For the Boys and Girls

THE DUEL OF TWO GIANTS

BY DAVID KER.

"Is this a jungle, Ned?"

"That's what I call it; isn't it thick enough for you?"

The veteran's sarcastic tone was not without cause, for the jungle through which they had been plowing their way laboriously for an hour and more was one of the thickest and wildest of those which cover the foothills of the great mountain wall of Mysore, the Switzerland of Southern India.

"Isn't this the place which you said was so full of elephants?" asked the younger brother, who, having just come out to India for the first time, was anxious to "win his first ivory" as soon as possible. "It won't be easy to get hold of them, though, if they're half as clever as they're said to be."

"Which they're not, you may take my word for it," laughed the elder. "My dear boy, you musn't judge the elephant by the stories you read about him in books, which having gone on for years without being contradicted, have come at last to be received as solid fact.

"There's that yarn, now, of a tailor who pricked an elephant's trunk with his needle, and the elephant paid him out by splashing water over his work, and spoiling it. Now, how on earth should a beast whose greatest delight is to splash water over himself, guess that the very same thing should be a punishment to anyone else?

"I've had five years' experience of the elephant, in every possible way, and my opinion is that, although he can do many things very well when he has been taught, he's naturally rather a stupid beast than otherwise."

Frank Ashton's countenance fell; for, like most untraveled readers, he had always been a firm believer in the "preternatural sagacity" of the elephant, and to find his sagacious giant suddenly dwarfed into "rather a stupid beast than otherwise" was a heavy blow.

But at that moment a sound was heard which put everything else out of his head in an instant—the strange, discordant noise, something like the blast of a cracked trumpet, which announces the presence of the jungle king.

"Hati! hati!" (elephant! elephant!) whispered their native attendant—an old Mysorean hunter—with a flash of stern enjoyment in his small, black eyes.

Quick as thought, the three dropped into a hollow at the foot of a giant banyan, and peered watchfully through the lattice-work of intertwisted roots, holding their breath, as the shrill trumpeting and the crashing of the broken bushes came nearer and nearer.

At last, a huge black head thrust itself through the tangled leaves, and out into the tiny glade, on the edge of which they were crouching, broke a full-grown "bull" of the largest size, with a pair of shining tusks, the very sight of which made Frank's mouth water.

The young fellow thrust forward his rifle with hand that quivered with excitement, and was just about to fire at haphazard, when his more experienced brother stopped him short.

Meanwhile, the elephant had advanced into the centre of the open space, snuffing the air and moving his enormous ears restlessly to and fro. Suddenly he struck the ground angrily with his mighty foot, and, throwing his trunk forward, sent forth a hoarse blast of defiance.

The challenge did not remain long unanswered. A counterblast replied to it as promptly as an echo, and then a crashing and trampling sound was heard in the thicket on the opposite side of the glade.

"Now, Frank, my boy," whispered Edward Ashton, "you'll see a sight worth looking at. There's going to be a fight; and a fight between two full-grown elephants is a thing that you don't see every day, I can tell you!"

As he spoke, a second elephant, quite as large as the first, appeared on the edge of the clearing, and advanced slowly into it.

The two monsters eyed each other warily for a moment, as if measuring each other's strength; and then came a simultaneous rush that made the earth tremble, and a shock that sounded like the collision of two loaded freight-cars.

"Round number one," whispered the elder brother to the younger, with an appreciative chuckle, "and well fought on both sides."

"And first blood to both, seemingly," answered the other, in the same tone.

In fact, the left ear of the second elephant was terribly mangled by the tusk of his adversary, while the latter's broad forehead, covered with blood from a gash which seemed as if made by a plow-share, showed that the counter-stroke had not been dealt in vain.

They closed again, and the fight was desperate for some minutes. The air rang with the hoarse screams of the contending giants, as their vast, black bodies swayed to and fro, trampling into mire the soft earth, which was already moistened with their blood.

The huge trunks writhed in the air like serpents, and two or three small trees that grew in the centre of the glade snapped off short, like sticks of sealing-wax, bore terrible witness to the irresistible strength of the brute combatants.

All of a sudden, one of the two was seen to reel back, as if struck by a cannon-ball, and then trot heavily off into the jungle, with the blood pouring from a terrific wound in his side.

"He's too hard hit to go far," said Edward Ashton to his brother. "We shall be sure of him, anyhow."

But Frank was too eager to listen to him. Fearing to lose both elephants, and determining to secure at least the one that remained, he fired hastily, and, instead of hitting the vulnerable part of the centre of the forehead, only grazed the extended trunk.

The sudden sting of the bullet roused the monster to fury. He uttered a savage roar, and, flinging up his trunk, came charging down upon them like a whirlwind.

The next moment, Frank Ashton heard the thick banyan-root behind which he lay snap like a pipe-stem, and saw a huge, black foot, as broad as a writing-table, hanging right over him. But it missed him by a few inches, and on went the beast, leaving Frank wishing most heartily that he had never seen or heard of an elephant in his life.

Suddenly, a shot echoed from the tree above (into which the native hunter had swung himself on the first alarm), and the elephant, struck in the hind-leg by the heavy ball, turned fiercely to look for his new assailant.

But at that moment Edward's unerring bullet smote him full in the forehead, and the mighty beast fell over on his side, with a crash like a falling tower.

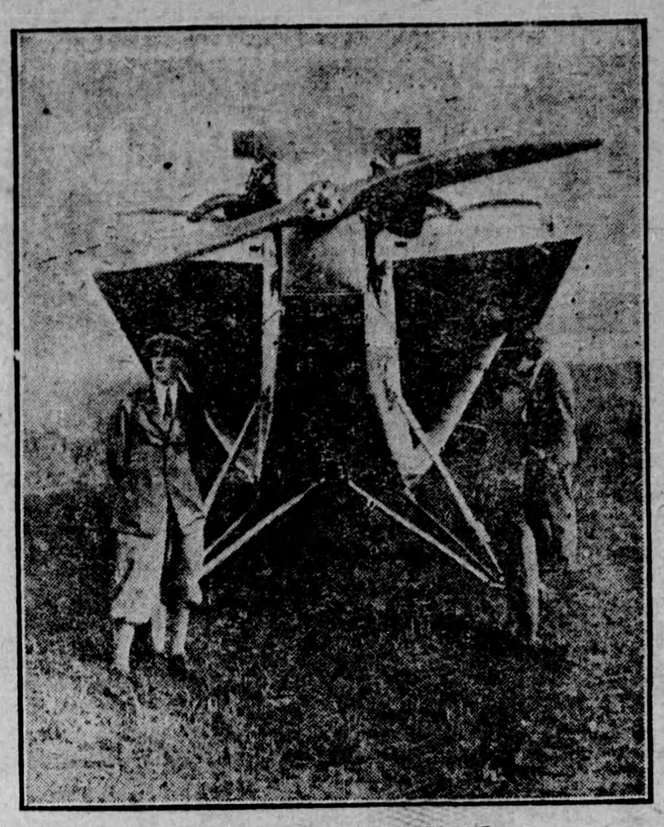
Before sunset the other elephant had likewise been tracked down and killed; and the two pairs of tusks, which had fought so fiercely that morning, were on their way to the nearest railway station.

Tearing Down the Street.

"Just saw Smith, the contractor, tearing down the street."

"He must be clearing a space for that new park."

Cheerfulness and content are great beautifiers.



FIRST FOLDING MONOPLANE

On this continent was recently taken through its first test in the United States, piloted by Capt. R. H. Depew, Jun. In a few minutes the wings can be folded back against the body so that the plane can be housed in an ordinary garage.

The Deserted House.

The house is dead.
The low sun paints its cobwebbed windows red,
But glass is cracked, and here and there a pane
Knocked out. Its hearth will never flame again.
The red brick chimney leans and soon will fall;
The wind't rude hands are tearing at the wall.

Yet roof and wall are mantled by a vine,
Where golden butterflies, like candles, shine;
A vine that lifts red, cup-like flowers on high,
Like crimson fires that blaze toward the sky.
Around the broken panes, green tendrils cling,
And blossoms brush the nesting bluebird's wing;
Brown bees go singing to their daily toil
To fill the empty chambers wih their spoil;
Till evening dims the golden air to blue,
And bats go out to hunt amid the dew.

So full of varied business, mirth and strife—
Is the house dead? or newly come to life?

—Claribel Weeks Avery.

Music.

I have known music,
A wind swept pine
Upon a singing hill,
A million elfin voices
In the night,
The chant of frogs in pools
A moonlit music.

I have known music,
The thrumming of the rain
Upon the leaves,
When all the birds were still,
And liquid drops fell softly
To the grass
And sliding gayly
Down each bending blade,
Slipped silently
Into the earth's dark breast,
To muted music.

And now within the city's
Surging roar
I still hear music,
Like some great organ
Filling all the sky,
A mighty diapason,
Pierced by the strident call
Of lesser sounds,
Urgent, challenging,
Tremendous music.

—Madelene M. Davis, in Christian Science Monitor.

Where Credit is Due.

"My dear fellow, you owe your wonderful recovery entirely to your wife."

"Glad to hear it, doctor. I'll make the cheque payable to her."

Mind More Alert at Night Than Morning.

The mind is more alert before a night's sleep than it is just after rising in the morning. This is the conclusion reached after an extensive study of sleep made by scientists at the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research at Pittsburgh. The tests were made on students in a local university who volunteered for the purpose.

It was found that the students performed mental tests better at night than in the morning. However, it was noted that the results in the morning were much better after a series of exercises. There is a popular impression that a restful sleeper changes his position very little during the night. But the tests showed that the sleepers remained in one position without moving only about eleven minutes on an average.

"Our results in their present form," declared Dr. H. M. Johnson, head of the experiments, "contradict a number of proverbs regarding sleep One of these is that the earlier hours passed in bed are the most restful. This is true only for a small minority of the subjects. For a number the periods of longest rest are pretty evenly distributed among the four quarters of the night. For some the last quarter is most free from activity.

"Recalling advice frequently given students to do their studying before breakfast while their minds are still fresh, the results of the night and morning tests are at variance with that belief, but a decision is yet to be made on what interpretation these results will bear. Recuperative effects of sleep undoubtedly exist, but they are obscured by other factors for some hours."

Fish Age Facts.

How long do fish live? Mayor F. S. Fowler, in a lecture before the London Zoological Society, gave some interesting data on a special study he has conducted on this subject.

An electric eel in the London Zoo, it was reported, lived twelve years. A European catfish in the private aquarium of the Duke of Bedford is fifty years old and shows little indication of weakness.

Other fish age figures given by the Major were: Carp, thirteen years; goldfish, twelve years; herring, four years; salmon, three years; bull frog, fifteen years, tree frog, fourteen years; female Spanish newt, eighteen years, and giant salamander, fifty-two years.

Didn't Refuse.

Marjorie, aged four, stayed to tea with her playmate. When she returned home her mother asked her, "Have you been a good girl and did you say 'Yes, please,' and 'No, thank you'?"

"Well, Mother," replied Marjorie, "I said, 'Yes, please.'"

Hate is the microscope of faults and weaknesses. Love is the microscope of our good qualities.

FINLAND, THE COUNTRY OF PICTURES

Finland is one of the most versatile of countries in its scenery. Rivers and falls are encountered everywhere. The most beautiful promenade imaginable is Punkaharja, a very remarkable natural ridge, located between Peruvesi and the Saima Canal, about four miles long. In some places the ridge is scarcely wider than the promenade itself, which leads through shady pine woods, the water gleaming silvery through the thick branches here and there. Artistry has assisted nature a little. Windowlike apertures have been cut in the pine forest, and through these may be seen, in orderly succession, very beautiful landscapes—distant villages, fields and windmills, ethereally blue waters and leafy islands. Truly idyllic is this experience of waking under a canopy of fir branches, with here and there the sunlight filtering through; the delicious scent of fragrant pines saluting the nostrils, and, as the poet says, "a picture in every shadow." So closely interlaced indeed are the branches that form this natural roof over the promenade, that in many places no rain can penetrate. The musical rustle of the wind in the tree-tops is all that the wanderer notices of a quick summer storm, such as occasionally rolls over the ridge. Especially peaceful is the sentiment that hovers over the entire scene at sunset, or during moonlit nights. While the night wind may slightly ruffle the surface of the canal, and the moon beams play thereon, Perusevi slumbers peacefully in the shadows of the lofty ridge, and the stars sparkle in its deep waters.

A Varying Panorama.

In the middle of the Finnish Gulf, outside of the town of Kotka, there rise out of the sea Hogland's mighty rocks, faintly visible even as far south as Frederikshawn. The soil on this solitary island is exceptionally barren, stony, and full of crags and ravines. Spruce and gnarled coast firs cover the ground, stunted by the tempestuous winds, and no higher than heather.

Koli affords a wide view over the landscape from the heights of one of the mountains. Varying indeed is the panorama spread out below. In the autumn it resembles a vast carpeted floor, of a pattern that is splendidly colored in varying tones of yellow, brown and green, bordered by the deep blue waters of the bay.

Then there is Abo Castle, erected in the early dawn of the Christian era. It is called the key to Finland. Numerous potentates have sighed for and desired to possess this key, yet Finland has it in her hand. The castles of Olofsburg and Wiborg are likewise monuments of ancient times. While Wasa, Borga and Helsingfors represent in the main modern architecture, Tammerfors is renowned for its modern and efficient industries, and Hango as an up-to-date bathing resort.

When the Sun Dances.

It must not be forgotten that northern Finland is situated in the land of the midnight sun. During the greater part of the summer the nights remain bright, so that travelers visiting there, unused to sleeping while it is still daylight, find it difficult to adjust themselves to this novel situation. No one who is in that region on Midsummer Night fails to avail himself of the opportunity to "see the sun dance" as it is popularly called. A famous restaurant, with an eye to business, has located itself charmingly at the point where the Oulu River empties into the Botnian Sea, and on that evening its special verandas are crowded. The sun continues shining during the entire evening, even past the midnight hour, drooping ever lower toward the horizon, where sky and water meet. Near the water's edge, it apparently stops and stands absolutely still. Then, suddenly, with a few leaps, it retraces its way, and gradually mounts up again into the sky. During this strange manoeuvring the sun looks like a round disk of reddish-orange color, with rays seemingly rising up behind it. It is a rare and never-to-be-forgotten spectacle.

While Changes Are Being Made.

I may be foolish, but when she
Decided that she's like to make
A sun room, just for beauty's sake,
And build another room to be
A slumber chamber. "Yes, said I,
"We'll make those changes in July."

I like the house the way it stands,
Here I could dwell till death shall come
Without that tired solarium,
But since it's something she demands,
This latest whim I won't deny,
We'll make those changes in July.

Rip, carpenters, and bang about!
Go to it, masons, all you wish!
I'm on Lake Huron catching fish,
I cannot hear the plumbers shout.
Go to it, fellows! Bang and pound!
I shan't be there to hear a sound.

I've been through changes once before,
I've swallowed dust and tried to be
At home with earnest carpentry
And once will last forevermore.
When masons and plumbers enter here
I pack my grip and disappear.

Now here beside the lake I sit
The while those workmen put up shelves
And build that room to suit themselves.
And if they're honest they'll admit
It suits them better through the day
To have the owner miles away.

—Edgar A. Guest.

Cold Cream? She Never Thought of It.

She (touching her lips)—"What do you do for the chaps?"

Her Friend (blushing) — "Why-er-why should I tell you?"

Maid (announcing the arrival of Mr. Foote and his two daughters): "Mr. Foote, and the Misses Feet."

JAPANESE SMILE IS WONDER OF TOURISTS

CONSTANT ACCOMPANIMENT IN THE LAND OF CHERRY BLOSSOMS.

Travellers Soon Learn it is Only Impersonal Form of Politeness.

One of the riddles of Japan is the Japanese smile. Nowhere in the world do people smile more than in Japan, writes A. von Winterfeld. A soft smile accompanies us constantly as long as we are in Japan; this smile is as pleasant as the light, enchanting atmosphere of the islands. All Japanese about us smile—even when we should expect utterances of bad humor, of anger or grief.

You leave a shop where you had the salesman show you things for an hour or more and where you bought nothing after all; the salesman accompanies you to the door, inhales the air with a slight noise to show you his glad devotion and smiles just as kindly as if you had bought up his entire store. You get angry some day and hit a servant; he smiles. Your servant tells you that his mother died; he smiles as though it were the most agreeable news in the world.

Requires Self-Control.

Of course, this smile is an impersonal form of politeness which does not express any feeling, any sympathy or any love. At first, as newcomers, we are delighted to find ourselves always surrounded by this soft smile. But after a while, when we begin to realize that it is merely a form of politeness and that it does not mean anything, the smile grows monotonous and even irritating. We begin to long for the contrasts of bitter and sweet humors in our occidental daily life.

But one thing we ought not to forget, namely, that this politeness of the Japanese requires a self-education and a rare energy and, finally, a power to be kind and gentle which other nations have seldom attained.

There are more than 2,000,000 blind people in the world.

REG'LAR FELLERS—By Gene Byrnes. **Those Changeable Eyes!**