

the German led them, swinging his lantern and seeming not at all afraid of being seen now.

"We have taken steps quite often to make the people hereabouts believe this temple haunted!" he said. "They avoid it at night as if the devil lived here. If any of them see my lantern, they will not stop running till they reach the sea!"

They came to a ruin that was such an utter ruin that it looked as if an earthquake must have shaken a temple to pieces to be disintegrated by the weather; but Ranjoor Singh noticed that the cart-tracks wound around the side of it, and when they came to a fairly large teak trap-door, half hidden by creepers, he was not much surprised.

"My God, gentlemen!" said Sita Ram. "That place is wet-weather refuge for many million cobras! If I must die, I will prefer to perish in rain, where wife and family may find me for proper funeral rites. I will not go in there!"

But the German raised the trap-door,

and Ranjoor Singh took the unhappy babu by the scruff of his fat neck.

"In with you!" he ordered.

And, chattering as if his teeth were castanets, the babu trod gingerly down damp stone steps whose centre had been worn into ruts by countless feet. The German came last, and let the trap slam shut.

"My God!" yelled the babu. "Let me go! I am family man!"

"Vorwärts!" laughed the German, leading the way toward a teak door set in a stone wall.

THEY were in an ancient temple vault that seemed to have miraculously escaped from the destruction that had overwhelmed the whole upper part. Not a stone of it was out of place. It was wind and water-tight, and the vaulted roof, that above was nothing better than a mound of debris, from below looked nearly as perfect as when the stones had first been fitted into place.

The German produced a long key, opened the teak door, and stood aside

to let them pass.

"No, no!" shuddered Sita Ram; but Ranjoor Singh pushed him through; the German followed, and the door slammed shut as the trap had done.

"And now, my friends, I will convince you!" said the German, holding the lantern high. "What are those?"

The light from the solitary lantern fell on rows and rows of bales, arranged in neat straight lines, until away in the distance it suggested endless other shadowy bales, whose outlines could be little more than guessed at. They were in a vault so huge that Ranjoor Singh made no attempt to estimate its size.

"See this!" said the German, walking close to something on a wooden stand, and he held the light above it. "In the office in Delhi that the police have just sealed up there is a wireless apparatus very much like this. This, that you see here, is a detonator. This is fulminate of mercury. This is dynamite. With a touch of a certain key in Delhi we could have blown up this vault at any minute of the past

two years, if we had thought it necessary to hide our tracks. A shot from this pistol would have much the same effect," he added darkly.

"But the bales?" asked Ranjoor Singh. "What is in the bales?"

"Dynamite bombs, my friend! You native soldiers have no artillery, and we have seen from the first the necessity of supplying a substitute. By making full use of the element of surprise, these bombs should serve your purpose. There are one million of them, packed two hundred in a bale—much more useful than artillery in the hands of untrained men!"

"Those look like bales of blankets. They are. Cotton blankets from Munchen-Gladbach. Only, the middle blankets have been omitted, and the outer ones have served as a cushion to prevent accidental discharge. They have been imported in small lots at a time, and brought here four or five at a time in ox-carts from one or other of the Delhi railway stations by men who are no longer in this part of India—men who have been pensioned off."

"How did you get them through the Customs?" wondered Ranjoor Singh.

"Did you ever see a rabbit go into his hole?" the German asked. "They were very small consignments, obviously of blankets. The duty was paid without demur, and the price paid the Customs men was worth their while. That part was easy!"

"Of what size are the bombs?" asked Ranjoor Singh.

"About the size of an orange. Come, I'll show you."

He led him to an opened bale, and showed him two hundred of them nestling like the eggs of some big bird.

"My God!" moaned Sita Ram. "Are those dynamite? Sahibs—snakes are better! Snakes can feel afraid, but these—ow! Let me go away!"

"Let him go," said the German. "Let him take his message."

"Go, then!" ordered Ranjoor Singh; and the German walked to the door to let him out.

"What is your message?" he asked.

"To Yasmini first, for she is in touch with all of them," said Sita Ram. "First I will go to Yasmini. Then she will come here to say the regiments have started. First she will come alone; after her the regiments."

"She had better be alone!" said the German. "Go on, run! And don't forget the way back? What! How will she know the way? How will you describe it to her?"

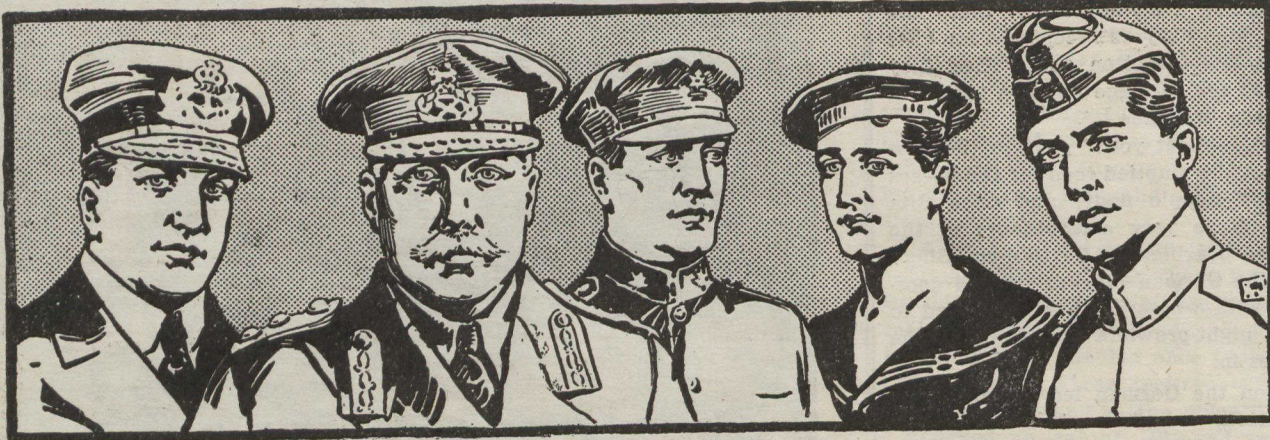
"She? Describe it to her? I will tell her 'The Winds of the World,' and she will come straight."

"How? How will she know?"

"The priest who used to be here—whom you bribed to go away—he is her night door-keeper now!" said Sita Ram. "Yes, she will come verree quickly!"

THE German let him out with an air mixed of surprise and disbelief, and returned to Ranjoor Singh with far less iron in his stride, though with no less determination.

"Now we shall see!" he said, drawing an automatic pistol and cocking it carefully. "This is not meant as a personal threat to you, so long as we two are in here alone. It's in case of trickery from outside. I shall blow this place sky-high if anything goes wrong. If the regiments come, good! You shall have the bombs. If they don't come, or if there's a trick played



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