

The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.



Society Bell to Walk Through Africa, May Meet Roosevelt

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, Jan. 21.—Charlotte Mansfield, the well known English authoress, has just started from England to embark on one of the most adventurous journeys ever undertaken by a woman. She proposes to go from Capetown, South Africa, to Cairo, Egypt, a distance of 5,000 miles, accompanied by only two guides. Part of the way lies through practically unexplored country.

Midway in the South African jungle, she hopes to meet President Roosevelt. Through the meeting place is not as yet determined upon. Miss Mansfield thinks it will be somewhere near Naddob, north of Lake Tanganyika. The natives of this district are known to be treacherous and hostile, and as Miss Mansfield will be the only white woman among them, the situation is likely to prove highly interesting, to say the least.

The adventurous woman spent all her spare time lately in learning how to use firearms, so that, should she be attacked in making one of the most perilous trips on record, she will be able to give a good account of herself.

CHARLOTTE WILL AFFILIATE.

What will carry Miss Mansfield through successfully is, perhaps, the daring character of her project. This is not the first journey made by a white woman through this portion of Africa. It is the first time one of her sex has attempted to "go through" on the lines laid down by Miss Mansfield. Most others who have made the trip have done so from necessity, going from one part of the district to another in order to reach some permanent residence in the country and having as little to do with the natives as possible. With Miss Mansfield, however, it is different. She intends to try to "affiliate" with the natives; to learn their habits of thought and to study their customs. She is a great believer in the psychology of the native races; and, as she is somewhat of a seer herself, will strive to get "en rapport" with the aborigines in a way hitherto undreamed of by others.

LONE 5,000 MILE JAUNT.

"I shall go from Capetown to the vicinity of the Victoria Falls by rail-road, but this is a very small portion of the journey. It is, in fact, only on leaving the railway for good that the real journey begins. I will have to walk fully 4,000 miles of solidly unexplored country. I have said that I intend to walk through this district, but that of course, will not be, in its literal sense, possible, as a large portion of the journey will have to be made by water. For instance, after leaving the neighborhood of the Zambesi river, in Rhodesia, we shall have to go by boat down Lake Tanganyika. From the end of that lake, we shall gradually make our way on foot until we come to the lower end of the Nile river.

"I am anxious to make excursions into the mining districts in each of the countries. It is reported that there are a number of ancient copper mines, worked entirely by natives; and that these natives are extremely wild. I would like to see these mines, though I have been warned that such a journey is quite unprecedented, and that a visit from a white person would not be at all welcome. This adds of course to the more to the rest of the trip. But whether I am able or not to visit these mines will be a matter for decision when nearing the spot.

SHE WILL HAVE COMPANY.

"I am not going wholly alone," continued Miss Mansfield. "Though I shall be the only white woman to make the trip, I shall be accompanied by a native guide, who will have charge of my hand of carriers. Of course, as I am taking several cameras and considerable baggage—owing to the nature of the trip and the length of time the journey will occupy—I shall have to have some help. Strange to say, the same hand of natives will not attend us all the way through. No matter how much money you offer these people, they will only conduct you a certain distance from their own homes, and then insist on going back. I

There is some tribal arrangement whereby one set of natives is not allowed in the other's territory. So we shall have to engage new carriers about every 200 miles. Naturally, the guide who will have charge of the expedition will have to speak the various dialects. The man I am taking knows nearly every part of the country well, and he is much thought of by the natives. So I shall have little to fear on that score. Of course, there are bands of wild natives throughout this country, whose one thought seems to be to keep people from getting through their territory. But, even these we hope to mollify by showing them that our expedition is a feasible one.

"As to dangers from wild beasts, I have no reason to look for trouble on this score, equipped as we shall be with plenty of guns and ammunition for all kinds of big game. I would like to make a point of the fact that I am going to do no shooting for the mere sake of killing for the fun of it. We shall, as I said, kill what we need, and if the big game let us alone, we shall not trouble them. My main idea will be to get through the country, and to make the most out of the experience.

NEW JERSEY SUGGESTIONS.

"The only serious trouble which I am told I shall have to guard against are the mosquitoes, from the bites of which one gets fever. We shall provide ourselves with all the latest scientific precautions against these pests. As I go through the country, I shall write descriptions, and take photographs. I am providing myself with a special photographic outfit which will withstand all climatic conditions. No one has been through this country with proper photographic appliances, and I think that the pictures I procure will be a revelation to the outside world. I am very anxious to meet President Roosevelt under the peculiar circumstances that will attend us. I hope to obtain from him his own impression of the country, and I shall improve my opportunities by joining in some of his hunting expeditions, if he will allow me after we have reached Upper Nile, our difficulties will be practically over, as there are plenty of boats to take us to Khartoum. At the latter place, I hope to meet Mrs. Roosevelt.

The 1,000 miles of practically unexplored country through which we will travel lies between Lake Tanganyika and the Upper Nile. The trip should take several months, though it is quite impossible to set a time limit upon it. If we make 30 miles a day steadily, we could do the 5,000 miles from Capetown to Cairo in five months. But there are all sorts of unforeseen circumstances which might interfere, and so it is well not to figure too closely on the time.

"HIGH SOCIETY" NO GOOD.

"Many of my friends have asked me why I am undertaking such a journey. Well, in the first place—it may sound frivolous as a reason—I wish to accomplish such a trip for the purpose of diverting society women from their useless way of spending their lives. I move to what may be called "high society" in England, and I find much of the life led is perfectly purposeless and vain. I hope by such a trip as this to stimulate interest in travel and adventure, to show women that there are better things than bridge and house parties. If I go through this country safely, it will be, as it were, an opening wedge; and I have no doubt that it will lead to other expeditions. There is plenty of amusement to be obtained from such an adventure, and, in addition to this, there is the great gain, the empire of opening up the district.

Despite all Miss Mansfield's disclaimers as to the danger that may attend her in passing through this country, persons acquainted with the matter say that it is a risky thing for a woman to do. She has already received hints of letters from white residents in Africa—wholly unknown to her—warning her against undertaking so perilous a journey. But she says there is no turning back. Miss Mansfield has achieved fame in England in various walks of life. She is a well-known author, and as a poet enjoys the distinction of being called the "Ella Wheeler Wilcox" of England. Her little book of poems, "Flowers of the Wind," created quite a furore in London society circles a year or two ago, while her novel, "Torn," was widely commented upon.

COMER OF OLD COLONIAL STOCK.

Miss Mansfield lays special claim on American interest owing to the fact that her grandparents, the Mathers, went over in the Mayflower, and distinguished themselves in Massachusetts for their "sabbathkeeping" agitation. Miss Mansfield owes considerable of her literary success to the fact that William Waldorf Astor first introduced her to the public through the columns of the Pall Mall Magazine. He published her first poem—written during the Boer war—entitled, "Those Who Wait and Weep." It was reprinted in many parts of England in the time of Ernest L. Scott.

Strange Stories of Lives Led By London's "Human Posters."

Clergyman, Ruined by His Son's Forgery, Eventually Driven to Asking for a Job as Sandwichman, and Finds His Son in the Same Brigade; But Even Most Wretched Position Was Again Lost by the Son's Treachery.

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, Jan. 21.—Close to the Trocadero restaurant, just back of Piccadilly Circus—the haunt of the gay world of London—is an obscure little court which bears the suggestive name of "Ham Yard." In this little by-pass, removed but a step from the human tide which pours through the great thoroughfares of this district, there assembles every morning about 7 o'clock a motley throng of persons, many of whom once called themselves self-respecting citizens. Clad in tatters and rags, broken down morally, physically and mentally, these human derelicts seek employment either as ordinary "sandwich men," or, attired in borrowed frock, consisting of frock coat, well-washed trousers, top hat, gloves and closely rolled umbrella, saunter forth into the hurly-burly of life as members of the "Gentlemen's Brigade."

Ex-politicians, ex-actors, business men, clergymen, representatives of every profession, all "ex-something" in life, find their way daily to Ham Yard. The lives of these ghosts of the gutter often are full of tragic surprises, revealed occasionally by strokes of fortune when they find money or articles of value during their weary wanderings.

It is not easy to obtain from the sandwich men any information about themselves. Hiding under assumed names—as most of them do—they have buried their past, and few will consent to resurrect it. To Smith of Ham Yard, however—W. R. Smith to be exact—the secret of many an interesting career has been revealed. Smith has had more experience with sandwich men than perhaps any one else in the world. For more than 40 years he has made a living for himself by keeping alive such unfortunates. Occasionally, of course, the human flotilla and jettison cast upon the shores of Ham Yard leave messages that tell their stories. Just as other wrecks along the ocean sands.

PARSON'S PECULIAR POSITION.

The writer recently spent a day with the sandwich men in order to learn some of their lurid life-stories. Until recently, one old man long figured as a London sandwich man under the name of "the Parson." It was not, however, a parson, but a clergyman, the elderly carrier of "the banner" had been an eminently respected vicar in a wealthy village. His story is full of pathetic "human interest." Though the parson himself led a life of perfect rectitude, his son, like offspring of a good man, many other prelates, did not come up to the standard of the "cloth." He went in for drinking, gambling and the usual diversions of the good books tell us lead to ruin, and finally left his home and went up to London. For a long time the father managed to keep him out of "swamps," but ultimately, through indulging some notes, the elder man was brought to penury and had to sever his connection with the church.

Leaving his home, the Parson came up to London to seek employment. But fortune did not favor him. He could find nothing to do, and as a last resort, applied to Mr. Smith for an engagement as a sandwich carrier. On hearing this, Mr. Smith referred to his books and remarked casually that there was another man in the "brigade" bearing the same title. It turned out to be the "Parson's" own son. It was arranged that they should be put into the same corps, and for many months paraded the London streets together, father and son, tramping along all sorts of wealth, or bearing the yoke about their necks.

Mr. Smith became interested in the couple, and discovering that the son was a clever artist, the youth was encouraged by his father to develop his talent and succeeded in producing some excellent landscapes, for which Mr. Smith undertook to find a market. This looked like a splendid opportunity for the young man to extricate himself and his father from their predicament. But, alas, for human frailty! The parson's son borrowed a considerable sum of money, ostensibly for the purpose of getting pictures framed and decorated, and the usual diversions of the gutter. Overcome by this last disaster, the father suddenly disappeared from the "brigade," leaving no trace.

EX-POLICEMAN ON UPPIERS.

"You see that man leaning against the wall," said Mr. Smith, as he stood at his window and pointed down upon a throng waiting for assignments. "He was once one of the most prominent policemen on the London force, in direct line of promotion. We have had numbers of ex-policemen here at one

time or another. A man often has said to me, 'Don't send me out now, guv'nor, please, there's a sergeant standing at the crossing who used to know me well when I was on the force. He doesn't know I've come down to this.'

"You scarcely would credit some of the applications we have. There are plenty of people like 'the Parson' and his son. Besides professional men, we frequently have clerks who have occupied good positions, and also a good smattering of actors and railway officials, together with a fair number of representatives from the army and navy."

Pointing down the yard, he indicated men who had figured in such walks of life. One, broad shoulders, an iron gray beard and piercing eyes, wearing a peaked cap, seemed to stand out from a group of hulking, slope-shouldered figures.

"That man was the master of a ship," explained Mr. Smith. "He lost one of his vessels, was not reinstated, and took to drink. He does not drink now, but is hard enough for him to get. Being too old to go to sea as a common sailor, there is nothing for him to do but go on the streets. He might have got into some sailors' home, but he seemed to resent the suggestion. He prefers making a shilling or two a day to being supported by charity. We have several men from the navy among us now, two of whom were midshipmen."

"The tall, rather pale-looking man with the white beard, just to the right of the former captain," continued Mr. Smith, "was a moneyed man in the city. Fifteen years ago he lived in Manchester Square and drove a carriage and pair about London. He lost his fortune, and then his health, and finally put his neck under the yoke. Every day this man passes within a few paces of his former fashionable haunts. Occasionally he disappears for a time from the 'brigade,' but always turns up again. It is presumed that these periods of mysterious disappearance are caused by the temporary aid of some sympathetic friend who attempts to rescue him. An uncontrollable failing—the cup which cheers—however, always gets the better of him, and so the pitiful tragedy goes on."

If you ever have watched a group of sandwich men walking along the streets you will observe that the men always keep their heads bent down, their eyes upon the ground. There is an object in this. They are seeking in the gutter, the roadway, or the pavement for some object which may bring temporary ease to them. Like unconsidered trifle escapes them. Like birds of prey they ever watch the moving platform of the ground. Occasionally something glitters. There is a sudden swoop on the part of the sandwich man. In his hand he holds a coin. If it be a small coin the nearest passerby will receive it. If the amount found prove fairly large the sandwich man disappears from his ordinary haunts until the money is entirely spent.

Considerable sums have been found by sandwichmen. One man not long ago picked up a purse containing £250 (about \$400) in bank notes. He was not conscious-stricken over his find, and did not promptly report his good luck to the police. With a generosity worthy of a better cause he "treated" most of his fellow-sufferers, and for temporary ease turned them to him. When the tattered sandwich man makes a find like this he does not himself attempt to pawn the object, but engages one of the more respectably dressed "gentlemen" board-carriers, whose appearance does not lay him open to suspicion.

Among other noteworthy finds among sandwich men are: A portion of a pearl necklace, value £500; a gold watch, with a seal and a piece of chain worth \$50; a pocket book containing \$150 in gold pieces.

While a few fortunate sandwich men

who "discover" things make a point of sharing with their less lucky brethren, most of them go off somewhere and enjoy themselves alone. The one who makes a haul does not like it talked about for fear of the police. As these lucky discoveries mean days, sometimes weeks, of freedom from tramping the streets, the finders fail to see the ethical advantage of foregoing a period of rest and liberty, combined sometimes with enjoyment and oblivion purchased at so much a pint.

Once in a while even better strokes of fortune befall sandwich men than merely finding valuables in the public streets. Several of them have come into inheritances, sometimes after years of "carrying the banner." One man a few years ago inherited a valuable estate. With the boards on his back, he was about to march out of the yard one morning when he was called into the office and informed of his good fortune. Gravely divesting himself of his advertising matter, he shook hands all around and disappeared forever from the scene of his sufferings.

DON'T FORGET OLD FRIENDS.

Some of those who have experienced these strokes of family fortune have revisited Ham Yard and helped along deserving cases. Some, indeed, they have shared. The Soup Kitchen which supplies penny (2 cents) meals to the men in the yard was assisted largely by an ex-sandwich man who had partaken of its hospitality. Upward of 500 men are fed daily at the "Ham Yard Hospice," where the men can obtain a bowl of hot soup before starting out on their rounds. Some years ago it was customary to give the men a small advance for food before they began their day's work; but this had to be abandoned, owing to the fact that many would take the money and then, so soon as they were outside the yard, desert the work and abandon the boards. In consequence a rule had to be made that no money was to be advanced. Sandwich men who know the ropes always bring a little food with them or else save a few cents out of the previous day's pay.

There are two distinct grades of sandwich men—those who carry the ordinary boards and those who belong to what is termed the "Gentlemen's Brigade." These latter are the pick of the men who follow sandwiching as a means of regular livelihood. They must be tall, and of "distinguished" appearance, as it were, for they are required to dress up as "swells" and go about the streets giving out handbills. They usually are fitted out with frock coat, top hat and the usual paraphernalia befitting such attire. Public sympathy seems to go out to these supposed "gentlemen in distress," and consequently the sandwich contractor does not hesitate to play up this impression for all it is worth. It is rather an advantage to get into the "Gentlemen's Brigade," for occasionally persons of wealth become interested in these men and try to give them an opportunity of improving their condition.

The "Gentlemen's Brigade" has helped to elevate the sandwich men's "profession" somewhat. It need no longer be a forlorn, bedraggled, rag-and-tatter calling, but, if a man gets into the exclusive "Gent's Corps," he at least always can be dressed well, even though the clothes be borrowed, and though every night sees the supposed "gentleman" stripped of all his finery, like the wicked prince in the fairy tale.

There is a standing reward of 12 cents for every missing set of boards returned to their lawful owner. Owing to the propensity of sandwich men to make the best of their luck, taking it out in various forms of conviviality, many sandwich boards come to grief. So soon as a man makes a "find" of any considerable amount, he immediately divests himself of his boards, leans them up against the nearest railing, and bids farewell to his peripatetic calling for the time being. Occasionally these boards are quite valuable, those with illuminated devices having as generators inside them some of the most valuable of the time being. It is seldom that boards of this description are lost, however, as only the most respectable men are allowed to carry them.

The pay of sandwich men is not on a luxurious scale. For carrying illuminated boards at night for four hours the remuneration is 50 cents. This is the highest pay in the service. The average for a full day's work is 30 cents, those who do night tramping with illuminated boards getting 4 cents more. Some of the men make 60 cents a day, but they have to start work at 7 a. m. and work up to a late hour. Altogether, the life of a sandwich man is not a walk dream; to some it is more like a species of nightmare. We would advise any one just starting out in life to consider the "profession" seriously as a career.

W. B. NORTHRUP.

Personal Stories of Sufferers In the Italian Earthquake

Special Correspondence.

NAPLES, Jan. 6.—It is doubtful if the full horrible story of the earthquake will ever be told. The survivors have only a confused idea of what took place. They were awakened by the falling of their houses and how they escaped they cannot guess. The awful minutes, in most cases when they were struggling for life, are a nightmare or a blank which perhaps even time will not clear.

However, some few have been able to put their sensations and experiences into words. I have heard of a man who inhabited the fourth floor of an apartment house and who was awakened by what he took to be an explosion. When he gained his senses he found himself in an alarming position. The floor, probably through some defect in building, had given way cleanly as though cut by a knife, right under his large double bed, which thus had two legs hanging in the void, the other two being on the portion of the floor left. The bed was dangerously inclined, and from it had rolled his wife into the gulf, he saving himself from a like fate by throwing himself violently on to the floor on the other side. He was rescued by the firemen after for 48 hours, without food and listening to the moans and cries of his little daughter who had shared her mother's fate. She was afterwards taken out of the debris dead, with scarcely a whole bone in her body.

SHE LOST SIX CHILDREN.

A poor woman who was found in the streets of Messina attracted attention through her strange behavior. At first, it was thought that her terrible experience had turned her brain, but it was afterwards discovered that she was perfectly sane. It seems that she had lost six children, five of whom slept in a room together, while she and a baby occupied a small room near by. They were all buried among the debris of the house, the bigger children probably killed by the fall as she heard no sound. The baby fell with her under a beam, but on her chest and would have been alive had not one of the ghouls who added fresh terrors to the city, and at not finding anything to steal and irritated by the crying of the child which attracted attention to the spot, brutally kicked it, killing it immediately. The mother was afterwards released and found her friend on the street, paired out her terrible trouble. The friend had evidently been the "goody" of her district and told the poor, credulous creature, that if she said two beads of her rosary at every street corner, never repeating a street and crossed herself five times, her children, if not yet dead, would revive. So the poor thing had pursued her pitiable penance for 24 hours, without food, never stopping for fear of thus indi-

rectly killing her poor children, long since dead. She absolutely refused to even sit down until assured by the archbishop of Messina, before whom she was taken, that her sacrifice was in vain.

REGGIO FARES THE WORST.

Conditions in Reggio are worse than at Messina. It would take the vivid pen of a Dante to give an adequate idea of the conditions in the sister cities. At Reggio two-thirds of the population lie under solid mounds of fallen buildings, the other third are in the streets, without roof, without food, without water, without clothes. These fatal 30 seconds cast down all the conventional barriers set up by society and reduced rich and poor alike to primitive man who must have shelter from cold and clothing and food for his body, and when he is deprived of them a sufficient time he will fight for them. To this must be added total darkness at night, only broken by the flendish thieves who, having looted a shop, had become possessed of a bit of candle and with it made the round of the labyrinthine rubbish, to see what they could steal from the bodies of the dead.

These jacksals, composed of the scum of the town, are so bold that their searches are in many cases conducted in broad daylight and they resist with reduced rich and poor alike who tries to interfere with them. In one case a man, after putting his wife in safety, returned to try and secure some of his valuables. Arrived at what was once his house he was forcibly prevented from entering by a couple of men who when he insisted, shot him dead. The few police and soldiers that there are, are totally inadequate to keep this dangerous and unscrupulous element within bounds so they have orders to shoot on sight, the result being regular pitched battles in full sight in the principal streets, in which law and order do not always get the best of the things. Thus soldiers have lost their lives and several more will undoubtedly do so before long.

TERRIBLE WORK OF GHOULS.

One particularly touching case of this kind has just occurred at Messina. A soldier who had, through his exceptional strength, succeeded in lifting a beam which had pinned him down, from over his legs, worked for almost two days in rescuing others with scarcely any rest, and at night he was returning to a shed which he had found to sleep in when he heard the sobbing cry of a little girl. He stepped and a group of three men, with whom a girl of eight was struggling violently, came into view. He stepped them whereupon the child fled with what afterwards proved to be a considerable sum of money which she had gathered together in her father's house. The thieves, furious at the escape of their victim, set upon the soldier and killed him by kicking him to death. These are but a few of the daily tragedies of this modern inferno, the victim of war, fire and earthquake, and rendered a hell by man; one moment the most beautiful spot on earth, the next a sink of terror and iniquity.

THE PRIDE OF JAPAN

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