

HER DREAM.

sleep and dreamed that, where the sea-gulls fly,
I saw a form to-day;
The sun seemed drooping in the western sky,
The waves seemed sobbing as it hurried by,
"Stay, stay!"
Its golden hair, outstreaming in the wind,
Caught the sun's dying glow;
Among the curls a spray of seaweed twined;
A fairer vision you will never find,
I know.

Then as the sun sank slowly in the West,
Softly the form drew near,
And laid its crowned head upon my breast,
And lo! I cried aloud and could not rest
For fear.

I woke from out my strange and troubled dream:
The young moon, calm and free,
Shone through my window with a tender beam,
Yet still a pressure on my breast did seem
To be.

I rose from out my chair where I had slept
The livelong afternoon;
And opening full wide my door I stepped
From out the house, while on, above me,
swept
The moon.

Upon the bare cliffs where the sea-bird flies
The moon its radiance shed;
I wandered down, and neath the starlit skies
A child with golden hair and close-shut eyes,
Lay dead.

Rocket: The Nautch Girl's Champion.

It was many years ago that I found my lot cast with the Great Western Hippodrome, one of the first circus organizations that had ventured into the interior of British India.

The venture had proved fortunate almost from the start. After performing to excellent houses in Madras, Cuttack and Calcutta, on the coast, we had pushed victoriously up the Sacred river, capturing Patna and Benares on the way, and were at last in the midst of a perfectly stunning season at Agra, high up on the Jumna, and with regal Delhi, and thence, across the country to Baroda, Bombay and Goa in golden prospect.

In Agra, as elsewhere, we were equally popular with the native population of all castes and with the British residents, both civil and military. Indeed, we were intending to remain there for a month or more, when an unforeseen event promised to cut us short in our career.

In the midst of our third performance before a vast and brilliant throng, plentifully interspersed with wealthy rajahs and their harem trains, that were fairly lustrous in "barbaric pearl and gold," the feature that had proved our best card among the natives brought about the interruption. This feature was a series of marvelous trick scenes enacted by Seraphina, as we called her, with Rocket, our best trick horse, when humored as the girl alone knew how to humor him—a superbly beautiful, immensely powerful, snow-white stallion of exceptional intelligence, but ordinarily so ferocious that no one had been able to make much of him until we had fortunately engaged the services of Seraphina whilst in Ceylon.

There had always been a mystery about her. We had found her a friendless Nautch girl, hungry and sick, in Colombo, where she had been deserted by the troupe of jugglers, snake charmers and dancing women with whom she had traveled. There was reason for suspecting, from a certain superiority of language and demeanor, that she might be a fugitive from some great man's household; but she would never afford the slightest inkling as to her antecedents, and little did we care what they might have been, for that matter. An odd incident revealed an extraordinary and mysterious power over the equine temperament; she was induced to exert it upon Rocket, with such surprising results that our enthusiastic manager, Monsieur Conquete, had engaged her forthwith at a salary that must have inclined her straight, night-black hair to crispness at the outset. During the ten months of decent treatment, wholesome food and immunity from mental fret, she had, in addition, to becoming our chief attraction, blossomed and rounded out into one of the most lovable, bewitchingly beautiful piece of nut-brown femininity you can imagine. A romantic attachment had arisen between her and Conquete, who intended to make her his wife at the close of the peninsula season; and she was as popular among her fellow-performers as with the spectators, who were attracted alike by her beauty, her courage and her talents.

Imagine, then, if you can, the sudden shock we underwent when, on the occasion alluded to, it was suddenly and publicly announced to us that our precious Seraphina (it was by this *nom de guerre* that our manager had replaced the consonantal jaw-breaker under which she had originally come to us) was in all probability to be ruthlessly torn from us, and to meet a fate the most awful that has been evolved out of Hindu caste prejudice.

Seraphina, having put Rocket through

a number of astonishing tricks, was careered on him like an Amazonian vision of delight around the ring, without saddle or bridle, preliminary to her startling denouement—that of linking her ankles under the animal's throat, and, stretched backward along the ribs and flank near to the spectators, to make two circuits thus—when a young rajpoot was seen to suddenly rup excitedly through the spectators to the pavilion occupied by the chief rajah of Agra and his household, together with some distinguished foreign residents, and began to talk loudly and earnestly to that magnate.

The rajah made some reply. Then a trumpet sounded from the pavilion, and an official loudly announced, in pigeon English, that, by reason of a startling revelation just made with regard to the peerless equestrienne, the performance must come to a close at once. A sensation ensued which could scarcely have been surpassed by anything down on the bills.

Then the official made public the nature of the revelation. In brief, the young rajpoot had recognized in our Seraphina a former slave of the harem of an uncle of his, Prince Mahapootra, a rich but miserly old rajah of the vicinity, who had died two days before. The girl had escaped from the harem, joining a troupe of mountebanks and Nautch girls, from whom she had come into our employment as has been stated, and had succeeded in eluding pursuit until now, when she was forthwith claimed, and must be straightway restored to the dead man's estate. But, *mirabile dictu*, this was not the worst.

Not only had the avaricious old prince outlived his legitimate wives, but he had also, shortly before lighting out for Nirvana, converted the remaining members of his seraglio into his better-beloved rupees; so that now, to the consternation of his high-caste and pious relatives, he lay dead, without so much as a single wife or female slave to serve a suttee on his pyre—that is, offer herself (?) up to be burned alive with his insensate old carcass, after the ancient and aristocratic custom of the Hindu nobility; but lo! with the recovery of the fugitive odalisque—our own—our beautiful Seraphina—here at last was a solution to the difficulty, and she was now claimed and appropriated as a living offering to the grim oriental moloch of sutteeism!

The wild excitement incidental to this announcement was indescribable. It was tremendous. Seraphina retained her self-control sufficiently to master Rocket and give him in charge of the grooms, after muzzling, hobbling and haltering him as was her wont, and then stood leaning against his shoulder and facing the great high rajah, in whose absolute decision rested her happiness, her fate, her life itself, as in the hollow of a hand; her delicate features wreathed with an expression of agonized appeal—a warm, living picture of helpless beauty in supreme distress. The majority of the vast assemblage roared its disapprobation of the rajah's demand, like an ocean in unrest. Poor Conquete, livid with rage and anguish, prostrated himself before the gold and purple pavilion, wringing his hands and screaming forth his protests like one possessed. The English officials nobly and earnestly seconded him to the best of their ability, though the rajah's voice was at that time autocratic over the fortunes and lives of the native population of his province, and British reformative measures had not then made the progress they have since made in crushing out the hideous customs and abuses of the caste system. But the rajpoot had been reinforced by many other kinsfolk of the defunct Mahapootra; they belonged to the Kabatruya caste, which is second only to the Brahmans, and they vied with each other in volubility and insistence upon the rightfulness of their claim, that the girl should be forthwith given up, and thus a suttee be furnished for the crematorial embellishment that had been arranged for the following day.

It all lay with the great high rajah of Agra, as he should decide. He was an odd-looking, wrinkled little old nabob, half buried out of sight in his jewel-crusted robes and turban, with twinkling little eyes, and a facial idiosyncrasy when he smiled that was suggestive of both an amused gorilla and a hyena in hysterics.

He let every one have his or her say, with praiseworthy imperturbability, then corked up the entire hubbub with an impatient gesture, and finally, after a few whispered words with the diamond-dusted chief begum at his side, smilingly announced through his herald that he had formed a decision.

This was awaited in an agony of suspense. The high rajah was known to have a penchant for cruel practical joking, in which the throwing of unsuspected sudras as tidbits to his favorite wild beasts, and kindred oddities, had been features, from which the general anxiety with which his fiat was looked for can be better imagined than depicted.

At last it was proclaimed. The

great high rajah would be pleased to grant our Seraphina absolute immunity from all caste obligations, on the sole condition that she would find some beast, wild or tame, that should successfully champion her cause in a contest with Jabdador, the famous king of the rajah's unexampled wild beast collection, the context to take place in the arena of the royal menagerie on the following morning. Falling in obtaining such a champion, or in the event of such champion being vanquished, if obtained, Seraphina was to be given up to be burned alive on the funeral pyre of her quondam lord.

Such was the decree.

The rajpoot relatives made no attempt to disguise their satisfaction, while the sympathizers with the poor girl were correspondingly despairing. This can readily be made plain. Jabdador, the pride of the rajah's collection, was famous throughout the upper India as the hughest, the most powerful and the most ferocious royal Bengal tiger that had ever been captured—tamed he never had been—or, as many averred, that had ever been seen. He was said to be five feet four inches high at the shoulder, eleven feet in length from tip to tip; with a capacity of leaping a hurdle with a carcass of a full grown buffalo in his teeth, as an ordinary cat would get away with a rat, and in numerous encounters to have killed lions, throttled panthers in pairs, ribboned up other tigers into shreds, forced double-horned rhinoceroses to the wall, and caused the most formidable rogue-elephants to squeal for quarter.

No wonder that the rajah's decision was at first regarded as tantamount to the surrender of the poor girl to the demand of the suttee seekers.

But the first shock of the announcement had hardly passed when, to the further amazement of every one, Seraphina started forward with a glad cry of relief and gratitude.

Proudly rearing herself erect, with flashing eyes and breast a-heave, she spoke in a clear, ringing voice, first in Hindustanee, and then translated her words into English.

"I accept your august highness' condition!" she cried; "and my champion is here at hand, with my kind manager's permission." She looked inquiringly at Monsieur, who, doubtless divining her meaning, responded with an eloquent, even an ecstatic shrug and grimace; and she then retreated, and placed her hand caressingly on Rocket's silvery mane. "This shall be my champion," she cried.

Another sensation! Thunders of applause swelled up, in which the stallion, arching his proud neck, snorted and curveted spite of muzzle and hobbles, as though with warrior-like intelligence; but the rajpoot contingent didn't weaken in the least, being doubtless wholly confident as to the result in their favor, though Rocket's fighting qualifications were no myth to them. The high rajah and his train probably more than shared this confidence in Jabdador's powers. Gratiified smiles beamed everywhere from the pavilion, while the little old rajah himself gleefully rubbed his skinny paws together, as if in anticipation of a prodigious treat, compared with which his royalist practical joke would be nowhere.

A fight to the death between the monarch of the jungle and the autocrat of the stables, with the liberty and life of the prettiest girl in India for the stakes! Could aught be more sanguinarily fascinating?

The assemblage broke up tumultuously, Seraphina being ordered into the custody of her late master's relatives for the time being.

The next morning found the small amphitheatre in the rajah's menagerie crowded to suffocation by the elite of Agra society, native and British, persons of lesser consequence not being admitted, with the exception of the members of our troupe, Seraphina, of course, included. The first glance at her made us suspect that no kindness had been thrown away upon her by her custodians.

Picturesquely clad in slight folds of snow-white, richly ornamented jamdani, which rather expressed than veiled her exquisite proportions, she occupied an isolated position near the rajah and his party, from which a full view of the arena was obtained. Her eyes were lustrous with hope, and she occasionally cast upon us, especially upon poor Conquete, a glance full of encouragement; but at the same time a nervous twitching of her lips told of the agony of suspense she was suffering.

This may be more fully appreciated when I say that on her way to the place she had been, with a refinement of cruelty, compelled to pass the funeral pile already thronging the corpse of her late lord and master, and upon which it was confidently expected she would be forced to immolate herself at the close of the extraordinary trial by battle that was about to begin.

The arena was a high walled pit, circular in form and about sixty feet in dia-

meter, which was brilliantly illuminated by sunlight admitted through a glazed aperture directly overhead.

A trumpet was blown, and Rocket was first admitted by the sudden opening of a grated door. Superbly beautiful, powerful and spirited, he bounded into the centre of the arena, and stood there pawing the sand, with his head erect, eyes blazing and nostrils extended.

The tiger was admitted almost immediately afterward. He had not been in the least exaggerated. In size, strength and ferocious appearance he was the most appalling brute we had ever conceived of.

Licking his chops in silence, with his fiery eyes never for an instant quitting the horse, he at once set up a slow, mechanical pacing around the extreme edge of the arena; while the stallion on his part, moving around and around as if on a pivot, with his head bent down like a dog, was equally watchful of every movement of his subtle and treacherous foe.

Suddenly, without so much as a growl of warning, and as if impelled by electric springs, the red-and-black-striped bulk of the tiger was seen hurling through the air towards his silvery antagonist. The latter, however, was both the quicker and warier. Wheeling in a flash, he caught the tiger full in the breast with his lashed out heels, driving him with a crash against the wall of the pit, when he again, with lowered head confronted him pivotally as before the tiger resuming his silent circling tread as if it had not been interrupted at all.

"In the next, or at least in the third spring, Jabdador will kill him!" cried the rajah, in a voice we all could hear.

But it was to be proved that his prediction for the tiger was blinding his better judgment. In a few minutes the spring was repeated, but with even less success than before. Again the lashing hind hoofs of the stallion hurled back the assailant, this time with a shock that the latter did not so promptly recover from, though his silent footed circlings were speedily resumed, and apparently with undiminished watchfulness and energy.

For the third time did Jabdador launch himself towards Rocket with the force of a catapult. But it was a last effort. Not only did the heroic stallion hurl him across the pit, this time with a broken jaw and dislocated shoulder, but he also followed up the repulse with repeated shocks from the terrible heels, wholly completing the discomfiture of the jungle lord.

Indeed, from that instant Jabdador—evidently jabbed to his heart's content—did nothing but run limpingly and whimperingly around the arena, intent only upon effecting an escape; and with a triumphant snort followed by a shrill whinnying cry, like the voice of a trumpet, the glorious steed remained indubitably the victor.

In spite of the fear in which the rajah was held and his undisguised chagrin at the result, the majority of the natives present joined in the ringing cheer that rushed from every British throat; while Seraphina, without a movement on the part of the chotपालe rajpoot to detain her, rushed over to our part of the benches and fell sobbing with joy into the transported Monsieur Conquete's arms.

Well, though the rajah made it too unpleasant for us to continue our performance in Agra, he could not go back on his word, and the fame of Rocket's gallant championship of our little Nautch girl went before us in the shape of an advertisement such as bill posters and advance agents combined had never organized.

Old Mahapootra's funeral pile was fired up, perforce, without so much as an apology of a suttee to do him reverence. We opened in Delhi and elsewhere to a tremendous business, and at the close of the Indian campaign Seraphina became the happy wife of Monsieur Conquete. They subsequently went out of the show business, and opened a hotel in Singapore, where, it may well be believed, Rocket remained with them an honored and gratuitous guest to the day of his death.

Brilliant Prospects.

Yesterday we met Bill Beatty with a gripsack swinging to one of his hands, going down Austin avenue. "Where are you bound for?" "I'm going to Leadville, to open an undertaker's establishment. There is millions in it." "You don't say so?" "Yes, my brother has just graduated as a doctor. He is going to practice in Leadville, and if I open an undertaker's establishment, he will give me all his custom. Good-bye, take care of yourself."

"Is this your first appearance in a court of justice?" asked the Austin Recorder of a vagrant. "No, Judge, it is the last time thus far—how is it with yourself?"

Right or Wrong: is the Lesson of the Clock.

Tick! tick! went the old eight-day clock. Polly Marsh and her little brother Tom were playing happily, and hardly noticed it. But the clock did not mind that, for it knew that there was some one in the house who would hear in a moment if it were ticking properly or not, and who would be in soon to wind it up. It was Thursday, and as sure as that day came, Dame Marsh would take the key from a little hook and wind up the old clock.

But besides being Thursday, it was New Year's day, and Polly was teaching Tom how to spin a new top, which had just been given him.

Dame Marsh was busy getting the dinner ready, and was saying softly, as she glanced at the happy children, "I wish he would come. He said he would try to begin the New Year with us. I wish he would come."

So deep in thought was she, that it was actually a quarter to two before she remembered the clock.

Tom just then flung down his top and cord in a temper.

"I can't do it!" he said, "Shan't try."

"Hush, hush, Tom, dear!" said Grannie as she took down the clock key. "You shouldn't say can't, or you will never learn to do anything; and you shouldn't say shan't, or nobody will teach you. You are only a wee boy yet, and have hardly begun to try to do anything; so you must not give up so soon."

Tom hid his blushing face in his grandmother's apron, for he knew it was naughty to kick his top and speak crossly to his sister.

"Come and see me wind up the dear old clock," said Dame Marsh. She was a wise and loving woman, and tried to train the two motherless children for heaven.

In a moment Tom's face was all smiles, as he watched the heavy weights being drawn up, while the big pendulum swung gravely from side to side as if it never meant to stop.

"Why do I wind up those weights Polly?"

"It wouldn't go if you did not," said Polly, gravely. "Grandfather told me all about that on Christmas day."

"That's just it, dear; and so every week since it was bought the weights have been wound up, and the clock has gone on doing its work. But if I forgot to wind it up it would stop ticking, and be of no use to any one. I think men and women, and boys and girls, are very much like clocks, only we want winding up more often. When we say our prayers, and ask God to help us, we are being wound up to keep on doing the work he has given us to do."

"But I haven't got any real work, no more has Tom, yet," said Polly.

"Yes, dear, you have. Your work now is to be obedient and gentle, and to learn your lessons well. Then besides ticking and striking, which we may call the clock's hard work, it has a face which shows us the right time. So all little children, as well as big people, can show by their faces whether they are doing God's work. When you look cross and pout, as some one did just now, you are like a clock, which is pointing to the wrong time; but when you are bright and smiling, you are telling the right time, and are like a little sign-post pointing to heaven.—*Child's Companion.*"

A Neat Trick.

Mirth vegetated like a mushroom at Hopercraft's, in Franklin street, last week. Senator Browning, the Hon. Arthur D. Williams, Robert C. Brown, a well-known cigar dealer and George Hopercraft, proprietor of the restaurant, were at dinner. Hopercraft was called from the table on business. "Let's stick Hop for a bottle of wine," suggested Banana Bob.

"Possibly it can't be done," Mr. Browning observed.

"Excuse me, Senator, but you're not very fly," Mr. Brown replied. "Oblige me by counting those toothpicks," pointing to a small tumbler filled with yellow splinters. "I'll show you how to let Hop in for the wine."

The Senator counted the toothpicks. There were thirty-one of them. Banana Bob threw three on the floor. "Now there are only seven times four—twenty-eight—d'you twig?" he remarked.

A moment afterward Hopercraft returned. Bob dumped the toothpicks on the table. "Hop, old boy," he said, "we're drawing pinks for a bottle. Are you in?"

"What do you mean?" the proprietor inquired.

"Why, each of us keeps on drawing toothpicks, one after another, and this man who draws last is stuck. Are you in?"

"All right, go ahead," Hopercraft replied in a tone of uncertainty.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before Brown, Browning and Williams had drawn from the pile leaving Hopercraft the fourth to draw. He took a toothpick. Bob drew a second time, and the others followed seriatim. Hopercraft's quick eye ran over the pile. He saw where he was about to land, and he tipped a quick wink at Williams and Browning. Banana Bob had drawn the fourth time. Before Browning could reach the pile Hopercraft threw the remaining toothpicks out of the window, saying: "That settles it. You lose, Bob."

"How?" said the astonished cigar dealer.

"Why, you drew last," was the response.

The wine was paid, Mr. Williams shrewdly observing: "Excuse me, Bob, but you're not very fly."

Certainly He Would.

The other evening as a muscular citizen was passing a house on Montcalm street, a lady, who stood at the gate, called out to him:

"Sir! I appeal to you for protection!"

"What's the trouble?" he asked as he stopped short.

"There's a man in the house, and he wouldn't go out doors when I ordered him to!"

"He wouldn't, eh? We'll see about that!"

Thereupon the man gave the woman his coat to hold and sailed into the house spitting on his hands. He found a man down at the supper-table, and he took him by the neck and remarked:

"Nice style of a brute you are, eh? Come out o' this or I'll break every bone in your body!"

The man fought back, and it was not until a chair had been broken and the table upset, that he was hauled out doors by the legs, and given a fling through the gate. Then, as the muscular citizen placed his boot where it would do the most hurt, he remarked:

"Now, then, you brass-faced old tramp, you move on or I'll finish you!"

"Tramp! Tramp!" shouted the victim, as he got up, "I'm no tramp! I own this property and live in this house!"

"You do?"

"Yes, that's my wife holding your coat!"

"Thunder!" whispered the victim, as he gazed from one to the other, and realized that the wife had got square through him; and then he made a grab for his coat and slid into the darkness with his shirt-bosom torn open, a finger badly bitten, and two front teeth ready to drop out.—*Detroit Free Press.*

The Cost of Living in France

A computation has recently been made by M. Armangaud as to the expenditure of sixteen working-class families in the town of Mulhouse, in Alsace. Similar expenses might be a little over or a little under this estimate in other districts in France; but, upon the whole, the results may be accepted as a fair average. The sixteen families tabulated by M. Armangaud were chosen from different classes of workmen, and their expenditures varied from 1100 francs to 3000 francs per annum; that is, from £44 £20 a year. House accommodation, as a rule, swallowed up 15 per cent. of the total expenditure, clothing 16 per cent., and food 61 per cent., 8 per cent. being reserved for miscellaneous purposes. In the matter of food the highest expenditure registered was 72 per cent., and this item of expenditure was thus distributed: 33 per cent. was for bread, 14 per cent. for meat, 13 for milk, 24 per cent. for groceries and 16 per cent. for miscellaneous ailments. The greatest expenditure upon bread in any individual case was 48 per cent. It was thus seen that the average expenditure of these sixteen working-class families of Mulhouse upon bread was a little over one-fifth of their total expenditure. This being the case in the average, and the greatest expenditure being about one-third of the total expenditure of the families, it will be seen that, taking these figures as fairly representative of the expenditure upon bread among working-class families, it is an exaggeration to say that the chief item in a working-class family's expenditure, in France at least, is the bread bill.

A peasant in Sweden never passes a fellow-peasant without a polite lifting of his hat. This explains why so many Swedes come to this country. They come to avoid catching cold in the head.

The editor wrote that "he was a member of an old family of musicians," and when it appeared in the paper it read "a member of an old family of nuisances." One assertion was just as true as the other; but the editor nearly swore.