

BOYS' ANGLIS' PAGE

STARTLING A DERVISH

THE main street of a Persian town is no pleasant place at the best of times for anyone who has a nose; but when some special cause has crowded it with a mob of fierce Mohammedans...

Such were my own thoughts, as I fought my way through the flood of striding camels, laden donkeys, veiled women, bare-headed native peasants, turbaned traders, fierce-eyed Tartars in high sheepskin caps, and gaunt, sinewy, swarthy Kurds from the mountains, with long guns on their shoulders.

The monthly market had crowded to overflowing all the narrow, crooked, filthy streets of the Persian border town of Kirduhad, past which the swift, dark stream of the Aras or Araxes—the boundary line between Persia and Russia—went swirling on its long journey eastward down to the Caspian Sea.

And such a chaos I had little hope of finding my way unaided back to the so-called "inn" which, while giving to the traveler the shelter of its walls, expected him to bring everything else along with him.

Up to him I stepped accordingly, and, finding him in the tall, manly "Amman" (peace), I proceeded to ask my way in the best Persian that I could muster.

"Well, doctor, I am sure I may say the same," quoth I. "For this is the very last place where I should have thought of falling in with you, if it were not that you have a way of always turning up just where you are least expected."

"That's so," laughed Dr. Diocletian Q. Spanghast, as he leisurely shook hands with me. "Well, if those quarters of mine aren't much to boast of, I guess you'll find 'em a bit cleaner than that lot of yours, anyhow; so I'll just send a couple of my critics to bring over your baggage, and you'd best stay right here till it comes."

The hospitable offer was accepted as frankly as it was made; and over the best cup of coffee that I had tasted since crossing the Persian frontier, my friend the doctor, gave me the history of his recent adventures.

"And now," he wound up, at the end of a list of startling experiences and hair-breadth escapes, "I've made my little fortune in this town, though I have not been here long; and if I keep on like this, I reckon it won't be long before I've made my little fortune. It's a little awkward, sometimes, though, for they've got to think that I am just the biggest and meanest man in the place."

self master of the situation, though, at the moment, I could not for the life of me see how.

Just then a confused murmur of many voices was heard outside; and, peeping through the lattice which looked out on the blinding sunlight, I saw the whole street blocked with an eager crowd, whose faces were all turned expectantly toward the porch of our house.

"This is the first time that I've been bothered with one of these Dervish devils," said my host, "and these folks are waiting to see if the 'magician' (as they call me) can get the better of a Dervish."

As he finished the dervish, who had for an instant looked somewhat uneasy, seemed to pluck up his courage once more, and set up a fresh yell of "Allah-ack-bar!" But his defiant shout ended in a shrill scream, as he went flying

well that no magic can prevail against one that is truly a holy man; and therefore, if my magic can cast him forth without laying a hand upon him, your own eyes shall see that he is no holiness at all!

"I will not weary you, gentlemen," went on the professor, as coolly as if nothing had happened, with the history of the various experiments by which I developed my discovery. Suffice it to say that after many trials I at last succeeded in developing a preparation which would make me absolutely proof and, as you have just seen, the effect (as I hoped) was permanent. But what is the matter that has just happened?

"We had just halted at the station from which the branch to the ancient capital of Russia forks off from the main line; and, right opposite our carriage, an eager and noisy throng was pressing around a placard posted on the wall.

Out jumped one of the young subalterns and, showing his way with a noisy ceremony through the crowd around the placard, came back to report to us that it was the offer of a large reward for the apprehension of Peter Voroff, a native of Petersburg who had started the whole capital two days before by one of the most daring and successful jewel robberies on record.

"Well, I hope with all my heart that they will catch him," cried the professor, warmly. "For such rascals are the pest of society and deserve no mercy."

against disease likewise, and perhaps even to expand the very limit of human existence.

"And did you succeed?" asked one of the young officers eagerly, for the narrator had uttered his last words with a fire and energy which moved us all.

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TRUE BALLOON ADVENTURES

YEARS ago I had the honor of being the aeronaut to make the first parachute descent in the Southern Hemisphere, which, incidentally, resulted in two exciting adventures to a boy hitherto unknown to me until I was soaring in the air preparatory to making my descent for the edification of the vast crowd gathered in the Plaza Victoria of the beautiful City of Buenos Ayres, capital of the Argentine Republic.

I was engaged by the government itself to perform this novel feat as a feature of the National Independence feast. As called to him to hold fast until we descended into the river.

"We reached a height of several thousand feet and then gradually descended into the Rio de la Plata, about a mile from the shore. When the multitude saw the boy clinging to the parachute there was a tremendous rush to the bank of the river to see the result of the accident. On reach the water I sank up to my waist, when my rubber life-belt kept me in a standing position until a boat reached us; the boy was taken from the parachute before reaching the water, as the balloon was still partially inflated.

"I became acquainted with a countryman of mine, a tailor, who grew very fond of me. He told me that he had helped me out and put together the two large balloons which you constructed at Buenos Ayres, and that he had directed the women how to sew the seams; he also had found the men who made the nets, valve, varnish and basket. He offered to furnish the money and build a balloon and go with me from city to city if I would make the ascents. He said he would pay the painter a certain sum of money for the use of my services for the rest of my apprenticeship, if that would be satisfactory to him.

"I concluded that if my master did not give his consent to me to go, I would run away from him. I was therefore highly delighted when he said he would prepare to go with us to look after me for four something might happen to me; that he would become a partner in the business and help me look after my share of the proceeds, should there be any received by the new enterprise.

"It was agreed that we should first go to Montevideo, as that was the nearest large city. Accordingly, a contract was made between the painter and tailor, and they constructed a small gas balloon of the cotton material, and we went to look our luck at Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. The Plaza del Toros was obtained for the ascent. Fortunately for us, an officer of the army had been up in a balloon at Paris. He knew something about the management of one and was quite anxious to ascend with me. To this I readily agreed.

"As it was the first ascent for many years in that city, a great crowd gathered to see us off and a large sum of money was received from the sale of tickets. The day was delightful and the wind blew toward the land, so we had no fear of going over the ocean or the Rio de la Plata. We had a magnificent view as we rose above the city to the height of several thousand feet, and were carried on a steady breeze over the land for a few miles. The balloon then reached a higher current and we were taken in an easterly direction. Before we were aware of it, a strong breeze had commenced blowing toward the sea. I pulled the valve cord, but before we could reach the ground we were swept into the ocean. My master and I were carried in the direction of a vessel bound for Buenos Ayres. We came down by the side of the ship. A rope was thrown to us, which we fastened to the balloon. On throwing out some ballast we ascended to the length of the rope, about 300 feet above the vessel, where we remained until darkness came on, when the captain told the sailors to pull the balloon down by the side of the ship.

"I had just commenced to let out the gas when the cook came with a lamp, which set the gas on fire, causing a terrific explosion that blew me off into the sea and burnt off the officer's hair, whiskers and mustache and ruined his uniform. The balloon took fire and, being well oiled, burst rapidly. Next the sails caught on fire and the whole vessel would have burnt, but the captain kept his presence of mind and gave orders to cut away the masts and let them fall overboard, with the burning sails and upper rigging, which had been well oiled and vanished before going into port.

"I managed to keep afloat by my life-belt until the fire was extinguished on the vessel, when the captain sent a boat and I was picked up and taken aboard. As the fire had been so close, I was high with a steam tube was sent out to the vessel and she was towed into port.



He went flying head-over-heels.

Well, I somehow have a notion that he can. So saying, he stepped forth onto the porch. I following, while the sizzling crowd watched breathlessly to see what would happen.

"The dervish, a filthy, half-naked, ruffianly tramp, the very type of the Oriental at his worst. He replied with the coarse insolence of his class to the doctor's mild request that he would betake himself elsewhere, and roughly declared that he was not going to be ordered about by any unbelieving dog, and that he would stay there as long as he liked, unless the 'infidel' chose to give him a beautiful alms.

"Hated that asked charity in befitting fashion," said the doctor to Furdan, "it should have been given thus freely; but since thou hast thus rudely demanded it, not one assar (one cent) shall thou get. What he meant by this I do not know, but the courteous, even to an unbeliever, for so it befits the servants of Allah (God) to be. Hearken, O people," he added, turning to the crowd, who were wildly impressed since the starting of the train that was carrying us from St. Petersburg to Moscow; and all five of us—even the two young Russian officers whose thoughtless jesting had provoked this singular comment—turned eagerly toward him to hear what more he would say.

head-over-heels into the road, and lay kicking and writhing in the dirt, grimacing and screeching like a scalded monkey.

Instantly the whole throng, as if fearing that the dervish might strike them dead on the spot, or turn them into dogs or hyenas, took to their heels as one man; and the crowd of dervishes, who had been so full of life and vigor, went off as if they were foreigners.

"I am not looking," said the professor, quietly, "but I can hardly blame you for thinking so, for no one ever takes me for a dervish."

Nor, in truth, did we. Of his face we could see little, and not a particle of beard or hair was left visible by the close-fitting cap and the alk handkerchief which was tied round his head; but his voice had nothing of the feebleness of age, and his gestures were full of life and vigor.

"Well, I went down below, and I hitched to that iron grating on which he sat the wire of my electric battery, and I guess he had just about enough of it for a spell!"

"My boy was right, for the bullying intruder had been so thoroughly frightened that he never showed his face within a mile of the dreaded house again; and so greatly enhanced the doctor's credit as a magician heightened by this victory that, so long as I remained in the town, the mere fact of my being his guest sufficed to make everyone treat me with the extreme of terrified civility.

"One morning, in came my old servant, as pale as death; but, before she could speak, I saw in the doorway two black horrors sliding the first glimpse of which told me the whole story. They were the 'famulias' of the Inquisition, with their black hoods drawn over their faces, and nothing but their eyes and hands showing through eye-holes, and they laid their hands upon me without a word, and led me away—for, of course, it would have been useless to resist.

"I asked them no why; I was arrested, but they gave me no answer; and it was not till the next day that I learned that I was accused of having murdered a man. The evidence against me—my lonely life, the strange experiments that I was making, and my intimacy with the old Moor who was, of course, supposed to have the whole Black Art at his fingers' ends—would have been laughed at by any man who was not an idiot; but nothing is too monstrous for ignorance and superstition to believe, and at that time (as I said just now) the whole nation was mad. I was pronounced guilty, and sentenced to be burned alive.

A Strange Fellow Passenger

ENCORE my saying, gentlemen, that you are quite mistaken as to the sensations of being burned alive. I ought to know something of them, for I have been burned alive myself!

The remark was a sufficiently startling one, and doubly so as being the first time that our strange fellow-passenger had broken silence since the starting of the train that was carrying us from St. Petersburg to Moscow; and all five of us—even the two young Russian officers whose thoughtless jesting had provoked this singular comment—turned eagerly toward him to hear what more he would say.

our modern historians seem to have any idea of.

"Well, I happened to be making experiments with a burning acid which needed very careful handling. I had been mixing a kind of clay paste, tintured with sulphur, when I saw the cup that held the acid gutter as if just about to tip over; and, starting out my hand to seize it, I thrust my forefinger into the burning liquid!

How You May Become a Ventriloquist

THE CALL of the footlights, that sooner or later sets a hold on most boys, had taken possession of Tommy. The high school was to give a minstrel show, and Uncle Dick had promised his assistance. So you can well imagine how warm was the welcome the old gentleman received when he showed up at the schoolhouse.

"I thought you would be here ahead of me," remarked Uncle Dick with a smile. "That doesn't matter," replied Uncle Dick. "You're going to be the greatest ventriloquist that ever was. And here are the plans and specifications showing just how to do it. By the way, where is that chum of yours who is such a good mimic, the one who sings the coon songs?"

pipe was then fitted in the bottom so it protruded slightly. The halves were now glued together and replaced in the chair. "You'll have to practice every day, Tommy, so you can walk out on the stage, carrying the chair carelessly and setting it down so the gas pipe fits in the hole in the floor." Tommy thought he ranged the great covers of the chair, took up the question of mannikins. Johnny Bright was a very good mimic. He could sing a coon song and talk Chinese dialect to a professor. "You will notice," said Uncle Dick, "that I didn't make any drawing of the costumes. That is better left to your mamma. The colored gent ought to have a clownhammer coat, and you can copy John the laundryman's Sunday clothes for the Chink.

"The heads you will have to make yourselves. Light pine is the best material, simply because it cuts easily. You can get some odds and ends of planks from a sawmill for nothing, and glue the pieces together to make a block about seven inches square. Then, with a chisel and gouge, block out your head, gradually getting it into shape. Scoop out the inside of the head, leaving a hole for the voice to go through. The hole was freely by pressing on it with your forefinger. Finish up with sandpaper and paint the complexion to suit. You don't have to be overparticular in drawing a matter of fact, the more grotesque you make them the better. The body is a simple affair. A hollow backbone, to carry the voice up and inside the head, is the main point. This can be wound with excelsior or rags, to give it shape. The arms and legs can be tied on instead of the way I have drawn them. You can carve the wooden shoes on the legs to fit the different characters or put real shoes on them. Be careful to have the coat tails of your dummy long enough to drape naturally over the rubber hose that connects the hollow backbone with the chair leg.

locate the hole in the floor and place the hollow leg of the chair as near as possible to it. Then with a slight move you make the connection. As it is marked before, the rubber hose, as we call it, requires practice. When you are seated with the mannikin on your lap you can make the connection with the chair leg under the cover of the mannikin. At all times you must be drawing the attention of the audience away from what you are doing by a monologue which you have prepared in advance. Every time you give a prearranged signal to your partner behind the partition and the fun begins. Your success will depend entirely upon how faithfully you rehearse the act together. By knowing just what the mannikin is going to say you can work the lower jaw in a natural manner. If I were you, after the audience is sufficiently mystified, I would show how it was done, and bring Johnny from behind the curtain for his share of the applause."

Hard Hit. Chicago. I could blash An' feel as cheap as dirt. Or had I'd got as sure as a nutt' 'bout my own head, I'd have said I was a white nigger, but chee! I'm different now, an' my teeth 're shined down, an' my hair 're slicked up, an' my eyes 're bright, an' my nose 're straight, an' my ears 're pointed, an' my mouth 're full, an' my hands 're clean, an' my feet 're shined, an' my whole self 're different, an' my name 're changed, an' my friends 're new, an' my enemies 're old, an' my life 're a new one, an' my future 're bright, an' my destiny 're grand, an' my fate 're glorious, an' my end 're happy, an' my soul 're saved, an' my name 're written in the book of life, an' my name 're on the roll of the redeemed, an' my name 're in the kingdom of glory, an' my name 're forever and ever, amen.

Tommy's tool-chest did not contain a bit long enough to bore a hole through the chair-leg, but Johnny Bright solved the problem. The leg was sawed through lengthwise exactly in the center, and a half-circle gouged out of each piece from the bottom to where the leg joined the chair seat. A section of half-inch gas