

Fénykövi José J.

in the Smithsonian Institution
Wash DC there is a giant elephant,
stuffed. It was shot and donated to
the Museum by a Hungarian,
named Fénykövi

Wash.
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Washington Scene . . . By George Dixon

How the Smithsonian Got Its Elephant

MADRID—Our Ambassador to Spain, Robert F. Woodward, had us to lunch the other day at the traditional Spanish lunch-time. After lunch, as the sun was beginning to set, there was the traditional separation of the sexes. Much as I hate to be parted from dames, this time I was glad of the tradition because I learned how the Smithsonian Institution in Washington got its big elephant.



Dixon

In the male banishment pen, I got talking to a fellow named José J. Fénykövi. He said he was a Hungarian, living in Spain, and that he was in the construction business. He said he had built the huge U.S. chancellery in Madrid and is now bidding to build a new residence for our Ambassador. The mansion in which Mr. Woodward is now living is owned by Prince Pio, and the U.S. is getting tired of paying the rent.

I told Mr. Fénykövi it must be rewarding to be a

big building contractor. He said he found it more rewarding to shoot elephants. I made a mental note to pass this on to some of our big contractors, notably former Ambassador to Ireland Matthew H. McCloskey, whom the Government is now suing over a crumbly Veterans Hospital in Boston. But Mr. Fénykövi interrupted this titillating train of thought by saying:

"I tracked your Smithsonian elephant for more than two years. He got around a lot."

"That seems odd," I said. "He looks stuffed."

"He is stuffed now," said Mr. Fénykövi. "I did not ship the Smithsonian the whole elephant. I sent it only the skin. The skin alone weighed two and a half tons. That is quite a lot of skin."

"You are a Hungarian, doing business in Spain," I said. "Why did you give it to the Smithsonian?"

"I thought," he said, "it was time somebody gave something to the United States, instead of take."

We all applauded this unique sentiment. Ambassador Woodward asked Mr. Fénykövi if he had any

other skinning plans afoot. "I have," said the contractor. "I gave the United States its biggest elephant. Now I am going to go hunting for the biggest donkey."

THIS IS NOT A GOP ELEPHANT: This species is not from Convention Hall but from the African Bush and it has its habitat in the Natural History Building at the Smithsonian.

