

# SENTINEL

Defrauding the Tiger.

I knew an old shikari [says A. Sarathkumer Ghosh in the February number of the *Cornhill*] who had fought many a battle with the royal Bengal tiger, and had had many a hairbreadth escape from the latter's jaws. When too old to carry on his campaigns, he delighted in telling an admiring audience, in his native village, all the adventures of his life; then, when he waxed warm over the heroic theme, he, like an old warrior, would shoulder his *cruch* (metaphorically, of course) and fight anew the battles of his youth. But among these adventures, the following is perhaps the most noteworthy.

One fine afternoon, having nothing better to do, he went out fishing with half a dozen of his friends—this is not going to be a fish story, but a real live tiger story, the fishy part coming in only incidentally. They chose a small river a couple of hundred yards in width. One bank of the river was flat and open, but the other was somewhat undulating and shrubby—in fact, it was adjacent to a jungle. The fishers sat in a row about ten paces apart on the former bank; each had a loaded gun by his side as a precaution against unwelcome intruders. Now, our friend, who seemed to be situated at one extremity of the row of fishers, had been negotiating very little business for some time, when, feeling tired of holding his rod, he very naturally laid it down by his side for a moment to have a pull at the hookah as a consolation for his ill luck. While engaged in this operation he heard a swish, and, turning round, beheld his rod scudding along the surface of the water like a racing yacht. Evidently it was a forty pounder that had got hold of the other end of the line! Such a catch was worth a little exertion; so he plunged into the water and struck out for the rod. He came up with it almost at the other side of the river, but at that instant a terrific roar was heard, a tiger leapt on the swimmer from the neighboring bush, and was off with him before his startled companions could raise a finger on his behalf.

The shikari was a little stunned by the tiger's onslaught; he recovered consciousness, however, in a few minutes, when he found himself lying on the tiger's back and in full sail towards the heart of the jungle. Fortunately, he was not seriously hurt, as the tiger had gripped him by the arm just above the elbow. There he lay quite helpless; what was he to do? Any movement on his part might have made his condition far worse; so he lay perfectly quiet, and shut his eyes as if he were dead. Perhaps he meditated on the happy home he had left behind—what his wife and children would feel when his comrades broke the news. Soon, however, the tiger arrived at his den, which was no more than a hollow scooped in the sand at the foot of a large tree. There the tiger deposited him and covered him over loosely with some sand. Luckily for him his face was uppermost when he fell, otherwise he would have had no other alternative between death by suffocation and death from the tiger if he had dared to move. As it was, he could manage to breathe gently, and even to have an occasional glimpse under his eyelids. After this operation of partial burial, the tiger ran ahead a few yards, but returned instantly as if he had some misgivings in his mind. Seeing, however, all safe, he bounded forth, but again returned to make assurance doubly sure. He kept up this method of self-persuasion for a few times, till, feeling quite certain about the matter, he finally went away on his mission. After waiting a few minutes to see that the tiger had really gone, our shikari sprang up and climbed the tree just over the den, and hid himself well among the leaves. He had not long to wait for the denouement, for the tiger soon returned, accompanied by a tigress and a couple of cubs (like a generous and exemplary husband and father, the tiger evidently scorned to eat on the sly). They came along with many a joyful cat-like gambol in anticipation of the great feast, and found the den—empty! Such a lamentation over the lost dinner then arose as was never heard before in the whole animal kingdom; in fact, the tigers persisted so long in their piteous cries, that our shikari began to have some doubts as to the righteousness of defrauding the poor creatures of their hard earned wages; but he was prevented from offering himself to them in a moment of misguided magnanimity by the thought of his own wife and children, whose claim upon him was evidently higher. At any rate, he stuck in the tree all night, as it was too risky to venture out in the ensuing darkness; then next morning, when the coast was clear, he fled home to tell me these undoubted facts.

How the Ancients Cook.—At a very early period the Orientals were familiar with a kind of pastry, a mixture of flour, oil and honey, and for centuries pastry making went no further, even among the nations in the south of Europe, says the *Gentleman's Magazine*. But in the beginning of the Middle Ages a change began to take place in the method of mixing the ingredients, and some other substances were brought into use. Butter, eggs and salt found their way into pastry making, and the result was a manifest improvement. Paste next came to be used as an inclosure for meat, seasoned with spices, &c.

Afterward it went further, the next use being for the inclosure of creams, fruit, preserves, etc., and later still it began to take the many fanciful shapes in which it has since been commonly found. In the early stages of English cookery the pastry cases were called *coffins*, or "coffines," and were made in

various sizes from "gret coffines with low liddes" for the "tartes of flesche," to the "small coffines" for tartolletes of "fische or flesches," mixed with "stuf of boylled figges ground and good powdure and spices."

Petruchio, in "The Taming of the Shrew," it may here be noted, calls a lit le cap a "custard coffin." These coffines correspond with the "vol-au-vent" of to-day. The art of making very light pastry, such as puff paste, is probably a modern one, but pastry of several kinds was probably used. For meat pastry butter was dissolved in boiling water, and worked into a soft mass with fine flour. As it cooled it would set in any form desired. Another paste of a flaky kind was made very much as at present, while still another kind, called *nam pufi*, was made of fine flour and the yolk of egg, no water at all being used. This was for the finer kinds of confectionery.

An Auction for Wives. From the earliest settlement of the colonies there has always been a defect in the distribution of women in this country. It is a historical fact that, while one section has always suffered from an embarrassment of riches, another has pined in needless privation. At the outset of American colonization the wilderness was hungry for men to till it, and thousands of the idle laborers of London and Bristol poured into the new El Dorado.

Robert Beverly, in his "History of Virginia," published in 1702 and 1722, says: "Those that went over to that country first were chiefly single men, who had not the encumbrance of wives and children in England; and, if they had, they did not expose them to the fatigue and hazard of so long a voyage until they saw how it would fare with themselves. Hence it came to pass that when they were settled down there in a comfortable way of supporting a family, they grew sensible of the misfortune of wives, and such as had left wives in England sent for them, but the single men were put to their shifts."

"Under this difficulty they had no hopes but that the plenty in which they lived might invite modest women of small fortunes to go over thither from England. However, they would not receive any but such as could carry sufficient certificate of their modesty and good behavior. Those, if they were but moderately qualified in all other respects, might depend upon marrying well in those days without any fortune. Nay, the first planters were so far from expecting money with a woman that it was a common thing for them to buy a deserving wife that carried good testimonials of her character, at the price of £100, and make themselves believe they had a bargain."

In one year Sir Edwin provided a passage for 1,261 new emigrants. Among those were 90 agreeable young women, poor but respectable, to furnish wives to the colonists. This new commodity was transported at the expense of the colony, and sold to the young planters, and the following year another consignment was made of 60 young maids of virtuous education, young, handsome and well recommended. A wife in the first lot sold generally for 100 pounds of tobacco, but as the value of the new article became known in the market the price rose, and a wife would bring 150 pounds of tobacco. A debt for a wife was of a higher dignity than other debts and to be paid first."

In a letter still in existence, dated London, August 21, 1681, and directed to a worthy colonist, of that settlement, the writer says: "We send you in the ship one widow and 11 maids for wives for the people of Virginia. There hath been especial care had in the choice of them, for there hath not one of them been received but upon good recommendations."

"In case they cannot be presently married we desire that they may be put with several householders that have wives." But the writer of this epistle had little reason to fear that any of the "maidens faire" would be left over. The archives of Virginia prove that these first cargoes of young ladies were put at auction beneath the green trees of Jamestown, where probably the most anxious and interested crowd of auction habitués ever known in the history of the world were gathered, and sold for 120 pounds of leaf tobacco each, and it was ordered that this debt should have precedence of all others. The solitary "one widow" went along with the others, for they could not be particular in those days. The minister of the colony no doubt had a busy time that day. He did not mention any fees, nor did the bridegrooms think of tendering any. All was joy and gladness.

There exists in the United States to-day the same defective distribution of women as existed in the colonies 278 years ago. Indeed, it is an economical as well as a social defect, that the distribution of women in the country is so imperfect that, while Massachusetts has 80,000 more women than men, and while in every city and hamlet from the Atlantic to the Mississippi spinsters bloom and fade unplucked by the reverent hand of eager youth, we frequently hear of a lonely bachelor in the far west addressing a letter to the United States Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island, New York, begging him to exercise his taste and discrimination, and, when his eyes fall upon a desirable young woman who wants a husband, to forward her to him at his cost and risk, provided she does not object.

The fact that reasonably eligible bachelors in the interior of the country should find it necessary to send to an Eastern port for wives points out a deplorable fault in the contemporary social state. To correct this fault in distribution is a problem which has received the profound attention of our social economists from the foundation of our country.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean*



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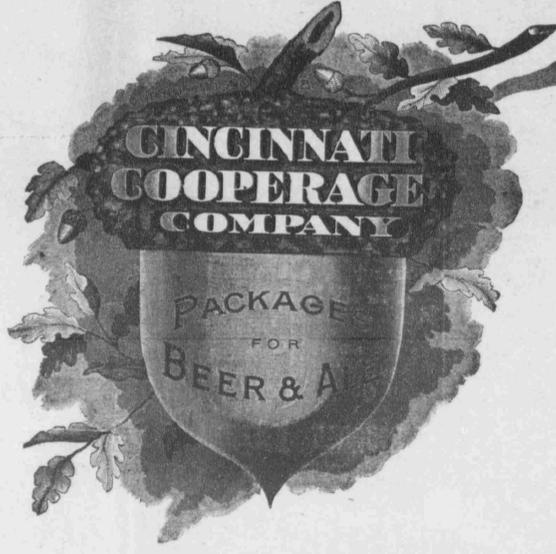


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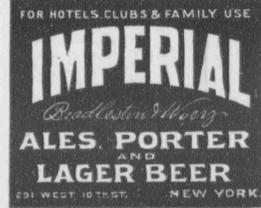
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