

the Three Kings hotel, Lass. Please destroy this note and communicate its contents to no one but Daphne and Berry alone.

At ten o'clock the next morning Mansel, Carson, and I visited the Castle of Gath.

From first to last this visit had been closely rehearsed, so that even a boy in the wood would not, I think, have suspected that we were play-acting.

Indeed, the play began some miles away, for we first seemed to notice the five as we were returning to the crossroads after a thirty mile run. After due hesitation we determined to see where it led.

At the sight of the castle we stopped, as any one would have done, and were plainly uncertain whether or no to proceed; but, after a little discussion, drove the car down the spur and drew up before the gateway in a perfectly natural way. Then Carson opened a door and Mansel got out.

When he had rung, he stood waiting, with a hand on the great stone knob, while Carson, with his hands behind him, stood leaning against a wing, and I pulled out tobacco and started to fill a pipe.

I shall never forget those moments or how hard it was to keep cool. Eyes were upon us, watching every breath we drew; it was likely that we were revered and certain that we were at the mercy of those we were seeking to appease. What was about to happen no one could tell. For once Noble was talking, and, whatever the cards he dealt us, with those we should have to play.

The day was very fine, and a gentle breeze was blowing across the spur; except for the whisper of the engine, there was no sound; and I remember thinking how gay the greenwood looked in the brave sunshine and how black the clean cut shadow which the battlements threw upon the turf.

After a little, Mansel rang again.

For an age we waited; then I heard a step on the pavement and the click of a lock. Then two bolts were drawn, the wicket swung open, and a woman came out her head.

"Good day," said Mansel, using German. "What's the name of this place?"

"The Castle of Gath, sir."

"Who lives here?"

"No one, sir. My husband and I are the caretakers."

"Do you know if it's for sale?"

The woman shook her head.

"Which is the castle hereabout which is for sale?"

"I have no idea, sir."

"Well, there's one somewhere," said Mansel, "not very far from here. It belongs to an English lady who's out of her mind. She drives about in a car without any hat, and she has male nurses with her wherever she goes. Surely you've heard her spoken of?"

"No, sir," said the woman evenly.

"A big closed car, painted gray. Sometimes the nurses use it when she is ill."

The woman shook her head.

"You surprise me," said Mansel. "It's common talk down in Lass."

The woman shrugged her shoulders.

"In Lass, perhaps; but we are so isolated here."

"I wonder if your husband could help me?"

"I fear he is out, sir. But I do not think he would know."

"Which way has he gone?" said Mansel.

The woman mentioned a hamlet four miles away.

"Perhaps I shall meet him," said Mansel. "But ask him about this gray car when he comes in."

"I will, sir."

"And the castle, or house, somewhere around about here. And, if he thinks he can help me, send him to the Three Kings at Lass."

"I will, sir."

Mansel gave her money and returned to the car.

"Nothing doing," he said shortly. "I was afraid it was useless. Too much of the beaten track."

As he spoke the wicket was shut and the bolts were shot.

"Let's have a look at the map," said Mansel.

I gave him the sheet.

As I did so the sharp clack of wood striking wood came from the door. We all looked around—naturally enough. Some one had drawn the shutter which masked the grill. No doubt they would have done so in silence, but the shutter, suppose, resisted and then gave way with a rush.

Mansel laughed.

"Seeing us off the premises," he said. He returned to the map. "There's the village she spoke of; we might as well go that way." He began to fold up the map and turned to the door. "By the way," he said, using German, "was your husband on foot?"

As he spoke he stepped to the grill, pocketing the map as he went.

No answer was given.

With his hand in his pocket, Mansel peered through the bars.

"I say," he said. "My good lady—"

No one replied.

"Come on," said I. "She's scared."

Mansel took his hand from his pocket and turned away.

"That's the worst of these people," he said. "No sense, no observation, and an inherent fear that you're trying to do them down."

With that he got into the car.

Carson followed, and I drove slowly away.

Not until we were five miles off did Mansel open his mouth.

"Noble was there all the time. On the woman's left. He was standing with his back to the doors, with his arms folded and a pistol in his right hand. I could see him in the glass of a lantern that hangs from the archway roof; its shades were tilted, and it couldn't have been better placed."

"It was he that drew the shutter and stood looking out; that's an assumption, of course, but I'm sure it's correct. I went back in the hope that he'd say there—to laugh in my face. But he very properly didn't. He resisted a great temptation and thereby saved his life. He wouldn't have expected a bullet, and I don't think I could have missed. When he saw me coming, he stopped. If he'd moved, I should have heard him; so he stood where he was and stooped. And that was why the woman never came back; he was in the way, and she couldn't get to the grill."

WHEN he turned to Carson and asked him how much he had seen.

"The walls are forty feet high, sir—that is, from the gaps to the ground."

"Embrasures, they're called," said Mansel. "Yes?"

"I'm sure they're not more, sir; they may be a foot or so less. The first windows are fourteen feet up, but they are very heavily barred; so are the ones above. There's no downpipe at all and no ledges that you could hold."

"Then we must have a ladder?"

"Three, sir. Each twelve feet long. The first hooks onto the bars of a window fourteen feet up, the second onto the bars of a window above, and the third to the top of the wall."

"Very good," said Mansel. "Are the windows above each other?"

"No, sir. Clear by about a foot. But you go up the left of the first and the right of the one above. There's a gap—embrasure—directly between the two."

"I see," said Mansel. "Wrought iron, one-pole ladders, made by a village smith; ends and rungs covered with rubber tubing, so that they make no noise."

"I hadn't thought of that, sir."

"You would have," said Mansel. "Once they're in place, it'll be like going upstairs."

"A rough night would help, sir."

"We must hope for one," said Mansel, "in two days' time. And now, handos, let me drive. We must find a forge; and it's got to be forty miles off."

The tale we told the smith is of no consequence; the ladders were simple to make, and Mansel's directions were clear; we were to find the work done by the evening of the following day.

Then Mansel found a rope factory and purchased a quantity of rope, after which we drove to some town, whose name I forget, where we bought what we had need of to aid our assault. All this gear we presently hid in a den, a pretty, private place, high up in the fold of a mountain, some ten miles by road from Gath. There we could work upon it during the next two days, and hence take it direct to the castle when the moment came.

Of foul weather we had not much hope, for the sky was clear and Mansel's barometer pointed to fair. "However," said he, "I'm not going to wait any more. At two on Friday morning we're going over the top; even if we don't get to Adèle, we shall see the inside of that rat trap, and that'll be devilish useful next time we come."

How much we were nowadays watched I do not know. A spy can go out, it is plainly useless unless he can later come in; and in view of the Case-ette business—to say nothing of that of Jude—I fancy Rose Noble was shy of finding his subordinates farther than the edge of the wood. Had he but known, he might have spared his concern; the last thing we wished was to be led to the castle, and Mansel had given orders that if we saw any one watching we were, if we possibly could, to turn a blind eye.

Now, not to look for a spy is easy enough; yet because, perhaps, we did not want him, Fate must needs deliver one into our hands.

This was the way of it.

(To be continued.)

(Copyright: 1928: By Dornford Yates.)

TEMPTING MENUS FOR THE WEEK

by Jane O'Ddington

Lace Molasses Wafers.

As a most entertaining variation and a compromise between a molasses cookie and molasses candy we have been recommending the following recipe, from a trade source, since we tested it out and thought it so gay: Slowly heat to a boiling point one cup of molasses, one cup of sugar, one cup of butter. Boil one minute, then remove from the fire.

Add two cups of flour, one teaspoon of baking powder, and one-half teaspoon of soda sifted together. Stir well. Set the pan in a vessel of hot water to keep the batter from hardening. On buttered baking sheets or inverted dripping pan drop one-fourth teaspoons of batter three inches apart.

Bake in a moderate oven until brown. Cool slightly, then lift off carefully with a thin knife.

A spatula is the thinnest and most satisfactory lifter to use, we think. We used one-fourth of the above recipe and made three pans of wafers from it, and these were so nearly like a candy that they baked in four minutes to brittleness in a 325 degree oven.

The batter must be kept hot or it will be a dough.

It is edible, as any child who likes to scrape out a cake bowl would agree. Even if you happen to have seen the picture of these in certain magazine advertisements, you may be surprised and entertained when you see the real thing.

If the batter is very thin the wafers will be brittle, but need destroy no teeth if the eater is reasonable. If they are a bit thicker they will roll when cool, and with some cream cheese inside the roll they make an entertaining snack.

Eggs en Cocotte.

Butter little earthenware baking dishes or cocottes, or use a silver casserole. Allow for each one or two eggs to be cooked half of a camed pimento. Chop it rather fine and beat it up in a bit of butter, then put it into the cocotte. Put on top of it a freshly broken egg, add salt and perhaps a grating of white pepper and two tablespoons of cream.

Bake in the oven for five or six minutes, or this cooking may be done under the broiler when the dishes are at the proper distance from the fire. This is not quite so hard on fine dishes as an altogether hot oven.

MONDAY

- Breakfast: Orange Juice, Prepared Cereal, Hot Muffins, Honey Coffee
- Luncheon: Melba Toast, Hot Pease Porridge, Rhubarb Compote, Wafers, Ginger Ale
- Dinner: Hearts of Celery, Chicken Broth, Baked Macaroni and Cheese, Fried Eggplant, Lettuce and Onion Salad, Rhubarb Pie and Cheese, Coffee

TUESDAY

- Breakfast: Baked Prunes, Barley Porridge, Graham Toast, Marmalade, Coffee
- Luncheon: Eggs en Cocotte, Plain Bread and Butter, Fruit Salad
- Dinner: Unsweetened Wafers, Radishes, Beef Stew with Dumplings, New Cabbage Greens, French Dressing, Cream Puffs, Coffee

WEDNESDAY

- Breakfast: Stewed Figs, Dry Toast, Oatmeal Porridge, Coffee
- Luncheon: Radishes, Stewed Lima Beans, Hot Corn Bread, Cream Cheese, Guava Jelly, Crackers, Beverage
- Dinner: Green Olives, Tomato Soup, Roast Shoulder of Veal, Franconia Potatoes, Artichokes with Hollandaise, Washington Cream Pie, Coffee

THURSDAY

- Breakfast: Sliced Bananas and Cream, Fried Mush and Maple Sirup, Thin Toast, Coffee
- Luncheon: Hot Olives, Chive Sandwiches, Glazed Peaches, Sugar Cookies, Beverage
- Dinner: New Onions (scallions), Peanut Soup (from raw peanuts), Boiled Ham, Orange Marmalade Sauce, Fried Potatoes, Spinach, Rice Pudding, Coffee

FRIDAY

- Breakfast: Fresh Fruit, White Cornmeal Mush, Toast, Honey, Coffee
- Luncheon: Poached Eggs on Toast, Beet Salad, Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream, Nut Sprinkled, Beverage
- Dinner: Cucumber Relish, Baked Shad, Thin White Sauce, Plain New Potatoes, Tomato Pie, Prune Pie, Coffee

SATURDAY

- Breakfast: Orange Quarters, Filled Pancakes, Coffee
- Luncheon: Escalloped Ham, Green Pepper Puree, Apple Salad, Cheese, Wafers, Beverage
- Dinner: Mixed Relishes, Corn Chowder, Minute Steaks, Horseradish, Baked Potatoes, Cauliflowerettes, Buttered, Lemon Juice, Chocolate Roll, Coffee

SUNDAY

- Breakfast: French Pineapple, Sugar Cones, Eggs in Shells, Easter Buns, Coffee
- Dinner: Hearts of Celery, Radishes, Cream of Cress Soup, Crown Roast of Lamb, Mashed Potatoes, Green Peas, French Endive Salad, Strawberry Mousse, Angel Cake, Coffee
- Supper: Hot Cheese Crackers, with Hot Chocolate, Lace Molasses Cookies, Apples, Coffee

(Copyright: 1928: By Chicago Tribune.)

Nine Issues for the Price of Four

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

Edited by H. L. MENCKEN

"I will content myself with the bald statement that he is a weasel."*

—SAMUEL R. GUARD, broadcasting over WLS



THE AMERICAN MERCURY is edited by one of the best-hated men on this continent. H. L. Mencken's convictions are not amenable to threats, cajoleries, or personal profit. People know that he would rather be hated than compromise the least of his trenchant convictions. Thousands who violently disagree get irresistible enjoyment out of every page that he writes or edits. Most men's enemies are liabilities. For twenty-five years Mr. Mencken's enemies have been among his most valuable assets.

Mr. Vachel Lindsay, poet and lecturer, submitted to THE AMERICAN MERCURY an article inscribed "To my friend the enemy H. L. Mencken, with whom I agree in nothing except the value of free speech, a free press, and personal courage at all times." Mr. Mencken printed that article as the leader in his issue of March, 1928—and publicly displayed the author's inscription.

By just such undeviating open-mindedness, honesty, and courage Mr. Mencken has made THE AMERICAN MERCURY known through the English-speaking world as a sound and stimulating monthly review of the nation's politics, literature, arts and sciences, and theatre. It is the vehicle of a new form of candid, untrammelled discussion of American realities, an implacable enemy of superstition, bigotry, quackery, and all high-sounding nonsense that parades as revelation from on high. Written for the man who likes energetic discussion better than tepid agreement, it serves a keen desire by Americans to know America. It dares to ridicule a cheap Americanism based upon hand-me-down ideas; and it is glad to be the spokesman of everything in our national life that can stand intelligent scrutiny.

Month by month THE AMERICAN MERCURY prints quantities of solid, sometimes startling, information which alert persons want, and which other persons, alert in different ways, would be willing to pay great sums to suppress. Every issue from the first published—that of January, 1924—has contained at least two or three articles which are not only stimulating for the moment, but also permanent. Subscribers regard each number as a lasting book and make sure that it goes from the reading-table into its proper niche in the library. What other magazine achieves anything like the same combination of timeliness with permanence, news value with literary value—stimulation for the moment and historical significance for the decades? And what other magazine ever made its way on sheer merit, in so short a period, to a like position of dignity and public trust?

THE AMERICAN MERCURY enjoys the suffrage of tens of thousands who pay \$5.00 a year for the magazine by subscription—more if they buy it from the newsstands.

Now, in the conviction that there are other tens of thousands to whom it would mean quite as much if they knew it as well, we have created a special introductory offer so challenging that a reader would be cheating himself by not taking advantage of it. We offer you a limited-term subscription to THE AMERICAN MERCURY for less than half its normal newsstand cost. Send us \$2.00 for a subscription involving nine complete issues—three-quarters of a year.

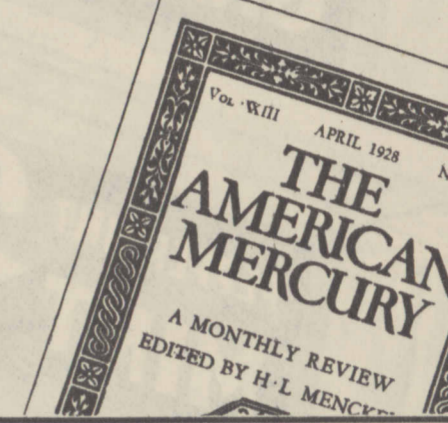
We will send you six current numbers as they appear—April to September, inclusive—and also the three preceding numbers, January, February, and March. You will receive at once, then, four numbers (January to April inclusive), or reading matter equivalent to four three-dollar volumes of the best current literature; and then you will receive the equivalent of five more such volumes at monthly intervals. Your \$2.00 buys, you see, what would cost you exactly \$4.50 at the newsstand.

This special introductory offer is for readers of this paper. Orders will be accepted only on the accompanying order form, and only up to and including April 30. You have but to mail the order form to us with \$2.00. The rest of the story, for you, is simply a bargain in enjoyment.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

ALFRED A. KNOPE, Publisher

730 Fifth Avenue, New York City



THE AMERICAN MERCURY

730 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Please enter my subscription for six months (April-September) and send me the January, February, and March issues; for which I enclose \$2.00.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____

*One of 430 similar utterances, chiefly American, recently collected in a 130-page, 23-chapter volume entitled *Menckeniama: A Schimlexikon* (New York, 1928). *Menckeniama* is cited here in illustration of the general thesis that some of Mr. Mencken's best friends are his enemies. Among those who work for him, in and out of print, are the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals, the Rev. John Roach Straton, the Rev. S. Parkes Cadman, and Billy Sunday. *Menckeniama*, published by the publisher of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, may be purchased at all good bookshops for \$2.50 a copy.