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SPECIAL FACT SECTION

Featuring

"THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN"
by ivan t. sanderson

THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

by IVAN T. SANDERSON

THE RACE to capture the soul of Man has been on since before so-called civilization began. But despite the efforts of many tyrants and dictators it has been *religion* that has triumphed in the long run. Today there is a gargantuan struggle in progress between what we call "The East" and "The West" and this is as much for the soul of humanity as for the first landing on the Moon. Alas, we are more interested in the latter while our rivals have the nerve to pay more attention to the former. In fact, they seem to think of everything and they appear to be a lot more pragmatic and a lot less squeamish than we are. They are willing to go into anything, however off-beat it may at first appear to be. Such "basic research" sometimes pays monumental dividends and there is one that could trump all our efforts: the ultimate Russian checkmate. But let me ask you a simple question.

Do you *really* believe in evolution?

This will probably conjure up visions of Charles Darwin and probably some notion that the scientists would have us believe that we are "descended from apes", but do you honestly believe this; deep down, I mean? Maybe you do, but if you are really honest about it I am prepared to bet some thousands to one that you do not. Don't you say to yourself that it's alright for *scientists* to say that, and to believe it; and maybe for your kids to be taught it in school *but*...well, after all...don't we know that we are all made *in the image of God* and that animals are not? So let me ask you another question.

Supposing you ran into a creature that was not just a "cross" between a Man and an Ape but a perfectly normal progeny of a whole race of beings that was neither quite man nor quite animal. What, apart from taking off for the nearest hills, would you do? More important, what would you *think*? Let me put it this

way. If such a creature menaced you, would you shoot it? And if you did, would you feel you had committed murder or just been out hunting? If you saw some other people put it in a cage would you demand its release on *humanitarian* grounds or would you just look at it from a safe distance as an interesting new zoo specimen? And if you felt it should have freedom of movement would you feel that it ought to have a vote and a voice in the councils of the United Nations? What I mean is, where do you draw the line between human and non-human, and on what criteria?

You can go to the legal fellows or you can go to the Bible, but I am afraid you won't get any consolation or help from either. Both are rather specific on the subject of *humanity*. We humans have certain privileges and rights said to have been granted to us by God, and these rights are allegedly protected by our own peers. All other living things do not have these privileges and rights, though today we grant them some measure of protection unless, of course, we want to eat them or there are too many of them or we deem them our rivals. Be this as it may, the sum total of our existence is that we have one set of rules for our own kind and another set for all other kinds. Just what would we do if we were confronted with something that was exactly halfway between the two?

This is a nice question that we have not bothered so far even to ask ourselves. Our competitors have, and they are convinced that just such creatures exist.

While only a handful of us in the so-called West have even heard of such ticket-scalpers on the outskirts of the great international ball-park, and while only one man has really tried single-handedly to do anything about the matter, our rivals have built

a whole institution in Moscow to investigate the problem and they have at this moment seventeen highly trained scientists in the field looking into the matter. But why?

Simply because the stakes are higher in this than in any other propaganda game and the winner will gain vastly more by winning this game than by being first on the moon. The stakes are nothing short of the very Soul of Man, for this off-beat quest is a practical effort to capture something that can rock our entire religious and ethical pyramid to its very foundations. This is simply a living example of the famous "missing link" between Man and Non-Man, otherwise known as the *Yeti*, or one of its now various reported cousins. But before I go into the facts of this business I must continue for a bit on the ethical and the political theme.

That such intermediate beings are still living today, in various forms, and all over an area in Asia alone about three times that of the United States, may not have been demonstrated to *our* satisfaction—that is to us, the people, of the "West"—but it apparently has been so to our competitors in the "East". You may snigger and laugh at this suggestion; you may call it crackpot, alarmist, newspaper twaddle, mass hallucination, the maunderings of benighted "natives", or simply the product of the imaginations of mountaineers whose minds have been drugged by altitude, and thus dispose of the whole thing as nonsense. But you cannot dismiss the fact that the Russians have a whole building in Moscow devoted solely to the investigation of this matter, staffed by top-notch scientists and technicians, and that they have published among other works on the subject, a whole book somewhat larger than our standard novel, on the bones of the hand alone, of a certain type of cave man that is

thought to be the prototype of this half-and-half "missing link". Further, the Russians have these seventeen scientists in the field and spread out all the way from the Pamirs in the southwest to Outer Mongolia in the east, looking for this "thing" or "things".

Now what does this mean? Simply that our rivals in the battle for the soul of humanity believe in something that we scoff at, and that they are on the ball both officially and actively while we sit around and poke fun at the few—so very few—private individuals in our free estate who are spending their own fortunes or their hard-earned savings to match the massive efforts of the entire Russian Empire. And the stakes are nothing short of our very souls, for if our rivals get an example of this prize first, all Hell literally is going to break loose, for then every one of us will really have to ask ourselves that question—do I believe in evolution? And what is more, we will have to answer it. Let us think this thing through.

Just suppose that one of our side captured one of these *Yetis*, or *Metho Kangmi*, or *Orang Pendek*, or even a *Sasquatch* (see below) alive, what would we do with it, or be permitted to do with it? Should one put it in a cage or ask it in for afternoon tea? And if it strangled your mother or raped your sister would you be at liberty to shoot it on sight or would you have to have it arrested? And then about the trial? Quite apart from the language difficulty, what's the law? It's not in the book and it's not in *The Book*. The creature is "responsible", for it's not insane, and if it comes from, say, Nepal it it a Nepalese citizen—if it's human that is—and it immediately has all kinds of rights. But who is going to say that it's human. Yet, if anybody wants to say it's an animal he's going to have

to explain himself to the church to which he belongs. The Almighty made us in *His* image; and in *His* infinite wisdom He made the animals in... what? The situation, in fact, immediately becomes both difficult and unpleasant to say the least.

But what if the "other side" gets the prize first?

The Marxists have been telling the non-literate and the semi-literate peoples of the world—and a lot of others who are supposed to be literate besides—for half a century now that there is a dastardly capitalist plot to keep them in slavery and that this is aided and abetted by religion. After the initial shock of this accusation had worn off, not only organized religion but a large part of humanity rebounded with a rather tough denial, stating and in good measure proving to all and sundry that there is no such "plot" for them to aid, and demonstrating that they are not abetting any such thing. But then comes this evolution business.

While this is not anti-religious, it flies directly in the face of all faiths—with the exception of the original teachings of the Guatama Buddha—all of which have insisted than Man is made in the image of the Deity. Just suppose for a moment that the non-religious, which is to say the present-day Communists, produce a living creature that is neither a "man" nor a "beast" but just halfway between the two. Where does this leave the "faithful"? What better propaganda weapon could be provided?

Anything short of a gibbering ape itself can see immediately that either God did not do that which he has so far been alleged to have done, or the cherished beliefs of the faithful are false. In either case it's "our side" that will have to do the explaining while "their side" can ride high on the demonstrable fact that something is and always has been very wrong

somewhere, to say the least, and just as they always said.

We have a genius for writing laws to cope with new situations and the legal boys could doubtless get us out of our distress in this case and in short order by, for instance, simply stating that living creatures which do not speak a human language are non-human, therefore "beasts", and ergo have no rights. But even the Law cannot rule our emotions, let alone our racial concepts—as has recently been amply demonstrated—or even more so, our religious beliefs. Given a true missing-link anywhere along the middle part of the chain that evolutionists state links Man to Non-Man, and the fat will be in the fire, for everybody is going to be presented with a *real* problem for once and one that each will have to solve for himself. And simply ignoring it is not going to do any good either, because it goes to the very roots of our *faith*, and only God, we believe, can vouchsafe us an answer to that.

But, you may well, and probably will say, this is all unimportant because we have caught any such creature and *you* have no reason to suppose that any such exists, or ever existed. This is a splendid ostrich-like attitude and it *could* work out but, may I remind you, our rivals are not a bunch of uneducated morons and *they* don't see it this way at all. To the contrary, they have investigated the now almost countless reports that such creatures *do* exist, and very widely over an enormous area of the earth's surface, and they feel from what they have read that the evidence is now sufficiently strong not only to warrant but to necessitate their doing something practical about it. They felt the same about the sputnik and they thereby gave us a nasty shock. They are now mumbling about the moon and land claims on Mars and so forth. They are investigating

at this very moment a cure for certain forms of cancer that we have for many years, refused even to test, and they are grafting spare heads on to dogs. We, the public of the West—not any longer all our scientists, I am happy to report—may continue to laugh at these outlandish concepts; that is our prerogative, but if we do we must not cry or scream when one of them lands figuratively or actually in our laps. Above all, we of the Press, meaning publicists in general and of all grades and techniques of the Fourth Estate, should refrain from ill-considered ribaldry in such esoteric matters, for there are more things not only under both heaven and earth, but now also above the former than we ever imagined, and any one of them may at any time become of vital import to our very existence. Man, in fact, is breaking through, and the break-through is both cumulative and progressive.

The idea that some missing-links—ape-men, or men-apes; and the two latter are *not* the same*—are still running around in out-of-the-way parts of the world, and even in northern California, may sound hilariously funny to almost everybody but it is really a very grim matter for the reasons we have stated, and it concerns all of us very deeply. It is a time-bomb of proportions altogether more monumental than any fusion device that we currently have in storage for it could blow the mental guts out of us more readily and universally than any gadget could scatter our physical intestines. We ought to be at least interested.

What, specifically, has made the Russians interested?

This cannot be answered in precise terms, though there is no reason to suppose that they would not tell you in some detail if you went to

*See my *The Monkey Kingdom*, Hanover House, 1957.

Moscow and visited their institution there which is devoted to the study of this business. You might even get a reply to a written request, for they have nothing to hide and they were very cooperative with at least one individual whom I know, who *did* call upon them. Presumably they must have read, and seriously, all the published reports by almost everybody *not* a native of Nepal or Tibet who has visited those countries, and they have probably also read a fair-sized library of reports by people who have stumbled upon or investigated similar facts in quite a lot of other countries—East Africa, the Congo, West Africa, Assam, Burma, Sumatra, two areas in South America, certain unexplored parts of Central America like southern British Honduras, Alaska, British Columbia, and northern California. This is a fair geographical roster when it is added to the vast swathe of territory in Asia extending from the Pamirs, through Tibet and the inner Himalayas to Sikang (*not* Sinkiang) in China and thence north to the Republic of Mongolia.

This will probably come as a surprise to you but sub-human creatures, either small, normal man-sized, or immense, have been seriously reported from all these areas recently, and by such official people as Game Wardens, professional surveyors, and even that most prosaic and laconic of all breeds, bulldozer operators.

Of all this mass of reports only one has so far filtered through the press to humanity at large. This is a thing or a group of related things called, and quite erroneously as it now turns out, *The Abominable Snowman*. About this, reams have now been written and all sorts of fanciful illustrations have been published. The point has now come where we should face the *facts!*

First, let me just say that the delightful term the "abominable snowman" was coined by the famous Brit-

ish columnist, Henry Newman, of the *Calcutta Statesman* of India on receipt of a telegram from the leader of an early Everest exploratory expedition announcing the discovery of a line of mysterious humanoid foot-prints in the snow just above the tree-line. Newman knows everything and his column has for half a century been amazing but he did not, as he gave to believe at that time, speak the language of the part of Tibet in which the tracks had been found. However, he went right ahead and translated the words "metch kangmi" in the telegram in this manner, as abominable snowman. (Actually, the telegraphist had further muddled the issue by mistranscribing *metch* for *metoh*.) But Newman was not far wrong for this term is applied to outcasts in Tibet and, I am told, should better be translated "filthy or dirty outcast". The reason is that there never has been any capital punishment in that country and murderers are simply turned out to fend for themselves for the rest of their lives while decent citizens not yet convicted of heinous crimes are forbidden to aid them in any way or even to speak to or of them. As a result, these wretches take to dwelling in caves, living on rats, insects and roots, while their lank, mongoloid hair grows to their shoulders and their clothing rots away.

There are such ex-delinquents all over Tibet. But the combination of the words *abominable* and *snowman* in the English language were too good for the press to pass up and they adopted them with the utmost gusto.

Actually there had been reports that some humanoid creature existed in the region of the border between Nepal and Tibet long before this incident but nobody had paid any attention to them. One of the very first was made by the British explorer Hugh Knight who, on one expedition, rode on a horse ahead of his

train, and happened to dismount for a rest in an open grassy place on the side of the mountains down among the massive rhododendron forests that clothe vast areas of this multi-million square mile area of unexplored territory and which plays such an important part in our story, as we shall see later. He happened to have made no noise and to have approached quietly so that he found himself—he says—almost face to face with a humanoid creature without clothes, with a yellowish skin covered in long hair, a mane, bent knees, and a prognathous jaw but, strangely, carrying a crude bow. This creature was watching some animals below on the mountainside with such intensity that he did not sense the intruder's presence. Knight watched, amazed, but the sub-human 'thing' suddenly hefted his weapon and rushed off down the slope.

This was in 1921. In 1925 a professional photographer named N. A. Tombazi, a member of the respected Royal Geographical Society of London, reported that he came upon a similar creature that was very ape-like which he watched at some distance pulling up dwarf rhododendron bushes at an altitude of 15,000 feet, nine miles from the Zemu Glacier.

Since Newman's famous "press release" almost every outsider who has been into inner Nepal and outer Tibet has had something to say on this subject and almost all have reported seeing foot-tracks in either fresh snow or mud, hearing strange cries, having boulders rolled down towards them, or having heard from the very sane and serious local inhabitants of the existence of these sub-human creatures. Few have made so bold as to report that they have encountered them face to face but there was an American Doctor on a Four-Point Program in Nepal a few years ago who says in print that, with a companion, he was surrounded by some

such creatures though he alleged that they had tails.

And there the matter might have rested had it not happened that a lot of Britishers were determined to climb the highest mountain in the world and a few iconoclasts who take a fiendish delight in doubting the word of any "expert" had not persisted in resuscitating and republishing the statements of Forest Officers and other serious-minded persons who lived in and about these areas and who had made similar reports.

The result of these two—to many people—aggravating circumstances and the actions of their aficionados, combined with Newman's delightful "translation," was that the Fourth Estate simply would not let the matter drop. The only trouble is that the hearty thing turns out not to be a "myth" but a distressing reality.

In the meantime—and I speak of the decades 1930 to 1950—little was heard of this business. Whole or complete Man, or whatever we now have to call ourselves, was otherwise preoccupied and especially in Europe. Up till this time, moreover, America had not yet heard of this abomination although two Americans had reported being yelled at by "something" while on an expedition to the inner Himalaya and having found a cairn on a superior mountain-top moved, and of having been told that Yeti—not Metoh Kangmi, be it noted—had done this. In fact, this is one of the earliest records of the proper Sherpa name for the submen. In 1948 this writer spoke of this abominable business to Ken Purdy then editor of *True Magazine*. He also became fascinated by Newman's nomenclature and published an article on the subject, the first introduction of the subject to this country.

Meantime, however, all manner of distressing, to many, other corollary matters had come to light. Two very serious-minded, respected and expe-

rienced men in East Africa—S.V. Cook and Capt. W. Hichens—stated flatly that they had come face to face with little man-like creatures in that country. Reports of a thing called the *Tok* or “Mouth Man” came out of Burma; a little fellow with shy habits called the *Orang Pendek* or simply “Little Man” turned up in Sumatra. There was also a positive outburst in a most unexpected quarter, namely, the strip of mountain forests from Canadian Alaska to northern California in the form of a rather monstrous hairy character called by the Amerindians the “Sasquatch.” The details of these and several other like items I will go into my next article.

The situation today in regard to this whole matter is really amazing. It has not yet become “common knowledge” though there has been an increasing amount about it in the press and not a little in magazines. The public as a whole is not aware of its very existence, yet it is rapidly becoming a matter of international interest and possibly of “cold-war” significance. An enormous amount of money and energy is going into investigation of the matter and, as we have said, it has hair-raising undertones—perhaps even overtones.

There is no longer any doubt but that these creatures are to be found and studied—if not caught or killed—and that they are very widely distributed. I will name in my next article half-a-dozen expeditions which are currently in the field searching for them or for evidence of them, and these are not crackpot, starry-eyed, one-man outfits. They are all either fully-trained scientific field organizations like those of the Russians already mentioned, or composed of very experienced and patient investigators.

There are also professional animal collectors devoting almost whole

time to the business, one of whom happens to be an associate of mine and who was a virulent if not “professional” sceptic until his last trip, after which he wrote me, and I quote, “I am now more convinced than ever and I am going back to do it myself.” I will tell you later who he is, where he is, why he is thus converted, and why he says that he is going back “to do it himself” this time, and by that time I may have first-hand reports from him as to what he has found.

This race for the *Yeti*, the *Orang Pendek*, the *Sasquatch* (on which I happen personally to be engaged at the time of writing), and others, including those delightful entities so well-known to the human inhabitants of Mongolia as *Almas* that the local people have promised to produce some this fall for the Russian scientists, is now on at full blast. It is one of the greatest news stories of all time and I want to tell you more about it. I will name those who are engaged in it; quote for you the actual reports of those who have over the years, patiently brought this matter to light, and I will tell you—with photographs—what has so far been discovered. The story, I can assure you, so amazing as almost to warrant that abominable prefix, *sensational*.

This is a race to capture the very soul of humanity indeed! And in one corner we have the organized might of Russia which can call upon a multitude of scientists and order them to go look almost anywhere, while in the other corner is a little band of what I can only call gallant men, all but one or two without even funds, derided and scoffed at by public, press, and organized science alike, who have to battle through mountains of red-tape as well as rhododendrons to the airy peaks of discovery. We ought to rally behind these rugged individualists and give them a boost in the name of freedom and free enterprise.