

YOGI STORIES

Many of the sciences and arts of modern civilization had their beginning centuries ago in the East. Eastern philosophers not only invented our numbers and our notation system and contributed in one way and another to various other things that we use every day, but they produced a peculiar literature and philosophy and delved profoundly into man's psychical powers as well as various unexplained natural laws. On the discoveries and reputed discoveries of these mystics and ascetics have been based several cults and isms with large bodies of adherents in America and other countries of the Western world.

There is no doubt that some of these mystics resort frequently to trickery and fraud with intent to deceive. Yet in some instances they appear actually to possess a weird kind of supernatural power and the ability to perform feats that no one can explain on any natural basis.

Some of these men seem to have acquired a most extraordinary mastery over matter. They say they have accomplished this by rigid penance. Whether this is true or not, it is not uncommon for some of them to abstain from food and water for long periods.

Sometimes they impose on themselves absolute silence and nothing can induce them to utter a word or syllable. Another means employed to inflict their bodies and gain superhuman powers is to lie for a long time on a spiked bed. Still another is to hold the arm extended above the head until it become fixed in that position and the nails grow into the palm of the hand.

Numerous witnesses, regarded by all who know them as truthful men and women, have testified to the strange, unusual powers of these occultists. Stories are told of their walking through a fierce fire wholly unharmed. In some instances, it is declared, onlookers suddenly become endowed with this marvelous heat-resisting power and follow the yogi unharmed through flames whose heat is so intense as to scorch the clothing of persons standing near.

A young Englishman was on the point of marrying a certain young lady to whom his mother objected strongly for some reason or other. He called on a yogi celebrated for his occult power, hoping to ascertain through him whether the girl really cared for him. After bidding the young swain seat himself on the floor—the hut was bare of everything but the most essential furniture—the yogi had the light extinguished and then directed his caller to concentrate his mind on his wish and then ask a question.

All was silent for a few minutes and then the young man said: "Tell me who is the woman that loves me best." After muttering some incantations the old man set fire to some sandalwood. The smoke arose and formed a sort of cloud in the room. Then it

melted away and in its place there appeared the picture of an aged woman. The visitor, greatly surprised, exclaimed: "My mother!" As he spoke, however, the vision began to fade and within a few minutes quite disappeared.

After relighting the lamp, the yogi inquired: "Are you quite satisfied, my son?" The Englishman replied that he was and sought to press a coin into the old man's hand. He waved it away, however, declaring that he wanted no money and bidding him go in peace and make an offering to the poor. Only a short time after this the young man received from his fiancee a letter breaking off the engagement.

HOW DO RATS CARRY EGGS?

When the eggs of chickens and other domestic fowl are found in the partitions of houses, under floors and in other places frequented by rats but inaccessible to the egg-layers, the natural conclusion is that rats have carried them there. This is probably correct but it is largely a circumstantial conclusion; not even the most learned naturalists can say authoritatively how rats can carry eggs without breaking them.

Some who claim to have seen the feat performed say that the rat holds the egg closely between his chin and forefeet or grips it snugly between his forefeet. When he wants to descend to a lower level he covers the egg with his body so as to protect it and then deftly tumbles down. In some cases, alleged eye-witnesses aver the rat will hold the egg, lying flat on his back, and a crowd of his fellows will seize his tail and drag him and the egg over level surfaces.

Numerous observers agree that a number of rats invariably take part in the work of carrying an egg. However, looking on from a distance, as is necessarily the case, it is difficult to determine exactly how the individuals of the group work. They do a great deal of squealing but no-one has been able to decide whether this is in the nature of complaint at having to do what seems an unfair proportion of the work or an outcry of pain from getting scratched or having their toes stepped on. Perhaps they make the job a sort of football scrimmage and squeal in sheer enjoyment of the fun and excitement.

FEMININITY OF SHIPS

To the English-speaking sailor a ship is always a "she" and many of the vessel's fittings and attributes—waist, stays, laces, bonnets, ties, ribbons, chains, watches, etc.—are distinctly feminine. It is believed that the Greeks originated the custom of speaking of ships as feminine, applying feminine names to their craft in deference to Athene, their goddess of the sea. In the French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese languages the word "ship" is masculine. In the Teutonic and Scandinavian tongues it is neuter in gender.