

# Jaguar Shooting Story Has

By REV. JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

There was something sad about Roger Yates shooting that jaguar down in Fellsmere.

Roger is a professional hunter. Out looking for otters he crossed a stream and came face to face with a 250 pound jaguar. He did the only thing he could do, and with a well-placed shot dropped the huge cat in his tracks.

THE JAGUAR was a native of South America and

## Perspective

had probably escaped from a zoo. However, he had been in the swamp for a long time since his claws were long and sharp. Cats that live in zoos wear their claws down to nubs from constantly pacing on the concrete floor.

## Sad Angle

But there was something sad about the whole affair. Here's a magnificent beast roaming the jungles of his native land. Then trapped, and put in a cramped, dirty cage. For years he paces back and forth in front of the bars, growling at people and eating stale meat.

Then escape. Freedom. Once again he is doing what he was created to do. Then one last encounter with man. And death.

**HOW DELICIOUS** must have been that taste of freedom. How sad that it should end this way. And yet had he been able to speak I think he would have desired it this way. Better to die in the swamp than to be returned to the filthy cage and the nervous pacing.

Zoos depress me. Cages of steel, glass and concrete. On the back walls of the cages are jungle scenes of Africa, India, and South America. Inside are the animals. They pace. Tigers, panthers, bears—pacing, pacing, pacing. The painted jungles are their only reminder of what they used to be.

Caged animals are pathetic. Caged people are tragic. Most people live in self-made cages. They pace. Nervous. Anxious. Frustrated. Dissatisfied. They long for something, they're not sure what. They know in their quiet moments they were not made to be like they are, and yet not knowing what the trouble is or how to correct it.

**PEOPLE LIKE** this live in artificial worlds. Like cages with jungle scenes painted on the rear walls. They seek to find satisfaction in counterfeits.

They turn to liquor and fine themselves in another cage. They seek freedom through drugs, pills but find only a mirage. They tell themselves that more money will buy their freedom. Yet, in those rare moments of personal honesty they admit that money really buys nothing worthwhile.

Restless...restless. St. Augustine wrote: "Thou hast made us for thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until we find our rest in Thee."

**DEEP INSIDE** all men is a desire to be the way God intended for them to be. Like the "call of the wild" in the animal, in the human being it is the call that the prodigal heard in the pig pen—"Come home."

Man is craving that which only God can give, yet he tries to satisfy his soul on garbage and artificial happiness. Nothing—nothing except a relationship with God through Jesus Christ will satisfy the longing, restless spirit. In each soul is a God-shaped vacuum. Christ alone can fill it. And 'tis better to die trying, than to waste away the years pacing in concrete cages with artificial jungle scenes.