

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR WOMEN READERS

"THE THIEF OF BAGDAD"

BY AHMED ABDULLAH

Based on Douglas Fairbanks' Fantasy of the Arabian Nights, by Elton Thomas

Indeed that morning, with the help of various servants, slaves, eunuchs, majordomos, coiffeurs, perfumers, dressers, barbers, masseurs, slipper-bearers, turban-twisters, valets, color experts, silk experts, velvet experts, skin experts, gland experts, manicurists, chiropodists, chiropactors, and jewelers, the obese little descendant of tough-thewed Iranian warriors had adorned himself as became a Prince and a bridegroom.

They had carefully shaved, painted, and powdered his cheeks and chin, except for cute little sidewhiskers that curled like question marks. They had trimmed, pointed, waxed, and scented his mustache. They had arched his eyebrows by plucking out the fine hairs around them with tweezers. They had dyed his hair a gorgeous indigo-blue, training two long, curly love-locks to hang gracefully down either side of his face like a handsome frame to a handsome painting. They had enlarged the pupils of his eyes by using an

infusion of belladonna. They had heightened the color of his lips with the help of beet-nut juice. They had whitened his plump neck by a mysterious Egyptian cosmetic worth its weight in gold. They had reddened the tips of his ears by squeezing them. They had caused his teeth to shine by rubbing copper powder into the roots. They had pointed and gilt his fingernails and toe-nails. They had stained the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet a delightful and delicate rose with Turkish henna. They had spent seven hours in twisting about his bullet-shaped head a silken turban, blending peach red with apricot-yellow, sky-blue with sea-green, the whole adorned with a cunning design of bleeding, interlacing lovers' hearts. They had robbed his stout body with simple, almost severe magnificence, in a robe of cloth-of-gold embroidered all over with white and yellow diamonds and opening over another robe of the same chaste magnificence, made of cloth-of-silver striped with purple and rose-madder and embroidered over the heart with a design of uncut emeralds that spelled out: "I love thee, Zobeid!" in both the Persian and the Arabic language. His jewels—fingerrings and toe-rings and ear-rings, pendants and necklaces and bracelets and turban aigrettes—were the pick of his treasury; and having never used a weapon, in all his life except knife and fork, perhaps occasionally a toothpick, he had hung about his substantial person a number of wicked-looking weapons.

For his chief barber had told him: "O Great Shah-in-Shah! O Lion of Allah! It has been my experience in life—a life," he had smirked, "not untrod by narrow, dainty, scented feet of many women—that the ladies admire a warrior, a hero, a clanking, rattling, bullying, swaggering fighting man!"

He had added: "Wah! The magic, flying carpet? You will hardly need it. Your face and figure alone—without mentioning your soul—are the greatest, rarest gift in the world! Just look into the mirror and convince yourself!"

And the Persian had looked into the mirror and had been convinced. The Indian Prince's conceit, while matching the other's, was more simple, more stolid and hard. He was cousin to all the gods. In him Ganasha, the god of wisdom, was incarnate, as was Shridat, the god of fortune, and Maya, the goddess of illusion.

Having been rather a guy blade during his bachelor years, fond of wine, women, and song, he had given oath that morning that, as soon as he was married and returned from his honeymoon trip, he would be a model husband and model Rajah.

"By Doorga, the Great Mother!" he had exclaimed. "By the Father of the Elephant's Trunk. I give solemn oath that hereafter I shall turn over a new leaf! Every day of my life I shall perform the proper duties of a Rajah as ordered in the Vedas. I shall rise before daybreak and finish my ablutions! I shall worship the gods; and do obeisance to the Brahmins! I shall not permit my wife, the Princess Zobeid, to contradict me! I shall listen to her advice, and then I shall go and do the opposite! I shall judge my people according to the Shastras and the Laws of Manu, keeping in subjection lust, anger, folly, avarice, drunkenness, and pride! I shall not yield to my desire for dancing, singing, playing on musical instruments, gaming, and the chase! I shall refrain from sleep during daytime, from molesting men of worth and women of virtue and from useless traveling! I shall live such an exemplary life that future historians will refer to me as the Father of my country and the Grand Old Man of Hindustan! And in their books these historians shall devote a couple of pages, perhaps an appendix, to the sweetness and beauty of the Princess Zobeid, whom I graciously permitted to share my throne and my life! Ho, Doorga! Ho, Devil Ho, Smashana Kali!"

But it was the Mongol Prince's conceit which was most justified by fact. For messengers, traveling post-haste from Bagdad, had brought him news that Fount-in-the-Forest had done her work well. She had succeeded in giving slow poison to her mistress. Even now the latter was on the threshold of death.

The greatest physicians, sorcerers, faith healers, apothecaries, and leeches of Bagdad, Damascus, Constantinople, and Cairo had been summoned to her bedside. Moses Maimonides, the eminent Jewish philosopher and savant, had made the long journey East from the Moorish University of Cordova, where he lectured, to add his skill and sagacity; from Wittelsbach, thanks to the good offices of the Emperor of Germany, had come the famous Doctor Johannes Erasmus von Thunichsgut, whose culture was so colossal that, besides being the greatest German physician, he spoke seven dead languages and not a single living one; the Holy Father in Rome had despatched a saintly and sapient Franciscan monk, Padre Chrysoptom, a wonderful exorcist who on three occasions had driven away the Devil by prayers and marvelous spells; and the Bourbons of France had sent M. le docteur Henri Toussaint Je-M'en-Moque, who hid his trenchant talents and penetrating perspicacity under mincing manners and a tremendous, white-powdered wig.

(To Be Continued.)

FIGURED SILKS



Paisley figured silk makes this simple dress with ruffles of pleated silk the color of the lightest tone in the background. They follow a spiral course and are much more interesting than they would be arranged in the conventional manner. The coquetry of the blouse is in accordance with the general trend in fashion.

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PROBABLE PEERAGE FOR NEW YEAR'S
A dukedom for Prince Harry, the King's third son, is not the only probable New Year's peerage discussed in inner circles at Court just now. A marquise for Prince Arthur of Connaught, the King's first cousin, also is being talked of. This would be in special recognition of Prince Arthur's admirable tenure of the Governor-Generalship of South Africa, from which he has only recently retired after serving the usual term. A marquise is the position in the peerage King George has been accustomed to bestow on Royal princes not sons of the Sovereign. The precedents set by the creation of the marquises of Cambridge, Carisbrooke and Milford Haven are, therefore being borne in mind in the case of Prince Arthur.

Norfolk Agricultural Wages Board have fixed laborers' wages at 28s. per week until March, the present wage being 25s.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Raven, aged 92, and 95 respectively of Brentwood, Essex, have celebrated the 70th anniversary of their wedding. Two sisters whose parents received £167 in relief from Scarborough Guardians between 1881 and 1890 have repaid it.

BE CAREFUL OF FALLING



If there is a loose rug at the top of your stairs, tack it down. If the rug should slip under you, you might fall down the stairs. Be careful in climbing into the bathtub. Many are injured this way. Loose hems on skirts, in which women's high heels might catch, are another hazard.



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