

SEE

The Free Picture Show

Saturday Afternoon

And then SEE US about

That Grocery Order

You will need for the week.

Make our Store your stopping place.

Bring in Your Eggs

We will pay cash for all the fresh eggs you have.

"The Quality Grocers"

Waterbury & Chapman

Estacada, Oregon

Oak Dining Room Chairs

Set of Six \$12.50



Call and let us show you the latest improved scrubbing brush, it scrubs, mops and takes up the water, and does away with that tiresome bending over.

Estacada Furniture Co.

Green Trading Stamps Undertakers

\$2. a day. \$10. a week

The Hotel Estacada

Modern Conveniences

One of the most delightful Resorts on the Coast

Local and Tourist Trade Solicited

Quality is Remembered

We are in business to sell Good Goods at Lowest Prices. The mail order houses neither buy your produce, help pay your taxes or support your schools. Trade At Home.

Estacada Pharmacy

World's Greatest Short Stories

No. V.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

By Rudyard Kipling



RUDYARD KIPLING



IRVIN S. COBB

Twenty-four famous authors were asked recently to name the best short story in the English language. The choice of Irvin S. Cobb was "The Man Who Would Be King," by Rudyard Kipling. Three other noted authors think this is the best short story

PART I.

THE beginning of everything was in a railway train upon the road to Mhow from Ajmir. There had been a deficit in the budget, which necessitated traveling not second class, which is only half as dear as first class, but by intermediate, which is very awful indeed.

My particular intermediate happened to be empty till I reached Nasirabad, when a huge gentleman in shirt sleeves entered and, following the custom of intermediates, passed the time of day. He was a wanderer and a vagabond like myself, but with an educated taste for whisky. He told tales of things he had seen and done, of out of the way corners of the empire into which he had penetrated and of adventures in which he risked his life for a few days food.

My friend wanted to send a telegram back from the next station to Ajmir which is the turning off place from the Bombay to the Mhow line as you travel westward. My friend had no money beyond 8 annas, which he wanted for dinner, and I had no money at all owing to the hitch in the budget before mentioned.

"Did you say you are travelling back along this line within any days?" asked he.

"Within ten," I said.

"Can't you make it eight?" said he. "Mine is rather urgent business."

"I can send your telegram within ten days if that will serve you," I said.

"I couldn't trust the wire to fetch him, now I think of it. It's this way: He leaves Delhi on the 23d for Bombay. That means he'll be running through Ajmir about the night of the 23d."

"But I'm going into the Indian desert," I explained.

"Well and good," he said. "You'll be changing at Marwar Junction to get into Jodhpore territory—you must do that—and he'll be coming through Marwar Junction in the early morning of the 24th by the Bombay mail. Can you be at Marwar Junction that time? I would take it more than kind of you if you was to come out of central India in time to catch him at Marwar Junction and say to him, 'He has gone south for the week.' He'll know what that means. He's a big man with a red beard, and a great swell he is. You'll find him sleeping like a gentleman with all his luggage round him in a second class compartment. I ask you as a stranger—going to the west," he said with emphasis.

"Where have you come from?" said I. "From the east," said he, "and I am hoping that you will give him the message on the square—for the sake of my mother as well as your own."

Englishmen are not usually softened by appeals to the memory of their

mothers, but for certain reasons, which will be fully apparent. I saw fit to agree.

"I'll give the message if I catch him," I said, "and for the sake of your mother as well as mine I'll give you a word of advice. Don't try to run the Central India states just now as the correspondent of the Backwoodsman. There's a real one knocking about here, and it might lead to trouble."

"Thank you," said he simply. "And when will the swine be gone? I can't starve because he's ruining my work. I wanted to get hold of the Degumber Rajah down here about his father's widow and give him a jump."

"What did he do to his father's widow, then?"

"Filled her up with red pepper and slipped her to death as she hung from a beam. I found that out myself, and I'm the only man that would dare going into the state to get hush money for it. But you'll give the man at Marwar Junction my message?"

He got out at a little roadside station. When I left the train I did business with divers kings, and in eight days passed through many changes of life.

Then I headed for the great Indian desert upon the proper date as I had promised, and the night mail set me down at Marwar Junction.

The Bombay mail from Delhi makes a short halt at Marwar. She arrived as I got in, and I had just time to hurry to her platform and go down the carriages. There was only one second class on the train. I slipped the window and looked down upon a flaming red beard, half covered by a railway rug.

"Tickets again?" said he.

"No," said I. "I am to tell you that he is gone south for the week. He is gone south for the week!"

The train had begun to move out. The red man rubbed his eyes. "He has gone south for the week!" he repeated. "Now, that's just like his impudence. Did he say that I was to give you anything? 'Cause I won't."

"He didn't," I said and dropped.

Later on I reflected that two gentlemen like my friends could not do any good if they foregathered and personated correspondents of newspapers, and might, if they "stuck up" one of the little rat trap states of central India or southern Rajputana, get themselves into serious difficulties. I therefore took some trouble and succeeded, so I was later informed, in having them headed back from the Degumber borders.

Then I became respectable and returned to an office where there were no kings and no incidents except the daily manufacture of a newspaper. A newspaper office seems to attract every conceivable sort of person, to the pre-

judice of discipline. But that is the amusing part of the year. There are other six months wherein none ever come to call and the thermometer walks inch by inch up to the top of the glass.

It was in that season, and a remarkably evil season, that the paper began running the last issue of the week on Saturday night, which is to say Sunday morning, after the custom of a London paper.

One Saturday night it was my pleasant duty to put the paper to bed alone. It was a pitchy black night, as stifling as a June night can be, and the loo, the red hot wind from the westward, was booming among the tinder dry trees and pretending that the rain was on its heels. It was a shade cooler in the pressroom than the office, so I sat there while the type ticked and clicked and the night jars hooted at the windows and the all but naked compositors wiped the sweat from their foreheads and called for water.

Then the roar and rattle of the wheels shivered the quiet into little bits. I rose to go away, but two men in white clothes stood in front of me. The first one said, "It's him!" The second said, "So it is!" And they both laughed almost as loudly as the machinery roared and mopped their foreheads. The smaller of the two was the man I had met in the Mhow train, and his fellow was the red bearded man of Marwar Junction.

I was not pleased, because I wished to go to sleep, not to squabble with loafers. "What do you want?" I asked. "Half an hour's talk with you cool and comfortable in the office," said the red bearded man. "We'd like some drink—the contract doesn't begin yet, Peachey, so you needn't look—but what we really want is advice. We don't want money. We ask you as a favor, because you did us a bad turn about Degumber."

I led from the press room to the stifling office with the maps on the wall, and the red haired man rubbed his hands. "That's something like," said he. "This was the proper shop to come to. Now, sir, let me introduce you to Brother Peachey Carnehan, that's him, and Brother Daniel Dravot, that is me, and the less said about our profession the better, for we have been most things in our time. Carnehan is sober, and so am I. We'll take one of your chairs a-piece, and you shall see us light."

I watched the test. The men were absolutely sober, so I gave them each a tepid peg.

"Well and good," said Carnehan of the eyebrows, wiping the froth from his mustache. "Let me talk now, Dan. We have decided that India isn't big enough for such as us."

They certainly were too big for the office. Carnehan continued: "The country isn't half worked out because they that governs us won't let you touch it. Therefore, such as it is, we will let it alone and go away to some other place where a man isn't crowded and can come to his own. We are not little men, and there is nothing that we are afraid of except drink, and we have signed a contract on that. Therefore we are going away to be kings."

"Kings in our own right," muttered Dravot.

"Yes, of course," I said. "You've been tramping in the sun, and it's a very warm night, and hadn't you better sleep over the notion?"

"Neither drunk nor sunstruck," said Dravot. "We have slept over the notion half a year and require to see books and atlases, and we have decided that there is only one place now in the world that two strong men can Sar-a-whack. They call it Kafiristan.

By my reckoning it's the top right hand corner of Afghanistan, not more than 300 miles from Peshawar. They have two and thirty heathen idols there, and we'll be the thirty-third. It's a mountainous country, and the women are very beautiful."

"But that is provided against in the contract," said Carnehan. "Neither women nor Idols or Daniel."

To be continued.