

HIS OCCUPATION

By ALBERT KENYON

I was stopping in London at Charles Cross and one afternoon strolled down Whitehall street and entered Green Park at the horse guards. Passing on through the park to Queen Victoria's statue opposite Buckingham Palace, I stopped to look at it. I noticed a man standing before the statue and I asked him if he could tell any interesting facts concerning the construction. He replied very civilly and proved quite an admirable guide. He was evidently not a polished gentleman, for he was plainly dressed and misapprehended his h'a.

"Er majesty," he said, "was one of the finest sovereigns that ever lived. He was in the public service under 'er for many years, during which 'er people was 'appier than at any other reign, though that 'appiness was continued under the reign of 'er gracious son King Edward."

"Did your office bring you in contact at all with the queen?"

"He is in contact with 'er majesty! Not he, sir. He never met 'er except when she was about taking. But he has been at court, 'er."

"Did you duties there?"

"No, sir. He had no duties at court; he went there to see the notables, sir."

"I presume you could give bits of information about many royal and eminent people?"

"Yes, sir. He's seen Justice B. often and Justice W. occasionally and many of the most eminent barristers in England."

"Army-magazine?"

"No, sir. He never met any army officer. But he once met a parson. He had official connection with him, sir."

"In what way?"

"He was doing too much talkin'. Very windy, sir. He shut it off."

I was puzzled to make the fellow out. At this bit of information I fancied he might be a sergeant-at-arms or something of the kind attached to the residence of some one of the royals, employed to see that no inadmissible person forced his way into the palace, or if such succeeded in getting there it was his duty to put him out. Having been brought up to consider questions as to people's business I had, I refrained from asking him what his office was. I let him go on talking, expecting that in time he would state it of his own accord.

"It must have taken a 'ole lot of cordage to swing that block of marble into position, sir," said my companion.

"I don't think they used much cordage for the purpose," I replied. "It would only be needed to guide the mass as it was swung on to its pedestal. They doubtless used chains to lift it."

"Now, really, he wouldn't 'a thought that. He should think ropes would be better. Chains might break the marble, sir. They couldn't 'ave swung it by the neck, could they, sir?"

I looked at the man surprised. He appeared to be sufficiently intelligent to know that a statue would not be lifted on to its pedestal by the neck.

"What made you think they would do it in that way?" I asked.

"Well, sir, it seems to me the natural way to lift a person."

"With ropes? You would break a living person's neck by lifting him that way."

"But you wouldn't break a marble person's neck."

"I think you would in this case. The figure is solid and must weigh a great many tons."

"And it wouldn't do, sir—not in this case—to swing 'er most gracious majesty even in marble by the neck. 'Eaven forbid that many of 'er loyal subjects should think of such a thing! His rank treason, sir."

He seemed terribly shocked.

I was not especially edified by this latter part of his chat, though before he got on to it he talked sensibly enough, so I thanked him for the information he had given me and started away, saying:

"I expect to go to court soon. Perhaps I shall have some attention from you there in your official capacity."

"He shall try to make it as easy as possible for you, sir, if you do."

This added so largely to my curiosity that I was sorry I had not asked him the nature of the position he held. He was not a gentleman and likely would not have taken it amiss. How ever, it was now too late.

Some time after this I was walking on Oxford street with my friend Hargrave, a Londoner, when I saw approaching the man I had met at the statue. It did not occur to me to ask Hargrave who he was, for I had no idea he would know.

"Do you see this man coming?" asked Hargrave.

"Yes."

"He's Calcraft, the hangman."

Then I understood the man's references to court—that he meant a legal court instead of a royal court. I appreciated his horror as a loyal subject of Queen Victoria at the idea of putting a rope around his sovereign's neck even in stone. But I was more especially affected at the remembrance of his words when I told him I expected to go to court soon. "He shall try to make it as easy as possible for you, sir."

Since that memorable interview I have never passed Queen Victoria's statue without thinking of Calcraft and the court to which he belonged.

Just catch a few...
Many methods were used—Insect nets, birdlime, a spray of water, open windows with bowers inside and finally a trap. At last! Could it really be I hardly dared trust my senses. Yes, it was a humming bird squeak that came from the little bag, and the boy asked if I was the lady who would pay a dollar for a humming bird. It must be! How hard he caught it? Under his cap. How strange! And had it a ruby throat? He wasn't sure. Well, we could find that out.

Doors were closed and locked and screens carefully placed to every window. Then the wonderful bag was cautiously opened. Way down in the bottom crouched the dear, funny little bird, with his bright eyes looking us straight in the face and his long bill pointing at a sharp angle from the web body. Just a baby one. Would he die of fright? He did not attempt to fly out, so we tore open the side of the bag to where he sat, but he did not move. Then, placing my finger gently under his toes and lifting slowly I beheld the jewel upon my hand—Katherine B. Dobber in Atlantic Monthly.

Equal to the Occasion.
Marchal Suraroff, when receiving a dispatch from the hands of a Russian sergeant who had greatly distinguished himself on the Danube, attempted to confuse the messenger by a series of whimsical questions, but found him fully equal to the occasion. "How many fish are there in the sea?" asked Suraroff. "All that are not caught yet!" was the answer. "How far is it to the moon?" "Two of your excellency's favored magpies." "What would you do if you saw your own giving way in battle?" "I would tell them that there was plenty of whisky behind the enemy's line." "Bathed at all points the marshes ended with 'What is the difference between your colonel and myself?" "My colonel cannot die me a lieutenant but your excellency has only to say the word."

A French Verdict.
A stag trilled through the forest of Fontainebleau took refuge in the garden of a certain M. de Brouillot. The lady's son refused to give the animal up unless paid the sum of 100 francs compensation for the damage it had done, but his request was indignantly refused by M. Lebaudy, the master of the bounds, who declined to accept any responsibility.

The Earth as Seen From the Moon.
From that surface of the moon which we see the earth is always visible, clearly marked with clouds, continents, oceans and polar snows, says Popular Science. The earth forms a bright lunar mare, passing through phases, just like those of our moon, from new to full, and then again to new, but the outline of her globe is always marked by a ring of brilliant light—namely, the light of the stars behind her, diffused and shining in her atmosphere. Yet to the dweller on the moon neither the incomparable splendor of the sun nor the great flood of earth shine can veil the eternal glitter of the constellations in heavenly black with a darkness of which our blackest night can give no true idea.

The Pandects of Justinian.
The pandects of Justinian, the most complete body of Roman law ever collected, were supposed to be lost, but in 1137, when Amalfi was taken and plundered by the Pisans, a private notary found a copy, which he sold to an officer for a few pence. The value of the discovery was soon apparent, and the precious volume was taken to Pisa and stored in the city library. When Pisa was stormed by the Florentines in 1415 the precious volume was captured and taken to Florence, where it was placed in the library of the Medici.—London Graphic.

Marr's Debt to Woman.
A man, even the best, always thinks that he can repay everything to a woman by making her his wife, whereas he is only incurring new obligations without paying off the old. Only though all good women know this they keep the fact carefully to themselves.—S. R. Crockett.

Artful Excuse.
"Minnie," said a mother to her little daughter, who had the telltale habit "why is it you can't keep a secret?" "Because, mamma," explained the precocious miss, "two of my front teeth are gone and the secrets just slip out."—Chicago News.

Parental Problems.
Where a whippersnapper improve one boy it will create a grudge and a thirst for revenge in another. Parents have several problems besides making a living.—Atchison Globe.

Partly Frank.
Intending Passenger—Oh, I go to Scotty square without change on this car? Frank Conductor—No, sir; you need a ticket.—Boston Transcript.

The greater the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it.—Moliere.

A Woman's Vigilance

By CARROLL H. PIERCE

The rapid advance of civilization in America has placed far in the background the stirring events of Indian warfare that lasted from the first occupancy of the continent to the annihilation of General Custer and his ill-fated command. Yet this last great episode of the long struggle with the aborigines of the country occurred but a generation ago.

There still lives a woman more than ninety years of age who passed through one of these Indian events. At twenty she was married to a lieutenant in the army on duty in the east, but who had been ordered to a small fort in what was then the far west. Immediately after the wedding the couple started for the officers' station, pursuing their way by canal, stagecoach and, lastly, an army supply wagon.

At that time there were white men in that region who were worse than the Indians in that they often incited the latter to pillage and bloodshed. They were not the settlers, but a class of desperadoes that are always found lounging about the skidmill line of the advancing army of civilization.

Mrs. Lieutenant—we shall call her Whittlessey—found herself in a one company post, and the company's captain being absent and her husband being the ranking officer, he was commander. Indeed, there was but one other officer there, and Mrs. Whittlessey was the only woman among some sixty men. Indians now and again would come into the fort, and their appearance was quite enough to scare a woman out of her senses, for of all the names most appropriate to these people—Indians, redskins, savages—the last is the most appropriate. They looked savage and acted savage, were fierce in their nature and made themselves hideous to correspond with what they were.

One day a dirty white man clad in skin came into the fort, claiming to be a settler, told a pitiful story of a wife and children at some distance from the garrison who were having a hard time. His little girl had been shot by an Indian with a Barbed arrow and the father wished to cut it out. Would the surgeon let him have some chloroform?

The surgeon gave him the chloroform, telling him how to use it and the precautions he must take. Then the man went away. Though the redskins were at peace with the whites, Mrs. Whittlessey would not trust them. She did not consider the post free from danger of attack at any time. It was nothing more than a blockhouse or stockade with a raised platform for the sentries to pace upon and little towers with loopholes from which they might fire upon an enemy if attacked.

One night Mrs. Whittlessey stole out of bed, leaving her husband asleep, and, putting on some clothing, she went out to inspect the guard. She found one sentry nodding and another fast asleep. She took the steeper's musket and awakened him to see himself covered by a woman with his own gun.

Mrs. Whittlessey told her husband in the morning that she had gone out and found the guard unwatchful. Though knowing that sleeping on post is death to a sentry, she made no definite charges. The commandant endeavored to arouse his guards to greater efficiency, but his efforts were short-lived, and discipline soon relaxed again. Mrs. Whittlessey, being a woman, was discredited in the matter, and her husband told her to make no more visits to the guards lest she put him, as commandant, in a ridiculous position.

One night the lady, not having a man's confidence in the peacefulness of the Indians, got stealthily out of bed and went to assure herself that the guards were awake. She found three of the four nodding, while the fourth had sunk down unconscious, his musket lying beside him. But what especially attracted her attention was a strong odor of chloroform.

It was this odor that led her to suspect an especial danger and to make an observation. Rising on tiptoe, she saw a dark body moving toward the fort. Seizing the unconscious sentry's gun, she ran to the nearest tower and through the narrow slit left for firing sent a bullet into the coming warrior. Her shot was a twofold advantage. It showed the Indians that their coming had been detected and roused the garrison. The former hesitated a few minutes, then continued their advance, sending arrows and bullets against the stronghold.

Men came pouring up from below in their night clothes, among them the commandant. He saw fire flash from one of the towers, and the next moment his wife came out, blood dripping from her right arm. She swooned in his arms.

The stratagem of the savages, which had been conceived by the white man, who had begged the chloroform, had been availed by the watchfulness of the only woman of the garrison. Not a man but lying, his head in shame, while their commander's assurance was only kept up by his pride in his wife's feat.

Mrs. Whittlessey's wound was not dangerous, and she was removed to the account of how she had saved the fort having been reported to Washington, she was awarded a gold medal by congress.

Barterial Genius

The genius in barterial accomplishments without effort things that refuse to yield to the most determined efforts of the ordinary mortal. He apparently creates out of nothing. His touch transforms the shape of the customer and the set of the garment. He molds the ungainly form into an Apollo, and the misfit garment falls into natural place in his hands. The lines of his draft are unapproachable, and his system is infallible. He knows just when the shoulder is to be advanced or receded. He understands intuitively just how much the waist is to be sprung or dilled in and how much spring is required. He never makes a mistake, and if the journeyman ruins a garment beyond repair in the making the genius sets it right with a few touches, even though to repair it is beyond the ordinary cutter's skill. Tailor and Cutter.

Automatic Fire Doors.
The construction of a fire door and its installation may be standard in every way, but for the door to be of service it must be closed at the time of fire. As employees of a plant cannot always be depended upon to close the doors of the plant, because of panic or other reasons, fire doors should be either self-closing or automatic. A self-closing door is one which closes by itself as soon as a person has passed through. This door is normally always closed, and never should be allowed to be held open by means of a weight or catch, which has connected with it a series of fusible links. In case of fire the solder on one or more of the fusible links melts from the heat, releases the weight or catch, and the door closes. This type of door should be employed wherever it is necessary for the door to be kept open at times, but otherwise the self-closing door is preferable.—F. T. Walthers in the Engineering Magazine.

One Exception.
There are so many ways of offending a waiter at a big restaurant that it seems difficult to think up a new one, but a customer who touched at a famous hostelry achieved it. Being in a sentimental, contemplative mood, the customer remarked, "I suppose people from every country under the sun dine here, eh?"

"It is depressing to reflect on the generations that have sat at these old tables," the customer resumed dreamily. "Old and young, grave and gay, from far and near, rich and poor." At that point in the reverie the waiter gazed up indignantly. "Not poor," he corrected. "It costs money to eat in this place."

Queer Birds.
There are two rare species of birds in the Amazon forests of which no specimens, it is said, have ever been brought away—the "bellbird" and the "lost soul." These names are derived from the effects produced by the cries of the birds the former having a voice likened to that of a silver bell and the latter possessing the eerie accomplishment of crooning in such a manner as to produce goose flesh on the unfortunate person who hears its song.

Lunar Athletics.
The "man in the moon" must surely regard with amused contempt our much-vaunted athletic records. A good terrestrial athlete could cover about 120 feet on the moon in a running broad jump, while leaping over the bar would be a very commonplace feat. He would find no difficulty in carrying six times as much and running six times as fast, as he could on earth, all because the moon attracts bodies with but one-sixth of the force of the earth.

At Sea.
"Isn't the ocean grand and majestic?" "Yes, and there is an indelible something about it that impresses me strangely." "What is it?" "I was just trying to determine, I have it. It's the utter absence of billboards."—Washington Herald.

Natural Infirmary.
"Here's an umbrella I've kept for three years," he said proudly. "Isn't it about time you returned it?" she replied.—Detroit Free Press.

A Little Heavy.
"Pa, who was Joseph?" "I can't place him just now, but he was some sort of an inside man."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

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