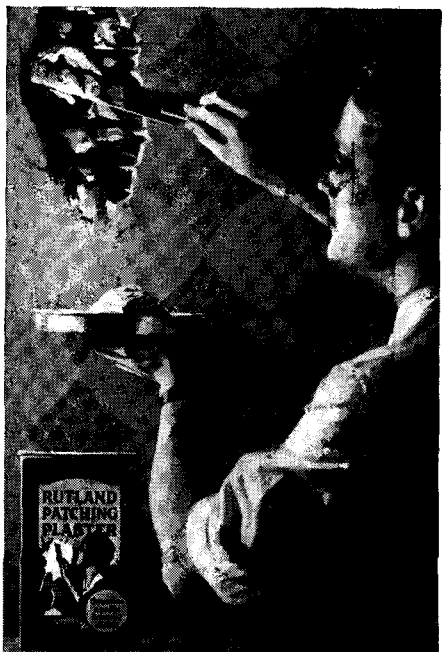


An Old Fool likes an Old Fool

Continued from page 20



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"Ah, but you must come again—and again—and again," she said. "To me, it has been delightful. And when I have finish the picture of your house, I hope you will accept it as a souvenir of our—meeting."

No other fifty-three-year-old woman in the entire world (and not more than seven in their twenties) could have said it just like that, and gotten away with it. But La Golivina put it across with a sigh, a smile and a drooping of the eyelids which caused Mr. Brice to retract his stomach to a really painful degree.

Recalling The Mark of Zorro, reel three, scene one, he bowed over her hand and kissed her slim brown fingers.

"Adool!" he said, squaring his shoulders and striding down the steps at imminent peril of life and limb, "Adool!" He was sure that he could feel her gaze every step of the way. But when he reached the bottom, wheeled dramatically and swept off his cap, he was dismayed to find that she was not standing at the top, looking after him. As a matter of fact, she wasn't even in sight.

"Shucks!" he said, disgustedly. "What do you know about that?"

Up at the villa, La Golivina and her maid were viewing the empty bottle in perplexed dismay. "Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the Countess, holding it to the light and then turning it upside down. "He drank every last drop and never a blink of the eye!"

"Flic!" said the maid. "But they are extraordinary, these Americans! One must remember well, Madame, that the veesky is their national drink. Since they passed their mad law which prohibits the water, they drink nothing else."

"Ah, yes . . . I have heard! Well"—and she smiled thoughtfully, "when the time comes, we'll try him on absinthe. Then . . . perhaps it will be different!"

THE time came a week later, and it was different. Very different. Mr. Brice, smacking his lips experimentally, said the stuff tasted like cough drops. Kind of pleasant, but not much kick. If it was all the same to her, he'd rather drink it straight.

"But surely!" she said, pouring him a brimming tumbler, "I am sorry that I have no veesky in the house."

"Oh, that's all right," he assured her, "I'm glad to give this stuff a work-out, for a change."

When he had worked-out something over a pint, he leaned across the table, seized La Golivina's hand, and ardently asked her to marry him.

"But you have a wife already, Monsieur!"

Mr. Brice took the news solemnly. "Oh, yes, I see," he said, nodding. He released her hand, and poured himself another drink. It was pretty potent stuff at that! Sipping it thoughtfully, he glanced down at his usually-bulging façade, which was today as severely straight as that of a West Point cadet. Joseph had bought him a broad knitted elastic belt (La Ceinture d'Obesité du Docteur Namy, it was called) which saved no end of wear and tear on the stomach muscles. He felt that it made him look not a day over forty. It gave him a great confidence.

"The fact of the matter, is, I'm madly in love with you, Countess," he said.

She rolled her eyes toward the lower branch of the plum tree, and sighed. Then she pressed the back of her hand to her forehead and shuddered dramatically.

"Alas!" she said, in a vibrant and tragic contralto. "Alas!"

"Alas what?" inquired Mr. Brice, hitching his chair around to her side of the table and bringing his glass with him. "I mean to say, what's alas? Privilege to help you any way I can, pretty Countess—help you in any shay, wape—er, way, shape or manner."

She bit her lip, shuddered again, and looked away.

"No!" she whispered. "It is—it is something in which you cannot help me. But you are so good, so noble, so kind!"

"Oh, no, say, not 't all!" he demurred, reaching for the bottle. The bottle was empty, but even as its emptiness became apparent, the maid appeared with a new one. Wonderfully trained, these European servants!

When Mr. Brice put down his glass, he saw that the Countess was weeping softly.

"Oh, say, please," he sympathized, putting his arm around her, "what's trouble, hey? Won't pretty little Coun-

tess Mousey-wousey tell her papa what's wrongey-wongey, hey?"

She was trembling. He took a drink and awaited her answer in growing discomfort. The Ceinture d'Obesité du Docteur Namy was all right when he was standing up, but it cut like sin when he was sitting down. "Come, come," he said, "I mean, come and tell papa."

FINALLY, under his urging, she steeled herself as if to an ordeal. With eyes averted and hands tightly clenched, she told him her story. When she came to the part about her life with the Russian Grand Duke, and that horrible afternoon in 1917 when the Reds dragged him from her cozy little apartment at Nevski Prospekt No. 79, Mr. Brice poured himself another drink. The poor, poor, poor little kid!

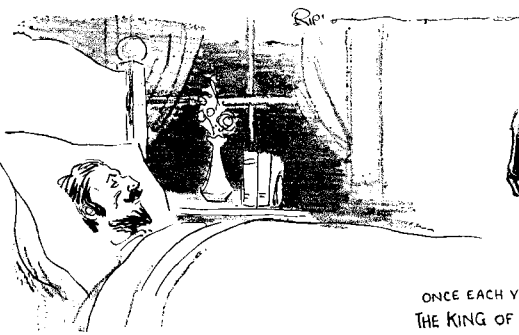
The Reds hadn't killed the Grand Duke, though. He had escaped in disguise, and joined General Wrangel's White Army which was fighting for the

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lost cause in the East. And then came the strangest part of the story—the strangest story Mr. Brice had ever heard. La Golivina told it in a whisper:

It seemed that the Czar and the imperial family were imprisoned in a house in Ekaterinburg. One night the Reds had taken them into the garden and shot them with automatic pistols. They threw the poor riddled bodies down a well. A week later, loyal peasants had retrieved these bodies, spirited them away, and burned them. The ashes of the Czar they reverently gathered and sealed in an ancient gem-studded coffer. This they smuggled to Wrangel, who gave it to Carlotta's Grand Duke.

When the White Army was smashed to pieces, the Duke fled overland to Vladivostok, where he lived in dire poverty.

La Golivina was in Paris, and hearing of his plight, she sold her jewels and sent the money to him.

"And," she said simply, "the very week the money reached him, the poor man died. But—he willed that precious coffer to me. . . ."

SHE buried her head in her arms, and sobbed piteously.

Mr. Brice put down his glass. "Lemme get this straight," he said. "You mean—you still have the ashes of the Czar?"

"Yes!" she said, proudly tossing her head. "I am custodian of that priceless, that sacred relic!"

"Well, I'll be darned!" said Mr. Brice. "Ah," sighed La Golivina. "Think, think of my great responsibility! How I have wished that I could find someone to whom I could entrust them—someone who would place them in a national museum perhaps, or. . . ."

"Sure!—Museum! Great attraction!" agreed Mr. Brice, a trifle thickly.

"For years I have been the slave of those ashes," she continued. "The Imperial Committee—the leading group of loyal refugees in France—have pledged me to part with them only to a person beyond reproach, for five hundred thousand francs. The Imperial Order of St. George of the First Class will be bestowed upon this benefactor at a public investiture at Duke Sergei's house in Paris. We have yet to find one who is worthy."

Mr. Brice leaned across and grasped her arm with one hand while he groped for fountain pen and check book with the other. "I'll buy 'em if you wamme to, dearie!" he said. "You look me up in Who's Who, the Directory of Directors, or anywhere you like. Go in and get those ashes!"

She went.

By the time she emerged—it must have been fifteen minutes—he had written a check on Morgan & Harjes, and had two more drinks. She walked slowly toward him, her eyes fixed upon an oblong brass coffer, turquoise-studded, which she held upon the palms of her extended hands. She placed the box upon the table and genuflected before it. Instinctively, Mr. Brice put down his drink and his cigar, and made appropriate adjustments in the expression of his face.

"Monsieur Brice," she said, her voice vibrant. "Here is the sacred relic. Guard it well! Give me your solemn oath that you will never break this seal or violate the imperial dust which lies within."

"Huh?" he said. "All right, I won't open it. Not 'f you don't wamme to."

He was sorry to see that a great seriousness had come over her. A religious light burned in her eyes. She seemed preoccupied—hardly conscious of his presence. He had hoped it would be otherwise.

"Say—did anybody ever tell you you

got a figure like Josephine Baker's?" he inquired.

She raised her hand in a saintly gesture. "Please, Monsieur, please!" she protested softly.

"Shucks!" he grunted. Well, anyway, there was a fresh bottle on the table. . . .

A bottle on the table! It reminded him of a song about something. Oh, why sure! It was a song about a stein on the table—great old song! "With a sh-h-tei-in on the tay-bul-l-l, 'an a good sawn-n-g ring-ging cle-e-ear. . . ."

Suddenly he saw her face through a sunshiny mist, and he realized by its expression that he'd been singing aloud.

"Whoa!" he exclaimed, biting the song off short, and rising to his feet. "M'awfully sorry, Countess—I guess I kind of forgot where I was. Mean to say, m'awfully sorry for getting like this."

"Go!" she said, handing him the coffer and taking the check. "Tonight I leave for Paris. In a week you will hear from the Committee. Go—" and her voice broke.

"C'mon, Czar!" he said, tucking the box under his arm and heading for the gate. "Come home an' meet the wife!"

The steps were easier this time. In fact, he wasn't even conscious of them. A taxi, by heaven's grace, was passing at the bottom. Mr. Brice handed the driver a bank note, waved his stick towards the crags of Eze, fell into the cab, and went to sleep.

The bank note happened to be a thousand francs. The taxi-driver, in his gratitude, delivered him at the château with a glib and excited story of sunstroke. He had seen the Monsieur taking his constitutional—striding along the Corniche at the *pas gymnastique*, in reckless defiance of the broiling sun. Suddenly, Monsieur had halted, pressed his hands to his head, and spun around like the dervishes of Algeria. Whereupon he, Lucien François Xavier Gaurin, old soldier, expert chauffeur, and a citizen the most reputable, had applied his brakes, leaped from his *voiture*, caught Monsieur in the act of falling, and brought him tenderly hither.

THE servants supported Mr. Brice to his room. Miss Penelope screamed into the phone for a doctor in her Misses Ely French. The telephone manager, listening in and learning that the great American capitalist was at death's door, immediately sold the story to three news agencies. These, in turn, put it on the American cables so promptly that it reached Wall Street before closing. Seven stocks hit their record low for the year.

Joseph had very sensibly taken charge, expelled the family, locked the door, and unfastened the Ceinture d'Obésité du Docteur Namy. Then he sent to the kitchen for a bottle of Worcestershire sauce, a raw egg, and red pepper. By the time the doctor arrived, Mr. Brice was sitting up in bed and breaking the seal on a curious turquoise-studded brass box. Lifting the lid, he peered within. "Russian cigarettes!" he chuckled, "Say, isn't that nice! Not a Czar in a coffin-load! eh, Doc?" Then, lighting one, he launched into a strange American folk-song about a taybull.

Thus, the day turned out profitably for almost everybody—especially for Mr. Brice, whose New York office, reassured by cable, had bought heavily at the low figure, and made a killing when prices leaped up again.

The only exception was La Golivina. The Nest of the Dove became anything but, when she discovered that the upper line of the check was filled in for Twenny Shive Fousand Dollars, while seven blurred but ardent cross-marks filled the space where should have been the numerals.

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Nothing up my Sleeve

Continued from page 17

accomplished by the snake-charmers, who are a caste by themselves.

The snake-charmers seem to be of superior intelligence. They have combined the thrill of handling a poisonous cobra with some of the cleverest deceptions known in magic. In fact, they have invented some of the most intricate and clever "loads," or methods of concealment, that have been adopted by the Occidental magician.

The snake-charmer, however, in comparison, works at a disadvantage, for the reason that he wears fewer clothes; and at times is obliged to perform his effects with only a breech-cloth around his body.

The third morning was given to the snake-charmer. This performance, as usual, took place on the stone floor beside my bed as I was having coffee. The magician patted his body on all sides, and opened his clothing to prove that there was nothing concealed on his person. He asked for a towel; then dancing and playing his flagiolette, he pointed under my bed, and cried:

"Cobra-hai! Cobra-hai, Sahib!"

The Indian's Secret

I looked under the bed. There was no cobra.

"Cobra-hai! Cobra-hai!" he repeated, and throwing the towel on the floor by the bed, he quickly raised it, and there was a large, hissing cobra. I jerked back in astonishment. I could have reached the cobra with my hand. He knelt beside the snake and played his flagiolette. The snake slowly raised its venomous head and looked at the musical gourd.

The magician played on, getting closer and closer to the snake; then, with a cry, he grabbed the cobra by the neck, raised it above his head, and cried: "Cobra-hai, Sahib!"

I shall never forget that scene. It was the first time in years that I had seen any magic that had mystified me. In my enthusiasm, I begged him to repeat the performance, and to my surprise he removed the yellow cloth that served as a coat; repeated the patting of his body, the dancing and playing of the music; threw the towel on the floor and produced another cobra from the same spot.

To make sure of my senses I sat up in bed. The magician, seeing that I was mystified, proceeded without further urging. He pulled his shirt from his body and stood with just a small piece of cloth draped around his loins. He was a great performer, that fellow, and will always hold my admiration as an artist. Added to his cleverness and dramatic ability, he showed a keen sense of humor. To prove that there was no snake concealed on his person, he showed me the pits of his arms, the backs of his knees, opened his mouth, turned his ear and pulled down the lids of his eyes, repeating at each gesture:

"Nay cobra! Nay cobra, Sahib! Nay cobra!"

Then he drew the cloth closely around his body, patting himself in such a convincing manner that I would have sworn there was no snake about his person. Grabbing the towel and shaking it vigorously, he danced and played with greater zeal.

"Cobra-hai!" he cried, as he raised the towel from the floor, revealing another deadly reptile.

Determined to learn the secret, I hastily dressed and gave the magician an English sovereign. It was probably the first gold-piece he had ever owned, and he willingly told me how he had first

extracted the poison sacs from the necks of the snakes; and he showed me the method, which had to be repeated every three weeks.

He forced the snakes into little canvas bags with a draw string at the opening, to which was attached a button. He explained to me how he tied these under his arms and back of his knees and under his loin cloth.

Under cover of waving the towel he caught the button, plunged forward, and covered the falling snake with the towel.

The snake-charmers are the most prosperous of all magicians in India. Their most lucrative practice is to visit the home of a newly-arrived British family, holding a snake in their hands claiming they caught it as it crawled from under the house. They add that where there is one, there are many snakes, and that that particular house has been infested for some time.

They offer to capture every snake in the house for a rupee apiece. With the lady's consent they proceed to find snakes in the cellar, kitchen, and finally in the bedrooms, using, of course, their trick method of production.

The lady, realizing the danger of these cobras, is greatly alarmed, and the happy magicians depart carrying their own snakes and several rupees.

The natives of India were not admitted to the Theater Royal, where we were playing to capacity to the Europeans. I continued my search for Indian mystery at every opportunity, and finally decided to give a free afternoon performance for all the magicians in Calcutta.

We advertised for ten days, and hours before the scheduled time, the theater was surrounded by every kind of magician and street entertainer. My friend, P. Gangulai, a high-caste Brahmin merchant, and another Hindu stood at the door to admit only those who carried proof of their occupation.

The seating capacity was fourteen hundred, but we crowded in twice that number. They filled the aisles and pressed against the footlights.

Credited with Occult Powers

Among some of the mysteries I presented was the levitation act in which a girl was hypnotized and placed on a couch in the center of the brilliantly lighted stage. I commanded her to rise slowly in the air to the height of six feet. Then I invited a score of magicians from the audience and led them around the lady. They put their hands over her and under her, and I passed a hoop back and forth over her body. To my astonishment the magicians on the stage fell on their faces. There was a general murmur in the audience and I was told that they were declaring I had supernatural powers.

The magicians circled around the young lady again. I covered her with a cloth; made a few mystic passes; jerked the cloth away, and the girl had vanished! Again I had trouble in preventing these magicians from falling on their faces.

Finally, my interpreter asked if any one could perform the Indian Rope Trick, and after much discussion I was surprised to learn that not one of the three thousand had ever heard of it.

They do, however, perform a trick with rope. This rope, which has a copper wire running through it, they obtain from ships. The magician straightens a six-foot piece through his hands and balances it on his fingers. Dropping it, the rope coils of its own weight.

This has no relation to the famous story where the magician throws a rope in the air and the boy who climbs it disappears.

The next morning the Indian newspapers printed in large headlines the statement that "God had sent Mr. Thurston as a great religious teacher to show the faithful some of the powers they would have if they remained true to their religion."

I placed a standing advertisement, which was published for six consecutive months, in five leading newspapers of India, to the effect that I would give three thousand rupees (one thousand dollars) to anyone who would show me anything in the way of mystery that I could not understand.

In the Cobra Country

I met many people who related strange and wonderful stories. In fact, the entire country was filled with reports of weird mysteries. But no one ever attempted to collect the reward.

After playing four weeks at the Theater Royal, we leased the Classic Theater on Beaden Street for six weeks. It was an old playhouse in the heart of the native district, which had been condemned for several years. Sixteen wagon-loads of dirt were taken from the stage and dressing-rooms. The balcony was shored up; seats were repaired, and lights were installed.

While the work proceeded, we crossed India to play a month's engagement at Bombay, stopping at Allahabad for three days. We gave the performance at the British Club, which was located in the center of a large park. The hotel manager told us not to be disappointed if the audience was small, for it was the cobra season, and snakes were everywhere. As was customary, he provided the members of our company with long staffs for protection, saying that we would need them after the performance that night, as there were no lights on the road.

At the club we learned that the day before a large cobra had been found coiled on a lady's dress while she was having tea on the veranda.

We were obliged to go under the stage to make necessary preparations. Having cut a hole through the floor at the back, George took the lantern and asked one of the natives to direct him to the center of the stage. The native refused, and the steward forbade us, saying the place was alive with cobras. But the show had to go on, and in order to give confidence to my assistants, I lowered the lantern on a rope and descended the improvised ladder. George had raised a board from the center of the stage floor. Holding the lantern, and drawing behind me a large electric wire, I cautiously made my way under the stage toward the dim light of the opening. I had gone several feet, when I heard a noise at my right; thinking it was a cobra, I swung the lantern in defense, and broke it against a support.

My nerves were tense with fear, for I have always had an abhorrence of snakes. Fearfully groping in the dark, I moved toward the aperture; then, as if the ground had gone from under me, and with a horror that I can never describe, I felt myself falling, down—down.

As I gasped with fear, my feet sank into a soft substance that covered my shoes; but I had reached the bottom. With a supreme effort I leaped forward and upward, and gripped the stone edge of the pit. The boys had just removed

several more boards, and without knowing how, I scrambled to the surface and threw my hands through the opening. George drew me to the stage.

The steward said the stage had been built over an old well, and we focused a strong spotlight down through the opening and saw that the well was about eight feet deep and filled with slime. Cobras are afraid of light, and in the glare we could see dozens of snakes crawling to safety.

The audience came in groups, with natives armed with sticks and lanterns guarding all sides as they made their way through the dark roads. We kept several strong lights burning under the stage, and continued our engagement for three nights, during which time the Mohammedan natives stood guard and killed many snakes on the grounds.

We stopped at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay. The native magicians had heard of our magic and asked me to give a special performance for them. The crowded theater of conjurers were even more enthusiastic than at Calcutta for they seemed to be of a higher intelligence, but none of them had ever heard of the Rope Trick. Several days later a committee of Indian magicians presented me with a beautiful collection of Benares hand-beaten brass, which I prize more than some of the gifts I have received from royalty. It was a tribute from the wonder-workers of the East to the magician of the West.

The repairs to the theater in Calcutta were finished, and I was anxious

to appear before the natives, because I liked them. They were so enthusiastic and different.

As early as five o'clock in the morning of the opening day a great crowd had gathered in the compound surrounding the theater, waiting for the evening performance.

I formed many friends among the Mohammedans and Hindus. The native papers insisted I had supernatural powers, and I found it difficult to force my way through the streets as the natives blocked my path and tried to touch my clothing.

I was forced to build a runway from my dressing-room to the gari, or carriage, and employ guards to make it possible for me to enter and leave the theater.

The Rajah's Carriage

Rajah Tagore reserved a box for the entire engagement, and attended many of the performances. He believed that my levitation and many of the other mysteries were accomplished by the powers possessed by the yogi. I was invited to his castle many times; and he insisted that I use his private carriage daily from ten to three. It was the largest carriage I had ever seen. It was ornately decorated and was drawn by four horses, two drivers in front and two footmen at the back.

Everybody in Calcutta knew the Rajah's carriage. I used it as much as possible, for it added to my prestige.

I was a guest at a festival given by the Rajah. There were many Hindu dig-

(Continued on page 64)

"Troubles we don't talk about"

Dr. Joseph Franklin Montague, leading specialist connected with the rectal clinic at Bellevue Medical College, is also an author and lecturer of note. He first captured the attention of the general public with his recent book, "Troubles we don't talk about," now in its third printing.

PROBABLY nobody is better qualified to judge the merits of various "regulating agents" than Dr. J. F. Montague. A brilliant New York specialist in intestinal and rectal ailments, he has had ample opportunity to observe the damaging effects of the old-fashioned drastic measures that people have used to keep their systems in order. So when he suggests a health measure because it is "absolutely harmless" and because of its "beneficent action" in helping to "re-establish normal habits," his advice is well worth heeding.

In his now famous book, "Troubles We Don't Talk About," Dr. Montague makes special mention of Nujol. Again, in a personal interview he spoke of Nujol as a safe, effective aid to health.

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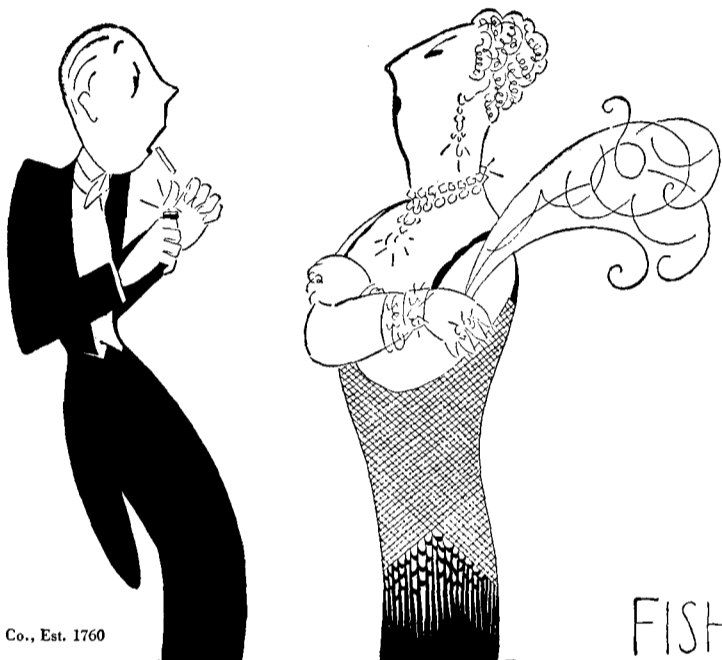
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EMBARRASSING MOMENTS

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securities present. The Rajah insisted that I display my magic powers, so I resorted to an old trick which I had taught Daddy Lyons.

I called for a fresh pack of cards, asked the Rajah to tear off the cover and select a card; to press it against his head and think intently of the suit and number. He replaced the card in the pack; I shuffled the cards which I handed to his secretary. I asked the Rajah to telephone "Mr. Harry Lyons" at the hotel and ask him the name of the card he had chosen.

It was evident to those present that there had been no trickery. Everyone was completely mystified when Daddy Lyons named the eight of clubs without hesitation.

All the party was delighted; and again I listened to the miraculous tales attributed to the yogi; self-levitation; the boy vanishing from the rope; the prisoner who escaped from a Calcutta jail and appeared in Delhi an hour later; the yogi who was buried in a grave for several days; the passage of the astral body to foreign lands; the mystery of how the natives of all India know instantly of any event of interest that may happen at any place. These and many other strange things were discussed and seemed to be accepted as truths.

I liked the Rajah, but fearful that he was being misled, thought it my duty to enlighten him on the subject of my mysteries. I explained the method of my levitation; how the ghost appeared in the cabinet; how the girl was shot from a cannon into a nest of boxes hanging at the dome of the theater; how gallons of water poured from a previously empty coconut shell held in my right hand, while streams of fire spurted from the fingers on my left; and finally the secret of the trick I had just performed.

He looked at me incredulously and refused to believe my explanations. He intimated that I was misleading him, and warned me to be truthful lest I lose my power.

To prove my assertions I asked him to select another card, and to phone Robert Lyons.

"Harry or Robert?" he asked.

"Robert," I replied.

He received the correct answer—the four of spades.

Then I explained to him that the first name of Mr. Lyons designated the card selected; that Harry signified the eight of clubs; Robert, the four of spades; that there was a different name for every card; and that through sleight of hand I learned the name of each card when it had been returned to the pack.

Dear to the Human Heart

The next day, the carriage did not appear; nor did the Rajah occupy the box again during the engagement. It was the last time I saw His Highness. Some years afterwards I met his son, Rabindrinath Tagore, who was lecturing in America.

This Rajah of Calcutta had the same desire to believe in the mysterious that is dear to the heart of all humans. Why not? The world is a mystery; life is a mystery; death is a mystery!

The Nizam of Hyderabad was a guest of the government house with the Amir. He sent his secretary to arrange a private performance for himself and his wives. All the seats downstairs had been removed, excepting three special chairs which the servants had brought for the Nizam and two of his aides. Ninety-seven wives were seated in the purda.

The secretary handed me an envelope just as His Highness was leaving.

I had heard of the tricks of the secretaries of native rulers—how they held half of the fee for themselves. It was common talk among the European artists in the Orient. I secretly opened the envelope and looked at the check. Five hundred rupees was the amount.

Standing on the runway as the Nizam's car left the compound, I said, "Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for the check for five hundred rupees."

"A thousand rupees, Mr. Thurston," said the secretary, with emphasis on the thousand.

The Nizam looked at the secretary.

I made a gesture as if hastily looking at the check and apologetically replied:

"Pardon, sir. It is a thousand. I hadn't expected so much!"

As I stood watching the car the secretary turned and nodded knowingly. That evening I received another check for five hundred rupees.

Under Canvas in India

We played at the Classic Theater for three months and would have remained indefinitely had not the owners doubled and tripled the rent as the engagement was extended from six to ten and then to twelve weeks.

We were told there were few theaters in India large enough for our performance. So we decided to make a tent to seat two thousand people, with stage, lights and seats. There were no tentmakers in Calcutta. Finally I found a Chinaman who said he would do the work if I explained how it should be done.

The tent was sixty by two hundred feet, with forty-foot center poles. The Chinaman showed remarkable skill, and with the aid of twenty of his native workmen the work progressed faster than expected. Before we closed at the Classic Theater everything was completed. We engaged thirty men and loaded the outfit, including a small automobile, in four railroad cars, and set off for Benares—our first stop.

The dreadful bubonic plague was on. There were many deaths daily and the natives were afraid to assemble. Business was bad, and we prepared to move.

The plague and the rapidly approaching hot season hinted at the futility of remaining in India. I cabled the theaters in South Africa, and having heard that Harry Kellar was about to retire, wrote him, offering to buy his show.

I remained in Benares long enough, however, to discuss magic, theosophy and religion with the famous Annie Besant, who lived in a beautiful home overlooking the Ganges. I also visited the priests who paid large fees to the city for the privilege of having small floats at the foot of the temples on the banks of the river.

We packed our four-car magic circus and entrained for Lucknow.

I finally engaged Bella Hassan, the best magician I could find in India, who later appeared with me in America.

A party of hunters was stopping at the hotel. Thrilling tales of the tiger hunt were told; but all agreed that the wild boar was more dangerous. Captain Wertzler told us that the wild dog was the most dangerous animal in India, for the reason that, unlike the tiger or the wild boar, it ventured into towns seeking sheep and cattle; and that no person or animal had ever lived after having been bitten by a wild dog.

During the ten days in Lucknow, the plague increased with great rapidity. There was almost constant procession of burials. Business decreased, and I decided to sell the tent. The captain told me of a wealthy babu who had exhibited moving pictures in a tent, which had been destroyed by a storm. The babu

bought our tent; the magic was removed, and the picture machine installed.

The tent had cost six thousand rupees; I sold it for a thousand as it stood.

We moved to Agra, and appeared at the Rawa Theater.

The fourth day in Agra, George said: "Mr. Thurston, one of the ducks died."

"What's wrong, George?"

"Plague!"

"No!" I replied, in an indifferent manner. "Ducks don't get the plague!"

The following day George phoned me in excitement, saying, "All the ducks died with the plague!"

"How do you know?"

"The natives told me."

I drove to the theater. Stepping from my car, I looked directly into the face of a dying man who was being carried on a litter. I entered the theater.

"George!" I shouted.

"Yes, sir!"

"We close the show tonight!"

I had received offers of engagements in South Africa. I also wired Kellar for a reply to my former message. He cabled acceptance.

I was in a quandary, whether I should play South Africa or join Kellar. I called George and explained the situation. As I held a coin in my hand, I remembered my last dollar that I had tossed on the steamship Sonoma.

"Which shall it be, George? South Africa or home?"

"Home," replied George.

"Take your choice!"

"Heads!"

I tossed the coin! George won; and we were homeward bound.

THE END

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\$1,000
in cash awards to
cigarette smokers

\$500 *for cigarette sales people*

Cigarette smokers discovered this new use for Luden's Menthol Cough Drops—greater smoke satisfaction and greater throat comfort. We have been advertising that "One Luden's to every ten cigarettes—makes the eleventh taste as good as the first." Now we find that cigarette smokers have been making their own tests—some say it should be one Luden's to seven cigarettes; others one to five, and so on. To settle this "argument" and to enable cigarette smokers to make their own decisions, we are offering \$1000 in prizes to cigarette smokers and \$500 to cigarette sales people for the most convincing experiment and the cleverest slogan on the use of Luden's with cigarettes.

PRIZES

\$1,000 to Cigarette Smokers.	\$500 to those who sell cigarettes.
\$200 for the best test description and slogan or jingle.	\$100 for the best test description and slogan or jingle.
\$100 for the 2nd best.	\$75 for the 2nd best.
\$50 for the 3rd best.	\$50 for the 3rd best.
\$25 for the 4th best.	\$25 for the 4th best.
\$10 each for the next 30 winners.	\$10 each for the next 10 winners.
\$5 each for the next 65 winners.	\$5 each for the next 30 winners.
(ninety-nine prizes in all)	(forty-four prizes in all)

RULES

- 1—Any cigarette smoker can enter except employees of Luden's, Inc.
- 2—Write on one side of the paper only—do not use more than 200 words, including your slogan or jingle.
- 3—Mail to Cigarette Slogan Contest, Luden's, Inc., 230 N. 8th St., Reading, Pa. Write your name and address plainly.
- 4—The letter must be postmarked before midnight, July 15th, 1929.
- 5—Prizes will be awarded for the most convincing explanation of the smoking test and the cleverest jingle or slogan giving the results. Not more than one prize to one person.
- 6—All contestants agree to abide by the decision of the judges. Names of winners will be given in this publication and checks mailed to winners as soon as a decision can be reached after July 15th, 1929.
- 7—If you want to participate and have not tried Luden's Menthol Cough Drops, you can get a sample package, free, by writing to Cigarette Slogan Contest, Luden's, Inc., 230 N. 8th St., Reading, Pa.

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THOMAS H. BECK
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Collier's

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

WILLIAM L. CHENERY, Editor



CHARLES COLEBAUGH
Managing Editor

AMEND THE AMENDMENT

EVERY effort of this character is an experiment, and we shall find from our experience the way to further advance."

The words are President Hoover's. He was talking to Congress about farm relief. What he said applies with even greater force to prohibition, which Mr. Hoover has described as an experiment noble in purpose.

The point is that any law is an experiment. Some succeed, some fail, but all are experimental. Remember this in connection with prohibition. It will make clear what would otherwise be a morass of confusion.

Collier's has pictured the evils which have grown up under prohibition—the drinking, the bribery, the corruption, the crime, which are national scandals.

Senator William E. Borah in an article published in this issue of Collier's demands that those not contented with present conditions propose a better alternative. The challenge is fair.

Prohibition is an experiment, noble in purpose, in the President's words. Prohibition thus is not an end in itself. Sobriety, a sober nation, is the goal sought through this experiment of prohibition.

Other experiments had been made with varying degrees of success. Voluntary temperance and abstinence were advocated and not without effect. Local option and state-wide prohibition had been tried. Federal prohibition came after many other trials.

Local option and state prohibition generally were arranged by law. Laws are passed and repealed in response to the change of public opinion.

Federal prohibition, however, in the excitement of war was engraved upon the Constitution. It was treated not as an experiment but as something proven. The Eighteenth Amendment was a sort of obituary notice written to commemorate the death of the Demon Rum. The difficulty arose when the demon did not die.

Now we have the words in the Constitu-

tion but we haven't got the fact. Prohibition has not brought about sobriety. On the contrary, since prohibition drunkenness has become more respectable.

No lasting harm would have come from national prohibition by statute. Statutes can readily be changed as conditions and public opinion shift. The blunder was in writing the experiment into the Constitution.

Collier's accordingly now proposes an amendment to the Eighteenth Amendment.

The precise wording of the amendment to be substituted for the Eighteenth Amendment should be fixed only after the most careful consultation.

Such an amendment, however, might be stated as follows:

"The Congress shall have the power to regulate or prohibit the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction

thereof, but such grant of power shall not be construed to require that such regulation or prohibition shall be uniform throughout the United States nor deprive the states of power to impose additional regulations or prohibitions upon such manufacture, sale, transportation, importation or exportation."

Such an amendment would be merely a grant of power. It would not be a definition of policy. Under it any number of experiments, federal, state or local might be undertaken.

The adoption of such an amendment would leave Congress and the states free to deal with the alcohol traffic as conditions and public opinion warrant.

The national law would still be superior to statutes of states. The policy determined by Congress would still be the national policy but Congress would not be required to lay down a uniform policy for all states. The national policy might very well provide for state and local differences. There is sound legal precedent for this.

Where local sentiment was dry, local or state prohibition might be adopted and enforced by local authority. Congress would naturally protect dry territory from interstate shipments. Where local sentiment was wet, devices such as the Quebec plan, or the Swedish plan, or some other schemes not yet invented might be tried. Enforcement would be by local authority and not by national police.

The fundamental point is that a majority of the people of the United States would tackle their present problem in their own way. Now we are ruled by the dead hand of 1918. Yet we are as fit to manage our affairs in 1929 as we were eleven years ago. Our successors of 1940 or 1950 will be as competent to make their own decisions. The capacity of American people to govern themselves did not perish in 1918.

Broaden the constitution and give the voters of today and tomorrow the lawful opportunity to express their will.

AMENDMENT SUGGESTED AS

A Substitute

FOR THE 18th AMENDMENT
to the Federal Constitution

"THE CONGRESS shall have the power to regulate or prohibit the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, but such grant of power shall not be construed to require that such regulation or prohibition shall be uniform throughout the United States nor deprive the states of power to impose additional regulations or prohibitions upon such manufacture, sale, transportation, importation or exportation."

The form of this amendment has been considered and approved by competent constitutional lawyers. To be valid it must be approved by two thirds of the House of Representatives and of the Senate and ratified by three fourths of the States.