

out for a beggarly week or so on such a magnificent specimen. Why, Rajah was as good as real estate or Government bonds. As for selling him, ten thousand wouldn't be a temptation. Would the gentlemen just step around to the stable?

It was then I began to put up the odds on Pinckney. I got a wink from them black eyes of his, and there was the very devil an' all in 'em, with his face as straight as a crowbar.

"Certainly," says he, "we'll be happy to meet Rajah."

They had him moored to one of the floor-beams with an ox-chain around his nigh hind foot. He wasn't as big as all out doors, nor he wasn't any vest-pocket edition either. As elephants go, he wouldn't have made the welter-weight class by about a ton. He was what I'd call just a handy size, about two bureaus high by one wide. His iv'ry stoop rails had been sawed off close to his jaw, so he didn't look any more wicked than a foldin'-bed. And his eyes didn't have that shifty wait-till-I-get-loose look they generally does. They were kind of soft, widowy, oh-me-poor-cheild eyes.

"He is sad, very sad, about all this," says one of the real gents. "Know? Rajah knows almost as much as we do, sir."

Pinckney took his word for it. "I think I shall accommodate you with that loan," says he. "Come into the hotel."

Say, I didn't think you could gold-brick Pinckney as easy as that. One of the guys wrote out a receipt and Pinckney shoved it into his pocket, handin' over a wad of yellow-backs. They didn't lose any time about headin' southeast, those two in the ulsterets. Then we goes back to have another look at Rajah.

"It's a wonderful thing, professor, this pride of possession," says Pinckney. "Only a few persons in the world own elephants. I am one of them. Even though it is only for a week, and he is miles away, I shall feel that I own Rajah, and it will make me glad."

Then he winks, so I knows he's just bein' gay. But Rajah didn't seem so gladsome. He was rockin' his head back and forth, and just as we gets there out rolls a big tear, about a tumblerful.

"Can't we do something to chirk him up a bit?" says I. "He seems to take it hard, being hung up on a ticket."

"There's something the matter with this elephant," says Pinckney, taking a front view of him. "He's in pain. See if you can't find a veterinary, professor."

Yes, they said there was a horse-doctor knockin' around the county somewhere. He worked in the shingle-mill by spells, and then again in the chair-factory, or did odd jobs. A blond-haired native turned up who was sure the Doc had gone hog-killin' up to the corners. So I goes back to the stable.

"I've found out," says Pinckney. "It's toothache. He showed me. Open up, Rajah, and let the professor see. Up, up!"

Rajah was accommodatin'. He unbinged the top half of his face to give me a private view. We used a box of matches locating that punky grinder. There was a hole in it big enough to drop a pool-ball into. Talk about your chamber of horrors! Think what it must be to be as big as that and feel bad all over.

"I never worked in an open-all-night painless shop," says I, "but I think I could do something for that if I could tap a drug store."

"Good," says Pinckney. "We passed one down the road."

They kept grindstones and stove-polish and dress-patterns there too, but they had a row of bottles in one corner.

"Gimme a roll of cotton-battin' an' a quart of oil of cloves," says I to the man.

He grinned and ripped a little ten-cent bottle of toothache drops off a card. "It may feel that way, but you'll find this plenty," says he.

"You get busy with my order," says I. "This ain't my ache, it's Rajah's, and Rajah's an elephant."

"Sho!" says he, and hands over all he had in stock. I went back on the jump. We made a wad

half as big as your head, soaked it in the clove-oil and ramm'd it down with a nail-hammer. It was the *fromage*, all right. And say! Ever see an elephant grin and look tickled and try to say thank you? The way he talked deaf and dumb with his trunk and shook hands with us and patted us on the back was almost as human as the way a man acts when the jury brings in "Not guilty." Inside of three minutes Rajah was that kinky he tried to do a double-shuffle and nearly wrecked the barn. It made us feel good too, and we stood around there and threw bouquets at ourselves for what we'd done.

Then the cook came out and wanted to know should she keep right on boiling them eggs or take 'em off; so we remembers about breakfast. Callin' for a new deal on the eggs, we sent out word for 'em to fix up a tub of hot mash for Rajah and told the landlord to give our friend the best in the stable.

Rajah was fetchin' the bottom of the tub when we went out to say good-by. He stretched his trunk out after us as we went through the door. We'd climbed into the car and was just gettin' under way when we hears things smash, and looks back to see Rajah, with a section of the stable floor draggin' behind, coming after us on the gallop.

"Beat it!" says I to Goggles, and he was reachin' for the speed lever, when he sees a town constable, with a tin badge like a stove-lid, pull a brass watch on us.

"What's the limit?" shouts Pinckney. "Ten an hour or ten dollars," says he.

"Here's your ten and costs," says Pinckney,

Made me feel like a pair of yellow shoes at a dance, but Pinckney seemed to think there was something funny about it. "And over the hills and far away the happy Princess followed him," as Tennyson puts it," says he.

"Tennyson was dead onto his job," says I. "But when do we annex the steam calliope and the boys in red coats with banners? We ought to have the rest of the grand forenoon parade, or else shake Rajah."

"Oh, perhaps we can find quarters for him in the next town, where he hasn't disgraced himself," says Pinckney.

Pinckney hadn't counted on the telephone, though. A posse with shot-guns and bench-war-rants met us a mile out from the next place and shoood us away. They'd heard that Rajah was a man-killer and they had brought along a pound of arsenic to feed him. After they'd been coaxed from behind their barricade, though, and had seen what a gentle, confidin' beast Rajah really was, they compromised by letting us take a road that led into the next county.

"This is gettin' sultry," says I as we goes on the side-track.

"I am enjoying it," says Pinckney. "Now let's have some road work."

Say, you ought to have seen that procession. First comes me and Pinckney, in running gear; then Rajah, hoofing along at our heels, as joyous as a chowder party; and after him Goggles, with the benzine wagon. Seems to me I've heard yarns about how grateful dumb beasts could be to folks that had done 'em a good turn, but Rajah's act made them tales seem like sarsaparilla ads. He was chock full of gratitude. He was nutty over it. Seemed like he couldn't think of anything else but that wholesale toothache of his and how he'd got shut of it. He just adopted us on the spot. Whenever we stopped he'd hang around and look us over, kind of admirin', and we couldn't move a step but he was there, flappin' his big ears and swingin' his trunk, just as though he was sayin': "Whoope-e-e, me fellers! You're the real persimmons, you are."

We couldn't find a hotel where they'd take us in that night, so we had to bribe a farmer to let us use his spare bedrooms. We tethered Rajah to a big apple-tree just under our windows to keep him quiet, and let him browse on a Rose of Sharon bush. He only ripped off the rain pipe and trod a flower-bed as hard as a paved court.

At breakfast Pinckney remarks, sort of soothin': "We might as well enjoy Rajah's society while we have it. I suppose those circus men will be after him in a few days."

Then he remembers that receipt and pulls it out. I could see something was queer by the way he screwed up his mouth. He tosses the paper over to me. Say! do you know what them two ulsteret guys had done? They'd given Pinckney a bill of sale, makin' over all rights, privileges and goodwill entire.

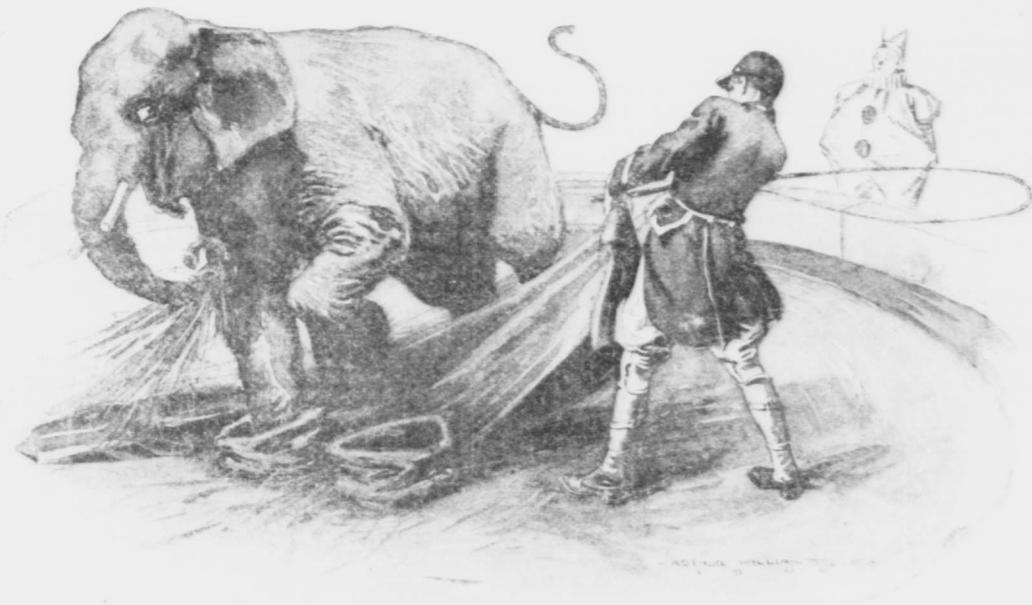
"You're it," says I.

"So it seems," says Pinckney. "But I hardly know whether I've got Rajah or Rajah's got me."

"If I owned something I didn't want," says I, "seems to me I'd sell it. There must be other come-ons."

"We will sell him," says Pinckney.

Well, we tried. For three or four days we didn't do anything else; and say, when I think of them days they seem like a nince-pie dream. We did our handsomest to make those Nutmeggers believe that they need'd Rajah in their business, that he would be handy to have around the place. But they couldn't see it. We argued with about fifty horny-handed plow-pushers, showin' 'em how Rajah could pull more'n a string of oxen a block long, and could be let out for stump-digging in summer, or as a snow-plough in winter. We tried livery-men, storckeeper, summer cottagers; but the nearest we came to making a sale was to a brewer who'd just built a new house with red and yellow fancy woodwork all over the front of it. He thought



Then Pinckney Pulls the Puckering String and Out Walks Old Rajah.

tossing him a sawbuck. "Go ahead, François."

We jumped into that village ordinance at a forty-mile an hour clip and would have had Rajah hull down in about two minutes, but Pinckney had to take one last look. The poor old mutt had quit after a few jumps. He had squat in the middle of the road, lifted up his trombone frontispiece and was bellowin' out his grief like a calf that has lost its mommer. Pinckney couldn't stand for that for a minute.

"I say now, we'll have to go back," says he. "That wail would haunt me for days if I didn't." So back we goes to Rajah, and he almost stands on his head, he's so glad to see us again.

"We'll just have to slip away without his knowing it next time," says Pinckney. "Perhaps he will get over his gratitude in an hour or so."

We unhitches Rajah from the stable floor and starts back for the hotel. The landlord met us half-way.

"Don't you bring that critter near my place ag'in!" shouts he. "Take him away before he tears the house down."

An' no jollyin' nor green money would change that hayseed's mind. The whole population was with him too. While we were jawin' about it, along comes the town marshal with some kind of injunction warnin' us to remove Rajah, the same bein' a menace to life and property.

There wa'n't nothing for it but to sneak. We moves out of that burg at half speed, with old Rajah paddin' close behind, his trunk restin' affectionately on the tonneau-back and a kind of satisfied right-to-home look in them little eyes of his.