

I allowed myself, therefore, four mouthfuls of water each day, half a chocolate bar, which I alternated every other day with one can of pemmican, two malted-milk tablets, one multiple vitamin tablet, and one vitamin B₁ tablet.

On the fourth morning I found an eight-inch fish in my sea anchor. I didn't know how it had gotten there, but that didn't worry me. I took it out and ate it raw.

All attempts to wring moisture out of the flesh failed.

I tried to cut the meat into small squares and wring it out in parachute silk. The silk became oily, but it wasn't enough even to moisten my tongue. Then I tried wringing it out in gauze with the same lack of results. I took some of the flesh and put it between the rounded sides of two canteens, squeezing and rolling to get a wringer action, but this, too, was ineffective.

On several occasions I speared fish with my sheath knife, for that was the only way I could catch them. They refused to take the baited hooks I hung on lines on the side of the raft. Tiny minnows appeared under the raft during the first few days and stayed there until I was rescued. I made a seine out of mosquito netting, caught some of the minnows and swallowed them alive. I had always ridiculed the college boys who gained notoriety by swallowing live gold fish, but I guess now they must have been hungry—because it can be done if a fellow is hungry enough.

I shot many birds during the twenty days, most of them "brown boobies," goose-like birds with a five-foot wing span. I ate the liver and drank the blood. The rest of the meat was not as palatable as the liver, but I cut it into very small pieces, chewed them and swallowed them whole. I had to force it down, but I knew in my mind that my body was getting nourishment.

When I shot the birds late in the afternoon, after they had been fishing all day, they had fish in their throats. These fish were predigested to some extent. The stomach juices had started to work on them and the meat was tender. I could pull it away from the bones, chew it and swallow it. It tasted

as though it had been partially cooked. It was perhaps the best thing I had to eat outside of my regular rations.

Before I ran out of fresh water, I decided to experiment with drinking sea-water. I tried to rig a distilling apparatus out of two canteens, but it was unsuccessful. I tried iodine in the water, but that, of course, did not work. I didn't expect it to, but I had nothing to lose by trying. I even tried putting sulfanilamide in the water. Not being a chemist, I thought by some miracle that it might precipitate the salt. It did not.

My malted-milk tablets were in a small jar with a metal cap of the "screw-on" type. I rigged a valve on the cap that would open under pressure. Securing the bottle to my fish-line, I lowered it into the water. The valve opened at about a 40-foot depth and admitted water. I had two reasons for doing this. First of all I thought that the water at that depth, being under terrific pressure, might not have as much salt in the solution as the water at the surface and I might be able to drink it. Secondly, I thought that it might be colder than the water at the surface and that the bottle might sweat in the sun, like a pitcher of ice water, allowing me to lick the sweat off the bottle. Both assumptions were false and the experiment was entirely unsuccessful.

One day I saw a "booby bird" land on the water, dip its long neck under the surface and take a drink. It made me angry. I couldn't understand why the bird, which was only flesh and blood like myself, could drink sea-water which I could not. I shot the bird, retrieved him quickly and cut him open to trace the course of the water through his digestive system.

There wasn't a thing unusual about it. The water just went in his mouth, down his throat and into his stomach.

Around the intestines of the "booby birds" I found a handful of fat, which I used for greasing my gun. One day the thought occurred to me that I might grease my mouth with the fat and get sea-water into my stomach without tasting the salt. I did that. I greased