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S.V.V. In Search of a House.

The **MERRY**
MAGAZINE

Vol. I

MADRAS, 25th JANUARY, 1933.

No. 2



P. P. SAMUEL, LEO, DEISVI.

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	PAGE.
IN SEARCH OF A HOUSE (S.V.V.)	34
CLARA CALLING! (P. P. SAMUEL)	36
SENSE AND NONSENSE	38
THE CREAM OF THE JEST	40
FULL CIRCLE (S. RAMASUBRAHMANYAM)	41
"OUR CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN" (A.B.C.)	44
EDGAR WALLACE'S MANY ROLES	45
FASTS (LEO)	47
THE APPLICANT (KALYAN)	48
BALA, THE BAD WOMAN (DEISVI)	49
CALENDARS (Y. BALARAM)	53
THE LEAGUE OF LEAGUERS AND HUSBANDS	54
SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL	56
COMPETITIONS	57

THE MERRY MAGAZINE

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Religious Neutrality

In Search of A House

S. V. V.

Of all a man's domestic afflictions, there is perhaps none so infernally annoying as house-shifting, and settling down in the new house. We had not settled a year yet in our present house before our landlady gave notice that we should vacate, and give possession in fifteen days, as she was going to marry her daughter there. My wife was in tears. Not that she was enamoured of the house, because since our moving into it, she had done nothing else than discover all its defects, that made it utterly wretched and uninhabitable. "Who would consent to die in it, let alone living?" she said, at least four times every day.

But she had planted two rose-trees in the backgarden, which gave about half a dozen roses every day, and she had besides grown *Pudal* (snake-gourd) and beans, which had come off luxuriantly, and promised to yield a plentiful harvest in a month or two.

"The greedy cat! She wants us to vacate that she may eat the pudal and the beans," she said.

"And the roses" I added, laughing.

"Yes, the roses. Let her stick them in her bald head. Only she has no husband to show them to," she said vengefully. (Our landlady was a widow). "I will root them out before we leave," she declared.

But, roses or beans, there was nothing to do but to pack and shift.

Seven mornings and evenings, I trudged the streets of the city, peering into 'To let' boards, looking into houses, and interviewing owners (covering at least seven hundred miles in the aggregate), but I could not find one house that satisfied my wife's conditions. Every night, I came home footsore, weary in mind, and wishing I was dead.

"You mean to say that there is no house at all in this whole wide city of Madras? You can find one only if you look for it, not if you keep mooning inside your rooms" remarked my wife, which, I thought, was the limit of unkindness. But my wife was like that. What do they know how men toil, after all to

get only such rewards from the wife? Men are born to toil, women to idle, grumbling all the while.

The next morning, I started out, determined to secure a house, even if I should wear my feet out in the attempt.

I spotted a house, the owner of which met me in the threshold. I asked him if the house was to let. He said 'yes', and we chatted on the threshold for some time. He came to know who I was.

"Oh! You are the author of 'Imaginary Conversations'?" he said in great joy.

"The same" I said laughing.

"I tell you, Sir, I am not flattering you. I have read Bernard Shaw, Chesterton, and that sort of authors, but they all fall flat before your 'Imaginary Conversations'. They do" he said and gripped my hand rapturously.

Here I found a kindred soul. I believe there is not an author that would not surrender himself before an appreciative reader.

"Will you look over the house?" he suggested.

"Of course" I said. We went over the house. After knowing what sort of a man the owner was, I found everything in the house quite pleasant.

"Do you like the house?" he asked.

"Immensely" I said. "What rent?" I asked timidly.

"Seventy five rupees a month. I hope you don't think it much" he said.

"Not at all. Only I am thinking I can't afford so much" I said, sorrowfully.

"Well, Sir, for the author of 'Imaginary Conversations' I can put it down a bit. Say sixty" he said.

"Thank you very much. Let it be sixty. I shall bring my wife tomorrow to have a look" I said, and departed, after a warm grip of his hand.

After I went home, I gave my wife a glowing and splendid account of the house, dwelt on its beauty, its situation, and its conveniences, and drew largely on my imagination to describe its various comforts, and told her, above all, what a splendid fellow the owner was. "He was simply taken up with me, and went into raptures over my 'Imaginary Conversations', and said that for the author of the book he would reduce the rent by Rs. 15. It is worth seventy five any day, I tell you" I said. My wife was eager to have a look at it.

Next day I took my wife and my brother-in-law; and even when we were at some distance from the house, I pointed it out to them. "That is the house" I said. And my wife looked so overjoyed. "And three storeyed too. It has a beautiful frontage," she exclaimed.

"Not that three storeyed one. The low one next to it" I said.

Her face fell. And my brother-in-law laughed in an outrageously insulting manner.

We were on the steps of the house. "This one?" queried my wife contemptuously and sneered. And my brother-in-law merely contented himself with assuming a look which plainly said, what a refreshing ass I was. They went in, and I went in also, rather sullenly.

My brother-in-law pointed out one defect after another as they were inspecting it. Not a drop of water would go out of the house. The gutters were clogged. There were nothing in the flooring except bandicoot pits. He tapped a wall and wondered that it had not collapsed already. He looked at the ceiling, and said that all the dust would settle on our food. He went into the kitchen, and remarked that if we lit the oven, the smoke would fill the kitchen, choke our nostrils and mouths, and spread into my room and throttle my labours on 'Further Imaginary Conversations.' He pointed out that four windows had no shutters, that the store-room door would not open, and the bath-room door would not close. In fact, nothing seemed to be right with the house. It was not a house, not even a shed to tie cattle in.

"Come, brother, we shall go home" said my wife as if to say what a fool she was to rely on my words, and waste a morning over this wonderful business.

I felt extremely hurt and insulted. Through every remark my brother-in-law made, I felt as if he was damning my own house. Perhaps that is human nature.

I was one day standing with my friend on the Trivellore Railway platform. I asked my friend whether the train would be in time. He flared up. "It is only the S. I. Ry., trains that always come late. M. S. M. never does. The train is due to arrive at 12-12 and you will see it arriving correct to the very second," he said. He was an admirer of the M. S. M. system.

It was 12-12 but the train was nowhere in sight. "There must be some accident on the way or the train would never be late. I tell you, Sir, this is the first time that the train has disappointed. It never does" he went on. Further time elapsed, and my friend grew more apologetic every minute, as if imploring me to forgive the railway train for this one act of misdemeanour. I could not understand why he should grow so apologetic. The Railway Company was not his, nor was he responsible for running the trains to correct time. But that, I suppose, is human nature.

My wife, and I, and my brother-in-law went back home, myself keeping the rear in sullenness.

"You and your wonderful brother would never be satisfied even if I found a house for you in Paradise" I said in vexation, after my brother-in-law had left. "You might well have requested your dear, all-knowing, brother to find a house for us" I said irritably.

"Of course I would have, if you had not been making a show of finding one yourself" she said.

My dear brother-in-law trudged the streets of Madras for another seven mornings and evenings, covering another seven hundred miles, only to tell us finally that, all considered, we might, for the present, occupy the house, I had selected, and see later, if one better could not be found.

Next issue—'House Shifting'.

Clara Calling!

(P. P. SAMUEL.)

It was one of those bright evenings when I could almost hear my red corpuscles sing as they paddled merrily down the rippling crimson streams. The air was as fresh as at the creation and nature pulled me out of my diggings. I walked jauntily along the lovers' path on the Marina and paused near the aquarium to sniff in the ozone.

"Hi," shouted somebody behind me.

"Yes, Dear," said I, from force of habit.

"Ha-ha-ha. That's rum," said the same voice.

I turned round and saw a perky little sparrow on the hedge winking and nodding at me like mad.

"Evening, sparrow," I said in the chummiest tone.

"Clara," she corrected, and forthwith burst into song.

Oh! sit here just a tick and watch
The bucks in ties and socks to match,
In blue blazers and college crests,
Brass buttons and patch pockets,
Silk handkerchiefs, side whiskers,
Parker pens and swell nippers,
Silks and tweeds in double breast,
Faces clammy with 'snow' and sweat.

"The metre, Clara,....." I interrupted.

"Shut up! and behave yourself," she snorted, with a peevish jerk of her little head.

I shut up and behaved myself. The songster gave tongue.

And pants that are loose beyond rules,
'American,' they say, poor fools.
The pointed toes and fancy shirts,
And College girls who come to flirt.

"How goes that?"

"Iambic tetrametre with a kink in its tail," I replied. "Well, Clara, you must read some healthy prosody."

"Have you read 'The Craft of the Poet' by Felkin?"

"No, but I read Pope."

"Or 'Lessons in Verse Craft' by Ford?"

"No."

"And I will give you another tip, old girl. Read the Rhymes of the Times in the Evening News."

"Righto, old son. But look here, have you ever seen a martyr?"

I informed her I was only 22 and that the last of the martyrs had been cremated 400 years before.

"Tripe!" she sneered. "There goes one."

I looked out in vain for a gnarled man with a grim rat-trap mouth, two months'



stubble on his face and eyes rolling heavenward. Helpless I turned to Clara.

"That's the buck," she jerked out, flourishing her tiny beak towards a young man in a gaudy tie, socks to match, and shoes with toes like a diagonal scale. "Look at his absurd shoes and how he toddles in them. I am blowed if I know how he squeezes his feet into those thingummies. Poor Devil!"

I too was wondering how he could compress his tarsus, metatarsus and phalanges, all at once, into the narrow wedges he called shoes. Clara divined my thoughts. "The poor fish," she went on, "was probably working hard with a horn from three to five. And how he suffers now for his sins! Look at the heterogeneous paste of Hazeline Snow, Cuticura Powder and sweat on his face! A true blue martyr to foolery and fashion."

And there's a chap in thick woollies.
Hey, lad! it is hundred degrees!

"And there is a third: the other sex this time," she continued, indicating a sleeveless dark girl whose only aim in life seemed to be the tucking away of her bony elbows and ebony arms in the folds of her sarree. The poet grew more poetical.

Jackets with sleeves of sleevelessness,
Chi! Cha!! they give me biliousness.

"A nice Heroic Couplet, minus a foot, though! Now your martyrs apart, do you talk poetry always?"

"No, I sing," she expostulated.

"Always?"

"When the Bluebells....."

"Shut up!" I groaned. "Poetry doesn't pay."

"It pays me," the warbler retorted. "I got a bran-new husband just this morning. How he loves to hear me sing!"

A new hubby have I, pip, pip,
Oh he is such a ripping rip!
A bran-new one, a bran-new one,
A beautiful son of a gun!



"Cut out that rot and go and pick up a few worms, thou sluggard," I shouted, and binged a brick at her.

"Wide ball," she laughed, and resumed her ditty.

What care have I on this wide earth?
Nothing can cause me dire distress.
My belly, sir, I tell the truth,
Is full as Trivandrum Express.

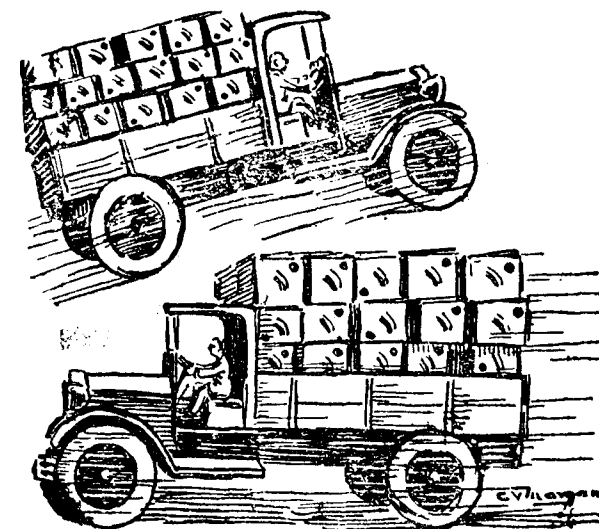
.....
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A bran-new one, a bran-new one,
A beautiful son of a gun!

"May I have a look at your Prince Charming?" I asked.

"Afraid not. He tells me he doesn't venture out on Thursdays when the orchestra plays jazz on the Radio."

"Jazz?"

"That's the muck. Don't know that? Do you know how the water comes down at Lodore? Rest easy! Can you imagine a Ford lorry laden with empty petrol tins? And another on the same lines? That's good. Now close your eyes, prick up your ears and imagine the two lorries playing leap-frog on top gear. That is Jazz, my lad."

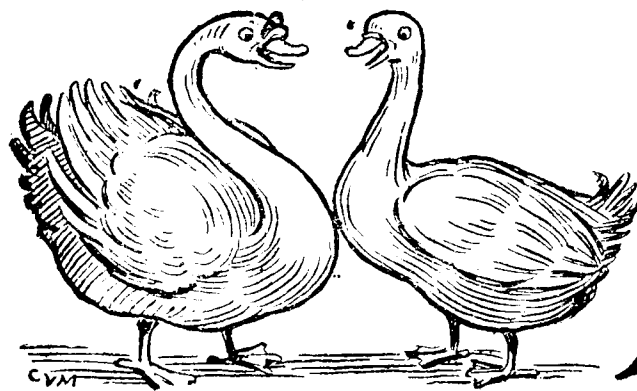


I was preparing to close my eyes and..... "Madr-r-ras Cor-r-r-oration Calling," said an angel from the blue. Probably a sainted Scot. "The next item is Kissable, Kissable You, by Ezekiel's orchestra." And the game of leap-frog began.

"Did you say 'two' or 'twenty'? I asked Clara. But she had disappeared.

"Hi, I am here. Wait a minute," said Clara's voice, from deep down in the dense casuarina hedge. I waited, and she popped out when 'Kissable, Kissable You' had become just an unpleasant memory. But Clara wasn't her old self: she seemed to be thinking hard. There she was, on the casuarina hedge, her perky little head cocked at a thoughtful angle, the tiny beak half open and her brow knit in thought.

"Bless my spirit and soul and body!" she suddenly gasped. "I must buzz off home now. To tell you the truth I have forgotten to lay my egg. So long!"



SENSE & NONSENSE

"Who can see the sense of robbing Peter to pay Paul?" asks a politician.

Why, Paul of course.

"The pipe is the diplomatist's greatest strength because it has to be smoked slowly," says M. Herriot, the famous French Minister.

Dr. Johnson defined a cigar as 'fire at one end and a fool at the other.'

"All of us in this country (England) have become accustomed to living extremely well," says Lord Chesham.

Yes; 'upon others.'

The British Post Office handled last year 6,540,000,000 letters, 158,000,000 parcels, 48,000,000 telegrams, and 4,620,000 wireless licenses."

"A whole town in Tanganyika has been destroyed by rats, which first destroyed the cotton crop and then invaded the town in such numbers that the inhabitants had to vacate it."

If the inhabitants would consent to pay his fee in advance, the Pied Piper of Hamelin may be persuaded to look into the matter.

The rearing of budgerigars, the beautifully coloured Australian love-birds, is among the hobbies of H. M. The King-Emperor.

"Hiking has not done us any benefit," says a writer.

What about the boom in the walking-stick manufacturing industry?

'Reading while travelling' has recently been investigated, and it was found that in a tram-car the speed of reading was decreased by twelve per cent and in a bus by fifty per cent."

Whereas we guess that in a South Indian Railway train it would work out at somewhere about a hundred per cent.

The absent-minded professor was busy in his study. "Have you seen this?" said his wife entering. "There is a report in the paper of your death."

"Is that so?" returned the professor without looking up. "We must remember to send a wreath."

Twins are so rare an occurrence among the natives of Uganda that their arrival is made the occasion of a feast.

Birth-control enthusiasts will please note.

"Income-tax is only six pence in the pound in the Island of Jersey, the budget of which favoured spot showed a surplus of £ 45,000 last year."

We beg to bring this to the kind attention of Surchargo Schuster.

It would take fifty bodies of the size of the Moon to form one mass as big as our Earth.

A Budapest coppersmith named Ladislaus Koerli-Klein was recently rescued from the Danube, into which he had jumped from the Margaret Bridge. This was his twenty first attempt at suicide.

Ladislaus had twice before jumped into the Danube, had cut arteries, thrown himself in front of an electric tram-car and taken poison. But he has always escaped death.

"Lumbago indicates that a man suffers from poorness of blood," says a medical book.

Or from a wife who insists on having the house-floor swept clean.

When one of the earlier plays of Bernard Shaw was being staged, a cantankerous member of the audience sitting next to the author remarked that the play was utter nonsense. The House, however, cheered it to the echo, when Shaw had his revenge by observing to the detractor "Yes sir, I agree with you that the whole thing is tripe but what are we two against so many?"

Believe it or not, Ripley reports the case of a man who can read with his eyes shut. Evidently a born editor.

The gum-chewing championship of the United States was recently won by a hero from Indianapolis who negotiated 110 sticks of the favourite American delicacy. In the matter of actual eating, the English have never been a whit behind the Americans. It is recorded of one banquet, given by Henry VIII that the guests started the first course at five in the afternoon and finished the last at three next morning.

When King Edward was Prince of Wales, he met an American in Paris who asked him to have a drink. The Prince politely refused.

The American said, "Sir, I come from a country where every man is his own king. You are only a prince. In the name of 80,000,000 kings I command you to drink with me."

This tickled the Prince so much that he at once sat down and had a drink with one of the 80,000,000 kings!

Tit-Bits.

Some men are like gramophones—they talk a good deal but never say anything original.

An actor says he has a dog which watches a hole for hours waiting for something to come out. Married men who go shopping with their wives will know what this means.

A clergyman noticed a new face among his congregation and went forward to welcome the young woman after the service. If you give me your name and address," he said, "I'll call and see you." "Oh! it is all right," was the reply, "I've got a young man already."

Walking into a house next door to the Police Station at Reigate, Surrey, a man helped himself to £ 300 worth of dresses from the bedrooms and walked out with them in two large cases past a policeman.

The policeman standing outside the house, knew nothing of the theft, which was only discovered when the occupants went to their rooms.

Persian carpets are made exclusively by hand. In a good carpet there are about ten thousand stitches to every square foot. Every stitch is made separately and afterwards clipped with the scissors and beaten down.

Insects have been on earth for 50,000,000 years while the human race is only 500,000 years old.

Here is an amusing story about George Bernard Shaw. The incident took place when Shaw visited Geneva in 1928. One evening he had finished dining at his hotel and was walking out of the dining-room when an American woman rose as he was about to pass her and fixed her gaze on him.

The great man stopped and returned the stare. The whole room watched in silence.

Then Mr. Shaw suddenly dropped his eyes, bowed and was about to pass on. "Well," said the American woman, "I won."

Krishna Rama Lunch Home.



Disgruntled luncher to waiter:—"Why have you taken so long over bringing my Bombay Jilabi."

Waiter:—"Sorry Sir but—"

Disgruntled luncher:—"I suppose you had to go to Bombay to get it."

The Shah of Persia, who has cancelled the Anglo-Persian concession, was originally a Sergeant-Major in the Persian Army, and has never been outside the borders of his own country. An example of his dominant personality was shown when he entered a mosque, unarmed, with only a single attendant, to chastise a fanatical priest who was about to attack the character of the Queen. The mosque was crowded with some ten thousand worshippers, all prepared to believe that their Holy of Holies had been desecrated and ready to take vengeance on the lady in question.

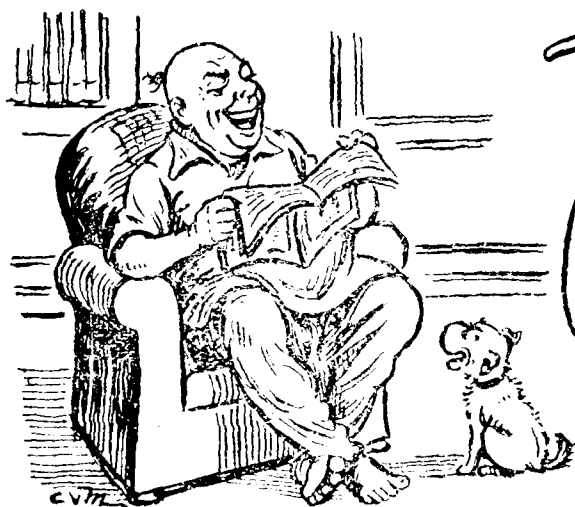
Calmly walking through the dense throng, looking neither to the

right nor the left, the Shah ascended the *dais*, and gazing upon the fanatical priest whose place he had usurped, he cried out to his attendant, "Thrash that man!" Thereupon the attendant drew a whip from his robe and thrashed the priest until he was unconscious.

The Shah descended from the pulpit, and, without turning a hair, quietly passed through the thousands of bearded and astonished worshippers.

(News of the World.)

Mr. Winston Churchill was addressing a political meeting. A man shouted "Rot, rot!" There were cries of "Chuck him out!" Said Mr. Churchill, "No, no! Let him say what is in his mind."



THE CREAM OF THE JEST

Suitor: "Ier-suppose you're aware I've been making advances to your daughter?"

Impecunious Father: "Yes, put it there, my son. And now what about poor old father?"

A smart newspaper boy was walking down the main street of the town one evening, selling his papers, when he came up to one of the big shopkeepers standing at the door of his shop.

"Paper, sir?" he asked.

"No!" replied the man abruptly.

"Local footballer shot!" said the boy. Then the other fairly tore his hair in his excitement.

"Give me a paper, quick!" he said, holding out a penny. "Local footballer shot, did you say?"

"Yes," replied the boy, moving away, "but he didn't score!"

A Jew and an Englishman were having an argument about the ways of their respective races.

"You people" said the Jew, "have been taking things from us, all your lives. The Ten Commandments, for instance."

"Well, yes," said the other, "we took them from you all right, but you can't say we have kept them."

A young couple who were just married received many presents after establishing their home in a suburb. One morning they received two theatre-tickets, with a note which read, "Guess, who sent these?"

On the appointed evening they went to the theatre, returning very late. To their astonishment, they found that all valuable things in the house had been carried away. On a table in the dining-room they found this note: "Now, you know."

"The world's a small place," said the bore, "For instance, last year in Paris I met a man who lives in the next road to me. Later I met him in Venice, next in Rome, again in Alexandria, and finally I crossed the Channel with him."

"Why on earth didn't you pay him what you owed him in the first place?" asked the man in the corner.

Verger:—"Friend of the Bride or Bridegroom, Sir?"

Guest:—"Quite neutral; I'm not taking sides."

The village magician stopped to the front of the stage of the local hall.

"Will the gentleman in the front row kindly lend me his hat for the purpose of the next trick?" he asked. The gentleman in question shook his head and clutched his hat firmly in his hands.

"Not until you return the lawn-mower, you borrowed from me last summer," he replied indignantly.

Office Manager:—"I'm afraid you are ignoring our efficiency system, Jones."

Jones:—"Perhaps sir, but somebody has got to get the work done."

Smart Youth (rocking the boat):—"Bet I can scare you".

Modern girl (calmly):—"Once before a boy tried that and the boat upset."

S. Y.:—And what did you do?

M. G.:—I swam ashore and notified the coroner.

"I am here, gentleman, explained the pickpocket, "as the result of a moment of abstraction."

"And I," said the incendiary, "because of an unfortunate habit of making light of things."

"And I," chimed in the forger, "on account of a simple desire to make a name for myself."

"And I," added the burglar, "through nothing but taking advantage of an opening which offered in a large mercantile establishment."

But here the warden separated them.

"The death of her husband must have been a dreadful blow to Mrs. Muscale."

"It was, indeed."

"I suppose she has given up her piano-playing entirely."

"No; she still plays; but only on the black keys."

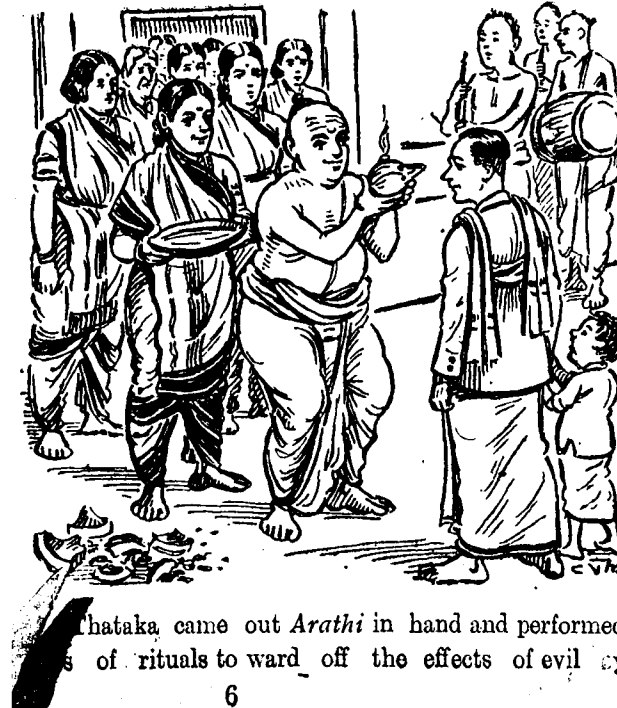
FULL CIRCLE

(S. RAMASUBRAHMANYAM B. A.,)

"The country cart passed slowly along the dusty street. Far away in the distant temple, the bells were chiming the hour of Pooja and the reverberations could be heard very faintly. But the bells round the bullock's collars jingled merrily summoning the eager to a first-rate spectacle just as the Muezzin summons the devout to prayers five times a day. The response was instantaneous. There came out from the houses a large number of widows and a larger number of children. Whispers went round and in a minute the news of the advent of Subbier's son-in-law was flashed from one end of the street to the other. Science has placed within our reach the telephone and the telegraph. But in the villages where these devices have not yet penetrated, the quickest means of communication still remains the woman."

Subbier's household in the meanwhile was all agog. Mrs. Subbier was running hither and thither humming a mangalam tune. A rickety young girl piped out 'Athi is coming,' and the aged mother of Subbier was about to rush out to receive the new comer when Mrs. Subbier yelled out in a high pitched voice, "Blast the crony, let not a widow's face greet my son-in-law when he crosses this threshold." The old woman smarted under the insult but was powerless to resent it. Drawing the folds of her saree closer and fully over her bald head she retired muttering heaps of names *sotto voce* of course.

The cart drew up at Subbier's and out jumped a handsome youth dressed in the latest fashion followed by an urchin who was all grins like a Cheshire cat. Subbier received his son-in-law with open arms.



Thataka came out Arathi in hand and performed a series of rituals to ward off the effects of evil eyes.

Thereafter, Sundaram entered the house amidst the loud beat of drums and the sonorous music of the piper.

"Namaskaram, Subbanna," cried out Kittu Sastri with folded hands. "Your son-in-law has come for the Diwali? The boy is handsome and good-looking and if I read his face correctly, is destined to become great."

Kittu Sastri was the village astrologer. He had a large family to support but was not able to make his way thanks to want of tact. If only he knew how to play on the credulity of people, he would be making a fortune.

Subbier was sitting on the pial of his house with a downcast face deeply immersed in thought. Already he was involved in debts to the tune of Rs. 1500 and was possibly planning ways and means to disentangle himself. But Kittu's stentorian voice roused him up from his brown study.

"Come on Kittu, take your seat and help yourself," Subbier said and pushed the betel box towards Sastri.

"Yes Kittu," Subbier went on while Sastri was engaged in emptying the contents of the *pan supari* box. "He has come for the Diwali. This, you will remember is the first Diwali after his marriage. He has appeared for the Services Commission Examination. May I know what the result will be?"

"Mention a number less than 108."

"Hundred and twenty two," roared out the young son of Subbier who had come there at his father's behest to fill the *pan supari* box.

"Your boy is an *enfant terrible*. A devil of the first water. Damn him" said Kittu with a smile playing on his face and then he proceeded to make his calculations.

"122 is 120+2 which means that Jupiter is in Leo winking at Mars in Aries. The result may not be so satisfactory. Yet there need be no concern. Let him but pass his B.L. and I shall not scruple to consign my astrological books to the fire, should he not make a second Mani Iyer."

But Subbier was not to be so easily consoled. To him the charms of Government Service were irresistible. As the number his son had given was greater than 108, he hoped against hope that his son-in-law would come out successful in the examination and would also be appointed a Tahsildar before long.

Kittu Sastri easily read what passed in the mind of Subbier and so at once changed the topic of conversation. "Your daughter's horoscope is very excellent. Four planets are in the zenith and she is assured of an enviable future. By the way how does the boy....."

"Yes, he loves Kamalam with all his heart. For her marriage I spent Rs. 2000 more than was originally estimated but I did not mind because I felt assured that Kamala's life in her lord's home would be comfortable. You may remember that at the marriage *nalangu* he rolled the coconut with immense enthusiasm and whenever Kamala finished a song he asked for one more."

"Well that depends upon the old crony and her husband. Sundaram may love his wife. But they could not be expected to take to their daughter-in-law kindly, especially Sundaram's mother. That wretched woman comes of a wretched family and surely blood will tell. We cannot easily forget how they showed themselves in their true colours at the time of the marriage. Did they not on the fourth day of the celebration rise up in arms simply because among the *Idlis* served at breakfast, one happened to be only half-baked and they calmed down only after two more silk cloths were purchased for their son. But after all....."

"Why Kittu, what do we care about all that? I am certain that when Sundaram settles in life, the very first thing, he will do, will be to turn them out," observed Subbier filling his nostrils with a pinch of snuff while Kittu Sastri laughed in his sleeve.

"Anyway, I shall ask Sundaram" continued Subbier, "to celebrate the nuptials in a couple of months and then it shall not be long before the old hag will go on her knees before my daughter imploring her forgiveness for her past misdeeds."

The Diwali was celebrated with great *eclat*. Sundaram and Kamalam were the recipients of valuable gifts from their relatives, while the mischievous Ramanathan played his pranks to the great amusement of the young pair.

A couple of days later, Sundaram set off for Madras. It must be stated that he left the place with a heavy heart. To him Kamalam's company was paradise itself and he had made up his mind to have the nuptials celebrated before long.

But the purpose faded away from his mind when he reached Madras. He attended college as usual and spent the evenings in the theatres or at the Triplicane Beach.

Subbier wrote a letter gently reminding him of the nuptials scheme. Thereupon Sundaram carried on a protracted correspondence with his parents. The result of it all was the following ultimatum to Subbier.

"I have carefully considered your suggestion. My parents have also been consulted. Having regard to the present state of my family and in view of the fact that I have to study for a year more at the College, I have to state that the celebration could be arranged only if you remit a thousand rupees. Otherwise farewell for good. Sundaram."

Subbier was beside himself with fury. "Heaven help us!" he cried out, "Could not this benign Govern-

ment give statutory protection to us and save us from avaricious *Sambhandis* and unkind sons-in-law. Oh! Let Sarda live and more Sardas step into his boots."

It did not take long for Subbier to realise that fretting and fuming would be of little avail. He showed the letter to his dear wife, and was not prepared for that lady's remarks.



"What if they make a demand?" she observed, "We can sell the piece of land lying adjacent to the Siva Temple and then besides clearing off old debts we can celebrate the function to the *Sambhandi's* satisfaction."

Subbier could only wish for one more Sarda to save husband from their wives. But he very much doubted if even he would be able to step outside the line marked by his better half.

"All this trouble could have been avoided....." murmured Subbier.

"Yes" roared Mrs. Subbier, "if you had thrust Kamalam into a well or married her to Vembu the cook, or Muthu the hotel attendant. It costs much to be the wife of an advocate."

Subbier thought silence the better part of argument and so held his tongue. Every Hindu household is a petticoat institution. The *Grahini* is all in all within the four walls of the house. The irony of it is that woman are called *Abalas*.

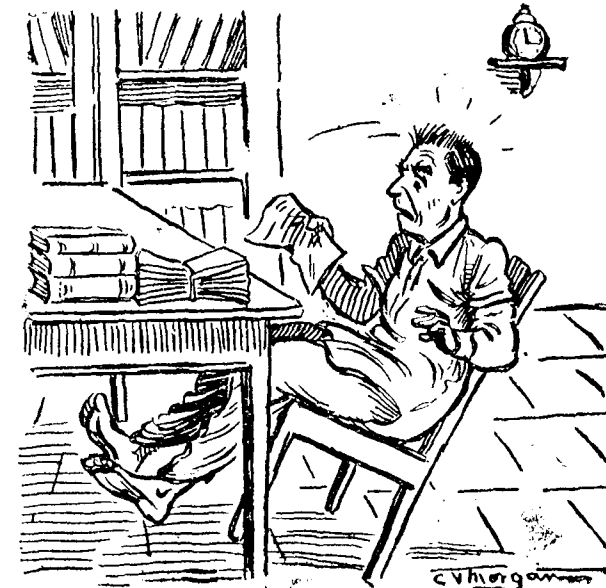
Subbier accepted his wife's counsel as he had no alternative. Three acres of fertile land that had fed generations after generations of Subbier's ancestors from time immemorial and which were worth Rs. 10000, were sold to a Nattukottai Chettiar for Rs. 4000. The debts incurred at the time of Kamala's marriage and which were rapidly accumulating in amount were repaid. Kamala's nuptials too were celebrated on a very grand scale. It must, however, be stated that Sundaram's

parents were not satisfied. Their greed knew no bounds and they would remain unsatisfied with Kalpatharu, Kamadhenu and Kausthuba.

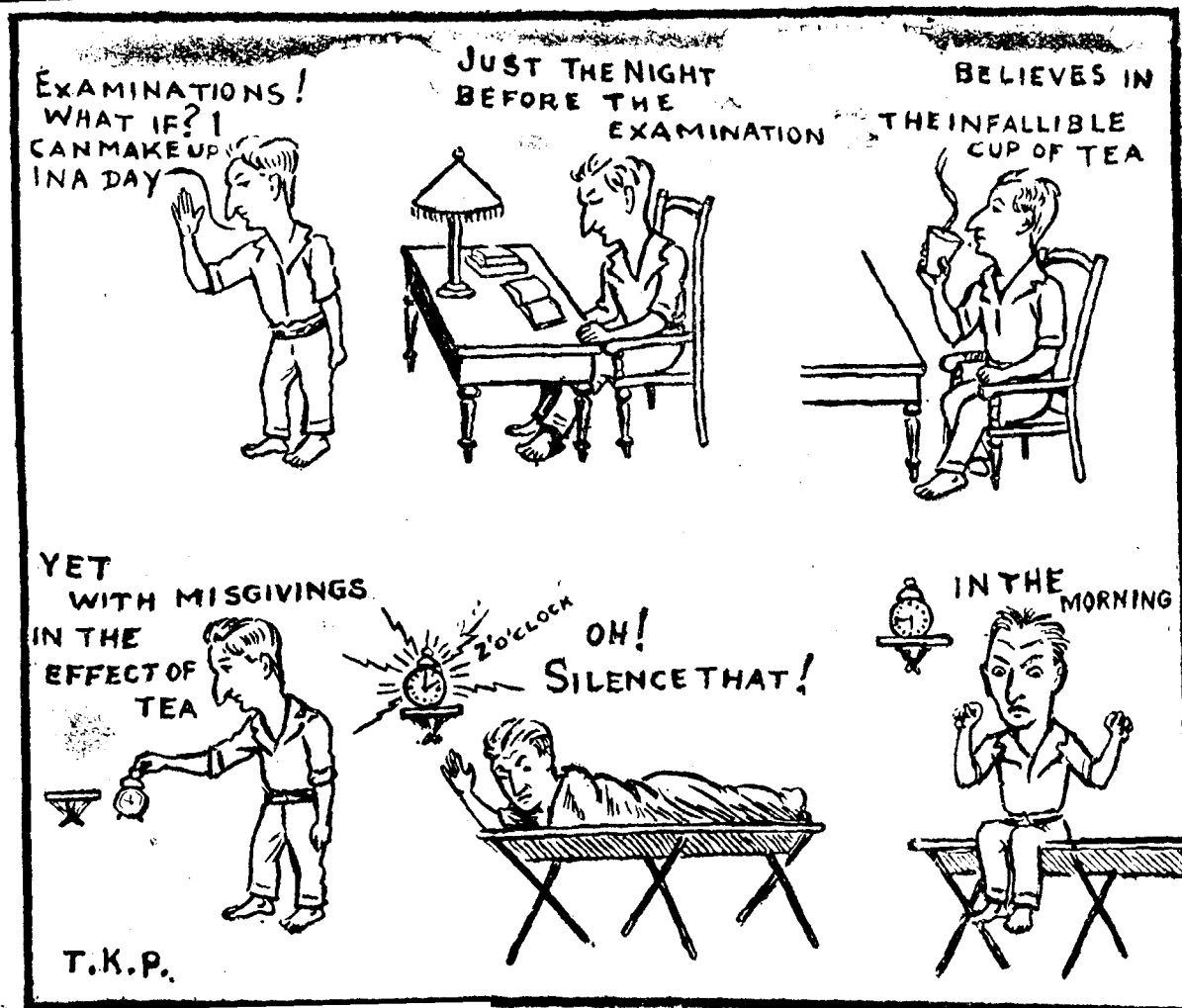
Sixteen years have rolled by since these incidents took place. Sundaram is now an advocate of 14 years' standing. He is practising in a mofussil town. Time has belied Kittu Sastri's predictions, for Sundaram has not been able to make his way in the profession. Commanding as he does a very narrow clientele, he is able to eke out only a hand to mouth existence. But God has blessed him with plenty of children. He has four daughters and three sons. The daughters are all of marriageable age. Radha is 15, Lakshmi is 13, Subbu is 11, Chinnu 9. To celebrate the marriage of each separately would cost him much. Why, in his present impecunious position he would have to borrow money even for celebrating all the marriages together. And then again he would have to wait till Chinnu passes the minimum age prescribed by the Sarda Act. By that time his other daughters would have become too old for *Kanyakadhanam*. He will gladly sell away his daughters to affluent old men but his wife stands in the way. So poor Sundaram is now sailing in the ocean of poverty and wavering between the Scylla of Government prosecution and the Charybdis of social ostracism.

One day while he was brooding over domestic difficulties and busy devising plans for a bridegroom-hunt the postman handed him a letter.

"Mappilai," it read, "you have been served in turn. Your affectionate brother-in-law, Ramanathan."



"Sundaram might well have exclaimed, 'This is the unkindest cut of all.' But he did not. Instead he fell down unconscious, not a word escaping his lips."



OUR CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

(By "A. B. C.")

Letter to "The Daily Wire" dated 22-10-32.

SIR, Your readers will be interested to learn that I am writing a life of that great National Hero, Dewan Sahib Kalimulla Sahib Bahadur. I am approaching you and your readers in that connection. Will you or any of your readers please write and tell me exactly what comment he made in the second para of the momentous interview that took place between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. George Slocombe on the 12th August 1929? As a lot of controversy centred round the incident, I want to gather all the facts but cannot find this in any printed book.

B. K. BUX.

Letter to the same dated 23-10-32.

SIR, The gentleman collecting facts about Dewan Sahib Kalimulla Sahib's life has misstated the date on which the interview between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. G. Slocombe took place. It was on the 13th March 1929 and not on the 12th Aug 1929, as stated by him.

"HISTORICUS."

Letter dated 23-10-32.

SIR, Your readers must be interested to know that Mr. Slocombe never visited India in 1929 at all. Consequently no such interview as Mr. Bux refers to, could have taken place in that year.

"POLITICUS"

Letter to "The Daily wire" dated 24-10-32.

SIR, I am interested to learn that the text of the interview between Mr. Slocombe and Mahatma Gandhi has a second paragraph. In my copy, there are no paragraphs at all; it is all in one mass, unbroken into paras.

"INTERESTED."

Letter dated 25th Oct, 1929.

SIR, Dewan Sahib Kalimulla Sahib's comments on the Gandhi-Slocombe interview are to be found in Messrs. Subbiah Naidu & Sons' publication called "The Round Table Conference." Mr. B. K. Bux can refer to it with profit.

"DISINTERESTED."

Letter dated 26th Oct, 1929.

SIR, Dewan Sahib Kalimulla Sahib was too busy in non-political work to bother much about Mahatma Gandhi and his interviews. To the best of my knowledge, he never commented on any para of such interview.

"PRO BONO PUBLICO."

Letter dated 27-12-32.

SIR, Messrs. Subbiah Naidu & Sons have issued no such publication called "The Round Table Conference." The title is not found in their catalogue.

"BOOK-LOVER"

Letter dated 28-12-32.

SIR, Who is Kalimulla Sahib? What are his claims to be called a "National Hero?"

"NATIONALIST."

Letter dated 29-12-32.

SIR, There is no publishing concern called "Subbiah Naidu & Sons." Probably "Disinterested" meant the brickmaking company of that name.

"INTERESTED."

Letter dated 30-12-32.

SIR, Will you or any of your readers kindly write and tell me what was the comment made by Dewan Sahib Kalimulla Sahib Bahadur on the 2nd paragraph of the Gandhi-Slocombe interview?

B. K. BUX.

Letter to "The Daily wire" of same date.

SIR, The gentleman who wants to know who Khalimulla Sahib is and what his claims to be called a "National Hero" are, must go back to his school and learn his History afresh.

"KALIMULLA SAHIB—ITE."

Letter dated 2-1-33.

SIR, "KALIMULLA SAHIB-ITE" need not be so high and mighty about it. The Sahib wasn't such a big and important man that every schoolboy must necessarily know about him. Also, his "Social work" can only be described as toady-ism of the worst sort.

"ANOTHER NATIONALIST."

Letter to "The Daily Wire" dated 3-1-33.

SIR, Will you or any of your readers kindly write and tell me what exactly was the comment made by Khalimulla Sahib Bahadur on the 2nd para of the Gandhi-Slocombe interview? The writing progress of my "Life" is being stayed by want of this information.

B. K. BUX.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY WIRE."
"This correspondence will now cease."

Edgar Wallace's Many Roles

Famous author for the nonce turns tipster.

Mr. Robert G. Curtis who was one of the famous novelist's most loyal friends and who acted as his secretary for a long period tells the following story of Edgar Wallace in "Edgar Wallace—Each Way."

At one time, when he was writing the racing column for a well-known journal he struck a more than usually barren patch. It lasted so long without showing any signs of improvement that I began to wonder whether Wallace had lost his skill or was suffering from an unprecedented dearth of ideas.

"Bob," he said one morning, "Why shouldn't I be a tipster?"

I had thought of pointing out as a reason why he should not, that the number of winners among the horses he tipped in his racing column was negligible. But I remembered that no tipster would consider lack of winners among his tips a disqualification for his business; and contented myself with expressing the opinion that, if the tipster's business was intended as a money-making project, writing a story would doubtless prove far more remunerative.

"I've got an idea," said Edgar, his eyes alight with excitement. "Joe Austin" was not the actual name under which Wallace chose to carry on his tipping venture, but it will

serve. Not many days later some thousands of persons who were interested in racing received a circular letter from one Joe Austin, setting out in glowing terms the qualifications which entitled Joe to this confident patronage, and the prospects which were theirs if they had vision enough to follow, and, of course, pay for his advice.

Joe, it appeared, was in the habit of receiving last minute information from sources of unimpeachable reliability concerning the winners of certain races. He was to receive one such tit-bit next week—for a race on the Wednesday, let us say. It would be absolutely last minute information and he would not himself receive it in all probability until the morning of the race, but he undertook that to every person who forwarded to him the sum of one shilling the tip should be communicated before midday on the Wednesday.

It was a cleverly written circular with the authentic tipster's touch about it. In the subtle way which such circulars have, it somehow persuaded one against one's better judgment that Joe Austin was a man with unequalled means of securing secret information and of irreproachable integrity. I have received hundreds of tipster's circulars in my life, but I have never seen one better calculated to coax a shilling from a punter's pocket.

Wallace showed me the circular—he had spent a long time on its composition—and asked me what I thought of it; and though experience had made me a very hardened sceptic, if I had not known that Joe Austin was Edgar Wallace, in whose racing tips I had learned to place only

the very feeblest confidence, I should have handed him my shilling, ill as I could afford it, there and then.

I had only one criticism of the circular to make. Wallace, like most authors, was not incapable of making grammatical slips, and part of my duty as his secretary was to stand as a watch-dog between Wallace and the purity of the English language, and put such trifling lapses right. I never troubled to point them out to him. But he was sending the circular straight away to be duplicated without my having an opportunity to edit it, and there were two mistakes so glaring that I felt in duty bound to point them out.

"Anything wrong?" inquired Wallace, noting, I suppose, my pained expression.

I handed him the letter. "If the subject of a sentence is in the plural," I said, not, I am afraid, without a hint of superior knowledge in my manner, "it is invariably followed by a verb in the plural. See paragraph one; And in the second paragraph 'was' should be 'were'."

Wallace grinned.

"I put these mistakes in purposely," he said.

I suppose I showed my perplexity.

"Because," he explained, "Joe Austin is a genuine racing tipster. Did you ever get a letter from a racing tipster which didn't contain a mistake in grammar?"



Theatrical Manager (at a rehearsal):—"Come to the centre of the stage, won't you? What do you mean by sticking on to the wings?"

Actor:—"I am deaf in the right ear, sir. So I must have my left ear near the prompter, you see."

I was silenced. Wallace, I realised, was right. With his customary thoroughness he had made Joe Austin true to type down to the very smallest detail. The circulars despatched, we waited for the result—Wallace with his usual optimism, I with decided misgivings. Joe Austin's ungrammatical letter did the trick, letters containing coin, postal orders or a shilling's worth of stamps came pouring in, and my uneasiness increased. At length, I ventured to broach with Wallace the cause of my misgivings.

"All these people are sending you money," I said, "which they probably can't afford. They're banking on your giving them a really good tip....."

The look of reproach in Wallace's eyes made me pause.

"That's all right, Bob," he said.

"I'm not going to let them down."

"But if you've no real information to hand on to them....."

"I have," he said. "I've a good one for the big race on Wednesday. 'So-and-so'—naming a famous jockey—gave me the tip a week ago. It's the biggest certainty there's been this season, and he told me to put my shirt on it."

He waved a hand towards the pile of postal orders on the table.

"I'm giving them good value for their shillings," he said, "and they're providing me with the shirt. That's fair enough, isn't it?"

I might have known it. Wallace was incapable of being anything but fair. By the Monday morning Joe Austin's letter had brought in over £200 in shillings, and Wallace was delighted. I did not share his delight. I could not for the life of me see how the scheme was even to pay its way, let alone the handsome profit on which Wallace was counting. Each client had for-

warded only one shilling, each telegram to be despatched on the Wednesday morning would require a shilling stamp; the printing and postage of the circulars had to be paid for, and according to all the established rules of book-keeping the net result on Wednesday must inevitably be a balance on the wrong side. I did just hint at the likelihood of such a contingency, but Wallace only grinned.

On the Monday evening, I understood. That night Joe Austin posted to all his clients a second letter. It gave the name of the horse which was the "good thing" for the race on Wednesday, and stated that, as the information from the unassailably reliable source had already come to hand, Joe Austin was passing it on to his clients immediately. The tip was the biggest racing certainty of the season, and some of them might wish to indulge in ante-post betting.

Only about a dozen telegrams had to be sent to clients whose shillings arrived too late for a letter to reach them in time. The difference between the total sum received in shillings and the total expenditure on 1½d. stamps and the circulars, was roughly £200. Wallace, of course, had had it all mapped out ahead and had never intended sending telegrams.

He himself put his shirt on it. On the Tuesday he put the whole £200 on the horse in question and when, in the afternoon, I went to his study to tell him that the horse had won at six to one, he only nodded.

"Did you back it, Bob?"

I admitted to a modest bet of 10s.

"That's all right," said Edgar. "I put ten quid on for you."

Chief Counsel:—"The first thing to do is to get at the root of this trouble."

Associate Counsel:—"The root of the trouble is the late Bania's fortune."

Chief Counsel:—"Exactly, and we must get at it."



Father:—"I wonder what is wrong with my watch. Possibly it wants cleaning."

Son:—"Oh, no, dad, it is quite clean. I had it in the bath-room yesterday and thoroughly washed the works."

"When I saw her last she seemed to have fallen in love with him."

"Oh, yes, but that was sometime ago. She's suing him now for breach of promise."

"Trying to get damages for the fall, eh?"

FASTS

(L E O)

There really must be a close season for these fasts. The descent from the sublime to the ridiculous is fatally easy; speaking in terms of comparison, reaching the bottom of Mount Avernus would be as hard as riding a winner in a steeplechase. Mahatmaji fasts and a nation stands aghast; a Terence McSwiney goes on hunger-strike and the foundations of an empire almost totter in their bed of blood and concrete. But lesser mortals within the law must needs ape their betters. A Gandhi fasts because in his opinion, rightly or wrongly, our masters seek to thrust a wedge between two large sections of the people. A McSwiney deliberately chooses the slow agony of a painful dissolution because he is one of a nation rightly struggling to be free. But when a school-master fasts for the reason that his Managing Committee do not see eye to eye with him on some point of internal discipline or management, it is time that we sat up and took notice.

Sacrifice and the suffering consequent upon it, in a noble cause, is fine and enheartening. We are moved, if not to emulation, to admiration. The nobler and wider the issue involved, the greater our spontaneous meed of praise.

But pathos must not degenerate into bathos. Who come to pray must not remain to scoff. And laughter is the most potent weapon in the armoury of the sceptic and the unbeliever.

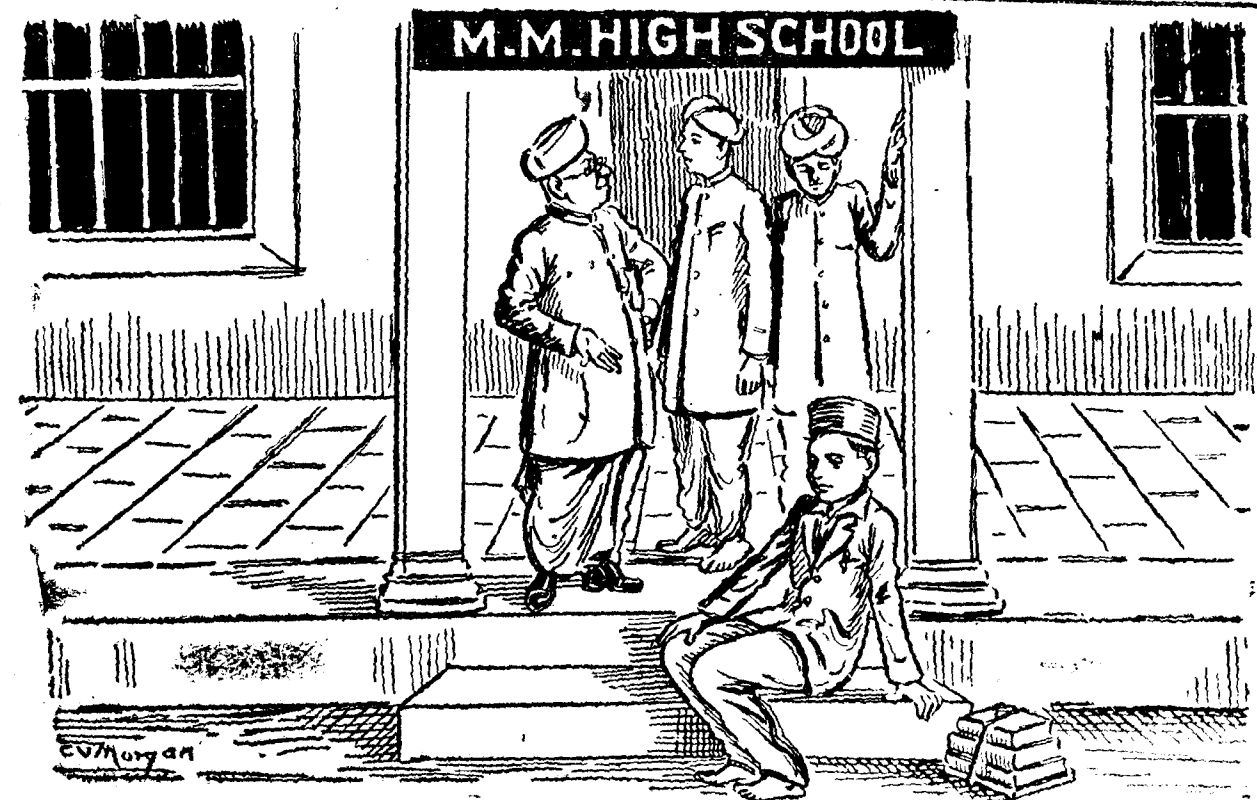
The latest performance in this line is reported in a local daily paper. An employee of the Municipal Corporation has gone on hunger-strike to force the authorities to investigate the circumstances in which he was dis-

charged from service. No doubt the unfortunate gentleman has a grievance. Whether it is real or imaginary, we do not know. Equally, no doubt, the gentleman in question has exhausted all other possible methods of redress. But it is easy to imagine the absurd lengths one can go to, in the adoption of this method; which has now lost even the charm of novelty. If a batsman in a cricket match is given out lbw. by the umpire, and if the batsman thinks, as he usually does, that he has been umpired out, he fasts. To make his fast more spectacular, he must take his place at the table where the two teams are luncheon together, preferably next to the offending umpire, refuse every dish offered to him, meanwhile looking steadily at his neighbour, with a look of mute reproach.

Or again, if a lawyer, engaged in speaking before a Judge, is pulled up by the latter for wandering from the point or indulging in the familiar irrelevancies, the lawyer strikes—we mean he hunger-strikes. He won't eat a morsel of food till the Judge withdraws his remarks and permits him to go on talking about nothing in particular and at great length.

Turn, for instance, to a clerk or stenographer in an office. If the boss points out that his typewriting is not done with the usual neatness, the indignant key-tapper straightaway goes on a fast. It would be more effective if he commenced it during the tiffin interval. He must post himself at the front door of the office or preferably in front of a nearby Lunch Home and look at his fellow clerks going in, with pained disgust.

And so on, ad libitum.



The unpromoted student goes on hunger-strike.

The Applicant

(KALYAN)

(The characters and situations in this story are wholly imaginary.)

PUBLICITY is not properly understood in this country; otherwise, the world would have heard of Subbarayan by this time. He is a record-holder: not in channel-swimming, or non-stop dancing, or cocktail drinking no, none of these common things. His is a special line. He is known to put in an average of 19 hours of sleep per day; and 21 hours on holidays (?) is not unusual. Kumbakarna is said to be the originator of the stunt; 'the fat boy' in 'Pickwick Papers' appears to have been a humble follower of this cult; and our Subbarayan, who is neither mythological like the first nor fictitious like the second but a solid reality, is the latest and best exponent of this art.

S. is a temporary clerk at the collectorate at T He is a fat, jovial fellow, who takes things as they come—especially eatables. But his knack lies, as already mentioned, in his capacity to fall asleep anywhere and anywhen. You have only to ignore him for two minutes..... and he will fall asleep in whatever posture he be. He does not make any exception when he is in the office. He sleeps practically all the time. His fellow clerks, however, so love him that they do his work for him, and nobody is the wiser.

One day, when he was 'busy at his work', he had a dream. He was unemployed and going round in search of a job. He was on the verge of tears due to repeated disappointments when suddenly his attention was drawn by a newsboy who was shouting that Swaraj had come. That put new hope in Subbarayan. He believed, along with many others, that under Swaraj no mouth would go unfed. Still, to make sure that his mouth not only got a feed, but a good feed, he hurried towards the Congress Office. Then, a better idea struck him; and he took the next train and went to the city where Mahatma Gandhi was in camp. The rush had not yet begun; and in a few minutes, he was standing before the Mahatma, bowing respectfully.

G:—Yes?

S:—May it please you, Sir, I want an appointment. I am a family man, Sir,

G:—What sort of appointment? Spinner? Weaver?

S:—Clerical, Sir.

G:—What are your qualifications for an appointment under the Swaraj Government?

S:—I am an S. S. L. C. failed, Sir, and

G (Smiling):—I don't mean that. Did you take any part in the struggle for Swaraj?

S:—I am afraid not, Sir.

G:—Then I am also afraid

S:—Due to family circumstances, Sir,

G:—Others had their families!

S:—I didn't realise, Sir, I was very young, Sir,

G:—Do you think the *vanarsenas* were bearded Grand-fathers?

S:—No, Sir, But

G (Smiling):—Yes? 'But?' Go on

S (Looking sheepish):—Nothing, Sir.

G (Smiling):—I thought so!

A happy idea strikes Subbarayan and he smiles brightly.

G:—What's it now?

S:—I only wanted to plead that I was doing my bit, Sir, but in a different manner.

G:—That's more encouraging. Let's hear about it.

S:—I was in temporary service, Sir, at the time; and I am glad to say that I was practising obstructive tactics in a novel form. I used to go to office everyday and sleep practically all the time. If I had non-co-operated and stayed out, somebody else would have filled my place and turned out a man's work. Don't you think mine was by far the better plan, Sir? 'Keep in and obstruct'. If all Government servants had followed my example, in three days,

G (Angrily):—You are not ashamed of your conduct?

S (Looking woebegone):—I thought you would be pleased, Sir?

G:—Disgraceful! Unmanly! Snake in the grass!

S:—Spare me, please spare me! The fact is

G (Severely):—Yes?

S (Shame-faced):—I thought of this only just now. Sir, prompted by want. I used to sleep as a matter of habit and colleagues and bosses who liked me used to overlook it. They laughingly used to say that judges sleep during arguments; and my head-clerk nicknamed me 'Chief Justice'!

G (Laughing heartily):—Oh, good! I am afraid that I have no job for you now, but when a vacancy occurs, I will appoint you Lord Chief Justice!

Subbarayan's heart so thumped with joy that he woke up with a start to hear his head-clerk say, 'Wake up Chief Justice, we are closing the office!'

BALA, THE BAD WOMAN

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY DEISVI

II



He patted me on the back, reassuringly.

Synopsis of the First Instalment.

(Bala receives a rude shock when for the first time she sees, just a day before her marriage, her prospective husband, who, to quote her own words, was "older than her father." She is unable to do anything to prevent the marriage and goes through with it, all the time devoting her attention to a beautiful baby which had attracted her considerably.)

When the marriage festivities were over, my family was invited to my husband's place in the city and we went there for a brief stay. We were rushed hither and thither to the Cinema and the Harbour, to the Zoo and the Museum and for drives on the Marina in the evenings, doing the city in proper style. But my husband was never one of the party and I was thankful for the nonce, to be spared the constant reminder of the trick which

destiny had played me. Back went we to our town and to our usual humdrum existence: at first, a constant stream of visitors poured in to hear my mother narrate the glowing details of my marriage and of the wonderful son-in-law she had got: I could not help feeling that she too often emphasised and elaborated the virtues and riches of her son-in-law, more to impress me, than to create an effect on her listeners.

But, I grow disconsolate, day by day. I wish now that in those days I had, opened out my heart fully to my mother. But I was so afraid that she might think me unappreciative and ungrateful and I nursed and kept my sorrow, all alone to myself. I allowed it to grow, and even took a selfish delight in its growth: I determined, if I could have the opportunity, to revenge myself on cruel fate.

Meanwhile, the months rolled on. My father received at regular intervals stilted letters from my husband enquiring about our welfare. I read many of these letters. At regular intervals and on occasions of importance there arrived also costly presents for me. My father invited my husband by letters and in person to come and stay with us for a couple of days at least, but, invariably, pressure of business was reported to have prevented him from doing so.

Eighteen months after my marriage, one rainy morning, much to my dismay and discomfort it was found, I had become a woman. The news was promptly flashed over the wires to my husband with the usual invitation to attend the celebrations, on the occasion, with his relations. His reply was curt and brief and came back on the wire. "Very busy. Prefer quiet celebrations. Writing." A distant relation of my husband, an old lady, later on, put in an appearance and she brought with her yet another assortment of presents for me.

Three months later, came a letter from my husband addressed to my father, wherein, for the first time, there was a reference to me. He wanted to know when he could expect his wife to come and live with him. My husband, as I said before, was in business and I couldn't refrain from thinking that having contracted a deal and liberally paid for it, he wanted the goods to be delivered and himself to come into possession. My mother and father were discussing the details while I, pleading a headache, retired to the bedroom and lying on the bed was crying my heart out, when my mother came in and found me.

"There, there, dear child! Why all this crying? Haven't I told you a thousand times that a girl's place is by her husband and some day or other you will have to forget us and live only for your husband. And such a good, nice, rich husband you have got!"

"Mother, I am I don't like him," I blurted out.

"Sh! Never say that my dear, nor think that way. It is wrong: sinful. The Gods gave him to you and you have to like, love and worship him. Now, what is wrong with him? Tell me."

"Oh mother, Have you no eyes?"

"A very good pair, my dear, and clear ones at that. I am your mother, remember that, and though I haven't read and can't read books, I have seen a great deal of the real world which you can never find in books. A husband my dear, must first of all be able to feed, clothe and shelter his wife: if he can do all these well, and adorn her also, well and good. If he is in addition to all these, God-fearing and cultured, no woman need ask more of him and she may thank her stars as well. What

if your husband is a bit aged? Isn't that a safeguard that he won't go gallivanting after other women? And, how many of these young husbands I pray, are straight and true? Don't they pawn the last screw on their wives to satisfy their mad pursuit of pleasure and then drive the wives away to their parents? Think child, think well, before you condemn the man. Go and try to live with him: free yourself from prejudices and if you find my estimate of the man incorrect, then come and tell me that I had not kept your happiness before me and call me a fool!"

"Mother, I don't mean it. Don't I know how much you love me? But if you were with me, it would be different. But to live all alone with him ah, I am so afraid!"

"Tush, tush, my dear, these are silly fears. Why, as a young kid you were never afraid of even ghost stories and *Poochandies*. You were so brave: so learned: you used to tell me stories from a big book about brave Indian Women about Padmini, Mira Bai and others. And you say you are afraid of a good, steady husband!"

"If he were only not my husband, I won't be afraid."

"What a proposition! Now, why should you be afraid?"

"I don't know."

"Do you call that sense?"

"I suppose not."

"It is childish. There is no meaning in it and you with your books and your learning and your age, you are still a child—my darling child! Do you remember, during your marriage you wanted me to stay always by your side, and I suppose for your nuptials you would want me somewhere near at hand? Oh, naughty, naughty Bala! Oh, my ju-ju baby!" So saying and kissing me, she made me lie down and lying by my side told me in low whispering tones, how she felt when her nuptials were being discussed by her parents, and how her fears were found to be groundless after all, about her girlhood, the petty misunderstandings between herself and my father, the coming of her first-born and the happiness he brought into the family, of his passing away in his fifth year and,—it was now my turn to console her!

The correspondence that later on passed between my father and my husband was somewhat strained. My parents had received so much of kindness from my husband—presents and the like—that they felt that the nuptials should be celebrated on an imposing and lavish scale, and, as was the custom, they being allowed to defray the expenses. They wanted to buy me a lot of costly things, invite all the relations and get up a good show. "Write to him," my mother said to my father, "that we have only one daughter and that if these things are not done as they should be, people will talk. And say also that he shouldn't deny us the pleasure."

My father wrote interminably long letters. But the replies were brief and to the point; "I beg of you to respect my wishes in this matter. On an auspicious day kindly bring your daughter over to this place. I am not having any religious or social function. I would be

obliged if you and your wife can stay with me for such time as your daughter gets used to her new surroundings. I shall explain everything personally." My parents were sorely disappointed. I wonder if they even grew a little apprehensive. "He is a funny kind of man," was all that my father could say. It was my lot to realise by and by, 'how funny' the man really was.

To make a final and last appeal my father proceeded to Madras, to see his son-in-law and to seek his consent for the celebration of the nuptials with pomp and ceremony. He came back sad and disappointed. Soon after his return, my mother was closetted with him for long and when they both came out, their faces looked glum and serious.

"Bala, dear," my mother said, taking me inside, "You are our only daughter and we had planned to send you to your husband's home, fitted with all the equipment necessary. Your husband is a rich man, as you know, and he doesn't want any presents from us. Moreover, he has given excellent reasons for not celebrating the nuptials on a grand scale, and I am sure you will yourself, in due course, hear from him these reasons. Well, it is going to be a very quiet affair, just we three only and not a soul, excepting your husband on the other side. Do you mind?"

"Mind? I certainly do not. I should think, I ought to be glad if all the usual publicity is avoided."

"Oh: yes! And people will say that for the only nuptials of our only daughter we were so miserly that we did not invite even those near and dear."

"Oh! Leave people alone, mother. They will always say, something or other."

"Very well, my dear. If you are satisfied, our happiness is ensured. It shall be as your husband wishes. But, remember this: whether your husband likes it or not, the fittings and furniture of the nuptial-chamber will be found by us, and they shall be such that even your rich husband will not look down upon them."

"Is that all, mother?"

"No. I have a lot more to tell you, but not now."

That night, when the household duties were over and when father had retired to his bed early, mother took me to the terrace, and there with the silent stars as witnesses above, she initiated me into the mysteries of the Nuptial rites. All the world over, at all times and climes, men and women have always praised their mothers. And so, when I say that my mother was unique, I do not intend to convey something ordinary and usual. Census statisticians may set down my mother as "illiterate", but for sheer robust commonsense as a working principle in life, she was unparalleled. "The best way to handle a man, Bala, is to treat him like a baby. Men are brutes and have to be tamed. The process would call for patience, tact and kindness. And you, with your winning ways with children, are sure to make your married life happy. Treat him like a child, humour him, be pleasant and he will eat out of your hand".

It was dark there on the terrace and, luckily for me, my mother couldn't read my face. Her illumination of my wifely duties, when compared to what little I had gathered from my girl-friends, left many corners and

crevices still dark and doubtful. As for her advice on the taming of beasts and the treating of husbands as children, I couldn't repress a smile as I conjured up a vision of my grandpa-husband 'eating out of my hand'.

Words fail me to describe the state of my mind during the days that followed. My parents were fairly well-to-do and I, being their only daughter, had received a very good education. Until I became a woman, I had always had three tutors: for English, for Sanskrit and Tamil, and for Music. I was fairly proficient in the languages and I, in my day, had read a lot of fiction. To borrow the language of fiction-writers, I felt like a man under sentence of death, awaiting the day of execution. But there was this difference. The man under sentence of death had at least the consolation that his sufferings would be over on a particular day: while mine would only have started.

* * *

It was with a start, I woke on the morning of the eventful day. My mother was already awake and was sitting by my side. We were in my husband's house at Madras and it was the day of the nuptials. My heart almost missed a beat, at the thought.

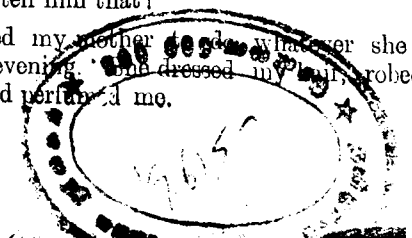
The bath-room was a marble-and-tile-modern affair, and I had shut myself inside to collect my thoughts. My mother was anxious to help me, but I put her away saying, "Hereafter I am my own mistress and not a baby." She laughed and went away. There was a big mirror in the bath-room, and standing before the mirror, I stared at myself for full five minutes. There stared back at me a girl, whose eyes were scared, whose face was pinched, and on whose every feature I could read signs of abject surrender and defeat.

"My dear girl!" I addressed my reflection in the mirror. "This won't do. You call yourself smart, but you are afraid of an old man. Now stand up to him and call him names! Ask him what he means by marrying you! Tell him that if he dares to touch you, you will behave exactly like a tigress. Be nasty! Be haughty! Be insulting! Be anything except a sacrificial goat!"

A slow smile touched the lips of the girl in the mirror, and presently it burst into a ripple, while the eyes began to twinkle with merriment. "That is the style!" I told the girl: "Keep it up!"

This little drama before the mirror braced me considerably. I almost hummed an air while I bathed, and later both my mother and father remarked, that I was in excellent spirits and that, it was the most sensible attitude to adopt. As the day advanced, my spirits soared. If my marriage was unique, I would make my nuptials still more unique. I would take the old man down a peg or two. I would show him what he got back for his money. He ruined my life: well, I would make what little he has left of his life, miserable. I am no Juliet pining for a non-existent Romeo. But I am a human being after all, and not a package sold on the counter. I will tell him that!

I permitted my mother to see what she liked with me that evening. She dressed my hair, and jewelled me and perfumed me.



"Mother!" I told her jokingly. "Your every action reminds me of the way in which you make 'mysore-pak'."

"Whatever do you mean, Bala?"

"Well, I am the Mysore-pak and your son-in-law is the guest. Don't you see the joke?"

"Oh, yes. It is nice!" she said, rather dubiously.

At eight o'clock that night my mother's excitement was so great that she talked to me only in whispers. Be careful not to fall asleep! Eat very little to-night! If you have to come out of the room, send for me! Do not be rude to him!" and so on and so forth.

9-30, and I was there alone in the Nuptial Chamber. All my old fears came back, a thousandfold stronger. Luckily there was a mirror there on the wardrobe. One look at the mirror was enough. "You silly, silly fool!" I called the girl in the mirror and she smiled back at me reassuringly.

Now I must do something to keep myself cool. I wondered what I could do. I deliberately walked out of the room, picked up an English newspaper from outside, came back and seating myself on a chair and crossing my legs, devoted myself to scanning the advertisement pages. It was a Glaxo baby that interested me most and a letter from its mother narrating what Glaxo had done to her child, when I was interrupted by my husband sneaking in. I threw the paper down and stood up. Well, I needn't have done either, but that is what I actually did.

"Do go on with your reading and do sit down," he said in English.

My tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. There was something sticking in my throat, which I couldn't gulp down. In a second more, I would have burst into

(Next instalment: Prison or Lunatic Asylum: Bala is unable to decide).

"Your offence calls for a very severe punishment," observed the judge, "and I must inflict it upon you. Your sentence is twenty years."

"I beg your pardon," said the prisoner, "Twenty years is not a sentence for there is no verb in it," and he was led away as the court officers brought the judge back to consciousness.

Mrs. Buck:—"You may talk, but what would you be if it wasn't for my money?"

Mr. Buck:—"A bachelor."

Editor: "I say, you waste an awful lot of paper!"

Contributor: Yes, but how can I economize?"

Editor: "Why not write on both sides?"

Contributor:—"But you say you will not take stuff written on both sides of the paper!"

Editor:—"Quite so, but you'd save paper just the same."

tears, when I remembered the mirror. I walked up to and peered into it.

"You are very beautiful!" he remarked. I got back my courage, my power of speech, and my spirits.

"You are very gallant!" I replied in English. He sat down on the only chair in the room. I perched myself on the edge of the bed and deliberately swung my legs.

"We have a lot to say to each other", he said in Tamil.

"Oh, yes!" I assented, "But there is a whole life before us. Why to-night?"

"Quite," he said and lapsed into silence. I yawned.

"Feeling sleepy?" he asked me.

"Oh, not at all!" I told him.

"It is funny," he said, "I thought you would be scared and frightened and I was wondering how to put you at ease. You are very brave!"

"What is there to frighten me? I am not a child!"

"Of course, not. Of course, not".

I suppressed another artificial yawn and got down from the bed.

"Yes: you are feeling sleepy. Do go to bed and since you are not afraid of being alone, I shall take a little exercise on the terrace." He patted me on the back reassuringly and left the room. Lying on the bed I was wondering what would happen next, if he came back. Ten; Eleven; Twelve: he never came back. I bolted the door, raised a silent prayer to Heaven, jumped into the bed with a whoop and dreamt all night of Glaxo babies and their mothers writing to newspapers.

Drawing Master:—"What's this? It's only a blank sheet of paper."

Pupil:—"It is the picture of an aeroplane."

Master:—"But I don't see anything. Where is the aeroplane?"

Pupil:—"It's out of sight, sir!"

A teachers' meeting was in progress, and it was decided that the more difficult subjects should come in the morning, and those that required less application later in the day. History was last on the list, and a young teacher protested.

"But it is certainly easier than science or mathematics," the principal insisted.

"As I teach it," replied the young teacher, "no subject could be more difficult and confusing."

CALENDARS

(Y. BALARAM)

Calendars are a pest. Thanks to the efforts of your wife, your sister's son and your servant-maid, you have no dearth of calendars on the walls of practically every room in your house.—kitchen and scullery included. You have as many calendars hanging on your bedroom walls as your wife's total purchases of creun pots and Pearl Powder boxes about the time of the New Year would amount to. Your sister's son's contributions enter the house along with his bound note-books, book-keeping exercise books, instrument-boxes and crayon colour-boxes. The servant-maid gets one or two from the motor chauffeur,—who is sweet on her, by the way—and, since she has herself no use for them, decorates her master's walls and draws your attention to them just at the time of the Pongal presents.

But what is the use? In spite of this legion of calendars, you keep asking about a dozen times in the course of every day, "I say, what's the date today?" And if you happen to be on a holiday, you drawl out "Today is—er—aw" and leave it to your sister's son to complete "Friday", whereas it is really Wednesday. But your sister's son is weekly expecting the Fridays to return more often, as they are succeeded by two consecutive holidays during which he can forget those wretched lessons.

And the calendars are responsible for this! They are not calendars really, but only pictures and advertisements and your walls are unpaid-for advertisement columns! You can prosecute bill-stickers who stick bills on the external walls of your house, if you can only find out the audacious stickers who paste the posters in spite of the warning! But why trouble about them when inside your house there are so many year-long posters hanging here, there and everywhere,—calendars in name, but really advts. of all commercial varieties while the calendar parts of them are to be found in corners, looking

up which strains your eye more than does the ready reckoner table! Whom would you prosecute? Your wife?

And the one really useful tear-off calendar you had placed on your working-desk is carried away by your friend Dhandapani who has such an appetite for calendars,

You get another tear-off calendar in its place. And about the month of February, when one evening you enter your room puffing after a hot day's work, you find that the calendar smiles a welcome with the face as shown in the illustration.



Armistice Day! You look round the room for a solution, and strewn about on the floor, you find date-slips anticipatorily torn-off up to the Poppy Day! You institute an enquiry and elicit the information from your wife that her sister had called that afternoon with her three-year old child who was playing about the house.

You fume and fret. But your wife silences you by saying that it is nothing when compared with what Isaac Newton's dog had done, and if nothing else you would learn, couldn't you learn at least this from Sir Isaac?

Hyde Park Orator:—"It's knowledge we want! Ask the average man when Magna Charta was King of England and he can't tell yer!"

Are we down-hearted? No, "Not 'ari" as the Cockney said, when he tossed his last three-penny piece to see if he should have food or a drink and it went down a-drain. Whoopee.

"Do I bore you?" asked the mosquito, politely, as he sank a half inch shaft into the man's leg.

"Not at all," replied the man, squashing him with a book. "How do I strike you?"

Puppies have been known to eat nails, marbles, loud-speakers, gramophone records, powder puffs, and the best part of an alarm-clock.

What is the matter with America? It is the damned movies.

Producers can think of nothing else but love and sex, sex and love they are making every house-wife and clerk in the country believe that this junk is the only important thing in life. Motion pictures are making the American mind smaller than it is, if that is possible. Hollywood is just a small town with notions.

Theodore Dreiser,

The League of Leaguers and Husbands.

(By the "Merry Mag's" own clandestine correspondent)

[Special Airless—No Copyright]

Emempoor,.

January 32nd.

In the writ of Royal Proclamation No. 'O' of date of Rani Baby-atrrix Bi-Boy Saheba of the Universal Liberal and Cistern Empire of Equality and Maatenity, which for brevity and levity was known to all the inside and outside sleeping world as 'Vlaceoam.' claiming to derive itself from the ancient Greek or primitive Tinlaw, 'Elyssium' but, in fact bearing eloquent testimony to its origin and parentage from the sounding and the whispering kinship of the dialectic vernacular equivalent 'Ullasayogam,' the 'brief and cryptic' preamble ran as follows:—(Starting from the time-honored Pillayarsuli, 'O', right on the top, which was allowed by a Royal decree to survive the civilised times of the Rani as a memento and relic of the past, thanks, of course, to the pertinacity of the oldest matron clerk of the Rani's Royal household)

"Whereas it is deemed desirable to gauge and discover the strength of feeling existing and the space and atmosphere pervading among wived husbands but not 'hen peck'd, adopting men's phraseology, within our Royal Domains;

And Whereas it is thought necessary in the interests of law and order and stores of Our Intelligence Department to uphold their dignity and vindicate their prestige;

And whereas it is expedient in the books of Our Realm to preserve and conserve internal economy, maintain domestic felicity and protect the millions of oppressed and suppressed specimens of glorious wifedom with a view to settle the ever unsettled Home charges of Our Royal Realms;

It is hereby ordained for public information by Our Royal pleasure, Our Royal grace, Our Royal smiles, our Royal frowns and our Royal favours and presents that a truly representative standing, moving, running, talking and cheering committee, consisting of all sorts and varieties and denominations of Guides and Companions among the wives of Our Kingdom and of Our Empire, be forthwith appointed to motor by sea, land, air and airless without any stoppage, breakage, demurrage, haulage or old age in transit, throughout Our entire limits of territorial jurisdiction and all areas gulfed or contiguous thereto;

It is further ordained that the strength of the said Committee be limited to such number as might Editor:—among the said Guides and Companions:

It be also ordained that the said Committee have power to co-opt as many others and more as they may like or desire according to the exigencies as they arise or may not;

It be still further ordained and decreed that the said Committee shall have full power and free authority to think what they like, roam as they please, whether in wind or rain, sun or moon, twilight or darkness, and observe and touch all and any they care to, among the thousand and eight still surviving orthodox, discontented, misguided and recalcitrant husbands with or without wives, living or dead, who might and might not deserve such recognition, title or claim; and

That it be still further ordained and decreed that the said Royal Committee shall, for all purposes of newspaper publicity, pedantic propaganda, airless longcast, wireless television and loquacious advertisement, presume, assume, have and bear, full and autonomous power to be styled the "Royal Commission of Guides and Companions" and all the members thereof be awarded as a hereditary distinction limited, however, to perpetuity only, the title, status and rank applicable within Our own domains to all tributary and feudatory chiefs, magnates and potentates of all larger and sundry powers, whether allies, friends or foes of Our Royal Empire, whenever they visit or not Our Royal Dominions and territories, acquired, inherited, unacquired, to be acquired or perhaps never-to-be-acquired;

And that it be still further ordained and decreed that the said Royal Committee shall device and use all such potent powers, lungs and energies they may possess as they may possess or as they may afford to make patent or call to their aid, in furtherance of the aims and objects, purposes and fulfillments of this, Our Royal Proclamation and shall always obey all terms of reference to be issued by us without the concurrence of the Councils of Our Empire or the government of Our Executive Cabinet, to them in due course, according to Our borrowed sweet will and pleasure or as the bitter smiles or sour frowns of all monarchs of Our time might dictate or no, in their own Territories and Domains and shall always, ever and anon, laugh heartily and act merrily in accordance with the custom and usage obtaining in Our Capital and after the fashion to be set by the only Estate of Our Realm represented and voiced forth by the "Merry Mag."

of Emempoor, our capitalless but capital-hunting Journal, to whom our hearty blessings and cheer that inebriates."

Before the other portions of this Royal Proclamation could see the flashing light of all the parlours of the Royal Palace or could be published in. The Official Gazette of Rani Baby-atrrix Bi-Boy Saheb's good government, the clandestine correspondent of the sensation mongering and proscribed paper, "All Over", edited by that reputed lucky husband Sir Joy O. Kay, obtained in his own inimitable way a copy of the bicarbon draft from the W.P.B. of the Rani's secretariat and rescued from the flaming ozone of the Royal Kiln through the good offices of the Lady in Sweeping and got it inserted in the "Later than the Dak" Edition overnight, but published it at exact twilight time—"O" according to the reckoning of the Rani's astronomers, when the sentry of the night was fast dreaming of his distinctions and decorations that were to find a place in the following 'Good morning' Edition of the official Daily Honours Gazette' of the Rani's Royal Realms.

As always happens, one fortunate, grunted and leaguings husband, Mangapathy by name, forestalled Tapalan the new Harijan recruit of the corps of 'Heralds of the Noisy World' and swifter than electricity, wireless transmission or airless and spaceless thought, hustled to all the promenades and thoroughfares of the Metropolitan city and with the aid of chalk, chunam, charred coaltar, drainage ink, the newly patented cochineal ink of the erstwhile cactus-prickio-pears, paints, varnishes, gums, rasams and Kolambus, whichever was ready and handy, broadcasted, longcasted, highcasted and outcasted the preamble so far known to him and in bold, capital and block-head letters and appealed vehemently in his own characteristic spelling and stress, strain and emphasis to the husbands of the world to whom more woe was suspected to be in store but much warning thereof was already given.

"TO BEFORE warned is to be FOUR armed" All newsmongers, Ballisthars Ado-vocates, awl advert Isers prospective Publisers, pernicious Prop-a-Ganders and Posther Wallahs-please copy-Tanks for filonthropy."

The dawn broke the news so efficiently proclaimed and advertised by Mangapathy's vigilant wits and as the husbands of the city rubbed and squeezed their eyes and darted out of their cowsheds, goodsheds, bedsteads and homesteads, the thought flashed and whirled across their brainy filaments that a secret 'League of Leaguers and Husbands, should be immediately formed to stem the rush of the oncoming menace and combat the evil forces of the eagle-eyed Rani Baby etc Saheba and Dia-tribes. And out started the type design convener "I. Luckinpathy" as Lakshminipathy always preferred to spell his name. The Long Ago Upstart that he was, sent out a little past morning tea time, a hasty manuscript notice convening a preliminary meeting at his pial of all husbands, existing and prospective, who might be interested in the League in question. The ever-ready 'Soni'—the newsboy flew

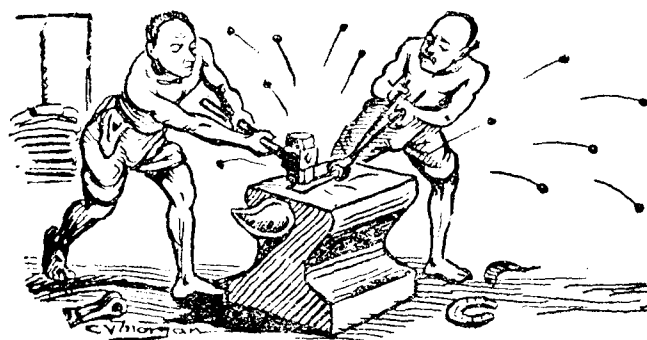
across all the corners and turnings of the city "tom-tomming" the news of the meeting and returned to his patron the slip with a hundred and odd signatures, scribblings, marks and initials in a regular medley of faint and bright colours.

Many responded to the R. S. V. P (in Vayadi Vythi's vocabulary an abbreviation for 'Rayitta Solra Vetti Pechu') and Luckinpathy noticed his usual comrades, whom we would very much like to introduce to our dear and unkind readers with the day's compliments of the regular racing season just by their names as were deciphered in the convener's notice:—Rahupathy, Sitapathy, Radhapathy, Venkatachalapathy, Selvapathy, Umupathy, Venkatapathy, Sabhapathy, Chalapathy, Ramapathy (with an accent on the second syllable), Ganapathy Setupathy, Gajupathy, Ambikapathy, (who spell with a 'c' for a.) Tirupathy, Pampapathy,, Senapathy, Ratnasabhapathy, Adhipathy, Rangapathy, Dhanapathy, Sthanapathy, and Matadhipathy. Their signatures, were in nearly half a dozen languages current in the Rani's Realm and our linguistic genius asserted itself in scanning them.

[Owing to the indiscretion of our clandestine correspondent and our own impatience and zeal to keep pace with the competing competitors we could not arrange these names in the order of the alphabet obtaining in the Rani's Government for which our readers' pardon, and we trust that lean clerk with sunken eyes of the University offices of King Mag-The Merry will ere long publish a true and complete list in the order in which it is usual for him to prepare the results of all failed candidates at the examinations held in the overseas department of the Rani's Empire' for whom all our and our readers' thanks in anticipation, more particularly of all the fortunately failed candidates of all ages and climes and of all examinations over or ever-to-be-held—in future. Own Correspondent himself—Not ED.]

Taking a Cue from the art critic's anxious and expectant eyes we have pleasure to introduce also to our readers the many marksmen who, while signifying their assent to the future League, could not find the time or the material to affix their thumb or toe impressions. Thanks however to the courtesy of a fat bailiff of the Rani etc., Saheba's—[no disrespect please; we are already late for the Press now-ED] L-o-n-g-e-s-t Court - S-H-I-P of Adjudicature in whose home 'Soni' daily took his nocturnal shelter, the marks were put in' in the slip wherever he, bailiff, deemed fit and the following among other names were written in a quick and glowing style. The line quality, the penpressure, the dashes, the strokes, the touches and the retouches and the loops and curves of the letters were really characteristic of an adept and let us leave all such digressive criticism, constructive and destructive to the best expert who could prove and disprove his handwriting as an expert witness at a future Court of Law. This only by the way—rather on the line. Those marksmen, who could ill afford to aim a mark, were Allopathy, Homeopathy, Hydropathy, Telepathy, Thereaupathy, Tapathy, Sympathy, Apathy, Antipathy and so on and so forth. The

(That will do, thank you. Ed.)



SPARKS from our ANVIL

The reception accorded to our first number has been distinctly encouraging. I am unable to tell you the exact number of copies we sold but it will be enough to say that the number was comfortably large. We are of course, printing more copies for our second issue.

* * *

My invitation to readers to send me contributions has met with fairly satisfactory response. There has been a thin but steady trickle of Mss. into our office. The quality of the matter sent in has been rather unequal and the quantity, so far, has not been sufficient for me to make a selection therefrom. But there are indications of an early improvement both in quality and quantity.

* * *

Amongst other things, I received a poem of one stanza from a reader who launched into a panegyric of our numerous excellences as a humorous paper. The first line of the stanza began with the letter M, the second with E, the third with R and so on, the first letters of the whole poem forming the word 'MERRY MAGAZINE.' This is the sort of matter we must reluctantly decline; conscious, as we fully are, of our manifold perfections, we would fain hide our virtue under a cloak of modesty. We never liked beating the big drum; self-advertisement may achieve many things, but our goal is different, and is reached by different methods.

I am printing in this issue articles by some new writers. I should like readers to tell me what they think of them. I must reiterate that letters from readers are always welcome, especially when they write and tell me what they think of a particular issue of the Magazine and what particular feature in it they enjoyed or appreciated most. Later on, I intend running a competition the result of which will depend upon a popular ballot from amongst our readers.

* * *

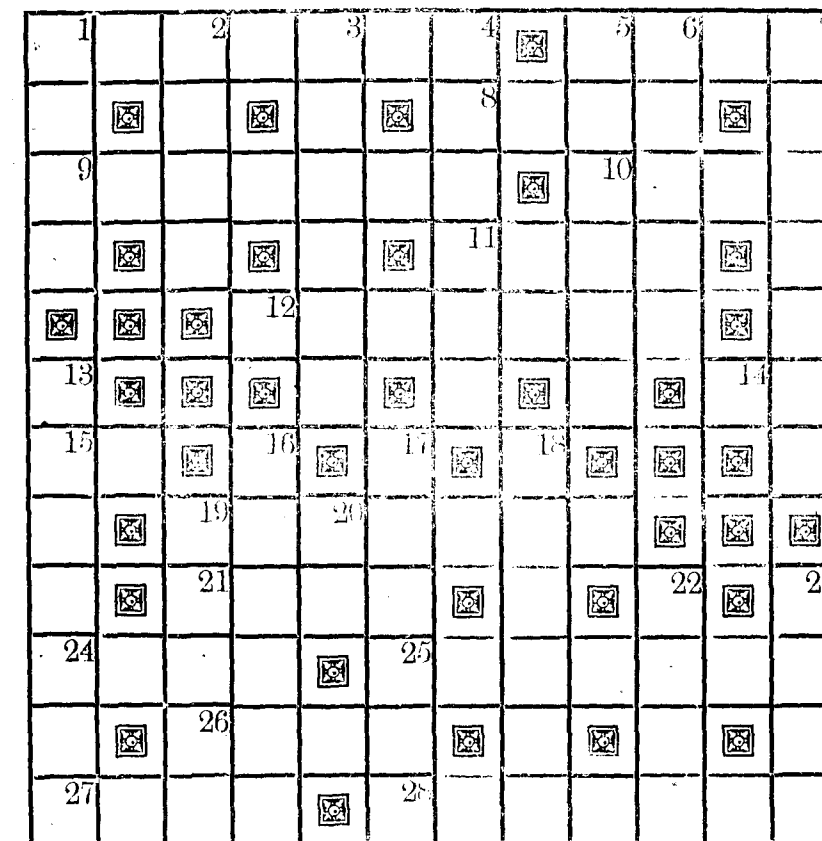
Talking of competitions I must tell you that I have decided to retain the two old ones for this fortnight also. It has been necessary to do so in order to give our Non-Southern-Indian readers a chance of competing and winning a prize in our competitions. There will be a new Cross-Word puzzle in our next issue, the hardness or ease of solution of which, will depend upon the entries received for the present one.

* * *

In the first issue of our paper, I asked readers to send in jokes or in the alternative, thoroughly disguised ones. The joke is on me now. The ones I have so far been favoured with are probably the ones that made Noah kick his cradle to pieces and shook the Ark. The despatch of this sort of humour through the ordinary channels of communication benefits only the Post Office, in its way, an admirably efficient Government Department but already sadly overburdened with work. Please, therefore, forbear. —[The Editor.]

Rs. 100 Must Be Won

"EASY CROSS WORDS COMPETITION."



CLUES ACROSS.

1. Madeira—Port.
5. Imitated.
8. A Home of Industry.
9. Confuse Arab and get a river.
10. Catch sight of.
11. Reshape the hillocks in Devon.
12. Thrill.
14. Type Measure.
15. Preposition.
19. Associated in English Literature with Pitcher and the Pink-un.
21. Mixed Pins.
24. An Egyptian king.
25. You must have a dark cap to ride in this car.
26. An Indian symbol of good wishes.
27. Where waste oil flows.
28. The Ace of Diamonds for instance.

CLUES DOWN.

1. Not a hedge though they sound like it.
2. Morn or Eve, the poet can glorify it. (Hidden.)
3. "Departmentalism is not a moral delinquency but an intellectual —" (Lord Curzon).
4. Make a slash in Tibet.
5. Prevents.
6. D'artagnan's favourite oath.
7. Where they speedily make records and break them.
13. Curses in the Fatherland.

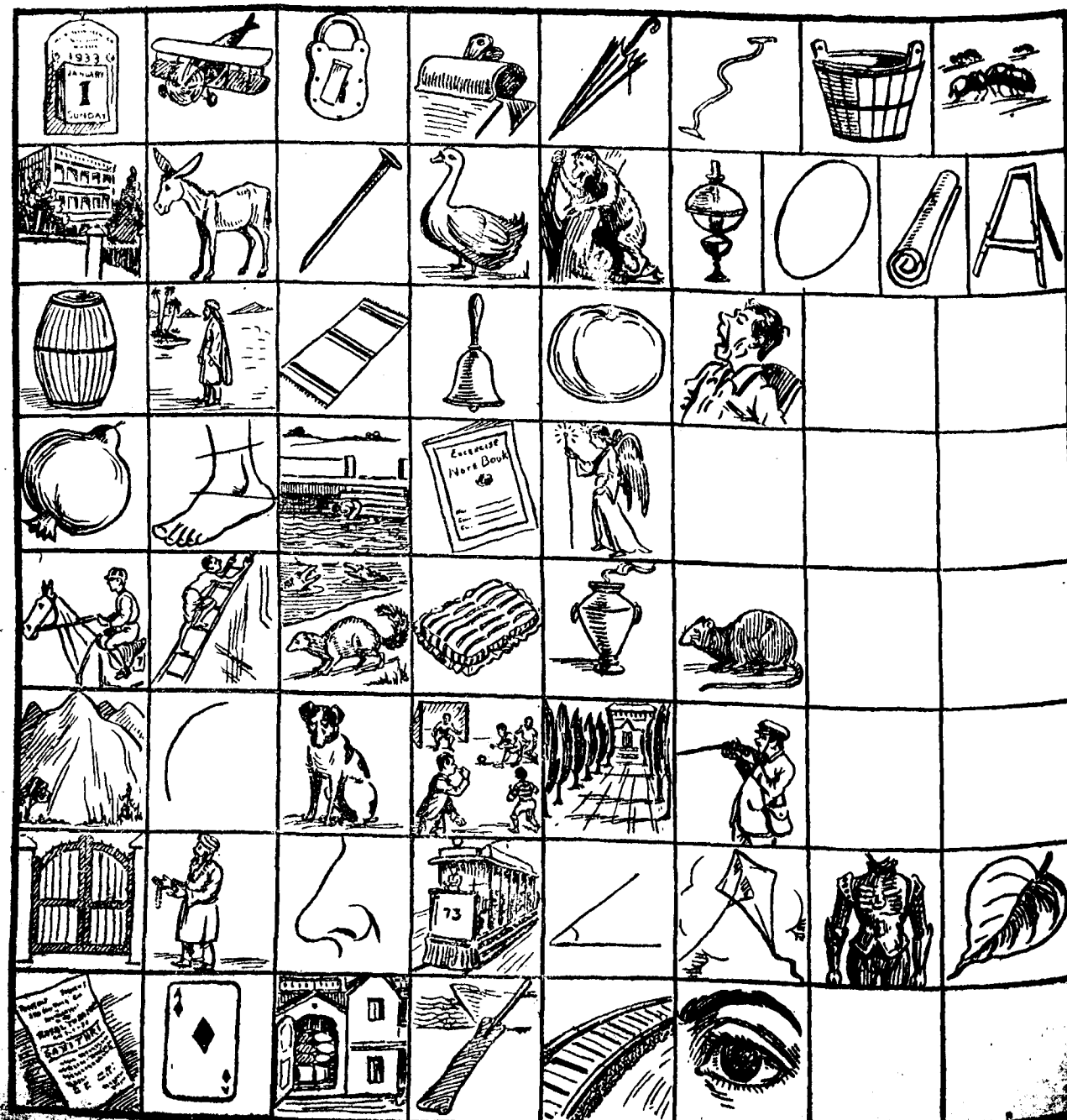
16. Is mixed bathing forbidden in these hills?
17. Red Pip. (Anagram.)
18. La Mancha's faithful henchman.
19. Biblical Lamps.
20. Chinese measure of distance.
22. A window-fitting.
23. Beheaded brides.

RULES & CONDITIONS.

- (1) Each solution must be accompanied by a Money Order for As. 8. No stamps.
- (2) Complete puzzle in ordinary ink. Cut out the whole puzzle square and send it along with the M. O. receipt issued by the Post Office. Solutions sent without M. O. receipts will be disqualified.
- (3) Any number of solutions may be sent, but an entrance fee of annas eight is necessary in each case.
- (4) A prize of Rs. 100 will be given to the sender of the correct solution.
- (5) A correct solution is one which agrees entirely with the one in the Editor's possession.
- (6) If no all-correct solution is received, a prize of Rs. 50 will be awarded to the Solution with the smallest number of errors.
- (7) The prize money may be divided if more correct solutions than one are received. No correspondence will be entered into, in this matter. The Editor's decision is final and binding. Solutions must be filled in, in ink and must reach the Editor The "Merry Magazine" on or before the 5th Feb. 1933.

Rs 200 Cash
must be won!

'Name The Towns' Competition



How to Solve ?

Each line of pictures represents the name of a town. The first line is illustrative. The first picture in the first line is a *calendar*. Starting with the letter C, we have *aeroplane* in the next square, which gives us CA. The *lock* gives us CA L and the *clip* followed by the *umbrella* C U makes CALCU. The *tag* and the *tub* concluded by the *ant* make TTA, the town name being CALCUTTA.

RULES.

An Entrance fee of Annas Eight must be remitted by Money Order only.

Solutions must be filled in, in ink, on the Coupon which will be published in 'The Merry Magazine' of 25-1-33.

Any number of solutions may be sent but only on Coupons, each of which must be accompanied by an entrance fee of Annas Eight.

Every solution must be accompanied by the Money Order receipt issued by the Post Office, failing which the entry will be disqualified.

The first prize will be awarded to an all-correct solution and the second and third in the order of merit. An all-correct solution is one which agrees in all respects with the one in the Editor's possession.

In the event of tie, the prizes will be divided.

No responsibility can be undertaken for coupons lost or delayed.

The Editor's decision in all matters relating to this competition is final.

Persons connected with ***The Merry Magazine*** or its associated journals are not allowed to compete.

I Prize Rs. 100.

II Prize Rs. 50. Ten third Prizes of Rs. 5 each.

‘Name The Towns’ Competition

COUPON

1. CALCUTTA	COMPETITOR'S ADDRESS
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

This Coupon must be filled in, in ink and sent with the M. O. receipt to the Editor The "Merry Magazine" before the 5th February 1933.

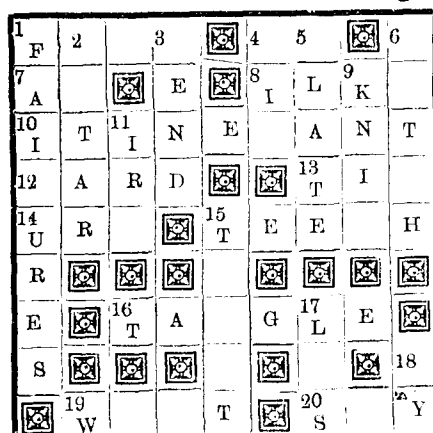
There is not even a Single ALTERNATIVE in this puzzle. There is only one correct Solution for this competition.

WIN Rs. 250 GUARANTEED

IN NO ALTERNATIVES COMPETITION.

SEALED KEY SOLUTION DEPOSITED WITH "MY MAGAZINE OF INDIA."

Last Posting date 10-2-33. (Results in a week)



Clues Across:—1 a waterfall. 4 a copper coin, the unit of early monetary system of Rome. 7 prep. denoting presence. 8 each. 10 a wanderer. 12 the melted fat of the hog. 13 a convulsive motion of certain muscles esp. of the face. 14 operation. 15 pl. of Tooth. 16 to entangle. 19 to know. —20 a trial.

Clues Down:—1 omissions. 2 a very fragrant essential oil made in Bulgaria and other Eastern lands chiefly from the damask rose. 3 to grant. 4 the fluid we breathe. 5 to abuse. 6. to seize 9 to tie together. 11 anger. 15 spot. 17 a controversy. 18 prep. at the side of.

N. B.—All Clues are EXACT and direct from Chambers XX Dicty and all forms are treated as direct.

RULES.—(1) Entrance fee Rs. 2 for any number of entries in one cover by one person. (2) Rupees 150 will be awarded for correct Solutions posted on or before 10-2-33 and Rs. 100 for solutions

with one error. (3) The prizes amount will NOT be decreased, in any event but may be increased at the discretion of the Manager and in cases of ties prizes will be divided. (4) No competitor can win more than one prize and the decision of the Manager must be accepted as final and legally binding, on all matters. 5 All entries in any readable form and fees (only by M. O.) should be addressed to:—

Manager, Chambers, NO ALTERNATIVE COMPETITIONS, 2, Appasami Lane, G.T. Madras.

Note:—All competitors who send their entries on or before 31-1-33 will be given our 1933 fancy calender free.

We do not advertise big imaginary prizes but we pay what we advertise.

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German make, fitted with double diaphragm and a few yards of cord suitable both to speak to each other and hear clearly like big telephones. Easy for fitting in shops, hotels, rooms or anywhere. Operates at all times, Strong mechanism. Finished in black and nickel with 2 Bells. Height 9 inches, complete with all accessories and directions will be sent with phone. Our clearance sale price Rs. 2-0-0.

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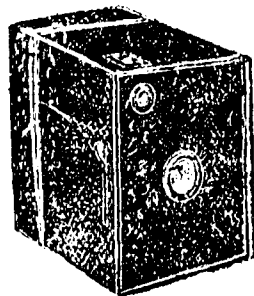
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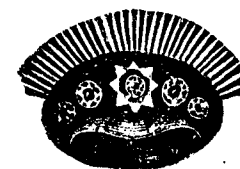
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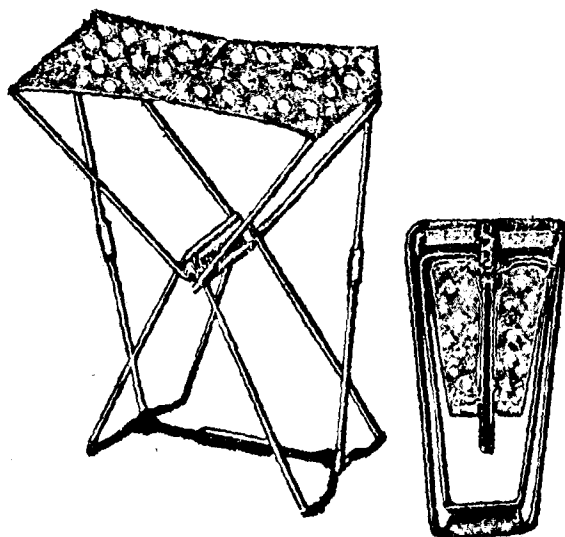
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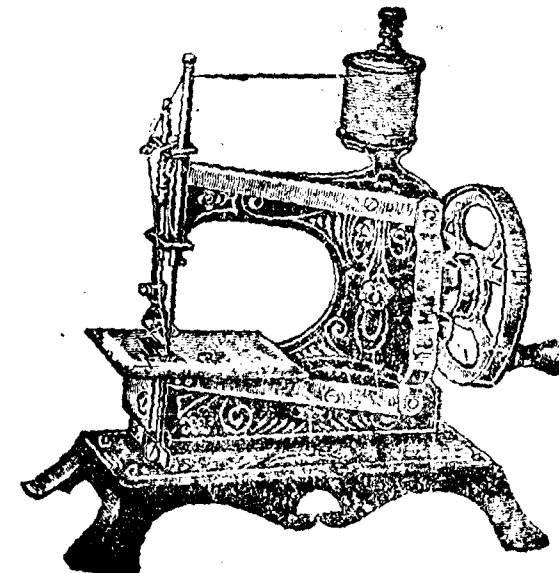
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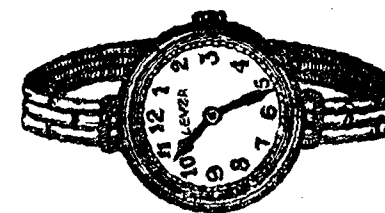
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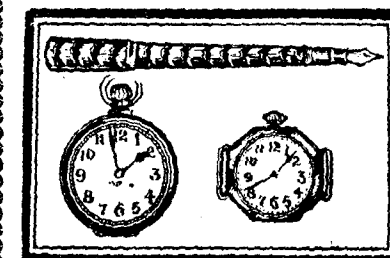
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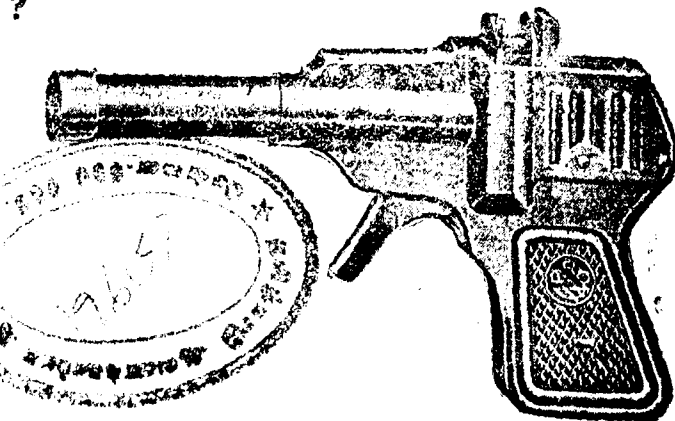
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For other rules of the Competition, see "ANANDHA
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