

# The Pelham Affair by Louis Tracy

**CHAPTER I.**  
**The "Agony" Column.**

The express from Paris was more crowded than usual that June evening when it drew up at the Continental arrival platform of Victoria station. Even the porters noticed the extra number of carriages and the density of their human freight.

"What's up, Tom?" inquired one of his nearest mates. "Is there another conference on?"

"P. and O. special from Marseilles," explained his better-informed friend. "Oh, is that it?" The speaker, an old soldier, wondered whether or not he would recognize any face from the land of Ind.

He did. Such is the strangeness of things. He, out of the hundreds brought there by duty, the one man among the millions of London who could set in motion forces which would wreck some lives and change the course of many others, was hailed by an alert, bronzed traveler leaning out through an open window.

"I say—are you free to look after my traps?" came the query.

"Yes, sir."

"Right. Grab that! I have two more bags here, and a couple of cabin trunks in the van."

"This was a suit case, with a label. The porter glanced at the address: 'Captain Arthur Pelham, Passenger from Bombay to London, per P. and O. S.S. Naldora.'"

"Well, that's rum—that's what it is!" he commented, while seizing the remaining portmanteaux. But he knew his job, and gave the necessary directions.

"You'll find me at the customers' barrier, sir. There's no hurry. It'll take 'em quarter of an hour or more to empty their luggage vans."

In a few minutes the two came together again in the midst of a crowd of laughing, joyous people, because few trains in the world bring together relatives and friends parted so long and so far as the weekly express which covers the last stage of the long journey from the east.



**You Don't Have to Tell Your Age**

By our system of fitting glasses, the age has nothing to do with the results we get.

**We correct DEFECTIVE VISION.**

All we need is **YOU!**

**BIFOCAL LENSES**

Distance and near vision in one lens. Lenses only **\$7.00**

The large shell spectacles or eye glasses for **DISTANCE or NEAR WORK**, only **\$6.00**

Same service in our So. Side Store 24th and N Sts. MA 0784

**Flitton Optical Co.**  
13th Floor 1st Nat'l Bk. JA 1953

**ADVERTISMENT.**

**SALTS FINE FOR ACHING KIDNEYS**

When Back Hurts Flush Your Kidneys as You Clean Your Bowels.

Most folks forget that the kidneys, like the bowels, sometimes get sluggish and clogged and need a flushing occasionally, else we have backache, severe headache, rheumatic twinges, torpid liver, acid stomach, sleeplessness and all sorts of bladder disorders.

You simply must keep your kidneys active and clean and the moment you feel an ache or pain in the kidney region begin drinking lots of water. Also get about four ounces of Jad salts from any good drug store here, take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine.

This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and is intended to flush clogged kidneys and help stimulate them to activity. It also helps neutralize the acids in the urine so they no longer irritate, thus helping to relieve bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everybody should take now and then to help keep their kidneys clean.

A well-known local druggist says he sells lots of Jad Salts to folks who believe in trying to correct kidney trouble while it is only trouble. By all means have your physician examine your kidneys at least twice a year.

**ADVERTISMENT.**

**ASPIRIN**

Say "Bayer"—Genuine!



**Cold's**

"Genuine Bayer Tablets of Aspirin" have been proved safe by millions and prescribed by physicians over twenty-three years for Colds and gripe misery. Handy boxes of twelve tablets cost only few cents at any drug store. Each package contains proven directions for Colds and tells how to prepare an Aspirin gargle for sore throat and tonsillitis.

Evidently Captain Pelham had none to welcome him in London, at any rate. He did not seem to pay heed to the fact that even his fellow-passengers left him alone at the moment.

"Be glad, sir," he said. "I 'appened ter see yer name on the tag, an' I thort I rekognized you the minute you looked abt 'o' the carriage. Still, you can't be Sir Arthur Pelham, Bart, but you're ortful like him, in some ways."

Pelham was applying a lighted match to the end of a fresh cigar. He hesitated a moment, but decided not to waste the match, so he was given an appreciable pause in which to collect his wits. Then he looked sharply at his unknown acquaintance.

"Where do you meet my cousin?" he demanded, with the tone of one who was surprised if not specially pleased by the discovery that he should be bracketed with Sir Arthur Pelham, Bart, the instant he set foot in London.

"I think we must both ha' bin hit in the quarries at Loos, sir, 'cause the first time I saw 'im 'e was lyin' there alongside me. Then they put 'im in a cot in the German field hospital. Fair knocked out, 'e was, an' 'e couldn't an' 'e kep' sayin' 'Vaquero, 'Matador' an' 'Solokante-neuf', as though answerin' to names in a roll-call. 'E was 'eep' watchin' eye for your trunks, sir. When you spots 'em I'll 'ave 'em on the bench. 'Pore gentlemen! 'E died at d'y light!"

"Went west, sir. At least I thort so. They took 'im an' another 'o' ficer 'o'f."

"You were mistaken. He is not dead but very much alive. And how on earth can you remember those foreign words?"

"That's the queer part of it, sir. That's w'y I said it was rum when I twigged you in the train. You know the papers 'ave wot they call an 'Agony' column, sir?"

"Yes."

"Well, I mikes a point o' gatherin' one o' 'em up every mornin' to look o'wer, when I thinks are a bit quiet, an' 'e blow me if I don't see them very words in a hadvertisement every two or three d'ys quite recent. 'Vaquero, 'Matador, 'Solokante-neuf'—but that last one in figures—each o' 'em a-snappin' at the others quite vicious-like. So, you see, sir, they was fresh in me mind when you turned up all the w'y from bloomin' old India. It was pretty 'ot at Colaba Point when you passed the battery, sir, that is, if you kem strike 'ome."

"Yes, I left Peshawar in the middle of May."

"My word! I was in All Musjid all 'ot 'ot weather 'an they grow'd 'ere if the glass touches 80! Excuse me, sir, but it's a fair treat ter meet anyone from the old show."

"By the way, those are my cabin-trunks, the two with the white bands."

The porter shouldered the smaller bags.

"Met me on the other side of the bench, sir. I'll 'ave you clear in a jiffy."

The customs formalities were slight. Young officers arriving from the far east may have an extra box of cheroots tucked away among their clothes but they are not the gentry for whom close watch is kept—a much closer watch than many people suspect, judging from the seemingly casual scrutiny given to strangers reaching British ports. Captain Pelham's luggage was soon stowed in a taxi, and the porter received a liberal tip. The traveler halted on the step—why, he never knew afterwards, though he often puzzled his brains to find a reason.

"What newspapers did those advertisements appear in?" he said.

The man told him.

"And what is your name?"

"Jenkins, sir. Corporal in the Fusiliers. Goin' to a hotel, sir?"

"I—yes—the Savoy."

Such was the manner of Arthur Pelham's return to the homeland after four years of war and three of foreign service. He neither dressed for dinner nor went out, but sat in the foyer, after a light meal, and tried to sum up this new England from the examples presented by the people who loitered or passed. Apparently, he was bored by the result, as he was in bed by 10 o'clock.

Next morning he called at the war office. After a half hour of departmental indifference he walked out a civilian, being one of the later shoots from the tree of empire which had to be lopped off by the economical axe.

More by way of saying something than with any hope of a favorable answer, he asked a man in the war office if there was any sort of job going on in East Africa.

"Not on your life, old bean," came the reply. "They're cutting down all along the line. A lot of our fellows are starting poultry farms, and some are growing apples in Nova Scotia. I hear well of the apples, and an' off there myself next month."

Eggs—and apples—strange substitutes for villainous saltpetre and its by-products! Pelham stroled past his army bankers' office, but did not call in. He had £40 in his pocket, and retiring gratuity of £1,200 was lodged to his credit. He was safe from starvation, therefore for a few years, but he disliked the notion of being at a loose end. He had neither profession nor hobby. He was well educated, and spoke French and Persian. His late colonel's "confidential report" had described him as a "born leader of men."

Here, in England, judging from newspaper statistics, he was one of two millions of unemployed. Now, given the conditions, what was a born leader of men to do?

The first step was obvious. He, too, must economize. He sought an estate agent, found a suite of furnished rooms in the Innesmore Mansions, off Tottenham Court road, took them for three months, and entered into possession at once. Then, having an hour to spare, he went to the newspaper office mentioned by the railway porter, and searched the files. Just six days earlier—the same issue announced that "Humorist" had won the derby—he found the latest announcement of personal interest in "the Agony Column." There were others, at intervals of a few days. Apparently, the series began about the middle of May. On the 17th appeared the following:

69—I am here. At present I neither visit nor write. You will comprehend. Announce rendezvous, date and hour this column.—MATADOR.

On the 21st came what is known in law as an intervenor.

69—Matador is a worm. Leave him to me. I'll crush him beneath my heel. But me you must see.—VAQUERO.

To this was appended a box number for correspondence.

May 24th produced two advertisements. A foreman printer, clearly with an eye to effect arranged them as follows:

VAQUERO—Nether/69 nor I fear you. To your desert, Jackall.—MATADOR.

MATADOR and VAQUERO—I deemed you dead. You soon will be.—69.

After an interval of five days one of the trio grew angry.

69—Beware! My patience is exhausted. Further silence is useless. As for Matador, I spit on him.—VAQUERO.

Then, last of all, on the day after the derby:

69—Vaquero and I have met. It was dangerous, but we unite in vengeance, unless—This is your final warning.—MATADOR.

Pelham bought copies of the newspaper, which were so bulky that he put out the advertisements and threw away the sheets. He was not aware

that the clerk who had attended to him was covertly interested. Meanwhile, he had been wondering what all this rhodomontade meant, since the railway porter's unsought statement definitely connected three queer people with Sir Arthur Pelham. It was almost provable that two were foreigners. The phrases they used, the disguised names they figured under, were un-English. If so, could it be possible that "69" was his cousin, his own namesake? He despised the man for good and sufficient reasons, but it was certainly a strange thing that a British baronet, who, with all his faults, had served his country with distinction during the war, should find it necessary to masquerade in such cryptic language in the advertising columns of a newspaper.

He was placing the little slips in his pocketbook when a mad notion obsessed him. Perhaps it would annoy and even frighten the triumvirate if someone else took a hand in the game. The joke would not cost much, and memories of bygone indignities spurred him to it. So, finding the requisite form on the counter where he stood, he wrote:

"I think we must both ha' bin hit in the quarries at Loos, sir, 'cause the first time I saw 'im 'e was lyin' there alongside me. Then they put 'im in a cot in the German field hospital. Fair knocked out, 'e was, an' 'e couldn't an' 'e kep' sayin' 'Vaquero, 'Matador' an' 'Solokante-neuf', as though answerin' to names in a roll-call. 'E was 'eep' watchin' eye for your trunks, sir. When you spots 'em I'll 'ave 'em on the bench. 'Pore gentlemen! 'E died at d'y light!"

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**Ill and cross last night—**

**DR. CALDWELL'S SYRUP PEPSIN**

*brought vigor by morning*

**How To Keep A Child Healthy**

A GENERATION ago parents thought that a sickness was a part of a child's life, but we know better now. The secret is in the food the mother allows the child to eat, and in watching that elimination occurs regularly two or three times a day. Mrs. J. Russell of 19,141 Havana Ave., Detroit, Mich., keeps her family of two young children in perfect health with Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, and Mrs. R. L. Smith of 519 Maple Ave., East Pittsburg, Pa., says her family of three children have never been sick a day since giving them Syrup Pepsin.

**A Substitute for Physics**

Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin is a scientific compound of Egyptian senna with pepsin and suitable aromatics. The formula is on every package. You will find you do not have to force children to take it, and it is much better for them than castor oil, calomel or coal-tar drugs like phenolphthalein even if covered with sugar or chocolate. Syrup Pepsin is mild and gentle in action and your child will have an easy passage without griping or strain. It does not contain

narcotics, and you can give it with absolute safety to an infant at the breast.

**"Magic" in a Teaspoonful**

Every store that sells medicines sells Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, and the cost is less than a cent a dose. Give half a teaspoonful to any ailing baby or child at night when you put it to bed and you will find a happy, laughing youngster in the morning. Take Syrup Pepsin yourself when constipated, and give it to any member of the family young or old, for any ailment due to constipation, such as biliousness, headache, lack of appetite, sleeplessness, bad breath, cankers, fever sores, indigestion, and to break up fevers and colds. Stop that first sneeze or sniffle and you will have a healthy winter.

If You Want to Try It Free Before Buying

"Syrup Pepsin," 516 Washington St., Monticello, Illinois.

Send a good laxative and would like to prove what you say about Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin by actual trial. Send me a free trial bottle. Address to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Not more than one free trial bottle to a family

**Serves All--Always Morning, Noon and Night!**

Home and Industry needs me!

I am their faithful servant, always—morning, noon and night; twenty-four hours, every day in the year.

I work on Sundays and don't recognize holidays.

To the Omaha Home, I bring warmth, conveniences and pleasure. I drive away drudgery.

To Omaha Industry I have brought better working conditions for labor; lifted many burdens of the workers, and operate great plants and factories.

I AM ELECTRICITY!

Without question Electricity is a great servant. Its past is brilliant. Its future looms even greater.

Electricity—rather the low power rates here—have attracted many industries to Omaha.

A city grows as its industries develop.

Figures show Omaha factories and plants are greatly increasing their output annually. THE CITY IS GROWING.

Omaha Is a Great Place In Which to Live!

**Nebraska Power Co.**

**The Omaha Bee: Wednesday, November 14, 1923**

69. MATADOR and VAQUERO—I am after you. Run, or you'll be tossed.—MULL.

He was somewhat taken aback when a clerk, not the one who had supplied the newspapers, demanded 10 shillings, together with his name and address.

"Is that the correct charge?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir. That is the minimum for two lines, with 5 shillings for each additional line."

Pelham hesitated, but paid, wrote his name and new address, and went out, resolving cheerfully to save something on a cheap luncheon; humor, it appeared, was expensive nowadays, if published at advertising rates. Meanwhile, the two clerks were in consultation.

"Isn't that one of the ads Scotland Yard is inquiring into?" said one.

"Yes. The other addresses are duds, I think, but this one strikes me as genuine," said his friend.

"What about it?"

"Oh, the Yard will see it in the morning and send someone along."

The first speaker thought it would be as well to ring up the criminal investigation department at once, but did not say so. He believed in minding his own business.

(Continued in The Morning Bee.)

**Today's Social Gaieties**

Mrs. J. E. Julver is entertaining at a buffet supper for Mrs. Horace Chapin of Batavia, N. Y.

Miss Beulah Sharp will entertain at a tea at her home Wednesday in honor of Mrs. Thomas D. Metcalfe.

Mrs. F. A. Nash, dinner for Mrs. E. J. McVann, guest of Mrs. Margaret Hynes.

Mrs. Frank Bender, bridge for Mrs. Horace Chapin of Batavia, N. Y., guest of Mrs. Earl Sterricker.

The Corinthian club first dinner dance of the season at the Masonic temple.

Mr. and Mrs. John Caldwell will entertain at dinner at their home.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dooley will entertain at dinner at their home in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Scott.

Mrs. Edward L. Burke will give a

**Collins-Wolcott.**

The marriage of Miss Virginia Wolcott of New York City, and Robert G. Collins of Omaha, was quietly solemnized last Thursday in Des Moines, Ia., Dr. Owen of St. Paul's Episcopal church, officiating. Mr. Collins and his bride are residing at the Bransford hotel.

Bee Want Ads Produce Results.

**"STYLE WITHOUT EXTRAVAGANCE"**

**HERZBERGS**

1519-1521 DOUGLAS ST.

Hundreds of Omaha Women Will Actually Save Thousands of Dollars in This Sale Thursday

We Believe This Event to Be Absolutely Unparalleled in the Merchandising History of Omaha

**An Astounding Sale of 350 Wondrous Gowns**

A safe that fairly "takes one's breath" at first. Three hundred and fifty gowns and dresses—the influence of Paris indelibly woven in to each of them—for every formal and informal occasion.

Sale Starts Thursday 9 A.M.



Several of the gowns modeled by members of the Junior league at the Style Show will be included in this wonderful sale Thursday.

Models developed from fabrics that would cost you much more than \$39.50 to buy the material alone.

If We Told You the Regular Prices of These Dresses---If We Told You in DOLLARS Exactly How Much You Can Save, the Savings and Values Would Seem Too Enormous to Be Possible

**\$39.50**

Models expressing the supreme in fashion; beauty and designing genius. Truly, their beauty begins where the writer's (and your) imagination leaves off. Just imagine for a moment the thrill you'll actually experience choosing such gowns and dresses tomorrow for a mere \$39.50.

Satins Crepe Elizabeth Cantons Broche Crepes Chiffon Velvets  
Jacquards Crepe Romaines Novelty Velours Laces Chiffons  
Metallic Lace Knitted Charmeen Poiret Tuills

A bewitching array of colors and color combinations. Gowns weighed with twinkling jewels, flashing beads, Chinese embroidery or lavish trimmings of fur. Gowns for the most exclusive functions—afternoon teas, bridge parties, Country club receptions. Entire sixth floor devoted to this great sale Thursday.