

# KING FOR A DAY

By  
**W. A. FRASER**  
COPYRIGHT by S. S. M'CLURE CO.

**S**IR LEMUEL JONES, C. I. E., was chief commissioner of Burma. Lawrence Jones, captain of the tramp steamer Newcastle Maid, was his brother. More than that, they were twins, as like as two drops of water. It was kismet that Sir Lemuel should rise to be chief commissioner, while it was Larry's own fault that he was only captain of a freighter, but they both enjoyed themselves, each after his kind.

One morning in November the Newcastle Maid glided up the Irrawadi and swung to moorings just off the main wharf at Raungun. Larry had not seen his brother for years, and, for the matter of that, did not care if many more years passed before he saw him. Their paths ran at right angles. He was there for a cargo of rice, not to renew family ties.

It was because the chief engineer of the Newcastle Maid was a man after his own heart that he said before going ashore: "I don't want to get into a gale here, for I've had a letter from the owners over that last break I made in Calcutta. If I come off seas over just lock me in the cabin and don't let me out. No matter what I say, keep me there until I'm braced up."

Then the captain went ashore. He took a drive out through the cantonments. As he bowed along in the old gharri a new experience came to him. Gentlemen lifted their hats and ladies driving in their carriages smiled and bowed in the most gracious manner.

"I wonder if there's anything sticking to my face," thought Larry, and he passed his hand carefully over its rounded surface. It seemed all right.

But still they kept it up—everybody he met, and one officer, galloping by on his pony, took a pull at the animal's head and shouted, "Are you coming to the club tonight, sir?"

"No!" roared the captain, for he hadn't the faintest idea of going to a club without an invitation.

"They'll be awfully disappointed," came the echo of the officer's voice as the gharri opened up a gap between them.

"Very kind," muttered Larry, "but I fancy they'll get over it. Must have taken me for somebody else."

The next minute Larry was busy staring open mouthed at the image of himself sitting in a carriage just in front. The carriage was turning out of a compound and blocked the road so that his own driver was forced to stop. He recognized the other man. It was Sir Lemuel, his twin brother.

The recognition was mutual. The commissioner bowed quite coldly as the captain called out, "How are you, Lemuel?"

Then the big Water horses whipped the carriage down the road at a slashing gait, and Larry was left alone.

"So that's why they've been taking off their hats to me," he mused. "They take me for Sir Lemuel. Great time he must have rulling these yellow niggers out here. I'd like to be in his shoes just for a day to see how it feels to be king of Burma."

All the way back to the hotel he was thinking about it. Arrived there, he wrote a note addressed to the chief commissioner and sent it off by a native. "That will bring him," he muttered. "He always was a bit afraid of me."

It was 6 o'clock when Sir Lemuel arrived in his carriage. There was a great scurrying about of servants and no end of salaaming the "Lat Sahib," for it was not often the chief commissioner honored the hotel with his presence. He was shown to Captain Jones' room.

"Take a seat, Lem," said Captain Larry cheerfully. "I wanted to see you and thought you'd rather come here than receive me at Government house."

"Please be brief, then," said Sir Lemuel in his most dignified manner. "I have to attend a dinner at the club tonight in honor of the return of our judicial commissioner."

"Oh, Sir Lemuel will be there in time for that," chuckled the captain. "But first, Lem, for the sake of old times, I want you to drink a glass of wine with me. You know, we took a drink together pretty often the first year of our existence." Then he broke into a loud sailor laugh that irritated the commissioner.

"While I don't approve of drinking to the extent you have carried it," said Sir Lemuel, with judicial severity, "still I can't refuse a glass proffered by my brother."

"Your twin brother," broke in Larry, "of whom you've always been so fond, you know."

"I really must be going, so please tell me why you've sent for me." But when he had drunk the glass of wine he gave up all idea of going anywhere but to sleep, for it was drugged.

Then Captain Larry stripped his brother, peeled the august body of the commissioner as one would strip a willow, and draped him in his own sailor outfit. "You're a groggy looking captain," he said as he tried to brace the figure up in a big chair. "You're a dis-

grace to the service. You'll have your papers taken away first thing you know."

When he had arrayed himself in the purple and fine linen of the commissioner he emptied the contents of the bottle of wine through the window. Then he went below and spoke to the proprietor. "The captain upstairs, who had an important communication to make to me, has become suddenly most completely intoxicated. Never saw a man get drunk so quickly in my life. Can you have him sent off to his ship so that he won't get in disgrace? It's my express wish that this should be done, as he has been of service to me."

"All right, sir," exclaimed the hotel keeper, touching his forehead with his forefinger in salute, "I will get Captain Davis, who is a great friend of his, to take him off right away."

"Most considerate man, the chief commissioner," remarked the boniface as the carriage rolled away.

The carriage swung in under a shed-like portico at the front of a big straggling bungalow. The driver pulled up his horses. The two yakkal bearing footmen, who had jumped down from their places behind as the carriage turned in off the road, ran hastily up, opening the door and lowering the steps for The Presence, the Lat Sahib, the Father of all Burmans.

"Hello! There's the ship's log!" exclaimed the captain, looking at the big visitors' book in the entrance. "Wonder where I've got to sign that? The ship musters a big crew," as he ran his eye down the long list of names.

"When does The Presence want the carriage?" asked a ponderous, much liveried native servant, making a deep salaam.

The captain pulled out his watch—Sir Lemuel's watch. "It's a beauty," he mused as his eyes fell on its rich yellow sides. "Right away, mate—I mean bos'n—that is, tell him not to go away. Wonder what that fellow's proper title is on the muster?"

"Ah, you're to dine at the club tonight, Sir Lemuel," a cheery English voice said as a young man came out of a room on the right.

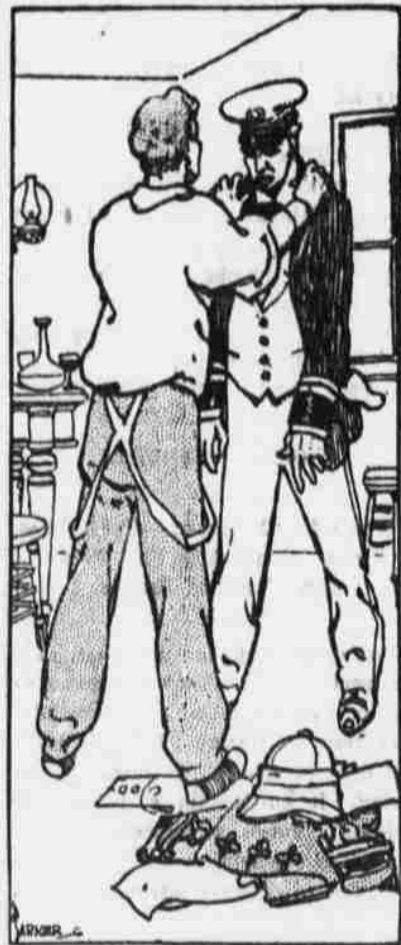
"I know that," angrily answered Larry. "I don't have to be told my business."

"Certainly, Sir Lemuel; but you asked me to jog your memory, as you are so apt to forget these things, you know."

"Quite right, quite right," answered the captain. "If you catch me forgetting anything else just hold out a signal—that is, tip me the wink, will you?"

"We've had a telegram from Lady Jones, Sir Lemuel."

The cold perspiration stood out on the captain's forehead. This was some-



He draped him in his own sailor outfit, thing he had forgotten all about. A bachelor himself, it had never occurred to him that Sir Lemuel was probably married and that he would have to face the wife.

"Where is she? When is she coming back?" he gasped.

"Oh, Sir Lemuel, it was only to say that she had arrived safely in Rangoon."

"Thank God for that!" exclaimed the captain, with a rare burst of reverence.

The private secretary looked rather astonished. Sir Lemuel had always been a very devoted husband, but not the sort of man to give way to an expression of strong feeling simply because his wife had arrived at the end of her journey.

"Do you happen to remember what she said about coming back?" he asked of the wondering secretary.

"No, Sir Lemuel; but she'll probably remain till her sister is out of danger—a couple of weeks, perhaps."

"Of course, of course," said the cap-

tain. "I thank the Lord—I mean I'm glad that she's had a safe voyage," he corrected himself, heaving a great sigh of relief. "That's one rock out of the channel," he muttered.

A bearer was waiting patiently for him to go and change his dress. The captain whistled softly to himself when he saw the dress suit all laid out and everything in perfect order for a "quick change," as he called it. As he finished dressing the "bos'n"—he of the gorgeous livery—appeared, announcing, "Johnson Sahib, sir."

"Who?" queried Captain Larry. "Secretary Sahib, sir."

"Oh, that's my private secretary," he thought.

"I've brought the speech, Sir Lemuel," said the young man as he entered. "You'll hardly have time to go through it before we start."

"Look here, Johnson," he said, "I think fever or something's working on me. I can't remember men's faces, and I get their names all mixed up. I wouldn't go to this dinner tonight if I hadn't promised to. I ought to stay aboard the ship—I mean I ought to stay at home. Now I want you to help me through, and if it goes off all right I'll double your salary next month. Safe to promise that," he muttered to himself. "Let Lem attend to it."

At the club as the captain entered the band struck up "God Save the Queen."

"By Jingo, we're late!" he said. "The show is over."

"He has got fever or sun, sure," thought his companion. "Oh, no, Sir Lemuel, they're waiting for you to sit down to dinner. There's Mr. Barnes, the judicial commissioner, talking to Colonel Short, sir," added the secretary, pointing to a tall, clerical looking gentleman. "He's looking very much cut up over the loss of his wife."

"Wife dead; must remember that," thought Larry.

Just then the judicial commissioner caught sight of the captain and hastened forward to greet him. "How do you do, dear Sir Lemuel? I called this afternoon. So sorry to find that Lady Jones was away. You must find it very lonely, Sir Lemuel. I understand this is the first time you have been separated during the many years of your married life."

"Yes, I shall miss the little woman. That great barracks is not the same without her sweet little face about."

"That's a pretty tall order," ejaculated a young officer to a friend. And it was, considering that Lady Jones was an Amazonian type of woman, five feet ten, much given to running the whole state and known as the "Ironclad." But Larry didn't know that and had to say something.

"Dear Lady Jones," sighed the judicial commissioner pathetically. "I suppose she returns almost immediately."

"The Lord forbid—at least not for a few days. I want her to enjoy herself while she's away. You will feel the loss of your wife, Mr. Barnes, even more than I, for of course she will never come back to you."

To say that general consternation followed this venture of the captain is drawing it very mild indeed, for the J. C.'s wife was not dead at all, but had wandered far away with a lieutenant in a Madras regiment.

"It's the Ironclad put him up to that. She was always down on the J. C. for marrying a girl half his age," said an assistant deputy commissioner to a man standing beside him.

The secretary was tugging energetically at the captain's coat tails. "What is it, Johnson?" he asked, suddenly realizing the tug.

"Dinner is on, sir."

Owing to the indisposition of the chief commissioner, by special arrangement the secretary sat at his left, which was rather fortunate, for, by the time dinner was over, the captain had looked upon the wine and seen that it was good—had looked several times.

"Shall we have the honor of your presence at the races tomorrow?" pleasantly asked a small, witty man, four seats down the table.

The captain was caught unawares and blurted out, "Where are they?"

"On the race course, sir."

The answer was a simple, straightforward one, but nevertheless it made everybody laugh.

"I thought they were on the moon," said the captain in a nettled tone.

A man doesn't laugh at a chief commissioner's joke, as a rule, because it's funny, but the mirth that followed this was genuine enough.

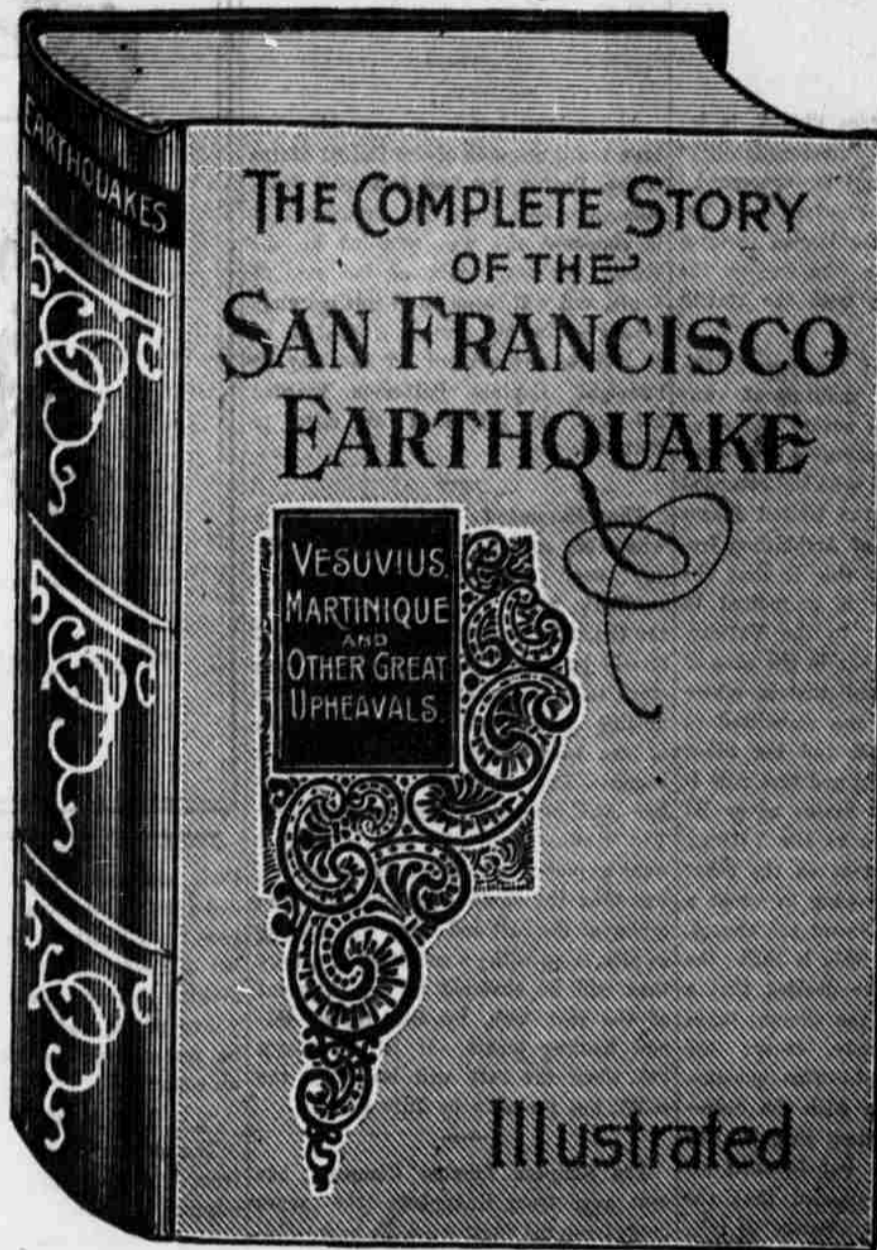
"Sir Lemuel is coming out," said Captain Lushton. "Pity the Ironclad wouldn't go away every week."

In the natural order of things Sir Lemuel had to respond to the toast of "The Queen." Now the secretary had very carefully and elaborately prepared the chief commissioner's speech for this occasion. Sir Lemuel had conscientiously "mugged" it up, and if he had not at that moment been a prisoner on board the Newcastle Maid would have delivered it with a pompous sincerity which would have added to his laurels as a deep thinker and brilliant speaker. But the captain of a tramp steamer, with a mixed cargo of sherry, hock and dry monopole in his stomach, is not exactly the proper person to deliver a statistical, semi-official after dinner speech.

(To be continued)

**An Alarming Situation**  
frequently results from neglect of clogged bowels and torpid liver, until constipation becomes chronic. This condition is unknown to those who use Dr. King's New Life Pills; the best and gentlest regulators of Stomach and Bowels. Guaranteed by Charles Rogers, druggist. Price 25c.

## A Wonderful Book of 400 Pages



Thoroughly Illustrated  
By 265 Actual Photographs  
taken at the time of the Awful  
Catastrophe

This great book which retails at \$1.50 and so much desired by every one is now offered as a premium with

# The Morning Astorian

In order to get the Book subscribe for the MORNING ASTORIAN at the regular subscription rate, 65c a month and 50c additional to cover cost of expressage. Old subscribers can get this book by paying the additional charge of 50c.

Only a limited number of books will be given away—come early and avoid the rush.