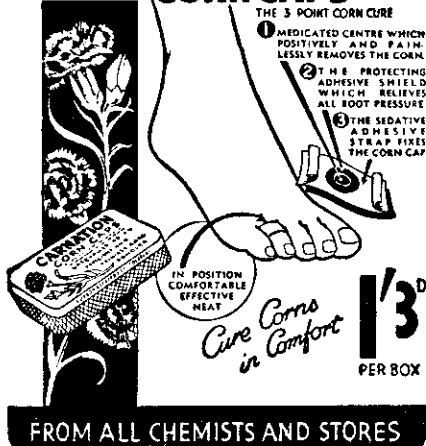


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IF HITLER DROPPED IN

An Amusing Parallel With Hess's Flying Visit

EARLY on the night of Saturday, May 10, a Messerschmitt fighter roared low over the Duke of Hamilton's estate in Lanarkshire, near Glasgow, Scotland. It was heard to crash, and a little later a German officer in a "magnificent flying suit" was found sitting on the ground near his parachute, nursing a broken ankle.

When he had been taken to hospital (refusing a cup of tea offered him by a hospitable Scots ploughman), the officer proved to be none other than Rudolf Hess, deputy Fuhrer of the Nazi Party, and Adolf Hitler's successor-designate after Field-Marshal Goering.

Thus broke what the *New York Times* excitedly described as "the most fantastic story in all history."

As we go to press, one ear on Daven-try for the latest developments, as the boys of the diplomatic service say, the full story has not been told, and with the rest of the world we wait with bated breath to learn the real reason for Herr Hess's visit, whether his I.Q. is all that it should be, and what Herr Hitler thinks about it.

Why the Fuhrer Flew

In the meantime, how many people have noticed the remarkable parallel to Herr Hess's flight and landing by parachute that is to be found in a whimsical little volume entitled *The Flying Visit*, written a year ago by Peter Fleming, former *Times* correspondent, and author of *Brazilian Adventure*, *One's Company*, and *News From Tartary*?

Mr. Fleming has written a delightfully authentic little story of an imaginary visit Herr Hitler paid to England soon after the outbreak of war. Partly to prove to his people that their Fuhrer was eager to share the dangers of his fighting forces in this war against plutocratic England, partly out of curiosity to view the country on which he confidently expected to set a conquering foot before the turn of the year, Hitler flies from Germany in a bombing plane, and soars over England at a height of 30,000 feet.

Unluckily, some enemy agent has inserted a time bomb in a thermos flask of vegetable essence which the Fuhrer has taken along to sustain him on his dangerous mission, and high over the parish of Bix in Oxfordshire it explodes, destroying the aeroplane and all of its occupants but one.

Hitler Arrives

This sole survivor, who is the Fuhrer himself, floats gently to earth by parachute, eventually landing on his rump in a horse pond. This is an interesting variation in the etiquette for conquistadors, Mr. Fleming points out. William the Conqueror, when stepping for the first time on to English soil, stumbled and took seisin of it with his hand.

Recovered from the shock, the Fuhrer plans his next move with characteristic initiative. What was his ultimate objective, he asks himself? To compass the downfall of England, no less. Could that be done in his present situation? Yes. If he could only get hold of Mr. Chamberlain or Sir Horace Wilson he was sure he could persuade them that he had come to England on a peace mission. There would be a great sensation, treaties would be signed, and when he had built up his resources still further, say in a couple of years' time, he would be in a much better position to put an end to England.

At a Fancy Dress Party

His immediate problem, however, is how to make contact with someone who will understand who he is. Stumbling into a little village, he comes across a hall in which a noisy meeting of influential foreign personages seems to be taking place. Hitler finds his way to the stage, determined to address the meeting. "English men and women," he yells in German, "it is I, Adolf Hitler, who stands before you! I am not your enemy! You are not my enemy! We are not each other's enemies!" Whereupon the audience cheers him to the echo, and an Arab potentate laughs uproariously, claps him on the back and roars in his ear, "Magnificent! A bloody marvel." Another person comes up and says, "My dear fellow, I haven't the slightest idea who you are, but you win in a canter," and hands the Fuhrer a pound of butter done up in pale blue ribbon.

Herr Hitler then realises he has won first prize at a county fancy dress ball.

Later, by the greatest good luck, he encounters a certain Lord Magnus Scunner, who before the war had achieved some notoriety for his whole-hearted support of the Nazi regime and his ostentatious



friendship with Hitler. "Magnus, my old friend," cries the Fuhrer. "Grasp in comradeship the hand of Adolf Hitler."

But Lord Scunner, who has discovered that pro-Nazi sentiment has lately become most unpopular in England, smiles and says in English loudly, "Jolly good, old chap, but you can't fool me. You see, I used to know the little—"

War Cabinet Meets

But finally, thanks to a young woman who has a hunch that this is really Hitler, the German Chancellor is locked up in a lavatory while Mr. Churchill gets on the job of deciding what is to be done with him. Mr. Churchill, at this time First Lord of the Admiralty, is perplexed, especially as he learns that one of Herr Hitler's doubles has just made a speech to workers on the German railways, and decides to summon the War Cabinet. The War Cabinet, having heard Mr. Churchill make a statement "on a somewhat unexpected development in the progress of our war with Germany," is also perplexed.

For several good reasons, the blank announcement that they had captured Hitler would embarrass them and quite likely make them the laughing stock of the whole world. If they tried to conceal his capture, and the news got out, they would be even more seriously embarrassed.

The News Gets Out

Then, due to the alertness of an American newspaperman, the story breaks in the U.S., and Mr. Churchill is confronted with newspaper posters in London, "Hitler in England. Sensational U.S. Report."

(Continued on next page)

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