

LITTLE TANG-U—THE RAT

By LAWRENCE E. ADAMS

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AMONG the most interesting souvenirs that Marston, the naval officer, brought from the Orient was a curious portrait, evidently the work of a native artist, painted in brilliant colors on a panel of foreign wood. More striking than the workmanship of the portrait, however, was its subject, a small Chinese boy, apparently not more than ten or twelve years of age, but wearing the uniform of a high Japanese naval officer, and adorned with a whole string of jeweled decorations:

Here is the history of the portrait: When the Japanese flagship steamed out of the harbor of Canton on the day that war was formally declared between Japan and China, it carried one human being whose name was not on the ship's rolls—and he belonged to the enemy. He became a passenger under the following circumstances: Just before the ship weighed anchor a small steam launch was sent back for the commander and superior officers, who had been detained until late. Among these officers were three Americans, all graduates of the Annapolis academy, who had been engaged by the Japanese government as advisers during the coming hostilities. As the little launch worked its way through the maze of picturesque craft and sampans—the curious little Chinese houseboats—which crowded the bay, the eyes of the American officers were riveted by a curious sight. To the top of a wooden stake to which a sampan was moored a little Chinese boy clung, swaying to and fro, eyeing delightedly the steam launch as it shot through the water. In his anxiety to see the fun, however, he had disregarded the weakness of this reedlike support, which, when a passing sampan collided with it, suddenly broke off short, plunging the little chap into the water. At first the launch's passengers paid slight attention to the accident, knowing that these little natives are as much at home in the water as on shore. Indifference, however, gave way to concern when the child's shrill cry for help rang through the air, followed by the mad efforts of every sampan man within sight to get away from the drowning boy, instead of to him. It was now evident that the little fellow had become entangled in a floating coil of rope, and that his drowning was a matter of a few seconds; yet not one of the Chinese boatmen but watched from a distance and in silence the small hero's frantic struggles for life. Indeed, the little Mongolian was already disappearing in the waters of the bay when the steam launch, at the signal of the commander, veered in its course, and a strong arm snatched the little body from the waves. As for the sampan men, they watched the rescue with cries of amazement. This was because of the curious law existing in certain provinces of China that whosoever saves a life, the rescued one may lawfully look to the rescuer for support forever after. It is plain that this barbaric edict virtually puts a premium on death; but the explanation lies in the fatalistic religion, which holds that whenever a man falls into peril it is by the express wish and will of the gods, and that to rescue him is to obstruct their just decrees.

Meantime the officers, who had arrived on shipboard with their proteges before it had occurred to them to plan for his disposal, were examining their find as though he had been a new and curious toy. To send him back to shore was impossible, as they were already steaming out of the harbor. The only course, then, was to keep him on board, at least during the voyage to Japan, a plan rendered all the easier by the fact that the little heathen was, according to his broken Japanese, both homeless and friendless.

But if the boy had seemed a nuisance in prospect, he was anything but that in reality. Shrewd as any Bowery ragamuffin, the little fellow's alert ways and quick wits were the unflinching delight of the three American officers. More imitative, even, than the Japanese, he picked up their language and customs with such incredible ease that in a few days he was more Japanese than any subject of the mikado. Indeed, before many weeks had passed, the entire crew was accustomed to the curious spectacle of one of the enemy enjoying the most marked attention and hospitality that the ship could afford.

But, besides his imitiveness and shrewdness, the little Mongolian had one accomplishment that gained the awe-struck admiration of his oriental friends. That was the power of discovering objects at incredible distances as easily by night as by day, a power due partly to inheritance, and partly to his profession. The lad was an interesting specimen of the oriental class of beings known as rat catchers. This means more than the word implies. They are not rat catchers by vocation alone, but, strangely enough, they are born to the trade. In addition to many other talents which he had inherited from a long line of rat-catching ancestry, little Tang-u—the "rat"—as the boy was called, had the power of seeing his way clearly in almost the dead blackness of night. Sometimes, indeed, it seemed as though he was endowed with a sixth sense in this matter, being able to walk straight

into a dungeon-like room and to bring forth any object without the least hesitancy. Courage, also, he had developed to a rare degree, for the rats in the docks of China, and in the underground passages from warehouse cellar to cellar, and sewer to sewer, where he plied his trade, are the fattest and most savage of the rodent tribe the world over; so large, indeed, that the skins of two of them will make a pair of gloves, and the carcass will supply a family with dried fillet de rodent for a week. These rat catchers spend days and weeks in the underground passages, and day and night are almost the same to them.

Now that he could no longer exercise his strange gift in his accustomed way, Tang-u would often amuse himself by standing for hours on the deck, peering out through the mist or the darkness in search of things hidden to common eyes. Indeed, among the Americans he soon became known as the "kid with the telescopic eyes," while the commander, on various occasions, allowed him to accompany the men in the lookout, where he discovered objects often in advance of the field glass. Even the dark waters of the ocean were not proof against the vision of the little heathen, whose bright eyes would detect curious fish as they swam around the ship, many feet below the surface; while a fog that blinded the ordinary eye proved no obstacle to his keen sight. Before long every one came to the conclusion that a boy whose eye was equal to a combined field glass and searchlight was a valuable addition to a modern warship; and on more than one occasion during the months of the war the little Chinaman's discernment was appealed to as gravely as though he had been thirty years old and a Japanese officer, instead of a ten-year-old Chinese boy.

On one occasion, indeed, Tang-u's sixth sense made him for five minutes the ship's commander. It was late in the evening before the memorable engagement of Port Arthur. The flagship, which, having passed unscathed through months of war, had been recently ordered to this stronghold, had just anchored in the harbor, and preparations were making for the night's defense. The torpedo net had not yet been lowered, but the whole ship resounded with the bustle and hurry of preparations for what every one felt would be the most decisive battle of the war. Meantime Tang-u stood alone near the bow, peering out through the darkness, as was his custom upon arriving in a strange place, in search for some new and interesting sight. Suddenly, above the confusion, there rang out a shrill little scream, and Tang-u, with his eyes bulging from his head, rushed toward the admiral, and, pointing out to sea, frantically shrieked: "Torpee-t! torpee-to!"

Instantly every eye followed the direction of the tiny finger. The sea looked untroubled. Not a soul on the deck, even by straining his vision to the utmost, could verify Tang-u's cry. Yet so accustomed had they become to relying upon the little fellow's keen sight that the admiral gave instant orders to lower the net. In a moment there was a sound of hurrying feet, a hundred hands were raised to the ropes, and the great net fell into place. Before the splash of the falling net had died away, there was a thundering explosion, and a tremendous upheaval of water, like that of a mighty geyser, shook the huge ship from bow to stern. It was indeed a torpedo that Tang-u's keen eyes had detected far away through the approaching night. But swiftly as it came, the boy's marvelous vision had been swifter. The well-aimed missile of destruction, that in a moment more would have destroyed the flower of the Japanese navy, had, in coming in contact with the netting, exploded harmlessly, flooding the deck with water. The great warship with over three hundred souls had been saved from annihilation—and by one of the enemy.

A few months later, when Tang-u's exploit was brought to the notice of the mikado, that dignitary conferred upon the little Chinese rat catcher the rank of honorary admiral in the Japanese navy.

And it was in this way that a heathen nation furnished the youngest naval hero in existence.

Whistler's Architect Denied Immortality

Whistler's house in Cheyne walk, Chelsea, London, on which a memorial tablet is being fixed, recalls the episode of the artist's proposed residence in Tite street. He had acquired a piece of ground adjoining Chelsea hospital, and after prolonged wrangling with a long-suffering architect, departed for the south of France until the building operations were completed. The result to Whistler on his return was agony. He stormed, he fumed, he attempted to repudiate the contract, but the architect was obdurate. He must accept possession and he must pay.

Whistler would not for a single day live in the house; but before selling it he had placed above the door a stone tablet with the inscription: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Mr. X (the architect) built this house."

Nobody seems to know how or when the inscription was got rid of, but although the house still stands to offend the eye—a monstrosity in whitewash, the stone tablet above the door has been carefully razed and a no doubt wholly respectable profession is excluded from that particular class of the Immortals whose immortality is none the less real for resting on the abuse of the great.—New York World.



In the JUNGLE

With Cheerups and the Quixies
By Grace Bliss Stewart



RAFFY FINDS HIS TONGUE

ONE warm sunny day, Cheerups was sitting on the ground in the Jungle and looking lazily up into the great trees. He was looking to see if any fruit were growing handy. "I'll send Softfoot or Brighteyes up to get it if I find some," thought he. Then suddenly he spied a long gold-colored face, all covered with brown spots, and two big solemn eyes looking down at him. Cheerups was most too astonished to breathe. "Gracious, that's a new kind of fruit to me!"



"So You've Lost Your Tongue, Have You, Raffy?"

Then, as his eyes traveled slowly down, down, over about eight feet of neck and along about ten feet more of body and leg, he had the surprise of his life.

"It's an animal!" cried Cheerups out loud. "But it must be the tallest one in the world."

Then the funny head at the top of the long neck began to nod. Up and down it nodded and nodded.

"Well, I must have said the right thing that time," murmured Cheerups. "But why doesn't he talk, instead of nodding in that silly fashion? He probably thinks I can't hear so far away. What he needs is a telephone."

"That's Raffy Giraffe, Mr. Cheerups," called Jack the Monkey, who was sitting up in the tall palm tree eating dates. "He can hear what you say but he can't talk. He hasn't any voice. Raffy, and Boomer Kangaroo who lives in Australia, are the only animals in the world who can't make a sound. Funny the way men talk about dumb animals, isn't it? I guess nobody in his right senses would call me that," chattered Jacky with a chuckle.

"So you've lost your tongue, have you, Raffy?" inquired Cheerups kindly. "That's a pity!"

Then, quick as a flash, out of Raffy's mouth shot the longest, slimmest tongue Cheerups had ever seen. It was so twisty and slender that it looked as if it could wrap around anything and tie in a bowknot. Cheerups just couldn't help laughing. He laughed and laughed. To think of having the longest tongue in the world and not using it for anything! It was too funny. Then he caught sight of the sad look in Raffy's eyes and realized that what seems funny to one person may be no laughing matter to another.

"I'm sorry," sighed Cheerups. "Something is wrong somewhere, and I'd love to help you, but how can I when I don't know what is wanted?"

"I can tell you," chirped Jacky Monk. "I have watched Raffy a lot. He has the longest neck in the world. There isn't a reacher anywhere who can compare with him, but when he is eating leaves in the tops of the trees, there are always a few just a little beyond him and those seem to be the very ones he wants most. He ought to be satisfied with those he can get, but I know he isn't, by the look in his eyes. Isn't that so, Raffy?"

"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day and lucky jewel

JEANETTE

THOUGH originating in France, from where most of our saucy little feminine names come, Jeanette has been formally naturalized and its birthplace is generally forgotten. It means "grace of the Lord" and has its earliest origin in the old Hebrew Joanna, a name bestowed upon the holy woman of the Gospel.

When Joan came into fashion in England and named the daughter of Edward II and other members of royalty, France formed Jeanette in accordance with their inimitable habit of making a diminutive. Jean had already been popular there and Jeanette and Jeanne, which seem to have been used almost interchangeably, became instantly in vogue.

Jeanne or Jeanette of Flanders, as she was called, was the famous heroine of the Henbonne, while Jeanette La Pucelle of Orleans ranks with the great of France. Jeanne de Valois, daughter of Louis XI and discarded wife of Louis XII, was another famous woman bearing the name. The French went one step farther and have a

Raffy nodded his head, switched his tail and swayed his long neck back and forth. It was evident that Jacky had told his difficulty exactly. Cheerups was thinking very hard indeed. Then joyfully he shouted: "Why, of course, it's your tongue that can do it. If you can't talk with it, it ought to be good for something. Your tongue is long and slender, and you can stretch it out for those leaves. It has prehensile or grasping power, too, like the tails of the South American monkeys. You can pick a single leaf or even a blade of grass with it. It can be made short or long, wide or narrow. Now isn't that a gift to be happy about? There's another thing, Raffy: Sometimes the trees you feed on are rough and thorny and hurt your tender nose, so just close your nostrils to protect them. You can do it, I know."

Raffy looked delighted. He closed his nostrils immediately to see if he could. Then he ran out his long tongue and nipped off a leaf high up in the Breadfruit tree. Then he looked at Cheerups with eyes full of gratitude, kicked up his heels, switched his tail joyfully and ran off through the Jungle.

"But remember," called Cheerups after him, "that the things which are out of reach are often no better than those just at hand. I hope he heard it," murmured Cheerups thoughtfully. (© by Little, Brown & Co.)

THE WHY of SUPERSTITIONS

By H. IRVING KING

APPLES AND SEEDS

MANY are the methods practiced today by the superstition of divination by apples, apple seeds and apple parings. They are nearly all in the nature of "projects," or love-charms. The most general of these in this country is, perhaps, the throwing of a whole apple paring on the floor after swinging it three times around the head in the belief that it will fall in the shape of the initial of one's future wife or husband. Then there is the naming of apple seeds and divining with them in various ways; the eating of an apple at midnight before a glass while one holds a lamp and repeats an appropriate rhyme with the expectation of seeing one's true love peep over one's shoulder; and the "bobbing for apples" on Allhallows' Eve. Doubtless the reader can recall many more. The apple superstition in all its forms has its roots so far back in mythology that its primal origin is lost but mystic qualities have always been attributed to this fruit since the days of Tammuz. Perhaps its origin was in the fact that the apple tree is the tree upon which the mistletoe is most

Alice Terry



Before she entered the "movies," handsome Alice Terry resided in Indiana. She was induced to accept employment as an extra in a studio. She was just eighteen at the time, and so well fitted into a prominent part in a picture that she was given the lead, and from that time on she has shared honors with other stars.

Just a Little Smile



DEAFENING

Mrs. Newly-Rich was recounting to an acquaintance the thrilling events of the evening before, when the house had been burgled. "As a matter of fact," she said, "we were eating our soup—"

"Then, of course," interrupted the candid friend, "none of you heard anything."—Tit-Bits.

IT BREAKS 'EM, ALL RIGHT



Son—Dad, what do they mean when they say in the history that in the old days many men perished by being broken on the wheel?

Dad—Why—er—son, I really can't tell you—they certainly didn't have automobiles that far back.

New Kind of Contest

I heard the oratorical din Where fierce invective filled the air And said, "I wonder who will win The perspiration contest there!"

A Puzzle

Coca—Have you read "To a Field Mouse"?
Cousa—No. How do you get 'em to listen?—American Boy.

BASE METAL, INDEED



"I should think that great automobile maker would be in constant fear of being arrested as a counterfeiter."

"How's that?"
"Hasn't he made every one of his millions of dollars out of tin?"

"Man's Extremity"
He had expressions fit and meet And used them with impunity— He always called his hands and feet Each one "God's opportunity."

Tact Is Essential

"Tact," said the lecturer, "is essential to good entertaining. I once dined at a house where the hostess had no tact. Opposite me sat a modest, quiet man. "Suddenly he turned as red as a lobster on hearing his hostess say to her husband, 'How inattentive you are, Charlie! You must look after Mr. Brown better. He's helping himself to everything.'"

Household Necessity

Butcher—You want some brains, madam?
Housewife—Yes, please. My husband hasn't had any for a long time.—Progressive Grocer.

Too Much Catnip

Pussy—Why do you suppose Miss Mouser makes such catty remarks?
Tabby—She eats too much catnip.

Before—and After

She's dear.
She's doggone dear.
But, oh, what a difference!

Man and Woman Equal

Mrs. Benham—Man and woman are equal.
Benham—Then how is it that, when it takes nine tailors to make a man, it takes more dressmakers to make a woman?

To Check His Appetite

"I'm afraid, my dear, you'll have to do the cooking again."
"Why so?"
"The doctor says I am eating too much."

Among the NOTABLES

LA VALLIERE

LA VALLIERE, favorite of Louis XIV and one of the greatest beauties of the French court, is so often pictured as an adventuresome and a deliberate coquette, that few know her real character.

Her name was Louise Francois de La Valliere. She was born August 6, 1644. Her mother brought her to Paris when she was sixteen, after she had been fairly well educated and brought up with the royal princesses as a child. A kinswoman got her the appointment of maid of honor to Henrietta, who was Louis' sister-in-law. There was some scandal about these two, and, as a blind, Louis XIV was told to pay marked attentions to some other woman—since a princess must never have a bit of gossip whispered about her. La Valliere then was a pure-minded, religious girl, willing to serve her mistress by involving her own good name. Louis, at first forced to pay her attention, soon developed a real love for her, and she, too, fell very much in love with him. All through the time of her connection with him, she refused to tell what she knew about the Princess Henrietta and her love affairs.

La Valliere had many enemies and one of them—Montespan—finally took Louis away from her. A little later, she was allowed to enter the Carmelite convent, where she spent the rest of her life, and we can imagine her entirely satisfied that her life of turmoil and intrigue was at an end and the peace of the convent hers until death. For, the court life of Louis XIV was artificial and hectic, and poor La Valliere, like many other women of her day, was a victim of the times, rather than an example of them.

The Safer Way

Two Highland farmers met at market, and one said to the other, "What's come over Donald lately? I haven't seen him for weeks."
"Och, have ye no heard?" replied the other. "Puir Donald got three months in jail for stealin' a cow!"
"Och, the big fool! Why did he no' just buy it an' no' pay for it?"—Tit-Bits.

Safe Walk

Rub—Whenever I see one of my creditors I always cross to the opposite side of the street to avoid meeting him.
Dub—I tried that plan once and was arrested for walking down the middle of the street.



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