

THE UNDERTAKERS

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

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"Anything," said the mugger, shutting his left eye again—"anything is possible that comes out of a boat three times the size of Mugger-Ghaut. My village is not a small one."

There was a whistle overhead on the bridge, and the Delhi mail slid across, all the carriages gleaming with light, and the shadows faithfully following across the river. It clanked away into the dark again; but the mugger and the jackal were so well used to it that they never turned their heads.

"Is that anything less wonderful than a boat three times the size of Mugger-Ghaut?" asked the bird, looking up.

"I saw that built, child. Stone by stone I saw the bridge pier rise, and when the men fell off (they were wondrous sure-footed for the most part—but when they fell) I was ready. After the first pier was made they never thought to look down the stream for the body to burn. There, again, I saved much trouble. There was nothing strange in the building of the bridge," said the mugger.

"But that which goes across, pulling the roofed carts! That is strange," the adjutant repeated.

"It is, past any doubt, a new breed of bullock. Some day it will not be able to keep its foothold yonder, and will fall as the men did. The old mugger will then be ready."

The jackal looked at the adjutant, and the adjutant looked at the jackal. If there was one thing they were more certain of than another, it was that the engine was everything in the wide world except a bullock. The jackal had watched it time and again from the aloo-hedges by the side of the line, and the adjutant had seen engines since the first engine ran in India. But the mugger had only looked up at the engine from below, where the brass dome seemed rather like a bullock's hump.

"M—yes, a new kind of bullock," the mugger repeated ponderously, to make

could hear him before I could see him—each sound that he made—creaking and puffing and rattling his gun, up and down the river. As surely as I had picked up one of his workmen, and thus saved great expense in wood for the burning, so surely would he come down to the ghaut and shout in a loud voice that he would hunt me, and rid the river of me—the mugger of Mugger-Ghaut! Me! Children, I have swam under the bottom of his boat for hour after hour, and heard him fire his gun at logs; and when I was well sure he was weary I have risen by his side and snapped my jaws in his face. When the bridge was finished he went away. All the English hunt in that fashion except when they are hunted."

"Who hunts the white-faces?" said the jackal, excitedly.

"No one now, but I have hunted them in my time."

"I remember a little of that hunting. I was young then," said the adjutant, clattering his beak significantly.

"I was well established here. My village was being built for the third time, as I remember, when my cousin the gajal brought me word of rich waters above Benares. At first I would not go, for my cousin, who is a fish-eater, does not always know the good from the bad; but I heard my people talking in the evenings, and what they said made me certain."

"And what did they say?" the jackal asked.

"They said enough to make me, the mugger of Mugger-Ghaut, leave water and take to my feet. I went by night, using the little streams as they served me; but it was the beginning of the hot weather and all streams were low. I crossed dusty roads; I went through tall grass; I climbed hills in the moonlight. Even rocks did I climb, children—consider this well. I crossed the tail of Sirhind the waterless, before I could find the set of the little rivers that flow Gungaward. I was a month's journey from my own people and the river that I knew. That was very marvelous!"

"What food by the way?" said the jackal, who kept his soul in his little stomach, and was not a bit impressed by the mugger's land travels.

"That which I could find—cousin," said the mugger slowly, dragging each word.

every self-respecting mugger and most wild beasts do when they can. Indeed, one of the worst terms of contempt along the river bed is "eater of fresh meat." It is about as bad as calling a friend a cannibal would be among human beings.

"That food was eaten thirty seasons ago," said the adjutant quietly. "If we talk for thirty seasons more it will never come back. Tell us now what happened when the good waters were reached after thy most wonderful land journey. If we listened to the howling of every jackal the business of the town would stop, as the saying is."

The mugger must have been grateful for the interruption, because he went on with a rush:

"By the Right and Left of Gunga, when I came there never did I see such waters."

"Were they better, then, than the big flood of last season?" said the jackal.

"Better! That flood was no more than comes every five years—a handful of drowned strangers, some chickens, and a dead bullock in muddy water with cross-currents. But, the season I think of, the river was low, smooth and even, and, as the gajal had warned me, the dead English came down touching each other. I got my girth in that season, my girth and my depth. From Agra, by Etawah and the broad waters by Allahabad—"

"Oh, the eddy that set under the walls of the fort at Allahabad!" said the adjutant. "They came in there like wildgeon to the reeds, and round and round they swung—thus!"

He went off into his horrible dance again, while the jackal looked on enviously. He naturally could not remember the year of the mutiny they were talking about. The mugger continued:

"Yes by Allahabad, one lay still in the slack water and let twenty go by to pick one; and, above all, the English were not cumbered with jewelry and nose rings and anklets as my women are nowadays. To delight in ornaments is to end with a rope for necklace, as the saying is. All the muggers of all the rivers grew fat then but it was my fate to be fatter than them all. The news was that the English were being hunted into the rivers, and by the Right and Left of Gunga we believed it was true. So far as I went south I believed it to be true, and I went down stream beyond Monghyr and the tombs that look over the river."

"I know that place," said the adjutant. "Since those days Monghyr is a lost city. Very few live there now."

"Thereafter I worked upstream very slowly and lazily, and a little above Monghyr there came down a boatful of white faces—alive! They were, as I remember, women, lying under a cloth spread over sticks, and crying aloud. There was never a gun fired at us watchers of the fords in those days. All the guns were busy elsewhere. We could hear them day and night inland, coming and going as the wind shifted. I rose up full before the boat, because I had never seen white faces alive, though I knew them well—otherwise. A naked white child kneeled by the side of the boat, and, stooping over, he must needs try to trail his hands in the river. It is a pretty thing to see how a child loves running water. I had fed that day, but there was a little unfilled space within me. Still, it was for sport and not for food that I rose at the child's hands. They were so clear a mark that I did not even look when I closed; and they were so small that though my jaws rang true—I am sure of that—the child drew them up swiftly unhurt. They must have passed between tooth and tooth—those small white hands. I should have caught him crosswise at the elbows, but, as I said, it was only for sport and desire to see new things that I rose at all. They cried out one after another in the boat, and presently I rose again to watch them. The boat was too heavy to push over. They were only women, but he who trusts a woman will walk on duckweed in a pool, as the saying is; and by the Right and Left of Gunga that is truth!"

"Once a woman gave me some dried skin from a fish," said the jackal. "I had hoped to get her baby, but horse food is better than the kick of a horse, as the saying is. What did thy woman do?"

"She fired at me with a short gun of a kind I have never seen before or since. Five times, one after another" (the mugger must have met with an old-fashioned revolver); "and I stayed open-mouthed and gaping, my head in the smoke. Never did I see such a thing. Five times, as swiftly as I wave my tail—thus!"

The jackal, who had been growing more and more interested in the story, had just time to leap back as the tail swung by like a scythe.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

Natural Once More.

Cumso—Jaysmith is himself again. Fangle—What do you mean? Cumso—You know a relative left him \$10,000 a few months ago? Fangle—Yes.

Cumso—It's all gone. He struck me for a fever this morning, just as he used to in the good old times.—Town Topics.

Signs of Defeat.

Corn—So you are sure her husband had the best of the argument? Did she tell you so?

Madge—No; but I heard her say he was a mean, hateful thing, as she went out of the room and slammed the door.—Puck.

EXPOSITION ECHOES.

Notes of the Great Fair Being Held in Atlanta.

The Show Is a Great Financial and Artistic Success—Variety in the Scenes and Attractions—Features Not to Be Overlooked.

Special Atlanta Letter.

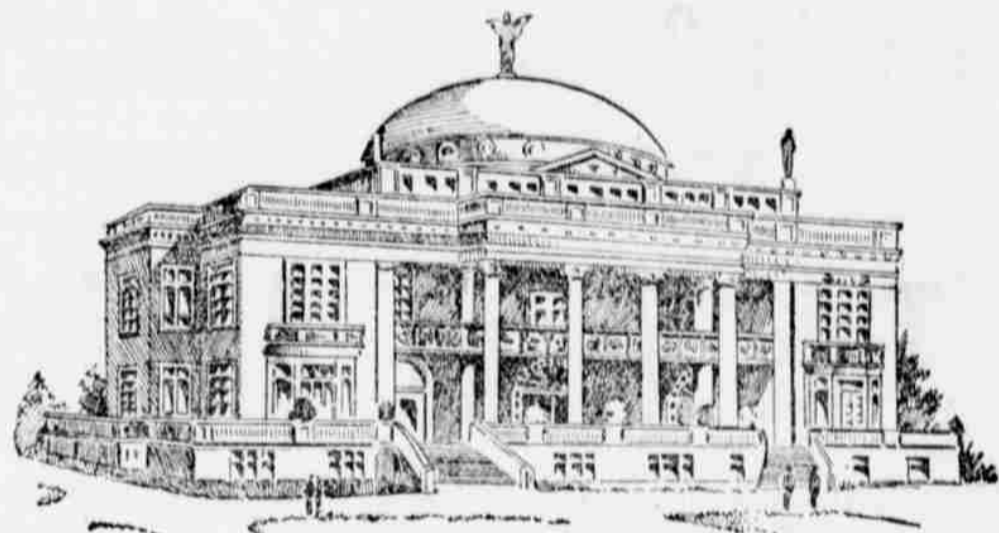


THE ATLANTA exposition is now in the full tide of success. In spite of the fact that for some time after its gates were opened the exhibition was incomplete in many of its attractions, it has up to the present time paid expenses. The attendance during

September, notwithstanding the severely hot weather, was larger than had been expected, and has since been steadily on the increase. Large excursion parties from the surrounding states have become quite the fashion. One day, not long since, several thousand Tennesseans passed through the exposition turnstiles. Large parties of journalists have made themselves familiar with the principal attractions. The last week of October, including the first days of November, Atlanta welcomed within her gates 500 newspaper men. Three of the largest state press organizations in the country arrived at

high names, when eyes are blinded with glares and glitters, when even the poor brain becomes soft because the legs are tired and the arms are weary and the stomach is jaded with beautiful foods and bad hours, the soft, smooth, oily rogue of society glides around in high carnival. One invitation to a swell function, and the rogue's career is easy; one introduction, and his snare is set.

If there is any one thing that the promoters of the fair pride themselves upon, it is the variety in its scenes and attractions. This is found in plenty among smaller buildings erected by states and corporations, such as the handsome Knickerbocker mansion, of New York state; the Longfellow home, of Massachusetts; the superb villa, of Illinois; the quaint old Catholic mission, of California; the queer looking barracks of Alabama; the Cozy bungalow, of Costa Rica; the giant log cabin, of the ercole kitchen; the pretty Renaissance, of the women's annex; the wonderful plant pyramid, of Florida; the railway sheds or stables, in which the iron horses stand upon exhibition; the campanile, the graceful music stand, where Gilmore's band pours forth its flood of melody every day; the Mexican village, with its interesting reproduction of Aztec, Spanish and Saracen types of construction; the Japanese and Chinese villages, which transport Tokio and Canton to the Gate City of the South, and the Indian village and Dahomey village, where savage Africa confronts savage America in equal ingenuity and dirt. Here and there, in rhythmic undulations, winds the main road, one-half



THE WOMAN'S BUILDING.

the same hour. The editors came from Missouri, Illinois and Arkansas. Said one of the editors: "When we entered the grounds what we saw astonished us. We looked in amazement for several minutes from the terrace near the auditorium upon the beautiful buildings and the grand panorama that was before us. If we were going to have an exposition in our state we would have the exposition here as our model." Quite a number of Chicago business men, together with the First regiment and a brass band, are on the eve of invading the great fair.

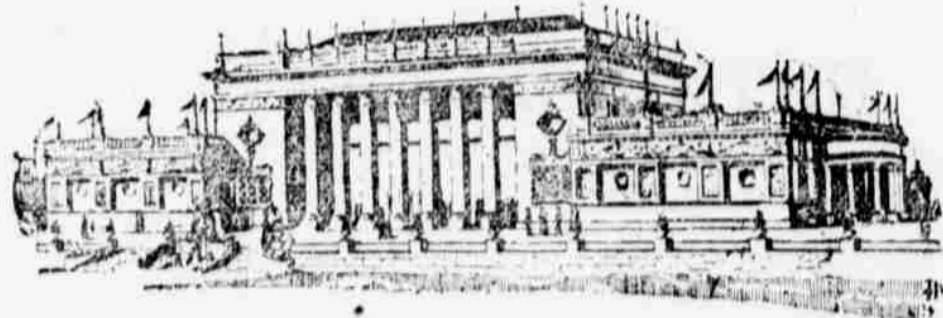
The success of the exposition in the matter of attendance comes from the tremendous attractiveness of that enterprise. Nothing could be imagined more complete and harmonious than this show of the great cotton states of the south. The reduced rates of travel on the railways have also contributed largely in the direction, though not going nearly so far as the cordial hospitality of the Atlanta hosts. The action of the managers in declining to open the exhibition grounds on Sunday has given widespread satisfaction throughout the south, where reverence for the Sabbath has not yet given place to the loose ideas which prevail in some other parts of the country.

But a word of caution is not out of order. The exhibit of rascals and im-

macadamized, as if to show the modern age, and one-half corduroy, that is to say, composed of a solid roadway of heavy pine planks, as if to represent the beginning of the century. The clever artist of the exposition so arranged road and meadow, hill and building, that from every point along the thoroughfare are two or three long vistas, each different from the rest, and yet each of the greatest attractiveness.

Devotees at the Napoleonic shrine will find some interesting mementos of their idol in the Virginia Colonial case. These relics are genuine, having been inherited by the exhibitor from Mons. Pascal Schisano, to whom they were given by Charles de Montholon, consul at Richmond, Va., who had received them from his father, Marquis de Montholon, and from Gen. Bertrand, both devoted friends of the emperor. Minnesota, however, has the most valuable Napoleonic relic at the fair; it is an exhibition in a small case in the Decorative art room, and is a small iron chest, with a curious lock, in which Napoleon carried his private papers when on his campaigns. Other interesting things connected with the French revolution are also to be seen in this exhibit.

In the Lucy Cobb room, Woman's building, are three old prints, date,



FINE ARTS BUILDING.

posters in connection with the Atlanta exposition is as rich and varied as it has been at other great fairs, and the visitor might do worse than look to his purse strings. It is not the fakirs of the Midway who are to be feared, not those who sell pure gold badges for a quarter of a dollar, who lure you into cheap shows or bad dining halls, not even those who pick your pockets in dense crowds or sandbag you in dark alleys. These are open-hearted, honest rogues whose designs may be anticipated and whose deeds may be averted by a keen eye and a stout cane. The dangerous rascals are those who shake your hand.

The peering of fraud thrives on crowds and vanity. There is no opportunity at such times as these to analyze society. Everybody is on the rush, seeking invitations, parting their hair in the middle, wearing their best gowns and brightest jewels, spending money with careless grace, holding their heads as high as they can, in fine, being of the world worldly and striving for distinction in cosmopolitan society.

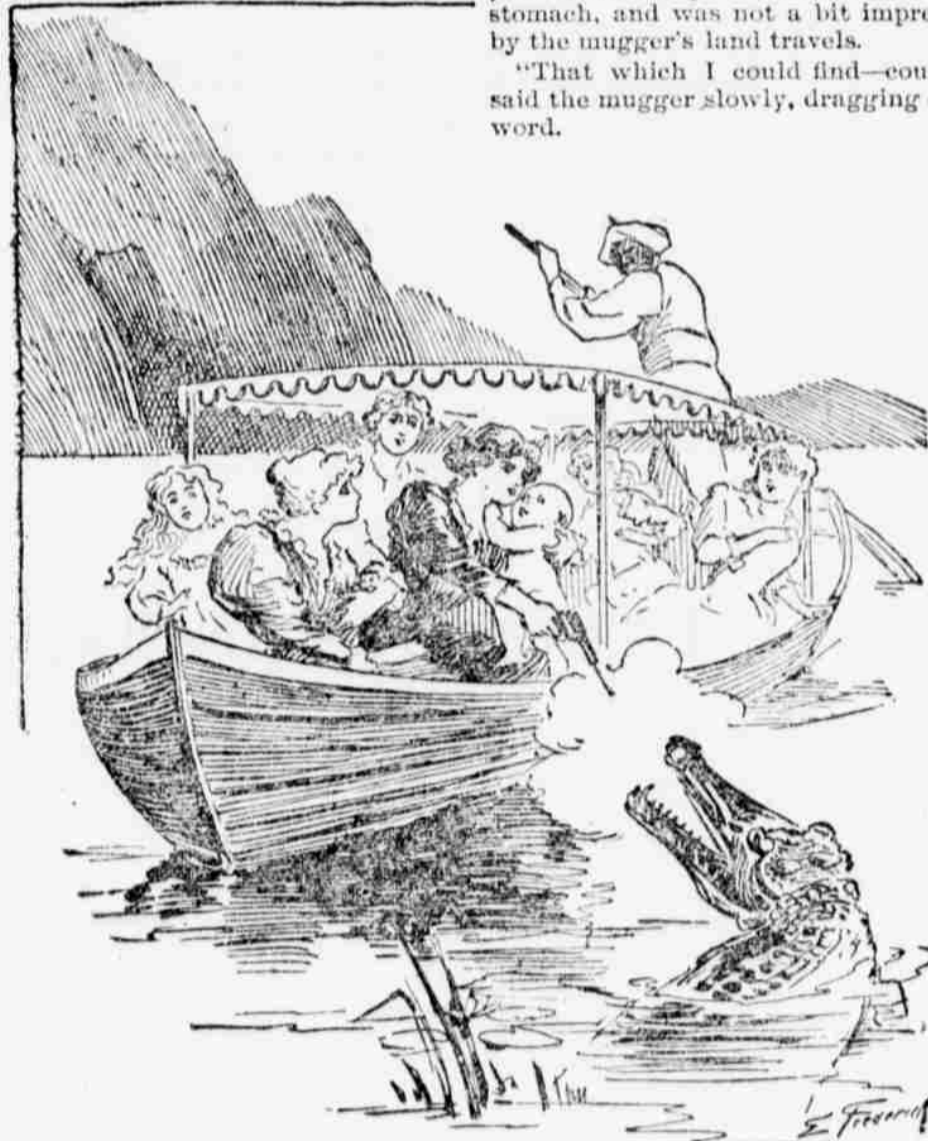
In this turmoil and passion, when heads are turned with the thunder of

1601, one of the Vatican library, one of the Ducal palace, Venice, and the third of the garden of the Tuileries, printed for Carrington Bowles, St. Paul's church yard, London, the artist's name, Mareschi. The lucky owner of these rare prints bought them only a few years ago for \$1.50.

The cradle in which Jefferson was rocked is exhibited in the Forestry building. It is not like that of Jefferson Davis, in the Confederate hall. In the Louisiana case, Colonial room, no one should fail to note the large repousse silver pitcher, bearing the Campbell coat of arms, and which once belonged to the duke of Argyll and descended in the female line to the present possessor, Mrs. Story, of New Orleans.

There is no doubt that the exposition is destined to exert a most potential influence in obliterating some of the prejudices which have operated to the disadvantage of the south, and that it will promote that spirit of national unity which must constitute so largely the butress of our life and security.

H. C. L.



"SHE FIRED AT ME WITH A SHORT GUN."

himself quite sure in his own mind; and "Certainly it is a bullock," said the jackal.

"And again it might be—" began the mugger, pettishly.

"Certainly—most certainly," said the jackal, without waiting for the other to finish.

"What?" said the mugger, angrily, for he could feel that the others knew more than he did. "What might it be? I never finished my words. You said it was a bullock."

"It is anything the Protector of the Poor pleases. I am his servant—not the servant of the thing that crosses the river."

"Whatever it is, it is white-faced work," said the adjutant. "And, for my own part, I would not choose a piece so near to it to lie out upon as this bur is."

"You do not know the English as I do," said the mugger. "There was a white-face here when the bridge was built, and he would take a boat in the evenings and shuffle with his feet on the bottom-boards, and whisper: 'Is he here? Is he there? Get me my gun.' I

Now you do not call a man a cousin in India unless you think you can establish some kind of blood relationship, and as it is only in old fairy tales that the mugger ever marries a jackal, the jackal knew for what reason he had been suddenly lifted into the mugger's family circle. If they had been alone he would not have cared, but the adjutant's eyes twinkled with mirth at the ugly jest.

"Assuredly, father, I might have known," said the jackal. A mugger does not care to be called a father of jackals, and the mugger of Mugger-Ghaut said as much—and a good deal more which there is no use in repeating here.

"The Protector of the Poor has claimed kinship. How can I remember the precise degree? Moreover, we eat the same food. He has said it," was the jackal's reply.

That made matters rather worse, for what the jackal hinted at was that the mugger must have eaten his food on that land march fresh, and fresh every day, instead of keeping it by him till it was in a fit and proper condition, as