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The 'Unlucky' Rickshaw
BY
S. V. V.

The Greatest Cult
BY
K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

The **MERRY** *MAGAZINE*

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No. 6



Bala's Dream Comes True—See page 165.

As. 2.

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THE MERRY MAG

Vol. I.

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The 'Unlucky' Rickshaw

(S. V. V.)



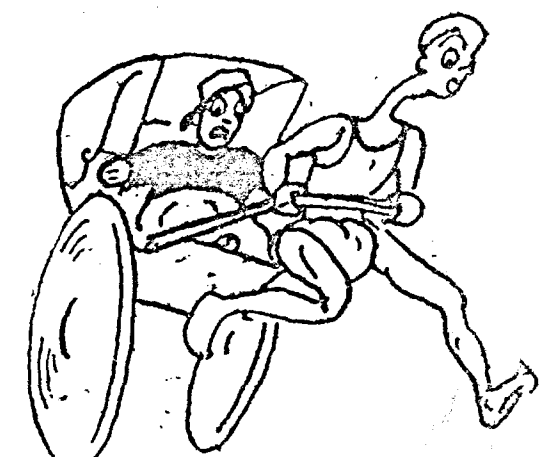
I am glad to say that the rickshaw was handed over to me by the order of the Police Magistrate, who gave me as a parting advice 'Young man, don't be foolish again, and purchase things because they come cheap. Before you buy things so cheap, find out that there is no snag in it. You have behaved foolishly, but, I am convinced, honestly. And now you may go.'

When I went home, my mother wept tears of joy, embraced me, and said she was so prayerful that I had come back; I believe, because, poor, dear thing, she had all the morning apprehended that she was not going to see her son for another two months.

She would not on any terms allow me to keep the rickshaw. Such an unlucky thing, she said. She wouldn't even use it as fuel to

I owned a rickshaw, and I was proud of it. It was a lovely thing. It wasn't in the least lovely when I purchased it. I got it second-hand, and it was then nothing to look at. I purchased it because it was going cheap; and every one said it was 'damn cheap' at the price. Strictly speaking, it wasn't cheap at all. Now I think of it, I paid very dearly for it, because before it was an evening with me, I was arrested for being in possession of 'stolen property' and everyone knows what that means. What matters it whether money was paid as the price of the rickshaw, or incidentally to establish one's ownership of it, or for escaping out of a nasty hole it got one into. A businessman would put it all on the head of the rickshaw.

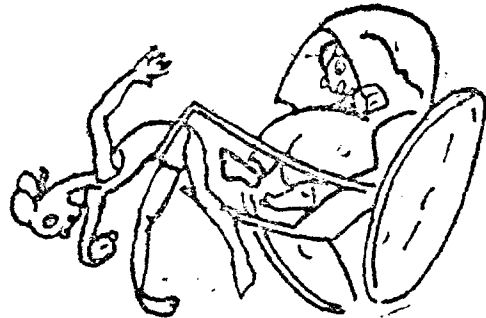
The rickshaw lay for a week under the banyan tree of the B 2 Police Station, enjoying the cool shade of the tree, and listening to the music of the birds, while its new owner lay tearing his hair distracted whether, ultimately, it would mean the penitentiary.



cook food, for it would poison the food, and we would all be dead in our beds.

Superstition, Crass Superstition. Wasn't it? What else?

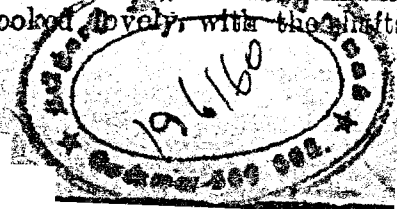
I wouldn't part with the rickshaw. It has always been my ambition to possess one.



My opinion is that people do not give the rickshaw, its proper and legitimate place, among the modes of locomotion. You have, in a rickshaw, no horse to kick the traces, to fall down in the way, refusing to be 'up and doing'. You have no engine that would either run mad or cough finally and stand still, no gears to change, no starter to 'back-fire', and no diving under the car like a gentleman, and emerging out of it like an engine fireman. And above all there is no bother about driving. The man between the shafts does both the driving and the pulling. You have nothing to do but to settle down on the cushion, throw up your back, cross your legs, and enjoy reading Bernard Shaw, or your favourite magazine, or keep idly listening to the pad, pad of the man between the shafts. And I tell you when mechanical science improves, you will also have collapsible rickshaws that you can put in your pocket when you are not actually riding in them.

Most rickshaws accommodate only one, which is an advantage because you can avoid the bore by your side, that you often have in a car. Some accommodate two. True, two can travel in it only if they agree to breathe alternately. But if it is you, and your 'girl', there is no trouble. There is real joy in it. The rickshaw is an ideal carriage for a loving couple. You may kiss her, but if she should frown at your doing it in public, you may tell her it wasn't a kiss but a bump consequent on the jolting and the proximity.

I got the rickshaw overhauled and painted, and it looked lovely, with the shafts shining



black like Day and Martin, with shining brass tips and brass bands round them, a nice cosy cushion under you, a nice cosy cushion at the back of you, and a lovely canopy overhanging your head.

On the morning when my rick appeared from the repairer, looking new and shining, I stepped proudly into it. I lay slipping in the seat as from a low sloping roof while Kondia was adjusting his turban—tucking the match box and the beedie inside it. He girded up his cloth, and having finished his preliminary preparations for starting, lifted the shafts and commenced trotting.

Kondia was a willing and honest-to-goodness fellow, but he was utterly new to the job. Where pedestrian and vehicular traffic was thick and heavy, he ran like mad, hitting the necks of some pedestrians, and prodding the backs of others. We missed accidents by hair breadths.

Not knowing the rule of the road, he frequently took the wrong side, bringing the whole traffic arrangements to a stand still. My attempts at instructing Kondia, in difficult situations proved futile, because he did not know Tamil, and the Madras Telugu I had picked up was a language that Kondia could not understand. As a result, Kondia, I and the Rickshaw were in every body's way, or rather, every man and every vehicle was in our way.

In the crush of the traffic at the beginning of Broadway I thought I would not be wise



to trust to Kondia, so I got down, directing Kondia to follow.

After passing the Law College, I got into the rickshaw, warning Kondia severely to keep

(Continued on page 164)

The Greatest Cult

(K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI)

THE greatest desire of every man and every woman is to achieve universal fame. The greatest desire of every country is to achieve universal empire. The greatest desire of every religion is to become the universal religion. But none knows that there is already a universal cult which has already achieved universal fame and empire and is too strong to be dislodged by any rebel or upstart. It is entrenched in the most safe and secret citadel—the human heart. It is defended by the drawn swords of a million mercenaries—the secret partialities and prejudices of egoism. That cult is the worship of lies. Man worships Truth with his lips but really worships Lie with his heart. He is miserable if he is denied his daily dose of lies and feels exactly as De Quincey felt when his beloved opium was denied to him.

Whenever any sensible suggestion is made to the public, it is always rejected as idealistic and unpractical. Man wants to be fed on lies. He is even more happy when he is fed upon lies and praised at the same time for his passion for truth. He is most pleased when he is also complimented at the same time for his rare power of discernment of truth. Take for instance his wasting millions of money on armaments of war. If you tell him that nations must live at peace and that it is not proper to fight with the name of the Prince of Peace upon the lips, he looks at you as if you were a new and queer arrival from Utopia. But tell him that peace is divine and that the nation which owns the biggest and most invincible armament is the divine protector of peace, he is pleased beyond measure. In every country there are thousands of clever ruffianly agitators who are experts at such clever national tickling.

The same is the case with doctors and patients. If the doctor prescribes pure air and sunbath and other such simple remedies, the gorge of the patient rises high. He says: "Have I paid such a high fee for such twaddle? My grandmother would have told me that." By the bye I wonder why men

and women hate their grandmothers. The Bible says that no man should marry his grandmother. There is not much chance or fear of that wedding happening. But why should, for goodness' sake, any man or woman vent his spleen upon poor old grannie who had probably joined the majority long ago? But that apart, the doctor must feed the patient on lies if he is to prosper at all. That is the one lucky prescription. Drugging with lies is the best kind of drugging in the interests of both. It brings money to the doctor and tickles the vanity of the patient. If the doctor prescribes *aqua pura* the patient feels glad. But if he prescribes cold water the patient is miserable. If the doctor asks a patient to eat and drink moderately and have regular work and keep regular hours, the patient gets into a fury. But if the doctor tells him to eat and drink when and where he likes and as much as he likes and have long holidays from work and make a night of day and a day of night taking care to taste a costly drop of what he calls the concentrated elixir of health, the patient is in raptures and attains the seventh heaven of joy. The real proof of the doctor is in the eating of the patient. Eating is the whole duty of man and of woman as well, to-day. The fact is that "appetite grows with what it feeds upon". The modern human eats and drinks day and night and makes love (or rather what he thinks to be love) for twenty-four hours *per diem*. I have known some tectotallers who are absolute gluttons and some vegetarians who are sodden with drink. If a man eats less, he must at least drink more. If a man drinks less, he must eat more. If a man eats and drinks the less, he must love all the more. By the time he is forty he transfers the appearance of his beloved cash to his own body! People talk about pinjarapoles and S. P. C. A. and so on. But I wish to found a society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Stomachs and intestines. Every big city spends lacs of rupees on flush latrines and underground drainage but every modern man or woman contrives to be an unflushed latrine and an undrained sewer.

If such is the fate of doctors the fate of lawyers is even worse. Tell a litigant that his case is goody-goody and he walks off with his records in a huff to the next door. Suggest to him that it is better to make it up with the devil who has annoyed him, he suspects that the devil had already made you his secret agent. But tell him that his case is the best of all cases and that you will surely win it for him, his face becomes wreathed in smiles. He does not come to hear the truth but wants to pay for being told pleasant lies in the brightest ways. If he eventually loses you can always abuse the stupid dull-headed judge and hint that the appellate judge is a miracle of wisdom and that the case is sure to be won before him. If he fails there is of course the eternally and infinitely wise High Court. That is just what he wants and cries for, as a child cries for the moon.

The cult of lies and make-believes is all powerful elsewhere also. The agreeable man is defined as the man who agrees with all men to-day and at all times and in all places. If one proposes to broadcast the photos and paintings of some popular hero or some man in power, all other men sing in chorus with him and do likewise. If some art-critic (all art-critics are a bumptious lot) or some newspaper with a thundering circulation booms a poem or a picture or a song, all men wonder at it with a foolish face of praise. No one has the courage to be himself. It is so easy and so alluring to hug pleasant lies that few are the devotees of truth.

Even more noxious are the advertisement lies and the lies of fashion. Pills to make an old man young are in actual operation and pills to make a young man old. Every mixture announces itself as the elixir of life but is really a concoction by the devil. There are more patent medicines than men or women to take them but yet diseases are stalking abroad grinning and mocking at the medicines.

In the same way every new fashion is announced to be non-pareil. The collars of every age are of course the most beautiful of all ages and climes. Long skirts were absolutely beautiful. Short skirts are absolutely beautiful to-day. Shorter skirts may become absolutely beautiful to-morrow. I shudder to work out and declare the logical consequences. The attitude of men and women to their hair is the greatest proof of their perspection. Long tresses were voted beautiful yesterday. Bobbed and shingled hair are voted beautiful to-day. Here again I shudder to work out and declare the logical consequences. Gold ornaments were the fashion before. Festoons of pearls are announced to be beautiful to-day. The falsehoods of fashions are the most abominable of all falsehoods. Man will write sonnets as readily upon bobbed hair as upon tresses "floating as wildly as mountain breezes." He will as readily praise the unsexed woman of to-day as he was praising the over-sexed woman of yesterday. Ugh! I am sick of the conventional lies of modern civilisation.

(Continued from page 162)

to the extreme left. He kept to the extreme left of course, poor fellow, but at a turning, he couldn't decide which was the right and which was the left, and while he was deciding it by moving the rickshaw to the right and to the left, a large car hooting from a distance like all the blazes of the world, dashed edge ways against the rickshaw, and Kondia missed death, by what should only be said as a miracle.

I was separated from my rickshaw by nearly a furlong. I looked up. There was no rickshaw there, but only debris.

"Mother, I have disposed off my rickshaw" I said.

"Have you my son? You have taken one dread off my mind" She said.

May it be that the rickshaw was really unlucky?

AGENTS, PLEASE NOTE

Those who require vending license to sell copies of the MERRY MAGAZINE on Railway Platforms will please communicate with me immediately and the necessary arrangements will be made.

The Manager, THE MERRY MAGAZINE OFFICE, 2/140. Broadway, Madras.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BALA, THE BAD WOMAN

BY DEISVI.

BALA'S DREAM COMES TRUE



"Are you angry with me?" he asked me, while I lay nestling in his arms.

In the Preceding five instalments

[Bala is given in marriage to a man old enough to be her father. She attains age and comes to live with her husband. He is an orthodox man and tells Bala that her horoscope is bad and that the indications are that she would lead a "husbandless life."

Looking idly out of the window, one day, Bala sees a girl (Radha) run over by a car in the street. She renders first aid to the child.

Going out in the car another day, a strange man smiles at Bala. This man appears in Bala's dreams and makes love to her.

Bala sees on the Marina, her dream-lover and Radha walking hand in hand. She learns that he is Radha's father. Bala takes Radha home in the car and on her way Radha tells a story. The story is merely an exaggerated version of Bala's married life. Bala is vastly intrigued by the story and wants to hear it to the end.]

I was eager to hear the rest of the story. I asked Manikkam to stop the car.

"Radha, dear," I told the child, "I must hear the full story now. We will therefore go to my house, first. There, you can tell me the whole story. I want to show you all the toys I have bought for the party. You must also see my jewels. What do you say?"

"Alright! We shall go to your house. I do want to see your jewels."

"To our house, Manikkam!" I commanded and he wheeled the car around. Arriving home, I took Radha to my bed-room and made her sit in a comfortable chair. "Now, tell me the rest of the story," I pleaded.

"Where did I leave off?"

"You said: 'The lovely young girl did not like the old ugly husband and that there was a nice young man in the village who loved this girl'—"

"Oh, yes. But she was already married to the old man and so the young man was very sad. The old man was a wicked old man and kept his wife in a cage and wouldn't allow her to go out and be happy. The young man would go and stand outside the cage and say 'Parrot! Parrot! How are you feeling?' and the young wife would say, 'Young man, young man, I don't like this cage, won't you please open the door and let me out?' The young man would have gladly done so, but he was afraid of what the old man might say."

"And then, what happened?"

"Things went on like this for many days. The girl was daily growing weaker and weaker and her beauty was fading little by little."

"Why?"

"She was in a cage, you see!"

"Oh, yes: And then?"

"The young man was also getting weaker and weaker."

"Why?"

She paused before answering. "I think he was sorry for her and that is why he also was not feeling well."

"Probably: Go on, dear. It is a good story!"

"One day they planned a way out!"

"How?"

"The old husband would daily come into the cage to feed the young wife. He would bring her food, water and a change of clothes. When he brought these things one day, he left the door open. The young wife suddenly darted out of the cage and closed the door and locked the old man inside the cage," said Radha, her excitement running high as she neared the denouement.

"Is that all?" I asked her.

"No. They put additional locks on the cage so that the old man could not escape, locked the house so that no one should know, and then, they ran away and lived happily ever afterwards."

"Poor old man! What happened to him?"

"He died inside the cage, because, there was no one to take care of him and give him food or water. And serve him right too!" Radha added with righteous indignation.

"Why Radha, what did the poor old man do?"

"He put such a nice girl inside a beastly cage! Could he do that?"

"No: He shouldn't have done that!" I said absently, as I was greatly agitated over the implications of the story. Nevertheless, I fulfilled my promise to Radha and showed her all my jewels while she stood admiring them, wide-mouthed with wonder. I showed her the toys also and gave her a big doll and putting her in the rickshaw bade Erraiya take her carefully to her house.

"Tell your grandmother, Radha, that I shall come and see her some other day. I am not feeling well now."

"Will you come tomorrow?"

"I shall try. If I come in the evening, will you come to the beach with me?"

Radha nodded assent with joy, while her hands caressed the doll on her lap. "We will go to the sands and play," she said, as Erraiya moved on.

When anything greatly agitated my mind, I always sought shelter in my bed-room and lying in my bed, pondered over my problems. Lying in bed, I went over Radha's story. There was no doubt that when he was asked to narrate a story, Radha's father had spun one out of what was going on in his mind. And that meant that his feelings towards me were inclined to be romantic. I stopped there the train of my thoughts.

I hardly knew what my own feelings were. That I was amused, was true. But beneath the amusement there lurked something else which I was unable to define. It was passing strange that I didn't feel like going and asking Radha's father, "Sir, what do you mean by telling stories to your child about my being locked-up in a cage like a parrot? How dare you, Sir?" On the other hand, I might frankly confess I was pleased at the way in which the story had been built up. I asked myself if my vanity was not tickled because a man in his attempts at fiction had made me his beloved heroine. Then I remembered the dream. I remembered also having read somewhere that the very intensity of one's thoughts is enough to convey and impress them on others. If instead of being merely a story—if he was really in love with me, that dream would signify a great many things.

Love! I know not what Love is. I have read about it: heard about it. But the only great yearning I have felt in my life was towards helpless babies. It is perhaps the mother-instinct that is the heritage of all women.

I have always watched with interest and amusement a peculiar trait in my character. I have noticed two different personalities in me and I wonder if this is a common experience. While my thoughts were engrossed with Radha's father and his sentiments towards me as revealed by the story, I found myself at the same time, watching the trend of my own thoughts with an aloofness and a superior air and not without a sneer. There was another Bala, so to speak, who looked down at the romantically inclined Bala and was constantly telling her, "Well, my girl, you are in a fine mess! You are just common clay after all and there is no use pretending that you are something different. You are going to succumb to the blandishments of a man whom you consider an Apollo. You are asking for trouble, my lady, and soon you will get it in full measure. Then, not all the hosts of heaven will be able to help you."

I decided to break the promise I made to Radha about taking her to the beach next evening. I shall avoid the girl as much as possible and if necessary drop even the children's party. I shall so behave as to indicate very clearly that I had no knowledge of the feelings of Radha's father towards me: nor shall he have any encouragement at my hands. Having finally come to this decision, I went about searching for some work to do

the next day. There was nothing to be done and so I busied myself in cleaning and re-arranging the contents of my wardrobe and also various knick-knacks and pieces of jewellery. While so engaged and about 4-30 in the evening, Radha came running inside the room.

"You, Radha?" I greeted her.

"Of course, ma. Why didn't you come to our house? Grandmother was so anxious to see you."

"I am sorry. Some work kept me here."

"Aren't we going to the Beach?"

"I shall send you to the beach."

"Aren't you Coming?"

"Well, I am not feeling well and I would rather not go out to-day."

"But if you are not feeling well, if you go out, you will feel better. I can't go to the beach all alone."

"I shall send Nainu with you."

"Who is Nainu?"

"Don't you know Nainu? He is our boy."

"Your boy?"

"Not my son, dear: but a boy who is being brought up by us. I shall send for him."

I called for Erraiya. He came. "Find Nainu and bring him here," I said to the Boyes. Presently he brought Nainu, who was his usual grumpy self.

"Nainu, this is Radha, who you know had an accident. I promised to take her to the Beach to-day in the car. But I am not feeling well. I don't want to break my promise. Will you keep her company and take her to the Beach?"

"On one condition," he stipulated.

"What is that?"

"We must go to the Aquarium."

"Alright: I'll ask Manikkam to take you both there. Is that fixed, Radha?"

Radha pouted her lips. "I am not going to the Beach," she said grimly.

"Why, dear?"

"I shall go some other day with you."

"If I come to-day?"

She clasped her hands and jumped with joy. "Oh, will you? Will you?" she asked.

Why deny the child this small pleasure, I thought, and agreed. Nainu frowned. I knew he was feeling humiliated. "You can come with us, Nainu," I assured him.

"I don't think there is any need" he remarked, feigning indifference.

"I want you to come and you must."

"What about my condition?"

"You shall go to the Aquarium, and anywhere else you like."

"I have never seen Elliotts Beach and I should like to see it."

"Very good. I shall ask Manikkam to take you there."

"And me too?" piped Radha.

"And you too!" I said and rummaged in the wardrobe for a change of clothing.

The moment the car stopped by the side-walk on the Marina, Radha was full of excitement. "Come, let us go and play on the sands," she called me.

We both got down, while Nainu sat moodily in the front-seat.

"Aren't you coming, Nainu?" I asked him.

"I don't like sand," he said firmly.

"I know what you like. Come along," I called him and he rose and followed us leisurely.

Very near the water's edge there was a boat. We went and sat behind this boat facing the roaring surf. It was a secluded spot and unless any one happened to look for us here, we were to all intents and purposes completely screened from the crowd of pleasure-seekers. Radha busied herself gathering sea-shells while Nainu sat staring stonily at the sea. Having gathered shells to her satisfaction, Radha began building sand-castles. Nainu never even looked at her, much less did he join her in her play. He was a superior sort of person, uncannily shrewd and frigid for his age. I was building castles in the air. It was Nainu who interrupted me.

"What about that fish?" he asked me all of a sudden. I was taken aback and asked him, "What fish?"

"I thought there was some talk of seeing fishes," he said with unnecessary acidity.

I had forgotten my promise to take him to the Aquarium: and what was worse, I had no money with me. Nainu was sure to mistake me if I told him I had no money. He would think I had deliberately come without money to deny him the pleasure of seeing the specimens in the Aquarium. I asked him to go and call Manikkam. When Manikkam came, I asked him, "Manikkam, I want a rupee. Will you go and get it from the shop?"

"Ammma, I have Ten Rupees with me. It is your money. You can have it."

"My money! What do you mean?"

"Master always keeps with me Rupees Ten for emergencies. If I spend anything out of it, I render an account to the shop and re-comp it."

"Very good. Take these two children to the Aquarium and show them around. Then take them as far as the Elliotts Beach and bring them back. Let me know as soon as you return. I will be here. Radha, dear, you may now go and see the fishes: but come here first."

I shook the sands out of her skirt and frock and smoothed her hair.

"Aren't you coming?" she asked me.

"I am feeling like a fish myself and I don't want the fishes to laugh at me," I told her: she smiled at the joke and went. I began rebuilding my castles in the air.

The sun had set. Stars began to appear one by one. The roar of the surf, the tooting of motor-horns on the distant road, made the twilight uncanny. The electric lights on the Marina were switched on. But behind the boat, where I sat, it was quite dark. How nice it would be, I thought, if I could walk straight into the sea and drown all my troubles and myself. A voice behind startled me.

The Merry Magazine

"Excuse me, but where is Radha?"

It was her father. The very person whom I had decided to avoid. I felt like running away from the place. I gathered just enough courage to answer him back.

"Oh, she will be back soon. She has gone for a drive," I remarked quite casually.

"Why didn't you go with her? It is very dark here. There may be crabs and nasty creatures about."

"Thank you, I am quite safe and in my element."

"May I stay till Radha comes back?"

"I am not very particular about the company I keep."

"But I am," he said with a light laugh and sat at a distance.

"Did Radha go alone?"

"No. She has a young cavalier with her as an escort."

"I don't understand."

"It is a long story."

"Please tell me. I like stories."

"I expect you do. Shall I begin the story?"

"Please do!"

"Once upon a time there was a village and in that village there lived an ugly, wicked old man who married thirteen wives. In that village there was a lovely girl. The old man wanted to marry her also. The beautiful girl thought she would get a nice young husband. But her parents cheated her and gave her away to the old man."

"Good God! Did Radha tell you that story?"

I looked at him, but it was dark and he was sitting away from me and I couldn't read his face. But his voice was vibrant with emotion.

"Your story has many weak points," I told him. He was silent. I continued: "The parrot was put in the cage so that stray cats may not attack and devour it. Cats of the Cheshire variety, you know, which keep grinning at parrots."

"You needn't rub it in as strongly as all that. It was a story after all."

"Was it? Fiction or fact, whatever it is, it requires correction. For instance, the Parrot was really grateful for the protection and sustenance."

"Preferred imprisonment to freedom, I suppose," he said sneeringly. "Then, it was not a Parrot, but a very domestic hen, who will one day be dished up."

I smiled at the comparison and at the vehemence with which he referred to the dishing-up.

"I suppose most feathered friends know that their offspring as well as themselves will one day be sacrificed, to gratify the gastronomical predilections of their masters," I remarked.

"If that be so, I shall be going," he said and rose.

"But I thought you were staying till Radha returns."

He sat down and was silent. I was in a teasing mood.

"I am curious to know your name."

"Kumaraswamy: shortened to Kumar."

"Profession, please?"

"Consulting architect. Anything else you want to know?"

"Yes: one or two more things if you don't mind. I am rather famous for my impertinence, you know."

"Indeed!"

"Why didn't you marry again?"

It was his turn to be impertinent.

"The answer is very simple. Everytime I see a nice girl, I find she is already married."

"Indeed! The solution is very simple. Marry a girl and then make her nice!"

"I don't know the art."

"You are good only at story-telling, I suppose?"

"I am glad you think I am good at least at something."

"That is the least of what I think of you."

"Is—that—so? What else? Tell me the rest—all!"

"All?"

"Yes: all. Tell me what you think of me."

"You might come nearer. I can't keep on shouting and these waves make such a noise. What is more, I might say uncomplimentary things and someone might overhear."

"There is not a soul hereabouts," he said and moved closer.

"You are a - a - bad-man-who-wants-to-steal-from-an-old-man-his young-innocent-wife," I told him, accenting the words.

For answer, he drew me into his arms and smothered me with kisses. I did not repel: I did not respond. It would be false to pretend I was not pleased.

"Are you angry with me," he asked me while I lay nestling in his arms.

"If I were, I would have pushed you in there!" and I pointed to the sea.

He hugged me hard and kissed me on the crown of my head: "You are the most precious thing on earth," he told me.

"Please take an eye off your precious thing and keep it on the road and watch if that car of mine arrives. I dread to think where this foolishness of ours will lead us."

"Bala, my darling, leave everything to me and don't worry. I shall take good care of you and no harm shall befall you. But one thing, dear, I want to hear from you. You do care a little, don't you?"

I told him all about the dream. He listened with rapt attention and exclaimed, "Destiny! We are made for each other!"

"Yes: you said that even in my dream," I said and drawing his head down, gave him, what I have never given any man before, my first kiss.

(Next instalment: Bala crosses the Rubicon.)

The Wonders of Madras

3. The Guindy Races

(P. R. KRISHNASWAMI M.A.)

WE cannot view the wonders of Madras better than in the company of Ramanathan, the city beau. It is a marvel how he manages to appear so smart in his clothes, considering the modest income he gets. He plays a very elegant game at the tennis court every evening before he goes on the walk to the beach. One would think that he was unencumbered with a wife and children, his ways and movements are so light. He thinks he represents the culture of city-life. He is polished in his manners to the tip of his fingers. Even in the smallest acts, like jumping into a rickshaw or buying the newspaper he puts to shame others by his own elegant manner. And then we note the many-sidedness of his interests, which in his opinion marks his culture. When old Subbiah Sastri turns over wearily the pages of the newspaper printing Racing News, Ramanathan owns to an inward chuckle over the feeling that to him no page of the newspaper is without interest.

The Shadows

"Thank God, the last day is over, and I may live in peace till December next," says Ramanathan to himself on the evening of the 11th March. Obviously, things were not as smooth with him as they appeared to be.

What was the purpose of those sudden errands which took Ramanathan to Mount Road, late in the evening on many a Friday? What was the sacred character of that booklet covered with coloured paper which Ramanathan clutched nervously, and buried in the inmost pocket of the coat, after arriving at the shop of his quest? Why did he sit up so late those Friday nights, poring over the booklet, when all the rest of the house had gone to sleep? Why did he, who is a democrat and denounces vehemently the accidents of birth, study so minutely the pedigree of racehorses? Why should the weights borne by racehorses have seemed so important to him, while he understands nothing of the

weights used in the bazaars where the provisions of his house are bought?

What was the mystery of the heavy withdrawals in Ramanathan's banking account on Saturday mornings? Why was it that on some Saturday evenings, Ramanathan, instead of going out on his usual walk to the beach, kept at home, and was dead in earnest in making himself useful to the household? Was it a fit of virtuous reaction coming on him after he had lost heavily at the races? How did it happen that on a few Saturday afternoons, Ramanathan who never misses an engagement if he can help it, was content to postpone his tasks to a later date? What was the confusion on his face due to, when on a Sunday morning, Thangavelu turned up at his house and requested time for the repayment of the loan he had taken of him the previous afternoon at the Guindy races?

Who can chronicle the rapid train of sensations and feelings which occurred to Ramanathan on the days of his visits to Guindy? He is keenly superstitious then and looks for omens in everything he sees. It is of account if he has just missed or caught a tram car, and the number of the car has a significance. Everytime he has a deliberate theory to follow in the choosing of horses, only it is a pity, it needs to be changed on every different day. He knows that the horses with the top weights must figure on the board on new moon days, and those with the lowest on full moon days, but the calculation between the two limits has been difficult, if not impossible. Then there are lucky numbers for each day. The winning horse of the first race yields the lucky number for the day. Or Ramanathan decides to back the horse least favoured by the punters, or he takes the last but one, or working the corner way, the second of the favourites. His ingenious calculations are quite perplexing, but we may remember that he never knows his own mind till the end of the races each

day, and then it is too late to profit by the acquired wisdom.

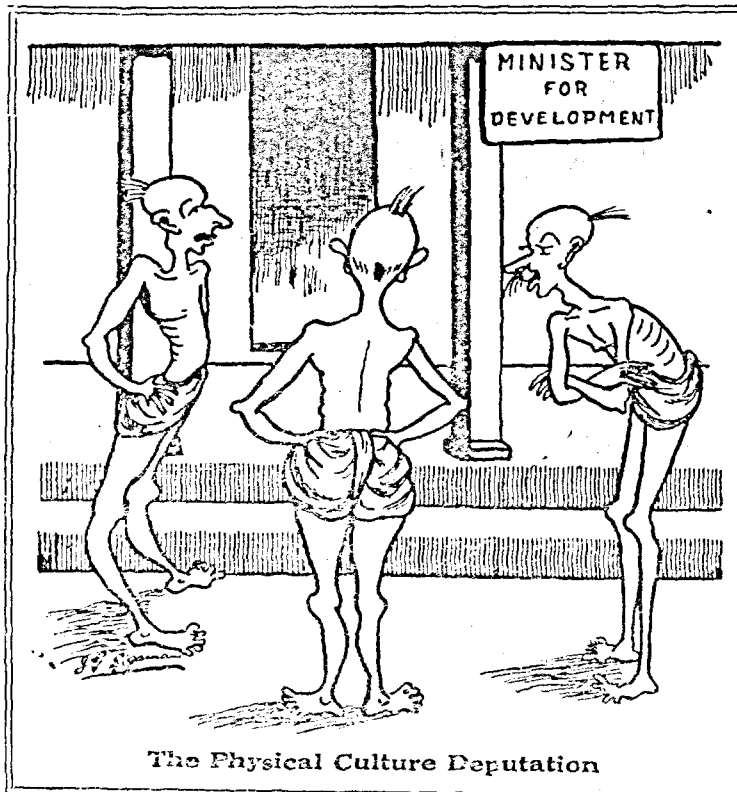
If you are in a bus, you look at the company around you and make your own inferences. It is a group of Muhammadans perhaps, and you feel happy, for there are no sportsmen like the Muhammadans. There are others who are cantankerous in bargaining about the bus fare to Guindy. They want to bring it down to four annas, but the conductor stands firm at six annas. When Venkatarayalu, the gray-haired conductor remonstrates about this hardness over a couple of annas while they were prepared to throw away any number of rupees at Guindy, every passenger in the bus feels a whip on his back. Think of the trepidation in which Ramanathan does his journey every time, whether in the bus or in the electric train, of the visions that fill his mind and the fears that invade it. He dreams of the time when, having made an incredible pile of money, he should rush home in a taxi, and the dream has not been spoilt by fulfilment in reality.

The New Colosseum

Think of the stream of men and women you come across at the races. It is a world of persons who feed ravenously on hope. The more broken in fortune, the more readily one catches at the imaginary chance of attaining sudden riches. Venkobarao, who ran through his patrimony years ago by running a profitless periodical, Venu the vakil who visited the prison twice on charges of breach

of trust and misappropriation, Thangavelu who tried his hand at half a dozen trades and failed in them all, Arumugam the contractor whose property was auctioned last week to pay his insistent creditors, Derozio, the Anglo Indian, returned recently from Rangoon, who set up a barber's shop and failed, and Abdul the tailor whom fate has treated cruelly,—all and thousands of others, are regular in their attendance at the races. Think of the increasing number of women who are at the races too: Savitri, who wears spectacles and carries a pretty bag hanging on her wrist, and has a man's self-composure in all she does, the Brahmin widows in white saris on whose lips words like "win" and "place" sound as of an alien tongue, Tripurasundari, the dancing girl from the southern town of Sarangapatnam who insists on her man following her own tips, and other women who have been brought by their husbands just to have a look once at the wonders of Guindy.

Like Locker-Lampson, the English society poet, Ramanathan thinks we must begin our acquaintance with society at the top, for, if we are tired there, we can come down; but if we begin below we may not go up at all. Every season, Ramanathan appears at first only in the First Enclosure. He and his friends sit on the cane chairs in the Restaurant and sip their coffee or eat an orange, and appear to take only a mild interest in the excitement of the races and of the totalisator. Ramanathan feels very wise as he notes in his racebook the names of the jockeys at the beginning of each race. Or he stands before



The Physical Culture Deputation

the bookies leaning on his stick, amused by the funny methods adopted by them.

"Come on, Maharaja," says the Parsi bookie with an uncanny look, "good luck smiles on you today, three to one 'Mandate'."

The 'Maharaja' who wears a turban adorned with silver lace smiles and walks away. The man next to him walks up to the bookie.

"But you are offering ten to one 'Colombo'. Why not I try that?" he asks. "Bah," says the bookie, sniffing in contempt, "'Colombo' is no good."

Five minutes later, Ramanathan sees that 'Colombo' has won, paying a huge dividend. What a pity he had not bought a ticket on that horse! Yet he felt he had stood, like France, 'on the top of golden hours.'

Young Rajagopal coming out from a window of the electric totalisator looks at Ramanathan and smiles.

"How are you faring, my dear fellow?" asks Rajagopal.

"Fairly well," says Ramanathan, for it is a shame to own defeat.

"Look here, Ramu, you see the girl at the second window there. She is a lucky girl to buy your tickets from. I have just made two hundreds," says Rajagopal.

"Congratulate you, old boy."

Ramanathan buys six tickets from the 'lucky girl' for the following race and loses all.

"Hallo, Ramu, you have come here!" greets Rangaswami, the leather merchant who has stopped his business owing to adverse conditions in trade. "How have you fared?"

"I am reaching the bottom of my purse, and I propose going home," replies Ramanathan, sulkily.

"But that is not sport. If you can't take these losses lightly, you shouldn't come here at all," remarks Rangaswami.

Ramanathan is impressionable, he thinks he may stay for another race.

Rajagopal heaves in sight once again, and offers a real tip this time to Ramanathan.

"You see barrister Richardson standing there," points out Rajagopal, "he is buying fifty tickets straight win on number six. He has stable information, you know, you may rely on it."

Ramu, who has grown prudent since his loss over six tickets, buys this time only three. Horse number six figures on the board, but not for a paying place. Once again Ramu had felt like 'standing on the top of golden hours.'

Rajagopal heaves in sight again and says: "Hard luck, Ramu, the expectation was right, you know. It is a shame six came fourth." This emphatic verdict does not make Ramanathan feel better. He conceives a vague dislike for Rajagopal that evening, but he is converted later by Rajagopal's kindness in taking Ramanathan home in his Baby Austin.

The Sea of the Proletariat

Loitering about a park, Ramanathan hears Kanya Lal the banker talk about betting at the races. "If you back all the horses, you make some money," pronounces Kanya Lal. Ramu's own experience does not confirm this proposition, but he thinks that a steady banker like Kanya Lal knows better. The next time he goes to the races, he backs all the fifteen horses in the Cup event. But the favourite wins, and two to one is the dividend! Ramu makes another experiment at the double tote. One day the dividend is Rs. 3000. By a simple calculation he finds that only a hundred combinations are possible in buying the tickets, and so 2000 must be clear gain even after investing on all the combinations. He tries all the hundred combinations the next time, but alas the dividend is only Rs. 400. Then Ramanathan resolves to desert the First Enclosure in favour of the Second.

The sea of men is fascinating in the Second Enclosure. It is a constant walk: you have to do from the totalisator to the paddock and from the paddock to the 'pay-out' (?) and you ascend as frequently the gallery that you may view the horses as they are coming

up from a distance. It is an exciting time when the horses are brought into the paddock before the race. Every person at the races is an intuitive judge of horseflesh. Murugesan the butler from Adyar, comments on the animals to Karuppan the cook. "Look at that gray-coloured thing with its pretentious name, 'Mahalakshmi.' It is a veritable donkey," remarks Murugesan. Ramanathan has bought Win tickets on the horse, and he suppresses his pain when he hears the remark. Five minutes later, Mahalakshmi wins and gives a dividend of twelve to one. That is a delightful day to Ramanathan. "Horse-racing is a wholesome diversion," he says to himself at the end of the day.

After the horses are viewed in the paddock, the proletariat determines its favourites, and there is a tremendous rush at the windows of the totalisator. You cannot buy your ticket at those windows without Herculean exertion. Old women beseech your assistance to buy them tickets. But you are unable to serve yourself. The hour brings out the hero. An adventurous man gets on to the ledge of the window and buys the tickets for the surging crowd below. The pickpocket finds his opportune moment now. He subtly diverts your mind to admire the hero above while he gently filches your purse from your pocket.

Think lastly of the army of hawkers of groundnuts, oranges, plantains, and sweets of all kinds, who seem to be quite unheeded by the absorbed punters; of the railway servants who view with amusement the hopeful countenances as the men arrive, and the great change in them as they depart. If hawkers with the finest oranges in their baskets cannot tempt the punter, how can the beggar at the railway station or bus-stand win his heart?

The Verdict

"What is this story of the goldsmith's suicide, Ramu? How can a man lose all his property in one day at the races, are we getting back the Mahabharatam days?" asks Subbiah Sastri.

"No uncle, yesterday's race was the last straw that broke the camel's back. The goldsmith must have lost successively at the races," replies Ramanathan.

"But how do these fellows lose their money? Are there cheats who relieve you of your money?" enquires Sastri.

"No, it is like this, uncle, the horses are made to run the races, and we bet on them—"

"But this goldsmith never owned a horse, and knew nothing of the animal," points out Sastri.

"He needn't know anything, to be able to bet on the horses," explains Ramanathan.

"If fellows come to grief like this, it is a shame to continue the races," remarks Sastri.

"But it is a great sport, uncle, these horse-races, and they stimulate for one thing the breeding of horses," argues Ramanathan.

"What is all this, Ramu, Tote paid..... Win..... Place.....?" asks the uncle again. Ramanathan begins his explanation at once with a sense of his own superior knowledge.

"My dear fellow, it is absurd that the horse coming third should pay you so much more than the one winning outright," remarks the uncle.

"That can't be helped, uncle. The sport is keenest in guessing aright the most unlikely horses," explains Ramanathan.

"It is clear, Ramu, that the only people who must profit by these races are the racing club. It is like the fable in which the monkey eats up the cake when adjudging the claims to it of two contending cats," remarks uncle Subbiah Sastri.

It is interesting to hear Ramanathan discourse to his ignorant listeners on the details of the racing organisation. He tells them of the mysteries of the electric totalisator, the double totalisator, of the favourites yielding poor dividends and the fluke horses sending up the dividend to four figures, and of the need to follow the jockeys or horses steadily.

"Anyway, racing is wrong, Ramu. The money earned is viciously got, and the money lost, ruins homes. Gambling is a deadly sin," pronounces Sastri.

"But all life is a gamble," mutters Ramanathan as he walks away from the uncle.

GREEN EYE

(P. P. SAMUEL)

66 WHEN I depart I want to leave a few foot-prints on the sands of time," said I.

Poet Nathan adjusted his spectacles and regarded me with the searching stare of a psycho-pathist.

"Tut-tut," he warned "you are too young to be bothering yourself with such nonsense. What has happened to you, my young man? The bride and the sunshine were in your heart when I met you last week. Now why this bleak blast of Winter?"

"Life is real, life is....."

"Cut the cackle," he interrupted. "Now would you mind coming to the point, child? I have to wade through the proof of 'More Chickens' and can't waste a minute."

"Life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal," I continued.

"Now don't try to teach your grandmother to suck eggs," he snapped. "I know my Longfellow as well as the next man."

"I intend writing some poetry," I blurted. "Perhaps you might give me a tip or two."

The poet laughed until his spectacles—which had a fractured limb—jumped off his nose. That seemed to open his safety-valve, for his chest ceased to heave violently. "You can't produce poetry by rule," he advised, with the air of a kindly celebrity who had arrived. "A poet is born, not made: the chief tool in his bag is inspiration. Anyway, should you write a volume of poems I should love to write a nice preface to it. But mind you, these critics are hard-boiled fellows. The better you write the more vitriolic is their criticism."

"Thanks. I was born all right," I said, "and I have my moments of inspiration."

Today, over my breakfast, I felt the maggot moving and heard a still, small voice urging me to write, write, write!"

"About what?" he asked.

"Coffee."

Nathan adjusted his spectacles and focussed an outraged eye on me.

"The trouble with you brats," he shouted, "is that you are too shallow and flippant! I tell you again, I won't waste any more time on you."

He entrenched himself behind a formidable pile of printed matter, looking as cold and immovable as the chimney of an old factory.

"May I suggest, sir," I ventured, "that you are a trifle conservative?"

"Why the dickens do you want to write about that poisonous stuff? Did Shakespeare do it? Did Milton?....."

"Neither Nathan," I put in edgeways. "And therein lies the charm. Heaps of people have written about the smell of the earth, the fragrance of the flower and all that sort of rot. But has not yet occurred to any man of genius to immortalize useful articles of diet. I am the coming man! And I want to do it forthwith lest I be caught napping. A gramophone record has already been made of an omelette and I fear they would very soon go one better and give a poetical version of it." "All my eye!" said the sage.

"And Betty Martin!" I rejoined over my shoulder.

That evening after dinner I lit a cigarette, kept the tin by me in case I needed more inspiration, and took the bit between my teeth. In plain language, I began to chew my

pencil. Ten minutes of vigorous work produced nothing more than the taste of graphite in the mouth and the title which was printed beautifully, in large letters, at the top. At first I had written "COFFEA ARABICA", thinking it would sound classical—something like Arcopagitica; but on second thoughts had changed it to plain COFFEE.

In sheer desperation I opened the tin and lighted another inspirer. Suddenly the grey cells were all agog, just as my Ford car starts, all out, after half an hour of sheer pig-headedness. And without wasting a split second over "Eurekas" I wrote down the stuff at the rate of ever-so-many words a minute.

COFFEE

Let Wordsworth sing of nature's charms—
Of flowers and lakes and sky;
Let Omar croon of women's charms,
And cheer that wine can buy.
My muse is free from sophistry,
It sings a sincere song
Of Coffee free from chicory:
To boot it isn't long.

It was a glorious stanza. Metre? Yes. Rhyme? Yes. Rhythm? Yes, by Shakespeare! I simply had to read it out aloud to my wife and ask her if she wouldn't withdraw a certain statement she had made the previous day.

"Oh, it's too sweet—a dream, dear—I did never," said the angel.

From the kitchen I sailed back to my desk. I had "arrived", at last. I could well imagine Nathan writing to the papers about a new literary star of the first magnitude. To write down 9 more stanzas was the work of as many minutes. I read the poem and saw that it was good. Here is stanza 2:—

Oh, have you seen the coffee tree
(Coffea Arabica)

With succulent fruits growing free,
So red and green, so round?.....Ah!
Be it 'Mocha' or 'Jamaica',
'Java' or 'E. Indian',
It's Coffea Arabica:
And so is 'Ethiopian'.

And the last stanza:—

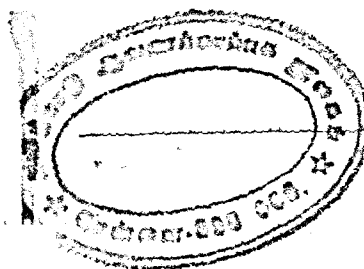
Ah give me just a glass, a glass
Out of the coffee pot,
With heaps and heaps of caffeine, lass—
The doctor he talks rot.
Is he better than coffee-bugs?
He prescribes chicory!
Oh, sure, he is one of them Thugs,
To prescribe chicory!!

In a state of literary inebriation I sent it on to Nathan, and waited for his panegyric as eagerly as I had waited for my first rejection slip, in January, 1930. In twenty days or so the Editor had concluded that the contribution didn't quite suit him. But Nathan was made of different stuff; he sent it back the very next day. But it was accompanied by a beastly stanza of six lines which ran as follows:—

"Old Viawamitra said,
'I'll make a quadruped';
And he did create one
That raised a lot of fun:
It had to crawl, dear sir,
Its four legs in the air!"

My first impulse was to resort to John-sonian tactics and crack him one on his cranium with a cane. The pig! He had himself volunteered to write a nice preface to my volume of verse when it was completed. Well, after all "these critics are hard-boiled fellows. The better you write the more vitriolic is their criticism." The green eye! Eh?

God may forgive him, but I never will.
Let "More Chickens" come out. I will.....
.....(The rest of the sentence is unprintable!)



MUSINGS ON MAIDENS

(G. VENKATACHALAM)

(3) The French Girl

"A French Girl is the sweetest thing on God's earth", wrote Ruskin, who knew France and her people as few Englishmen of his time can claim to have known her. In France, the typical home-life has a purity, sweetness, gentleness and affection, that you will not easily find equalled, much less excelled anywhere else in Europe. There are two countries in the world, especially, the women of which represent radiant types of ideal womanhood—India in Asia, and France in Europe.

"Europe is unthinkable without France", said Stead. With the exception of India, nowhere else, in this wide world, can you come across women, so naive, charming, lovable and gentle as in that land of fashion and frivolities. The typical French Girl is a sweet little lady, gentle, dutiful and self-sacrificing. She is impulsive, generous and warm-hearted; and welcomes even a stranger with a baby-like innocent face. The modern Parisian flapper, who is generally mistaken for the girl-humanity of *La belle France*, is something of an anachronism. She is the light-hearted child of a flippant city civilisation. She no more represents France than a West-End Londoner represents England, or a pleasure-mad prince represents the son of the soil.

In France, a typical young unmarried girl is like a ripe peach—with all the bloom of the fruit. She has a tenderness about her as pathetic as an ivy-creper, needing an oak by her side to cling to, and grow and beautify her surroundings. In this respect she resembles the Hindu girl the most. The French girl does not age quickly; she preserves her bloom and freshness into maturity and middle age. She is healthy, robust, and strong with the natural life of the open air, innocent games and simple play and laughter. It is true that things, nowadays, are somewhat changed and that we get an Americanised edition of the French girl, reckless, care-free, and with vagabond instincts. But such types are rare, though universal, and are to be met with in every country, even in India, and they do not represent the ideal type of any one nation or country.

France, as the most cultured country in Europe, puts her ideal of maidenly modesty at a higher level than others do in the West. It is nearly of the same character as is to be found in this ancient land of India. The

French girl is all modesty during her maidenhood. She is free, but her freedom is restricted and is not allowed to develop into license. She is not for instance free to have "boy-friends," in the American sense, though she may meet them socially often, and she seldom has her own exclusive sets and clubs, like the British youths and maidens. Promenade-walking may be the fashion in Paris boulevards, but "petting parties" are not regular features of a French girl's life, as it is in the case of young America.



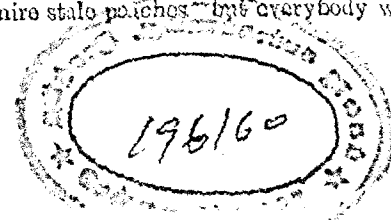
The Better Half.

"If you were to address a young French maiden, the probability is that her mother will answer you, but if you were to address an American mother, the probability is that her daughter would reply to you", remarked a shrewd observer of human nature, contrasting the nature of French and American girls respectively. A French girl is not wooed, much less courted, except with the consent of her parents or guardians. Even a betrothed husband in France has to converse with his bride in the presence of a chaperon. "It can't be! How frightful!", I hear even Hindu girls in the Queen Mary's, shout and protest!!

Well, here's a little anecdote about a famous French woman, who subsequently became the Editor-in-Chief of a leading journal in Paris, which well illustrates a French girl's notion of social etiquette and her own maidenly modesty. It so happened that when this lady, who afterwards became world-famous, was betrothed to another world-famous man, she was once kissed by him in her chaperon's absence. The Frenchman

had visited England and had partially assimilated the English customs which permit betrothed persons to indulge in such endearments. As observed above, Mon. Adam kissed his bride. Poor little Mlle. Eve burst into tears. "Monsieur," she cried with a sense of grief and resentment, "Ah, Monsieur," what have you done? you have now made it impossible for me to marry any other man!"

"A Prude!" declares the modern girl; and however much one may be inclined to agree with her, yet one cannot deny that there is much to be admired in such a fine idea as that portrayed in the above anecdote. One may admire stale patches, but everybody welcomes fresh ones!



Red Herrings Abroad

The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri has done a public service by pleading for the introduction of agreeable levities in the conduct of public controversies. He deserves the grateful thanks of all interested in the preservation of the sanity of our species. His inspiring example will, if followed more universally, contribute not a little to the gaiety of nations. Nothing is better calculated to assuage human passions than to draw emotional red herrings across the paths of human prejudices. Whoever could have thought that any connection lurked between 'Temple-Entry' and English as she is wrote? It is as intriguing as the connecting link between Gokulashtami and Ghulam Khadir (This has been communicated to me under the seal of strictest secrecy, and not all the wild horses can draw it out of me). What further delightful vistas are not opened up of similar combinations and juxtapositions? This magazine, dedicated to the sacred cause of 'heart-easing Mirth' has great pleasure in publishing the following exclusive symposium of the views of many prominent men on the application of Mr. Sastri's idea to the burning topics of the day.

Mr. Woodful refused to discuss the ethics of the 'leg-theory'. He was however characteristically facetious on the deportment and facial expression of the six or seven fieldsmen on the leg-side. Being a schoolmaster, he said that he was not likely to be intimidated by their ferocious looks. What with Jardine's harlequin cap, and the asymmetric arrangement of the field, he felt nothing but commiseration for English taste or the lack of it! He promises a big surprise in this line for the 1934 tests to be played in England.

Baron Mosquito, the Premier of Japan merely smiled when told that the League had endorsed the Lytton Report on the Manchuko tangle. He was more concerned, he said, with the international deterioration in the art of speaking the soft word that turneth away wrath. He solemnly assured our representative that he would not give up the daily *parayanam* of the Sermon on the Mount, whatever might happen—in Jehol.

Mr. MacDonald is seeking refuge from the acerbities of politics in philosophical retrospect. It is not perhaps generally known that he is passionately fond of

Shaftesbury's classic disquisition on the 'Art of Trimming'. It is thought not unlikely that he may yet prepare for the press an edition of that work with his own notes, which are certain to be of considerable autobiographical significance.

Mr. Winston Churchill's much-advertised opposition to Indian Reforms is, he declares in private, merely to demonstrate his rare facility for talking through his hat. 'You know,' he added, with twinkling eyes and apparent inconsequence, 'my hobby has been collecting—hats!'



Kittu:—I have now found out why the Rt. Hon. Sastri is not in good health.
Uncle Subba Rao:—You see, he has over-agitated constitutionally.

Speaking on the prospects of Anglo-Irish peace, Mr. DeValera is reported to have said: "The English are welcome to collect as much as they can through import duties. I trust they will not grudge me the satisfaction of gathering, in revenge, the nitches dropped by Mr. Thomas!"

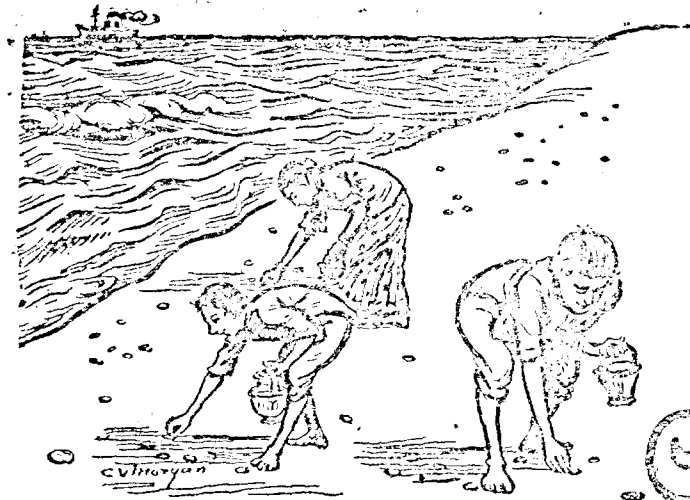
The compelling charm of 'C.P.' is confessed even by his enemies. But he was not to be drawn out on the chances of an Indian Federation. "As a matter of aesthetics, how to integrate the infinite variety of tufts and turbans in Native India, is the more fascinating theme of my labours," he declared in his inimitable Front-Bench manner.

Sir Mahomed Usman is as unconcerned about politics as Mr. Chesterton is about his bulk.

He however confessed, with a rapt expression on his face, that his literary tastes have been formed, and are still being fed exclusively on two epics, viz. The CID and The Vicar of Bray.

Asked if he thought the idea was a sound one, Mr. Bernard Shaw retorted briskly: "Both sound and sense;" and added: "Don't you run away with the impression that it's new to me. I've been doing nothing else all my life. Look at the titles of my plays; and if you've understood any of my prefaces, you'd have seen what a mixed cargo mine has been. Sastri indeed! he snorted, his unsoaped complexion becoming emergent red.

Our interviewer discreetly withdrew. 'PAM.'



A man may be able to write a sensible love-letter, but he never does.

It is a funny thing that when a man has not anything on earth to worry about, he goes off and gets married.

When a man and a woman marry they become one; but the question is, which one?

Certainly ladies' dress is becoming less, but the question is, is it less becoming.

A pessimist is a man who, when faced with two evils, chooses both.

Where there is a will there is a lawsuit.

Fashion Note: There will be little change in men's pockets this summer.

There are lots of people about nowadays with a keen sense of rumour.

A man should certainly love all mankind, but if he gets busy loving all womankind, he is asking for trouble.

The world is full of willing people—some willing to work, the rest willing to let them.

You can't tell from a man's clothes how much money he's making; look at his wife.

Tact may be defined as handling truth with delicacy.

The wisest man is he who has the sense to say nothing at the right time.

A jolly girl is one who will let you kiss her. A sensible girl is one who won't let anyone else.

The best thing about distant relations is—the distance.

Don't forget that a miss with a mission may sometimes be looking for a man with a mansion.

Motor and the girl motors with you, walk and you walk alone.

Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can't say it, and the other half of folks who have nothing to say, and keep saying it.

Many women are fond of keeping queer pets. That is why some of them marry.

Some one has said that no woman should suffer in silence; but if she is silent, she must suffer.

Some folks only attend church three times in their lives—when they are hatched, when they are matched, and when they are despatched.

It was an optimist who invented the steam boiler, but it was a pessimist who added the safety-valve.

ON GETTING UP

(NEIL A' CANTEN)

YOU, reader, have done it once at least during the last twenty hours. Nay, don't change colour, bless you, nor look so guilty over it. You have not committed murder, Heaven forbid; nor have you been detected with your hand in the jam-pot. All that we mean is that you have got up from your sleep once at least during the last twenty hours; and that is a thing, Heaven knows, you cannot help doing. You might forget to take your season ticket, and ungrudgingly pay the excess fare at the terminus. You might even forget to have your dinner—in fact many do, making a virtue of necessity—but you simply cannot forget to get up. Early or late is quite a different matter. As Sir Toby says, "To be up after midnight and to go to bed then is early; so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes;" and that applies to getting up too, *mutatis mutandis*. Where and how you get up too, does not concern us. You might go to sleep at Erode and get up to hear the "top-tap" of a ticket-collector at Basin Bridge. You might go to bed on the thirty-first of December and get up on the New Year's morn to find that a year has stealthily stepped over you, while you slept. If it were April and if you were in England as some poet sang, you might get up and

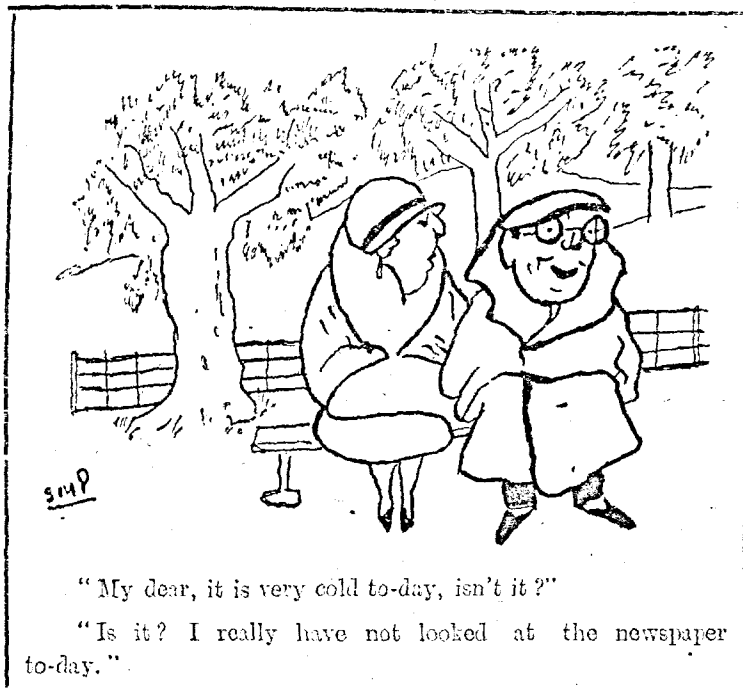
"See—some morning unaware,

That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree hole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!"

Again, you might go to bed in this world and get up in the next. Heigh-ho! we have pulled ourselves up just in time, for we were drifting into realms "where angels fear to tread."

You know my friend, Joe. Well, he gets up every morning from the gutter, helped out by some obliging policeman. You know he is not quite for prohibition and all that cant. He isn't sober except when he cannot get a drink, and that seldom happens—he is simply drowned. All that we can vouch for him is, that he at least gets up from where he went to bed. His conception of Paradise is that it is a place where all gas-pipes, water-pipes, petrol-pumps—in fact, every inch of metal-tubing

in the street that you can lay your hand upon—even the telegraph and the tram-posts, are full of liquor. He is a man of wit, and that commodity in him comes out in the form of anecdotes when the wine is in. His best one is, that he was lying in the gutter one night, half unconscious, when a pig came and nestled close up to him. A passer-by observing the strange couple smiled, and said, "Every one is known by the company he keeps". And just fancy, as Joe says, the beast strode out of the gutter with an offended air. You are no doubt wondering, gentle reader, what all this talk about Joe has to do with getting up. But you forget that we got up on our wrong side today, and hence our mood is none too pleasant and our strain none too relevant, for that fool of a boy of ours made our shaving water too hot.



Talking of shaving, there is Hassan, the barber in the Arabian Nights Tales. He wished to be the Caliph for a day and his wish was overheard by the Caliph himself, who fulfilled it the next day in such a wonderful way, that it is not found anywhere out of the "Arabian Nights". So Hassan bossed it over for a whole day, and when, the next morning, his poor wife woke him up in his own lowly cottage, he belaboured her with blows for addressing him as Hassan, instead of "Sultan Haroun Al

Raschid—Most Faithful, etc." And a poet chappie woke up one fine morning and found himself famous. Your humble servant, too, once tried the experiment and groined about to feel fame. But you know what a slippery eel she is. He felt instead the bed posts.

A constitutional indolence, a similarity of temperament, in fact, everything except a terragant wife, has made Rip Van Winkle our favourite character in fiction. For twenty years our hero defied the necessity of getting up, and we have always imagined him as turning round on his side once a year, and then quaffing off a flagon of that stuff which bewitched him, with as much relish as you and I would sip a delicious cup of steaming hot-coffee. And if we had our way, we would emulate our hero by migrating to the Polar regions, and enjoying half the year in delicious slumber, till a faint glimpse of the sun on the horizon tells us that the earth has finished half her revolution, and that it is time to get up.

There are heroes and heroes—some who defy the necessity of getting up by going into an eternal sleep, others who do it by never going to sleep at all. "Sleep" says an American Professor, "is a luxury, and you can cancel that off your routine, as easily as you can drop a week-end picnic." And four Oxford undergraduates actually tried it on the eve of their exam. For ninety-six hours at a stretch they kept their eyes open, but by the end of that period, their thinking apparatus, which laymen prefer to call brains, was in such a state that they began to repeat their logarithm tables. We would advise our readers too to try it. If they can manage it before they sit for a paper in mathematics, so much the better; for then they can do without their Clarke's Tables.

Lots of things have been written about getting on in the world, but precious little about getting up. If we remember aright, only Lamb seems to have attempted anything of the sort and he, poor chap, bungled the whole affair. To get up with the lark! Ridiculous! That would have been good enough for our ancestors who went to bed with the lamb, but we, with our balls, our theatres

From Ring to Business.

Even now one hears stories of the fabulous wealth with which bookmakers have retired from the Turf, but it will be found upon examination that the majority of the men—there are not many—reputed to have amassed money in the bookmaking line have acquired their wealth by the skill, energy, and foresight with which they have utilised what may be called a nest-egg taken from the Ring in the development of businesses of one sort or another, as, for instance, steel and iron, breweries, and tobacco concerns.

About the heaviest betting bookmaker concerning whom fairly reliable records are available was Davies, known as The Leviathan. It is said that on several occasions he laid bets of 100,000 to 1,000, and did by far the biggest business in the Ring, but he does not seem to have been worth more than £50,000 at his death.

Then there was J. B. Morris, ready to lay to any amount. He died a very poor man, but contemporary writers stated that he would have been worth well over £100,000 had the money due to him from defaulting punters been paid. William Ridsdale, prominent even in the heavy betting days in which he lived, was found dead in a garret at Newmarket.

It was an open secret that Jack Valentino, head of the firm of Valentino and Wright, would have been in distressed circumstances had it not been for the kindness of a former partner, and John Jackson of Fairfield left comparatively little behind him.

The vast transactions in which The Leviathan was wont to indulge have already been alluded to. Gazing out across the racecourse at Epsom one day, he said to a friend, "All that is now within view might have been mine had I never made a bet upon the Derby until the numbers went up."

and our exams, we never think of retiring to bed till the first streaks of Aurora's spears begin to gild the east. Let those who will, prate about the harvest of gold they garner in the sunrise. We are content to bathe ourselves in the argentine effulgence of the midnight. That talk of drawing inspiration from the lark is all bosh, every word of it. We draw ours from the smoke of the midnight oil and also of a cigarette. Give us a silent room, a rocking-chair, a packet of "fags" and a time-piece indicating two—it is hard if we do not start some game on a wild heath. Ideas seem to dance and skip about your head like mischievous elves, as you complacently watch with half-closed eyes the smoke of your cigarette curling up to the ceiling, like the incense at some oriental shrine. Ours are the diamonds that twinkle against a foil of azure blue, ours that Kohinoor they call the moon, the silence of the midnight is ours, ours too, the melodies of the nightingales, ours for keeps. We do not want that naughty lark to wake us up from our bed, just when we are seeking it—that Big Ben on the mantelshelf will see to it. We are not children of the Dawn—we are children of the twentieth century, and of the ten o'clock.

In five consecutive years, 1849-1853, the losses of Davies over the Derby were astounding. He laid 55,000 to 1,000 in two Lets against Daniel O'Rourke; 30,000 to 2,000 in one bet Teddington; 15, 00 to 1,000 West Australian; and 100,000 to 1,000 each, of three horses to their owners, one of which started at 6 to 1.

On one occasion a punter with a heavy winning account did not send in his claim. It transpired that he had died almost directly after the event had been decided. On hearing of this Davies made it his business to find out the widow, who had been left badly off, and having done so, handed her over the money due to her deceased husband.

Among punters in the good old days (not very long ago) known as the Hastings epoch, Capt. Machell, Turf manager to several racing magnates of the day, among them Mr. Chaplin, owner of Hermit, was a prominent figure and a ready gambler into the bargain.

In some ante-post Derby Betting at Long's Hotel one night the captain backed Mr. Chaplin's horse to win him 45,000 sovs, ending up with a bet of 20,000 to 1000. Just as this wager had been booked the Duke of Hamilton came into the room, and, on being told what had happened, remarked, "Hooh, you don't call that betting! I'll lay 30,000 to 1000 Hermit, once, twice, three times, five times, or six times."

Capt. Machell was not the sort of man to back out from such a challenge, and promptly booked the colossal bet (to the best of my knowledge the biggest ever made) of £180,000 to £6000.

A large sum was subsequently offered to Capt. Machell to cancel the bet, but for some time he stuck to his guns, and, the wager was not, I believe, called off until shortly before the race. Still, it had been made, and there is no doubt whatever that, had it stood, it would have been duly paid.

News of the World.

Courtship

(RAMSAY. B. RAMONI)

THESE American politicians are in a class by themselves. There is no knowing what they will do or what they will not when power is put into their hands. Inscrutable are their ways. And I do not know what moved Mr. Joseph Cestre to do what he has done. This gentleman, the Mayor of Newtown, Kansas, U. S. A., has thrown open the municipal halls in his jurisdiction, two evenings a week, free, for the use of courting couples.

I do not know what Mr. Cestre is going to receive as a reward for his action. I do not know what he expects even. And so I do not know if he will get what he expects.

"A Nobel prize or some such thing" you may suggest. As for the former, Sir Alfred has not instituted a prize to be awarded annually to the record breaking marriage maker. Even if he had, Il Duco of Italy granting free railway trips to honeymoon couples, and Ramanatha Sastri of Kandytipuram managing a horoscope manufactory have got greater claims for the award than the Mayor of Newtown. As for the 'some such thing', well no such thing exists to my knowledge.

"A statue may be erected in his honour," shall be the alternative suggestion. Let me digress. The pen, they say, is mightier than the sword. Yet the wielder of this mightier weapon is not able to grapple successfully with the wolf at the door. But I may fondly look forward to a time when India shall not fail to patronise and honour her talented sons. (Yes, daughters too.) If, and when, that time comes, and if the people of this country seek to honour me by erecting a statue, I must most certainly take the strongest exception to it. I do not know if Mr. Cestre feels likewise. If he does not I may ask him to go carefully through what Mr. G. K. C. writes of statue worship in his 'All Things Considered'. Then, I am certain, he will see eye to eye with me and decline to be dishonoured by a statue. The erection of statues is something akin to idolatry and surely there cannot be a worse means of dishonouring a true follower of the Son of God than seeking to thrust a Pagan honour upon him.

There is a soul of goodness in things evil. And the present economic depression has proved to be a blessing in disguise to America. There has been a remarkable fall in the divorce rate of that country and surely, that is a consummation devoutly to be wished for. For in the land of stars and stripes, marriages are made and unmade the same day and girls are not ashamed to confess that they find marriage monotonous. It is yet to be seen what effect Mr. Cestre's action is going to have in this respect. And one shudders to imagine what it would be if one were to take his stand on Lindsey. For if the figures Lindsey gives in his books be correct, then in the New World one out of every three cases of matrimony becomes before long a case for alimony. And by the way, what has Judge Lindsey to say of Mr. Cestre's action?

And we have cause for more fear. The Dean of the University of Washington says—and he is an authority in these matters—that American youths fail in their examinations because of their love affairs. He also adds the following amusing anecdote. "Sometime ago one of the students had that trouble but after a time he asked for readmission. On the petition form the question was asked: 'Has the cause for failure been removed?' The student wrote 'Yes. I married her.' When we remember that more often than not jilted lovers and plucked students pay their debt to nature in order to escape from the misfortune dogging their footsteps, well, I very much doubt if Mr. Cestre's action is really laudable.

A writer in an American weekly suggests that Mr. Cestre might have felt "that the lack of courting facilities is a definite impediment to countless marriages." If that be so, I am inclined to believe that neither Mr. Cestre nor the writer has got much of the commodity called commonsense. For I am certain that lack of courting facilities never makes a scrap of difference to a really loving couple.

I may cite an instance in point and introduce to you my good friend, Edwin. He has his own sweetie, an angel in cream and gold, whose company he never leaves. The astronomers say that the moon is never seen without the company of Rohini. And I have never seen Edwin unaccompanied by his 'Princess Charming.' In fact he is so madly in love with his hussy that he does not scruple to woo her any where everywhere without being alive to the presence of strangers around and about him. Travelling in the tram along with his dear sweetheart, he would all on a sudden, cry out flinging his arm round the neck of his fair companion,

"From the East to Western Ind,
There's no jewel like my Rosalind."

And then Rosalind, flattered by the couplet would sit a bit closer.

Now if anybody were to suggest to Edwin and Rosalind that they need a municipal hall to do their courting in, they would simply laugh in contempt.

I really wonder what made Mr. Cestre feel that there were not adequate facilities for courting couples. In fact my complaint is that there are far too many facilities already, the picture palaces, parks, botanical gardens, and the like. These induce our youths to plunge headlong into love. Little do they realise the dangers ahead. The vain girl—almost all girls are vain—may jilt her lover when the proposal comes or treat him worse by accepting it. The poor fellow then ends his life or lives to suffer. Over there in America, I think Mr. Cestre himself must have bitter experience of such things. If he has not, let him but go through the matrimonial history of some of the Hollywood stars.

66 SELF-HELP 99

(Dr. CYNICUS.)

I could never understand my friends indulging themselves in exchanging vulgar jokes with one another at the expense of what I had never bargained for, or acquired with a conscious effort. Strangely paradoxical as it might seem, it is nevertheless true, that though my parents were lean and lanky creatures (God bless their souls if they had any!) I was born a fat and plumpy baby and, unlike the majority of mankind who belie the promises of their earlier years, I continued to develop into a substantial specimen; and I confess, I see no reason why I should feel sorry for it. On the other hand I am immensely proud—and justifiably too—of my sheer volume and capacity. While at college, my services were continually in demand for captaining the tug-of-war teams; and as the college goalie, I simply left no space between the posts for the ball to escape through!

The advantages of being fat, are too numerous to be mentioned and can only be appreciated by personal experience. I cannot afford to be peevish or short-tempered. A good-natured *bonhomie* is always the concomitant of corpulence, for, the very sight of me engenders levity and light-heartedness. My very enormity begets a certain sense of security and confidence which certainly go a long way towards the achievement of success in any walk of life. I am incapable of falling ill as, with the minimum

exertion I can eliminate the impurities of my system through perspiration in profusion, by just taking a few paces round my garden, or climbing the staircase up and down a couple of times. And, last but not least, I am the most chivalrous gentleman, for on vacating my seat in the crowded tram or bus, I can accommodate half a dozen ladies in ease and comfort!

Coming to minor details, I can defy description with impunity unless you are prepared to expend a whole vocabulary of superlatives. If it is my size, it is the biggest; if it is my girth, it is the broadest; if it is my coat or shirt or boots, they are the largest size, which you

can never obtain ready-made; if it is my dhoti—it is the longest! you cannot easily satisfy me with things small, puny and contemptible! I always attract attention and can never lose myself in a crowd!

Of the various modes of mechanical propulsion that have multiplied with the advance of civilisation, I preferred the Railway as the safest and least disastrous. The Jutka, oh! I could never forget the incident. It was during the Tramway-men's strike and I was forced to get into one of these, as there was no other conveyance available. The Jutkawala eyed me up and down suspiciously and but for the tempting fare that I offered, I dare say, he would have refused to have anything to do with me. Poor fellow, he was quite right! I had just placed one foot inside and was about to follow with the other, when the whole structure came down, horse and man dangling in mid-air and poor me buried under the roofing!

One of the most diabolical contrivances that disgrace our premier cities and degrade man—made in the image of God—to the level of a veritable beast of burden,

is what is known in common parlance as the "Rickshaw." I can never forgive the cruelty of it and I assure you, I have always despised the very idea of being dragged along the thoroughfare by a fellow human being, for, no Rickshawallah would dare risk his precious bones by attempting to haul me along in the manner aforesaid! Of the other means of cheap locomotion, such as the tram or

ODDITIES OF THE LITERATURE

HAWTHORNE would have his hands washed before perusing a letter from his better half. He delighted in poring over the newspaper files, and the old advertisements that were therein, pleased him right royally.

A petty little cat was the bed-fellow of Edgar Allan Poe; he slept with him, and was inordinately proud of his feet.

Oliver W. Holmes was wont to take a horse-chestnut in one pocket and a potato in another to guard against rheumatism.

Neither vocal nor instrumental music afforded Byron the slightest pleasure.

R. L. Stevenson's favourite pastime was playing the lute, in order as he said, to tune up his ideas.

Charles Dickens was passionately fond of adorning himself with jewellery.

Alexander Pope preferred a street organ to Handel's oratorios.

Keats would not neglect toast with red pepper on it; it delighted his palate awfully well.

Joaquin Miller had all his chairs nailed to the wall.

When fast asleep Daudet had his glasses on.

The younger Alexander Dumas bought a new painting everytime he had a new book published.

The poet Rogers and Edmund Burke felt actual discomfort at the sounds of music.

Walks at sunrise and sunset were Longfellow's special enjoyment; as he said, sublimest moods came over him only on these occasions.

Should Bacon (I am not sure of the man) give out his lessons or answer a question put by his professor, he must by all means twist and turn his breast-button; otherwise he could not answer him.

S. ANTONY.

the motor bus, I have not much to say, except that they are too small for my magnificent proportions.

Having had occasion to undertake a distant journey to the far south, I was compelled one day to transport my ponderous bulk to the Railway Station by means of the latter mode of conveyance referred to above and, having reached the station safe, and in full possession of all my limbs, (thank God, there were no accidents), I reserved the lower berth of a second class compartment. In spite of the liberal "tipping" all round (which custom, by the way, has my warmest approbation, as it enables one to secure undivided attention) some mistake arose in the administrative machinery of the Railway Office and to my utter consternation, I found on arrival at the platform, that an upper berth had been set apart for my exclusive occupation, instead of the lower that I had specially paid for! Now, to an ordinary individual, such minor events may not be of any appreciable consequence, but, to one of my all round superiority, and accustomed as I was to be looked up to with awe and reverence, it was very provoking. But no amount of arguments could alter the situation for the better and I had perforce to resign myself to the inevitable.

As if to add insult to the injury I had already sustained, I had to face, on attempting to enter the compartment, a more serious problem than the loss of my lower berth, which now paled into insignificance. With an absolute and criminal disregard of the possibilities of human expansion, the Railway company had constructed their carriages with the door-ways so narrow, that, as I stood abreast, I found to my horror, one half of my person refused to be coaxed in! A crowd had by this time collected in front of my carriage and encouraged by their sympathetic cheering, I succeeded at last in storming the citadel, by effecting a lateral entrance!!

Having thus outwitted the stupidity of the Railway by a simple stroke of ingenuity, I looked round and, ignoring the presence of my fellow traveller (my rival for

the pleasures of the lower berth—a fellow of about quarter my size) with a supreme contempt born of hatred engendered by jealousy, I made a rough mental calculation of the cubic pressure I would exert on the chains that supported the berth. I counted the links, and tested their capacity for endurance by suspending myself for a while with my hands firmly clutching them for support during the process. Having satisfied myself that I would be safe, I removed my coat and turban and prepared for ascent. As ill-luck would have it, just at this moment, my fellow passenger took it into his head to purchase a large quantity of oranges and, in the absence of any receptacle for their storage, piled them in a heap on the floor of the carriage.

In spite of the Darwinian theory of man's glorious descent from the monkey which is commonly defined as an animal well versed in the art of climbing and probably due to the fact, that generations of more civilised occupations had deadened my latent abilities in that direction, I found the problem of climbing into the upper berth well nigh insuperable! Still undaunted, I took a firm grip of the handle attached to the ceiling and, having inhaled a sufficient quantity of air to increase my buoyancy, I attempted to raise myself bodily into the upper regions. The poor fragile structure could not bear my weight, and down I came with a tremendous force on the heap of oranges that lay on the floor, in utter ignorance of the catastrophe that was to overtake them! The whole lot of them were annihilated beyond recognition and, as I stood up, the juice that had been pressed out from under my pressure had so deeply stained my clothes, that I looked like a pilgrim bound for the Tirupathi Hills!

In sheer disgust I got out and having cancelled my journey, returned home, a sadder but a wiser man. That was the only occasion in all my life, I regretted my enormous stature and from that day, I have always depended on my own pair of stout legs for purposes of locomotion!

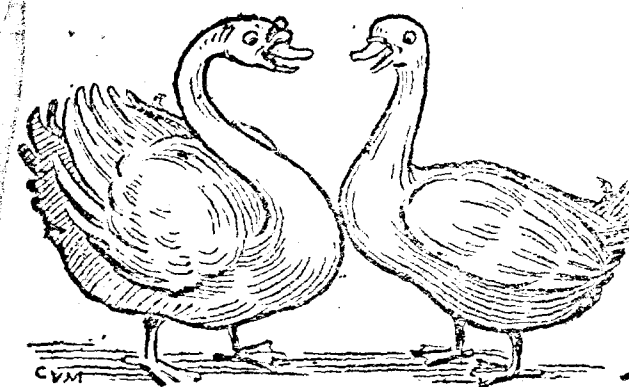
Nothing like Self-help!!

DO YOU WONDER?

There once was a man of
Tobago,
Who stuck to a diet
of sago;
He became very rude,
When they brought other food,
And would snarlingly bid them:
"Away, go!"
For breakfast and dinner,
and luncheon,
He had it served up in
a puncheon;
It was all he could do,
Now and then, to get through,
But he always continued
To munch on.

He kept to this habit
For ages,
And then pined away
(in slow stages)
Though just why he did so,
"I'm afraid I don't know:
It's a problem that's baffled
All sages.
But if you insist on
the question,
I'll venture a humble
suggestion.
He had had quite enough
Of the horrible stuff,
And "succumbed" to acute
indigestion.

Panruti. K. Govindarajulu Naidu.



SENSE & NONSENSE

Mr. John Aye tells the following amusing stories in his book "Humour in Sport."

When W. G. Grace, the famous cricketer, came to play against a local team the squire offered a silver mounted bat to any one who could bowl, stump or catch him. To everyone's astonishment, to say nothing of anger, at the indignity, Jimmy, a hefty bricklayer, clown bowled the champion first ball, and Grace returned to the pavilion amid a deathly silence. Suddenly, Jimmy was heard to say, contritely: "I didn't mean to do it *sae soon*."

A football fan went on shouting at the top of his voice: "Well played, sir! Pretty, Smith, pretty! Beautiful, Williams! Lovely, Brown!" A supporter of the rival team who had stood this for some time decided he had enough of it. "Hi, you in front!" he yelled. "Give it a rest! Put a sock in it! This is a football match, not a bloomin' beauty competition."

At an England V. Scotland Rugby international a Southern supporter kept shouting to his side: "Sit on 'em!" At last, one old Scot who could stand it no longer, chimed in: "Na, na, my guid man. You may sit on a rose, you can sit on a shamrock, but I am hanged if you can sit on a thistle."

A well-known jockey once received the surprise of his life. In a certain steeplechase he and another rider were leading the field when both fell at the same fence.

He jumped up quickly, remounted, and galloped home the winner. But on returning to the paddock he found the owner in a rage.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "I won the race. didn't I? What more do you want?"

"Of course you won," spluttered the owner, "but on the wrong horse!"

Bob Sherwood, the famous clown tells these interesting anecdotes in his "Hold Yer Hosses!", one of the best books ever written about circus folk.

Dan Rice, the famous Shakespearean clown always paraded about the streets in a coach-and-four with a handsomely-bound copy of the great William's works open before him when—had his life depended upon it—he could not have spelled out a single word of the text!

Finally, drink took him out of the "show" business. He stumped round the country preaching and lecturing on Temperance. He always had a waterbottle on his rostrum from which he would drink at intervals, remarking: "God's drink for mankind, friends, pure water." Actually it was pure gin!

Every circus in old days ran a freak show. And Tom Thumb was the greatest dwarf in one and he fell in love with a giantess in the troupe. One day while the show waited at a junction, Tom and his lofty lady-love went for a stroll. Just as they were nearing a wayside smithy Tom asked for a kiss. The lady agreed, and Tom just managed to reach her lips by standing on an anvil mounted on a wooden block outside. Two hundred yards farther on he asked for another kiss.

"No. No more. One is enough," insisted the tall one.

"Mean it?" inquired Tom.

"Absolutely!"

"Well then," said Tom, "I suppose there's no need of my carrying this damned anvil any farther!"

Like many other creative authors, Mr. H. G. Wells hates being interviewed when he is busy writing a new book.

Recently, while thinking out situations for his latest novel, "The Bulpington of Blup," he was walking in a country lane near his house, when he saw a stranger hurrying towards him.

The man looked every inch a journalist, and Mr. Wells was firmly convinced that he would try to interview him. So the famous author dodged aside down a convenient bridle-path.

But the stranger was not to be shaken off and doggedly followed his quarry down the path through a broken hedge, and across a meadow. Eventually he came up to Wells, behind a haystack.

Resigning himself to his fate, the author turned and faced his pursuer.

"Glad you've come to anchor at last, old man," said the stranger cheerfully. "I want you to tell me where I can find a pub in this damned district. I'm dying for a glass of beer."

Who are the people whose names are best known throughout the world?

Sinclair Lewis, the great American novelist and former Nobel prize winner in his new novel *Ann Vickers* gives the following list.

"Colonel Lindbergh, G. B. Shaw, the Prince of Wales, the ex-Kaiser, Freud, Einstein, Hitler, Mussolini, Gandhi, Hindenburg, Greta Garbo, Stalin, Henry Ford, and most of all, Al Capone."

A Reading police man recently summoned himself because his chimney was on fire, and was duly fined four shillings by the magistrates.

This shows a high degree of conscientiousness, but not more so than the case of a certain judge in the United States who tried himself for "speeding" a little time ago, found himself guilty, and imposed the maximum fine.

A sense of duty, apparently, can produce some remarkable results. But in neither of

these cases was it carried so far as in that of a constable who, in order to obtain evidence against a man practising as a dentist without the prescribed qualifications, called on him and had one of his teeth extracted. —*Answers.*

Seven years' free shaves—and all because he made the barber laugh! It sounds fantastic, but it is true.

On his first day at a new station a police officer discovered he had forgotten to pack his shaving tackle, so he visited a barber. While the latter was operating he told him a story so amusing that the man with the razor said he would shave him for nothing if he told a similar story every day. And the officer kept it up for seven years.

Many of the European statesmen in power to-day, have risen from very humble beginnings. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was once a penniless addresser of envelopes. Herr Hitler has been a lance corporal and a house painter. Il Duce of Italy was first a blacksmith and then a schoolmaster. M. Edouard Daladier also was a schoolmaster. M. Masaryk is the son of a coachman. Mr. DeValera and Herr Miklas of Austria were schoolmasters once.

Mr. & Mrs. A. Bennett have been divorced but will continue to reside in the same house. Before marrying Mr. Bennett, Mrs. Bennett had been his housekeeper, and Mr. Bennett told the divorce court that while the lady had disappointed him as a wife, he still liked her cooking. So Mrs. Bennett remains in his house as housekeeper with alimony of 50 dollars a month while working for her ex-husband. *Los Angeles.*

A writer says that only those who have suffered can write modern fiction. If so, any one who has read modern

fiction should be able to write it.

—*Thamastori*
(*Gr.*) *Times.*

Mr. Wilbur Glenn Voliva predicts that the end of the world will come in 1935.

It seems a long time to wait.
—*Life.*

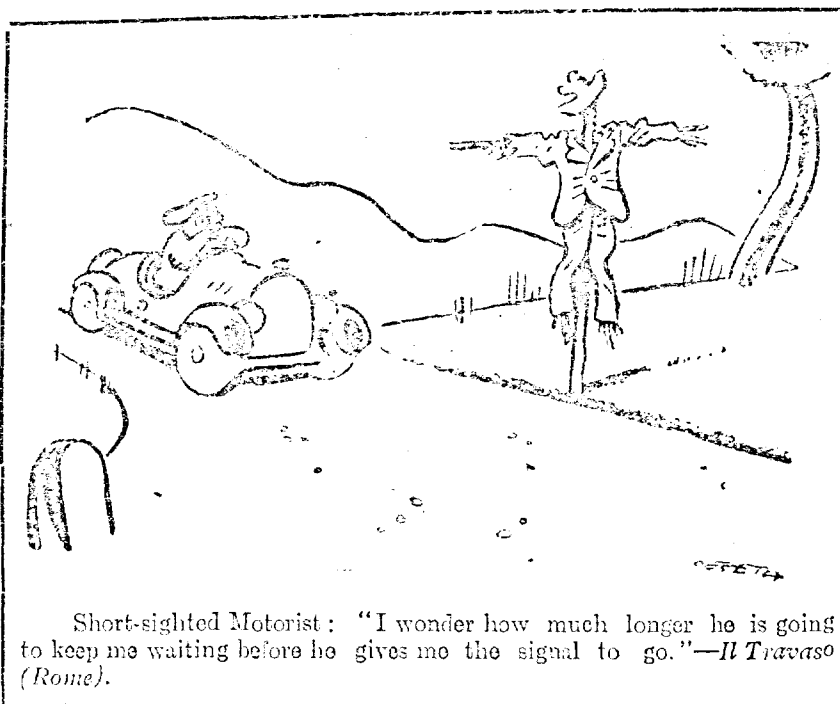
An American artist has stated that Miss Claudette Colbert "comes nearer to being a really beautiful woman than any other film star in Hollywood. He added that his perfect woman

could be "constructed" from the shoulders of Miss Miriam Hopkins, the hands of Miss Sylvia Sydney, the legs of Miss Marlene Dietrich, the knees of Miss Wynne Gibson, the figure of Miss Carole Lombard, the carriage of Miss Elissa Landi, the walk of Miss Kay Francis. He said nothing about brains or character.

Now that John Galsworthy is dead, there are only sixteen members of the Order of Merit. The statutes of the Order lay down a maximum of twenty-four ordinary members.

The "father" of the Order is Sir Edward Elgar, who was made a member in 1911. He took the honour from Admiral Sir Edward Hobart Seymour, who died in 1929. The latter was one of the twelve original members instituted by King Edward in 1902.

Most of the members to-day are writers and scientists, though the Order was founded to honour those who had rendered exceptionally meritorious services in the Navy or Army, or to Art, Literature and Science. There are only three sailors who possess the Order—Lord Jellicoe, Lord Beatty, and Sir Charles Madden—and no soldiers.



'THE HERO'

(T. L. EDWIN)

THE high opinion that so many women have of their husbands, is most touching, and sometimes very useful too. Mrs. Ganpat Iyer belonged to this group, and her belief in her husband's brutally heroic qualities remained unshaken. It all started two years ago, about a week after their marriage, when Ganpat Iyer stepped on a banana skin and performed one of those difficult feats known to the circus world as a somersault. Some men of milder stuff would have cautiously looked around, and seeing that no one had noticed the incident, would have tried to forget it. But not so Ganpat Iyer. He became purple with rage, and his countenance was terrible to behold. He swore and raged, heaping curses in cart-loads on the forefathers up to umpteen generations, of the child who had unwittingly dropped the banana skin on his door-step.

That settled it. From that time forward, onward, and upward, through twenty-four months of married life, Mrs. Iyer entertained an immutable opinion of her husband's potential ferocity in direct contradiction to the facts. Even her sister Rajathi who once ventured to suggest that Athan was not so very terrible was treated with superiority.

"You would naturally think so, Rajathi. That quiet manner of your Athan is very deceptive, you see. You have never seen him when he is roused. I have. I remember one occasion, a week after my marriage when the storm broke. I assure you, I shall never, never forget it."

Mrs. Iyer used her husband's potential ferocity to overawe her erring servants. This she did with singular persistence, perfect confidence, and with no success whatever. "If," she would say to Janaki, the servant lass, "Iyer had seen the way the hall was swept—or, rather, not swept—this morning, I tremble to think what might have happened." Janaki did not tremble. She knew better. In fact, she trembled more at Mrs. Iyer than at Mr. Iyer.

The fact was that in an international competition, Iyer would have been awarded the champion gold cup for sheer meekness. But still his wife's belief in him remained unshaken. But one must do him justice. He did protest strongly against any excessive estimate of his

militant character. It was only after the incident in which Karuppan was concerned, that he gave up the struggle.

Karuppan was a burglar and a disgrace to his profession. He had a face that proclaimed aloud his criminal tendency. Dogs would go two miles out of their way to bite him. He knew nothing and could do nothing. He was unskilled and unfortunate, besides being intemperate and suffering from nerves. He had been to prison eight times without having anything to show for it. The only time he got anything was when he broke into the house of a deaf old man who was suffering from paralysis.

Even there he managed to get only a copper tumbler, for he was frightened out of his wits by a black cat, which tried to get friendly with him.

Failure and ignominy having driven him from tougher quarters, he tried to ransack houses in the *agraharam*. On the evening of Pongal day, Karuppan entered the toddy shop and emerged two hours later, quite unsteady and unfit for the job he had contemplated. At twelve midnight, he entered the residence of Ganpat Iyer, and after leaving his foot and finger prints all over the place, succeeded in forcing the lock and got inside the hall. By this time the effect of twelve annas worth of toddy was

steadily increasing and Karuppan feeling tipsy and unable to stand on his legs, sank on the sofa to steady himself. A few minutes later he was fast asleep and snoring.

Ganpat Iyer woke precisely at one-thirty cursing the mosquito which had dared to puncture his nose. After rubbing the tender spot, he realised that he was thirsty, and came to the kitchen. When he lit the lantern in the hall, his heart sank within him for, on the sofa lay a horrifying and repulsive man. Trembling, he decided that the right course would be to beat a hasty retreat quietly and wake up the constable who usually slept on his night-boat on the verandah of Sundaram Iyer, next door. But at this moment Karuppan suddenly awoke, realised Iyer's presence, and staggered to his feet. He was about to flee, when he grasped an important fact. He saw that Iyer was much more frightened than he was.

A Confession

When I told you I must leave you,
(Though I know to part would grieve you),
When you said "Oh! must you go?"

And I merely answered "Yes",
Did you really think I meant it?

Now, Confess!

Now you say that you adore me,
And I answer that you bore me,
Then you sigh "Is this goodbye?"

And I coldly answer "Yes!"
Do you really think I meant it?

Now, Confess—

Gwen Nisbet.

In two lurches he put himself between the door and Iyer. "Hist! one whisper, and I will send you post-haste to the next world. Hand me your cash and jewellery, or I will rip your throat," said he trying to look as fierce as possible. Iyer's knees were shaking frightfully and he was perspiring. Even speech failed him for a while. At length he managed to blurt out "There now, steady, you are drunk; I will call for the police," and so forth. This made Karuppan all the more brave, and brandishing his knife, he overbalanced himself and fell, upsetting the table and its contents. The heavy new Singer-Sewing machine, on which Iyer had paid only two instalments, came crashing on top of Karuppan. His uninviting face was cut considerably, and he lay like a log senseless. The noise was such that it sufficed to wake up the whole house including a brown mongrel, which promptly joined the fray and rendered considerable help by barking and biting the fallen miscreant. Sekharan Nair, P. C. No. 310 awoke at

this din, and came rushing to the scene, and collared the burglar. Mrs. Iyer clung to her husband, and the mongrel clung to the fallen burglar. At length they were all separated and explanations followed.

SEND IN JOKES ON A POST CARD.

The Editor will pay a prize of Rs. 3 for what, in his opinion, is the best joke received and printed. Turn to page 192 for details.

Mrs. Iyer's account of the affair, would have brought envy to even the reporter of a big paper. She flitted about from house to house and explained in detail the whole affair, which was partly based on the account of Karuppan himself, who with a view to a possible mitigation, stoutly maintained that he was grievously assaulted and mauled.

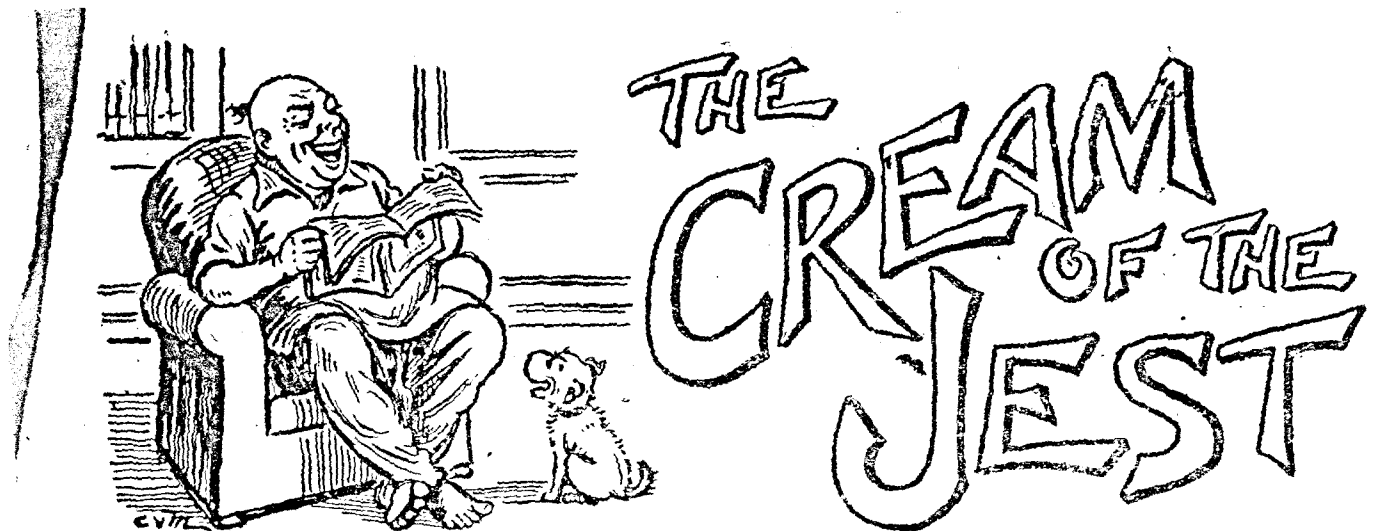
"Fortunately," said Mrs. Iyer to her sister Rajathi "the policeman came in time or my husband would have killed him! Imagine a man throwing the heavy sewing machine at a burglar!" Iyer protested for a while, but after sipping a little of fame, found that the halo of a hero was pleasant, and was content to hide the exact version of the affair on Pongal night.

"Myself"

'SOME are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust on them.' But I was neither born great nor have so far achieved any greatness worth writing about. If I had either been born great or achieved any greatness, there would be no need for me to write my own biography. That is fairly obvious, isn't it? The newspapers would have chronicled my arrival and departure at the Railway Station, my name would be frequently found "prominent amongst those present" at all public functions, my views on all subjects from "why I went north" to "why I intend going south", would have been duly published by the International Press Agency and even broadcasted. In my short life I have had several things thrust on me—old vests, torn shoes, faded caps—all duly used and enjoyed first by my elder brothers. I have had people thrusting their elbows into my sides and umbrellas into my eyes. But as for thrusting any greatness on me—well, I am still waiting for that benefactor. And if any body is bursting with the noble impulse and cannot contain himself, why, he can write to The Editor of The Merry Magazine and find out my name and address. And then of course, the world will know me—will know that I am that rarity in this all-too-sophisticated world, just a simple, "common or garden" man, an ordinary man—neither a saint nor a sinner, that I have been just "myself" and not somebody else at second hand or third hand. Just as you

rarely meet a person who has normal sight or normal hearing, so you rarely meet a normal person; like myself, for instance. Meanwhile, I intend writing my own biography, if you will publish it Dear Editor,—who knows but it may be treasured and kept in the archives of the Public Library for future generations to read, mark and digest. Somebody has very justly remarked—"Blow your own trumpet; if you cannot do that for yourself, don't expect other people to do it for you". Now that is a bit of very sound advice, don't you think? And one that unfortunately many people, who ought to know better, don't follow. For, look round you and see how many people there are who ought to be known far and wide, but simply aren't; because they haven't done a little judicious trumpeting. Now in this world nothing is achieved without advertising, you can't sell socks or soaps or mixtures without advertisement. You can't be anybody in particular without advertising yourself in general. You must create "atmosphere about yourself". And let me tell you a little secret—whisper it in your ears—I have obtained it by a simple brain wave—it has cost me nothing and I part with it without any regret—I give it to you simply in return for reading this article. You can advertise your patent lotion to become bald, most effectively, by writing to THE MERRY MAGAZINE.

—NERA



Mr. Patrick Braybrooke narrates this amusing anecdote in his provocative biography of 'The Playboy of the West End World', "The Amazing Mr. Noel Coward" (Denis Archer 7s. 6d.)

I'll leave it to you enabled Mr. Coward to score heavily off a well-known society lady who had taken a prominent part in a serious romantic film. She had seen his play, and he had seen her film. They met at a reception, and the room had lapsed into one of the unaccountable silences when every one quite suddenly ceases from conversation and listens.

"Oh, Mr. Coward," said the society lady, in a beautifully well-bred loud voice, "I must congratulate you."

"Really," replied Coward, "but why?"

"Oh," was the reply, "every one says your play is most amusing although, personally I could not laugh at all."

"I am sorry," replied Coward, on the instant. "I laughed all the time at your film!"

Dr. Johnson treated Mrs. Siddons, who called upon him in Bolt Court, with the most marked politeness, Frank, his servant, could not immediately bring her a chair. "You see, madam," said the Doctor, "wherever you go, there's not a seat to be had."

Tree and Irving were friendly rivals, and each would sometimes make humorous comments on the other. There is a story of a theatrical animal-dealer exhibiting to Irving a horse which was to be used in a coming production.

"Aha!" remarked Irving, surveying the steed with critical eyes. "A very likely animal! How does he behave on the stage?"

"Perfect, sir," replied the dealer. "Never misbehaves the least bit, but once at His Majesty's (Tree's theatre), he yawned on the stage."

Irving grinned.

"A critic as well as an actor, I perceive," he said quietly.

Sir Henry Irving was noted amongst other things for the illegibility of his handwriting. On one occasion he wrote a letter of instant dismissal to a subordinate, who with difficulty deciphered it, and—used it as a free pass to the Lyceum for years.

On one of the nights when Mrs. Siddons first performed at Drury Lane, a little Jew boy, in his eagerness to get to the first row in the shilling gallery, fell over into the pit, and was dangerously hurt. The managers of the theatre ordered the lad to be conveyed to a lodging, and he was attended by their own physician; but, notwithstanding all their attention, he died, and was decently buried at the expense of the theatre. The mother came to the theatre to thank the managers, and they gave her his clothes, together with five guineas, for which she returned a curtsy, but with some hesitation added they had forgotten to return her the shilling which Abraham had paid for coming in.

Henry Kemble, known to his friends as "The Beetle," hated cant and humbug of any kind, and a snob beyond all power of expression. Once, when some empty-headed youth talked of nothing but titled non-entities for about an hour, and at the end of his discourse turned to Kemble for corroboration as to the characteristics of some noble duke, Kemble turned a cold eye on him, and squashed him by saying: "I really can't say anything about the gentleman. The only member of the British aristocracy I know is Lord George Sanger."

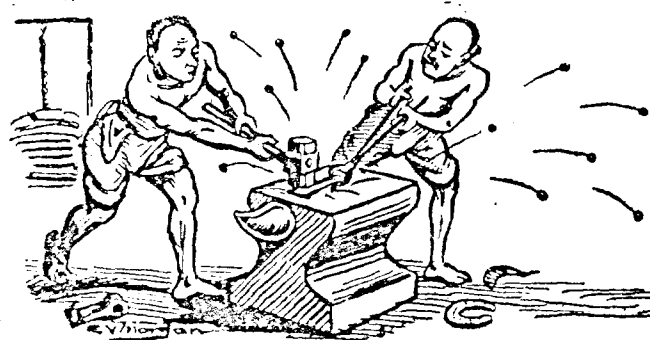
There is an amusing story of a melodrama in which the "villain" had to pursue the heroine through four acts, burning to enjoy "just one kiss." In the third act, the girl was supposed to faint, the "villain" however fancying that she was dead.

In tragic tones, he turned his eyes upwards and exclaimed.

"Merciful Heavens! The woman is dead? What—what shall I do?"

Someone upstairs shouted.

"Kiss 'er whilst yer got the bloomin' chanst!"



SPARKS from our ANVIL

The Oxford University Union has resolved that it will, in no circumstances, fight for its King and Country. An attempt was made at a subsequent meeting of the Union to rescind that resolution; but it was defeated by a six to one majority.

The 'Home of Lost Causes' must henceforth be deemed the 'Lost Home of Lost Causes.'

Talking of lost causes reminds me of Mr. Winston Churchill. He has contributed a self-revealing article to the March STRAND on 'Great Fighters in Lost Causes.' He writes: "The winning cause is saddled with the responsibilities of the future."

Now we know why he is against Responsible Government for India!

It is announced that the Independent Party in the Assembly will henceforth function on non-communal lines. The idea is to preserve the solidarity of the party by giving its members freedom of vote on all communal questions.

Japan has announced that she will secede from the League. The assurance is however given that she will continue to co-operate in maintaining League authority in the Western hemisphere.

It is stated that the 57th Disarmament plan is to be christened after Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. It is generally expected that Herr Hitler will be given the next chance.

"'Malaria for laymen' (postage 0-4-0) price 0-4-0" says an advertisement. We can give a recipe which costs nothing.

Our quick-change artist, Mr. Shaukat Ali, has just appeared in a new role—that of the candid friend. The Mahatma, he says, is incapable of quick decision or prompt action. Would the Maulana tell us of a more expeditious method of fasting unto death?

There is no foundation for the report that Sir M. Oosman was the first to sympathise with Sir M. Krishnan Nair on the limited extension of the latter's tenure of office.

The Hon'ble Mr. P. T. Rajan, Development Minister, replying to the charge of corruption in the Registration department is reported to have said:—"It would take two persons to bring about corruption. If there was a man to receive money, there must be a man to offer it."

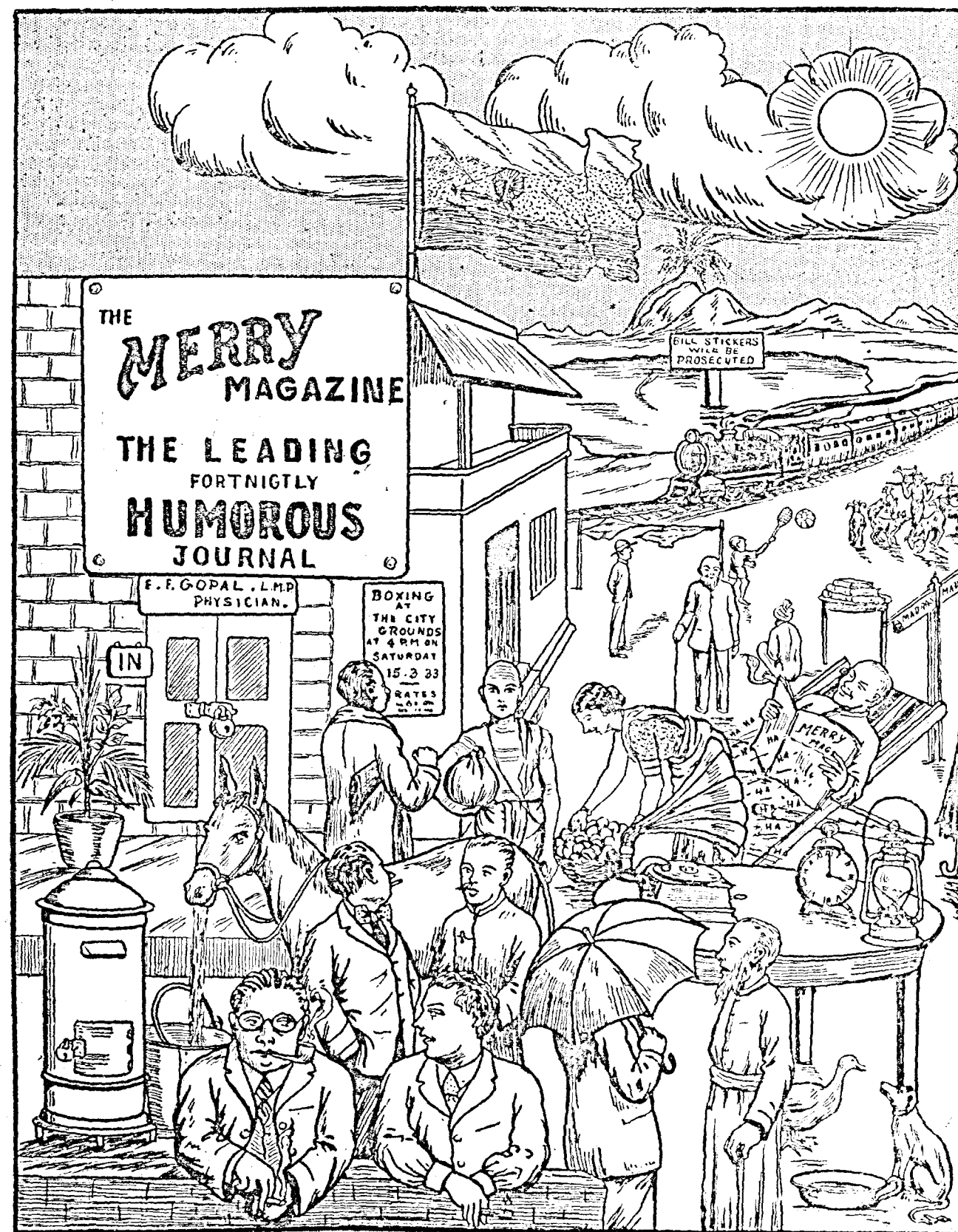
Much resentment is, we understand, being felt by the man who lends, and the man who goes between, at this invidious omission of any reference to them.

"When a job is available, there is no suitable Adi-Dravida; and when the Adi-Dravida is available, there is no suitable job" wailed Mr. Sivaraj in the Council; and pressed for the abolition of the principle of rotation.

We expect that the next step in the political education of the Hon'ble but depressed member will be signalled by a plea for the abolition of the communal principle.

An A. P. I. message stated the other day that Sir Ghulam Hidayatullah of Bombay has been continuously in office during the last thirteen years. We wonder what Sir Mohammed Usman proposes to do about it.

Find out the Errors and Win Rs. 100



RULES.

There are a number of errors in the picture given in the previous page. For example, the man near the bottom left hand corner smokes a pipe and at the same time holds a lighted cigarette in his hand. That is an error. Again, on the top right hand corner, the clouds appear behind the sun; and that is another error. Thus if you look at the various objects, you will find a variety of errors. Each error pertains to a particular object and does not bear upon the general aspect of the picture as a whole.

The errors are clear and decisive and readers need not worry over unnecessary details.

When you discover an error, mark it with number 1 in the picture with red ink on the spot where the error is or quite near it. Number the next error as 2 and so on serially. Then in a list show the numbers and the corresponding errors against them as :—

1. Two smokes at the same time,
2. Clouds appear behind the sun, & etc.

In defining the errors, be as brief as possible. It is enough if you make us understand that you have spotted the error.

As. 8 should be remitted for each entry. Every entry should contain the following :—

- (1) the picture with errors marked in red ink.
- (2) A list showing the numbers and the corresponding errors as marked in the picture.
- (3) The coupon for entry.
- (4) Money Order receipt for entrance fee remitted.

A prize of Rs. 75 will be awarded to the reader who finds out the largest number of errors; and a prize of Rs. 25 to the next in merit.

In the event of a 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.

Competitors must write on the envelopes the words, 'Errors Competition.'

Competitors, indicating errors not noted in the list in the Editor's possession, will not be penalised because of such indication.

Readers, who detect more than thirty genuine errors, are advised to send in their entries.

' ERRORS ' Competition Coupon

No. of Errors.....

COMPETITOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS

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

'De' Competition

The all-correct solution is

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. Decoration. | 3. Dear. | 5. Deride. | 7. Descent. |
| 2. Develop. | 4. Decameron. | 6. Defect. | 8. Department. |

Only one reader, Mr. K. V. V. Sarma, has submitted an all-correct solution. He is also one of the six who have tied for the second prize. A cheque for Rs. 216—10—8 has been forwarded to him and we have pleasure, in reproducing his letter of acknowledgment, below.

Six readers have submitted entries containing one error each. Money-orders for Rs. 16—11 as. have been sent to each of these competitors.

1. K. V. V. SARMA, 9, Perumal Mudali Street, Pudupakam, Royapettah, Madras.
2. M. B. SUNDARESA IYER, S. M. S. High School, Karaikudi.
3. S. GNANAMBAL, Meena Lodge, Audiappa Mudaly Street, Vepery.
4. SIGNATURE ILLEGIBLE, c/o Agency Manager, New Mysore Sports Ltd. Coimbatore.
5. SAME AS ABOVE. (The above gentleman is requested to communicate with our Office and on receipt of satisfactory proof of his identity, a Money-order will be sent to him.)
6. S. RAJAGOPALAN, 7, Kakatope Street, Madura.

MADRAS.

Dated 20th March 1933.

To

THE EDITOR,
THE MERRY MAGAZINE,
MADRAS.

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge with grateful thanks receipt of a cheque from you for Rs. 216-10-8 being the amount of the first prize in your 'DE' Competition. I may mention that I have for a long period, been a regular entrant for your Prize Competitions. So I need hardly tell you that I am delighted with my present success.

In this connection, with your permission, I should like to send a message to the readers of your paper i. e. this :—

In this competition, as in all other things in life, I think perseverance is the surest passport to success. Though I myself have failed on many occasions to win a prize, I have never felt pessimistic and have gone on trying.

Once again, permit me to thank you for the promptness with which you have despatched the Prize Award.

I am
Yours faithfully,
(Sd) K. V. V. SARMA.

SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Readers are reminded that the 25th April 1933 is the last date for sending in entries for the above competition.

1961

The Editor to his Readers

I have great pleasure in announcing that from the 10th of April next, the size of the Merry Magazine will be increased by eight pages. I also intend to introduce one or two new features, which, I am certain, will prove of great interest to our readers.

One of the features, I was talking about above, will be a Page of Jokes from our readers. Readers are hereby invited to send in Jokes, written on postcards. A selection will be made from among those received and the Jokes chosen will be printed on this page. The name of the sender will be printed underneath each joke thus selected and a prize of Rs. 3 will be awarded to the sender of what, in the Editor's opinion, is the best of the bunch. No correspondence will be entered into, in this matter.

An announcement, on somewhat the same lines will be made, in our next issue, on the subject of pictures from our readers. Meanwhile, there is no reason why readers should not send in drawings for our consideration. The only condition, I make, is of course, that the subject or the treatment must be humorous.

Do you feel Tired of Razors and an ever increasing Growth of Hair.
Here' is Marvel of Modern Chemistry to satisfy you
RESULT IN 3 MINUTES.



THE IDEAL
HAIR REMOVING
CREAM.

This is a fatty ointment that does not dry up and excels owing to pleasant coolness during the duration of treatment whereas with other ordinary watery depilatories available in the market, there will often arise some burning feeling on the skin. Ohio Cream excels owing to beautiful lilac scent and hence can be used at any time.

If correctly applied hair once removed within 3 minutes do not grow for several days leaving the skin clean and fresh all the while. Every application of OHIO makes the hair grow finer. Frequent use of it reduces and slackens the growth of hair so that they are finally turned into soft down. Unlike Razors Ohio does not darken the skin nor causes irritation.

Directions for use enclosed in each tube.
A Tube Costs Rs. 1-4. Three at a Time Rs. 3-12.
To purchasers of Packing & postage free

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Look Sharp!

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(CONTAINING 130 ARTICLES.)

A beautiful Fountain Pen fitted with Gold Plated Nib, Gold plated Imitation Diamond Rings, Shirt Buttons, Brooches, Dolls for Children, Knives, Key-rings & Chains, High class Nibs, Money Purses, Ink Bottles, Ink Pills, Scent Bottle, Transfer Pictures and Safety Pins. Altogether 130 Articles.

Get One Box by V. P. P.

Price Rs. 2-12-0.



THE KRISHNA AGENCY,
POST BOX 119, Madras.

OUR AGENTS.

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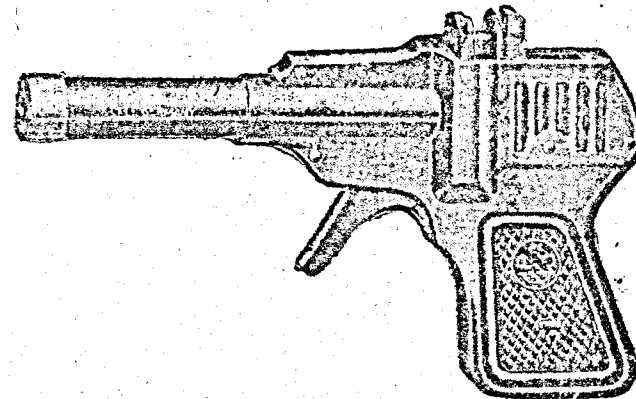


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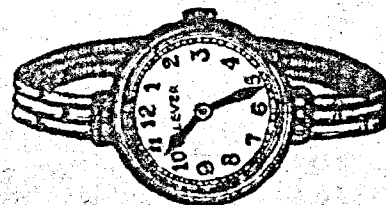
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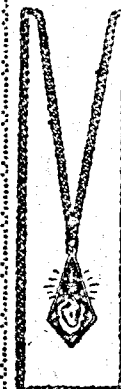
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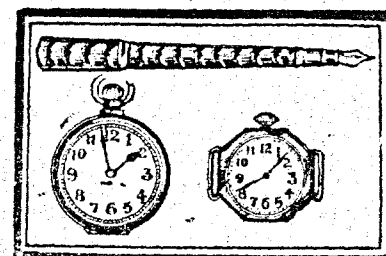
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