

whole civilised world; and he answered with equal heartiness:

"I could never have a better adviser than yourself, Sir Reginald, in any difficulty; and if I hesitated to consult you, it was simply because (as you will soon see) the matter is one which a man would hardly repeat to his best friend without some consideration. Look at this paper—it's a list of instructions left by Senhor da Espingarda when he sailed, about the work that he wants done on the plantation."

Horseley took the paper—eyed it closely—then more closely still—and spreading it out on the table, made a careful examination of it, though rather as if scrutinising the handwriting (which was a very peculiar one) than as if studying the contents.

"I see," said he in a low voice; "but let us be quite sure. I have that letter here now, you know—the captain left it with me in case I should be able to pick up among all the people whom I know here some clue to its history and its right address."

And, taking from his pocket-book the memorable letter which Captain Pipes and Lionel had picked up at sea, he laid it beside Espingarda's paper of directions, and proceeded to compare the two with the closest attention.

The handwriting of both was the same in every point.

The two men exchanged a meaning look in silence.

"You see my dilemma now," said Lionel, at length; "either I must neglect a dying man's last prayer, or I must run the risk of giving his sick wife such a shock as may kill her outright."

"It's an awkward question to deal with, undoubtedly," rejoined the baronet; "but I think I can settle it for you. When that poor fellow wrote this message, he, of course, thought himself doomed to certain death, and intended the letter to tell his wife the worst at once, and spare her the torment of prolonged suspense; whereas now—there being as yet no positive proof that he is dead—it will only make the suspense which it was meant to relieve ten times worse than ever."

"That's true—I didn't think of that," said Lionel, with a brightening face.

"And then," resumed the baronet, "apart from the danger of giving this poor woman such a shock in her present weak state of health, I may tell you that, in the position of the Espingarda family at this moment, you could not do them a worse injury than to deliver this letter."

The young man stared at him in blank amazement, as indeed he well might.

"I see you are wondering how I can know anything of their affairs when I don't even know themselves," went on Sir Reginald; "but the fact is that I met to-day, at that house where I've been visiting, a Portuguese lawyer whom I used to know in Oporto, the very man who drew up the will of Gonzalo da Espingarda's

father. He tells me that that will left this property to Gonzalo, and a smaller one in Madeira to his younger brother, who comes into this estate, too, in the event of Gonzalo's death."

Lionel raised his head quickly, with the air of a man who was beginning to understand.

"Now," pursued Horseley, "this brother of his seems to be a very great rascal, and if he got the least hint of Gonzalo being dead (as he soon would if this story once got abroad) we should have him down here post-haste to claim the property, worry the poor woman out of her life, and very likely—if he made good his claim—drive her out of her own house as a homeless beggar; for the will, having been made before Gonzalo's marriage was ever thought of, makes absolutely no provision for it."

"And can nothing be done to prevent all that?"

"So far as I understand the case, nothing whatever."

"Then you think our best plan is to say nothing about the matter?"

"I'm sure of it—at all events until we have made further inquiries as to the fate of Gonzalo himself, and of the vessel in which he sailed from Oporto. I think I can undertake to make them without arousing any suspicion; and, in the meantime, we had better keep the whole affair a secret between ourselves."

And so they did.

(To be continued.)

## BELEAGUERED BY TIGERS; AND OTHER TRUE INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL IN SUMATRA.

BY CLAES ERICSSON.

THERE was tiger "talk" almost every day—many times daily in some parts—and I saw more than enough of the treacherous brutes when collecting orchids and other plants among the mountains which stretch from end to end of Sumatra, but I can recall very few instances of natives being killed by them, although the huts outside the *campongs* (villages) are often a great distance apart. However, this comparative immunity is not owing to want of enterprise on the part of the tigers, or my experiences were exceptional ones, but to the prudence of the people, who seldom go out after dark without lamps or torches, and whose houses are mostly built on piles, often eight or ten feet from the ground. If those airy structures of bamboo and rattan were more within reach, I doubt not that "Mr. Stripes" would play havoc with the dwellers.

Certainly the tiger is no respecter of human habitations. A Chinaman at Singapore told me that on going out one morning to cut vegetables for the market he encountered a monster in his garden. Rushing back to his house in desperate haste, he had but just time to clamber up the notched pole to a sort of loft where he slept and kept his gun, before the tiger was after him through the open door, dashing about the kitchen below, smashing the crockery-ware, and upsetting pots and pans in his vain endeavours to climb the apology for a staircase. Had Wang-lo taken the trouble to make a ladder when building his house he would certainly have been food for tiger that day, but the makeshift bamboo saved him, for the brute could not negotiate it. His gun was empty, but he loaded it as quickly as his trembling fingers would permit, and peered down.

What a sight that must have been!

The tiger standing erect, his quivering body stretched out full length, while he clawed the pole and shook the house in his rage at being balked. Wang-lo looked down the cavernous throat and marked the great white teeth and bared gums. I do not suppose that he enjoyed the spectacle. He must have been in a terrible fright lest the frail building should tumble about his ears and precipitate him into those gaping jaws. Pushing the muzzle of his old gun to within a couple of feet of the brute's head, he sent a handful of slugs into his brain, killing his enemy at the first shot. Descending when quite sure that the tiger was dead, Wang-lo stepped over the carcass, and once more went out into his garden, only to rush back in even greater panic and bar the door. The tiger had brought two companions, which had remained outside the house, playing, so the Celestial said, with his pigs. These went away after a while, and Wang-lo seized the earliest opportunity to remove to a less lonely neighbourhood.

Towards the end of May, 1893, I set out from Bencoolen for Campong Palik, a village some twenty-five miles distant, intending to explore the Palik mountain. During a previous journey I had heard a great deal about tigers in this part of Sumatra, and soon after leaving Taba Penandjong, a village on the road, notorious for the frequent visits paid to it by those dangerous felines, my coolies and I had rather a bad scare.

We had taken possession of a small hut standing a couple of feet from the ground, on the slope of a mountain. As it would not hold all my men, about half of them were obliged to sleep outside. Shortly before day-

break I was aroused by shouts and a loud knocking at the door.

"*Tuan—Tuan! Rimau!* (Sir—Sir! Tiger!). Let us in!"

Springing out of my *clambo* (mosquito curtains), I reached and unbarred the door before the Malays who shared the hut were on their feet. I was only just in time. As the last of the terrified fellows rushed past me the tiger struck the door a violent blow. Had a Malay been holding it the brute would certainly have been amongst us, but I pushed with all my might, shouting for my Winchester. Half a dozen of the coolies came to my assistance, and between us we got the bamboo which served as a bar into position.

Finding that he could not break in there, the tiger walked round the hut, sniffing at every crevice, and striking the bamboos until they shook again. Getting hold of my rifle I tried for a shot, but the hovel was packed with men. However, when they had recovered from their panic I persuaded them to follow, and we dashed out, yelling at the top of our voices. The tiger made off, but a Malay caught sight of the brute in the tall Alang-Alang grass below, and drew my attention. I fired, but the light was too bad. Anyway, I missed.

Mr. Pelzer, a Dutch official at Taba Penandjong, told me that scarcely a week passed without a tiger being seen or heard as it prowled round the village, but I only encountered one in that neighbourhood. However, before my collecting trip came to an end I had made the acquaintance of more than I cared for.

The day following that first adventure we arrived at a coffee plantation owned by two



A Surprise.

(Drawn for the "Boy's Own Paper" by GEORGE SOPER.)

natives. These people usually dwell in the *campungs*, but as their gardens are generally on the hills at some little distance from the villages, they build huts to shelter them when planting or harvesting. The natives had a bamboo hovel about fifteen feet square, just high enough to permit them to stand upright in the middle. One of them told me that a few weeks before he had brought his child with him and left it playing about the hut while he went to cut the jungle a short distance away. During his absence the little one was killed by a tiger and partly eaten. And he had not heard a sound.

At *Campung Palik* I learned that there was a village, *Gading*, much nearer the *Palik* mountain, and that if I had gone there direct I should have saved about ten miles. But *Nor*, the Malay who filled the dual posts of guide and cook, and the coolies seemed to have entered into a conspiracy to lead me astray; indeed, my experience of the natives of *Sumatra* is that nothing pleases them better than befogging travellers. *Nor* was a dreadful humbug. To hear him talk one would suppose that he had explored every mountain in the country, but whenever I wished to benefit by his knowledge I found his information most untrustworthy. He had, in fact, scarcely been anywhere. Most ferocious he looked in his tattered head-handkerchief and among stook full of krisses, but I believe the meanest coolie in my company had more pluck.

*Ali*, my other personal servant, was of a different stamp, but I fear no less deceitful. It was his pleasure to pose as a sort of *Man Friday*, the faithful slave. "Master go to eat, me go to eat. Master go to sleep, me go to sleep," he used to say. Indeed, his devotion was something to marvel at—until I found him out.

I stayed at *Campung Palik* till the next day, sharing the hut of a kindly Malay. During the night a herd of wild pigs invaded the village and fought a pitched battle with the dogs that lasted till dawn. I could not sleep a wink for the awful squealing and howling, but my host and his family snored through the battle as if it were a nightly occurrence.

Leaving for *Campung Gading* in the morning, we passed through *Tandjong Agong*, with its splendid avenue of cocoa-nut palms, and several other villages. Getting tired of the slow pace of the buffaloes, I took *Balan*, a man I had engaged at *Palik*, to act as guide in place of the incompetent *Nor*, and set out to walk to *Gading*. It was then dusk, and we had a five-mile tramp before us.

On either side of the track were thickets of bamboo and tall *Alang-Alang* grass. We had not got far on our way before *Balan* began to glance over his shoulder in a frightened manner and dodge about from one side of the path to the other.

"Why do you do that?" I asked at length, for the fellow was making me nervous.

"*Biman, Tuan!*" (Tiger, Sir), he answered fearfully. "He's in the grass and he's keeping level with us."

I felt cold all down my back, and when, a moment afterwards, I heard a rush behind me, I could almost feel the tiger's claws in my shoulder. However, I sprang aside, shouting as loud as I could. Great was my relief when a chorus of grunts answered. *Balan's* tiger was a drove of wild pigs, possibly those which had kept me awake the night before.

I laughed, but all the same I was very glad to reach *Gading*, and more pleased still when safe in the village resthouse, stretched in a comfortable arm-chair lent me by the *Passirah*. A *Passirah*, I should explain, is the chief of a *marpa*, which comprises a certain number of *campungs*, or villages.

*Gading* is in the district of *Lais*. This particular *Passirah* was a shifty sort of fellow, who would not look me in the face, even when drinking my brandy, but he provided some extra coolies and accompanied us some distance on our way.

Our next halt was at a plantation owned by a *Hadji*—that is, a Moslem who has made the pilgrimage to *Mecca*. From here I sent some men ahead to make a camp, as there were no more villages. Following them, I found they had built a *pondok* (hut) in a thicket of trees, rattans, and creepers so dense that no sun-ray could possibly penetrate. However, as the rain fell in torrents all the rest of the day, I was glad of the shelter.

Leaving this camp we presently hit upon an elephant track, which spared us the labour of cutting a path. But it was very slippery, and several of the coolies had bad falls. My lamp-bearer rolled down a ravine and smashed the lamp all to pieces. This was a serious loss, as I had no lamp to hang up beside my sleeping-place to scare the tigers and other animals. On arriving at the top of the ridge I found we could not reach the summit of *Palik* mountain from that position. Back we went, down a fearful precipice, at the bottom of which ran a small stream. I led the way up the channel, which was full of jagged rocks; but the barefoot coolies could not follow far. Their feet were badly cut before we had covered a mile, and I was obliged to halt.

We camped beside the mountain stream. Before the *pondoks* were built the rain fell in torrents. The Malays, in their short cotton trousers, shivered with cold and grumbled loudly. But there was no returning. As soon as my hut was ready I stripped and took thirteen leeches from my ankles. Making themselves almost as fine as needles, they penetrate garments of the closest texture. The victim feels a sting not unlike the bite of a flea, and in a few moments there is a big red spot on his trousers, and soon the leech is about ten times its ordinary size. The whole of that night the rain poured down. Awaking some hours before dawn, I could not at first hear anything except the ceaseless drip and splash.

"Hallo!" I shouted.

The answer came from a distance.

"*Baniak ayer, Tuan!*" (Much water, Sir!)

There was, indeed, much water. I could see scarcely anything else. My hut was an island. The stream had risen to within a few inches of my rude bed. Jumping up, I waded to some rising ground close by, where I found the men crouching and chattering their teeth. There we stayed till daylight. Fortunately the stream went down as quickly as it had risen, and we lost no time in removing the camp to an open spot where the sun could penetrate to dry our sodden clothes and blankets.

Here I saw a great quantity of elephant dung, but the animals appeared to have left the neighbourhood. A few plants grew round the camp, *Marantaceæ* with spotted leaves, and *Balsams* with very conspicuous yellow, cup-shaped blossoms. At noon it commenced to rain again, and by three o'clock the clouds had gathered so thickly that we sat in semi-darkness. Then the thunder began to shake the earth and the lightning to rend the heavens. Had we remained in our first camp we must have been drowned, for in a very short time we were islanders once more. Crouched up like crows round a fire that persistently refused to burn, my men sat in silence—giving no sign of life, indeed. But this wretched experience came to an end.

Following the pioneers, I found that they had made the next camp on a big slope

which could not possibly be flooded. They had also cut down a number of trees to let in the sunlight. I was very pleased with the situation, but not being a prophet, I could not foresee the future.

The immediate consequence of so many drenchings was a bad attack of fever, which a liberal use of quinine enabled me to conquer. As soon as I was able to get about I explored the slope and made a fine collection of plants. Determined to make a long stay, I sent the "faithful" *Ali* back to *Gading* for a supply of provisions, but that much-protesting youth never returned. He was tired of the mountains, so contrived to fall ill, like *Nor*, who had deserted some time before.

I had just got back to the camp one evening when without the least warning a number of large trees came crashing to the ground. The *pondok* rocked to and fro. My plates fell from the shelf which I had made for them and were smashed. In great alarm I rushed out to the panic-stricken coolies.

"The mountain is falling," they cried, and flung themselves on their faces.

It really appeared so. The slope was on the move, slipping from beneath my feet. Only once before had I experienced a sensation so sickening, and that was at *Labuan* off the north-west coast of *Borneo*—when, during a tremendous thunderstorm, the island seemed to be lifted from its foundations and dropped back again.

I felt three distinct shocks. Many of the mightiest monarchs of the forest fell prone, but fortunately for us there was no serious landslip. As may be supposed, I was very ill at ease, and my men were similarly affected. They kept together, talking in low tones and quoting verses from the *Koran*, as was their custom when nervous and excited. When I went to bed I could not sleep, and it was well that I did not, for that night the tigers found us out.

As nearly as I could judge it was about ten o'clock that I heard a slight noise behind the *pondok*. A stick cracked, and the leaves were rustling suspiciously. Half rising from my bed of twigs and branches, I listened intently. All was very still. The Malays had evidently droned themselves to sleep. But a moment afterwards I heard the rustling again, and then a sniff. There was a tiger within a foot or so of my head. I could hear his wary breathing. With one blow of his paw he could level the frail hut with the ground, and I should be at his mercy. My rifle stood in a corner out of reach. Besides, I was enveloped in the mosquito curtains. Half paralysed, I lay still for a moment, then, overcoming the sickening dread, I tossed aside the curtains, sprang up and got hold of my *Winchester*. Next moment I was outside the *pondok*, shouting for the coolies, who were fast asleep.

The tiger made off down a ravine on the edge of which the hut had been built. Taking a make-shift lamp and a firebrand I went behind the *pondok*. The brute's footprints, nearly as large as saucers, were only too visible. *Nor* had he gone far, for when I threw the firebrand down the ravine I could hear him rushing up the opposite bank. I discharged a couple of shots at random in the hope that he would be too scared to trouble us further.

Calling *Balan*, my *Palik* man, I told him to make up a big fire and keep a good watch, then went back to the *pondok*, but, feeling very uneasy, I did not lie down. When *Balan* had put all the dry wood we had—which was very little—on the fire, he came and stood close to the hut, leaning on his spear. I could see him between the leaves that formed the walls. Judging by the quick

movements of his head as he turned it from side to side, he was in a terrible funk. As I watched him he set up a yell:

"*Tuan! Tuan! Rimau datang lagi!*" (Sir! the tiger is coming back!)

Almost simultaneously the men round the dwindling fire sprang to their feet shouting that another was approaching their side of the camp. Things were getting lively, indeed! In no small alarm I rushed from the *pondok* once more and fired two shots down the ravine. Listening, I heard the tiger dashing about, but instead of making off he came straight for the camp. I at once joined the panic-stricken Malays, every man of whom was yelling at the top of his voice. Our united efforts must have frightened the tigers for the time being, as neither showed in the open.

Go back to the hut I dared not. We could hear the tigers stealing round the camp, now in one quarter, now in another. The fire was nearly out. We had no more dry fuel, and no man dared seek any. When the last flicker died away the hungry brutes watching us would attack. Clearly something must be done, and without delay.

Tearing up some old cloth into strips, I made wicks in desperate haste, while the Malays were cutting pieces of metal from provision tins to form cylinders, and pouring paraffin into bottles and empty tins. Even after half-a-dozen rude lamps had been set alight and placed round the camp the rustling continued for a time. The tigers seemed unwilling to leave; but when they did go it was with a rush. We heard a succession of crashes, then all was still.

At dawn the men showed me the tracks of a rhinoceros, which had come down the path they had cut, and passed within a few feet of the rhinoceros perhaps accounted for the tigers' hurried departure. That he had compassed the camp was clear, for his tracks were almost everywhere. Possibly he had wined the tigers and was seeking them to pay off some old score, perhaps to avenge the death of a calf snapped up in the temporary absence of its parents. In the ravine and all round the cleared space, tiger-pads were almost as thick as cat-tracks in a freshly dug suburban garden.

After breakfast I sent half the Malays collecting, and retained the rest to assist me in preparing for another siege. Some cut bamboos, others rattans. When we had enough, I built a fence round the clearing, planting the bamboos firmly in the ground, and stretching the rattans between them in place of rails. At intervals I tied a couple of Crosse and Blackwell's tins (empty, of course), or a couple of bottles, so that in the event of any animal coming in contact with the fence the tins and bottles would rattle and give the alarm. This done, I had a great heap of firewood collected and some additional lamps prepared. My frying-pau I hung up as a tom-tom for the use of the sentry.

In the evening, after supper, all the lamps and two big fires were set alight. Never in all the ten years of my jungle wandering had I had a camp so splendidly illuminated. We were in fairyland. The foliage, vivid green where the light fell, black in the shadows, except when a swarm of fire-flies flashed past, had never looked so lovely. But our illuminations were designed for a strictly utilitarian purpose.

Having satisfied myself that the fence was in perfect condition, I arranged the order of the watch, instructing each man detailed for sentry duty to beat the tom-tom every fifteen minutes, then retired to the *pondok*, where I lay awake, with my rifle close at hand.

For some hours I listened to the musical, if rather nasal, voices of the Malays, also

watchful, chanting some song which from time to time blended with the ting-ting of my frying-pan. At length I fell asleep, to awake with the old cry ringing in my ears:

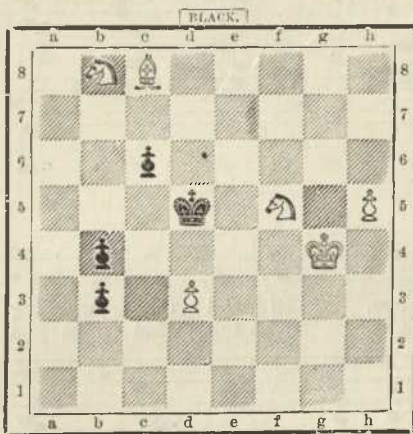
"*Rimau, Tuan!*"

Rising hurriedly, I left the *pondok*. It was the darkest hour of the night, that before dawn. The lamps were all out, the fires burning very low. Hearing a slight noise behind me, I turned quickly, and saw two eyes that glowed like coals not six yards away. They were so near the ground that I felt sure the tiger was crouching to spring. With my heart in my mouth I fired from the hip and leapt aside. Next moment I heard the tins and bottles rattling as the brute struck against the fence, and then I heard him rolling over and over down the ravine. We made up the fires and sat round them until daybreak, when we examined the ground. There were fresh prints in numbers, but all outside the fence, except in one place, close to the hut. The cunning brute I had fired at had been in the act of creeping under the rattan when I pulled the trigger. In rising he had smashed the fence down. There was arterial blood on the bank and in the bottom of the ravine, but we did not follow the trail. I had had enough of tigers, and so had the Malays. It was with the greatest difficulty that I prevented them from setting out for Gading at once. We moved the camp to a hill at some distance, where I made another good collection. The tigers did not trouble us there; nevertheless I was very pleased to get back to Gading and the *Passirah's* comfortable arm-chair.

## CHESS.

Problem No. 438.

By E. H. ANDREWS.



Solution of No. 437.—1, B—B sq., K x Kt (or a, b, c). 2, Q—Q 2 mate. (a) K—B 4, 2, B—K 3 mate. (b) K—K 4 or P—B 4. 2, Q—B 6 mate. (c) Kt moves. 2, Q—K 3 mate. If the white K were placed on R sq. or R 8, there would be a solution by 1, K—R 2 or to R 7; and if the position were shifted one square to the right, there would be a mate by 1, Q—K 8 (ch.) and 2, Q mates.

### FOUR-MOVERS.

It has been said that S. Loyd considers the following four-mover by himself the best problem in four moves: White, K G4; L F2; N A3; O B4, E1; P D4. Black, K B3; P C3, D5, H4. We have no means of selecting the best problem, and can only quote those four-

movers which have been praised by various authors, and shall be pleased to receive the opinions of the best composers and solvers. We use the International notation, for it is shorter, and is easily understood by foreigners.

By J. Kohtz and C. Kockelkorn.—White, K H1; L B2; M D4, F6; P E2, E3, G5, H5; Black, K E5; M C8; N E1; O C3, G7; P C7, G4.

By J. Berger.—White, K C1; L B8; M C3; N C7; O F2; P A3, B2, C4, D5, G3, H2. Black, K D4; M H6; N H1, H8; O G6, G7; P A4, A6, B3, C5, F3, G4.

By J. Dobrusky.—White, K F1; L B3; M C4; N D4; P A4, G6. Black, K D5; O B4; P E6, G7.

By J. Salminger.—White, K F5; L H2; M C2; N B1; O C3; P A3, B5, D4, E6. Black, K C4; N F8, P B2, B3, C7, D6, E7, G2, H3.

By J. Pospisil.—White, K G1; L B7; M C3; N E1; O A1; P A4, D5, F4, F6, Black, K D4; N A7; O A3, C1; P B6, E2, E6, G3, G4, G6.

By J. Dobrusky.—White, K A2; L B1; N B8, F5; O A3, D8; P A4, D6, E2, F6, G5, H2. Black, K D5; O C5, D7; P A7.

There is another four-mover by S. Loyd, which has been much admired, and as some composers prefer it to the one given above, we quote it here: White, K A8; L H8; M G2; N E1, F1; O H4; P A5, B6, F4, G5, H6. Black, K H3; L C6; O A2, B1; P A6, B7, D5, E4.

We could add four-movers by K. Bayer, P. Klett, C. Planck, W. A. Shinkman, and others, but will wait for the opinions of our correspondents about the first moves to these eight problems, which in turn are: L F8; L B7; K D1; N B6; M G2; P D6; N A7; N A6;. The best answers are: K C4; O F5 and E6; N G2; O A6, C2 and C6; P C5; P G5 and P E5; K D6; and O E5; and P A6;+. The symmetrical turns in Nos. 2, 4, 6, and 7 are delightful. In No. 3 Black is compelled to move, else there would not be a mate in four moves.

### TO CHESS CORRESPONDENTS.

F. S. P.—The International notation records games from Black's side as well as White's, for game No. 5 in the "Guide" (London, 1882) begins thus:

BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE
1. P c5	P e4	2. N g5	O f5

C. C. F. A., and P. W.—In sending solutions, you have done well to use capitals for the squares, for the c and e are not easily distinguished in small writing and print.

J. W. GRIFFITHS.—Of No. 430 you are the nineteenth solver, but among the correct ones the sixth, and Mr. Bainsford promised to present a copy also to you.

### AN ADVENTUROUS EXPLORER.

We give this week a stirring tiger story by a writer new to our columns—Mr. Ericsson. This gentleman has spent some twelve years in the jungles of the Far East, collecting plants, birds, butterflies, beetles, etc., and several fine orchids are named after him in honour of their discoverer. He knows thoroughly Borneo, Java, Sumatra, the Philippines, etc., and our readers will doubtless be glad to make his acquaintance in our pages.

### THE "B.O.P." IN THE COLONIES.

Mr. G. PONTIN writes to us from Williamstown, Victoria:

"I have made all sorts of things from the descriptions given in the 'B.O.P.', from the cardboard engines to cameras, canvas canoes, and model yachts, etc. etc. We have started a model-yacht club out here, and have a small club with fast boats. They are very beamy, and carry a large amount of canvas. They are hand-capped on W. L. measurement, sail area being unlimited and windward ballast allowed, so that it requires a strong puller to keep up with them when it blows hard. They are sailed on the open sea (or rather Hobson's Bay). Later on I will send you some photos of our models."