

## THE EXPULSION FROM EDEN

A Long and Sad Farewell to the Many Waxworks at the Eden Musée

By Pelham Grenville. Drawing by Thelma Cudlipp

AS I roamed through the cathedral-like stillness of the Eden Musée, the home of waxworks and horrors, which is soon to be closed forever to the public, it seemed to me that a chorus of ghostly "Wal, I swan's" filled the air, as a million dead and gone visitors from Kankakee, Kalamazoo, and all points west, wandered past, leading hysterical infants by the hand and telling them that they had got to enjoy themselves even if they *did* have convulsions at the lovely horrors displayed to their view.

The exhibits at the Eden Musée are of all kinds, from the Czar of Russia to Mutt and Jeff; but all of them seem more or less steeped in blood. I don't think I ever saw so much vital fluid collected in one place as there is in No. 38, "Beheading in Morocco," though No. 35, "Execution of a Burmese Criminal," is far from dry.

There are two absorbing problems opened by an inspection of the Eden Musée: why people think them attractive, and what are the essential qualifications which, in the eyes of the proprietors, render a person a fit candidate for the waxen Hall of Fame?

Of course, there are certain criminals,—Kaisers and other sensational murderers, who get in without question. But why, to name one instance, is Anna Held at the Eden Musée, and not Mrs. Vernon Castle? Why is E. H. Sothern given preference over Frank Tinney? Why is there no Jess Willard and no Billy Sunday?

There must be some system of admission and exclusion. Probably an admission committee sits, like the governing board of a fashionable club, and weighs the claims of all the applicants.

As to why people like to look at waxworks, that, I suppose, is answered by the fact that

tastes differ. There are thousands and thousands of persons, for instance, who like to read the novels of Mr. Harold Bell Wright.

A more interesting subject for speculation is,—How does a wax-worked celebrity feel when he sees his image glaring at him with that expression of glassy imbecility which is *de rigueur* in the world of wax?



Charming little wax group at the Eden Musée entitled: "Execution of a Burmese Criminal"

Does William Jennings Bryan drop into the Eden Musée to correct a tendency to think too highly of himself after a more than successful tour on the Chautauqua Circuit? It would be hard to imagine a finer corrective for complacency. I seem to see these great ones breazing into the Musée, all pride and self-confidence, and creeping out into Twenty-third Street like punctured balloons. Even Donald Brian might doubt his physical charms if he saw himself in wax.

Whatever you may say in favor of the waxworks, they lack what you might call "action."

A public which can see its favorite movie-actor—for five cents, cash—shoot a dozen desperadoes, ride across country at a speed never less than a hundred and fifty-five miles an hour, and marry the girl at the end of the ride, will not spend twenty-five cents to stare at an immobile policeman holding up a motionless opium den. Get action! That is the slogan of to-day.

Yes, it is undoubtedly; the movies which have killed the poor waxwork. The Eden Musée no longer has the power to draw the rustic from his native village. When the rustic wants intellectual refreshment, he takes it back home at the Hicks Corners Colonial or the Bodville Center Gaiety, and his children, spared the Chamber of Horrors, stand a sporting chance of growing to manhood with unimpaired intellects instead of becoming nervous wrecks at the tender age of seven through a too great acquaintance with the Eden Musée.

There is one group, however, which must give the directors of the Eden Musée a great deal of quiet satisfaction. I can imagine them creeping down into the chamber of horrors every now and then—when they are feeling a little depressed—to gaze at it, and smiling softly to themselves for a moment. It represents an untamed lion of the jungle and a film operator. A part of the film operator is inside the lion, the remainder—covered with blood—is waiting, with pained look on its face, till the motionless diner shall be ready for his next course.

FOR a moment, I say, the directors gaze on the group and smile. But their smiles die away, for film operators are so many, and untamed lions are so few.

## A HINDU AT THE POLO GROUNDS

A Letter from Mahatma Sri Paramananda Guru Swamiji (Great Soul Saint Supreme-Bliss Teacher Learned Person) to His Brother in India

HONORED Brother: Yesterday I went with a friend to the great temple. It is an oval like the Yoni of the most holy Bhavani, and the cakras are marked in sand. On these paths the priests run in their mystic dances. There are two kinds of priests. There are Redsox and Yanks, according to their tribes. The worshippers sit around in tiers reaching to the sky. Some of the priests are armed with clubs to slay the victims. There is also a white ball, symbolizing the sun. My friend remarked: "The Yanks will get their goat." I cannot see any goat nor is there an altar to sacrifice a goat!

Now the priests take their stations in the temple, and the ritual begins. One high-priest throws the white ball; this represents the sun traveling through the heavens. Another high-priest strikes it with the Mahalingam club, meaning that even the sun is tossed about by the will of God. Many priests representing other gods are stationed according to the places of the planets, as I understand, for my friend says: "It is an all-star team." The god with the club is a symbol of man, and if the sun, or ball, strike him he is dead; he throws away his club, and walks to his base,



Mahatma Sri Paramananda Guru Swamiji, from a photograph taken in Seringapatam

that is, he makes the next stage in his incarnations. If he strike the sun far away beyond any planets, he makes the complete circle in his sacred dance. They have an idol here—one McGraw! He is a Mahathera.

THE worshippers are full of religion; sometimes the sacred cry changes to a roar as if they wanted something killed. Then my friend says: "See! he sacrifices himself," but I do not see him sacrifice himself. He only throws himself down at the feet of a god. But there is no blood; it is not good religion.

The ritual has nine parts, for the nine planets (there are nine priests of each of the two castes) and for the nine greater gods. After the seventh part all the people rise and make mystic gestures with their arms, out of reverence to the sacred number seven. And now the people disperse. They will drink of the sacred soma of the country, the gin-rickey, or jinricksha—so called because with it they are wheeled swiftly and surely to Nirvana.

I join in this part of the ceremony also. I grasp the hand of my friend and, on gin-rickeys, we shall peacefully glide into Nirvana.

Your Happy Brother.