

The next few days at Rawal Pindi were spent in unpacking those cases which were too big to load on an ekka. An "ekka" is a vehicle drawn by one horse; in the back of the vehicle is room for a good deal of luggage, and more yet can be piled on top, leaving only a small place for the driver. The ekka, however, is of such a nature that, while it will accommodate seven or eight natives in apparent



OUR EKKAS AT RAWAL PINDI.

comfort, it does not show the same pleasing quality towards even one European.

The magnitude of our expedition may be gauged by the fact that our sea-borne and previously despatched cases alone weighed over three tons. On the 29th March, after endless cursing, by dint of much physical force, we managed to get our baggage on to seventeen ekkas, and to start at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We reached Tret the same night, a little before half-past ten, Knowles and I bringing up the rear to prevent any ekkas straggling; for if once an ekka is allowed out of sight it is likely to turn up three or four days later than you expect. No sooner had we reached the first night's stage—Tret—than an urgent summons forced Eckenstein to return to the plains, as it turned out, for over three weeks. We had some dinner, by no means before it was wanted, and went off to sleep in blissful ignorance of the catastrophe that was even then poised and about to strike us to the dust.

(To be continued.)

THE FASHION CORRESPONDENT.

THE Fashion Correspondent was busily engaged in writing. The hour was late, the night was cold, and the rain falling on the window-sill with a certain maddening pertinacity, seemed, perhaps owing to the sudden cessation of traffic, to make rather more noise than it should have done. But editors are like time and tide, they wait for neither man nor woman, and the Fashion Correspondent was behindhand with her copy already. It was unfortunate that on this of all nights her pen should seem to lag. Now and again her eyes recurred to the decorous type-written letter she had propped up against her inkstand. "The key-note of your article should be, as I have stated before, the 'personal note' . . . People must think you really know what you are writing about, or the article is of no value to them—nor to the paper" . . . The hint was significant. The editor of the up-to-date journal for which she wrote liked it to be believed that his fashion column was written by a Society woman in her spare time. So he insisted that the frills and frivolities of which she wrote should be spoken of intimately, flippantly as of well-known familiars. The Fashion Correspondent found it hard sometimes to look at life through the eyes of a Society woman instead of those of a hard-worked, under-paid

journalist, and to-night with the added depression of a heavy cold, she found it specially hard. But still, with that letter before her, she spurred herself on to do her best.

She chattered gaily concerning velvets and sables, she trailed gay wreaths of flowers round spring hats; she expatiated volubly on the ephemeral attractions of chiffon and lace, from a detailed description of the glories of a Court train, she drifted on to talk concerning her latest tea-gown. "A vapoury thing of rose-coloured gauze, looped up with knots of silvery ribbon and one big La France rose set among the nestling laces at the throat." (The Fashion Correspondent was wearing at the moment a rather dubious-looking skirt and a much washed cotton blouse. You see, she kept her best clothes for going out.) "It was horribly expensive, but so becoming," she continued, "and you can have no idea how well it matches the Louis XVI. chairs in my boudoir. . . ." A little smile twisted the Fashion Correspondent's mouth as she glanced round the small, ill-furnished room with its one uncomfortable armchair. . . . "Spring, judging from the weather outside, seems far enough off just now, but seated here before a blazing fire—the flames are whispering ever so many rosy things to themselves—with the scent of the violets that reached me only this morning from the South of France filling the room, it seems quite easy to cheat winter and dream summer is here." The Fashion Correspondent shivered here. Perhaps because she had suddenly realised that there was no fire in the blackened grate.

She yawned and stretched a tired back, then passed on to discuss the charms of a recent trossou. Much fluent language concerning the merits of fine linen and lace fell easily from her pen. "I regard dainty lingerie as a quite valuable matrimonial asset," she wound up, and felt daring as she wrote the words. The frocks at a "first night" next engaged her attention. Over one gown in particular she waxed especially enthusiastic. "A clinging supple garment of silver tinsel, with touches of blue; just the colour of a sapphire summer's night glinting here and through the cobwebby folds, whilst what looked like strings of imprisoned moonbeams, but were in reality just prosaic strings of quite admirable paste, held the misty folds on the white shoulders of the wearer, who suited the lovely gown admirably. Not only pretty, but tall, supple, and slender, she looked like a willow shaking in the wind at every movement, my ideal of a perfect figure." Her paper had given out. As she crossed the room to the cupboard in the wall to replenish her stock, her eyes met her reflection in the fly-blown glass mirror over the mantelpiece. She must have had a keen sense of humour, for as she looked she laughed softly. . . . You see, the Fashion Correspondent was a hunchback.

LOUISE HELGERS.

SONGE D'AMOUR APRES LE BAL.

THROUGH the wide casement, when Dawn's waking smile

First flushed across the East, and all the Town
Dreamed in its sleep, we stood and gazed awhile;
Hushed at the thought of sacred things unknown.

For new love trembled on our lips,
And in our eyes there shone the light
That kindled in the violet night,
And in your rose-pink finger-tips
That touched my hand and cheek and hair,
Thrilled tender passion, and your form
Swayed, in my arms, into a storm
Of rapture that o'erthrew despair.
O dearest, you were very fair,
And Love had smiled across the skies,
It seemed so very sweet and wise
To kiss your lips and cheek and hair.
And as the rosy dawn grew bright
And the tired dancers crept away,
There in the wonder of the day
I claimed and captured my delight!

Through the wide casement came the winds of Love,
And the pale sky was tender blue above,
The sparrows twittered on the window-sill, . . .

Then, for a little while, the world was still.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

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