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THE DANCER : By Deisvi

The **MERRY** *MAGAZINE*

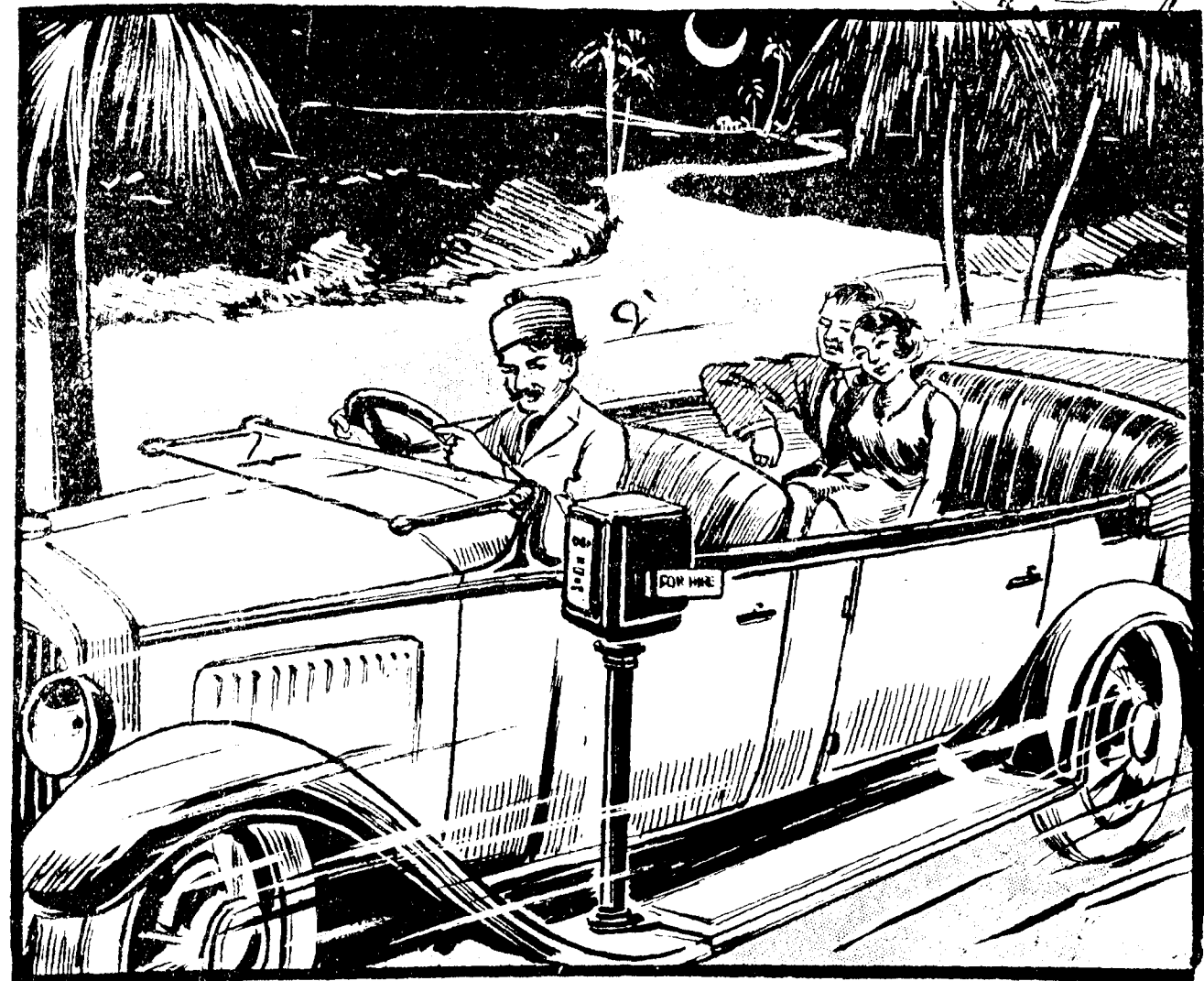
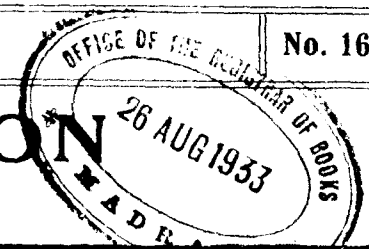
Vol. I

MADRAS, 25th AUGUST, 1933.

No. 16.

IN-TAXI-CATION

[By OUR OBSTINATE ARTIST]



As.

THE MERRY MAG

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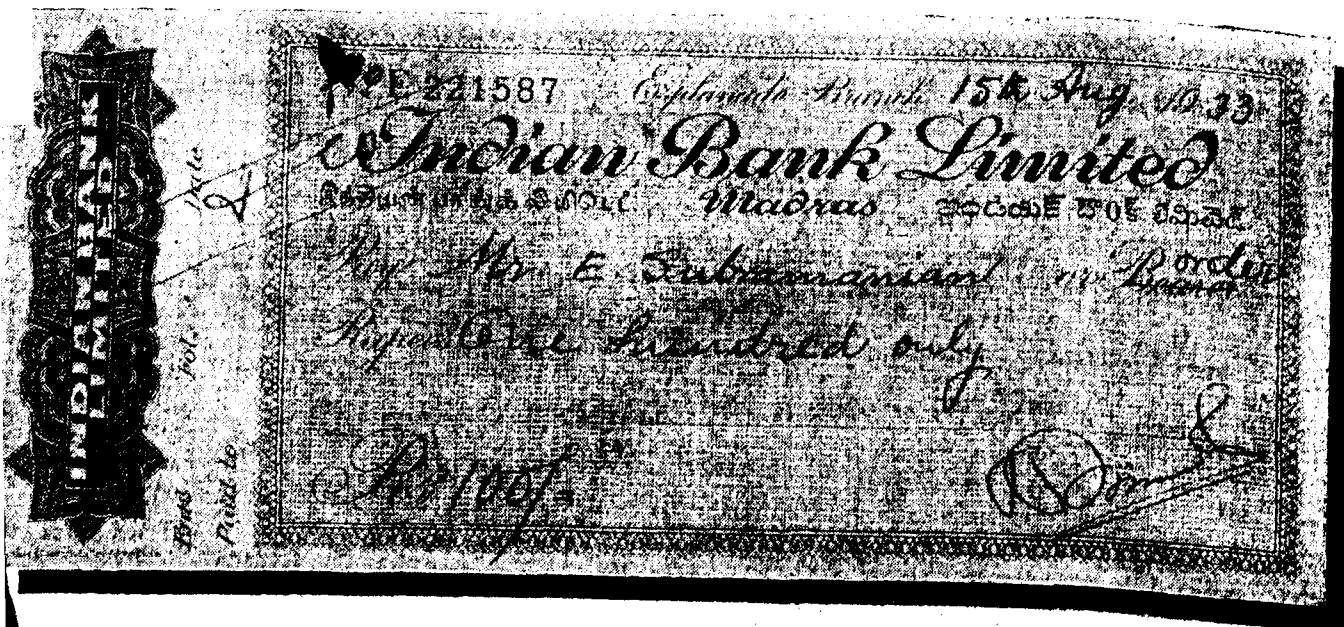
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IT MAY BE YOUR TURN NEXT

To Receive a Cheque like the One below. KEEP YOUR COPY OF THE MERRY MAGAZINE



The above is a photo-reproduction of a cheque for Rs. 100 sent to Mr. E. Subramaniam, L. F. Overseer, 13/3 Lawley Road, Coimbatore, who sent us the copy of the Merry Magazine No. 49763, the lucky number which we announced in our issue, dated 10th instant.

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

A White Paper on the future of Burma has been issued. The Burmans will be done, as we have been done by!

Under the proposed scheme, the executive authority will vest with the Governor, who will also be Commander-in-Chief, and who will himself direct and control the administration of defence, external affairs, Ecclesiastical affairs, monetary policy, currency and coinage, and also the affairs of the Scheduled areas.

The Burmans may manage the rest, subject to the usual safeguards.

An article on Mrs. Ponny, the novelist, is entitled: 'How her Anglo-Indian stories came to be written.'

We should have preferred to know why they were written.

Mr. V. J. Patel and Sir K. V. Reddy both advocate the capture of the legislatures by Congressmen.

People who are equal to the same thing are not necessarily equal to one another.

It is stated that Messrs. Jardine and Larwood may not be able to play next season; and that Australia might after all send out a Test team in 1934.

Misfortunes never come single.

Sir T. B. Sapru has returned from England; he says he is definitely not going back.

We are not in a position to say as definitely that the others are not coming back!

He further said that he never was, and does not intend to be, an active party-politician.

It is not yet generally realised what a lot of excitement is provided by writing memorandums.

Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari assures us that the White Paper proposals would go through.

This merely confirms our fears.

The Joint Committee has adjourned. It is computed that Sir S. Hoare has answered more than 2000 questions.

Most of them were white answers.

The Rt. Hon'ble Sastri says that, unless we obtain Dominion Status, the disabilities of our nationals abroad cannot be removed.

This is another reason why we may not get it.

Replying to a question of the Chairman of the Joint Committee as to whether she thought women had more common-sense than men, Mrs. Mukherjee replied: 'I honestly think so.'

We are unable to determine who let down our sex—whether the Chairman by asking such a question, or Mr. Mukherjee by providing the material for the answer.

In accordance with a new decree approved by Hitler, vivisection of animals of any kind, is to be prohibited throughout Prussia.

We understand that Communists in Germany are anxious to claim protection under the elastic terms of the decree.

Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty says that Mr. Satyamurti is the leader of a party composed of himself.

Thank goodness! No one can accuse him of deserting his party!

Lord Clydesdale explained that certain inhabitants in Himalayan districts had never seen an aeroplane before. After the first flight, one old man said, 'I have seen God.'

On the other hand, the inhabitants of Kotkai, on receiving notice of air-bombing, are said to have exclaimed: 'We have often seen God; but do not wish to go to him just yet.'

'I have never passed an examination in my life,' says Lord Irwin.

We always knew that Viceroys must have some exceptional qualification or other.

Senor Machado, President of the Cuban Republic, has had to flee the country.

But he left his name behind.

HUMOUR UNDER DIFFICULTIES

(S. V. V.)

I have always wondered what my uncle could make such funny and humorous stories, having a wife like that. My uncle is a philosopher. (I believe all husbands are, in a way). And my aunt is a philosopher, too, in giving amusing accounts of the state of her health. She always said she would never live to see the next morning.

When uncle married aunt, he married one hundred and eighty pounds of rosy flesh and bone. Aunt had beautiful curls, and my uncle,

"He fell in love with a curl
And married the whole girl."

My aunt now weighs 270 lbs. She has rosy cheeks, a plump nose, ample bosom, and a generous proportion.

"I don't expect to see another morning dawn, no, I don't," groaned my aunt.

I have heard my aunt say so a hundred times or more within the last six months, and yet she is not dead. On the contrary, she is hale and hearty, and looks as if she is not going to die for a long number of years more.

Almost every day I went to my uncle's house to have a chat with him on the day's news in the papers, and to hear his humorous productions in the making. My aunt would come up to me, heavily drop into a chair, and sob:

"Why do I live? Oh! Why? My dear nephew, if you only knew, if you....."

And here she would choke into sobs, put the end of her nose to her eyes and shake all the two hundred and seventy pounds in a violent paroxysm of grief. She was the most unlucky person in the world. She was the most abused person—the most ill-used person.

I would comfort her, and tell her that she didn't look so bad as that. After a while, she would admit that she might possibly live for a week, and again go off aquatic.

"If you only knew half my troubles, you would wonder that I have not turned mad, or killed somebody."

When my uncle came and sat by my side, and was going to read to me his new article, she never gave us time to get along with more than the first sentence or two.

"Do you know that four brass vessels are awaiting lead-coating for seven days?" she would start.

My uncle would stop in the middle of the third sentence, and tell her that he would look it up tomorrow, but aunt would never be satisfied.

"You will look it up tomorrow, will you? You know you have said so a thousand times. My dear nephew, you don't know how I am being driven to my grave in this house by your uncle's neglect and indifference."

My uncle again started reading as if he heard nothing, and my aunt retired into the kitchen for a minute or two and then came out.

"I wish people knew just what I suffer!"

My uncle does not even change his countenance or drop a word, and very soon my aunt starts.

"You needn't make any fuss over me, only please have the goodness to let my sister come and see my corpse and then cremate me."

My uncle goes on reading the story. She jumps up and sneezes.

"Did you hear me say, my loving husband, that next morning will see me only a corpse? I hope you won't neglect the corpse at least."

"Don't you feel well?" asks my uncle, with sudden interest.

"Don't I feel well? Isn't it nice, nephew? Here I am in the verge of the grave, and he pretends he can't see it."

"If you think it would do you any good, I shall get you some liver pills. And now, my boy, what do you think of this story? You think it would put the public in a roar?" he goes on in the same even tone. Aunt jumps out of the back-door to find some sympathetic neighbour.

If my uncle were not a humorist, I think my aunt would kill him in a week.

Once, when he was in the middle of a dinner in the house of a distinguished host, a messenger came running and said that my aunt was very bad and that she requested him to come and see her die. Some of the guests expressed extreme sympathy and concern. Uncle ran back home in a hurry, where he was greeted by my aunt.

"Didn't I tell you this morning that I would be a corpse before the night is over?"

"I think, I recollect you said something to that effect."

"I am obliged to you for recollecting at least that. Your poor suffering wife is going to find her rest at last. The world would call it dropsy, pneumonia, or liver complaint or something, but you know and I know what has brought this on me."

For a moment uncle stood with his hands crossed, and an expression of sorrow in his face, and then said:

"Where are those brass vessels that wanted lead-coating?"

"Brass vessels, my God? Are brass vessels more to you than your dying wife," she shrieked, jumping in her bed.

Next day aunt was doing her own work. Her weight is constantly increasing year after year. She continues to be a martyr, and uncle continues writing his humorous stories, and growing more famous every day.

AUCTION BRIDGE

WITH THE BRIDGE OMITTED BY SPECIAL REQUEST



One Heart!



Two Hearts!



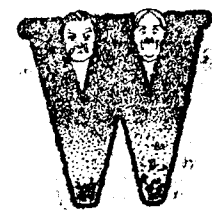
Three Diamonds!



A Neat Trick!

VERY MUCH INVOLVED, III.

(LEO.)



WITH a swish of her saree and a saucy, backward glance at me, my visitor left the room and tripped daintily down the stairs. I leaned back in my chair and the chair tilted back. I sat up and the chair-back came back and slapped me on the back. It was one of the revolving and tilting variety, though I was always forgetting that fact. I turned half-left and the chair, (being a revolving chair) turned full left. Impatiently, I kicked the chair back and clearing a space on my table, sat upon it and put my feet on the chair. End of the first round and the honours were with me.

I sank into a brown study. The happenings of that morning had considerably shaken my already jangled nerves. In the course of one brief hour, I had managed to arrive late at the office, had had an altercation with the front door, had engaged in a verbal duel with my assistant, had dismissed him incontinently, and had entertained a visitor, whom it had taken all my tact to speed on her way, without committing myself to anything definite about the contribution she was trying to foist on me. Talk about one crowded hour of glorious life. This was hustle with a vengeance. Were all Editors subject to these annoyances? When John Thaddeus Delane sat in the Editorial chair of "The Thunderer" did pert young Misses force their way into his sanctum with rolls of Ms. in their hands? Or did cheeky Assistant or Sub-Editors, who had grown too big for their boots, give him lip? Or even if they did, would Delane have permitted them to get away with it? Why, Delane? W. T. Stead, for instance, would never have allowed this sort of goings-on in his office. Or, perhaps, unable to put up with this persecution, Stead chose the easier way out and bought a state-room reservation in the *Titanic*. It may be asked how the late W. T. knew that that was going to be the *Titanic's* last voyage. The answer is that W. T. Stead was an Editor and next to God, who knows everything about all things. Editors know everything about all things, except of course, their own shortcomings and limitations. But, why continue this idle speculation about men, who are now inhabiting a region where climatic conditions are presumed to be so startlingly different from ours. Let the dead be forgotten. I will model myself on the great ones of the earth, who are still happily with us. I, too, when my troubles and tribulations grow too severe, I, too, will arise, cross the great water and arriving in a Western Island, take my seat at the Council table and frame a Constitution. What matter if I have to leave my native land to itself for the space of three moons. Are there not compensations? I escape the drab monotony of my daily work, I come in contact with the great ones of the earth and travel broadens the mind. And, most important of all the factors governing the situation, my journey does not bore a hole in my bank balance, into which you can thrust an armful of overdrafts. Enough! my mind was made up. I slid down from my table into my revolving

chair and picked up the telephone from the hook. Of course, the Directory was not on my table. No matter. I dialled Exchange.

"Exchange."

"Speaking."

"Sorry to trouble you, but I want Cooks'."

"Right."

Brrr — . Click! Click!

"Hullo."

"Hullo."

"This is Leo speaking. Leo, of the Editorial—"

"Yes, Sir."

"I want Cooks'."

"Yes, Sir, male or female, vegetarian or non-vegetarian, Hindu or Mussalman, plain or fancy, what variety would you want, Sir? We have all types on our books."

"Look here," I said, "I wanted Cooks'."

"Yes, Sir, that's right and we are telling you what varieties we have in stock. It is our boast, Sir, our proud boast that, at less than three hours' notice, we can supply any sort, to a customer within a radius of twenty-one miles. There will be a small charge for delivery, just sufficient to cover the cost of transport of one adult cook by motor delivery van. Our cooks have given universal satisfaction, as will be seen from the hundreds of unsolicited testimonials received at our office. We have printed extracts in a 32-page booklet. This booklet is illustrated with photographs of a few of the cooks we have supplied. These photographs of our cooks have been taken in their respective kitchens and the very pose and bearing of the subjects will go a long way to establish their mastery over the culinary art. We are instructing our office—as a matter of fact, I have already done so—to send you one of these booklets by express delivery. There will, of course, be a trifling charge to cover cost of conveyance a little overhead, small matter of Rs. 2-4 as. In fact....."

I put the receiver back on the hook.

I took up the telephone again and dialled Exchange.

"Hullo."

"Is that Exchange?"

"Speaking."

"I say, Exchange, who did you put me on to, just now? I asked for Cooks'."

"Yes, and you were put on to the Universal Domestic and Other Servants Supply Agency."

"Thanks, thanks, Exchange. But as a matter of fact, it was not a cook that I needed 'but Cooks'."

"Quite so and the Agency can supply any number in a very short time."

"Thanks, thanks."

(Continued on page 631 bottom)

LETTERS FROM LALITA, IV.

(CONCLUDED)

Courtallum, 20th August, '33.

MY DEAR SARASA,

This is the very end. I pray you keep yourself ready to receive and put me up for a few days. I can't and I won't go to my parents. But I must at any cost leave this place immediately. I can't bear to live with this husband of mine for another moment. Oh, the perfidy of men!

I ran across Leela and she it was that told me all. She is down here with her husband and children and the first question she asked me was, "Whatever is the matter with you, Sarsi?" I had to tell her all. She was so very sympathetic and so full of understanding and it was a great relief to my overwrought nerves to have some one to whom I could tell my troubles. You must admire Leela. Within an hour, she had unearthed the whole unsavoury plot and believe me, it is the most outrageous piece of story I have ever come across.

The girl, whom we saw in the Railway platform and whom I later found in the company of my husband, is none other than the daughter of the old man—the 'agent', as he is very properly called. It seems she is a widow, having lost her husband early after her marriage. I could well understand that and the husband did well to make his exit. My husband, as you know, fixed up a Bungalow in this hole through the offices of this agent, when the agent was at Madras on a visit to his daughter who, it seems, is studying for medicine. Evidently, she had started giving it to others. I cannot, however, help feeling that my husband must have been aware that the girl would be travelling in the same train as the one in which we travelled. I wonder if he arranged it also. I am convinced he knew her and yet pretended as if she was a perfect stranger. Why, I ask you. Why again did he warn me not to have anything to do with the father of the girl? And what were they doing, all three of them, in the temple *Mandapam*? Haven't I enough reasons, my dear, to run away from the wretch?

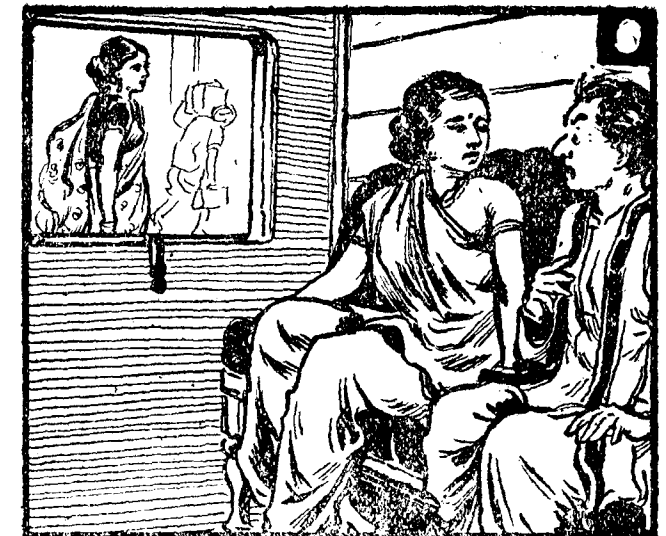
I haven't seen him, I haven't spoken to him and I am staying with Leela. Her children are a little trying but Leela is such a dear. Her husband is a model husband. His every movement is dictated by Leela. She tells him what to do and what not to do, when to speak and when not to speak and it is a joy to see him drilled and disciplined like that. But I digress.

Leela has promised to see me off and I will be travelling all alone. I don't care and I am not afraid. My husband doesn't know my plans and thinks I am staying with Leela just for a change. He called here but Leela very cleverly sent him away. I should like to see his face when he hears that I have left for Madras, but, of course, I can't be at two places at the same time.

I am eagerly looking forward to meeting you, my dear, when I shall tell you all the rest of the sordid details. Whatever happens, I shan't forgive him this time and I do hope you agree.

Yours ever,

LALITA.



The girl.....



..... We saw...



What were they doing?

TICKLERS

(TUT-TUT-TUT)

1. Annotate :—

- Toswallow their gudgeons ere they're caught,
And count their chickens ere they're hatched.
- 'Here I am, and here I shall remain.'
- To know a thing is nothing unless others know it.
- See the conquering hero comes!

2. Write short notes on :—

- The Empire Marketing Board.
- The Calcutta Municipal Bill.
- The Italian Air Armada.
- The Blue-Shirts.

3. What do you know of :—

- The Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan.
- Lt.-Col. Dr. Suhrawady.
- Begum Shah Nawaz.
- M. R. Jayakar.

ANSWERS

- (a) There is much amusement in Olympian spheres at the zealous unanimity with which many of our politicians advocate the capture of the Reformed Councils. The most optimistic estimate of the date of their inauguration does not put it earlier than 1936. We should not at all be surprised if the life of the present councils is extended *sine die*! There is bound to be some provision in the existing statutes to enable this being done strictly constitutionally; and public opinion as represented by the sitting councillors will almost unanimously approve of such a step.
- (b) This seems to be the heroic determination of a President of a District Board in one of the southern districts of our Presidency. He has had many 'hairbreadth escapes by flood and field.' An overwhelming majority of elected members gave notice of a motion of no-confidence in him; but on the appointed day, they are reported to have absented themselves from the meeting. Rumour has it that his tenure of the office will at last be as undisturbed as that of one of our Ministers. This is as funny as the story of the astrologer who, fearing that he was to be put to death by the king, saved himself by foretelling the king that the latter would die on the day following that of his death. This episode in local self-government is a valuable indication of how safeguards under the new constitution are likely to work. Incidentally, one would like to know the part, if any, played in this humiliation, of the party-in-power.
- (c) This seems to have been the motto of Sir A. P. Patro, when he was engaged in that edifying duel with M. K. Acharya. 'I have known you for thirty years; you will deny everything,' said the gallant Knight. It is not without significance that the Joint Committee should have been treated to an exhibition of bad manners, by the only two people capable of it.

(d) Mr. H. P. Mody, a mill-owner of Bombay, has just returned from a trade mission to Lancashire. Though he represented none but himself, he spoke in a pontifical manner, and assured Lancashire of India's anxiety to help Lancashire trade. If this gentleman had his way, he would make a tripartite division of this unhappy country, so that the claims of England, Japan and of himself might be harmonised. If there are more Indian mill-owners of his type, heaven help the economic self-sufficiency of this country! For our part, we shall continue to wear Khaddar, whether it is good, bad, or indifferent. Dear reader, 'Go and do thou likewise.'

- (a) This was set up to facilitate the operation of the Ottawa Pact. The Dominions, quick to seek an advantage, began to dump their goods on the mother-country. Things have now come to such a pass that Britain wonders whether she should not seek protection from her own Colonies! As a first step, this Board has been scrapped. The reason advanced for its abolition is that the Board has served its purpose—whatever that might mean.
- (b) An official bill, sponsored by an Indian Minister and having for its aim the stifling of public opinion. The Calcutta Corporation has been *facile princeps* among Indian civic corporations for planning and carrying through a courageous and many-sided programme of civic improvements. It has been fortunate in its Mayors and Councillors, who have generally been bigger men than the Ministers who were supposed to be in charge of local self-government. The intention of the present bill is to destroy municipal autonomy, and extend the sway of the wooden bureaucracy over it. On the eve of much greater changes promised to us, it can only be taken as a sinister omen of the evil potentialities of the new scheme.
- (c) A harmless bit of kite-flying by Sgr. Mussolini. A squadron of aeroplanes under the command of Gen. Balbo made a flight of the Atlantic to and fro. The only mishap that happened was that one of the planes had to make a forced landing. It was the 13th plane of the squadron, and must have, therefore, been anticipated beforehand. Italy, which is hemmed in both by land and sea, has a natural desire to expand—in the air.
- (d) An organisation of the wilder elements in the Irish Free State, inspired by the phenomenal success of the Fascists in Germany. The colour blue was chosen just to show that the Irish can be original, and secondly to symbolise the mental outlook of the members composing the new organisation. The Irishman is only happy when fighting somebody or other. Till now, it was England; and now that DeValera is wiping out the last vestiges of the English connection, he bids fair to become the best-hated man in the Irish Free State.

- (a) Has just completed sixty years; and we wish him many, many happy returns of the cycle! With all his failings, he has been, and will, we hope, continue to be, an unflagging journalist. Has been a consistent moderate in his views and ambitions, and achieved whatever he set his hands to do. Edits a 'high-class' monthly periodical with as mixed a bag of contributors as can be imagined. He has many friends, and not one enemy.
- (b) One of the greatest of Bengal Indians. Is the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, Medical Officer of the E. I. Ry., a gallant soldier, and the first Indian to receive the degree of

D. C. L., of the London University. Was knighted for an act of heroism in saving the life of H. E. the Governor of Bengal. We do not mind if he is a Muslim.

- One of the women delegates to the Joint Committee. Is an ornament of her sex, and the pride of her countrymen, whether Hindu or Muslim.
- The *alter ego* of Sir T. B. Sapru. If clever advocacy could have brought us Swaraj, we should have obtained it long ago. If non-co-operators plough the sands, he and his ilk plough the waves.

VERY MUCH INVOLVED—(Continued from page 628.)

"It's quite all right. Sorry, you've been troubled."

"Thanks....."

I put the receiver back. I picked it up again. I put my lips close to the mouthpiece and dialled Exchange once again.

"Hullo" trilled the same maddening voice again.

"I want Thomas Cook & Son, Travel Agents. The people who book berths in passenger steamers. I don't want a culinary artist or a cook-general or a gardener or chauffeur."

Whirr! Click!

"You are on, Sir."

"Hullo, hullo, hullo. Is that Thomas Cooks'?"

"Speaking."

"I am Leo, Editor. I want a state-room by the next boat to Europe."

"Yes, Sir. One minute, Sir. I'll find out if any are available. Yes, Sir. We find we have a very nice one. We can give you on the *Empress of the East*, sailing in three days. In fact, Sir, if I may say so, you are very lucky to be able to get it. All our state-rooms were taken months ahead, but this morning, Mr. Pogathy Rayannaswamy cancelled his passage by telephone. We can give you his reservation."

"Thanks awfully."

"Don't mention it, Sir. May we register your name, Sir?"

"Please do."

"And, pardon my mentioning it, Sir, but steamer

BUILD A STORY ROUND THIS PICTURE



For details of this competition, see Editorial Chat.

fares are always payable in advance. No doubt, you will be sending us your cheque by messenger? The exact fare is £ 93-10s."

"Cheque? What do you want a cheque for?"

"Your fare, of course, Sir."

"Look here, I'm going to Europe to attend the Conference. The Government bears all the expenses."

"Sorry, sir, my mistake. One minute, Sir, I will look into the list of Government invitees for whom passages have been booked with us by Government. L..... There is Lakshmanaswamy, and then Liagat

Hussein, then Loganatha Mudaliar and then Lilavati Bai.....Sorry, Sir, your name is not here."

"There must be some mistake."

"I'm afraid so, Sir."

"Very well, I'll phone up later."

"Very good, Sir. And thank you."

"Thank you."

* * *
Well, that was the last avenue of escape, now closed to me. There was a tap at the door. The office-boy sidled into the room. "The printing-room foreman says, Sir, the machine is idle and unless he has one and a half pages more of ten-point, he can't make up the forme....."

Once more unto the breach, dear friends!

DEPRESSION DRIVEN AWAY!



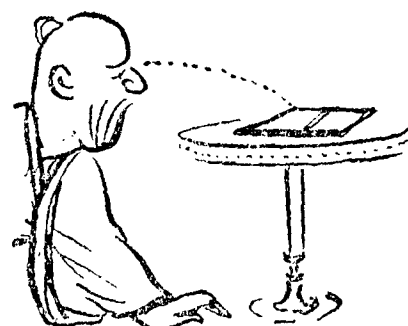
(1) Dejected



(2) Depressed



(3) Down, out and out



(4) Spies a book



(5) Skips some pages



(6) Somewhat interested



(7) Something arresting



(8) Attention focussed



(9) Already smiling



(10) Ah!



(11) What a Magazine!



(12) What a screamer!



CULLED GEMS

When women go wrong, men go right after them.

Only the brave deserve the fair, but only the rich can support them.

Money talks—and never more than when you marry it.

A girl may love you from the bottom of her heart, but there's always room for some other fellow at the top.

The tomato is not a vegetable, but a fruit. Actors don't care so long as it isn't a missile.

Girls have discovered that without the man in it there can be no ROMANCE.

Tariff!

Mike:—"And how much do you charge for funeral notices?"

Newspaper Clerk:—"Thirty cents an inch."

Mike:—"Be gorra, it's robbery. Me brother was six feet tall."

Deserving of our Sympathy.

It was midnight. In the smoking-room of a club, a young man sat huddled in a chair. A friend entered.

"Hello, Smith," he asked cheerfully, "not going home yet?"

"No," muttered the despairing one, "I dare not."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Matter? At eight o'clock I telephoned to my wife, gave her a perfectly good excuse for not coming straight home," and his voice sank to a whisper, "I've forgotten what I said."

Finance First.

A doctor, an engineer and a financier were debating as to which profession was the oldest. The doctor quoted the case of Adam's rib and said: "That was a major operation." The engineer said: "When the world was

created out of chaos, that was the greatest of all feats of engineering." Then the financier said quietly: "Yes, gentlemen, but I ask you,—who created the chaos?"

Will it do it?

Inventor (to Capitalist):—"This, sir, is an epoch-making machine."

Capitalist:—"Is it? Then, let me see it make an epoch."

The Bet of the Better-half.



She:—"Shell out the money! Did I not bet I won't talk to you for a week?"

He:—"You did and you have won. I can easily afford to give you Rupees ten, for, during those seven days, I must have saved seven times that amount."

Out of her Way!

A woman motorist was driving along a country road when she noticed a couple of repair men climbing telephone poles.

"Fools!" she exclaimed to her companion, "they must think I never drove before!"

A Close Shave!

A young woman called a policeman because a man tried to flirt with her. Lucky chap! She might have called a clergyman.

Something Wrong—Up!

An expert in aviation was observed studying a bird closely.

"What's up, old top?"

"I think his steering gear infringes on one of my patents."

Notice!

"Darling," she said, "when we are married, you'll have a woman in the house who really knows how to cook."

"Well," said darling, "that's pleasant news. I didn't know that you were an expert in the cooking line."

"I'm not," she replied, "but when we are married, mother is coming to live with us."



THE DANCER

THE FIRST SIGNS OF HER ADVENT

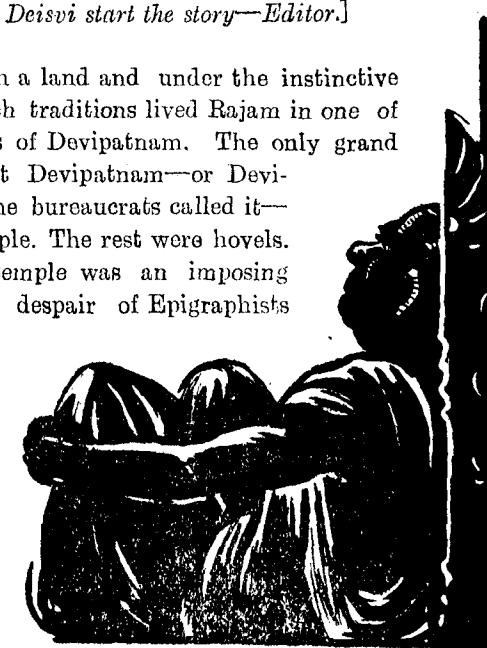
Story By Deisvi
Pictures by Setkar.



But, for purposes of narrating this story, a dissertation on the history of dancing is certainly unnecessary. Suffice it to state that, in this ancient land of temples and tanks, many of the Gods themselves are conceived as dancers and, in particular, there is no grander conception of the everlasting operation of Creation, Continuance and Destruction, than that conveyed by the bronze masterpieces depicting the eternal dancer of Ohidambaram; while the little lotus feet that marked time on hydra-headed Kalinga will always be held in reverent adoration by saint and sinner and prostitute and pativrata, alike.

But let Deisvi start the story—Editor.]

In such a land and under the instinctive sway of such traditions lived Rajam in one of the by-lanes of Devipatnam. The only grand thing about Devipatnam—or Devipatam as the bureaucrats called it—was its temple. The rest were hovels. But the temple was an imposing edifice—the despair of Epigraphists and the delight of Archaeologists and globe-trotters. The Cheras and Cholas, and the Pandiyas



PROBABLY, in the post-glacial Palaeolithic period, ceremonial dances were in fashion, if paintings on rock-cut caves are any testimony to the Cap-sian culture of the period. Primordial man, before he could talk, probably saw very vividly, mimicked very cleverly, gestured, laughed, danced and lived without speculating as to whence he came or whither he was bent. Before man became 'civilised,' the familiar forms of story and sketch and homely dance undoubtedly went on, till a time came when these periodic commemorations were exalted to the rites and rituals of the worship of whatever Gods that be that appealed to the religious sentiments of men and women of the respective periods.

The main trunk of the Aryan cultural tree shot out many a splendid branch, laden with the choicest of fruits full of Rasa.¹ Its Teutonic Sagas, its Greek Epics and its Sanskrit Vedantic verses, reveal a predomination of recitals which must have been inevitably accompanied by pomp and ceremony, and dance and music! It would seem that even the prophets danced, after the fashion of Dervishes and uttered oracles.

1 Flavour. 2 Virtuous Woman

and Pallavas, of a forgotten age, had lavished on this temple all the best which the art of their respective periods was capable of and the result was a symphony in mellow granite.

Devipatam was a place of pilgrimage. Out of the pilgrims that flocked to its shrine, the residents eked out a miserable living. And here, as elsewhere, it was the Goddess who drew vast crowds, by her alleged readiness to grant whatever boon the votary at her shrine craved, with infinite faith in Her.

Rajam of the by-lane, as she was called to differentiate her from the many Rajams of the locality, was a *Devadasi*—a servant of the Gods. She was but one of many and though she came of a traditional line of *Devadasis*, she was just common clay and had neither pretensions to beauty nor inherent grace in her limbs. In her younger days, she had failed to hook-up any of the rich Zamindars of the neighbourhood. Her income from the temple was next-to-nothing and she was under the protection of one of the poor priests of the temple whose ugliness and poverty matched her own. Hers was a drab, uneventful, life.

Rajam was getting old. She was nearing forty, but was neither fat nor fair. And the Gods had not given her any children. She longed to have a wee, tiny child—a girl, to keep the tradition going. Her longing became an intense obsession and day and night she worried herself over her sterility. Quacks, old women and obnoxious concoctions failing Rajam, she began to turn her thoughts heavenwards and wondered if really there was a God above and if His benign dispensation included the gift of babies.

Panchakshara *Gurukkal*,³ Rajam's consort, was detained at the temple late in the night to perform an elaborate *arthajama puja*.⁴ When he came to Rajam's house, for the night's rest, she, much to his discomfort, wouldn't allow him to sleep.

"*Aiyah!* In Devi's shrine I see ever so many toy-cradles hanging. Is it true that childless women pray to Her for children and when they do get children offer a toy-cradle and hang it in the shrine as a votive offering?"

"Look here! It is late. Some fool wanted to spend fifteen *varahans* on *Arthajama abhishekam*⁵ and I am, therefore, dead tired. I must sleep. Don't worry me with grandmother-tales."

"Please tell me if it is true."

"If what is true?"

"That, if you pray sincerely and with faith, the great Gods will give you all that you ask."

"It is all rubbish. One gets what one deserves: nothing more, nothing less. What kind of Gods are these, Rajee, when I have slaved and sweated all my life in their service, that they take away my wife and only child?"

3 Temple-priest. 4 Midnight Worship. 5 Midnight anointment and bath to idols. 6 Temple spire. 7 Niche. 8 Ritual with lights. 9 Midday Worship. 10 Brass pot lamp. 11 Reciter of Hymns.

"But did you pray?"

"I suppose I did, in a manner of speaking."

"I don't think you did it with faith. Familiarity, they say, breeds contempt. I am going to try the experiment."

"What experiment?"

"A *devadasi* has definite daily duties to perform in the temple. All of us have neglected to attend to these duties for the simple reason that it doesn't pay us to do so. From to-morrow onwards, I shall attend the temple regularly. I shall pray to the Devi sincerely, devoutly and beg her to bless me with a child. Let us see what happens."

"I know what will happen. You will be the laughing stock of all Devipatam."

"I don't care, so long as I get what I want."

"I shall pray that you don't get it. What do you want a child for?"

"Wait and see!"

"I would rather sleep and see," said Panchaksharam and true to his word went to sleep and did not see his Rajee prostrating herself, facing the temple *Gopuram*,⁶ whose solitary light in the ninth *vihara*⁷ twinkled like one of the myriads of stars overhead.

Panchaksharam was right. All Devipatam was vastly intrigued at Rajam's behaviour. Early one morning, the temple watchman got the shock of his life when he saw Rajam sweeping the corridors around the Devi's shrine and drawing elaborate patterns on the floor with white flour. During the *Deeparathana*⁸ after the *Uchchikala puja*,⁹ the *Murai Gurukkal* very nearly swooned when he saw Rajam, spick and span, and with a patch of *Kumkumam* about the size of a half-rupee coin on her forehead, handing him the *Kumba deepam*.¹⁰

In the evening, at the Devi's shrine, the throng of worshippers were at first mildly surprised, when they saw Rajam arrayed in the paraphernalia of the Temple-Dancer—velvet pants and all—standing modestly aside and conversing with a very old man, who wore a prodigious turban. Rajam witnessed the *Deeparathana* like any other devout pilgrim and her hands smote her cheeks at least half-a-dozen times during the *deeparathana*. Her duty of handing to the *Gurukkal* the *Kumba deepam* over, she was seen adjusting the folds of her saree over her shoulders. The *Othuvai*¹¹ had delivered himself of the day's *Thevaram* and the *gurukkal* was about to light the camphor for the final *harathi*, when, all of a sudden, the old man pulled out a pair of cymbals from out of his turban and standing behind Rajam began to shout:

"*Thatha—Thathikita—Thom! Thatha—Thathikita Thom!*"

The crowd gaped. The temple servants gaped. And Rajam went through her long forgotten first-steps of *Nritya*, while the crowd, perhaps because of the

sanctity of the place, refrained with difficulty from jeering.

Her antics over, Rajam sang the *Mangalam* in a voice that could only be compared to a tin-sheet in trouble; and the camphor blazed, the temple pipers blared and the crowd broke into loud comments on the evening's unexpected entertainment.

For nine days, Rajam was the additional attraction at the temple. But the novelty of the attraction wore off, as Devipatam found that Rajam had acquired a new tenacity of purpose and Devipatam took Rajam as it took its temple-pillars and *Vahanams*¹²—a necessary adjunct to the temple, its *Trikala Puja*¹³ and periodical *Utsavams*.¹⁴

But not so Rajam's compeers or her consort, Panchaksharam. The former circulated lurid tales that sought to explain Rajam's behaviour, while the latter threatened to desert her. But she stood firm as a rock and dared them all to do their worst: "My mother Devi will take care of me and very soon, make me a mother," said she, to all of them and they laughed in her face.

The months rolled on and still there were no signs heralding the blessed event. "My prayer has not been heard. My service, perhaps, is not sincere enough. I must be more assiduous," said Rajam to herself and she redoubled her efforts. She scored and scrubbed the floor around the Devi's shrine, daubed vermilion and saffron paste all over the entrance, broke an occasional cocoanut or two and as for circumambulations, she easily held the record. In the short space of eighteen months, slow and imperceptible changes took place in Rajam's physical frame and mental equipment. Constant work, regular habits, a well-ordered and disciplined life, had all contrived to make a new Rajam of her. Her face acquired the serene contentment of service done with sincerity and the soft glow of a patience that awaited with pleasure, the fruits of action. She saw life from a newer angle, realised how few and small were human wants and was fast becoming a philosopher, much to the disgust of Panchaksharam.

Panchu was worried. His friends advised him to take her to a doctor. "These are the first signs of lunacy," one of them said. "Later on, she will grow wild and begin to throw stones at you. Lunacy grows in stages. This is the soft stage. Oh, I have seen cases like this. Take my advice and take her to Madras. There are very good lunatic-doctors there. They will cure her."

Panchu reflected over this piece of advice. A change would do her good, he thought. At least, it will take her away from the shrine. He had a little money put by and that would come in handy for a trip to Madras and for a short stay in the metropolis. He decided to discuss the subject that night with his Rajee.

"Next week, Rajee, we must go to Madras," said Panchu to Rajam, as she was preparing cotton-wicks for the lamps in the Devi's shrine.

"What is the matter?" asked Rajam.

12 Mounts. 13 Worship thrice a day. 14 Festivities. 15 Ascetic. 16 Saffron coloured robe of an ascetic.

"I have some work at Madras."

"Why should I accompany you?"

"I want you to come."

"I can't. Who is to do all my work here?"

"What work?"

"Why, my work in the temple?"

"Pchea! As if the temple will go to pieces if you stop your wonderful work!"

"You know I never meant anything of the kind. Late as it may be in my life, I have set myself certain duties. I must discharge them scrupulously. Neither my pleasure nor yours should stand between me and my duty."

"You talk now-a-days like a *pandaram*.¹⁵ I hope you will be wearing a *kashaya*¹⁶ saree very soon."

"Perhaps, if my prayers aren't answered, I might do some such thing."

"Listen to me, Rajee. It is now very nearly two years since you started this foolishness. I have always liked you. You and I have no one else in this wide-world to care for us. Do you honestly believe, that, at this age and after all these years, it would be possible for you to become a mother? The days of miracles are over. Come, be a good girl, let us go to Madras and have a good time."

"I am sorry, *aiyah*, but I can't leave the temple and my duties.....Haven't I been faithful to you all these years?"

"I have never doubted that."

"Well, why should you be ashamed of me now? I am doing no wrong. Hundreds of women flock to the Devi's shrine craving for the boon of a baby. I have a better right there in the shrine, for, I am by birth a Servant of the Gods. Why did destiny apportion to me the life of a *Devadasi*? Destiny could have made me a 'family woman.' Fate has decided otherwise. Who am I to struggle against fate?"

"These are wise words and beyond me. I wish you could be disillusioned! How long are you going to behave like this?"

"Till I attain my heart's desire."

"And if you don't?"

"Till death!" said Rajam determinedly.

A millionaire Mudaliar in the metropolis prayed at the Devi's shrine for a son and heir. His prayer was answered. He consulted many of his friends to decide how best he could show his gratitude to Devi and Her shrine.

"Illumine the ninth *vihara* of Her *gopuram* by the brightest of lights. Let the light shed its lustre like a beacon on a hill-top over all the countryside around. Weary pilgrims bound for the shrine will look at it miles away from here and murmur fervently to themselves, 'There! There! That is Devipatam!' Create

an endowment and ensure that the light burns for ever and ever!" said a sincere friend, and Mudaliar immediately made the necessary arrangements.

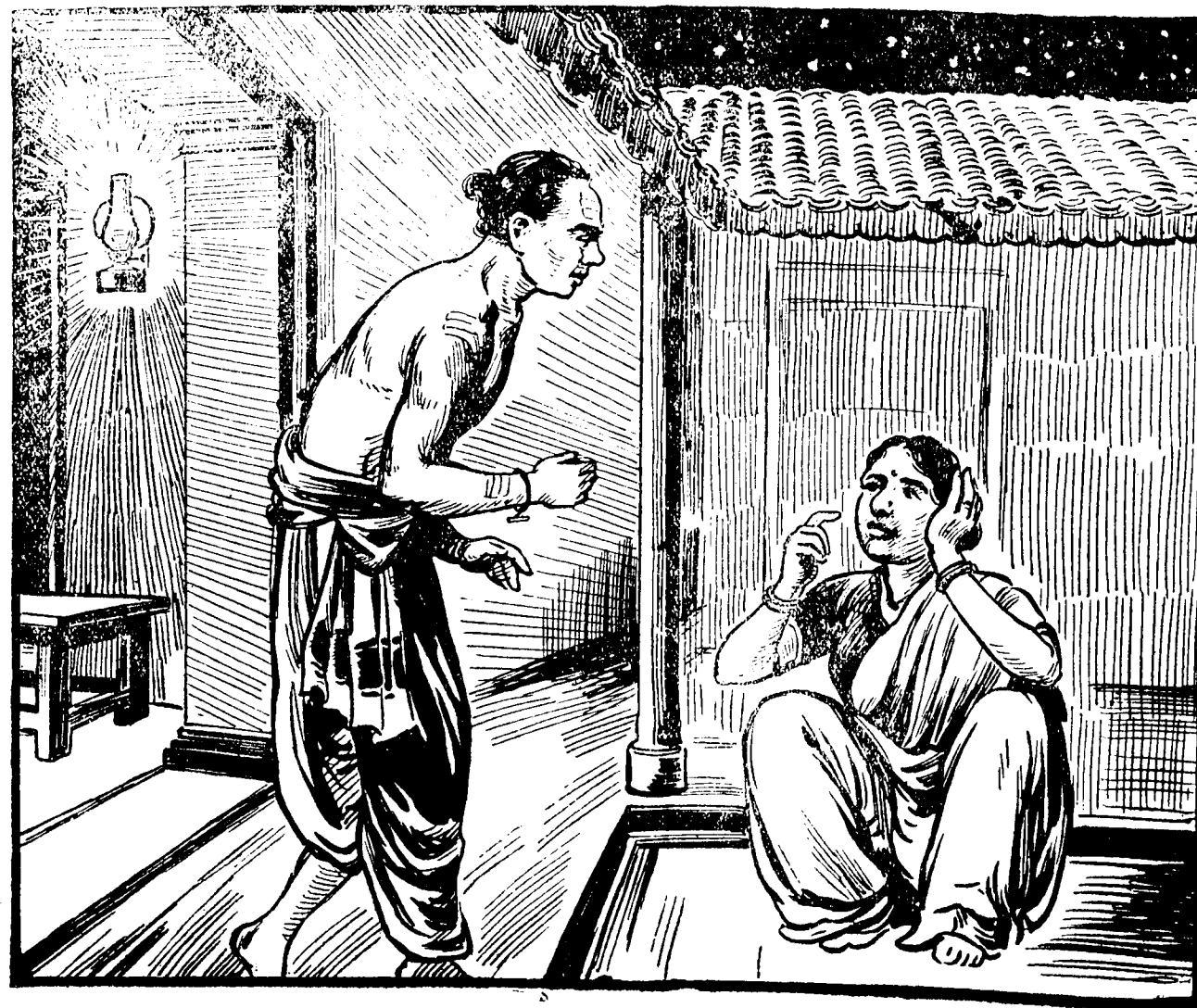
On *Karthigai* day the light was lit with pomp and splendour. It was a day of great happenings at the temple. And Panchaksharam, for once, missed Rajam inside the precincts of the temple and wondered if she was ill. It was past midnight when he could leave the temple and he hurried to Rajam's house.

"Why? What?—What is the matter?" asked Panchaksharam, marvelling that anyone in pain could be so happy.

"*Aiyah!*" cooed Rajam. "Don't you see these signs of her advent?"

"Who?—What? You don't say so? My God!"

"Rather, my Goddess," corrected Rajam. "She never fails Her devotees. In five months more, you shall have a daughter on your lap."



"Why? What?—What is the matter?"

In the centre of the court-yard of her house was Rajam, squatting. She was holding her head between her hands and was straining every nerve to throw out of her throat the contents of her stomach. It was a futile attempt, ending only in a series of heart-rending convulsions of her larynx. The stars twinkled overhead. A kerosine lamp in the hall fitfully illuminated the court-yard and the verandahs. Panchaksharam grew anxious and hastened to her side with a question on his lips. "Are you ill?" he asked her.

Rajam turned a beatific face towards him. "Of course, I am!" said she, beaming with ecstasy.

"Don't be silly!" retorted Panchaksharam. "You are suffering from indigestion. There must be some *Omum*-water somewhere. Look for the bottle and I shall give you a dose. You will be alright in the morning."

Rajam's peal of laughter, that greeted his advice, irritated him. He was getting fed-up with her prayers and fasts. And the fool believed that she was pregnant. "There is no doubt that her mind is getting deranged," muttered Panchaksharam to himself and went to look for the *Omum*-water bottle.

(Was Rajam mistaken? Could Panchu be right? Read the next instalment.)



THE LUCKY DOG

(S. TEEKAY)

A little carelessness in inserting the enclosures to the letters. My! What a sequence!

2148



MANAVALAN was an enthusiastic man, ever sure of his cleverness, in spite of his friends' confirmed opinion that he was a fool throughout the year without any special partiality for the first of April.

Manavalan had two inborn weaknesses—women and photography. These two filled his horizon, leaving little space for anything else. He was a frequent contributor of snapshots to the leading dailies, weeklies, monthlies and annuals. There was no photographic competition which didn't find in him a competitor. All his spare time was spent in the dark room, when not wasted at the Marina staring at girls. Being the only son of a big Zamindar, he had plenty of leisure.

He had just finished his light breakfast of six *idlis* plus ghee and *chutney*, four *vadais* and a hot kooja of coffee—(he called himself a very poor eater)—when the servant brought him the newspaper.

Reclining in his easy-chair, Manavalan read the paper. He was fond of the advertisement columns, especially the matrimonial. He had sent scores of his photos to advertisers asking for bridegrooms but had never received even an acknowledgment.

As usual the matrimonial column caught his eager eye and he read it carefully.

WANTED

A handsome, young and rich bridegroom for a beautiful and highly talented Naidu girl, aged 18, belonging to a rich and respectable family. Send photograph, to Box No. 4232 c/o 'The Mail.'

Manavalan smiled and immediately assumed the inimitable pose of the proverbial bridegroom. His hand stole-up to caress his moth-eaten growth of a moustache and his eyes gave the glad-eye to himself. He was worried over the details of the pose in the photograph to be submitted to No. 4232 c/o 'The Mail.'

He had three favourite poses:

1. Sitting in a chair and reading a book.
2. Standing calm and serene, staring beyond the Camera, with his hands clasped behind, his brow raised and the forehead wrinkled like that of a great philosopher.
3. Resting on the edge of a table and playing with his dog, Jo-Jo.

And these attitudes, far from being imposing as the perennial fool thought, were ridiculous to the extreme and mirth-provoking. He finally decided upon a particular pose seated expectantly with clasped hands.

Then he turned over the rest of the pages of the newspaper and came upon a second attractive advt. It was a photographic competition set by The Digby's Dog Biscuits Co. (India) Ltd. All one had to do was to submit the snapshot of a dog, with the wrapper of a packet of Digby's Dog Biscuits. A sum of Rs. 3000 was offered for the best photograph received.

Manavalan became very happy and he saw in himself in the near future a happy bridegroom as well as the winner of Rs. 3000 and began to seriously recall the first object that had met his eye that morning. Was it a broom-stick? No! His old pair of slippers! What a lucky pair they were! He must have them placed above his bed so as to catch his eye first every morning.

The two photographs, one of himself and the other of Jo-Jo, were taken that very day and developed and copies got ready within 24 hours.

Manavalan was very fond of colour and romance. He wrote two covering letters, one to No. 4232 c/o 'The Mail' and the other to The Digby's Dog Biscuits Co. (India) Ltd., and they ran as follows:—

(1)

Madras, 20-8-33.

DEAR MADAM,

Herewith the photograph of the humble applicant for your charming hand,

To

Box No. 4232,
c/o 'THE MAIL.'

Enclosure to above letter



(Read next column.)

He addressed the envelopes and placed a letter and a photograph in each, closed and stamped the letters and posted them without delay.

* * *

He had not to wait long for the result, for, on the fourth day he received two letters, one from Jagannathan, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Madras and the other from The Digby's Dog Biscuits Co. (India) Ltd.

The letter from the High Court Vakil was penned thus:—

SIR,

My client, Mr. Vasudeva Naidu, complains that you have grossly insulted his family by sending the photograph of a dog as applying for his daughter's hand and has instructed me to inform

Madras, 24-8-33.

(2)

Madras, 20-8-33.

GENTLEMEN,

I am enclosing herewith the photograph of a lucky dog, with the wrapper of your biscuit packet and hope to be the winner of your contest.

Yours faithfully,

MANAVALAN.

To

THE DIGBY'S DOG BISCUITS CO,
(INDIA) LTD.

Enclosure to above letter



(Read 1st column bottom.)

you that matters can be amicably settled, if you can part with Rs. 3000. Else, a suit for damages will be launched against you and the amount recovered with costs.

JAGANNATHAN, B.A.B.L.,

The Letter from The Digby's Dog Biscuits Co. read as follows:—

DEAR SIR,

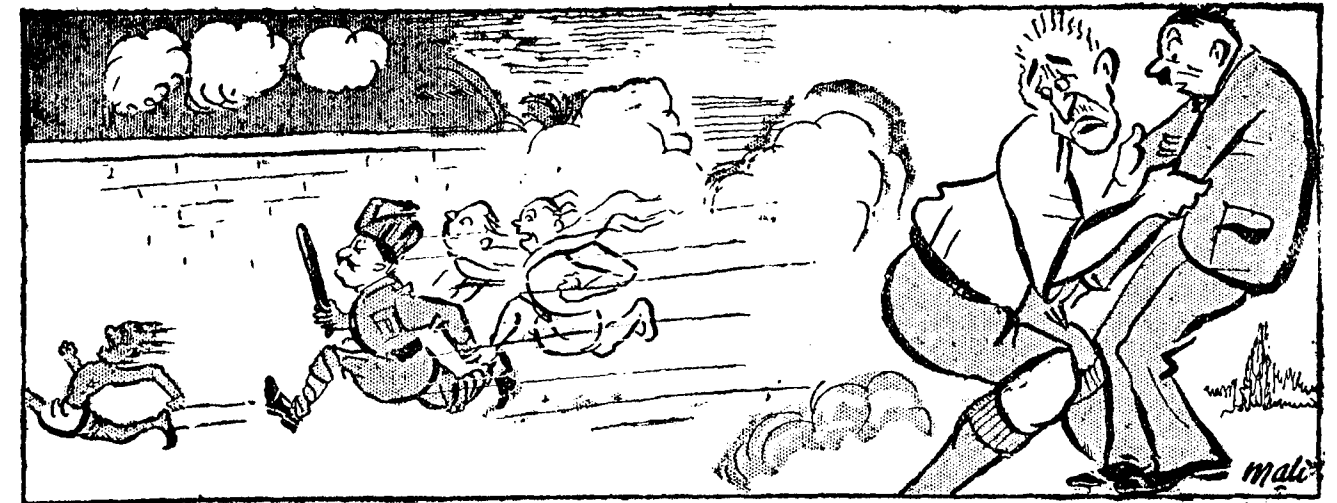
Madras, 24-8-33.

In returning your photo, we regret to disqualify you, as we want photographs of real dogs alone. You may certainly be a lucky dog, though you don't look like one, but your photo is of no use.

Yours faithfully,

G. S. LAMFREY,

Per Pro.

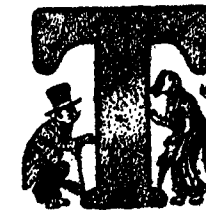


.....fellow shot out at top-gear with a policeman

Mr. JANGLI JUNGLED

[V. B. PRASAD]

Merely a matter of point of view. The inmate of a lunatic asylum is certainly entitled to his opinion on others outside his compound wall. It is passing strange that such opinions should be startlingly true.—Editor.



THE s.s. "Crocodile" of the famous Grab Line steamed alongside the Ballard Pier and belched out a motley cosmopolitan crowd, with the usual hebdomadal complement of Empire Builders. After a brief spell of the customary pandemonium incidental to the West meeting the East, the pier was deserted, but for a solitary European, gripping a medium-sized portmanteau and looking hard at the sky, while a couple of coolies were skirmishing in the foreground ready for a dash either at the grip or in the opposite direction.

The solitary European was about forty, tall, mighty strong in the upper half and mighty lean in the lower regions; a face—the concentrated essence of all the Buster Keatons of the here and the hereafter; a toothbrush affair adorning the upper labium—a perfect replica of the immortal part of Hitler's equipment. He was delightfully enclosed in shorts and its eternal satellite, the half-arm, open joy-neck, shirt,—a strange rigging for a new arrival. But then, India is a land of half-naked fakirs, as witness the coolies. So it was alright.

Presently, a smart, young journalist in search of 'copy,' much as a jackal at night after the crabs, butted in on the scene and sensing a possibility, accosted the lone traveller and passed the time of day.

"Are you, by any chance, one of the bugs?" growled the traveller.

"One of the what?"

"Bugs, sir, bugs. Ain't you a guide?"

"Certainly not."

"Or a toad?"

"A toad?"

"Yes. A terrorist."

"No," replied the jackal, his primeval assurance a little shaken. "I am a law-abiding citizen, a gentleman at large and a journalist of sorts. I do a bit for the comic press, off and on."

"Comic press, is it? Say Mr. Journalist, do you live in Bombay?"

"Just at the moment, yes. But I am here, there and everywhere."

"You know the country pretty well, I suppose?"

"Inside out. What I don't know of it, can be written on a postage stamp."

"Good! Look here, Mr.....er....."

"Jangliwalla. You may call me Jangli for short."

"What a queer name! Look here, Mr. Jangli, I'm Mr. Hannibal of.....of.....well, what does it matter? I want to do this funny country inside of a fortnight. How would you like a jolt around with me? I'll foot the bill, of course."

"O. K. I am your man."

"You must steer me clear of those damned revolutionaries. And, mind, no leg-pulling yarns."

"Right! I will be as truthful as Harischandra."
"Who is he?"

"Harischandra? Oh! He was a contemporary of Moses. Pulled a long stunt out of truth."

"I see. Which hotel hereabouts, do you say, is one of the ones?"

"Why, the Taj. Caters to all tastes, you know."

"The Taj! Dash me.....I'd no.....well, let's be getting along."

"What about your luggage?"

"My what?"

"Your luggage; trunks, boxes and things."

"Oh! That's gone in advance."

They footed it for the Taj Mahal Hotel, at the request of Mr. Hannibal, who said there was no sense in engaging costly taxis for short distances.

"Are you Scotch, Mr. Hannibal?"

"What if I am?"

"Oh, nothing!"

The two expectant coolies looked at each other, spat in loud contempt and went their several ways.

"Here we are!" beamed Jangli.

They stopped on the side-walk, facing the Taj Mahal Hotel. Mr. Hannibal stared at it with a puzzled expression and nudged Jangli good-humouredly.

"Tut, tut, Mr. Jangli. There was to be no leg-pulling business, as I understood the contract. Now, if this is the Taj, why isn't it made of marble and moonstone?"

"Ha, ha, haaaaaaa! This is not the Taj; only its namesake—a hotel. The real goods is in Agra."

"Then, why the devil do they go mixing up names and call hotels after romantic monuments?"

"Dunno. Maybe the Directors of this Taj are romantic gentlemen."

They entered the hotel. Mr. Hannibal had a wash and a brush up. They sat to light refreshments and commenced with a b-and-s.

"When is the next fast train to Madras, Mr. Jangli?"

"But don't you want to have a look round Bombay?"

"Not now. Later. We will work down to it from the North."

"The Madras Express leaves here this evening at six."

"We shall go by that. And.....er.....by the way, old man, my letters of credit are negotiable in Calcutta. And.....er.....would you....."

"That's alright. I shall be charmed to be your banker. We can square up later." Saying which

Jangli handed him a bundle of currency notes from his wallet.

"Thanks awfully."

"Don't mention it."

They boarded the Express. En route, Mr. Hannibal emptied a row of Haigs into himself, singing comic songs between each bottle, at the pitch of his voice. Correct to schedule, the Express steamed majestically into the Central. While yet the train was slowing down, half a dozen coffee-dacoction-coloured coolies got into their compartment with astonishing agility. A dozen lank arms grabbed the modest luggage of the tourists and an equal dozen unshod legs made ready to go. Mr. Hannibal was eyeing the proceedings with great disfavour. Thinking they were dacoits *a la* Chicago, he selected the leanest of the lot and sent him howling to the floor with a well-placed right hook, before Jangli could intervene.

"Whatever did you do that for?"

"Why, man, where's your sense of property rights? These blighters were evaporating with our things and I just said 'no.' Where's the harm in that?"

Jangli eyed his friend a little doubtfully; but remembering the Haigs, brightened up and winked.

"He is a cooly, poor fellow! They are like that here. Good citizens, only a bit hasty. They anticipate you."

"Cooly? Well, don't bother; it doesn't signify."

"But it does. Don't you see you have damaged him a bit?"

"Oh, damn! Shut up! Don't let me damage you."

"Come, come, Mr. Hannibal. This won't....."

"Don't mind me, old fellow. It's only my fun."

"Fun, indeed! I don't want a repetition of your fun, or we part company."

"No, no, no. Don't say that. I should be sorry to lose you."

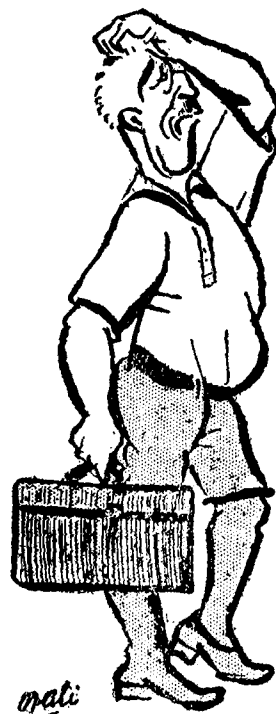
So, first aid was administered to the damaged cooly, effectively, via a tola of silver with His Majesty's head.

After seeing Mr. Hannibal to the Hotel Fleecy, Jangli left him, with a promise to call a couple of hours later.

Night had set in. They were sauntering along Mount Road.

"Say, Mr. Jangli."

"Yes?"



"What street do you call this?"

"Mount Road."

"Why Mount Road?"

"Leads to a Mount."

"Which Mount?"

"Don't know exactly. Mount Everest, probably."

"Say, what's there on the other side of that wall?"

"Oh! That? That's the Governor's place."

"You don't say he lives there, do you?"

"Yes, he lives there, sometimes."

"The devil take you, Indians! Why don't you house your ruler in a secure palace-castle, befitting his rank? The trouble with you, natives, is you are getting democratier and democratier."

"There, there, Mr. Hannibal. Don't be getting funny again. The Gov'nor is alright. He doesn't complain. How shall we commence the revels?"

"Eh?"

"The revels. There are dances, with bars attached. There are the talkies....."

"What else is there?"

"Not much, I am afraid. The brothels are suppressed, thank God. There are a few which do business on the sly. But that's risky. There is the Legislative Council, sitting late—great fun. Ah, yes! There's a play in the Victoria Hall. But you won't be interested, it is a Telugu affair. Moreover, it would be half through by now."

"Never mind. The play's the thing. I want to see how you, fellows, manage the job."

As they neared the lane leading from the Park station, a fellow shot out at top-gear, with a policeman and a few ragged gentlemen-about-town in hot pursuit. Mr. Hannibal braked up with a start and caught Jangli's arm in a vice grip, a strange scared look in his face.

"Let go, Mr. Hannibal, you are hurting me."

"That fellow,—running away, isn't he a revolutionary?"

"Revolutionary be blowed! You seem to smell a terrorist in every other man you see. Likely as not, he is a gent. with rible fingers."



"A pickpocket! Drat them. They are as bad. Say, what does a revolutionary get?"

"Get?"

"Yes. How are they punished?"

"Oh! As the law stands, they get anything from a ten years to free-boarding-and-lodging pass for life. Once in a while, the proceedings are enlivened by the introduction of a little hemp."

"Too dashed soft. Much too dashed soft. Those rascals ought to be hanged till they are dead as Charles I; then shot to make sure; then quartered; then dried; then fried with a seasoning and eaten, skin and all. Damned rats!"

Jangli looked hard at the physiognomy of his friend. A disquieting suspicion took possession of him; but he shook it off as too fantastic.

They entered the theatre. Savitri was pleading with Yama for her husband's life, in a fine crescendo of *mukhari*.

"What's that woman yelling for at the buffalow chap?"

"That lady is just widowed," said the guide. "She is an ideal wife. Praying to the God of Death to restore to her, her lord."

"Then, why don't she put some tragic, suppliant expression into her bally face? She is grinning."

"What you call expression is not necessary on the Indian stage. What she lacks in expression, she is more than making up in sound. This one is a great actress. Almost a Sarah Bernhardt."

"Funny! Queer lot! Let's move on."

They came away. Mr. Hannibal indicating a strong desire to taste a South Indian supper, Jangli took him to Hotel Neo Rot and ordered two specials with extra sweets, among which there was a rasagulla. Mr. Hannibal committed a solecism by making a beginning with the rasagulla.

"Mr. Jangli, what dish is this?"

"Rasagulla."

"What! Not the famous Bengali sweet?"

"Yes, it is."

"Oh! Depraved rouges! Infringement of copy right, I call it. This is no more a rasagulla than you are my wife. I tasted a rasagulla once. It was divine. This is..."

At this stage, the servant brought a vessel to spoon out the ghee.

"What's that?" asked Mr. Hannibal.

"Ghee, saaaaar," said the servant.

Without more ado, Mr. Hannibal introduced his left hand index into the vessel and scooping a goodly bit of the white thing, applied it to his tongue.

"Why, you blasted scoundrel," he roared. "You call this hell's decoction, ghee? If this is not deodorized whale fat, I am a cannibal. Police!"

"Stay, hold, Mr. Hannibal. You are wrong," soothed Jangli. "These gents, are Brahmins, which means in Sanskrit, among other things, congenital vegetarians and anti-whaleans. Now, fellows, who don't touch a Harijan even with a pair of tongs, won't go near a whale, let alone its oil. What?"

"Precious lot *you* know! Come along. I don't want your whale dinners. Don't pay the pickpockets."

The tourists came away, all the hotel staff peeping at them from safe points of vantage. They dined on two beer bottles. Mr. Hannibal saying that he had had enough for a night, Jangli escorted him to the Fleecy and left him.

* * *

Next morning Jangli called at the Fleecy to fix up the itinerary in consultation with Mr. Hannibal.

"Your friend has gone," said the Fleecy Manager.

"Gone? Gone? Where to, may I ask?"

"Calcutta. Immediately you left last night a gimlet-eyed chap tickled in like a cat and after a little persuasion, took Mr. Hannibal away by the Mail."

Jangli choked. He nearly had a fit. He found his tongue at last.

"And what about me?"

"You? I don't know much about you. If you are further interested in the matter, please call at the Coconut Bazaar Police Station."

* * *

"So, you, two, were doing India?" laughed Inspector Burtle. "He did you at all events. Ha, ha, ha! I won't say you lost your money. But it would be sometime before you get it back. You are a fine journalist, you are! Ha, ha!"

"But, officer, you don't say Mr. Hannibal is a.... is a....."

"No, he ain't a criminal, if I get you correct. What he is or was, you will know pretty soon. Write to Bunting and Boggle, Solicitors, Calcutta. And send this note on with yours. It'll help you. Morning."

Jangli wrote that very day to Bunting and Boggle, in a rueful vein. In due season a big, square, respectable looking envelope came along. He tore it open with a shaky hand, and read on, his face a fine study in motions.

Dalhousie Square,
Calcutta, 25th August 1933.

F. L. Jangliwallah, Esqr.,
Journalist,
Hotel Neo Rot, MADRAS.

Dear Sir,

Acknowledging receipt of yours of the 5th July.

The gentleman you picked up on Ballard Pier is no more Mr. Hannibal than you are Mrs. Cleopatra. And he is not a tourist either. He is Mr. Frank Doyle, till recently a prosperous businessman in Clive Street. What with prevailing depression, what with the White Paper generosity, what with the terrorists—especially the terrorists,—though they have never made the acquaintance of our friend, his fine aesthetic brain grew soft. He was scared by the press reports of the exploits of the brotherhood of the bomb. He nearly shot down a respected business connection of his, mistaking him in his distorted imagination for a disguised revolutionary.

So, we put him in a mental home.

In spite of rigid vigilance, he got away twice and did two idiots, assuming fancy *aliases* from ancient history. He passed himself off as a tourist in a mighty hurry, exactly as on the occasion under reference.

Latterly, he quietened down a bit and we thought he would be in intelligent possession of himself before long. But, as it turned out, this was only a lunatic's cunning ruse. He gave the slip a third time.

You know the rest.

Our private detective traced him to Madras and brought him away with the help of the police. He would have seen you, but for pressing business in Calcutta.

We have great pleasure in congratulating you on your emerging unscathed out of this adventure. The two idiots aforesaid had their heads broken by Mr. Doyle.

We have the further pleasure in handing you annexed, as trustees to Mr. Doyle's estate, our cheque for Rs. 400.—which would clear, in full, his obligation to you.

Please own receipt.

Always at your service,

Yours faithfully,
BUNTING & BOGGLE.

P. S. If, in future, you happen to pitch into a European in khaki shorts on Ballard Pier, don't jump to the conclusion that he just got down from the boat. Europeans, as a rule, don't make their debut in India, in shorts.

PRESCRIBED TO DOCTORS

A Collection for the Benefit of Gentlemen of the Medical Profession.

An Eye on Business.

A young country doctor, starting business, was roken in upon by his maidservant, who said, "Them oys is a-stealing of your green apples, sir. Shall I drive 'em away?" The doctor thought for a moment, and then, looking the girl straight in the eye, responded, "No."

An Eye on It.

Doctor (to patient):—"I don't want to make you nduly anxious about your health, but you have a car-uncle coming on the back of your neck, and I should advise you to keep your eye on it."

Taking it Easy.

Friend:—"By the way, dear, how do you like your ew doctor?"

Nurse:—"Oh, he's a charming man: he always kes life so easily!"

Fifty—Fifty.

Patient (calling on doctor):—"I wish, doctor, you ould give me a thorough examination."

Doctor:—"Certainly, I will examine you for Rs. 20."

Patient:—"That's right; and if you find it, I'll give ou half."

Some Consolation.

A doctor doesn't get depressed when he loses a atient, because he realises that the man might have ied even if he hadn't been called in.

Not so Patent.

Doctor (addressing crowd):—"Two years ago, my iends, I was a physical wreck, 'orrible to behold. 'ow I'm a-goin' to tell you what wrought this wonder-ful change."

Old Man (in crowd):—"Wot change?"

Steadying It.

Pretty Nurse (to Doctor):—"Every time I take at patient's pulse, it goes faster. What shall I do?"

Doctor:—"Blindfold him."

Preaching and Practice.

Strangely enough, both the doctor and the vicar ere named Brown, and, as the vicar was a doctor of ivinity, it sometimes led to confusion. For instance, a ranger to the village once asked one of the natives, Where does Doctor Brown live?" "Which one?" asked e villager, "im what preaches or im what practises?"

Ending the Trouble.

Mrs. Jones:—"I'm feeling much better this morn-ing, doctor. The only thing that troubles me now is my breathing."

Doctor:—"Um—yes; We must see if we can't get something to stop that!"

HOPE!

An Irish doctor was examining a wounded man, and pronounced judgment as follows: "There are three wounds; one may prove fatal, but I expect he will recover from the other two."

DOUBT!

A man was filling in his insurance form, and the agent asked him, "Have you ever had appendicitis?" "Well," the applicant answered, "I was operated upon, but I have never felt quite sure whether it was appendicitis or merely professional curiosity."

His Mistake.

"The only bad mistake in a diagnosis I can remember," said an eminent doctor, "was when I prescribed for indigestion, and afterwards learnt that my patient could easily have afforded appendicitis."

A Matter of Size.

Little Snooke had taken a hospital course in Chemistry, and having a sore throat decided to prescribe for himself. With great pride he handed his maiden effort to the chemist. The chemist read it doubtfully. "Well," he said at last, "is it a very big dog?"

A Matter of Coverage.

An old lady went to a doctor, and he painted her back with iodine. She asked what the fee would be, and was told 3s. 6d. "It's an awful lot for that little bit," she said, "why, I had my kitchen white-washed all over for 2s. 6d."

Absent-minded?

He was building up a successful practice, and then suddenly all his patients left him. In filling up a death certificate, he had absent-mindedly signed his name in the space headed, "Cause of Death."

The Diet.

"Did you follow the diet I prescribed, namely, to eat only such food as a three-year-old could digest?" "Yes, doctor, I ate two handfuls of mud, a piece of orange peel, a boot button, and a couple of cigarette ends."



.....distribute to every one, huge lumps of almond halwa.

This is the third of the delightful series of short sketches from the pen of Nera. I, for my part, certainly agree with Nera when he says, "When they meet, some people like to shout hallo or shake hands. For Myself, give me some almond halwa every time."—Editor.

THE other day I heard my little child pottering about upstairs. Guessing that, as usual with her, she was up to some mischief, I called her down and asked her sternly why she had gone upstairs. She smiled—and said with a knowing look—"Sure, because I wanted to come downstairs." The finality and irresistible logic of it shut me up—absolutely. I have said my father was a great disciplinarian. He ruled the house with an iron hand—encased in a velvet glove, of course. He might lose his temper; but he never lost his power of calm, quiet speech and perfectly balanced action. His anger was, therefore, all the more effective on account of this restraint. He was, indeed, affectionate but always clothed his affection in a dignified reserve and only occasionally permitted himself to relax. He was methodical and punctual to the minute in everything he did. Everybody was quite pleased with his systematic way of doing things except perhaps only one person and that was that unfortunate person who had to come twice a week at 5 o'clock in the early morning—even on the coldest wintry days—to shave him.

My mother, on the other hand, believed that habits were made for men and not men for habits. And she never made the slightest attempt to hide her emotions.

What use was emotion without expression? Anger, with her, produced thunder-storms and even my father had to seek instant shelter by retiring upstairs or to his office room. Very soon, however, the sky would clear up. The sun would shine all the more brightly and everybody would be all the happier. Love, with her, was always overflowing and often took the shape of a generous distribution of enormous quantities of eatables. "Feed the brute," was an article of faith with her. You could not come across her anywhere without her at once producing, like a magician, some wonderfully tasty sweetmeat or other. She had a high dietetic and diplomatic opinion of sugar and ghee, wheat, curds and milk. And she had never heard of vitamins! The other day she arrived at a railway station after a long and tedious journey of several days. She was met on the platform by her grown-up sons and daughters and daughters-in-law and grand children. And the first thing she did on alighting from the train was to distribute to everyone present huge lumps of almond halwa. My father sat at some distance trying to look as if he did not notice anything unusual, as if he did not see us all swallowing the halwa with a somewhat sheepish expression in the presence of all and sundry. When they meet, some people like to shout hallo or shake hands. For myself give me some almond halwa everytime. It is all a matter of taste surely—and possibly of heredity.

And now I must tell you of my great adventure with the snake. For some days before the incident, a snake had been seen in different parts of the house, or were there many snakes? But none had been caught. My father always dined at 8 o'clock in the evening. Everybody in the house was expected to sit with him for dinner. Woe unto anybody who was late or missing when he entered the dining room. That evening I had been out playing football and returning home late, undressed in a hurry and went over to a little friend living opposite for a chat. We kept on talking when suddenly I noticed it was pitch dark outside and past 8 o'clock. So I ran hard across the street and jumped up the steps to the house. As I did so, I felt a damp, creepy thing going round and round my ankle. Terror struck, I shouted "snake! snake!" Father, mother and everybody rushed out of the dining room. Seeing the ugly, venomous thing coiling round my leg, each started beating it and my leg with towels, sticks and umbrellas and whatever else anybody could lay their hands upon. But the wretched thing kept its hold. And there it remained—a thin light thing, black and shiny, squirming, twining itself round and round my ankle. At last my family doctor—

an ayurvedic-pandit—who happened to be there, as he generally spent his evenings with us, took great courage and with a brave effort put his hand through the coils, snapped the awful thing off my leg and threw it far away. Oh, the relief of it! Comparable only to those ecstatic moments in one's life—when a splitting headache or a corroding toothache leaves one of a sudden. But my leg was badly bruised with all that beating. It was painful and swollen. Every kind of ointment and medication was applied. Everybody praised my presence of mind in keeping my leg stiff and allowing it and the snake to be beaten hard. Encomiums were showered on the Pandit. He was, indeed, the hero of the hour. Then somebody suggested that we might see what sort of a snake it was that had made such a murderous attack on an innocent boy. There it was, lying where it was thrown, broken and inert—a long silky piece of black boot-lace! I had used it earlier in the evening to keep my socks up in position and had forgotten to take it off when I undressed in a hurry. When, later, I ran across and jumped up the steps, it had slipped down and went round and round my ankle. Thus happened my great adventure with a snake.

PROVERBS ARE PROVERBS BUT

(1) A Fool and his Money are Easily Parted (?)

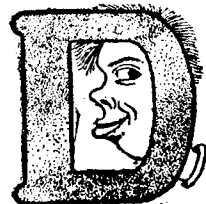


The highway robber, lurking inside the Bank's premises, was waiting for such an opportunity. "At last!" sighed this gentleman of the road, as he overheard the Sowcar telling the Boyee, "You fool, take it carefully and give it to the Manager." The Boyee was duly shadowed and while traversing a by-lane, the attack began. But the fool, with utter disregard to the proverb, started pounding his assailant into jelly while the bag of money lay snug and safe in his capacious pocket.

THE NEW THERAPY

[P. P. SAMUEL]

The patient dabbles in a little palmistry and forecasts the possibility of the fat doctor's demise. It cures the doctor, at least of superfluous flesh.



DR. SRINIVASAN stalked into my room with the solid tramp of an Ayrshire prize bull and deposited his half-ton of beef on a small bedroom-chair built for a feather

weight.

"What's up?" he wheezed, when he had stopped puffing like a steam-roller.

"Asphyxia," I groaned, turning my face involuntarily towards the window. He occupied so much of the available space that I felt a sudden lack of oxygen.

He felt my pulse, stared at my tongue, dug into my liver, pounded my chest, did some Swedish jerks on my abdomen and asked me to recite, 'The Charge of the Light Brigade.'

He stopped me when I had done with the first lot of guns.

"Enough, thanks," said he. "Look here! you are fundamentally O. K. All that you need is a general tuning up. Well, here is the prescrip: Kalzana for your bones, Haemoglobin for your red corpuscles, and heaps and heaps of butter to give you some padding."

"Cut out the butter, doc.," I suggested, "and lend me a bit of your generous padding, will you?"

I wasn't surprised to see the doctor look shocked. Now, if you ever happen to try to make a three-hundred-pounder confess that he is a bit beefy, you will realise that it takes a bit of doing—something like convincing a woman of thirty-five that she isn't five years younger than she really is.

"Am I over-weight?" he asked me, in an injured, buttery voice.

"Just a trifle," said I. "A wee hundredweight or two of superfluous tissues. But don't worry. You can work it off all right in a couple of months on Eno and exercise."

"Don't rot," laughed the medicine man. "I do know I am not in Marathon form just at present. Yet I am more than fit. Do you expect everyone to be two-dimensional like you?"



"May be, I am wrong, Aesculapius. Three chins are, perhaps, better than mere one and a girth of sixty-four inches round the fourth button of the waistcoat more desirable than a paltry thirty-six at the chest. But you have heard of fatty degeneration and things of that sort, haven't you? I'll tell you what, old chap, Drop butter....."

"That's real fun," he bellowed. "We seem to have changed places. For aught I know, you are the doctor now and I am the patient. Would you like to borrow my stethoscope and tongue-depressor, doctor?"

".....and potatoes and rice, brother leech," I continued, serious like, totally ignoring his remark. "And take Eno's or Kruschen's first thing every morning, as much as would lie comfortably on an eight-anna bit. Preferably in your bed coffee. Now, for Falstaff's sake, don't go about messing with those patent fat solvents. They might dissolve the fat away, but would leave your skin wrinkled like a dry grape. Need I tell you that three nice, smooth, full, shiny chins are (even on a week-day) better than one chin with two unutterable flaps behind them? And....."

"If," he interrupted, "If any other blighted ass had the brass to preach me such a homily, I should certainly have got my back up. But, at the same time, I should like to correct a technical error and inform you that I am not far above the average weight for my height."

"Not very," I agreed. "But in these days of economies, why don't you think of the tremendous lot of savings you can effect, if you listen to my advice? Two yards less for a suit, nothing wasted over butter, no snapping belts to replace, less money thrown away over repair of furniture and the back axle of your motor-car. And it is a simple axiom in arithmetic that three chins require three times as many razor blades per week as one. 'Many a mickle makes a pickle—or something,' as the Scots say."

"Not to mention the middle," I rejoined, taking hold of his right wrist gently, and staring at the lines on his palm.

I cocked my eye to the right and then to the left, screwed up my face, pursed my lips and studied his palm as carefully as Choירו himself would have done. And there he sat, like Joa, the fat boy, caught stealing butter from the cupboard.

"Oh God!" cried I, suddenly dropping his hand.

"Now doc., what news?" I asked him, as if I meant to put him off the scent.

"Don't try to side-track me, you silly," said he, in his familiar way. "Out with the life reading, palmist."

"I am no palmist," said I. "I am just a.....just a.....dabbler."

"Don't rot," he shouted. "I have heard people say that you are about the best palmist in S. India."

"Rubbish!"

"Be a good boy for once and do be serious," he pleaded.

"There's nothing peculiar about your palm exceptexcept.....O, nothing at all."

I could see anguish wring his brow.

"Tell me," he gurgled.

"I wish I hadn't looked at your palm," I wailed, trying to look as sad as a jutka-horse.

"Tell me, tell me the worst," he cried, with eagerness sitting in every curve of his face.

"If you insist like that, I suppose, I have to tell you. There is a large gap in your life-line at thirty-seven. But.....but.....but who knows you may not survive it? By the by, what is your age?"

"Thirty-six and a half."

"Then rest easy. You have six months yet. And after all my reading may be wrong."

* * *

Three months have passed by and he is now a light-weight. But that cadaverous look has disappeared from his face because I have told him that the life-reading was just a bluff to frighten him out of his fat.

"You are a genius," he applauded. "Your New Therapy did it. And I bet I won't give you another chance to cure me. I'll hurtle off home, straightaway, and tell my wife that I have forsworn butter and potatoes. Cheerio!"



"Look here, my boy," said he, "I am none of your Bohemians. I live by rule. My house is entirely antiseptic and I live on an exquisitely balanced diet consisting of....."

He disappeared like a diving duck among proteins, fats, carbo-hydrates and vitamins (A—G), leaving me absolutely out of my depths.

"To make a clean breast of it," said he, coming to the surface again, "I have tried every means known to the medical profession to keep my weight down. But, you know, there is a Force outside our control that shapes our ends."

 As I turned, the office-boy handed me a note. I frowned at him. He was growing fat—in the head—and had read too much about Northcliffe. The way this boy cast glances at the Editorial easy-chair was positively indecent. I twirled the note between my fingers and hummed an air. "Any idea, boy, where the chief is?" I asked him.

I picked up the directory, looked up 2600* and then flung the book at the boy's head. He dived like a seal and vanished.

- (1) I want something funny
- (2) Submit a peppy idea for a competition.

Look sharp!

I reversed the agenda. Applying sand-paper to the eye and a pencil-sharpener to the nose, I looked sharply around for an idea. I found a used envelope and on its back indicated a lay-out.

I rang the bell : no response : shouted for the boy : no response either : went out and found him absorbed in "More Educated Evans." He was known to have

picked many a winner with a pin. The process is simple. You take the acceptance-sheet, close your eyes and stab the sheet with a pin. On whichever name your pin has made a hole, the "Cert." is indicated.

"Give this to the chief when and if he returns," said I, handing the boy the envelope bearing on its back the idea for a competition.

"Did the chief say anything in particular before he went out?" I asked the boy, before leaving the place.

"I think, he did," said the boy grinning. "He was describing some of my remote ancestors."

"I know them. I am also going out. Watch the office and your step!"

Something Funny! My sacred aunt! What with
Magazines galore, and writers by the million, every
conceivable subject and theme had been man-handled
and knocked out of shape.

"Well, something is bound to happen. Let us take to the road," said something within me and I took to the road.

The late lamented Mr. 'natural' humorist, used to advise the youths who sat at his filial feet to go into the thronged thoroughfares of the metropolis to derive inspiration therefrom. To quote from his *obiter dicta*, "If one were to keep one's ears and eyes open, one is sure to get something"—snuff or cigarette-smoke in the eye or a vivid vulgar phrase flung into the ear and hitting the tympanum with a never-forgettable reverberating twang. It is an experiment well worth a trial and may even land one occasionally in a Court of Law. Anyway, with ears metaphorically cocked and eyes literally skinned, I was toddling along Broadway

"How delightfully he plays the *Sithar*!" said the velvet-vest veteran of the two.

"Pshaw!" spat the burly one. "He started life as a cotton-cleaner. You know the 'twang-twang' of the twine with which they beat cotton! You give him the Sitar and two bags of cotton. He will clean the lot in two hours! Music! Some people will see music in a road-roller levelling gravel!"

Coom and found myself on the Island grounds. Pitying Thomas Munro for the stirrup he sadly lacked and bowing to His Lordship Boddam patiently serving his term inside a cage, I wondered, if inside the carnival grounds, one could secure something funny, when, to the right, a football match very much impinged on the ear and clamoured for the focus of the eye. Turning, I walked up to the crowd and high above the din recognised a shrill contralto which could not have issued from any other throat except that of our office-boy. There he was shouting and gesticulating and not a fifty

A black and white line drawing illustration. On the left, a man wearing a turban and a shawl is leaning over a large wooden chest of drawers. He is looking down at a rotary telephone that sits on top of the chest. To his right, a woman in a sari stands with her hands on her hips, looking towards the man. The chest of drawers has several drawers with knobs. In the background, there is a framed picture on the wall and a lamp on a small table to the right. The style is simple and illustrative, typical of mid-20th-century Indian magazine art.

Visitor from the Village :—"However do you find the time from this clock, my dear?"

I was in the fringe of a crowd by now. I craned my neck to see what the row was about. There was the fat Brahmin hotel-proprietor I knew, outside his hotel shouting himself hoarse and attempting to kick the new Malayalee servant, who had put the salt inside the ice-cream pail. It was another version of His Master's Noise, for the Malayalee took it all gently, with his tail between his legs—very docile he was and too close to his master: but perhaps he knew that too much adipose issues are a great handicap for delivering an effective kick.

And so passing the Burma-Shell pile and the extensive Fort Railway Station, I crossed the jade-green

yards away was the chief himself, singing the refrain :
 " Man on you, Munuswamy ! "

Two from the office at a match were bad enough and we, Indians, do not fancy a trio: so I left the grounds and ran into a slow procession—It was a funeral.

"God! Here is Fun!" said I to myself and very nearly collapsed.

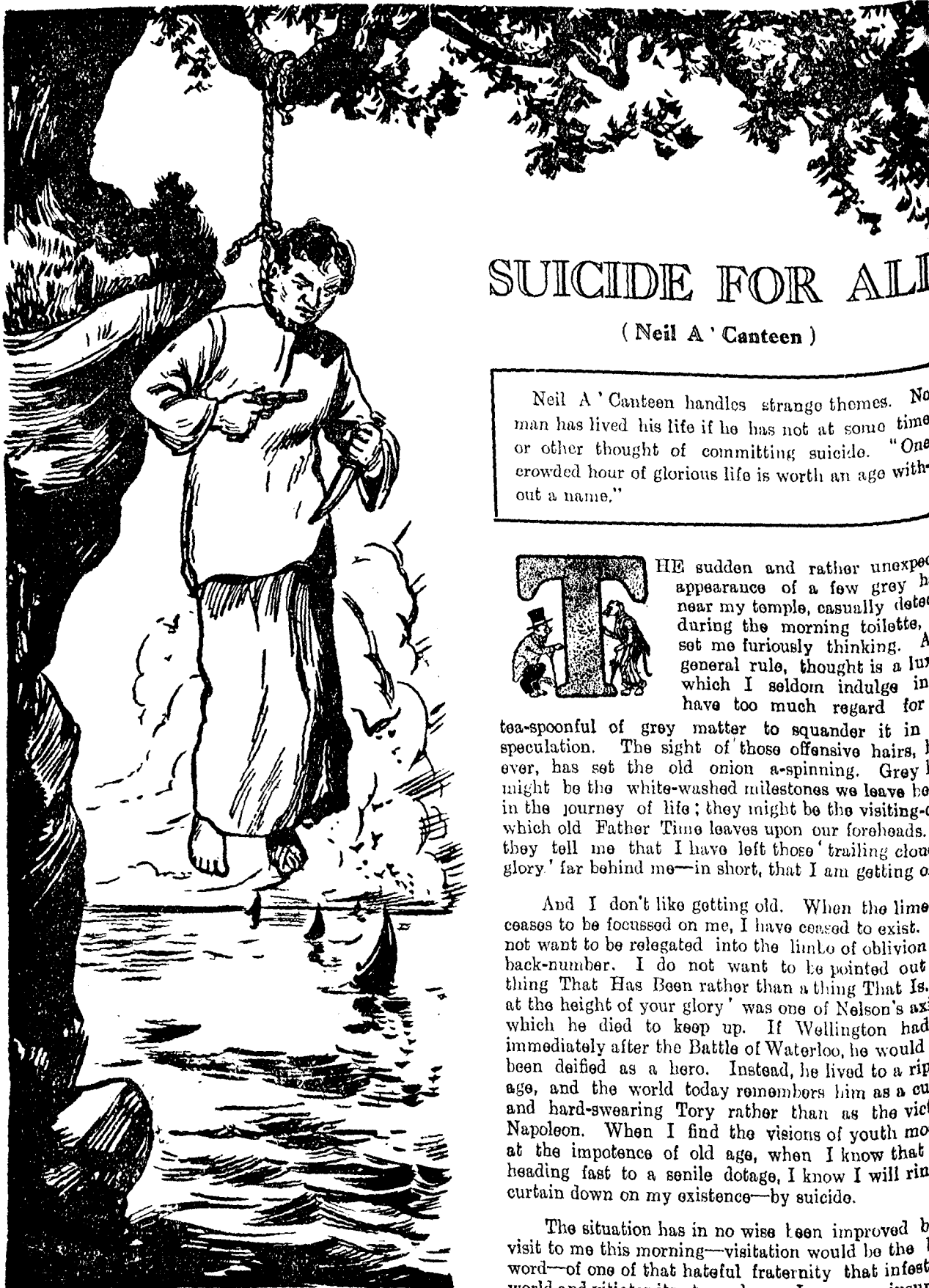
"WHERE?" thunders the Editor.

Between you and me and the aquarium wall, I ask you, is this fact? Isn't there FUN in FUNeral?

between you and me and the aqu
is this fair isn't there? in



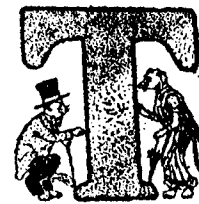
1/9/69



SUICIDE FOR ALL

(Neil A 'Canteen)

Neil A 'Canteen handles strange themes. No man has lived his life if he has not at some time or other thought of committing suicide. "One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name."



THE sudden and rather unexpected appearance of a few grey hairs near my temple, casually detected during the morning toilette, has set me furiously thinking. As a general rule, thought is a luxury which I seldom indulge in. I have too much regard for my tea-spoonful of grey matter to squander it in idle speculation. The sight of those offensive hairs, however, has set the old onion a-spinning. Grey hairs might be the white-washed milestones we leave behind in the journey of life; they might be the visiting-cards which old Father Time leaves upon our foreheads. But they tell me that I have left those 'trailing clouds of glory' far behind me—in short, that I am getting old.

And I don't like getting old. When the limelight ceases to be focussed on me, I have ceased to exist. I do not want to be relegated into the limbo of oblivion as a back-number. I do not want to be pointed out as 'that thing That Has Been rather than a thing That Is.' 'At the height of your glory' was one of Nelson's axioms which he died to keep up. If Wellington had died immediately after the Battle of Waterloo, he would have been deified as a hero. Instead, he lived to a ripe old age, and the world today remembers him as a curmudgeon and hard-swearing Tory rather than as the victor Napoleon. When I find the visions of youth mocking me at the impotence of old age, when I know that I am heading fast to a senile dotage, I know I will ring the curtain down on my existence—by suicide.

The situation has in no wise been improved by the visit to me this morning—visitation would be the better word—of one of that hateful fraternity that infects the world and vitiates its atmosphere—I mean an insurance agent. The fellow had barged into my room with

even a 'By your leave', when I was enjoying my *chota*. And to disturb me when I am sipping my morning coffee is to place your hand on a non-insulated fuse in an electric power-house. I have a nebulous sort of idea that long before Satan invaded the Garden of Eden, the Insurance Agent had disturbed the peace of Paradise. He must have whispered into the ears of Eve, that she should be provided for the future in case Adam should kick the bucket all too soon. And this fellow had spoiled the day for me with his talk of policies, premiums and bonuses. Short of a blank 'No', I had tried all the possible means to get rid of him. I pleaded that I was a victim to all the diseases in the pharmacopoeia from toothache to tuberculosis. And once, I averred, my heart had actually stopped beating for full two minutes. I made him understand that there was a strain of insanity running in the family and I convinced him that heredity counts. The fellow heard me out as cool as a cucumber and accepted me as a first class risk. A farce of a medical exam. at a neighbouring doctor's, and I was richer by a Rs. 5000 policy dumped on me, and poorer by a few cups of coffee to which the blighter had helped himself without an invitation. No wonder, I am feeling



.....missed me by a few inches.....

as vindictive as 'Ate today, and if I stir out, I am sure there would be at least half-a-dozen casualties among insurance-agents ere the sun sets. The fellow that

trapped me must be laughing at me in his sleeves as an easily gullible fool. But Time will turn the tables, Sir. I know the company has to shell out the tin if the policy-holder commits suicide a year after the payment of the first premium. Wait, my dear fellow, wait. You will laugh to another tune before the game is finished, when you will find my name in the obituary list. They laugh best who laugh last.

Addison killed Sir Roger de Coverley that no one else might take that liberty with that eminent Knight. I would like to put an end to my existence that no one else might do it. I will not, if I can help it, leave a knife which posterity would proudly preserve in a museum as the weapon that took the Neilish life. No one shall have a chance of boasting that he has worsted me. It shall be said of me, as Mark Antony said of himself—a Roman by a Roman valiantly vanquished. And of late, Death and I have been running a neck-to-neck race. Countless are the 'narrowshaves' I had recently. When I was walking close to a building the other day, a huge block missed me by inches. The train which I would have caught, but for the happy accident of being late by a minute, had been wrecked in a collision. And a cobra's fang, darted with unerring precision, had just missed my ankle and emptied its venom in the hind tyre of my byke. And as for street-fights, where there is a liberal exchange of brickbats and soda-bottles, I am like the Irishman, who, when he heard some commotion at the far end of his street, sent his daughter to enquire. "Dad would like to know, if there is going to be a row," said the girl, "cos, if so, he would like to join in it." Yes, Death has been pursuing me like an avenging fury, and I feel it up to me to beard him in his den, to rush to death as if to a bridal bed. And perhaps, when you carry the war, into the enemy's camp, Death will fight shy of you, as some worthy recently demonstrated. He prepared himself for suicide, leaving nothing to chance. Believe it or not, he took an over-dose of a mild poison, hanged himself from a tree on the sea-shore, and held a loaded revolver in his hand, ready to blow his brains out, if the other strings in his bow should snap. The poison was slow in its effect and finding his medulla oblongata too tough to be snapped by the knot of a rope, he held the revolver to his temple and pulled the trigger. Obviously, he was the sort of shot who aims at a cathedral tower and misses it by a hair's breadth. The bullet snapped the rope into two and he fell into the sea. After gulping down a gallon or so of salt water, he was washed ashore. Meanwhile, the sea-water had neutralised the effect of the poison!

Can you, gentle reader, lay your hand upon your heart and honestly tell me, that not once in your life have you ever thought of a little bottle with a red-label with 'Poison' on it, at the chemist's at the corner of the street? No? Not even when with your heart a-pit-a-pat and your fingers trembling, you break the wrapper of the paper that bears your examination results and find there every number in the numerology except your own? Of course, thoughts of absconding to Bombay or Singapore come next—but that little bottle leads. And one need not feel so guilty over it. For in the rough-and-tumble of existence in a world which is a 'deep vale of tears', there is scarcely a single individual

upon whose mind thoughts of suicide do not obtrude themselves at some time or other. If there is, my hat off to him!

De Quincey might sing the praises of murder as a fine art, but ever since reading Dr. Smile's volume on Self-Help, I have been inclined to back up suicide. We, as a generation, are getting more self-reliant than ever, and do not want to be obliged to another; no, not even for the butt-end of a cigarette. And moreover, it is a delicate task to put a revolver into your friend's hands, and ask him to discharge an ounce of lead into your brains. You do not pay a discount to his sentiment, for, say what you like, we are still full of that stuff, in spite of Bernard Shaw.

I am all for suicide, but suicide in the most artistic way possible. The deed should live after me, as the statue of Venus de Milo or the portrait of Mona Lisa do, long after the bones of their creators have crumbled into dust. The idea of my body being fished out of a filthy pond with pupil-less eyes and a water-logged tummy is preposterous. To be found oscillating like a pendulum from the branch of a tree with a noose round the neck, is worse. To be anatomised into chops by the wheels of a train is crude. Such means of ejecting the soul from its fleshy tenement jar on our sense of art. Dress my body up in its Sunday clothes and lay it on a clean bed. Let there be on the lips a smile and on the face a serenity, imprinted there by the Angel of Death. Let my body lie like a fair casket from which the precious jewel has been rifled. Verily, it must be said of me that after 'life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.'

And to think of the obituary notices and the epitaph on your tomb! It would really make you commit suicide, for it is a sin to speak ill of the dead. And my only wish is that I should be able to be conscious of the fine things that are said about me when I am gone. I shall have a hearty laugh at the writer of that obituary notice and my very bones shall rattle in their coffin. To hear the plaints and laments and to see the tears of those near and dear to us, to realise that by our exit we have created a void in the heart of some which would take long to be filled up—really, it soothes our vanity and lays the flattering unction to our soul.

Moralists always raise my gorge, when, with an air of infallible wisdom, they proclaim that it is cowardly to commit suicide. Rot! There never was a greater fallacy. They write a three-column editorial or make a three-hour speech on the courage of an Amundsen or a General Nobile, who have after all only tried to explore the Arctic. And they have only a sneer for the hero, who, tucking up his sleeves and girding up his loins, makes the fatal plunge—the leap into the dark to dare the unknown. Travesty of logic! If you have praises, prepare to shower them on him who, without rudder or compass, launches his frail bark on to the uncharted seas.

But still the coroner at an inquest persists in believing that suicide can be committed only in a fit of insanity. The reason is obvious. Thanks to Einstein, we know that sanity and insanity are only relative terms. Ask any inmate of a Mental Hospital and he would tell you that his asylum is the only oasis of sanity in a sahara of lunacy. But he is kept under lock and

key—because "it is a mad, mad world, my brothers." And the irrefutable proof of Hamlet's insanity is that he did not commit suicide when he ought to have done it. Instead of stalking on the stage ranting at 'the Almighty's canon against self-surrender,' he could have shone in the glorious galaxy of Othello and Brutus, by simply thrusting a poisoned rapier into his bosom.

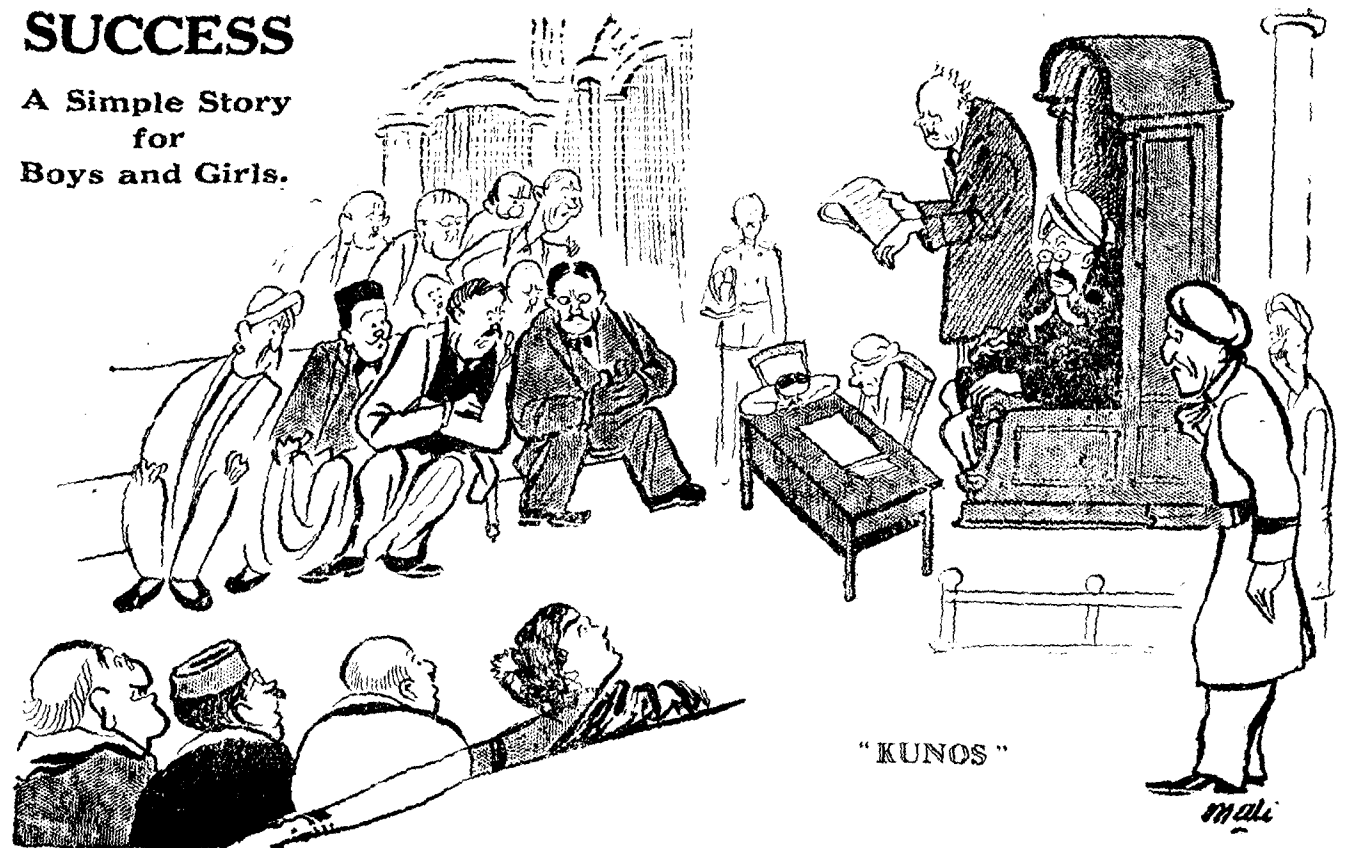
One crowded hour of glorious life, sang the poet, is worth an age without a name. And here I come to the crux of my theme. Why not we cultivate intense living, load every rift with ore, condense all human experience into one little sensation and then—commit suicide! A great General recently retired from the army to make way for the promotion of a hierarchy of subordinate ranks. Why not put an end to one's existence so that the younger generation might be given a chance to show their mettle? And the menace of overpopulation would be a thing of the past. And just think of it! There will be a welcome arranged for us in the next world—whichever that is—by the 'inheritors of unfulfilled renown.' We shall shake hands with Chatterton, 'the marvellous boy that perished in his prime.' We shall bask in Cleopatra's favours. Kreuger shall light our cigarettes for us. Kodak shall snap us. And the Aberdonian shall rejoice, who shot himself dead, when an undertaker in a fit of generosity promised to bury free of cost the next man that died.



.....a cobra emptied its venom in the hind-tyre of my byke.....

SUCCESS

A Simple Story
for
Boys and Girls.



"KUNOS"

.....Sarada glared at H. E.....

A tale with a moral. "If you have money, you can always succeed in life, especially in political life." The trouble is with people who seek money and not success in political life. Thereby hangs the tale!



ONCE upon a time, in a distant province of India, there lived a boy called Ram. Ram was a naughty boy. Lying came natural to him. He lied to his brothers; and he lied to his mother; he lied all over the place and he lied most of the time.

If ever he was caught in a lie and if people put him inconvenient questions, he said simply: "You go to the Devil. I shan't answer you." So, you can guess what a rude boy he was. When he played in the streets, he flung mud at the passers-by; and when they turned back, he tried to look very innocent. He was, as you may expect, the terror and despair of his teacher. This teacher, a mild, old man, named Mohandas, became very unhappy about him and went to his father and said: "What can we do about Ram? He looks and acts like a Rakshasa. Whenever he opens his mouth to speak, people laugh at him, for he stutters so. He has been at school for years and yet can barely sign his name. But worse than all, he is a bad liar, flings mud at people, is rude in his manners, and can keep neither his friends nor his promises. And if I question him, he says, 'Go to the Devil!' What is he good for, except the jail?" And so the old man ran on.

But Ram's father was a very clever man and knew a great deal more about life than this silly, old school-master; and he said with a proud smile all over his face: "Our Ram may not be good enough for any one of the humdrum professions. But he is not foolish enough to go to jail. On the other hand, my dear sir, do you not see that he has the makings of a successful politician? If you can't make a man of him, don't you worry. I can and will make a Minister of him!"

So, he at once took the boy in hand. He taught him to say "Notice!" instead of "You go to the Devil!", to stand up and smile whenever he saw an Englishman, and to repeat on all possible occasions, "I am against the Congress. I am against the Congress." And after this training, he made him a Minister. For, Ram's father was a wealthy man and there is nothing that wealthy people cannot do in politics.

And in spite of his stony silence, Ram was a roaring success as a Minister. At the Council meetings, when they aimed questions at him, he uttered the magic *mantra*, "Notice!" and won peace and safety. All his party-men said, "What a safe Minister he is! He is never indiscreet, for, he can't speak for stuttering." His subordinates said, "What an ideal Minister he is, for, he

has a lovely signature and he places it at the bottom of any paper that we put before him." The Opposition said, "What a dangerous man he is! He flings mud so unerringly. Anyhow, we must not quarrel with him; for any day he may form a coalition and then he can put us into office."

But poor Ram was a great failure at home. His wife was a termagant and not at all awed by his many virtues and dignities. She was always nagging him and would not give him a moment's peace. She would not allow him to come home late in the evening; she would not allow him to get up late in the morning; and she would not allow him to spend a rupee without her consent. Ram pleaded that it was not the Home Member, who ought to have the power of the purse. But whatever he said, his wife only laughed at him and said, "Are all the Members of Government as inept as you?" And Ram always replied, "Notice!"—from force of habit. But she could not be silenced, like the Legislators. She went on shooting insulting remarks at him and, when words failed, she shot at him whatever lay handy. Ram could only shout, "Order! Order!"—which he had learnt from his friend, the President,—or "Law and Order must be maintained,"—which he had learnt from his friend, the Home Member. But all this did him no good.

So, Ram brooded and brooded on this problem until at last he had an idea. Hugging this idea to his bosom, he went and bought a new jewel for his wife and gave it to her. And when he saw that she was pleased, he said, "My dear, I have had a brain-wave." But she only stared at him and said, "Don't be absurd. A bald woman cannot have a hair-wave and you cannot have a brain-wave." But he persisted and said, "But, my dear, do please listen to me and you will be convinced that this is the genuine thing. Do you not see that your genius is being wasted in the narrow circle of the home? You have great powers: you can be virtuously indignant over trifles and you can get into tantrums at a moment's notice. You can make a non-stop speech for three hours. You are just the person to be Leader of the Opposition. The office is yours for the taking. Now, will you take it or leave it?"

And so, she smiled and said, "Well, I don't mind taking it. And you had better get busy about wangling it for me." Soon Sarada was made Leader of the Opposition. For, Ram was a wealthy man and there is nothing that wealthy people cannot do in politics.

Sarada was even more of a success in the Opposition than Ram was on the Treasury Bench. The President dare not cry, "Order! Order!" to her; for he quailed at her glance. Whenever Sarada disliked a passage in the Governor's speech, at the opening or closing of the Council session, she just glared at him and His Excellency usually put the rest of his speech in his pocket and sprinted for the Government House. And never once could his chauffeur overtake him. Sarada flung her questions and speeches at the poor dear Members of Government and she did not spare her husband. But, Ram was the last person to mind her harshness, for he had got used to it all, at home. At the close of each

day's session, he crossed the floor of the House and kissed the Leader of the Opposition. For, he said nobly, "Political differences ought not to stand in the way of personal friendship."

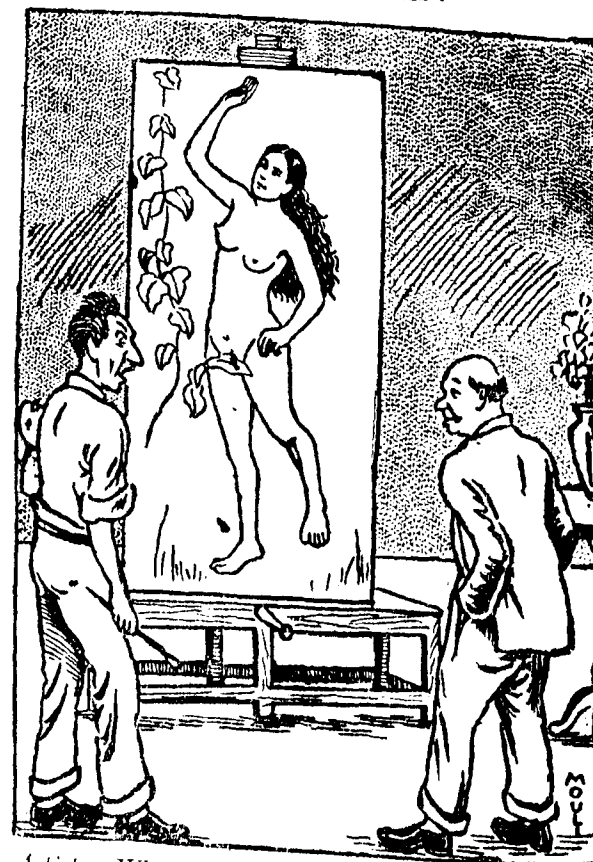
But the Governor and the other Members of Government were not at all happy. None of them could be comfortable so long as Sarada was in the opposition. So they laid their heads together and it was not long before they discovered that the Province was passing through a terrible crisis and that all the parties ought to join together and form a National Cabinet for saving the Province.

And Ramsay MacDonald radio-phoned from Downing Street, "Hear, Hear!" or words to the same effect.

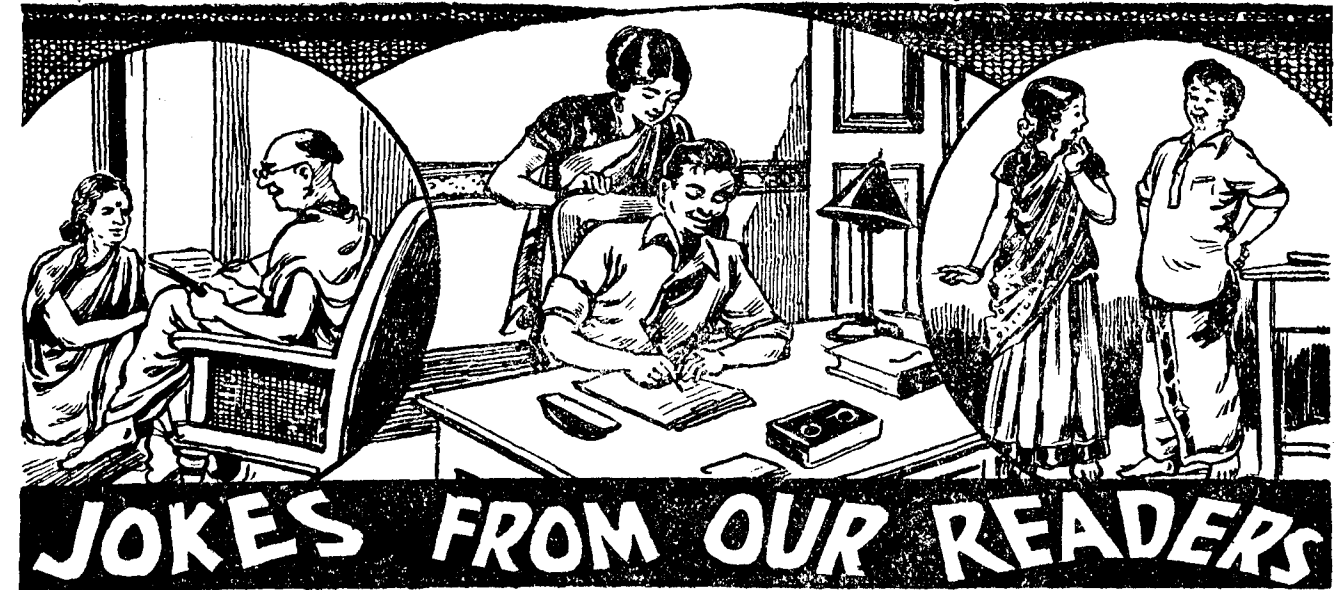
So, they made both Ram and Sarada Ministers in the National Government; and of course, Sarada was the Chief. And they lived happily ever afterwards, for whatever party came to power, they promptly changed over to that party. And every party was glad to have them for some time at least, because they were so wealthy.

MORAL:—And so, my dear boys and girls, never you mind the silly old morals taught by your school-masters. If your parents have money, you can always succeed in life, especially in political life.

TOO MANY LEAVES!



Artist:—What do you think of the picture?
Visitor:—Are you going to paint more leaves?
Artist:—Why?
Visitor:—Too many already!



Mr. Jill happened to notice a sign-board in front of a Doctor's house, "Dr. Dill—Consultation free during Office hours." Finding that the moment was most opportune, he boldly stepped in and said to the Doctor: "Good-morning, Sir, what shall I do if I were ill?"

Doctor (promptly and humorously replied): "Well, Mr. Jill, if you are ill, walk up the hill, cross the rill, get into the mill, pay my bill, have the will to take my pill with a gill of milk to the fill, till you have nil to kill."

—V. Rajagopala Aiyar, Fernhill.

The teacher was explaining to his pupils the meaning of homicide. "Suppose a motor-car going at top speed ran over me in a street corner. What would that be?"

"A three days' holiday," replied the boys.

—K. Saraswathy, Trivandrum.

"Well, Kittoo, I see your brother has a bandaged hand. Has he had an accident?"

"Yes, reckless driving."

"Ah, a motor-car, I presume!"

"Oh, no!—a nail!"

—A. V. R. Chandran, Podanur.

"I want a pair of shoes of good quality, for this little boy," said an Indian gentleman, as he entered a boot-shop in London.

"Certainly, sir," said the Manager. "English Kid?"

The parent got annoyed, and said:—"Look here, you must know, this boy was born and bred in India!"

—M. J. Swamikannu, Champion Reef.

In a village, there is a corpulent man who holds the record for consuming the largest number of *Idlis* at a time. Recently he beat his own 1930 record. But the tragedy of it all was that he did it almost to the point of death. The Doctor arrived and pronounced "no hope." The wailing wife of our hero brought the holy Ganges water to administer to him, hoping that something miraculous would turn up. But the dying hero, murmuring, said: "Had there been space for those drops of water, I fain would have stuffed in some more *Idlies*!"

—Saraswati, Sagar.

Teacher:—"Now, can you tell me a liquid that doesn't freeze?"

Boy:—"Hot water, sir."

—V. S. Narayanan, The Mount.

A Vakil was cross-examining a woman-witness and wanted to make much of the fact that her husband had been a burglar from his youth up.

Vakil:—"And, why did you marry a burglar?"

Witness:—"Well, you see, when I was to be married, I had two suitors—one was a lawyer and the other, no doubt, a burglar; but I chose the better of the two."

—S. Balakrishnan, Mylapore.

A dairyman was taken to task by a customer for having rendered an account for milk with the entries twice charged.

"Well," the dairyman replied, "I have asked several accountants lately, and they say that everything is now done by the double entry method."

—M. Subramanian, Egmore.

Once a man complained to the Police-Inspector that he lost his pocket-watch at China Bazaar.

Inspector:—"Can you furnish me with details regarding it?"

Complainant:—"Yes, sir."

Inspector:—"What?"

Complainant:—"Only a few minutes before I lost it, it was 4-45 p.m."

—T. V. Rajagopalan, Madras.

Boy:—On seeing an Aeroplane flying, he said to his father, "Papa, when will the passengers reach heaven, if they go on flying like this?"

Father:—"As soon as the petrol is exhausted," was the prompt reply.

—M. Venkatachalam, Bellary.

He:—"What's your husband?"

She:—"An inventor."

He:—"What does he invent?"

She:—"A new excuse every month for not paying the house-rent."

—R. A. Padmanabhan, Pollachi.

Father:—"Do the questions, which the teachers ask you, puzzle you?"

Boy:—"No, the questions don't, but the answers do."

—T. C. A. Ramanujam, Triplicane.

"Mr. Jones," said the employer, "yesterday you went away in the afternoon, saying that you were ill. Yet, I saw you at the Races and you were quite O.K."

"Ah," said Jones, "You should have seen me after three-thirty! Before that I was ill."

—Miss Chandravalli, Bangalore City.

In spite of clear instructions and repeated entreaties, we find that contributors to this page copy jokes from foreign periodicals and pass them on as original Jokes. The prize of Rs. 3/- is awarded to what we think is an original joke and even here it is possible that we err. Once again, may we request contributors to this page to send only original jokes?—Editor.

This fortnight the Prize is awarded to Mr. R. A. PADMANABHAN, Pollachi.

SUSILA TACKLES MY TEETH

(N. S. PILLIEUX)

No one can doubt Susila's good intentions. Her solicitude for her husband's welfare is so touching. While we are still left doubting if she cured her husband's baldness, here she is, tackling his teeth.—*Editor.*



"My teeth were the target of her attack."

THE annual Health and Baby Week Celebrations may, indeed, be a move in the right direction for educating the masses, and instilling in them the elementary principles of Preventive Medicine. Prevention may be, and perhaps is, (as the old hackneyed adage goes) better than cure; but, one should not, for that simple reason, be so far obsessed with ideas of ways and means thereof, as to err on the side of excessive caution and be dubbed eccentric by the world at large. I once read of a Yankee—a brainy chap, that one—who, in his desire to minimise the risk of ill health and indirectly, therefore, of death, underwent a series of prophylactic inoculations against all known and unknown diseases on the face of earth; but, would you believe it, the poor chap kicked the bucket under a bus!

The oft-quoted, well-known lines,
"Woman.....
When pain and anguish wring the brow
A ministering angel thou!",
does little justice, so far as it applies to my wife Susila. She, in fact, transcends the poet's conception of her species; she is a ministering angel, when there is neither pain nor anguish to wring my brow, or for that matter any other part of my anatomy. You envy me? Well, well!

It all happened this way. The Health and Baby Week last year came—and went as usual. To me, it was no more important than any other of the fifty-one weeks of the year; but curiously enough,

Susila took an exceptional interest in the year's celebrations. She was, in fact, a co-opted member, or something of the Advisory Committee, or may be Sub-Committee; and, if I remember aright, she never missed a single lecture, or a demonstration, during the week. My house proved the dumping ground for a number of health pamphlets, hand-bills, health-slogan bearing placards, and so on and so forth. It was no wonder, therefore, that, when the week came to a close—as, indeed, any week must, sooner or later—Susila began to utilise her newly acquired ideas of correct and hygienic living, like charity beginning at home, to set her house in order.

A supplementary budget for mosquito nets, a drum of phenyle, fly-proof fittings, rat-traps, and so on, had to be sanctioned. Carpenters got busy fixing up ventilators to the living and bed rooms, and generally remodelling the house along ultra-modern hygienic lines, under the personal supervision of Susila herself.

The house problem having been tackled satisfactorily, Susila directed her energies towards the betterment of her 'domestic colleague.' My teeth were the first target of attack and came in for a large share of hostile criticism. I listened, in awed silence, to a masterly exposition of the dangers and far-reaching sequelae of Pyorrhoea—I hope I spell it right. Almost all diseases that "human flesh is heir to" appeared to owe their origin directly or indirectly to this infernal disease. An appointment with a dentist was, therefore, fixed up; and, when I 'kept' it, I was 'chaired' (dentist's vocabulary), three of my offending teeth were pulled out, two were 'plugged' and with a general scaling of the intact ones, the day's sitting came to a close. But, not so my troubles; for, every morning and every night (as the last thing before going to bed) thereafter, under the personal supervision and in the immediate presence of Susila herself, an intensive and organised campaign against "the bacterial flora and fauna" of my mouth was launched, aided by an inch or two of a foul smelling paste on a hard-as-nail bristled tooth-brush and a lotion of revolting taste as a final mouth-wash.

While my teeth were receiving such meticulous attention, my general health was not neglected either. "Dear, you are growing fat," Susila confided to me, one afternoon, as I returned from my office.

Susila Tackles My Teeth

"Fat, eh?" I beamed upon her, quite pleased at receiving, what I thought, was a compliment, "that means, I look more healthy."

"No, you are not," she said, with an air of infinite concern; "don't you know, dear, obesity is a terrible state for any person to be in? It may predispose to many serious ailments; and, what is more," she paused, to drive home the dangers of obesity, "it may even produce—sudden death."

"But you know, dear, that I am heavily insured," I ventured to suggest.

"Shut up!" was all I got for what she considered as "my cheek."

The next few days saw Susila busy looking up all sorts of reference books on "Obesity Cures," "Dietetics" and so on. As a result, drastic cuts were made in the fat-producing and carbohydrate contents of my diet, as also in the quantity of intake allowed. Side by side with the above dietetic restrictions, physical exercises, under the direct supervision of Susila "to wash away my fat," were also so incorporated into my daily routine, as to eat-up the major portion of my leisure hours at home.

Without going into minute details, I may say that this changed state of affairs left me, as hungry as the wolf, throughout the day; while the exhausting "fat reducing" exercises on a practically empty stomach reduced me to the ghost of my former self. Continued inanition and exertion brought in their wake, the usual, characteristic, unequivocal symptoms—dark rings around sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, a wild and hungry look on the face

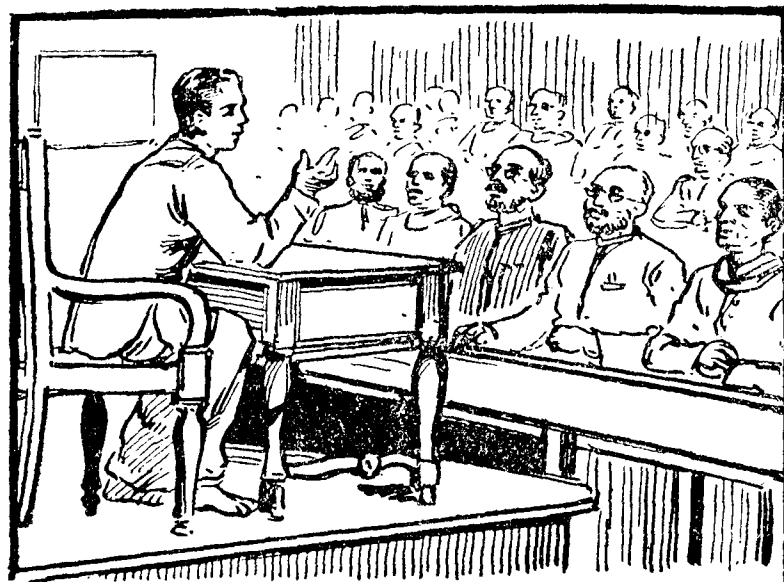


Drilled under the direct supervision of Susila.

and a death-like pallor over the whole body.

After the 'cure' was 'on' for a month or so, my boss at the office, no doubt, struck with my changed appearance, one day called me aside, and said, "Why, man! you seem to be aging and going downhill rapidly. I should think, there is something seriously the matter with you. Take my advice, before it is too late; avail yourself of sick leave for a month or two and recoup your health. But mind," his words fell like a bomb-shell, "if you don't pull up soon, I may have to seriously consider the question of 'invalidating' you."

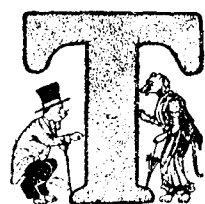
The Sack! After all these 'cures'! Is Susila to be told?



THE ART OF MOB-COLLECTING A LECTURE

(REPORTED BY FELIX SUM)

[In this age of Democracy, the goodwill of the mob is an absolute necessity for the successful politician. But how to gather together a mob? Felix Sum's report touches the fringe of the problem.—Editor.]



THE study of mob psychology has been the passion and problem of ages ever since Adam was created. (Laughter). To deal with, to understand, to overlook, to rouse, to appease, to incense, to pacify mobs, you must have a mob. If every person were to remain indoors or to attend to his own proper work, then, there can be no mobs. (A voice: Isn't Mobile oil of any use?) Gentlemen, so far as my researches go, I have been unable to trace any connection or influence. It might probably be, as a friend suggests, that being a foreign product, it has no application here.

The Art of Mob collecting, Mobilising if you will or crowd-gathering, naturally claims the first attention in the subject of Mobs. The *summum bonum* of a politician was, has been, is, and will be, the possession of a following—I use the word 'possession' advisedly in its juristic sense—somewhat like the Centurion in St. Matthew, who had many servants who would come when he says 'Come' and go when he says 'Go.' The secret of success of the official in service—for I well know that not some but many among you will shortly be knocking, with full faith in the Gospel which says 'knock and it shall be opened,' at the doors of the Services Commissions, public or private—was, has been, is and will ever continue to be, the foundation of a Popular Opinion. I pass over the religious teacher, the street preacher, the street juggler and performer etc., who are intent on mob-collecting. Practical advice, then, on the art of crowd gathering is a *sine qua non*. There are several guiding principles—laws and regulations of nature—alas! unfortunately known to but a few, I mean in the scientific or systematic sense—which it shall be my endeavour to set out analytically as well as synthetically.

Before, however, considering the subject in its historical aspect after the orthodox manner and laying bare before you the methods pursued by cannibals and savages in prehistoric days—you have an instance in the method of Polyphemus the Cyclops in Homer—by

the people of the ancient, medieval and modern times—the mob of the French Revolution for instance—I shall give you two striking experiments made in this country in recent years.

Fifty years ago nearly, gentlemen, in the town of Cumbangle in the South, there lived a merry wag, Desa Iyer, who was notorious for his wit and practical jokes. Great preparations were at one time being made, as it was announced that His Excellency the Governor was visiting the town to receive caskets, garlands, addresses etc. at the Carrier Town Hall. The wag approached the Tahsildar, the willy-nilly Master of Ceremonies—who, by the way, was making a decent collection, feathering his own nest in the bargain too—and our wag requested the Tahsildar to arrange for a few minutes' interview with His Excellency. The Tahsildar laughed at the presumptuous demand and dismissed the wag and the request. Desa Iyer's pride was hurt and he vowed before the Tahsildar that he would invite and entertain His Excellency at his own house and make the Tahsildar serve him that day.

The great day arrived. His Excellency arrived in State and was taken in procession with music playing in front, a train a furlong deep before and behind, all the while smiling in whispers to the District Collector. Just as the procession came up half-way, it had to simply stop, held up by a huge crowd, whose men were running about, backs bent and stooping in a scramble to pick up something. Some fifty yards high above, from the parapet wall of the third storey, our friend, Iyer, was busy putting both his hands into money bags and throwing into the public street, coins, quarter-annas and half-annas. A few tall members were skilful in bringing about a stoppage in transit, like crows that can divert the path of an edible projectile in air into their maws. But the greater number crawled.

The District Collector was furious at the cry-halt to the procession and looked ferociously at the Tahsildar behind, who looked nervously at the Sub-Magistrate, whose piteous eyes were transfixed to the starting point

of the parabolas of coins evidently in their glare, cursing the folly of the wastage in costly dynamical experiments. The District Collector demanded an explanation and the ubiquitous Police Inspector hurried up with a posse of what looked like Lucifer matches, and soon brought Mr. Desa Iyer before the Collector. Mr. Iyer, not deigning to look at the Collector, made a low bow to His Excellency and began: "My Royal Lord! It is the custom among the Hindus, the most loyal citizens on the face of the globe, as learned men and books will show, that, when Kings pass, the townsmen should strew flowers and shower money. I have but obeyed the injunctions of God in thus rendering my homage and my brethren's to His Majesty's visible representative etc. etc." He then wound up with an audacious invitation to His Excellency to step into his house and the Governor, a humour loving man, did so, cheerfully. The *Arathi* was a pleasing sight. After camphor, garlands etc. Mr. Iyer made His Excellency drink an *uthirani* full of holy water and munch a few pieces of fruits. In the presence of His Excellency, Mr. Iyer called on the Tahsildar to serve the fruits and the Tahsildar did so. What later followed is beside our purpose and I shall not weary you with the tale.

The second is a little experiment, performed, gentlemen, by my humble self. When I was a student in the Humane College, our History Professor, Mr. Mac-Pass lectured to us one day on the characteristics of mobs. That evening, somehow in a wrangle, between myself and a class-mate, I said that I could collect a

crowd of not less than fifty persons in a public highway, without opening my mouth—that was made essential because, even in those days, I am proud to look back upon them now, my humble self had made some noise in the College Began Society etc. Well, that evening at about five o'clock, my friend and myself went to the Central Station bridge and there stationed ourselves on the pedestrian pavement, and looked intently into the pure fragrant water flowing between the Moore Market and the Railway Station. I pointed with a finger to a spot on the water below and began tracing curves in air. My companion was shifting his head up and down, from side to side in several loops, gazing hard at the water below. In less than a minute, three or four others of the passers-by halted, watched us, and finally watched the water. In another minute, ten more joined. The third minute saw more than twenty-five gathered about, holding the rails and peering deep below. The fourth minute men, women, urchins, pedlars, officers out of their carriages, even people from the tram-cars—then the Triplicane and Mylapore passengers reached home only doubling the Chintadripet fish market—all crowded behind, though they could see nothing but the backs of other persons. If I had liked, I could have, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, led the whole lot to a ducking in the sacred canal. But the fifth minute I walked away from my place, my companion following me, leaving a crowd of nearly a hundred on the pavement to watch some fancied curiosity. I won the wager! (applause).

(To be Continued.)



I
She took me into the bedroom
We both went to bed
"Oh, that is quite alright!"
Was all that her mother said.

II
Now though 'tis morning
I am holding her still tight
You know I'm the Saree—
She draped me on last night.

T. L. E.

Enamoured of My Wife

(EMDEN)



If jumping to conclusions is deemed an art, I will take my rightful place in the world of artists. I might even be hailed as a genius. For, if there was anything in which I found myself most natural, it was in jumping to conclusions. To this artistic talent of mine add my idiotic yellow heart and green eyes for my kid of a genuine newly-wed brand-new bride. And when a man like that has to live in box-like contiguous dwellings of an infernally clamorous city as this, he is bound to agree that jumping to conclusions is most uncommonly true.

The one advantage of marrying a modern girl with no end of a tongue and no sign of a heart is that she does not tax your conversational powers nor bar your path when you honestly attempt to commit suicide; if you let fall an occasional 'Yes', she is perfectly happy. This tender representative of the feminine world had in addition to the aforesaid qualifications of a sentimentally inert heart and a figuratively unending tongue all other physical attractions that any lazy languorous poet might make it worth while to weave around his chosen heroine. To find such a girl as that in my parlour was like coming across a lotus blooming in mire.

Our home had not made any history before the day she cooed to me like the blithiest bird on a branch, "Why don't you ever go out?" It never occurred to me why nymphs should say such things. Now I know.

I debated swiftly whether it would be wise to tell her I had no job, that that infernal rogue of a marriage broker lied most maliciously when he spoke to her parents of my resources and resourcefulness, and it was idle to expect me to go anywhere but sit at home and devour her endless charms with my hungry eyes. But she returned to the parlour before I could stammer a word.

I made up my mind to go out, at least just to please her and I did. Scarcely had I crossed the threshold, when I heard the silvery voice of the siren within, jingling like golden bells. Now she laughed. I paused. Now she whispered. I listened. Again she sighed and laughed. I felt a weakening in my knees. I sank on the door-way.

My little wife's shrill voice was heard in the remote corner of the box-like tenement. It was evident she called out to somebody. For, the very same moment, I heard a bass voice respond "Yes,



"I listened"

dear!" I was struck to the quick and the greenest of the green-eyed monsters took sole and exclusive charge of my otherwise auricular heart. It did not take long for the poor heart to get stung beyond repair, for, straight came the dialogue in quick repartees:

"He has just left!" (this in joyous ecstasy)

"Won't he come back?"

"Not so soon!"

"What'll you have me do?"

"Won't you make me the happiest girl?"

"I will."

"Ere you come, I shall dress my hair, rearrange my attire, set the furniture, brush up the mirrors. Then, you can flit in and dart out like a speed arrow or a beaming lightning. Just a minute and make me—"

My unfortunate ailment about the region of the knees mounted up. It disturbed my bile and sent up a current of blood into the region of the skull. My face swelled up like the things you see in a vegetable stall and the hue and form of my eyes bade me not to look into a mirror. The humble heart was being squeezed. I perspired all over. I summoned all courage that rightfully accrued to my credit in God's creation and made one supreme effort not to break any limb nor weep.

Resolutely I got up, took off my coat, undid my collar, tucked up my silk-shirt-sleeves and gasping like a harnessed bull, lay in ambush behind the street-door peeping for her secret lover, her second husband, her intriguer, to step in, there and then to deal him doles of Death and wreak my righteous vengeance. It did not then occur to me to go in and demand an explanation regarding the amorous monologue on her part. It was preposterous! for, how could I, an unemployed husband, a permanent guest of the super-furnished house that she got as a dowry from her fond parents, demand explanations!

Suzana of the next house

I had not to wait long. I expected to see him pass in Plus Fours, or Cow-boy Hat or at least in Bond Street Blazer Suits. Nothing of the sort did happen. He never appeared!

Instead, the sleek-haired, slender-looking, soft-footed Suzana (second daughter, unmarried, of the only Muslim elected member of the Non-Muhammadan Urban Constituency) of the next house walked in, in gentle and

stately strides, the tiny bells of her silver anklets and chains tingling like the soft music of a tombrone.

"Hallo, dear!" she called out as she almost ran in. And to my painful surprise and disillusionment, my little wife received her with rapture and hilarious mirth. The dialogue that ensued sent me into convulsions of silent laughter, as I recalled my own priggishness and pugnacity.

Wanted Agents.

To Sell Copies of the Merry Magazine in the following places:—

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"FUNNIEST INCIDENT" COMPETITION

WOONG THE BRIDE

(R. R.)

First Prize

When, after five years of weary expectancy, I was after all a bridegroom, the hero of four days, my soul was floating in an ocean of rapture and bliss. I enjoyed every item of the marriage ceremony. I took care to sit as near my young wife as possible, prolonged the duration of the *nalangu* sport, induced the young girls to tie up the end of my cloth to the bride's saree, and at the time of *onjal* nudged my sweetheart many times. But my young wife, Radha, was very shy. Except occasionally stealing a glance at me, she did nothing to show that she cared for me.

I had, however, one big ambition. I was not satisfied with mere nudgings and sittings close by. I wanted to meet Radha in solitude. You will, of course, wonder why I was so impetuous. If you wonder like that, I can only say you are very prosaic. Are not stolen pleasures sweeter? Not caring, therefore, for what others might think of me, I watched for an opportunity. On the evening of the third day of my marriage, the opportunity came. I knew only too well all the rooms in our bungalow, and on the third evening many of the wedding guests had gone on a visit to the local temple and a few remained at home. Putting on a very innocent look, I went from room to room. Peeping into a room, I found Radha sitting alone, evidently deeply thinking of me. She was superbly beautiful. She did not notice my approach, because her back was turned to me. I knew it was a golden opportunity. I slowly went in. The carnal, (or the romantic, if you prefer) in me was up. I neared Radha and without allowing her to remonstrate, hugged her and showered kisses on her. Smothered by my attentions, Radha could neither speak nor shriek. Two minutes of kissing were over, and then it seemed to me that, after all, women are not so tender as poets portray them to be. I had fancied that Radha's limbs would be soft as down, that her cheeks would be tender as a rose-petal, that her waist would be slim and thin, that her body would be light as a feather. But I now saw that her body was hard. There was not much of softness of touch and delicacy of feeling on her person. However, I kept on paying attentions and suddenly as I was stroking her dishevelled hair, it came away in a lump in my hands. I saw that Radha's head was cropped. Radha laughed and from her laughter I knew she was not Radha, but my twelve-year old cousin, Kittu.

"I had a pain in my body" said Kittu, "but now it is all over."

I stood transfixed to the ground. The electric lights suddenly lit up. And I saw the real Radha at a short distance coming from the latrine with a *chombu* in her hand.

The explanation is simple. It is the custom with us to take the bride in procession on the third evening of the marriage. The procession is called 'the procession of the girl-mates.' And it is also usual to dress up a boy like a girl and take him in the procession. Kittu

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

(MRS. E. A. WOOTTON, LUCKNOW)

Second Prize

The funniest day in my life or the funniest incidents of my life happened one day, when I was a student in a shorthand and typewriting school at Allahabad.

After our practice for the day was over, my friend and I were leaving the school on our cycles. Coming round the bend of the drive, we had nearly reached the gate which led out to the public road, when we suddenly saw an empty *thela* or handcart, pushed by two men, right in our way. We rang our cycle bells, but the men were just as surprised to see us as we were then, and not having the time to move out quickly, they simply left the *thela* standing scissor fashion and bolted.

My friend had the presence of mind to swerve and go round the *thela*, but I was too flustered to do anything, and consequently I went up one side of the *thela* and came down the other, falling off my cycle on to the road; both my friend and I were in fits of laughter, including the passers-by, but the two men, to whom the *thela* belonged, were miles away.

The wheels of my cycle were hopelessly buckled, but we managed to get them straightened out a bit; we could scarcely mount our cycles, so convulsed were we with laughter.

They say that misfortune never comes single, but in shoals and that "it never rains but it pours" and if ever we proved these sayings true, we did it that day.

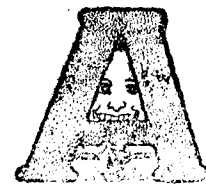
Going along still talking about my accident and how comical I must have looked to all around, we never noticed a *gharry* in front of us; consequently my friend and I both banged into the back of it, and shot clean off our cycles on to the road again, causing another crowd to collect around and laugh at us—of course, we also joining in the laughter.

Once again, we got up and mounted our cycles, leaving a jeering crowd behind, but scarcely had we gone another few hundred yards, when a dog came chasing after our cycles.

I tried to kick out but instead of getting the dog to leave us, it banged into my front wheel, knocked me off sideways on to my friend and we got mixed up with us on the road.

We thought this was about the limit in a day for accidents, for, again we were surrounded by a crowd, which, by this time, must have thought us to be drunk as all the accidents took place on the same road. So, we decided to walk and avoid any further accidents happening to us that day.

had been dressed up for this function, and the ladies had asked him to remain closeted till they returned from the temple to start the procession. Kittu's disguise was perfect and in the darkness of twilight, it was, perhaps, no wonder that a love-mad youth, blinded by infatuation, was deceived by the disguise.



KIND critic, with whom I was discussing the last issue of the Merry Magazine remarked in the course of the conversation: "Your Magazine is getting brighter and brighter every fortnight." I was reminded of the satellite that gets bright every alternate fortnight and most of the readers must be familiar with the sixteen *Kalas* which this satellite in full splendour is said to possess. Well, this is the sixteenth number of my Merry Moon and I do hope, now that all the sixteen *Kalas* are in full effulgence, the radiance would make all of you as romantic and pleased as the man in the moon.

Kalas or no *Kalas*, I should like to assure you that my particular moon will, on no account, wane. It shall be my earnest endeavour to make it ever effulgent like the sun.

To start with, I hope you aren't startled at the colour of the wrapper to this issue. Any tyro in astrology will tell you that orange is the Sun's colour. Do you like the change of colour? If you have the time, do write and tell me what you think of it.

As regards the contents, you have here all the bright ones at their best, including S. V. V. who, owing to a slight physical inability, has not been contributing to these pages. Quite a galaxy, I should think, and stars of every magnitude in their apportioned places, sparkling and re-intillating. Focus your telescopes and feast your eyes!

"Imaginary Concoctions"

Do you know that, recently, there has been many a jolt and jerk in the vital statistics of journalism? New ventures have seen the light of day, while old ones have went west. Seven days' wonders, fortnightly flourishes, monthly manifestations come fluttering down, thick like leaves in Autumn. To all these, my greetings and good wishes. There is room for all and more to spare—at the top!

A contemporary, famous for its second-hand jokes and fifth-rate letter-press, which is not above lifting an article solidly from our pages and parading it as an original contribution to its own pages, which is so barren in ideas that it attempts blatantly to copy us, whose alleged circulation is equally well alleged to have mounted up and obviously affected its head, has chosen to comment, *apropos* our "Letter to the Editor" competition, that the results published by us are "imaginary concoctions." This bare-faced terminological inexactitude, issuing from a green-covered, green-eyed journal, is nailed to the counter by the extracts on page 668.

Ordinarily, I would ignore such cheap jibes as beneath contempt. A Magazine, like the one under reference, having been in the field, comparatively speaking, for a longer period than those of recent origin, ought to be able to set an example for others to emulate and follow, at least in rectitude. But, apparently, it is too much to expect anything so healthy or helpful from this quarter. I do not expect this green one either to have heard or understood the saying, 'Let the cobbler stick to his last.' For, the particular manumitted scribe, who has this cheap fling, is so lost in double negatives in his effusion, that, with refreshing candour, he promises his readers that he "will leave no expenses unspared to make (his) magazine brighter." But, why stress the obvious?

Our Artists

I have been literally bombarded with questions, asking me who it is that illumines the written word in this Magazine. When this magazine was started eight months back, Mr. C. V. Morgan, our staff-artist, was doing most of the illustrations. Mr Morgan is well-known to readers of "Ananda Vikatan," (our elder brother, who has done pioneer work in the field of Tamil journalism, more particularly in its lighter and sunnier side). Mr. Morgan's entire time being required for the Tamil journal, a major portion of the illustrative side of the work is now being done, by Mr. Sekar of the

The Merry Magazine

Scientific Advertising Service. He is the younger brother of the late Mr. Chetty, a genius which South India produced and, like all South Indian geniuses, lost in the prime of his youth, unhonoured as usual. Mr. Sekar is modest—too modest—and very rarely affixes his initials to his delightful sketches. It was he who illustrated so beautifully the story, "Bala, the Bad Woman." Deisvi and Sekar are a good combination and readers would find on page 631 a double-page spread, featuring our new serial, "Devi, the Dancer." It required a great deal of persuasion to make Mr. Sekar consent to putting down his name as the illustrator of the story and anyway—the cat is now out of the bag.

Mali is another artist who occasionally contributes a cartoon or two to these pages. He is a clever caricaturist and draws his inspiration from Low, of whom mention is recently being made prominently in a contemporary journal. In the present issue would be found three stories illustrated by Mali. These are *Mr. Jangli Jungled*, *The New Therapy* and *Success*.

Sekar and Mali are professional artists. So is Mr. Sarma, an all-round popular artist. Among the amateurs, Dial easily tops the list. He has developed a magnificent perspective and technique, all his own, and so rarely met with among Indian artists. The purity of his lines, the points he chooses to emphasise, mark him as an artist full of promise.

Magazine illustration, caricature, cartoon-writing are all of them still in the infant stage in Indian journalism. Artists are rare in South India, who have the aptitude to work in this field of art. The wonder is that we are able to command at least this much of talent at present. It may be that there are men and women engaged in other walks of life, who have such an aptitude, but might, possibly, lack encouragement and proper guidance. This Magazine always welcomes sketches from amateurs and many such have been published in its pages. I propose indicating in the future issues of this Magazine such of the sketches as are sent in by amateurs, so that readers may look upon them with a kindly eye.

Devi, the Dancer

Story-writers are, as a class, clever at tricks. It is part and parcel of their business. They are like magicians who fool the audience; but it is fun to be fooled. The audience knows that there is no more magic in the performer than in a hard-boiled potato. To grip the attention of the reader, some writers jump into the middle of a story; while others open-up with a vivid well-phrased sentence or a piquant situation. But Deisvi is staid, orthodox and begins at the beginning in the old, old way. His "Bala" began at about the 14th year of her age. His Devi is still in the lap of Gods.

I have already mentioned about the double-page spread which inaugurates the story. You have before you this picture, which, I almost suspect, is symbolic, and

the first instalment of the story. If, after looking at the picture and reading the letter-press, you do not feel as if you are emerging out of one of our famous South Indian temples after a Dharsan at a *Deeparathana* with the *prasadam* on your hands and a *Devadasi* on your brain, you may wisely spend the time speculating if Panchu did really get hold of the *Omum*-water bottle and if Rajam consented to take a dose of the stuff.

Finish the Story Competition

I wonder if all of you keep a tack of the many and varied competitions we announce in this Magazine from time to time. To the reader, who has a literary flair and who can express himself in correct English, many opportunities are thus provided. He or she can "Finish the Story," which appeared on page 534. The closing date is 5-9-33. I do hope many of you are tackling this story and that, before the closing date, I would have on my hands a good number of entries.

"Letter to the Editor" Competition: Result

The best letter and the next best are printed on page 667. The subject is, of course, the issue of the Merry Magazine, dated 25th July, '33. Read these two letters and see how far you agree or disagree with the writers.

Funny Incident Competition: Result

The best entry received as well as the next best are published on page 664. I regret I have to say once again that most of the competitors have quite funny ideas of what fun is. And I suppose I shouldn't grumble when even my assistant attempts to see fun in a funeral in *His Master's Noise*.

Rs. 500 'Ding' Competition

Have you made a note of the closing date of this competition? The date is 2-9-33. The coupon, the rules, etc., are again published in this issue.

"Build A Story" Competition

On page 631 you will find a picture. Build a story round this picture. Give the story a title. Let not the story exceed 600 words. For the best story received, I will award a prize of Rs. 10. All entries to reach me before 29-9-33.

Rs. 100 Lucky No. Winner

I am so glad that Mr. E. Subramaniam, L. E. Overseer, 13/3, Lawley Road, Coimbatore, presented his copy. It contained the No. 49763 which is the Number I announced in the last issue as the Rs. 100 lucky Number. A cheque for Rs. 100 has been posted to him and on the 2nd page of the cover, you will find a photographic reproduction of this cheque. It may be your turn next to receive a similar cheque! So, keep your copy.

Editor.

First Prize.

DEAR SIR,

The 25th July number of the 'Merry Magazine' is indeed a better and brighter one in all respects than the previous ones. All the stories are spicy and contain pep and humour. They are as beautifully variegated as a rainbow. The entire issue is one gleaming necklace of chosen pearls. The style is brilliantly chaste and humorous. The mirth they cause is natural and spontaneous.

Sparks are sparks. Leo's very much involved contains a funny punny dialogue. Lalita's letter reveals the delicate shade of a suspicious woman's uneasiness in regard to every move of her husband. It is all dealt in such a way as to appear quite natural and such things are not uncommon in every day life.

Deisvi's unfinished story is like the embryo of a divine offspring. The style is peculiarly Deisvik—inimitable. It serves as an impetus to other literary dilettantes to make a serious effort to string Ulysses' bow. Dynamite Dan's story of an 'Anti-Humbug Superstition Society' dealing with a catalogue of fine accidents arising from an indiscreet act of flouting superstition, cast in a semi-serious style, is a good hit. Gopalratnam's "Pat-Pat-Pat" is a bit of aromatic romance finely blended with a bit of mystery exquisitely unveiled—a story well-conceived and well-narrated.

Inkslinger's tonic is a carminative mixture so very much needed to keep one in perfect health. Satyamurti's "Declined with thanks" is indeed a mighty secret, divulged gratis to literary aspirants and holds out a real hope of success. We come to a rich mine of gold when we go through Mr. Edwin's chronicle of the exploits of Rowdy, a canine hero. It reminds me of the unique history of Tony, Tom Mix's famous horse of the screen. 'To be shot again' is well shot by Pillieux. It keeps one in dramatic suspense—a cinema surprise—very charming and humorous. 'Dago's Carnival Fantasia' is worth more than two rupees in the words of the author himself. Satya Kanta's "Welcome to His Excellency" is a good yarn. It is a good and humorous essay on the work of city fathers—exposing sham. It is a sure hit. Matt De Carlo's story is a good burlesque. The idea of recovering a gramophone through a supernatural agency is a novel and original one which effectively taught a lesson to the borrower, never to borrow it again. It put a stop to the nuisance of lending while it enhanced domestic felicity. The style smacks of real English. Ganapathi's "Locus Standi" shows that the shoe of petticoat Government pinches all round. It is nothing, if it is not so very realistic.

Coming to prize competitions, one cannot but feel the bounteous nature of the Editor, who selflessly offers an additional tip to the purchasers and contributors of the magazine. This deserves special thanks. On the whole, the entire issue is a model of wit, wisdom and unsurpassing humour. Would to God that the Editor continues to exercise the same judicious selection of articles!

Wishing a brighter future for the 'Merry Magazine.'

Yours truly,
K. GUNNAYYA SASTRY.

Second Prize.

MY DEAR EDDIE,

I hear that you intend to run a book-stall at Nawalapitiya. If you do so, I would recommend to you 'The Merry Magazine' priced As. 2 but worth far more than its cost. It is just the Magazine that is needed by a Nawalapitian who spends most part of the day in the factory and finds little or practically no recreation whatsoever. As a matter of fact, this Magazine is a fine tonic to any average person.

Among a dozen of literary pieces in the latest issue of the Merry Magazine, I thoroughly enjoyed the story of how a certain gent used a ghost to recover his gramophone, which was borrowed very much against his wish. The 'Letter from Lalita' is equally interesting. The other articles that appeal to me most are:—'Pat-Pat-Pat', 'To be shot again', 'Welcome to His Excellency', 'My Locus Standi' and the 'Rowdy'.

Apart from these beautiful, short stories, there are humorous sarcasms called "the Sparks from our Anvil" probably edited by a learned Editor. "Jokes from our Readers" and "Other Peoples' Humour" are equally so interesting that you will burst into a roaring laughter once you read them. The one-minute-stories are short and sweet. The Editor's page is business-like, as it ought to be, and is very instructive to the competitors and contributors.

The various Competitions rouse the highest pitch of excitement in the reader. There are as many as five competitions open to readers, free of entrance fees! One is 'Finish the Story' competition where the story tells us of how Doraisamy is left excited as a result of a beaming smile from an unknown lady. Another competition is the 'Joke' competition, where readers are invited to send in original jokes and the one who sends the best wins, of course. The two literary competitions are 'The Letter to the Editor' and the 'Funniest Incident in your life.' A novel competition by name of the 'Ding' competition, is published tempting every reader for a sensational prize of Rs. 500. Particulars and coupons for entrance will be sent in the next issue of the Merry Magazine.

What creates the mirth and jollity, as the name of the Magazine suggests, is not only the jokes, humour and one-minute stories but also the illustrated jokes or cartoons. The local artistic Shakespeare discovers that, to run away from the Dentist, is nobler in mind than suffer agonies long before the tooth is extracted! I am afraid, I shall only be spoiling the soup, if I go to explain every one of them to you. The best cartoon, in my opinion, that creates humour and laughter is the one by name of 'Rules That Restrict.' Among the rest, my favourites are 'Why not?' 'Whose Will?' 'The Thoughtful Son' 'Closed or open?' and 'An old Punner'.

It is indeed impossible for me to treat, in the compass of a few hundred words, all the humour, mirth and jollity found in this issue of the Merry Magazine, without reducing individual articles to uninteresting brevity. Therefore, nothing but a trial peep at the Merry Mag. will make you to appreciate it.

Yours, GEORGIE, (MR. V. G. WHITEFIELD)

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 *REIV* and *Are* 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.....

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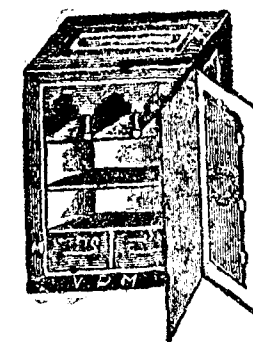
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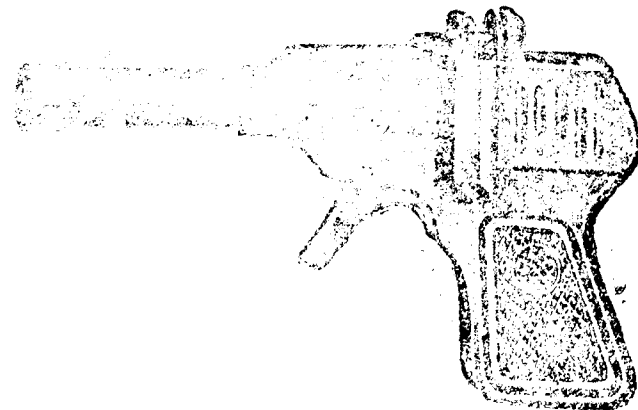
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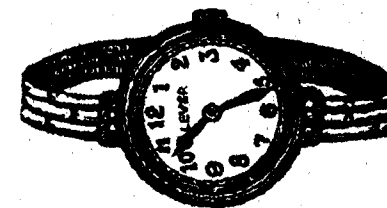
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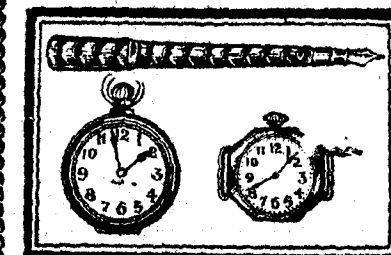
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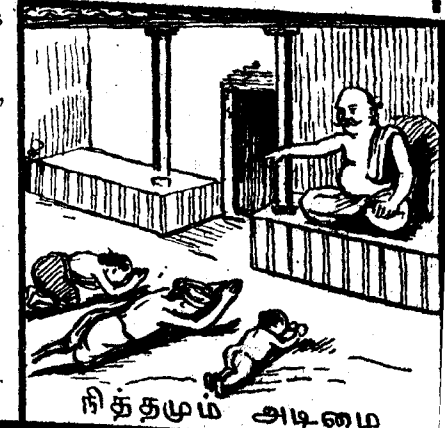
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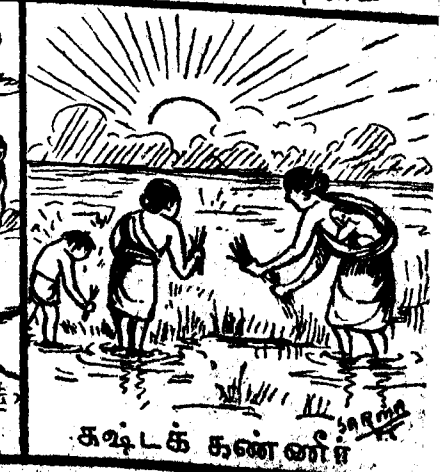
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