

THE WINDS OF THE WORLD

In a second the whole squadron was by the ears, and the stable-helper was the center of an interest he had not bargained for.

“Nay, sahibs, I but followed him, and how should I know? Nay, then I did not follow him! It so happened. I took that road, and he stepped out of a *tikka-gharri* at her door. Am I blind? Do I not know her door? Does not everybody know it? Who am I that I should know why he goes again? But—does a moth fly only once to the lamp-flame? Does a drunkard drink but once? By the Guru, nay! May my tongue parch in my throat if I said he is a drunkard! I said—I meant to say—seeing she is Yasmini, and he having been to see her once—and being again in a great hurry—whither goes he?”

So the squadron chose a sub-committee of inquiry, seven strong, that being a lucky number the wide world over, and the movements of the risaldar-major were reported one by one to the squadron with the infinite exactness of small detail that seems so useless to all save Easterns.