

THE MERRY MAG

Vol. I.

MADRAS, 25th NOVEMBER, 1933.

No. 22

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Dr. Thomas, Professor of Economics in the University of Madras says that if the 350 millions of India each bought one more yard of cloth, the troubles of Lancashire would be at an end.

Not if it is of khaddar.

Sir A. P. Patro opines that many of the younger members of the I. C. S., are fools in practical affairs.

But they have one advantage over the gallant knight; they can live it down.

Proposing the toast of Dr. Shafat Ahmad Khan at a London dinner, H. H. the Agha Khan declared that he represented the India of to-day, and not of yesterday.

We have therefore decided to look forward to the India of to-morrow.

A local philosopher says—'Pluralism and pantheism are found in the sun.'

This is a plausible explanation for the sun spots.

There is a proposal for the fusion of the opposition parties in the Assembly.

The ultimate aim is to be the same as at present—confusion.

Mr. Chakkarai avers that his defeat in the mayoral election is the defeat of the Justice party.

Then, why is he not as pleased as the party?

Rumours of his secession from the party are discounted in well-informed circles.

Presumably because there is no other party from which the gentleman has not already seceded.

Mr. Henderson says that he has not yet decided to resign from the Disarmament Conference.

We understand that he is anxious to give precedence to the remaining countries.

At the third reading of the Madras Estates Land Act Amendment bill, the closure was moved by Mr. Madanagopal Naidu.

We hope the Kumararajah of Chettinad bore the shock bravely.

A Reuter message announces that 'concentration camps' in Germany would be closed as a result of the plebiscite.

We are surprised to hear that they had been open till now!

The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri declares that 'Dominion Status' is no longer an ambiguous term.

It's of course what we are *not* going to get.

Duckworth the English wicket-keeper says that 'Body-line' bowling was not at all dangerous.

Not to the wicket-keeper so long as there was a batsman in front of him!

'Empire car goes for empire ships'—says a headline.

Another result of the Road-rail competition?

Mr. Churchill fears that Mr. Macdonald might destroy the Conservative party at the next general elections.

It looks as if he is anxious to forestall him!

From a description of the funeral of the late Amir of Afghanistan: "It was a profoundly moving spectacle to witness this vast sorrowing multitude, estimated to be over 50,000, humbly following their inspired leader in his last state procession."

As a matter of fact, more *expire* than *inspire*!

Interviewed concerning the finances of separated Burma, Sir Basil Blackett is reported to have said: 'My position of a former finance member gives me extra reason for saying nothing.'

This is carrying the front-bench manner too far.

Reuter says that there are 44 parties fighting the elections in Spain.

We hope our country's record in this matter is yet secure.

Mr. Shaukat Ali says that he is something of a sooth-sayer too.

We wondered why none would take him seriously—not even himself!

The Rev. Fr. Basenich says that 'Malthus had a great idea—just one.'

We wish we could say the same of the Rev. Father.

THE LAMENT OF

Being a Rhyming Report of the Debate on The Estates Land Act which



The M. L. Cs met in the hall.

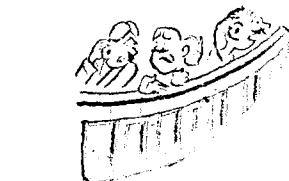
The M. L. Cs met in the hall
Talking with all their might
They did their very best to see
The Land Bill smooth and bright
And this was very odd because
The tenants showed no fight.

Sami was brooding sulkily
Because he thought that none
Had any right to bring a Bill
Before his own was done
"It is very rude of them," he said
"To rob me of my fun."



Sami was brooding sulkily

The Inamdars were sitting in
The Strangers Gallery
There was such noise and so much din
They could not hear but only see
The ministers and opposers smile
As if all things quite settled were
And in their sorry dismal plight
A few suggested a free fight.



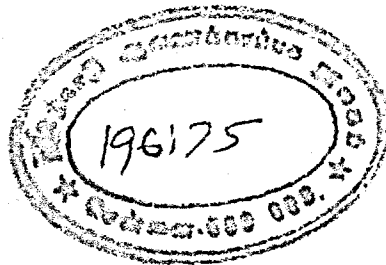
The Inamdars were sitting in
The Strangers Gallery

Some sturdy Andhras stood erect
With bamboos in their hand
Some did their heaviest shoes select
All cried, "This nonsense we won't stand."
The Tamils counselled peaceful means
Reminded them of Gandhi's cult.
This brought some order in their ranks
To Gandhi's creed they all gave thanks.



.....sturdy Andhras stood erect
.....Tamils counselled peaceful means

The upraised shoes were all thrown down
Each one resumed his seat
Their sinful impulse slid out
The shoes were at their feet.
Some vowed a ten days solemn fast
By wife and friends surrounded
And when their fasting days were passed
Break Inam laws propounded.



their sinful impulse slid out
The shoes were at their feet

THE LEGISLATOR

has brought many a Tear to the Eye of Legislator and Inamdar alike.

The members and the ministers
Were working hand in hand
They grieved like anyone to see
The Inamdars make a stand
"If these can all be kept away"
They said, "it would be grand!"
Some members rose and did propose
That they should straightaway legislate

The President showed he felt
inclined
The sitting to adjourn
But afterwards he changed his
mind
His Secretary's views to learn.



"If there are precedents" he said
"For roaming on the Beach
While sitting here they all
could make

The President
showed he felt
inclined The sitting
to adjourn.

That when the Justice party chose
Third persons' rights to confiscate
The people most affected by
The measures they discuss
Should stay at home quite decently
And not make any fuss
And breach of these laws should entail
Seven years' confinement in jail.



A pleasant way
to end the day
Is walking on
the Beach.

"Oh ministers! come and treat
with us"

The Inamdars did beseech
"A pleasant way to end the day
Is walking on the Beach
A quiet talk, a pleasant walk
Will spare you many a speech."



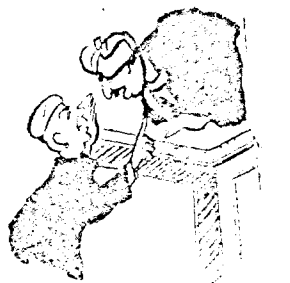
.....came back
With a triumph-
ant smile

Full many a dreary speech
I shall adjourn against my will"
Here Patro did sit still.

The Secretary to his office rushed
Searched many a musty file
And racked his brains and came
back flushed

With a triumphant smile
"The President in this matter has
Discretion" he replied
"To sit or stand, to walk or talk
Or "ad vult" for a while."

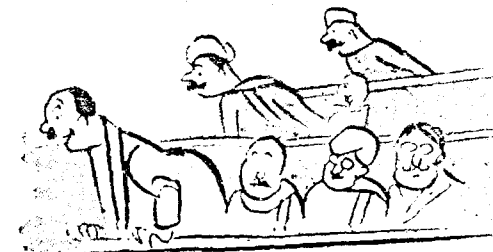
This answer did the President
A great deal more perplex
"Are there no cases in reports
Of somebody versus Rex
Setting a Judicial precedent
A clearer rule to guide
Quasi judicial men like me
Quite quickly to decide
The legal Secretary and to
seek
The drafting one beside."



The President in this
matter has Discretion,
he replied

Some M. L. Cs at once got up
All eager for the talk
With smiling face and eager mien
The President's eye they caught
Two talked a while and tried to show
The benefits of the course

Three showed the evils that would flow
From such a foolish source
But none referred to precedents
With reason and with force.

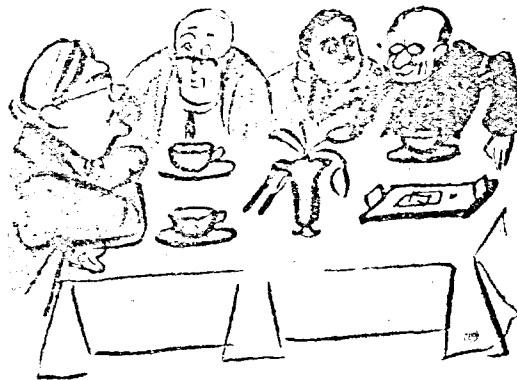


Some M. L. Cs at once got up
The President's eye they caught.



Sir Patro rose and
glaring said

Sir Patro rose and glaring said:
"Who are Inamdars, who is Rex.
Should legal quibbles cause delay
And President's brain perplex
I think the ruling ought to be
No quarter will be given
To those that are opposed to me
My party's got the votes, thank
Heaven, I!"



Their tea was on the table set

"We can the closure straight apply
And vote that Inamdars
All pattagars of ruling chiefs.
And all their threats defy
But we shall vote them Zamindars
And lawful claims deny
If they persist in their damned twist
The'll soon perceive our mailed fist"

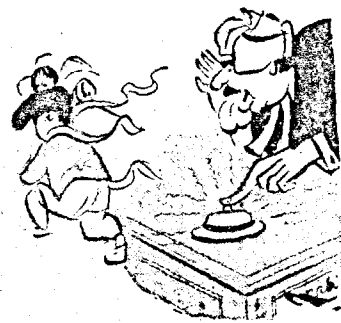
The officials wisely held their tongue
But watched their members' face
They went into their offices
To do their work in peace
Their tea was on the table set
The buttered toast was hot
They smiled a weary smile and said
"Oh, what a funny lot!"



And hunger cast its spell

While all this talk was going on
The shades of evening fell
The Council hall was filled with gloom
And hunger cast its spell
Their appetites were whetted quite
By smell of tea and toast
Coming so fresh from officers' room
They all went out in haste

The President rang his bell and called
The M. L. Cs to order
And long he tried to stem the tide
Of Senatorial disorder.
"Oh members all!" the President cried
"Our work is not yet done
Let us dispose of the Inamdars"
But answer there was none
And this was scarcely odd because
They had left him every one.



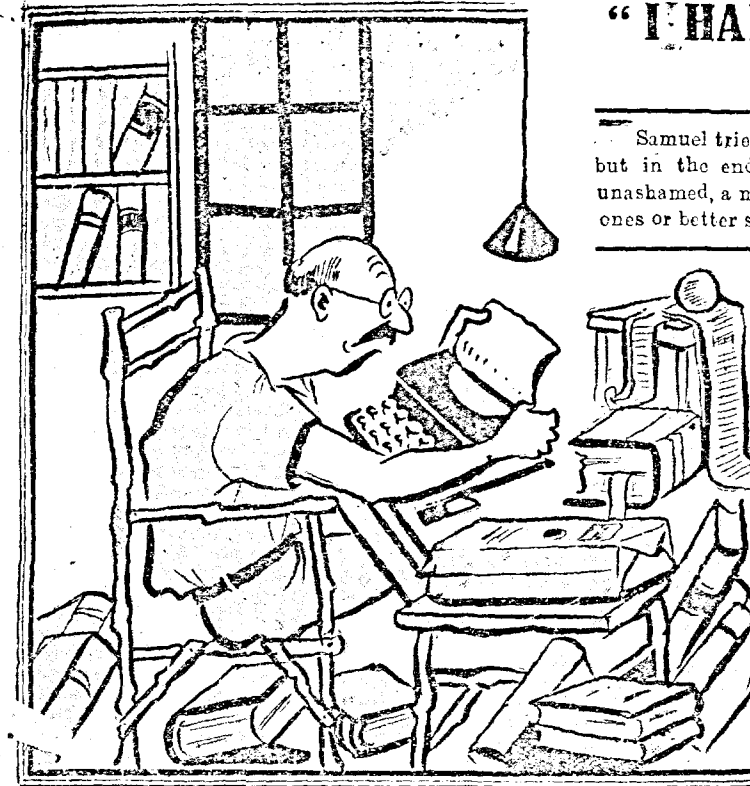
The President rang his bell and called
The M. L. Cs to order.

—Dreamer.

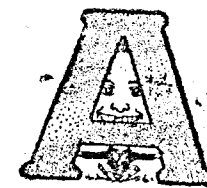
"I HAD [ALMOST] FORGOTTEN"

(P. P. SAMUEL)

Samuel tries to fool you with gory tales of Colonels and subalterns; but in the end, gives himself away and stands before you, naked and unashamed, a mendicant begging for razor-blades. Send him your used ones or better still, ask him to grow a beard.—Editor.



Now any pensioner can afford to buy a ream of paper.....and write an autobiography.



BEARDED Professor of Economics has recently written to the papers that the present World Slump is all due to the over-production of Autobiographies. The theory sounds absurd, no doubt, but when we give it a fair consideration we might perhaps find a spark of sense buried deep in the plentiful ashes of absurdity. In the meantime we would warn the professor that these autobiographers are a dangerous gang and he would do well to shave off his beard and provide himself with a bullet-proof shirt. It would be far more sensible than depending on the Police for protection.

Nowadays, almost every pensioner who can afford to buy a ream of paper and a typewriter on the Instalment Plan sits up among heaps of diaries and sheaves of press-cuttings to write an autobiography. He or She is sure of finding a sale for his or her book as there are thousands of autobiographers who believe in the old saw: "Ka me ka thee." A proverb which, translated liberally, means: "If you buy my autobiography I will buy yours, dash it!"

Incidentally, it is a pretty easy thing to be an autobiographer if you only remember that the nebulous thing called "Truth" is definitely out of fashion in

1933. A little imagination to colour all the incidents—or more probably the accidents—in your life, a few fictitious anecdotes—or old ones in new jackets—to give "zip" to the narrative, and the trick is done. All that remains now is to tack on a corking title to the dog-eared manuscript. "I Had Almost Forgotten," "What a Life!" "If I Must," "Statesmen, Soldiers and Scoundrels," are all *a la mode*. The thing will then jolly well stand on its own legs. That is why Presidents, Booze runners, Chimney-sweeps, Charwomen, Premiers, Jockeys, Colonels, American 'Toughs' and Politicians hasten to join the glorious galaxy of autobiographers.

If my memory is right, 251 autobiographies were published in England in September, 1933. No doubt a great achievement, considering the fact that September has only thirty days. With 250 of these ladies and gentlemen we are not immediately concerned, but the 251st touches us on the raw. He is a retired Colonel of the British Army in India, popularly known as the Indian Army.

Colonel Grundy's autobiography has the simple title: "Forty Years in the Indian Army." Surely it should have been possible for a man of Colonel Grundy's girth to find a weighty title for his book of reminiscences. When one has read it from cover to cover one feels that the title is rather unassuming and even misleading to some extent. To call it "Forty Years of Grog, Golf and Glee-Glee" would give a better idea of its contents, perhaps. And more snappy, by the way.

Now let us follow the gallant Colonel through his two hundred and fifty odd pages of crisp stuff. From the time he buys his first whisky-and-soda at Bombay—exactly five minutes after he lands—life is a broad-gauge railway to him. Like a gay Cavalier he goes through the "Wonderland of India," from Quetta to Calcutta, and Srinagar to Virulhunagar. True, in course of time he becomes fat and you suspect he has cirrhosis of the liver, but he doesn't care two hoots as he has in the meantime become a Colonel and

won the O. B. E. From the lean, handsome, half-pint subaltern of 1895 to the apple-shaped, apple-coloured, three-bottle Colonel of 1930 is as jolly an evolution as any soldier can dream of.

The book is as full of lively anecdotes as an early bird's crop is full of nice, wriggling worms. On page 2 you see young Lieutenant Grundy at the Officers' Mess, trying to convince himself that he isn't the Taj Mahal. And you run on from incident to incident, from joke to joke, until, on page 241, you see a massive, florid, whiskered Colonel slapping a "timid, 13-guns Maharajah" on his velvety back and assuring him that he is "a nice, little Ma'raj."

Of course, life has its seamy side, as Colonel Grundy realises himself, whenever he happens to play golf. Golf is the only thorn in his sound flesh. It gets his liver and his goat and helps him to find his tongue. He rakes up the turf, fozzles his shots, looks daggers at the grinning caddies, gets redder in the face, and swears. And when he is compelled to do that sort of thing for forty years on end I suppose one must grant that he is entitled to swear, not only like a mere trooper, but like a Major General with lumbago as well. And that is exactly what he does.

The average Briton, I suppose, would insist on learning more about the "Peoples of India" from Colonel Grundy's six-shilling book than from "The Simon Commission Report" or any other similar million-pound document. Says the Colonel: "Crikey! They are nice, little, loyal chaps who know manners and never indulge in any bloody back-chat. My chokra, Abdul, was in my service 25 years, but I have never known him give a back-answer. Of course, there are blokes who are so darned un-English as to insult a fellow by refusing a neat whisky-and-soda; but they are damn negligible."

Can you beat it? Like to have a try, gents? Come, come. Better never to try at all than to try and come a cropper, as the poet is alleged to have said. Well, Grundy takes the cake and he is going to eat it with your permission.

I like the book more for its natural, colourful zippy language than for its profundities. If all the jolly "damns" and kindly "bloodies" in the book are printed in "English" type and placed end to end they would run from Quetta to Calcutta and back again. The language is so democratically and unmistakably English that it is not The King's English. And therein lies the merit. Thank you, Colonel Grundy. A prodigious book—though a shade wet!



A massive Colonel slapping a Maharaja saying he is "a nice little Ma'raj."

The Colonel tempts me to write a very Indian (and therefore very un-English) autobiography. But I would rather not, even though I have a thing or two to say about myself. True, I can sell 35239 copies if I join the International League of Autobiographers which has 35239 members on its rolls. But then, according to the rules of the League, I will have to buy 35239 autobiographies with the proceeds of the

sale of my book. The net profit would then be $+ \times - \times$, as the mathematicians euphemistically put it. That doesn't look like sound Economics. Does it?

Therefore, if you ever happen to catch me writing an autobiography you are at liberty to land me one on my left ear. Believe me, I will immediately turn the other ear also to you for a second smack.

Now taking it all in all, there seems to be more than a mere tittle of truth in what the bearded Professor of Economics has written to the papers. So I suppose you are not going to send him your packet of razor blades as a Christmas present. Between you and me and the Editor, I think I could do with the packet, if you are really keen on passing it on to me.

PEOPLE IN THE PUBLIC EYE

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA



The Doyen of Indian Nationalism: a fine flower of Hindu culture. Statesman, scholar, educationist and social reformer, he has derived his inspiration for all his many-sided activities from the unifying and eternal verities of Arya Dharma. A silver-tongued orator from whose lips TRUTH 'prevails with double sway.' As enduring monument of his life-mission, the Hindu University at Benares shall stand for ever, and enshrine, in the fullness of time, the soul of a resurgent Nation. Has stilled the voice of dark contention in whatever he has done by radiating 'sweetness and light.' Has many preferences, but no exclusions.

May he be long spared to enjoy

*"An old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night."*

TICKLERS

(TUT-TUT-TUT)



Annotate:—

- (a) "With thee were the dreams of my earliest love.
Every thought of my reason was thine;
In my last humble prayer to the spirit above,
Thy spirit shall be mingled with mine."
- (b) There's small choice in rotten apples.
- (c) Bless thee, Bottom! Bless thee! thou art translated.
- (d) "And finds with keen, discriminating sight,
Black's not so black;—nor white so very white."



Write short notes on:—

- (a) Limerick.
- (b) Dewas (Senior) State.
- (c) Malta.



What do you know of:—

- (a) The Kumararaja of Chettinad.
- (b) Mr. Hales, M. P.



ANSWERS

1. (a) Sjt. V. J. Patel has passed away in a foreign land, praying for his beloved but unhappy country with his last breath. The angel of Death has taken toll of another of our national martyrs. In a free country, he would have moulded national destiny to more enduring and fruitful purposes. As it was, he rose to heights of moral grandeur that can provide us with un-failing inspiration. Everything about him was aggressive. He was perhaps the only Indian in office in recent times to be genuinely feared by the bureaucracy; for he attacked them in their most vulnerable point—their *amour propre*. To have placed before himself an inflexible ideal; to have fought with undiminished zest in promoting it; to have escaped disillusionment with repeated failure; in short, to have grown more ardent as he grew older—these have not been given to any

other of our leaders in like measure. When his life comes to be written, it will constitute a liberal education in political integrity. His spirit has now joined 'the choir invisible,' waiting and watching from afar, for the consummation of his and our dearest earthly hopes.

- (b) Germany has had its general elections. But as only one party's nominees sought the suffrage of the electorate, the overwhelming majority for Hitler overwhelms us by its farcical futility. A sense of humour is apparently not an 'Aryan' virtue; and what little there might have been of it must have died of asphyxiation under Hitler. In the old days there used to be parties with programmes, good, bad and indifferent; now there is a nightmare the duration of which seems indefinite. Nevertheless, a minority of three million votes cast against Hitler is a welcome reminder that political courage is not yet wholly extinct in Germany.

- (c) The passage of the Estates Land Act Amendment Bill has provided as many surprises as 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.' We confess at once that we have been unable to follow the labyrinthine windings of the amendments and their amendments. The ex-chief minister returned, like the prodigal son to the parent fold, and out-justiced the justice party by his advocacy of injustice to a class of people called Inamdars. It is true that we have no use for them any more than for the Zamindars, except for purposes of comic relief. But we believe in giving the devil his due. The most astonishing feature of the debate was not sufficiently stressed by anybody. If a majority is to ride rough-shod over the minority, what guarantee is there of continuity in legislation? Would not a future Council be equally justified in using the very same arguments to despoil the zamindar, now basking in the uncertain and treacherous sunshine of political power? And then, consider what a sorry figure the Revenue member cut, helplessly 'blundering round about a meaning' and never hitting it off either from the point of view of draughtsmanship or from that of equity. The moral of all this is plain; we have not yet heard the last of this contentious measure.

- (d) Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar has flooded the news-papers with an elaborate

account of the proceedings of the Commonwealth Relations Committee. It appears that the Dominions are languishing to extend equality of treatment to India. Evidences of inequality cry out from the house-tops of the empire; and yet not a word of any of them in all this sanctimonious rubbish. The Dewan Bahadur complacently mentions the fact that he was elected chairman of one of the sub-committees. May we remind our self-satisfied patriot that it proves nothing; not even that he was fit to preside over it?

- 2 (a) Limerick is a well-known city in Ireland which has lent its name to one of the easiest kinds of literary composition in verse. This can be composed by anybody on any subject at short notice; from which it is fairly obvious that you needn't be a born poet for it. It comes in very handy for the celebration of any passing event with more than passing interest to the public. For example, while the Indo-Jap talks have been going on, a British textile delegation came, saw and conquered. It is a suitable theme for a limerick. So here goes:—

*"There was a meddlesome busybody,
Who gloried in the name of Mody;
He had vowed to please
Sir William Clare Lees,
Simply to prove himself a—"*

And then, there has been the Mayoral election at Madras. It is an event that has made history. What about this one?

*"A gentleman named Mr. Ladden
Was anxious our hearts to gladden;
As our Mayor he drest
Into a heraldic jest,—
While poor Chakkarai it did sadden and madden!"*

We can give no undertaking that we shall not inflict more of them in subsequent issues. (Not without our permission, thank you? Ed. M. M.)

- (b) One of the Mahratta states somewhere in Central India. Its ruler is now hibernating in Pondicherry for ostensible reasons of health. It is said that the paramount power has given him notice to return to his state within a week. This introduces an element of much-needed variety in the relations of the Government of India with the states, which may be briefly summarised thus: (a) To give notice to people like the Maharajahs of Nabha and Alwar to quit within a

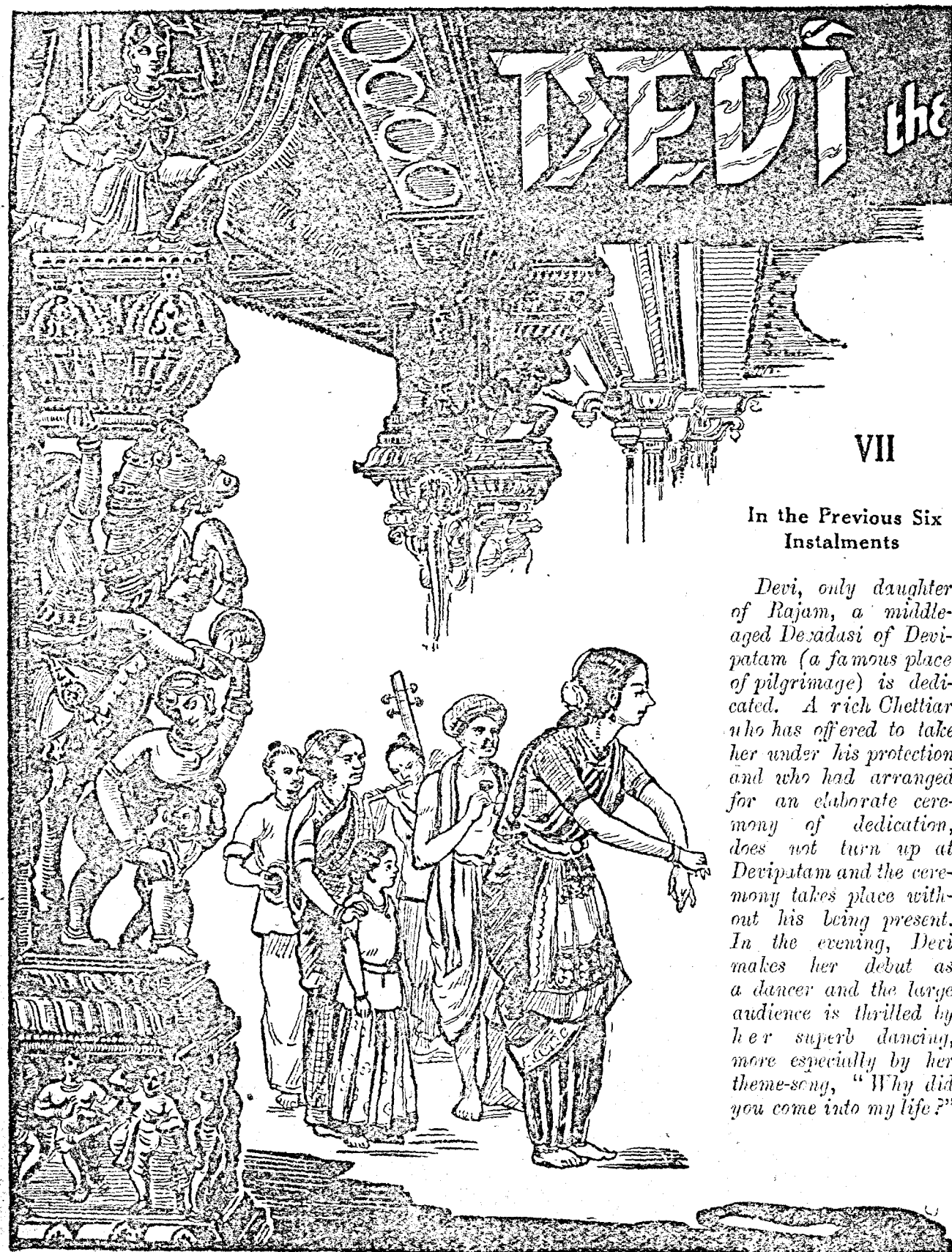
Ticklers

given period; and (b) to people like Dewas (senior) to give notice to return within a given period. This is convenient, for if you dislike policy (a) the Government can show you that they also adopt policy (b); and *vice versa*.

- (c) This is an island in the Mediterranean, belonging as islands should, to the queen of all islands. It has just undergone a political upheaval in a strictly constitutional manner. The Governor of the island has dismissed the Ministers, suspended the constitution and declared his intention of ruling the island in the King's name. The point at issue was whether English or Italian should be the medium of instruction in the schools. The ministers preferred Italian, and hence the rub. Mussolini must be watching the course of events with secret satisfaction; for there is no doubt that time and other natural causes will tend to bring about the affiliation of Malta, linguistically as well as administratively, with Italy. This episode in imperial policy offers Indian enthusiasts of the White Paper scheme, a full-dress rehearsal of how the 'safeguards' are likely to work, if ministers prove intractable.

3. (a) Affectionately known as the Mayor, although he has just relinquished that ornamental office. Is the scion of an ancient family of Nagarathars, the origins of which can ultimately be traced back to Adam. As head of the Corporation of Madras, he has left an enduring record of his daring originality in office 'notes,' which we understand are marked by incisive brevity, and a singular freedom from the tyrannical exactions of English orthography. Is also the chief whip of the Justice party, and hopes on the strength of precedent, one day to be a minister too. His contribution to the debates on the floor of the house has been to move for closure at the psychological moment, and with an unwearied vigilance worthy of a more heroic cause. He and the Rajah of Bobbili are among the most brilliant and well-informed of the younger hopes of their party.

- (b) A peripatetic member of Parliament, with an incurable habit of writing well-meaning letters to all prominent people in India. He is the living embodiment of the truism that much might be said on both sides. He is very daring in his suggestions, and if he had his way, looks like helping all the parties here and in England, at once to have their cakes and eat them too?



DEVIPATAM the

VII

In the Previous Six Instalments

Devi, only daughter of Rajam, a middle-aged Devadasi of Devipatam (a famous place of pilgrimage) is dedicated. A rich Chettiar who has offered to take her under his protection and who had arranged for an elaborate ceremony of dedication, does not turn up at Devipatam and the ceremony takes place without his being present. In the evening, Devi makes her debut as a dancer and the large audience is thrilled by her superb dancing, more especially by her theme-song, "Why did you come into my life?"

DANCER

DEVI MEETS HER BOY-LOVER



"A ravishing young virgin! Taught from her childhood to simulate moods beyond the scope of even the most sophisticated of women! Elaborate arrangements made for—what to her people is certainly—her wedding! And yet, here is the bridegroom dallying over a cup of coffee! It beats me!" said Chandrasekhar, the wag of the Madras Metropolitan Club, to a group of intimate friends gathered in the Club lounge. Rao Saheb Bala-sundaram Chettiar, the subject of Chandrasekhar's sally, continued to sip his coffee, unruffled. The hour was five in the evening and elsewhere in Devipatam, at the same hour, an audience was being thrilled by Devi and her theme-song, "Why did you come into my life?"

"Oh he is a cool hand!" said Ananthachar, the archaeologist, "He will give us the slip alright and be on time to-night at the nuptial chamber!"

"What's the odds?" asked Subbier, the professional punter. "I'll lay ten to one that the Chettiar goes to Devipatam to-night."

"Done, old boy!" said the Chettiar, laying down the coffee-tumbler and wiping his mouth with a kerchief. He rang for the club-boy and asked for pen and paper. When these arrived, he wrote out a telegram and read it aloud:

"Indisposed. Not coming. Bring Party here whenever convenient."

"Don't do that, Balu!" protested Ramanulu, Balu's thickest friend who was an authority on such matters. "It is not done! You must respect the feelings of the girl and her people. Hang it, man, you are as good as marrying this girl and no one can treat a wife like that and get away with it."

"Anyway, here it goes!" said Balu and gave the telegram to the boy saying, "Ask the clerk to send it express, on my account."

"Poor Subbier!" exclaimed Ananthachar.

"He laughs best who laughs last!" retorted Subbier, who couldn't believe that Rao Saheb Chettiar would be so callous as to absent himself from the function.

When the telegram reached Sambandam's hands two hours later, he could hardly believe his eyes. He sought Rajam and gave her an exaggerated version of the telegram. "The Chettiar is ill. I think he must have fallen suddenly ill."

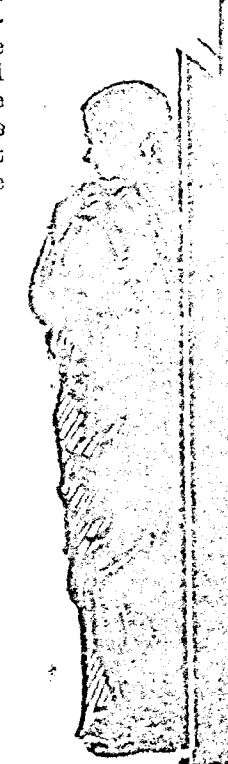
Perhaps he thought he could come here and that must be

Story By Devan

Pictures by Sekar.

the reason why he sent me a telegram in the morning. Now, I have received another telegram in which he says he can't come at all! I hope it isn't anything serious but, anyway, I shall run up to Madras tomorrow morning and find out for myself."

Rajam's first feelings on hearing the news was one of humiliation. But her anxiety about the health of the Marudupillai was equally intense and it was apparent to her that she was not being intentionally treated with indifference. "The poor man has been taken ill. What can we do?" she told everybody who questioned her about the absence of the Chettiar. The nuptial chamber which was



elaborately decorated and hung with garlands was closed and locked. Deva heaved a sigh of relief and tired as she was after the day's excitement and strenuous labour, she snuggled closer to her mother and went to sleep like a top.

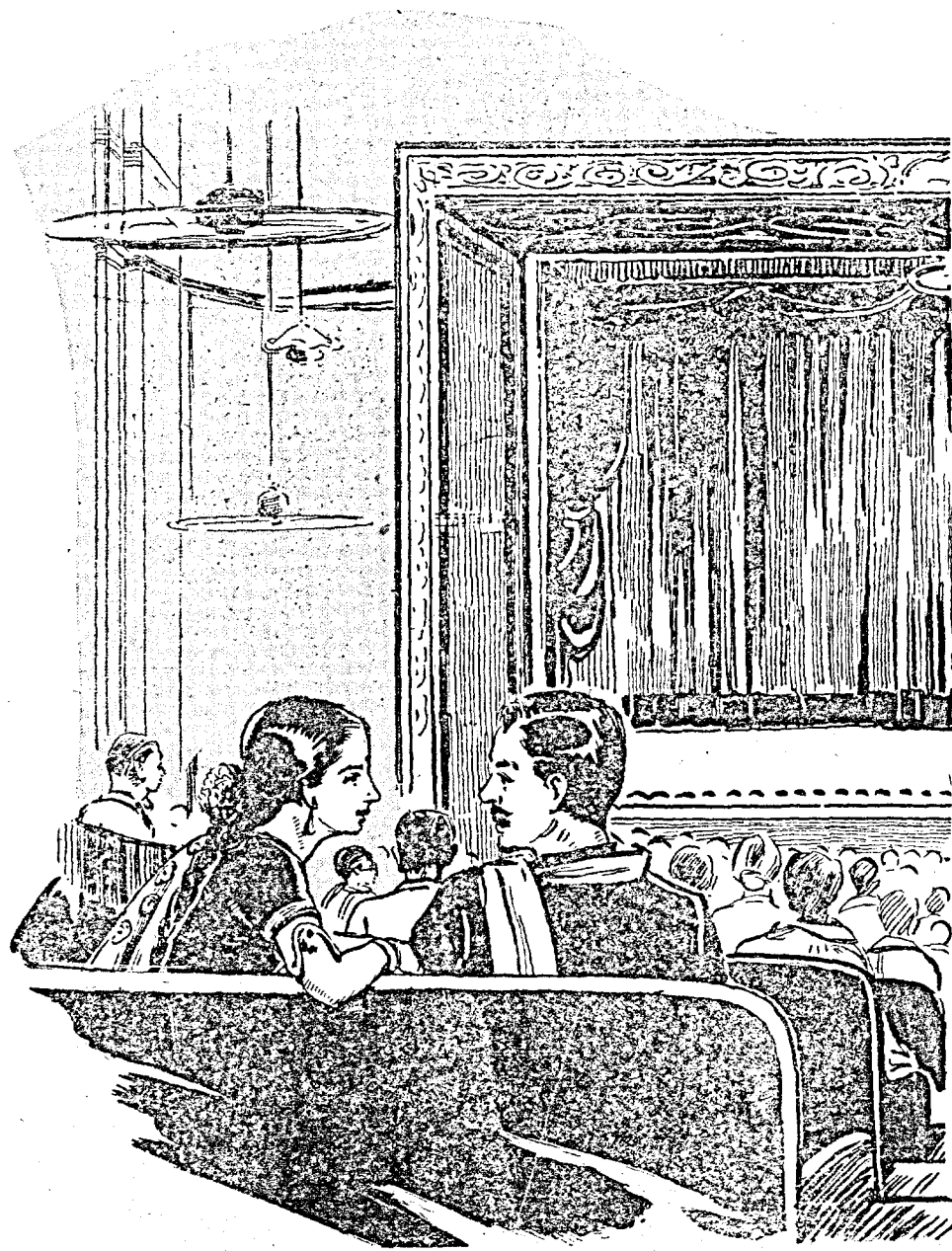
Sambandam left for Madras the next morning and despatched from there a telegram. "Better. No anxiety," was the cryptic message. Two days later, he returned to Devipattam bringing with him two cars, a sedan and tourer.

"There is a nice little bungalow with servants and all, ready waiting for Deva at Madras. The Chettiar has asked me to invite all of you to come and stay at Madras as long as you like. The Aiyar too must come. Two cars are here and we can start as soon as all of you are ready."

Rajam at first demurred. She was eventually persuaded by Sambandam to accompany her daughter to Madras and stay in the Metropolis for a week. But Panchaksharam stoutly refused to be one of the party, pleaded a splitting head-ache, daubed *chunam* on both his temples and wrapping himself in a thick blanket, laid himself down in a dark corner.

It was a quiet little cottage in Kilpauk. There was a Mussalman watchman at the gate, and two mastiffs in the garden. A fat virago, by name Meenakshi ran the household aided and abetted by a cook, a boyce and a gardener. Sambandam could also be said to live in the cottage, for, he was there or thereabouts throughout the day, though he never dined or stayed there after sunset. Rajam was delighted with the cottage, its fittings and furniture, the retinue of servants and the contents of Deva's wardrobe and jewel-cases. On the evening of the first day of their arrival, when the Chettiar called and took out Deva for the evening drive, Rajam stood in the portico watching the car, her eyes dimmed with tears of joy. Truly, the Gods had been

kind to her and she instinctively turned southwards and joined her palms over her head. Meenakshi, who was passing that way, stood transfixed at the sight and wondered if the old dame had suddenly gone crazy.



"Would it be very improper if I talk
"Whom or what are you worshipping?" she asked with an amused smile on her lips.
"My patron Goddess. You may not know that Deva is my only daughter and we are poor people, and all this luxury and comfort is the answer to my prayers. My little girl is bound to be happy amidst these surroundings."

"Oh, yes! That is my business. By the way, you could tell me what kind of fish she likes."

Rajam was taken aback at the request. "Oh, no no! We don't eat fish, fowl or mutton. I mean, even before Deva was born, I took to vegetarian food and Deva has been brought up as a vegetarian."

"Alright!" said Meenakshi wondering what kind of Dasis these were, who had forsworn fish and mutton.

After a week, Rajam left for Devipattam. The parting was an ordeal to her. But with full faith in her Patron Goddess to Whose care she entrusted her daughter, she brushed the tears from her eyes and gathered Deva in her arms. "Deva, my child," she said. "Though I go from here to-day, I will be always thinking of you. Write to me daily. Do not, on any account, incur the displeasure of the Chettiar. Be content with what the Gods have given you. They have been kind and generous. Be grateful: be happy and daily in the morning turn your face southwards in obeisance to the All-merciful Devi."

"I will remember everything, *amma*," said Deva bravely fighting down her intense longing to fall on her mother's shoulders and cry out to her heart's content.

Till very recently, that part of Madras which goes by the name of George Town was known as Black Town. Even before the Britisher landed on the shores of Chennai, he had a superiority complex, fully well-developed. He did desire very much to trade with the Indian but he wanted to do it from a distance. Hence came into existence the Fort St. George with its moat, walls and array of guns and the system known as "the guaranteed Dubash."

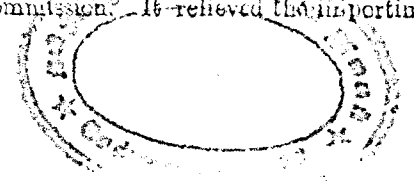
A guaranteed Dubash stood surety for all the various contracts which Indian dealers entered

to the gentleman in the next seat?"

"That's very queer, especially in your community. I suppose I must manage as best as I can with brinjals and pumpkins. Would she object to a few eggs now and then?"

"I beseech you, do not tempt her," pleaded Rajam.

into with British firms in respect of purchases or sales. If a dealer failed, or repudiated a contract the Dubash had to pay the penalty or make good the loss. For agreeing to bear this vicarious punishment he was paid a salary and a commission. It relieved the importing



British firms from coming into direct contact with the 'blacks' and from financial risks and responsibilities. It provided its Burra sahibs, loling in deck-chairs in their punkah-roofed verandahs, ample leisure to chase the fox at Vellachery.

Rao Saheb Balasundaram Chettiar's ancestors had been Dubashes to Bull & Co., for several generations. They had built up, by honest and painstaking endeavour, a goodwill and a market for the products imported by Bull & Co. Messrs Bull & Co., were duly grateful and the office of Dubash went in unbroken succession to the eldest son of the family, like the right of ascending a *gadi*, in a Royal family.

From the cradle therefore, Balu was treated as befitted a Dubash in embryo. He read up to the VI form with the help of half-a-dozen tutors. He served under his father as an apprentice in the firm, drawing a handsome allowance. He was married with pomp and ceremony and when two years later, his father died, he ascended the *Gadi* and became a full-fledged Dubash.

The Dubash business was a well-established one and there were many old and honest men in service and Balu had very little work to do. His ancestors, frugal in their methods of life, had amassed and left him a fortune and the business of guaranteed Dubash-ship—thanks to the loyalty of the staff—was piling up the profits. Balu had therefore considerable leisure, a comfortable bank balance and enough liquid assets to prop him up in lean years, if need be. He was a member of all the reputed clubs in Madras, moved in high society and was also an Honorary Magistrate. He acquired the latest models in cars, the most modern styles of furniture and his clothes were cut for him by a fashionable tailor on the Mount Road. He lived and moved to elicit the applause and admiration of his set of friends and he was made to believe that a separate establishment with a charming houri presiding over it was one of the essentials to make a perfect man-about-town. Hence, in brief, the acquisition of Deva. To him, therefore, she was just like another piece of costly carved ebony furniture, another flashy roadster. His attitude towards Deva, gave her at first, cause for much apprehension and this grew oppressive day to day, so much so, that three months after Deva's arrival at Madras, she had perforce to sit and pen the following long letter to her mother:

MOTHER DEAR,

It is now three months since I came to live with the Chettiar and you ask me if I am happy. I hope you won't think me an ungrateful girl, for, I have pondered very deeply over this question of happiness and I am unable to decide if I am happy or not. In my previous letters I had to be brief, as I did not desire to create an impression in your mind, that I was either unhappy or displeased with the state of things prevailing here. On three different occasions I asked the Chettiar to permit me to visit you, but every time he refused my request and suggested that if I was so very anxious

to see you, the best course would be to ask you to go over here. I feel I am being kept like a prisoner in this house. Day follows day in monotonous machine-like existence. I miss you very much, mother, and long for all your love and affection for me. I think if I give you an idea of what I do daily, it would help you to understand the kind of life I lead here.

I get up daily at six in the morning and have my bath. After coffee, I take a stroll round the garden. As you know, there is a watchman at the gate and I am not allowed to go outside or walk on the road. An old Indian Christian lady calls at about eight in the morning and till ten she teaches me English. I take my food at about eleven and from eleven to three I read some books and snatch a little sleep. But by three my troubles really begin. Meenakshi would take me in charge, make me bathe again, comb and plait my hair and dress me. One would imagine from the way she goes about 'making me ready' as she calls it, that I have got to look like a bride every day. She is very clever at dressing my hair and I must say she has shown me many beautiful ways of doing it. Then, every day, all the jewels must be worn and also one of the heaviest of lace sarrees. It takes two hours at least to get dressed like this and by five, a small baby-car arrives at the portico. Mr. Sambandam would invariably be in the front-seat by the side of the chauffeur. He would greet me with, "you are looking like a queen!" or some such gallant remark and I would then be driven away to the Marina and the car would be parked near the kerb opposite the Senate House. From 5-30 to 6-30 I would feel so uncomfortable, sitting all alone in the car like a dressed-up doll, on show. About 6-30, the big sedan containing the Chettiar would arrive and I must transfer myself to the sedan. We would then drive to and fro on the Marina road twice or thrice. The whole idea seems to be to parade me, my dress and jewellery. I can almost imagine the Chettiar saying to himself, "Look at my Girl! See what costly ornaments I can afford to give her!" After an hour or so of this aimless driving, during which the Chettiar will answer me only in monosyllables, the sedan would stop at the other end of the Marina and he will climb down to join a group of friends who will invariably be assembled there. By this time, the baby car would join the sedan and be parked behind it. Somewhere about 8 o'clock the Chettiar's friends will disperse and that is a sign for me to re-transfer myself to the baby-car. He would just come near the car and instruct the driver to take me home even though such instructions would appear unnecessary, but I believe he does it to show off before his friends. Mr. Sambandam would be picked up by the driver of the baby-car near the iron-bridge and by the time I reach home, it will almost be nine. To take off and put away the jewels and sarree and to change into a light, comfortable dress would take another half-an hour and by the time I have my

night meal, I would be feeling like a baby wanting its cradle and its mother. No one ever knows on what nights the Chettiar can be expected at the cottage. I never sit up for him.

I am merely one of the many luxuries which he can afford, maintained more for the purpose of impressing others than for anything else. It is a loveless life, mother. It is monotonous, it is insipid and so purposeless. The only person to whom I can talk frankly is Mr. Sambandam and he has been really very kind to me. But even he doesn't look at it from my point of view and he explains it all by saying that because you have given so much of your affection and love to me in my life, the lack of it seems to starve and stifle me. I think he is right. And I think all my present unhappiness is due to my not being able to live with you.

Won't you come and live with me, mother? I have not forgotten to make my daily obeisance to Devi. Do you think She will be angry or displeased if you come and live with me? You have often-times told me that She is the Mother of all the Universe. Couldn't She be worshipped then, from any place and at any time? Please consider over this deeply and ask *Aiyah* as usual to write to me in detail. My *namaskarams* to him.

But Rajam never got the letter nor heard its contents read out to her. From the day that Deva left Devipatam, Rajam began to pine. She grew listless, was always at the temple and a strange far-away look crept into her eyes. One morning, the temple watchman found her lying huddled in a heap on the steps leading into the Devi's shrine. Life was extinct before Deva's letter could reach Devipatam.

A telegram was despatched to the Chettiar at Madras. He dealt with it in a most methodical and business-like manner. He sent for Sambandam. "Well Pillay," said he, "the old lady at Devipatam has croaked. I suppose the girl will want to go there. Take the car and some cash. Give the old dame a decent burial, rush the thing through and bring back the girl over-night. The offerings of consolations and condolences is your business. I shall keep away from the cottage for about a week. Tell Meena that I hate tear-filled eyes and that inside a week, she ought to keep things going on, bright as before. And that is that!"

Deva could never forget the eventful day. At eleven, Sambandam told her that her mother was ailing and that she should start for Devipatam. The car was ready. Before two in the afternoon she was at the village. A strange premonition was growing in her that she wouldn't see her mother alive. As the car drew opposite the house she knew the worst, from the loud wailings issuing from inside the house. She rushed in and saw her mother laid out, clothed richly, with flowers all over her, her face serene and gentle, like one in peaceful slumber. She flung herself over the lifeless body with a great gasping cry of "Ammma!" and lost all consciousness.

The rest was a nightmare to her. Many came to console her. But her heart was heavy and her feelings numb and she moved like an automaton. She didn't realise that she was back at the cottage at Madras till late after she was actually there. For days, she went about like one demented, did not notice the absence of the Chettiar or the contemptuous pity on Meenakshi's face. Sambandam tried his best to coax her back into her normal mood but the shock was too great for Deva and other methods had to be resorted to, to distract her attention.

"Deva!" said Sambandam to her, a fortnight after Rajam's demise, "you used to dance superbly. How would you like to see some really good dancing?"

"I can't go out anywhere. How can you suggest such a thing as that?"

"But the show I have in view is unique. Nothing like that has ever come to Madras. You must see it!"

"I can't."

"My dear Girl, do you know that for fifteen days the Chettiar hasn't been here? He has done so much for you and now that your mother has gone, he is your only friend and support. He told me that he is very anxious to take you to this show and you ought not to disappoint him."

"But, what will people say?"

"Your mother very often used to ask all of us that question. Leave people alone and make up your mind."

"I don't want to go unless....."

"Unless what?"

"I don't want to incur the displeasure of the Chettiar."

"That's a good girl! Then, it is fixed up. I'll tell the Chettiar. I'll ask Meenakshi to put in an extra effort and make you look like a Nymph to night. What is gone is gone. Be brave, and be pleasant to the Chettiar."

At the Museum theatre, the elite of Madras had gathered together to witness the dance of a great Indian artist and his troupe, famed throughout the East and West. The hall was dimly lighted and as Rao Saheb Balasundaram Chettiar led Deva to her seat, all eyes turned towards her. Her wan face, her eyes full of unshed tears and the fawn like timidity of her graceful movement, held many young hearts enthralled and evoked in older hearts memories of long-forgotten romance.

Devi settled down in her seat, adjusted her sarree, and after a minute, turned round to scan the audience. From the next seat Seenu was looking at her, full in the face. Her heart missed a beat, the old emotions came surging up within her and she felt like fainting. Getting control over her feelings and covering her confusion, she startled the Chettiar by asking, "would it be very improper if I talk to that gentleman in the next seat?"

I WONDER

(AUTOLYCUS)

I wonder why in the modern detective novels there is a lamentable tendency on the part of the murderer to leave traces, such as, a kerchief, a snuff-box, a boot-lace, a cuff-link, a set of teeth, or a false knee-cap, which the lynx-eyed sleuth at once seizes upon and traces triumphantly to its owner. Cannot a murder be committed without strewing the place with one's personal belongings, I fondly ask? In a recent story I read of a murderer absent-mindedly leaving his false legs and getting away, though how, is and will always remain a mystery to me and possibly to you. But there is a hopeful feature to the situation. I am yet to hear of a murderer who really lost his head in the scene of the murder though it might be argued that just after the crime is committed the murderer loses his head, as it were. Possibly, some spirited American writer of detective fiction will soon supply this obvious deficiency.

I wonder why people say "sorry" after reducing your toe to a mere pulp or smartly jabbing you in the middle with their elbows or knocking your cap into the ditch with their umbrellas. Do they really feel sorry? I doubt it. Then why be sorrowful? Better be merry and say "Ha, ha, is that your toe? Can you recognise it now?" or "He, he, *did* I jab you in the middle? Well, well, I should think so. But, stay, why are you executing those strange movements? Is it fox-trot, or Black-Bottom or what?" or "Ho, ho, is that your cap? Your cap lost its head, eh? By the way you consider that rather a good quip, don't you?"

I wonder why ultra-modern poets consider themselves mere poets even after writing such inspired lines as:—

Green pigs, yellow idiots,
Cluck-clucking
All the time Joe T. Buggins ate his sandwich
Sandwich full of worms,
Creeping things,
Things.....
& so on.

or
Bah, not to say Pshaw!
Ugh, mphm, humph,
Pooh-pooh!
Pink elephants sneezing.....
and so on.

I wonder they do not consider themselves gods after displaying such *divine* madness?

I wonder why Editors always "regret etc." Cannot they do the manly thing, returning bilge to its source, without instantly regretting it? Do they really mean that but for lack of space they would really print all that they receive? In that case they might have to print intelligent contributions like the following:—

Respectful sir,

Myself am clerk in T.....Taluk Sub-Treasury Office. I think shame to send me away for to give place to a B. A., though I read to Fourth Form T... High School when Vembu Aiyar, great man, was Headmaster. Vembu Aiyar is good man also. He was kind to me. But I ask, is myself to be sent home for a B. A? Is it law, I ask?

Yours affly,

K. M. C. NAVANEETHAVENKATAKRISHNAN.

or

Sir,

With reference to the scholarly and erudite dissertation of Prof. S. R..... on "The influence of Jergsonism on contemporary Philosophical Thought," I beg to state that the learned author has made himself responsible for a statement which is as surprising as it is untenable: the erudite author, doubtless by a strange lacuna in his thought, seems to think that Asinus Idioticus, the mediaeval philosopher whose disciple the learned author proudly claims to be and who again exhibits in no small degree a fundamental divergence from Jergson in his approach to the Unconscious.....by the way, he claims that the Unconscious as such does not necessarily impinge on the Conscious, or, as it were, hold communicative sequence which is as much as to say that no sort of intermediate relation can be inevitably postulated between the two.....

(10 more pages of this sort of thing.)

Yours etc,

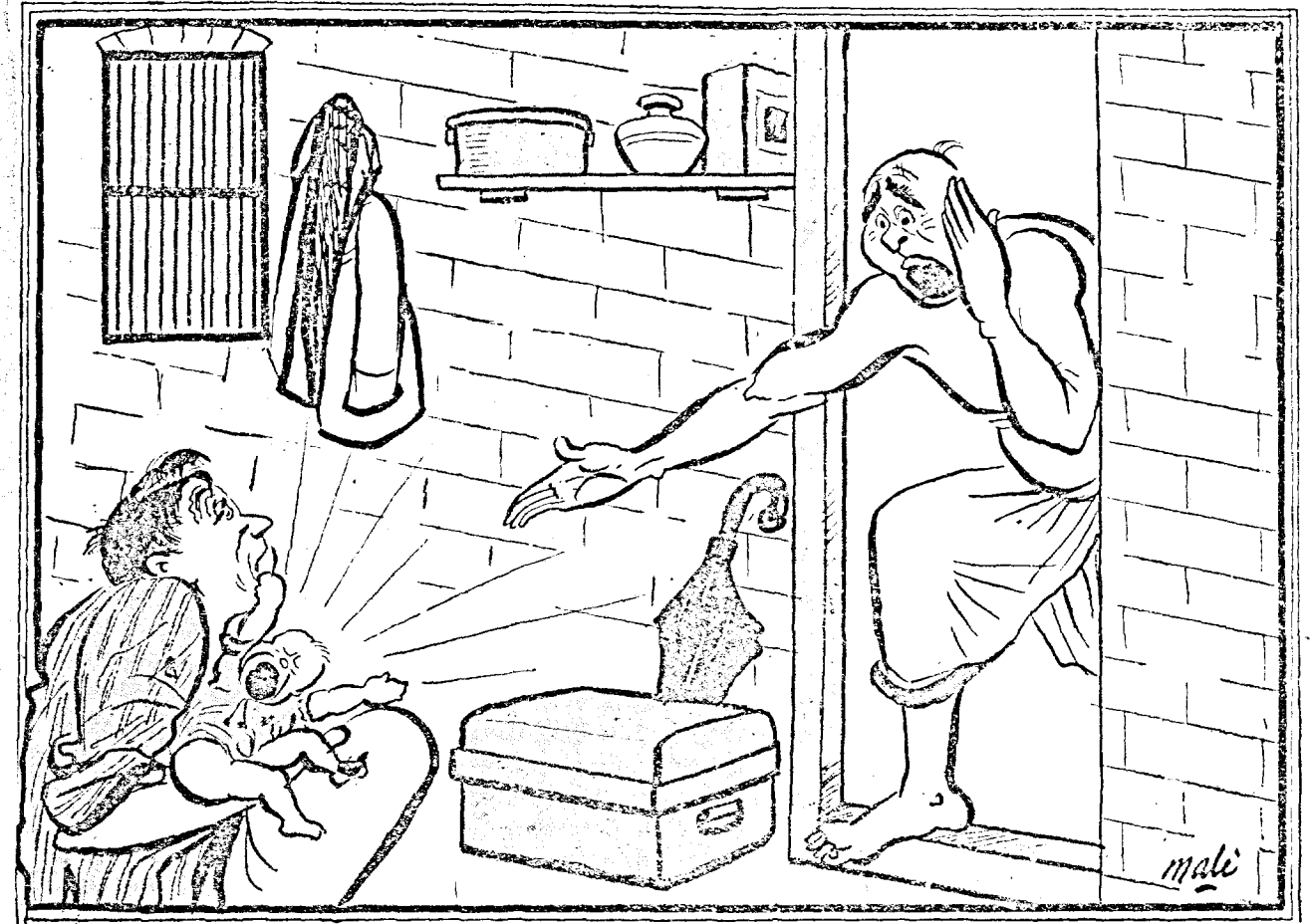
RAGA RAJA SARMA.

I Wonder why Editors of avowedly humorous magazines accept articles like the one you are reading.

We, too, wonder.—Ed.

Mr. JANGLI NURSES A BABY

V. B. PRASAD.



...Why the devil don't you strangle that devil?

"**W**HOSE bud is that, my dear Byron?"

I was rolling on the Marina sands one evening tickling a baby when my only friend, Jangli the Incurable, a prince among loafers, a blighter who never took to anything seriously in life—in short, a downright cent-per-cent A 1 blunderbuss, cast anchor opposite me with the above question on his lips.

"Not mine!"

"Need you say that, dear old baboon? Evolution must work on you for nearly ten thousand years before such milky-rosy howlers are begotten unto you."

"Not a beauty yourself, you know."

"That is not relevant to the point. You haven't traced the ancestry of this interesting proposition."

"See that young lady with the hairy legs running away from the breakers? That's the Ma."

"And who is she?"

"How the devil am I to know?"

"Come come; cut out the high style, my dear satyagrahi. From what you told me this blooming

morn, you should, at this moment, be manufacturing contraband salt. Actually, however, I see you dandling an infant Napoleon. And what I want to know, quite reasonably, is....."

"Wait a bit, old boy. You don't give a fellow time. It is like this. I was sitting here and thinking of Jawaharlal and Their Royal Highnesses when that lady comes up from behind and smiles at me."

"You fainted? Now, don't deny it."

"Well, not exactly; but I felt like a starving cat in a hot bath. Please hold the baby, brother; I will just wash my legs and return in a minute," she says. What could a fellow say to that?"

"What did you say?"

"Nothing. She appears to be one of those determined sort of women. Before I could say 'yes' or 'no' she hurles the baby at my head and bolts into the water. That is the epic."

"I know the type. That reminds me. Did I tell you of my adventure with a brat once?"

A LUCKY ASSISTANT STATION MASTER!

Rs. 100 LUCKY NUMBER PRIZE WINNER

K. N. SOUNTHARARAJAN,

Assistant Station Master, M. & S. M. Railway,
Gangayapalli, Kamalapuram, (P.O.)

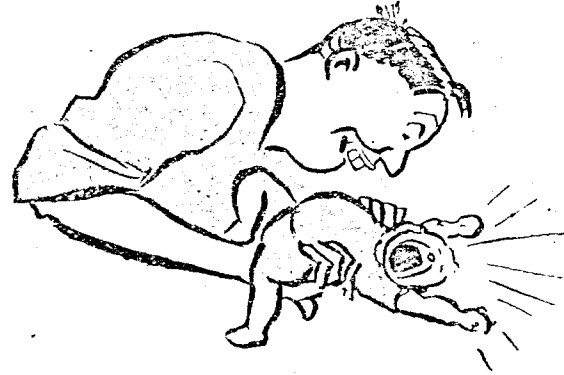
This gentleman has sent his copy bearing No, 112530 and Rs. 100 has been sent to him by insured post.

IT MAY BE YOUR TURN NEXT! SO, KEEP YOUR COPY!

"No. Let's hear it."

Jangli lit a cigarette and began with the profound remark, "Babies are a bust-up."

"That sounds a bit Shakespearean, Jangli."



...Vow, vow, vow

"Never mind what or how it sounds. The scene is Edward Pontoon, Rangoon: Time, a beastly, bleak, blithering, blizzard morning: Enter self and Pater."

"Remember the name Rangaswamy? Tall man with funny nose. He will receive you in the harbour and put you in the train."

"Yes, father."

"And, be careful, babu. These are stormy days in the Bay. Keep to your cabin. Don't go on the decks."

"Alright, dad."

"So I bade goodbye to the Emperor. The boat was about to nose its way out to sea, bound for Madras."

I am a good sailor, as you know. But this passage floored me as neatly as a steam-roller would a rat. It was tumultuous. The boat tossed, teared, kicked and lurched like a wild horse of Arizona or something. It blew, not great guns, but mighty seas. All the stomachs on board, except those owned by the officers and the crew, went on violent hunger strike. Nothing would induce them to keep their contents to themselves.

Four days of this hell. The steamer sneaked into harbour and discharged the animate part of its cargo. Unasked, a swart cooly, resplendent in great namams and a small loin cloth and a perpetual smile hovering about his mouth, as if he made his debut into this Vale of Tears with a grin, shouldered my trunk and rug: and depositing me and my household gods outside, held out the palm. Nice, holy looking chap. A little generosity won't bite me. I placed an eight-anna piece in his palm. He regarded the offending coin severely and looked up at the heavens as if to say, 'Ho Ye Gods! Look at this heartless buccaneer.' I felt as guilty as pickpocket caught in the act. So, I appeased the gods with another four annas and waited for Rangasamy who was to receive me on landing, and put me in the Northbound mail.

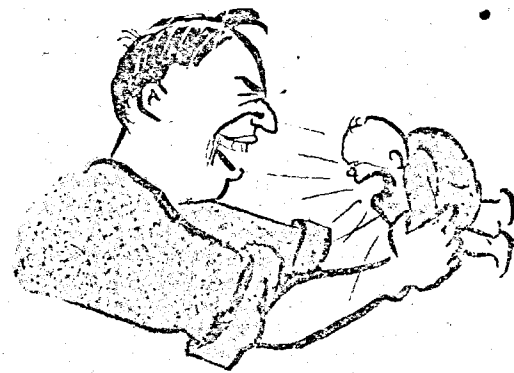
An hour crawled by. No blooming Rangaswamy. Another; no funny nose. Nobody claimed me. I was rather pleased than otherwise. Here is Madras, City of distances, of politicians, of orators, of pickpockets! And I was free, adrift from parental and Rangaswamian moorings. The thought was a luxury.

A rickshawman, as amiable looking as a Polynesian cannibal, who was eyeing me all the while, with hunger writ large on his anatomy, now butted in. Acting on his altruistic advice, I let myself be perambulated to the choultry opposite Moore Market. It was choking, this choultry, with pilgrims, marriage parties, holiday makers and gentlemen-beggars. Again, through the good offices of the cannibal and the magic of a four anna piece, I was shown into a room already occupied by a young lady, her baby of 12 moons and a romping bounder of 12 summers—her brother. I think she was an insurance agent in her last avatar. She tackled me immediately with great skill; and inside of a quarter of an hour she was in possession of enough data to write a topping biography of myself.

Hurrah! I let go with a whoopie. Short of immolating myself in a brothel and getting drunk, I committed every sin in the scheme of things. I slackened down the revels towards nightfall and returning to the choultry began the preparations for the exit. While I was packing my things the young lady came in, sat on my trunk, leisurely peeled one of my bananas, ate it without even a 'thank you' and smiled at me, cheeky as a chorus girl. I went hot all over.

"You have lots and lots of time. Will you just have half an eye on baby? She is the sweetest, passivest, darlingest, wee little dear ever born. Knows tons of tricks. Don't you, kannu? I will return in a wink."

Before I could blurt out a polite 'no madam' she deposited the baby on my trunk, gathered her brother and sailed out.



...mew, mew, mew

Here was a go! A roundish, over-sized tummy-bulging monkey-bags—no beezers—little hair, two biters, a couple of extremely idiotic peepers—a large bean. That was the make-up. The brat stared at me as if I were a cross-breed bear out of the zoo and began to whimper.

'Gee, baby-eece: bow-wow: myave-myave: kichchehe-kich: bek-beka,' said I parodying a dog, a cat, a monkey and a frog, throwing in the appropriate distortion into the old map to suit each burlesque.



...Keech, Keech, Keech

How the devil was I to know that this idiotic mimicry, far from mollifying the bud, would frighten it? She set up a deafening howl. I took her up in my arms, kissed her, rocked her and finally pinched her. It wouldn't stop. I cursed myself, the mother, the baby most of all and revised my opinion of King Herod and Kamsa. I alternately smiled, whistled and shook my fist at this infant phenomenon. No use. She kept it up with a pertinacity worthy of the Britisher. I read somewhere that prayer is a dead double cert balm to a lacerated soul. I applied the balm. I prayed to the reclining God of Srirangam, to the Fish-Eyed Lady of Madura, to the Bald Lingam of Benares offering them impossible bribes to rally round and put the lid on the kid.

"Your prayers were heard?"

"Nothing of the sort. On that day I canonised Colonel Ingersoll and Bradlaugh."

I had a nebulous idea that children reacted somnolently to music. I began a vulgar rollicking ditty, the rage in those days.

"Was it a success?"

"No: it was as thundering a fiasco as the World Economic Conference. I just succeeded in braying like a donkey. I made faces; no good. I performed a few funny acrobatics that would make Mr. Churchill turn green with envy and Arabindo Ghosh laugh again. Nothing doing. The kid was proof against all nonsense. It yelled like a Zulu on the war path."

3500 winks ticked by. No mother. I was clean scared. Suppose the baby did not belong to her! Suppose she had kidnapped it and had decamped with the jewels, a fond, foolish mother bedecked it with, making me the goat? Beads of perspiration stood out all over me.

"Why the devil don't you strangle that devil? Where is her mother?" cried the irate choultry gumastha or whoever he was, bursting in.

"Don't know," I said helplessly.

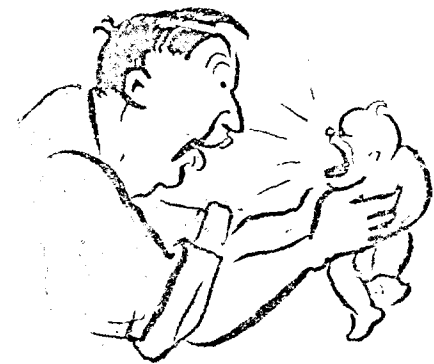
"Don't know? Don't you try that bluff on me, young fellow. Give her something to eat. Let me have 40 winks and a snore." Exit gumastha.

Capital idea! Queer, it didn't strike me. We live and learn! I handed her a bulky banana. She grabbed it as if it were her long lost son unexpectedly turned up and despatched it in a jiffy. She looked at me expectantly. And not finding any encouragement there, commenced anew those horrible appoplectic facial contortions heralding another yelling bout. So, I doled out a chocolate, then a biscuit, then a few grapes, then a banana and repeated the process with the patience of.....

"Job."

"No, two Jobs. One Job would be hopelessly unequal to the occasion. So we sat there, this unformed lump of humanity and myself, much as a bride and bridegroom during the marriage ceremony who are blackmailed into shooting flowers and things at each other's heads by ogling, giggling, screaming, bounding, perspiring, bright young ladies who plague the occasion with their silky, lavender, sandal-paste, turmeric, floral presence.

At last in sheer exhaustion she gave up eating and toddling heavily up to my lap laid her lil body at rest. I was not prepared for this. This was a point blank, short range whistler. I was bowled out. The nearest approach to an elusive God on earth or beyond, which pickpocket would not feel a lump in his throat at this angelic innocence? I forgave her sins. I rocked the darling tenderly. She dozed off. I laid her on my bed. She snored like a top.



...Bek, Bek, Bek

The tower clock was proclaiming zero hour: in walked the mother cool as ice butter-milk. Shot a quick, satisfied glance at the sleeping part of herself,

The Merry Magazine

saw my plight and went off the deep end. She laughed as I never saw anybody laugh. No apologies offered. She approached me, chucked me under the chin as if I were another baby, undid my defiled shirt with motherly hands, washed it clean and spread it against the wall to dry.

"Gadding about the Fair, we went and lost ourselves in Purasawalkum," she explained. "Darling bujji asleep? Didn't I tell you. She is such a sweet, reasonable, little kitty." She looked up at the shirt and giggled again, as if it were a capital joke. "Wait till you are a father. You will understand."

"Don't want to be a father," I protested sheepishly.

"Don't you? Oh, I know you men. Hear him, bujji! Won't he be a pappa'?"

Bujji heard. She opened her eyes a little; then wide; then wider; smiled a bald, seraphic smile and crawled to her ma who threw her up like a ball, caught her falling, fondled her in her bosom and then started to dine.

"Well?"

"That's all."

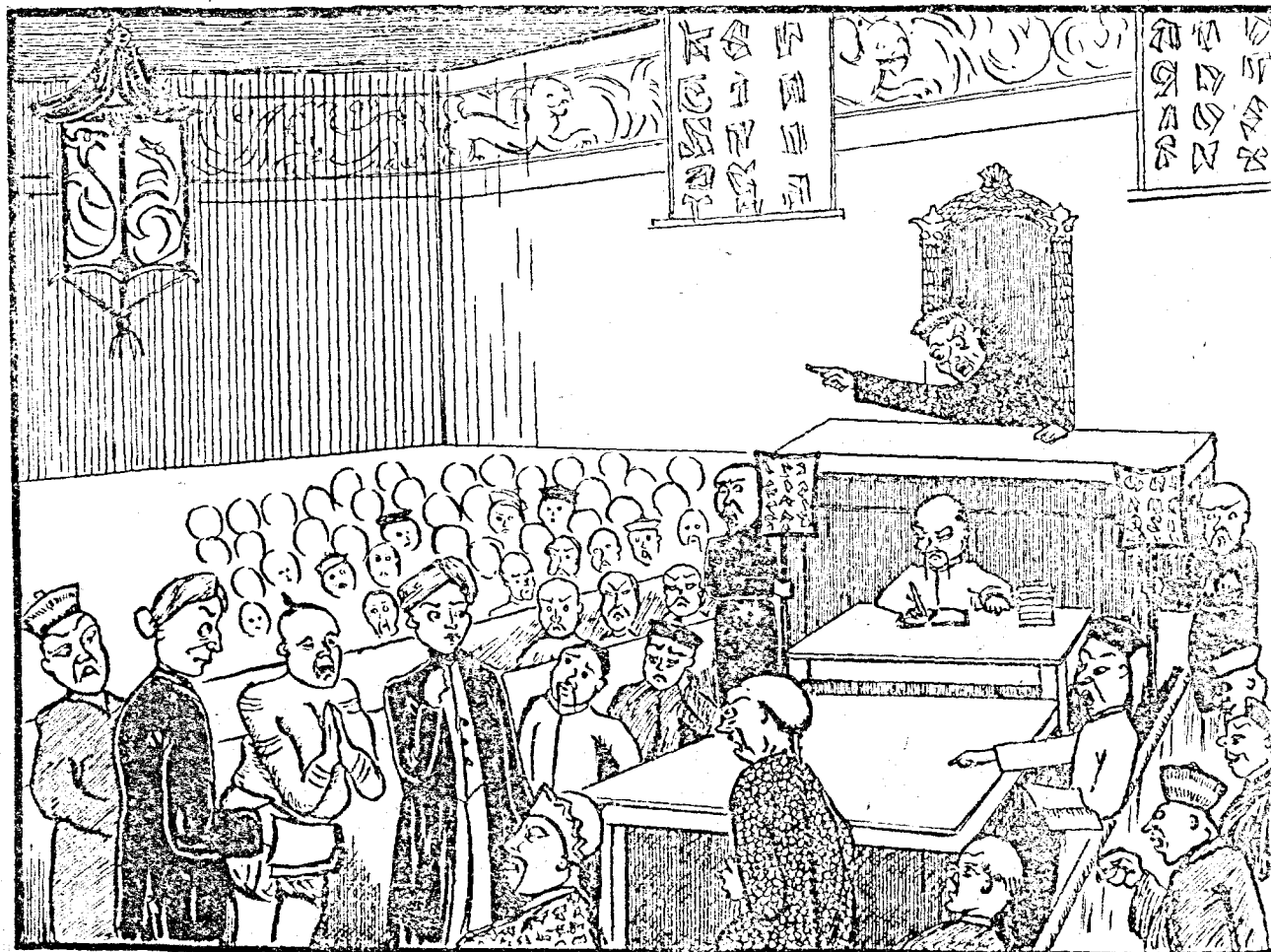
"No. You know it is not all."

"Well, then. I said to myself, 'To hell with all the trains in the world, Jangli. What if you missed them all? What if all your baggy shirts.....? Feast your eyes, you sinner. Here is a glorious, beatific vision of the holiest of the holies, sacred motherhood—old as cosmic energy, new as fresh laid eggs'."

"New as what?"

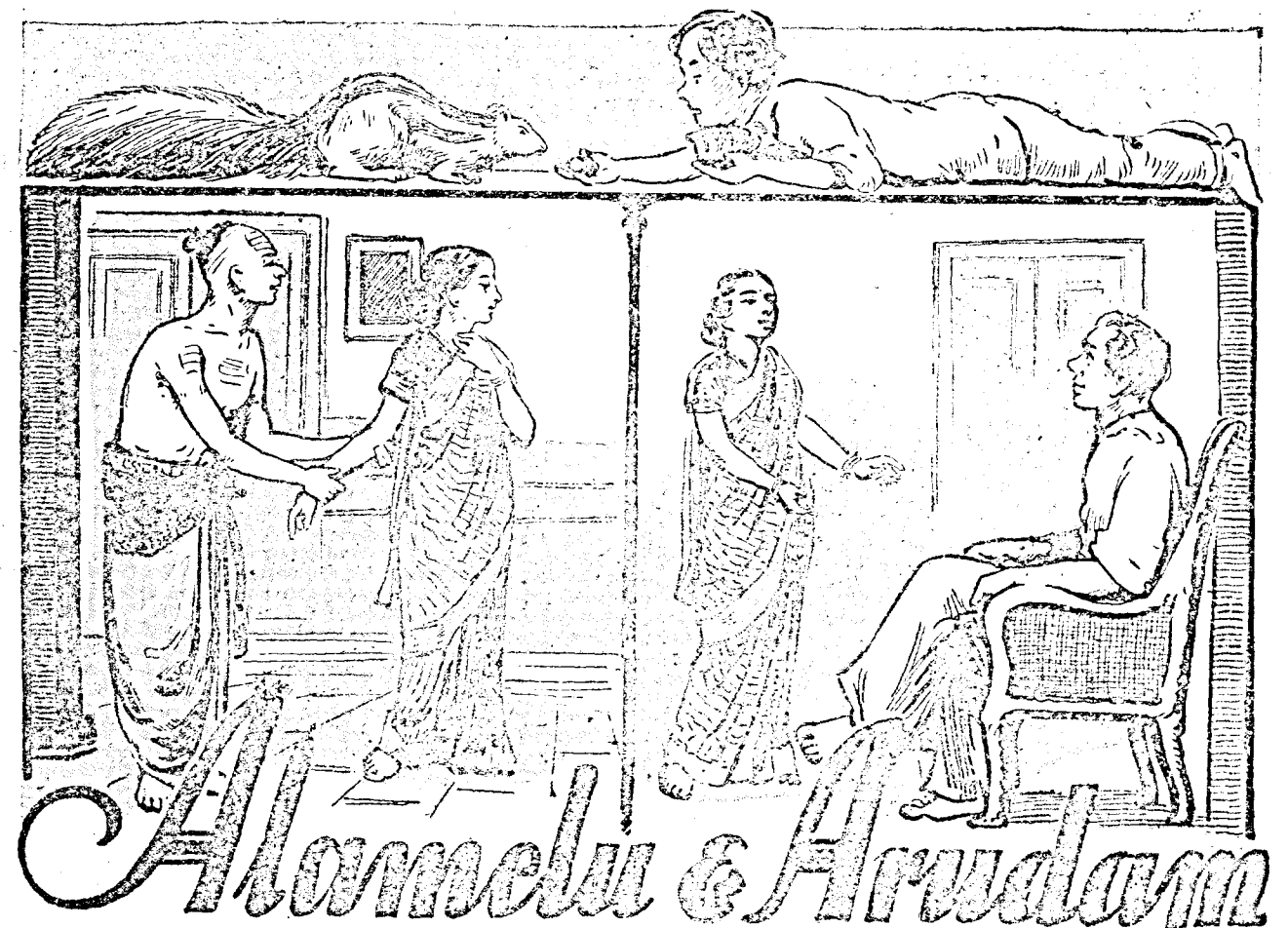
"Fresh-laid-eggs!"

If's in Indian History, V.



If the Hon'ble East India Company had not come to India.

(BY KESAR SINGH, AMATEUR ARTIST)



"PINCH"

Raman relates how astrology—that most exact of sciences—through the medium of an overfed squirrel, helps him to win Alamelu.

MY daughter was getting old; far beyond the limit set by Haribilas Sarda, and people, I heard, had begun to talk. So I thought it was time that I did something about it. And after a night or two of consort-council I concluded that I should do the usual thing and do it quick. We had made up our mind to see her go the way of all women: marry her to some Seshu or Vengu.

It was really a Rangu that I finally fixed upon, and with his horoscope I journeyed to Madura to see if the thing was compatible with Vimala's. Her *Jadagam* too I had, all on a silver plate my wife insisted on my taking with me, together with an anna worth of plantains, betel and nuts. An hour's search aided by an occasional enquiry at last brought me to the house at Madura.

Eager to push the thing through, I shuffled in noisily letting out a discreet cough or two, heralding my advent, so to say. A crimson sarce with a blue border faded fast into the interior, and my school-mate Raman came out of a corner.

"Hullo! Raman, you here?" I exclaimed, but let me tell you a few things about Raman.

Ten years ago I knew Raman as a rover in my crew. Eccentric? Yes. But deeply interested in everything on earth. Learning to knit hand-bags, making toys and things, acquiring new languages, collecting stamps, and a lot other silly things besides. He came down in the inter exam,—a fellow like that always does you know, bottling snakes, and painting butterflies, or swimming for a bet, and forgetting the final exam all the while which rushes up in a month

and finishes all his folly,—whereas I was always a book-worm, I don't care who knows it. I got a first class and went up for Medicine. After that, I think Raman got trained or something, but let him tell the tale.

"Sit down Mani," he said, waving me to a plank. "Sit down, and we will soon have our meal. But you are surprised to see me here, are you not?"

I was. And the Vedic *panchakacham*, the triple ash-mark on his bumper, and the *uchikudumi* that topped all this transformation—well I was surprised and I said so.

"Alamelu! Alamelu!" he called into the house, and I saw the crimson saree with the blue border bob up to the passage door, "Here is Mani my old friend!"

From behind the half-closed door came the words "Leaves shall be spread soon."

"Which means an hour," commented Raman, "so you will have my story first."

I had come out on a day's casual leave, the hospital was heavy just then, and the compounders heavier than usual. So I murmured a weak protest....." But it will be time for my train. I want Vimala's horoscope fixed up....."

"Horoscope? So you have come about a horoscope? Between us," and he whispered low, "it is all bosh." He paused for a while and as if making up his mind, and "I myself am an astrologer. But before I tackle your daughter's *Jadagam* let me tell you how I came down to this....."

"Came down? Astrology is an accurate science," I protested.

"Yes, yes," replied Raman, "And so are *Sagunams* and *Prasnam*s too. You must have heard of the Rishi who foretold the boy's death, the manner of murder, and the burial by the sea, all because at the time the parents consulted him about it he had just sent a plantain out in bits to be boiled in brine for the night meal. Or again of the other who held that a full bucket slipping back into the well foretold the return of the prodigal. Well, I too have done something along that line, and that is why I am here. Saw that blighted brother-in-law of mine on the pial? And a mountain squirrel? Well, that was mainly responsible. It was thus," he began.

I forgot my train, forgot the patients in my ward, forgot the forgetful compounders, forgot all but the fact that here lay a juicy story, and Raman my old friend was narrating it.

You remember I failed to fetch the parchment in my day of trial after the inter Exam?" continued Raman. "Subsequent to that I joined a training school and in course of time they sent me out with a certificate. After learning photography, carpentry and type-writing, to fill up the leisure hours, I got a job in one of the High Schools here. After a month or two in that institution I turned my thoughts to Astrology and Alamelu. Alamelu you know is my wife. But she wasn't then. She was just a pupil in the high school getting higher education. I found out that everything about her was perfect, but for the fact she was an astrologer's kid. So I thought it wouldn't be bad for me to pick up a little astrology. I tracked her down and kept the old man busy hiding his art from me. But trust an old rover to do the thing. I made slow but sure progress, and what was more to my taste, I saw Alamelu pretty frequently. At school she watched the class-room window in her moments of abstraction during the Arithmetic hour while at home she peeped past half-closed doors, or gave me a quick smiling glance *en passant*.

If things were humming merrily along with Alamelu, my progress with the old man was far from anything to chuckle over. I knew my Bohemian ways didn't quite get the applause from *Josyar* and so I started to reform my ways. I shaved off my curly Oxford crop and perched a peaky *uchikudumi* on the zenith. I got some sacred ash at the temple, and exchanged my two-yard dhoties for full four-yard ones. Well, sure enough, Josy softened a bit no doubt, but my hit wasn't hard enough to kill, and he didn't come groping for my hand with Alamelu's already in his. Also my Vedic transformations, I was afraid, might not appeal to Alamelu's ways of thinking. Oxford bags, I sometimes thought, and an American too would have been more to her liking, but luckily I was wrong. But then, she was in her father's custody and what tactics better than tickling the jailer to bear off the jailed?

But what I lost in these forced changes I made good in soulful eyes and pleasing offerings. Once I gave her a net-bag I had made. Another time it was a soap-box I had gouged out of a block of wood. The former was eaten by the rats, while the latter due to a crack in the workmanship, came to untimely grief. But

still, I felt my offerings were acceptable, and appreciated. And then I caught this mountain squirrel.

On one of my hikes to the hills—you see I haven't quite forgotten my rover ways—I found it half dead on the path, replete with a rich repast of nuts and fruits. I carried it home and laid it at the beautiful feet of Alamelu. The brute recovered just at the very moment of the homage, and clawed wildly at Alamelu's saree. She was much frightened and ran away. I cursed my luck, but caught it again, and trained it, and broke it from its wild ways. Soon it was tame enough to feed from my hands. I again put up the offering, but Alamelu would have none of it. I did the next best: gifted it to the blighted brother; the fellow you saw on the pial.

The two chummed off alright, till the young fellow thought the squirrel's tail too long for its lean body and wanted to dock it after the fashion of the dogs of the day. I was very angry but Alamelu who was as usual near by, went half mad laughing herself to tears. But for her I would have laid hands on the beggar, and deprived him of the pet, but as it was I gave him a severe warning and left it at that.

The next day Gandhiji began his epic fast. As you and all else know, his release was expected any day. This may seem like going off a bit at a tangent, but wait and see.

Not permitted to suit the tail to the tummy the young rascal must have thought of establishing proportion in the anatomy of his pet by pulling out the body to suit the long bushy tail, for he kept noodling the poor beast with all sorts of delicacies. Morning till night he was at it, feeding the pet on sweets and savouries, plantains and milk, till it must have felt like a soldier in peace time.

There is only one end to all such methods. Anything overworked, be it your tummy or your type-writer, goes on strike. It is the same with camels and mules, brains and stomachs. So the overfed pet went off his feed. We tempted him with fruits, we cajoled him with cashew-nuts but all to no purpose. We tried him on artificial milk, we tried natural ones from all sorts of animals, from a mule's to a madonna's but all to no purpose. Dates we tried, and goat's milk, but it refused all with equal impartiality.

Then we got the local vet to see it. And he, you know the way of these doctors, and vets are no exception, he just shook his head with a feigned look of wisdom, and asked us to give it 'this.' 'This' too the squirrel refused.

All this time Alamelu acted the nurse-in-charge and I the medical superintendent; and although the

result of our combination was nothing to the credit of the staff, the collaboration was all to our heart. We had many an eye to eye communion, and often our fingers met slyly; shyly, in mutual sympathy in this our hour of affliction.

But all our soul-stuff and sympathy could not get one morsel of food down the poor pet's throat.

Gandhiji's great renunciation held the country in a spell. Protest meetings and appeals filled the dailies and telegraph clerks prayed loud and long that the Mahatma should end his fast if only to lessen their work.

An evening crowd at the *Josyar's* pial where betel and baccy disappeared fast and free. There was the blighted son and heir in a corner trying a last shot at feeding the sick squirrel; Alamelu was behind the hall window, now and then shooting a sly peep my-wards; the old man was scolding the young villain urging him to release the poor animal; when some one popped the question: "When will the Mahatma be released?"

Old Josy looked sheepish, and with almost a sneer, nodded towards me: "Ask him."

In the far corner, the young boy was struggling with a last knot round the squirrel's neck and with a final tug he loosened it free, with weakened steps the poor thing took a few steps forward.....and there flashed across my mind the one word: "Freedom!"

At the same time I heard the unbeliever asking "when will Gandhiji be released, Rama?"

Quick as a wink I shot out: "He has been."

A local congress man who had seen the inside of Cuddalore jail more than once received a telegram that evening—the last spell for the over-worked clerks—"Gandhiji released this noon."

I had hit the bullseye.

Well, after all that, an alliance was inevitable, and Alamelu is my wife.

"Now let me have a look at that *Jadagam* of yours!"

SUSILA SUSPECTS

N. S. PILLIEUX



"The travelling Inspector after scribbling his dhobi marks on the ticket, took a pinch on snuff....."

A toy revolver, in your opinion, may be a harmless toy. But, in the present year of grace, let a policeman see it and you are forthwith frog-marched to the local lock-up.

66 **HEY!** get up, man, get up; here, show me your ticket?"

I heard the words shouted peremptorily into my ears and felt a pair of rude hands roll me from side to side. With a bang, I came down from the realm of sweet unconsciousness and pleasant dreams, and woke up with a start. Where was I? Yes, I was returning home on the Deepavali night after making some purchases from the town. The train was doing 40 miles per hour and all was darkness outside.

"Hi! Show me your ticket?" an officious looking ticket-examiner was standing at my elbow. These ticket examiners! they are the limit. It is said, that the first class passengers can afford to be rude to the Company servants; the second class passengers may be rude towards one another while the poor third class passengers should suffer in silence, if the Company servants choose to be rude towards them. Certainly, there is more than a grain of truth in it, I thought.

I sat up, rubbed my swollen eyes, fumbled in my pocket and drew out my ticket and handed it over to him. "The Company servant" instead of returning it to me forthwith, after putting his dhoby mark initials on it, grinned at me from ear to ear, sat down

leisurely, took a pinch of snuff and produced his note book.

"You have to pay 'excess' fare—well, let me see—yes, six annas six pies."

"Oh, really! If that is a joke, I can tell you one better" I told him.

"Sir, joking is not in my line, at least not while I am on duty. This ticket here is for Kanjiyur and you have all but come two stations farther on. You know we are nearing Pudukkurai."

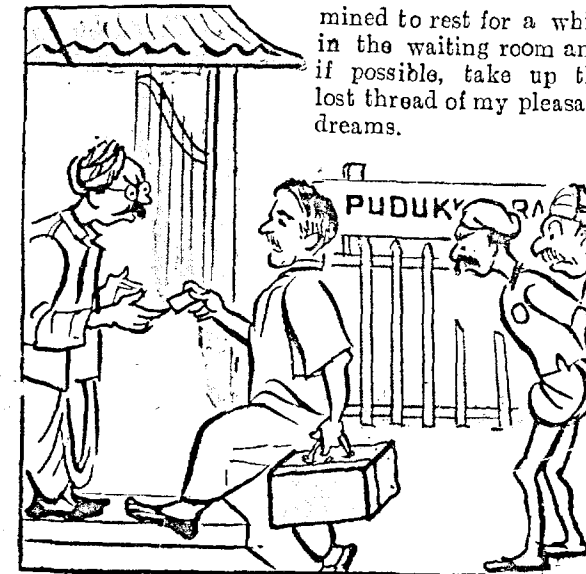
As a matter of fact, I did not; but two of my co-passengers testified to the veracity of his statement.

"I never knew that I had slept so long," I explained.

"But all the same you have to shell out the excess fare," the man replied.

"Alright," I said and counted out the cash, perhaps not with grace, pocketed the receipt and when the train steamed into Pudukkurai at 1-15 hours, I got out with my things. I was the only passenger to alight from the train; and the station master and the two porters, who manned Pudukkurai, eyed me suspiciously, as I handed over the ticket. They scrutinised me rather

narrowly, when they saw the wrong ticket and the receipt for the excess fare. The next train Kanjiyurwards, I ascertained was only at 4-45 hours; so, I determined to rest for a while in the waiting room and, if possible, take up the lost thread of my pleasant dreams.



"They looked at me suspiciously....."

But that was not to be. No sooner had I closed my eyes, than the station master accompanied by his satellites came over to me and began to draw me out into conversation. He wanted to know my name, my occupation, my place of residence and so on and so forth. Not being in the best of tempers I asked him to mind his business. He beat a hasty retreat; but, returned in an hour's time accompanied by one head constable and two constables in uniform.

"The Sub Inspector wants you to go over to the police station," the head constable informed me.

"What for?" I yelled.

"I don't know; that is his order."

I stifled an oath, which unconsciously rose to my lips. I did some rapid thinking and finally decided that discretion was the better part of valour and made my way to the police station. One of the constables obliged me by carrying my trunk and things.

At the police station worse things were to follow. I had to answer a regular volley of questions fired at me by the Sub-Inspector.

"What is your name?" I gave him the information.

"You are not lying?"—"No."

"You have no aliases?"—"No."

"Which is your native place?" I gave the name of my town.

"You are sure you don't come from the north, I mean Bengal, or the Punjab or—"

"The Upper Provinces?", the station clerk came to his rescue "yes."

"You don't belong to the Republican Army or Revolutionary Party?"—"No"

"Have you in your possession any revolver, cartridges or proscribed pamphlets?"—"No."

"Well, young man, I suspect you are lying and that you are involved in the—Bank robbery, you had better confess it." I laughed outright.

"No. 747, search this person; and you, 962, search his trunk and things."

Nothing incriminating was found on my person; but, 962, as soon as he opened my trunk, shouted "Revolver, Sir."

"Close the box at once and seal it; and send him to the lock-up. Don't meddle with his articles. I suspected as much. I shall get the Circle Inspector down the first thing in the morning."

"Sir,—" I sang out.

"No, I don't want to hear any more of your lies"

"The 'revolver' is—," I began again.

"No.—constable, take him to the lock-up at once."

"The 'revolver' is only a—," I tried for the third time.

"Shut up, man, none of your cock-and-bull stories. You had better reserve them for the Circle Inspector tomorrow morning," was his final reply.

In an instant, I felt two pairs of muscular hands catch hold of me in an iron grip and I was unceremoniously ushered into a cell, which by the way was a veritable dungeon. The door was locked and the retracing foot steps left the world to darkness and to me.

The next day, I was produced before the Circle Inspector. He looked at me from head to foot and then ordered 962 to break open the seal on my box and take out the revolver. No. 962 produced the 'revolver.' One glance at it sent him into fits of laughter.

"A nice revolver, indeed! Ha! Ha!! Ha!!! And you put this gentleman in the lock-up, merely because he had in his possession this toy pistol,—eh? Most probably, our friend was taking it home as a Deepavali present for his kiddies. You, Sub-Inspector, I thought you had better sense in you."

"And, now, Mr.....er....."

"Pillieux," I reminded him.

"And, now, Mr. Pillieux, I sincerely apologise for the inconvenience you have been put to, by being locked up in a cell overnight by my subordinates."

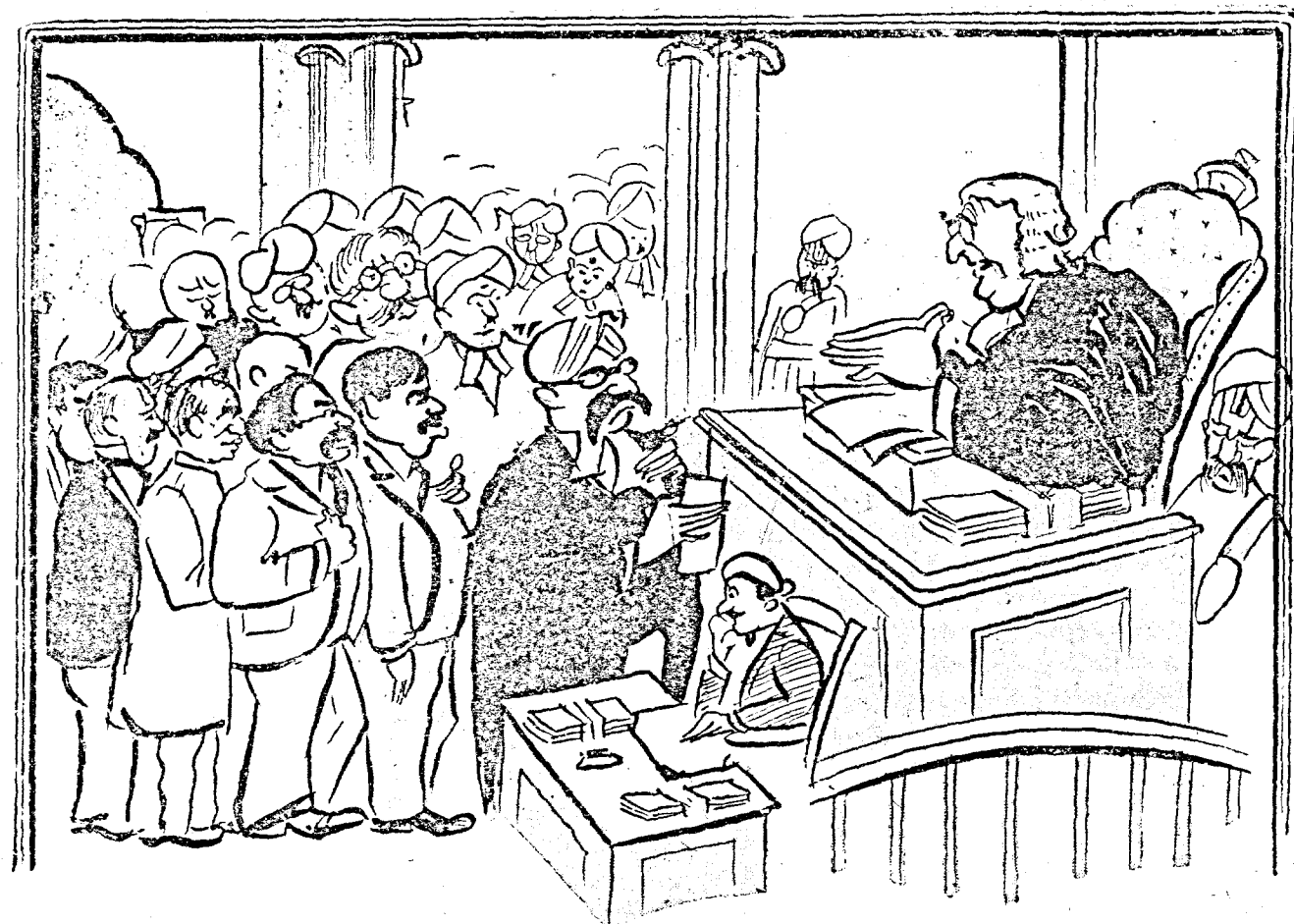
"That is alright, Inspector; but why did he ask me to go over here at all? That is what beats me."

"Of course, you know all about the—Bank robbery. All railway servants and police officers are instructed to detain and search suspicious looking individuals. That was probably why the station master sent word as soon as you alighted from the train."

"Am I suspicious looking?" was my next query.

"Rather, well, good morning."

When I eventually reached home, an even greater ordeal was in store for me. Susila stoutly refused to believe this 'Story' and even now thinks that I have not satisfactorily explained my absence from home on that eventful day. Wives are all made of the same stuff, you know.



Snore J. in the course of a considered judgment.....

TIDINGS FROM TRIBUNALS

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

Before his Lordship Mr. Solomon Snore J.

In Re Iranthu Pona Nair

Sir. Aday Pavi
Devendrudu
E. Vimarsai
Sir. Suddha Kavirayar
The Zemindar of Kandathippill
Pratapa Arasan
Satrughna Mudali
The Inamdar of Nallavanniankudikadu
Mannarsamy
Harischandra Iyer

Plaintiffs.

Vs.

Pizhaithu Irukkum Nair ... Defendant.

Maddington, 25th November, 1933.

CONSIDERABLE amusement was caused to day in the Supreme Court by the attitude of the plaintiffs in the famous Nair Will case when his Lordship Justice Solomon Snore delivered the Judgment. The public life of this province came in for much adverse criticism

at the hands of his Lordship who in the course of his incomplete judgment said as follows:—

The sole question in this suit concerns the ultimate destination of the sum of Rs. 498765-4-3 given by the late, but lamented, Iranthu Pona Nair by his last will and testament dated 5-5-25 (Ex A) to Constitutionalist

Party. The parties proceeding on the footing that the will is valid in law, the controversy has raged round the vexed question as to who is the legatee contemplated therein by the testator. The several plaintiffs seek to recover the said sum from the sole executor under the will each in his own right as the only legatee contemplated by the testator.

Beset as this task of divining the intentions of a dead man is with considerable difficulties, the arguments and mutual recriminations in which the parties have freely indulged have advanced me very little towards a just disposition of the dead man's property. 'Dead men tell no tales' said Lord Mildew in *Fox vs The Mayor of Swindon*. The obiter came in for consideration in *In Re Jobhunter 82 A. C.* when Lord Crackrib observed 'It were better they made no wills.' Without presuming to question the soundness of these Obiter Dicta of the eminent Law Lords I would say, it were better still they left no property. I observe eminent Counsel arrayed before me pulling long faces and exchanging distressful glances. But to my mind a rich estate and a disputed will which is Counsel's dream is at the same time the Judge's nightmare.

At the outset it will be convenient to consider the claim of the plaintiff Sir. Aday Pavi. When he was called upon to prove his claim to my satisfaction this plaintiff who appeared to be in an agitated state of mind prayed for an adjournment of this suit to some convenient date after the 31st December, 1935 by which time he hoped to be able to decide on the course of action in respect of his claim. He pressed this prayer on the ground that the legacy herein is obviously in favour of The Constitutionalist Party in politics, of which he claimed to be the leader and representative, and as he was then engaged in the super-human, but thankless, task of drafting a constitution for this ill constituted party with himself as the leader thereof under the 1st article of that constitution, he urged that would settle many of the vexed questions at issue herein. He expected to complete this task before the aforesaid date. Apart from this ground of expediency and convenience he further urged that he had to proceed to England to participate, by monosyllabic utterances, show of hands, both if permitted, and nod of head, in the deliberations of the Nth (he has evidently lost count of the number) Round Table Conference now in contemplation to dot the 'i's and dash the 't's of some paper called the White Paper. He was however certain that in any event he would abandon or, in the circumstances, though very reluctantly, be compelled to abandon his claim and incidentally the party on behalf of which he claimed, should the persistent rumour of his elevation to the Governorship of the new province of Behar and Orissa, also in contemplation, materialise. This move of his was stoutly resisted and strenuously opposed by the other parties to the suit and more than that the several plaintiffs were observed pawing the ground, snorting and blowing their noses, thumping the table, foaming in the mouth and doing similar other acts indicative of the various states of mind and body preceding violent action. In the circumstances I declined to grant the

adjournment prayed for upon which this plaintiff staged a walk out of this Hon'ble Court gesticulating in an unseemly fashion and twirling his moustache. His claim is therefore dismissed with two sets of costs.

"Bench Clerk, wake up that 3rd Advocate in the 2nd row, and ask him to stop snoring. He can do it in the theatre to night."

Court. Bench Clerk:—He appears for the 2nd plaintiff, milod!

Court:—I thought he had concluded his arguments. Hm! There then remain the claims of the other plaintiffs for disposal on merits. The claims of the plaintiff Devendrudu and E. Vimarsai are easily disposed of. Their contentions which were accompanied by loud denunciations of all and sundry including a community of people called the Coventryites, in effect were that the bequest is in favour of one who just is a party in politics and not in favour of the Constitutionalist Party. They stated that they answered this description eminently. This contention of theirs was founded on an argument which is more ingenious than ingenuous. This ingenious argument is destitute of any merit as it has been explained to my satisfaction that Ex A was written by a Mahomedan scribe to the dictation of the testator. I have therefore no hesitation in dismissing their claim.

On an examination of the claims of the other plaintiffs I am convinced that no suspicions regarding their pretensions and professions are too strong to be nourished, nor are the tales unfolded before me concerning their activities as public men too improbable to be believed. While all the plaintiffs are agreed that the bequest is in favour of the Constitutionalist Party every one of them vehemently asserts in himself the right to same as the torch, organ voice, and sole authentic repository, of that party and its principles, to the exclusion of the others. These conflicting contentions put forth with an animosity equalled only by that manifested at the meetings of this party have inevitably led to a minute examination of the contentions of every plaintiff by the others and as a result thereof, followed up by an examination in chief, cross examination and re-examination as to things omitted by inadvertence or concealed by design and re-examination to clarify such testimony, facts equal to the most fantastic inventions have been revealed. Without entering into any discussion of the necessarily disagreeable details of such revelations I dismiss the claim of this plaintiff for I do not like his moustache, nor am I pleased with his demeanour while in the box. I consider that he should, in the nature of things, belong to the Walrus Party or the Beaver party rather than the Constitutionalist Party.

One fact that emerges from the testimony of the plaintiffs is that there appear to exist in this unfortunate province as many Constitutionalist Parties as there are ministerial and other influential posts vacant. While all the plaintiffs speak with affected pride of crowns thrice offered and three times refused, every one of

them has been compelled to admit that he has ever been ready and willing to clutch at any opportunity of paving the way to such appointments or posts. It is in evidence before me and the interested rival claimants have not failed to impress on me the importance of this evidence that the plaintiffs The Inamdar of Nallavannankudikadu and Mannarsamy are the disgruntled offshoots of the parent body (The Constitutionalist Party) the nebulous nature of which has always been a grave difficulty confronting the other plaintiffs swearing allegiance to or sway over that party. While the former is alleged to be parading under the attractive name of Independent Nationalist the latter is alleged to have crossed and recrossed the 'Floor' so often that he had to be reminded more than once before that, according to his prior assertions, perhaps since regretted, he came under the banner of the party called The Constitutionalist Democratic Party. While the Zemindar of Kandathippili has been denounced as a member of the hostile camp of the Constitutionalist Plutocratic Party as opposed to the constitutional Nationalist People's Party the plaintiff Sir Suddha Kavirayar has been condemned as an old fossil of great age and venerable appearance with neither a faith nor a following nevertheless persistent in his efforts to dispense with the one and secure the other to regain his lost glory.

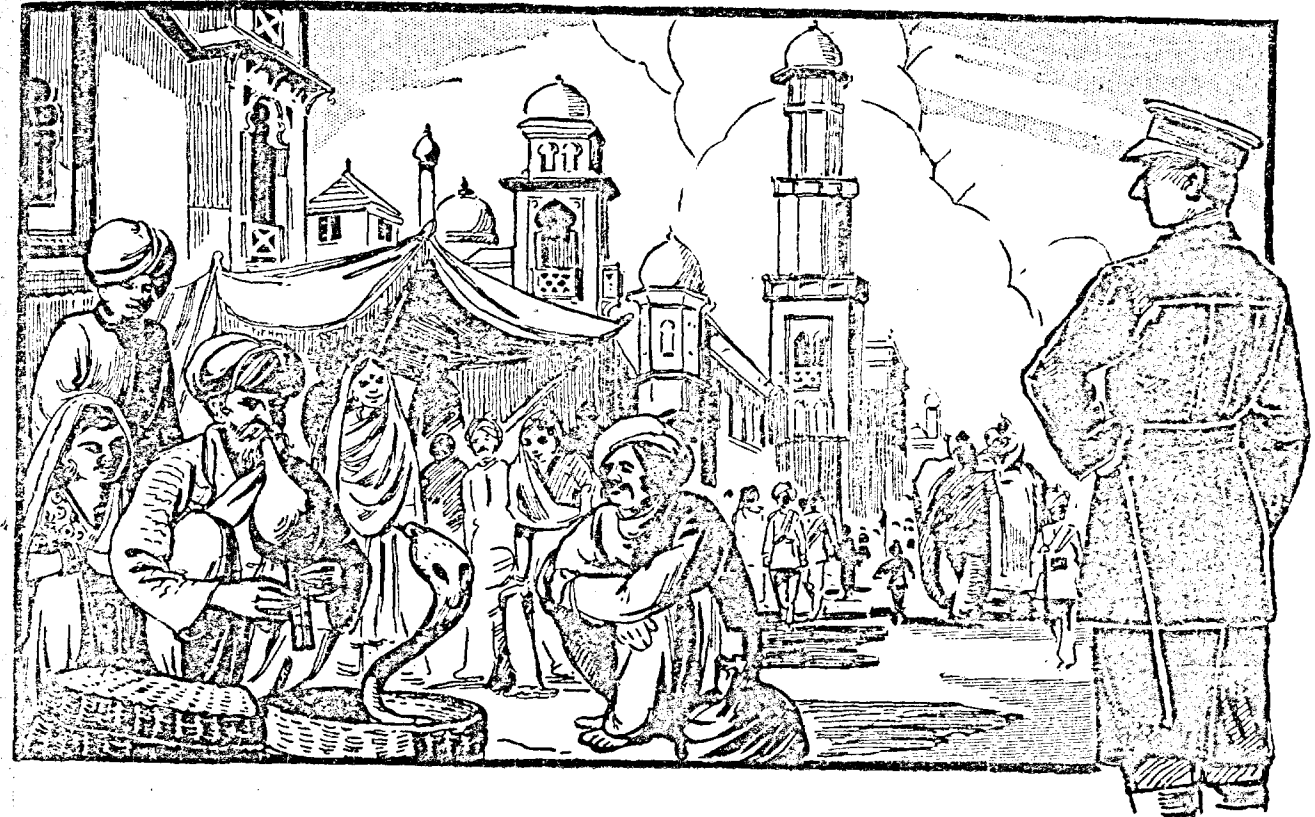
Underlying these sharp differences between the constituent members of a defunct parent body there appear to exist a number of parties called the Old Constitutionalist Party, the not so very old Party, The rather Depressed Party and the Extremely Oppressed Party.

The plaintiffs Sir Suddha Kavirayar and Satrugna Mudali asked me to uphold their claim on the alternative grounds either as persona designata under Ex A or on the strength of the doctrine of Cy pres as the nearest approach to the intentions of the testator. But this mode of enquiry was vehemently opposed by the plaintiff Harischandra Aiyer. This plaintiff who was the most vociferous of the lot contended that the intention of the testator was clearly opposed to any such course of determination. He drew pointed attention to the significant omission of the definite article 'THE' before the words 'Constitutionalist Party' in the Ex A and argued that the testator intended the legacy to the party in politics which stood for Constitutionalism in thought, word and deed, and not for the party that merely adopted that name. In support of this contention he adduced evidence to prove the close and constant association of the deceased testator in all progressive movements to advance the just cause. He however regretted that some of these causes should have for their object the advancement of only a certain community to the detriment of the others. This he explained as due to the error in practice rather than any innate defect in the principle practised. This plaintiff confessed that the party which he represented

is a party of one but insisted nevertheless that he is the party contemplated by the testator. In the searching cross-examination to which he was subjected, he admitted that he did not attach much value to a mere pedantic correlation of precept and practice or promise and performance but that he endeavoured to suit his actions to the spirit of his professions and principles. In answer to the charge that he was an Opposition member of the left extreme of the Party who unblushingly wore coarse Kaddar, he asserted that he did wear kaddar and would continue to wear it so long as supplies lasted. And in the event of the supplies running short he stated on oath that he would resort to dry grass and palmyrah leaves in preference to foreign cloth to cover his body. When challenged to anticipate such a contingency and follow up that precept with action he threatened to do so in my presence and called for palmyrah leaves when I had to call him to order. In answer to the charge of being a member of an organisation having nothing to do with the word Constitution on which alone he relied, he stated that there was nothing inconsistent in his claims and added that he had just then decided to shift from the left extreme to the right extreme of his Party. He finally affirmed that he always had the courage of his convictions including his previous ones.

Much as I desire to uphold the claim of this plaintiff I regret to observe he does not press it. I have now detailed with much particularity the salient features in the conflicting claims herein. I have done so, laboriously I fear, but not finding it possible otherwise to make clear within the confines of a self-sufficient judgment the difficulty of the problem disclosed herein. But at the end of the day instead of finding the plaintiffs eager to have my decree in favour of the party entitled to the same I find myself faced with a statement of account and report from the executor under the Will and the prayer of all the plaintiffs in a chorus asking for leave of court to withdraw their respective claims. The executor in his statement of account and report, states that owing to extreme depression in trade and consequent fall in his income from other sources, as well as an increase in law charges including his remuneration, the estate has, during the course of administration in his hands, dwindled from the fabulous figure of Rs. 4987654-4-3 to Rs. 4-11-9 only. The plaintiffs therefore state that they do not desire to swear allegiance to the Constitutionalist Party or any other party before me just to claim the sum of Rs. 4-11-9 and pray for leave to withdraw of their suits. I accordingly grant their prayer and permit them to withdraw their suits. There will be no order as to costs.

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL, III.



Madras, 25th November, '33

DEAR MOTHER,

THANK you for the money-order you sent me. I got two rupees for it, and I promise I won't squander it, or indulge in riotous living with it.

In India they use rupees instead of money. The Indians are a music-loving people, and in consequence they are very fond of rupees. You see, when you bang a rupee on a board, it makes sweet musical sounds, and on this account people are very fond of collecting rupees. Every time two Indians have a transaction with rupees, they sit down and enjoy themselves. They bang every single rupee on a board, and listen to the lovely chinking sound, and at the same time they chant a religious hymn which goes like this: "Onnu, rendu, moonu, unjee." At this point in the ceremony, the other person gets excited, and sings, "Illay, nalu"; and so they start the hymn again from the beginning. After they have done this, the owner of the rupees ties them into the bedsheet he wears instead of trousers, making many knots, and uttering charms and holy words. Afterwards, he buries the rupees in a pot, and never digs it up any more.

You will be surprised at this, and wonder why they don't put the rupees in a bank. Well, mother, the banks

in India aren't the same as the banks in England. In India, the bank has a Treasurer to hold the money, but there isn't anyone to hold the treasurer. So sometimes the treasurer takes the money out for a walk, and carelessly forgets to come back. To try and prevent this, they have people called Auditors. These auditors are very clever, and can divide by sixteen in their heads. But unfortunately it takes a long time for the auditors to find out that the treasurer has gone for a walk with all the money. Usually it takes two years, and by that time the treasurer has walked a long way, and cannot be found. I think it would be better if, instead of having auditors, they had men with big sticks, who could run very fast. Most of the auditors are little men with spectacles.

However, I met a different kind of auditor the other day. It appeared that he belonged to a very generous firm. You find these firms only in India. They believe in brotherly love, and when they see anyone who needs money, they go and give him some. After this, they appoint an auditor to go and call on the man every month, and enquire after his health. The auditor I met was a very big man, and he carried a young tree-trunk in his hand, tastefully decorated with bands of iron. He wore a fancy waistcoat, and three pairs of trousers made into one. He had a nose like the beak of

1941/75

a bird of prey, and his hair was pomaded with butter and done into ringlets. He looked a magnificent specimen, and it was a pity he was so dirty, and smelt so much. I asked if he could divide by sixteen, and to my surprise he said he could not read or write. I enquired how he did his auditing, and he said he did it with the tree-trunk. He said it was a kind of ready-reckoner, and if anyone disputed his calculations, he could always persuade them with his tree-trunk.

I asked him if his firm would give me some money, but he said it was against his principles to give money to soldiers. The reason was that soldiers were supposed to be hasty and turbulent, and it was not easy to carry out an audit on them. He said his firm preferred to be benevolent to the weak and helpless. I considered this very thoughtful of him, and said "Jow", which means "Good-bye". He took my greeting in a very peculiar way, swinging his tree-trunk as if he were going to hit me. It was only in fun, of course, so I entered into the joke at once, and drew back my fist as if I were going to knock his head off. I saw it

would be quite easy to parry his tree-trunk, and break his jaw with my fist. But before the fun could go any further, the big man stepped back and laughed, and said, "Ah! Sahib atchha dushman hai!" and swaggered off as if he owned the town; which perhaps he does. I looked after him doubtfully, wondering if I ought to go and knock his head off anyway, because I thought he called me a dustman, which in India is a very low occupation. But I asked my friend Boggins about it, and Boggins told me the words were what I have written down, meaning I was a good fighter. So it is

just as well I let the man go without hurting him. I could easily have done so, for he was only twice my size.

I have come to the conclusion that Boggins doesn't know the Indian language properly, because most of the words he tells me are wrong. According to Boggins, "Jow" means "Good-bye," but people don't say "Jow" here. What they do say is something that I would be ashamed to write down, if it were not that a son should

not have any secrets from his mother. Well, mother, when you see people separating from each other in the street, one is always saying "Po" to the other. When gentlemen walk along China Bazaar, and meet their friends who are selling oranges and rat-traps, the gentlemen always cry out "Po" to them. At first I hung my head with shame, because I thought they must mean the domestic utensils which people keep under their beds. I thought it a very abusive name for one person to call another. But apparently the word has nothing to do with an English po, but is just a form of polite farewell used by the higher classes.

I have told you how most of the people wear bed-sheets instead of trousers. Well, mother, the other day a man came into the barracks, and he drew me mysteriously on one side, and he said he would tell my fortune. He looked at my hand, and said at once that I had come a long journey over the water. I wonder how he knew that? He went on to say that I was going to be very rich, and have lots of children, and live on a farm. I asked if I could have some ducks on the farm, and he said yes, I could have a whole duckery, and a pond for them to



The Auditor I met.....

swim in. He said my fate was very fortunate, but I was soon going to suffer a small loss. He then told me to shut my eyes and count up to five hundred. When I had finished counting, I opened my eyes, and the man was gone, and I was surprised to notice that the sheets from my bed had gone as well. I ran down to ask the sentry if he had seen anyone go out carrying a bundle, but the sentry said no. He said the only person who had gone out in the last five minutes was an Indian with a wart on his nose. Well, the fortune-teller had a wart on his nose, and when I asked the sentry, the sentry said that the fortune-teller was wearing some sheets, like they all do.

The Madras gentlemen are very noble-looking. They wear clothes of fine white cloth, and little neat turbans, and a scarf around their necks. They carry an umbrella, which they use for making gestures to their friends as they talk, and for pointing out the sights. They go along with great dignity, like a ship in full sail, or like a professor going to teach a class of very small boys.

You remember the European lady whom I met on the quay at Bombay. Well, I have encountered another one here, and she reminded me very much of the first one. It is very difficult to know that these ladies come from Europe, because they have been in India such a long time that they are quite sunburnt. The way to tell is this: if she is wearing a topi, she is a European. Well, this lady stopped me in Mount Road, and she asked me if there was anyone called Private Smith in my regiment. I said there would be about thirty men in the regiment with that name, and I asked if she could give me any other particulars about him. I asked if he had fair hair or dark hair, and at this she burst into tears and said she did not know, as he had kept his hat on all the time. She explained that this Private Smith was her husband. I was surprised at this, but she said she had the marriage certificate, and could prove it. I asked if I could look at the certificate, so she took it out of her handbag and showed it to me. To my surprise, it was not at all like an ordinary marriage certificate. Instead, it seemed to be a Certificate of Purity taken from the wrapper of a whisky-bottle. I asked the lady if her husband had given her any whisky. She said yes, they had a lot to drink before

they got married, and afterwards her husband gave her the certificate. I hardly knew what advice to give her. I said the best thing to do was to write to the War Office in London, and perhaps they would go through all the Smiths in the Army until they found the right one for her.

There is a very strange custom here. A lot of shopkeepers are too polite to ask you for money if you buy anything from them. Instead, they ask you to sign little pieces of paper. Then, in about six months time, they take the pieces of paper to a place called the High Court, and they get an order to say how much you owe them. When they have got the order, you have to pay, and somehow you always have to pay much more than you thought you would have to. I do not think it is a very good system, but fortunately they don't employ it much with soldiers. They let us pay cash instead. I have been to the High Court to watch this system in operation, and I thought it was very remarkable. I will tell you all about the High Court another time.

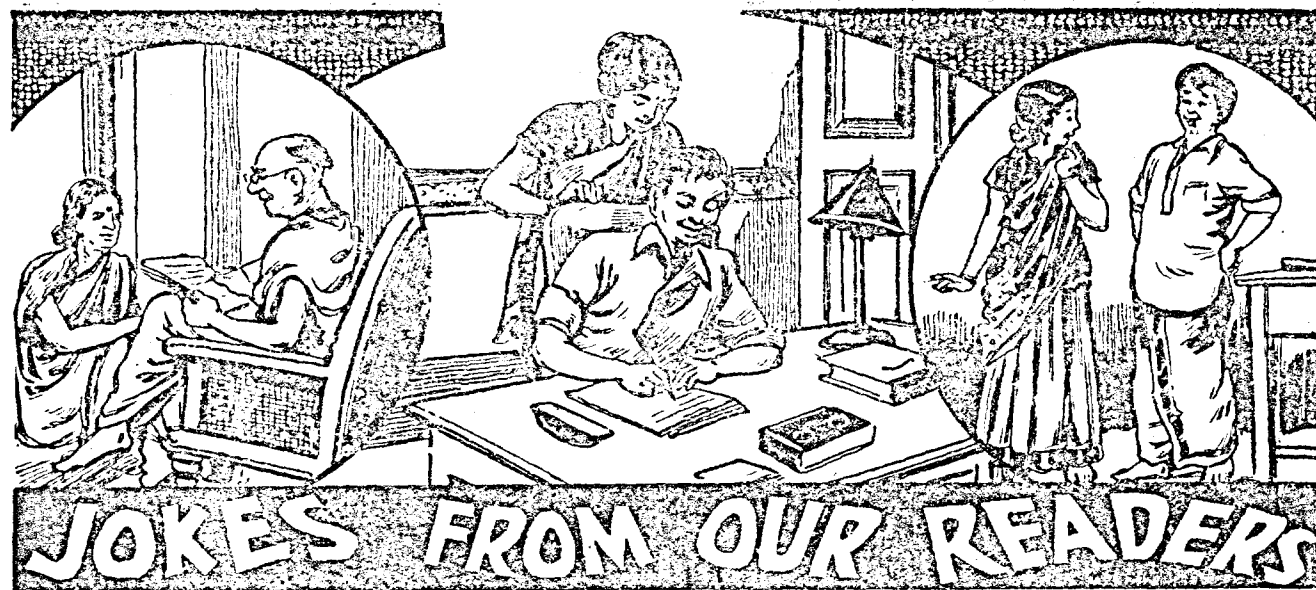
The other day I saw an instance of how sometimes this system does not work. A gentleman called me into a bar, and asked me if I had ever heard of the person who had signed some chits which he produced. There were ever so many chits, and they were signed in a very shaky handwriting. The signature was "Julius Caesar." I was quite pleased to help the gentleman, so I replied at once that I knew the name quite well. At this the gentleman was delighted, and asked if I knew Julius Caesar's present address. I said it would be impious to guess his present abode, but his last known address was Rome, Italy, where he lived with his friends Brutus, Cassius, Cicero, and all that crush. The gentleman took down all these particulars with great relief, and asked me what I would like to drink, so I said I would have a glass of nice cold water. I hope he gets his money all right, though I am under the impression that Julius Caesar died some little while ago.

Well, mother, good-bye for the present. I am keeping all your good advice in mind, and I am always careful to air my underclothing before putting it on.

Your Loving Son,
Obeah Joyfull

Keep this copy of The Merry Magazine.

It may bring you Rs. 100.



Country Lady:—Farmer, I shall send my nurse girl to you for milk every morning. How much do you charge a quart?

Farmer:—"Four annas."

Country Lady:—"You must give her good pure milk."

Farmer:—"That will be six annas."

Country Lady:—"And I would like my girl to be present at the milking."

Farmer:—"Let me see, I will have to charge eight annas for that."

—M. Arunachalam, Trichinopoly.

"What is the matter, my dear?" said a wife to her husband, who had sat for half-an hour with his face buried in his hands, apparently in great tribulation. "Oh! I don't know," said he; "I have felt like a fool all day."—"Well," returned the wife, consolingly, "I am afraid you will never get any better; you look the very picture of what you feel."

—A. Srinivasan, Sivaganga.

A man appeared in a Police Station and said:—

"Oh, in regard to the watch which I reported was stolen yesterday, I have since found that it is not lost at all."

"You are too late," replied the Inspector, "the thief has been arrested."

—Orgyal, Coimbatore.

John:—"What guarantee will you give for the loan?"

Jones:—"The word of an honest man."

John:—"Go and get the honest man and I will give you the money."

—R. Gopinatha Rao, Madras.

Rengu was in an unusually critical mood as he tasted bit by bit the dainty sweets laid before him. The "gulep Jan" came in for more caustic comments than the others. This proved too much for the proud restaurant keeper, and fixing the youngman with a stern eye, remarked angrily: "What is it you say, young feller? Why, I made sweets long before you were born!"

"Ah!" grinned the young man, "Ah! that's it exactly, but why sell them now?"

—N. S. U. Iyer, Palghat.

Why is a kiss like a rumour? Because it goes from mouth to mouth.

—K. Krishnaswami Rao, Kovur.

Smith (to the son of a millionaire) your father is entirely bald? Is he not?

John:—Yes, I am his only heir.

—D. S. Venkatarajan, Poona City.

Teacher (during the course of giving a lesson):—Now, boys! You will be surprised to know, how it sometimes so happens that even clever men find it difficult to answer the questions put by fools!

A student (rising up):—My dear sir! that was exactly the reason why I failed last year!

—K. Ramaswami, Kumbakonam.

Teacher:—"Tommy, come out here and give me what you have got in your mouth."

Tommy:—"I wish I could—it's tooth-ache!"

—Xavier Francis, Jamshedpur.

A revenue collector received intimation that a person kept a trap without paying duty.

The collector called and began.

"You keep a trap, I understand."

"Yes."

"Have you a licence for that trap?"

"No."

Down went an entry of this candid admission in the note book.

"Did you have a license last year?"

"No."

Another entry in the Book.

"Why did you not take a license?"

"I did not think it necessary."

"How many wheels has it?"

"None."

"None! What sort of a trap is it?"

"A mouse trap."

—K. B. Ramakrishnan, Madras.

The professor was giving hints to the students on the art of essay-writing. He was pointing out with great care the common pitfalls that budding authors usually fall into. In the course of his very instructive discourse he said: "You must learn to find out the correct word to express your thoughts. Particularly while choosing epithets you should take care to put off, what I call, lazy adjectives. Great, for instance, is one of them. This word is merely a sort of stopgap. It is a lazy mind which cannot see any more fitting epithet than 'very big.' Do not therefore make great use of that adjective. —Do not use very except on very rare occasions. —Learn to write short sentences and do not make use of the conjunction and too often. —Do not use a preposition to end up with. —You must take care to carefully avoid the splitting of infinitives. —You must not indulge in tautological redundancies superfluously. —etc." —S. Nanjundiah, Trivandrum.

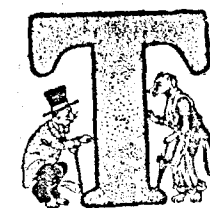
MYSELF

NERA



.... a little gentle prodding.....

In Nera's day, there were no latchkeys. Father was a stern parent but luckily Father went to bed regularly at 9 in the night and so Nera could indulge his love of the mimetic art to his heart's content. There remained however, the problem of getting back into the house, unperceived. Nera was equal to it.



THE atom has been split! And now that the long-looked for event has happened and a great scientist has split the atom, where are we? Well, it strikes me that we are just where we were before the atom was split. It strikes me, on further thought, that we do far too much talking, and thinking, and planning, and researching. The world is sick with over-production of labour-saving machinery and children. Meanwhile, the exceedingly precious moments of our allotted span of life are passing away beyond recall. The past is out of our control; the future is problematical; the present only is with us. Why not make the best of the present?

My brother—not the tall one this time but another one—has always been an adept in making the best of life. Very early in life he became convinced—and remains so to this day—that this is the best of all possible worlds, that everything that happens in this best of all

possible worlds is for the best of all possible reasons, that everything belonging to him is the best of all possible things in this best of all possible worlds, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Can you wonder that he is happy? You remember that great philosophical poem in the English language—The House that Jack Built, etc. Well, one can construct a beautiful philosophy of life on these lines and act accordingly.

Talking of poems, he was the literary genius of our family. While still in his *Kulumi*-and-*Dhoti* stage of life he acquired a passion for Poetry. He declaimed English Verses in a sonorous voice by the feet—metrical of course. The sing-song tone would rise and fall in what he considered musical cadence. Later, inspired by great examples, he himself began to compose poems by the yard literally. The family was always an admiring audience. It mattered little if some of them did not understand the language. They could appreciate the feeling underlying it all. He sent a copy of his poems to Alfred Lord Tennyson. It is presumed it reached him. The Post Office is so infallible and

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 MR. M. ARUNACHALAM Trichinopoly.

unsympathetic(!) Witness the regularity with which it brings to us the notices to quit, the demands for payment of long over-due accounts and the Income tax forms and the rejected MSS.!

In our boy-hood days, one of the most exciting events was the rare visit to our town of a big Theatrical Company from Bombay. They had such gorgeous dresses, such surpassing make-ups, such wonderful scenery—they called it cut-scenery, I believe. And they had actually women acting the part of women on the stage—not as with us, men masquerading as women. We had been accustomed in our little town to see only the local theatrical shows which were hopelessly inadequate and anachronistic in every way. The same dress, with slight alterations, did duty for several kings, ministers or merchants of several periods. The same scenery did duty for palace, hut, or street in any part of the world. And as for make-up—they believed in the charm of variety—each part of the visible body was in a different shade of colour. After all, any one can be realistic but it is given to few to be really imaginative. And in our local theatres much was left to the imagination of the audience.

My father would retire to bed exactly at nine o'clock in the night. Then we would quietly get out of our beds and go off to the theatre where the show

would begin at 9-30. There we would sit till about 1 o'clock, in the hot, stuffy, smoky, *pensupari* laden atmosphere, keenly witnessing the great performances. It mattered little to us that we could not understand the language. It was again a clear case of much hearing, little seeing, and less understanding. There were tense moments when shots were fired; the existing scene would shed off its several parts revealing a new and more glorious scene. The problem of our re-entry into the house without disturbing everybody was solved with the loyal assistance of our cook. He was an ancient person much addicted to snuff, and a light sleeper. He would be sleeping inside the house just underneath a window. A long stick, previously kept in a corner of the pial; a little gentle prodding with it; the cook would wake up and after much grumbling and more snuffing, he would open the door. We would all troop in, and get into our beds where we would lie snugly till late in the morning.

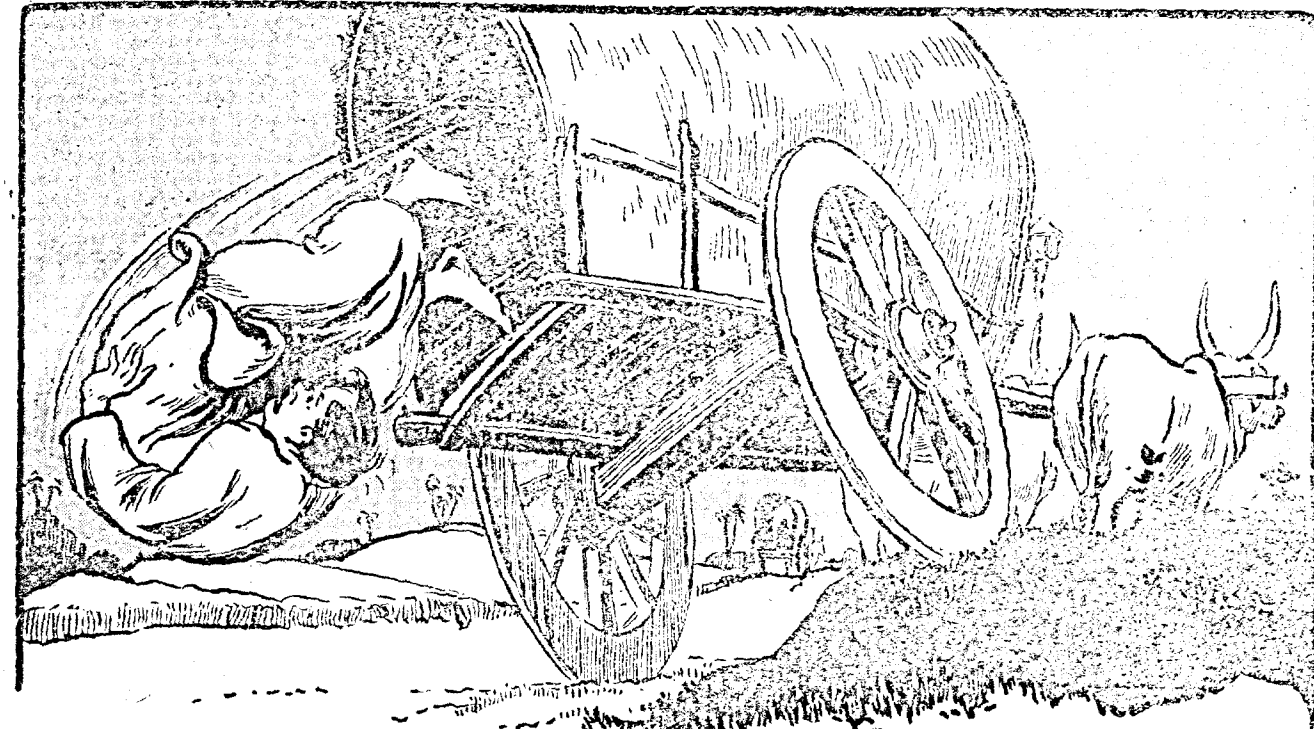
In all this, of course, we took our mother into our confidence. She knew where we were going, what we were doing and when we were returning, and naturally supplied us with funds out of her house-keeping allowance. We had more than a suspicion that father also knew; but he kept quiet on such fateful occasions. He had a way—a very disconcerting way—of keeping quiet.

Wanted a Roaring Push.



"WE WANTED A ROAD"

G. VANMIKANATHAN.



.....one wheel on the track and the other on the ridge.....

How the demand for a road eventually led to many things including the presence of the Income-tax Officer.



It was an ideal village according to the ideal of our villagers. It stood on the banks of a river, all alone, miles away from anywhere. It boasted of only one street; I think they called it a street because of the accident of the householders having placed their huts in two rows with a ribbon of space between. The villagers might have been the only inhabitants of the world or so it seemed, for they were as self-supporting as Robinson Crusoe on his island. The fields gave the corn, the back-gardens the vegetables, the cows milk, and the bullocks all the labour. The village weaver clothed the people.

And then someone died very inconveniently when his only son had gone to a city on the fringe of the far beyond. A runner carried the message to his son. Then it began to rain. It rained in torrents, it poured in rivers. The well-worn cattle track to the village was submerged in a torrential stream, on which sailed, like erratic drunkards, reeling and lurching, small and big trees, hay ricks, barn doors, and other craft which carried many an unwilling terror-stricken denizen of the woods. The father who would never have waited for his son with any patience in life waited for him in death. But he waited in vain.

The son came in the fulness of time and at the convenience of the flood. He found a distressed mother and a gloomy priest who raved about the perdition which awaited his father's soul which had gone to the Beyond without the solace of the death-rites performed by the son. To the young man in his desolate grief came an idea—"we wanted a road" said he. From that day he button-holed—I should say, he took hold by the *uthiriam*—every village elder, and clamoured for a road. All of them heard with horror this proposal, but they could not say him nay when he trotted out the pitiable tale of his father's soul. "For want of a road," said he, "my father's soul was lost."

We wanted a road, said he, when he met the villagers in marriage festivities, or at the funeral ghat; we wanted a road, said he, when a child was born; we wanted a road, said he, when the village patriarch's cow calved. The village panchayat agreed to make a road, and soon after the harvest they took the simple expedient of driving several teams of oxen across the fallow fields, and thus made a cart track. When sowing time came around, there was the devil to pay, for no man wanted to forego the strip of his land over which the track went. They wrangled and wrangled, and finally each man in fear of the day when he might die without due rites for want

of a road agreed not to plough the strip over which the cart track went, and thus the road came to stay.

We wanted a road, and we had a road; narrow, it is true, ratty no doubt, some call it a mere cart track verily, but we wanted a road and we had a road. This tale would not have been told if nothing else had happened. But one dark night the village patriarch needs must go and drive his bullock cart one wheel on the track and the other three feet high over the field ridge, and return to the village sans teeth, sans cart-wheel, and sans wisdom. Woe unto the day his cart turned a cart-wheel on the field ridge. It was the undoing of our village. He did not rest till he had brow-beaten the villagers into agreeing to make a pucca road. And make a pucca road they did. I remember that year very well. I was seven years old. Like every other village lad my wardrobe consisted of a loin cloth and a pughrce many sizes too big for my head. But this year I was minus pughrce and my loin cloth was akin to the shirt of the hopeful man who on receiving it back from the laundry mused that he could use it as a lace curtain. A kinsman asked my father the explanation of my scanty wardrobe, and he complained

of the excessive rates he had to pay for making the road. It was in that same year that I sustained an insult at the hands of the shepherd's daughter next door, who left off playing with me and chummed with the son of the Dhoby who still sported a pughrce, in fact, sported a different coloured pughrce every day.

We had a road, and we should have been highly content, for had we not a pucca road? But now we wring our hands in travail and wish with unholy intensity many acorns of perdition to the soul of the man who had the wickedness to die when his son was away. Our village was proud of its butter, and a wily dame one day sent it to the city market, and soon brought the market to our village. The butter brought in its train many butter-tongued men, and our village was no longer our own. In our old state the village patriarch was quite enough to steer the affairs of our patriarch-

dom, but now an ungrown puppy,—the son of a cunning lawyer who had retired to our village—must tell us that what we wanted was a Union. And a Union our village became. I smelt from the beginning that this man was up to no good, for had he not too clean a dhoti? I was not wrong, for what did he do as soon as the Union was formed but went and elected—so he says—his father as its President.

A road, we wanted, but we have roads now. The Union dug up the nice strip of land between the rows of houses in our one street village, and now we could make mud pies no longer. For they dug up the earth and filled it with hard stones, and all who have tried, to



.....as we made mud-pies in the street.....visioned the day when she would be making real pies in my home.....

their sorrow know that they cannot get pies out of stones or for that matter bread. If we had stopped with the Union we would yet have been a united village. But our President must show the Union as prospering very well, and so some interfering ass in some remote office said that we had outgrown a Union and a Municipality is what we ought to be. This is a tale, of course, of many years after the one-street village day. Let me take the reader with me passing over many years of slow and steady progress when boys turned into youths, and the village dhoby's son took his father's place and excelled him in the art of shredding clothes.

So a Municipality we became, and the lawyer was its Chairman too. I think I told you that our village was famous for its butter. So too became my shepherd

(Continued on page 951 bottom)

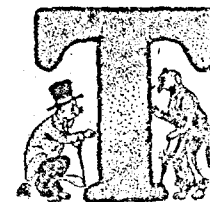
BORROWED PLUMES

THANGAVELU



"What's going on here?"

Kamala must needs be kept in good humour for, she has not yet been secured in wedlock. Palta, the pretty Chetty girl, her friend, is in distress. Chandran has therefore to play the Knight Errant in borrowed plumes.



"I'll trouble with you," said Kamala critically, "is that you are so dull and lifeless." Chandran gaped at her. To be told on the top of what he had regarded his best proposal of marriage that he was dull and lifeless, amazed him. He had loved Kamala, Head Mistress of the Hindu girls' training school, for more than a year, and she had never spoken to him like that before. "Dull!" said Chandran incredulously "Lifeless!"

Kamala smiled at him in a superior sort of manner, the smile which all girls who earn their own living wear. "I mean there's nothing very thrilling or exciting about you," she explained. "Heavens!" said Chandran shocked. "I should hope not!"

"After all, what do you do, or what have you ever done?" asked Kamala.

Chandran gaped at her again. "Hang it!" he said. "I can't make out what you are driving at. It's all due to the talkies. That's what has turned your head. You expect me to kill a couple of lions like Tarzan perhaps?" he sneered.

"When I marry," continued Kamala soulfully "I want a man who has done something of importance."

"Then I'm your man," said Chandran grinning.

"What important thing have you done?" demanded Kamala.

"I fell in love with you at first sight," laughed Chandran.

"Not that sort of thing," returned Kamala. "I want a man who can do something thrilling, something chivalrous, one who would steal for me, one who would

The Merry Magazinê

biff another in the eye for me, one who would risk everything for me, one—

"Here, stop it," interrupted Chandran. "I see what you mean. What you want is a criminal, not a husband—somebody who's always popping in and out of prison. Well good-bye!" and so saying, he walked towards the door.

"Where are you going?"

Chandran drew himself up. "I am going to buy a mask, a revolver a sand-bag, a jemmy, a bottle of chloroform, another of arsenic and a pair of gloves to avoid leaving finger prints!"

"Chandra, you're,—you're not going to do anything foolish are you?"

"I am going to biff your brother in the eye, pinch something from Tulji Ram the jeweller, and throw a bomb or two on some folks!"

"Nonsense, stay and listen to what I say; since you are prepared to do so much, do what I want you to do."

Chandran now understood that the wily Kamala had something up her sleeve.

"You know my friend and classmate Pattu. Don't you?" demanded Kamala.

"You mean that pretty Chetty girl?"

"Chetty al-right, but not pretty," snapped Kamala. "She works in the Swadeshi Stores, since her father died bankrupt. She told me her story yesterday and I was deeply moved. It seems the manager of the store wants her to marry him and he says he will get her the sack if she doesn't. If poor Pattu had only herself to think of, she would have told him to go to Guntakal. But you see, she has to keep her mother and two sisters on her earnings."

"Well, what about marrying the bloke? She can strike it rich."

Kamala looked indignant. "Do you expect a girl of Pattu's family and age to marry a man old enough to be her father?"

"Why not?"

"Shut up!" snapped Kamala. "You know that she does not like it. That's all there's to it."

"What am I expected to do in this love affair?" demanded Chandran. "I thought you were clever," sneered Kamala.

"Well I am not."

"Borrow a police inspector's costume and hide near her house at 9 P. M. tomorrow. The brute has told her to expect him and meet him. Try to frighten him, Chandran, and understand that it must be so done, that she retains her job as well as gets rid of his unwanted attentions."

Chandran's eyes gleamed. Helping a damsel in distress was in itself a pleasant job, when it was done as a favour to Kamala, well—he bade her good-bye and went straight to Inspector Loganathan's house. After

a good deal of persuasion he succeeded in getting a uniform from his reluctant friend.

Precisely at nine P. M. next day, Chandran hid himself near some shrubs opposite Pattu's house. A few minutes elapsed when he saw a hefty man, immaculately dressed, move up leisurely, and continue pacing up and down the lane. A little later, he saw the figure of a girl, whom he concluded must be Pattu come out of the house. He watched the pair talking. Soon he heard her voice raised in expostulation: "Don't! Go away," "Leave me alone," "Oh please go away."

At once Chandran sauntered up and said: "Now then, now then, what's all this?" imitating as best as he could an officer's attitude. Before him stood a large hefty man, and in Chandran's judgment, a nasty piece of work. Near him leaning against the wall was a girl, whom he had seen many times with Kamala, fair and delicate. She looked so scared that it at once appealed to Chandran's protective instinct. "What's going on here?" he demanded sternly.

The man did not answer, but the girl said hastily, choking back something, "It is all right Inspector." Chandran was taken aback, but he at once understood that she evidently was unaware of Kamala's conspiracy.

"Is this man molesting you, miss?" he demanded sternly.

"No, no, its quite alright," she pleaded. "Please go away."

Chandran struck his thumb in his belt in the correct inspector-like manner.

"I should like to point out, Inspector," said the man speaking for the first time, "that you are interrupting a love scene. Further I'm not committing a felony. The lady has clearly stated that there's no need for poking your nose."

Chandran's sense of humour was tickled. He was also rather angry, for the man's insolent speech put his back up. "I don't believe the lady," he said. "She is speaking under duress—and as for you, you get out of here. You run along, miss. I'll deal with this fellow."

"Oh will you?" sneered the man. "I will report you to the Commissioner."

"Oh you will, will you?" said Chandran. "You buzz off, and never molest the girl again, or I will have to arrest you."

"On what charge?" asked the man offensively.

Chandran didn't have the faintest idea. "On a charge of molesting an unprotected female. On a charge of loitering with intention to commit a felony," he blurted out.

The hefty man seemed to be thinking about something. Suddenly he hit Chandran very hard on the nose.

Now Chandran was a good-tempered easy-going soul, but a sudden unprovoked blow on the snout, was a thing he did not take quietly. He hit the hefty

man just where he had stored his meals. Two seconds later, a really good scrap was going on. Chandran was getting distinctly the better of it, when a loud harsh voice close behind them said:

"Now then, what's all this?" Chandran who had just tucked the hefty man's face under his arm and was punching it in great satisfaction let it go, and rose erect to face an unmistakably real police-man.

"Why, damn your impudence!" the real police man began, "you're not a real inspector at all! Come on both of you to the station on a charge of battery, assault, and impersonation."

The hefty man gulped and said, "This fellow assaulted me without any provocation at all!"

"It's a lie!" said Chandran, "he hit me first, and he was annoying a lady."

"Oh, indeed!" said the policeman looking around him. "And where's the lady?"

"She's gone home. I told her to."

"Oh, you did, did you? Yours is a suspicious tale. Come along and tell it to the Inspector. I would believe your story, but that uniform and the absence of the lady looks suspicious. As I asked you before, where's the lady?"

"Here!" said a clear voice just behind them, and all turned to face Pattu.

"Police-man," she asked, "you are not going to arrest this gentleman, are you?"

"Which one?" asked the policeman.

"The one rigged up as an Officer."

"He's got no right to be wearing it at all," grunted the police man.

"He has done me good," she gulped and her eyes filled with tears.

"Now then, tell me what happened," he demanded.

WE WANTED A ROAD—(Continued from page 948)

neighbour. He does not now call himself a shepherd, for he owns a dairy and is a gentleman farmer. He is also a member of our Municipal Council. While these people had progressed I could not understand how my father had stayed in the back-waters, in fact had taken further to the solace of the strong waters. Perhaps it was due to the set-back he received when he paid the rates for the road. Whatever it might be due to, it set the seal of doom on my hopes of marrying the shepherd's daughter. It was not out of boyish jealousy that I once resented the favours bestowed on the dhoby's son, for even then as we made mud pies in the street, I visioned the day when she would be making real pies in my home.

It must now rest a mere vision for ever. I hear that her father has angled for better fish, and that soon the Chairman's son will call her wife. My heart breaks with grief and desolation. I think I will go now and have a last look at the face of my beloved before I forsake my benighted town. What is all this noise going on in her house? Her father's voice is

"Why, this man," she nodded at the hefty man— "was pestering me, and this gentleman came up and tried to persuade him to go away. Then this hefty man hit him."

"How do you know all this?"

"I was watching over the compound wall."

"Oh, this is evidence, but what were you doing in this lane with him at this time of the night?"

"He forced me to meet him."

"Oh did he? Well, you do not have to put up with it. You can lodge a complaint with us."

"But I daren't."

"Oh, he has some hold on you, black-mailing you, was he?"

"Oh no, not that, but he is the manager: he will sack me if I am not nice to him."

"Oh is it so? Now don't you worry, I will report this, and see that he does not bother you, nor give you the sack. This is a clear case of molesting and if he hit the gentleman first, it is also assault."

"Oh, don't do it please."

"Well. But if you have any trouble with him, you have only got to come to us. Do you get that, you cotton-bag."

The hefty man mumbled something.

"Also pie-facer!" said Chandran, "if I hear of you making a nuisance of yourself again, I'll call on you and push your face in."

The hefty man slunk away.

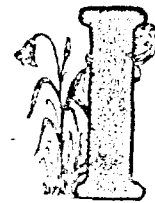
Chandran saw Pattu home, and told her all about the conspiracy. The constable, thanks to Chandran, had two pegs of Arrack at Mari Pillay's tavern. Chandran received a delicious kiss from Kamala later that night.

raised in anger and protest. Well, here comes someone from the house: let me ask him. He might know. What are the sheaves of forms in his hand? He explains to me and incidentally breaks my resolve to leave the town. I have now something to keep me here. The man whom I met is an Income-tax Collector. While fixing the details of the marriage, my father-in-law might-have-been had boasted of his wealth with many additions and etceteras. But other ears than those to whom these fables were intended heard them, and Nemesis had come in the shape of the Income-tax man. I have heard a little of the ways of the Income-tax men, they are like the cat which has got at the negligent housewife's milk-pot: they will come for more and more. I am not leaving my village-home while I can see the mortification of my would-have-been father-in-law.

We wanted a road, and we have got a road and many things besides, and an Income-tax Collector too. It will not be long before other pests visit this village, for the fore-runner is here.

THIS FORTNIGHT'S FAIRY TALE

(KALYAN)



I WAS leaning over the balcony, idly looking up and down the road, when I saw young Sampath coming out of Jambhu's house. Sampath is the local representative for Easy Settlement Insurance Co. He had already called on me twice during the week when I was not in. I didn't like to be caught this time, and so tried to draw my head in; but he had seen me and signalled a hearty greeting. I had to put the best face on it and ask him in with the warmth of School-day friendship. We talked of the unusual *Purattasi* rains, of the possible, further drop in prices, of the lull in the Congress, of the white Paper, of the burglar caught last night by the S I, of the increase of mosquitoes since the closure of drains, the continuing export of gold, etc. All the time, I felt as if I was like sitting on a volcano. Every minute, I expected him to lead me on to the topic of insurance by some train of thought. When he said 'untimely rains,' I concatenated thus: untimely rains—unexpected colds and chills—pneumonia—death—insurance. Other similar chains were:—

Drop in prices—more spare cash for salaried people—investment—insurance;

Lull in the Congress—constructive activities—industrial and commercial schemes—Congress supported insurance companies—Lakshmi and Tropical—Easy Settlement much superior;

White Paper—'yellow paper'—insolvency—famous insolvents—great banking and industrial failures—security of insurance;

Burglar—loss to property and life—insurance;

Mosquito—disease—death—insurance;

Gold drainage—gold hoarding—bad investments—ideal investments—insurance;

and so on.

But strange to say, he never once mentioned business, but merrily rattled on on various lines. Naturally, I grew a bit bold and impish and asked him, "By the way, how is business?"

"Not bad. Just enough to keep me busy, no more, thank God."

A clumsy silence followed. Next I asked him, "What is the difference between insurance and assurance?"

"Assurance is providing against a certainty; insurance is providing against a possibility.....Why, you are not appearing for any departmental *viva-voce* test, are you?"

A halt. "Which are the dozen best Companies?" I asked.

"What companies?"

"Insurance, of course!"

"Oh! leaving out perhaps a dozen, all the rest are fairly equal and good. All have to maintain a high average of service and efficiency. Each has to copy the good features of the others."

A long break. "What are the special features in your company?"

"There is only one. I am in it," he smiled and almost stroked a beard that was not there.

"Read much of Shaw?"

"Rather."

Halt. "Would I have to pay more in Postal Insurance or in yours?"

"I will have to look up my tables. Please send me a chit tomorrow in office.....By the bye, meaning no offence, can't we talk of something else on a holiday?"

"I am awfully sorry....."

Then followed some more purposeless talk indicative of politeness, after which he took leave. After he got into the road, I shouted down from the balcony, "I say, I forgot to mention that three chaps in my office wanted to insure with you. If you drop in there sometime tomorrow....."

"Oh, that is all right. There is no need for me to call on them. In fact, I avoid that. It generally irritates the clients and often puts a sort of constraint on them. They can apply in the usual way with the caution fee in advance. I will advise them when to go to the medical officer. The rest will go on in a routine way. If, however, they wish to consult me personally on any matter, I am always in the office between 10 and 4 on week days. Thank you all the same. Ta-ta!"

I wondered whether I was awake or asleep. I have a few simple tests to prove that. I started applying them. Little Papa was trying to burst the tin whistle with his lungs. I told him to throw it in the gutter. He did so at once and smiled.....The dhoby came in just then, apologising for the delay. I asked him about my torn Chicacole kaddar dhoti. He confessed that he had been wearing it to attend a marriage and that some silly fellow had played some prank and burnt a hole through it.....I next went to the railway station. There was nobody waiting, yet the booking clerk was at his seat, keeping the window open and arranging coppers and nickels for easy handling. I asked him the reason for such unusual conduct. He replied, "We have to open the window an hour before the arrivals of each train. Sir. 1934 down is due in 58 minutes, Sir".....I did not apply the infallible money order window test, it being a holiday.

I needed no further proof that I was in dream-land, and went home.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF RACING

DESCRIBED BY JOHN AYE

THE young racing enthusiast had taken his best girl for the first time to the course and was pointing out all the notabilities. "You see that woman over there?" he said, pointing out a lady of ample proportions. "Well, that's Mrs. Green, the unluckiest punter I ever met." "I'm not surprised at that," responded the girl. "I should think she would be a bad punter. A woman with a figure like hers has no business to go boating in anything smaller than an ocean liner."

Such humour as there is in racing is naturally tinged with pessimism when the "dead cert" fails to come off. "When I back a horse," grumbled one disconsolate, "he's always scratched, and when I back a dog, he stops and scratches himself."

"You say you backed that horse at twenty to one?" asked a friend of an unhappy punter. "Yes" was the reply, "but he came in at half-past seven."

A simple looking individual at a West of Scotland meeting, in which there were only three runners went up to one bookie and laid a heavy bet on that one of the three horses which was looked upon as a rank outsider. To the astonishment of everyone, this horse won easily. When the backer returned to draw his winnings, the bookie growled, "Do you know that the winner—hang him—belongs to me?" "Yes, I knew that," replied the simple one; "but did you know that the other two belong to me?"

Walter Hackett, the author of the racing play *Take a Chance* tells a story of a Jockey in America who was riding a long-priced horse, and a bookmaker who had laid heavily against it, who threatened to shoot him if he won. When the race came off, the jockey got away to a flying start, and afraid to pull it where the owner might see, he decided to wait till he got to a clump of bushes which hid that part of the course from the stand. Unfortunately, when he reached the clump, he found the owner standing there with a revolver and threatening him with instant death if he did not go all out. Choosing the possible lesser of two evils, the Jockey rode for dear life, passed the winning-post first, and, without stopping, continued his horse to the railway station to catch the fastest train that was going the longest distance from the neighbourhood.

One of the bookmaking fraternity had experienced a very bad time over the Derby. On the following

Monday some of his customers went to his office to draw what was due to them and found posted on the door, which was locked, the following notice, "Derby result: Flyaway, Harkaway, Runaway. Also ran, me and my blooming clerk."

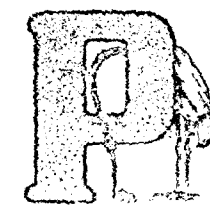
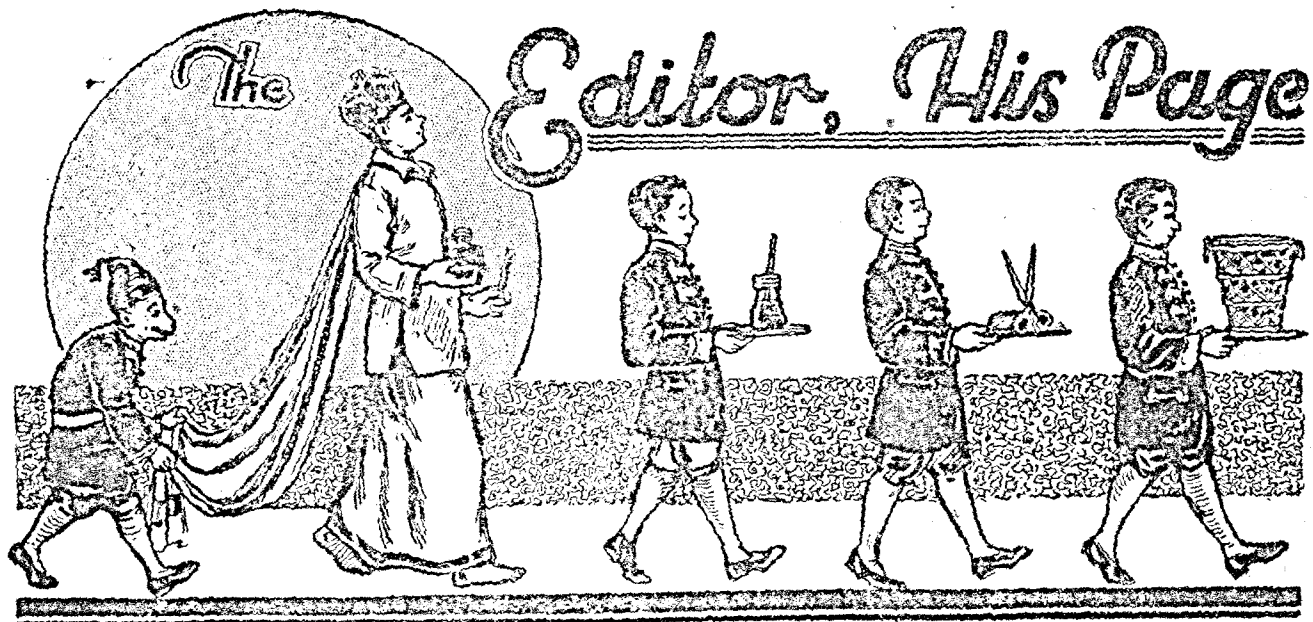
It had been a bad season, and one owner was in a very discontented mood. "Yes," he said, "I'm going to call the next horse that I buy 'Bad News.'" "Whatever makes you take a name like that?" asked a friend. "It's quite simple," was the grim reply. "Bad news always travels fast."

There is a type of person who is prepared to back a horse on something that he heard from the grandmother of the boy who delivered groceries at the trainer's house. A gentleman of this description, returning from the races, was bemoaning the fact that, though he had followed all the "dead certs" given him yet he had not found a single winner. "Would you believe it?" he demanded to know. "There were only two runners in the last race, and the one that I backed had to hurry up to get second."

A typist, having entered an office sweepstake, was successful in winning a place. When informed of her luck, she remarked sadly, "Oh dear, I didn't know it was a fish we were drawing for, I thought it was a race-horse."

How great is the ignorance of some who, in the hope of getting something for nothing, dabble in this sport, is shown in the story of an old lady's first visit to a race-course. She went up to a lookie and said timidly, "Please put this on Duleepsinhji for me." For a moment the man with the satchel looked the amazement that he felt. Why, mum," he said at length, "he ain't a boss, he is a cricketer." "Dear, dear" said the old lady sorrowfully. "Then I must have stuck my pin in the wrong part of the paper."

It is doubtful if even an earthquake would keep a really keen racing man from a meeting. Two friends met unexpectedly on a race-course. "Hello, old chap," said one, "I thought you were too busy to come down to-day." "So I was," replied the other, "it was touch and go whether I could manage it so I tossed up for it, and I had to toss seven times before it came down right."



PATRIOTISM, said Dr. Samuel Johnson, in the last refuge of a scoundrel. Johnson's saying has been variously interpreted by various people; very recently, a writer whose Latinity is on a par with his logic, invoked the aid of the sage of Lichfield in the course of an arid controversy with ourselves. When vituperation which has not even the charm of novelty takes the place of argument and incoherent spite usurps reason from its throne, it is time to turn away from this unlovely spectacle. We can only hope that Dr. Johnson still rests quietly in his grave, but if his spirit be still abroad walking unquietly, we can absolve ourselves of all blame in this respect since nothing we have ever had occasion to say, could have disturbed the good Doctor's slumbers.

The Stanley Viaduct.

But, to return to our muttons. We were on the subject of patriotism. An admirable feeling but in the age in which we are living, the ardent patriot is not an unmixed blessing. You could, of course, turn round indignantly and ask

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said"

and so on. But there is a time for everything and a place; and this is neither the one nor the other for a thesis on Love of Country. We are more immediately concerned with love of one's province, one's district or to come to the point, one's home town. In other words, we refer to the civic sense, or the lack of it, in us. These lines are more particularly addressed to the average citizen or the average man (though what exactly is meant by the average man is known only to the law and to M. Renan.) The average man—and for the purposes of our present talk, the average man is the man who goes to and from his work in a public

conveyance, to wit, the tram, the motor bus or the suburban train—when he travels from one of the many residential suburbs of our great City to his office or place of business in George Town, if he is at all observant, cannot fail to be struck by the many architectural and other changes that have unostentatiously but rapidly taken place in the City. Awkward corners have been rounded off, attempts have successfully been made to widen dangerously narrow thoroughfares (Broadway—save the mark—is a disgraceful exception) and many an isolated triangle or oblong of land has been converted into a little oasis of green, surrounded by ornamental iron railings which are at once elegant and simple. (The naming of these 'parks' after local Municipal Councillors is a sop to the petty vanity of the latter.)

Above all, we may legitimately take pride in the new viaducts and overbridges which the electrification of our Suburban Railway Service has necessitated. Every available inch of space has been utilised, abrupt corners have been cut away, approaches have been rendered easier, gradients have been eased; in short everything has been done to ensure the maximum of convenience and the finished structure is a standing tribute at once to the engineering skill of the architect as well as to his aesthetic sense, which latter has found fit expression in buildings which, in their classical severity of line and an elegant utilitarianism are a refreshing contrast to the hybrid red-brick monstrosities which were so fashionable a few years ago. No citizen of our City but must feel a justifiable pride in our common civic possession and a lively sense of gratitude towards the person or persons who have added to our amenities. Our feelings, however, seem to find expression in ways which are, to put it mildly, regrettable. The Stanley Viaduct, for instance, in its way, a little triumph of engineering and architectural skill, has its walls plastered with advertising placards. At one time, aggressive nationalism ran riot and the poor passer-by was exhorted to boycott

The Editor, His Page

British goods in language, which was inappropriately enough, alien but more appropriately in many cases, with a disregard of English grammar which was, to say the least, characteristic. We repeat there is a time and a place for everything and in our opinion neither the road surface nor the walls of one of our most imposing overbridges are the proper media for instilling nationalism into the minds of the young idea or its elder brother and sister.

The City Beautiful.

But, in place of this, to be told that Blank's Pills are the best, that A's Lohyam gives you Pep and last, but not least, to have a picture of an elderly gentleman, unsuccessfully trying to look younger than he really is and with hirsute addenda to his face which would keep a small regiment of barbers from the workhouse, smirking at you from the walls, gives you a pain in the inside which perhaps, only the quack nostrums advertised on the next free square of wall-space can cure. The one redeeming feature in the aforesaid blurb is to be found in the announcement below which warns you that there is going to be only a second and last play on—and thank goodness, you are given the date of the performance. Thanks for the warning. To tolerate this kind of thing anywhere else than on hoardings, specially set apart and hired for this purpose, is negligence on the part of the tax payer and is merely a passive offence. But it does not stop there. Throughout the City, every lamp post, electric standard, telephone post, tramway overhead wire-carrier, whether of iron or concrete or wood, any upright structure which abuts or adjoins the roadway, every single one is coated with chunam to a height of some six feet odd. This represents the highest point which can be reached by the average citizen without undue exertion. And, far as his outstretched arm can reach, the average citizen after eating the inevitable pan (another national characteristic, peculiarly oriental and possibly having

some connection with our ancient spiritual heritage) looks round for the nearest upright, transfers a dab of chunam from his thumb or forefinger to the post and saunters away. And yet, on Press and Platform, our civic ideal is the City Beautiful. Smooth roads with a top-dressing of tar macadam, spacious parks, pavements for the pedestrian and finally, streets and roads named after our local worthies. It is a blessing that we do not always get what we deserve.

Literary Competition

Letters are still arriving from readers, asking for information about our Rs. 1000 Literary Competition. The rules and conditions are printed on another page. It may be stated here that there is no entrance fee, that there is no limit to the number of entries a competitor may send and that entries should be about 3000 words in length. Every entry will be judged solely on its merits.

Rs. 5 for a Chestnut.

Quite a large number of readers send a large number of jokes for insertion in our Readers' Jokes Page. Quite a few of these contributors also take care to state on their cards that the Jokes are original. The large majority of them are so original that when we read them (for our sins, we are compelled to do so), our thoughts invariably hark back to our childhood's years and an atmosphere of wistful melancholy pervades our sanctum. Anyhow, since we are curious to discover what is the oldest joke any of our readers know, a prize of Rs. 5 will be awarded to the reader who sends in the oldest joke the Editor knows. By old is meant a joke which has been retailed or copied for the longest time in the largest number of journals. The Editor will, of course, be the final judge. One reader, one joke, and mark your entries 'Chestnut.'

Closing date, 20th December 1933.

OCTOBER LUCKY NUMBERS

The following gentlemen have submitted claims in our October Lucky Number Scheme and the prize amounts have been sent to them.

No. 121524 Rs. 10 C. KANDASAMY, s/o K. Chidambara Thevar, Manali, Alathambadi Post, Tanjore Dt.

No. 106925 Rs. 10 T. K. RAMACHANDRAN, Assistant Vaccinator, Corporation of Madras.

No. 110000 Rs. 5 N. NAGARAJA IYER, Agent (India) Railway Station Road, Tanjore.

No. 111111 Rs. 5 G. VEERARAGHAVADU, L.F. Overseer, Cheepunupalli, Vizagapatam Dt.



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.)

THE TAMIL-LOVERS' CONFERENCE. TAMIL BOOKS EXHIBITION

(From December 21st to December 26th.)

Mr. W. Erlam Smith, Director of Public Instruction

will open the

EXHIBITION

Under the Presidency of

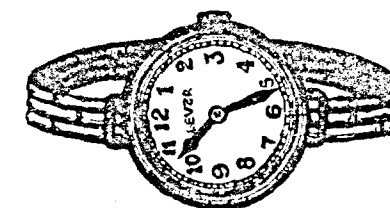
The Right Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H., L.L.D.,

All Authors, Publishers, and Book-sellers are invited to take part

PLEASE COMMUNICATE BEFORE DECEMBER 10th

GOLD PLATED "FIDO" LEVER WRIST WATCH.

Rs. 7-14-0



Your loss in repair of Cylinder watches will
be recouped and you will get rid of worries if
you go in for our Lever wrist watch. No need of
repairs. No lever watch sold up to now at such a
price.

Free with a fine goldplated wrist chain

Rs. 7-14-0 nly.

(Postage As. 7. Extra.)

Sole Agents :-

CANADIAN WATCH PEOPLE

George Town, Madras.

PHOTO ALBUM.



An Album containing 12 Beautiful
nature Studies of Sexes in Real
life. Most indispensable for deco-
rating Bedrooms etc.

Price Rs. 1-14-0 each

THE KRISHNA AGENCY,
P. B. No. 119, MADRAS.

HYGENIC RUBBER GOODS

Improved Washable Paragon Sheaths.
FOR MEN. Single and Reinforced Double Top.

Price 1st Quality	...	Rs. 2 0 0 each.
" 2nd "	...	" 1 8 0 "
" 3rd "	...	" 1 0 0 "
" 4th "	...	" 0 12 0 "

Solid Rim Improved Check Pessary.
FOR WOMEN. Seamless with Solid Rubber Rim.

Price 1st Quality	...	Rs. 3 0 0 "
" 2nd "	...	" 2 0 0 "
" 3rd "	...	" 1 8 0 "

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

The House-wife's Favourite

Hand Embroidery Machine



This wonderful machine is the most necessary requisite to the house-wife. It is useful to stitch many embroideries beautifully. Pillows, clothes, pictures, carpets, window curtain, children's dresses, lady's gowns, caps and many other such things can be made with the greatest ease by the user of our Hand Embroidery Machine.

This can also be used to prepare several kind of flower designs on the walls with clay.

In several schools, this has been used with the greatest success.

One can earn from Rs. 50 to 500 per month with the help of this machine. Complete instructions sent with the Machine.

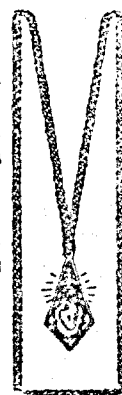
Price Rs. 2-4-0 only

V. P. P. Charges extra

Genuine Watch Co., - P. B. 119, Madras.

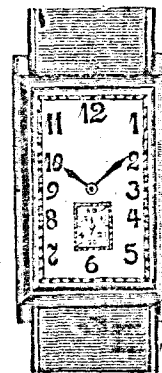
ROLLED GOLDEN NECKLACE.

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



**GENUINE WATCH Co.,
P. B. 119, Madras.**

LEVER WRIST WATCH FOR Rs. 2-15-0

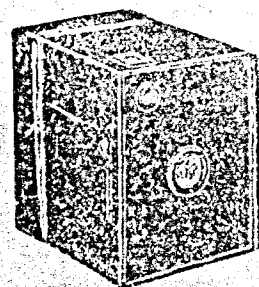


Absolutely correct time keeper with unparalleled mechanism of high standard Shape, Design, and Durability are its speciality. Price Rs. 2-15-0. Best quality Rs. 4-4-0 Radium Dial Rs. 4-8-0 Rolled Gold Rs. 5-0-0 Best quality Rs. 6-0-0. For square shape Rs. 2-0-0 extra will be charged. Postage As, 7 Extra. Postage free to the purchaser of 3 watches at a time.

Solid Guarantee for 5 years. Attractive strap sent with each watch. Every watch thoroughly tested before despatch.

**National Trading Co., (M. M.)
Beadon Street, CALCUTTA.**

PHOTO HAND CAMERA



This Pocket Camera is fitted with powerful lens very compact and durably constructed. It takes nice pictures in $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Easy to operate. No previous knowledge necessary. Price per Camera with necessary chemicals, plates and directions complete.

Price Rs. 2-15-0.

**THE KRISHNA AGENCY,
POST BOX No. 119, Madras.**

THE MERRY MAGAZINE FREE INSURANCE COUPON

Dated 25-11-33.

Sign here:.....

Name.....

