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The Flying Courier

by Boyd Cable

SYNOPSIS.

At Croydon aerodrome, Glynn Elliman, pilot of the Indian Air Mail liner, meets Norah Seaman who has come to see some friends off. Glynn is ordered to stand by for a special job. He talks it over with Norah and connects the press reports of a Prince of Napalata, who is ill in London and in haste to return to India where his father has died, with Glynn's orders.

CHAPTER I.—(Cont'd.)

Twenty minutes later Glynn was being shown in to the manager at the Airways office.

"Afternoon, Elliman," said the manager waving to a chair. "Sit down. Have a cigarette? I suppose you're wondering why we hauled you off your run at the last minute?"

"I was wondering if it was anything to do with that Prince fellow that's talking of flying to India," said Glynn casually, taking a cigarette.

"Good lord!" exclaimed the manager in startled tones. "What put that in your head? Has anybody said anything?"

"Only the newspapers," said Glynn calmly. "They've got a yarn that it's rumored the Prince wants to fly. I know the routes to India. I speak Hindustani, and I'm pulled off my regular job in a great hurry. Putting two and two together, that makes four—or maybe I'm making it look like all the fours possible."

"If that's all, it doesn't matter," said the manager with a distinct air of relief. "But let's get this clear first of all—this business is the most complete and cast-iron hush-hush. You'll be given a holiday from Airways while you're on it, and you'll draw treble pay and a present at the end if you do it well. But you must give me your word not to tell a living soul what the business is, where you are going, what you are doing until I say you may. Can I count on that implicitly?"

"Why, certainly," said Glynn readily, and then as he suddenly remembered his promise to telephone, he added, "But if you don't mind, I'd say the best plan is for you to tell me nothing more until the job starts. Just leave it that I'm to stand by for orders that may come at any time. Then if anything leaks elsewhere you'll know it was not through me."

"Perhaps that's best," said the manager thoughtfully. "And it may save you straining your conscience or your powers of invention if you're asked questions. So here is all you need to know meantime—get your kit together for a two or three-day stay out of town, and ring me at my home number at eight tonight for further instructions. That clear?"

"Quite clear," said Glynn simply.

"Take this cash then," said the manager opening a drawer and taking out an envelope. "You may need it for fares and hotels. Just sign the receipt for it, will you?"

Glynn took the envelope, and scribbled his name on the receipt form.

"That's all then," said the manager briskly. "Oh, one thing more—unless you have one of your own you'd prefer, you'd better take this."

From the open drawer he lifted out a small automatic pistol and pushed it across the desk. Glynn picked it up, looked at it, and handed it back. "I'll get out my own," he said, adding with a mildly enquiring look in his eye, "if it's likely to be needed?"

"You're getting treble pay," said the manager significantly.

Glynn grinned happily at him. "And that takes earning these days," he amended, "But I don't mind owning that the chance of earning it by ways out of the usual is one better than getting it."

"Which is one reason why I picked you specially," said the manager, and rose, holding out his hand.

CHAPTER II.

About seven that evening Glynn telephoned Norah Seaman as he had arranged. His call was answered almost on the first ring, and he guessed rightly that it was the girl herself who answered him. "It's Miss Seaman speaking. Is that you, Captain Elliman?"

"Yes," he answered. "You have a good ear for a voice to recognize mine so quickly."

He heard her laugh lightly. "Partly recognizing it, and partly because I expected you. Well, any news?"

"Not a thing," he told her, "except that it evidently isn't that job we guessed at. I'm shunting off out of town tonight, probably, but expect to be back in a few days."

"It certainly can't be India if you're to be back in days," she answered. "I hope it isn't a tiresome journey for you?"

There was the hint of a question in her tones, and he answered it at once. "Don't even know where I'm going yet. My boss is to tell me this evening, later."

"More and more mysteriouser," she laughed. "Almost sounds like the Orient after all."

"Oh, no," he assured her. "It's all in the day's work for us to get chased off on hush-hush jobs to look over some new type of bus or engine or something. I'd guess it's something of the sort."

"Then perhaps I'll hear from you when you get back to town?" she asked, and he answered quickly. "You certainly will. And I'm going to see you again as soon as possible after that."

"All right," she agreed. "But remember if it should turn out to be India after all, I'll expect you to tell me all about it."

After he had finished their talk he hung up the receiver and stood thoughtful for a moment. "Wonder why she's so keen about news of that Napalata biz?" he wondered to himself. "nowing his country a bit, I suppose, and interested in the local gossip of it. Oh, well....."

He put his other call through at eight o'clock and again was answered promptly this time, by the manager of Airways. The instructions he got were brief to a point of curtness—to take a cab to a house of which he got the address and where he would be expected and admitted on giving his name, to take what orders were given him there, and carry them out without question.

"No need to report any further to me, Elliman," the manaer finished. "You're officially on holiday now, and I'll be told about it as and when you're reporting back again. Good night, now, and good luck."

"Certainly gets mysteriouser, as that girl said," reflected Glynn as he hung up. "Taking orders from a man I don't even know the name of, or anything about except his house number and street. But at least it's out of the routine, with treble pay tacked on, and that's good enough."

At the house of which he had got the address, a close and anxious discussion was then in progress. On a big bed in the dimly lit room, the Prince of Napalata lay, his head and shoulders slightly raised on the pillows behind him. Seated at one side of the bed were two very famous specialist surgeons, and facing them on the other side of the bed sat a man known to the surgeons as high in the confidential affairs of the Government and of India. He was speaking slowly and deliberately.

"His Highness wished me to meet you here, so that I could give you my asurances in addition to his that it is of serious importance—the most grave importance—that he should be flown to India at the earliest possible date."

"Within a week from now," added the Prince, with his eyes on the surgeons' faces.

"I fear it is impossible to promise that," said the one quietly; and the other added, "I take it the importance of getting to India is less than the importance of preserving the Prince's life?"

"Sir Aylmer here may tell you it is perhaps of less importance that I live if I am not in my palace in the next two weeks or so," said the Prince.

"Hardly that," said Sir Aylmer. "Yet grave enough. You have both heard of the rumors being spread through Napalata, and the dangers of riots and outbreaks being stirred up. The most dangerous lie is that the Prince is dying—without hope of recovery—and that when he dies it is planned to put an impostor in his place."

"But surely," said the one surgeon, "our word as specialists, quoted by such an authority as Sir Aylmer, should silence such rumors."

The Prince laughed shortly. "You do not know the East, gentlemen, nor the rooted belief in the powers of Princes—and of bribery."

"It is true," cut in Sir Aylmer quickly, as he saw a look of distaste on one of the faces opposite. "My own official cables and reports have been discredited."

"Most curious," murmured one surgeon, and the other shook his head in puzzled agreement.

"Of course," said Sir Aylmer slowly and with a side glance at the Prince, "there is an influence in Napalata..."

"My own half-brother," exploded the Prince. "No use mincing words, gentlemen. My half-brother — the Vulture, as they have rightly named him. He aspires to my father's royal seat, and if I am not there to check him is like to seize it, unless my troopers' swords are strong enough to deny him."

"And that means riot, bloodshed, civil and religious war," added Sir Aylmer quietly. "It might mean another outbreak like Moplah, and worse. This is why my Government, and the India Government is so urgent to get the Prince out to Napalata."

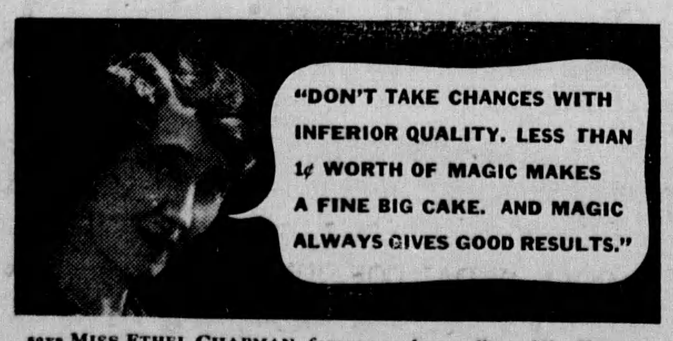
The surgeons glanced at each other again. "In a fortnight from now, it is just possible the Prince might risk travelling, but I see no hope before," said one, and the other added briefly, "Nor I."

"In sixteen days from now, the gutters will be running blood," said the Prince steadily, "unless I am there."

"The law of Napalata," explained Sir Aylmer, "is that the heir to a Prince who has died must proclaim himself in his capital within seventy days. The seventieth day as it happens, is the day of an important religious festival—one on which every year there is danger of religious strife only averted with difficulty. The priests on both sides are frenzied by the rumors and tales going round; the troops and police are tormented with the doubts instilled in them...."

(To be continued.)

Promises may get friends, but it is performances that must nurse and keep them.—Owen Feltham.



says MISS ETHEL CHAPMAN, famous cookery editor of the Farmer

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Distinctive Quality

Fresh from the Gardens

Henry VIII Documents Found in Old Chest

The discovery of important Henry VIII. documents at the home of an elderly widow, Mrs. J. Smith, of Oundle, Northamptonshire, England, was described recently at the Conference of the British Records Association in London by Miss Jane Wake, Secretary of the Northamptonshire Records Society.

Mrs. Smith, while showing Miss Wake round her house, opened an enormous chest full of documents dating from the Seventeenth Century and relating to numerous Midland, Eastern and Southern Counties.

"We searched through the papers, making a record," said Miss Wake, "and found among them the King Henry VIII. documents, which fill a gap in the records relating to the King. They were accounts of bailiffs, farmers and other ministers of manors 'to the Lord King.'

HYDE PARK.

"They related to Middlesex, Hackney, 'Chelsey,' Westminster, Hyde Park, the Manor of Tieburn, the Manor of Stanwell, 'bought of Lord Wyndsor at Michaelmas, 1542.'"

The documents are now in the Public Records Office, London.

Other papers found at Mrs. Smith's house, including a copy of a letter from the Privy Council to the Lord Lieutenant, directing the enforcement of the laws against Papists, dated July 30, 1714, are in the Nottinghamshire Records Office.

They consist of papers deposited at Smith's Bank, Oundle, by clients. They were left unclaimed when the bank closed in the Nineteenth Century.

The Master of the Rolls, Lord Hanworth, presiding at the business session, said that the Association had been formed to assist the movement for the preservation of muniments and records of interest.

"The archives which we are now preserving are the means of illustrating the life and the history of the simple people who have gone before, as well as the great deeds which have been done in the past."

Mickey's New Job

Mickey Mouse is familiar as a toy, a mascot, and as a decoration on nursery tea-cups and kiddies' handkerchiefs, but his latest use is unique. Even Chaplin himself could not rival the merry mouse in his new job, writes Tit-Bits (London), for Mickey is actually helping specialists to correct errors of vision in children at a famous London eye hospital.

Among the latest equipment used for rectifying faulty sight is an apparatus for correcting squints. The child has to look through two lenses in front of which are two slots in which coloured plates, similar to lantern slides, are fitted. Both plate are exactly the same and have on them pictures of Mickey Mouse in various comic attitudes. At first the child sees two separate pictures, but, slowly, the plates are moved about until the child sees the two pictures merged into one. This merging has the effect of making both eyes concentrate on the same spot, thus correcting the squint.

The treatment, in its early stages, is a strain on the muscles of the eye, but the hospital authorities declare that the child does not notice this in his excitement at seeing the pictures of Mickey.

Core

She wore her clothes
As if they were
No very special
Part of her.
A shabby hat,
A faded coat
Would fool the stranger
Nor denote
That underneath
The sleazy dress
Her soul was gowned
In loveliness.

—Philip Stack, in the New York Sun.

"Without bunk in the place of history few existing political movements could hope to carry on."—H .G. Wells.

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ISSUE No. 4—'34

Little Towns

On gay mornings, foreign craft
Bring to the port their load
And the claque of wooden sabots sounds
Along the cobbled road.
Strange scents, strange tongues,
Bring joy and mystery,
Little towns are never lonely
If they're by the sea.

On grey mornings, old men sit
And rub tobacco in hardened hand.
While telling tales of long ago
They look away from the land.
The youth of the village listen well
As they think of days to be . . .
Little towns are never lonely
If they're by the sea.

Even sunsets, afterglow
Long grey shadows creep,
As yellow sails of anchored fleet
Are molten gold in the deep;
And figures of lovers are patterned
And blended against the sky.
In the cool evening scudding home
The native sea-birds fly,
Ah, hear the patter of children's feet
As they run the dock so free . . .
Little towns are never lonely
If they're by the sea.

Sydney, N.S. —H. B. Clarke.

London's Tiniest House

A house which, it is said, Sir James Barrie had in mind when he described the home of Mr. and Mrs. Darling in "The Little White Bird," is wedged between two tall mansions in Hyde Park Place.

It has a tiny front door and its number is 10, like the Prime Minister's in Downing Street! It is six feet wide and about twenty feet long, and inside it contains a tiny entrance hall, one room on the ground floor, and two more above. To get upstairs you have to climb a narrow iron ladder. The front door not only has a number, but also a letter-box, yet neither knocker nor bell. No one has lived there for some time, but when a well-known doctor lived next door he always kept the house fresh-looking with green paint, curtains to its one window, and gay flower-boxes on its sill.

It is said that sixty years ago a maiden lady, who lived at No. 9, built it for a retired maid. Miniature furniture was made to fit. But nurses who take their charges to Kensington Gardens, the haunt of Peter Pan, tell them that once upon a time a queer old dwarf with a smiling face lived there; he used to run out of the house on the stroke of midnight and play by himself in Broad Walk!

"You can love your neighbor and be stupid enough not to know how to love him."—Thomas G. Masaryk.

Choose always the way that seems the best, however, rough it may be. Custom will render it easy and agreeable.—Pythagoras.

Toronto's Health Best in Years

City Free From Epidemics Death Rate in '33 Close to Lowest in History

Toronto.—The health record of the city in 1933 was not only the best in the past five years, but "in general might be considered as probably the best in history," the local board of health's first meeting of the year was advised recently by Dr. G. P. Jackson, M.O.H.

The report, analyzing vital statistics for 1933, listed the following deductions from the year's records:

A general death rate of 10.5, slightly lower than that for 1932 (10.6) and close to the lowest rates on record, 10.3 in 1924 and 1925.

Exceptionally low rates for diphtheria, both as to the number of cases reported and the number of deaths from the disease.

Further reduction in the low rates for tuberculosis established in 1932.

The all time low rate for infant mortality, set up in 1932, "practically maintained."

No deaths from measles or infantile paralysis.

No reported cases of smallpox or sleeping sickness.

No epidemic from any cause of major importance.

Lowest birth rate on record.

Increase over 1932 in death rate of women in childbirth, but 1933 rate approximately same as average for past five years.

New low rates for a number of causes of death, particularly those to which public health efforts were specially directed.

If the 1929 death rate of 11.8 had prevailed in 1933, Dr. Jackson points out, deaths here last year would have been 800 more in number. If deaths in Toronto of non-residents of the city were excluded from last year's total, he added, the rate for 1933 would have been 9.1.

In regard to diphtheria, the number of cases reported was only 56, contrasting sharply with the total of 1,022 in 1929. In the same period the number of deaths was reduced from 64 to 5. No deaths took place of any person protected by toxoid immunization, he said, and the reduction in cases reported could be traced to the immunization campaign.

Dr. Jackson deeply regretted the increase in maternal mortality, but feared that a factor in the increase was the reportedly increasing frequency of abortions, particularly those self-induced. Of the maternal deaths reported here last year, he said 25 per cent. were from abortions and half of these were probably self-induced. He believed that many maternal deaths reported due to puerperal septicaemia were traceable to abortions.

Manchuria's weights and measures are being standardized.

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It requires medicine—like ASPIRIN—to do these things! That is why throat specialists throughout the world are prescribing this ASPIRIN gargle in place of old-time ways.

Be careful, however, that you get Aspirin Tablets for this purpose. Aspirin is the trademark of The Bayer Company, Limited, and the name Bayer in the form of a cross is on each tablet. They dissolve completely enough to gargle without leaving irritating particles.

ASPIRIN TABLETS ARE MADE IN CANADA