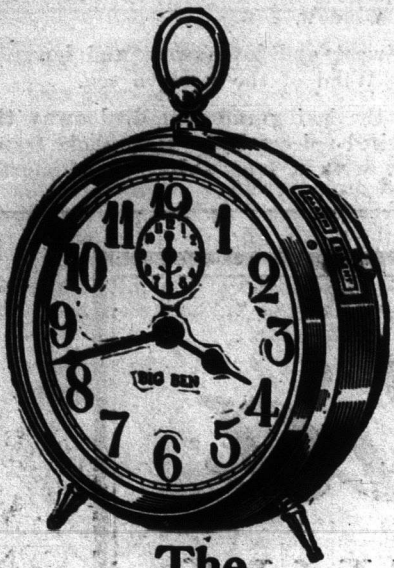




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In two years and a half time, 6,000 Canadian dealers have adopted him. Nearly half of the families in Canada leave it to him to call them up in the morning; nearly half the families in Canada use him all day long to tell the right time by. He is really two good clocks in one—a crackerjack of a time-keeper and a crackerjack of an alarm.

Big Ben stands seven inches tall. He is triple nickel-plated and wears an inner vest of steel that insures him for life. His big, bold figures and hands are easy to read in the dim morning light. His large, comfortable keys almost wind themselves. He rings five minutes steadily or ten intermittently. If he is oiled every other year, there is no telling how long he will last.

Big Ben's price is \$3.00 anywhere in Canada. If you cannot find him at your dealer's, a money order sent to *Watches, La Salle, Illinois*, will bring him to you, carefully packed and duty charges paid.

BIG BEN

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cold and, swaying a little, she fell senseless to the ground, her face upturned, the straight delicate features white and rigid.

It was at that moment that a red setter ran into the verandah followed by his master. A brief glance sufficed to show him the danger. He set his teeth hard and the blood rushed to his head with a ringing sound. Then he was his usual self—keen, alert, and self-possessed.

In the meantime the dog had sprung forward with hair bristling erect and barking furiously. Instantly the cobra drew itself together in a remarkably graceful posture and flickered its mysterious little tongue as it gave a threatening hiss. Then, with hood erect and eyes glaring, it prepared to strike.

But too late! There came a swift, smart blow from a heavy stick which felled the cobra to the earth.

"Thank God, I was in time!" muttered Colonel Stuart as trampling on the head he crushed it to pieces.

Two hours had passed by. On a couch drawn to the log fire lay Nora Stuart. She did not move or show any signs of consciousness. Her eyes were closed and the dark lashes curled softly on the ivory-tinted cheeks. The doctor had come and gone; everything had been done that could be done to restore animation to the senseless form, but

without success. Colonel Stuart was standing by the couch looking down on the whiteness and stillness of the beautiful face which looked like sculptured marble. Tears were in his eyes—terrible tears that are only wrung from a strong man in moments of intense mental anguish. Suddenly he fell on his knees by her side and threw his arms round her.

Nora, my beloved, speak to me!"

The cry of a heart in agony sounded in the utterance of those words and penetrated the sacred depths of her soul.

She stirred. The brows twitched; the dark eyes slowly opened. As if awakening from a dream, she looked up.

"John," she murmured in a scarcely audible voice, and gave a long sobbing sigh as her head sank against his breast.

He could not trust himself to speak, but gathered her closer to him and pressed a passionate kiss on the perfect lips.

With that kiss her eyes closed again and she fell into a deep, refreshing sleep—a sleep that brought her back from the misty borderland which lies between life and death. When she awoke her rippling masses of rich, dark hair had become white as snow. But what did that matter? She lived—the baby was safe!

The Seeker

Written for the Western Home Monthly by J. K. Leys

MY acquaintance with Elijah (one of the most singular persons I ever knew) happened in this wise.

One mild winter's day I was at a small town called Heddington, and, having transacted my business there, I wished to proceed to Market Fairleigh, where there is a railway station. The distance between the two towns is a little over ten miles, and I found that I had just time to get to Market Fairleigh and catch a train I particularly wanted to travel by.

I knew that the landlord of the Sun had a little mare that could cover the distance in the time comfortably if she was fresh; so I hurried down to the inn to make enquiries. Fortunately the mare was in the stables, so I ordered her to be put between the shafts of the light gig while I attended to some cold beef and pickles in the parlor. I also said that I must have a man to drive me, as I had hurt my hand, and could not hold the reins.

My meal over, I came to the front door of the establishment, where the gig and mare were ready waiting.

"What! are you going to drive, Elijah?" I asked with some surprise.

He was a big fellow, with a coarse, sullen, smooth-shaven face, dressed in shabby ill-fitting garments. He was sitting on the box seat ready to start.

The man touched his hat and growled something by way of reply. I did not fancy having Elijah for a coachman, and I turned back into the inn with the idea of demanding another charioteer. I reflected, however, that a change would mean loss of time, and that the landlady would not have sent this man if she could have spared a more presentable person. So I jumped into the vehicle and told my Jehu to drive on.

The man at my side was a tall fellow, but he always seemed rather short at first sight, so great was his girth. He was by far and away the thickest man and the stoutest man round the chest that I ever saw or expect to see. I imagined that at one time of his life he must have been in training as an athlete, and that his sobriquet "Heavy Elijah" must have been an allusion to his being classed in athletic competitions as a heavy-weight.

His face was slightly marked with the small-pox, and his complexion was pale—I should rather say white, a dull, fusty white, without a suspicion of color in it. His cheeks and chin were as smooth as a girl's.

The man's expression was sullen, reserved and forbidding. His eyes had a dull glazed look that might either be-

token great suffering or merely great stupidity. He always loved (I understood) to be by himself, and sometimes he had been overheard talking to himself, or addressing absent or imaginary persons, when he believed himself to be unobserved. Never had he been known to drink with his mates of the stable yard or play at games with them. He lived alone. Doubtless his solitary position would have made him enemies had not the other fellows been afraid to meddle with a man of such gigantic strength. Elijah was a stupid but harmless fellow almost half-witted and certainly "cracked," but incapable of doing any one serious harm—a man to be used and fed and disregarded. He had drifted to the Sun Inn at Heddington no one exactly knew how and there, no doubt, he would remain till some current of fortune should float him off to some other resting-place.

Such was the man who was now sitting beside me driving me to Market Fairleigh—driving with judgment, too, I could see, for he eased the mare uphill and sent her along the level bits of road at a capital pace. I had no doubt she would do what was required of her, with some minutes to spare, and was congratulating myself already on my good fortune as we neared the town of Selway, about three miles from our destination.

We were about half a mile from the town when the discordant notes of a very inferior brass band broke suddenly upon our ears. From that moment I noticed a change come over Elijah. He jerked up his head, his eyes were distended, his breathing came and went rapidly. Evidently he was laboring under some strong emotion. As we drew near the little town the music became louder, and my coachman's excitement increased. His eyes flashed fire; he seemed to be animated by a stronger and bolder spirit than that which had before inhabited his body. At length, turning a corner we caught sight of the establishment from which the music proceeded—a circus, with two or three travelling vans, and a stage in front of the canvas amphitheatre, on which two cornets, a bassoon, and a drum were making all the noise they could. It was a commonplace sight enough—even the inhabitants of Selway seemed to think so, for only about a score of them were gathered in front of the show—but it seemed to possess an overpowering attraction for Heavy Elijah. No sooner had he caught sight of the tent and the vans than he checked the mare, threw me the reins, and was gone, running as fast as he could towards the circus, before I could even remonstrate with him on his conduct.

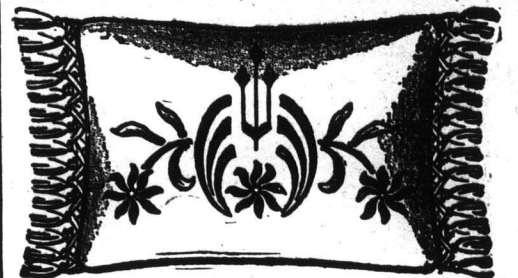


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