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The Flying Courier

By Boyd Cable

Synopsis

Glynn Elliman, pilot of Imperial Airways is travelling by Air Mail to India, carrying two copies of a talking film of the Prince of Napalta, who is too ill to travel himself. The talking films are sent as a last resort to foil his half-brother in India, to usurp his throne.

On the same Mail liner travels Norah Seaman who becomes interested in Glynn.

Several attempts are made by the Vulture's envoys and one film is stolen. Glynn has the other film secured round his waist by a steel chain.

At Karachi Glynn is met by a supposed envoy of the Prince who requests him to accompany him to a theatre. Jimmy Doyle and Norah Seaman go with Glynn. They are followed. The Prince's envoys in the meantime have become alarmed at the non-appearance of Glynn and institute a search. Glynn accepts a drink in the theatre restaurant which has a strong sleeping draught. The lights suddenly go out. Glynn is rescued by the police. The Vulture plans revenge, and captures Glynn when he arrives at Hydrapore.

Some of them muttered amongst themselves, and Glynn fought desperately to press his thoughts on them. "It will not be for Hydrapore or the Prince only to deal with. The British Raj, the Sirkar, will not rest until satisfaction is given and punishment meted out."

"How can it be known who of us is here tonight," he heard one man say loudly, as if answering another's argument. Glynn laughed loudly. "I am the Courier of the Prince," he cried, "and an English officer, sahib. Big rewards, much money will be offered for the names of my murderers. One of you will sell the names of the others, and they will be brought to justice."

Now he had fairly stirred them, and he could hear the hum and murmur of rapid talk amongst them. Again he caught enough of a sentence to answer it—something about any man who sold the names knowing that the others would certainly give his name to the police.

"Fools," cried Glynn scornfully. "Surely you know one man may give King's Evidence and earn pardon by bringing others to the Law. And even if that were not done, one of you can give the names to another outside yourselves who will tell the police and share the reward. And yet again, answer this—are not your names known to the one who hired you, and will The Vulture spare any man if their death will make his own neck safe?"

The talk died to a deadly silence, and the leader drew close and asked harshly "What is this talk of The Vulture? What do you know of him and us?"

"It has been printed in the papers, and the world knows," retorted Glynn, "that it is The Vulture who desires what I carry. Who but he would pay men to plunder it? He will be accused, not only of planning and paying for the robbery, but of hiring the murderers of an Englishman. And when he is so accused, he will swear he gave strict orders no hair of the messenger was to be hurt, and that you killed against those orders. He, The Vulture, will give your necks to the hangman to save his own."

This time he had won. With an immense thankfulness he heard the talk break out again and caught sentences that proved his arguments admitted—especially those that discredited The Vulture's good faith. The chatter ended with a curt order from the leader. "Bring the hammer and file."

They tried first to break the lock; but it was a stoutly made brass one, and although they battered and flattened it with many blows, the hasp of it held, and indeed may have been closer gripped for the hammering. They set to work on the chain with a file.

Glynn sought to try his powers of persuasion on them again, reminding them that in the past The Vulture had been safe and beyond punishment because his father, the Prince, lived; that now the Prince was gone, and a new Prince coming who would know how to reward those who helped his friends and bitterly punish those who robbed or injured them. The leader at last, fearing perhaps that such talk might have some effect, struck him hard across the face with a file and ordered him to silence, unless he would be gagged.

The rasp-rasp of the file went on steadily, and at last the man using it leaned back and said it should break now with a good hammer blow. But because the men did not know enough to put metal or something hard enough under the chain but struck at it against the wood of the bench, it only dinted into the wood and did not break. The man went back to work with the file.

And at that instant there came the thunder of blows upon the outer door, and a voice shouting to open. A panic-stricken pause was followed by cries of "the police" and hurried movements that were still again by the voice of the leader. "The door is of inches thick wood, bound and lined with iron," he cried. "It will hold for an hour, and two minutes more will serve to finish here. Go, get away by the roof all, except you two. Try the hammer again, and strike hard."

The outer door was echoing to the assault of sledge-hammer blows, and the men moved hurriedly to an inner door leading to the roof. But they were met by a distant crash and crackle of rending and splintering wood, and poured back into the room with cries of dismay, shouting that the police were on the roof, were breaking in, would be on them at any minute.

Under the orders of the leader, the door of the room they were in was shut, and the men set to work to bar it and pile it against anything that would delay its opening.

"It is giving—another blow or two," shouted the leader with his eyes on the filed link of the chain. "Again — harder!" The man struck again and Glynn felt the chain slacken round him. He heard the rush of feet descending the sairs, and as the leader, with a cry of triumph, snatched the chain rasping from under him, Glynn yelled at the top of his voice, shouts in English and Hindustani to be quick —quick.

With a fierce cry of anger as he heard the polcie yell answers to this call, the leader snatched up a heavy cudgel and struck down on Glynn's head. He dropped with a thud on the bench, stunned and streaming blood.

"I have it," shouted the leader above the din. "Hold the door until I destroy it, and the master will reward you well."

He snatched the chain through the hasps of the case, jerked open the lid, and shook out the cigarette case. This too, he snatched open, and the curling loops of film were in his hands. "The lamp," he cried. "Hold it close, that I may make sure the pictures are those we seek." While a man held close a little oil lamp, the leader held up a length of film to it and examined it closely, heedless of the clatter at the door and the cracking sounds of breaking panels as the wood gave under the raining blows."

"It is the Prince," cried the man exultantly, as he saw a close-up of the Prince's face on one section, and then running the film through his fingers to another length again saw recognizable pictures of the Prince.

He tossed the film in a wriggling heap on the floor. "The lamp," he cried. "The flame in it." He seized the cheap tin lamp, knocked the glass chimney off it, and pushing the smoking flame into the middle of the tumbled coils of film umped back for it to roar up in an instant burst of sheeting flame.

But there was no such leap of fire. The coils of films above the flame writhed and twisted slowly, sputtered and smoked and blistered, but did not burn. The man stared aghast. He had been told it would burn or even tumbled coils of film jumped back for more than inches were slowly melting and charring. And the door was on the point of yielding, breaking an inch at a time from its hinges under each battering-ram blow. The film was of the "non-flam" fireproof type.

With a fierce cry of rage, the man snatched up the hammer and fell to beating frenziedly at the coils of film taking handfuls of them, twisting them hard like rope strands, knotting them, battering them as fast as he could lift the hammer and strike.

The door gave with a rending crash, and the police tumbled crowding into the room. A man beside the leader fired two shots from a revolver, and in answer came a rapid banging of police pistols and the yells of wounded men.

The leader's hammering stopped abruptly. With a groan he straightened a moment, then the hammer dropped, and he collapsed in a heap on the battered film, with his blood spilling over it.

While some of the police held their prisoners huddled in a corner under their pistol muzzles, others ran to cut Glynn free and try to revive him, and to lift the dying man off the crumpled battered film, and gather it up.

When Glynn's aching head cleared enough to remember what had happened, the first thing he asked was about the film—had the case been opened. For answer they showed him the wreckage and remains of his film, twisted, cracked and battered.

"So The Vulture scored over me after all," he said and laughed weakly.

(To Be Continued.)

"Blue" Spells

Reduce some women to the petulant shadow of their own smiling selves. Others take the Vegetable Compound when they feel the "blues" coming on. It steadies quivering nerves ... helps to tone up the general health...gives them more pep ... more charm.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

Issue No. 35—'35

Fashion Hints

More overblouses are indicated for the fall season. "They always wear more overblouses in the fall," is the comment made by the practical minded who see one season much like another. But the fact that two-piece themes are so good for fall would seem to influence blouse and skirt arrangements in the direction of overblouses rather than tuck-ins. The dressy models, as taffetas, moires, velvets with silk pique trims, will probably be worn as tuck-ins. They are generally fitted up at the waistline so that they will look graceful above skirt waistbands.

* * *

Stitching is another device on the tailored side that is well liked for fall. Especially in collars and sleeve and sleeve-bands is stitching a favorite theme. It is easy to launder, it is simple and it helps blouses to keep a pressed look at the strategic points.

* * *

Middies do not disappear with the coming of fall. They go right on in a number of new variations. The collars are not quite so frankly middy collars, but the anchors and stars appear again. Navy with trimmings of red and white is the most commonly used color scheme.

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Appetites of U.S. Unemployed To Speed Prosperity's Return

Chicago.—The newest debate for curbstone economists is whether the United States can eat its way back to prosperity.

What prompts it is the extension of the activities of the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation, set up to buy excess foodstuff and get rid of it. The corporation feeds it to the country's unemployed.

Now distributing canned beef, salt pork and smoked pork free to relief clients, the corporation, intends to add fresh meat to its cupboard. It will begin soon distributing fresh cuts of beef and veal and later, possibly, will add mutton and lamb.

Farmers will be paid for the stock —which became a surplus commodity when the drought made it impossible to feed the animals—and the unemployed will eat this problem out of existence. This phase of the corporation's activities operates entirely outside of ordinary profit-system marketing.

Swimming and Health

A well-known swimming instructor states "The interest in swimming has been stimulated tremendously and it is now possible for people to indulge in this healthful recreation throughout the year."

Greater indulgence would naturally make the health of the nation greater. It may also be the means of saving the swimmer and another's life. As an exercise swimming has few exercise with which to be compared. It may be performed to suit the age and physical condition of the individual 'The art of swimming has also developed marvelously," states the author. In the early days the breast stroke and over-hand stroke were commonly used. The trudgeon and single over-arm stroke were next evolved. The writer outlines th methods of swimming and states "Make up your mind that you will learn or improve.' The crawl stroke is the most popular of all swim strokes. Champions all over the world use it and it is fast becoming the stroke for everybody. In explaining the crawl stroke attention is paid to position, breathing and practice. At this time of year swimming can be made easier by the reading of such an article.

Canadian Butter Grades

The Provincial Parliament of Alberta has passed an enabling Act for the provisions of the Dairy Industry Act to come into force within the province so far as appertains to the grading and marketing of creamery butter. The grades of butter are First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade and No Grade. No butter will be graded which is too fresh from the churn and determine the quality properly, and in the case of failure on the part of any owner to comply with the regulations, the chief, Division of Dairy Produce, may seize and hold any lot of butter involved until such time as the regulations have been complied with. One important point is that the butter be of the exact quality represented, and any package containing creamery butter sold, offered or exposed or held for sale to consumers, or to any person representing a consumer, must be marked so as to give a true and accurate description of the quality of the butter. The new regulations apply to all Canada, but come into force in any province on proclamation by that province.

Low River Levels

At the midsummer period, the water levels of the St. Lawrence river are usually at their greatest height. In normal seasons, the level gradually rises from the spring break-up to the commencement of July and then subsides equally gradually until the close of the season of navigation.

For the past two or three seasons, and notably this year, the St. Lawrence has, however, departed radically from its habits in regard to levels. The increase in the depth of water in the river channels from spring to midsummer has been very much less than is normally the case and, what is more, subsidence has taken place at such a rapid rate that already this year, at a time when the water should possess its greatest depth, no fewer than two reductions in the draught of vessels passing through the canals have been ordered by the Marine Department at Ottawa. It now stands at thirteen feet, having been dropped from thirteen feet nine inches at the commencement of the season.

The loss to shipping due to low water and the enforced reduction of draught in passing through the canals may be easily understood and, if such action is already considered necesary, the situation at the close of the season, unless there is a quite unexpected improvement in conditions, will be indeed a serious one.

Reduction of cargoes means reduction of earnings and thus los of profit, and lake and river shipping interests are experiencing quite enough difficulties without having additional ones thrust upon them.

Because low water in the St. Lawrence is becoming the rule instead of the exception—as it once was—much hinges upon the enquiry into the cause of this condition and the steps which might be taken to correct it that is under way by departmental engineers at Ottawa.

Nearly every person has his own explanation of why the river continues to remain low. Some attribute it to the diversion of water from Lake Michigan at Chicago, others to scanty precipitation during the spring and summer seasons, others still to the effect which removal of forest growth has had upon the storage of water in inland basins. Meterological phenomena are also blamed upon occasions.

Whatever the reason, however, and it may well be a combination of all those suggestions which have been made, the St. Lawrence is exceptionally low and gives no prospect of improving its ways, and when an east wind blows shipping suffers along with many other interests.

Dredging is now under way at different points in an effort to improve the situation, but dredging, no matter how often it may be undertaken, does not hold the solution of the question. That can only be brought about through the establishing of works capable of regulating the flow of water and maintaining recognized levels or through waiting for Nature to supply sufficient moisture at the proper intervals to keep lake and river levels at their normal position.—Brockville Recorder.

New Shoes Inspired by Those of Pre-War Days

There is a national conference of shoes going on in Paris and one of the outstanding resolutions they have drawn up is that if a dress can hook together, so can a shoe.

For laced types of shoe, shiny hooks do duty. Truth to tell, all the smartest shoes of today are borrowing their inspiration from the good pre-war days of the buttoned boot and covered ankle.

Ever since chiaparelli launched the idea of fish and bird silhouettes in dress—putting funny little fins on at the shoulders the fin and wing motif has flapped and flipped through every phase of fashion, clear down to the feet where high standing tongues and tabs of kidskin give a sort of new winged Victory feeling to feet. Kid shoes in a natural fishy Eel grey tone are a very smart vogue.

When you come to think of it there is no fashion of any kind, dresses, hats and all manner of accessories, that the shoe doesn't come and put its foot in most decisively. There's no getting a smart effect without consulting the foot for its co-operation. And while fancy fabrics come and go with the whims of nature, kid goes on for ever being popular, smart and desirable.

Before Flying – Oxygen

Aviators After Height Records Urged to Take Treatment

If Professors Francis Marsh Baldwin and Harold B. Robertson of the University of Southern California have their way, aviators who want to break the high-altitude record would be dosed for an hour with pure ovygen before they would be permitted to leave the ground. The professors reached their conclusions after having experimented with white rats. After having breathed pure oxygen for 25, 40, 70 and 130 minutes, the rats were placed in a chamber from which air was partially exhausted. In that evacuated space the conditions prevailing in the stratosphere were reproduced.

Rats which had not been dosed with oxygen succumbed much sooner than rats that had. Seventy minutes proved to be the best period of exposure to the oxygen. The experimenters account for the efficacy of the oxygen on the theory that bodily processes are changed like those of a runner who gets his "second wind."

Summer Snow

Now blooms the pale
Gardenia moon
Above each wrinkled
Samite dune.

The pungent larch,
The myrtle tree,
Seems starkly carved
Of ebony.

From dune to dune
Bold foot-prints show
Clear-cut as in
New-fallen snow.

—John Richard Moreland, in "The Moon Mender." (Dallas, Texas: The Kaleidograph Press.)

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