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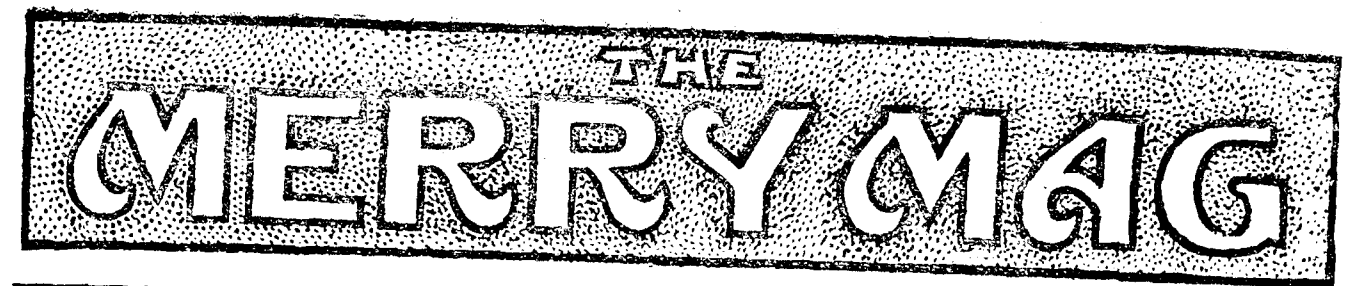
TO CONTRIBUTORS

1. Choose fairly stout sheets of paper.
2. Whether you write or type-write, leave plenty of space between lines for editorial corrections.
3. Write on one side of the paper only.
4. Keep a copy. If you want Your Ms. to be returned, enclose sufficient postage stamps.
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Vol. I.

MADRAS, 10th AUGUST, 1933.

No. 15.

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Herr Hitler opines that India should continue to be subject to Britain.

If the alternative is Hitler, we cordially agree.

Mr. Lloyd George denies that he is joining Mr. Churchill.

This decision has brought much nearer the prospects of Mr. Churchill joining Mr. Lloyd George.

"Do not think that everything is wrong with the Justice Party," assures the Kumararajah of Chettinad.

Except the name, of course.

'Plum' Warner protests against the use of 'leg-theory' by the West-Indies bowlers.

We understand that legal opinion is being canvassed as to whether there has been any infringement of British Patent rights.

Sir T. B. Sapru announces that he does not propose to return to England in the autumn.

The fight for Swaraj will be continued on—paper.

It is said that the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court refused to permit any reference to be made to the late Sjt. Sen Gupta.

This has enabled news-papers to make a reference to the Chief Justice of that High Court.

"My much-discussed pronouncement on Dominion Status for India was merely an expression of ultimate intention," says Lord Irwin.

This adds one more to the speed-records held by Britain.

A head-line announces that "Gandhi is losing weight."

That he who runs may read it?

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has had the honour of lunching with Their Majesties.

Further developments have not yet been announced.

Dr. Moore holds that Muslims are also Hindus because they live in Hindustan.

It would still leave the 'Hindu' problem unsolved.

The Zamindars' deputation to the Governor of the Punjab is understood to have pointed out that corruption had not increased under the Reforms, but had come to light as a result of the Reforms.

No assurance was apparently given that more Reforms will not bring more of it to light.

"The secret of the present position is that Gandhi has been met by a 'moral force superior to his own,' says the 'Observer'.

This has raised the question as to who is the greater Non-co-operator, the Viceroy or the Secretary of State!

Justice Ameer Ali of the Calcutta High Court says he does not know who first used the term 'communalist'.

Nor can we say who will use it last.

Moving a supplementary demand for the C. I. D., Sir Md. Usman concluded his speech by saying: 'A grave emergency has arisen.'

The Council saw it at once.

'Juniors, whose services had been dispensed with, would be given the option of coming back, if they liked, in the reverse order in which their services had been dispensed with,' said the Revenue Member, referring to the Government policy of Retrenchment.

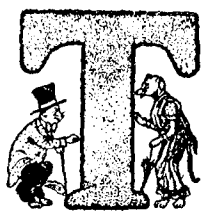
The last shall be first, and the first last.

"Kotkal bombed again: no response from Bajauris," says a head-line.

We think it very bad manners on the part of the tribes!

VERY MUCH INVOLVED, II.

(LEO.)



TO resume! Fresh from the bout of back-chat with my late assistant, I was not quite at the top of my form. I had an uneasy feeling that, in the late encounter, I had come off perilously near second best. It was not even a case of honours easy, for my assistant had managed to have the last word and before I could think of a sufficiently smart bit of repartee, he had managed to take himself out of ear-shot.

With an effort, however, I managed to cast the incident out of my mind and turned to my visitor. I put on my most ingratiating smile. "Madam," I began, "what may I have the pleasure of doing for you?"

"I was told, Mr.———?"

"Leo, Madam, and very much at your service."

"Surely, you are not Leo."

"Madam, I assure you, to the best of my knowledge and belief, I am that person. Indeed, no one else has so far dared to pinch my cognomen. I know there is no copyright in names but, I tell you, if any miserable hackwriter starts masquerading under a stolen name, a name, which I might say, without undue immodesty, stands for all that is brightest and best in contemporary magazine literature, I'll—I'll—"

"Oh, Mr. Leo, don't tell me you will resort to extremes."

"I'll—"

"You mean you will challenge him to a duel?"

"Duel! I'll—"

"You'll horsewhip him?"

"Horsewhip? By God, no. The horse, that equine quadruped, that dumb, loyal friend of man, is a noble animal."

"You'll take a common whip to him."

"Whip, Madam. There are whips in Westminster; there are others in our own unhappy land. The

Assembly has one. It is called the Chief Whip. There are other whips who are not so chief. Why, in our own local talk-shops, if you look carefully, you can spot a whip or two. And sometimes, the Chief Whip sends out an urgent whip. It is sent out to all the members of the east, who, on given occasions, go into one of the two lobbies. One lobby is for the 'Ayes' and the other is for the 'Noes.' Whenever they have a division—"

"Oh, now I know. You have divisions in football and when one player scores more than three goals in a match, he is promoted."

"Wrong, my dear, I mean, Miss."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I thought you were talking Sport. Field-sports, I mean. I see now I am wrong. When a horse, weighing not more than 10 stone is able to beat nine other horses—the rider carrying not more than one whip—this horse, if it has run in the second division, is promoted to the First Division, the protest of the owner notwithstanding and all forfeits to stand."

"Madam," I replied, in pained surprise, "you'll permit me to inform you that I was talking neither



"I want you to see a Manuscript....."

about football nor racing, but about whips and Legislative Councils."

"Oh, but how thrilling! But you see, Mr. Leo, when you started talking about whips, I naturally thought of horses and equally naturally, of horse-racing."

"Oh, quite, quite. A very pardonable mistake, I assure you. Anyway, as I was saying, when the House divides....."

"Pity the poor architect."

"Madam," I said, patiently, "when I say 'House', I do not mean the usual brick-and-mortar structure used by individuals and families for the purpose of sheltering them from the inclemencies of our invariable climate. I was talking about the House in a sort of metaphorical fashion. I meant the House of Legislature. So that, when the House divides....."

"A House divided against itself will not stand."

"Madam, unwittingly and in a spirit of flippancy, which, at other times, I would be the first to condemn in the most unhesitating manner, you have managed to hit the nail on the head. You have rung the bell, first shot. What'll you have, Madam, a Cigar or a Coconut?"

"Oh, Mr. Leo! You're comic!"

"My dear, it does me good to hear you say so. I have heard the same sentiments expressed in different language, from different lips, in other places, at other times and sometimes with other meanings but never, my dear, I assure you, with that spontaneity, that warmth of feeling, that, if I may so express it, *je ne sais quo* that *ne plus ultra* that—that almost *mens sana in corpore sano*."

"Oh, Mr. Leo, you are flattering."

"Flattering, Madam, I mean Miss. This is praise from Sir Hubert Stanley."

"Not Sir Hubert? The intrepid explorer who met David Livingstone half-way in Africa. And one of them, I don't quite remember which one it was, who said to the other intrepid explorer, 'Mr. Livingstone or Mr. (as he then was) Stanley, I presume.'"

"Your perspicacity leaves me stunned."

"But not, I hope, quite Livingstunned?"

"Miss, you're a *nonpareil*."

"But not, I hope, *non compos mentis*."

"Miss, I throw up the sponge. I realise now that dialogue is not my *metier*. At back-chat, I'm a back-number. At repartee, I'm an also ran. When it comes to keeping in motion the ball that has been set rolling, I'm as stationary as the Development Department of our Local Government. I give you best. And this is not the first time either, that I have had to do it to-day. To be bested by an impertinent and incompetent Jack-in-Office went against the grain. To have that experience followed, in quick time, by vanquishment at your hands is merely one more illustration of the old adage, 'The darkest hour is before the dawn.'"

Very Much Involved.

"Flatterer!"

"If I'm a flatterer, I'm an insincere one. I do not imitate."

"You could not, even if you tried. But, coming to the point, now, Mr. Leo, I came here on business."

"In that case, there is no question of my combining business with pleasure. It will be a double delight to me to put myself at your service."

"Oh, Mr. Leo, you are too kind. But I came to ask a favour of you."

"Granted. Now tell me what you want."

"I want you to see a Manuscript I have brought."

That pulled me up with a jerk. Men earn their bread in many ways and in many walks of life. Some become lawyers, others go into business, some are civil engineers and others are not so polite. Occasionally, one comes across some obvious misfits. What is to be done with the engineer who, faced with an irrigation channel choked with refuse, promptly prescribes a two-gallon drum of croton-oil, or the surgeon-dentist who, when a patient wants a broken tooth attended to, suggests a layer-bed of cement-concrete with a top dressing of tar macadam? Or the lawyer who suggests that his client should split fifty-fifty with him, or the business man whose commercial correspondence is a model of what an affidavit should be? Nothing. In course of time, they sort themselves and find their level. If they do not, so much the worse for them.

With Editors, newspaper and Magazine, the matter is different. Very few editors deliberately train themselves to be editors. They are not made: they are very rarely born. That a misguided few actually believe they are born editors is merely another proof of the inscrutability of the ways of a Divine Providence. They drift along many a highway and by-way, compassless and storm-tossed till some kindly squall or freakish undertow lands them against an Editorial Chair. The prudent ones stick on like grim death, clamber out of the current and once safely ensconced, sit there, blandly complacent, looking disdainfully down on the stormy waters, whose plaything they but so lately were.

But there is always a fly in the Editorial as in other ointments. And, of all these flies, the most maddeningly persistent is the contributor. His offerings are always voluntary. The autumn leaves never fell so thick in Vallombrosa as unsolicited Mss. on the Magazine Editor's head. He dare not reject them unread lest in that mountain of dross, some grain of gold is hiding in an unexplored corner. Wearily, therefore, I turned again to my visitor. "Give me your Manuscript, Miss," I said.

"Here it is. But you know, it is not mine. I mean I am not the author."

I recoiled. In the abstract, Editors are hard-hearted, cynical and callous rejectors of Mss. submitted by ambitious aspirants to literary fame; but they are

human. They have sentiments, they have susceptibilities. Nay, more, they are susceptible. Here, in the person of the pretty young thing before me was ample apology for sentiment. To recast, almost to rewrite fourth-rate journalism penned in fifth rate idiom by these fair hands was one thing, to be asked to accept and to pay for a contribution to which the young lady merely sought to play the *role* of fairy god-mother was an entirely different proposition. I steeled my heart. Once more, I turned to my visitor.

"And, pray, Madam, who is the author? And, why are you interesting yourself in placing it?"

She blushed. "In fact, my husband wrote it. He was very reluctant to submit it to you. But I told him it was too good not to be published and I persuaded him—"

"Yes?"

"To let you see it. I'll read out some bits."

"Madam," I replied firmly. "All Mss. submitted to the Editor will receive most serious and careful consideration."

I touched the concealed bell-push under my desk.

"Conduct the lady—"

"So, you will print my husband's article in your next week's issue?"

"Madam, all Mss. submitted to the Editor....."

"This way, Madam," beamed the office-boy.

* * *

Unless I receive a sufficiently large number of complaints from readers protesting against the continuance of this series, I will be reluctantly compelled to write a third instalment of this thrilling autobiographical series. To the best letter of protest received by me, I will award.....an answer. The next instalment will be entitled, "God knows.....Dashed if I do!"

JULY LUCKY NUMBERS

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All claims to be preferred before 2-9-'33.

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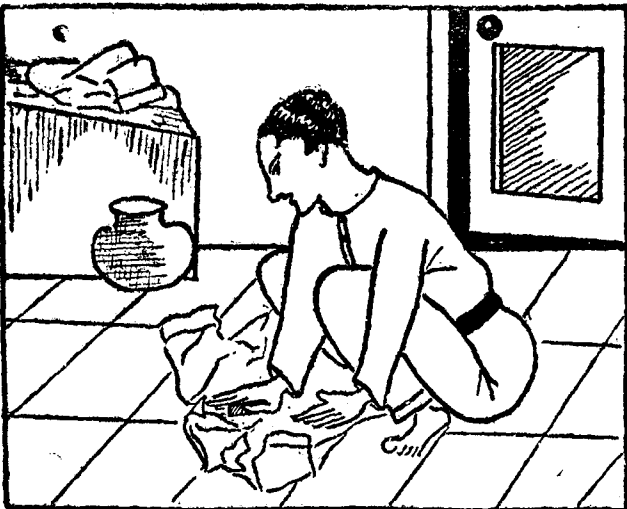
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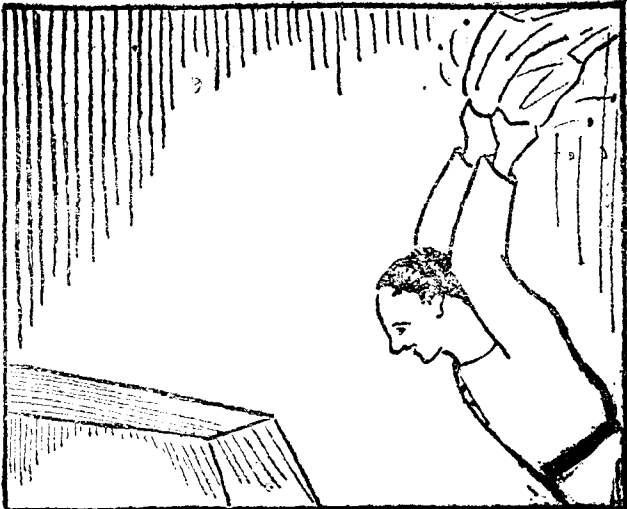
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THE AMATEUR AT WORK

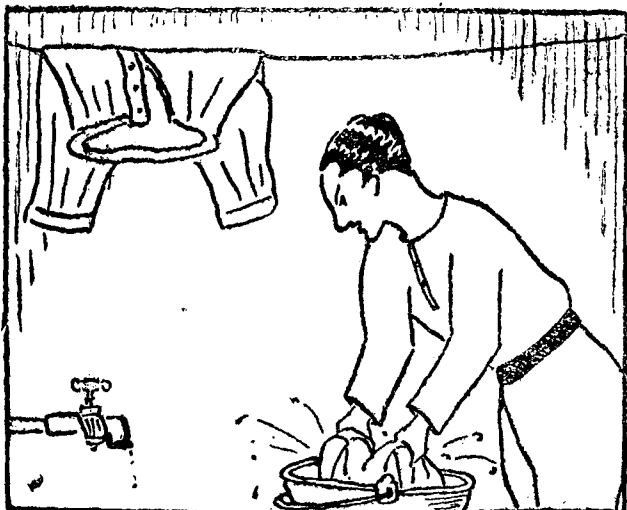
HOME WASHING



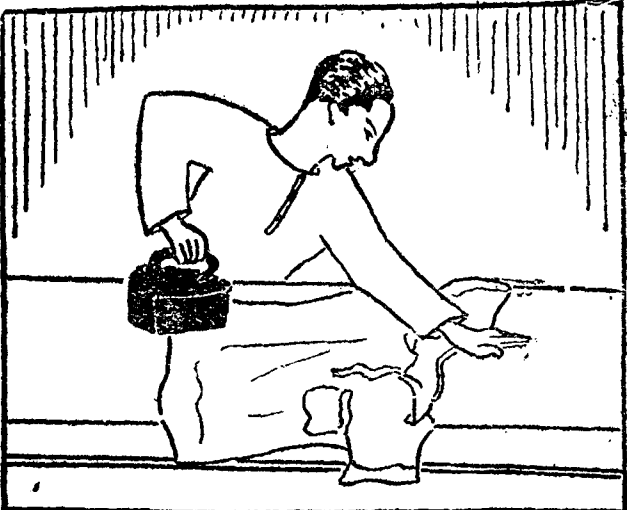
1. Spreading Soap over it.



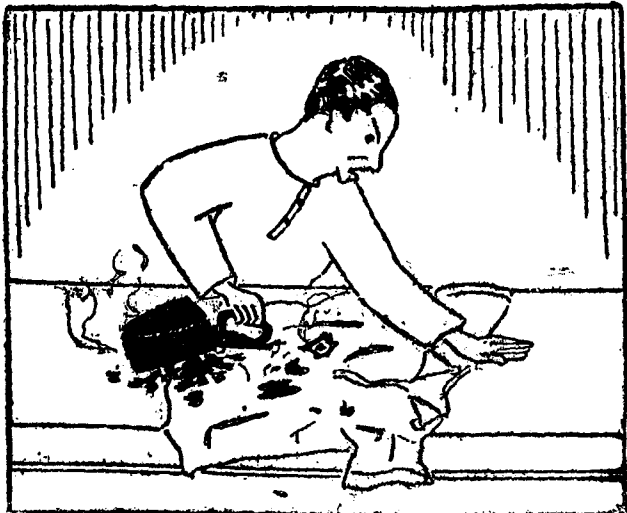
2. Smashing a stone with it.



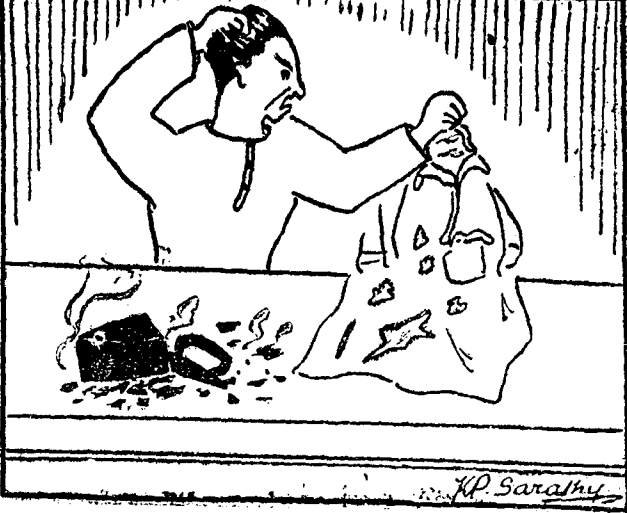
3. Rinsing and wringing.



4. Applying the iron, hot.



5. A Small Accident.



6.and there you are!

LETTERS FROM LALITA, III

Courtallum, 5th August, 1933.

MY DEAR SARASA,

I am sorry, my dear, that I should have called this place God-forsaken in my last letter. Yesterday morning, a fat Brahmin called on me—he was such a droll and nice old gentleman—and he told me all about this place and the dwarf-sage, Agastya, of whom, very probably, you have not heard. Well, it is a long story, though the sage is short. When he was in the middle of his yarn (I mean the Brahmin, of course)—my hubby walked into the room, cast a look at the old Brahmin and taking me aside cautioned me not to truckle with the old man and when I asked him why, he said something about the man being an 'agent' and very undesirable at that. I had, therefore, to cut short a very interesting discussion and the old man left with an assurance of calling on me again.

What happened subsequently is quite a story, my dear, but I am so upset and you will, therefore, pardon an unfortunate person like me, if you find me rambling in my thoughts and incoherent in expressing them.

I do not know if you believe in a rough exterior hiding a soft interior and in the existence of Shakespeare's 'ugly and venomous toad which yet wears a precious jewel on its head'. The Immortal Bard must have been thinking of our mythological Cobra. If you believe in this sort of bunkum, my dear, I pray you, cast these beliefs aside. The quicker, the better for you and all of us.

I know many of you, girls, have been wondering what made me fall for this man whom the world calls my husband. It is a big mistake, my dear, and I am not afraid to own it up—at least to friends like you. I had hoped that his abominable ugliness would keep him involuntarily faithful (I am not parodying the great Mahatma's phrase), that he (my husband, I mean) would at least be honest and straightforward and that he would not have any illusions of his being a Don Juan and a killer of frail feminine humanity. In all of which, I am beginning to be afraid that I was hopelessly mistaken.

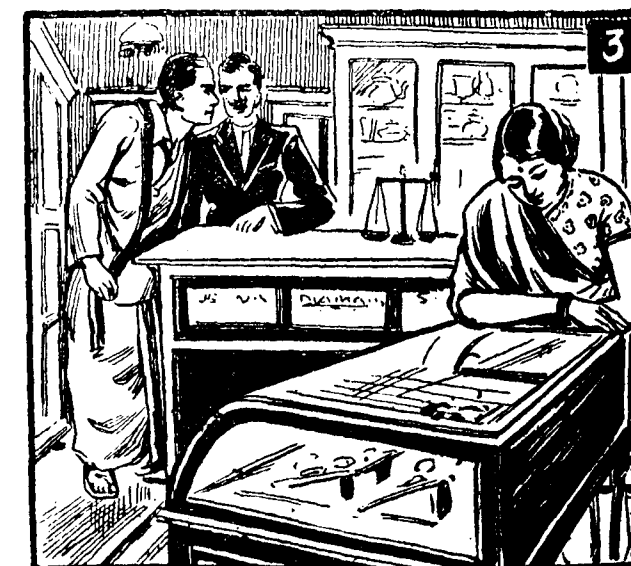
Before we started for this holiday, I told him I had a little shopping to do. He volunteered to accompany me, not so much as to offer me gratuitous advice, but to enable me to obtain what he called 'trade discounts'—Heaven save the mark! We went to.....Ram's and there, hanging from the roof, was the very saree I saw in my dreams. The salesman was kindness itself, took the lovely thing out and was growing panegyric over the pattern. My lord and master took me aside and called the salesman a thug and a highway robber and a lot else, ending it all by saying that the salesman was out to cheat an innocent guileless girl. He (my husband) said he knew the manufacturers in Karachi in whose factory a bosom friend of his was employed. To make a long story short, he made me believe that he could get the saree for less than half the value mentioned by the salesman and I, poor fish, believed in him and walked out of the shop naturally with a very aggrieved air. How am I to know, my dear, that these sarees are not made in Karachi but in Benares and that no bosom



.....cautioned me about the old man.



.....made me believe he could get the saree at less than half the price.



.....never noticed my hubby and the clerk was pining.

friend of my husband could ever secure a job anywhere, much less keep it?

My gold bangles had worn out and the patterns could only be likened to those that were in vogue when Tippu was still in his cradle and Hyder was making it hot for the East India Company. We, therefore, went to a Jewellers' where I shed my antiquated hand-ferrules and exchanged them for some really thin, nice, new patterns, beautifully enamelled. I was looking round the show cases for a serviceable yet cheap toiletteset and never noticed my hubby and the clerk of the shop in close consultation,—conspiracy would have been nearer the truth. When we left the shop, I asked him how much he had to pay and he told me a bill would be sent in due course and that we may have to pay Rs. 50/- or 60/- in addition to the exchange of bangles. I was rummaging among his papers only yesterday and came across the bill. Can you guess what I found? The meanness of men! My old bangles weighed 13½ sovereigns and the new ones I bought only 11 and odd. As such, for the making charges he has adjusted out of the excess gold left with the shop-keeper and there stands to his credit (!) Rs. 7-8-6. Very creditable, isn't it?

You might remember that, in my last letter, I told you how he refused to engage a taxi because he was short of cash and that what little he had must be made to go a long way. I believed him, my dear, and I was even inclined to overlook his meanness in taking my gold and cheating me out of a really nice saree. But imagine my feelings, my dear, when this morning the postman delivers an M. O. acknowledgment. It is for Rs. 200/- sent from the local post-office by my husband to his mother after our arrival at this place. The limit of perfect recovery, about which we heard so much in our college, having been reached, I hunted high and low but could find him nowhere within the house or anywhere outside it. "The master must have gone to bathe," said the servant and I could well believe him, for visitors to this place do nothing else but bathe the live-long day.

Well, I waited for him all the afternoon and he didn't turn-up. I grew apprehensive and sent the servant to the Falls and waited. My nerves were on edge and I couldn't possibly sit at home doing nothing while perhaps even his very life was in danger. Without even changing my saree or brushing my hair, I left the house and footed it. Half-way up, I met the servant returning and he told me that his master, my lord, was at the temple with friends! Not knowing who these friends were, I turned my steps towards the temple and in a dilapidated Mandapam I saw a sight which chilled me to the marrow of my bones.

There was my husband, squatting on the floor and hugging his knees, the old man whom he counselled me to avoid was telling some tall story with much gusto and a third party was devouring with her eyes my husband. Can you guess who she was? The same slut who was parading her ugliness in the platform when we started on our holiday.

My head reels. My pen quivers. In despair, your

LALITA.



.....the postman delivers an M. O. aakt.



.....I met the servant and he told me.....



.....third party.....her eyes on my husband.....

TICKLERS

(TUT-TUT-TUT)

1. Annotate :—

- (a) O, good old man, how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world!
Thou art not for the fashion of these times
Where none will sweat but for promotion.
- (b) Wandering between two worlds—one dead,
And the other powerless to be born.
- (c) His cabin'd ample spirit,
It failed for lack of breath;
And now it doth inherit
The vasty halls of death.

2. Write short notes on :—

- (a) The Tirupati Devasthanam Committee.
- (b) The Meerut Trial.
- (c) 'The Madras Mail.'

3. What do you know of :—

- (a) Lord Salisbury.
- (b) Dr. Ambedkar.
- (c) Mr. Garvin.

Answers to Ticklers.

1. (a) To whom else can these lines apply, but to Gandhiji? Has he let down the country, or the country let him down? In this hour of national humiliation, how small is our burden when compared with the vicarious agony of his consecrated soul! If non-co-operation has failed, nothing else can or will succeed. But can the cause, for which he and others suffered and are prepared to suffer, ever fail? Their voices, though stilled, are more eloquent in their silences. Let the men of little faith cease from wrangling or what is worse, recanting. There is work enough for them to do, without fouling the parent nest, which fledged their infant wings.
 - (b) This is the tragic fate of many who led the mass movement last year, with insufficient spiritual equipment. They knew that political mendicancy is not the way of achieving national self-respect. They hoped that the path of self-imposed suffering, though bitter, would be brief. Deferred hope has made their hearts sick. They have no hold on the country now, because they have no hold on themselves. May we suggest to them to do certain eminently constitutional things, such as promoting the 'Buy Indian' campaign? It is curious that even this movement, which has for its aim purely economic considerations, should languish in the general languor of the nation's spirit. Let us be loyal and law-abiding subjects; but let us buy Indian and nothing but Indian.
 - (c) To Sjt. Jitendra Mohun Sen Gupta. He is now beyond all Regulations and Ordinances. May his spirit still watch over us and remind us that the country's work must go on!
2. (a) A Committee of seven members created by the Legislature to provide for a more equitable distribution of the surplus of the Tirupati Devasthanam income, hitherto administered solely by the Mahant. One of the first acts of the Committee

has been to cashier about 150 employees of the Devasthanam, after due and proper notice. It is said that the tests applied were the minimum educational qualification of the S.S.L.C., and the maximum age-limit of 55. We need not point out that neither of these tests is applicable to the members of the Committee. We have no information as to the views of Sri Venkatachalapathi on these dismissals.

- (b) A long trial; the biggest of its kind in India. Was very auspiciously started on March 20, 1929, and ceased to be *sub judice*, for the present, on August 3, 1933. The delay of four years was primarily due to the accused, 32 in number, who were perverse enough to defend themselves by all sorts of vexatious means. Meerut was chosen as the venue, because the accused were arrested in Bombay, Poona, Calcutta, Dacca, Allahabad and other Indian cities. It has cost the Government 16 lakhs. The present position is that 14 of the accused have been set free, and all sentences running to two figures have been reduced to one. Nine people have been acquitted after having had a four year's holiday in the prison.

- (c) One of our Anglo-Indian contemporaries. Was once singled out for special mention by the Chief Presidency Magistrate. Generally displays tripe in bold type. Is particularly hospitable to 'Indian contributors', adept in the art of servile toadyism, and renegade scribes, glorying in anonymous scurrility against what we hold sacred and precious.

3. (a) One of the high lights of the Conservative party in England, and a member of the Joint Committee of the two Houses. Knows his own mind, and says it crisply. Is particularly good at putting people in their places. Pulled up Lord Reading very sharply the other day in the House of Lords. Is one of the valued friends of India, since, in the fullness of time, he will speak as bluntly on our side as he now does against us. If any one can succeed in re-opening the Poona Pact, he can; for everybody knows that he won't interfere unnecessarily.
- (b) He is one of those people, who have made themselves public without making themselves known. Representing the depressed classes without their knowledge in most cases, he has latterly developed a rather swollen head. For instance, he made this pronouncement the other day: "I shall not be a party to make the fate of my people the sport of party-politics." No one pulled him up for *les-majesty*, apparently because it must have been exquisitely ludicrous, and a welcome relief to the rather solemn proceedings of the Joint Committee.

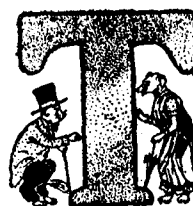
- (c) One of the few Editors in England writing leaders in the grand manner. They are more often admired than read or understood. But for smug self-sufficiency and pontifical authority, he is hard to beat even in a land of Pharisees.



A famous writer once wrote: "It may be worth while to pull an Orchid to pieces: but who would care to vivisect a Pumpkin?" Mr. Samrel here probes into the elusive mysteries of the cause of humour and the effect is certainly telling.—*Editor.*

HUMOUR FROM MY POINT OF VIEW

(P. P. SAMUEL.)



HERE are definitions of the term 'humour'. "Distilled sunlight," says one savant; "What is humour but sensible nonsense!" remarks another. "Humour is delightful fooling—nothing more or less," is the verdict of *The Morning Post*, which often chats with the authority and cocksureness of a man of ninety. These definitions, profound as they are, leave the unsophisticated reader still guessing. Why not say in Spanish language that humour is what makes one laugh? Perhaps the most humorous exposition of the term is the dictum of an Englishman: "Humour is England when she laughs." In other words, humour is *Punch*, *London Opinion*, *Tit-Bits*, *Passing Show* and *The Humorist* rolled into one and served in tabloid form twice a day, preferably before breakfast and after dinner. Well, for delightful absurdity and laughable audacity, the definition is just unbeatable.

But the Americans aver that humour is Yankee-land when she laughs. Hasn't she produced Mark Twain, Stephen Leacock, Harold Lloyd and the American Language? The English, on the other hand, think that the only notable contribution of America to the world's laughter is the cheap motor car, and that what

the Americans call their humour is just a perversion of the King's English into what might be called the President's English. Leave out such words as "gee, guy, guff, pep, plunk, punk, yep, cop, nope, hobo, hootch, hoodlum, buck, bone, berry, dub, darn, doodad" and a few cent-per-cent Americanisms like "Beat it, old son" and "Cut the kidding, Mike" from the writings of their humorists, and what remains would be as insipid as the Standard Prose taught in Secondary Schools. There will be no more 'zip' and 'ginger' in them than in a Temperance Speech or a Sunday Sermon.

Why is humour England when she laughs? The very air of the land and the food of the natives, they say, are congenial to the growth of humour. It has to be fed on nourishing stuff—preferably beef and beer. Had old Falstaff, for instance, been starved of his beefsteak and his pint of sack (15th century beer), his wits had probably gone awolgathered. Why don't the Scots go about cracking jokes, but have jokes cracked in their faces by every English Merry-andrew? Well, here's the tip. The Scots (poor fellows!) are bred on oatmeal cakes and Highland Whisky, not honest beef and English beer. Hard luck to the Caledonians! But they regard it with Gaelic philosophy: "Ilka cock craws loodest on its ain midden."

The average Indian (like the average Scot) does not possess much sense of humour—he is a wee little Buddha. And any Englishman will tell you why. Indians exist (mark the word) on 'grass diet', consisting mostly of brinjal and assorted cellulose, which produce wind, self-righteousness, biliousness and fatalism—all enemies of humour. Perhaps you may ask, "Then, how do you account for S. V. V.?" Is he not a Brahmin built on brinjal and does he not draw the real stuff straight off the reel? And is not V. V. S. a brinjal-eater and humorist? Well, my answer is that they are both exceptions. Don't you notice the magical 'S' and the double 'V'? I believe in dietetics as the English do. Do you want to build up a splendid long-jumper? Pick



.....down came his form-master.

up any straight-limbed lad and feed him on Spring Cabbage for a period of three years. Or a greater runner like Nurmi? Build him up on fast beans. Or a sparkling humorist? Then bring him up on balanced diet consisting of Lewis Carroll beef, and beer, and call me a Jack-pudding if he doesn't write away to *Punch* and *Tit-Bits* before he cuts his wisdom tooth.

English critics say that humour is of three main types—the 'sharp' humour of *Punch*, the 'broad' humour of *The Humorist*, and the 'spacious' humour of *Passing Show*, *Tit-Bits* and *London Opinion*. A sort of pyramidal arrangement, you see, with *Punch* at the apex, *The Humorist* somewhere in the belly, and the rest of the crowd at the spacious base. I do not quite

understand the difference between 'broad' and 'spacious,' probably because I am a vegetarian-water-drinker and do not have the literary sensitiveness of Fleet Street.

To my thinking, there are only two types of humour—the subdued and the noisy. For instance, if you say that the Coom is "not particularly fragrant" the humour is partly latent. The same might be put blatantly thus:—"Text-books of Geography say that the Amazon is the broadest, the Nile the longest, and the Coom the smelliest river in the world." The former is eternal, like chewing gum. It gets bigger, the more you try to digest it. The latter, like sugar candy, is more suckable, but evanescent. Now, whether your humour be subdued or noisy, there are two ways of making your reader smile. He can be made to laugh at himself or at somebody else. The former is the better method of the two, if the writer has restraint and remembers that too much of chewing gum or sugar candy would leave one a trifle sticky. Often we love to laugh a while at our little foibles and human weaknesses. It is a sign of mental health and balance.

Now to the technique of humour. In the days of my nonage I wrote a skit and sent it on to a much-advertised School of Journalism—one of those altruistic bodies that do everything for nothing if you just sign on the dotted line and drop the post card. They wrote back to say that it was a good beginning and contained 'bright patches,' but the article 'missed fire' as it was 'deficient in technique.' They would liek me into technical shape in six short lessons by post if I paid the nominal fee of nine guineas in advance. As I thought that the fee was not quite nominal, I had to school myself as old Shakespeare did. And here is the real stuff—the technique—if you care to learn it. To begin with, a humorist must have a working capital of humorous vocabulary and healthy slang. To use the ordinary dull words of Standard Prose is, from the point of view of the humorist, certain death!

Dull words to avoid

Head
Face
Fool
Devil

God
Friend
Trousers
Hit
Goodness
&c &c

Their humorous equivalents

Cokernut, Bean.
Map, Mug
Bonehead, Simp
G. B. S., Dickens
(no Christian name)
Obodaddy, Golly, Gee
Old son, Old horse
Bags, Jeans, The double
Wallop, Sock, Soak, Biff
Holy rats!
&c &c

The only other point to remember is that there must be a whale of a lot of Simile and Hyperbole in your skit. Yet if your Ms. flutters back like Noah's pigeon (note the figure of speech) rewrite it with more of the breezy vocabulary, not forgetting to cram it with Hyperbole, as a good cook fills his cake with plums. "Holy rats!" the Editor would exclaim, slapping you on your back, "this IS great. Worth a Jew's eye!" And

he will commission you so heavily that, if you do not get writer's cramp, you will, ten to one, fall a victim to typist's carpus.

* * *

There are certain forms of humour which I am utterly unable to appreciate. The very worst among these is what might be called 'smut'—the sort of humour that sprouts and thrives in barrack rooms, bachelors' clubs, and medical students' hostels. I once had a room-mate—a medico—whom we used to call General Smut, as he had an unusual flair for smutty talk. Start him on any topic and be sure he would eventually orientate to pornography, as inexorably as a magnetic N. pole would point to the geographic North. The boys lapped up his stories with uproarious relish and looked up to him as a hero. Perhaps, now, they realise how detestable he was!

Then again I hate the stories about Aberdonians which you see in every humorous journal. A humorous magazine without a chiel from Aberdeen—McSomebody with much on his face, and nothing in his head—is not considered humorous. Oh, we have had Aberdonians *ad nauseam*! Too much of a good thing, like jam, morning, noon, and night. Can't they unearth some other town from the Land O' Cakes and drop the Mc?

The anecdotes dealing with eminent persons are perhaps the very limit. Something like this:—"The Maharajadhiraja Raja Bahadur of Bahadurjung was out shooting. A tiger was spotted full 400 yards in front of the party and the Maharajadhiraja &c missed it just by an inch—or may be half. 'Wait, you silly chump,' he yelled, 'wait till I get my ten-thousand-rupee B. S. A. from England.' And the day his new rifle arrived, the Raja Bahadur bagged him—clean!"

I do not quite know if the point of the joke consists in Royalty swearing at a tiger and calling it names, or telling it the make and price of his beauty rifle. Anyway the story is blazed abroad with the speed of a Mylapore scandal and displaces the weather as a suitable introductory topic for days. The newspapers pick up the story and print it under the caption:—

ROYAL HUMOUR

Sporting Bahadurjung Smiles.

* * *

In children we still find to an amazing degree the sense of humour of the caveman, who hit the girl of his choice on her head by way of making love to her. With what patent relish do boys con the poem about Humpty Dumpty who had a great fall! I once asked a boy to tell me the most laughable incident of his experience. "The very funniest?" he wanted to know. "Did you see the gliding tower in the White City?" he asked me, quick as shot. Yes, I had seen it. "One fine night," he began, "when I went to see the show whom did I see at the top of the tower, but my form Master!"

Here's amusement enough for four annas. I reflected and waited with bated breath at a spot whence I could command a splendid end-on view. Down came his majesty along the inclined plane, a forest of arms and legs.....(Here the boy choked with glee).....and p-p-p-p."

"Shoot ahead, you unnatural child," yelled I.

".....and pounded into the straw, the wrong end first. Four men lifted him out of the pit. C-c-c-compound..."

The boy had an attack of apoplexy and I had to infer with the aid of quite a little Logic that it was a jolly, jolly case of compound fracture.

The sense of humour of women is, perhaps, not so crude as that of men. "Poor Pickwick!" exclaimed a cultured lady when I referred to Dickens's masterpiece of humour. "Sam Weller? Yes, he is humorous. But poor, poor Pickwick!!" It may send a man into yelps of laughter to see bladder-bodied, old Pickwick tumble head over heels—the caveman complex again!—but it evokes a cry of pity from the woman who instinctively reaches round for tincture of Iodine and sticking plaster. A woman's sense of humour borders on wit—nay, it thrives on it—and she sometimes wonders if Jane Austen is not far greater a humorist than Dickens.

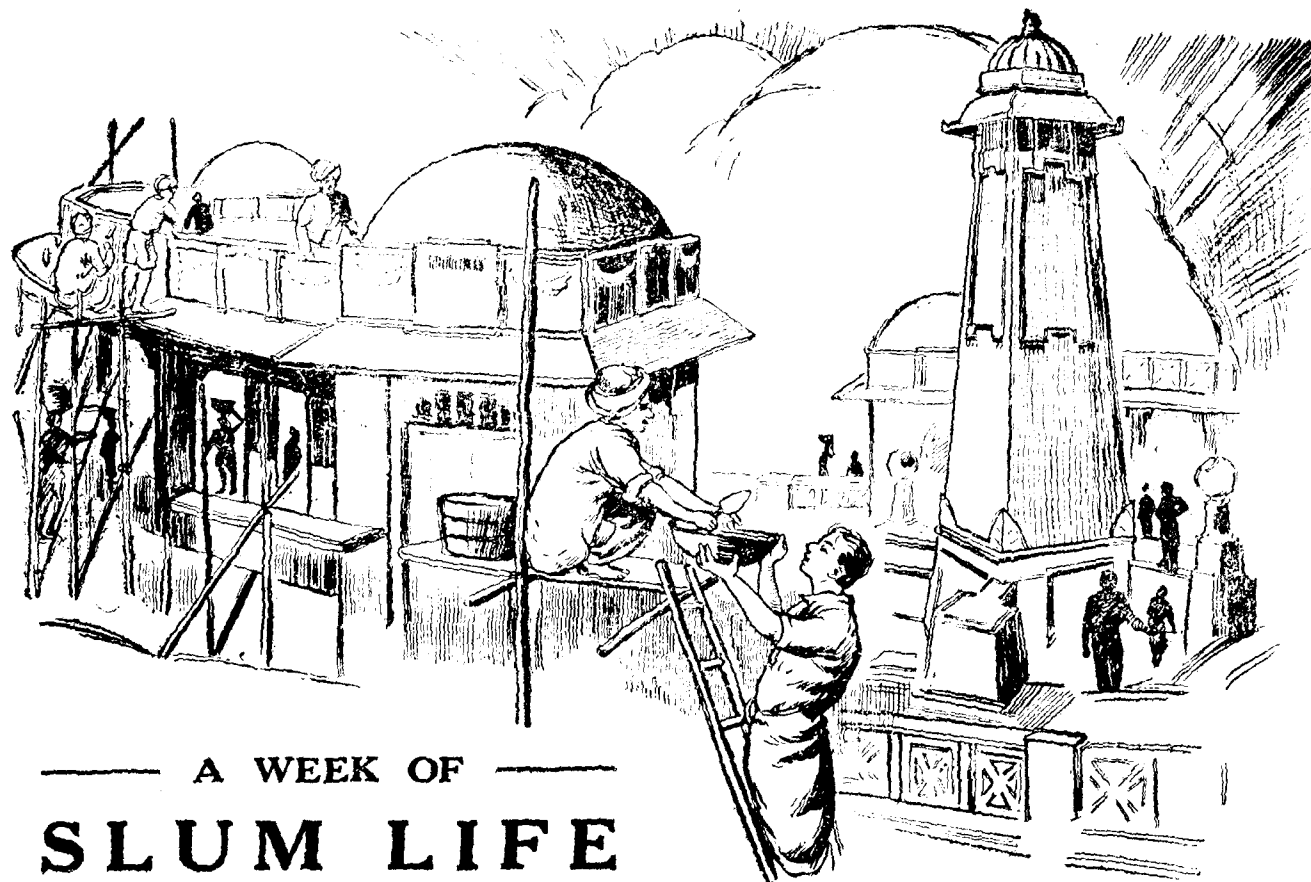
Humorists are among the saviours of mankind. Charles Dickens has perhaps done more for the human race than any other Englishman in history. He has let in a generous flood of sunshine into more hearts than even the English Legislator who knocked a penny off the pint of beer. How heavenly it is to see a man broken down by years chuckle over the pages of Dickens or any other humorist! The Tragi-comedy of life at its very best! A few days ago, an old man came and settled down in my pial to read. There he was for hours, with his legs crossed under him and fearing that any visitors might mistake him for a part of my establishment, I thought I would ask him to make a move on. "Excuse me," I began, but he was deaf! Presently he came to life with a chuckle.

"Have you read Love Among the Chickens by P. G. W.?" he asked me suddenly.

The ball came so fast and unexpectedly that I was clean bowled. You know there are some surprises so surprising that they do not surprise you. Your mind just refuses to work and is what the schoolmasters call a *Tabula Rasa*.

"Great," he effervesced, "that's what I call it. I'll lend you this book in a couple of minutes. It is not a particularly new one and begins only at the twenty seventh page, but I tell you, what remains is G-R-E-A-T."

"Thanks awfully," I replied, and went in, whistling something out of Browning.



A WEEK OF SLUM LIFE

("YEATYKAV")

"The Drudgery of brick-carrying starts."

A Bachelor of Arts lives the life in a slum, working as a labourer. He gets 'four annas, all copper' for the day and what is to the point, intimacy enough to cover four pages of very interesting reading matter.—Editor.

PARTHASARATHY Kuppam lies between the Buckingham Canal and the clerk-cum-student dwelling Agraharam of Triplicane. I have come here, to learn what it is to live on four annas a day, and to earn it. It is not a pleasure trip; nor is it a self-imposed torture of a back-to-the village faddist. My object is simply to study the slum life.

You will excuse me when I begin with the confession that I had to undertake this ordeal at the request of my friend Rao Bahadur...Iyengar. He began as a Pedagogue and alive to the limitations of that august avocation, he soon qualified for the Bar and made his debut at first class forensic distinction. His craving for 'brilliance' as cross-examiner and as legal extortioner of criminal clients being sated half way, his thirst for public recognition and parliamentary notoriety urged him on the road to Democracy. He soon manipulated the construction of a spacious Women and Children's Hospital in his town, the money for which came from different sources, disputed wills, dramatic performances and dance parties too! To obscure the donors and avail

himself of the honours, he styled himself the honorary secretary and was soon as honourable as a Rao Bahadur. The town and taluk councils were under his sway for over a decade when his wife's brother, an adventurous artist, took up in succession an insurance agency, automobile and oil representation and finally public-works contracts. Before the public could read any insinuating (circumstantial) relationship between Mr. Iyengar's civic station and his brother-in-law's affluence, a Democratic council had elevated him to the presidency of the District! His sons-in-law, of whom there were half a dozen, were in quick succession summoned to the ranks of the teaching staff of the District Board. The President's reasons were none other than that his own (bright?) career began with a schoolmaster's job. The whole administration soon became a colony populated by the votaries at the shrine of the Rao Bahadur either as chorists to sing his praise or as Bhaktas with their votive offerings in kind!

He had of late developed a shrewd insight of men and things and clear foresight of coming events. He perceives in the present ferment in the country the possibilities of Rural revival, the promises of Pastoral

life and the potentialities of the slums in our cities. Ignorant as he still is on all these and cognate subjects, he has already addressed the Governor as well as all the co-presidents of District Councils, urging the need for forming a National Rural Council, for the study and amelioration of conditions now obtaining in pastoral life and slum areas. His first step in the plan was to commission me to observe and report on the question how to live on 4as. a day and earn it. I thought hard, read books, consulted friends. I went to the Y.M.C.A. Auditorium to attend the week-end debates. There were three score and ten present, all talking about the life of a man in a city slum. The Slum Improvement Society was in evidence represented by its indefatigable secretary. A lady reformer was on the platform. A municipal Commissioner was on his legs. Oh, how they talked! Some preferred to take the slum-dweller into the country and use him at the farm or at the cattle. Others for keeping him in night-schools and under recognition. An economist fumed and roared that with frugality and temperance a slum dweller might save just Rs. 61-10-8 a year—a sum that in twenty years will buy an endowment policy for Rs. 2000/- with profits! Needless to say, I came home unenlightened, dejected, unconvinced. So this is Rural Reconstruction! I knew I was tired of reports, speeches, debates, in short of second hand knowledge. I yearned to see for myself. I came to Parthasarathy Kuppam.

The Secretary of a Slum Service Society, who was himself the proud owner of a pair of Cadillac super-saloons and a monoplane in Madras, invited me to join his group at Adyar, where they were camping to do research work in Rural Economics. I went down to look at their work. It was a mere picnic party with the victims of penury providing all the fun. The 'research' student did not live the life. It had no attractions for me.

Now, I should see what it is to live on 4as. a day and to earn it. So, I piously resolved to get a job on 4 as. a day and to suffer the privations of a slum-life for a week to study the conditions first hand. In days when the enterprising foreigners' effective lures of aero-concrete and everlasting modes of structural perfection have successfully subdued the psychology of our sages and the number of buildings is getting galore, it is no hard task to get an odd job on 4 as. a day if you be willing to forget your degree and (comfortable) fashionable society at Mylapore and brace up to carry bricks or draw water or even assist at the mason's elbow. I found a situation in the War Memorial (in commemoration of Peace) that is building at the Cupid's Bow. I was to carry refuse out of a well, or into a well, I hardly knew which, and I did not care, so long as it meant Re. 1-12-0 a week.

I walked out of my rooms in Luz Church Road with little more than my six cubit *veshti* and a towel which being torn in places and soiled all round I always wore at the morning *pooja*. I went straight to Parthasarathy Kuppam, where I was brought by Chellan, a fellow whom I met at the War memorial, a labourer, and like myself an old hand. He dwelt in one of the box-like

mud huts of the Kuppam and his scanty clothing revealed thick short limbs and a robust frame. He had a fighting temper and a humorous face.

My first great effort was to find a lodging preferably in a slum, so as to be face to face with penury and dirt, intemperance and ignorance. It was no easy task to convince Chellan that I was no policeman, come to unravel a mystery but an ordinary wreck, back home from Penang, weather-beaten and homeless, now in search of a hole to lay my care-ridden head at night. He offered to take me as his guest, on no rent, but of course I could perceive that he was not against any demonstration of my gratitude in the shape of an entertainment at his evening rendezvous that lay at the other end of the Kuppam.

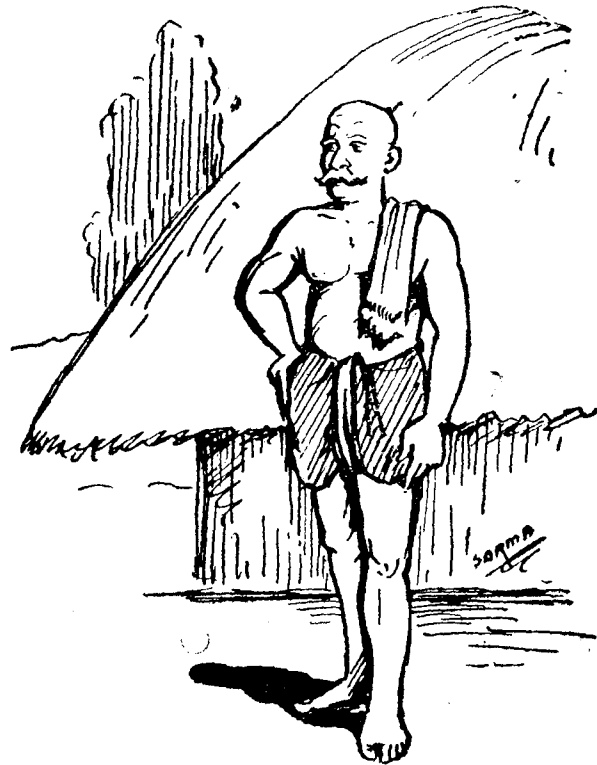
There is no script that could portray the notation of the Kuppam dialect. It is a thousand pities that a national heritage is being lost to posterity in the failure to record in a dictionary or collection, all the slang that is handy and fashionable in a slum. Chellan's wife, Tayi, his mother and a couple of children slept on the same mat, the dirt of which was sticky and stinking. I was invited to share the corner, but declined and preferred the threshold for my pillow and the passage for the bedstead. I stretched myself wearily after the day's task. Sleep would not come and the swarm of mosquitoes sang me a lullaby, while the aroma of the Canal wafted all the odours of Hell. Tired of these disturbances, I sank into sleep by slow degrees like one losing consciousness.

In the morning, we all buy a cheroot for a pie. It is the daily palliative, laxative or whatever you call it. The women folk take only chewing tobacco. The children—they have no need for any. There is no bath. A slum dweller does not bathe. If he does, it is only to wash his mud and at dusk.

Hark! There comes the Appam basket (it is indeed the vendor! but Kuppam language perceives only the basket). We help ourselves each to a piece worth of the delicious provender and drown its taste in a draught of cold tap water. Ah, what a cheap simple breakfast! Three pies worth and still satisfying. This venerable lady, for it is a woman who runs this peripatetic victual stall, is kind enough to allow credit too: but then she claims the money as soon as the anna is reached. Bless the mark! In her ladyship's estimation, a slum dweller's solvency reaches the limit at an anna worth of credit.

Tayi is busy with packing some rice in water in a large mud pot with a morsel of pickles on top which she has the precaution to cover with a dirtsoaked rag of cloth and lifts it on to her head. She is already dressed. Vanity has been looked to. Her oily complexion, deceived with a light varnish of turmeric paste, a right round mark of vermilion adorns her forehead. She leads. Chellan and I in single file follow at a distance.

The work is reached. Haughty masons in silk turbans greet Tayi with smiles, Chellan and poor me with frowns! The drudgery of brick carrying starts.



Chellan, scanty of clothing.....robust of frame.

Chellan's mad craving for a bite at his favourite tobacco gets over him and he stops. He begs of every passing woman "Yelder Sister"—in fact a synonym for madam—"have you a nut?" he gets half a nut, less than half a betel leaf, a liberal morsel of chunam and with a chip of tobacco stem. Chellan is all smiles. He winks at me. I look about. Every face is grinning. Every mouth filled with tobacco and every drop of their saliva looks like blood! For fear I should be detected, I take my first schooling in chewing and in the enterprise, feel giddy, reel, fall down and let go the bricks on my head!

I get abuses, provoking references and in fact everything short of a thrashing. Ah! How would I have thrashed those maistries and masons were it not for my 'report' to Rao Bahadur. I bore it with patience, as every other labourer there did. Only they were not surprised. How could they? Why should they? Was it not but a daily common occurrence and perhaps part of a Maistry's duties to scold, abuse and even to flog offending workmen?

It is noon. The clinking sounds of the mason's trowels have ceased. The baskets carrying sand and pots carrying water, come down. The rigour of the look of the Maistries disappears. The flock of men go off in groups of three's and five's. Behold, here comes a rice vendor with her basket of rice and chutney and sambhar. She sets her burden at your end of the pedestrian

platform, skirting the tarred thoroughfare under the dubious shade of that myrtle tree. Here come her customers. She takes out a sauce pan and with a giant spoon, the outside of which resembles a close-up palm, she measures out judiciously heapfuls and approvingly looks up to the customer who has already without much ado beyond a casual hail, seated himself on the little cushion of his three cubit, red turban cloth with his long limbs idly stretched in front of him, his mighty arms clasped in a healthy style embracing his naked knee-caps. A ladle of sambhar crowns the small white heap of cooked rice and soon her deft fingers are busy with kneading them. In a minute it is collected into a doughy ball of brick-grey colour and deposited in the outstretched joint palms of the labourer. No leaf, nor plate, nor spoon has to be fetched. The palms go up and the lips help themselves. Delightful! Mightily modern in its scientific simplicity. Utterly ancient in its primitive artlessness. As a score come and go, I fall in and like the rest of the herd fall to the meal.

This lady of the moving grub-store has a genial temper and a soft heart. She offers to help me to drink (water!) between my mouthfuls (how can I say morsels?) and as for buttermilk at these dinners, it is unthinkable! Tayi and Chellan have repaired to yon shelter where they are this moment having a cool and refreshing meal of rice in water! Had I my Tayi with me and a potful



There comes the "Appam" basket.....Peripatetic victual stall.

of that rice! I could spare poor myself of the pangs of hot sambhar rice and that at midday after a hot day's hard toil.

A little slang—a little chat. A smoke—a bite at the blessed tobacco. Away goes the rice vendor. Up go the workmen to their work. The labour begins monotonous,



.....she leads. Chellan and I follow at a distance.

tiring, endless. "Raise this stone!" "Dig here" "Water these walls!" "Pull down that block!" shout the captains. But why? Yours is not to question why but to do and die. And indeed they die. Did the poet see Madras slums and Madras labour when he said that? Pretty much he imagined.

Dusk! Ah for a little change and a night's rest! Here we all range up in a row. Our names are called. I am reminded of our college attendance. But here we are not marked. As we are called, we file up and receive the princely salary of four annas, all copper. But Tayi gets only three annas. Why? She is a mere woman. A woman cannot get the same as a man. Yet, but she carried as many, if not more, bricks than myself. She gave me and the Mason two courses of chewing articles! True, but then, she is after all a woman. Blessed distinction. Her sex does not save her the hard burden of work but stands in her way of earning.

Our hard earned day's salary in our pocket we wend our way to the Kuppam. Chellan edges up to me and solemnly whispers that should I pay a couple of annas to his wife Tayi, she would give me a good night's meal and a bed without a grumble. I consent and part with the amount. The rest in my left palm, I accompany Chellan. But what is this!

A feast! no; but a gin shop. There is a pot of toddy. What a concourse of people! The mason is yonder buying arrack. But who is the slouching figure in a

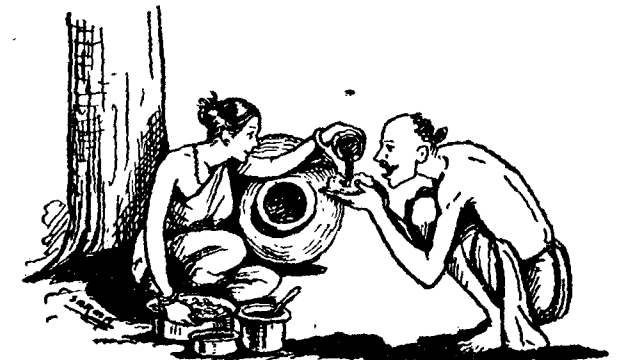
white shirt at his elbow? It is our maistry. But was he not an Iyer? The tavern is a great leveller. It has no distinction of creeds. "Thank you, Chellan."

No, he would not agree. I have had a bounteous share of his slang terms of endearment. Already promises of the most promiscuous and venal unions have escaped his lips. There is nothing left me but obedience. I take the pot of the beverage, retire outside and empty it. Here come a couple, the woman drunk. Ah, that way! Well done! She has smacked him! Is it a knife dripping with blood! Catch her! A yell and a shriek. She is caught, led to the police-station, there detained.

We reach home, Chellan, despite his mug at the tavern in his most sober mood. Two earthen dishes are placed before us and Tayi brings and serves a wholesome meal of Rangoon rice, fish soup and chillies.

Who lives next door? Why such a noisy brawl? It is nothing new. The woman was once in some village-smith's keeping. Lately, she was discovered by Ellappen and brought here. On his death, his step-son has taken her. When he sees her in the company of other paramours, of whom there are not a few constables and maistries, he remonstrates and they quarrel often with blows.

Why do not these children go to school? There is no school. And where is the need for a school? Our sons are not going to be Vakils and Deputy Collectors. They can pick our trade and get on. Thus contentment and stagnation rule the slum.



.....lady of the moving grub-store.

The week is past and I hasten home to prepare the report! If anybody smiles at this tale, let him go and live in a slum for a full week.

Keep this copy of The Merry Magazine.

It may bring you Rs. 100.

ISRAEL IN TRAVAIL

Some Juicy Jokes on Jews

How They Charged!

The Jewish Legion, which fought so well for Britain in Palestine during the war, were responsible for some good-humoured stories that are worth remembering. It is said that, when the question arose of what they should call themselves, they decided upon "The Jordan Highlanders." One of their officers is reported to have said that "they were beggars to charge, but when they charged, they usually charged too much!"

Mr. Levy's Legerdemain

Mr. Levy was much disturbed when, towards the end of a banquet, he was told by Mr. Rubenstein, on his left, that he had already secured three silver spoons and two silver forks, and had stowed them away in his coat tail pocket. So when the viands were removed, and the sing-song part of the show was well on the way, Mr. Levy arose and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I was not able to sing a song, nor to make a recitation, but I am ver good at what you call ze slight of hand" (chorus of voices, "That's all right old man: let's have some of that"). "Zoh, I will take these three spoons and two forks off the table, and I vos put them in my pocket, zoh: and then I say 'Hey Presto!' and wave my hands, zoh: and now you vill find the spoons and forks in the pocket of ze gentleman on my left." Collapse of Mr. Rubenstein, and Mr. Levy goes home with the spoils.

"Business is Business"

Ikey and Moses were excellent friends, but business was always business. Ikey wanted to sell Moses a horse, and asked £1,000 for it. Moses offered him £500, but Ikey refused the offer. However, on the same night, the horse died, and the next morning Ikey wired to Moses, "Send £500, and will forward horse." Moses sent a cheque for the deal, and, after getting it cleared by his bank, Ikey sent off the dead horse. To his surprise, he did not hear a word from Moses, and after waiting some days, he was overtaken by a fit of remorse, and went off to see him. He found him at home, and going up to him he said, "I'm dreadfully sorry, old man, that I played you such a dirty trick. Vill you shake'ands and forgive me?" "Vy certainly," replied Moses. "I haven't been grumblin', have I? Don't bother yourself: that is quite all right." "But vot about the horse?" asked Ikey. "I raffled it," said Moses. "Raffled it?" exclaimed Ikey. "Yes," said Moses, "I got sixteen entries at £100 each, and the only man vot grumbled vos the winner, and I gave him his money back!"

An Eye on Business.

A little Jewish boy was caught by the dangling ropes of a balloon at the country fair. When he was being carried aloft, and the crowd was standing aghast as he hung head downwards, the father cried: "Ikey, Ikey, throw out some of our bithnith cards."

A Problem

Two Hebrews met in the city, and one told the other that he had insured his new house for £5,000 against fire or burglary. "But haven't you insured against a flood?" asked his friend. The owner paused for a while, and then said, "How do you make a flood?"

Another

A Jew always returned from race meetings with empty pockets. "How is it, Abe, that you always win at cards, and never on horses?" asked his wife. "Vell, you see, my dear, I don't shuffle the horses," was the candid reply.

The Diffidence.

Moses met Ikey in the street, and said to him "You're lookin' very blue to-day, Ikey. Vot's troublin' you?" "I'm bankrupt: that's wot's the matter." "Bankrupt, eh?" said Moses, "but vot did you settle on your wife?" "I settle nothing on my wife," said Ikey. "Vell, vot did you settle on your daughter?" asked Moses. "I settle nothing on my daughter," groaned Ikey. "Vy," exclaimed Moses, "you are not bankrupt, you are ruined!"

Sheer Thrift!

"Vot do you give your boy for pocket money, Mr. Isaacs?" asked a friend. "A shilling a week," was the reply. "Isn't that a lot of money?" asked his friend. "Yes, my poy, it is," replied Mr. Isaacs, "but he puts it away in vot he thinks is his money box, but vitch happens to be the gas meter."

Wouldn't Leave it Alone.

The little Jew tailor, walking in the neighbourhood of Petticoat Lane, saw a fire-engine pass, and murmured contemptuously: "There they go again; interferin' wit busineth!"

Selling and Smelling.

A man went into a second-hand shop to buy a fur-coat, and the Jewish proprietor showed him one that had a very strong odour. "I can't stand this one," he said. "It smells." "Shemalls!" said Isaacs. You say it smells. That's nod the coat that shruells; that's me!"

Jacobs, Jun.—"Fader, a schentleman in de shop wants to know if dot all-vool unshrinkable shirt vill shrink?"

Jacobs, Sen.—"Does it fid him?"

Jacobs, Jun.—"No id is too big."

Jacobs, Sen.—"Den id vill shrink."



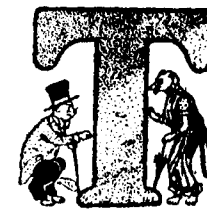
TIDINGS FROM TRIBUNALS, II.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

The first instalment of Tidings, published on page 465, called for an enthusiastic encore from more throats than one. The rule, early to bed and early to rise, might have found acceptance in many a leading divorce proceedings, but their lordships are vague and refuse to guess if the Rooster does so with a view to avoid domestic dissensions—*Editor*.

'SPARKLETS' vs. Sir Usmad Moudeen Pichai, Kt.

Maddington, 10th Aug. 1933.



THE Division Bench of the Court of Appeal, consisting of Their Lordships, Sir Gilbert Cullon C. J. and Sir Andrew Beefsteake J. concluded the hearing and delivered judgment in the well-known Rooster Libel Case. When the Court assembled this morning, His Lordship, Sir Gilbert Cullon C. J. asked: "Sir Allasami, did your client seriously mean to suggest that Sir Usmad Moudeen Pichai Kt. was conveyed in a motor lorry?"

Sir Allasami—"That is the question, the answer to which rests purely on the appreciation of the evidence before Your Lordships to which I have drawn pointed attention. I have no doubt that he only meant to contradict a rumour to that effect and nothing more than that, My Lords."

Sir Norman Grunt—"I have no doubt that the rumour is a fiction of the defendant's imagination, miluds. I challenge my learned friend to point out a scrap of evidence, warranting the conclusion that there

was ever such a rumour then extant. Imagine for a moment, miluds, my client who owns in his own right one Isphano Sueza and two Rolls Royces for his use, not to speak of the three five-seaters, four baby cars and three two-ton lorries of various manufactures meant exclusively for the use of his harem, being conveyed in a municipal waggon, miluds. Is it not, I respectfully ask, miluds, most humiliating to my client to be told, under the cloak of contradicting a rumour, that he indented on the services of a waggon, belonging to a public body, a public body, miluds, of which he admittedly is the President, and the property of which public body, miluds, he, admittedly, is the lawful custodian, the property of which body, miluds, he has to safeguard and protect with all reasonable care and caution, the property of which bod....."

Sir Gilbert—"Then, do you suggest, Sir Norman, that if the plaintiff was really conveyed in that waggon, the waggon would have been subjected to misuse and seriously damaged thereby?"

Sir Norman :—"Miluds, it is far from my intention to suggest that inference, though in a sense it does follow from the broad proposition set forth by me. It is for your ludships to consider that and arrive at the correct conclusion. I cannot venture to add anything more than that, miluds, in view of the expert testimony of three motor engineers, four tailors, and three doctors, D. W's. 7 to 17."

Sir Beefsteake :—"At what time does your client retire for the day, Sir Norman?"

Sir Norman :—"Retire for the day, milud!!"

Sir Beefsteake :—"Yes. In other words, at what hour of the night does your client go to bed?"

Sir Allasami :—"At about 4-30 A. M., my lords."

the progress of justice. Sir Allasami, will you please refrain from volunteering any information not asked for by the bench?

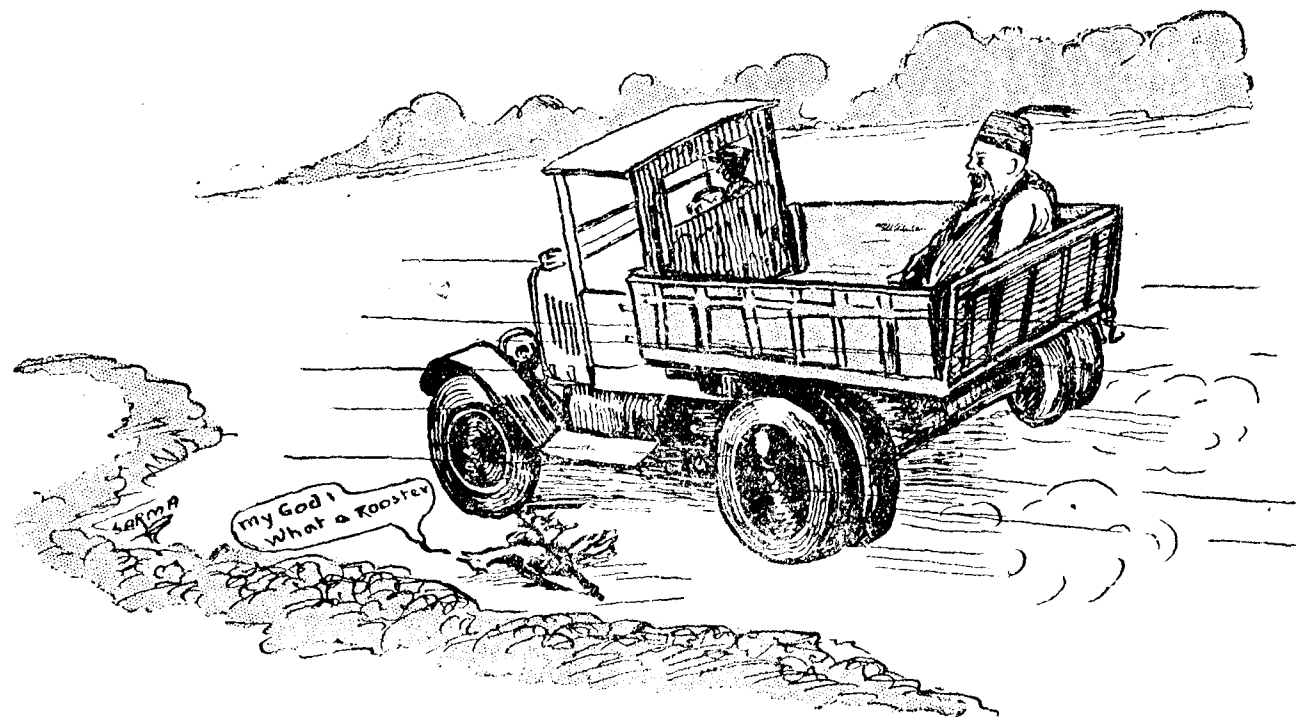
Sir Allasami :—"As Your Lordship pleases."

Sir Beefsteake :—"Now, Sir Norman, at what time does your client go to bed and what time does he wake up after the rest?"

Sir Norman :—"At or about 4-30 A.M. milud, and rises at 11 A.M."

Sir Beefsteake :—"That is enough for our purposes. Have you anything more to say?"

Sir Norman :—"I have made my submissions, miluds and have nothing more to add."



—while being so run-over exclaimed, "My God! What a Rooster!"

Sir Norman :—"May I ask you, Sir Allasami, not to interrupt me."

Sir Allasami :—"I am not interrupting you."

Sir Norman :—"You ARE interrupting me."

Sir Allasami :—"No. I am not."

Sir Norman :—"Yes. You ARE."

Sir Allasami :—"NEVER. What do you mean by interruption? Define that word."

Sir Norman :—"Miluds! I crave the protection of the Court!"

Sir Gilbert :—"You shall have it, Sir Norman. We cannot but condemn this scratch and bite attitude of eminent Counsel towards each other in this country. That prevents the smooth working of the complicated judicial machinery, hampers and even retards

Sir Gilbert Cullon C. J. in delivering the judgment said: This is an appeal by the defendant against the judgment and decree of the Dist. Judge of Somberipatam. The facts, giving rise to this action, which are novel even to our wide and varied experience, may at once be stated. The Plaintiff (Respondt.) in this action is Sir Usnad Moudeen Pichai Kt., a wealthy, prominent and distinguished citizen of Somberipatam, as his title indicates beyond dispute. He is also a member of over sixteen public bodies which is irrelevant and the President of the local Municipal Council which may be relevant. The Defendant (Applt) is the Editor, Printer, and Publisher, of "Sparklets" a leading English Weekly published in Somberipatam, devoted to light literature and comments on current topics of interest. On the 22nd Dec. of the year 1931, it was reported in the dailies of that city that a Te-tin-al motor Waggon, belonging to the local municipal authorities ran over and killed a hen on Rankin's Road in that city

and that the hen—doubtless a trained one of the species—while being so run over exclaimed, "My God! What a Rooster!" The defendant in the issue dated 24th Dec, 1931 of his Magazine published the above news, which undeniably is a matter of absorbing interest, and added on his own responsibility the words, "We contradict on reliable authority the persistent rumour that has since gained currency that Sir Usnad Moudeen Pichai Kt. was then being lugged in that waggon." How serious in its present consequences this innocent publication has proved will emerge from the sequel to be narrated. Had it not been for the restrictions imposed on the members of the Bench by long established traditions of decorum and most dignified conduct coupled, no doubt, with the more pressing restrictions on our august persons by well fastened buttons, we must confess that we should have given a more natural and hilarious response to the provocation caused by the said words when their full import was brought home to us. But it is sufficient for our purposes to observe that, that at any rate, was not the kind of response that these words provoked in the plaintiff. As has been observed by the learned Law Lord Mumfiz in that leading case of But-terton Gilder Vs. Hardy Boatman, 'All men are not alike and minds differ even as rivers do,—which obiter dictum explains the otherwise inexplicable conduct of the plaintiff—he preferred to differ from the 29,899 readers of that journal and responded with a writ for the recovery of Rs. 49,876-4-11 for an alleged libel and special damages sustained thereby.

2. It is unnecessary to traverse the whole length of his voluminous pleadings to ascertain the precise nature and implications of the offending publication or wherein the sting lay, as we find it set out in the innuendo on which the action is entirely founded. It is to the effect that the publication was tantamount to calling the plaintiff a rooster, that it suggested that the height, weight, girth, and size of the plaintiff was far above that of the general run of the species, of which he still claims to be a member, and that it, in any event, suggested the wrongful use by the plaintiff of the property belonging to a public body, to wit, a Te-tin-al waggon belonging to the said public body. The defences to the action were numerous and it is only necessary to observe four of them which have been pressed before us, the others

passing into history. They were that the defendant neither in fact nor in law published anything more than a news item of an important nature—the unfortunate fowl that was the victim of the accident being the prize winner in all the local poultry exhibitions having beaten its own record of 372 eggs for the year 1930 by laying the 376th egg for the year 1931; 3 hrs. and 59 mnts. prior to the accident—, that the defendant never in fact or in law published any reflection on the tonnage or dimensions of the plaintiff's anatomy, nor did he thereby suggest in any manner whatsoever the ingenious imputation about the wrongful use of the waggon. He repudiated all liability for the damages claimed and in the alternative pleaded justification for all that he had published.



...height, weight, girth, and size of the plaintiff...

3. One feature of this case that stands out in bold relief which the plaintiff, for obvious reasons, has not ventured to contradict either in his own depositions or through the evidence of his witnesses, is the nature of the plaintiff's person. He is 5ft. 11 inches in height, 92 inches round the abdomen, i.e. navel round and back to navel, 52 inches round the chest and in *puris naturalibus* weighs 482 lbs 9½ ozs. Three doctors and four tailors have testified to these facts, while three motor engineers are agreed that, were a person of the plaintiff's parts employed as driver of the waggon with load, it would indeed be an unbearable strain on the engine, while conveying him ordinarily would entail thrice the normal wear and tear.

4. The nature of the damages alleged to have been suffered by the plaintiff as a result of the offending publication and the basis of calculation thereof adopted by the plaintiff strikes us as curious beyond description. It would appear that, within eight days from the date of publication complained of, three of his wives divorced him and a fourth threatened to divorce him, at the same time expressing her preference to espouse another. He computes the loss under this head at Rs. 35,000—a most extravagant estimate to our minds—his estimate for the threatened divorce alone being Rs. 5,000. The balance of Rs. 14,876-4-11 to make up the aggregate claim of Rs. 49,876-4-11 is set down as expenses incurred in the wholesale purchase for valuable consideration the opposition of the members of the local Municipal Council, who had tabled a motion of no-confidence against him on the 31st Dec. 1931.

5. We cannot help entertaining grave misgivings about the future of that fair and untarnished name of British Justice, of which we are the lawful custodians, when we pursue the course that this suit has taken in the hands of the subordinate judiciary. The learned District Judge has, on the most fantastic grounds, decreed the claim of the plaintiff to the extent of Rs. 39,869-14-11 with proportionate costs. While this compensation may seem bountiful to minds disciplined in a school of austerity, it has doubtless, by the plaintiff engaged in the great business of electioneering, been regarded as far less than adequate to the occasion with the result that we have his cross-appeal as well before us. Albeit, we have searched in vain for even a remote link establishing some appreciable connection between the libel and divorces, notice of divorce, and the no-confidence motion, that have followed the libel with almost cinematic quickness. Nor do we find any evidence, indicating to the slightest extent that the libel was in any manner communicated to the wives of the plaintiff—of whom he has thirteen—to engender in them a sudden dislike for the plaintiff. At the risk of transgressing the limits of decency nevertheless, secure in the feeling that we are courting such a risk only in the lawful discharge of our responsible functions as the final Appellate Tribunal in this Presidency, we are constrained to observe that the *raison d'être* was the plaintiff himself and his propensities which can with sufficient justification be likened to those of a rooster.

6. The law applicable to this case is quite clear. 'Words are *prima facie* libellous when their natural, obvious and primary sense is libellous' says Lord Woolbed in *Joe Barrel Vs. John Mug* 1874 C & B F. II. 231. The plaintiff has, however, contended before us that the secondary meaning clearly labels him a rooster. We must decline to concede this position as not one of the 29,898 readers of the publication complained of, whose letters the defendant has spared no pains to secure and file as Ex. XXI series, has read that imputation between those lines. It has been observed by the same Law Lord that the 'inch tape of law is the ordinary, average, reasonable man.' In our minds, these principles apply with compelling force. We cannot, therefore, hold with any other view and depart from established principle by rejecting the testimony of 29,898 ordinary, average reasonable readers. But it appears to us that the plaintiff's contention may be negated on a firmer ground, namely, his admission that he retires for the day at or about 4-30 A.M. (deposition p. 79), an admission most damaging to his contention when considered with

the fact that this habit of the plaintiff was a matter of common knowledge in Somboripatam. Dr. Gander, an authority of no mean order on the subject of the flora and fauna of the tropics on p. 419 of his book of the same title, and Sir Ronald Crane, an authority of equal eminence, on p. 369 of his book, 'Birds of the Tropics,' both state that the Indian rooster, like his brother in England, and quite unlike the plaintiff here, observes the wholesome rule of early to bed and early to rise, a rule that has found acceptance in many a leading divorce proceedings. Whether the rooster does that with a view to avoid domestic dissensions we shall not venture to guess. But it is sufficient to state that the argument of the learned counsel for the defendant, viz, that such an imputation is inconceivable in view of this crucial difference between the plaintiff and a rooster, seems to us to be fundamental and in the interest of fairness in litigation, it is, we think, *optima exempli*, that in a case as this, it should be sustained.

7. Having regard to the provisions of the Somboripatam Dist. Municipality Act LXXV of 1924, that gives unfettered discretion to the President of that body in dealing with its property—a discretion the advantages of exercising which Presidents are neither slow in appreciating nor willing to surrender on mere threats of no-confidence motions—we are surprised that arguments should have survived even at this Bar, that the offending publication had sadly shaken the confidence of the members of that Council in the plaintiff, whereas in fact, the no-confidence motion is one of the many that are periodically engineered in that Council by needy adventurers, who have not been slow in realising the comparative opulence of their President and turn that to some account, (Vide Ex IV, V, & VI. Deposition of Pw's 19-23). As for the arguments for the plaintiff concerning the imputation on his person, they are destitute of any merit when it is observed that the plaintiff is modelled on colossal proportions.

8. For the reasons stated above, we arrive without reluctance at the conclusion that the defendant's appeal A. S. 4932/32 should be allowed with costs. For the same reasons which apply with equal force the plaintiff's cross-appeal shall stand dismissed.

Sir Allasami, instructed by Messrs. Patsadi Pantulu, Bheema Beemamoorthy, Gajapathi Iyer, of the Somboripatam Bar and Messrs. Pichu Iyer, Bodairamanan, Dochi Iyengar and Peruntalai Sastri of the Maddington Bar, appeared for the (Deft.) appellant; while Sir Norman Grunt, instructed by Phibs & Argue, Solicitors, Maddington, appeared for the (Ptf.) respondent.

THE LITTLE THIEF



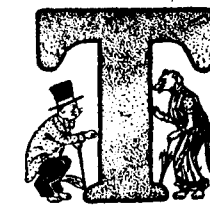
The Statue of Venus de Milo.



7/8 DROP OF METAL PAINT

(BON AMI)

Here is a Detective Story of the orthodox type. Things happen like this only once in a blue moon and fiction is certainly stranger to truth.—*Editor*.



THE telephone-bell in Inspector Seshu Aiyar's room rang. The Inspector himself answered the call.

It was an agitated voice of a woman that spoke at the other end. "Is that the Inspector? This is cook, Seeni, speaking from 'River View,' Chepauk. My madam had disappeared suddenly this morning and Master is quite upset about it."

"Does he want me?" the Inspector asked.

"Not exactly. I have called on you upon my own initiative. Master is so overcome with grief that he does not know what to do."

"Well, I will be there presently."

When the Inspector arrived at 'River View,' the old cook received him with an expression of having been relieved of a great anxiety in her heart. The Inspector's presence brought her confidence that her mistress would soon be found.

"When did you notice her disappearance?" Seshu Aiyar asked her.

"It was in the morning," she replied. "Very early in the morning, master fixed up the metal statue—the new one he had ordered—in the garden, and then desiring to show it to his wife, how nice it was there beautifying the whole garden, asked me to call the mistress. Throughout the house, I searched for her, but she was nowhere to be found. When I told master about it, 'Oh, she will be taking her bath,' he said, and went to the bathroom and tapped on the door."

"He could have waited," suggested the Inspector.

"Of course. But madam had always been very partial to taking hot-water bath for hours together, and she everyday wanted her to be reminded of the time".

"Well, then?"

"When no answer came from inside, he opened the door and when he found it empty, he got alarmed. He wrung his hands as if in despair. It transpired to me from what he said in broken sentences that he had a quarrel with his wife yesternight for the first time in their married life."

"How long have they been married?"

The cook, like all cooks, was, fortunately for the Inspector, garrulous and she wanted no prompting to speak.

"Only a year back," she replied. "They came to this house only two days before. It was under repairs and slight reconstruction till then. The fixing up of the statue in the garden was the finishing touch to the house. I have been living with them even from their marriage-day."

"They should have been much satisfied with your services. Well. Where is master? I should like to see him."

When Seshu Aiyar entered Mr. Pamraj's private study a few minutes later, he found him seated amidst a cluster of trunks and suit-cases all packed and ready for transit. Mr. Pamraj was an amiable-looking middle-aged man.

"Good morning," he said. "I am very sorry, Inspector. Really this matter is not so serious as to warrant the investigation by a detective. Just a private hitch between husband and wife. As a matter of fact, my wife and I had a short exchange of hot words between us, and being for the first time in our married life, it had affected her too much. She may come back in a day or two, perhaps when the wound heals."

"Then, you think that she would have gone to some of her friend's house? Is that all?" Seshu Aiyar asked.

"Exactly. That is why I have started on a journey to Bombay where my wife's parents are. I am sure to find her with them. If I don't and if there is any room for suspicion of anything else about my wife, you will be the first man from whom I will look for help."

"Thank you."

"I am sorry you have been troubled. The silly mutt of an hysterical cook should not have been so hasty; and I hope you will excuse us for wasting so much of your valuable time."

"Not at all. Good morning."

* * *

But really detectives are not dismissed off from a job so easily as all that. When once they get themselves introduced into a business, they stick to it like glue. The concerned parties may not want their assistance and yet, these detectives will be quite content to be on the job of their own accord.

And that was why Inspector Seshu Aiyar instead of forgetting the matter of Mrs. Pamraj's disappearance went to 'River View' on the next day.

Only the cook was in the house.

"Madam has not returned yet?" he asked the cook by way of beginning the conversation. "No! Don't worry, she will be here to-morrow or the day after. But I want to see the house just to study how far it has

been improved upon by Mr. Pamraj. Years ago I lived here for some time. Have you got the keys?"

"Yes, all except the key of Master's private room."

When the Inspector, accompanied by the cook, went over the whole house, he did not appear to the cook to be scrutinizing the rooms and their contents. He just looked round and passed on. But his experienced eye did take stock of every little thing in the whole house. He did not interest himself in any room except one. It was situated adjacent to the front hall and contained no furniture. On its floor, he saw just a little drop of solidified metal paint. It was paint used generally for varnishing metal articles of furniture and was of the white aluminium variety.

Seshu Aiyar carefully observed it and looked round the room a second time. But for a wooden oblong box in the corner, the room was quite empty.

"What came in that box?" he asked Seeni.

"Yes, sir. The statue for the garden."

"Oh," the Inspector said and moved on.

"Quite a cosy little home now," he remarked after he finished seeing the whole house. "What made your lady forsake this 'heaven' of a house and run away, I wonder? Who bought this house, the husband or the wife?"

"It is in Master's name but of course the money was the larger part of madam's dowry."

"Handsome dowry, I am sure?"

"Yes, sir. About thirty thousands, out of which the house was bought for twenty thousands and the balance was deposited in the bank."

"What a good woman! When did you see her last on the night she left the house?"

"While I served supper. She was happy and charming as usual."

"A pretentious and cunning woman and so did not give cause for a tint of suspicion."

Conversing with the cook, the Inspector reached the garden. Among various plants and beautiful flowers, the central fountain-head caught his eye most readily. On its top stood a metal statue, quite life-like and beautiful. It was decidedly the best he had ever seen in the garden of a private house. He examined it closely.

* * *

When Inspector Seshu Aiyar returned to the station, he called three of his best constables.

"I want 'River View', the new house in Chepauk, of one Mr. Pamraj of the Expert Motor Engineers Ltd, to be guarded day and night," he told them. "There is nobody in the house except the cook. If you find any intruder in the compound, just take him along here. But be careful not to disturb him until he finishes his job at the house, and what is more, notice minutely what he does there."

"Good morning, Mr. Sircar," the Inspector said to the hand-cuffed visitor. "Though the name has been changed, the face is the same. I expected you would have 'grown' at least a moderate-sized beard."

"Cutting down the sarcastic stuff, tell me what you have found out," the man replied with a sneer.

The Inspector ignored it.

"Height 4 ft 11 inches!" he exclaimed instead. "Air-tight. What a wonderful idea to have a 'treasure safe' air-tight! A pot of enamel paint to obliterate the traces of opening the safe! But the irony of it all is that you have given the order to the firm in the presence of your wife. And above all, the figure of Venus de Milo!"

Pamraj—Sircar had been only the temporary name of the individual brought by the constable—smiled a grim smile.

He was a man of iron nerves. After having secured all his wife's money in the shape of a house and a good balance at the bank, he knew that the only way to remove the obstacle by marrying some other woman—of course, solely with a view to inheriting her wealth also—was to murder his wife. His plans, extending over two months' time, had been carefully laid and would have been carried out to perfection but for the hasty act of an hysterical cook. If not for her, Inspector Seshu Aiyar would never have been let into the secret of the 'disappearance' of Mrs. Pamraj at so early a stage, and her (Mrs. Pamraj's) unusual coffin would have been drowned in the deep waters of the Cooum River. The accomplices of Mr. 'Sircar' were prevented from doing that in time and perhaps they really never knew, as they persisted in asserting, that by sinking the statue they were incidentally drowning a dead body too.

"Now, the opening ceremony only remains to be done," the Inspector said.

Approaching the statue, he pressed a small lever that was almost imperceptibly fixed to the left foot of the figure, and lifted the front or upper part of the whole figure. The mechanically closed statue went in halves and there between the two halves of the hollow statue, was the dead body of a woman in night dress.

"The strangled body of your wife, Pamraj," the Inspector said with contempt.

Pamraj closed his eyes tightly. Though a callous and pitiless criminal, he could not bear the sight of his innocent wife's body that had been kept in the posture of the world-famous statue for a week.

"You should not have been so anxious, Pamraj," the Inspector continued, "to convince me of the insignificance of the disappearance of your wife. And further, you should have been more careful in using the paint to cover up the slight opening in the statue. But for the drop of paint in that room, I would never have linked up the cause of your wife's mysterious disappearance with the aluminium-coated statue."

For three days and nights the constables kept a vigilant watch. Yet nothing happened. But on the fourth day, at one o'clock in the night, a small taxi-cab stopped before the gates of 'River View'. Two men got down while the driver remained at the steering-wheel. The engine of the car was left running. The two men, after satisfying themselves that they were not being watched, jumped over the gates into the compound.

They were not aware of the three constables who were watching their every movement. The latter a few minutes later had the surprise of their life.

The thieves, instead of attempting to get into the house, went stealthily towards the water-fountain in the garden. They screwed off the statue from its support on the fountain, and carried it to the taxi-cab waiting outside on the road. It was only then that the constables saw that the time for their interference had come. They were only just in time to prevent the driver from stepping on the accelerator, for one of the bobbies dealt him a severe blow on the head and at the same time bodily lifted him off from the driver's seat. The other two constables did well, too. In no time they hand-cuffed the two ruffians and took all the three (and the statue too) to the Police Station.

"Wring out the truth from the fellows," Inspector Seshu Aiyar told the constables. "If I am not mistaken, there should be somebody who instigated the theft of the statue and when you get to know his name, your first duty is to go and bring him to me."

The next morning, the Inspector found himself as gay as a lark. He was singing as he dialled 0054 on the 'phone.

"Hello!" he said presently. "This is B. Division Police Station and Inspector Seshu Aiyar speaking. Is that Ramdus & Co? Well, I want the manager of the firm to come over here at once with last year's order book and the current one."

A few minutes later, the manager of Ramdus' factory made his appearance before the Inspector.

"Well," the latter said, "while I go through the order-book, you just have a look at the statue there and tell me whether it was made by your firm."

The manager did not study it, for he knew at a glance that it was the product of their own firm.

"Yes. It was made by our firm for one Mr. Pamraj of 'River View' and we delivered it only a week back. I remember it so well because....."

"No! I know everything about it from the order-book," the Inspector interrupted him. "Just remember that you may be asked to be present here a day or two hence."

Two days passed with no news for the Inspector about the master-hand behind the theft of the statue. But on the third day, while he was indulging in a sort of recreation by studying the 'probables' in the next Saturday race at Poona, his head constable ushered into his presence a middle-aged man, by name, Sircar.

"SUSILA'S CURE FOR MY BALDNESS"

(N. S. PILLIEUX)

Susila needs no introduction. We have already watched her attempts to win a prize on page 510. Here she is busy curing the baldness of her lord and master. Mr. Pillieux is full of promises—of giving us more of Susila in future issues:—*Editor*.



I am ever of opinion, (my apologies to Goldsmith), that a bald-headed man is higher up in the stage of Evolution than his hairy headed brother. The primitive man, we are told, was covered all over with a luxuriant growth of hair, and that, as the process of Evolution proceeded apace, he shed his hair little by little. So the less of hair, the more advanced is the stage of Evolution, hence *quod erat demonstrandum* or Q. E. D. (as Euclid would have it). In fact, I can dimly perceive a time, perhaps, in the far-off distant future, when, with the onward march of Evolution, the whole world, I mean the human species, will go bald. We shall at present agree to leave this perhaps controversial evolutionistic conception of baldness to brainier heads than ours.

Coming down from the dizzy heights of abstruse, scientific considerations to the plains, bristling with the problems of the prosaic, matter-of-fact, everyday life, one has to concede, even here, that a baldhead, though often a target for ridicule, has its own advantages. For one thing, it obviates the necessity for elaborate, pains-taking toilet of the hair, involving hard-earned cash to be ear-marked for all sorts of hair-creams, hair oils, and such like stuff, to say nothing of the valuable time expended therefor. For another, it makes the usually bothersome oil bath, a ridiculously easy affair, so much so, that a bald-headed man need not anticipate, with dread, an approaching Wednesday or Saturday any more than any other day of the week. Lastly, a bald head is as much cleaner than the hairy one as a close-shaven, than a bearded chin.

To be perfectly candid with you, I admit that I am bald-headed; and I am plainly so. I consider it a piece of egregious folly, to grow the few hairs on the occipital and temporal regions of the scalp, to bring them over and paste them on the hair-bereft vertex to give it a semblance of habitation, as many of my similarly circumstanced friends are doing. I am not at all ashamed to exhibit my head, shining-bald as it is, to the whole world, and, in fact, I am of opinion, that any man should be proud of such a possession.

But my wife, Susila, thinks otherwise and there is an end of the whole matter. The trouble started one evening, when we returned home from a tea-party, to which we had been invited. As soon as we arrived home, Susila turned to me and said in all seriousness:

"Isn't it time, we did something to set right your head."

I was flabbergasted. I staggered under the unexpected blow. My head! and something wrong with it!! Horror of horrors!!! In an instant, were conjured up before my mind, the stone walls and the iron bars of the Lunatic Asylum and I shuddered at the grim prospect of a life-long internment therein.

"Susila, dear," I said with a pale, horror-stricken face, "I never thought that—that my sanity was ever er—mooted."

"Silly!" she cried, "whoever said anything about your sanity? I was talking about your bald head."

I heaved a sigh of relief.

"To-day at the tea-party," she continued, "one of my friends, to wit, Lady Karuppanna Chetty; (of course not guessing your identity), pointed your head out to me and exclaimed, 'Look at his head; such a smooth shining thing. I hope he is a bachelor; no wife, I dare say, would tolerate such a head on her husband's shoulders.' I had to swallow the insult. I dare say, I did look very foolish, indeed! I made up my mind, then and there, to leave no stone unturned, and to spare no expense, whatsoever, to make the hair grow on your head."

"Dear, but you know my pet ideas and views about baldness. I am quite comfortable—"

"Comfortable! Comfortable, indeed!!" she cut in, "It is not a question of your comfort; it is what the world thinks about your head that matters."

I had to acquiesce finally in Lady Karuppanna's claim to voice forth the opinion of the whole world and to recognise her in that representative capacity.

Susila did not allow the grass to grow under her feet. The next day she went out shopping and when she returned, she had "bagged" a stiff hair brush (with extra-hard bristles, (to be more exact, with bristles as hard as nails) and half a dozen bottles of hair tonics, hair restorers, hair growing lotions, and so on and so forth.

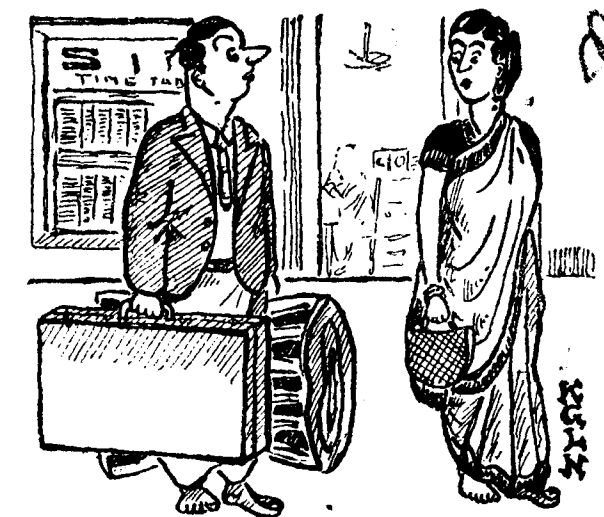
Susila's Cure for My Baldness

The "treatment" began on the very next day and has been going on ever since. It consists of two "sittings" per day, morning and evening, each of one hour's duration, for three months on end.

All that I am called upon to do, is more easily said than suffered. I have to surrender myself—to be more exact, my head only—into her hands, and sit through the whole ordeal with eyes shut, teeth clenched and hands clutching firmly the arms of my chair. Raman, my servant, catches hold of my head, as with a vice, while the actual "operation" is performed by Susila herself, with her deit hands; she pours a little of the hair restorer on to my head and then—my God!—rubs and r-r-rubs and r-r-r-rubs, with all her might and for all she is worth—with the extra-hard-bristled hair brush. Every quarter of an hour, she changes the medicament, but not the *modus operandi* of the application. My head aches all over with an excruciating, unbearable pain. The pain of the morning sitting continues till the evening, and of the evening sitting, all through the night and the small hours of the morning.

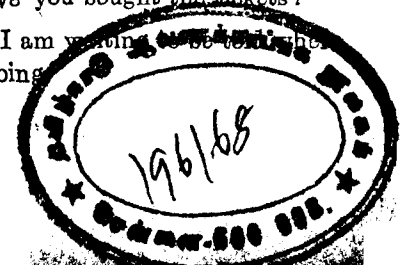
This sort of thing has been continuing for the past two weeks and is still going on. I have reached the end of my tether; I have reached the limit of human endurance. Even the proverbial worm will turn. Will you, Mr. Editor, or any one of your numerous subscribers and patrons, take pity on me and inform me at an early date, whether I can have recourse to any legal redress—the sort they call "interim injunctions," restraining the "aforesaid Mrs. Susiladevi Pillieux, B.A." from inflicting any further injury to my poor head? Or, better still, will the charitably-minded, humanitarian-motivated, Society for the Deliverance of Henpecked Husbands from Domineering Wives take up my case on their file?

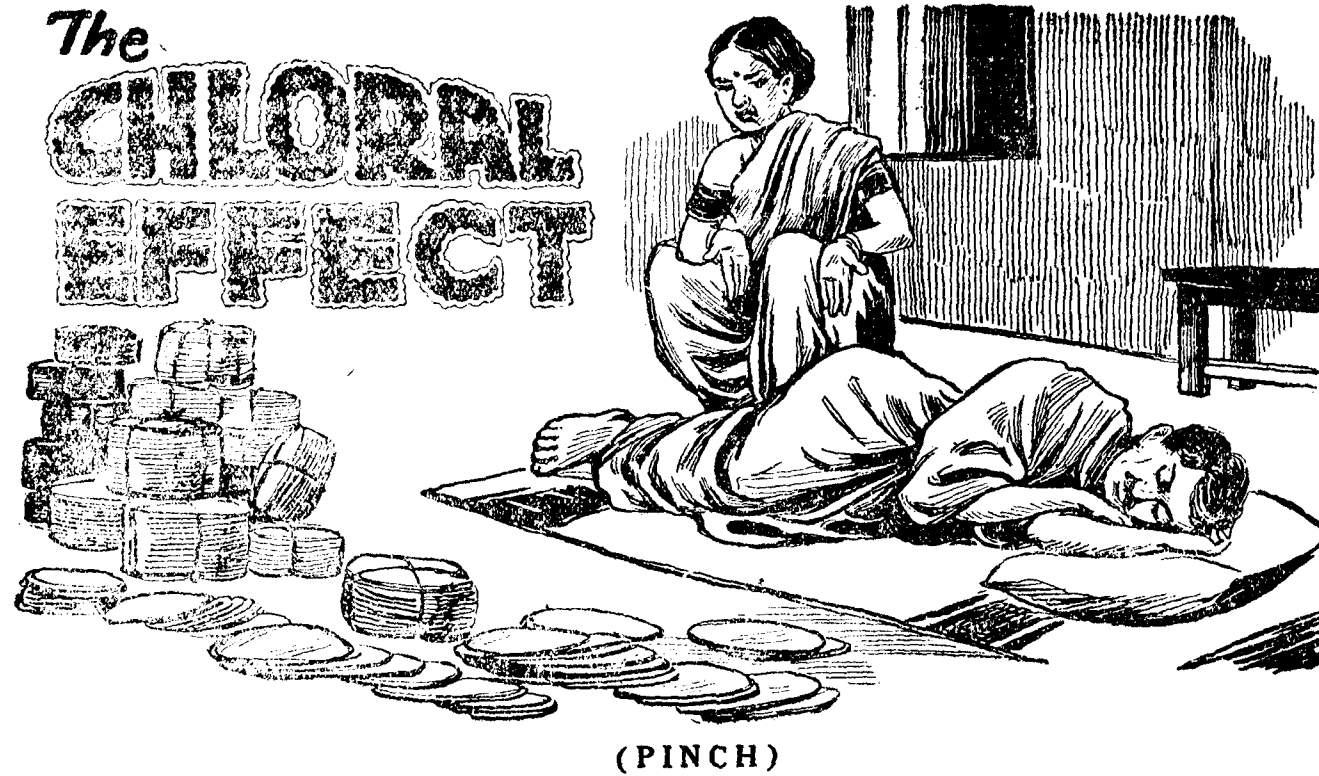
The Last Word.



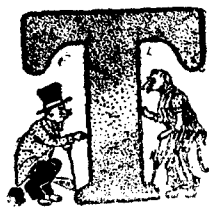
Wife:—"Have you bought the tickets?"

Husband:—"I am going to be bald, and we are going to be bald."





A delightful tale, full of flavour, even as the pinch of Chloral in Veeramma's Pappadams—Editor.



HE Jurisprudence class was as thinly attended as ever. But for the first benchers in *saries* of various hues, the desks were but sparsely peopled. The Professor—God bless the conscientious man!—was going on in a squeaky voice about something no one bothered about. It is true the ladies were goggling in apparent attention. They were even scribbling in their note-books from time to time but of interest they evinced very little in their sleepy eyes, and it would have been cruel to let the pompous Professor look into their 'notes.'

He looked up from the loose-leaf file out of which he was reading *verbatim* facts about some deadly poison or other, took off his *pince-nez*, wiped them on a spotted Bandana, replaced the kerchief, perched the *pince-nez* perilously on his nose, and clearing his throat, began; "Now, I will tell you a story. I am sorry for the blighters of the back-benches. They will miss a really good story. Dr. Siva Rao, take a second roll-call at the end of the class, and send up the names of the absconders."

A curly head looked up from the last row, rubbed its eyes, and re-assumed its pose of restful repose, atop the desk.

"When I was very young....." began the Professor and a shade of attention crept into the slumber-filled eyes of the class through lids, a shade wider apart than a little while ago.

"When I was very young," the Professor continued: "I was a house-surgeon in this very hospital....."

"I bet you were!" came a whisper from the bottom of the class. A pink ribbon cast a quick glance backwards. The Professor paused for a frown and continued.

"In the same hospital, there was a compounder called Subbiah. He was but a probationer and did his mixtures with juvenile accuracy and added his ingredients just as they were in the prescription, for he had not yet learnt to improve on the Doctor's nostrums. More obliging chap than Subbiah were hard to find in these days. You could always get an aspirin from him, and that, you know, is saying a lot for a hard-worked probationer at the mercy of senior-compounders and more senior officers.

But, Subbiah, the budding chemist, like everyone else in the world—with the exception of a few doubtful cases—had a secret vice. He acquired the Chloral habit by which I mean he was in the habit of taking the drug Chloral secretly."

"Very clear!" said the same voice from the depths of the room. The pink ribbon cast a second glance backwards, with a faint giggle; the Professor put up a second frown with a feeble growl. But anon, he continued:

"Now Chloral, as you all know—or ought to know which is quite a different thing—has no affinity to the palate. Your physicians will tell you it is a safe hyp-

notic. Not as regards life however; Chloral can kill as I have cause to know; but it is generally safe, as it is again supposed, it does not form a habit. It needs a will to get it down, often someone else's in addition to your own.

"The question then arises, how did young—what-is-his-name—prefer this noxious stuff to the rest of his pharmacopœia? True, there are worse things than Chloral in and outside the pharmacopœia, especially outside. But that is no reason why Subbiah should choose a bad drug because there are worse, forgetting there are better. Reasons will follow.

One such drug worse than Chloral, outside the druggist's, was Veeramma, the chemist's wife, of sorts. But why worse than Chloral, you may ask. A wordy woman, Veeramma was worse than many things in the world. Why, a wordy wife, I would say, is worse than anything in the world.....or outside.

Now Subbiah hated lectures. It was the morbid dislike for lengthy harangues, he once confided to me, it was this funk of quiet attention that bottled him down to a chemist. But for the inability to concentrate and keep quiet, Subbiah would have expanded into something like you or me: and this story would not have come to be told.

Veeramma, as I remarked before, had a woman's tongue, and a longer one than the usual feminine vocal appendage. And it was also loud—grating like an antiquated motor-car. With such a regrettable gift, God in His infinite wisdom had made Veeramma a talker, almost a lecturer. And she snored in her sleep. To be brief, when she was not shouting at Subbiah, she was snoring very much near him. Now, need you ask why he took to a drug habit? But why Chloral, you ask. Wait and you will hear.

At this point in Subbiah's life, when Veeramma was lecturing at her best and snoring at her worst, there was held at the local medical stores, an auction. Only the night before, Veeramma had commenced her spring sessions with a magnificent piece of oratory on the very ancient theme of 'Late Nights.' Subbiah, with his dread of lengthy pieces of invective oration, failed to see the point of it all. And, therefore, he tried to curse her. But Veeramma of the loud long tongue drowned his oaths in her enthusiastic eloquence—as the above-mentioned antiquated motor-car invariably drowns all small talk, when on the war-path.

This led to Subbiah's purchasing some four pound and odd of Chloral at the auction, cheap as nothing can be, as only nothing is nowadays. He thought the stuff would come in handy, now that he got so little sleep. It did come in very handy, and contrary to all the precepts of *Materia Medica*, he contracted "the Chloral Habit."

From this you would have gathered that Subbiah used to take the stuff regularly every night. You are not wrong. At first, he used to weigh the drug exactly, for which necessary purpose he had taken home, on temporary and unauthorised loan, a hospital balance. This was the period when all his mixtures were correctly dispensed. But with time came experience and sloven-

liness followed in the wake of experience. He sold the scales at the Moore Market, had a drink with the proceeds of the negotiation and bought a packet of beedies with what remained. From then on, he used to gauge the weight of the stuff by the hand, as an experienced man ought to be able to do. His dispensing at the hospital conformed to the usual but highly dangerous standards prevalent and persistent at that premier institution. The depth of tint varied in glaring measure in different specimens of the same mixture. Doubtless, the Chemical Examiner would have been able to adduce less crude evidence of Subbiah's methods. But the Superintendent always keen on C. I. D. work, saw, without being seen, Subbiah's handiwork; he was gauging minimums by the look of it, and grains by eye-sight; two things abhorrent to the accurate soul of the Scotchman; and when he followed up these feats of judgment by the rash and negligent act of using tap water instead of the filtered stuff specially provided for the manufacture of poisoned drinks out of harmless tinctures—it is no wonder that Jacob replaced Subbiah.

"I would have lost sight of the man but for his consort, Veeramma. She watched her lord sleep like a top, the moment he laid down his head; watched him lose all interest in her loud appeals and louder threats, and worse than all, she watched him drop some whitish stuff on the palm of his hand each evening and swallow it....."

With the loss of her husband's job, Veeramma grew louder in her complaints and a little more industrious. She was a good one in her own way, as who is not and started making Pappadams for sale.

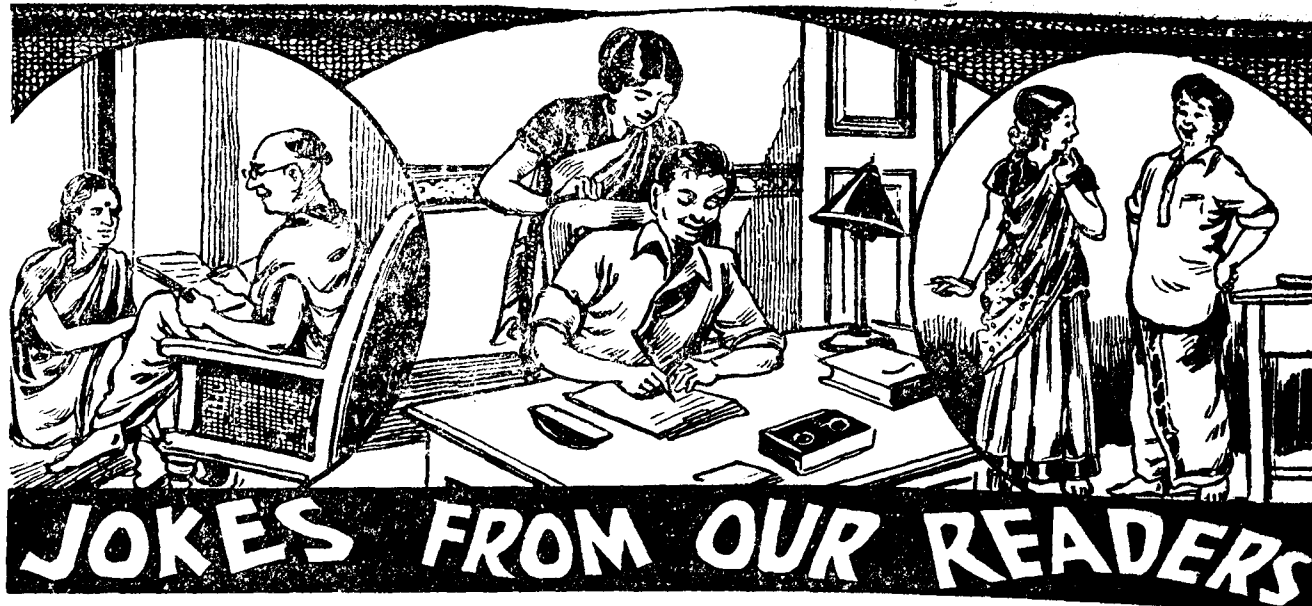
Now, Pappadam making is a hard job as Veeramma's elbows knew and there were the meals to cook, the children to bathe, the clothes to wash etc., etc., (you could have heard Veeramma on the subject almost any-day at the water pump). She worked hard, but grew weak, her appetite proved treacherous, and she was tormented by unbearable head-aches at eventide. If Pappadams are hard to make, Veeramma found out very soon they are harder to sell. Men from Malabar—land of enterprising youths that crowd our coffee hotels and betel bazaars—had made the local makes crouch in corners in crumbling heaps and Veeramma's production suffered along with the rest.

But came the day when they began to sell as Pappadams ought to sell, if at all they were meant to enrich their producer. There was a regular run on Veeramma's Pappadams. They got crushed before you could get out of the waiting crowd!

Curious as to the cause of her sudden success, Veeramma ate a few of her own Pappadams—a thing she had never done before. They did taste nice and believe me, they were crisp. That night she slept like a tired child. She had no aches or ails and not a bit of that 'morning-after-the-night-before-sort-of-feeling.'

That night Subbiah missed his nightly lecture. In pleasurable curiosity, he remarked to his wife that she slept well.

[Continued on Page 618 bottom]



Judge (addressing the accused):—"Before closing the trial, I wish to know your motive in bringing about the death of the deceased by drowning him."

The Criminal:—"It is plain, your honour. His love for my girl was very warm. In order to cool it down, I threw him into the water. He did not know how to swim. That is *not* my fault!"

—M. K. Srinivasan, Bangalore.

He:—"Have you heard of the release of Srimathi Saraswathi Bai?"

Friend:—"What! was she ever jailed in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement?"

He:—"I speak of the recent release of her popular songs in Odeon Gramophone records! They are splendid."

—S. Gopal, Mylapore.

The Schoolmaster was examining the class in Scripture.

"Now boys," he said, "supposing I saw a man beating a donkey, and stopped him, what virtue would my action show?"

"Brotherly love, sir" replied a bright youngster.

—Daniel Joseph, Bombay.

A:—"Can you lend a—?"

B:—"Sorry, I've lent you—"

A:—"But I want to borrow a—"

B:—"Yes, yes. You've borrowed—"

A:—"But now I want—"

B:—"No, I can't any more—"

A:—"Alright, I wanted to borrow a pen with the object of writing a cheque in your favour for all the money I owe you; but as you do not seem to be in a hurry—"

B:—"Old chap! here's my p—"

A:—"Perhaps, you can have it another time!"

—E. Hobday, Egnore.

Mother:—"What do you mean by eating all the cakes?"

Kittu:—"You told me to put them in a place where the mice wouldn't touch them!"

—V. S. Narayan, The Mount.

Mendicant:—"I am really an author. I once wrote a book called 'One hundred ways to earn money.'"

Gentleman:—"Then, why are you begging?"

Mendicant:—"This is one of the hundred ways." —K. Thyagarajan, Tiruvavur.

Merchant:—"Look! There goes the millionaire, who made all his money out of iron. He got a title."

Lawyer:—"H'm, I know a man who made a few anna pieces out of lead. He got 3 years."

—P. K. Rajagopal, Thyagarayanagar.

A firm advertised for a lady-typist, and the next morning hundreds of applicants arrived. So numerous were they that the Manager told the office-boy not to admit any more. Shortly after this, an aggressive lady turned up, and, pushing her way, asked to see the Manager. By this time, the office-boy had turned a deaf ear to all protestations and had but one answer.

"Not to-day, madam," he said.
"But I'm his wife," said the lady.
"Not to-day, madam," was the inexorable reply." —M. Subramanian, Madras.

Send only original jokes. We pay Rs. 3/- for the best original joke received from our readers.

This fortnight, the prize for the best joke is awarded to—

S. NARASIMHAM, Mylapore.

Magistrate:—"Mr. Prosecuting Inspector, what is the charge against this accused?"

P. Inspector:—"Bi-Bigotry, Your Honor. He has got three wives."

Magistrate:—"Three wives! Why, Inspector, you are not well up with the law. It is not bigotry. It is trigonometry." —S. Narasimham, Mylapore.

Father:—"What caused your failure in Biography in the B. A. Examination on all the three occasions, in spite of your strenuous efforts?"

Son:—"It is the law of heredity, father." —T. S. Rajan, Mambalam.

Teacher:—"You are an idiot! You have been in this class for nearly a year and I have been racking my brains with you all these days. And yet you haven't picked up a tenth of my knowledge!"

Pupil:—"But, sir, you have been in the same class for over twenty years." —S. Nanjundiah, Dowlatabad.

A harassed but self-important Despatching clerk in a Government office, annoyed at the illegible scribbling on a despatch book, asked the messenger-boy: "Which ass has written in this book?" The nonchalant imp answered: "One of your colleagues in our office, sir."

—G. K. Subramaniam, Bombay.

"You drink wine as though it were water!"
"No, not at all. I cannot drink so much water."

—R. A. Padmanabhan, Pollachi.

Servant:—"The Marwarli called this morning, sir."

Master:—"And you told him I'd just left for Delhi?"

Servant:—"Yes, sir, and that you wouldn't be back till late in the evening."

—N. Ramanathan, Saidapet.



The Dilapidated Shrine

(ETTIENNE)

[Gods, simian or otherwise, have also their utilitarian aspects and charlatans are not slow to capitalise even these Gods. But the Biter is Bit in this short story—Editor.]



HERE is a decaying little shrine in the cluster of stark mango trees, that lie a little way off from the main road on the ninety-ninth mile between the town of Singampettah and the shandy centre of Trikutam, dedicated to the Monkey-God that ran the errand of Rama in the days of legend. The crumbling bricks that time had dismantled from over the head of the mighty Hanuman rolling every day one by one into the quagmire that lies by its side told a different tale forty years ago, when the incidents of this tale took place.

The shrine was then a pretty square block of white chunam. The well-oiled image of the Monkey-God gleamed in the flickering light of the votive lamp and burst into a blaze of shining glory with its twelve *namams* of milk white and crimson red pastilles, whenever passing strangers performed a *harathi* of holy camphor. The quagmire that is now, was then a clear sheet of crystal water fringed with ever-green mango trees whose leafy branches fanned a cool breeze on the hottest day. The grove of Hanuman—as it was then popularly called—was a perfect oasis in that district of arid waste and in those days of bullock-bandy travel, it was a haven to way-farers.

Travellers came to rest in the holy grove and unpacked their provision bags on the banks of the Hanuman pond, while their bullocks had their fill of water and browsed under the shady mango trees. None could forget the presiding deity whose bounty gave them the only shelter in that sunbaked flat waste and the devotees' cocoanuts and camphor daily flowed in an unbroken train before the godly presence. Even the mighty Hanuman could not long live in peace.

There came into the grove of Hanuman a lean, lanky priest with little sunken eyes, a long tapering nose and a bony jaw—no one knew from where? But he soon made the shrine his own and the devotees too recognised him as the arch-priest of the Monkey-God. He claimed and had his share of the votive offerings that included some coins too, now that there was a priest to grab them. The priest soon grew ambitious and would not be content with the little coins that gave him just enough to live upon. He hit on a stratagem to fleece the visitors to the shrine and amass a fortune.

It was a hot day in June. The noon sun beat mercilessly on the blighted waste while a pair of white bullocks wearily dragged a fully laden bandy along the white ribbon of the main road towards Singampettah. There was a haze in the air and man and beast sought the friendly shade of house or tree. But there was none on the sun-burnt waste except mighty Hanuman's lonely grove. The beasts strained their necks and broke into a trot to reach the hospitable shades of the grove. The bandy came to a halt under the trees. The inmates of the cart, a wealthy Chettiar, his wife and three daughters alighted and after a dip in the pond and a change of clothing wended their way towards the shrine. At the doorway sat cross-legged the lanky priest of Lanka's destroyer. He hummed a holy chant which grew loud and shrill as the party approached.

As the chant neared its climax, the priest sprang up and shrieked, "How dare you enter my presence with an impure heart and an impure body? Away-Away. Thou wretch—bow and ask for forgiveness. Or else....." and he stamped his foot and roared.

"Pardon, My Lord!" wailed the Chetty, trembling like an aspen leaf, while his wife and daughter bent low

before the idol and sobbed in hysterics, "O Lord! Thou banisher of the sorrow of Sita, bring not sorrow on us—Forgive him. Oh Lord! He knows not what he does....."

"Pardon indeed—by the mighty *Kothanda*, the bow of Rama, if he does not deliver unto the hands of my priest, ere he departs, a hundred mohurs to sanctify my desecrated shrine—he shall not leave the grove of Hanuman alive....." The lanky priest kicked the ground, whirled into a dance, sagged and collapsed into a crumpled heap on the ground.

The Chetty stood aghast for some minutes. With trembling hand, he opened his purse and counted out a hundred shining pieces. He placed them on the doorstep of the shrine and beat a hasty retreat with his wife and daughters towards the highway, followed by the cart.

As the sound of the wheels of the Chetty's cart died away on the high-way, the priest, who lay in a crumpled heap, suddenly jumped up and grabbed the shining pieces of gold. "Ha!" he chuckled as the precious pieces gleamed in his hands "the superstitious idiots—so easily taken in—my precious eighteenth hoax—I have made a nine hundred and forty—some sixty mohurs more—off I go from this wretched hole—." There was yet another chuckle in his throat. Poor man, he little knew that it was his last triumph!

A fortnight elapsed since the Chetty paid dearly for his superstitious stupidity and no big fish had come the way of the priest to give him a sixty and play out his last hoax. He was having a lean time of it at the shrine. A faint rumbling on the highroad made him look up from his reverie that day and he saw a white cloud of dust approaching. He ran towards the porch of the shrine and brought out a long narrow basket of plaited cocoanut leaves and began a drolling chant in the intervals of which he laid a flower or two from the basket at the foot of the idol. There was an interruption to his chant and a shadow fell, darkening the porch. The priest turned and faced a sturdy young man of twenty and six with a driving whip in hand. At the sight of him, the priest frowned and cried out—"You young idiot! How dare you enter Hanuman's presence direct from a house of ill-fame—Away!—Thou wretch—Get thee gone and leave sixty mohurs to clean thy defilement of holy Hanuman's shrine—Do it or....." and the priest leapt up and roared.

Rangan, the son of a proud race of mighty zamindars of Trikutam, whose generations of high living and inefficient stewardship had reduced their estate to the verge of bankruptcy, was taken aback at this accusation. The heir to such an inheritance, he had all the high spirits of his race but none of their vices. He had directed all his abundant energy in raising breeding bulls and racing bullocks, and it had enabled him to clear more than half the encumbrances on his patrimony. He was returning that day from a visit to one of his dunning creditors, a wealthy Chetty of Singampettah, who was no other than the one who had fallen a ready victim to the guiles of the priest. The Gods never lie, nor did they worship Mammon. There was

something wrong... so ran his thoughts at the accusation of the priest and his quick intellect suggested a ready remedy to extricate him from the position.

He opened his eyes wide. His head went up and down like a swing, and his body swayed sideways like a pendulum. Suddenly his hand with the whip went up—"How dare you try your hoax on me—know you not your friend and master—how dare you disobey Rama of Raghu's race, son of mighty Dasaratha...Mm. Mm." His eyes burnt fire and his body quivered. Crack, crack went the whip and landed again and again on the head and shoulders of the priest, gathering greater velocity with every new stroke.

"Save me—Oh Save me—Master—I knew thee not—I will leave the place—Never will I come back—" wailed the priest and broke away towards the highway. He ran and ran till he melted on the horizon. Rangan stood watching the priest disappear and had a hearty laugh at the success of his plan.

Little did the poor priest dream that he would meet his master, nor that his deity too had its master. Never did it occur to him that he would be caught at his own game and that the tables would be turned on after the incident nor explain the tell-tale marks on his back and he carried himself off to the metropolis where he eked out a miserable existence.

Rangan turned back and made a close scrutiny of the shrine and its surroundings. In a corner just behind the image of the God, he espied a small earthen-ware pot. He pulled it out and found nine hundred and sixty mohurs, which he quickly annexed to replenish his lean purse and departed.

Future travellers found no priest ministering to the mighty Monkey-God, wondered why and passed on. Years rolled on and automobiles invaded the district and obliterated the distance between Trikutam and Singampettah and none found it necessary to rest in the grove of Hanuman, as in the days of old. They whirled past in their fast moving vehicles, casting but casual glances towards the once famous shrine. The Rain-God too forgot to shower his usual blessings on the son of his friend, the wind God and Hanuman's pond soon became a quagmire. The trees withered and the shrine fell into neglect and began to crumble. The Monkey-God's sway was over.

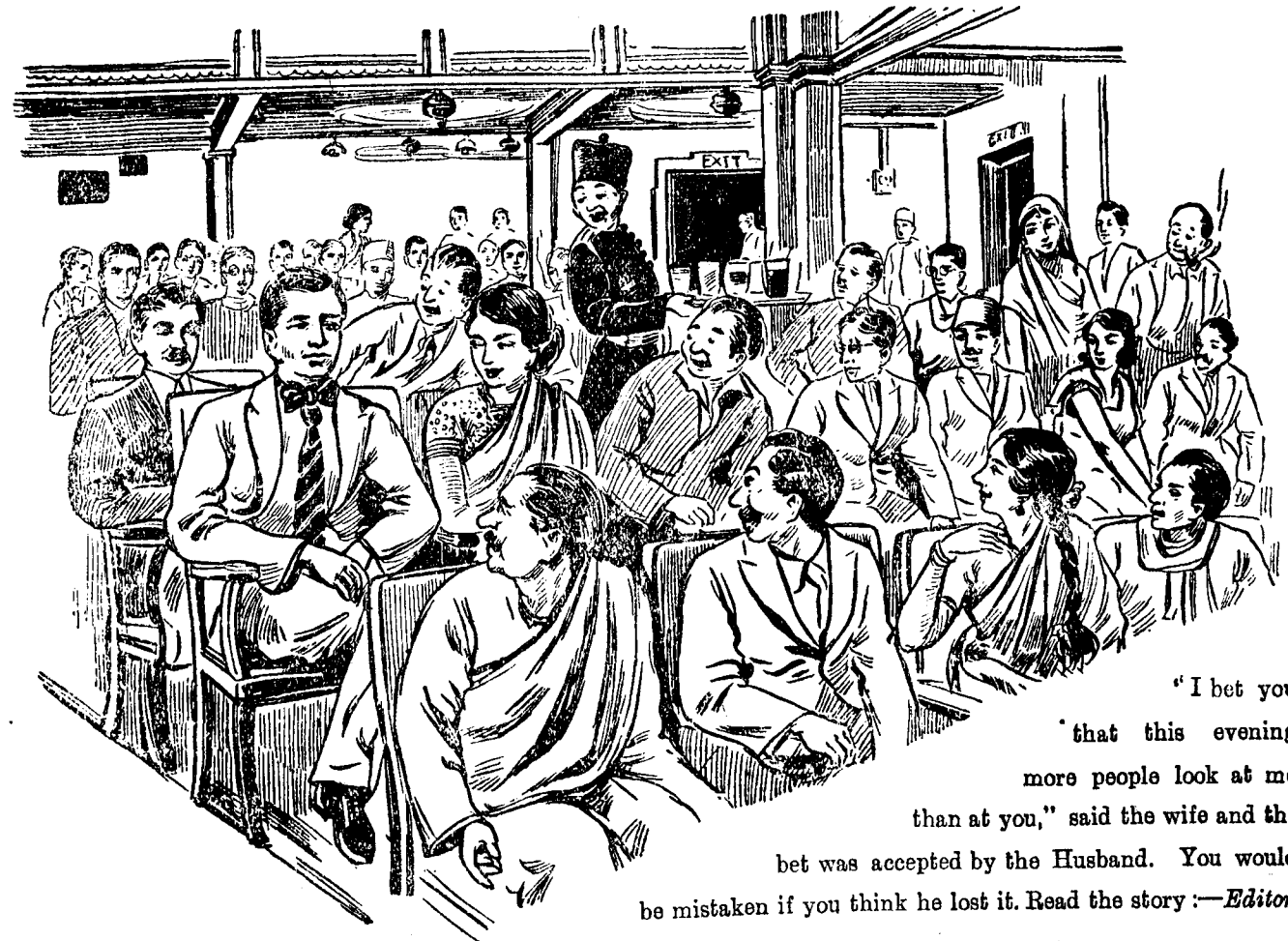
Two Hebrew money-lenders went into partnership, and one clause of the agreement read: "In the event of failure, the profits are to be divided equally."

"If I gave you a hundred pounds, my poy," said Mr. Eistein to his son, "vot would you do vit it?" "Count it," said the son.

A Jewish boy said that he didn't want to go to heaven as his father had told him that all the business

THE BET

(T. L. Edwin)



"I bet you that this evening more people look at me than at you," said the wife and the bet was accepted by the Husband. You would be mistaken if you think he lost it. Read the story:—Editor.



COULDN'T help it. I turned furiously on my wife and burst into a volley of bad language. "Oh, hang it," I cried. "Bother you."

"What's the matter now?" demanded my better-half, not a bit alarmed at my frenzy, for, with a woman's quick wit, she had learnt that words are merely words and that I was perfectly harmless.

"Your bally face powder. Look! it's all over my new tie! It is a bit thick that a man can't leave a black tie about without having a beastly lot of scented flour spilt all over it."

"Give it a shake," suggested my wife calmly. "I'll—I'll give you a shake," I snapped. And at that moment I am sure I almost meant it, although I have not struck a woman, except my sister, and that too for having spilt a lot of red ink on my leather-bound stamp album, and for putting the blame on my pet squirrel.

"I can't understand you, women," I went on. "Why can't you accept the fact that you're not ornamental? It is nothing to be ashamed of. Nature just made you that way." I now warmed to the topic and

waxed eloquent. "Look at the peacock and the peahen. Instead of powdering her nose, she meekly submits to nature, and lets the male bird strut about. It is much better to be tidy than beautiful. But no, you fiddle around with powder, paint, eye-black, and a lot of muck."

"I suppose, you think, you're the beautiful sex," demanded my wife with a smile of sarcasm.

"There is no supposition about it. You only have to look at us. We, men, shave once a day and have our hair cut once a month, and there we are, a joy to the eye."

My wife paused in the middle of combing her luxuriant tresses and regarded me coldly.

"As an ornament in the house," she remarked, "you come under the same category as mud pots and sauce-pans. If I were a man, I should simply hate to look myself in the face in a mirror!"

"If you were a man," I retorted, "you would find yourself the observed of all observers."

"I bet you," said my wife.

"You bet me what?" I enquired.

"I bet you that this evening more people look at me than at you. Bet you a fiver."

"M'm," I said thoughtfully. This was going to be a serious affair. Usually my wife bets me a million rupees; stakes I do not mind, for they mean nothing. But five rupees!

"Coward!" she said. "You are frightened, for I'm on a dead cert."

"Nothing of the sort. I'm only wondering how on earth we are going to record the number of looks we get."

"Easily enough. Every time a man looks at me, I'll give you a slight nudge, and every time a girl looks at you, you give me one. That's clear and fair, ain't it?"

"Yes," I admitted, "but you have got to play fair. No winking and ogling allowed."

At this, my wife laughed good-naturedly, and I hastily donned a bow-tie, and taking my wife, walked out towards Doveton College. We had planned to go to the Wellington Talkies, to see the much-advertised film, "Arrowsmith." My wife was dressed in a chocolate and black coloured Karachi saree, and looked so charming and sweet that I knew my bet would fail. Meanwhile, a stout Mussalman of fifty years sauntered up to us.

"Well, look here pet," I said, "you shouldn't look at him and encourage him."

"No. I'll behave quite properly, and you must too."

"Naturally, I'm a man, and I always do," I snapped.

The Mussalman lighted a beedi, and imperiously looked at my wife. At this she gave me such a nudge that I nearly overbalanced myself. A few seconds elapsed and the Mussalman glanced at my wife again. I received a second nudge.

"Look here, you can't nudge twice for one man," I exclaimed angrily.

"Why not?" demanded my wife with equal heat.

Luckily, a bus came up, and in the scramble seats, the conversation was forgotten. As it was on the way to the theatre, neither of us attracted attention but the occupants of the bus, numbered fourteen, gave my wife a look each, and the total ran to sixteen. I had half a mind to acknowledge defeat but with a true sportsman's spirit, I decided to grin and bear defeat to the last.

We arrived at the theatre just in time, and neither of us scored. But in the interval, to my astonishment, great Scott! how I scored! I almost got a in the elbow, by the frequent nudges I had to give. A wife's total was completely eclipsed.

In fact, she grew quite cross. There were three times as many men as girls in the theatre, so she ought to have scored heavily. But no, hardly glanced at her. And those who did only smiled at pityingly; while I received a rapt stare.

"Are you satisfied?" I murmured with a women?"

"Ye-es," she assented doubtfully, and looked at me. And then she laughed. "You goat," she pered, "you have forgotten to remove your tie, and are wearing both tie and bow!"

Beads of perspiration gathered round my forehead. Good Lord! What a sight I must have been! I remembered how in the theatre two Anglo-Indians actually laughed at me!

But I made my wife pay. It was her fault way. If she had'n't gone and spilt that beastly flour all over my tie, I shouldn't have gone and the bow and forgotten to remove my tie!



Mother:—Why are you angry with the servant girl? Don't you like her?
Boy:—I hate her. I should like to pinch her cheeks like father does.

THE GOLD THAT WAS NOT THERE



REALLY must tell you my brush story. I just have to tell it ever so often. You know how it is when you know a good story. If you have heard it before, you can skip this.

Not far from here there is a large and very handsome brick building—obviously an Institution of some sort. One day some body passing by noticed a man on a ladder against the wall of the building, apparently painting the wall—but, although he was brushing up and down, he had no paint. So he asked: "What are you doing there?" The "painter" answered: "Can't you see, I'm painting the wall?" "But you have no paint," said the passerby. "I know that," said the painter, "they won't give me any paint, but what does that matter? Any fool can paint with paint, but I can paint without any."

The passer-by then took a look at the building, and it dawned upon him of what sort of Institution the painter was an inmate. Out of curiosity he had further conversation with the "painter," and they got on very friendly terms. Eventually, the "painter" said, "you seem an honest fellow—I would like to tell you why I am here. I am not really crazy. Some years ago, I made a lot of money; I was worth over £100,000. But I had some heirs who wanted my money, so in order to get it, they plotted together and had me put in here. But they never got the money. I was too smart for them. I converted it all into gold and buried it in a box in a

certain place which nobody knows but myself—over £100,000 in gold sovereigns. Some day, when I know you well enough, I may tell you where it is."

The passer-by decided to cultivate the acquaintance of the inmate of the Institution, whom he found each morning at the same spot, painting with his dry brush. After about a week, the painter said; "I think I can trust you now. If I tell where the money is, will you promise me faithfully to give me half, and get me out of this Institution?" Naturally, he promised, and was told that the box with the money was buried in a certain field, the locality of which was carefully given. In the N. W. corner of this field, he was told, there was a large chestnut tree. The gold was buried 6 feet deep, about 10 to 15 feet away from the tree, but in what direction he could not remember. He said it would be necessary to dig a trench 5 feet wide 6 feet deep all round the tree. Then he was bound to find it.

The friend went away, and came back about a week later. The "painter" was still brushing the wall with his dry brush. "Hallo," he said, "how did you get on? Did you find the gold?" "No," said the other. "Did you dig as I told you?" "Sure." "Five feet wide and 6 feet deep." "That's right." "All round the tree?" "Yes, all round." "And you found nothing." "Nothing at all," said the friend, "what shall I do now?" "Go and get a brush and come and help me," said the inmate.

—From *The Bare Aspect*.

DEDI the DANCER



— A GREAT —
— NEW SERIAL —
STORY
— BY 'DEISVI' —
AUTHOR OF
BALA
THE BAD WOMAN



— Read this serial which will begin in the next issue of —
THE MERRY MAGAZINE



IN THE GRIP OF THE DENTIST

(With apologies to "Jee")

K. GURUMURTHY.

Persons suffering from physical pain generally elicit sympathy and very often gratuitous advice. This state of affairs would seem to prevail even in the Land of Nods. At least, such is the impression which Mr. Gurumurthy would seek to convey.—*Editor.*

SOME are born with tooth-trouble, some acquire it and some have it thrust upon them. I was born to tooth trouble. What? Oh! I could tax my memory and tell you when it just started, but then may I ask you seriously, does it matter? And moreover tooth-trouble is tooth-trouble, no matter what its history might have been.

Well, as I was saying when you interrupted me and wanted to know when and why I had my first tooth-ache, I was having tooth-trouble of the most acute description. And from the way I go about massaging my right cheek and crying 'ah!.....' every minute or so, you could easily see that I suffered much.

Exhibition of pain in public does not go without consequences and I got unsolicited and unlimited tips from my friends and well-wishers.

"Have you tried Ucalol?" one would ask. "I had tooth-ache once and Ucalol stopped it in exactly five minutes. It banished once for all, all kinds of aches and pains including tooth-ache, ear-ache, head-ache, stomach ache....."

Later on, another suggested, "Why not try Toothol? An old aunt of mine used it once on the only tooth she ever had and it stopped the ache like magic."

There were tips likewise about, Dentine, Pyrrine, Kilpain, Mendol, Painpo, and a dozen others, all guaran-

teed to cure all sorts of aches within twenty-four hours and backed by money-back guarantees.

I tried them all, one after another, and the following is a summary of my recorded experiments:

Ucalol. Pain as usual. Got up at mid-night and tried to pull out the missing tooth.

Dentine. Pain became more acute. Howled at mid-night and brought out angry neighbours.

Pyrrine. Acted more or less like a two-inch nail being driven in with a hammer inside the gum-wall.

Painpo. Oh! Lord!!

Soon I entered into a new phase of my sufferings and despair.

Even at this stage, suggestions were not wanting and I suffered them all, till they got on my nerves and I started crying out, "Spare me, my gentle friends!"

Then, one night I, as it were, 'saw light.' That is to say, I got inspiration, illumination or intuition, call it any name you please. I jumped up from my bed in the midst of a dream in which I felt a Being, with a circle of something around his head, tug at my tooth and say, "Go thou to the Dentist, my son."

"The Dentist?"

"Yes, the Dentist."

"I will hire me a car," I said.

".....and to the dentist go."

In The Grip of The Dentist

Next morning, in the light of prospective relief still radiating in spite of excessive pain, I hired a car and was about to go to the Dentist; but enthusiasm just then dropped by a few degrees. I was going alone.

It was then that my friend Ullat arrived on the scene. Ullat is not really as bad as his poetry. Though of a very reserved nature, he has a great liking for me. From giving proxy attendance at College to attending a funeral, he could be expected to stand-by.

"The light upon thy brow!" He queried, "Has Dentine in the bowl of pains flung the stone that puts the pain to flight?"

"I am going to the Dentist. Come with me," I said in prose. "I have need of thee." And I followed him.

We soon stopped at the front of a metal sign-board.

"Electro Therapeutic Dental Surgery"

The tooth doctor received us at the door of his inferno. He had a keen business eye. He collared Ullat-figuratively—at once.

I was about to remonstrate and explain; but it was nothing more than a hissing sound somewhat like the noise, I suppose, a cobra makes when it is excited.

The Dentist leaped a clean two feet into the air and came down with a thud upsetting two chairs and a teapoy. Then being assured there was no reptile about, he turned safely on me with a new light in his eyes.

"So you are having tooth ache? What!" He said, and then getting hold of my poor jaw he prized the

mouth open much as a farmer examining a cow he is about to buy. "Your tolar mouth—I mean the molar tooth is wrong. You are suffering from pyotocat (sio), lartar, corrosion, erosion, and the entire row of teeth should be removed."

While the examination was going on I was making gurgling noises like those of a dumb animal in the slaughter-house. And Ullat was almost funeral in his expression. He realised where he had brought me and that my succour lay only on him.

"My friend" he said, hitting on a plan of rescue. "is young; parents living. What a shock it would be! His teeth are his greatest asset. He would like to consult and perhaps we could come round tomorrow."

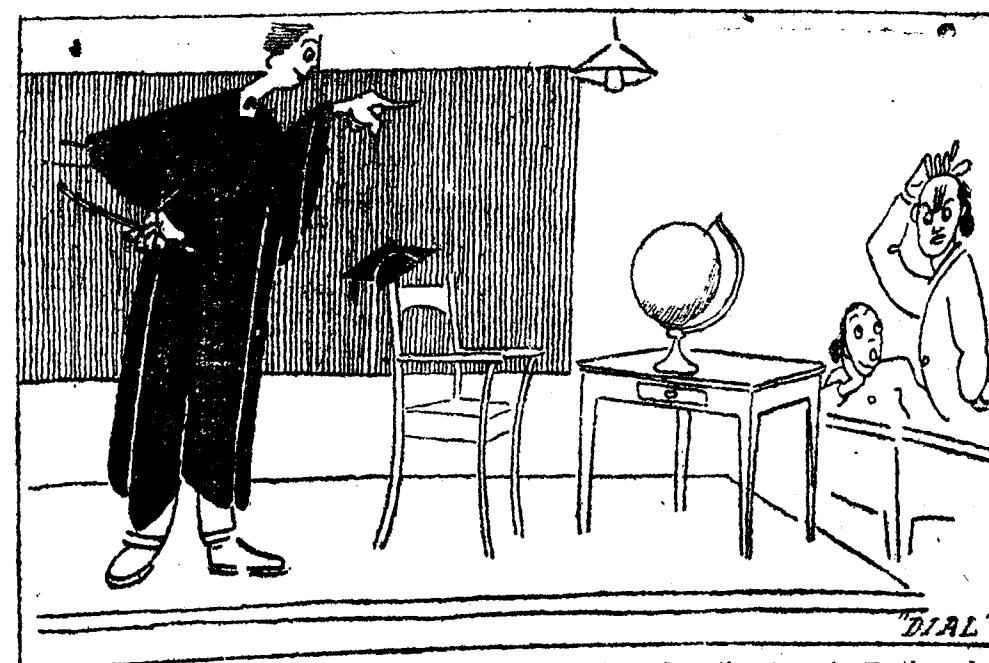
"Yes, tomorrow," I added pleadingly, "what difference does it make whether it is today or tomorrow." In an instant the doctor's expression changed to one of extreme vindictiveness, mingled with inexorable cupidity. "Today or never" he roared. Then getting hold of a pair of tongs he pushed me into a chair and before I could utter a vowel, commenced pulling out my front teeth one by one.

The pain was acute. I clutched at the arms of the chair and aimed a wild kick at the dentist's abdomen. And where—oh! where was Ullat?

I opened my eyes.

The arms of the chair became soft and a heap of blankets were thrown violently on the floor while Ullat was at the doorway already excited on my being late by 15 minutes for the U. T. C. Parade.

Raking up an Old Controversy



Lecturer:—"Now then, suppose the light represented the Sun, the globe the Earth, and ah yes, my hat represented Mars....."

Pupil:—"Sir, is Mars inhabited?"



EXAMS in MARS

A Naturalistic Behaviouristic Study

(KLIM R. SAMS)

[Klim R. Sams' would have us believe that Mars is not only inhabited but that the system of education obtaining there is almost on a par with the one we are familiar with on mundane Earth. Who is not familiar with, "offerings to Gods, presents to examiners' wives, tips to peons, arrayed in vain against the perversity of examiners" or of "tabulation clerks persuaded for considerations, human or monetary, to commit convenient slips in the copying of marks." There is good cream in Klim: reverse it and see!—Editor.]



IN this important thesis (accepted for the D. Phil. degree of the Central Pagoda of Higher Knowledge of Mars) I have evaluated, on a naturalistic and behaviouristic basis, the part exams play in the conduct of higher education in Mars. The bonafide secret proceedings occasionally disclosed in the following pages need not shock the readers, for they did not shock the Pagoda's Supreme Council, nor even the Dictator. I am obliged to many friends, who took a fervent interest in the progress of my enquiry, for their still unfailing sympathy.

I. Treating Exams (shortened and vulgarised form of 'examinations') morphologically, I am inclined to group them as under 'academic', 'social' and 'political'. To staff the 'services' in Mars we need specialised tests; to staff the puppet democratic assembly at the capital, we need queer tests which go by the name of 'elections'; these be 'political' hues taken by exams. Again, brides and bride-grooms are required everyday, and medical and intelligence tests precede the choices: we need cooks, charwomen, prostitutes, priests, buffoons and the like, and the All Highest State of Mars holds tests for them all, to keep the body politic clean and trim; these are among the 'social' types of exams. In the present treatise, these will not be considered. (A future occasion may enable us to undertake the task, if sufficient encouragement is forthcoming for this one. Some of the chapters only are referred to here.)

II. Academic exams are the exams *par excellence*. A sub-classification will be: Lower, Middle, Higher. In them all, the province of the exams is equally the

perfectly futile. The Lovers study odd facts about the domestic transfigurations of reptile life; the Middles cram notes on the possibility of colonising the Earth and its melancholy satellite, the Moon; and the Highers cogitate on the eternal problems of life, viz. are men and women descended from a common stock? which is nobler, the ass or the kangaroo? what are the reasons for preferring adjectives to adverbs in sentence compositions? or is man the arithmetic, geometric or harmonic mean between the beast and the Deity? I must now further limit the scope of my thesis to the repercussions made by exams on Highers alone.

VI. The Maritan (adjective for Mars) student is an economical individual. He knows that the degrees he eventually gets by passing the various exams are a passport to gentlemanly rambling and cultured indolence. He would fain get the degrees, therefore. But why study dead authors and meaningless problems? Why follow the silly actions of A, B and C who turn up every moment to "do a piece of work" or "enter into a partnership" or "take to running like Derby horses"? Why discuss the infinite potentialities for mischief which gravitation and magnetism and electricity have accumulated during the long centuries of their life? In short, why take these 'higher' studies seriously? Pass the exams they must: and that they will anyhow.

X. Mr. Bul-bul-thein, undergraduate in Metabiology, when interviewed by me, gave evidence as follows: "It is a picturesque struggle between the examinees, and examiners, in which the cards are heavily weighed against the former. They work, they pay, and they suffer,—whether they pass or fail. My ethico-religious

blood boils to think that examiners are paid to plough the students as they think fit. Often, indeed, all the resources, and hooks and crooks, of the examinees—industrious study, pre-and-post exam preparation, offerings to Gods, presents to examiners' wives, tips to peons—are arrayed in vain against the perversity of the examiners. It is my unshakable view, Mr. Klim Sams, that the examinees deserve to be pitied."

XI. As a result of seven hours' intent and nerve-straining study of huge statistics, I have come to the conclusion that of the examinees for degree exams (a) about 176 per cent only patiently plod through their

text-books, class-notes, cribs, annotations, and leave the result to Providence and the examiners; (b) the rest adopt far subtler strategies. Some fasten upon probable questions after scrupulous collating of past question-papers and applying the intricate principles of elimination to questions already asked. Others get to know the examiners of diverse categories, please them, their parents and wives, their mistresses and their ugly children, and hope that their generosity will make things O. K. Instead of investing money on books and notes and candles, the cunning fellows invest good silver on peppermints, faps, petticoats, buttons, and centrifugal bumble-buppy dolls. Still others approach

the tabulation clerks of the Central Pagoda of Higher Knowledge and persuade those needy souls for a consideration, human or monetary, to commit convenient slips in the copying of marks.

XX. Let me revert to naturalistic narration. Ondhui i-pitt, candidate for the B. P. (Bachelor of Poultry) exam, stands nervous before the counter with his forty silverreins, his fees for the exam. Auspicious is the moment; astrologically it is influence-proof of vicious Earth, demented Moon, and giddy Venus. The clerk is about to write the receipt, and anon Ondhui-i-pitt murmurs: "Sarvaloka saranya! Thwayi pravrittas mama: kim prayasath?" (O God of all the worlds! Should you work on my behalf, need I trouble myself at all?) The thing is over. He heaves a sigh. But he ought not to idle away his time. Barely three lunar circumlocutions before the exam! He must read and chew and digest and dissolve and crystallize. Roaries and Singies should wait: so should his hetero-sexual experiments. That is decided.

XXIX. Excitement! Bustle! Two days before the exam! The entry-tickets are to be obtained from the Chief Executant of the C. P. H. K. Again Ondhui-i-pitt is a bundle of nerves, his heart is in pathetic trepidation, he could not speak two words coherently. There is the white paper before him, his neat name in gilt letters, and his number 123. The first three natural numbers! What may be its sinister significance? One, two, three; let-me-see! His eyes shine in illumination. His lips quiver in joy. The paper waves in the luxury of impending happiness. Surely 1, 2, 3, means that he either takes a first class or a second or a third! Anyhow, failure is an admitted impossibility. "Akhilandakodi Brahmandanayaka!" hums the boy and runs, rather than walks, back homeward.

Literally True



Diner:—"What kind of meat is this, waiter?"

Waiter:—"Spring lamb, Sir."

Diner:—"I thought so, I've been chewing one of those springs for an hour."

kingdom in the far off planet, Earth. This goes on day after day: the Supts. don't care a mango about it. But the other examinees know, and knowing they smile, and smiling they envy. Trimghshein and Termafatel are in collusion: no doubt at all: look at Trimghshein's bulging pockets, packed with "crammable" jottings! Nefarious and infamous! But it goes on, and Trimghshein's sensation in his stomach repeats with lucky and plucky regularity.

XL. Miss Similiniyini is appearing for the V. C. H. (Virgin in Cookery and Hysteria) exam. She is a jolly nice girl, and amuses (and embarrasses) her class-mates with her caprices. Every five minutes she screams to the Head Supt. in a piping extraordinary voice: "Tim please! or "Fan please" or "Won't you please stop the wretched, disturbing fan?" or "blotter—would you mind?" or "Just one more additional answer book!" A less frequent intervals, she calls the Supt. and tells him suavely: "Fact is, I'm thirsty,—like schoolmaster

Won't you ask somebody to get me a strong cup of Koffee, or at least Dee? Please, please!" Her smile pulverises the masculine Supt; he gallantly refuses to accept the silversin piece she gives, and runs out of the hall to procure Koffee for the ailing girl. The latter, nimble like a rabbit, whispers to this neighbour and that, dives into her pockets, refers to one or two bits of paper, and re-assumes the poise of Heaven when the Supt returns, cooing ridiculously: "Here's Goffee, good Goffee, let me assure you!"

XLIII. The B.O. (Bachelor of Origins) exam: viva-voce Board is sitting: No. 77 is ushered in.

President:—Which is the centre of the cellular universe?

No. 77:—The geometric centre of Mars.

Prof. Hupipu:—Distinguish between the centres of the cellular and spiritual universes?

No. 77:—The former is comprehended by the brain and the latter is apprehended by the heart.

President:—"What a mouse-trap!" Is that expression appropriate to our life in the planet of Mars?

No. 77:—Certainly not. That is the futile cry of Bessimists. I'm an Obdimist, out and out.

Prof. Olivu:—How did everything originate?

No. 77:—The All Highest wanted a way out of his intolerable ennui, and hence all this munificence of His creative activity.

Rev. Baxometre:—Which is more rational: the universality or immortality of the soul?

No. 77:—That depends.

L. Dr. Halwa Thangam, bald-headed (and pig-headed), sits valuing the answer papers. His young wife (fifth in the series) is nestling close to him. "Darling Hal," says Mrs. Thangam with swift receding dimples, "you're a miser. Sure, no. 35 deserves pass marks. As it is, he gets five marks less. Please make it good. Won't you, my own Hally?" Saying so she cups his chin in her palms, with a look of entreaty. He asks brusquely: "You know the fellow, do you?" "Of course, you know it's Bellami." He fumes: "That brat again! BELLAMI! I know why you're over solicitous about him. I know!"

"What do you know, you silly old ignoramus?"

"Bluff not, woman. I'm old and bald; Bellami is young and fair. He is your lover. You'd make him pass. You'd deceive me—you'd dare—my own wife and my own nephew! I'll cut you out, and I'll p-l-o-u-g-h the rascal! For three years I'll be Chairman of the Board and for 3 years I'll thwart him, smash him, torture you—and—and—"

"You're mad and you are fat and you are a doltish nincompoop."

LXII. The All Powerful Three sit in judgment over the Superlative Arts students. The Chairman is

weary; the other two members are equally so. Proceedings begin.

Chairman:—Gentlemen, there are 70 candidates. As it is, 10 are in the 1st division, 20 in the 2nd, 30 in the 3rd and 5 are placed in the Comparatives, 4 in the Ordinaries, and 1 fails.

Others:—That's right. Let's sign and be done with it.

Chairman:—Alas, tarry a little: there's something else. You know the Dictator's son has appeared this year, and if he doesn't get into the 1st division, woe unto us!

Others:—Merciful Heavens!

Chairman:—This brat, whose fatherhood the Dictator claims, is 10th among the third classes. If he goes to the first division, all above him go too. Thus there will be 40 first classes; it is absurd, but there's no help. The remaining 3rd classes become second classes. The Ordinaries become Secondaries and the Secondaries become third class Superlatives. The one failed candidate is elevated to an Ordinary. Thus none fails. What is your opinion, gentlemen?

Others:—We docilely concur.

XCIII. Results are out; so also advts. of the Tartarial Agencies, who promise to coach up failed candidates and guarantee excellent results. Congrats, condolences, surprises, disappointments,—they whizz and tingle. "You never studied: I knew you'd fail!" "What did I tell you? Did I not say that Bhruhngibathkri was a close lad? Did I not say he was a deep'un? Did I not say he would top the lists? now—and you know!" "And what will you do next? Higher studies, I expect?" "Oh no. I've no money. Must look at the 'wanteds' and write out some applications. Some billet must come, sooner or later." "Sure, I warrant." "Donkey, now that you've failed, will you abjure the despicable Roaries and Singies, the evening walks and the Goffee drinks?"...

Appendix A.

Statement by the Board of D. Phil. examiners on Mr. Klim R. Sams's thesis on 'Exams in Mars':—

Dr. Vigni la Gdmung, B. A. (Neptune), D. Sc. (Venus), S. S. L. C. (Earth), Hon. M. A. (Moon) etc etc: Chairman of the Board:—This remarkable thesis is vitiated by exaggeration and a faulty tendency to caricature. It is an indictment in effect. It tries to bring the administration of Higher Education into discredit. But, for fear Mr. Sams may otherwise do even worse in the direction of calumny, I recommend the Central Temple of Higher Knowledge, federating all the Temples in Mars, to confer upon Mr. Sams the degree of D. Phil without the least delay.

Prof. Jinjibris and Rev. Kunjabahridi (both M.A.'s of C. T. H. K.)—We agree. We further recommend that the marked chapters are completely censored out, before permission is granted for the publication of the book. In this pernicious book, the marked chapters are far the

Exams in Mars

Hon'ble Mr. Hullaballo: Will the Hon'ble the Minister-in-charge of material and mataphysical knowledge be pleased to state

- (1) if the Govt. are aware of the sensation caused by Mr. Klim R. Sams's book on "Exams in Mars";
- (2) if they are aware that the predominant opinion in the country is ranged against the book;
- (3) whether, in view of the above, the Govt contemplate any action against the book or author or both;
- (4) whether the Hon'ble Minister will be pleased to furnish all members of the Federal Assembly with an uncensored copy of the book in question?

The Hon'ble Minister: I am constrained to answer as follows—

- (1) yes;
- (2) not at all;
- (3) the question does not arise;
- (4) no funds, and anyhow they would find the book difficult to digest.

most violently pernicious and insulting. The C.T.H.K. should have nothing further to do with the life of Mr. Klim R. Sams.

Appendix B.

What the reviewers of the first edition say:—

The Daily Martian:—A huge achievement. Every syllable brimming with wisdom and wit. Deserves to be recommended to Nobel in our sister planet Earth.

The Literary Juncture:—A smashing, firing book. It has exploded the effete C. T. H. K. The author is a genius and a prophet. He ought to tear his D. Phil. diploma which is plainly unworthy of him.

The Anno Democrito:—I would rather give my readers Potassium Cyanide than a leaf of this book. It is the greatest scandal of our time. Mr. Sams is a drain inspector. He must be put in jail.

Mr. Akasa Pilting in Tuesday Noontide:—The book is a small great book or rather, a great small book. But it is a real BOOK—and does credit to Mr. Sams, the talented author.

Appendix C.

Question-time in the Federal Assembly of the Martian States:—

THE FUNNIEST INCIDENT

IN YOUR LIFE!

Set this down in 600 words. Mark on top

"Funny Incident" and post to the

Editor. For the best entry in

the opinion of the Editor,

a prize of Rs. 10 will

be awarded and

to the next best

Rs. 5.

Entries to reach the Editor before 20-9-33.

THIS COPY OF THE MERRY MAGAZINE

MAY BE WORTH

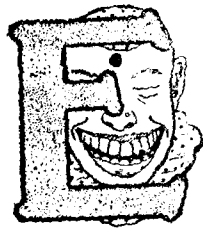
Rs. 100

Every copy of the Merry Magazine issued on the 10th August and 25th August bears an unduplicated number. Numbers have been selected at random and kept in a sealed envelope with the Editor. These are the winning numbers and they will be published in the issue of the 10th September, '33. The Editor will buy back the copy bearing the first winning number for Rs. 100 in cash. To other copies bearing the other selected numbers a sum of Rs. 5 will be given. The copy you now have with you may contain the winning number. So,

KEEP YOUR COPY.

THE BANDAR ABBAS SWEEP

(RAS MASAUD JANJUA OF SOUTH PERSIA)



VENINGS throughout the Persian Gulf and particularly at Bandar Abbas are extremely enjoyable. The Wireless quarters are especially known in the world over for their charming dampness and invigorating want of breeze in the summer. People from all over the Bandar Abbas world usually flock to the wireless—their hill station—in the evenings to forget their worries for a short while. On the whole foreigners, in this port, well known for its pearl fishery, are mostly of a very compromising personalities but there are exceptions also to prove the rule. Some of them strictly obey the law of nature and are staunch believers in the 'survival of the fittest.' Often, challenges are thrown and accepted. You may ask the nature of the challenges, but I am not here to reveal the secrets. If you persist, well, majority of them are for preserving the pride of having a biggest and fittest paunch. The judges are always ready for the measurements and estimates with their tapes. As a matter of fact, at present, I am not inclined to narrate this minor side of the challenges to my dear readers, as I believe the head lines must be keeping them impatiently waiting for the Tattenham Corner of the race Course.

The other day, during the year 1933, almost end of June, while having a very enjoyable evening at the wireless a challenge was thrown out by Mr. Children Crying of the Local Oil Company Fame to run the length of the Hookey Field which, by the way, is only half a mile from the place of the challenge. Perhaps it may be worthwhile to lay the dimensions of the challenger before the reader. Mr. Children Crying is specially made of a symmetrical frame. Width 4 feet, length 4 feet, and height 4 feet. The projecting curve of the fittest paunch was often declared by the judges to be absolutely within a circumference of 7 feet 11½ inches.

Mr. Pompom of the Imperial Communication Limited famous in Bridge circles for seven clubs, and a daring type of human being seldom found in the last 73 centuries, left his iron chair and accepted the challenge at the top of his voice, provided the race was run at once, (it was 22.25 P. M.) and the loser to supply a cooked Dumba (sheep.) Mr. Pompom is not more than 8 feet in height and 7 feet 11½ inches in average width, though the judges' tape often runs upto 8 feet 9 inches round the waist. Mr. Muscles, a peculiar and unique secretary of the local club lost no time in procuring the cars and immediately the full party was conveyed to the field.

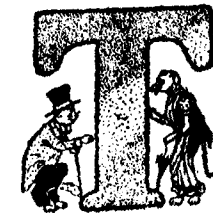
Although there were plenty of stars shining, there was no moonlight and in order that neither party may

take advantage of the Darkness, the cars which were standing on either side of the goal-posts were asked to switch on the front lights—thus lighting the whole field. Mr. Muscles who was selected to perform the responsible duties of a starter went near the Shaik's Palace along with the Great Runners who, to make themselves as light as possible, discarded their trousers etc., and made over to the starter. The starter was packed up with the discarded goods in one hand while he firmly held a torch in the other. Although these were the only things that could be seen of the starter, nevertheless he gave them a Fair Start after half a dozen warnings to Mr. Children Crying who was not keeping within the lines. At last the Great Race began, exactly at 22.35 P. M. The bookmakers had a very busy time during those ten minutes, and Mr. Children Crying was found to be a hot favourite, hotter than April the Fifth.

It took them only 8½ minutes to cover the field. Of course the time was recorded by the starter who was following the runners and he solemnly swore that his watch did not stop during those 8 minutes. To the dismay of the few spectators, who had staked their whole fortunes, including their cigarette cases, the hot favourite proved to be entirely void of the timely stamina and was almost crushed under the gruelling gallop of the famous POMPOM. Mr. Pompom, it is authoritatively said by the judges, won the race by one complete foot of his own, which when measured was found to be three yards. The cooked Dumba was won with some grog etc., which was provided by some wealthy people to start with, before attacking the prize.

A very comical incident happened towards the end of the race when Mr. Pompom who was running at a breakneck speed fell across the boards between the goal-posts thus exposing his two halves of the Gulf World etc. to the full view of the judges who are too noble to be mentioned by names. While Mr. Pompom was being assisted to the car, Mr. Children Crying was seen running all over the ground in search of his fountain pen. It was a delightful scene to watch him in his search as he refused to put on his trousers till he found his fountain pen. With the aid of the car lights and Mr. Muscles' Ever-Ready Torch, the pen was eventually found, and it was with great difficulty that the starter persuaded the loser to put on his trousers. The party motored back to the Wireless for the dinner and the dumba. A return race is expected very shortly and the kind readers are requested to be on the look out for the Merry Mag issue containing the description.

Stop Press. A later message states that Mr. Pompom won by a yard and a foot. (his own, of course).



THE Proof of the Pudding, it has been said, is in the eating of it. As Editor of this Magazine, I have to discharge a great many functions but none of them so delight my heart as that of the preparation of the fortnightly pudding for the consumption of the readers. True it is that the best of ingredients necessary for the making-up of a succulent dish are not always or easily available. There is a scarcity of pepper occasionally and, more often than not, a little ginger-up seems immensely desirable. But all told, I have always been wondering about the 'Proof.' These fortnightly periodical puddings! Do they cause indigestion after an injudicious yet liberal helping? Are appearances justified in epicurean judgments? Does a smack reverberate to the ceiling after a thorough and relishing enjoyment of the dish? I didn't know and I wondered—till recently.

The 'Letter to the Editor' Competition, which I announced in the issue dated 10-7-33 and the closing date of which was 3-8-33, has changed and settled my wonder and doubt. You may remember that I asked competitors to write to me about the issue of The Merry Magazine dated 10-7-1933. I have been swamped by a regular avalanche of entries. I have read every one of them carefully and I wish I had the space to publish extracts from many of the competitors' critical efforts. I am glad, I feel flattered, and I am properly thankful for the 'Proof.' 'The eating of it' has been simply great—not a morsel left and like Oliver Twist, more is asked for. But unlike the rebuff to Master Twist, you will find me literally liberal. Wait and see!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

On page 619, you will find the winning letter. Though I announced only one prize of Rs. 15/- I am also publishing another letter *in extenso* on page 619 (second column)—it is too good to keep it to myself—and for this second best letter, I am awarding an extra prize of Rs. 5. A common feature among all the entries was the appreciation of the pictorial aspect of this Magazine and the regular features, "Sparks" and "Ticklers".

May I remind readers that I announced a similar competition of Letter to the Editor regarding the issue of this Magazine, dated 25th July 1933? The closing date is 20-8-33. There are two prizes, Rs. 10/- for the best letter and Rs. 5 for the next best. Write to me whatever it is that you think of the issue, dated 25th July, 1933.

THIS ISSUE

Now that I have had ample and sincere testimony to my culinary abilities in providing the fortnightly bill of fare, I think I may safely, and with advantage to you, offer a few words of commendation on the current bill. The Appam Basket and the moving grub-store in *A Week of Shum Life*, the juice extracted out of *Israel in Travail*, and Veeramma's Pappadams in *The Chloral Effect* are very good side-dishes. Leo doesn't seem to be very much involved this time, though one would have suspected him of softening towards his *vis-a-vis* from reading his last involution. But Editors and their associates steel their hearts, as I know only too well, perhaps because there is a lot of stealing among the fraternity without so much as a by-your-leave. It looks

The Merry Magazine

as if Lalita will land her husband in a court of law, if he doesn't stop courting the lady we all saw in the Railway platform. He surely is courting trouble. Susila is fast becoming popular what with winning prizes and trying to raise hirsute crops. If you think the passive sex has no sense of humour, you would be hopelessly mistaken. What about the hen in *The Tidings From Tribunals*, who has her sense of humour unimpaired even in her death-throes? Or, as a matter of that, the resourceful Miss Similiniyini who sits for the Virgin in Cookery and Hysteria Examination in Mars.

DEVI, THE DANCER

Now for a little foretaste of the next fortnight's repast. You will find, on page 609 bottom, an announcement regarding Deisvi's new serial story. As you would see from the title of the story, the heroine is a *Devadasi*. Quite intriguing, isn't it? Trust Deisvi for that. I have the first instalment before me, the artist has had a go at it and I may very modestly say that in letterpress and illustration this story shows promises of giving us a new slant on something with which, we, South Indians are familiar—the institution of the Devadasi. In the next issue, therefore, you will find the ground cleared for the advent of the Heroine—at least that is the impression I gather—but you never can tell what these writers of serial stories have up their sleeves.

I must take this occasion to point out that this office is unable to supply back-numbers, for the simple reason that we don't tolerate them, nor do we allow them to exist. It is all the more necessary, therefore, that readers should order their copy well in advance if they are anxious to keep with them all the instalments of this great, new serial story entitled "Devi, the Dancer" by Deisvi.

THE CHLORAL EFFECT. (Continued from page 603.)

"Perhaps, because my Pappadams sell so well!" replied Veeramma. "They do taste so nice, I ate a few, you know!" This set Subbiah doing an unusual thing. He began to think. Then he ate a few of the home-made stuff and both he and his wife agreed it was fine, as they nibbled at the crisp and crackling circles.

That night Veeramma was asleep before she could even think out a theme to lecture to Subbiah and he for his part even forgot to take his usual dose of chloral.

In the early morning hours when all things are silent and only brain-cells and bus-services start working light dawned on Subbiah and soon blazed in full brilliance in his mind. The good taste of their Pappadams, the good sleep, the good sale.....above all the bracing odour of the stuff, something faint but familiar.....and then he remembered having messed about the kitchen a few days ago for Soda to take off the odour of

THE FUNNIEST INCIDENT

Even though the number of Competitors to this competition was fairly large, I regret I have to mention that the quality of the material, sent in, has been very poor. Most of the incidents narrated were not funny at all. What I consider to be the best of the lot is published in the 2nd col. of page 620. I have promised already Rs. 10/- for the best and Rs. 5/- for the next best entries of the Funniest Incident in your Life and entries close on 20-8-33. I hope this time, at least, I will receive some really good ones.

FINISH THE STORY COMPETITION

Just a line to remind you of this. Details on page 534. I have given you ample time to finish this story. The closing date is 5-9-33. Sit down to it now.

Rs. 500 'DING' COMPETITION

In these days, five hundred rupees is not something at which you can sneeze. And such an easy competition too! I could solve and dissolve it in a jiffy. But, unfortunately, I am precluded from competing. The competition is my creation. You know the story of Brahma and his creation Ahalya. He had to give her away. Come on, ye Gautamas! Here is Rs. 500 ready for the taking and as simple as going round a docile cow.

LUCKY NUMBERS

Of the lucky numbers for June, only No. 39648 was produced by Mr. K. S. Narayanan of 25, Nammalwar Street, Madras and the prize of Rs. 5 duly taken by him. The unclaimed amount of Rs. 70, together with a sum of Rs. 75 from office funds, will be for August Lucky Nos. Of this sum of Rs. 145, Rs. 100 will be for the first Lucky number and Rs. 45 for 9 other numbers. See advertisement on page 580 for further details.

the hypnotic from his left palm, on to which he had accidentally spilled a great lot of the drug—he had dipped his hand wholesale into the tin of bicarb—which Veeramma used in mixing the flour for the Pappadams. He sniffed at it now—Yes. It must be that...It was that. And when that tin of Soda was over, Subbiah was ready with another into whose contents he dropped—this time purposely, not by accident—a judicious proportion, known only to himself, of Chloral.

Veeramma's Pappadams became the rage. They soon had to start a big factory, employing over a hundred hands.

Veeramma no longer gives any lectures for her lord's benefit, and he for his part no longer takes chloral. Why should he when the popular "Veer Brand Pappadams" soothe him by their inherent quality and the fortune which they slowly but steadily accumulate?

"LETTER TO THE EDITOR" COMPETITION

Subject:—Issue of Merry Magazine, Dated 10-7-'33.

Winner:—Julius Caesar.



THE heat was intense. The teacher and the students were perspiring and feeling limp. No one was in the mood for serious work. A happy inspiration came to the teacher. He announced that he would give a prize for the best description of a humorous incident in life. Pens and pencils worked vigorously for a time. A short account by a boy of his having been stung by a scorpion (which later turned out to be but a big black ant), the magic cure being effected by a resourceful cook reciting some strange incantations, was adjudged the best. The prize given was the first issue of the *Merry Magazine*. The boy proudly carried the Magazine home. Father, mother and all at home read it with great interest. The father was forthwith inspired to write an article himself and send it to the Editor. The Editor out of sheer compassion published it. Since then, the *Merry Magazine* has become a regular feature in the home. Smiles and tears make up the sum total of one's life. Tears are plentiful and, like the poor, are almost always with us. Smiles are rare. "Smile and give your face a chance." Anything that makes us laugh is doubly welcome. In the *Merry Magazine*, laughter is combined with healthy amusement and, let us hope increasingly in the future, instruction.

Number 13 may or may not be a 'Lucky number'. But the 13th issue of the *Merry Magazine* is a very scintillating production. The 'Sparks from the Anvil' are bright and may well extend over more space. Peeps are a welcome feature but in this issue is somewhat unduly diffident about the capacity of his readers to enjoy good-natured humour. *Lalita* has started her letter-writing in a piquant fashion and it is to be hoped that, unlike many young ladies, she is a good and regular correspondent. *Prakrit* continues with his excellent skits on the common daily events in a modern town life. He has found a keen competitor in *Subramanyam*. *Dr. Cynicus* stands in a category by himself and continues his monograph on the 'South Indian Stage', throwing an arclight on its past, present and future. *Deisvi* has blossomed out into a clever and stimulating dialogue, after setting the entire literary world of Madras speaking and writing about his 'bad woman'. The 'Ticklers' are indeed most titillating. I can manage *Prasad* and his 'ghost' and even *Neil A. Canteen* and his 'stepney' but I draw the line at *Elmer Delville*. He ought to publish a separate dictionary to accompany his articles or at the least revise *Hobson-Jobson*. 'Shock Therapy' is as good an article of the kind as I have ever come across. There are plenty of good and even better things in the July part. Full many a gem etc., you know. If I keep on telling you all about all of them, you might read me and omit the part. And then, the dear Editor will be disappointed!

At the Travellers' Bungalow, where I was staying the other day, I very nearly got into serious trouble by the Mbety, Mali, and others not knowing why I was

lying in the easy-chair on the verandah in front of the SUN DIAL, performing violent acrobatics and laughing uproariously all by myself, until one of them 'seizing a good opportunity' when I had gone for my 'bath' looked at the pictures in the copy of the *Merry Magazine* I was reading, and understood 'how and why' I was laughing, and that I was not merely 'drunk' or seen a 'ghost' or had a shell 'shock' or received answers to my 'matrimonial advertisement in the daily newspaper.' Needless to add, though I am neither a 'bachelor' nor of the 'complaining' sort, that the Magazine was not there when I returned. And now I have lost the chance of getting 'the first prize' or any prize in the 'Lucky number' scheme. That is hard luck, isn't it, Susila? Never mind, we won't quarrel over it or 'pick the bone of contention' like Ariyaratne. But rather hope in 'flights of imagination' into the future, that the 'coming events' will more than justify the Editor in his well-merited boast on HIS PAGE. But, dear Editor, why give away our secrets? That is the most unkindest cut of all. *Et tu, Brute?*

JULIUS CAESAR.

QUO VADIS, MERRY?

THIS is a delicate business, dear Editor. But I will risk it. Fifteen rupees! Why, it's a fortune. To begin at the beginning, I don't feel like going near the Sparks. They might singe.

Mr. Samuel is delightful, as ever; only just now he is a bit bitter. Take heart, sir, every dog has his day and there's a tomorrow.

Mrs. Lalita need not worry about hubby's philanderings. There is nothing wrong in this,—man's peripatetic morals, or woman's either.

The Parliamentary Committee, now about to take a holiday, ought to record Mrs. Rose's splendid achievement and recommend an enlargement of women's franchise. Bravo! dear lady.

A banana skin putting up the banns! Delville's cheque means 1650 cigarettes! Lucky man! But why this coyness? Why don't we see a little more of him?

Deisvi? Sh! That's Caesar's wife. His Saptarishi is a platonic brute. I know two blighters who, when they were apprised of the blessed event fiasco, glared at their wives as if they, poor dears, cheated them out of something they had sweated for.

Mr. Canteen worked on me to such an extent that I had a Haig, just to see how it feels. I did feel five lamp-posts, two drains and a wall, to the last which I said "Cheerio" and shook hands.

This is something new and welcome. Ghosts are good, enjoyable things,—in a way. Let's us have a ghost every week, dear Ed.

Dr. Cynicus is evidently itching to write dramatic criticism. His anxiety does credit to his feelings, but tell him from me that he is destined to run his race out

There is a saying about asking questions and hearing lies. Well, don't ask your readers to send you original jokes, either. These gentlemen are extraordinarily adept at the digging business. The Archaeological Department ought to put them on excavation work at Taxila. They would acquit themselves creditably.

This issue, then, "easily eclipses all the previous issues". A truer word was not said since Gandhi wrote his own life.

Your ardent admirer, DON JUAN.

"Give the awful liar a hiding," aunt suggested, sweetly.

Aunty shut up.

"Babu, show me those villains. I'll murder the lot," roared uncle.

"You see, sir, it's this way. My boy, just the size.....and.....and.....well, just the size of your pretty angel, ran away from home this morning. Hasn't turned up yet. My wife and daughter, who were ambushing, are congenitally short-sighted. Anything two inches beyond their noses is a London particular. Hence the mistake. Thousand pardons. Your buddy has a fine set of teeth, though. Here, Nagamma, show this gentleman your arm."

Epilogue.

Nagamma, my wife, has read this and approves.

Winner : S. V. P.

Prologue: A street in Vizagapatam. Time, early night. A kid of eight years, running.

That was my dear aunt. The peroration was necessary. She knew I was a great admirer of tortoises—especially the one that floored the hare.

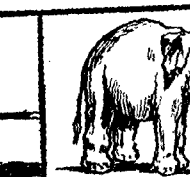
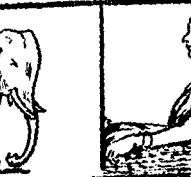
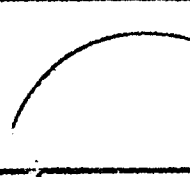
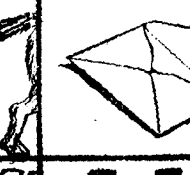
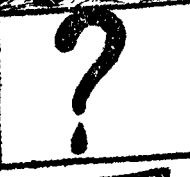
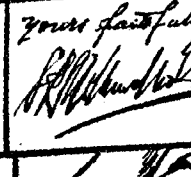
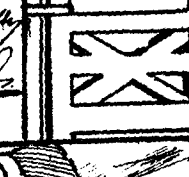
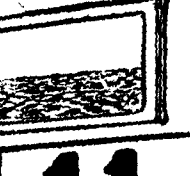
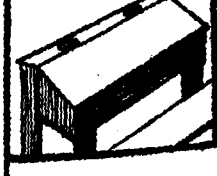
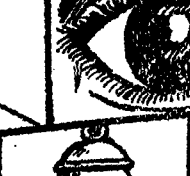
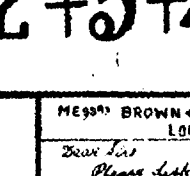
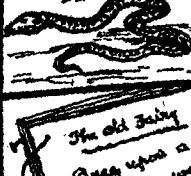
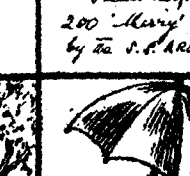
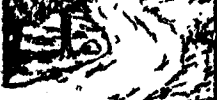
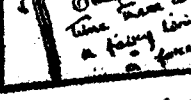
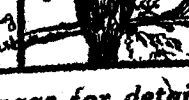
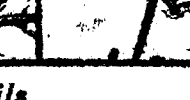
I was coming blithely—blithely because of the successful brigandage and the thought of a rare smoking debauch later, when a young thing, loafing hesitant around girlhood and womanhood, caught me neatly by the hair and landed one on my feeler with the science of a Jack Dempsey.

"You heartless rogue! Youson corpse! you donkey's tail! you.....you.....you baboon—bullock-faced vassal!" screamed the rowdy apparition, punctuating these compliments with sundry boxes, cuffs and kicks.

I was lifted up bodily, carried inside and handed over to a bulky proposition of a woman, who brandished aloft that pre-historic implement, the broom, to give me the benefit of a vigorous brush-down, when a lean chap shot out from an inner room yelling, "Stay, woman! stop, devil; let go the brat." The woman hesitated, brought her face to within an inch of mine, peered into it, stared violently, dropped the broom as if it were Mr. Churchill, hugged me in her tremendous bosom, and smothered me with thumping kisses, wailing the while, "My darling, my lamb, my little father, Oh God!"

A parting hug. A parting kiss. A something thrust in an eager hand.

(Continued in the previous Column.)

				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				 Dear Sir, unless the work for the building is paid forthwith, it is will be taken for the disband of you

See next page for details

THE "DING" COMPETITION

SENSATIONAL PRIZE OFFER.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

On the previous page, you will find one of the most popular picture competitions we have so far run. There are eight lines of pictures and each line represents a word, after the letters "Ding" are added. For example, take the first line. The first picture in the first line is *rat*. Starting with its first letter 'R', we have in the next square *Elephant* which gives us *RE*. Woman gives us *REW* and Arc and Rose give us *REWAR*. Add 'DING' to this and you get the word *REWARDING*. The rest of the lines of pictures can be solved similarly.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

Solutions must be filled in the coupon printed in the next column. Any number of solutions may be sent but an entrance fee of *annas eight* must accompany every entry submitted. Where copies of The Merry Magazine are not available, competitors can send in their solutions on ordinary paper but an entrance fee of *annas ten* is payable with each entry thus submitted. All entries must be received by last post on 2-9-33. Any received later will be disqualified. Entries from local competitors will be received in person at our office till 6 P. M. on that date. The first prize of Rs. 350 will be awarded to an all-correct solution and the second prize of Rs. 150 to the one which the Editor considers the next best and similarly the third prize. An all-correct solution is one which agrees in all respects with the one in the Editor's possession. Failing an all-correct solution, the first prize will be awarded to the nearest correct entry received. In case of ties, the prize money will be equally divided. In case there are three or more than three all-correct answers, the total prize of Rs. 500 will be divided equally amongst them. A winning competitor can receive only one share in a prize and the winner who ties for the first prize shall not be eligible for a share in the second. No correspondence can be entered into or interviews granted. Persons connected with the Merry Magazine and its associated journals are not allowed to compete.

Coupons must be filled in legibly and sent intact along with the M. O. receipt issued by the Post Office. All entries must be addressed to:—

THE EDITOR, 'DING' COMPETITION,
The Merry Magazine Office,
2/140, Broadway, Madras.

1st Prize	Rs. 350
2nd Prize	Rs. 100
3rd Prize	Rs. 50

In case of ties, prize amount will be equally divided.

Entrance fee as 8 only.

Closing Date 2-9-'33.

THE MERRY MAGAZINE "DING" Competition Coupon.

1. REWARDING

2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

In entering this Competition I agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and legally binding.

Signature.....

Name.....

Address.....

THE MERRY MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

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Here is a Marvel of Modern Chemistry to satisfy you
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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. 1-8. Three at a Time Rs. 3-12.
When ordering please mention "Merry Magazine."

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These are made of pure Rolled Gold and set in with imitation diamonds and rubies etc., workmanship is unrivalled. Beautifully engraved and decorated as per illustration. Very pleasing in presenting a charming appearance to the eye. Can be compared with real gold chains. May be used by all nationalities. Each in a Pad. Price Rs. 1-8 each.

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SRI DHANAM & Co, P. B. 119,
Madras.

CRYSTAL BALL!



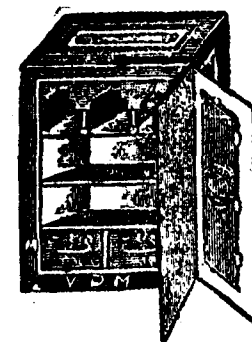
Youngster! Do you wish to know the mind of the lady you love? Do you wish to know when you will get married? or when your cares will get success in life? Here is the way. A crystall ball, having 32 numbers, will reveal secrets. Try this immediately.

Each ball with Instructions Rs. 1-4-0

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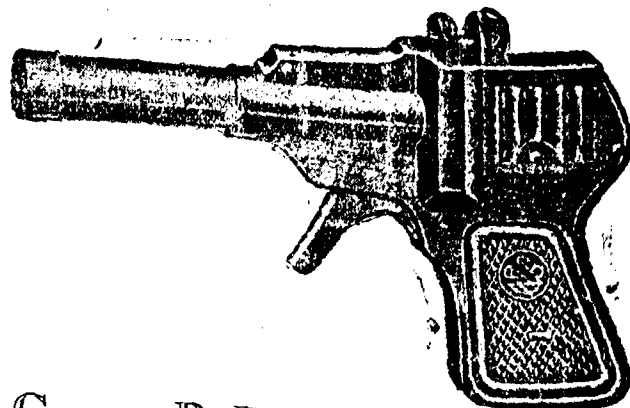
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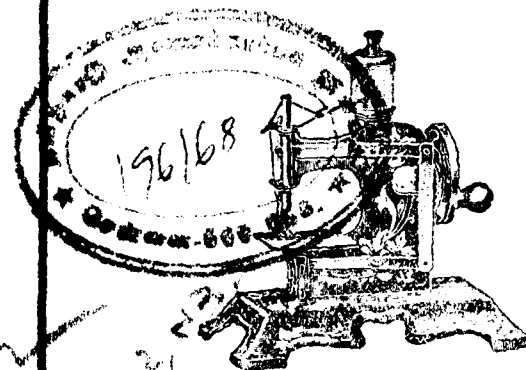
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