

to anything you find in the shack. There's some bedding, an axe and a shovel; and there's a boat in the boat-house. Good-bye!"

Hoag packed a bundle with simple provisions and a few rough clothes and boarded a tug that was still carrying odds and ends of summer cottagers' effects from the island to the city.

The island across the harbor was a strange prehistoric sandbar several miles long, full of mazes and canals and wild-willow copses and all sorts of inspiring solitudes within a mile of the city smoke.

The two men that ran the tug eyed him in a suspicious way. To all their questions Hoag made no definite reply; except that he was going over to reopen a cottage for a few weeks.

"I think he's nutty," said the engineer.

"I'm darned sure of it," replied the other.

Both of them lived on the point, more than a mile from Poundem's bungalow. Hoag was glad when they landed him and let him go on his way with his pack through the silent Stonehenge of the amusement city all sanded up and superbly gloomy, out over the sidewalk into a swale of sand that led by a shortcut through the willows and the gorse to the one bungalow in a long sanded up row that was soon to smoke—the only warm chimney on that side of the sand-bar.

THERE was a small fireplace for wood. The beach was lined with driftage. Poundem had left enough furniture and bedding to make housekeeping possible. Hoag unpacked his load of rough togs and eatables and built a fire.

The place was as melancholy as a ruins. Only a few weeks before hundreds of people bathing, boating, bon-firing, gardening. Now nobody but gulls. It was a mile at least to the one house inhabited by the tug-men at the Point. The wires were dead. Cold electric bulbs gleamed here and there. In the whole lakeside of the bar there was not a track. Within a mile or more of a big city Hoag was suddenly in a desolation as complete as that of Robinson Crusoe.

He chopped and packed wood; fed his fire; then it was dusk.

NO doubt Markham would discover his whereabouts. Hoag knew islanders well enough to be sure the tug-men would investigate him on their own account. Failing to elucidate him, they would be an easy mark for any detective agency set afoot by Markham.

The first day convinced him that he was right. He chopped and lugged wood, walked mile upon mile and shoved the boat into the lagoon. From there he wound his way out through the willows to the open lake. The water was calm, and the air quite nippy. Out half a mile he noted the gleam of the dead cottages among which his was the only smoke. Not a sign of life. He removed his clothes down to the waist and rowed on. The wind had a fine sharp tang. At first uncomfortable, it soon became a second nature to his skin. Lean as he was, he observed that he was no skeleton. All he had removed was the superfluous flesh. Clothes, after all, were a good deal of a habit. Man had

always refused to acclimatize his body as he did his face or a bald head.

All of which he realized was very little aid to what he had in hand. No one man could undo his body, the work of centuries. The best he could do was to set free that part of his being that mere body culture starves, especially in a highly civilized place. Hoag was as convinced of his duality as he was of his life. He did not believe that a man's body must die in order to set free his soul. And as he slowly rowed the boat just fast enough to keep off the sense of chilling cold, he looked closely at the shore line.

Just to the left of his cottage he observed a willow stub among a swale of dead long grass just at the edge of the sand moor that once had been a marsh.

He suddenly felt certain that the willow stub was moving. He could see it as clear as a bright cloud. Over the top of it came a swift heliogram. He knew now—what. That stub had eyes. A man was behind it with field-glasses. Hoag paddled his boat in backwards, keeping his eye constantly on the stub. There was no other movement. Gulls screamed and dipped. Something seemed to thicken up at



He longed to see some better provision for the treatment of nerve cases.

the base of the stub and vanish by burrowing into the long, dead grass, back into the moor scrub.

When he landed at the stub—nobody was there. But he saw bootprints not his own.

HOAG was the first man who had ever set up smoke on that side of the sandbar in winter. He made it his first business to know the island. It was a maze. A small jungle could not have been better for man-concealment. Hence it was that Hoag never knew at any waking hour when by boat or afoot on any part of the sandbar, he would not suddenly turn and observe another biped just vanishing out of his line of vision. Those tug-men were born on the island. They resented Hoag. He fetched no revenue. He was nothing but a squatter. His smoke irritated them. They felt crowded. Winter was always their time to be lords of all. Besides, they were the official guardians of property on behalf of the city that owned the island and the summer residents who owned the roofs. Frequently Hoag made an effort to get at one of these stalkers. He called to a man every

time he saw him; but the man always slunk away like a bear.

"Evidently I'm not popular," he whistled.

NEITHER was he lonesome. And he had no fear. Fear, after all, was of the body. Alone here, away from theatres, churches, crowds, smoke and scurrying ambition, he felt himself greater than the whole city he had left; greater than Markham, who was the most powerful man in the place. He knew it was a mere matter of a few weeks till the town should suck him back again. For the present he was free. He belonged to all the ages. Carrying with him the sense of the city, he could feel how man had come up to such myriad forms of art and industry and society while retaining somewhere at the root most of his primitive instincts.

ONE thing he quickly noticed as he began to get the city out of his nerves was that a few things refused to be obliterated. One of these was music. Another was the sense of a crowd. Another was the curious vibration of the office when



Even a scientific doctor could be convinced.

the press was running. Those three stayed curiously vivid. When he forgot the crowd and the office, both of them rather physical, as he reflected, the music remained. There was an obvious reason. Hoag was taking himself to pieces about as calmly as a doctor dissects a cadaver. The reason music persisted, he told himself, was because it was the most spiritual of all man's suggestions. Though it depended upon physical vibrations of air—so the scientists said—yet it got into the nerves by a set of vibrations that had nothing to do with air.

He could resurrect melodies, the motifs of symphonies, strange cadences and harmonies that he heard to the cold creepings of wind and water. They were tremendously beautiful and infinitely sad. They gave him power to escape from his body into the unseen; power to be without fear, to ignore common hunger and the cold. Some of them brought to his mind nebulous scenes, fabulous, legendary people, invading phantoms of limitless patience and beauty. Hoag pondered upon the mystery of the music machine; the sound personality caged up in a cylinder or a few rolls of notched paper. How was it possible



That willow stub had eyes.

not only for a phonograph to rehabilitate the sound personality of a singer or a player, but more mysteriously how could a machine attached to a piano repeat identically the sound dynamics, the poetry, the silken glissandos of any known piano artist? He had heard it. The marvel he had never solved. It was one with the moving picture. Here on the dead island he could realize the magic of this thing as never he could in the crowded city.

NIGHT by night the island and the man became more and more a unity. Blindfolded he could tell by the sound of the water or the lilt of the winds in the naked trees, or the moan of it over the marsh scrub and the dead grasses, just where he was in any direction but one mile from his bungalow. He liked it better by night; and the nights were now almost at their longest. The day was but the lift of a peering curtain between the shadows of the dawn and the dusk. Every night Hoag was abroad on the sand, or out on the water in his boat. When he went to bunk in the bungalow with the flicker of a low wood fire in the arch, he scarcely knew whether he was awake or asleep. The prowling images of the sand and the water stalked at once into what might have been called his dreams, when he saw places as legendary as those called up by music, people as tremendous and as swift as the shapes on the film, and heard music more lovely than any he knew. He woke always just as dawn was creeping from the lake. He used no timepiece. And he never missed the crawl of the peering day through the ghosted clouds of grey or rose pink or green, melting over the water as never a light crept upon any human stage. When storms lashed the lake into fury he left his bungalow and ran madly along the packed-hard sand till the spray drenched him and the roar of the breakers filled him with the strength of sound. Now the eyes of Markham had so extended their range that any calm morning as he rose to see the rebirth of the day, one of those sinister figures stalked him.

D. WARMAN as general manager of Markhams, was expected to keep himself posted on more things than his business. He was to keep Markham posted. Infinite mastery of detail, no imagination, a plod-