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TABLE TOP

by
Eden Phillpotts

You can start the story here!
Below will be found a synopsis of what you can take up the story and read on.

Synopsis

After receiving word of the death of Tom Aymer's father in England, Aymer and his friend Angus Maine, decide to sail for the Old Land from Peru where Aymer is the manager of a silver mine owned by his father and bequeathed to Tom. A parrot is bought by Tom as a present for fiance, Jan Bradshaw. The bird repeats words that Jacob Fernandez, a rich man from Lima, believes are significant. "Benny Boss," the parrot repeats, and it is thought this refers to a man who dealt more or less illicitly in jewels.

Prospective Mother-in-law

Jane Bradshaw dwelt with a brother with small means, but every year the industrious pair bettered themselves. Nicholas Bradshaw, like his sister, lived for the aviaries, and stood high in the kingdom of bird-fanciers. Jane had made special culture of that exquisite Australian grass finch, the Gouldian. Mastered the difficult requirements of these dainty and costly little gems, and crowned herself with glory when she produced a yellow-crested bird instead of the usual black or crimson-headed varieties. Thus her name was revered where Gouldians were known and she found the cult increasingly popular despite such stiff prices as her treasures demanded. Nicholas specialized in budgerigars, and had achieved a new colour. He dreamed of a scarlet budgerigar, and pursued his quest with undying hope, despite scientific assurances that the achievement must be impossible.

Jane was a dark girl, handsome rather than pretty. Experts decided that her face showed too much character and intelligence for beauty. Her eyes were dark and not very large; her brow was somewhat high her countenance distinguished by a perfect mouth and nose, and a chin, not massive or particularly large, but finely moulded and firm of contour. Her colour was high, her hair black and lustrous. She took care of herself, but cared not much for clothes, and disliked the addition of cosmetics. In this attitude Tom supported her. Jane had a dimple on her left cheek which her lover declared to be more precious than any possible decoration from a beauty parlour. She was twenty-one, tall, slightly built, but strong, practical, not lacking in tact, and a sound woman of business.

Her brother, esteemed Tom Aymer highly, but felt a little depressed under present circumstances, because he knew that his sister must soon leave him—a prospect that made him uneasy.

Her new gift was made welcome and Jane soon won the Peruvian parrot. He took up his quarters in a warm house, where the din of lesser parrots cheered him, and he swiftly perceived the engaging qualities of his mistress, while she—an expert in bird physiology—declared the blue and orange stranger to have somewhat human cast of countenance.

"He looks like an old man—but not a very nice old man," she said, and her remark reminded Tom of something that Signor Fernandez had told him in a jesting moment.

"If I were a buddhist," Jacob had declared, "and believed in reincarnation and transmigration of the soul, I should be much disposed to think that Benny Boss was peering at us from under his parrot's purple eyelids."

Jane approved.

"Quite likely," she declared.

She heard the old story of her bird but Tom was to busy for some time to think again about it. Everything proved to be in order, and, at his sweetheart's advice, he determined to sell the mine if a purchaser were forthcoming. He wrote to Fernandez accordingly, and in the course of a few weeks learned that Jacob would dispatch competent persons to make investigations.

Tom communicated with Felice Pardo also, and wrote letters to certain old men, who had been remembered by his father. Guessing, however, that his friend might be alarmed at the prospect of coming changes, and ask his own future if the mine were sold young Aymer begged Pardo to feel no sort of uneasiness for himself. "Needless to say that Angus and you will be all right whatever happens," he told Felice.

Pardo, he guessed, would stop with the silver mine in any case and prove his value to a future possessor; while as for the Soot, Tom always seen in him a great explorer, and guessed that presently Angus and himself, and possibly Jane might probe the ruins of buried and add to the knowledge of the world concerning them.

Upon the subject of the future Jane had spoken quite definitely, and after hearing Mrs. Aymer's wishes declined to consider them for a moment.

"To live with your mother, Tom is utterly unthinkable," she said. "We're very good friends—as far as two women can be without a single ideal in common—but if she were as angelic inside as she always looks outside, I still wouldn't risk it. You must tell her it couldn't work. She loves society and we loathe it. She is more sophisticated than anybody I ever met, while you and I are utter ruffians when it comes to social life. To live in a town house with your mother would be Hades, and

now she is going to have money to burn you'll be up to your neck in financial bother from the start anyway. She told me herself that she was going to make up for lost time and assume the position she was entitled to. You can guess what that means."

"Tom laughed.

"Of course we couldn't live in London and she couldn't live anywhere else, so she'll understand her wishes in that inatter can't take shape. She is assuming that about three-quarters of the estate's income will be hers. She told me that, since I could rely on the capital, it would only be seemly for her to enjoy the interest during the few years that remain to her."

"She's not fifty and the best preserved woman I ever saw," declared Jane. "If your mother had twenty thousand tomorrow, she'd feel convinced that decent life was impossible under thirty thousand, and feel you were her father's son and treating her with cruelty. Whatever you arrange for her you'll have to keep a tidy reserve to meet the inevitable shocks she'll arrange for you."

"Mustn't take our fences till we come to them, Jane. How's the parrot and what have you called him?" he asked.

"Too soon to name him yet," she answered, "though it doesn't seem possible to call him anything but 'Benny'."

"That reminds me. You remember Mr. Fernandez believes that he's talking to us all the time, and laughing because we can't understand him. There may be some truth in it, and I want you to do what he advised. I've listened jolly carefully to the bird and I'm sure he's saying something in human language of some sort. He says ten things that appear to be words. Four of them are two syllables long; three are one syllable only; one is four syllables. They mostly sound perfectly mad to me; but there's Gregory Barbour at the British Museum, a great swell, on languages—and an old pal of my father's. I'm going to ask him to come and listen. He lives quite close and often visits us. You remember him?"

"You'd better not be there if he does come," said Tom. "If Benny has taught the parrot ten words, the betting is they are too foul for your delicate ears."

"On dear no. You've given me a lurid picture of Benny and he may have been a bad hat; but I'm sure he was much too bright to waste time teaching his parrot to swear. Here are ten possible words and it must have been hard work and needed much patience to make the bird get them right. Anyway I'll ask Gregory to come to lunch on Sunday. He lives at Sevenoaks. He's vain, but exceedingly clever and always kind to me. He'll take it quite seriously. Most British Museum people do so in my experience."

**CHAPTER V
AN EXPERT**

Mr. Gregory Barbour was a small man of fifty year old. He already grew bald, and the result was to make his high forehead loftier still. He shaved clean and his face was withered and lacked animation, as often happens where no sense of humour lights the countenance. But his small slate-coloured eyes were bright behind his unusually large spectacles; his mouth was neat and firm; his chin tended to recede. The linguists had known Jane's parents in their time and entertained considerable admiration for her, but he had striven to turn the girl from her hobby.

"With your university career and your excellent degree," said Gregory "this pursuit of rearing tropical fowl for profit is unworthy of you, Jane."

He always talked like that.

Jane, however, preferred Gouldian finches to the paths of scholarship.

Mr. Barbour tended to be a little stiff with strangers until he had gauged their calibre. Aymer he knew already and regretted that Jane had not chosen a man of finer intellect, but Angus he had never met, and young Maine made certain remarks that inclined Gregory to take a favourable opinion of him.

Angus guessed that Jane's new parrot might possibly be speaking an obsolete, South American language; but Tom reminded him of old Jacob's comment when he first propounded that theory.

"A language," said Mr. Barbour, "dies hard. I know of course, such rudimentary fragments of Aztec and Inca as still persists, and have instructed explorers in my time to seek the remote fastness of foreign countries where survivals may best be hoped for. When I am brought face to face with your parrot, after luncheon, I shall bring to the arena all that is known of any tongue that he can possibly be supposed to have heard and chronicled in his own mechanical fashion. A parrot, of course, is wholly ignorant of any meaning in his pronouncements; but if a meaning exists in this case, then probably I am more likely to detect it than another."

lived not far distant from him. He said "Benny Boss" three times, then eyed Mr. Barbour solemnly for some seconds and finally broke into a peal of raucous laughter.

Gregory flushed and turned upon the company.

"Is that what you have summoned me to report upon Jane?" he asked. "If so, the jest is ill-timed—as your jests are apt to be."

"Wait, wait!" she begged. "He's only picked that up from my laughing Jack. He'll go back to his own conversation in a minute."

Mr. Barbour calmed down.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners as Menander so truly remarks," he answered.

"I thought St. Paul said it," ventured Nicholas.

"He did, but Menander said it first," replied the little man.

The parrot steadied down and fell back upon his familiar phrase, whereupon Gregory lifted his hand for silence, took a seat before the cage and concentrated upon the odd jumble of sounds. He brought a pocket-book from his coat and a pencil from his waist-coat. Then he noted down phonetically each potential word as it fell upon his ear. Everybody awaited any results with interest; but to Jane there sounded a mocking and even cynical flavour in her bird's utterance.

Mr. Barbour proceeded upon his curious task with utmost solemnity and threw no light upon what might be in his mind; but at length he begged that the parrot should be removed.

"Take him away," he said, "and leave me quite alone with my memorandum for the space of one half hour, please. I will take this data into the garden, Jane and sit in the summer-house. Should you hear strange noises, feel no concern. I shall utter these words aloud and feel how they may sound upon my tongue when it comes to fashioning the labials and dentals."

Gregory departed, and presently faint sounds came to their ears where the young people sat and smoked on the grass twenty yards away.

"I'm not hopeful," said Tom. "If Greg had got a line, he'd have been dramatic about it and created a big affect."

"You never know with him," thought Nicholas Bradshaw. "He's awfully deep really."

But when the half an hour was gone the linguist joined them, and Jane perceived at once that he had nothing hopeful to report.

"You always know by Greg's walk if he's satisfied with life, or disappointed with it," she told them. "He's failed, and he'll be full of reasons why he's failed, and put the blame on the parrot."

She proved quite right.

"My results are entirely negative I regret to say," he began spreading a silk handkerchief upon the grass before he sat down.

(To Be Continued)

Spent Many Years in Japan, Now Stationed at Geraldton

Rev. C. C. Robinson a Visitor to Timmins Last Week

Among the visitors to Timmins last week was Rev. C. C. Robinson, Anglican Church clergyman stationed at Geraldton since the beginning of the year. Rev. Mr. Robinson last year completed 18 years of service in Japan. Like most of the people who come into touch with the Japanese people he speaks very highly of their talents and kindness. "I think when you get to know people of any nationality you appreciate their good points and learn to like them," he said. Rev. Mr. Robinson conducted a school at Kobe, Japan, in which there were twenty nationalities. Asked how he liked a mining town like Geraldton, Rev. Mr. Robinson said he found many comforts there that were not available in Japan and the people were friendly and progressive. Geraldton is a town of 3,500, founded about five years ago and making much progress.

Columbian Squires Get Charter Over Week-End

St. Patrick's Circle of Columbian Squires, Number 303, held its charter night over the week-end. The presentation of the charter was made on behalf of the Knights of Columbus by Rev. Father J. R. O'Gorman.

Squire buttons were presented by Chief Counsellor J. F. Burgyne and the presentation of Councillors' Commissions was made by Grand Knight A. L. Shaw. There were several short speeches.

Speakers were introduced by Chief Squire Ed. McLennan and thanked by Bursar Clifford Hickey. After the presentation motion pictures were shown under the direction of the Civic Committee of the Squires.

Toronto Telegram: Crop control might work in everything except the wild oat crop.

Schumacher Man to Meet King and Queen at Sudbury To-day

Other News from Schumacher and District.

Schumacher, June 4.—(Special to The Advance)—Mr. Dave Bennett, shift boss at the McIntyre Mine, was a very happy man when he left Schumacher on Sunday for Sudbury. Dave had a telegram on Thursday from Queen Elizabeth's private secretary, stating that he had to be at Sudbury Station, and the Queen would meet him. Prior to the departure of the Royal train, he had to take the telegram to the Mayor of Sudbury, who would make the necessary arrangements for the visit. One of Dave's most valued possessions is a picture taken in Australia where he is seen shaking hands with Their Majesties, then the Duke and Duchess of York, during their visit to Australia some years ago.

Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Arnott, left by plane this morning for Sudbury where they will attend the royal visit celebrations.

Mrs. J. R. Todd and Miss Jessie Scullion and Mrs. (Dr.) Harrison and daughter, Mary, left on Saturday for North Bay where they will be the guests of Dr. and Mrs. Knott. On Monday they will travel to Sudbury to attend the royal visit celebration.

Mrs. Adamson left on Sunday on the noon train for Sudbury for the royal visit of Their Majesties.

Mr. Reid Murdoch, International Director of the Lions Clubs, was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Wylie during his visit here.

Mrs. Harry Leng and daughter, Marion, left on Thursday by car for Toronto. They were accompanied by Mrs. S. Kitchen, who will visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hawkins, in Toronto. Miss Leng will attend the dental convention and later Mrs. H. Leng and Miss Leng will leave by car for Hamilton and other points.

Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Urquhart left on Thursday by car for Sudbury to attend the royal visit celebrations. During their visit they will be the guests of Mrs. Urquhart's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Parker, of the International Nickel Mines.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Davidson, Bank of Commerce building, First Ave., left by car on Saturday for Sudbury for the royal visit of Their Majesties. They will visit at the home of Mrs. Davidson's parents in Grand Valley before returning to Schumacher.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Morgan and daughter, Frankie, left Saturday by car for Sudbury, for the royal visit of Their Majesties.

Mrs. C. W. Pennie, First Ave., visited at Iroquois Falls during the past week.

Mrs. W. Leek, accompanied by Mrs. Dan Fraser and daughter, Jean, left on Saturday by car for Larder Lake, where they will visit Mr. and Mrs.

George Leek at the Omega Mine. Mr. and Mrs. George Leek will accompany them to Sudbury for the visit of Their Majesties.

Born—June 2nd, at St. Mary's Hospital, to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Adamson (Jean Chatson) Birch St.—a daughter.

The funeral of Mrs. John McGowan, who passed away so suddenly last week was held on Thursday afternoon from her home 119 First Ave., to the South Porcupine cemetery. The Rev. F. J. Eaine conducted the funeral services and he spoke of the high esteem in which Mrs. McGowan was held and how the church had lost a very ardent and faithful worker, always ready and willing to help. The late Mrs. McGowan was also an active worker for the Women's Missionary Society of Trinity United Church. She held the office of treasurer, and was very interested in the work of the society. The sympathy of all goes out to the husband and daughter, also to the sisters and brother in their sad bereavement. There were no flowers by request. A large number of telegrams and letters of sympathy were received. The pallbearers were: Mr. James Tinsley, Mr. Tom Moore, Mr. Hugh Moore, Mr. Walter Craik, Mr. Tom Quine, Mr. Bill McGee.



That Body of Yours

(by James W. Barton, M.D.)

Flat Feet May Cause Pain in Legs, Hips, Back and Head

An elderly man consulted his physician about a pain in inner side of his right knee. Examination showed a flat foot which allowed the lower leg (below knee) to swing inward thus putting strain on inner side of knee. A plaster cast was taken of the foot, a support made, and the pain in the knee disappeared.

Flat feet are common and if not brought up by exercise or supports or both, it may mean other symptoms besides painful feet. The knee joint and all the joints in the spine between bones are put under a strain when the arch of the foot falls.

Our method of examining recruits for overseas service was to have them walk across the floor and note if large tendon going down to heel bone came straight down to the heel or turned outward letting inner side of foot come down. The recruit then knelt on a pillow and we could see if there was a white or clean spot where arch had held sole of the foot instead of letting whole sole of the foot reach the ground. If the large tendon was turned outward and the whole sole of the foot was black from touching the floor, the recruit was rejected for the in-

fantry but might be used in ambulance or other service.

However, some of these flat-footed recruits were very anxious to go over with the infantry and when the feet had enough "spring" in the arches to raise them from the low pillow up on their feet again (without help from their hands) they were accepted. Their feet, although flat, with arches down, were not "rigid" flat feet. One such case had walked forty miles to enlist and another had walked second to the world's champion in a three mile walking race a few days previously.

The first thought in the majority of cases of flat foot is to try to strengthen the muscles which hold up the arch of the foot making the foot look like a claw.

Two simple exercises done twice daily to a count of twenty each are:

1. Trying to grasp a marble or other object with the toes.
2. Raising the body slowly from heel to toe, holding a few seconds, and then coming down slowly.

A third exercise is to walk around the room three times on the outer sides of the feet. Results can often be obtained in six weeks to six months.

Putting the feet in hot water for five minutes before exercise and for five minutes after exercise will prevent or remove soreness caused by the exercise. When the individual is elderly, greatly overweight, or unwilling to take exercise, arch supports, properly fitted, act as a crutch and give much relief.

Scourge

Dr. Barton's latest booklet entitled "Scourge" with reliable information regarding the two most dreaded social diseases, gonorrhoea and syphilis, may be obtained by sending Ten Cents to The Bell Library, 247 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y., mentioning The Advance, Timmins.

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Canada Lumberman: The newest contribution of science is "rubber" glass. But umpires had better continue to dodge pop bottles.

Globe and Mail: The only redeeming feature of the swindles perpetrated by the leader of the American Nazi Party is that other American Nazis people from scrapping.

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