetic face all lit up with the enthusiasm of the fanatic. 'Our goal,' said he, 'is the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.'

"'And right here I ought to stop, for I expect it has taken away your breath as it did mine. If I were a story writer I guess I should leave it at that. But as I am just a chronicler of what occurred, I may tell you that I stayed another hour in the cabin of old man Marston and that I learned a lot which there is still just time for me to tell you before the last shore boat leaves."

"'Yes, young man,' said he, 'you may write freely now, for by the time your letter reaches England we shall have made the plunge.'

"'This started him giggling, for he has a queer, dry sense of humor of his own.

"'Yes, sir, "plunge" is the right word in this occasion—a plunge which will be historic in the annals of science. Let me tell you, in the first place, that I am well convinced that the current doctrine as to the extreme pressure of the ocean at great depths is entirely misleading. It is perfectly clear that other factors exist which neutralize the effect, though I am not yet prepared to say what those factors may be. That is one of the problems which we may settle. Now what pressure, may I ask, have you been led to expect under a mile of water?' He gazed at me through his big horn spectacles.

"'Not less than a ton to the square inch,' I answered, 'surely that has been closely shown.'

"'The task of the plunger has always been to dispense the thing which has been clearly shown. The year brains, young man. You have been for the last month fishing up some of the most delicate bathic forms of life, creatures so delicate that you could hardly transfer them from the net to the tank without marring their sensitive shapes. Did you find that there was evidence upon these of this extreme pressure?'

"'The pressure,' said I, 'equalized itself. It was the same within as without.'

"'Words—mere words!' he cried, shaking his lean head impatiently. 'You have brought up round fish, such fish as *Gasterosteus globulus*. Would they not have been squashed flat had the pressure been as you imagine? Or look at our other boards. They are not squashed together at the mouth of the trawl.'

"'But the experience of divers?'

"'Certainly it holds good up to a point. They do find a sufficient increase of pressure to influence what is perhaps the most sensitive organ of the body—the interior of the ear. But as I plan it, we shall not be exposed to any pressure at all. We shall be lowered in a steel cage, with crystal windows on each side for observation. If the pressure is not strong enough to break in an inch and a half of toughened double-ribbed steel, then it cannot hurt us. It is an extension of the experiment of the Williamson Brothers at Nansen, with which no doubt you are familiar. If my calculation is wrong—well, you say that no one is dependent upon you—we shall die in a great adventure. Of course if you would rather stand clear, I can go alone.'

"'It seemed to me the maddest kind of scheme, and yet you knew how difficult it is to release a dam. I played for time while I thought it over. "How deep do you propose to go, sir?" I asked.

"'He had a chart pinned upon the table, and he placed the end of his compass upon a point which lies to the southwest of the Canadian. "Last year I did some sounding in this part," said he. "There is a pit of great depth. We got twenty-five thousand feet there. I saw the first to report it. Indeed, I trust that you will find it on the charts of the future as the Marston Deep."

"'You don't propose to descend into an abyss like that?'

"'No, sir,' he answered, smiling. "Neither our lowering chain nor our air tubes reach beyond half a mile. But I was going to explain to you that round this deep we have, which has no doubt been formed by volcanic forces long ago, there is a raised ridge, or narrow plateau, which is not more than three hundred fathoms under the surface."

"'Three hundred fathoms? A third of a mile?'

"'Yes, roughly a third of a mile. It is my present intention that we shall be lowered in our little pressure-proof

locket station onto this submarine bank. There we shall make such observations as we can. A speaking tube will connect us with the ship so that we can give our directions. There should be no difficulty in the matter. When we wish to be hoisted up we have only to say so."

"'And the air?'

"'Will be pumped down to us.'

"'That it will be pitch dark.'

"'That, I fear, is undoubtedly true. The experiments of Fil and Sarasin at the Lake of Geneva show that even the ultraviolet rays are absent at that depth. But does it matter? We shall be provided with the powerful electric illumination from the ship's engine, supplemented by six two-volt Hellstrand dry cells connected together so as to give a current of twelve volts. That, with an army signalling lamp as a movable reflector should serve our turn. . . . Any other difficulties?'

"'If our air line tangles?'

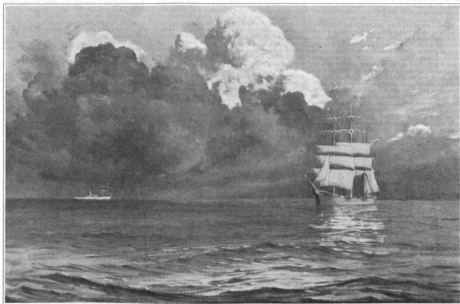
"'They won't tangle. And as a reserve, we have compressed air in tubes which would last us twenty-four hours. . . . Well, have I satisfied you? Will you consent?'

"'It was not an easy decision. The brain works quickly and imagination is a mighty vivid thing. I seemed to realize that black bar down in the primordial depths, to feel the foul two-breasted all and then to add the walls sagging, bulging inward, rising at the joints with the water spouting in every five hole and errieve and crawling up from below. It was a slow, dreadful death to die. But I looked up and there were the old man's fiery eyes fixed upon me with the exaltation of a martyr to science. He's exclaiming! Not a word of enthusiasm; and if it be crazy, it is at least noble and useful. I caught fire from his great flame and I sprang to my feet with my hand out. "Do not, I'm with you to the end," said I.

"'I know it,' said he. 'It was not for my mattering of learning that I plied you, my young friend, nor, he added, smiling, "for your intimate acquaintance with the pelagic crabs. There are other qualities which may be more immediately useful, and they are loyalty and courage."

"'So, with that little bit of sugar, I was dominated, with my future pledged and my whole scheme of life in ruins. . . . Well, the last shore boat is leaving. They are calling for the

(Continued on Page 142)



"The Only Ship in Sight Was a Bark Flying the Norwegian Colors, and We Observed That It Was Keeling Down, as if Expecting Trouble!"

MARACOT DEEP

(Continued from Page 5)

mail. You will either not hear from me again, my dear Talbot, or you will get a letter worth reading. If you don't hear, you can have a floating buoyline made and drop it somewhere south of the Canaries, with the inscription:

"Here or hereabouts lies all that the fishes have left of my friend"

"J. CYRUS HEADLEY."

The second document is the case of the unintelligible wireless message which was intercepted by several vessels, including the Royal Mail steamer *Arcturion*. It was received at three P.M., October 3, 1908, which shows that it was dispatched only two days after the *Stratford* left the Grand Canary, as shown in the previous letter, and it corresponds exactly with the time when the Norwegian bark saw a steamer founder in a cyclone two hundred miles to the southwest of Ponta de La Luz. It ran thus:

Blown on our beam sou'. Four positions before. Have already lost Masthead. Head-Scarles. Situation inconceivable. Head-ly headboarded end of deep-sea sounding win. Got help up.

This was the incoherent last message which came from the ill-fated vessel, and part of it was so strange that it was put down to delirium on the part of the operator. It seemed, however, to leave no doubt as to the fate of the ship.

The explanation—if it can be accepted as an explanation—of the matter is to be found in the narrative contained inside the vitreous ball, and first it would be as well to amplify the very brief account which has hitherto appeared in the press of the finding of the ball. It takes its origin from the log of the *Arabella*, Knowles, master, Amos Green, outward bound with coal from Cardiff to Bannockburn Alton:

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1927. Lat. 27 54 north. Long. 28 west. Calm weather. Blue sky, with few strata of cirrus clouds. Sea like glass. At two bells of the middle watch the first officer reported that he had seen a shining object bounded high out of the sea and then fell back into it. His first impression was that it was some strange fish, but on examination with his glasses he observed that it was a silver globe or ball which was as light as air. I was then stationed on the surface of the water. I was looking brightly about half a mile off on our starboard beam. I stepped onto the engine and called away the quarter boat under the second rate, who picked the thing up and brought it aboard.

On examination it proved to be a ball made of some sort of very tough glass, and filled with a substance so light that when it was tossed in the air it swirved about like a child's balloon. It was nearly transparent, and we could see what looked like a roll of paper inside it. The greatest possible difficulty in breaking the ball was getting at the contents. A hammer would not crack it, and was only when the chief engineer slipped it in the thrice of the engine that we were able to smash it. Then I am sorry to say that it disintegrated into sparkling dust, so that it was impossible to collect and send it to the British consul when we reached the Plate River. Man and boy, I have been at sea for five and thirty years, but this is the strangest thing that ever befell me, and so says every man aboard this ship. I have the meaning of it all to wiser heads than mine.

So much for the genesis of the narrative of Cyrus Headley, which we will now give exactly as written:

"When am I writing to? Well, I suppose, I may say to the whole wide world, but as that is rather a vague address, I'll aim at my friend Sir James Talbot, of Oxford University. For the reason that my last letter was to him, and this may be regarded as a continuation. I expect the odds are one hundred to one that this ball, even if it should see the light of day and not be gulped by a shark in passing, will toss about on the waves and never catch

the eye of the passing sailor; and yet it's worth trying, and Maracot is sending up another, so between us it may be that we shall get our wonderful story to the world. Whether the world will believe it is another matter, I guess; but when folk look at the ball with its vitreous cover and note its contents of levigen gas, they will surely see for themselves that there is something here that is out of the ordinary. Yes, at my rate, Talbot, will not throw it aside unread.

"If anyone wants to know how the thing began, and what we were trying to do, he can find it all in a letter I wrote you on October first last year, the night before we left Ponta de La Luz. By George, if I had known what was in store for me, I think I should have smoked into a shore boat that night! And yet—well, maybe, even with my eyes open, I would have stood by the doctor and seen it through. On second thought, I have not a doubt that I would.

"Well, starting from the day that we left Grand Canary, I will carry on with my experience.

"The moment we were clear of the port, old man Maracot fairly leapt into flames. The time for action had come at last and all the damped-down energy of the man came flaring up. I tell you he took hold of that ship and of everyone and everything in it and led it all to his will. The cry, croaking, almost-mind-aching, and suddenly vanished and instead there emerged a human electrical machine, crackling with vitality and quivering from the great driving force within. His eyes gleamed behind his glasses like flames in a furnace. He seemed to be everywhere at once, working out distances on his chart, comparing reckonings with the skipper, driving Bill Scanlan along setting men onto a hundred odd jobs, but it was all full of method and with a definite end. He developed an unexpected knowledge of electricity and of working at the machinery, which Scanlan, under his supervision, was now carefully piecing together.

"'Ray, Mr. Headley, it's just dandy,' said Bill, on the morning of the second day. 'Come to have one more a look. The fish is a regular fellow and a whale of a slick mechanic.'

"I had a most unpleasant impression that it was my own coffin at which I was gazing, but even so, I had to admit that it was a very adequate manometer. The floor had been clamped to the four steel walls and the porthale windows screwed into the center of each. A small tripod at the top gave admission, and there was a second one at the base. The steel cage was supported by a thin but very powerful steel barner, which ran over a drum and was paid out or reeled in by the strong engine which we used for our deep-sea trawls. The barner, as I understood, was nearly half a mile in length, the slack of it coiled round bollards on the deck. The rubber breathing tubes were of the same length, and the telephone wire was connected with them, and also the wire by which the electric lights within could be operated from the ship's batteries, though we had an independent installation as well.

"It was on the evening of that day that the engine were stopped. The glass was low and a thick black cloud rising upon the horizon gave warning of coming trouble. The only ship in sight was a bark flying the Norwegian colors, and we observed that it was wedged down, as if expecting trouble. For the moment, however, all was propitious and the *Stratford* rolled gently upon a deep blue sea, white-capped waves and there from the breath of the trade wind. Bill Scanlan came to me in my laboratory with some show of excitement but his easy-going temperament had ever permitted him to show:

"'Looka here, Mr. Headley,' said he, 'they've lowered that contraption into a

(Continued on Page 143)

(Continued from Page 142)

well in the bottom of the ship. D'you figure that the boss is going down in it?"

"Certain sure, Hill. And I am going with him."

"Well, well, you are sure baghouse, the two of you, to think of such a thing. But I'd feed a cheap skate if I let you go alone."

"It is no baghouse of yours, Hill."

"Well, I just feel that it is. Sure I'd be as yellow as a Chick with the jaundice if I let you go alone. Merrichals sent me here to look after the machinery, and if the machinery is down at the bottom of the sea, then it's a sure thing that it's me for the bottom. Where those steel cuttings are—that's the address of Hill Scanlan, whether the left round bins are crazy or not."

"It was useless to argue with him, so one more was added to our little suicide club and we just waited for our orders."

"All right they were had at work upon the fittings, and it was after an early breakfast that we descended into the hold ready for our adventure. The steel cage had been half lowered into the false bottom, and we were descended into it by two through the upper trapdoor, which was closed and screwed down behind us, Captain Howie with a most lugubrious face having shaken hands with each of us as we passed him. We were then lowered a few more feet, the shutter drawn above our heads and the water admitted to test how far we were really seaworthy. The cage stood the trial well, every joint fitted exactly and there was no sign of any leakage. Then the lower flap in the hold was loosened and we hung suspended in the ocean beneath the level of the keel."

"It was really a very snug little room, and I marveled at the skill and foresight with which everything had been arranged. The electric illumination had not been turned on, but the amphotropic sun shone brightly through the bottle-green water at either portside. Some small fish were flickering here and there, streaks of silver against the green background. Inside, there was a settee round the little room, with a bathymetric dial, a thermometer and other instruments ranged above it. Beneath the settee was a row of pipes which represented our reserve supply of compressed air in case the tubes should fail us. These tubes opened out above our heads and the telephone apparatus hung beside them. We could all hear the muffled voice of the captain outside."

"Are you really determined to go?" he asked.

"We are quite all right," the doctor answered impatiently. "You will lower slowly and have someone at the receiver all the time. I will report conditions. When we reach the bottom, remain as you are until I give instructions. It will not do to put too much strain upon the hawser, but a slow movement of a couple of knots an hour should be well within its strength. And now—lower away!"

"He yelled out the two words with the scream of a hurricane. It was the supreme moment of his life, the fruition of all his brooding dreams. For an instant I was shaken by the thought that we were really in the power of a cunning, plausible moonstruck. Hill Scanlan had the same thought, for he looked across at me with a rueful grin and touched his forehead. But after that one sinister, cold instant we were instantly his sole, self-contained self once more. Indeed, one had but to look at the order and foresight which showed in every detail around us to be reassured as to the power of his self."

"But now all our attention was diverted to the wonderful new experience which every instant was providing. Slowly the cage was sinking into the depths. The light-green water turned to dark-olive. That again deepened into a wonderful blue, a rich deep blue gradually thickening to a dusky purple. Deeper and lower we sank—a hundred feet—two hundred—three hundred. The water was settling to perfection. Our breathing was as free and natural as upon the deck of the vessel. Slowly the

bathymeter needle moved round the luminous dial—four hundred—five hundred—six hundred. "How are you?" roared an anxious voice from above us.

"Nothing could be better!" cried Marcot in reply. But the light was falling. There was now only a dim gray twilight, which rapidly changed to utter darkness.

"Stop her!" shouted our leader. We ceased to move and hung suspended at seven hundred feet below the surface of the ocean. I heard the click of the switch and the next instant we were flooded with glorious golden light which poured out through each of our side windows and sent long glimmering vistas into the waste of waters round us. With our faces against the thick glass, each at his own portside, we gazed out into such a prospect as man had never seen.

"Up to now we had known these strata by the sight of the few fish that had been too slow to avoid our clumsy trawl or too stupid to escape a dragnet. Now we saw the wonderful world of water as it really was."

"If the object of creation was the production of man, it is strange that the ocean is so much more populous than the land. Broadway on a Saturday night, Lombard Street on a week-day afternoon, is not more crowded than the great sea spaces which lay before us."

"We had passed these surface strata where fish are either colorless or of the true machine tints of ultramarine above and silver below. Here there were creatures of lustrous metallic tint and form, whose pelagic life can show. Delicate leptopthal, or eel larva, shot like streaks of burnished silver across the tunnel of radiance. The slow snake-like form of *Muraena*, the deep-sea lamprey, writhed and twisted by; or the black crusta, all spines and mouth, gaped feebly back at our peering faces."

"Sometimes it was the squat cuttlefish which drifted across and glided at us with human sinister eyes; sometimes it was some crystal-clear pelagic form of life which lent a flowerlike charm to the scene. One huge eel, or horse mackerel, butted savagely again and again against our window until the dark shadow of a seven-foot shark came across him and he vanished into the gaping jaws."

"Doctor Marcot sat estranged, his mouth open upon his lips, scribbling down his observations and keeping up a muttered monologue of scientific comment. "What's that? What's that?" I would hear. "Yes, yes, *Chimera maritima* as taken by the Michael Sars. Dear me, there is *Lepidion*, but a new species, as I should judge. Surely that is *Mora*, but with an elongated pectoral which is worth noting. Observe that *Macrura*, Mr. Headley; its coloring is quite different from what we get in the net."

"Once more it was he taken quite aback. It was when a long oval object shot with grass-speed past his window from above and left a vibrating trail behind it which extended as far as we could see above us and below. I admit that I was as puzzled for the moment as the doctor, and it was Hill Scanlan who solved the mystery."

"I guess that both John Seawey has bowed his head alongside of us. Kind of a joke, maybe, to prevent us from feeling lonesome."

"To be sure! To be sure!" said Marcot, sniggering. "Plumbus longicaudatus—a new genus, Mr. Headley, with a piano-wire tail and larv in its nose. But, indeed, it is very necessary they should take soundings so as to keep above the bank, which is circumscribed in size. All well, captain!" he shouted. "You may drop us down."

"And down we went. Doctor Marcot turned off the electric light and all was pitch darkness once more save for the bathymeter's luminous face, which ticked off our steady fall. There was a gentle sway, but otherwise we were hardly conscious of any motion. Only that moving hand upon the dial told us of our terrific, our inconceivable position. Now we were at the thousand-foot level and the air had become distinctly foul. Scanlan tilted the

valve of the discharge tube and things were better.

"At fifteen hundred feet we stopped and swung in mid-current, with our lights blazing once more. Some great dark mass passed us here, but whether swordfish or deep-sea shark or monster of unknown breed was more than we could determine. The doctor hurriedly turned off the lights.

"These are our chief danger," said he; "these are creatures in the deep before whose charge this steel-plated room would have as much chance as a beehive before the rush of a rhinoceros."

"Whales, maybe," said Scanlon.
 "Whales may squid to a great depth," the scientist answered. "A Greenland whale has been known to take out nearly a mile of line in a perpendicular dive. But unless hurt or badly frightened, no whale would descend so low. It may have been a giant squid. They are found at every level."

"Well, I guess squids are too soft to hurt us. The laugh would be with the squid

if he could chew a hole in Merrilank's nickel steel."

"Their bodies may be soft," the professor answered, "but the beak of a large squid would shatter through a bar of iron, and one peck of that beak might go through these inch-thick windows as if they were parchment."

"Get-whittaker!" cried Bill, as we began to sink once more upon our journey.

"And then at last, quite softly and gently, we came to rest. So delicate was the impact that we should hardly have known of it had it not been that the light when turned on showed great coils of the hawser all around us. The wire was a danger to our breathing tubes, for it might foul them, and at the urgent cry of Maracout it was pulled taut from above once more. The dial marked eighteen hundred feet. We lay motionless on a volcanic ridge at the bottom of the Atlantic."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

MARACOT DEEP

By Arthur Conan Doyle

ILLUSTRATED BY ANTON OTTO FISCHER

FOR a time I think that all had the same feeling. We did not want to do anything or to see anything. We just wanted to sit quiet and try to realize the wonder of it. That we should be resting in the plumb cover of one of the great seas of the world. But soon the strange sounds round us, illuminated in all directions by our lights, drew us to the window.

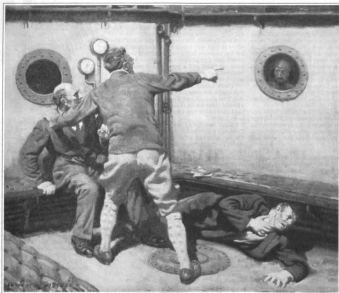
"We had settled upon a bed of high alga—'Codium multicaule,' said Maracot—the yellow strands of which waved around us, moved by some deep-sea current exactly as branches would move in a summer breeze. They were not long enough to obscure our view, though their great flat leaves, deep green in the light, showed occasionally across our vision. Beyond them lay slopes of some blackish staghorn material which were dotted with lovely colored creatures—holothurians, actinians, sponges and spongiolites—as thickly as over an English springtime bank was sprinkled with hyacinth and primroses. These living flowers of the sea, vivid scarlet, rich purple and delicate pink, were opened in profusion upon that coal-black background. Here and there great sponges bristled out from the crevices of the dark rocks, and a few fish of the middle depths, themselves showing up as flashes of color, shot across our field of vivid radiance. We were gazing enraptured at the fairy scene when an anxious voice came down the tube: "What, how do you like the bottom? Is all well with you? Don't be too long, for the glass is dropping and I don't like the look of it. Giving you air enough? Anything more we can do?"

"All right, captain!" cried Maracot cheerily. "We won't be long. We are quite as comfortable as in our own cabin. Shall I presently move us slowly forward."

"We had come into the region of the luminous fishes and it amazed us to turn out our own lights and in the absolute pitch darkness—a darkness in which a sensitive plate can be exposed for an hour without a trace even of the ultraviolet ray—to look out at the phosphorescent activity of the ocean. As against a black velvet curtain, sea lights of brilliant light moving steadily along as a liner at night might shed light through its long line of portholes. One terrifying creature had luminous teeth which flashed in Biblical fashion in the outer darkness. Another had long golden antennae, and yet another a plume of flame above its head. As far as our vision carried the lights flashed in the darkness, each little being best upon its own business and lighting up its own course as surely as the nighty tarantula at the theater hour in the Strand. Soon we had our own lights on again and the doctor was making his observations of the sea bottom.

"Deep as we are, we are not deep enough to get any of the Mesozoic or Cretaceous deposits," said he. "These are entirely beyond our possible range. Perhaps an another occasion, or with a lower hauler —"

"Cut it out!" growled Bill. "Forget it!"



"A Human Face Was Looking in at Us Through the Porthole!"

"Maracot smiled. 'You will soon get acclimated to the depths, Sealan. This will not be my only descent.'

"'The hell you say!' muttered Bill.

"You will think no more of it than of going down into the hold of the Stratford. You will observe, Mr. Headley, that the groundwork here, so far as we can observe it through the dense growth of Hydroids and siliceous sponges, is porphyritic and the black sign of basalt, pointing to ancient Plutonic activities. Indeed, I am inclined to think that it confirms my previous view that this ridge is part of a volcanic formation and that the Maracot Deep,'—he ruled out the words as if he loved them,—'represents the outer slope of the mountain. It has struck me that it would be an interesting experiment to move our cage slowly onward until we came to the edge of the Deep and see exactly what the formation may be at that point. I should expect to find a precipice of majestic dimensions extending downward at a sharp angle into the extreme depths of the ocean.'

"The experiment seemed to me to be a dangerous one, for who could say how far our thin hull could bear the strain of lateral movement? But with Maracot, deeper either to himself or to anyone else simply did not exist when a scientific observation had to be made. I held my breath—and so, I observed, did Bill Sealan—when a slow movement of our steel shell, brushing aside the waving fronds of seaweed, showed that the full strain was upon the line. It stood it nobly, however, and with a very gentle sweeping progression we began to glide over the bottom of the ocean, Maracot, with a compass in the hollow of his hand, shouting his direction as to the course to follow and occasionally ordering the shell to be raised so as to avoid some obstacle in our path.

"This basaltic ridge can hardly be more than a mile across," he explained. "I had marked the algaes as being to the west of the point where we took our plunge. At this rate we should certainly reach it in a very short time."

"We did without any check over the volcanic plain, all feathered by the waving golden alga and made beautiful

by the gorgeous jewels of Nature's cutting, flaming out from their setting of jet.

"Suddenly the doctor dashed to the telephone. 'Stop her!' he cried. 'We are there!'

"A monstrous gap had opened suddenly before us. It was a fearsome place, the vision of a nightmare. Black shining cliffs of basalt fell sheer down into the unknown. Their edges were fringed with dangling Laminaria or ferns might overhang some earthly gorge, but beneath that looming, vibrating rim there were only the black gleaming walls of the chasm. The rocky edge curved away from us, but the abyss might be of any breadth, for our lights failed to penetrate the gloom which lay before us. When one of our signaling lamps was turned downward it shot out a long golden lance of parallel beams extending down, down, down, down, down.

until it was quenched in the gloom of the terrific chasm beneath us.

"It is indeed wonderful!" cried Maracot, gazing out with a pleased proprietary expression upon his thin, eager face. "For depth I need not say that it has no equal needed. There is the Challenger Deep of twenty-six thousand feet near the Ladrone Islands, the Planet Deep of thirty-two thousand feet off the Philippines, and many others; but it is probable that the Maracot Deep stands alone in the desolacy of its descent, and is remarkable also for its escape from the observation of our many hydrographic explorers who have charted the Atlantic. It can hardly be doubted —"

"He had stopped in the middle of a sentence and a look of intense interest and surprise had been upon his face. Bill Sealan and I, gazing over his shoulders, were petrified by that which met our startled eyes.

"Some great creature was coming up the tunnel of light which we had projected into the abyss. Far down, where it faded off into the darkness of the pit, we could dimly see the vague black markings and bearings of some monstrous body in slow upward progression. Puffing in clumsy fashion, it was rising with long slitherings to the edge of the pit.

"Now, as it came nearer, it was right in the beam and we could see its dreadful form more clearly. It was a beast unknown to science and yet with an analogy to much with which we are familiar. Too long a huge crab and too short for a giant lobster, it was reddish-brown upon the lines of the crawfish, with two monstrous pincers stretched on either side and a pair of sixteen-foot antennae which quivered in front of its black, dull, salient eyes. The ceapace, light yellow in color, may have been ten feet across, and its total length—measured from the antennae first—have been not less than thirty.

"'Wonderful!' cried Maracot, scribbling dogmatically in his notebook. 'Sensitulated eyes, elastic lamella, fan-like Crustacea, species unknown. Crustacean Maracot—why not? Why not?'

"My god, I'll pass his name, but it seems to me it's coming our way!" cried Bill. "Say, doc, what about getting our light out?"

"Just one moment while I note the reticulations!" cried the naturalist. "In, yes, that will do." He closed off the switch and we were back in our laby darkness, with only the darting lights outside, like meteors on a motionless night.

"That boat is sure the world's worst," said Bill, wiping his forehead. "I feel like the morning after a bottle of prohibition hooch."

"It is certainly terrible to look at," Marston remarked, "and perhaps terrible to deal with also if we were exposed to those monstrous claws. But inside our steel case we are afforded to examine him in safety and at our ease."

"He had hardly spoken when there came a rap as from a heavy object on our wall. Then there was a long-drawn rasping and scratching, ending in another sharp rap."

"Say, he wants to come in!" cried Bill Scanlan in alarm.

"By gosh, we want No Admission painted on this shack!" His shaking voice showed how forced was his merriment, and I confess that my own knees were knocking together as I was aware of the stately monster closing up with an eyes blacker than each of our windows in succession, as he explored this strange shell which could be but crack it might contain his food.

"His can't hurt us," said Marston; but there was less assurance in his tone. "Maybe it would be as well to shake the brass." He looked at the captain up the tube:

"Pull us up twenty or thirty feet!" he cried.

"A few seconds later we rose from the lava plain and came gently in the still water. But the terrible boat was perturbation. After a very short interval, we noted once more the rattling of his fingers and the sharp tapping of his claws as he felt us round. It was terrible to sit silent in the dark and know that death was no near. If that mighty claw fell upon the window, would it stand the strain? That was the unspoken question in each of our minds.

"But suddenly an unexpected and more urgent danger presented itself. The tapping had gone to the roof of our little dwelling, and now we began to sway with a rhythmic movement to and fro.

"'Good God!' I cried. 'It has hold of the hawser! It will surely snap it!'

"Say, doc, it's mine for the surface. I guess we've seen what we came to see, and it's horse, exact horse for Bill Scanlan. Ring up the elevator and get her going."

"But our work is not half done!" cried Marston. "We have only begun to explore the edges of the Deep. Let us at least see how broad it is. When we have reached the other side I will be ready to return." Then up the tube: "All well, captain. Move on at two knots until I call for a stop."

"We moved slowly out over the edge of the abyss. Since darkness had not saved us from attack, we now turned

on our lights. One of the portholes was entirely obscured by what appeared to be the creature's lower stomach. Its head and its greatippers were at work above us and we still swung like a clinging bell. The strength of the least thrust would have been enormous. Were ever mortals placed in such a situation, with five miles of water beneath and that deadly monster above? The oscillations became more and more violent. An excited shout came down the tube from the captain as he became aware of the jerks upon the hawser, and Marston sprang to his feet, with his hands thrown upward in despair. Even within the shell, we were aware of the jar of the broken wires, and an instant later we were falling into the mighty gulf beneath us.

"As I look back at that awful moment I can remember hearing a wild cry from Marston. 'The hawser has parted! You can do nothing! We are all dead men!' he yelled, grabbing the telephone tube; and then—"Good-by, captain, good-by to all." They were our last words to the world of men.

"We did not fall swiftly down, as you might have imagined. In spite of our weight, our hollow shell gave as some sustaining buoyancy, and we sank slowly and gently into the abyss. I heard the long scrape as we slid through the claws of the horrible creature that had been our rate, and then with a smooth gravity, we went sliding downward into the abyssal depths. It may have been half five minutes, and it seemed like an hour, before we reached the limit of our telephone wire and stopped it like a thread.

Our air tube broke off at almost the same moment and the salt water came spouting through the vents. With quick, deft hands, Bill Scanlan tied our coils round each of the rubber tubes and so stopped the inrush, while the doctor released the top of our compressed air, which came hissing forth from the tubes. The lights had gone out when the wire snapped, but even in the dark the doctor was able to connect up the dry cells, which lit a number of lamps.

"It should last us a week," he said, with a wry smile. "We shall at least have light to die in." Then he shook his head sadly and a kindly smile came over his great features. "It is all right for me. I am an old man and have done my work in the world. My one regret is that I should have allowed you two young fellows to come with me. I should have taken the risk alone."

"I simply shook his hand in reassurance, for, indeed, there was nothing I could say. Bill Scanlan, too, was silent. Slowly we sank, marking our pace by the dark fish shadows which flitted past our windows. It seemed as if they were flying upward rather than that we were sinking down. We still oscillated and there was nothing so far as I could see to prevent us from falling on our side or even turning upside down. Our weight, however, was, fortunately, very evenly balanced and we kept a level face. Glancing up at the bathymeter, I saw that we had already reached the depth of a mile.

"You see, it is as I said," remarked Marston with some complacency. "You may have seen my paper in the proceedings of the Oceanographical Society upon the relation of pressure and depth. I wish I could get one word back to the world, I only to confute Enlow of Glasgow, who ventured to contradict me."

"My gosh, if I could get a word back to the world, I wouldn't waste it on a square-head highbrow!" said the mechanic. "There is a little wren in Philadelphia that will have town in her pretty eyes when she hears that Bill Scanlan has passed out. Well, it sure does seem a darn queer way of doing it anyhow."

"You should never have come," I said, putting my hand on his.

"What sort of tin-horn sport should I have been if I had quit?" he answered. "No, it's my job, and I'm glad I stuck to it." "How long have we?" I asked the doctor, after a pause.

"He shrugged his shoulders.

"We shall have time to see the real bottom of the ocean, anyhow," said he. "There is air enough in our tubes for the better part of a day. Our trouble is with the waste products. That is what is going to choke us. If we could get rid of our carbon dioxide—"

"That, I can see, is impossible."

"—There is one tube of pure oxygen. I put it in case of accidents. A little of that from time to time will help to keep us alive. . . . You will observe that we are now more than two miles deep."



"Were Ever Mortals Placed in Such a Situation, With Five Miles of Water Beneath and That Deadly Monster Above?"

MARCOOT DEEP

(Continued From Page 37)

"Why should we try to keep ourselves alive? The sooner it is over, the better," said I.

"That's the dope!" cried Scanlan. "Come on, and let us see what it is." And now the most wonderful sight that man's eye has ever seen! said Marcoat. "It would be treason to science. Let us record facts to the end, even if they should be covered with our bodies. Play the game out."

"Some sport, the doc!" cried Scanlan. "I guess he has the best guts of the bunch. Let us see the spirit in an end." We sat patiently on the settee, the two of us, gripping the edges of it with strained fingers as it swayed and rocked, while the fishes still flashed upward past the porches.

"It is now three miles," announced Marcoat. "I will turn on the oxygen, Mr. Headley, for in a certainly very close. This is one thing," he added, with his dry, crackling laugh. "It will certainly be the Marcoat Deep from this time onward. When Captain Howie takes back the news, my colleagues will see to it that my grave is also my monument. Even Hilow of Geneva will be talking of nothing but some intelligible scientific grievance."

"We sat in silence again, watching the needles as it crowded on to its fourth mile. At that point we saw the most lively, which shook us so violently that I feared we would turn upon our side. It may have been a huge fish, or conceivably we may have bumped upon some projection of the sea, but the edge of the water had become precipitated. That edge had seemed to us at the time to be such a wondrous depth, and now, looking back at it from our dreadful alps, it might almost have been the surface. Still we rolled, and rolled, and lower through the dark-green waste of waters. Twenty-five thousand feet now was registered upon the dial.

"You are nearly on your journey's end," said Marcoat. "By the way, remember, gave me twenty-six thousand seven hundred last year at the deepest point. We shall know our fate within a few minutes. It may be that the shock will crush us. It may be that it will not."

"And at that moment we landed."

"There was never a bale lowered by its mother onto a fether bed who nestled down more gently than onto the heavy bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. The soft, thick, elastic ooze upon which we lit was a perfect buffer which saved us from the slightest jar. We landed moved upon our knees, as it is well that we did not, for we had perched upon some sort of projecting humpback, clothed thickly with the viscous, gelatinous mud, and there we were balanced, rocking gently, with surely had been projecting and unsteady rock. There was a danger that we would tip over on our side, but finally we steadied down and remained motionless. As we did so, Doctor Marcoat, staring out through his porthole, gave a cry of surprise and hurriedly turned out our electric light.

"To our amazement we could still see clearly. There was a dim, misty light outside which streamed through our porthole like the odd radiance of a starry night. We looked out at the strange ooze, and with so help from our own lights we could see clearly for some hundred yards in each direction. It was a dark, gray, and sticky, but none the less the evidence of our position told us that it was a fact. The great ocean floor is hazardous.

"Why not?" cried Marcoat, when we had spent ten minutes or two in silent wonder. "Should I not have foreseen it? What is this stupor or glibberiness come? It is not the product of decay, the maddening boredom of a billion billion organic creatures, and it does not emanate from phosphorescent luminosity. Where, in all creation, would it be seen if it were not here? Ah, it is indeed hard that we should

have such a demonstration and be unable to send our knowledge back to the world."

"And yet," I remarked, "we have scooped half a ton of radiolarian jelly at a time and have been able to send it back." "It would lose it, doubtless, in its long journey to the surface. And what is half a ton compared to these far-stretching plains of sea putrescence? And see—see, a foolish one of us was showing the deep-sea creatures grass upon this organic carpet, even as our beds on land grass upon the meadows?"

"As he spoke a flock of big black fish, heavy and squat, came sailing over the ocean bed toward us, swarming among the spongy growths and sipping away as they advanced. Another large red creature, like a foolish one of us, was showing the eel in front of my porthole, and others were grazing here and there, raising their heads from time to time to gaze at this strange object which had so suddenly appeared among them.

"I could only marvel at Marcoat, who in that foul atmosphere, seated under the very shadow of death, still obeyed the call of science and carried his observations in his mind. I had followed the scientific procedure method, I knew the loss made my own mental notes, which will remain forever as a picture stamped upon my brain.

"The lowest plain of ocean consist of red clay, but here it was overlaid by the gray bathyalian slime which formed an undulating plain as far as our eyes could reach. This plain was not smooth, but was rather a series of small hills and valleys, the sides like that upon which we had perched, all glistening in the spectral light. Between these little hills there darted great clouds of strange fish, many of them quite small. I was struck by the variety of color, but black and red predominating. Marcoat watched them with suppressed excitement and chronicled this in his notes. "Surely that is Euryptera, the fossil insect," he said. "I am sure it is Euryptera. Headley, can you see that splendid Alopeophagus among the weeds yonder?" And there among the calcareous sponges, are we too black? We were not now in the vicinity of the ocean. The wealth of it, the wealth of it, and all lost to the world!" He gazed in the agency of his frustration. The shell rocked with his passionate postulations.

"The air had become very foul, and again we were only able to save ourselves by a fresh emission of oxygen. Curiously enough, we were all hungry—I should rather say ravenous—and my stomach rattled, with bread and butter, washed down by whisky and water, which the foresight of Marcoat had provided. With his perceptiveness stimulated by this rebuke, I was so hungry that I could not eat and longed for a hot cigarette, when my eyes caught something which sent a whirl of strange thoughts and anticipations through my mind.

"I have said that the undulating gray plain on every side of us was studded with what seemed like humpbacks. A particularly large one was in front of my porthole and I looked out at it within a range of ten or twenty feet. It was a dark mark upon the side of it, and as I glanced along I saw to my surprise that this mark was repeated again and again until it was lost round the curve of the ocean. The other side it came back to give one a whole about anything connected with this world, but my breath failed me for a moment and my heart stood still as I suddenly realized that I was looking at the body of a man, that, bandaged and worn as it was, the hand of man had surely at some time carved those faded figures. Marcoat and Scanlan crowded to my porthole and gazed through it with the same signs of the overwhelmed energies of man.

"It's carving, for sure!" cried Scanlan. "I guess this dump has been the roof of a

building. Then those other ones are buildings also. Sky, boy, we've dropped plumb onto a regular rug."

"It is, indeed, an ancient city," said Marcoat. "We have discovered that there have once been continents and the continents seas, but I have always distrusted the idea that in times so recent as the Quaternary there could have been an Atlantic Ocean. The discovery of Egyptian geology had, then, a foundation of fact. These volcanic formations confirm the view that this subsidence was due to seismic activity."

"There is regularity about these domes," I remarked. "I begin to think that they are not separate houses, but that they are cupolas and form the ornaments of the roof of some great building."

"I guess you are right," said Scanlan. "There are four big ones at the corners and the small ones in between. It's some building, if we could see the whole of it! You can see the whole Merrick plant inside it—and then some."

"It has been buried up to the roof by the constant dropping from above," said Marcoat. "On the other hand, it has not been buried. We have noted the temperature of a little more than 32 Fahrenheit in the great depths, which would arrest destructive processes. Even the dissipation of the bottom remains which save the floor of the ocean and incidentally give us this luminousity must be a very slow one. But, dear me, this marking is not a tree, but an inscription!"

"There was no doubt that he was right. The same symbol reappeared every here and there. These marks were unquestionably letters of some archaic alphabet.

"I have seen this symbol in many an antiquity, and there is a striking similarity in their suggestive and fearful in these characters," said our leader. "Well, we have seen a buried city of ancient days, my friend, and this is a wonderful piece of knowledge with us to the great. There is no more to be learned. Our book of knowledge is closed. I agree with you that the sooner the red ooze, the better."

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"He has deserted us!" cried Marcoat.

(Continued on Page 181)

(Continued from Page 182)

the same humanity as ourselves—had a transparent envelope all round him which enveloped his head and body, while his arms and legs were free. So transparent was it that no one could detect it in the water, but now that he was in the air beside it as it glistened like silver, though it remained as clear as the finest glass. On either shoulder he had a curious rounded projection beneath the clear protective sheath. It looked like an oblong box pivoted with many holes and gave him an appearance as if he were wearing spectacles.

"When our new friend had joined us, another face appeared in the aperture of the bottom and thrust through it what seemed like a great bubble of glass. Three of these in succession were passed in and fastened upon the surface of the water. Then six small lenses were handed up and our new acquaintances tied one with the straps attached to them to each of our shoulders, whence they stood up like his own.

"Already I began to surmise that no intrusion of natural law was involved in the life of these strange people, and that while my box in some way functioned as a producer of air, the other was an absorber of waste products. He now passed the transparent suits over our heads, and we felt that they clasped us tightly in the upper arms and waist by elastic bands, so that no water could penetrate. Within we breathed with perfect ease, and it was a joy to me to see Maracot looking out at us with his eyes twinkling as of old behind his glasses, while Bill Scanlan's grin assured me that the life-giving oxygen had done its work and that he was his cheerful self once more.

Our rescuer looked from one to another of us with grave satisfaction, and then motioned to us to follow him through the trapdoor and out on to the floor of the ocean. A dozen willing hands were outstretched to pull us through and to sustain our first feeble steps as we staggered with our feet deep in the silty ooze.

"Even now I cannot get just the marvel of it. There we were, the three of us, unharmed and at our ease at the bottom of a four-hundred fathoms of water. Where was that terrific pressure which had enervated the imagination of so many scientists? We were no more affected by it than were the dainty fish which swam around us. It is true that, so far as our bodies were concerned, we were protected by those delicate bells of vitreous which were in truth tougher than the strongest steel; but even our brains, which were exposed, felt no more than a firm restriction from the water which one learned in time to disregard.

"It was wonderful to stand together and to look back at the shell from which we had emerged. We

had left the batteries at work, and it was a wonderful sight, with its thousands of yellow light flooding out from each side while clouds of fishes gathered at each window. As we watched it the leader took Maracot by the hand and we followed them both across the watery moor, clapping heavily through the sticky surface.

"And now a most surprising incident occurred, which was clearly as astonishing to these strange new companions of ours as to ourselves. Above our heads there

appeared a small dark object, descending from the darkness above us and swinging down until it reached the bed of the ocean within a very short distance from where we stood. It was, of course, the deep-sea lead from the Stratford above us, making a sounding of that water gulf with which the name of the expedition was to be associated.

"We had seen it already upon its downward path and we could well understand that the tragedy of our disappearance had suspended the operation, but that after a pause it had been conducted with little thought that it would finish almost at our feet. They were unconscious, apparently, that they had touched bottom, for the lead lay motionless in the ooze.

"Above me stretched the vast plain over which connected me through five miles of water with the deck of our vessel. Oh, that it were possible to write a note and to attach it! The idea was absurd, and yet could I not send some message which would show them that we were still conscious? My coat was covered by my glass bell and the pockets were unapproachable, but I was few below the waist and my handkerchief chanced to be in my trousers pocket. I pulled it out and tied it round the top of the lead. The weight itself at once disengaged itself by its automatic mechanism, and presently I saw my white wisp of linen flying upward to that world which I may never see again. Our new acquaintances examined the seventy-five pounds of lead with great interest and finally carried it off with us as we went upon our way.

"We had only walked a couple of hundred yards, threading our way among the hummocks, when we halted before a small square-out door, with solid pillars on either side and an inscription across the lintel. It was open and we passed through it into a large bare chamber. There was a sliding partition worked by a crank from within, and this was drawn across behind us.

"We could, of course, hear nothing in our glass helmets; but after standing a few minutes, we were aware that a powerful pump must be at work, for we saw the level of the water sinking rapidly above us. In less than a quarter of an hour we were standing upon a sloopy steel-floored pavement, while our new friends were busy in undoing the fastenings of our transparent suits. An instant later there we stood, breathing perfectly pure air in a warm, well-lighted atmosphere, while the dark people of the deep, smiling and chattering, crowded round us with handshakings and friendly partings. It was a strange, rambling tongue that they spoke, and no word of it was intelligible to us, but the smile on the face and the light of friendship in the eye

were understandable even in the waters under the earth. The glass suits were hung on numbered pegs upon the wall, and the kindly folk had led and half pushed us to an inner door which opened into a long downward-sloping corridor. When it closed again behind us there was nothing to remind us of the stupendous fact that we were the involuntary guests of an unknown race at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean and out of forever from the world to which we belonged.

"Now that the terrific strain had been so suddenly eased, we were all relaxed. Even Bill Scanlan, who was a pocket Hercules, dragged his feet along the floor, while Maracot and I were only too glad to lean heavily upon our guides. Yet, weary as I was, I took in every detail as we passed. That the air came from some air-casting machine was very evident, for it issued in puffs from circular openings in the walls. The light was diffused and was clearly an extension of that fluor system which was extremely engaging the attention of our European engineers, when the fluorescent and lamp were dispensed with. It shone from long cylinders of clear glass which were suspended along the cornice of the passages.

"So much I had observed when our descent was checked and we were ushered into a large sitting room, thickly carpeted and well furnished with glass, china and silver services of Egyptian bronze. The crowd had been dismissed and only the bearded man with two attendants remained. "Manda," he repeated several times, tapping himself upon the chest. Then he pointed to each of us in turn and repeated the words Maracot, Hoadley and Scanlan until he had them perfect. He then motioned us to be seated and said a word to the attendant, who left the room and returned presently escorting a very ancient gentleman, white-haired and long-bearded, with a curious circular cap of blue cloth upon his head. I should have said that all these folk were dressed in colored tunics which extended to their knees, with high boots of fish skin or slagreen.

"The venerable newswriter was clearly a physician, for he examined each of us in turn, placing his hand upon our brows and closing his own eyes as if receiving a mental impression as to our condition. Apparently he was by no means satisfied, for he took his hand and said a few grave words to Manda. The latter at once sent the attendant out once more, and he brought in a tray of eatables and a flask of wine, which were laid before us. We were too weary to ask ourselves what they were, but we felt the better for the meal. We were then led to another room, where three beds had

been prepared, and on one of these I flung myself down. I have a dim recollection of Bill Scanlan coming across and sitting beside me.

"Say, bo, that jolt of brandy saved my life," said he. "But where are we, anyhow?"

"I know no more than you do."

"Well, I am ready to hit the hay," he said sleepily, as he turned to his bed. "Say, that wine was fine." They were the last words I heard as I sank into the most profound sleep that I can ever recall.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

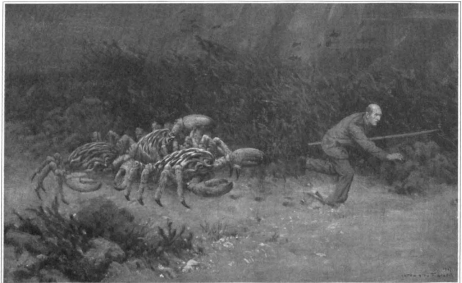


Evening, Greenwich Harbor, Long Island Sound, Connecticut

MARACOT DEEP

By Arthur Conan Doyle

ILLUSTRATED BY ANTON OTTO FISCHER



"But We Were Running—Running With an Agility Which I Should Have Thought Impossible for a Man of His Habits"

III

WHEN I came to myself I could not at first imagine where I was. The events of the previous day were like some blurred nightmare, and I could not believe that I had to accept them as facts. I looked round in bewilderment at the large, bare, windowless room with drab-colored walls, at the lines of glistening purplish light which flowed along the corridors, at the scattered articles of furniture, and finally at the two other beds, from one of which came the high-pitched strident noise which I had learned showed the Stratford to associate with Maracot. It was too grotesque to be true, and it was only when I figured my bedclothes and observed the curious woven material—the dried fibres of some sea plant—from which it was made that I was able to realize this inconceivable adventure which had befallen us. I was still pondering it when there came a loud explosion of laughter, and Bill Scanlan sat up in bed.

"Morris, ha!" he cried amid his chuckles.

"You seem in good spirits," said I rather testily. "I can't see that we have much to laugh about."

"Well, I had a growth on me the same as you when first I woke up," he answered. "Then came a real cute idea, and it was that that made me laugh."

"I could do with a laugh myself," said I. "What's the idea?"

"Well, ha, I thought how darned funny it would have been if we had all tied ourselves onto that deep-sea line. I allow with those glass goggles we could have kept breathing all right. Then when old man Howie looked over the side there would have been the whole bunch of us coming up at him through the water. He would have figured that he had hooked us, sure. Gee, what a sight!"

"Our united laughter woke the doctor, who sat up in bed with the same amazed expression upon his face which had previously been upon my own. I forgot our troubles as I listened in amazement to his disjointed comments, which alternated between ecstatic joy at the prospect of such a field of study and profound sorrow that he could never hope to convey his results to his scientific confederates of the surface. Finally he got back to the actual needs of the moment.

"It is nine o'clock," he said, looking at his watch. We all registered the same hour, but there was nothing to show if it was night or morning. "We must keep our own calendar," said Maracot; "we descended upon October third. We reached this place on the evening of the same day. How long have we slept?"

"My gosh, it may have been a month!" said Scanlan. "I've not been so deep since Mickey Scott got me on the point in the six-road track at the works."

"We dressed and washed, for every civilized convenience was at hand. The door, however, was fastened, and it was clear that we were prisoners for the time. In spite of the apparent absence of any ventilation, the atmosphere kept perfectly sweet, and we found that this was due to a current of air which came through small holes in the wall. There was some source of central heating, too, for though no stove was visible, the temperature was pleasantly warm. Presently I observed a knob upon one of the walls and pressed it. This was, as I expected, a bell, for the door instantly opened and a small duck man, dressed in a yellow robe, appeared in the aperture. He looked at us inquiringly, with large, brown, kindly eyes.

"We are hungry," said Maracot. "Can you get us some food?"

"The man shook his head and smiled. It was clear that the words were incomprehensible to him. Scanlan tried his luck with a flow of American slang, which was received with the same blank smile. When, however, I opened my mouth and thrust my finger into it, our visitor nodded vigorously and hurried away.

"Ten minutes later the door opened and two of the yellow-clad attendants appeared, rolling a small table before them. Had we been at a first-class hotel we could not have had better fare. There was coffee, hot milk, rolls, delicious fatback and honey. For half an hour we were far too busy to discuss what it was we ate or when it was obtained. At the end of that time the two servants appeared once more, rolled out the table and closed the door carefully behind them.

"I'm fair black and blue with picking myself," said Scanlan. "Is this a pipe dream or what? Say, doc, you

get us down here, and I guess it is up to you to tell us just how you see it all up."

"The doctor shook his head. "It is like a dream to me, also, but it is a glorious dream. What a story for the world if we could but get it to them!"

"One thing is clear," said I. "There was certainly truth in this legend of Atlantis, and some of the folk here is a marvelous way managed to carry on."

"Well, even if they carried on," cried Bill Scanlan, scratching his bullet head, "I'm darned if I see undertaken how they could get air and fresh water and the rest. Maybe if that queer duck with the beard that we saw last night comes to give us a cow-over, he will put us wise to it."

"How can he do that when we have no common language?"

"Well, we shall use our own observation," said Maracot. "One thing I can already understand. I learned it from the honey at breakfast. That was clearly synthetic honey, such as we have already learned to make upon the earth. But if synthetic honey, why not synthetic coffee or flour? The molecules of the elements are like bricks, and these bricks lie all around us. We have only to learn how to pull out certain bricks—sometimes just a single brick—in order to make a fresh substance. Sugar becomes starch or other because linked just by a shifting of the bricks. What is it that shifts them? Heat—electricity—other things perhaps of which we know nothing. Some of them will shift themselves and radium becomes lead or uranium becomes radium without our touching them."

"You think then that they have an advanced chemistry?"

"I'm sure of it. After all, there is no elemental brick which is not ready to their hands. Hydrogen and oxygen come readily from the sea water. There are nitrogen and carbon in those masses of sea vegetation, and there are phosphorus and sodium in the bathylic deposit. With skillful management and adequate knowledge, what is there which could not be produced?"

"The doctor had launched upon a chemical lecture, when the door opened and Maada entered, giving us a friendly greeting. There came with him the same old

gentleman of venerable appearance whom we had met the night before. He may have had a reputation for learning, for he tried several sentences, which were probably different languages, upon us, but all were equally unintelligible. Then he shrugged his shoulders and spoke to Marat, who gave an order to the two yellow-clad servants, still waiting at the door. They vanished, but returned presently with a curious screen, supported by two side posts. It was exactly like one of our cinema screens, but it was coated with some sparkling material which glittered in the light. This was placed against one of the walls. The old man then passed out very carefully a certain distance and marked it upon the floor. Standing at this point, he turned to Marat and touched his forehead, pointing to the screen.

"Clean dippy," said Scanlan. "Bats in the belly." Marat shook his head to show that we were misapprehended. So was the old man for a moment. An idea struck him, however, and he pointed to his own figure. Then he turned toward the screen, fixed his eyes upon it and seemed to concentrate his attention. In an instant a reflection of himself appeared on the screen before us. Then he pointed to us, and a moment later our own little group took the place of his image. It was not particularly like us. Scanslan looked like a comic Chinaman and Marat like a decayed corpse, but it was clearly meant to be ourselves as we appeared in the eyes of the operator.

"It's a reflection of thought!" I cried. "Exactly," said Marat. "This is certainly a most marvelous invention, and yet it is but a combination of such telegraphy and television as we fairly comprehend upon earth."

"I never thought I'd live to see myself in the movies, if that cheese-faced Chink is really meant for me," said Scanslan. "Boy, if we could get all this news to the editor of the Ledger he'd cough up enough to keep me for life. We've sure got the goods if we could deliver them."

"That's the trouble," said I. "By George, we could stir the whole world if we could only get back to it! But what is he backoning about?"

"The old guy wants you to try your hand at it, doc." Marat took the place indicated, and his strong, clear-cut brain focused his picture to perfection. We saw an image of Marat, and then another one of the Stratford as we had left her.

"Both Mandu and the old scientist nodded their great approval at the sight of the ship, and Mandu made a sweeping gesture with his hands, pointing first to us and then to the screen.

"To tell them all about it—that's the idea," I cried. "They want to know in pictures who we are and how we get here."

Marat nodded to Mandu to show that he understood, and had begun to throw an image of our voyage, when Mandu held up his hand and stopped him. At an order the attendants removed the screen and the two Atlanteans beckoned that we should follow them.

"It was a huge building, and we proceeded down corridor after corridor until we came at last to a large hall with seats arranged in tiers like a lecture room. At one side was a broad screen of the same nature as that which we had seen. Facing it, there was assembled an audience of at least a thousand people, who set up a murmur of welcome as we entered. They were of both sexes and of all ages, the men dark and bearded, the women beautiful in youth and dignified in age. We had little time to observe them, for we were led to seats in the front row, and Marat was there placed on a stand opposite the screen, the lights were in scene fashion turned down and he had the signal to begin.

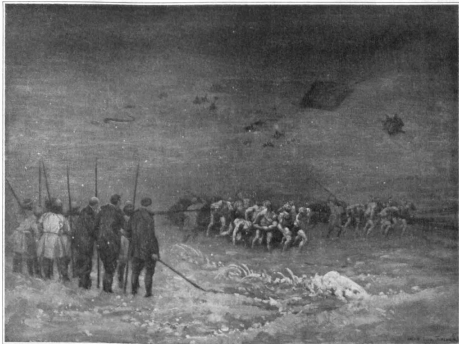
"And excellently well he played his part. We first saw our vessel sailing forth from the Thames, and a haze of excitement went up from the massed audience at this synthetic glimpse of a real modern city. Then a map

appeared which marked her course. Then was seen the steel hull with its fittings, which was greeted with a murmur of recognition. We saw ourselves once more descending and reaching the edge of the abyss. Then came the appearance of the monster who had wrecked us. "Marat! Marat!" cried the people, as the beast appeared. It was clear that they had learned to know and to fear it. There was a terrified hush as the creature fumbled with our hawser, and a groan of horror as the wire parted and we dropped into the gulf. In a month of explanation we could not have made our plight so clear as in that half hour of visible demonstration.

"As the audience broke up they showered every sign of sympathy upon us, crowding round us and putting our backs to show that we were welcome. We were presented in turn to some of the chiefs, but the chiefdomship seemed to lie in wisdom alone, for all appeared to be on the same social scale and were dressed in such the same way. The men wore tunics of a saffron color, coming down to the knees, with belts and high boots of a scaly tough material which must have been the hide of some sea beast. The women were beautifully draped in classical style, their flowing robes, of every tint of pink and blue and green, ornamented with clusters of pearl or opalescent shells of shell. Many of them were lovely beyond any earthly comparison.

"There was one — But why should I mix my private feelings up with this public narrative! Let me say only that Missa is the only daughter of Scanslan, one of the leaders of the people, and that from that first day of meeting I read in her dark eyes a message of sympathy and of understanding which went home to my heart, as my gratitude and admiration may have gone to hers. I need not say more at present about this exquisite lady. Suffice it that a new and strong influence had come into my life."

(Continued on Page 128)



"A Missing Patch Appeared in Front of Us, which Broke Up as We Approached It into a Crowd of Men, Each in His Vitriol Envelope, Who Were Dragging Behind Them Broad Shields Wreathed With Coal"

MARACOT DEEP

(Continued from Page 27)

"When I saw Maracot gestulating with unquieted animation to one kindly lady, while Scaslan stood conveying his admiringly in paternity in the center of a group of laughing girls, I realized that my conclusions also had begun to find that there was a lighter side to our tragic position. If we were dead to the world, we had at least found a life beyond which promised some consolation for what we had lost."

"Later in the day we were guided by Mandu and other friends round some portions of the immense building. It had been so enclosed in its sea floor by the accumulations of sponges that it was only through the roof that it could be entered, and from this point the passages led down and down until the floor level was reached several hundred feet below the entrance under. The floor in turn had been excavated and we saw in all directions passages which sloped downward into the bowels of the earth. We were shown the air-making apparatus, with the pumps which circulated it through the building."

"Maracot pointed out with wonder and admiration that not only was the oxygen utilized with the nitrogen but that smaller amounts supplied other gases which could only be the argon, neon and other little-known constituents of the atmosphere which we are only just beginning to understand. The distilling vats for making fresh water and the enormous electrical installations were other objects of interest, but much of the machinery was so intricate that it was difficult for us to follow the details. I can only say what we observed with my own eyes and tested with my own palate that chemical in gaseous and liquid forms were poured into various machines, that they were treated by heat, by pressure and by electricity, and that food, by coffee or wine was collected as the product."

"There was one consideration which was very quickly forced upon us by our examination on various occasions of so much of the building as was open to our inspection. This was that the exposure to the sea had been foreseen and the protection against the intruders of the water had been prepared long before the laying of the beams and the waves. Of course, it stood in reason and needed no proof that such precautions could not have been taken after the event, but we were witnesses now of the signs that the whole great building had from the first been constructed with the one idea of being an enduring ark of refuge."

"The huge retorts and vats in which the air, the food, the distilled water and the other necessary products were made were all built into the walls, and were evidently integral parts of the original construction. So, too, with the exit chambers, the silica works, where the vitrified bells were contained, and the huge pumps which controlled the water. Every one of these things had been prepared by the skill and the foresight of that wonderful far-away people who seemed, from what we could learn, to have thrown out one arm to Central America and one to Egypt, and so left traces of themselves even upon this earth when their own land went down into the Atlantic."

"As to these their descendants, we judged that they had probably degenerated, as was but natural, and that at the most they had been stagnant and only preserved some of the science and knowledge of their ancestors without having the energy to add to it. They possessed wonderful powers and yet seemed to us to be strangely wanting in initiative, and had added nothing to that wonderful legacy which they had inherited. I am sure that Maracot, using this knowledge, would very soon have obtained greater results."

"As to Scaslan, with his quick brain and mechanical skill, he was continually putting together which probably seemed as remarkable to them as their powers to us. He had a beloved mouth organ in his coat pocket when we made our descent, and his

use of this was a perpetual joy to our companions, who sat around in entranced groups, as we might listen to a Mozart, while he banded out to them the crooning notes from his native land."

"I have said that the whole building was not open to our inspection, and I might give a little further detail upon that subject. There was one well-worn corridor down which we were permitted to pass, but which was always avoided by our guides in our excursions. As was natural, our curiosity was aroused, and we detoured one evening, but we were to take a shower and do a little exploring upon our own account. We slipped out of our room; therefore add made our way to the unknown quarter at a time when few people were about."

"The passage led us to a high arched door which appeared to be made of solid gold. When we pushed it open we found ourselves in a huge room, forming a square of not less than two hundred feet. All around the walls were pictures with vivid colors and adorned with extraordinary pictures and statues of grotesque creatures with enormous heads, like the fellows of the old American Indians. At the end of the room there was one large seated figure, the legs crossed like a Buddha, but with none of the benignity of aspect which is seen on the Buddha's placid features. On the contrary, this was a creature of wrath, open-mouthed and ferocious, the latter being red and their effect exaggerated by two electric lights which shone through them. On his lap was a great dark oval which we observed as we approached it, to be filled with ash."

"'Moloch!' said Maracot. 'Moloch, or Baal—the old god of the Phœnicians.'"
"Oh, how quaint!" I cried, with recollections of old Cretan lore. "Don't tell me that these gentle folk could go in for human sacrifice!"

"'Look here, he!' said Scaslan anxiously. 'Does he keep it in the family anyhow? I don't want them to pull so much dope on us.'"

"'No, I guess they have learned their lesson,' said I. 'It's unfortunate that teaches fate to be happy by for which the world.'"

"'That's right,' Maracot remarked, poking about among the ash. 'It is the old hereditary god, but it is surely a gentler cult. There are burned leaves and the like. But perhaps this was a time'

"But our speculations were interrupted by a stern voice at our elbow and we found several men in yellow garments and high hats who were clearly the priests of the cult. With them we were engaged in their faces I should judge that we were very near to being the last victims to Baal, and one of them had actually drawn a knife from his girdle. With three gestures and cries they drove us to the door of their sacred shrine."
"My god," cried Scaslan, "I'll look that dark if he keeps crowding me! Look here, you kindliest, keep your hands off my coat!"

"For a moment I feared that we should have had what Scaslan called a rough-house within the sacred precincts. However, we got the angry mechanism of our room, but we could tell from the demeanor of Mandu and others of our friends that our escape was known and rumored. It was the one and only glimpse that we have had of the religio of these strange people."

"But there was another shrine which was truly shown to us and which had a very unexpected result. It opened up a slow original method of communication between our companions and ourselves. This was a room in the lower quarter of the temple was to decorations of distillation save that at one end there stood a statue of ivory yellow with age, representing a woman holding a spear, with an owl perched upon her shoulder. A very old man was the guardian of the room, and in

spite of his age it was clear to us that he was of a very different race, and one of a finer, larger type than the men of the temple. As we stood gazing at the ivory creature we saw that both wandering where we had seen something like it before, the old man addressed us.

"'Thea,' said he, pointing to the figure. 'By Geopel!' I cried. 'He is speaking Greek.'"

"'Thea—Althra!' repeated the old man. 'There was not a fault of it.' 'God—Althra,' the words were untranslatable. However, what wonderful brain had absorbed something from every branch of human knowledge, began at one to ask questions in classical Greek which were only partly understood and were answered in a dialect so obscure that it was almost incomprehensible. Still, he acquired some knowledge, and he found an intermediary through whom he could distily convey something to our companions."

"'It is a remarkable proof,' said Maracot that evening in his high nighting voice and in the tones of one addressing a large class, 'of the reliability of legend. There is always a basis of truth in it. In the course of the years it should become clearer. You are aware—probably you are not aware—' "He—your life!"—from Scaslan—"that a link exists between the primitive Greeks and the Atlanteans at the time of the destruction of the great island. The fact is recorded in Solon's description of what he learned from the priests of Samos. We may conclude that there were Greek prisoners in the hands of the Atlanteans at the time, that some of them were in the service of the temple and that they carried their own religion with them. That man was, so far as I can understand, the old hereditary priest of the cult. Perhaps when we know more we shall see something of those ancient people.'"

"'Well, I had it in them for good sense,' said Scaslan. 'I'm sure you would be a glutton if it were to have a few more of those that blacken with the red eyes and the oak bunker on his nose.'"

"'Lucky they can't understand your views,' I remarked. 'You say they do, you might as well as a Christian say they do.'"

"'Not so long as we can play their jazz,' he answered. 'I guess they've got used to us now, and they couldn't do without us.'"

"'I expect he was right, too, for his chery rough-and-ready ways, our mechanic was, before many weeks were over, very much the most popular of our party. Apart from his mechanical powers, Scaslan was an excellent dancer in the most recent American style, and as I was also some performer when I was at Harvard, the two of us helped to supply the ideas of our submarine friends. They were a cheerful crowd and it was a happy life. We were together as often when one's whole heart goes out to the homelands which we have lost, and visions of the dear old quadrangles of Oxford or the ancient halls and the familiar campus of Harvard came into our most fertile mind. In those early days they seemed as far from me as some landscape in the moon, and were as bright as a dim uncertain future glow in the sky of my soul."

"It was a few days after our arrival that our old and our captives—we were dubious as to whether we should not be taken out for an expedition upon the bottom of the ocean. Six of them came with us, including Mandu the chief. We assembled in the small chamber in which we had originally been taken up before we were in a condition to exercise it a little more closely. It was a very large place, at least hundreds feet each way, and its low walls were covered with green with marine growth and dripping with water."

"A long row of pews, with marks which I presume were numbers, ran round the

(Continued on Page 122)

(Continued from Page 120)

whole room, and on each was hung one of the semitransparent bells of vitrine and a pair of the shoulder batteries which insured respiration. The floor was of jagged stones worn into concavities, the flattops of many generations, those hollows now lying as pools of shallow water. The whole was highly illuminated by clear tubes round the curtain. We were fastened into our vitrine coverings and a stout pointed staff made of some light metal was handed to each of us.

"Then, by signals, Manda ordered us to take a grip of a rail which ran round the room, he and his friends setting us as an example. The object of this precaution soon became evident, for as the outer door swung slowly open the sea water came pouring in with such force that we should have been swept from our feet but for this precaution. It rose rapidly, however, to above the level of our heads and the pressure upon us was eased. Manda led the way to the door, and an instant afterward we were out on the ocean bed once more, leaving the portal open behind us ready for our return.

"Looking round us in the cold, flickering, spectral light which illuminates the bathyal plain, we could see for a radius of at least a quarter of a mile in every direction. What amazed us was to observe, on the very limit of what was visible, a very brilliant glow of radiance. It was toward this that our leader turned his steps, our party walking in single file behind him. It was slow going, for there was the resistance of the water, and our feet were buried deeply in the soft slush with every step; but soon we were able to see clearly what the beacon was which had attracted us. In an our own shell, our last remnant of terrestrial life, which lay tilted upon one of the cupolas of the far-flung building, with all its lights still burning.

"It was three-quarters full of water, but the imprisoned air still preserved that portion in which our electric installation lay. It was strange, indeed, as we gazed into it, to see the familiar interior with our settees and instruments still in position, while several good-sized fish like minnows in a bottle swam round and round inside it. One after the other our party clambered through the open flap, Marston to connect eyes to lenses which floated on the surface. Scanlan and I to pick up some personal belongings.

"Manda came also, with one or two of his comrades, examining with the greatest interest the bathometer and thermometer, with the other instruments which were attached to the wall. The latter we detached and took away with us. It may interest scientists to know that at depths Fahrenheit represents the temperature at the greatest sea depth to which man has ever descended, and that it is higher, on account of the chemical decomposition of the ocean, than the upper strata of the sea.

"Our little expedition had, it seems, a definite object besides that of allowing us a little exercise upon the bed of the ocean. We were hunting for food. Every now and then I saw our comrades strike sharply down with their pointed staves, impaling each time a large brown flat fish, not unlike a turbot, which was ravenous, but lay so closely in the ocean that it took no practice eyes to detect it. Soon each of the little men had two or three of these dangling at his side. Scanlan and I soon got the knack of it, and captured a couple each, but Manda walked one up in a dreamy riddle but in his wonder at the ocean beatitudes around him and making long and excited speeches which were lost to the ear, but visible to the eyes from the contention of his features.

"Our first impression had been one of monotony, but we soon found that the gray plains were broken up into varied formations by the action of the deep-sea currents which flow like submarine rivers, across them. These streams cut channels in the soft slime and exposed the beds which lay beneath. The floor of these

beds consisted of the red clay which forms the base of all things on the surface of the bed of the ocean, and they were thickly studded with white objects which I imagined to be shells. In the presence, however, we examined them, to be the ear bones of whales and the teeth of sharks and other sea monsters.

"One of these teeth which I picked up was fifteen inches long, and we could but be thankful that so fearful a monster frequented the higher levels of ocean. It belonged, according to Marston, to a giant killing Gorgonian, or Oryza gladiator.

"There was one peculiarity of the ocean depths which impresses itself upon the observer. There is, as I have said, a constant and light rising up from the slow phosphorescent decay of the great masses of organic matter. But above, all is black as night. The effect is that of a dim winter day, with a heavy black transfusion lying low above the earth. Out of this black canopy there falls slowly an incessant snow-storm of tiny white flakes which glimmer against the somber background. These are the shreds of sea anemals and other small creatures that live and die in the fine miles of water which separate us from the surface; and though many of them are dissolved as they fall and add to the lime sands in the ocean, the rest go in the course of ages to form that deposit which has entombed the great city in the upper part of which we now dwell.

"Leaving our last link with earth beneath us, we passed on into the gloom of the submarine world and soon we were met by a completely new development. A moving patch appeared in front of us, which broke up as we approached it into a crowd of men, each in his vitrine enclosure, as we were dragging behind them broad leashes hooped with coal. It was heavy work, and the poor devils were bending and straining, tagging load of the short-six ropes which served as traces.

"With each gang of men there was one who appeared to be in authority, and it interested us to see that the leaders and the workers were clearly of a different race. The latter were tall men, fair, with blue eyes and powerful bodies. The others were as already described, dark and almost negro, with squat, broad frames. We could not associate with the latter class as we meant, but the impression was left upon my mind that the one race represented the hereditary slaves of the other, and Marston was of opinion that they may have been the descendants of those Greek prisoners whose goddess we had seen in the temple.

"Several droves of these men, each drawing their loads of coal, were met by us before we came to the mine itself. At this point the deep-sea deposits and sandy formations which lay beneath them had been cut away and a great pit exposed, which consisted of alternate layers of clay and coal, representing strata in the old prehistoric world of long ago which now lay at the bottom of the Atlantic.

"At the various levels of this huge excavation we could see gangs of men at work leaving the coal, while others gathered it into loads and placed it in baskets, by means of which it was hoisted up to the level above. The whole mine was so vast a scale that we could not see the other side of the movement in which so many generations of workers had accepted in the bed of the ocean. This, then, transmuted into electric force, was the source of the motive power by which the whole machinery of Atlanta was run. It is interesting, by the way, to record that the name of the old city had been correctly preserved in the legends, for when we mentioned it to Manda and others they first looked gravely surprised that we should know it, and then nodded their heads vigorously to show that they understood.

"Passing the great coal pit—or rather, branching away from it to the right—we came on a line of low hills of basalt, their surface as clear and shining as on the day when they were shut up from the bowels of

(Continued on Page 122)

(Continued from Page 122)

the earth, while their summit, some hundred feet above us, loomed up against the dark background. The base of these volcanic cliffs was draped in a deep jungle of high seaweed growing out of tangled masses of crinoid corals laid down in the old terrestrial days.

Along the edge of this thick undergrowth we wandered for some time, our companions beating it with their sticks and driving out of our unassessable extradietary assortment of strange fishes and Crustacea, now and again securing a specimen for their own tables. For a mile or more we wandered along in this haphazard fashion, when I saw Maids step suddenly and look toward him with gestures of alarm and surprise. These submarine gestures formed a language in themselves, for in a moment his companions understood the cause of his trouble, and then with a shock we realized it also. Doctor Matroni had disappeared.

"He had certainly been with us at the end pit, and he had come as far as the last cliff. It was inconceivable that he had got ahead of us, so it was evident that he must be somewhere along the line of jungle in our rear. Though our friends were disturbed, Scalan and I, who knew something of the good man's abominable character, were confident that there was no cause for alarm and that we should soon find him loitering over some sea farm which had attracted him. We all turned in our tracks and had hardly gone a hundred yards before we caught sight of him.

"But he was running—running with an agility which I should have thought impossible for a man of his build. Even the best athletic can run, however, when fear is the pincer. His hands were outstretched for help and he stumbled and tumbled forward with clumsy energy. He had good cause to exert himself, for these horrible creatures were close at his heels. They were tiger crabs, striped black and white, each about the size of a Newfoundland dog. Fortunately, they were themselves not very swift travelers and were scurrying along the soft sea bottom in a curious sidelong fashion which was little faster than that of the terrified fugitive. Their mind was better, however, and they would probably have had their horrible claws upon him in a very few minutes had not our friends intervened.

"They dashed forward with their pointed sticks and Maids flashed a powerful electric lantern which he carried in his belt in the face of the lustreless monsters, which scuttled into the jungle and were lost to view. Our comrades sat down on a bump of coral and his face showed that he was unharmed by his adventure. He told us afterward that he had penetrated the jungle in the hope of securing what seemed to him to be a rare specimen of the deep-sea Chimera, and that he had blundered into the nest of these fierce tiger crabs, which had instantly dashed for him. It was only after a long rest that he was able to resume the journey.

"Our next stage after skirting the bank cliffs led us to our goal. The gray plain in front of us was covered at this point by irregular burmacks and tall projections, which told us that the great city of old lay beneath it. It would all have been completely buried forever by the sea, as Heracles has been by lava or Pompeii by ashes, had an entrance to it not been created by the survivors of the temple.

"This entrance was a long, downward cutting which ended up in a broad street with buildings exposed on either side. The walls of these buildings were occasionally cracked and shattered, for they were not of the construction which had preserved the temple, but the interiors were in most cases exactly as they had been when the catastrophe occurred, save that sea changes of all sorts, beautiful and rare in some cases and horrifying in others, had modified the appearance of the rooms.

"Our guides did not encourage us to examine the first ones which we reached,

but hurried us onward until we came to that which had clearly been the great central citadel or palace round which the whole town centered. The pillars and columns and vast sculptured corridors and friezes and stairways of this building exceeded anything which I have ever seen upon earth. Its nearest approach seemed to me to be the remains of the Temple of Karnak at Luxor in Egypt and, strange to say, the decorations and half-effaced engravings resembled in detail those of the great ruins beside the Nile, and the lion-shaped capitals of the columns were the same.

"It was an amazing experience to stand in the marble templed floor of these vast halls, with great statues looming high above one on every side, and to see, as we saw that day, huge silvery eel-gliding above our heads and frightened fish darting away in every direction from the light which was projected before us. From room to room we wandered, marking every sign of luxury and occasionally of that lascivious folly which is said, by the legating legend, to have drawn God's curse upon the people.

"One small room was wondrously encased with mother-of-pearl, so that even now it gleamed with brilliant opalescent tints when the light played across it. An ornamented platform of yellow metal and a broken couch lay in one corner, and one felt that it may well have been the bed-chamber of a queen; but beside the couch there lay now a lustrous black squid, its body rising and falling in a slow, stately rhythm, so that it seemed like some evil heart which still beat in the very center of the wicked palace.

"I was glad—and so, I learned, were my companions—when our guides led the way out once more, glancing for a moment at a raised amphitheater and again at a pier with a lighthouse at the end, which showed that the city had been a seaport. Since we had emerged from these places of ill omen and were out on the familiar bathybian plain once more.

"Our adventures were not quite over, for there was one more which was as alarming to our companions as to ourselves. We had nearly made our way home when one of our guides pointed upward with alarm. Gazing in that direction, we saw an extraordinary sight. Out of the black gloom of the water a huge dark figure was emerging, falling rapidly downward. At first it seemed a shapeless mass, but as it came more clearly into the light we could see that it was the dead body of a monstrous fish, which had burst so that the entrails were streaming up behind it as it fell. No doubt the gases had buoyed it up in the higher reaches of the ocean until, having been released by putrefaction or by the ravages of sharks, there was nothing left but dead weight, which sent it hurtling down to the bottom of the sea.

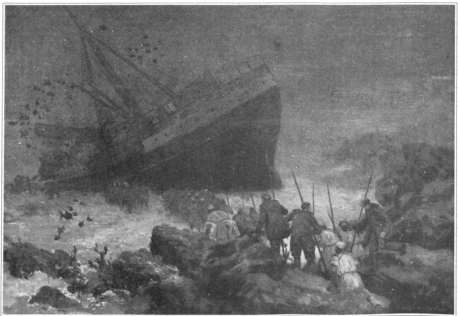
"Already in our walk we had observed several of these great skeletons picked clean by the fish, but this creature was still, save for its dismemberment, even as it had lived. Our guides seized us with the intention of dragging us out of the path of the falling mass, but fortunately they were reassured and stood still, for it was clear that it would miss us.

"Our virtuous helmets prevented our hearing the dead, but it must have been prodigious when that huge body struck the floor of the ocean, and we saw the globigerina ooze fly up into the air as the mud splashes when a heavy stone is hurled into it. It was a green white, some seventy feet long, and from the excited and joyful gestures of the salarinate folk I gathered that they would find plenty of use for the spermatocyst and the fat. For the moment, however, we left the desolate creature, and with joyful hearts for the ungrateful visitors were weary and aching, we found ourselves once more in front of the engraved portal of the reef and finally standing safe and sound, divested of our virtuous belts, the slippery floor of the entrance chamber."

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

MARACOT DEEP

By Arthur Conan Doyle
ILLUSTRATED BY ANTON OTTO FISCHER



"Emerging From This Tangle of Ancient Lanes, We Came Out on a Circular Plain, Brilliant in the Phosphorescent Light, and There in the Very Center of It Lay an Object Which Set Me Gasping"

17

A FEW days—as we reckon time—after the occasion when we had given the community a cinema view of our own proceedings, we were present at a very much more solemn and august exhibition of the same sort, which gave us in a clear and wonderful way the past history of this remarkable people. I cannot father myself that it was given entirely on our behalf, for I rather think that the events were publicly rehearsed from time to time in order to carry on the record, and that the part to which we were admitted was only some intermezzo of a long religious ceremony. However that may be, I will describe it exactly as it occurred.

"We were led to the same great hall, or theater, where Doctor Maracot had thrown our own adventures upon the screen. There the whole community was assembled, and we were given, as before, places of honor in front of the great luminous screen.

"Then after a long song, which may have been some sort of patriotic chant, a very old, white-haired man, the historian or chronicler of the nation, advanced amid much applause to the focal point and threw upon the right surface before him a series of pictures to represent the rise and fall of his own people.

"I wish I could convey to you their vividness and drama. My two companions and I lost all sense of time and place, so absorbed were we in the contemplation, while the audience was moved to its depths and groined or wept as the tragically unbridled which depicted the ruin of their fatherland, the destruction of their race.

"In the first series of scenes we saw the old continent in its glory, as its memory had been handed down by these historical records passed from fathers to sons. We had a bird's-eye view of a glorious rolling country, enormous in extent, well watered and evenly irrigated, with great fields of grain, waving orchards, lovely streams and woody

hills, still lakes and occasional picturesque mountains. It was studded with villages and covered with farmhouses and beautiful private residences.

"Then our attention was carried to the capital, a wonderful and gorgeous city upon the seashore, the harbor crisscrossed with galleys, but quays piled with merchandise and her safety assured by high walls with towering battlements and circular mounds, all on the most gigantic scale. The houses stretched inland for many miles, and in the center of the city was a circled castle, or citadel, so widespread and commanding that it was like some creation of a dream. We were then shown the faces of those who lived in that golden age, wise and venerable old men, fierce warriors, saintly priests, beautiful and dignified women, lovely children—an epitome of the human race.

"Then came pictures of another sort. We saw wars, constant wars, war by land and war by sea. We saw rabid and defenceless masses trampled down and overriden by great chariots or the rush of mailed horsemen. We saw treasure hooped upon the victors, but even as the riches increased, the faces upon the screen became more animal and more cruel. Down, down they sank from one generation to another. We were shown signs of lascivious disposition or moral degeneracy, of the accretion of matter and decline of spirit. Brutal sports at the expense of others had taken the place of the manly exercises of old.

"There was no longer the quiet and simple family life or the cultivation of the mind, but we had a glimpse of a people who were restless and shallow, ranking from one pursuit to another, gasping ever at pleasure, forever mixing it, and yet imagining always that in some more complex and unnatural form it might still be found. There had risen on the one hand an overrich class who sought only sensual gratification, and on the other hand an over-poor residue whose whole function in life was to minister

to the wants of their masters, however evil those wants might be.

"And now once again a new note was struck. There were reformers at work who were trying to turn the nation from its evil ways, and to direct it back into those higher paths which it had forsaken. We saw their grave and earnest men, reasoning and pleading with the people, but we saw them scorned and jeered at by those whom they were trying to save. Especially we could see that it was the priests of Baal, priests who had gradually allowed forms and show and outward ceremonies to take the place of unselfish spiritual development, who led the opposition to the reformers. But the latter were not to be killed or browbeaten. They continued to try for the salvation of the people, and their faces assumed a graver and even a terror-inspiring aspect as those of men who had a fearsome warning to give which was like some dreadful vision before their own minds. Of their auditors, some few seemed to heed and be terrified at the words, but others turned away laughing, and plunged ever deeper into their means of sin. There came a time at last when the reformers turned away also, as men who could do no more, and left this degenerate people to its fate.

"Then we saw a strange sight. There was one reformer, a man of singular strength of mind and body, who gave a lead to all the others. He had wealth and influence and powers, which latter seemed to be not entirely of this earth. We saw him in what seemed to be a trance, communicating with higher spirits. It was he who brought all the sciences of his land—science which far outshone anything known by us moderns—to the task of building an ark of refuge against the coming troubles.

"We saw myriads of workmen at work, and the walls rising, while crowds of anxious citizens looked on and made merry at each elaborate and useless precaution. We saw

others who seemed to reason with him and to say to him that if he had fears, it would be easier for him to fly to some safer land. His answer, so far as we could follow it, was that there were some who must be saved at the last moment and that for their sake he must remain in the new temple of safety. Meanwhile he collected in it those who had followed him, and he held them there, for he did not himself know the day or the hour, though forces beyond mortal had assured him of the coming fact. So when the ark was ready and the water-eight downs were finished and tested, he waited upon down, with his family, his friends, his followers and his servants.

"And doom came. It was a terrible thing even in a picture. God knows what it could be like in reality. We first saw a huge, sleek mountain of water rise to an incredible height out of a calm ocean. Then we saw it travel, sweeping on and on, mile after mile, a great glistening hill, topped with foam, at an ever-increasing rate. Two little ships tossed among the swaying fringes upon the summit, became, as the wave rolled toward us, a couple of shattered galleys.

"Then we saw it strike the shore and sweep over the city, while the houses went down before it like a field of corn before a tornado. We saw the folk upon the housetops, glaring out at the approaching death, their faces twisted with horror, their eyes staring, their mouths contorted, gnawing at their hands and gibbering in an insanity of terror. The very men and women who had mocked at the warning were now screaming to heaven for mercy, groveling with their faces on the ground or kneeling with trembled arms raised in wild appeal.

"There was no time now to reach the ark, which stood beyond the city, but thousands dashed up to the citadel, which stood upon higher ground, and the battlement walls were black with people. Then suddenly the cattle began to stink. Everything began to sink. The water had poured

down into the remote recesses of the earth, the central fire had expanded its iron steam and the very foundations of the land were blown apart.

"Down went the city, and ever down, while a cry went up from ourselves and the audience at the terrible sight. The pier broke in two and vanished. The high places collapsed under the waves. The roofs looked for a while like successive roofs of rock forming lines of spouting breakers until they, too, went under. The citadel was left alone upon the surface, like some monstrous ship, and then it also slid sideways down into the abyss, with a fringe of helpless waving hands upon its summit.

"The awful drama was over and an unbroken sea lay across the whole continent—a sea which bore no life upon it, but which, among its huge smoking swirls and eddies, showed all the wreck of the tragedy tossed hither and thither—dead men and animals, chairs, tables, articles of clothing, floating bats and bales of goods, all bobbing and heaving in one huge liquid fermentation. Slowly we saw it die away and a great wide expanse as smooth and bright as quicksilver, with a murky sea low on the horizon, showed us the grave of the land that God had weighed and found wanting.

"The story was complete. We could ask for no more, since our own brains and imagination could supply the rest. We retained the slow, remorseless descent of that great land lower and lower into the abyss as the ocean and wild volcanic convulsions which threw up submarine peaks around it. We saw it in our mind's eye stretched out over miles of what was now the bed of the Atlantic, the shattered city lying alongside of the ark of refuge in which the handful of survivors were assembled. And then finally we understood how those had carried on their lives, how they had used the various devices with which the foresight and science of their great leader had endowed them,

how he had taught them all his arts before he passed away, and how some fifty or sixty survivors had grown now into a large community, which had to dig its way into the bowels of the earth in order to get roots to expand.

"No library of information could make it clearer than that series of pictures and the inferences which we could draw from them. Such was the fate, and such the cause of the fate, which overreached the great land of Atlantis. Some day far distant, when this bathybian case has turned to chalk, this great city will be thrown up once more by some fresh expiration of Nature and the geologist of the future, delving in the quarry, will exhume not flats or shells, but the remains of a vanished civilization and the traces of an Old World catastrophe.

"Only one point had remained undecided and that was the length of time since the tragedy had occurred. Doctor Maracot discovered a rough method of making an estimate. Among the many masses of the great building, there was one huge vault which was the burial place of the chiefs. As in Egypt and in Yucatan, the practice of mummifying had been usual, and in niches in the walls there were endless rows of these grim relics of the past. Manda pointed proudly to the next one in the succession and gave us to understand that it was specially arranged for himself.

"If you take an average of the European kings," said Maracot, in his best professional manner, "you will find that they run to about five in the century. We may adopt the same figure here. We cannot hope for scientific accuracy, but it will give us an approximation. I have counted the mummies and they are four hundred in number."

"That it would be eight thousand years."

"Exactly. And this agrees to some extent with Plato's estimate. It certainly occurred before the Egyptian written records begin, and they go back between six and seven

(Continued on Page 24)



"My first day a huge, sleek mountain of water rise to an incredible height out of a calm ocean. Then we saw it travel, sweeping on and on, mile after mile, a great glistening hill, topped with foam, at an ever-increasing rate."

MARACOT DEEP

(Continued from Page 22)

thousand years from the present date. Yes, I think we may say that our eyes have seen the reproduction of a tragedy which occurred eight thousand years ago. But of course, to build up a civilization and to see we see the traces of what a staff have taken many thousands of years. Thus, he concluded—and I pass the claim on to you—we have extended the horizon of accurate human history, and you men have ever done since history began."

"It was about a month, according to our calculations, after our visit to the buried city that the most amazing and unexpected thing of all occurred. We had thought by this time that we were immune to shocks and that nothing new could really happen to us, but this actual fact went far beyond anything for which our imagination might have prepared us.

"It was Scanlan who brought the news that something unexpected had happened. You must realize that by this time we were, to some extent, at home in the great building; that we knew where the common rest rooms and recreation rooms were situated; that we attended concerts—their music was very strange and elaborate—theatrical entertainments, where the unintelligible words were translated by very vivid and dramatic gestures; and that, speaking generally, we were part of the community.

"We visited various families in their own private rooms, and our lives—I can speak for my own, at any rate—were made the lighter by the glances of those strange people, especially of that one dear young lady whose name I have already mentioned. Mona was the daughter of one of the leaders of the tribe, and I found in his family a wonderfully kind and friendly atmosphere, all differences of race or language. When it comes to the most tender language of all, I did not find that there was so much difference between old Atlantis and the new America. I guess that what would please a New England girl of Brown's College is just about what would please my lady under the waves.

"But I must get back to the fact that Scanlan came into our room with news of some great happening.

"Say, there is one of them just blown in, and he's that excited that he can't forget to take his glass top off, and he was jabbering for some minutes before he understood that no one could hear him. Then it was blab-blab as long as his breath would hold, and they all are following him for the water, for there is sure something worth our seeing."

"Running out, we found our friends all hurrying down the corridor with excited gestures, and we, joining the procession, soon formed part of the crowd who were hurrying across the sea bottom, led by the excited messenger. They drove along at a rate which made it no easy matter for us to keep up, but they carried their electric lanterns with them, and even though we fell behind, we were able to follow the gleam.

"The route lay as before, along the base of the basalt cliffs until we came to a spot where a set of steps, concave from long usage, led up to the top. Ascending these, we found ourselves in broken country, with many jagged pinnacles of rock and deep crevasses which made it difficult traveling. Emerging from this tangle of ancient lava, we came out on a circular plain, brilliant in the phosphorescent light, and there in the center of it lay an object which caused me gasping. As I lay on my companions, I could see from their amazed expression how fully they shared my emotion.

"It was all embedded in the slime, there lay a goodly steamer. It was tilted on its open side; the funnel had broken and was hanging at a strange angle, and the forecastle had snapped short off, but otherwise

the vessel was intact and as clean and fresh as if she had just left the dock. We hurried toward her and found ourselves under the stern. You can imagine how we felt when we read the name Stratford, London. Our ship had followed ourselves into the Maracot Deep.

"Of course, after the first shock, the affair did not seem so inconceivable. We remembered the falling glass, the tremendous sails of the experienced Norwegian skipper, the strange black cloud upon the horizon. Clearly there had been a sudden cyclone of phenomenal severity and the Stratford had been blown over. It was too evident that all her people were dead, for there were no boats were trailing in different states of destruction from the davits, and is any one, what boat could live in such a hurricane?"

"The tragedy had occurred, no doubt, within an hour or two of our own disaster. Perhaps the sounding line which we had seen had only just been wound in before the blow fell. It was terrible, but whitened that we should be still alive while those who were mourning our destruction had themselves been destroyed. We had no means of telling whether the ship had drifted in the upper levels of the ocean or whether she had lain for some time where we found her before she was discovered by the Atlantic.

"Poor Howie, the captain, or what was left of him, was still at his post upon the bridge, the rail grasped firmly in his stiffened hands. His body and those of three stokers in the engine room were the only ones which had sunk with the ship. They were removed under our direction and buried under the ooze, with a wreath of sea flowers over their remains. I give this detail in the hope that it may be some comfort to Mrs. Howie in her bereavement. The names of the stokers were unknown to us.

"While we had been performing this duty the little men had swarmed over the ship. Looking up, we saw them everywhere, like mice upon a cheese. Their excitement and curiosity made it clear to us that it was not possible to possibly the first steamer—which had ever come down to them. We found out later that their oxygen apparatus inside their vitrine bells would not allow of a longer absence from the recharging station than a few hours, and so their chances of learning anything of what was on the sea bed were limited to so many miles from their central point.

"They set to work at once bringing up the wreck and recovering all that would be of use to them, a very long process, which is hardly accomplished yet. We were glad also to make our way to our cabin and to get made up. Some trays of clothing and books which were not ruined beyond redemption.

"Among the other things which we rescued from the Stratford was the ship's log, which had been written up to the last day by the captain in view of our own catastrophe. It was strange, indeed, that we should be reading it and that he should be dead. The day's entry ran thus:

"Oct. 5. The day's heavy but foolhardy adventures have today, against my will and advice, descended in their apparatus to the bottom of the ocean, and the accident which I had foreseen has occurred. God rest their souls. They went down at eleven A.M. and I had some doubts about permitting them, as a squall seemed to be coming up. I would that I had acted upon my impulse, but it would only have postponed the inevitable tragedy. I bade each of them farewell with the conviction that I would see them no more.

"For a time all was well, and at 11:45 they had reached a depth of 350 fathoms, where they touched bottom. Doctor Maracot sent several messages to me and all seemed to be in order, when suddenly I heard his voice in agitation, and there was

considerable jerking of the wire hawser. An instant later it snapped. It would appear that they were by this time over a deep chasm, for at the doctor's request the ship had steamed very slowly forward. The air tubes continued to run out for a distance which I should estimate at half a mile, and then they also snapped. It is the last which we can ever hope to hear of Doctor Maracot, Mr. Headley or Mr. Scanlan.

"And yet a most extraordinary thing must be recorded, the meaning of which I have not had time to weigh, for with this foul weather coming up there is much to distract me. A deep-sea sounder was taken at the same time, and the depth recorded was 27,600 feet. The weight was, of course, left at the bottom, but the wire has just been drawn in, and incredible as it may seem, above the porcelain sample cup there was found Mr. Headley's handkerchief with his name marked upon it. The ship's company are all amazed and no one can suggest how such a thing could have occurred. In my next entry I may have more to say about this. We have lingered a few hours in the hope of something coming to the surface, and we have pulled up the hawser, but shows a jagged end. No one must look to the ship, for I have never seen a worse sky and the barometer is at 28.5 and sinking fast."

"So it was that we got the final news of our former companions. A terrific cyclone must have struck the ship and destroyed her immediately afterward.

"We stayed at the wreck until a certain distance within our vitrine bells and a feeling of increasing weight upon our chests warned us that it was high time to begin our return. Then it was, on our homeward journey, that we had an adventure which was no less than the hidden dangers to which those submarine folk are exposed, and which may explain why their numbers, in spite of the lapse of time, were not greater than ours here. Including the Greek slaves, we saw no less than those numbers at more than four or five thousand at the most.

"We had descended the staircase and were making our way along the edge of the ledge which skirts the basalt cliffs, when Manda pointed excitedly upward and beckoned furiously to one of our party who was some distance out in the open. At the same time he and three swam his run to the side of some high bowlders, pulling us along with them. It was only when we were in their shelter that we saw the cause of the alarm.

"Some distance above us, but descending rapidly, was a huge fish of a most peculiar shape. It might have been a great floating feather bed, soft and bulging, with a white under surface and a long red fringe, or some vibration of which propelled it through the water. It appeared to have neither mouth nor eyes, but it soon showed that it was ferociously alert. The member of our party who was out in the open ran for the same shelter that we had taken, but he was too late. I saw his face convulsed with terror as he realized his fate. The horrible creature descended upon him, enveloped him on all sides and lay upon him, pulling in a dreamy way as if he were treading his body against the coral rocks and grinding it to pieces.

"The tragedy was taking place within a few yards of us, and yet our companions were so unconscious that they did not seem that they seemed to be bereft of all power of action. It was Scanlan who roused out, and jumping on the creature's broad back, slashed with red and brown markings, the sharp end of his metal staff into its soft tissues. I had followed Scanlan's example, and finally Maracot and all of them attacked the monster, which glided slowly off, leaving a trail of oily and glutinous excretion behind it.

"Our ship had come too late, however, for the impact of the great fish had broken the vitrine bell of the Atlantean and he had

been drowned. It was a day of mourning when we carried his body back into the temple, but it was also a day of triumph for us, for our prompt action had raised us greatly in the estimation of our companions.

"As to the strange fish, we had Doctor Maracot's assurance that it was a specimen of the bluish fish well-known to ichthyologists, but of a size which he had never entered into his dreams.

"I speak of this creature because it changed to being about a tragedy, but I could, and perhaps will, write a book upon the wonderful life which we have seen here. Many of the marine forms are of surpassing loveliness, and others so grotesque in their horror that they are like the images of delirium and of a danger such as no land animal can rival.

"I have seen a blackating ray thirty feet long with a horrible fang upon its tail, one which would kill any living creature. I have seen, too, a froglike beast with protruding green eyes, which is simply a gaping mouth with a huge stomach behind it. To meet it is death unless one has an electric eel with which to retaliate. I have seen the blind red eel which lies among the rocks and kills by the emission of poison, and I have seen also the giant sea scorpion, one of the terrors of the deep, and the hagfish which lurks among the sea anemones.

"Once, too, it was my privilege to see the real sea serpent, a creature which has seldom appeared before the human eye, for it lives in the extreme depths and is seen on the surface only when driven to the surface by violence has driven it out of its haunts. Two of them swam—or rather, glided—past in one day while Mona and I covered among the bunches of lamellaria. They were enormous—some ten feet in height and two hundred in length, black above, silver-white below, with a high fringe upon the back, and small eyes no larger than those of an eel.

"Week glided into work in our own life. It had become a very pleasant one, and we were slowly picking up enough of this long-forgotten togetherness to enable us to converse a little with our companions. There were endless subjects both for study and for amusement in the temple, and already Maracot has mastered so much of the old literature that he declares he can revolutionize his worldy life if he can only transmit his knowledge.

"Among other things, they have learned to split the atom, and though the energy released is less than our scientists had anticipated, it is still sufficient to supply the needs with a great reserve of power. Their acquaintance with the power and nature of the ether is also far ahead of ours, and indeed, that strange transition of thought into pictures by which we had told them our story and they therein was due to an etheric impression translated back into terms of matter.

"And yet, in spite of their knowledge, there were points connected with modern scientific developments which had been overlooked by their ancestors.

"It was left to Scanlan to demonstrate the fact. For some he was in a state of suppressed excitement, bursting with some great secret and chuckling continually at his own thoughts. We saw his only occasionally during this time, for he was extremely shy, and his one friend and confidant was a fat and jovial Atlantean named Bertrix, who was in charge of some of the machinery. Scanlan and Bertrix, though their intercourse was carried on chiefly by signs and mutual back-slapping, had become very close friends and were now continually clustered together.

"One evening Scanlan came in radiant. 'Look here, doc,' he said to Maracot. 'I've a dope of my own that I want to hand to those folk. They've shown us a thing or two, and I figure that it is up to us to return it. What's the matter with calling them together tomorrow night for a show?'

"'Jaw, or the Charlatan?' I asked.

"'Charlatan nothing! Wait till you see it! Man, it's the greatest stunt—but there,

I won't say a word more. Just this, bo: I won't let you down, far I've got the goods, and I mean to deliver them.'

"Accordingly the comradery we assembled next evening in familiar haunts. Scanlan and Bertrix were on the platform beaming with pride. One or other of them touched a button, and then—well, to see Scanlan's own language: 'I hand it to him, for he's got some surprises for us.'

"'2.1.0. speaking,' cried a clear voice. 'London speaking to the British Isles. Weather forecast. Then followed the usual sentences about depression and gloominess. 'First News Bulletin. Copyright by Reuter, Daily Telegraph and Associated Press. His Majesty the King this morning opened the new wing of the Children's Hospital in Hammersmith.—' And so on and so on, in the familiar strain. For the first time we were back in a workaday England. Then we heard the foreign news, the sporting news. The old world was drifting on the same as ever. Our friends the Atlanteans listened in amusement, but with only a comprehension. When, however, as the first item after the news, the Guards' band struck up the march of the volunteers, a positive outburst of delight broke from the people, and it was funny to see them rub upon the platform and turn over the curtains and look behind the screens to find the source of the music. Yes, we had left our mark forever upon the submarine civilization.

"'No, sir,' said Scanlan afterward, 'I could not make a distribution station. They have the material, I haven't the brains. But down at home I rigged a two-valve set of my own with the aerial beside the clothesline in the yard, and I learned to handle it and to pick up my station in the States. It seemed to me funny if, with all this electricity to hand, and with their glass work ahead of ours, we couldn't venter up something that would catch our own ears, and a wave would start traveling through water just as easy as through air. Old Bertrix nearly threw a fit when we got the first call, but he is wise to it now, and I guess it's a permanent installation.

"Among the discoveries of the Atlantean chemists is a gas which is nine times lighter than hydrogen and which Maracot has named levigen. It was his experiments with this which gave us the idea of sending glass balls with information as to our fate to the surface of the ocean.

"'I have made Mazda understand the idea,' said he. 'He has given orders to the silica workers, and in a day or two the glasses will ready.'

"'But how can we get our news inside?' I asked.

"'There is a small aperture left through which the gas is inserted. Into this we can push the glasses. Then these skillful workers can seal up the hole. I am assured that when we release them they will shoot up to the surface.'

"'Any job about seven for a year.'

"'That might be. But the ball would reflect the sun's rays. It would surely attract attention. We were on the line of shipping between Europe and South America. I see no reason why, if we send several, one at least may not be found.'

"'And this, my dear Talbot, or you others who read this narrative, is how it comes into your hands. But a far more fateful scheme may issue from the idea come from the fertile brain of the American mechanic.

"'Say, friends,' said he, as we sat alone in our chamber. 'It's steady down here, and the drink is good and the cats are good, and I've met a wren that makes anything in Philadelphia look like two cents, but all the more there are times when I want to feel that I might see God's own country once more.'

"'We may all feel that way,' said I, 'but I don't see how you can hope to make it.'

"'Looks here, bo, if these balls of gold could carry us to the surface, maybe they could carry us up also. Don't think I'm joking, for I've figured it out rights. We will suppose we put three or four of them

together so as to get a good lift, see? Then we can our vitrine bells on and harness ourselves onto the balls. When the bell rings we cut loose and up we go. What is going to stop us between here and the surface?'

"'A shark, maybe.'

"'Fish! Sharks nothing! We would streak past any shark's beak I'd hardly know we was there. There's no way we was there flukes of light and we'd get such a lick on that we'd not shift left up in the air at the other end. I tell you the god that sees some up is going to say his prayers over us.'

"'But suppose it is possible, what will happen afterwards?'

"'For Pete's sake, leave afterwards out of it! Let's have our luck or we are here for keeps. It's me for cutting loose and having a dash at it.'

"'I certainly greatly desire to return to the world, if only to say our results before the learned societies,' said Maracot. 'It is only my personal influence which can make them realize the fund of new knowledge which I have acquired. I should be quite in favor of any such attempt as Scanlan has indicated.'

"'Perhaps the bright eyes of Mona prejudiced my judgment, but I was the least eager of the three. 'It would be perfect for me to see you back to the surface, and someone expecting us on the surface, we should infallibly drift about and perish from hunger and thirst.'

"'Stivars, man, how could we have some-one expecting us?'

"'Perhaps even that could be managed,' said Maracot. 'We can give within a mile or two the exact latitude and longitude of our position.'

"'I wish they would let down a ladder,' said I, with some bitterness.

"'Ladder nothing! The box is right. See here, Mr. Headley, you put in that letter and you'll see the way by the cat's paw—my, don't I see the issue here in the journal!—that we are at 27 north latitude and 23.14 west longitude, or whatever other figure is the right one. Got that?'

"'That's all right, but the most important folk in history—the great mariners of science Maracot, and the rising star of science Headley, and Bill Scanlan, a leg of a mechanic, and the pride of Meribach's—see all bottomed up to the surface by the cat's bottom of the sea. Follow my idea?'

"'Well, what them?'

"'Well, then it's up to them, you see. It's kind of a challenge that they can't forget. Same as I've read of Stanley finding Livingstone, and the like. It's for them to find some way to yank us out or to catch us at the other end if we can take the jump ourselves.'

"'We could suggest the way ourselves,' said the professor. 'Let them draw a deep-sea line into those waters and we will look out for it. When it comes we can tie a message to it and we'll be up by the cat's paw.'

"'You've said a mouthful! cried Bill Scanlan. 'That's sure the way to do it.'

"'And if any body cared to share our fortunes, lose would be to lose as three,' said Maracot, with a rough smile at me.

"'For that matter, five is as easy as four,' said Scanlan. 'But you've got it now, Mr. Headley. You write that down, and in six months we shall be back in London river and on shore.'

"'So now we launch our two balls into that water which is to us what the air is to you. Our two little balloons will go aloft. Will be the best on the way? It is possible. Or may we hope that one will get through? We leave it on the knees of the gods. If nothing can be done for us, then let those who care for us know that in any case we will be happy. If, on the other hand, this suggestion could be carried out, we'll use the money and energy for our needs should be forthcoming, we have given you the means by which it can be done. Meanwhile, goodbye to you all, as usual.'

"'Send the narrative in the vitrine ball.