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"FIRST IN SCIENCE FICTION SINCE 1926"

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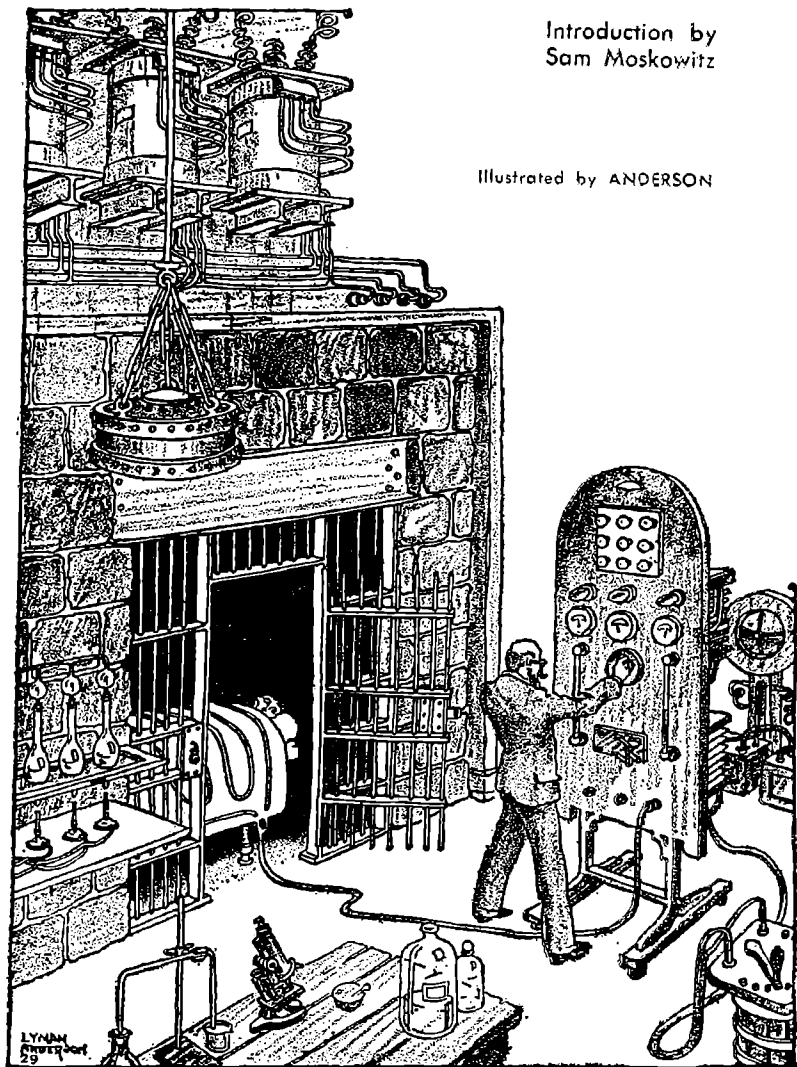
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The Ice Man

By WILLIAM WITHERS DOUGLAS

HUMOR is rare in science fiction and good natured humor even rarer. Usually what passes for humor is the merciless bludgeon of satire, delivered with the finesse of a battering ram. As a result, *The Ice Man* by William Withers Douglas, which appeared in the Feb., 1930 issue of *AMAZING STORIES* deserves, in its fullest sense, the appellation of "delightful."

Arthur K. Barnes and Henry Kuttner, writing individually and collectively under the house name of Kelvin Kent, presented the science fiction world with a series of humorous episodes concerning Pete Manx's travel trips back to the periods of Rome, Egypt and elsewhere from 1939 through to 1944 in *THRILLING WONDER STORIES*. The first of the series, *Roman Holiday*, finds men of today's world trying to make out in ancient Rome.

William Withers Douglas, had tried the process in reverse nine years earlier with considerably greater artistic and entertainment success. The Romans were an advanced people. It was far

from impossible that some of their chemists might have experimented with suspended animation.

The story is really a message from Marcus Publius to Caesar giving his adventures in the United States of 1928 and his reactions to what he sees and they are in character and hilarious. Typical of the penetrating humor are his remarks: "I was not to be fooled simply because the United States had their own trick calendar, a calendar based on the time they discovered there was a God.

"I wondered what they would do when they discovered that there are many Gods."

Since HARPER'S issued *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* in 1889, writers have been sending men of their present into the past with a high degree of literary success. Operations in reverse have not been as common or as successful. George F. Worts presented this theme under the title of *The Return of George Washington*, serialized in *ARGOSY* in 1927. Some of the edge

was taken off his presentation, however, when the entire affair developed to be a hoax.

More recently, Edgar Rice Burroughs injected a blunt note of social criticism into his short story *The Resurrection of Jimber Jaw* published in the Feb. 20, 1937 issue of ARGOSY, wherein a prehistoric man, frozen in a block of ice, is thawed to cope with and give his reactions to modern civilization. This device is an old one with Burroughs, he used it in *The Eternal Lover* as far back as 1914 to bring into the modern world a man capable of

emulating Tarzan in the jungles of Africa. In the last-mentioned case, the main purpose was fetching through time for a handy superman rather than as an excuse for social criticism.

We find, then, that the device is not overly common in any event and that successful works in which a man from a very specific period with a known cultural background is brought into the present are infrequent. Rarer still are good stories of that nature, in that category *The Ice Man* most certainly belongs.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Under no consideration will the author reveal the identity of the person Marcus Publius mentioned in this story.

Our hero is now isolated in comfortable surroundings and is perfectly satisfied with his moderate luxuries, while enjoying complete freedom and peace of mind in his seclusion. Many readers will not sanction the author's action in effecting Marcus' escape from the B— Insane Asylum. It is hoped that the reader will appreciate the author's position after reading the following manuscript. This manuscript or report was, of course, written in Latin and is given unaltered, other than the author's translation, as received from Marcus' hand. May the

reader judge for himself as to the sanity of our hero.

W. W. D.

This following inscription in English was first to meet the author's eyes when the herein mentioned package was opened:

Kind Sir:

Because of my belief that you are the one man who can and will help me, I have selected you from the many visitors that come to this Asylum. I have long awaited your coming and I now hope that my cautious selection will not be unavailing.

Behind the bars of this cell I have been imprisoned the past year. I am without funds or friends. I am a stranger within a strange land. Pray heed my call,

for the thing I ask of you is so small in itself. I seek no alms. Neither do I ask your help in effecting my escape, for I would have you do no wrong.

All I ask is that you take the enclosed letter or report and dispatch it to the parties designated. First, read it yourself; see the vast importance of my communicating with my countrymen; then place it in the proper channels that it may reach those mentioned. It is a little favor I ask; pray do not fail me. I beseech you to make all haste, lest I truly become demented like my fellow prisoners in this madhouse.

MARCUS PUBLIUS.

THE REPORT

GREETINGS O Caesar; Greetings Honorable Senate; Greetings to all Roman Countrymen. I am alive! I, Marcus Publius, have survived! The Great Experiment is a success! Witness my hand as proof, lest someone doubt that I am alive.

I bring great honors to Rome. I have discovered a new and strange land. It is called the United States.

My head is filled with the many wonders I have beheld. My heart is overflowing with the desire to enlighten immediately all Rome with this report. But, I must begin at the beginning, guiding you through my experiences in chronological order, lest my country-

men doubt the truth of this letter, for I, myself, have sometimes doubted if I am really alive and not with the Gods.

I will date the report, *Nov. a. 696, the present date, according to my calculation, although these United Statesians term it November, 1928 A.D.

It will be remembered that on ‡Parilia a. 695 all Rome was agog over the embarking of the Cask. I had offered myself as a martyr to science, and after a night of feasting and many toasts, I submitted to the Committee's administering of a sleep-endowing drug. I knew of naught until I was revived one year later, Aprilis a. 696, by a citizen of this United States, although he contended that many years had passed. My rescuer called himself Professor Emil Haskell and gave me a detailed account of the condition in which I was found.

The Professor was a very learned man, well versed in the science and arts of this land. While on a private expedition of deep-sea research, in what he called tropical waters, he discovered the Cask floating near his private yacht. Puzzled by the appearance of this "cake of ice" in a warm sea, he had the Cask lifted aboard by means of the yacht's boat davits.

* The author translates: † Parilia a. 695 as April 21, 50 B.C. Nov. a. 696 as November, 53 B.C.

In the hot sun on the dry deck of the yacht, the frosty coating on the Cask soon disappeared and brought forth in clarity the Latin inscription on the outer casing. Professor was overjoyed with his discovery, when he read:

"Whosoever findeth this Cask will leave it unopened and immediately communicate with the Society of Roman Medical Scientists, provided the discovery is made one year later than the date, Parilia a. 696. This Cask contains a living man whose life has been preserved as an experiment in science and any premature tampering with or opening of this vessel will result in the occupant's death. Persons finding this Cask will keep it covered from the sun's rays, as the occupant is "frozen" in liquid oil at an extremely low temperature. Take heed, for this Cask is under the seal of Julius Cæsar."

Accepting the inscription at its face value, Professor Haskell immediately returned to his dwelling on Riverside Drive in the city of New York of this United States. During the trip homeward, he planned in detail the task of my revival, and it was due to this careful advanced thought and to Professor Haskell's wonderfully trained mind, that I am alive today. Had someone of lesser mentality made the discovery, I fear that I should

not have survived to write this report.

Jealously guarding his secret from all, the Professor had the Cask placed in his private laboratory, and after gathering the necessary equipment, he proceeded to bring me back to life. A week later, after I had fully recovered he showed me the remains of the Cask and explained each step he made in effecting my survival.

He spoke first of removing the outer covering without much difficulty, but was dismayed upon hearing the hissing noise as he punctured the second covering until he discovered that it was only the releasing of the vacuum insulation. He then noticed that the coating of frost on the inner copper tank was becoming heavier, and he hurriedly effected an opening large enough to admit light. Upon looking down, he was startled to see me in full view lying within, since he expected to find some other inner container. As will be remembered, the preserving oil in which I was immersed was of a clear straw color and came from our deep well at the very low temperature; or of 126 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit, according to the Professor's scale. These United Statesians measured heat and cold in degrees and their freezing point was 32 degrees above zero. Thus, the Professor estimated that our

oil was really 158 degrees below freezing. He defined the oil as being a mixture of oil and about 80 per-cent of what he termed carbon dioxide gas, with a small portion of helium.

Professor Haskell claimed to be very well acquainted with our low temperature oil of Rome, and he said there was another oil-well which produced a similar mixture in this country at a place he called Jackson County, Colorado. The well in this county had been worked for commercial use, the oil being heated by pipes of live steam, until the substance was of an atmospheric temperature. I give this information to show that Professor Haskell was familiar with our fluid and knew the conditions under which he was working.

Unaffected by the shock of seeing my body in plain view, the Professor immediately made a larger hole in the Cask and drained off the oil. Insulating his hands with heavy towels, Professor Haskell then removed my body to a small cell where he had formerly kept a large gorilla for experimental purposes. He then wrapped me in what he termed electrical blankets and by carefully regulating the applied heat he brought my body back to normal temperature. At the right moment, he injected into my heart a drug known as adrenalin, which started pulsation and re-

stored animation. Thus did I again become alive.

It is needless to state that, had not this United States drug adrenalin been recently discovered and available, and had not Professor Haskell been acquainted with its use, I should have perished in vain as soon as my body had attained normal temperature. The Professor evidently felt very sure of himself, as he gave no thought of having violated the order of the Society of Roman Medical Scientists and seemed to care not that he had broken the seal of Julius Caesar when he opened the Cask.

The reason for Professor Haskell's placing me in the small cell was soon apparent. He wanted to keep me a prisoner until he had finished writing a book. Daily he would visit me, and after supplying food and water, he would question me for hours at a time. I could see no wrong in telling him of the wonders of our Rome, of our manner of living, and of all the facts concerning our great statesmen. In exchange, he taught me his native language, called English. He was congenial in every respect, but insisted that I remain confined in the cell. After a month of this, I noticed him tittering and chuckling to himself at times, and I reasoned that he must be going mad. He practically confirmed this view one day-when he boastfully de-

clared that sweet revenge was soon to be his. He told me that he had nearly finished his book and that it would revolutionize all history and make his fellow scientists look ridiculous. I realized that I had been liberated from the Cask by a maniac, only to be made a captive again.

DAILY I watched for a chance to escape from my cell, but Professor Haskell was as crafty as he was learned, and always was careful to remain at a safe distance, lest I reach him through the bars.

The more I talked and listened to him, the more I realized that he was on the verge of total insanity. His wonderful brain had reached the snapping point, undoubtedly the fruits of mental over-development and his neglect of physical exercise. In desperation I racked my brain for a plan whereby I could obtain freedom before it was too late.

In order that my countrymen may know the condition of my captor's mind and in justification of my later action to obtain freedom, I shall cite a few examples of the idiotic statements Professor Haskell often made and would have me believe.

He would have it that the land and sea were round like a ball. I did my best to nullify this mad hallucination, repeating to him time and again that we Romans

have long since known the world to be flat. I even told him of those who had been to the top of mountains and had proved this flat-theory by viewing the straight line of the horizon. But all of this was of no avail as Professor Haskell was very set in his views, like all men of science who have their own pet theories.

He even went so far as to say that the land and sea moved. The Professor thought that the sun was more or less stationary and that it was the Earth that moved—everything turning over during the night. This, he claimed, caused the sun to appear to rise and set, while it was the land that actually moved. I assured him that this was not the case, as I had frequently been up all night on affairs with ladies, and although the land did seem to be a bit unsteady at times, it was nothing but the result of drinking too much wine. I further assured him that I had often watched shadows of our buildings slowly crawl across the promenade of the Forum, thus proving that the sun moved.

Professor Haskell was at his worst when he would have me believe that there was no Great Edge to the Sea. He contended that the water of the Sea bent around a curve. This seemed to be the most idiotic of all his statements, save one, for it is evident to the most uneducated

person that water is always flat and level. How could it be otherwise?

According to the Professor, his United States was around this bend from Rome. He claimed to know all about our land and acted very superior when discussing maps and countries. Nevertheless, I noticed that he continually questioned me regarding our cities, the construction of our buildings and homes, and upon all matters concerning our Republic. This was very strange action, indeed, for one who was supposed to know as much as Professor Haskell pretended.

THE most colossal falsity the Professor would have me swallow, was that I am 2013 years old. He estimated that our Parilia a. 695 was really what he termed April 21, 59 (Before his God was discovered). He claimed that the present date was 1928 (After his God was discovered). Knowing my age was twenty-five upon entry, as I had told him that was my age, he figured that I had been confined in the Cask some 1988 years.

I believe that he was trying to beat down my spirit by casting reflections upon my intellect. However, I was not fooled nor would I allow my brain to become muddled with his wild assertions. I could see for myself that I had

not aged physically, and by clever questioning, I secured his admission that we were just finishing the Winter Season. Thus, as I had embarked last Spring, it was easy to deduce that only a year had passed since I entered the Cask. I was not to be fooled simply because the United States had their own trick calendar, a calendar based on the time they discovered that there was a God.

I wondered what they would do when they discovered that there are many Gods.

Professor Haskell often admired my physical development. He would stand and watch the knotting and bunching of my rippling muscles as I daily disrobed and performed the National Roman Calisthenic Drill. While I am only physically equal to the average Roman citizen, I was far superior to Professor Haskell; he being little more in body than a well developed child. I finally conceived a plan whereby I could use his admiration for my strength as a means of escape.

Striking a boastful pose, I called him and offered to show how easily I could crush the back of a chair in my cell. This started a little game in which he furnished articles, such as sticks and beams, to test my strength. Cunningly I played the game until finally he unthinkingly offered the article I long desired. It was a short piece of metal rod that he

had used to open the Cask. He called it a crowbar.

With assumed difficulty, I bent the bar across my knee and, with the right degree of aloofness, tossed it on the floor within my cell. Soon after, Professor Haskell left the laboratory and gave me the opportunity I had long awaited.

Straightening out the crowbar, I reached through the bars of the cell and used it to twist off the little lock that held the door. To one who was familiar with the Roman lever principles it required little effort to destroy this fastening.

Gathering my toga about the waist, I crouched by the wall near the door and waited the Professor's return.

MY ever burning desire to forge ahead of the natural sequence of events and blurt forth in loud acclaim the many wonders of this newly discovered land, the United States, has been hard to withstand. Roman Citizens, I can picture you standing in rapt attention before the Senate as my humble report is read from the rostrum. Your eagerness to learn of the miracles I have beheld is no greater than my desire to enrich your knowledge. But I feel that I must continue in logical order, giving each event as it happened, lest some may misconstrue the hap-

penings which I later reveal. However, I promise that your wait will not be in vain, when you hear of my stroll along New York's thoroughfares.

While crouching near the door, I thought over a plan of action. It was one whereby I could dispose of the Professor in the shortest time possible. I was eager to have him out of the way to be able to set out on my own, in quest of new adventures, for I had become weary of the sight of the four walls in which I had been held captive for over a month. True, there were appliances within the laboratory that I wished to learn more about, for the Professor had jealously withheld any information except that regarding my study of English. But, somehow I felt that I must flee the confinement I had endured and again breathe pure air with the sky overhead. A month's imprisonment had given me the heart of a woman, and I had caught myself in moods of sympathy with our galley-slaves.

At last I heard the approach of footsteps. I tensed my muscles in readiness. My chance for freedom had arrived.

True to habit, the Professor opened the door and strode a full six paces before he realized I was not within the cell. I was upon him in a flash and bowled him over with one blow. Quickly placing him in the cell, I twisted the

crowbar around the door and made a much better fastener than the flimsy padlock. Gathering my toga about me, I fled through the door from which the Professor had just entered. I quickly mounted a stairway.

At the top of this stairs I encountered another door that barred the way. It was a strong wooden panel, and contained within the edge was a new type of fastener, quite unlike the padlock of the cell. A small knob protruded just below a little metal disc. It offered practically no working area for any Roman lever principle that I might have employed. I searched in vain for a solution to the secret, straining against the panel with my strong shoulders. But the door was well made and withstood all my efforts. I later learned that the door could have been easily opened with a small notched metal strip that fits in the little disc above the handle. It was known as a Yale key and I was told that many young United Statesians in the Yale school carried these keys. They were used for private apartments.

Returning to the laboratory, I perceived that the Professor had recovered consciousness. Straightway he began begging for his release. I admired the Professor's nerve, but turned a deaf ear to his pleas, for I thought that he deserved a bit of

his own medicine. I also gave him to understand that the only thing that had restrained me from twisting his neck was the fact that he had found the Cask and had restored my life. Nevertheless, I believe he realized that one should not imprison a Roman Citizen.

I searched the room for some other means of escape while Professor Haskell watched me with his hawk-like eyes. Evidently the laboratory had been constructed in the cellar of his home, for I noticed that the walls were of a stone composition and that two small windows were up near the ceiling. They were closed by shutters on the outside. While I was making this survey, my attention was attracted to the construction overhead. Small boards had been used to make the floor above. Although the cross beams between were of heavy wood, this boarding above appeared to be of light material. I also noted two long white shafts hanging a short distance from the ceiling. I later learned that these were heat pipes containing steam. They offered an ideal foothold in a new plan that quickly came to my mind.

With the aid of a small box I was able to mount these shafts. They felt soft and warm to the touch. In this manner I secured a position on my back with my feet against the small boarding

above. Using my arms to assist the knee leverage, I was able to exert considerable force, and soon I had a few boards kicked loose from their fastenings. Then it was comparatively easy to push my foot through to the floor above and create an opening large enough to admit my body.

PROFESSOR HASKELL made one last gesture to detain me when he saw that I had met with success and would soon be free. This last effort resulted in the finish of his brilliant career as it was destined to cost him his life. No doubt his act would have taken my life also, had I not been well trained in the Roman art of leaping. But it was perhaps best that he ended as he did, for I was convinced that he was totally insane.

I suspected nothing when he asked that I hand him his unfinished manuscript of history that lay on the table. He intimated that he might as well work in the cell until some of his servants came and released him. I came down from my perch in the ceiling to grant his last wish. As I gave him his work he thanked me and gave vent to a low sigh. I now see that his sigh was in relief over having his manuscript in a safe place remote from the scene of my intended extermination.

I should have been suspicious

when he tendered me his purse filled with United States paper money. I well know that men of science are not usually susceptible to the passion of charity. However, I accepted his donation as a form of Roman levy. It seemed natural for him to want me to have some funds when starting out alone in a strange land. I could not suspect his real motive; that of having me appear to be a dead thief, if his diabolical scheme had proved successful.

As I turned to go, Professor Haskell ventured that I could extinguish his little electrical stove on which he was brewing a bowl of brownish liquid called coffee. He seemed to think that the coffee would boil over before his servants came to his rescue. Although I was unfamiliar with the mechanism of this electrical device, I wanted to make the Professor as comfortable as possible. I felt like a young husband ready to go out on a party with a purse full of money and freedom in the offing. Any little whim the Professor had in mind was proper to be granted.

Seeing that I fumbled with the electrical stove, he advised me that the best method of extinguishing it was to immerse it in a pail of water. I could pour this from a large red container at hand. Eager to serve him, I poured out the liquid. It was as clear as spring water, but had a

pungent odor. I thought this was due to stagnation. Little did I suspect that this liquid was highly explosive. It was called gasoline. A sudden desire to hurry and quit the place made me toss the stove in the open pail from a short distance instead of immersing it as the Professor directed. This saved my life. For immediately the liquid flared up in a great flame that would have consumed me had I been standing over the pail. Leaping back, I was just barely able to clear the fire. Professor Haskell fell in a swoon when he perceived that I had escaped his fiery death trap.

I saw at a glance that I just had time to make my exit through the opening above if I hurried. I noticed that the fire was growing in volume, as I climbed quickly aloft. The spreading flames were igniting the oil that had been drained from the Cask. During the past month this oil had been left standing in a huge open tub and had resumed a normal temperature as all of the carbon dioxide had escaped. The heat was terrific as the new flames flared up like burning pitch.

By a superhuman effort, I managed to crawl out of the opening and roll over on the floor above, while the flames began licking up through the hole. I lay for an instant thinking of the Professor's fate. I would much rather

have had the pleasure of seeing him fed to the lions in our dear old Coliseum.

After a deep breath or two, I arose and wandered through many rooms and pasageways. Not a soul was in sight and I finally found an outer door that opened on a court in the rear of the dwelling. Unnoticed, I managed to run across this court. With a quick leap, I scaled a high wall that surrounded the estate and dropped into a small street. I later learned that this street was only an alley. The streets of this United States are great wide thoroughfares and even this alley was quite wide compared to our streets of Rome. Hurrying along, I soon came upon one of these spacious thoroughfares. At last I was free!

FREE at last on the streets of the United States! Yet I saw nothing! As much as I would like to tell you Romans of what I first witnessed; as much as I would like to know myself; verily I can remember nothing. Looking back on my first moments of freedom, I realize that my mind did not absorb any of the many wonders I must have witnessed. When I walked away from the inferno that I had started in the Professor's laboratory, I was blind to everything but the path before me. I had just tasted the first draught of a newly discovered

wine Freedom! A month's imprisonment in Professor Haskell's cell, followed by my sudden liberation, had made me experience a new form of intoxication.

Freedom! Wine of wines! Freedom, a drink entirely unknown to one who is a Roman Citizen. My blood tingled in great ecstasy as I felt the fire of Freedom's nectar; a nectar such as is sipped only in dreams. Oh, men of Rome, I entreat you to try a taste of my newfound vintage. Bind yourself as a slave unto a stranger for a month only. Mingle and work with the slaves, and when the time is up, verily, I prophesy that you will enjoy a drink many times worthy of your exile. Our best wine, Nassicum, will seem like grape husks compared to this new quaff. You will, as never before, appreciate the freedom of Roman Citizenship. Have a little drink on me!

I have recalled one thing that came to my notice. The street which I had chosen was as smooth as polished stone. But I might as well have been strolling on any one of our rough, narrow thoroughfares in Rome, for all else I can recall. I could not even remember the same street, should I happen on it again. Thus was the condition of my mind.

However, at the next intersection, I was rudely awakened from my haziness. Terror filled my heart. Yea, terror! Even if I

am a Roman Citizen! For I was confronted with a fiendish monster. To my intimate friends, that will sound as if I had become like a woman, for it is well known that I fear nothing mortal. My bravery upon entering the Cask should prove my courage and fearlessness. But I defy any Roman—yea, even the mighty Julius Caesar himself, as brave as he is known to be to have stood in my place and to have felt other than afraid. I was alone, a stranger, a newborn babe, in a land of seeming terrors and mysteries. I was encompassed by the unknown. I was confronted with a thing that had the broken unrealities of a phantasm. Hear me, as I tell of what I saw.

My eyes were on the pathway. I had nearly reached the corner. Suddenly bedlam broke loose. A piercing eerie cry rent the air, an uncanny wail of rising cadences. It seemed to pour ice into my veins. At the same moment, a hundred bells started clanging. The crash of a thousand thunders roared about my ears. I looked up to see many Citizens scurrying from the streets. Chaos was everywhere!

Looking down the cross avenue, I beheld an ungodly sight. A huge red land-monster was coming to recapture me. In great lurching leaps and bounds it came directly for me. It was as tall as two men and as long as a small ship. Two

great eyes as large as the moon hungrily sought me out from the crowd. Men were clinging to the sides of the monster, urging it on to greater speed. In a glance I saw another similar monster was immediately behind the first. Off in the distance others were following.

Turning to flee, I saw that my path was cut off by still others approaching from the rear. What chance of freedom, I thought, had one in a land where they send shrieking red monsters lumbering after their captives? I closed my eyes and awaited the end. My head was held erect. My chest thrust forward. I stood like a true Roman, unflinchingly awaiting death.

But my time had not yet come!

WITH a thundering roar that made the very ground upon which I stood tremble, the monster swept past me. Opening my eyes I was just in time to see the second monster pass. I gave vent to a low chuckle of relief. For I saw that my fear was groundless. Again I was a true Roman who laughs when close death is thought to have passed. I saw that what I had thought were huge red land-monsters, were only fire-fighting machines used in the United States. Their piercing cry and clanging bells were only to clear the path. My recapture was not wanted. Again I

laughed to compose myself, for verily, I will admit I was afraid.

Noting that the machines had stopped a short distance down the street, I hurried along to examine them better. And what marvels I beheld. They were a sort of chariot . . . a four- or six-wheeled chariot. And the most amazing part was that they had moved at terrific speed without the aid of horses. Pails, axes, ladders, bells and great sections of fiber pipe adorned the chariots in a very decorative manner. Numerous special fittings glistened like polished gold. At the forward end was the device that propelled the machine in place of horses. It was called the Engine. It breathed in loud, puffing snorts. It was this noise that I had first thought was thunder. This snorting and blowing was cleverly controlled by a man in charge. The Engine was used, even when the machine was stationary, to blow water through the fiber pipes with tremendous force. The other end of the pipes was then directed on the fire, the water shooting out in great fountains. The two large eyes as big as moons were great lanterns. They were used to throw out piercing beams of light whenever the chariot traveled at night. The entire body of the machine was painted a violent red.

Great was the admiration of the United States Citizens for their fire-fighting chariots. A

vast throng had quickly gathered to witness it in operation. A stout rope was immediately stretched waist high across the street to hold back the surging multitude. A large black-covered horseless-chariot brought a squad of ushers to the scene. They immediately began their duties of keeping the crowd behind the rope. These ushers were very important individuals, whose sharp, nasal voices bespoke of earlier training as auctioneers or fish merchants. I know now that they were the city guards, called Cops. I had occasion later to know them intimately.

Suddenly there was a loud explosion across the street. Smoke and flames burst from every window of a magnificent stone castle. I realized that this was Professor Haskell's dwelling and that I was the one who had started the fire. I stood in awe, watching the great billows of smoke and streaming tongues of flame as they leaped skyward. Professor Haskell must have kept other explosive liquids in his laboratory; and the fire had taken a little time to reach them. However, the flames were enveloping the entire building and reminded me of our Vesuvius.

Strange to relate, the men in charge of the fire-fighting machines gave no heed to the burning building. Instead they directed their streams of water on the

adjoining houses, which were not burning at all. This seemed a very queer way to put out a fire. But I reasoned that the men must have had a certain system of procedure, and I did not feel called upon to offer any advice. Perhaps they also knew the Professor.

Realizing that the house would be a total loss and that everything in it would be consumed, I slowly withdrew from the front ranks. I tried to attract as little attention as possible for I knew that if I was suspected in the least I should be subjected to severe questioning. Even though I felt that I could cope with any inquiry that might arise—for I have had much training in the art of Roman evasion—I perceived that my task would be very difficult, as the last shreds of my identity must have been obliterated in the fire. Little did I then realize that I should later wish that I had stepped forward and made myself known. Some evidence might have then been saved. But at the time, I gave no thought to this. My sole idea was to place as much distance as possible between myself and the fire.

AS I strolled away from the conflagration, I began seeing so many wonders at once that it is hard for me to set them down in any order of recognition.

I have said that I was in the

United States. This was true, but I was also in the largest city in the country—New York. I have long since learned, from contact with the many natives of this New York, that it is the only city of any consequence. However, there are a few other cities out in a part of the country known as the Sticks. Hereafter, I will speak of being in New York, and it will be understood that I also mean the United States.

On my right was a large river named the Hudson. It looked like our Tiber River except that the boats did not have any sails. While some of the vessels were small and similar to our war-barges, there were also others of great size. These massive ships carried many passengers and were called Ferries and Steamers. I thought these must be the biggest ships human hands could construct, but I later witnessed a marvelous colossal floating city, a huge ship made entirely of metal and as great in size as a whole section of Rome. As I said, none of the ships had sails. They were all propelled by an Engine similar to that of the fire-fighting chariots. In fact, the Engine was one of the most wonderful and useful inventions of this land. It was used in almost every conceivable manner whenever energy or power was required.

I suspect that scores of Roman citizens are already doubting my

word, for I know that it is hard for one to believe that there could be any ships as large as I have mentioned. It must be equally as hard for you Romans to picture a little metal Engine doing the work of thousands of horses. But I swear on my honor as a Roman citizen that these truths are just as I have pictured them. Pray treat my report with an open mind, for even more fantastic things are yet to come—Ships that fly, Electricity, Radio, Pictures that move and talk, Subways—but wait, I must not go ahead of my story. I only hope that it will be remembered that I have investigated every thing about which I write. I have fully recovered from my first fear of the supernatural. I no longer look upon fire-fighting apparatus as land-monsters. I am counting on the belief of you men of Rome, who saw me placed in the Cask, for I am now in bondage again, because the citizens of this great New York will not believe that I arrived in that manner. These people who have created unbelievable wonders are quick to doubt a lesser wonder. They call me The Ice Man because I tried to tell them that I was frozen in the Cask for a year. The Cops have—but, again I am wandering from my report. Oh, if I were only the Great Cicero! If I could only tell my story in logical order! But I am only Marcus Publius, and you

Romans will have to make allowances for my lapses. I will try again to stick to my report.

I WAS turning away from the river when I beheld the next wonder. Suddenly a strange buzzing noise fell upon my ears. It was like the whirling drone of a giant bee. Looking towards the sky from which the sound came, I beheld five huge birds flying in wedge-shaped order. Even at their great height I saw that the birds were of a strange species, unknown to me. Their peculiar droning buzz beat upon my ears like staccato thunder. As I looked, they began to fall. In a series of fluttering, spinning spirals they came, until I thought they would be dashed on the ground. Even as I watched, they regained their equilibrium and skillfully glided down to skim across the river. I held my breath in wonder as they gracefully came to rest on the water's smooth surface. I stared in open-mouthed amazement over their great bulk and wondered how such gigantic birds could have been caught and tamed. Looking closer I beheld a sight that nearly swept me off my feet. A citizen was actually emerging from the bird's mouth. I could hardly believe my eyes. More citizens came forth—six in all. They gleefully waved to passengers on a passing ship.

At last it finally dawned on me

that I was witnessing another strange marvel of this New York. Inventions of the Gods! The huge birds were great man-made flying-ships.

I saw that the flying-ships were shaped very much like a bird in full flight. The wings did not fold up, but remained stiffly outstretched, even after the flight was over. A large wind-mill had been placed in the nose of the device. Another of those Engines was used to turn this wind-mill at great speed; the force thus sucked the flying-ship through the air. These flying-ships were called airplanes. There were no feathers on the devices.

Turning away I made a vow that I would seek a flight in one of these airplanes at the first opportunity. I walked along in deep thought, wondering over the possibilities of an early return to Rome in an airplane. What a greeting I would receive when I glided down on the surface of the Tiber. I would be a hero. Ney, the hero of all times. With my private airplane I could lead great armies on to new victories. With a load of stones, I could easily conquer the strongest cities. I would be made king! Ladies would flock to me in droves; riches and luxuries would be mine for the asking. My poetry would rival Virgil's. Ha! such is the power of thought. Verily, what Roman would not have let

his mind run astray in the midst of such super-geniuSES of invention as these New Yorkians? Yea, and I am a Roman.

I continued on my walk. On my left hand were large castles where one of a select four hundred persons lived. There were four hundred such castles like these in New York, each housing one of this same select four hundred. A short distance away were the towering dwellings of the more common people. The common people had to live four hundred in one house. These buildings were constructed much the same as ours, except that they rose to dizzy heights. High rents also prevailed here, as in Rome.

The streets were filled with long lines of swiftly moving chariots or carts. They were luxurious affairs, gaudy and brilliant in highly polished colors. The expressions on the faces of the occupants bespoke the pride of their owners. Again, the Engine was used to propel these glorious chariots along the glistening streets. Instead of the outer edges of the streets being ground in hides or leather, as are our chariots, they were covered by a smooth-fitting fabric rim. These rims contained air under pressure. The fabric was called Rubber and was another wonderful discovery of this land. Like the Engine, it had been put to many uses, and because of its flexibility

and water-shedding quality, it was of great value as a cloak in the rain. This Rubber could be made either soft or hard and was manufactured into thousands of different articles for daily use throughout the United States. Later on, I found that the Rubber was made into little sticks, five to a package. Many citizens chewed these little sticks as they strolled along. No doubt the idea came from the cow.

AFTER a glance around the horizon, it was perhaps natural that I, a Roman, should next be attracted by New York's native females.

My friends in Rome will vouch, that while I have delved deeply into scientific matters I have, with all other Romans, not neglected the physical. Although I was not considered a connoisseur of women, I have had my little moments. For I am a Roman. I dare say that any of my fellow countrymen would have been likewise enthralled should they have witnessed the enchanting creatures that I beheld. I must control my emotions as I write, lest I overdo the thing.

The main attraction of these New York ladies was their style of dress. However, their faces were also very beautiful to look upon, when one took occasion to look. But their costumes were the main enticement.

Each and every one was clothed in a single short garment that fell to a point just above the knees. Just above the knees. . . . I swear to it! This garment was made of a glossy shimmering fabric and clung to the shapely bodies as if the owners had just been immersed in the river and were walking along dripping wet and slippery. The legs of these fair creatures were clothed in a similar fabric but of much thinner texture, that actually being possible. It was like looking through wisps of wind-blown cobwebs. This shimmering fabric was called Silk. It was made in various hues and shades and was truly a godsend to womankind, for it was even more appealing than the nude.

I stood still for a moment, my heart filled with rapture over seeing such a wonderful parade of treasures. These lovely creatures strolled along apparently ignorant of the fact that every movement was clearly defined by the twitching of the Silk. I thought of the feast this sight would be for those friends of mine back in heavily swathed Rome. Even dusky Egypt had nothing like this!

With a chuckle of glee, I thought of you Romans having to be content with watching the damsels meander about the Forum in their concealing Pallas and Stolas. Ah! but here in New

York a slight gust showed me visions above the knee. Verily, the dress of the ladies was one of the most revealing sights of this great New York.

My past experience with the fair ladies of Rome had taught me that beauty of the face did not necessarily continue under the Palla. Here in New York there was no doubt whatsoever. For a man could really trust his vision.

Thinking that I would enjoy the companionship of one of these fair exhibits, I straightway tried to make the acquaintance of the next beautiful lady who passed. To my surprise, my only reward was a baleful glance of disdain. By no means discouraged, I approached many others, some even more beautiful than the first. But I was rebuffed at every turn. While some of the ladies did smile and giggle, the net result was anything but complimentary to one who had always considered himself a first-rate Roman lover.

I reasoned that perhaps my mode of dress was distasteful to them. It must be remembered that I was dressed in our native Roman garb and that I was quite different in appearance from the rest of the men in New York. Although my toga displayed my strong, manly arms to good advantage, it was entirely unlike the male attire of this land. The New York male garments were

of an unusual pattern. However, they were very pleasing to the eye and made a practical mode of dress for those who rushed about in a great hurry. The upper part of this costume consisted of a short, tight-fitting jacket with long sleeves that entirely concealed the muscles of the arm, if there were any. The lower portion of the garment consisted of two long loose tubes that were joined at the waist. They were called pants. These pants were ideal for hiding undeveloped legs, as they gave no hint whatsoever as to what they concealed. The wide effect at the bottom lent a very substantial appearance to the wearer. I resolved that I would postpone my campaign with the ladies until I could procure similar raiment for myself.

For the first time, it struck me as queer that my own attire had attracted little or no attention. There I was, strolling about the streets of New York clad in my native Roman Toga, with my Tunica underneath, but all the attention I aroused was a casual glance here and there. Had one of the New Yorkers been in the same position in Rome, he would have been an object of interest for the multitude. But here in this country, where men pay little heed to the dress of their women—that is, compared to my interest—what could be expected of their notice of a man's?

ANOTHER peculiar thing I noticed at that time was that most of the men were eating smoke. This smoke was obtained by sucking on a small fire at the outer end of a short white stick which was carried in the mouth. I later learned that these white sticks contained a peculiar weed known as Tobacco. The sticks were called Cigarettes. I have since tried to use one of them myself, but the smoke always got in my lungs and choked me.

Evidently the art of eating smoke could be learned in time, for every male in sight had a little cloud of smoke about his head. Even the females smoked while riding in their chariots! But my own personal opinion was that the Cigarette had been over-spoken. As in Rome, many things in New York had secured followers by being over-spoken. They called it advertising in this country.

Oh, yes, another thing! All the male citizens wore odd-shaped helmets. They looked like small inverted bows and some were folded or creased at the top. I did not particularly notice the ladies' headgear. However I distinctly remember that their shoes were pushed up in the rear on slender peg-like stilts. This gave an appearance of smallness even to large feet.

Speaking of the ladies again reminds me that the eyes of the males were equipped with two

small windows of transparent glass. The glass was not unlike our glass . . . from which we make our small perfume flasks . . . excepting that it was so curved as to magnify the objects of vision. The little windows, held in place by two long hooks that fastened over the ears, turned with the head as the eyes were focused from one lady to the next. This was the reason the men appeared not to be looking at the ladies. Only one glance was required to bring the magnified beauty before their eyes. Verily, I yearned for a pair of these little windows for my own use. Even one or two of the ladies wore the device, although these ladies were of the older type. Looking for a desirable husband, no doubt.

I next beheld some of New York's wonderful buildings. They were of tremendous height and faced close to the edge of the street. Nothing will ever stir me as did my first sight of these colossal structures. Like the sheer walls of a mountain defile they towered to unbelievable heights. Their topmost points seemed to scrape the clouds. Ye Gods, what an awful mess there would certainly be if one of them ever toppled over!

However, as gigantic as the structures were, they lacked the grace and beauty of our Roman buildings. There was a marked absence of any columns or arches.

Their walls were straight and flat, though pierced by many hundreds of windows, and the whole unit looked like a vast pile of stone blocks. True, there were some of the low buildings that had a few columns in the front, and here and there a small arch graced an entranceway. But the great majority of them were built on the ugly Egyptian style of the obelisk.

I was glad to see that we Romans were very far in advance of these New Yorkers in the art and the beauty of architecture.

ONE or two of the buildings were in the process of being built, and I had an opportunity to discover a group of marvelous inventions that were in common use in this land. Only a few men were at work on the buildings, but I was able to gather much information from the large crowd watching the construction. The builders were experts at their trade as the structures were completed in a very short space of time. However, the watchers were also experts and they often argued among themselves as to whether the workers were doing the job right or not.

The skeletons of the buildings were made of great beams of metal known as Steel. This Steel was a metal similar to our iron. In fact iron-ore had been heated until all impurities and sulphur

had passed off. Then the exact amount of carbon and other secret ingredients were added to produce the required strength of Steel. The Steel was very strong and almost as hard as some of our copper. I was later gratified to learn that we Romans were also far in advance of these New Yorkers in the matter of hardening copper. Oh, there was no doubt but what these New Yorkers had some wonderful inventions and tricks. But I never lost sight of the fact that we Romans had a trick or two ourselves. One or two of the natives did not care to hear about this, so I refrained from bringing it up during the rest of the conversation on building.

The great Steel beams were lifted into place on the skeleton-work by flexible Steel ropes. These ropes were attached to devices such as our pulley-system and the pulling was done by another of those Engines. It appeared that almost everything in New York was made of Steel or Rubber and was called a Machine and was run with an Engine.

Great Machines mixed concrete, made with our Roman cement, and poured it into wood frames built around the steel beams. This method had quite an advantage over our method of hand-mixing concrete.

We should have been greatly assisted in constructing our great

Aqua Marica if we had had one of those mixing Machines.

One other thing these New Yorkers had learned better than we Romans ever did, was the art of manufacturing glass in great sheets. I was informed that they rolled the glass instead of blowing it. These immense glass sheets were placed on the front of the building to keep the citizens from stealing the various pieces of merchandise on display.

All of a sudden I realized that I had not eaten since morning. Professor Haskell had given me some food during the third hour, but in the excitement of my escape and of seeing so many wonderful sights, I had forgotten all about eating again. Seeing that it was nearly sunset or at least the eleventh hour, I hunted for a place where I could purchase food with the paper money from the Professor's purse.

My nose soon-directed me to a place from which the smell of cooking was issuing with a very noticeable and agreeable aroma.

A LARGE sheet of glass covered the front of this eating place and enabled one to whet his appetite from watching others eat. Upon entering, I first noticed a long row of discs that were mounted on short pedestals. On these discs were perched many citizens and it reminded me of my pet monkey.

Unlike us Romans, the New Yorkers have yet to learn how much the stomach suffers when one tries to eat in a seated position. Some day these people will learn that a reclining posture, when one is dining, minimizes the strain on the organs. Some day they will learn that the throat muscles were intended to force the food into the stomach. They will learn of the necessary gland-fluids that are to be mixed with the food as it slowly passes along the throat. Watching their animals eat would tell them that. How these people could stand the shock of dropping food and drink directly into their stomachs was more than I could understand. What, with eating while seated and with eating smoke, it was no wonder all New Yorkers looked so frail and sickly.

Approaching a counter that separated the discs or stools from the rest of the place, I encountered a very beautiful damsel. She wore a fetching blue and white costume and must have been the proprietress. She gave me a glass of water and a card and with a damp cloth she wiped a brown stain from off the polished counter. I demanded meat, bread, and drink . . . any wine she might have, would do.

The fair lady gave every indication that she thought I was intoxicated. At last my difference of dress was noticed. She asked

me if I had not been in a "joint." And she wanted to know what kind of a place it was where they sent a "guy" home in a sheet. My friendly smile put a stop to any further questions and she straightway brought forth victuals. Three or four metal eating-instruments were also served with the food. But I chose to spend no time learning the use of these tools, for I was very hungry. Besides, nothing will ever be invented that would improve on our good old Roman style of eating with the fingers.

All would have gone well had I not forgotten myself and tried to recline on the tops of those stools. The discs revolved with lightning speed and I fell to the floor. This act caused me no little discomfort and gave reason for considerable mirth to those assembled. My head had received a good sound thump on the stone floor, and I must have staggered a bit when regaining my perch. This settled all doubts of my sobriety in the minds of my associates.

In a measure, my seeming intoxication proved fortunate. For the fair attendant or proprietress became very solicitous regarding my feelings. I soon gained her consent to an invitation to show me the city. I told her that I was a stranger in New York. I then quickly showed her my full purse and thereby overcame her fears

that I had been robbed and was penniless.

She was overjoyed at seeing my great wealth and she said that I could come back for her after an hour had passed. However, she was firm on the point that I must first purchase suitable New York clothes. She told me to procure them in a place around the corner on Broadway Street. I was cautioned that I could find her in this Restaurant which was on Seventy-second Street. She wrote the address down on a piece of tissue E——— Restaurant, 72nd and B'way, and signed her name. It was Kate.

As I stepped outside of the Restaurant I beheld one of the most wonderful sights I had ever seen. Miracle of miracles! Oh, what a sight for one who had only been accustomed to the dark streets of Rome at night. Here in New York the night-time was brighter than the day. Thousands of brightly illuminated globes flooded the street with light. Hundreds of small globes were grouped in weird scrolls and designs that spelled out letters. Each letter flickered off and on in rapid succession. It made me think I had stepped into a fairyland. Try to imagine each star in the heavens a hundred times brighter! Tint them the colors of the rainbow! Arrange them in patterns like the mosaic of our Temple of Venus and Roma.

Twinkle them on and off! Whirl them around like a thousand comets. Then, my Romans, you will have a vague conception of what I witnessed on Broadway Street at night in this wonderful city of New York. This was called Electricity!

Electricity! Electricity was that "something" that made all of these little globes shine so brightly. Electricity was the force that gave these New Yorkers light, heat, power, music . . . everything that was wonderful. Ah, but what it was and even whence it came, not one citizen in all the land could tell. Nor did anyone know! All they knew was that they had it . . . that they could put it to work. I know that this will sound very silly to all Romans. For we Romans will never rest until we have solved every perplexing mystery. But such was the state of ignorance of the strange people in this very strange land.

I ENTERED the clothing establishment which Kate had told me I would find. It was maintained by an Israelite. With both hands he sold me an outfit such as I desired. It was called a Nifty Suit. I was also supplied with the New York type of footgear and under garments. I was delightfully surprised with my appearance in the large mirror that the Israelite had strategically placed

near his cash box. How I wished that my countrymen could have seen me!

Kate was also delighted with my costume when I returned for her at the Restaurant. She spoke of me as being her "Warm Daddy." Almost everything had some sort of heated temperature in this New York.

Kate further remarked that I looked "swell" although I could not see that my new costume had made me look any fatter. I later learned that most of Kate's language was very different from the English I had learned from Professor Haskell. The real New York language was full of tricks and I soon learned that the Professor had out-traded me. Instead of teaching me the native New York tongue, in exchange for my information on the things of Rome, he had taught me a foreign language. However, if I raised my eyebrows, the New Yorkers were able to understand me, but I could not comprehend one-half of the things they said.

Other languages have many words with the same meaning. But this New York tongue had many meanings for the same word. Their word "CAN" was a good example. This word "CAN" could mean; to be able to do; a small bucket; to discharge one from his job; an automobile; the art of preserving; a men's retreat; the head, as when one was

"off his can;" the middle rear, as when one was "knocked on his can"; dismissal of one's sweetheart; to rush the purchase of beer; to torment a dog; and as an "oil-can" it could mean either an oil-container or just as easily one's brother-in-law.

Kate also spoke the language of the eyes, and in this art she was a fluent speaker. Her eyebrows were little penciled lines, but they made up in movement what they lacked in hair.

Kate led me to a commercial chariot called a taxi. Riding in it was like skimming through the air while one sat on a bed. Our Roman chariots are very poor riding compared to these smooth-running taxis. We were very fortunate in having selected the one taxi in all New York that had the right-of-way privilege over everybody else. After pushing aside one or two other chariots that would not recognize this authority, we arrived at one of the brightest places I have ever seen. It was the place where Forty-second Street made a crossing on Broadway Street. Kate said that it was the Times Square, but I thought that it had been many times divided.

Kate enjoyed my amazement over the bright lights. She stood off at a little distance so that I could look my fill. Taking me by the arm, she then led me to an even brighter spot—the brilliant,

dazzling white entrance to one of New York's cathedrals of amusement.

A soldier of high rank guarded the entranceway of this gorgeous cathedral. He wore an elegant uniform and must have been of the rank of general. Harken unto me, Noble Romans; during the night would be an ideal time to capture this country, as all of the soldiers are placed on guard in these amusement halls. They are so placed to hold the citizens in awe, so that each and every time one will line up and pay the admission toll.

ALL of the art and beauty that the New Yorkers had omitted from their tall buildings had been lavishly applied to the interior of their amusement cathedrals. They are on a par with our Roman interiors. Just inside the doorway stood two or three soldiers of the ranks. They were dressed in uniforms of brilliant hue and they stood quite stiff, lest they wrinkle their garments. Stationed around the hall were many more of these soldiers. They had no lances or spears, but one could readily see from the expression on their faces that they would not be conquered without giving strenuous battle. However, as they were such small, sickly looking soldiers, I believe that I could have conquered a dozen of them at one time.

Magnificent tapestries covered the high walls. These tapestries were made of the silk material and figured with golden dragons whose serpentine bodies shimmered and gleamed in the many-colored lights. A gorgeous carpet covered the entire floor and this, too, was fashioned with golden dragons which seemed to glare at me with fiery eyes as I stepped deep into their soft bodies. Huge vases and odd pieces of furniture with dragon's feet stood at intervals along the wall. Great lamps that looked like suspended waterfalls hung from the doomed ceiling. One was swayed with the colossal luxury and lavish grandeur of the place and I had a feeling of being smothered in gorgeousness. I was in a place called the Movies.

Kate and I were finally led to seats in a dark auditorium. On one wall, facing the seats, was a large picture? When we were situated comfortably in our seats, I wondered why all of the lavish art display had been made on the outside of the auditorium? Why could they not have put some inside with the picture? Why all the fancy trimmings for only a big black-and-white picture? And then I saw! I heard!

The figures on the painting moved . . . they came to life . . . they talked . . . and it was only a picture! Again that breath-taking fright of the su-

pernatural swept over me. I swear on my honor as a Roman Citizen that I was fully conscious when I witnessed this miracle. Not only did the figures in the painting move and talk, but the picture grew dim and faded into another new scene. Still other scenes appeared, more figures came forth . . . until a whole story was unfolded.

I could not explain this mystery any more than I could explain Electricity. It was a form of amusement whose origin was a secret. The citizens were allowed to look at the picture only when it moved. When the action ceased a curtain was dropped in front of the painting. A squadron of musicians was pushed up from the cellar to keep people from mounting the stage, lest they discover the secret of the moving and talking within the painting.

SOON afterwards a new painting appeared and showed citizens playing ball, a game very similar to our Roman pastime. The only difference was that the New Yorkers played on a diamond plot, instead of on a triangle, and they used twelve players at one time instead of our three. However, three of the players were dressed in blue uniforms and seemed to be the best players of the lot. For they kept telling the others what to do to improve their game. One selfish

player in the center, who probably owned the ball, made all the rest wait until he felt like playing. Naturally, the other players did not get very much exercise.

I noticed that one player carried a stick for hitting the ball. But at the time the picture was painted, this fellow with the club was a poor selection. He could not send the ball to the rest of the players. He even knocked the ball over the fence. Finally, in anger, he ran all around the plot and quit. The witnesses jeered him on to a little hole in the wall. They teased him by calling him a "Big Baby." They also called him "Ruth," a feminine name.

After the ball-game painting faded out, the lights flared up and I had to release Kate from my embrace. We left the auditorium.

Kate proved to be a really wonderful girl. She seemed to have caught the spirit of the occasion, for she tried to show me everything that she thought I would consider unusual or mystifying. I had informed her that I was not acquainted with many things in New York which were common affairs to anyone else. She had deduced this in advance and thought it not unusual as I had recently arrived from Rome. She said that there were many strangers and foreigners in New York. In fact she had personally met many of my own countrymen who

had been in this land for some time and who were then in the fruit and shoe-polishing profession. Kate, like the Professor, spoke of knowing all about our city of Rome and declared that our citizens were well known here in New York. She admitted that they all were in need of knowledge. For, most of them were struck dumb with the strange sights they had beheld. She said that now all Romans were called Wops.

I secured her promise that on the morrow I could meet these fellow Romans. Undoubtedly they were some of our sailors whom we had given up as lost over the great Edge of the Sea. I cannot blame them for not wanting to return to Rome after having discovered this wonderful United States and New York City. It would be a very attractive port for any sailor. What, with the New York ladies parading around the streets dressed in their swaddling clothes, together with all of the wonder of this strange land, it would have been very easy for a Roman sailor to forget that he had a wife back home. Especially would it be so, when he knew that the wife believed him lost at sea!

Stopping in front of a brightly lighted shop, Kate asked me if I would like to talk over the telephone and listen to a Phonograph and Radio. I assured her that

such was my fondest desire, for I had visions of our entering another darkened auditorium where Kate could again snuggle close in my arms. However, the darkened retreat was not forthcoming as she instead guided me into a brightly lighted shop.

INSIDE the shop were many boxes and cabinets. In one of these boxes I found the Telephone. It was a large cupboard-like box, and contained a small Electrical device by which one could converse with another at a great distance. Calling in a loud voice was unnecessary, for one could plainly hear and speak in a normal tone. I distinctly heard a feminine voice ask me for a number, but before I could think of one, she selected another person's offering, to perform her trick, and told me to retire as she was busy. There was considerable buzzing going on in the bell-shaped ear-piece. But this noise would no doubt be soon eliminated and one would be able to converse over a busy wire without disturbance; if they were quick in selecting a number. Kate informed me that the lady's voice I had heard was many miles away and had been carried by Electricity over two small metal wires. There was no way of proving this statement at the time, but I will say that I looked behind the cupboard and found no one hiding.

AS I came from the Telephone box, Kate showed me another much smaller box. It was the Radio. Again I heard voices. This time there was a man singing to his mother in a sad voice. He cried for her like a calf. It was a very good imitation, but the music was very poor and uneven. Most of the notes were off key and very flat. However, this was to be expected, Kate said, as the Radio was a new invention and not fully developed at that time. Like the telephone, the voice and music were carried over the same distance, but with Radio there were no wires strung along the way. Kate said that the noise or music was hurled through the air by Electricity and caught by the Radio in the shop. The man who owned the shop said that the Radio was "in tune" with the sending equipment. Again, I had to take their word for it, but my personal opinion was that the things were very much out of tune.

Kate was a master conjurer and took delight in pointing out a third box in which the music had been caught and stored up for future hearing. I know that my fellow Romans are thinking that I am a great liar when I tell of such seemingly impossible things as these. I assure everyone that the actual devices were before me and performed just as I have stated. However, I am at a

loss to tell how they worked, and I believe that neither Kate nor the shop-man could have done much explaining, had I been able to question them at any length.

I, myself, hardly believed in the last mechanical box, the Phonograph, but the shopkeeper convinced me beyond all doubt with a fourth box. He called this last device a Dictaphone. He requested me to speak a few words in the attached tube. He then made a certain mystic motion with his hands and, lo . . . I again heard my own voice speak from the box and say the words I had already spoken. Verily, I heard my voice speak the very same words over and over again. He told me that a thousand years hence my voice would continue repeating the words from the box, even though I would be long since dead. Ah, my Romans, this was indeed a very strange land of very strange people who had very strange boxes. The Dictaphone, which captured my voice, was the greatest thing of all. I could listen to it for hours.

I would have stayed and better examined this marvelous Dictaphone, but Kate, in her characteristic New York rushing manner, led me outside the shop. She said that I had not seen anything compared to what she had yet to show me. She referred to more New York inventions, for she was then wearing the typical dress.

Under her guidance we came upon a large hole in the street. It was covered with a hood-like canopy and was the entrance to an ingenious subterranean chariot-train called the Subway.

We sped down the brightly illuminated steps of this hole until I thought we surely must have reached the realm of Hades. At a very low level we came upon a great open place. On either side in deep channels, I saw swiftly moving trains made up of many wheeled chariots. They were much longer than the Taxi and travelled at terrific speed. I had thought we were to watch their operation, but before I knew what had happened, we were thrust inside of one that had quickly stopped at our feet. In an instant we were whisked away in the darkness. I had become quite fond of Kate by this time and trusted her implicitly, but nevertheless my heart was riding in my mouth during the entire journey underground.

I FELT a sudden change of atmosphere and Kate told me that we were traveling under the bed of a River. Under the bed of East River we were boring our path! I could hardly believe it! Great ships were plowing their way on the surface of the river above as we rushed through the darkness under the water. The roar of the train wheels was deaf-

ening on the ears, but I liked it, for Kate swayed close to my side and gave me reassuring squeezes on the arm. The inside of the train was well lighted and very pleasant, except that most of the passengers had been eating garlic and had neglected to chew their cloves.

Leaving the train at a place called Atlantic Station, we immediately boarded another. This new train ran underground for a while and then emerged to the surface and thence to a high level built upon Steel stilts. The train was no longer called the Subway. It was to be known as the Elevated, while it ran on the stilts. I was much happier to be nearer to Heaven than to Hades. I hoped that the attendant up front would not forget how to steer.

In about one-half hour we had travelled what would have been a day's journey in Rome. Soon we came upon the city of Coney Island. Even at that time I could hardly believe that I had been set free only that morning. I had traveled many miles unto a new city and had seen the most marvelous things of my life, and the hour was only half-after-ten by the New York reckoning. As Kate remarked, the evening was young "yet" and "I ain't seen nothin' yet."

Coney Island was a gorgeous dream city that had been especially built for the encouragement of

young couples in love. It proved to be an ideal place for one to become intimately acquainted with the fair lady. However Kate and I hardly required any stimulant to promote our congeniality. For I had long since marveled over how quickly we had come to know and understand each other's feelings during the short time we had been together. Only a few hours past, we had not known of each other's existence, but our close companionship through those short adventure-seeking hours had bound us together like friends and lovers of long standing. Our unrestrained emotions, bursting forth as we discovered new adventures at every turn, had opened our hearts and torn down the usual barricade of poise one generally affects when in company with one of the opposite sex. It was surprising how quickly a stranger could meet and become an intimate friend of a New York lady. Nevertheless, I found that our Coney Island visit added strength to our mutual bond, and we both felt as if we had known each other since birth.

During the hour that we toured the city of Coney Island, I saw so many marvelous sights and strange devices that my head was muddled in a mydiar of dancing Electric lights amidst hundreds of hot-meat vendors and countless squawking advertisers of gambling.

ONE thing I will never forget was our many rides on breath-taking death-defying devices that were known as Coasters. These Coasters were built up on high stilts, oh! much higher than the elevated stilts. They were also built down deep like the Subway. Their paths continually dropped from high pinnacles to deep ravines below. It was as if the builders had not been able to make up their minds as to what they were trying to construct, Subway or Elevated.

The principle of the Coaster was that each man passenger had to clutch his woman companion tightly as she squealed in fright on the top of each hill. A long dark tunnel had been conveniently placed on a nice level stretch at the base of the last hill. By the time the tunnel was reached the male escort had become well acquainted with his fair lady's outline. It seems needless to report that when we found ourselves shot into the tunnel in close embrace, we straightway eliminated any further delay of our inevitable kiss. In fact we made up for any time that might have been lost. I want to say right here, that, even though Kate's words usually were only short, meaningless ejaculations, I felt that she possessed an eloquence of expression, such as I had never attained in any of my many-worded speeches in Rome, when she con-

cluded each kiss with her, "Oh, Daddy."

The Coaster was a wonderful invention!

Later, Kate gleefully introduced me to another United States or New York wonder-box. It was a device that required only an instant to paint one's likeness. It was called the Photograph. It was the most wonderful box of all the boxes . . . even more wonderful than the Dictaphone.

Kate and I were led to a seat in a toy airplane, while an attendant made some little movements over his box-device. In less time than it takes me to write, he supplied us with six miniature paintings that were most exact in detail and likeness. Nowhere have I ever seen such marvelous work. Nothing will ever equal the lightning speed with which we were painted. All my life I had longed for a portrait of myself, but never did I think I would become rich or famous enough to have my desire fulfilled. The six paintings from the wonderful Photograph-box I gave to Kate for safe-keeping. They were, by far, the greatest inventions of all this invention-blessed land.

During the return journey to New York we found the Subway to be considerably less crowded and we were able to ride in seats. I had not noticed that there were seats on the first trip. Kate snuggled to my side and allowed her

head to droop on my shoulder. I reasoned that she had at last become tired and sleepy and I had visions of our retiring to her abode. But in this I was mistaken, for we had no sooner reached Times Square Station than she was up on her feet, bubbling over with new enthusiasm and lust for adventure. What stamina these New York ladies possessed!

We hailed a passing taxi and entered its passenger compartment to settle in the deep luxury of the seats. Kate directed the driver to take us out Lenox Avenue to One-hundred and Thirty-fifth Street. I had become so acclimated to being ridden swiftly hither and yon in New York, that the taxi's high speed no longer thrilled me. However, I found a new and better thrill could be had in a taxi. It was a marvelous place in which one could promote unrestricted love-making with one's fair lady while flying through the main streets of New York. The Coaster had taught us to make the most of every opportunity. Likewise, most of New York's citizens must have been in the same mood, for I noticed that every taxi we passed contained occupants similarly entwined. I gleefully thought of how it would appear in Rome if all men tried to caress their maidens while riding along the Forum in chariots. However, it was surprising how quickly one

could travel while engaged in this artful occupation. Just when things were becoming interesting, we were interrupted by arriving at our destination.

AFTER we alighted, Kate told me that she was taking me to a place called a Night Club. It seemed that any stranger's evening in New York was not complete without a concluding Night Club visit. I was willing to follow Kate unto the last, last adventure, wherever she chose to lead, for the promise in her eyes was such as one sees when the trail is near the end. My only fear was that the Professor's fast diminishing purse would not stand the strain much longer.

The Night Club proved to be a very large Restaurant in which many citizens and their ladies were having little feasts at secluded, independent tables. A squad of African musicians furnished weird barbaric notes from odd-shaped trumpets and a large drum. The noise beat upon the ears with stimulating rhythm and seemed to have a hilarious effect upon everyone present. A chorus of sparsely dressed Ethiopian females were executing fantastic dance steps and body wiggles in a little open place between the tables. The free spirit of congeniality, together with the intoxicating music, steeled everyone to a high pitch. This tempo

was undoubtedly necessary to assist one in downing the liquid these New Yorkers had to drink. The drink was called hootch and it had to be diluted with a portion of mineral water and lemon juice before one dared place it in one's mouth. It was always drunk in a single quaff or gulped down as speedily as possible, lest one's grimaces became permanent. I think the stuff was made from this unknown thing they called Electricity.

I longed to show these New Yorkers our Roman art of sipping drinks; but after drinking my first glass of hootch, I, too, realized that their method of gulping was for the best.

As the evening sped along into the last hours of night, I felt as if a veil had been lifted from my eyes. The lights seemed to have brightened in color, the dancing figures seemed to have more animation and less raiment on their bodies as they floated across the floor. Everything seemed to be toned into a beautiful, harmonious blend, and Kate's ravishing beauty seemed more vivid than ever as she openly kissed me across the table. I realized that we had had many drinks of hooch, and although I was not in any sense drunk, I certainly was pleased with the outlook on life in this wonderful New York and the United States. However, I decided to control my thirst lest I

became totally intoxicated and would be unable to survive the climax of a most wonderful evening.

Oh, what a climax it was. When it finally came upon us it was nothing like what I had expected. The brightness of the evening was immediately snuffed out. Tragedy crossed the dance floor in the form of a powerfully built Ethiopian who made some slurring remark to Kate. This was the beginning of the end!

QUICK as a flash I was upon the slave. He must have underestimated my condition, for he was unprepared for my onslaught and I quickly and easily lifted him over my head and hurled him through the air. He crashed with terrific force upon the startled musicians and scattered them and their rigging to the four winds. This action brought forth screams of terror from all the ladies, and chaos reigned throughout the hall. From that time on, I was busily engaged in battle. In a short space of time I had piled up an amazing heap of humanity on the musician's platform. Verily, I would have conquered all of my enemies, had they not brought into play another insidious New York invention, called the Gat, or Pistol. Before this new weapon, I went down in defeat.

These pistols, or gats, were

diabolical things of steel. They were short, compact little devices that spat forth flame and fire and sent lead pellets hurtling through the air. Without these weapons, one was helpless. I sank to the floor writhing in agony. Three or four pistols had used my body as a target. I had a vague recollection of some New York ushers or Cops appearing upon the scene, but at that point I fell into a swoon.

Upon awakening, I found myself again a prisoner. For a while I was in a hospital but I was later transferred to a cell in the New York jail. At first my wounds were very painful and I feared that I should die before I could again see Kate. However, my strong well-kept body soon healed and I was ready to depart. But the Cops insisted that I remain in my cell and there I languished for three months.

While awaiting my release, I had the opportunity to observe and study two more marvels of this land. They were paper and printing.

The paper was similar to our *Liber*. Like our *Pugillares*, it was made of wood and was in common use. But it was very different from these *Pugillares*, which were only wax-coated slabs of wood. The paper was the result of boiling wood until it became a pulp and then pressing this mass into thin sheets. It was as endur-

ing as our Papyrus from Egypt and after it had dried out thoroughly, one could fold or bend the stuff without having it crack or become brittle.

None of the paper came in rolls, but instead was bound in little small leafed booklets. On the paper was the other invention called printing. It was a quick way to make copies of the same writing.

This printing was accomplished by using large embossed plates similar to our coins. These plates were coated with an ink-fluid and lightly touched on the paper with a machine. The resulting impression was printing. Long speeches and even paintings were produced in this manner. During my stay in the jail I had ample opportunity to read many books and news bulletins.

MY association with my fellow prisoners has given me a thought that I believe will be helpful to you Romans when you demand my immediate release. From listening to the conversation of the men about me I learned the names of some of the prominent men in this country. Knowing that a messenger will be dispatched with all haste as soon as this report reaches Rome, I am giving the names of the men most spoken of, so that it will be known to whom the order of release should be addressed: Gene Tunney, Cal, Hornsby, Babe, Al

Smith, Lindy, Hoover, Jack Dempsey, and Will Rogers.

After three months in jail I was given a trial. Such a trial as it was. It was just a foolish pretense of justice, the sole object being to have all concerned establish themselves as public speakers of great renown. I was not allowed to even make a speech. One blustering citizen made some highly insulting remarks about my mentality. I took immediate offense and grappled him about the throat, but the Cops sprang to his rescue and I was forced to listen in silence. Upon his word alone, I was sent back to my cell. He called me the "Ice Man" and said many other things which I will not repeat, lest Rome declare war with this country. I was merely the ball in a game. I was tossed back and forth from cell to court while the lawyers and some citizens called Alienists, were enabled to show their skill at the pastime.

Throughout the trial I made vain efforts to establish my identity but was repulsed at every turn. Finally I was judged insane and committed to an asylum. I am now in this asylum called B—— While here imprisoned I have written this report, in the hope that it will in some way reach you Romans and that my release will be speedily effected. I advise you to send a large army with the messenger, for these

New Yorkers are very obstinate in their views and say that you Romans are a "dead" race of people.

I will bide my time and await the coming of a likely looking visitor to whom I must intrust the delivery of this report.

Signed,

MARCUS PUBLIUS.

P.S. I have not heard from Kate since the disastrous climax in the Night Club. I fear that she was mortally wounded for I know that she would have appeared at the trial to help prove my sanity. One of my associates in the jail thought that she was in the gold-digging business. I pray that she is alive and is out digging this gold, so that she will soon have enough to purchase my release. Otherwise I must wait and hope that this report finds its way to my countrymen.

MARCUS PUBLIUS.

Author's Note: Again we remark that some may question Marcus Publius' sanity and our action in securing his release from the insane Asylum. But, lest someone also question the sanity of the author, himself, it must be remembered that out of the large sum he received for this work, the reader has helped to defray a part when he purchased this magazine.

W.W.D.

THE END