

THE ENGLISH SPEECH.

the English speech! how true it rings!  
 How masterful and clear!  
 Vehicle for greatest things  
 That mortal man may hear.  
 Men of greatest, noblest thought  
 Their songs divine have sung,  
 And laws of highest justice taught  
 In this majestic tongue.  
 Stern, defiant, tempest tones,  
 As battle shouts arise,  
 Making the coward's heart like stones,  
 Breaking the vaulted skies.  
 Oh! what frank and hearty mirth  
 Both English speech reveal,  
 When Peace, God's angel, walks the earth,  
 The wounds of war to heal!  
 There's not an impulse of the mind,  
 Or feeling of the heart,  
 That may its full expression find  
 In this consummate art.  
 O mother tongue! the English speech!  
 The ages' masterpiece!  
 Whose sway around the world doth reach,  
 And shall, till Time doth cease.  
 O, the English speech! how true it rings!  
 Simple, direct, and clear,  
 The speech of freemen, Nature's kings,  
 Language of men sincere!  
 W. J. Herbert Hogan, in New York Sun.

LOVE AND A TIGER.



HAT Charlie Wallace, of the Forty-second B. N. I., was in the dumps, was evident. Nor wholly without cause. Dame Fortune had just dealt him one of those ugly blows she spares none of us—not even the luckiest. An official letter lay open before him. And thus it ran:

Sir: I have the honor to inform you that I have placed your name on the list of applicants for the vacant post in the Waste Paper Office. As you are one of two hundred and eighteen candidates, I feel it right to warn you against harboring any very sanguine hopes of success. Yours faithfully,  
 JOHN LEVING.

Such was the answer to his twentieth application for a post in that department of the Indian Civil Service. And he had nothing but his lieutenant's pay to depend on, nor any prospects worth mentioning; and he was head over ears—not in debt—but in love with Lucy Campbell, the only child of the Collector of Bungareepootur, the place where his regiment was then stationed. And albeit she smiled on him, and kept other suitors—including rich old Colonel Greybeard—at arm's length for his sake, her parents did not give him any encouragement, though they liked and esteemed him. On the whole, then, he had some reason for being in the dumps, as he sat in his bungalow, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy."

His meditations were suddenly cut short by the cheery voice of his bosom friend, Captain Finch. "Why, Charlie, what the dickens ails you, that you've cut mess these last three days?"

"Oh, I'm a trifle out of sorts—nothing much," replied his friend.

"Any news?"

"Only that the man-eater has been making a meal of another post-runner."

"Why, that's the sixth within the last nine months," broke in Charlie Wallace.

"I believe you, my boy," replied his friend; "and Collector Campbell has offered a reward of 3000 rupees for said man-eater's skin. And high time, too! Else we shall find no one to carry our letters."

"Where did it happen?" inquired Wallace.

"Why, about ten miles nor-east of this place—just where the road dives into the Scrawat jungle after crossing the gully. They found the poor fellow's letter-bag and his bells lying in the bed of the gully."

"It seems as if those bells, instead of scaring the brute as intended, acted as a signal to him to make ready to pounce on his prey."

"True to you, friend Charlie."

"I should dearly like to have a shot at the brute."

"No go, my boy! He's too leery. Grant and Spurling have both been on his track; but they couldn't even catch sight of the tip of his tail."

After a few minutes' more chat about things in general, the Captain left the buglow; and Charlie Wallace forthwith shouted to the boy in the verandah outside:

"Where's Murreem Ali?"

This was his factotum—a native of the lowest caste, but faithful as a mastiff.

"Gone to bazaar, saheeb," answered the lad.

"Then go you and buy me a half a dozen small bells such as the post-runners carry on their sticks," said his master, flinging him a couple of rupees. "And be quick about it."

Away sped the boy to do his errand. Meanwhile the lovelorn Lieutenant carefully loaded his rifle and double-barrelled gun, and then strolled out on to the verandah to await Murreem Ali's return.

Ali soon made his appearance, with the boy at his heels. When he was within earshot, his master called to him, "That brute of a tiger has killed another mail-carrier; and now I'm minded to put a bullet through his hide."

"Pardon, saheeb. He no tiger, he devil!" said Ali; "saheeb no shoot him. He eat saheeb!"

"We shall see about that," replied the Lieutenant. "Are you man enough to come along with me and chance it?"

"If saheeb go, Ali go with him, and devil-tiger eat both," replied the native, calmly.

"Well, then, just get me a red coat such as the mail-carriers wear, and we'll be off at once."

The native took the purse which his master held out to him and retraced his steps toward the bazaar, thinking his master stark mad. But then in the East madmen are deemed inspired.

When he returned with the red coat he found the Lieutenant transformed into a fair imitation of a native by the aid of burnt cork. The Lieutenant donned the coat, loaded his pistols, thrust them into his belt, and handed the gun to his servant. The rifle he shouldered himself. The two then stole out of the bungalow by the back door and gained the high road by an unfrequented path to avoid attracting attention needlessly—always a wise precaution when one goes out for wool at the risk of coming home shorn.

For some four or five miles their road lay through open fields sown with maize and cotton. Then they dived into the jungle. Here the Lieutenant bade Ali fall behind and trotted on ahead by himself, lest the tiger should "smell a rat." So on he jogged alone, hoping—though not without a qualm or two—that the beast would mistake him for a post-runner and show himself. To this end he tied the bells in a bunch to his girdle, and a pretty jingle they made as he sped onward. Anon he plunged into a wood of lofty trees, where the underlying brushwood grew thick enough to harbor a hundred hungry tigers within easy reach of him. The thought made him blanch a bit; but nevertheless he pushed on till he reached the very spot where the man-eater had made his last meal of human flesh. There could be no doubt of it, for traces of the poor fellow's blood were still to be seen on the white pebbles in the bed of what, during the rainy season, became a foaming torrent. Here Charlie Wallace halted, with his rifle at full-cock in his right hand, and gazed around him.

Naught stirred. All was silent as the grave—oppressively silent. Ah! what noise was that which he heard behind him? The footsteps of his servant? Impossible! Ali must still be half a mile behind him. As this thought flashed through his mind he faced round just in time to see a pair of gleaming eyes glaring at him from the brushwood. Quick as lightning he raised his rifle and fired. A wild howl answered the report, and a huge tiger rolled down into the gully, where it lay for a moment as if stunned. But it quickly recovered itself, and

crouched to spring on its assailant. Had Wallace wavered for half a second he must have shared the fate of the luckless runner. But he whipped out his pistol and discharged it point-blank in the animal's face. One of the slugs entered its eye and pierced the brain, and the ruthless creature fell seemingly lifeless at his feet; then he knew that it must actually have made its spring when he fired.

With his second pistol in his hand he sat down on the brink of the gully and mopped the moisture from his dripping brows. Meanwhile he kept his eye fixed upon his enemy, half expecting to see it rise and renew the attack. But there it lay quite motionless, and was indeed stone dead.

He had ample time to admire the beauty of his sleek coat before Ali made his appearance.

"What a marvel!" exclaimed that worthy, almost breathless with wonder and admiration. "Heaven has enabled saheeb to shoot the devil!"

"The question now is, what are we to do with the devil, as you call him?" said his master. "Can we get a bullock-car hereabouts?"

"Surely!" replied Ali. "At the next village—not a mile off—where every bullock-cart and bullock will be proudly at the beck of the saheeb who has destroyed the devil."

"Well, away with you, and fetch one! One will serve our turn," said the devil-shooter smiling.

About half an hour later, a loud shouting proclaimed the approach of the vehicle and half the village. As the noisy crowd drew near, one old man rushed forward, and, grovelling at the Lieutenant's feet, exclaimed: "Oh, my Lord, my Lord, hast thou verily destroyed the devil that devoured my brother's son?"

Meanwhile the villagers crowded round the carcass of their fallen foe, and kicked and spat upon it to their hearts' content. One fellow pulled out a tinderbox and struck a light, wherewith he proceeded to singe the animal's whiskers. But Ali checked him with a threat that if he spoilt the creature's skin he was likely to share its fate. Others, instead of venting their hate on their dead foe, tendered milk and fruit and wild honey to the tiger-queller, or, rather, to the devil-queller, as they deemed him. And, sure enough, ere long up came a hoary priest to lay the spirit of the beast, lest it should haunt the village and work far more evil than while clothed with flesh. They drew a magic circle round the carcass, and smeared its head with dabs of red paint, and prostrated themselves before it, by way of soothing the wrath of its patron goddess, the mischief-working Kali. Finally, they wreathed its neck with wild flowers, and hoisted it into the cart, and marched in procession before it to the music of tomtoms and half a dozen horns. And then, as night came on, scores of torchbearers swelled the throng that marched in front of the cart.

When they were within two miles distance of the Lieutenant's headquarters, they were overtaken by a stoutish gentleman riding a powerful and spirited horse. Reining it in alongside the cart, where sat the Lieutenant alongside the tiger, he asked:

"What's the matter?"

Wallace modestly explained, to the best of his ability, amid all that din of tomtoms, horns and human voices.

The horseman looked puzzled for a moment. Then he said: "But you're not a post-runner."

At this moment up rode three other horsemen. He turned to one of them and whispered something which Wallace failed to catch. He then rode off, followed by the two other horsemen.

The one to whom he had spoken accompanied the procession, chatting to the amateur post-runner, till the cars stopped at the door of Wallace's bungalow. There he abruptly said: "An revoir, Lieutenant Wallace," and rode off.

"What on earth does he mean with his an revoir?" muttered the tiger-queller as he entered his "diggings."

"And how the dickens does he know my name and grade?" He had failed to observe the diplomatic art with

which the horseman had pumped him during their chat.

Scarcely had the tiger-hunter doffed his red coat, washed off his war-paint, and donned his ordinary "togs," when his boy came in with a note, which ran:

The Governor-General begs me to invite you to dine with him at my house. Come just as you are. Yours sincerely,  
 HECTOR CAMPBELL.

Dinner at 8 sharp.

So the frank, plain-spoken horseman who first accosted him was no less a person than the Viceroy of India, the universally beloved and respected Lord Mayo, who—like Mr. Gladstone—went here, there and everywhere, finding out things for himself, instead of trusting to hearsay.

But far from this reflection were Charlie Wallace's thoughts. He was thinking of dining, not so much with the Governor-General, but rather with him in the presence of Ducy Campbell, whose parents had prudently kept her out of his way for months; in fact, ever since they detected her weakness for the impecunious Lieutenant without "expectations."

But, indeed, mighty little time had he for any reflections; barely time to give himself an additional brush-up and reach the Collector's bungalow as the dinner-on-table gong sounded.

Lord Mayo led Mrs. Campbell into the dining-room; and Lucy fell to the lot of his lordship's aide-de-camp—the gentleman who had pumped our hero so skillfully. But he did not feel inclined to grumble at that arrangement. He was well content to bring up the rear with her father and sit opposite to her and side by side with the Governor-General.

Like all thoroughbred gentlemen, Lord Mayo had the art, or "second nature," of setting all persons at their ease in his presence, except, of course, sly rogues, who never can feel quite at ease in the presence of an honest man. The dinner might have been that of a family party for any sense of stiffness or constraint that prevailed it. Nor did the talk once flag, or turn too much, but just enough, on the event that gave Charlie Wallace his seat at that table.

After the ladies left the room, his lordship and the aide-de-camp between them drew Charlie out, and discovered, without much difficulty, that it was not the three thousand rupees reward that induced him to risk his life, but rather the reckless courage born of that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick.

"I have seen that odiously polite form so often that I know it by heart," he said; and he repeated with grim humor the prescriptive words, "Sir—I have the honor to inform you, etc."

"Ay, it seems you know your lesson thoroughly," quoth Lord Mayo, with a merry twinkle in his eye. "But perhaps the bird may sometimes change its note."

Next morning, as he sat at breakfast, Charlie received a note addressed to him in a peculiarly bold hand. He hastily tore it open and read:

"Sir: I have the honor to inform you that I have placed your name on the list of applicants for the vacant post in the General Supervision Department. But as your name heads the list, you may chance to find this announcement somewhat better than waste paper. Wishing you heartily every success, I am, very faithfully yours,  
 Mayo."

Up he jumped, snatched up his hat, and rushed off at the top of his speed towards Collector Campbell's bungalow, to pour out his thanks to the Governor-General. But he found the the bird flown. There was some one, however, to receive him; some one in whose bright eyes the kind-hearted nobleman had read a certain tale of true love; whose course he forthwith resolved to smooth so far as in him lay. And he succeeded so well, that when a twelve-month later, Collector Campbell, retired, sailed with his wife for England, they left Lucy behind them. Only she had changed her surname for that of old Scotland's darling hero.—Old and Young.

The British Government possesses the greatest number of distinct flags, excluding those used for signal purposes, the number being twenty-six.