

MY WIFE RIDES THE ELEPHANT!

By O. O. McINTYRE

It was Ray Long, the magazine editor, who thought up the bright idea. Dexter Fellows, the polysyllabic press purveyor, aided and abetted. And so our wives rode the elephants in the Madison Square circus parade.

Great is the circus, but you never experience the real thrill until you sit in a box and see your wife reclining languorously high up in the houba, robed magically as an Egyptian queen.

There was a little trepidation on my part when we met Dex at the entrance, waiting to escort our wives to that enchanted spot where tired horses are suddenly transformed to plumed romantic steeds; where seedy canvasmen become cavalier and knights, and dowdy women become great ladies.

I have heard Courtney Ryley Cooper spin elephant eccentricities with Achmed Abdullah until there was nothing left in the bottle. An elephant is an elephant—a big, kindly beast—until some trivial thing happens on the side lines, and he goes rampaging and then he doesn't give a hoot what lady is riding on his back.

But Long, who has ridden a bicycle, and on top of a haystack in Indiana, reassured me. So they tripped gaily away—leaving us to carry their furs and handbags. When full grown men stroll through a circus arena with a fur-piece on one arm and a gaudy handbag in the other, it is small wonder little children cry: "O, look, Mama, the clowns!"

There was quite a long wait. It takes some time for ladies to dress under ordinary circumstances, but to dress to ride an elephant is longer. It seemed ages. There were robes to be adjusted, high funnel heads to be arranged and then the climb up the ladder to the houba.

"Maybe we better not let them ride, after all," I ventured. And added: "You know how elephants are!"

Long, who had been silently spoiling a fresh manure, replied: "Perhaps you're right. Wonder what they're doing now?" And in unison we got up and began to move toward the arena entrance. But it was too late!

The Beau Brummel ringmaster in derby hat, red vest, riding pants and elegant patent leather boots had popped out and blown the whistle. A drum major with his silver baton and high fur cap stepped into place, goose-stepped elegantly, and with a mighty crescendo the

Nobody heard up except an usher who yelled: "Sit down. Take off your hats."

Following the band, came the drove of camels who stalked superciliously, ready to curl a scornful lip at the sight of a lorgnette.

Then the "blood sweating behe-

used to be labelled "freaks" but are now "The Strange People." The lion-faced boy was there gazing mournfully through his whiskers. The "Blue Man," perhaps father of the blue laws, Ko-Ko, the bird girl, with real feathers. The fat lady, worrying lest the heat decrease her avordupois.

The clumsily stepping midgets trying pathetically to march in time. The giants! The lady with glittering smiles who winds serpents around her neck. The African bushmen and the Dyack head-hunters. The Pin Heads—man and wife. But not called that because they are man and wife. Zip, the What Is It!

Then—great red wagons with brilliant gilded ornaments. The lady and the tiger in the mammoth cage. The lady reading Zippy Stories while the tiger blissfully slept.

Here comes the eiy-funts!" boomed a leather lunged voice through a megaphone.

No Sign of Friend Wife.

And surely enough, they were coming—a herd of them with toenails as neatly whitewashed as a back fence in the spring. But no one was riding them. They just lumbered along, swinging their trunks from side to side.

Following them came a herd of baby elephants and they, too, were unoccupied.

Well, if your wife ever went out to ride an elephant and then when the elephants came and she wasn't riding, you'll know exactly what we thought.

Flabbergasted, is the word. But hold! Here comes another band! It is playing a lively tune. Out came two elephants in single file, fully caparisoned with gorgeously trimmed houbas.

"There's my wife!" I shouted, and upset a bottle of pop in a lady's lap in the next box.

There she was in all her blonde loveliness—her cheeks flaming prettily with excitement. No queen in the story books ever looked so majestic. As the houba swung from side to side she swung gracefully with it.

Ripples of applause floated across the arena. I got up and

shouted again: "That's my wife!" I began pounding Long on the back and it was a good thing, for he had tried to swallow three peanuts whole. He was shouting, too.

Slowly they moved about the vast circle.

"What if they should stampede?" whispered Long. But such was my intoxication of the moment I merely replied, "Don't be silly; I could stop any elephant living." And I believe I could.

Once in a Lifetime.

Oh, yes, his wife, too, looked lovely and gorgeous, but I only gave her a passing glance. For only once in a lifetime do you get to see your own wife riding an elephant.

As they passed our station they airily blew us a kiss—just as magnificent queens might to their loyal subjects in the coronation parade.

Dex Fellows came strolling up, puffing at the stub end of his inevitable cigar.

"The hit of the parade," he said—always the press agent. "But 'Pale? Why we weren't frightened a bit," we lied. And then we added, "Anyone can ride an elephant."

Great indeed is the circus. manifold are its wonders. But no flaming poster, as brilliant and chromatic as they are, can equal the real beauty of our wives sitting up in the houbas!

We wanted to take a flashlight picture of them. "Flashlight!" snorted Dex Fellows. "Why, don't you know that a flashlight will stampede the tamest herd of elephants?"

"Oh," we said—completely subdued.

The parade was over. The polar bears were performing. Gentlemen were hurling ladies through the air from trapeze to trapeze. Seals were balancing balls and beating cymbals. Whips were cracking over the heads of cowed lions.

And our wives came back to us. We babbled questions—seeking to learn of their great experience.

"Oh, it was interesting," they said, with a bored sort of nonchalance. Circus folk are that way—quite blasé!

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band began to play. The parade was moving.

"O, Mr. Fellows!" shouted Long in a frightened voice that trailed off into a whisper.

"Yoo, hoo! Oh Dexter!" I wailed. "We want our wives."

moth or holy writ" who grunted and sozzled around in his tank. Cages of lions—perhaps toothless—but roaring their defiance of civilization. The clown band playing magnificently out of tune.

Behind the clowns came what

Pola Negri's Strange Rival for Charlie Chaplin's Love

(Continued from Page One.)

went to the door leading to the street and saw the same mysterious guest of earlier in the evening.

Before he could make a move to prevent she lifted a bottle to her lips and drained its contents. Then with a little cry she slumped down on the floor of the vestibule like one dead.

This time the swiftest of the fleet of motor cars in the Chaplin garage speeded Marina Vega away from the mansion where she had twice briefly been an unbidden guest. At the hospital it was found she had swallowed enough of some mysterious poison to make her life for a time despaired of.

She is recovering from the effects of the poison dose, but it is thought to be a question whether she can be cured of the self-hypnotism which seems to have prompted her flight from Mexico and her invasion of the Chaplin home. Perhaps the deeply etched delusion that Charlie Chaplin is the fairy prince who should be her own particular hero could be erased from her mind if she could be sent to live for several years in some place where Chaplin's name is never mentioned and pictures of him are never seen.

Since it seems impossible to find such a place medical science will be forced to devise some other method of treating this unhappy girl's unusual case.

Psychologists see in the experience of this unhappy young Mexican girl now proof of the extraordinary influence which the movie may often exert on the human mind. Of course Marina Vega was all the more susceptible to it because she was at her most impressionable age and because she was living in a place where there was little or nothing to amuse except the occasional films.

Doubtless Charlie Chaplin is just as fondly enshrined in the love dreams of thousands of other girls—but ones who lack the courage to try throwing themselves at his feet as Marina did.

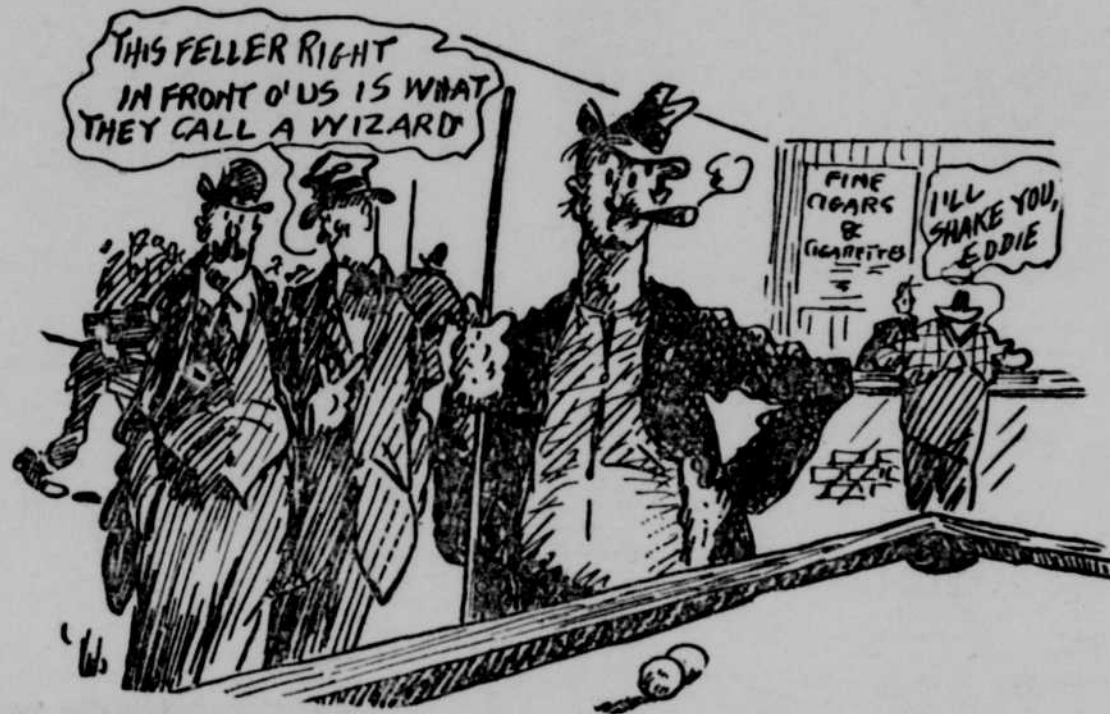
If this is so, then how many million more girlish hearts must such romantic personalities as Rodolph Valentino be the secret rulers of?

The total, if there were any way of computing it, could hardly fail to be one to stagger the imagination.

The island of Ceylon is the only known place in the world where the mineral thormalite is found. This metal is largely used in the manufacture of the mantles for incandescent gas lamps.

ABE MARTIN

On Topics o' th' Day



Ex-Banker Elmer Wilkins, Pool Wizard.

"Is it better t' be fairly efficient in several things than it is t' excel in some particular direction?" is t' be thrashed out by th' Apple Grove Debatin' society in th' near future. We doubt if this problem has been worryin' any considerable number o' people, but a little arguin' o'er it won't hurt nothin'. Since it seems like we have t' neglect ever'thing else if we want t' excel at somethin' we think it's best t' keep in th' ordinary class. We've known lots o' wizards, an' phenoms, an' humdingers, an' past masters, an' wonders, an' we can't say that they impressed us very favorably outside ther particular line. Th' best penman we ever knowed had never even heard o' Tony Pastor, an' he couldn't be trusted t' go after a can o' corn. Loafers soon git to excellin' at wood carvin' an' discussin' grave national questions. Phenomenal mathematicians are th' worst things. They jest positively refuse t' know anything but figgers. Unless they're in vaudeville they're o' no use to anybuddy. Marvelous planner players are much th' same. They eat in bed an' don't know one state from another. Great singers have t' be coddled an' humored an' fed by hand. They git married an' divorced an' married agin jest like

they wuz takin' a carpet sweeper out on approval, an' they don't care a thing about votin'. Unparalleled theatrical stars are in a distinct class by 'emselves. Applause an' press encomiums are th' only things they crave. Very often they don't see th' people they're talkin' to, an' would fall utterly at anything ordinary like bein' a tradesman, or a bricklayer, or a postmaster, or a senator, or liveryman. Genuine statesmen, when we used t' have 'em, used t' unbend occasionally. Some were peachy waiters, some were fair at chess, while others were very capable horsemen. Sometimes they dabbled in business with fair success. Alexander Hamilton, or Dan Webster, or Grover Cleveland, we've forgotten which, used t' be interested in a grocery that did right well. But as a rule great absorbed specialists are rarely known even t' ther immediate families, an' rarely look at circus parades, or fool with flowers, or guns, or motor-in'. It seems like it's impossible for a celebrated doctor t' know th' liver an' know anything else—what's goin' on in world affairs, or what show is at th' hall t'night, or which is th' best gas, or how t' collect what's comin' t' him. Maybe he'll drop a remark about takin' a vacation

eventually, some time while he's thumpin' our stomach, but he never does. Farmers are jest beginnin' t' git interested in economic questions, but nobuddy kin learn t' talk intelligently on anything like economics an' find time t' plow an' milk. We recall when Elmer Wilkins wuz an all around man. He owned a half interest in the O. K. livery barn, wuz president o' th' bank, city clerk, an' fairly handy with tools. He wuz nothin' wonderful, but he wuz doin' well. Then he started in t' master pool, an' finally let go his other holdin's an' started a shootin' gallery. Then he wuz constable one term. Now he's a night watchman an' a pool wizard with a wife in Iowa an' three daughters clerkin' in th' Monarch 5 an' 10.

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An electric railway in California operates a weed-burning device that is said to eliminate the hard work of hundreds of laborers with mattocks and hoes. The apparatus, using oil as fuel, is brought into contact with live steam. This system forms a gas, emitted under the car, which ignites and burns the weeds to the roots, destroying all seeds that are cast on the right of way.

Doings in the Realm of Science and Invention

The art of embalming became a regular profession which highly skilled men practiced in 450 B. C.

Carpets which are made on a paper mesh foundation of being manufactured in Germany, but they will stand neither beating nor much wear.

Prof. George Petit, famous French veterinary, has discovered a way to rejuvenate race horses, dogs and other animals by the same operation Prof. Voronoff uses to give vigor to men.

A wheelbarrow that climbs stairs is in use in Shanghai, China. It is worked by a series of wheels. The wheelbarrow often carries as much as 400 pounds up steps, see-sawing from wheel to wheel.

To determine how long it takes to "tire" a metal to the point where it gives way under repeated strains or shocks, a number of engineering associations have undertaken a comprehensive program of research to establish the endurance limits, or so-called "fatigue" of copper, brass, bronze and other metals.

General George O. Squier, the chief signal officer of the United States army, has invented a new universal alphabet, to take the place of the Morse code. The new alphabet, hailed as the greatest advance in the science of communication in many years, is 2.65 times faster than the international Morse code.

Among the most curious motors ever invented is one devised for delicate experiments in heat measurement. It is so sensitive that it begins to revolve the moment it is exposed to daylight, even when the sun is hidden, and in clear weather it will work all night, affected even by the radiant heat of moonlight.

According to Dr. Louis A. Bauer, a director of Carnegie Institute, Washington, D. C., the earth's magnetism is diminishing one-thousandth part each year. This loss of magnetism, he explained, would affect the magnetic needles of compasses and surveying instruments, but with no appreciable trace of error.

The largest safe in the world is being installed in the new Federal Reserve Bank building in Cleveland, Ohio. Weighing 500,000 pounds, the vault is 13 feet square, and has an all-round thickness of four feet of the toughest chromium steel. In case of an attempted robbery, the vault would stand against a heavy artillery fire for half an hour, as its steel protection is four times thicker than the armor plate of a battleship.