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At last I was on the track. . . . Or was I?

Could he remember which paper it was? Or where he'd seen it?

"No, but it was about four or five weeks ago. It was one of those papers that have a weekly supplement. It's a pity I didn't take more notice at the time."

My sentiments entirely, I thought, as I set off for the Library again.

The assistant looked at me when I asked for the weekly supplements of all the English newspapers for the past six weeks. At the end of a lengthy session I went out. I thanked her—no, I hadn't found what I was looking for.

* * *

AT the boarding house at lunch-time

I was glancing over the shelves of old books. Nestling in between *Bulldog Drummond's Return* and *How to Keep Hens for Profit* was one on the popular customs of England, and in it I discovered a detailed description of how one received the Freedom of Alnwick. It appeared that in 1209 King John fell from his horse into a bog at Alnwick, and he stuck so fast that it was only with difficulty that he was rescued by his attendants. He therefore inserted in the city charter a clause that all new-created freemen should, each year, on St. Mark's day (April 25) pass on foot through the bog. Fortunately for the Prime Minister, who just might have visited Alnwick in the course of his travels, the ceremony was discontinued about the middle of the nineteenth century.



A visit to the British High Commissioner's Office and to a Professor or two at the University brought me no nearer



"... According to its own peculiar customs and by-laws"

to the solution (beyond a lengthy bibliography from one of the Professors in which I *might* find something).

Later that day, after finding that Government departments could do no more than refer me to encyclopædias, I searched the Assembly Library. Here I discovered that for five centuries before 1835 the Freedom of the City of London could be obtained only through the Livery Companies, that the privileges of an ordinary freeman include a parliamentary vote, immunity from country jurisdiction, exemption from tolls, and a share in the revenue accruing from the corporate property, and that since 1899 women have been eligible for an Honorary Freedom. Another section told me that Honorary Freemen could exercise no voting rights. Although the Freedom of the City was the greatest honour that could be conferred upon anyone, it

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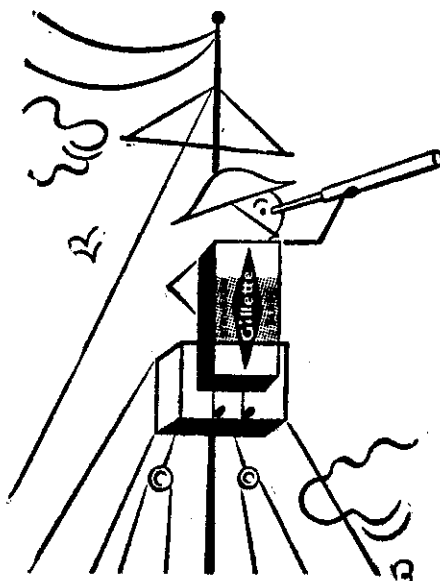
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