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A DREAM OF BAD WOMEN—Page 868

The MERRY MAGAZINE

Vol. 1

MADRAS, 10th NOVEMBER 1933.

2142

21.

A CASE IS BEING TRIED

[BY OUR OBSTINATE ARTIST]



48 Pages.

As. 2.

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THE MERRY MAG

Vol. I.

MADRAS, 10th NOVEMBER, 1933.

No. 21

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

The members of the Tariff Board paid a flying visit, to Tippogandanahalli and inspected the Bangalore Water Supply Reservoir.

We hope that it did not require their protection.

'The resolution also gave the reason why the council chose to remove Mr.—namely, want of necessary gratifications as prescribed by Government rules.'

We didn't know that they had been made legal!

Referring to the aboriginal tribes in 'the scheduled areas,' Sir Samuel Hoare is reported to have stated that they should be safeguarded against ignorant politicians.

Will somebody tell us whom else Sir Samuel could have had in mind?

The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri says: 'Our countrymen in South Africa are just now in the public eye uncomfortably.'

Much sympathy is felt for the public eye!

In the course of the debate on the Estates Land Act Amendment Bill, Sir A. P. Patro asked: 'Who is Mr. Ramadas Pantulu?'

We think we can answer him: He is an honest man.

One of the civilian witnesses before the Joint Committee quoted Sir John Simon as having said: 'Whatever you do, do not let the lawyers in. They will only ruin the place.'

Judging from Sir John's record at the Foreign Office, we are bound to say that he has been trying his best.

'It is now learnt that the work on which Pandit Jawaharlal was engaged while in prison.....consists of 190 letters to his daughter India.

Nobody seems to care for the old lady—the Mother.

'In spite of severe baton charges, the police were unable to disperse the crowds, and as a last resort, were compelled to open fire.'

They might have tried Larwood first!

Mr. Churchill has written a biography of his ancestor, the duke of Marlborough.

This is a vivid reminder of his abiding fascination for lost causes.

'Yesterday, the Dewan of Mandasa shot a Bengal tiger measuring 9.1' by 3.1' at dusk.'

We understand that the measurements were the same in the morning also.

"If another person would characterise a thing as not proper, Satyamurti would characterise it as 'damn, disgraceful scandalous,' and perhaps more correctly."—S. V. V. in the Hindu.

Let us hope so, in the interests at least of grammar.

'Mr. Gandhi chafes me as his enemy, whenever I meet him,' complains Mr. Kelkar.

May we appeal to the apostle of non-violence henceforth to *chaff* him as his friend?

Mr. Satyamurti has organised a Congress Swarajya Party for Madras with himself as President.

This, we understand, is in supercession of his previous intention to migrate to Maharashtra.

Router announces that the new french cabinet will lean a little more to the right.

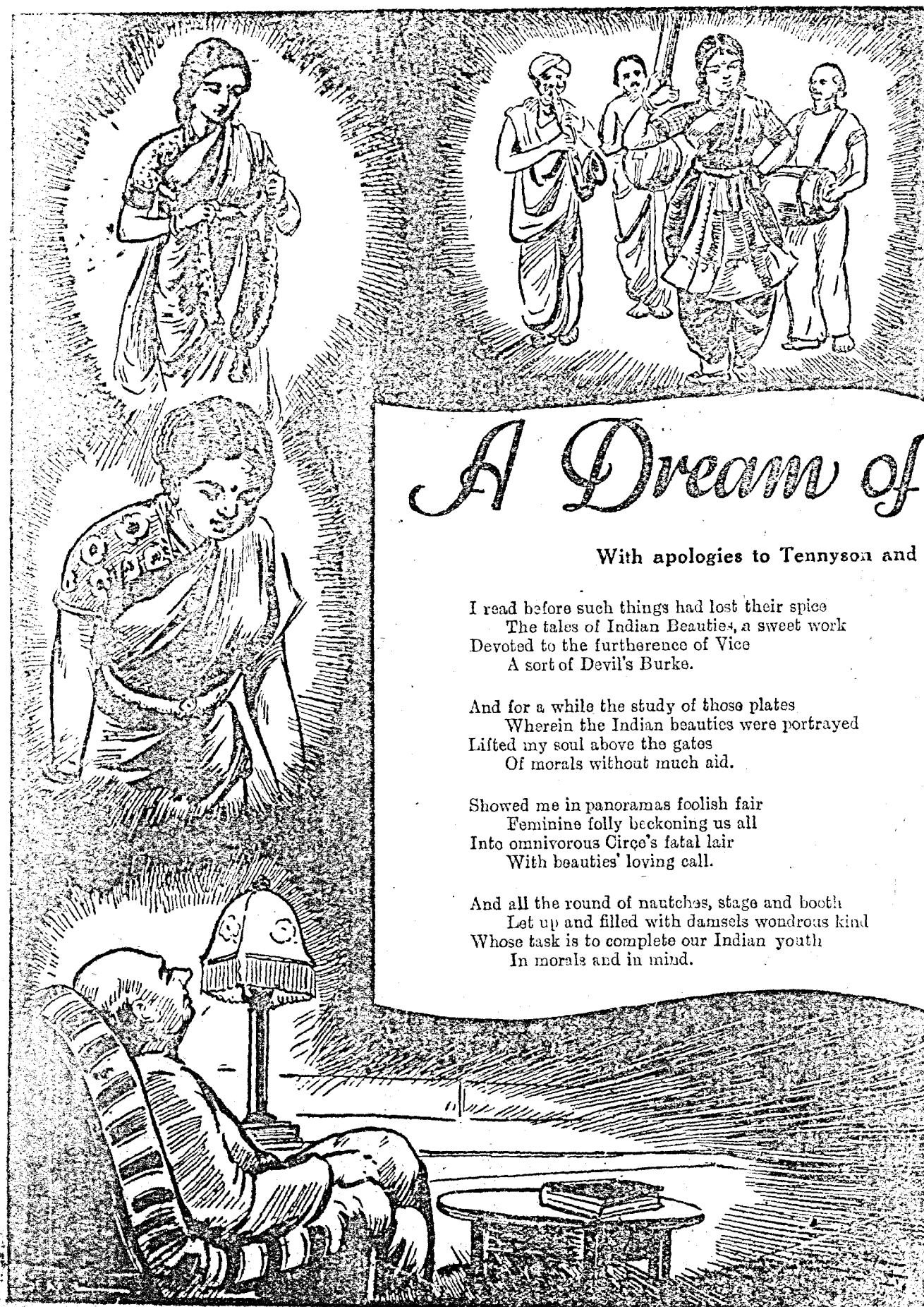
This however does not mean that it will be less in the wrong.

The Nawab of Pataudi has declined to play against the M. C. C., so far.

Hard to Catch!

An appeal on behalf of the new Congress party complains that interested persons are saying that 'it is only out for council-entry.'

We fear they will remain out.



A Dream of

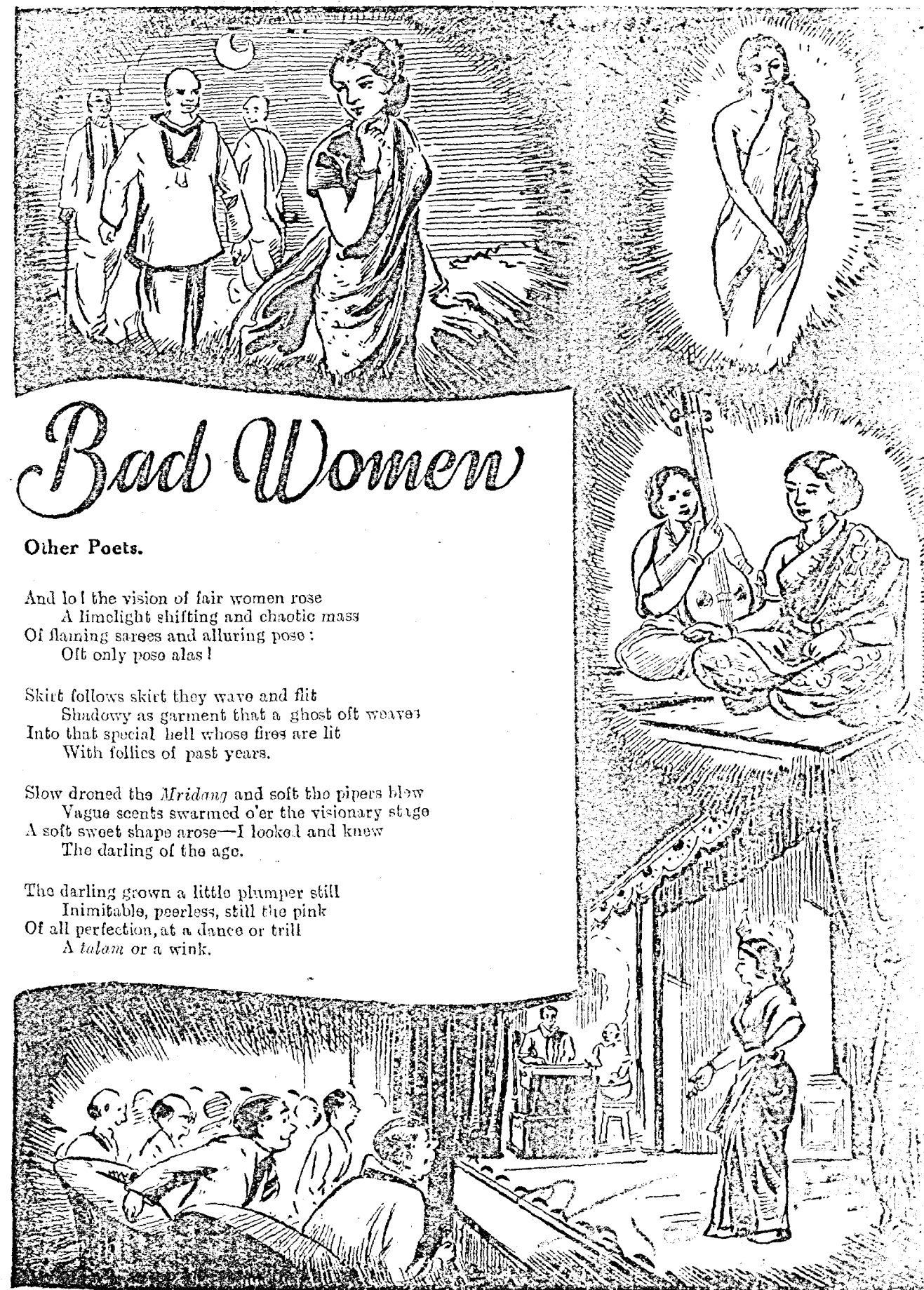
With apologies to Tennyson and

I read before such things had lost their spice
The tales of Indian Beauties, a sweet work
Devoted to the furtherance of Vice
A sort of Devil's Burke.

And for a while the study of those plates
Wherein the Indian beauties were portrayed
Lifted my soul above the gates
Of morals without much aid.

Showed me in panoramas foolish fair
Feminine folly beckoning us all
Into omnivorous Circe's fatal lair
With beauties' loving call.

And all the round of natches, stage and booth
Let up and filled with damsels wondrous kind
Whose task is to complete our Indian youth
In morals and in mind.



Bad Women

Other Poets.

And lo! the vision of fair women rose
A limelight shifting and chaotic mass
Of flaming sarees and alluring pose:
Oft only pose alas!

Skirt follows skirt they wave and flit
Shadowy as garment that a ghost oft weaves
Into that special hell whose fires are lit
With follies of past years.

Slow droned the *Mridang* and soft the pipers blow
Vague scents swarmed o'er the visionary stage
A soft sweet shape arose—I looked and knew
The darling of the age.

The darling grown a little plumper still
Inimitable, peerless, still the pink
Of all perfection, at a dance or trill
A *talam* or a wink.

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The Merry Magazine

She spoke no word. She had no word to speak
Who could withstand the sorceress? Who compete?
We knew the matchless smile and the unique
Allurement of the feet

The way so womanly and yet so bold
Her eyes so frank, her features so profane
Her steps so light and no need to be told
A well-known name again.

Erioch la belle lady fair and fat
And sixty though they say thou art, Time's touch
Lies softly on thy plumpness—and of that
Say, can't one have too much?

Sweet actress from the rest so quite apart
No frailty you are saved from. Do you know
What charm is it that makes one break his heart
Buy sofa tickets too?

Dost understand why naughty as thou art—
And naughty not a soul can say you ain't
Although your wiles would subjugate afar
Your morals spoil a saint.

Do tell us why we in spite of all we know
About your enchanting open ways
How 'tis, fair lady, the stones we ought to throw
Somchow turn out boquets?

"It is because the things I say are plain
The moral of my teachings uninvolved
I don't pretend that by my gravest strain
One moral problem 's solved.

"I don't pretend to have a mission sweet
Or hold a brief for any art—the cant
Of coquettes and buffoons who think they meet
An intellectual want.

"I use my art without effort as a thing
That needs no pompous name affixed to it
Just an effective instrument to bring
The people to the pit.

"In short, I am not a humbug, though I know
A dozen Rajas tolerably well
I look beyond the dandified first row
And never get too swell.

"That is my charm," said she "although 'tis sin
That earns my civil list, all that I own
Yet this saves all—there is truth and humour in
My speeches from the throne."

He vision paled to old familiar strains
With which the *Passee* songs of recent years
Have sorely maddened scientific brains
And vexed poetical ears.

Then rose another—queen of all her set
Ingenuous from her toe-rings to her chin
With those peculiar graces that do net
Fair profits just like sin.

"I am queen Indigo but not a blue
In theories though I may be so, in tights
Man is my natural Banker, that's the view
I take of woman's rights.

"I was once slim and famed for dignity
And slimness so pronounced, that I could drape
Myself sweet creature quite abundantly
In half a yard of tape.

"And I was one whom Rajas used to pet
The Chetty boys went mad about me in my time
But now my *embonpoint* is inclined to get
A trifle too sublime."

She vanished and then rose a company instead
Eve's beauteous daughters filing one by one
Whence stole a shadow forth at times and said
Sweet words and then was gone.

One rose who in her upper notes did choke
At times as if old age had gripped the throat
Proud with the memory of past triumphs spoke
"I was a thing to float.

"In clouds of gauze and kinkob and put
Urvashi to shame and many a Yaksha wild
To set men dreaming when I arched my foot
And raving when I smiled.

"For I was Seeta, the last in that brave rank
That held the *Natya* high, great glorious and sleek
The last great artist e'er the pure art sank
To epileptic cheek".

She vanished in a ghostly dance and soon
Another shape replaced her—a stout lass
Swart with dark eyes as hot as August noon
And forehead bold as brass.

She said, "My *forte* is realistic love
The eastern way of loving is too rude
I smile and languish, cooing like a dove
Exactly as one should.

"I let my black hair down and highly chalked
Forgave society. Moderns all agree
If ever a blessed ill-used angel walked
It was Miss Sundaree."

The other forms had scarcely faded when
Came forth two beauties sisterlike enlaced
They said, "It is Sambandam's Tamil pen
That gave us fame and traced

"Our not immaculate career; Our fate
Is to be good or sin whichever he may please
To make love in a forest or to hate
Or die of heart disease.

"To tread the stage with modesty or look above
Appealing to the Gods with tear-filled eyes
When bearded Sultans make indecent love
To helpless *screamies*.

"To drink the poisoned cup with modest grace
Or flash the dagger in our bosoms hid
To taunt the faithless lover to his face
Or meekly do whatever he may bid.

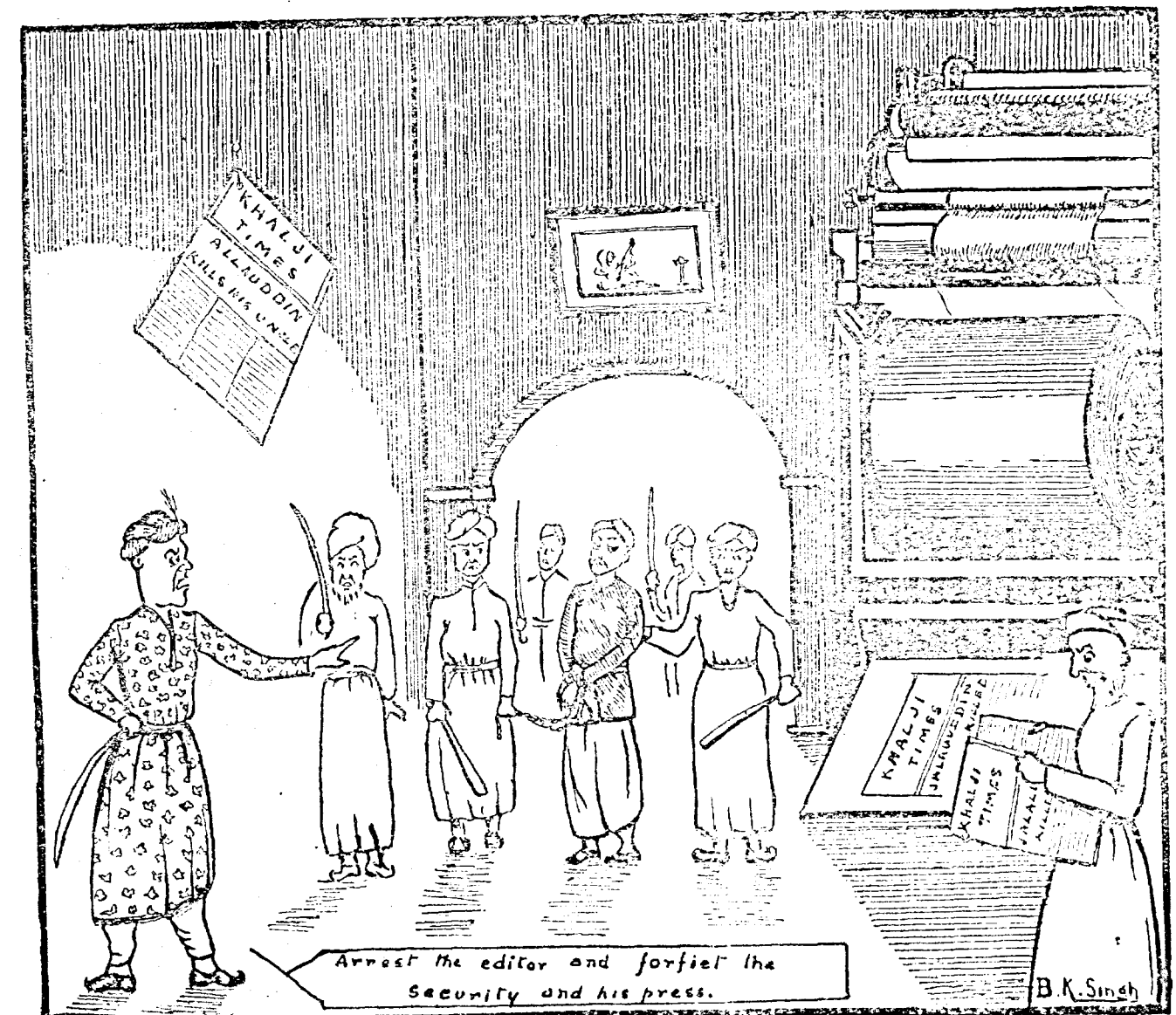
"So we won fame till Sabhas grew apace
And toured in cities an amateurish lot
Acted all our parts with shaven face
And murdered loth the music and the plot."

All these and many others passed—the dream
Grew hazy, forms were fused and faded quick
As ebbing evening's final golden gleam
Is merged into the night.

And ever since though many a naughty page
I read, no vision came, though many did before
Fair woman of our modern Indian stage
We sleep—but dream no more.

"Old Sinner"

If's in Indian History, IV.



If there had been newspapers during the reign of Allauddin Khalji
(By KESAR SINGH, AMATEUR ARTIST)



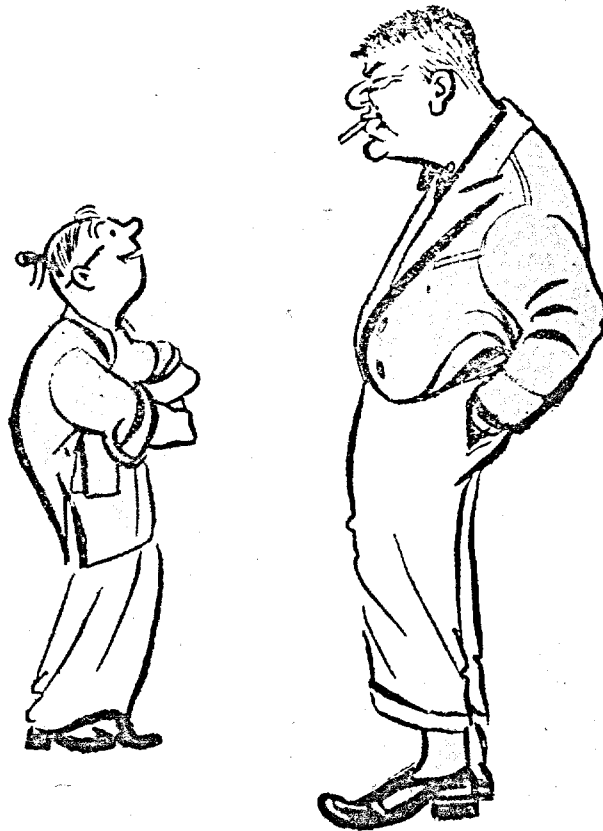
.....roused mixed feelings among our publicists.

HEART-TO-HEART TALKS

(LENS)

The official announcement that the life of the present Council has been extended by a year has naturally roused very mixed feelings among our publicists. We are in a position to furnish a symposium of views on the subject, of prominent leaders of our province. Needless to say, we disclaim, as is usual in such cases, all responsibility for the accuracy of the reports of our special sleuth.

OUR representative first called on Dr. Subbarayan, leader of the opposition, and found him unpacking after one of his organising tours. 'Loves' Labour's Lost', he exclaimed more in sorrow than in anger; and giving directions to his valet to roll up the camp-cot, and stow it away in the lumber room, added, 'It won't be required for another year at least.' He was constrained to



...more in sorrow than in anger

characterise the advice tendered to His Excellency as not quite disinterested. Even now, if only the sitting members would unite in the common interests of the motherland, steps might be taken to save the province from being run into the ditch by reactionaries.

Mr. B. Munisamy Naidu Garu who, since his forced retirement from office, has developed a passion for the

study of astrology, declined to comment on the extension without first being posted in regard to the positions or juxta-positions of the planets in the zodiac *inter se*, and with reference to the horoscopes of the ministers.

The Hon'ble Sir Md. Usman was in one of his most genial and expansive moods. "So far as I and the nominated block of which I am the head are concerned we are absolutely neutral. Members and ministers may come and go; but I and they, (or their equivalents) will



.....in his most genial and expensive mood

go on for ever. But speaking on behalf of the Government of which I hope to be the temporary head very soon, I have no doubt that the extension is a measure of courageous economy in these days of depression. I can confidently count on the gratitude of the sitting councillors, at least. The supreme need of the hour is to fight terrorists who have so far been foiled in their

attempts to invade our loyal and peaceful province. The setting up of an election office would mean an expense of a few lakhs of rupees, which I can ill spare at this juncture when every pie that can be saved is urgently required for the protection of the public and the promotion of the police."

Sir A. P. Patro wished to know what Mr. A Ramaswamy Mudaliar had said. Our representative was surprised at the sub-acid tone adopted by the redoubtable knight when referring to the Dewan Bahadur. He said he disagreed with him in advance, and bade him beware of putting his foot into it. He added that if



"...wanted to know what the Mudaliar said"

absentee-landlords are an abomination, absentee-politicians are a pest. After all, he added, the public deserves what it gets. As for the extension, it was of course unjustifiable from every point of view. He wouldn't have cancelled his trip to England, if he had known. However, he was a realist in politics, and believed that the mischief could be mitigated by effecting a reconstitution of the ministry at the earliest opportunity.

Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar was in a pugilistic mood, with moustaches twitching and eyes flashing fire. He said in his inimitably blunt manner that dissolution would have been a breach of faith with the sitting councillors. He was glad that the Government remembered, in time, the yeoman service rendered by the Justice party in co-operating with the reserved half in upholding law and order against the disruptive forces of the Congress. He said he was engaged in compiling a record of the achievements of his party with a view to prove that its services have been so invaluable as to merit the abiding gratitude of the Government. In his view, the extension should be not for a year, but for the natural life of the members composing his party.

Our representative next went to Mr. Gopalaswami Mudaliar, one of the stalwarts from Andhra Desa, and found him, surprisingly enough, sitting on the fence,

and balancing himself with an adroit grace which any acrobat might envy. He smiled enigmatically, when asked for his views. "I have not yet quite made up my mind. As you know, the topic is one on which much



"...in a pugilistic mood..."

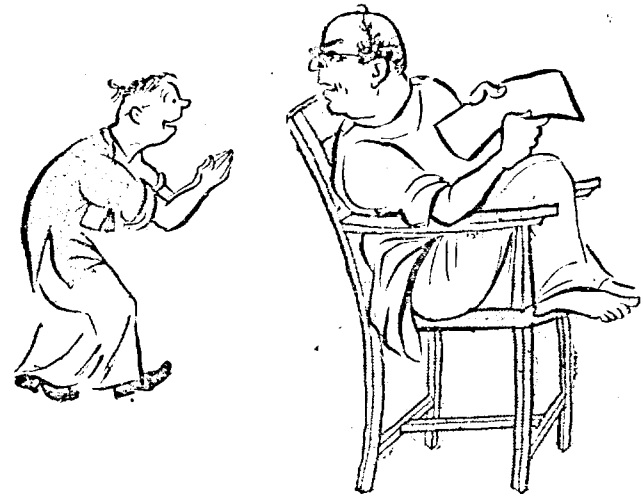
might be said on both sides. But my attitude is strictly dependent upon the attitude of the Chief Minister, in regard to the appointment of the Electrical Engineer to the Conjeevaram Municipality. I regret I cannot say more at present, as the matter is still *sub rosa*.

Mr. Satyamurti characterised the extension as a fraud on the constitution, and as a political scandal of the first magnitude. He had no doubt in his mind that it was dictated by panic at the formation of the Congress Swarajya Party of which he had the honour of being the President. 'The Englishman's love of sport,' he continued, 'is a myth, or is shown only in non-essentials. Look at the body-line controversy with their own kith and kin. Look at the way they're wriggling out of the Ottawa pact. As for the ministers, let them not halloo before they're out of the wood. They may fool some people sometime, and themselves all the time; but they can never fool me at any time. They are not worth powder and shot, or even pity. Let them thank their stars that they have saved themselves, for the time being, from one of my salvos of supplementary questions. The moving finger writes, and having writ their doom, has passed on.' Like the ghost of Caesar, I shall haunt them in their dreams, and din into their ears: 'We shall meet at Philippi.'

The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri deprecated the visit of our representative. 'I am an old and tired man, and elections have not been my forte. I have always been accused of presenting the case of the opponent better than mine own. I plead guilty to the charge, since I have always stood for moderation and sweet reasonableness. Much might no doubt be said against the extension. But I must say one thing at least for it,

The Merry Magazine

The progressive forces in the country are endeavouring to find the greatest common measure of agreement



...deprecatd the visit...

among themselves. It cannot be evolved in a day. I am firmly convinced that His Excellency yearns to see the crystallisation of parties with principles. The year before us can be fruitfully employed in organising ourselves and the country, so that we may work the 25% of autonomy promised to us in the White Paper."

Mr. S. Srinivasa Aiyangar who recently emerged from his tent of silence, and paid what was perhaps the most measured yet the most eloquent tribute to the memory of the late Sjt. V. J. Patel, dismissed the subject with a brusque movement of the hand. " Councils have ceased to interest me; they are a device of pompous futility; and I have no intention of throwing good money after bad. Let the others stew in their juice. I look forward to:

'Sunset and Evening Star,
And one clear call for me;
And may there be no meaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.'

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PEOPLE IN THE PUBLIC EYE
THE RAJA OF BOBBILI



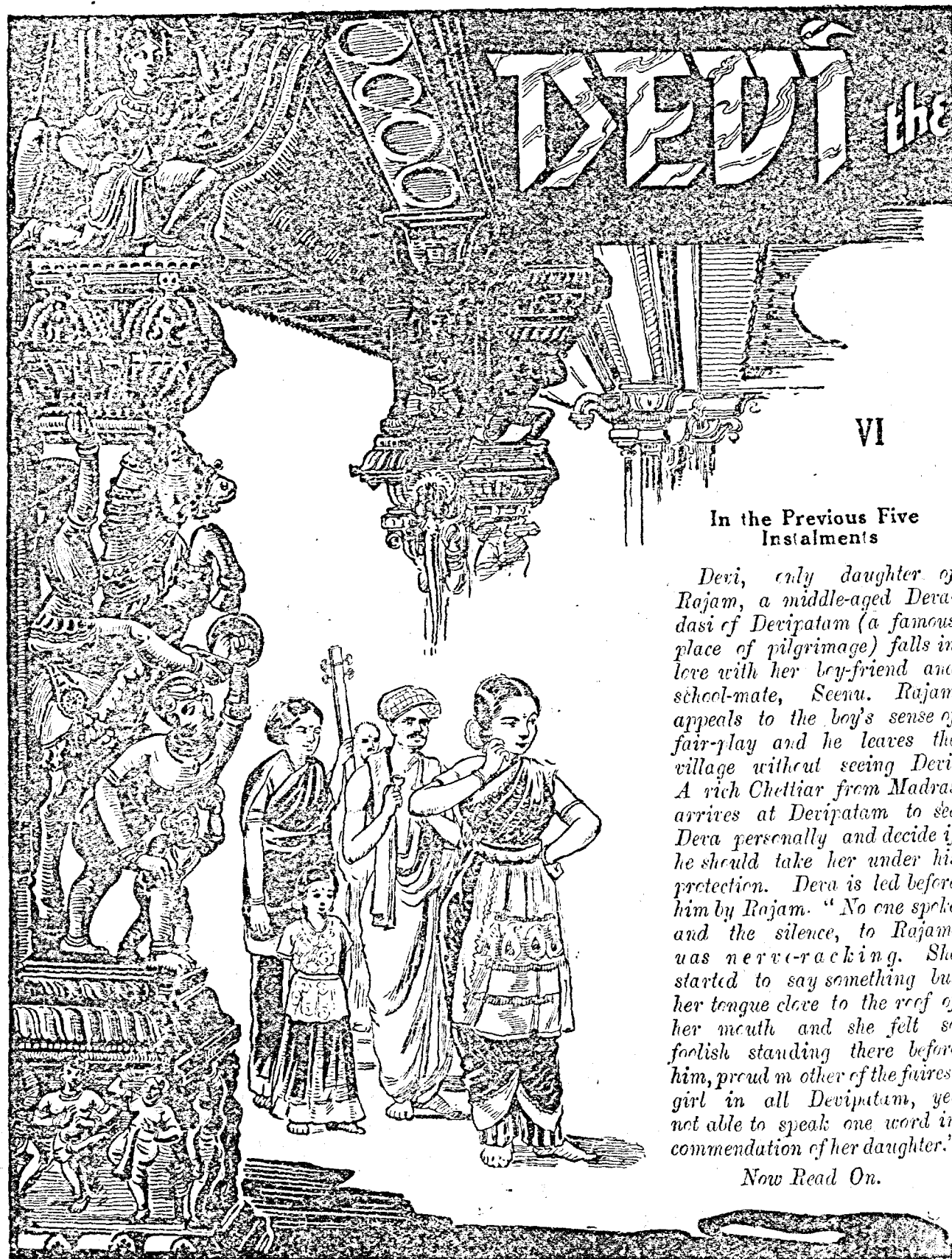
Chief Minister to the Government of Madras, holding, among others the portfolio of Local Self-Government: Better known to the racing public by the association of his name with the Bobbili Grand Stand and the Bobbili Gold Cup. His brief administration has not been lacking in exciting events which have evoked consternation in his camp and jubilation in the ranks of his enemy.

Is a sportsman and plays a good game of polo. Broke the High Jump record at Tanjore in 1932 when he jumped to the very top of the political tree at the very first time of asking. As a speaker, he seems to weigh every word before he utters it.

Pet Aversion: Alleged followers who are for ever trying to change places with him.

Hobbies: Rejuvenating unprosperous daily papers and rechristening them from time to time.

Amusements: Presenting Commissioners, Electrical Engineers, etc. to reluctant Municipalities which are audibly heard to murmur 'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.'



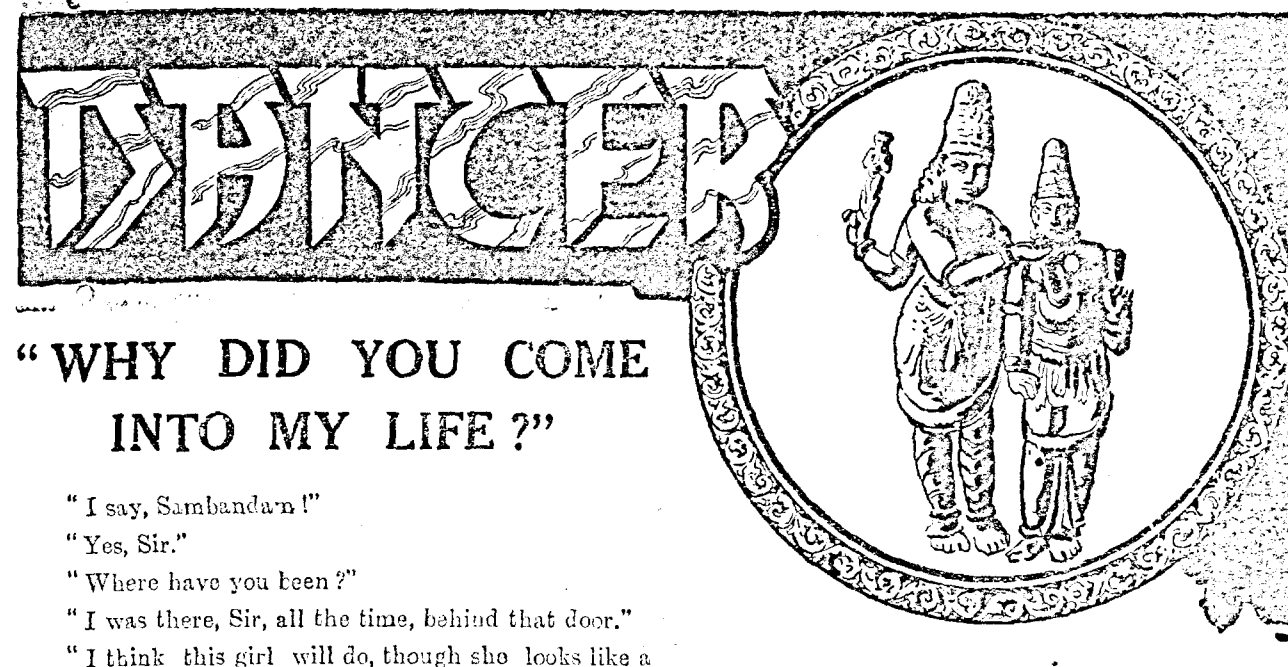
DEVI the

VI

In the Previous Five Instalments

Devi, only daughter of Rajam, a middle-aged Devadasi of Devipatam (a famous place of pilgrimage) falls in love with her boy-friend and school-mate, Seenu. Rajam appeals to the boy's sense of fair-play and he leaves the village without seeing Devi. A rich Chettiar from Madras arrives at Devipatam to see Devi personally and decide if he should take her under his protection. Devi is led before him by Rajam. "No one spoke and the silence, to Rajam, was nerve-racking. She started to say something but her tongue cleve to the roof of her mouth and she felt so foolish standing there before him, proud in other of the fairest girl in all Devipatam, yet not able to speak one word in commendation of her daughter."

Now Read On.



DANCER

"I say, Sambandam!"
 "Yes, Sir."
 "Where have you been?"
 "I was there, Sir, all the time, behind that door."

"I think this girl will do, though she looks like a country wench. If we polish her somewhat and fit her with some decent clothes and trinkets, she might even look presentable. What do you say?"

"Certainly, Sir."

"Go ahead then and fix up the details. You know how far you can go. I think I will now drive straight to the Ry. station, have a bite at the refreshment room and run up to Madras. I have an engagement at the club at four and another at the office at three."

"Very good, sir."

"If they agree to our terms, pay them any advance they ask and....."

"Yes, Sir?"

.....You might keep a guard over the girl."

As the two men conversed in English, Rajam was unable to grasp what they were saying. And when the distinguished visitor rose suddenly from his chair with an air of finality and left the house, Rajam surmised that the visitor was leaving dissatisfied. Panchaksharam, who was a silent witness of the whole affair, was also disappointed and when Sambandam returned, after seeing the Chettiar off, neither Rajam nor Panchaksharam could account for Sambandam's high spirits.

"What did I tell you?" asked Sambandam of Panchaksharam and Rajam. Devi, equally puzzled at the trend of affairs, sank into the only chair.

"What did the Chettiar say?" asked Rajam of Sambandam, somewhat frigidly.

"What could he say! He simply melted at the sight of your daughter. Now, let us get down to business. How soon can you send your girl away?"

"Are you saying that your Chettiar will take our girl?"

"Oh, won't he? He would have taken her in the car now, had I not counselled a little patience. I don't believe in rushing things through."

"I have never before heard of such a thing as this!" said Rajam, still doubtful if she had heard Sambandam

Story By Desani
 Pictures by Sekar.

aright. "He hasn't spoken to any of us, he hasn't taken a single leaf or nut and he has run away from the place and yet you tell me he will be our Marumagapillai."

"You must make some allowance for these rich young men. You see, they do not know the old order of things. But, does it matter? He has consented. That is what we wanted. What do you say, Aiyar?"

Panchaksharam was pleased. "Devi is lucky and her mother doesn't realise it," said Panchaksharam laconically.

"Let us all sit down and discuss the details," said Sambandam and they settled down on the floor.

1. Son-in-law.

875

874

The arrival of a motor-car in Devipatam was always an event of some importance. Before Rao Sahab Chettiar's car could leave the outskirts of Devipatam, he was the talk of almost the entire village. His personality, his assets, his private weaknesses, and the object of his visit to Devipatam were being canvassed and discussed in every nook and corner and quite a flutter was started among the dove-cotes of the Dasi community. And Sattai spoke with authority on the subject, though such authority was tinged with alcoholic *Pattai*. He was holding forth on the merits of Rao Sahab Chettiar to a select audience in a street-corner, when Sonachalam who had also heard about the arrival of a car and its departure, joined the crowd and listened. Sattai was making his listeners believe that it was only through his efforts that the rich Chettiar was introduced into Rajam's house.

"And what did you get for it, Sattai?" asked Sonachalam good-humouredly.

"You wait and see and you won't see, for, I won't be here then. I am also going to Madras as a sort of uncle to Deva."

"Good! Don't you think we ought to celebrate the happy occasion?" asked Sonachalam.

"I have no objection if you feel that way and..."

"Yes?"

"...if you can afford it."

"Oh, Don't you worry about the cash! Come, let us go!" persuaded Sonachalam.

Sattai and Sonachalam sauntered into the arrack shop, hand in hand. When they emerged out of it, half-an-hour later, Sonachalam had no reason to regret the cash which he had to spend for making



The Priest

Sattai drunk. He had pumped Sattai dry and what was more, he had pinched from Sattai a very useful piece of paper. It was the letter which Deva wrote to Seenu and which she entrusted, the day before, to a little boy with instructions to deliver the letter safely into Seenu's hands. Sattai, who had spied on the boy, had bullied him and had taken the letter away from him threatening the boy with dire punishment if he ever told Deva about it. Sattai's curiosity having been satisfied, he did try to deliver the letter to Seenu, but

the latter had left Devipatam. The letter was in Sattai's shirt-pocket along with a match-box, and at the tavern, when he took out the match-box to light a *beeli*, the letter dropped down and Sonachalam picked it up. Sattai was half-seas over and emitted a pungent alcoholic chuckle at sight of the letter.

"Nish love-letter that! Read it Shonu! Written by my Deva! Great girl, that Shonu! I would love

The news spread all over Devipatam. "A rich Chettiar from Madras is taking over Deva to Madras! He has a big motor-car! What a lucky girl!" exclaimed all Devipatam and the minor Zamindar of Palavanur heard the news too. He was sore about it. Poor Sonachalam was sent for. He was called a bungling fool, an incompetent ass and a lot else besides. Sonachalam, bore it all patiently for a while, but his patience was fast becoming exhausted at the torrent of abuse.

"It is not fair, Sir, to lay the entire blame at my door. It has been purely a question of money. I couldn't outbid that Chettiar from Madras."

"Why not? You could have agreed to anything!"

"It wasn't worth while."

"What do you mean—worth while?"

"See this letter! You never can trust these Dasi kids. And she, so young and so sweet and innocent looking, with a paramour all ready, and waiting for her."

The Zamindar ran over the contents of the letter hastily and coolly pocketed it.

"Who is he?" he asked.

"Some young man from Madras. An affair of the heart, I understand. Nevertheless, what does it indicate?"

"A great many things," said the Zamindar to Sonachalam and mused: "I'll get her, all the same, if not now, sometime later."



approached her

to keep her myself but Sattai is poor, you know. No money, no motor-car! Don't care! Only want Pattai and that is Sattai! What?"

Sonachalam read the letter. Plying Sattai with more arrack he made him depart to Rajam's house to find out if the Chettiar from Madras had decided to take Deva. Sattai forgot all about the letter and Sonachalam pocketed it.

The Mango and Margosa bloom in *Chittrai*. The pollen-laden southern breeze brings, like a well-tuned carrier wave, the music of full-throated song birds heralding the advent of Spring. All Nature, in a joyful mood, finds expression in wealth of colour and richness of melody. On *Chittrai* full-moon day, the dedication or the *Pottu kattu* ceremony of Devi was arranged to take place. The Chettiar gave magnanimously all that Rajam asked for and more. Rich

sarees; costly ornaments; cash to lift the mortgage on Rajam's house and Panchaksharam's lands; all were forthcoming for the mere asking. And Sambandam was very much in evidence around Rajam's house making the final arrangements.

Madurai, the old dancing-master, was the happiest of men in Devipatam. Everybody who was anybody, round about Devipatam, was invited to the *Pottu Kattu* function. For, after the dedication, Deva would make her debut as a Dancer. Madurai had no doubt that she would acquit herself very creditably.

Notwithstanding the hustle and excitement preceding the day of dedication, notwithstanding the array of presents from her prospective lord and master, and in spite of the paen of praise which Rajam was constantly singing at her daughter's luck, Deva wasn't feeling happy. That Seenu should have left Devipatam without seeing her or replying to her letter made her sad and pensive, whenever she thought of him and of the short, sweet hour spent with him on the terrace. About her future life and about the Chettiar at Madras she was apprehensive. She couldn't tell her troubles to her mother and she had to confide them to Neela.

Neela was also of Devipatam, also of the Dasi community and six years older than Deva. She had migrated to Madras with her mother early in her youth and had taken to the profession of a songstress. But life at Madras and especially with a never-do-well Naidu had brought her neither health nor wealth, but only Asthma of an acute type. Back to the village, therefore, returned Neela, sans the Naidu and with shattered health. She was a thoroughly sophisticated girl, typical of the ramping variety of the community and was a great favourite of Rajam whom she called "grandmother" and Deva, to her, was merely "Baby."

When Deva told Neela all about Seenu, and what little she knew of the Chettiar, not omitting the Zamindar and his agent Sonachalam, Neela pouted her lips in contempt and puckered her brows. "It is all wrong!" she exclaimed, stilling a cough. "I mean, the way you have been brought up and the silly ideas that have been put inside that pretty head of yours. I think your mother is responsible for your being such a slushy sentimental girl. She has overdone this God-business and divine faith and all that sort of Pandaram tall-talk. Remember this, Deva: we Dasies are different. If a man marries a girl, he has got to support her through thick and thin. In our case, however faithful one may be, when the man tires, one is pushed away—that is all. Therefore, what should you do? I say, 'Make hay while the sun shines!' Give very little and ask for all! Keep a very sharp look out! See that men don't get tired of you. And above all, keep an eye on the cash and keep a tight grip over it. It is the cash that counts, ultimately. I tell you, money can do wonders. If I had plenty of money, I can get rid of this Asthma, put on some more flesh and tempt even a saint. I was a fool, I wasn't lucky, and here I am, in this hole and corner place, with a cough that can be heard for miles around. Who cares for me?"

"But how does one get the money? Isn't it very difficult to keep a lot of money and guard it? And supposing he gets angry or annoyed and refuses to part with money?"

"Oh, you baby! Your mother ought to have taught you all these and much more. But, never mind! I'll teach you a trick or two and perhaps, when you go to Madras and live with him, you could tell him that you want a companion and then I'll come and stay with you and watch over you. That would be an ideal arrangement. If necessary, I'll speak to your mother about it. Is she going with you?"

"No. She says she can't allow her duties at the temple to be neglected. She might stay there for just a week."

"Silly idiot, that's what your mother is. If I were your mother I would make a fortune out of you."

"And what would you do with the fortune?"

"What a silly question!"

The day of dedication dawned, bright and sunny. Elaborate arrangements had been made to receive and entertain the guests. A special and spacious pandal had been created inside the temple for Deva's first public dance. The various shrines were lavishly decorated and the chief shrine, where the dedication was to take place, was hung with garlands of flowers and illuminated by innumerable little oil-lamps. Sambandam was in charge of all the arrangements and he was greatly worried in mind. The Chettiar from Madras had not arrived and Rajam was pestering him with inconvenient questions. At nine in the morning a telegram was placed in his hands. "Detained on important business," it ran. "Carry on. May come there any time before evening—Balu."

Rajam was very disappointed when the purport of the telegram was conveyed to her by Sambandam. "Whoever heard of such a thing as this! A marriage without the bride-groom! But where are his people—his friends? All this crowd here belong to this place."

"I don't think he will be bringing a crowd with him: just a few select friends, perhaps," said Sambandam.

"Why, is he ashamed of all this?"

"Not exactly. He doesn't want much publicity. He told me that in so many words."

"You make me afraid. Will he come at all?"

"Oh, yes! Most certainly!"

"What will people think! And what will they say! He has humiliated us. I have been dreaming of this day and it looks as if I am being made a big fool."

"Please, please! Do not say so. You do not understand. He may be here any time. Compose yourself and start the procession."

The procession was started at eleven. Decked with jewels and lace like a bride, with a toy-parrot in her hand, to the tunes of a brass band and the temple pipe and drum, escorted by the temple Elephant and paraphernalia, Devi, the Dancer, went in slow procession to the temple. She walked like one in a dream. The noise, the crowd, the brass band and the pipe and drum, and above all, the suffocating atmosphere of the dark *Garbaraha*, made her head reel. She only remembered the words of the priest when he approached her, with a thin yellow thread in his hands, from which hung a gold pendant.

"OM Bagavate!" intoned the Priest. "Deign to accept this frail vessel as Thy handmaid. Pray be seated on her heart-lotus. Let her wash Thy feet with the nectar that flows from the *Sahasvara*. Here is her *manas* as *arghya*: Here the *akashu* for robing Thee: here, the *Chitta* offered as a fragrant flower: here *prana* as incense: *Tejas* as never failing light. And in her Thy servant, oh, Lord and Master, let your glorious feet ever dance, and calm the restlessness of a mere mortal mind!"

The deafening peal of temple bells, and pipe and drum, the shouts and applause of the assembled crowd, drowned the Priest's last words. Deva remembered only her mother's whispered instructions to bend down and as she did so, the priest approached her, sprinkled a little water over her and tied the *mangala sutra* round her neck. And then....she swooned in her mother's arms and lost all consciousness.

The crowd was thrilled. "The Gods have taken possession of her," remarked many: "and no wonder," added a few, "she was a gift from the Gods, after all."

3 P.M. in the afternoon! and yet no sign of the Chettiar. Rajam was on the verge of tears. She was tired of answering all the questions of her friends enquiring where the *Marumagapillai* was. At four the dance must start in the temple. Special accommodation had been provided there for the Chettiar and his party and Rajam wondered what people would think if those seats were to be empty.

Deva was ready, dressed for the dance, and Madurai, the old dancing-master was with her, giving her final instructions. "My dear child," said the old man, "I have gathered here to-day people from far and near and every one of them is an authority on some aspect or other of *Bharatha Natya*. Great things are expected of you and to-day, the best repayment you can make for the trouble I have taken in training you, is to endeavour to reveal the glories of the art to these *Rasikas*. While you dance, forget the whole world. Attune yourself to the theme on hand and sing, act, and dance for your own enjoyment. That is the secret of success. If you do not enjoy what you yourself create, how can you expect others to derive any enjoyment therefrom? Will you remember?"

"Alright, *aiyah*, I'll remember. I am feeling sad to-day: therefore don't start any of those gay, giddy themes. I would prefer to begin with the tune: 'Why did you come into my life?'"

"Very well, make your own choice....."

"And then the other song, 'One night on the terrace.....'"

"That's a very good one, too!"

"What about, 'Why this silence, Beloved?'"

"That may be taken up later. You see, you can't jump from one *raga* to another like that. There are certain rules and if we don't observe them, it may jar on the ear."

"Well, I have told you what kind of themes I would like to take up to-day so that I may put my heart into them. You may make up a list in any order you choose. I shall certainly do my very best to-day."

"Are you also worried about the Chettiar not having put in an appearance till now, to-day?"

"I am not worried at all. On the other hand, I am almost glad he isn't here."

At 5 P. M. the dance was in full swing. The large crowd that had assembled in a holiday mood settled down as soon as the *Nritta* part of the programme was over. When the orchestra opened with the overture 'Why did you come into my life?' Devi the Dancer, trembled like an aspen leaf, paused for a fleeting second and then put her whole soul into the theme. The audience was thrilled. It sensed the presence of something more real than mere acting and amidst silence, Devi sang and danced. She was superb!

Why did you come into my life? Why open

The secret wells of love.....

Why did you open them?

And let

The flood-gales of my passion swell and burst

Till, like the wave when rivers overflow

That sweeps the forest and farm away

Love in the sp'endid avalanche of its might

Swept my life with it. Must I drop by drop

Gather these waters back and seal them up?

Alas! Each drop will be a tear and so

Will with its saltiness make life very bitter.

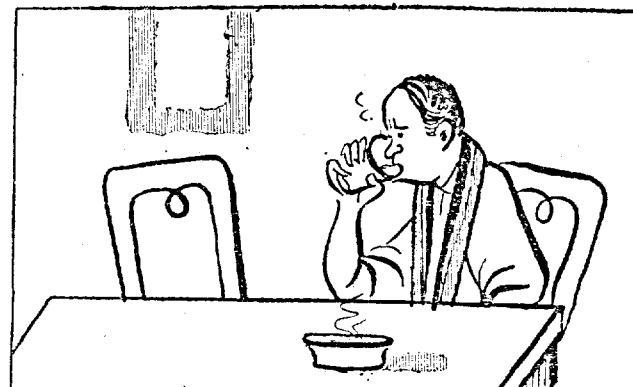
Sustaining the song in her throat, conveying its meaning by graceful gesture, indicating the various moods by her glances, marking the rhythm with her feet, glance following gesture and mind accompanying glance, mood and mind intertwined yet distinct, she was a perfect vision of the culmination of it all, yielding *Rasa* to the crowd of *Rasikas*: altogether independent of her own emotional condition, a detached spectator of her own art, she had the air of perfect spontaneity, for she had Seenu before her mind's eye, all the time.

But her prospective lord and master wasn't there to appreciate her art, nor did he turn-up later in the night, to the delight of Deva and to the disgust of Rajam.

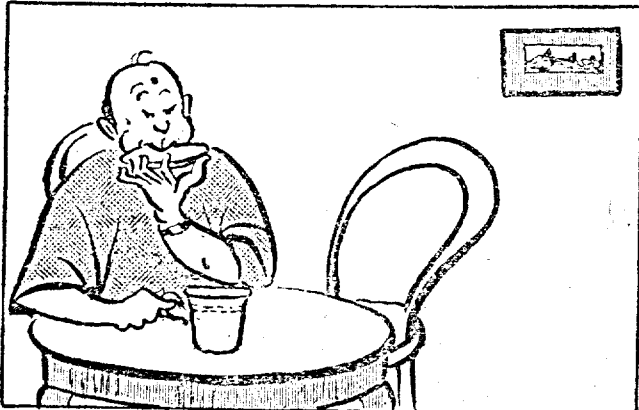
Getting the Most Out of Coffee



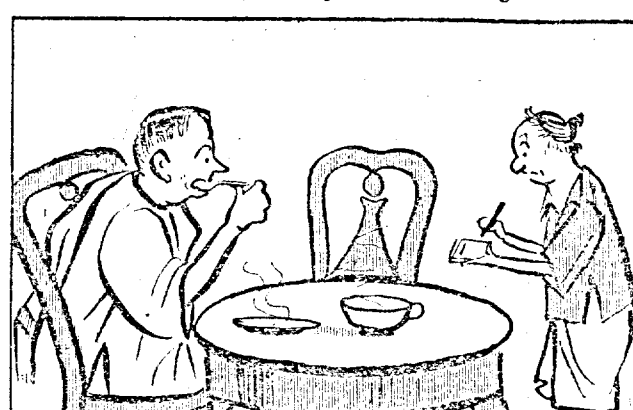
(1) Squatting on the floor and pouring it down in a torrent.



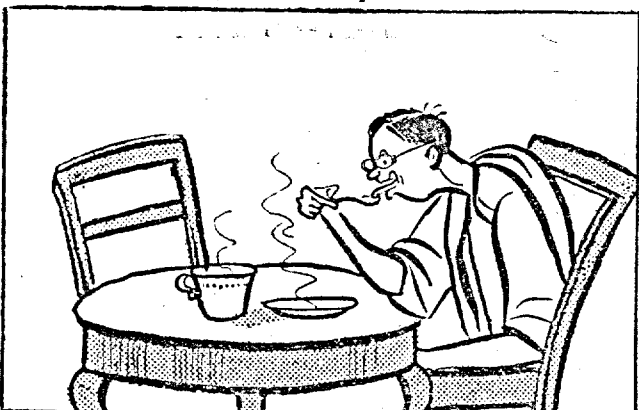
(5) Testing the cup's ceramic strength.



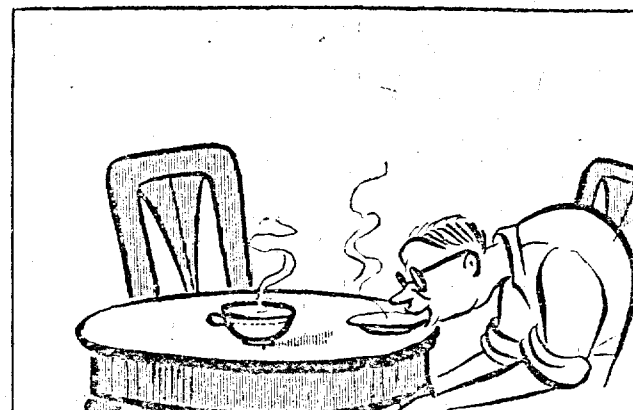
(2) Biting the edge of the saucer while keeping a grip on the cup.



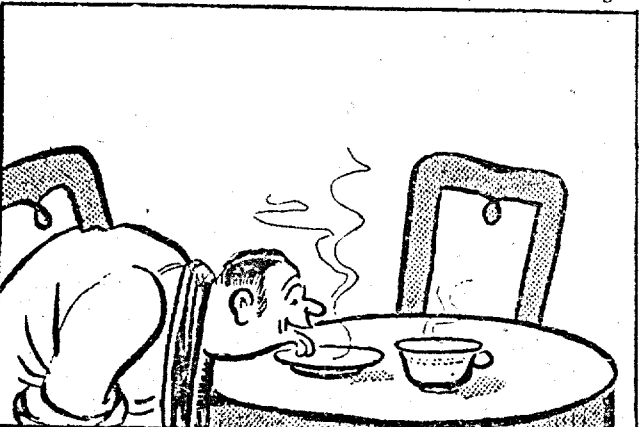
(6) Cautious spoon-feeding with an eye on the bill.



(3) Trying to tickle the tea-spoon with the tip of the tongue.



(7) Swallowing it, saucer and all.



(4) Lapping it all up like a performing puppy at the circus.



(8) Perhaps, the best method of a .

= I WOULD LIKE TO... =

(JAYA)

The wife is a perennial theme for humourists and satirists. From the better-half of Socrates down to the bobbed and shingled variety of the modern daughter of Eve, wives have borne the slings and arrows of writers of light prose with proverbial patience. And if in this article Jaya feels like hitting out, our sympathies are most certainly with her—Editor.

WHY do I put up with it? With what? Oh, my husband and his wretched jokes! Yes, I could retaliate, but one does not; that is all!

After all, men are mere grown-up babies, and we women are morally bound to look after their mental

Yes, I would like to say many things. For example I would like to say what an utterly incapable person he is, and how he could not even lie convincingly. The other night he had arranged to go to a drama with his friends, and, do you know, I had no peace at all throughout the whole day: he was so furtive and jumpy. I

guessed that he had arranged some such thing, and I opened my mouth again and again to say:—"For Heaven's sake, do stop that nervous tapping and tell me what mischief you are up to." But I did not say it. No wife ever does. Ours is not even a case of the mugger knowing that the jackal knew that the mugger knew. It is simply that we women know, and we have to pretend not to know, and when they offer some lame excuses, we have to pretend to believe it. Why? Only because of our innate kindness, I suppose.

I would like to say, just once in a while, "Yes, my dear, but I happen to have heard that one before." One gets a little tired of hearing the same joke for the three hundred and sixty-fourth time. God

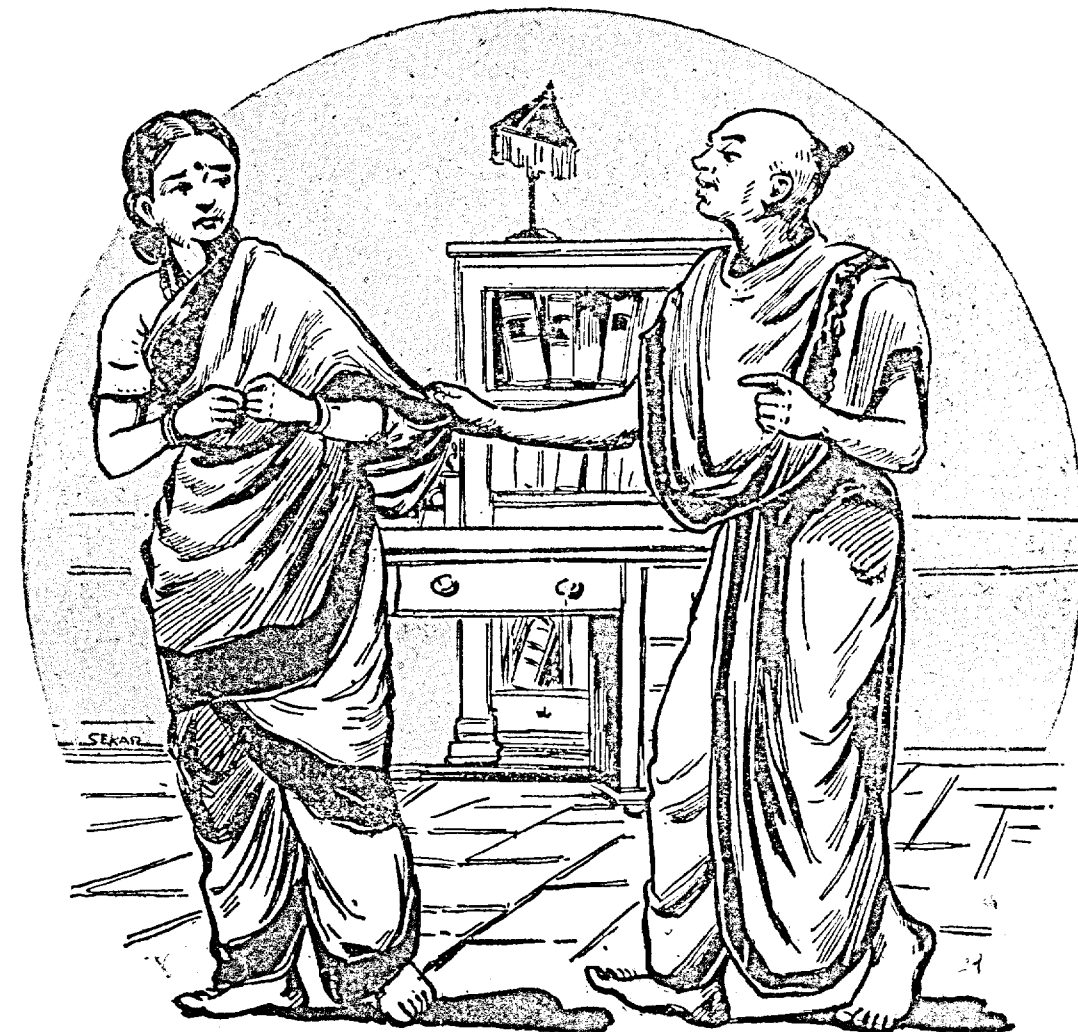
"His absurd love making....."

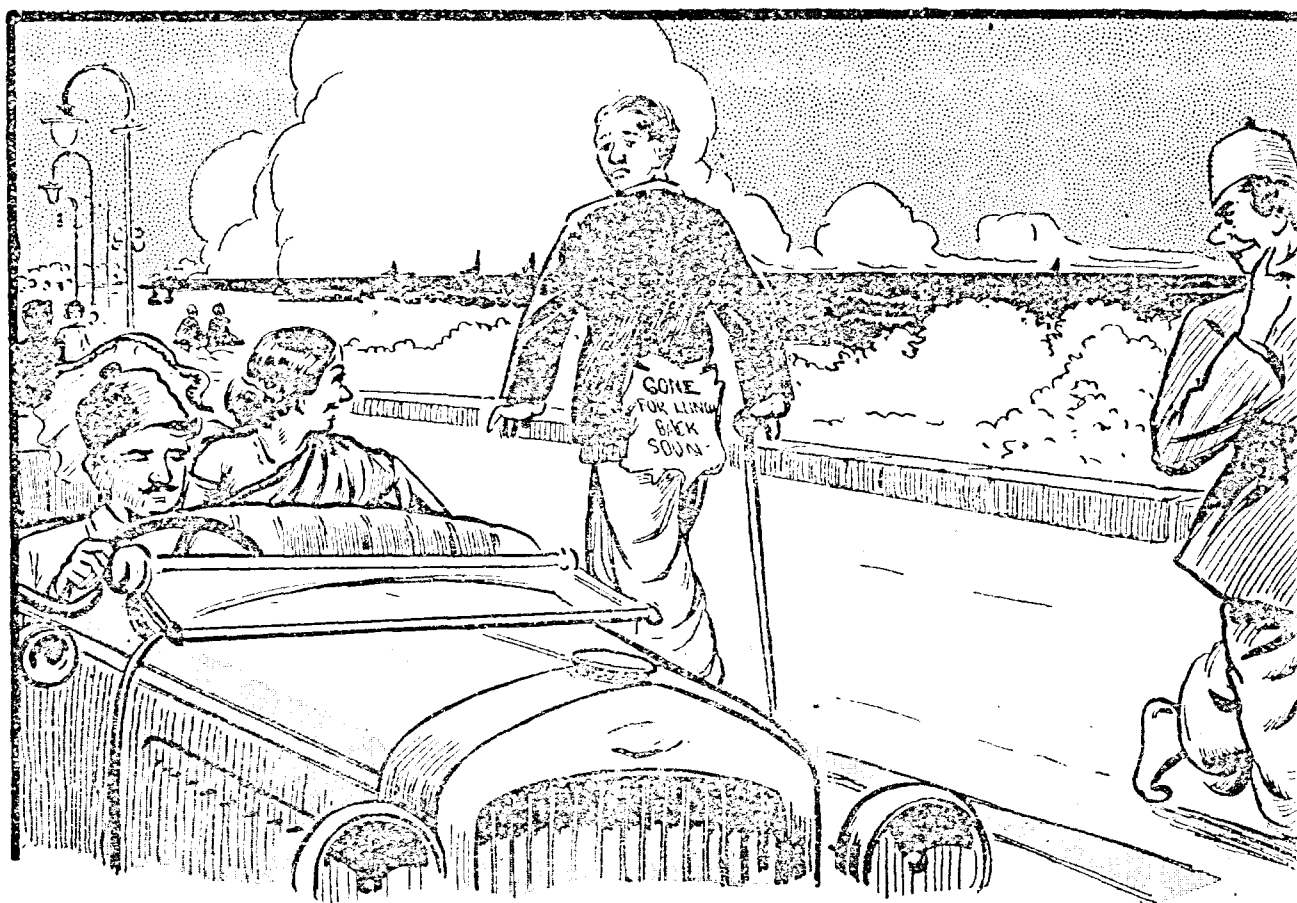
contentment just as they are bound to look after our physical well-being. When a three year old boy wants to show off before us, we do not let it appear that we see through him. We pretend to believe him. To make a grown-up man contented in his mind, we do the same thing. When one speaks of men's mental outfit of course, one means their vanity. If you strip them of it, what is left will be so small that you will need a microscope to see it.

knows why husbands go on retailing the same joke again and again, to their wives particularly. But they do it as regularly as the sun shines or the rain rains.

Do I say it? Never. I gulp down the words and smile dutifully at the proper moment. No. The reason is not that I am just well mannered; it is because I do not want to hurt his vanity. I would feel bad, as if I had slapped a trusting child suddenly, on

(Continued on page 884)

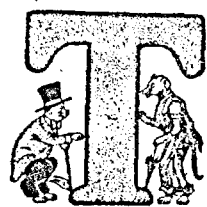




== DORAI TELLS A TALE ==

(SEQUEL TO OUR 'FINISH THE STORY COMPETITION')

Readers will remember our "Finish the Story Competition." There Dorai met a dame on the Marina. His astrologer predicted the influx of a fortune thro' the efforts of a fair lady. The story was started by Deisvi and finished by A. Srinivasa Rao. But 'Dorai' tells another story and here it is.—Editor:



THE offending story is the one published in your issue of the 25th July, 1933, under the title "Finish the story" Competition. I am not a highly lettered man. I have always wondered how these authors write their stories. Though I modestly confess to not being very highly lettered I have, however, the first two letters (in reverse order) of the alphabet as a suffix to my name. On numerous mornings after having cleared my table of the empty coffee cup, my cap, the *pansupari* plate, my wife's hair-oil bottle, comb, and a fistful of shed hairs, I sit down to write a story with my face composed to the determination, which must have shone on the face of the "boy who stood on the burning deck." At the end of an hour or so I usually cover only the first page,

with twenty-five specimens of my initials, each with a different flourish, fifteen signatures, half-a-dozen faces with beaky noses, Van Dyke beards, and inordinately long cigars in the mouth. There would be a few other intimate things also written therein, such as the pet name of my wife: but of the story, I could never produce even a ghost.

But, now I know how these authors get their stories. They sneak behind a probable victim, stalk him like a leopard, spy on him to their eternal shame, and then write it all up with a Webster Dictionary by their side to assist them to set high sounding words at proper intervals in their story. Or probably, they run a private detective bureau.

You must excuse me these hot words, as it is only natural for me, when not only I but all my intimate

friends have recognised me in "Doraiswamy" of your story.

I suppose, I shook off my shadow early in the proceedings. I recollect now that though in my elated moment I felt that there was no one around and the ravishing smile of the lady was meant to no one but me, yet I had the sixth sense of feeling not all alone. At once, I took the necessary steps to shake off any spies: and though the author has described faithfully my boarding the wrong tram and my omission to take back the change, yet he has miserably failed to know that these were the deliberate acts of a highly clever fellow with the intention of shaking off the spying author or his minions and not the distracted antics of a love struck chump.

Seeing that he has been baulked at the most interesting moment of what would have made a good story, what does he do? He persuades you to make a competition of it, probably, with the faint hope that it may catch my eye, and I may come forward to satisfy his unholy curiosity.

Even the sanctity of home is not safe from these sensation-hunters and what my wife said to me and what I said to my wife have all been exposed to the sneering delight of the public.

The little passage from my horoscope removes the last doubt about this being nothing other than an incomplete account of what happened to me this July on the Marina. I have the horoscope by me and I can send it to you, if you want to examine it.

Though I would have cut off my right hand rather than satisfy the idle curiosity of the author (anyhow I saw the Magazine too late to enter the competition) yet in the interest of Truth, I will tell you what happened later. If you desire to remunerate me, I will accept it this time more as a compensation for the pain caused to me than as any honorarium for writing this letter to you. I consider this my duty and I do not desire to be paid for doing my duty though I do not refuse any merited rewards.

Your author has already told you how while walking along the Marina in a greatly perturbed state of mind, brooding over the none-too-well paying business and the dishonest business methods of a rival, and with misgivings about my faith in my horoscope, a lady passed me in a car and turning in her seat threw a most ravishing smile at me revealing incidentally "a row of pure white faultless natural teeth." Personally, I did not notice the teeth with the business eye of a dentist, especially as the sun had set and the electric lights had come on, and the lady herself was in a fast receding car; besides my eyes at that moment were busy with more prosaic affairs, such as noting the number of the car.

You know also that my head was in a dizzy whirl at once, and though I had a wife and two kids at home, I felt that there was nothing strange in '*divinae ex machina*' smiling at me ravishingly as there must have been something about me to attract a woman of her evidently high station in life, though personally I had not been aware of this quality in me so long.

You also know how I went home and consulted my horoscope which said that *Sukraukti* began for me on the 23rd July, 1933, and that my fortune will be made through the efforts of a lady, a beautiful and rich lady whom I would meet shortly.

I will now tell you the story to the end. My friends smile at the way this episode in my life ended but I ask you what lady could be more beautiful to husband's eyes than his legally espoused wife, or who could be more fitted to bring fortune to him than she? What if it was small, there is a Rs. 2,500 contest advertised in the latest issue of *Athiya Vikatan*. But let me not anticipate events or incur the anger of those who are anxious to hear the story.

Now let me proceed with my story.

Even if I believed in astrology, I was not likely to sit idle waiting for the Gods to bring the fortune to my door.

In my adventures into the business world I had made several friends, and I now thought of Kannappan of the Police Commissioner's Office. He would be able to let me know about the owner of the car. I looked him up the next day and learnt to my dismay that the car belonged to Sir Ponniah, the millionaire owner of Scramble Grab & Co., Brokers, Contractors, Commission Agents, etc. The fair lady, then, can be no other than the much-admired Lady Ponniah, the beautiful second wife of the magnate.

How could I make her acquaintance,—do I must—but I may as well wish for the moon. I believe firmly that "faint heart never won fair love." I was determined to find a way. All sorts of plans, fantastic to even falling before her car, flitted through my mind. The next day I was entering the block in which I had a room which did duty for office, show-room, and go-down, three in one, when I was told by my *factotum* Kuppasami that Chinniah was waiting for me. I must introduce Chinniah. He is a millstone round my neck: my constant nightmare. I curse the year when I was in school with him. On the strength of that acquaintance, he had borrowed—which is a most unsuitable term—as he never returned anything—several little sums of money. I was very annoyed that of all days he should select this one to bother me. I ascended the steps determined to be very firm with him, and give him a piece of my mind.

Chinniah has a thicker skin than a Rhino. He simply did not see my frown, and buttonholing me began to pour out a tale of woe which I knew will soon be followed by a request for money. I was about to shake him off brusquely and send him with a flea in his ear when something he said about Scramble Grab & Co's silver jubilee caught my ear. I became immediately interested, and with that leapt into my memory the remembrance that Chinniah was some sort of relation to Sir Ponniah by marriage. Here was a God-sent help. I covered my frown and with a friendly slap on his back propelled him into the room and began sounding him. Chinniah is of the type of fellow who would sell his father for a consideration; and very soon assisted by a 'lean' of a fiver with a promise of another to follow, he readily agreed to secure me an invitation to the Jubilee

The Merry Magazine

Party and also to introduce me to Lady Ponniah. I learnt that the Party was to celebrate a double event, the silver jubilee of the firm as well as the "shastipurthi" of Sir Ponniah.

The next few days I spent in exciting anticipation and would have liked to confide in my wife who was being consumed with curiosity, did I not fear that I would be consumed by her jealousy?

In due time the invitation to the Jubilee arrived, and on the appointed day Chinniah with an eye to the promised fiver, came in person to take me to the function.

The crush in the hall where the jubilee was held was very great, but with judicious elbowing we reached where Sir and Lady Ponniah were receiving the guests. As soon as Lady Ponniah's eyes lighted on me she gave me a most charming smile, which showed that she had not forgotten me. I was elated to the seventh heaven and would have stayed longer to chat with her, but I feared that we may indiscreetly betray ourselves to malicious comment, and therefore I moved away.

Soon the stream of arrivals slackened, and the guests settled themselves to enjoy the many delectable dishes provided for their entertainment.

I selected a lonely table behind a palm and sat down to watch the guests. My heart was going pat-pat, and I could not eat even a crumb of all the delicacies provided there. Chinniah had deserted me long ago. Suddenly I heard a laughter-laden voice behind me. It was the voice of my beloved hostess, and I sat in rapt attention drinking in every syllable of the musical carillon of her words. Sir Ponniah also appeared to be with her, but I dared not turn round lest Lady Ponniah betray herself and me again, with one of her beatific smiles.

She had now controlled in a manner her laughter and was narrating something in a loud whisper. "I was taking the air," she was saying, "last saturday in the 'Lovers' Walk' when I noticed that young man behind the palm. He was slashing about him fiercely with his cane at the casaurina bushes and muttering to

himself strangely. I passed him again when I was returning in the car. I was intrigued by his wild and murderous looks, and turned to have another glance at him.

"What do you think I saw?" The recollection seemed to cause her the greatest amusement and she again burst into cascades of laughter. Presently she continued. "He had neatly pasted on to the tail of his coat a notice." Between outbursts of renewed mirth she spluttered out, "it read, 'GONE FOR LUNCH, BACK SOON.'" At this the entire table burst into a roar of raucous huffaw. I remembered I had such a placard, neatly gummed in my office and was much annoyed when I found it missing. And so, that was that!

My dream castle had tumbled round my ears, and I prayed that the floor may open and swallow me up. Sir Ponniah was yet cackling most hideously. Mortification and rage were overpowering me. I felt like rushing at the horrid crowd and slapping one and all of them.

Just then Chinniah came back, and like the addle-brained ass he is, started pulling me towards Lady Ponniah, gibbering the meanwhile something about that being a more leisurely occasion to get better acquainted with her. He had the cheek to add, "you wouldn't forget the other fiver, will you, old chap?"

I knocked down the half-witted idiot and rushed out into the street like a man possessed. People shouted after me, someone cried, "stop thief!" and a policeman hurled himself in my way. Cars seemed to rear themselves on their hind wheels and came at me snorting fire and smoke. It was a ghastly nightmare. At last I stood before a house. A beautiful lady stood framed in the doorway. Her face beamed with pleasure at my sight. I was still feeling very dazed. "Darling," she exclaimed, "I have been waiting for ages for you. I have a surprise for you. Our luck has changed at last. I have won a prize in the 'Topsy-Turvy Words competition' of 'Athisaya Vikatan.' Let us celebrate. We will go to the Talkies tonight." If this isn't fortune through, the efforts of a lady, I ask you what is?

I WOULD LIKE TO.....(Continued from page 881)

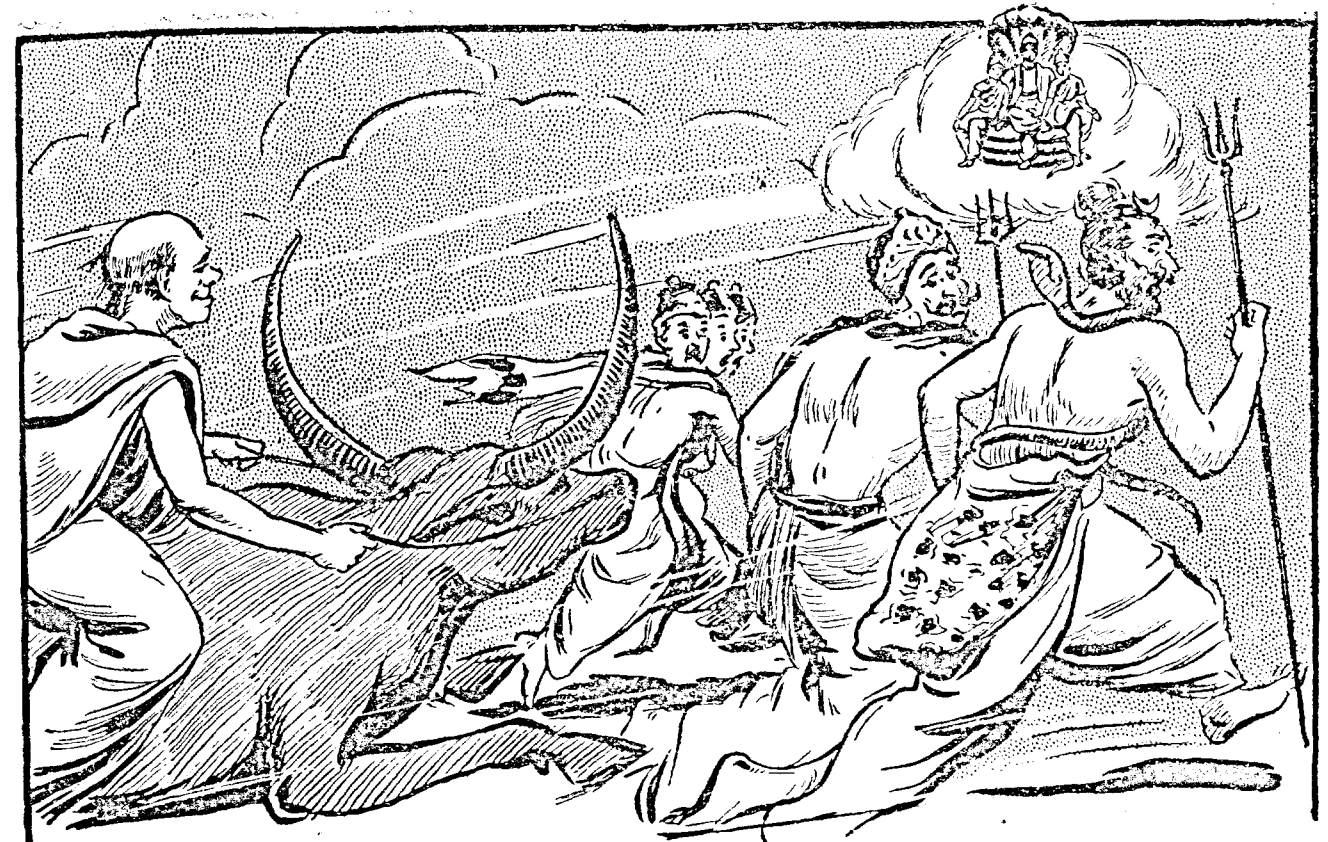
the face. So I allow him to go on, although day by day and every day my nerves are getting taut, strung up like that, and I would not be surprised if one of these days there is a big snap,—phut—and me, just a wreck!

Most hard of all to bear are his sudden attacks of sentimentalism. I am a hardened married woman of many years standing, but that wretched man still makes me blush with his absurd love-making. Could he not behave, at least in public? It has been the same ever since he married me. In our father's house, when he came for Deepavali, he would walk up and down the verandah merely to pass by the window of my room. The apartment was so dark that he could not be sure whether I was inside or not; and most of the time, I would not be inside. Still he would continue to walk, nourishing the fond hope that he was giving me the

pleasure of beholding his 'winning' personality. And after our clandestine meeting, he would be so idiotically pleased with himself that he would grin the rest of the day. Of course, even my baby brother would say, "Althimber is grinning. I know. I know. He has been talking to Akka." No girl will betray the fact that she has just come from a rendezvous, either by her behaviour or her facial expression. Why then could not men have equal control over themselves? They make us feel ashamed of their silly behaviour.

I could say many things about men, and I would like to say them; but, as I said before one does not. It is not done. We might retaliate, and we do retaliate, but not in this way by exposing them publicly.

I beg your pardon. I have repeated myself, haven't I? I suppose this comes from living with him and reading his humorous articles. Heaven save the mark!



SALVATION FOR SAMPATH

(A. S. RAO.)

A Fantasy. If the survival of personality even after the mortal coil is shuffled off is true, it could be supposed that people will be shrewd enough to strike a bargain even in the "other place." Sampath merely takes advantage of an ancient text.—Editor :



FAT Sampathu Chetty, the rich landholder, money-lender, owner of a half a dozen mills and factories was a miser among misers. During his sixty years, charity was unknown to him. Beggars never approached his door. Two big mastiffs chased any one who dared to beg alms at his door.

Sampathu, was superstitious by nature. One day the poor man tripped on a banana peel and fell—a fatal fall it proved to be. The doctors who attended on him shook their heads and pronounced his condition hopeless and beyond human aid. A week was the maximum time allowed in which the Chettiar could atone for his multitudinous sins. Seven short days! His amassed wealth would not come with him nor could it grant him an extension of time. Poor Chettiar! He could not think of the horrors of "Yama Loka" where he knew he would soon have to go. How to escape the tortures of Hell was the problem? He could fly in air, travel on land or water, but what was the good? He cannot escape from the clutches

of Yama's *Doothas*. He thought, for three livelong days and nights, and at last hit upon a plan. He must spend something on charity. Therein alone lay his salvation. What shall it be? Presenting a cow to a Brahmin to wash off his sins? A splendid idea! 'Godhanam' beats every other dhanam! mused our Chettiar. And he forthwith engaged a gharry and went to the cattle market, selected a very old emaciated cow (ear-marked for the slaughter-house) paid a small amount, summoned a Brahmin and solemnly gave it away to him. The poor cow, as she was being led by the Brahmin, reeled and fell, as if struck by lightning, and collapsed. The Brahmin's anger knew no bounds. He cursed the Chettiar, cursed himself, cursed everybody, and paid out of his pocket, charges for the burial of the carcass.

Now to return to our Chettiar. The Doctors made no mistake in their prediction. On the seventh day, on the stroke of eight, Sampathu died. His two sons and wife bemoaned his loss and his funeral obsequies were

duly performed according to the rites. The soul of Sampathu Chetty accompanied Yama's servants to Yama-Loka (Hades) much against its will.

What happened in Yama-Loka?

Yama :— Are you Sampathu Chetty, the miserly son of Lokiah Chetty. Stand up man, why do you shiver like a whipped cur?

Sampathu :— Yes, my lord. But your Lordship cannot call me a miser, for I did a charitable act ere I died.

Yama :— Eh! What? Charity did you say? You swine, you dare to utter a lie even in my kingdom. Beware, Ho! Who's there? Throw this wretch into those cauldrons of boiling oil and give him a good ducking. Brand him with red-hot irons till I cry halt.

Sampathu :— Hear me, I pray, before you chastise me. I performed a *Godhanam* :— Vengu Sastry the village *purchit* of Ariyalur was the recipient.

Yama :— Ho, there! summon Chitragupta to my presence.

(Enter Chitragupta with a bulky book in his hand)

Yama :— Chitragupta, read out the record of Sampathu Chetty, son of Lokiah Chetty of Ariyalur.

Chitragupta :— (After fumbling with the leaves reads out)

Born 1872.

Died 1932.

Age 60.

Cause of death—Banana Peel.

Most miserly in habits throughout life. Amassed a lot of money in usury. Much against his will, he bought and gave Vengu Sastry an almost dead cow with 2 per cent. life in it. The cow died on the way and the expenses of the burial were met by the Brahmin, who heaped curses instead of blessings on Sampathu. Submitted for orders as to how this should be accounted. Debit or Credit against Party? Orders passed to rule it out.

Yama :— There you are. Your act did not come up to the level of charity. So prepare yourself for your doom which I have already pronounced.

Sampathu :— (Prostrating himself at the feet of Yama) Lord! Lord! Show some mercy on me. I gave the cow to that Brahmin in good faith. I am not responsible for its death.

Yama :— Chitragupta, What do you suggest? How am I to deal with this fellow?

Chitragupta :— I have already recorded in the diary that this fellow, much against his will, gave the cow away to the Brahmin. So, anything given not spontaneously cannot be deemed a gift. The fear of punishment in Hell for his iniquities must have made him throw sand in our eyes by a seeming piece of charity. Much as he deserves his punishment it would be better to show some mercy. For, he saved the cow from being brutally slaughtered by the butcher. We can therefore reckon it as 1 per cent. good against 100 per cent. bad deeds. This will entitle him to spend half-an-hour in heaven.

Yama :— Sampathu Chettiar, in accordance with the suggestion of our Chitragupta who pleads hard for you, you are allowed half-an-hour to enjoy the pleasures of heaven. Now avaunt!

Sampathu :— I thank you and also Chitragupta for this bounty, but may I ask a favour at your hands?

Yama :— What is it? Out with it, and be quick about it.

Sampathu :— My lord, I crave the use of your *vahanam* to take me to heaven; it should be instructed to obey me implicitly.

Yama :— What a curious request to ask? Granted. Here is my Buffalo! Take it.

Sampathu bestrode the animal and ordered it to charge and gore Yama. Poor Yama—he did not expect this manoeuvre. So he ran, ran like a mad man, with the buffalo bellowing with rage close at his heels.

Vanquishing the Trinity.

To God Brahma, Yama ran with the buffalo in hot pursuit. But Brahma could not give him any shelter. The beast attacked Brahma also at the behest of Sampathu. To God Siva therefore, both Yama and Brahma ran at top-gear. Siva too was in the same predicament. He joined the couple and the trio doubled up to the All Powerful God Vishnu who was sitting in Vaikunta dallying with his consorts. He was amazed at the sight! so funny it was. The precious trio arrived panting and breathless, at break-neck-speed. Lord Vishnu through the aid of His celestial foresight knew what the matter was. The half-an-hour allotted to Sampathu was fast nearing its end—it was almost over. The Buffalo approached its Lord and Master, Yama, with a meek and docile air.

Yama :— What a rascal, you have proved yourself to be! Make haste to come along with me to my Kingdom. You shall pay for this insolence. (So saying Yama threw a noose round the neck of Sampathu and attempted to drag him.)

Sampathu :— Oh! Lord Vishnu hear me, I pray. I did no wrong to merit punishment at the hands of the Lord of Death. He Himself gave me His *vahanam* of his own free-will. I simply wanted to put it to a test, I am now satisfied!

Vishnu :— Your behaviour has been most impertinent. I cannot interfere. Depart from here.

Sampathu :— Where to my Lord?

Vishnu :— To Yama's Kingdom to receive your punishment.

Sampathu :— How can I go to Hell Oh Lord! I have seen all the three divinities, Brahma, Siva and Yourself, and have even entered Your Kingdom. To such a one there can be no place in Hell, according to the Vedas that you yourself have ordained. I deserve *Moksha*, and I must enjoy it.

Lord Vishnu was so taken aback at the strength of this argument that he had to accede to the request of Chettiar. Lords Brahma, Siva and Yama took their departure, leaving the Chettiar a happy and proud possessor of a permanent seat in *Vaikunta*.

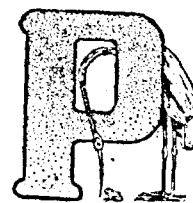


"..... see the duck dips its head....."

FANTASTIC PALMISTRY!

(ELMER DELVILLE)

Here is a story where the astrologer gives a correct prediction. How is it done and why? Read the story to the bitter end.—*Editor*.



HEW! What a hot day," muttered Mr. Venkataramanan, mopping his bald benevolent head with the end of his shawl and sinking into a sofa, "it's the hottest I've seen for quite a number of years."

This remark was, of course, not to be taken seriously as Mr. Parthasarathy well knew, for the old joker said the same thing every other day. He often vented his spleen on somebody or something for sheer love of it.

Mr. Venkataramanan's pet hobby was eating and a second choice was—eating. Between these pleasant occupations he would sleep or creak round his flower-beds, sit painfully in front of a shrub or two and would call it gardening. For a spot of intellectual exercise he favoured fairy tales, astrology or the occult sciences—anything that did not call for mental effort.

When Mr. Parthasarathy, the affianced husband of Bageerath, Mr. Venkataramanan's only daughter, came

up behind him in the garden and unexpectedly slapped him on the back familiarly, he had almost jumped out of his skin. It perhaps occurred to him that if before the actual marriage to his daughter the young man's smack was so resonant, how much more vigorous it would be after the event. With remarkable presence of mind, however, he drawled, "Welcome Mr. Parthasarathy. The child and I have just been talking about you."

"Did you, really?" giggled Mr. Sarathy, opening his lantern-jaws as wide as they could go, "that was kind of you."

"Not really—er—I mean don't mention it."

So the conversation drifted on to topical matters notably the forthcoming wedding ceremonies. If the truth were told, it was a commercial wedding. Bageerath was marrying money that would eventually go to lift a heavy mortgage on her father's house. She had agreed to help her father out, though in her heart she cherished a secret affection for her cousin Raghavan. In spite of his hatchet face and spindle shanks Mr. Parthasarathy

was considered to be a big catch. But Bageerathy had different views on matrimony though her father would set his own house on fire if by doing so he could draw a smile from his prospective son-in-law.

As the two men were now lolling in their deck-chairs, Mr. Venkataramanan smoking a Trichy "diamond" and Mr. Parthasarathy sucking contentedly at his two rupee briar-wood pipe, who should come in but a wandering fakir? He had come through the gate unnoticed and now stood facing them from the portico. Across his shoulder was slung a bulging canvas bag.

"Get away from here, you skunk!" shouted Mr. Parthasarathy, "you and your kind are dirty thieves and birds of ill-omen. Begone!"

"Not so hasty," soothed Mr. Venkataramanan, and addressing the visitor, "now look here, who are you?"

"I'm a palmist by trade, sir."

"A palmist?" sneered Mr. P. "what the devil do you know?"

"I know everything," said the diviner, fingering his bag, as if he got his inspiration from it.

"Then, of course, you know what you are going to get presently." Mr. Parthasarathy's tone was none too pleasant.

"I don't want anything master," said the man unperturbed, and ignoring the implied threat. "I've been sent here," he added.

"By whom? By Mephistopheles himself, perhaps?"

"How much do you want for the message?" asked the older man, who was a lightning thinker where rupees and annas were concerned.

"Nothing!"

"Nothing?"

"Yes. Nothing."

"Come, come, my good friend," mocked Mr. P, curling his lips in undisguised contempt. "You are much too old to know anything sensible. Or are you pulling our legs?"

"You have no need to be."

"What?"

"I say you have no need to be so distrustful."

"Alright then," said Mr. Parthasarathy condescendingly, pulling his chair a little forward, "tell me something that you know about me."

"You are going to be married shortly."

"Any dolt can say that. You might have even heard about it outside the gate."

"Well?" Mr. Venkataramanan wanted to be encouraging.

"The wedding will not take place."

A thunder-clap would be child's play compared to the chorus of startled surprise from the two men. "What!" they exclaimed in unison.

"The marriage will not materialise," said the soothsayer.

"Preposterous! This is confounded cheek!" roared Mr. Sarathy, his brittle stub of a moustache quivering with anger.

"Yes true," said the palmist coolly.

"Get out of here," thundered the injured bridegroom-elect and bits of the ceiling fell down and mingled with the party.

"Let's hear him out, Mr. Sarathy," said Mr. Ramanan, "it doesn't cost us anything and we need not believe all that he says."

"Then what's the use of listening to nonsense?"

"Curiosity," replied the older man. "It is an entertainment as well. Now proceed. Remember, we pay you nothing for your babble."

As the fakir unfastened the bag, he asked for a measure of raw rice. Mr. Sarathy on the lookout for an opportunity to have a word with Bageerathy alone said he would fetch it and disappeared into the house.

"Pardon me, sir, may I trouble you for a little water also in a small vessel. Thank you." Mr. Venkataramanan went to bring the water.

When the two men returned the astrologer had already spread his things about and in their midst, he was solemnly seated with his legs crossed. On one side was an coconut shell with a celuloid duck lying at its bottom; on the other side was a silver tray covered with a white cloth. He poured a little water into the shell and the duck began to float. He then filled the tray with rice.

"May I borrow your pipe, sir?" This request was made to Mr. Parthasarathy.

"This is queer palmistry, isn't it?" jibed the now irritated young man. Mr. Venkatan, however, was impressed and begged his son-in-law-to-be to hand over the pipe.

The charmer thereupon buried the bowl-end of the pipe in the rice with the mouthpiece sticking out. Then he slowly removed the cloth covering.

"I shall now ask my mystic duck a few questions. Only, please do not interrupt me. Else the spell will have gone."

"Very well," said Mr. Venkataramanan in such a tone that it implied for and on behalf also. "Begin."

"There is a virgin in this house? Yes. See the duck dips its head. She is to be married? Yes. To whom? I forget. You cannot speak. Is it to our master here? No answer. Is it to somebody else? Ah! he dips."

"You—" growled Mr. Parthasarathy; that is saying a great deal.

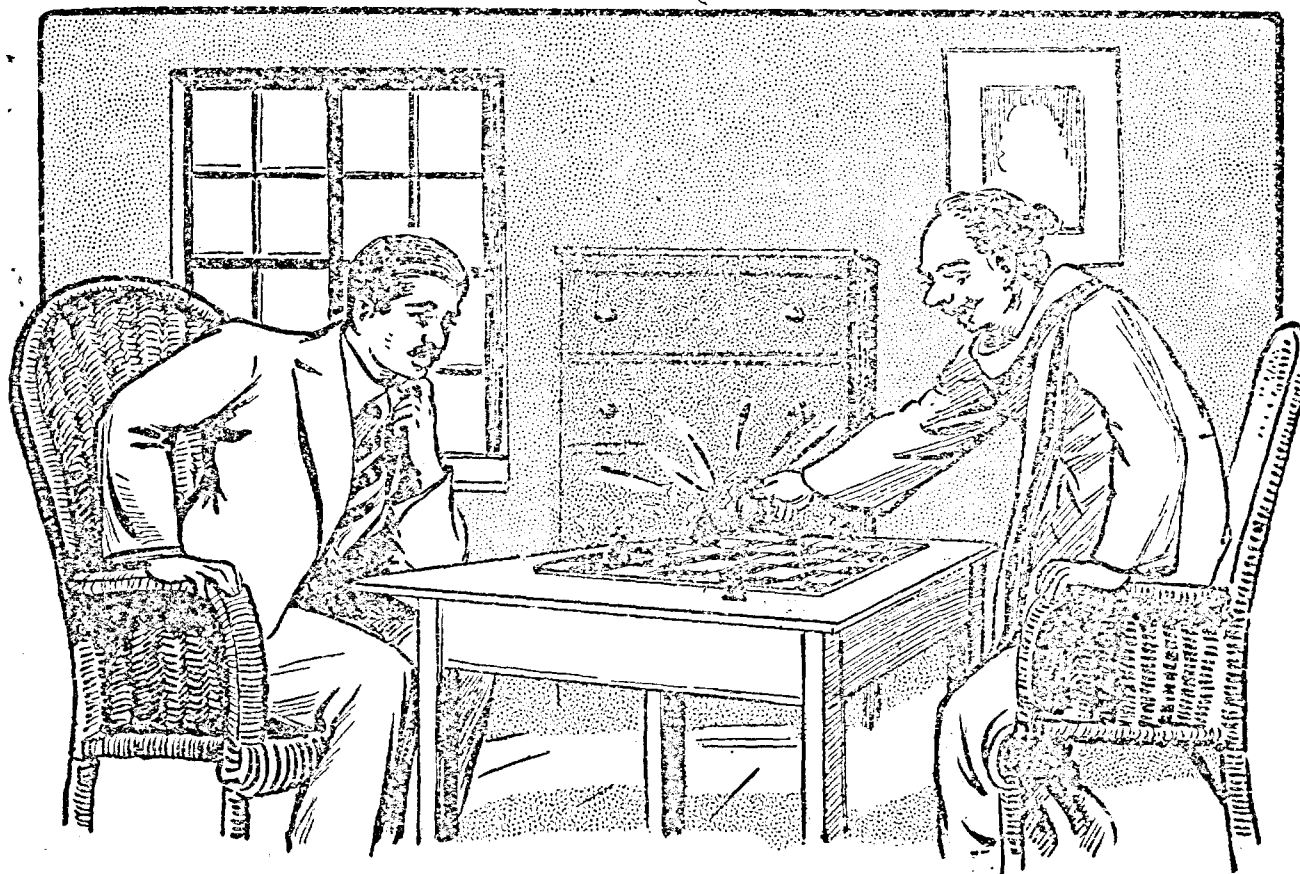
"Does the lady love somebody else? Yes. Where does he live? In this direction? No. This? No. This? Yes."

"The rascal," Mr. P. could not contain himself!

(Continued on page 890)

CHESS, MY LAD!

P. P. SAMUEL.



A game to convince a squint-eyed Johnny that the peculiar plan of his orbs is a decided advantage to him.

"Everything," said Mr. Mani, trying his best to look a philosopher, "Everything is for the best in the best of possible worlds."

"I learned that at school," said I. "In 1900 or so."

"And therefore you don't believe it?"

"In fact, I don't, unless it is qualified a good deal. Now, tell me. How do rats help you?"

"Elementary, my dear Samuel," he sneered. "Don't they keep the cats busy? Far too busy to mess about in your kitchen and read the temperature of your soup with their whiskers?"

He adjusted his dhoti and gave me a triumphant, philosophic stare. But I stood to my guns.

"Can you," I demanded, "convince a squint-eyed Johnny that the peculiar plan of his orbs is a decided advantage to him?"

Mr. Mani turned red like a chameleon.

"Don't put such damfool questions," he demurred, as if he was the Minister for Local Self-Government answering a short-notice question.

Well, that was yesterday. Today I am wiser. I have just played a game of chess with Mr. Mani, and he has beaten me hollow.

About half an hour ago he sidled up to me like a crab and asked me if I cared to play a game.

"Righto!" said I, as I was sure I could give him a jolly licking.

He was the first to reach the table. He emptied the box of chessmen on to the table, extracted the White King thoughtfully, and erected him on his black throne.

"Heads or tails?" said I, when he was reaching for the White Queen.

"What?"

"We are going to toss for the white," I declared.

"Don't worry. You may have it if you care. As a matter of fact I prefer the black fellows."

We tossed and Mr. Mani disposed his proud little army of sixteen Caucasians in battle array, with a triumphant air.

"Like to toss again?" he barked.

"No, thanks," said I, humbly arranging my poor Ethiopians on the board.

"Now, then, King's Gambit," he announced. "K. P. to K's 4th."

"Same here," said I, countering him.

"K. B. P. to B's 4th," he declared, teaching his grandmother to suck eggs, so to say.

I rolled up my sleeve, took hold of the impudent little fellow—the pawn, I mean—by the scruff of the neck, and lifted him neatly off the board.

Followed, of course, carnage. Mr. Mani was no cold-blooded, calculating fellow like Dr. Alekhine or Senor Capablanca. He was out for blood and more of it, like the gunmen of Chicago. "Kill," was his watchword, and he executed with such vim that when he made a mad rush for my Queen he knocked down the poor horse that was dutifully covering its mistress.

"S-Sorry," he murmured, realising his mistake.

"Now, my turn," I shouted.

I am not a giant at chess, but I always have a trick or two up my sleeve. I know—it is sheer Psychology—that my adversary always ignores my Bishops, as they are expected to be grave, peace-loving folk. So I make it a point to unleash a bish as early as possible and plant him in a position whence he could run diagonally right across the board. There he waits, piously, yet longingly, until the Queen floats into his See. Then he just sings the Magnificat and gracefully lifts her off her feet.

"Senor Capablanca playing," said I, grabbing his Queen and substituting her by my faithful Bishop.

"Give it back, will you?" yelled Mr. Mani. "Don't you see that I haven't yet let go of my piece?"

That was an eventuality I was prepared for, and the Queen was safe in my pocket. But according to an unwritten law of our club a player has the right to get back his Queen twice in a game.

"Give it back," he yelled.

"If it is a request I will consider it," said I, with the air of a Grand Moghul distributing Governorships.

"Come, come," said Mr. Mani.

"A Birthday present for you," I beamed, dropping the Queen into his open hand.

"Look here," he returned, "I haven't yet let go of my man. And don't be impatient if you still want to learn the A. B. C. of Chess."

He looked at his Queen lovingly and stationed her in an impregnable fortress.

It was then that I had a brain-wave. There was a little fellow of mine—a hermaphrodite—waiting in the seventh square of his file and crying to be allowed to change his sex and become a Queen.

FANTASTIC PALMISTRY—(Continued from page 888)

"Masters! the duck has pointed the direction in which her future husband lives. Let us now see whether the present proposed union is conducive to happiness. The rice, Sir, belongs to this house. The pipe, to you, Sir. If the Gods ordain that the two ashrams should not be conjoined then we shall see things happening. Otherwise nothing will happen."

The man then took the water vessel and sprinkled a little of it over the rice. Nothing happened at first and Mr. Parthasarthy was just bursting into a fit of laughter when lol bubbles came through the rice as if the water was boiling underneath. Then he took a match-stick and lit the stem of the pipe. It took fire and burnt with a steady jet. Holy smokes! what calamity thought Mr. V. What a deceiving charlatan, thought Mr. P. The sequence sent Mr. Parthasarthy back to the country, for no sooner than the astrologer left the premises, it was discovered that Bageerathy had disappeared.

I pushed him forward.

"Meet the Second Queen of Ethiopia," I announced.

"Don't be silly," said Mr. Mani. "Polygamy isn't allowed."

"Anyway, there she is."

"My dear man, she is illegal," he snapped, with an air of finality.

"A white King doesn't perhaps marry two wives, but I suppose a Black King needn't have any such scruples."

"Do you?" said he, lifting the new Queen out of my reach.

"I am prepared to give you another move," he conceded.

I stared at the board. There were only a few men left to decide the battle, but my army was decidedly the stronger of the two.

Meanwhile Mr. Mani was glaring at my imprudent Bishop who had had a short flirtation with his Queen. And seeing the singleness of his aim I removed my poor officer to safety.

"Now, then," he cried, triumphantly: "behold Napoleon at Austerlitz!"

He moved his horse with a flourish, and cried "Check!"

I was preparing to remove the silly horse from the battlefield when Mr. Mani exploded like a gasometer.

"Checkmate!" he bellowed.

Then the tragedy of the thing dawned on me. The movement of his horse left me exposed to the attack of his Queen as well. And my men were guarding their king so carefully that he couldn't move an inch!

"It's all unfair," I yelled. "You were all the time glaring at my Bishop just to mislead me. No, that isn't cricket!"

"It is just Chess, my lad," he gloated. "But, honestly, I didn't even glance at your blinking Bish. By the way, doesn't it answer that damfool question you put me yesterday?"

It was then that I remembered Mr. Mani had a fearful squint!

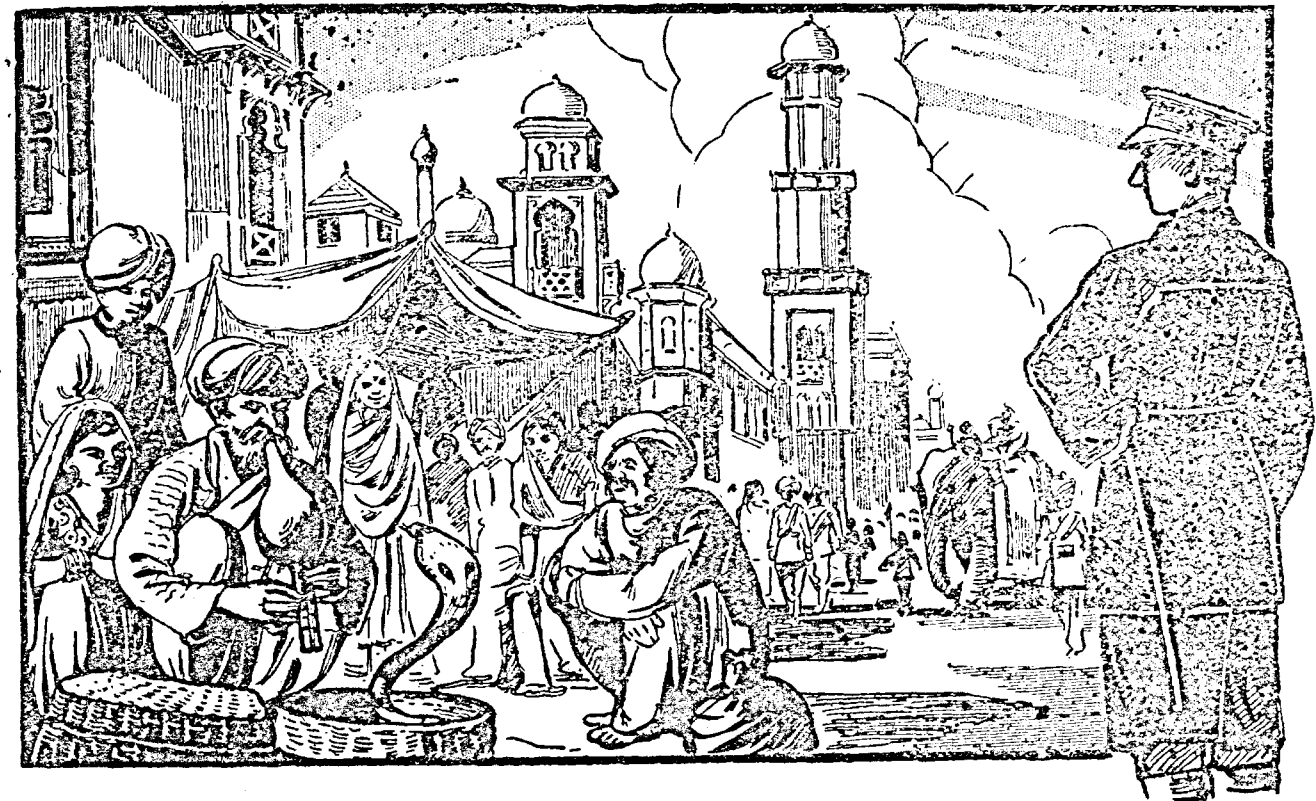
It is easy to be reconciled to a son-in-law who is also or who was also a nephew. Mr. and Mrs. Raghavan did not have any ill-feeling against the old man, when he visited them at Bangalore. He was glad that even Raghavan could raise the mortgage on his house. But he was anxious to find out how things happened eighteen months before.

"The fakir was no other than my friend Gopalan. While he entertained you outside I had planned to take Bageerathy by the back lane. Everything went perfectly as we had expected."

"That part of it, I can guess. How did Gopalan manage the conjuring tricks? For instance, the duck?"

"That's simple. The duck had a steel beak and Gopalan had a strong magnetic ring. It had to dance to his gestures. The rice boiled because there was Enos Fruit Salt at the bottom of the tray and the pipe caught fire because there was calcium carbide stuffed into its bowl."

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL, II.



Private Joyfull looks at India and Indian Life from a refreshingly new angle. He is a typical Tommy and already he has gathered around him a host of admirers—*Editor*.

Madras, 10th November, '33.

DEAR MOTHER,

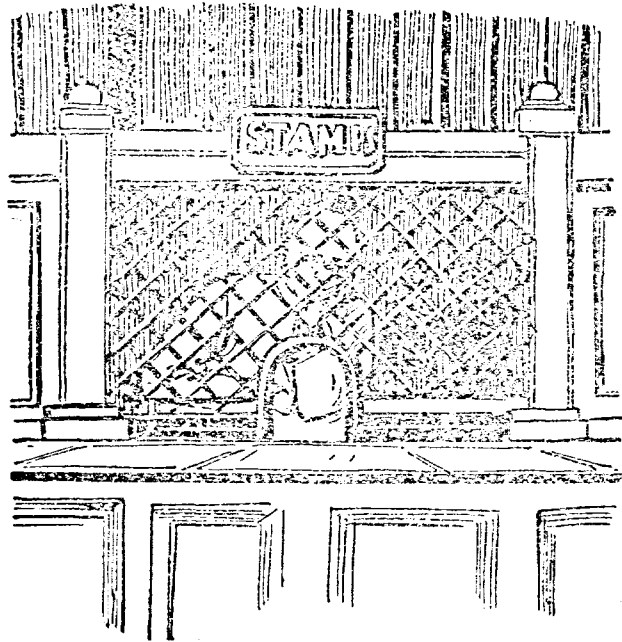
I HAVE found that I cannot send you a letter every day as I promised, as by some oversight the Post Office doesn't have a steamer going to England every day.

I went to the Post-office in order to find out the arrangements, and I was quite surprised. It wasn't like a post-office at all, but a kind of little dungeon, suitable for a person undergoing solitary confinement for life. There was a small opening in the wall, through which a warder could pass in bread and water to the unfortunate captive. There was an Indian gentleman peeping out of the hole, and I felt sorry for him, and asked how he came to get like that. He said he owed his position to being a failed B.A., and also to nepotism and private influence. From this I gather that they are very strict in India, and anyone who is guilty of these practices is shut up in a Government dungeon, and tortured by having papers constantly passed to him. I have even heard of a victim being kept awake for a whole afternoon by such methods.

I think this particular gentleman must have been sentenced to hard labour, because he was doing the work of ever so many departments all at once, scribbling and counting and stamping in a dogged sort of way,

so that it took a very long time to get any one thing done. There was an Indian General asleep outside, and when I questioned him he said he had been there for many hours, waiting for a three pice stamp. He said he was the Governor of Madras, so I was just going to salute him, when I thought I had better make sure. As far as I could make out from his lingo, he was not the Governor himself, but a sort of office superintendent called a Chup Prassy. You could tell he was a high official, because he was wearing a splendid uniform in gold lace, and I wished I had his job and his pay. He said to himself that the Government couldn't get along without him, so I thought what nonsense it was for the Indians to complain that they did not get a fair share of the Government, when there were positions like this open to them. Meanwhile the gentleman in the prison was transacting business and having long rapid-fire expostulations with his customers, none of whom seemed to understand anything, or to believe what the gentleman told them. Locked in with him was a kind of C class prisoner in a drab uniform. He was squatting on the floor, and counting on his fingers with slow grunts, and every now and then he would be seized by a fit, and bang the post-office stamp on all sorts of pieces of paper scattered about. In spite of this, he seemed quite important, and gave instructions to the customers, and heaped reproaches on them, with an air of great authority and knowledge.

Yesterday afternoon I went for a walk with my chum Boggins to have our first sight of the town. At the fort gate there were a lot of men with little carts,



"...the gentleman in the prison"

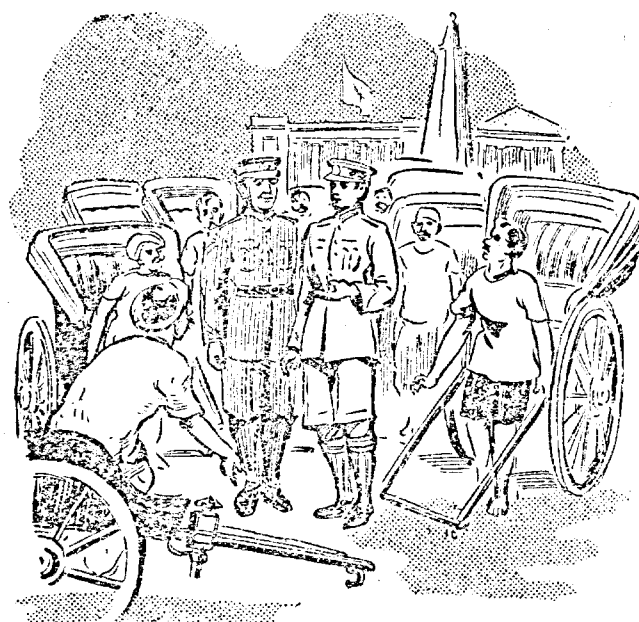
and when we tried to walk out, these men all started shouting, and they blocked the road with their little carts, so that we could not go out. I thought this was a precaution to defend the fort against sudden attacks; the men were quite expert in blocking the road, and the little carts were quite light and handy for the purpose. But later on I saw people riding in these little carts, and would you believe it, there was a man in the shafts, pulling the cart like a horse or a donkey. I thought this was the most shameful sight I have ever seen. I tried to ask one of the men how he could do such work; but he was like a poor dumb beast, and only had two ideas. At first he thought I was going to hit him, and when he found I did not mean any violence, his only other thought was that I would give him money. It was just as if I walked up to a strange animal, with a stick in one hand and a carrot in the other. I thought that there must be some very wicked people in Madras, to let their brothers grow up like beasts of burden.

Those men did not seem to think it right that a gentleman should walk about on his own legs, and for quite a long way they followed us, begging us to abandon the shame of pedestrianism, and get into their little carts. It is very surprising how Indians insist on your doing things you don't want to do. There was a person who wanted me to buy a baby's toy, and another who wanted me to watch him do some acrobatic tricks, and another who said I ought to come with him and get something called toddy. Besides this, there were ever so many who said I had to give them a pice. I asked what for, and they all said they wanted a pice for their bellies. They all had quite fat bellies, with a piece of string tied round it, so I suppose it is their ambition to hang the pice, when they get it, on the string like a

watch-charm. At first I thought it would be polite to do what all these people said, but Boggins told me to take no notice, so to all of them I said "No thank you, not today," very politely. They took no notice, so Boggins told me to say "Jow," which means "Goodbye." But they took no notice still, and Boggins said it was the custom, if you did not want anything, to shake your fist and shout angry words, and then the people (who did not understand different languages) would take it as a hint. I thought it was a very impolite way of saying goodbye, but I did as Boggins said, and it was quite successful. But while I was shouting and threatening an Indian in a white cap came by, and looked at me very solemnly, and said, "Brutal soldier." I was quite surprised, and wondered what he could mean, but I don't think he could have meant me. Perhaps it is a greeting in some Indian language.

After a little while, we came to a street called China Bazaar. I kept a good lookout, because I wanted to buy a shaving-nug to send home to Uncle Alf. I wanted one with a picture on it, and the words "A Present From Madras" written on it in gold leaf, to show that it came from foreign parts; but would you believe it, there wasn't a single china-shop in the whole street. I don't think there can be any china-shops in Madras, because I bought a paper called "Merry Magazine," and there weren't any advertisements in it for china-ware at all.

Well, mother, this street looked like one of those nightmares you read of in books about the population question, in which it is prophesied that in a few years the earth will have standing-room only. There were pavements in some parts of the street, but everyone walked in the roadway, because there were so many



"...experts in blocking the road"

inhabitants who had acquired squatters' rights on the pavement. Hundreds of people live on the pavements in a lot of little encampments, doing their cooking and passing the time of day with the next door neighbours.

I thought it would be a good idea if they put up little tents; it would be much more comfortable for them.

The trouble about China Bazaar is that, although everyone has to walk in the roadway, there is no room in the roadway for them to walk. First of all, I must tell you about the trams. These are a peculiar sort, and to make the tram go, the driver has to keep ringing a bell. If he ceases ringing for a moment, the tram stops. This must be very tiring for him, yet such are the good spirits of the driver that he often rings his bell when the tram is stationary, just for fun. The passengers are full of gaiety, too. There is nothing they like better than to ride eighty in a tram constructed to take forty, clinging all over it like flies. However, I've never seen any passenger hanging on by the trolley-pole, so I suppose there is a law against occupying that particular point of vantage.

The small part of the road not occupied by the trams is competed for by every kind of vehicle. There are little buses, rather like tea-trays on wheels, with a canopy overhead, and these dart and stop, dart and stop, like dragon-flies. The bus drivers are very obliging. Suppose they have seats for sixteen passengers. At the commencement of the journey there may be five people aboard, not counting the conductor, the conductor's mate, and a few friends and relations who are not really travelling, but just being sociable. Well, the driver hates to see people walking when they might be using his nice little bus, so for a start he just goes a few yards, and stops to have a few words with a passing friend. A few yards further he spies someone whom he thinks might like a ride in his bus, so he stops again. In this way he takes half an hour to cover the first hundred yards, and meanwhile the passengers pass the time with intellectual conversation. At last, when the driver has got twenty-two people in his sixteen seats, he really decides to get going, and off he careers at knots per hour, and gets his load of friends to their destination in the shortest possible time.

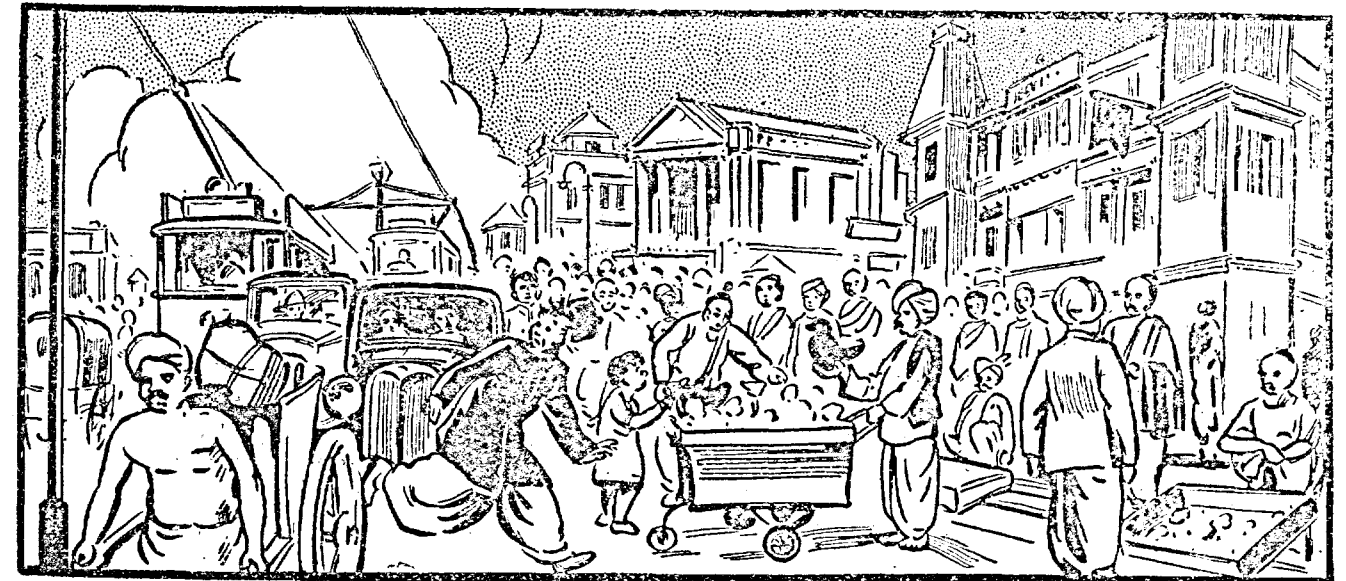
But even the preliminary ambling of the little buses leaves a little room in the street, and this is taken

up by handcarts, rickshaws, bicycles, lorries, and motor-cars. As the handcarts progress at two miles an hour, and the motors at fifty, and the remaining vehicles at intermediate speeds, it is quite amusing to watch the difficulties they get into. Meanwhile all the remaining crevices of the roadway are crammed with pedestrians, and the drivers of all the trams, buses, handcarts, rickshaws, bicycles, lorries, and motor-cars shout rude remarks to them. But the pedestrians don't mind. You can always tell a Madras pedestrian because of his complete detachment from problems of space and time. He meanders along, absorbed by higher things, or perhaps reading a newspaper, amidst traffic that would make a London policeman have apoplexy. If he isn't absorbed by higher things, he is just enjoying a spell of mental vacancy. And so all the drivers are all the time standing on their brakes and squealing, except the men pushing the handcarts. These handcarts seem to be made out of the solid trunks of trees. They are twenty feet long, and piled with tons and tons of goods. Somewhere round the back there are three or four puny little men, pushing this car of Juggernaut. It takes them minutes of grunting and groaning to start the cart moving, but once it has started they are quite unable to stop it or guide it.

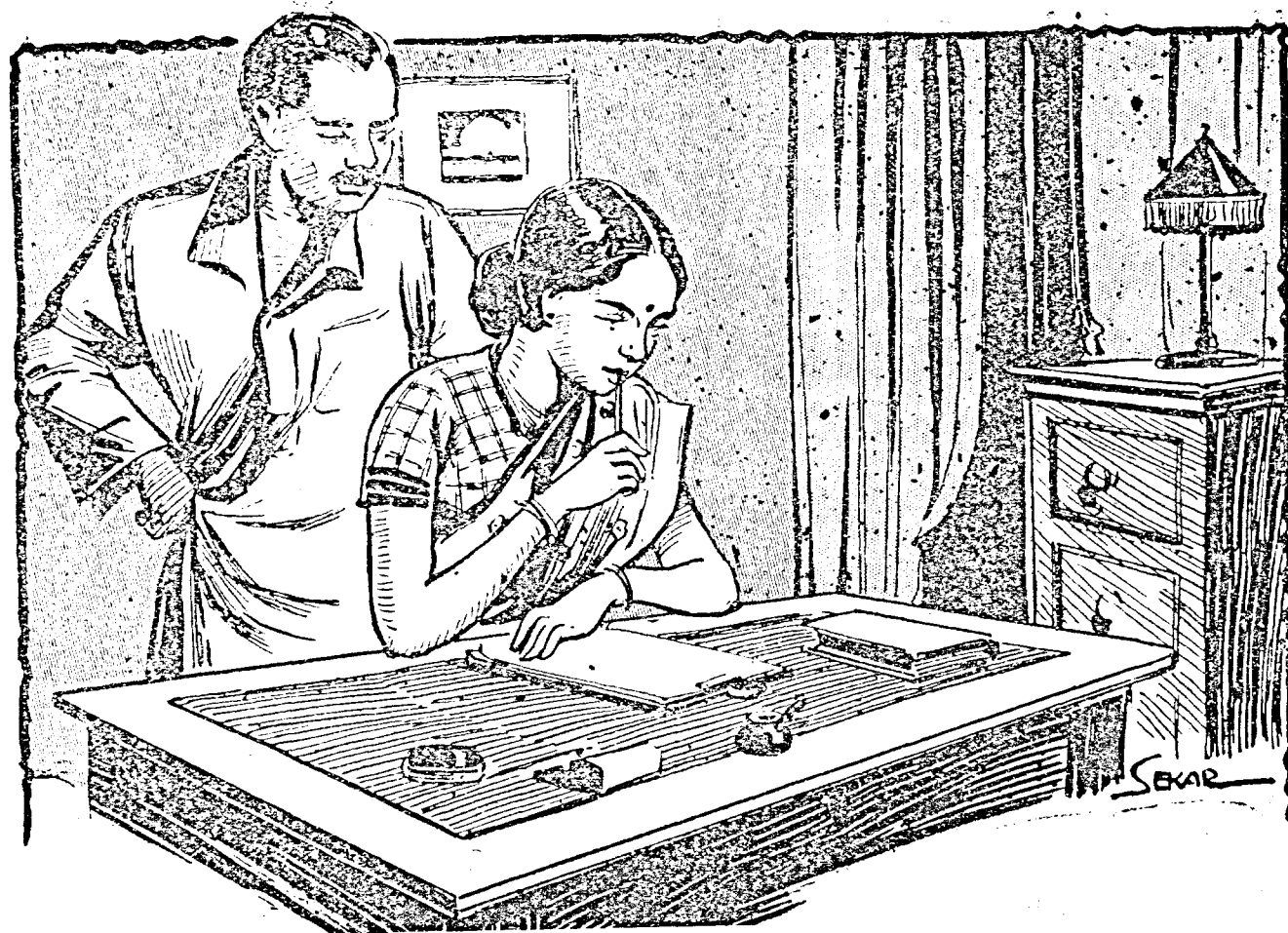
The best time to see China Bazaar is in the evening. There are the trams clanging their bells like nightingales, and the motors honking, and all the other drivers saying rude words, and the brakes squealing, and the pedestrians giving short sharp yelps as they are dug in the back by someone's mudguard, and men shouting "Two-and-a-half annas," and others crying their wares, and over all, the peaceful dung-smoke of the oriental evening. I haven't seen any elephants or camels in the streets so far, but you can imagine it is quite picturesque, rather like Petticoat Lane on a Saturday night.

I will write and tell you more about Madras next week.

Your Loving Son,
OBRAH JOYFULL.



The China Bazaar



SUSILA IS REMUNERATED

FOR HER LITERARY EFFORTS

(N. S. PILLIEUX.)

Susila, hectic in her manifold activities, busy as a butterfly flitting from flower to flower, now takes a hand in writing to Magazines: and as usual is disappointed with the nature and extent of the remuneration sent to her.—*Editor.*



COMING up behind me suddenly, Susila thrust some papers under my nose.

"Look!" she commanded.

I looked. I recognised her handwriting.

"I've looked," I said, "Now tell me what it is."

"Since we engaged the servant, I am just bored to death idling away the time," said Susila my wife. "And I was wondering why I shouldn't take up journalism—"

"What?" I shouted, wondering if I had heard her aright. "Journalism, did you say?"

Susila was pained.

"Is that what you showed me? I thought it was a letter asking your mother to come down and spend a couple of months here."

"No, dear, it was the first two pages of my Ms. Don't you know, dear, there is a great demand now-a-days for the magazine stuff—short stories, humorous skits and so on. And editors are out to discover and encourage latent talent; who knows but that I might prove a veritable 'find'! Full many a gem of Purest—"

"That is alright dear," I cut in, "as a matter of fact, I know you are not lacking in talent. You may

not be a born humorist, but, I concede that you can produce the right stuff—at least as good as any in contemporary magazines."

"Flatterer!"

"But—" I paused significantly.

"But no buts, please," exclaimed Susila impatiently. "Personally I can't really see anything special, in many of those regular contributors. I could do heaps better—"

"No dear, I don't mean that, but——"

"I know what you are about to say. You can take it from me, that all articles used will be paid for," broke in Susila. "Do you mean to insinuate that there are editors who are so callous as to expect their contributors to be satisfied with only seeing their name in print?"

"I do."

"Rubbish! that is what I call it—rubbish!!"

Poor Susila! After all, what can a poor innocent girl like her know about this cruel world. I could have given her, if only she had allowed me, quite a dissertation on how some editors exploit indigenous talent to their advantage. But, she would herself realise it to her cost, presently, I knew.

"Right-O! Go ahead, dear! Only, choose the right man," was my cryptic remark.

The next week saw Susila at it, the quill-driving, I mean. With a zeal and singleness of purpose worthy of a far better cause, she put her heart and soul into her new venture. She wrote pages after pages, tore off pages after pages; and, at last when the week came to a close, her efforts bore fruit in the shape of a neatly-written, thousand worded affair.

"I am quite sure, this Ms. will be accepted," Susila exclaimed with paternal pride, after reading it over for the hundredth time. "Will you, please, send it per registered post to this address," and she gave me the address.

"Certainly, dear," I acquiesced.

"And don't forget to enclose sufficient stamps for return of the Ms. per registered post, in the event of its being declined with thanks."

I explained, that editors generally return rejected Mss. by unregistered book-post only and pinch any stamps sent in excess. But her final, "Do as I tell you, please" left me no alternative.

The article was sent accordingly. A few days later, a loud rat-tat upon the hall door heralded the arrival of the morning's post. Susila sprang up from the chair and ran to the door. There was a letter addressed to her from the Editor. Susila slit open

Susila is Remunerated

the flap with trembling fingers. It contained a brief typewritten communication, to the effect that the Editor liked the article immensely and that he would be publishing it in an early issue of his paper. Would she kindly be a regular subscriber in future? Susila was in the seventh heaven of delight. With a whoop of joy, she rushed at me.....

"My first acceptance," she exclaimed disentangling herself from my arms. "I've won and I knew I would." A second and a third contribution followed suit, in due course. By that time, her first effort had come out in print and a complimentary copy was, of course, sent to her. She read and re-read her contribution for—God only knows how many times. She purchased a dozen copies of the magazine and sent them gratis to her friends, with her name and article marked out in blue pencil.

Her second effort saw the light of day in course of time, as also her third effort. But, the first gush of enthusiasm, however, was slowly ebbing away, giving place to a growing indifference towards her journalistic activities. The reason for this phenomenal change was not difficult to seek. Though more than a month had passed since her first contribution appeared in print, she had not received so far anything by way of a monetary remuneration for all her troubles.

"Dear, why don't you just remind him about the payment? He might have forgotten about it, you know," I suggested.

"Yes, you are right. I shall write to him today, though one must admit it is a bit 'delicate' to remind him about payment. But, of course, he cannot go back on his word. He has explicitly stated that all contributions will be paid for."

Susila received a reply in about a week's time.

"Dear Madam," the typescript ran,

Your letter dated 8th inst. to hand and contents noted.

I wish to draw your attention to the usual policy followed in this office with regard to the payment for contributions published in this magazine. We generally send to the contributor a complimentary copy of the particular Number of the magazine in which ^{his} _{her} article appears in payment therefor. I hope you might have received your copies long ago.

I think it is only proper on my part to inform you, that I am too busy to enter into any further correspondence with you on this subject; and I trust you would not waste your time and energy in inditing letters, which benefit no one but His Majesty's Postal Department.

YOURS ETC.

Keep this copy of The Merry Magazine.

It may bring you Rs. 100.

IN A THIRD CLASS COMPARTMENT, II.

V. B. PRASAD.



In a Third Class Compartment.

Mr. Prasad finishes here his sketch of the Third-Class Compartment. Contrary to expectations he sees in it all, a purpose, a desire of the Railway people to take you to places of pilgrimage, and famous resorts of health. Truly the railway is a 'thingummy'.—Editor.

THE compartment was crowded.

I began to count the heads gathered there for fun. Reckoning two half tickets as one there were exactly 213½ of fissiparous humanity, to borrow, a word from.....never mind whom—1½ of the above figure represented a lady in an interesting condition—in fact, a very interesting condition. By an easy transition of ideas, I raised my head, over the Dinosaur belly of Falstaff's Indian avatar, to the solid, small rectangular, tri-lingual notice, solidly fixed into the solid panels on one of the transverse sides of the compartment:—

To seat 35 Passengers
Indian Troops 10
English Troops 5

I embraced the sweltering, swearing, flirting, yarn spinning, spitting, smoking humanity around—not in the usual way, but by a sweeping glance. Gave another look at the said, solid notice.

I had to laugh.

The punditji, the *al fresco* lady, the shiny pated party from Tirupathi, the dashing youth, each thinking I was having a go at them, favoured me with diverse looks expressive of diverse emotions. The *al fresco* lady was particularly bellicose looking longingly at my rather long hair and her chic little hand alternately. (You can't come that trick on me, though, my beauty) I continued to laugh with the easy abandon of a lunatic.

What a joke! And not one of you have seen it, my dears, all and sundry.

Now, watch me!

You get into a III class or if you are of the born-with-an-electroplated-spoon-in-the-mouth species, into an Inter Class. (The silver spoons go into the I and II class, of course) You find the place crowded—say like London. You will do one of three things.

One: If you want to show off before the admiring ladies and gents in the train, you accost the guard as he passes your way and let go like a Deepavali Cracker—

In a Third Class Compartment

"I say Mr. Guard this beastly compartment is 1000 legs, 2000 arms and 500 heads. And this is supposed to accommodate 15 people. Now, what about it?" The



"Now, what about it?"

guard simply looks you down and up as if you were a cow for sale, his look indicating IDIOT heard a mile either way. He gives a rakish tilt to his cap and passes on to have a friendly chat with the driver. Curbing your desire to roar like a lion and saying something about "Ruddy Guard" you plant yourself before the Station Master, the moral support of a hundred facetious fellow-travellers putting the necessary pepper into you. You want to know of the station master what the devil they mean by shoving in a quarter million people into an affair scheduled to seat 15. The S. M. who almost always is a South Indian Iyer (of the time of Sankara of thrice blessed memory) between Waltair and Cape Comorin and Bezvada and Hyderabad, becomes suddenly absorbed in the block key in his hand. Not getting any inspiration from the block key, he beats it hurriedly into his *sanctum sanctorum*. If, however, he wants to be obliging he says with a broad, sweet, urbane, yellow smile that he is busy and 'Excuse me.' It now dawns upon you that you have made a five legged donkey of yourself. In a desperate attempt to retrieve lost dignity, you fish out the railway constable and order him with becoming hauteur to ease the congestion. Being a simple, tactless soul, he laughs at your spring-time freshness.....lights a *ceddy* with an eye cocked on you; enjoys the first puff like the round fellow in "Solid Contentment" of Spencer's advertising genius; laughs again as if he had never heard such a good one before and gets along. You, poor fish, either go and

make a chutney of yourself in another far-away compartment or commit suicide.

Two. Or, if you are not of a demonstrative temperament, you squeeze yourself as best as you can into the compartment and between the vigorous exercise to your lungs, call yourself, those around you and the railway, all the fancy names you have learnt in and out of School.

Or again if you are one of the inheritors of the earth as described by Lord Jesus, you go in meekly and take things as a matter of course and hope for better things in Kingdom Come.

Three. If you are assertive, no nonsense please, don't-you-try-to-bluff-me sort-of-chap, you pull a long face (and a long arm); you assume a martyr's look; you step on somebody's lap; you pull the communication cord as a matter of conscientious duty, while the train is in full motion in a particularly barren wilderness. The brakes screech. The train pulls up a quarter of a mile ahead. The guard, the crew, and a few adventurous souls promptly get down. They locate the assertive chap. The guard and the black grimy crude-oily crew demand 'what's the funny game'. They get an idea of the game, say something not exactly complimentary to your general appearance and hand you over to the Police. The long and the rather short of it is, you are the guest of His Majesty for a few months.

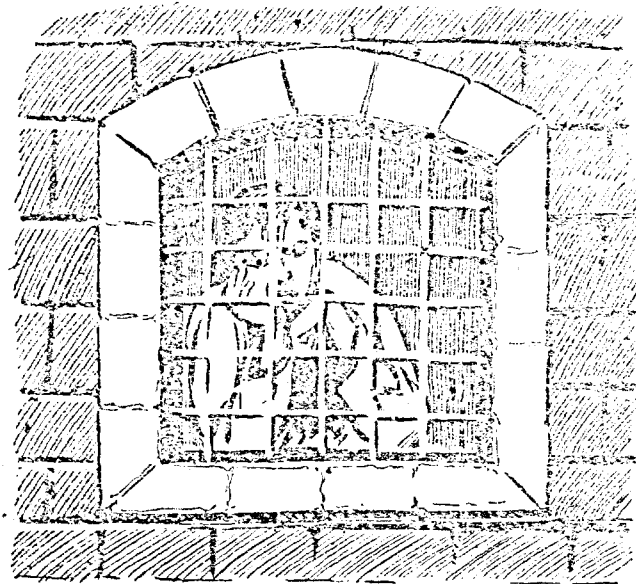


Pulling the Communication Cord.

But in spite of a thousand boobies wanting to get matters set right by guards, station masters, and railway constables; a million fellows silently cursing and calling names; a like number of true satyagrahis pulling the

cord; in spite also of a score of passenger associations conceived in defeating heraldry, whose post-swaddling progress is a mystery even to research scholars; in spite of the frantic gesticulations of misguided members of the railway advisory committees, the thing goes on—this overcrowding.

The rummiest part of the whole business is, nobody has seen through the working of the intricate railway mind. The railway is undoubtedly very intricate and—complicated.



"Guest of His Majesty"

There is overcrowding, a damned uncomfortable thing, certainly. That is admitted on all hands including the railway hands. A generous thing in itself. Now the railway can't go and duplicate their service, lest the takings should fall short of running and overhead charges. (This latter expression is a smart name for the telegraph). They are here, there, everywhere, *inter alia* to transfer as much specie from the pocket of the public to their particular pocket, in the brainiest, unimpeachablest fashion imaginable. They are not here, there, everywhere, to give you joy rides in trains at nominal prices.

Suppose they stick to the solid notice and refuse to accommodate a body or a soul over the quota fixed by the railway engineers. What happens? Why, most of you would be left on the various platforms, like so many goats. The train steams away derisively, all its axles calling you in synchronised, stentorian symphony, "Silly idiots—silly idiots!" And serve you right!

But the railway people are a tender-hearted tribe. They see so many sorry looking fellows marooned on so many platforms. The sight is too much for them. They shed tears. The real goods. Not croc. They dig their knuckles into their eyes. With a generous gesture they let you get in, of course for the usual consideration. That's only playing the game. And instead of thanking them, you go and actually do something else. Bally ingrates!

The railway people go a step further. They entertain you gratis *en mouvement*. They stick up a notice or whatever it is called, almost near your nose. It says—that a particular compartment is to seat say 25 etc. Actually, however, a hundred to a thousand people wriggle themselves in, the Devil alone knows how. Now, for a fellow loaded down with the correct quantity of grey matter, the joke ought to be pretty plain. The brainy cove takes a look round, counts the populace, takes another and goes off the deep end. Forgets all his little railway troubles and railway discomforts which are, after all, illusive and *maya* on no less an authority than our ancient Rishies and hoary Puranas.

The railway are not obliged to put up that impossible plate in the trains. Indeed, by scrapping the lot of 'em they could, in these days of off Gold and away Silver, effect tremendous economy in material, engineering skill and labour, that is to say, rupees, annas and pies. But still they incur huge expenditure and put them up and paint them in beautiful schemes of white and black and red and white—a work of art, if ever there was a work of art in the world. Why do they do it? Soft in the upper storey? Not at all. They do it for all of you to look at—and enjoy the joke.

Not only that. Here is a sample of the sacred responsibility quoted at the outset. Look at this holy, choking anxiety in wanting to take you on a religious trip to Palni, Tirupathi East, Pushkaram, Rameswaram, Chidambaram, Puri, Tanjore, Maha Makam, Madura, Mattra, Benares, Gaya, Conjeevaram, and ever so many holy places, where our obliging Gods and their divine consorts and hangers-on have left their finger prints, leg impressions, or their stony or wooden replicas. A mere peep at any one of these places secures you a passport to Heaven. What if the passport is visited *via* plague *cum* cholera? What indeed! Heaven is Heaven. The sages say that the path leading thereto is extraordinarily narrow (to the great consternation of all stout devotees) beset with huge boulders, slippery gravel, thistles, and thorns, needle's eyes and camels, with latter day accretions, namely, cholera, plague, and small pox.

Well might our guardians ask in outraged altruism "Breathes there the rotter with imagination so far below zero, that he denies this soul-saving responsibility conscientiously discharged?"

Let us say, "None, Brutus."

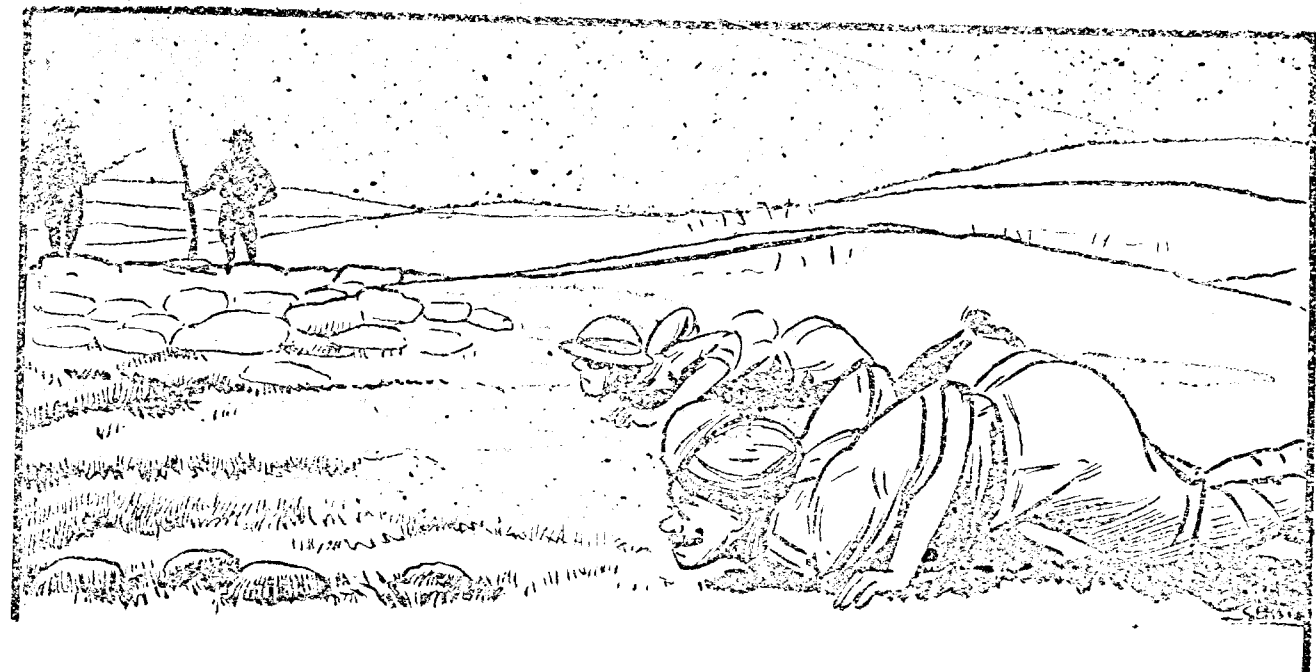
And then watch how the railway takes care of your health. With an emotion that is simply a *roma har-shanam* (Sanskrit, meaning hair-tickling), they beseech you to take a jolt to Bangalore, Kodaikanal, Nainital, Ooty, for the season or the week-end and forget the heat of the plains for a spell. You extend the glad hand. You go to the hills. You come down bright and fit, with vim, vigour and vitality written all over your face in chick, bold block capitals and all the Vitamins from A to Z crawling all over you.

After all is said and done, the railway is—well, dash it, there is no word in any language to sing its praise. The least we can say is, the railway is a thin-gummy; especially its third class.

Let there be no bones about it.

THE VICTORIA CROSS

Neil 'A' Canten.



Crawling on all fours.....

A Topical Story for the Armistice Day.

"A DEED of valour?" said Captain Naik Lala, and Captain Naik has a Victoria Cross on his breast, "I will tell you of one I myself did."

It was a cold dreary evening and we were seated in a ring in our parlour beside a warm hearth fire. The logs crackled in the grate and the rain pattered on the roof. Amongst us, a member of the happy group, sat Captain Naik himself, his long legs thrust forth close to the fire. Beside him on a table stood the Captain's best friend in warm and cold weather—a tumbler and a bottle of his favourite brandy.

Captain Naik Lala, V. C. of the 41st Dogras had been 'somewhere in France' during the War. He had been in the front many a time and had seen great 'Jack Johnsons' bursting and making a crater in the ground as big as Sleepy Hollow. What he did not know of gas and trench warfare is not worth knowing. Every Christmas he used to spend with us but this year he had come to us on the Armistice Day. He had alighted amidst us like Santa Claus who had caught an earlier train, with his pockets bulging with toys, crackers and chocolates. He is a bosom friend of dad's, and I remember he used to tell us stories of goblins and of fairies in the old days. My own impression is that if the Captain had not won the Victoria Cross for valour, he would have won the Nobel Prize for being the best story-teller.

The pretty bronze cross with 'For Valour' inscribed on it shone on his breast, and from his button-

hole glowed a poppy. I could scarcely suppress a smile when I remembered the picture of the Captain being besieged by an army of laughing print-frocked poppy-girls in the morning and the Captain in spite of his six feet two and fifty years had blushed like a school-girl and coughed—a habit he had formed ever since a dangerous gassing during the war.

"Well," continued the Captain, "I will tell you of one, I myself did." He filled the glass with the sparkling liquor and quaffed it off at a single breath. "It was in that hell out there," said he "the 'No-man's land' between the German and the British lines. We were in our trenches and the next ones were occupied by the Shropshire Light Infantry. Captain Pearson—Plucky Pearson, we used to call him—was in charge of a company. The Boches were giving us a long holiday, and we were tired of it. Beyond a few games of hide and seek, they had kept us totally inactive and to make matters worse, a heavy shower had fallen and the water was knee-deep in the trenches. So we meant to attack, and attack roundly. But we were not as sure of the enemy's positions as we had hoped to be, and that meant, we did not know where to attack. So we set out, Pearson and myself, and crawling on all four and escaping the observation of the German sharpshooters by hiding ourselves in the grass, we made a good survey of the enemy's position. We had just made an 'about turn' and were crawling back to our lines when we observed a pair of Germans returning from a similar survey of our positions. The recognition was mutual and there was no time to spare.

Pearson was a plucky fellow enough and with the agility of a tiger he sprang upon one of the Germans and brought him to the ground. There was a brief scuffle; in another instant the clasp-knife was unsheathed from the belt, the blade flashed and the German expired without a groan. Meanwhile I had belaboured the other and with the help of Pearson who had now come to my assistance, I made short work of him. "Bravo," said Pearson "the world is rid of two such fellows at least, and now we will play these chaps a trick. Strip your victim, Captain, of all his dress, while I do the same with my good man here. And tonight we will steal into the German lines in these fellows' uniforms and make a better survey of their trenches, passing for real Boches. Meanwhile, between you and me and the post, not a word of it to Roberts or Wilson." I hailed the prospect with delight as Pearson could speak German as well as a Teuton. "Mum's is the word" said I, as I drew my finger across my lips.

Here the narrative was interrupted by a long cough, which when paraphrased meant 'More brandy, please.' We poured him out a glassful, and draining it the Captain resumed his tale.

"Well" said he, "with the pomp and grandeur of a gladiator returning with laurels from the arena, we proceeded to our respective dug-outs with the German uniforms, as the trenches were still under water. I hung the helmet of the German on the upper peg of my coat-stand, the jacket with the belt bearing a revolver hung loose from the next peg, from a lower one dangled the German's shorts as if from a scare-crow. The boots with the rolled putties found their place just under the shorts."

"Fatigued much with the day's adventure, I laid myself down to rest and was perusing an Indian newspaper. My eyes involuntarily closed, the paper dropped from my hands, and in reverie, that twilight between consciousness and unconsciousness, thoughts of various things, of 'sunken wrecks and sumless treasures,' flitted along the curtain of my memory of my far-off native land which I had left perhaps for ever, of the various hardships I had endured since then, and last though not the least of all, of that meteor of 'Prussianism'—the Crown Prince of Germany—as I had seen him during his

attack on the French position at Verdun. My mind sickened at the thought of this royal leader and gradually I fell into a deep slumber. The call of a patrol recalled me to my senses, and Heavens! as I opened my eyes, there stood before me with his back turned towards me the very fidebrand of whom I had been thinking ere I fell asleep—the Crown Prince of Germany! If only I could capture this engine of 'Prussianism' thought I, 'I would be doing my Emperor and motherland a signal service.' My hand involuntarily sought my revolver, and taking steady aim, I pulled the trigger. But the revolver did not go off. The cartridges were damp!"

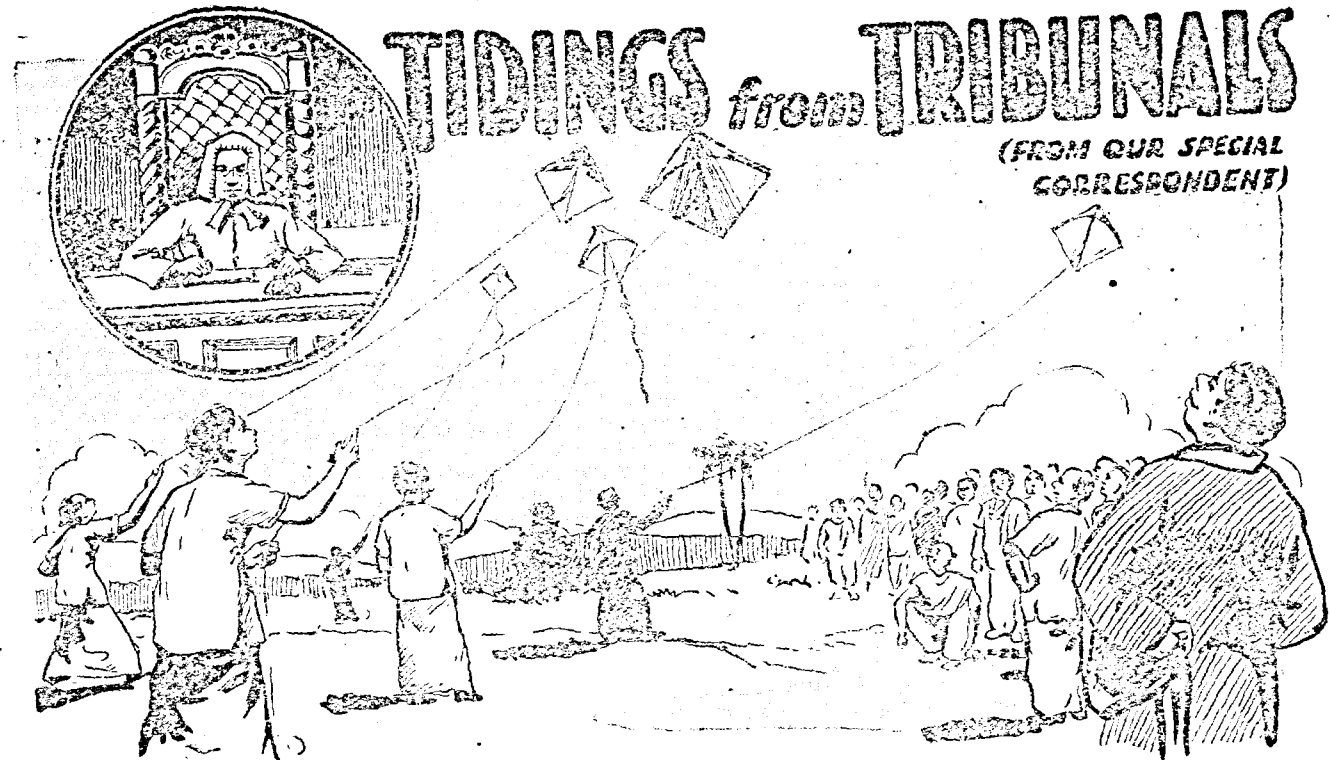
Here, as children draw near the grandmother, as the ghost story approaches its climax, we all drew nearer the Captain who in a serious tone continued, "There was but one way left. I unsheathed my clasp-knife and never did tiger spring quicker on its victim than I on mine. One blow! There was a rustle of dress, down rolled the German helmet, down fell the jacket and shorts and lo! there stood not the Crown Prince—but don't burst a-laughing children, but the pegs of my coat-stand."

Here a merry peal of unwarranted childish laughter burst forth that shook the parlour for a full five minutes, and through our tears, we saw the glass once more filled and emptied. The Captain in a tone not a whit the less serious continued; "All was plain now. The helmet, the jacket, the shorts, the putties and boots arranged systematically on and under the pegs of my coat-stand held out to my sleepy eyes the living form of a Boche—and by the trigger! when I informed my friends of this simple mistake, Roberts and Wilson must laugh and laugh till the provisions ran short, and Pearson should needs remark, that 'but for that attack of the Captain on the Crown Prince, he would never have won his Victoria Cross.'"

"And Pearson?"

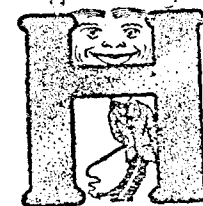
"And Pearson? Ah! you might well ask that. All his pluck didn't save him though. But he died a glorious death in saving a comrade from that nasty gas." Here the captain flung off his coat and baring his sinewy left arm revealed to us the letters P.P. tattooed on the skin. "And here's to the memory of Plucky Pearson," said the Captain as he raised the tumbler to his lips.

Mistakes will Happen!



THE MADDINGTON CONSPIRACY CASE Before His Lordship Mr. Solomon Snore, J.

Maddington, 10th November, 1933.



IS Lordship Mr. Justice Solomon Snore concluded this morning his summing up to the jury in the Maddington Conspiracy case in which 3 Bengalee and 2 Punjabi youths took their trial for various offences under the Indian Penal Code and The Criminal Law Amendment Act. The following were the members of the special jury empanelled for the trial: Rao Sahib Tanneer Chetty, foreman, Khan Bahadur Jamal Kottai, Messrs Rotti Kadai Munisami, Professor Potofax, Jonathan Carburettor, Wilkie Plugs, Mittoi Kadai Laladas, Dunse Dy Hard, and Emanuel Yawner. His Lordship in his direction to the jury said:—

The magnitude of the duty before you that is at once a rare privilege and a heavy responsibility cannot be exaggerated. In discharging that duty it is my firm belief that you will hold the scales evenly between the 5 accused before you and the society and sovereignty which they have, by various overt acts, endeavoured to undermine.

In the Courts of Justice in England there is a most impressive sight. That is the statue symbolising JUSTICE. That statue is blind. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, I do not want you to be so blind as all that. The respective functions of the judge and the jury in a

trial are too clearly defined in the Code of Criminal Procedure to permit of any confusion or overlapping in our functions. I am constrained to sound this note of caution as juries with all their transcendent acuteness in some matters lack in others a grasp of the obvious.

The 5 accused before you stand charged under 6 distinct counts for various offences committed by them from time to time during the 11 months and 29 days from the 1st July 1932 to the 23rd June 1933. They are charged with having conspired to deprive His Most Imperial Majesty The King Emperor of His Supreme Sovereignty of India, and in pursuance of this common object they are charged with having committed diverse acts which by themselves constitute distinct offences under the penal law of the land." His Lordship then explained the penal law of the land in elaborate detail with special reference to the offences of conspiracy, sedition, unlawful assemblies, waging war against the King, rioting, and abetment thereof etc., etc., and continued: "Their *modus operandi* to achieve the common object is bound to strike any one as curious. But in its deliberate conception and in its audacious execution it remains unsurpassed in the annals of crime in India. The conspirators were apparently engaged in the perfectly innocent (but mark you, gentlemen, only seemingly so) pastime of flying kites. But behind that thin veil of an apparently innocent pastime there lurked one of the most sinister and deeply laid plans to bring the Sovereignty into hatred and contempt and thereby undermine its very existence. The police has spared no

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pains to rip open this thin veil and in my opinion their stern and unsleeping vigilance has succeeded in doing that and exposing the subtle peril that has dwelt privily in our midst all these days in all its naked horror. Whether they have done that to your satisfaction is a matter for you to decide on the evidence before you.

That evidence, in my opinion points to the one and only conclusion viz. the guilt of the accused. You may at once dismiss the evidence for the defence from your minds as that evidence far from supporting the defence only goes to strengthen and conclusively establish the case for the prosecution. You have seen the 36 defence witnesses go one after the other into the box. For a hundred and twenty six hours you have heard the deadly volley of questions from the counsel for the prosecution flow on, damaging admissions pile up, the witnesses' firm-front yielding and soon you beheld them in full retreat. The retreat then became a rout. You have heard the agitated address of the defence attempting to retrieve and extenuate the satanic and serpentine guile of the accused. It is for you to decide on the merits of such evidence.

Turning now to the story of the prosecution and the evidence in support of it, I am of the opinion that we tread on firmer ground. The activities of the accused were part of the larger scheme on the part of the Communist International to overthrow, by means of the accused, the whole political system of India. It may be—and in fact the accused had the hardihood to contend that it is so—that any system of government that could be so overthrown by the machinations, of 5 mere ordinary men however deep-dyed they may be, is not worth maintaining. It has further been contended for the defence that the offences of conspiracy to wage war against the King is a fiction of the imagination of the bald yet fertile head of the prosecution and that it is more than impossible for five men to wage war against a King with an army of 5 million or more trained men and most modern methods of warfare on land, air and sea at his command. It is therefore argued that the accused cannot be charged with or convicted for an offence which it is obviously impossible to accomplish. But the law is different and I have explained to you in detail what it is. The accused are accordingly charged under the last count as conspirators among themselves and with the Third International and other persons known and unknown not now before the Court.

That the accused are members of such a conspiracy is deposed to by P. Ws 4 to 22, men of established integrity in the police service. Accused 1, 2, and 4 hail from Bengal that hot bed of revolutionary activities where bombs are the playthings of every infant in the nursery, while accused 3 and 5 hail from Lahore by no means a more pacific centre. That they knew each other is conclusively established. It is for you to draw whatever inference that such intimate friendships indicate. The world is surely large enough for the 5 accused to live in it, without having to know each other." Here His Lordship proceeded to analyse the evidence of the Pws 4 to 22 and Dws 2 to 19 and continued "Gentlemen of the Jury, Why should the accused, Indians by birth and domicile, read Marx on

Capitalism or the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels especially when they have no capital? Why should the accused read the life of Lenin or Trotsky or such absolutely abandoned beings who are a menace to the peace of the world? As the prosecution has suggested is not that short History of India by Marsden and that illuminating chapter therein on the benefits of the British rule in India inspiring reading? These are questions for you to answer and I have no doubt you will answer them in your verdict.

You have been cautioned by the counsel for the defence against importing your private knowledge, if any, of that notorious organisation The Third International when judging the conduct of the accused and permitting such knowledge to influence your judgment. While endorsing that word of caution I would at the same time point out to you the danger that can reasonably be anticipated from that organisation and those in contact with its aims and objects which though in some respects exaggerated by our imagination is nevertheless terribly real and potentially fatal to the peace and prosperity of any civilised society or government except Russia.

The second count of the charge relates to the activities of the accused in furtherance of the plans of the Hindustan Republican Army and Navy. These are of course the terrorist activities with which you are, no doubt, familiar." Here His Lordship analysed the evidence of Pws 9 to 26 (C. I. D. officers) and continued "To corroborate the evidence of the Pws 9 to 26 we have the M.O's discovered in the premises of the accused." (The jury were observed pricking up their ears in anticipation of Money Orders for their trouble). "They are 2 bell metal Koojas and 2 lbs of black powder. The chemical examiner's report states that this powder contains 90 per cent charcoal 3 per cent camphor and 7 per cent common salt. (perhaps contraband salt) The accused state that this terribly inflammable material is nothing more than tooth powder and that koojas were used for keeping water. That is a far-fetched story. It is a matter of common knowledge that these materials can be used with advantage in manufacturing the most deadly bombs. It is for you to decide whether these materials corroborate the other evidence on the subversive activities of the accused.

One other important piece of evidence which I feel sure would not have escaped your attention is the long, grisly, black beards of the accused 3 and 5. The prosecution is positive that they are definitely Bolshevik beards i.e. beards commonly worn by Bolsheviks. (Expert witness Pw. 38) The accused appeared scandalised when this was brought to their notice and stated that they are perfect specimens of silky goatee beards of the latest pattern. They further state that they are of the Sikh persuasion of religion that permits no encroachments on cheeks and chins. It is no doubt true that the question whether the Sikhs should shave or shingle was a question that agitated the minds of eminent men like Guru Nanak. But that was in Anti-Gillettean days and you will bear that in mind when considering this material piece of corroborative evidence.

Counts 3 to 6 of the charge relate to the offences of sedition, Waging war against the King, being members of an unlawful assembly, Rioting, etc., The evidence on these charges is that on the 22 June 1933 the accused as members of the Skyward Ho! Committee, a committee since declared to be unlawful, advertised in the newspapers and hand bills (Ex VII, series) that on the day following there was to be a Skyward Ho! display on the foreshore of the Maddington maiden. To celebrate the occasion all participants were invited to bring their best kites to fly and prizes were offered to the best specimens. According to the prosecution there were assembled there, on that occasion about 30,000 spectators to watch the display of kites and as many as 147 competitors competed for the prizes, with kites of various descriptions. On the morning of the 23rd June A 1 and A 2 with the aid and assistance of the accused 3 to 5 manufactured a kite. That is M. O. 6 before you. M. O. 6 as you will observe is a strong kite made on the pattern of the Congress Flag in red, green and white colours with the design of the spinning wheel in the centre and mounted on a strong but light bamboo frame with sharp protruding ends. One of the 147 other competitors is P. W. 49 Anthony Kakasami Mudaliar, a leading citizen though aged yet not so infirm as to be dissuaded from such youthful and buoyant pursuits as flying kites. You will note that he is a loyal citizen to the very marrow of his bones. He repaired to the scene of the competition with his kite to compete in the events of the evening. The Tattered and humiliated remnants of this kite is M. O. 7 before you. P. Ws 4 to 29 and 37 to 49 depose that this kite was a perfect model of the Union Jack in design and dimensions. Kakasami hoisted his kite and let it soar high. He plied it with wonderful skill. It described geometrically round circles and cut immaculate figures of 8 in the air. In short it was careering merrily lustily cheered by a solitary voice. At this moment there appeared on that peaceful horizon M. O. 6 the kite of the accused. It shot up in one amazing leap, and soared higher than the rest. By its size and doubtless on account of its sinister designs it became at once the cynosure of all eyes. It hung as it were in the air for some time surveying the field. The next moment it swooped down with lightning speed on Kakasami's kite and left it a tattered remnant of its former self which was, at considerable risk to the life of Kakasami, rescued from a watery grave in the Bay of Bengal.

Curiously enough, at this dastardly attack on the most cherished emblem of the Empire 29,000 hurrahs! ".....Kijais!! Inqulab Zindbads!!! rent the air, while the solitary voice of Kakasami sang 'God Save the King.' D. Ws 4 to 14 depose that only 29,000 voices were heard. It is for you to believe or disbelieve that. But they did hear 'God save the King', and as if in answer to that earnest prayer of Kakasami God did save the King and the country as well. This act of the accused and their malignant kite was more effective than the most inflammable seditious publications ever published. In fact the news of this occurrence was announced on sheets of asbestos and it was suspected in some quarters that it had been written with a blow lamp. (P. W. 49.)

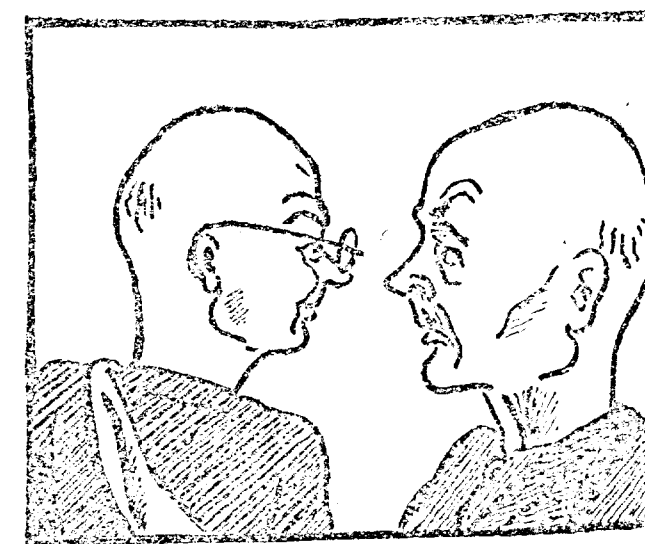
To maintain the peace and tranquility of the city an order under section 144 CrI. P. C. had to be promulgated. The assembly of 30,000 was declared to be unlawful. Military aid was summoned and the services of the Royal Air Force were requisitioned to prevent further depredations of the Kite M. O. 6. The accused were at once apprehended and by an order of the Commissioner of Police the 1st prize was awarded to Anthony Kakasami the owner of M. O. 7. The defence of the accused in respect of these charges is, to my mind, incredible. They plead that a few over zealous police officers, 'title hunters,' and 'promotion seekers' have foisted this case on them. They have suggested that the investigating officers had designs on "Bahadur doms." I am however pleased to note that they have had the good sense not to suggest that I had designs on a Knighthood." His Lordship then concluded the directions by an exhortation to the jury to return a fair and just verdict.

The jury took time to consider and returned a verdict of 'GUILTY' on all counts and recommended that the accused may be supplied with copies of Marsden's History while in Jail. His Lordship agreeing with the verdict sentenced the 5 accused to transportation for life and ordered immediate destruction of M. O. 6.

Messrs Bathyam Murti Rao and Dr. Chamois appeared for the accused while Tenali Raman assisted by Messrs Mattunni Menon and Mootaipoochi Nair conducted the prosecution.

Late News. A petition was filed this evening on behalf of the accused applying for sanction to appeal against the conviction and sentence on grounds of misdirection and nondirection. The same was dismissed with thanks.

Preaching and Practice

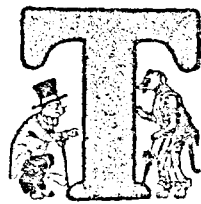


Spec. Bald:—I must boycott something. I must practice what I preach. What do you suggest?

II Bald:—Let us boycott all foreign hair-oils.

THIS FORTNIGHT'S FAIRY TALE

(KALYAN)



THEY say that all the world loves a lover. I don't know much about it, because, are there 'lovers' as such in this country? But I formulate a substitute proverb: half the world sympathises with a marriageable girl's father, that is; that half which has marriageable girls to dispose off. (I know that my proverb doesn't hang well, but as the now hangman said, this is my first attempt, you see!) Anyway, you have rightly surmised that my Kamala is about thirteen and unmarried. I have been going up and down the Province these two years with no appreciable result.

One day, I had just retired to bed with a copy of Kusika's Short Stories when my wife shouted from the kitchen: "Have you written to those Salem people?"

I hadn't. And that, despite curtain lectures running for two nights. It was partly due to vacillation and partly to overwork in the office. But what was the use of trying to tell all that to the Missus? Bindlo has told us that 'tack' is the main stock-in-trade of the successful husband. And I tactfully lowered the lamp and pretended to be asleep. But she was at it in a few minutes with a symphony of questions, interjections, affirmations, negations, self-pity, self-accusation, and parts of speech not found in grammar books and forms of speech not found in books of rhetoric. "Good God! What an orator!" I thought, with a shudder. "And she doesn't even know A. B. C.! Female Education! Some females don't need educating!

I fell asleep; and sleep for me, especially after Kamala's eleventh year, has been mainly a series of nightmares. Now for the fairy tale.

.....I was sitting on the pial doing some office work one morning when a good-looking young man came to me and *namaskaram*-ed me.

"Namaskaram; please sit down," I said, trying to recollect who he was.

He said, "You don't know me, but I think you know my father, Mr. Guruswami Ayyar, Govt. Pleader. My name is

"Oh, you are Ramakrishnan. I hear that you have passed the Public Service Commission exam. First Division, isn't it? That's very good!"

"Thank you, Sir; it is kind of you to have noticed that.....I came to you on a particular business. I hear that you have a daughter to be married, and that you are distracted at not being able to get a suitable groom. I don't know what your ideas are, but if you think I am good enough,

"Goodness me, I should be the most blessed man to get a son-in-law like you! The truth is, I spoke to your uncle, Dharmarajayyar, about it soon after you

took the Hons. degree, and he mentioned such a sum that I almost collapsed."

"No, no; there must be some mistake about it. Why don't you meet my father direct?"

"Most certainly. I will do it now.....Perhaps you would like to meet Kamala?.....have you seen her before—playing about or doing something?"

"No, I haven't seen her. I will see her some time. I am going to see plenty of her, I am sure!"

So, I went to Mr. Guruswami Ayyar. He received me cordially, heard my request and heartily agreed to it. I gently probed the question of *sulka*. He paled aghast and said, "Sir, I have often heard that bridegrooms have to be paid for, but I have been unable to believe that. As the father of five sons—my life-long regret is that I have no daughters—I have always wondered how a father could 'sell' his son and look him in the face after that! Arabs feel a sense of disloyalty in selling their horses; and we....."

My wife was amazed and overjoyed on hearing all this. She resolved that as there was no cash to pay, clothes, vessels and jewellery should be presented on a lavish scale. On an auspicious day, we went to their house, I to consult R. about the kind of clothing and jewellery he fancied and she to ask Mrs. G. to specify the vessels required. On leaving, their house, we were both bursting with things to tell; and we began to vie with each other as to who should speak first.

"He is a young God on earth," I began.

"She is a Goddess in human shape," she began.

"So highly educated and yet so humble....."

"So highly placed and yet so austere....."

"Wanted but the minimum of things required by the *Shastras*....."

"Required only the few ceremonial cups and plates....."

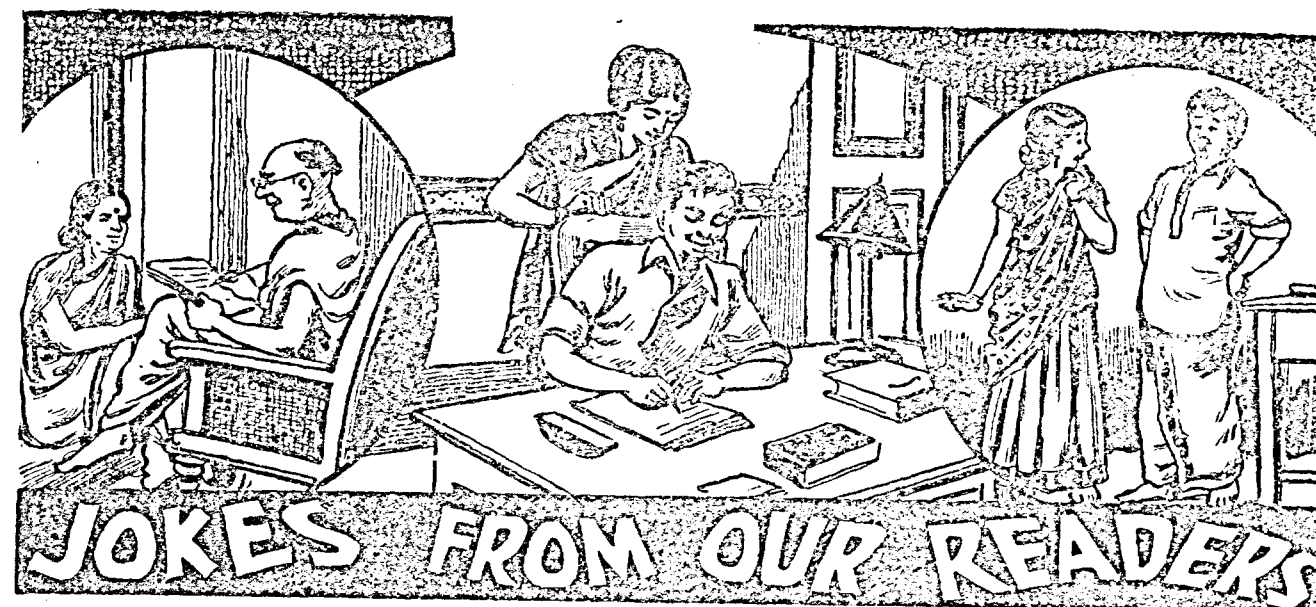
"A few simple *Khaddar* things which he could decently wear everyday....."

"Just a few bronze and brass things which wouldn't require an iron safe and a detective...."

"But I don't think his mother would seamed his Registry Office marriage idea....."

"She too suggested the same, but mentioned a one-day-marriage with no general-feeding as an alternative."

The marriage began with great *celat* and all the ceremonials were gone through properly. At the appointed hour R. lovingly tied the *thali* round his neck and the pipes and drums beat up a rich chow-chow. I woke up. It was my young son, Papa, who was rattling along his toy cart with that h—l of a drum attached.



JOKES FROM OUR READERS

Good Shot!

Two women were walking across a field near a film-producing company's ground. Suddenly a man rushed towards them, waving his hand.

"Don't go up there!" he shouted. "You'll spoil it—there is a film being shot there."

One of the women sniffed contemptuously.

"Well," she said, acidly, "if it is the one I saw last Saturday, it jolly well deserves it."

—Rajalakshmi, Madras.

O. K. & K. O.

Mrs. Smith. (Anxious to enquire how her husband is progressing in the Boxing Tournament—rings up the Gymkhana Secretary)

"How is Mr. Smith doing?"

Secretary:—"O. K. Madam."

Mrs. Smith:—(after five minutes) "How is he?"

Secretary:—"O. K. Madam."

Mrs. Smith:—(A little later, very anxious to know the result) "Any news?"

Secretary:—"K. O. Madam."

Mrs. Smith:—"What do you mean?"

Secretary:—"Knocked out."

—Lal. M. Mansukhan, Hyderabad.

A Standard of Judgment.

A Witness with a long beard was giving evidence to the dissatisfaction of the Judge. The Judge had to remark:

"If your conscience is as large as your beard you will swear to anything."

The old witness.

"My Lord, if your lordship measures consciences by beards, how about your lordship who has no beard at all?"

—E. K. Ramamoorthi, Madras.

Good For Nothing.

Mother:—"Now, Tommy, don't be naughty, be good."

Tom:—"Give me four annas then, mother."

Mother:—"Why?"

Tom:—"Surely you don't expect me to be good for nothing!"

—Romulus, Egnore.

Leaving it to Him.

Hysterical patient:—"Doctor, I often feel like killing myself. What shall I do?"

Doctor:—"Leave it to me."

—S. Krishnan, Madras.

Too True to be Good.

Teacher:—"I've been getting threatening letters through the post. Isn't there a law against that?"

H. M.:—"Of course there is. It's a very serious offence to send threatening letters. Have you any idea who is doing it?"

Teacher:—"Oh yes, my Bankers."

—S. G. Jayapalan, Tirunelveli.

Sheer Economy.

A Teacher:—"Mr. Ramchandrar, how is it you have got the lowest marks in this terminal Exam?"

Student:—"I am a student of economy."

Sir.

—H. R. Krishnamoorthi, Bangalore city.

Auto-Suggestion.

Mohana:—"You seem to be in some one's car every-day! How on earth do you manage to do it?"

Palma:—"Oh, simply auto-suggestion my dear."

—Explorer.

Cold Care and Care Cold.

He was just returning from the doctor's house. On the way he was met by the old man.

The old man:—"I see that you are suffering from severe cold, Rama. You must take good care of it."

Rama:—"Take care be damned! I want to cure it."

—K. R. Srinivasan, Fort, St. George.

Sins of the Fathers.

A Kiddie was given some sums for homework. When he brought the answers the next day, all were wrong. The teacher grew angry and said, "Look here, if this continues, I shall have to speak to your father."

"You may speak, Sir. All the sums were worked out by him."

—K. R. Row, B. A. Poona.

The Difference.

The lawyer addressing the medical man—"Doctor, your mistakes are buried six feet deep!"

The medical man complacently—

"Certes my friend, but thine are hoisted six feet high!"

—A. Ganesa sankaran, Salem.

Im-pass-able.

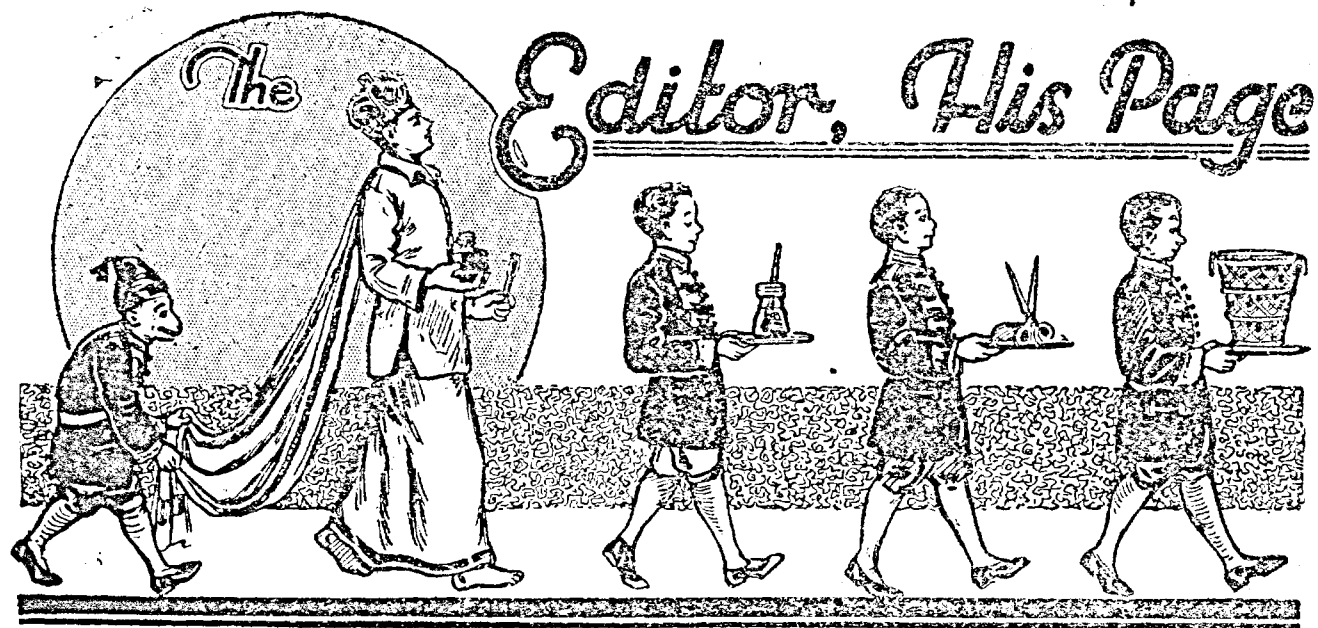
An absent minded student was returning on a tram-car worrying over his failure in the examination. The conductor of the tram guessing the student might own a pass asked "PASS?"

"No, failed, damn you" was the unexpected reply.

—M. R. K. Krishnan, Vijayanagar.

In spite of clear instructions 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 EXPLORER.



Eleven Judges in the Merry Magazine Literary Competition.

"ELEVEN Judges in the Merry Magazine Literary Competition" said our placard featuring the bill for the last issue of our Magazine. It was at a Bombay Railway terminus that a lady who had entrained there for Madras saw the announcement. Her husband adorns the Bench of the Madras High Court of Judicature and the lady's interest was quickened by her natural speculation as to whether her husband, along with ten other ornaments of the Judiciary, had unbeknown to her, started wooing the Muse. Straightaway, she bought a copy and turned over the pages eagerly. She scanned the names of the Judges and somewhat puzzled, continued to read on and discovered that the Eleven Judges were eleven eminent gentlemen who had consented to judge our readers' literary efforts. The lady then did something which you or I are not likely to have done, in similar circumstances. If you or I had bought a paper expecting a particular item in it and had discovered that particular item was not the one we expected but something entirely different, our first impulse would probably have been to chuck the offending paper into a corner. But this reader, more pertinacious than the rest of us, began reading one of the articles and needless to say, she did not put the Magazine down till she had read it through from beginning to end. She reached Madras and one of the first things she did was to place an order for the back numbers. The lady is now one of our most enthusiastic and appreciative readers. *Verbum sap.* Or, if you don't know Latin, deeds speak stronger than words. Or, in other words, these words are sufficient.

Turning now to our Literary Competition, you will notice that an addition has been made in the rules pertaining thereto. Competitors submitting entries must send their contributions under a pen-name and must also send a sealed cover containing their pen-names and their real names. The reason for the addition of this new rule is, of course, obvious. There are, in our midst, a few writers whose names or pseudonyms are somewhat familiar to all. I am anxious that no bias, however unconscious should enter in the final determination of the award.

A Dream of Bad Women

As all of you are by now well aware, I am one of the most modest of individuals and I never miss an opportunity of hiding my light under a bushel. But turning back and casting my eye on the feast of good things provided for you in this issue, I cannot resist the temptation to draw pointed attention to some of the items on the menu. An 'Old Sinner' has a dream of Bad Women. Unlike the rest of us who dream but do not set down our dreams on paper for the edification or entertainment of our fellow-mortals, the 'Old Sinner' relates his dream in verse, which for melody and diction need fear no comparison. If all of us could dream so pleasantly and to such good purpose, at will, there would, I fear, be very few waking moments for most of us. Dancers of a forgotten age once more trip the light fantastic toe before us and had Pavlova seen them in their prime, the great *danseuse* might have lived longer, so potent is their grace and so perfect the perfection of their exquisite art. Singers, who shamed the nightingale once more warble their tuneful melodies and the music haunts our responsive ears for ever and a day. Actresses,

in parts they have made famous, help us to relive the past till the past blends into the present and the future, clothed in golden glory, seems almost within our grasp until the fall of the curtain brings us back to stern reality and with a sigh, we file out of the phantom auditorium and wend our respective ways home or elsewhere. I am no *laudator temporis acti* but alas for the spacious days of old! Men were men then, an actor or actress could act, could make the twitch of an eyebrow speak volumes, or with a single gesture hush the tumult of the mob. The dance then was not a branch of gymnastics: there was rhythm in that forgotten art, there was grace, there was poetry and behind all these, there was the pervading personality of the performer herself. Musicians in those days made music which was a delight to the ear and an anodyne to the harassed soul and the hearer came back, even if only for the nonce, a happier and more contented man. Those days now belong to the dim past, but our poet, wise in his generation and mellowed and more sapient in ours, for a brief while lifts the curtain of Time and affords us a tantalisingly transient glimpse of the splendour that was ancient Indian art and the glory that was Indian song.

Private Joyfull.

Could you choose your offspring, wouldn't you love to have a son like Private Joyfull, the only limit to whose epistolary zeal is set by the hebdomadal nature of the P. and O. Mail Boat sailings? Deliciously satirical and penetratingly shrewd in his observations on

men and things, what is Private Joyfull doing in this strange gallery of warriors in drab khaki, where brawn counts for more than brain? But, at least for the sake of his Letters, we wish him a long and prosperous career in the Army. If it be true that every private soldier carries a baton in his knapsack, we shall, one of these days, have the pleasure of reading Field Marshal Joyfull's Letters to his daughter.

Heart-to-Heart Talks

Is a symposium of the opinions of prominent people on the propriety of the extension of the term of the present Legislative Council. Read it for yourself. I am not going to attempt to paint the lily.

Lucky Number Scheme.

In the September Lucky Number Scheme, Rs. 100 has been paid to Mr. S. Pakkiriswami Pillai, No. 4174, Dabirkulam Road, Tanjore, the winning Lucky Number being 82975. Copy of the Merry Magazine bearing No. 84331 has been bought back from Mr. S. Kalyanasundaram, 24, Paramasiva Chetty Street, Park Town, Madras for Rs. 10 and two other copies, bearing No. 81799 and 96917 from Messrs. K. Srinivasachariar, Sanskrit Pandit, Kellat High School, Triplicane and K. Sundram, Kaliapet Village, Salavakkam Post, Chingleput District for Rs. 5 each.

A sum of Rs. 20 is left unclaimed and will be added to the November amount for which therefore, a sum of Rs. 120 will be available for distribution.

NOVEMBER LUCKY NUMBER SCHEME

THE EDITOR OFFERS

Rs. 120

for the return of readers' copies. Rs. 100 will be paid for the first Winning number, and Rs. 20 for the four Second Winning numbers.

5 numbers have been chosen at random and kept in a sealed envelope which will be opened after 25-11-'33. These numbers will be published on 10-12-'33.

**Yours may be the Lucky Number Worth Rs. 100
SO KEEP YOUR COPY**

Rs. 1000

IS OFFERED IN THE ALL-INDIA MERRY MAGAZINE LITERARY COMPETITION

A prize of Rs. 1000 will be awarded to the best humorous sketch or short story submitted before 1st January 1934.

NO ENTRANCE FEE. NO LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF ENTRIES.

1. All Indians and Anglo-Indians residing in India, Burma, Ceylon, Straits and F. M. S. are eligible to compete.
2. All entries must be typewritten.
3. Two copies of Mss must be sent.
4. Only humorous sketches or short stories are wanted.
5. Mss may be about 3000 words long.
6. The closing date is 1st January 1934.
7. The copyright of winning Mss as well as of others used by the editor will vest in the Editor of the Merry Magazine.
8. The Editor reserves the right to divide the prize if it is found that the entries finally selected are of equal merit.
9. Others Mss used by the Editor will be paid for at the usual rates.
10. Mss will not be returned.
11. The Editor will undertake no responsibility for Mss lost or damaged in transit.
12. Competitors submitting entries must in all cases, sign their Mss. with a pen-name. Along with their Mss. they must send a sealed envelope containing their full names and addresses and their pen-names.
13. All entries must be addressed to Editor, All-India Merry Magazine Literary Competition, Merry Magazine Office, 2/140, Broadway, Madras.

The following gentlemen have consented to sit on the Committee of Judges which will award the prizes in

THE ALL-INDIA MERRY MAGAZINE LITERARY COMPETITION

The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastriar, P.C. (Chairman of the Committee.)
Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar, B.A., B.L.,

Sometime Judge of the High Court, Madras.

Mr. M. A. Candeth, M.A., BAR-AT-LAW, I.E.S., M.B.E.,
Dy. Director of Public Instruction, Madras.

Rao Bahadur S. E. Ranganathan Ayl., M.A. I.E.S.
Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, Chidambaram.

Mr. P. Seshadri M.A., Principal, Government College, Ajmer.

Mr. K. S. Venkatramani, M.A., B.L., Advocate, Madras.

Mr. S. Govindarajulu, M.A.B.L., L.L.B., BAR-AT-LAW, Professor, Law College, Madras.

Mr. V. Saranathan, M.A., Principal, National College, Trichinopoly.

Mr. K. Swaminathan, M.A., Professor of English, Presidency College, Madras.

Mr. P. Mahadevan, M. A., Principal, Madura College, Madura.

Mr. S. Singam, B.A., B.L., Madras. (Secretary.)

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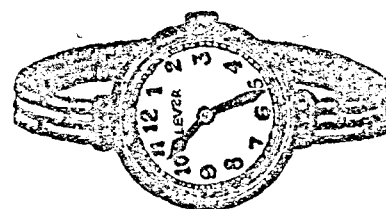
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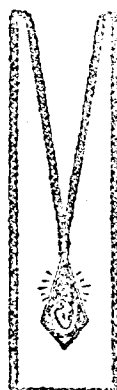
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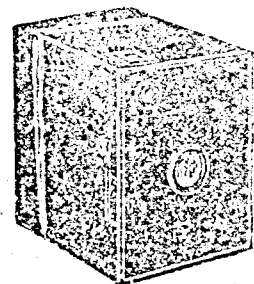
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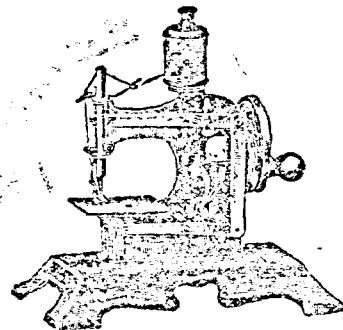
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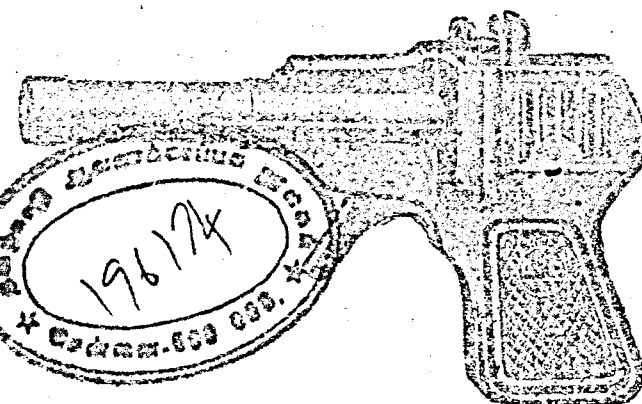
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