

# Ilan Islands

## Part of the Account of his Past Winter.

At Point Balcine, at its western extremity, then crossing Monos the first outlet not much used for navigation, called at several little on Monos Island, then crossing Boca calling again at a cove Boca, then across the third Boca; cast anchor in a bay on Achacara Island, where the Trinitarian Government is establishing a leper colony. It is a barren isolated place, they have built a number of houses to take care of the lepers. There are quite a number of lepers there and they are gradually moving from the former colony which is outside the Port of Spain.

Beyond Chacachacara Island is the Boca, an inlet 9 miles wide. Boca are raging maelstroms caused by the inflow and outflow of water as the tides rise and fall.

### Port of Spain

Port of Spain which I have frequently mentioned is the capital of Trinidad. It is located about ten miles from the Boca entrance to the Gulf of Paria, on a plain extending from the shore back to the range of mountains that traverse the north part of the island. The city has a population of about 60,000 of which about 40,000 are whites. It is well laid out with a fairly wide, clean streets and many fine public buildings, especially the Parliament buildings, called "Red House" situated at the side of a fine public square or park.

At the north edge of the city is Savannah, an open space of 130 acres used as a recreation park. On the south side of this savannah is the Park Hotel, the best hotel in the city; while on the north side is the Governor's residence and Botanical Garden so amply described by Charles Kingsley in "At Last." On the east, south and west sides of the savannah are some of the finest residences in the city. The city has a well equipped electric street railway, also electric lights, and a good trolley system.

After my month's stay in Trinidad, I took the R. M. S. P. ship *Chaudiere*, to Barbados, calling at Grenada and Vincent on the way.

### Barbados

Barbados is a coral island with an area of 166 square miles and is in the shape of a well trimmed ham. It is the most intensively cultivated of all islands in the West Indies.

### AYLMER HOME DESTROYED BY FIRE

About 10:30 a.m. on Saturday last a fire broke out in the home of Walter Aylmer, Victoria street, north, Aylmer. The firemen responded promptly but could not save the house, which was frame and had a big start by the time the alarm was given. It burned to the ground and very little of the contents was saved. The fire, it is thought was caused from a defective chimney. While there was some insurance on the house and contents we understand it was not sufficient to cover the loss.

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## The Heritage Of The Desert

Continued from Page Four

ment.

rear of the wind in the pines was disturbing; it might mean only the fall and crash of the breaking night gusts, and it might mean the north wind, storm and snow. It whooped down the hollow, scattering the few scrub-oaks leaves; it whirled the red embers of the fire away into the dark to sputter in the snow, and blew the burning logs into white glow. Mescal slept in the shelter of the spruce boughs with Wolf snug and warm beside her. Hare stretched his tired limbs in the heat of the blaze.

When he awakened the fire was low and he was numb with cold. He took care to put on logs enough to last till morning; then he lay down once more, but did not sleep. The dawn came with a gray shade in the forest; it was a cloud, and it rolled over him soft, tangible, moist, and cool, and passed away under the pines. With its vanishing the dawn lightened. "Mescal, if we're on the spur of Cocconina, it's only ten miles or so to Silver Cup," said Hare, as he saddled Silvermane. "Mount now and we'll go up out of the hollow and get our bearings."

While ascending the last step to the rim Hare revolved in his mind the probabilities of marking a straight course to Silver Cup.

"Oh, Jack!" exclaimed Mescal, suddenly. "Vermillion Cliffs and home!"

"I've travelled in a circle!" replied Hare.

Mescal was enraptured at the scene. Vermillion Cliffs shone red as a rose. The split in the wall marking the oasis defined its outlines sharply against the sky. Miles of the Colorado River lay in sight. Hare knew he stood on the highest point of Cocconina overhanging the Grand Canon

and the Painted Desert, thousands of feet below. He noted the wondrous abyss sleeping in blue mist at his feet, while he gazed across to the desert awakening in the first red rays of the rising sun.

"Mescal, your Thunder River Canon is only one little crack in the rocks. It is lost in this chasm," said Hare.

"It's lost, surely. I can't even see the tip of the peak that stood so high over the valley."

Once more turning to the left Hare ran his eye over the Vermillion Cliffs and the strip of red sand shining under them, and so calculating his bearings he headed due north for Silver Cup. What with the snow and the soggy ground the first mile was hard going for Hare, and Silvermane often sank deep. Once off the level spur of the mountain they made better time, for the snow thinned out to the brown dry aisles of the forest. The slope and gradually gave way. Hare mounted in front of Mescal, and put the stallion on an easy trot; after two hours of riding they struck a bridge-trail which Hare recognized as one leading down to the spring. In another hour they reached the steep slope of Cocconina, and saw the familiar red wall across the valley, and caught glimpses of gray sage patches down through the pines.

"I smell smoke," said Hare.

"The boys must be at the spring," rejoined Mescal.

"Maybe. I want to be sure who's there. We'll leave the trail and slip down through the woods to the left. I wish we could get down on the home side of the spring. But we can't; we've got to pass it."

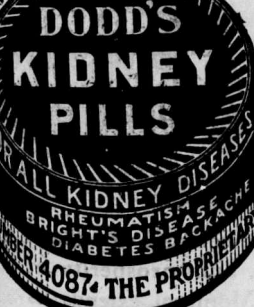
With many a pause to peer through openings in the pines Hare traversed a diagonal course down the slope, crossed the line of cedars, and reached the edge of the valley a mile or more above Silver Cup. Then he turned toward it, still cautiously leading Silvermane under cover of the fringe of cedars.

"Mescal, there are too many cattle in the valley," he said, looking at her significantly.

"They can't all be ours, that's sure," she replied. "What do you think?"

"Holderness!" With the word Hare's face grew set and stern. He kept on, cautiously leading the horse under the cedars careful to avoid breaking brush or rattling stones, occasionally whispering to Wolf; and so worked his way along the curve of the woody slope till further progress was checked by the bulging wall of rock.

"Only cattle in the valley, no horses," he said. "I've a good chance to cut across this curve and reach the trail. If I take time to climb up and see who's at the spring maybe the chance will be gone. I don't believe Dave and the boys are there."



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He pondered a moment, then climbed up in front of Mescal, and directed the gray out upon the valley. Soon he was among the grazing cattle. He felt no surprise to see the H brand on their flanks.

"Jack, look at that brand," said Mescal, pointing to a white-flanked steer. "There's an old brand like a cross, Father's Naab's cross, and a new brand, a single bar. Together they make an H!"

"Mescal! You've hit it. I remember that steer. He was a very devil to brand. He's the property of August Naab, and Holderness has added the bar, making a clumsy H. What a rustlers' trick! It wouldn't deceive a child."

They had reached the cedars and the trail when Wolf began to sniff suspiciously at the wind.

"Look!" whispered Mescal, calling attention of Hare from the dog. "Look! A new corral!"

Bending back to get in line with her pointing finger Hare looked through a network of cedar boughs to see a fence of stripped pines. Farther up were piles of unstripped logs, and close by the spring there was a new cabin with smoke curling from the chimney. Hare guided Silvermane off of the trail to softer ground and went on. He climbed the slope, passed the old pool, now a mud puddle, and crossed the dry wash to be brought suddenly to a halt. Wolf had made an uneasy stand with his nose pointing to the left, and Silvermane pricked up his ears. Presently Hare heard the tramping of hoofs off in the cedars, and before he had fully determined the direction from which the sound came three horses and a man stepped from the shade into a sunlit space.

As luck would have it Hare happened to be well screened by a thick cedar; and since there was a possibility that he might remain unseen he chose to take it. Silvermane and Wolf stood still in their tracks. Hare felt Mescal's hands tighten on his coat and he pressed them to reassure her. Peeping out from his covert he saw a man in his shirt-sleeves leading the horses—a slender, clean-faced, dark-haired man—Dene! The blood beat hotly in Hare's temples and he gripped the handle of his Colt. It seemed a fatal chance that sent the outlaw to that trail. He was whistling; he had two halters in one hand and with the other he led his bay horse by the mane. Then Hare saw that he wore no belt; he was unarmed; on the horses were only the halters and clinking hobbles. Hare dropped his Colt back into its holster.

Dene sauntered on, whistling "Dixie." When he reached the trail, instead of crossing it, as Hare had hoped, he turned into it and came down.

Hare swung the switch he had broken from an aspen and struck Silvermane a stinging blow on the flanks. The gray leaped forward. The crash of brush and rattle of hoofs stampeded Dene's horses in a twinkling. But the outlaw paled to a ghastly white and seemed rooted to the trail. It was not fear of a man or a horse that held Dene fixed; in his starting eyes was the terror of the supernatural.

The shoulder of the charging stallion struck Dene and sent him sprawling out of the trail. In a backward glance Hare saw the outlaw fall, then rise unharmed to shake his fists wildly and to run yelling toward the cabin.

**The Swoop of the Hawk**

"Jack! the saddles' slipping!" cried Mescal, clinging closer to him.

"What luck!" Hare muttered through clenched teeth, and pulled hard on the bridle. But the mouth of the stallion was iron; regardless of the saving bit, he galloped on. Hare steadily: "Whoa, there, Silver! Whoa—slow now—whoo—easy!" and finally halted him. Hare swung down, and as he lifted Mescal off, the saddle slipped to the ground.

"Lucky not to get a spill! The girth snapped. It was wet, and dried out." Hare hurriedly began to repair the break with buckskin thongs that he found in a saddle bag.

"Listen! Hear the yells!" Oh hurry!" cried Mescal.

"I've never ridden bareback. Suppose you go ahead with Silver, and I'll hide in the cedars till dark, then walk home!"

"No—No. There's time, but hurry." "It's got to be strong," muttered Hare, holding the strap over his knee and pulling the laced knot with all his strength, "for well have to ride some. If it comes loose—Good bye!"

Silvermane's broad chest muscles rippled and he stamped restlessly. The dog whined and looked back. Mescal had the blanket smooth on the gray when Hare threw the saddle over him. The yells had ceased, but clattering

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hoofs on the stony trail were a greater menace. While Hare's brown hands worked swiftly over buckle and strap, Mescal climbed to a seat behind the saddle.

"Get into the saddle," said Hare leaping astride and pressing forward over the pommel. "Slip down—there! and hold to me. Go! Silver!"

The rapid pounding of the stallion's hoofs drowned the clatter coming up the trail. A backward glance relieved Hare, for dust-clouds some few hundred yards in the rear showed the position of the pursuing horsemen. He held in Silvermane to a steady gallop. The trail was up-hill, and steep enough to wind even a desert racer, if put to his limit.

"Look back!" cried Mescal. "Can you see them? Is Snap with them?"

"I can't see for trees," replied Hare, over his shoulder. "There's dust—we're far in the lead—never fear, Mescal. The lead's all we want."

Cedars grew thickly all the way up the steeper part of the divide, and ended abruptly at a pathway of stone where the ascent became gradual. When Silvermane struck out of the turning upon this slope Hare kept glancing keen glances rearward. The dust cloud rolled to the edge of the cedars, and out of it trooped half-dozen horsemen who began to shoot as soon as they had reached the open. Bullets zipped along the red stone, cutting little puffs of red dust, and sung through the air.

"Good God!" cried Hare. "They're firing on us! They'd shoot a woman!"

"Has it taken you so long to learn that?"

Hare slashed his steel with the switch. But Silvermane needed no goad or spur; he had been shot at before and the whistle of one bullet was sufficient to stretch his gallop into a run. Then distance between him and his pursuers grew wider and wider and soon he was out of their range. The yells of the rustlers seemed at first to come from baffled rage but Mescal's startled cry showed their meaning. Other horsemen appeared ahead to the right of him, tearing down the ridge to the divide. Evidently they had been returning from the western curve of Cocconina.

The direction in which Silvermane was stretching was the only possible one for Hare. If he swerved off the trail to the left it would be upon rough rising ground. Not only must he outride this second band to the point where the trail went down on the other side of the divide, but also he must get beyond it before they came within rifle range.

"Now! Silver! Go! Go!" Fast as the noble stallion was speeding he answered the call. He was in the open now, free of stones and brush, with the spang of rifles in the air. The wind rushed into Hare's ears, filling them with a hollow roar; the ground blurred by in reddish sheets. The horsemen cut down the half-mile to a quarter, lessened that, swept closer and closer, till Hare recognized Chance and Culver, and Snap Naab on his cream-colored pinto. Seeing that they could not head the invincible stallion they sheered more to the right. But Silvermane thundered on, crossing the line ahead of them, at full three hundred yards, and went over the divide, drawing them in behind him.

Then, at the sharp crack of the rifles, leaden messengers whizzed high in the air over horse and riders, and skipped along the red shale in front of the running dog.

"Oh—Silvermane!" cried Hare. It was just a call, as if the horse were human, and knew what that pace meant to his master. The stern business of the race had ceased to rest on Hare. Silvermane was out to the front. He was like a level-rushing thunderbolt. Hare felt the instantaneous pause between his long low leaps, the gather of mighty muscles, the strain, the tension, then the quivering expulsion of force. It was a perilous ride down that red slope, not so much from the hissing bullets as from the washes and gullies Silvermane sailed over in

magnificent leaps. Hare thrilled with savage delight in the wonderful prowess of his desert king, in the primal instinct of joy at escaping with the woman he loved.

"Outrun!" he cried, with blazing eyes. Mescal's white face was pressed close to his shoulder. "Silver has beaten them. They'll hang on till we reach the sand-strip, hoping the slowdown will let them come up in time. But they'll be far too late."

The rustlers continued on the trail firing desultory, till Silvermane so far distanced them that even the necessary lapse into a walk in the red sand placed them beyond range when they arrived at the strip.

"They've turned back, Mescal. We're safe. Why, you look as you did the day the bear ran for you."

"I'd rather a bear got me than Snap, Jack, did you see him?"

"See him? Rather! I'll bet he nearly killed his pinto. Mescal, what do you think of Silvermane now? Can he run? Can he outrun Bolly?"

"Yes—yes. Oh! Jack! how I'll love him. Look back again. Are we safe? Will we ever be safe?"

It was still daylight when they rounded the portal of the oasis and entered the lane with the familiar wall on one side, the peeled fence-pickets on the other. Wolf dashed on ahead, and presently a chorus of barks announced that he had been met by the other dogs. Silvermane neighed shrilly, and the horses and mustangs in the corrals trooped noisily to the lower sides and hung inquisitive heads over the top bars.

A Navajo whom Hare remembered stared with awe at the woodpile, then Judith Naab dropped a bundle of



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sticks and with a cry of gladness ran from the house. Before Silvermane had come to a full stop Mescal was off. She put her arms around his neck and kissed him, then she left Judith to dart to the corral where a little black mustang had begun to whistle and stamp and try to climb over the bars.

August Naab, bareheaded, with shaggy locks shaking at every step, strode off the porch and his great hands lifted Hare from the saddle. "Every day I've watched the river for you," he said. His eyes were warm and his grasp like a vise.

"Mescal—child!" he continued, as she came running to him. "Safe and well. He's brought you back. Thank the Lord!" He took her to his breast and bent his gray head over her.

Then the crowd of big and little Naabs burst from the house and came under the cottonwoods to offer noisy welcome to Mescal and Hare.

To Be Continued Next Week

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