

THE LONG TRICK

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The Long Trick by "Bartimeus"

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AUTHOR OF "A TALL SHIP," "NAVAL
OCCASIONS," ETC.

*"Much of what you have done, as far as
the public eye is concerned, may almost be
said to have been done in the twilight."—*

EXTRACT FROM ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE
PRIME MINISTER ON BOARD THE FLEET
FLAGSHIP, AUGUST, 1915.



State of
California

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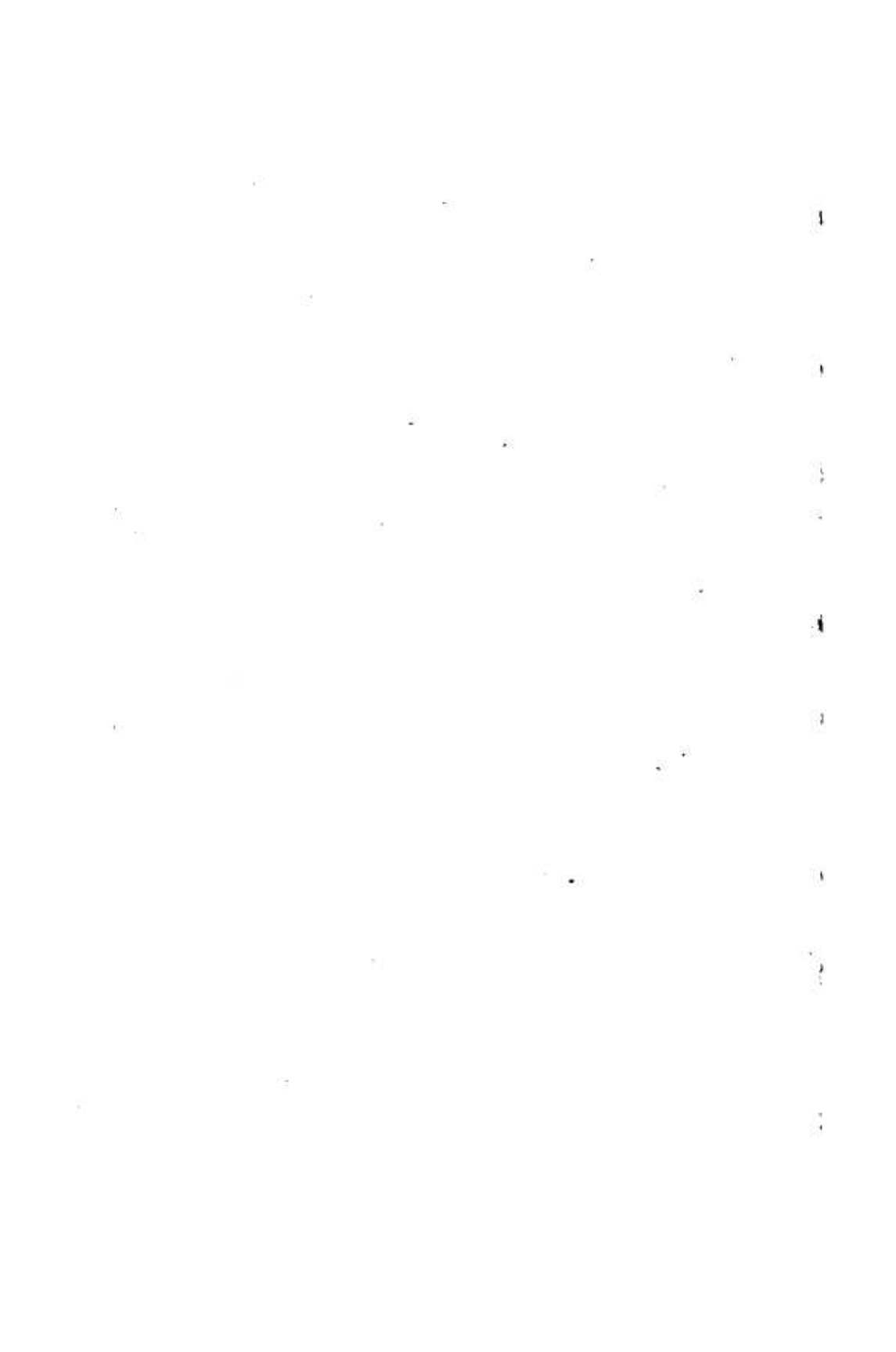
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TO YOU
ABSENTEE

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ONE
CHUNKS
WHO, IN MOMENTS OF FRENZY, IS CALLED
HUNKS
AND ANSWERS READILY TO
TUNKS, TINKS or TONKS
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

496265



FOREWORD

DEAR N AND M,

This is the first opportunity I have had of answering your letter, although I am hardly to blame since you chose to write anonymously and leave me with no better clue to your address than the Tunbridge Wells postmark.

Fee! Fi! Fo! Fum! I am sorry about Torps, though. I admit his death was a mistake, and I fancy my Publisher thought so too: but we cannot very well bring him to life again, like Sherlock Holmes. So please cheer up, and remember that there are just as many fine fellows in the ink-pot as ever came out of it.

I have borne in mind the final paragraph of your letter, which said, "We do beseech you not to kill the India-rubber Man." In fact, I originally meant him to be the hero of this book. But as the book progressed I found the melancholy conviction growing on me that the India-rubber Man had become

infernally dull. A pair of cynical bachelors like you will, I know, attribute this to marriage and poor Betty. For my part I am inclined to put it down to advancing years.

I have just finished the book, and, turning over the pages, found myself wondering how you will like it. It has been written in so many different moods and places and noises and temperatures that the general effect is rather patchwork. But, after all, it was written chiefly for the amusement of two people, and (as I believe all story-books ought to be written) out of some curiosity on the Author's part to know "what happened next."

Thus, you see, I strive to disarm all critics at the outset by the assumption of an ingenuous indifference to anything they can say. But there is one portion of the book on which I have expended so much thought and care that I am willing to defy criticism on the subject. I refer to the Dedication.

You probably skip Dedications, but they interest me, and I have studied them a good deal. They are generally arranged in columns like untidy addition sums, and no two lines are the same length. This is very important. At the end you arrive, as