

Must Be Won

THE MERRY MAGAZINE

Vol. II

Vol. II

MADRAS, 1st JANUARY 1934

OFFICE OF THE
3-JAN-1934
MADRAS
No.

All the good fairies attend the christening of the infant.



The Infant: 1934 for the gift-bringing Greeks

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CEYLON JUSTICE OF PEACE

T. C. P. FERNANDO, J.P., U.P.M., Proctor and Notary. AMBALANGODA Ceylon,

writes on 19th November 1933.

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No. 1

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

The Madras Government have finally decided against the supply of butter-milk to C class prisoners, on the ground that it would be difficult to supply it pure and in hygienic condition.

Only a 'paternal government' could have thought of such a reason!

'Two Indian ladies, impelled by the music, joined in the dance with Indian partners, and seemed to do remarkably well'—says an account of the Viceregal reception at the Banqueting Hall.

We wonder if it is fair to blame the music.

The Irish correspondent of a contemporary writes: "Mr. De Valera is no gambler, but a shrewd statician." We doubt however if he is going to wait indefinitely.

Commenting on the next Australian Test team's visit to England, Larwood is reported to have said: 'I'm glad the Aussies are coming. I shall be glad to bowl against them, if I get an opportunity.'

It will be noticed that there is no reference to bowling against the wicket!

'Western people failed to understand the Eastern mind, because they did not try to assimilate Eastern thought.'

Most of our rulers do the next best thing,—simulate!

Referring to British Fascists, Sir John Simon asks: 'Who was the tremendous personality to play the part of a Mussolini or a Hitler?'

Obviously, it is not to be Sir John!

Mr. C. S. Ranga Aiyar remarked that when the European group quarrel, the Indian members are right.

On the other hand, we've noticed that when the Indian members are wrong, they generally agree!

Addressing the convocation of the Allahabad University, Sir T. B. Sapru said: 'Public life is a serious vocation, entailing prolonged and painful preparation and probation.'

If you have any doubts, try your hand at a memorandum!

'The usual complaint against the modern woman is that she dislikes cooking, and cannot propose a decent meal.'

But she can dispose of one!

At a meeting of the Madras Moderates, one of the speakers said that they must have the courage to risk unpopularity.

May we point out that they succeed beyond their expectations!

We read that 400,000 defectives are to be compulsorily sterilised in Germany in the new year.

We hope Herr Hitler obtained the previous approval of Fr. Dasenach.

In the course of a speech, H. E. the Governor of the Punjab said: 'In education we have to very seriously consider whether the present system is best suited to the country.'

Let us hope His Excellency will turn his attention first to the split infinitive.

'It is a fairly well-known experience that a sudden drop in the unit of currency, tends to stimulate exports and diminish imports, but that is a very temporary effect.'—Sir G. Schuster.

Our Exchange business has indeed been more romantic than a fairy tale.

Mr. Puri: "The finance member too had attacked them, but in his usual sugar-coated style."

Sir G. S.: "My hon. friend got no coating when I replied to him."

Not even a dressing!

'A scribe meets Mr. Gandhi'—is the title of an account of an interview.

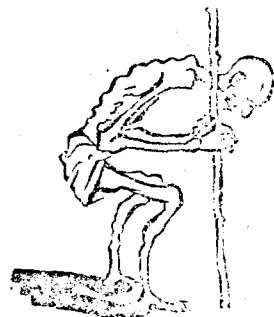
This is accompanied by a leader in a contemporary, which might have had for its title: 'And a Pharisee comments.'

At the preliminary meeting to concert measures for holding another All-Parties Conference recently held at Bombay, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta asked what they proposed to do, if the Government refused to modify the White Paper. It was pointed out in reply that the question did not arise now.

But should it arise, there would still be room for convening still another conference.

Judgment in the Reichstag Fire Case has been delivered.

It is pleasing to record that all the accused have got what they prayed for: Death in the case of Van der Lubbe, and acquittal in the case of others.



Hail and Farewell

'Ave atque vale.'

MY visitor looked anxiously at the clock. A wistful smile hovered round the corners of his lips. During the last few days, he had been forced to take to his bed, much against his will. It was clear that he was hastening to his dissolution with alarming rapidity. He was, I could see, unwilling to go, yet powerless to stay. I realised that I was soon to part from him—for ever. It induced in me a warmth of feeling towards him which, notwithstanding that he had been often enough boresome, contrarious and exasperating, overcame me by its suddenness.

'I'm afraid I must go,' he faltered at last.

I realised the pathetic finality of his farewell, but could not soften it by indulging in the formal inanities of a ceremonious parting. But I wished to avoid, if possible, a funeral note in my valediction.

'There's no help for it,' I replied as lightly as I could; 'but you have one advantage over us, mortals; you know when you must go. If our politicians and ministers only knew as much, we should be much better off than we are.'

But my visitor was apparently in a reminiscent mood, and sententiously remarked: "It's been a trying year, all things considered."

'Very trying indeed,' I admitted; 'what with the Meerut trial, the Russian Sabotage trial, the Reichstag Fire trial, not to mention the numerous 'terrorist' and other trials much nearer home.....'

'I was speaking figuratively,' he interrupted me in a mildly deprecating tone. 'I was thinking of the world in general,—economic chaos, political stale-mate, if not rampant reaction, international mistrust; the League like me on its sick-bed, and the future altogether very much in the air.'

'You are quite right,' I remarked. 'All are agreed that the future is in the air. Did you notice that Britain is out to speed up her air-craft building programme?'

He sat up in his bed excitedly. 'Your facetiousness is wholly out of place. I survey a world of ruined hopes, of frustrated ambitions. My only comfort is, and it's cold comfort, that I shall never know what disasters are in store for this giddy generation.'

You cannot argue with a man who is old and sick and disillusioned. I therefore tried to humour him.

'Pardon me if I do not seem to appreciate the solemnity of the occasion. It's your misfortune to feel a special responsibility for the whole world.

Speaking as an individual interested in the corner of it which I occupy, I think the situation is fairly well in hand. We have the Pax Britannica—still: there's still gold to be exported from the country. Trade is booming; Civil Disobedience is dead. Our legislators have proved that exchange at 18d. is no robbery; a European is the Mayor of Madras; another bids fair to be one of our ministers; elections will again be postponed; and last but by no means the least, racing goes on simultaneously at least in three centres throughout the year in this ancient land.'

'If you are satisfied, so much the worse for you.'

'Pardon me again; I too was generalising. My personal views are an entirely different matter. I'm afraid, preaching is not in my line; specially as I believe that it is as futile to improve the world, as to try to straighten the involutions of a dog's tail. The moment you let it go, it gets back all its pristine contortions.'

'Are you too among the cynics?'

'Anyway, I am not among the lugubrious. I hold that the world must get much worse before it gets better. It's the only realistic and rational view of the matter.'

'I thought young men at least were idealistic.'

'O yes, I have my own ideals; the first of them is not to be down-hearted; secondly, better have no ideals than low ideals. Then there would be no room for disappointment. I see many of my more fortunate countrymen in office or power thriving pretty well under the inspiration of No. 2 above.'

'And to think that, but a year ago, you should have hailed me with such high-sounding resolutions! You've deceived me; let me charitably hope that you deceived yourselves too.'

'In that case, the responsibility would be yours; if we've failed, you'll go down in history branded with our failures.'

'I care little for that; for I shall be insensible to the judgment of posterity. But it breaks my heart to see myself ignored even before my time; it is hard to go unhonoured, unwept and unsung.'

'I'm sorry if I've given you such an impression. I shall miss you badly,—for a time. In fact, I am almost certain that I shall mix you up with your successor at least for a whole month. But may I say that during the time that we've been together, we've seen many things, learnt some things, enjoyed a few things and perhaps regretted others.'

'But, for me, only the regrets remain.'

'Well, you are a Job's comforter, I must say; there's misery enough in all conscience, without our being called upon to add to the sum-total. Come, admit that you're taking too gloomy a view of the situation. Put on a bright face, and confess that you have enjoyed some things at least.'

Thus put on his defence, my venerable friend knitted his brows in concentrated thought; after a few moments, his face relaxed, and a faint twinkle dawned in his eyes.

'You are young and can afford to be an optimist.'

'I can stand the truth too; come, a straight answer to a straight question.'

'Well, then,' he replied almost grudgingly, 'I admit you've been a jolly companion; but if you're fishing for a compliment from me, you won't get it.'

'The loss will be the season's, not mine. But, if you don't mind, you might be more explicit.'

'Honestly, I was not very hopeful that you would survive the thousand ills of infantile existence. Though we were born together, I see that you have, unlike me, grown stronger as the months passed by. I shall miss you more than all the others, whose performance has fallen short of their promise. You have created a demand, which you have so far supplied with conspicuous success. I did not know till you came what the poet meant when he said that 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin'.

'What do you mean?' I asked, uncertain whether to take his words seriously or otherwise.

'Why, I mean the comic touch, of course! All of us wear motley in our brains. It's a merciful providence that enables us to see it by reflection. After all I'm not sure if it's not more effective to laugh men out of their folly than to dragoon them into virtue.'

'You flatter me,' I said, somewhat embarrassed by the high claim made for our humble efforts to amuse.

'O, I'm not praising you for what you have done but for what you may do. In the circumambient

gloom, there's scope for the play of light without heat. May you establish yourself on the horizon of Indian journalism, and be a source of unfailing brightness and unflinching candour, lighting the path of the weary, and cheering the heart of the dejected.'

'Thank you for the benediction; it's so reassuring to be told that there's room for me! My aim has been to be a good companion, to whoever cares for my company; to be familiar but not coarse, and to be candid without being cautions. I only hope that your successor will have as good cause to approve of me, as you've had.'

'There! you're already thinking of my successor. I don't blame you. It's the way of the world to welcome the coming, and speed the parting guest. I shall not speak for my unfortunate successor, who will no doubt be as much over-praised and under-estimated as I have been.'

'You need not be so hard on him, seeing that he is condemned for ever to be posthumously born. But before you go, may I present these volumes as a slight souvenir of our mutual association?' and I took out a bundle of Merry Mags. for the year 1933.

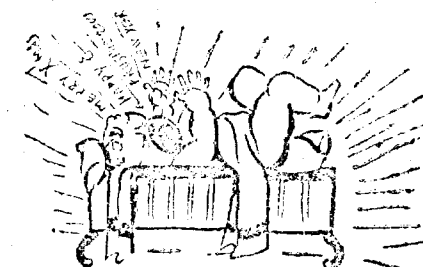
'Sorry, I take nothing with me,—on principle. It would be invidious too. Offer it to the youngster who is waiting impatiently to be born. My time is up. Farewell!'

'Hail and Farewell!' I exclaimed, as a peal of bells rang out through the clear night air, and 1934 was ushered into existence with a universal chorus of rejoicings.

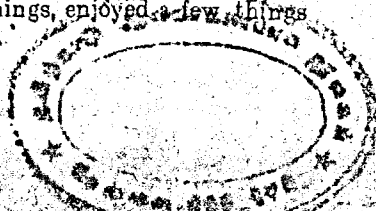
I looked at the bed, and rubbed my eyes. There was a tiny cot, and in it, a rosy-hued cherub-like infant was kicking its feet, and crying out lustily. With some difficulty, I made out its message: A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU!

Dear Readers, to you as to the new-comer, I repeat heartily:

A Happy New Year to you, and many, many happy returns of it!



Only about one hundred entries have been received in our One Thousand Rupees Literary Competition. Readers will remember that we announced the award of this handsome prize amount solely with a view to encourage readers to submit entries in the hope that we would be able to discover fresh talent. We have also received a large number of letters requesting that the time for entering may be extended. It has therefore been decided to extend the closing date which will now be the 31st March 1934.



— THE FIRST TEST MATCH —

(RITA)



Tis one of the unwritten laws of my house that I should be the first to open the newspaper as soon as it arrives. The news-boy has standing instructions to leave it on my table, if I should be away at the time. My wife would occasionally contravene the rule—in my absence. But, generally, I am in undisturbed possession of the paper for about a quarter of an hour; my wife would then come up quite casually, asking the invariable question: 'What's in the papers to-day?' The equally invariable answer would be 'Nothing!' the while that I am deeply engaged in the perusal of *tripe in bold type*. The wife would then gently seek to disengage the picture-page, while encouraging me to go on with my perusal. It is one of the daily trials of our existence to be forced to share the newspaper. *That* would be the signal for my surrendering the paper *in toto*. She would gather the sheets and retreat to her domain, well or ill-pleased in direct proportion to the extent to which I evince my displeasure at her intrusion.

This daily ritual was disastrously upset for me on the morning of Tuesday, the 19th December, 1933. We had received no papers from Madras during the previous two days, on account of the break-down of communications. Was it an accident or a portent that the cyclone should have synchronised with the dates of the first Test Match between England and India? You can therefore imagine how impatient I was to see Monday's newspaper. I went out to my gate to receive the news-boy, as I would an honoured and eagerly awaited guest. I snatched the paper from his hands, and instinctively turned to the sporting page, where a line of gigantic type announced: 'ENGLAND WIN FIRST TEST.' For a moment, the world seemed to me on the point of dissolution. The paper slipped from my hands and lay unheeded in the garden, while I dragged myself to my seat—with a broken heart!

My wife sailed in, as usual; and the mechanical question was arrested on her lips, as, looking out of the window, she saw that the paper lay disgraced in the compound, the sheets flying at one another even as my dear countrymen are!

'Why, the paper's come,' exclaimed my wife wonderingly. 'Didn't you know? Look, I believe the children have made a mess of it.'

With that she went out, and tenderly picked them up, to the accompaniment of a running fire of angry exclamations directed against the, in the present case, innocent children.

'There you are,' she said, coming back and pretending to put the paper on my table while trying to extract some of the sheets.

'Take it away,' I cried hoarsely, 'we've lost the Test Match.' Looking back on that moment of anguish, I do declare, no tragic hero could have improved on my performance.

There was blank amazement in my wife's face. Her ignorance naturally struggled with the wifely desire to share my grief.

'What's it, dear? You seem terribly upset. Is it anything serious?'

I controlled myself with a violent effort.

'I knew that this rain and storm and cyclone was a bad omen.' I said it to myself with the unavailing regret of retrospection.

'I don't understand the context; but as for the rain being a bad omen, either you or H. E. the Viceroy is wrong. For did he not say the other day in Madras that it was a very auspicious omen for him to be welcomed by so much rain?'

'O, that!'—I exclaimed in disgust, 'Viceroys can be egregious, you have no excuse. It must have been some ready-tongued Rao Saheb or Rao Bahadur, with further expectations, that must have given the tip to H. E., mainly no doubt to keep him in countenance. Ask any old woman and she will tell you that rains are a bad omen, and unseasonable rains a *dead cert*.'

'Still, I don't quite follow you. A few minutes ago, do you know, you nearly frightened me out of my wits? What if we have lost a Test Match? We might win another. And anyway, what is a Test Match?'

Next to playing the game, is to see it; next to seeing it is to read about it; and next to reading about it, is to talk about it. But I had doubts if my wife was sufficiently well-informed about the game of cricket, to make conversation with her on it possible. But I was anxious to find some outlet for my pent-up emotions. And so began:

The First Test Match

'Well, a test match is a match intended to test which is the better of two teams.'

'Is that not true of every match?' asked my wife, pertinently, I think.

'In a way, no doubt,' I replied, conscious that I had not begun well; 'but a test match is a far more serious affair; we prepare for it longer; talk about it more, spend more on it, earn more by it and above all expect it to be fought out more strenuously than ordinary matches.'

'I think it all sounds so silly!'

'My dear girl, you are, as usual, pluming yourself on your ignorance. Was not Waterloo won on the cricket fields of England? And how can we hope to win self-government without showing that we can beat the Briton at his own game?'

'In that case, ask him to play *your* game, beat him at it, and then demand self-government. Why should we play *his* game? Do other countries play it? What about France, Germany, Italy, or even America?'

'How like a woman! Don't you understand that the future of the empire hangs on sport, and that cricket is the sport of the empire?'

'All the same, I consider it a tiresome game. Eleven fellows loaf about in the field, eating their heads off, with nothing to do; and two fellows, bandaged all over, run between two sets of stumps, like madcaps. And you call it an exciting game. Well, I never—'

'More than 40,000 witnessed the Bombay match. But O, the pity of it; our men let us down badly.'

My wife took the sporting sheet, and read out India's first innings score. When she found that she had to repeat l. b. w., four times, her curiosity became over-powering, and she asked me: 'Who is this l. b. w.? He seems to have accounted for four players.'

'And the pick of the bunch, worse luck.'

'But who is he? Why is his name not given in full, as in the case of the others?'

'L. B. W. is not a man, nor a thing, but an optical illusion. The person called the umpire is more often subject to it than the batsman or the spectators.'

'I see that seven of the Indian players have l. b. w. against only one on the other side.'

'The trouble with our fellows is that they have no staying power. They had only to stick on, and they would have drawn the match.'

'At any rate, it's some comfort that Amarnath made a century.'

'What good is that ultimately? If only he and the others had thought of the team as a whole!'

'I think you're hard to please. It says that Amarnath is only 19. It's very creditable, I should say, though I don't pretend to know anything about the game.'

'What we want is not stray brilliance; but to hold on like a leech, that's what we want.'

'What's the good of that again? There it says that Colah held on. And what is the result? It appears that the poor man was hit all over the body. I call it a shame; why was he not declared L.B.W.? By the way what does it mean?'

'It means leg-before-wicket.'

'He was very nearly lost before wicket.'

'There's no use of crying over spilt milk. Our captain has promised to do better next time. After all, we've not yet lost the rubber. If we can draw the next one, and win the final, I shall be content for the present. If Calcutta will do its bit, let us hope Madras will save our honour, and show the final score as one all.'

'It's no great matter if they don't. Only I hope that none of our men will be so cruelly treated as Colah was.'

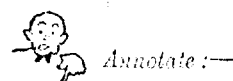
'But if we fail,' I continued disregarding her feminine inconsequence, 'it would prove the inferiority of our youth to our elders. May our batsmen be inspired by the tenacity of some of our elder statesmen to stick on at all costs!'

'What have our elder statesmen to do with it? I don't find their names in the team. I think you are not quite all there this morning.' My wife's irony fell flat on me.

'Everything. They know the cardinal principle of the game of cricket—to hold on. I want our players to copy that from them. Then they will go a long way to maintain the prestige of the country in sport, as it is maintained by our tenacious elders in other directions.'

TICKLERS

(TUT-TUT-TUT)



Annotation:—

- (a) We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love, and reverence and regret.
- (b) 'To hold with the hare and run with the hound.'
- (c) 'Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables
that he who runs may read it.'
- (d) 'Of all the cants that are canted in a canting
world, the most odious is that of the man who
re-cants.'



Write short notes on:—

- (a) Newfoundland.
- (b) The Capitation Tribunal's Findings.
- (c) The Reform of the House of Lords.



What do you know of:—

- (a) The Kumararajah of Venkatagiri.
- (b) Sir A. L. Tottenham.
- (c) Sir Cowasji Jehangir.



ANSWERS

1. (a) Madras excelled itself, and beat all previous records by the wonderful welcome which it accorded to Mahatmaji. Coming so soon after the visit of the Viceroy, the people as well as those in high places had a unique opportunity of making comparisons and contrasts. Even the Madras Mail has written decently about it; and we must say it *can* be fair-minded, and even charming, if it wants to. We hope that the huge crowds who gave such a touching demonstration of their affection for the frail body, will do something to bring about an improvement in the lot of the untouchables,—for long a festering sore in the body politic. In this connection we offer our profound obeisance to Mr. Bhasyam Aiyangar, president of the Servants of the Untouchables Society. A retired judge of our province, his conversion to the cause of the 'untouchables' is a triumph as much to the justice

of the cause, as to the magnetic personality of Gandhiji. When the highest in the land thus stoop in service to the lowest and the most down-trodden, does it not show that we are bound to conquer?

- (b) From the heights of idealism, we shall now plumb for a while the muddy depths of the art of political legerdemain. Dewan Bahadur Ramaswamy Mudaliar has performed a difficult feat. He can point to a vehement speech on the ratio question, espousing the popular point of view. He can, on the other side, point to his neutrality at the time of the division. It is well-known that the Government will encourage you to say anything you like, so long as it is understood that you will do only what *they* like. Perhaps the Dewan Bahadur hopes to satisfy everybody concerned; but he goes about the wrong way by beginning to satisfy himself. Public memory is proverbially short; but we shall try to remind this *soi-disant* leader, of his betrayal, at the proper time.

- (c) Pandit Jawaharlal is still at it. We do not hold with all that he says concerning the shape of things to come. But we wish to place on record our conviction that he has proved himself more than a match for all the hosts ranged against him. It has been an intellectual treat to watch the pandit's controversial manner. Integrity, urbanity, a singular moderation of expression, but uncompromising in the logical development and statement of his conviction? We go so far as to doubt if all newspaper readers have fully realised that in him we have a man with the most dispassionate and compact intellect in the country. There is withal a simplicity in the presentment of his ideas, which whether he succeeds or fails, will still mark him out as the evangelist of the newer and younger India to be.

- (d) This might apply to any one of the nameless hordes that have sprung up like *poochies* after a rainy evening, and die after a brief and inglorious existence. We refer generally to the protagonists of the anti-Gandhi movement, which is being desperately propped up in some places in South India. More particularly, we have in mind, Mr. S. Ramanathan who edits a weekly called the Rationalist. Mr. Ramanathan was at one time a staunch

nationalist, believing in the gospel of Khaddar, which he promoted with missionary zeal. He suffered for his convictions, like many other heroic sons of the country. But a mysterious change has come over him. He is now against all that he held sacred and vital not long ago. It is one of the tragedies of great idealistic and popular movements that it should produce their Ramanathans side by side with sturdier martyrs. Let us hope for better things still from one who has by his past a claim on our indulgence, if not respect.

2. (a) This is, or rather was, till recently, one of the self-governing units of the British empire. During the post-war period, it came in for a good deal of economic suffering as a result of which its debts rose to the extent of about 17 millions. The creditors were, of course, the directors controlling 'Big Business' in London. There was danger of default of payment of the interest on the debt. A bill was rushed through Parliament, quite recently, as a result of which the colony has its self-governing institutions scrapped, and its administration taken over by the Crown. Its affairs will henceforth be managed by a Commission appointed by the Crown, and its primary business will be to pay the creditors. Incidentally, it is hoped that some berths will be found for some of the retired or retiring civilians from India. We have thought it worth while to refer to this episode to point to an imperfectly appreciated moral. Empire is first and last a matter of business; and it must be made to pay. If the self-government of even an English colony interferes with it, self-government must go, because the empire is too sacred to be touched. We therefore enjoyed the unconscious humour of a simpleton in the Assembly, who the other day, declared that the Reserve Bank Bill as passed by the Assembly, ensured 'financial swaraj for India.' We prophesy that he will live to be a wiser and sadder man.
- (b) Sometime ago, we referred to this tribunal's labours 'as a dead secret.' Now it's out. The material fact emerges that Britain is to pay India 1½ millions towards the training and upkeep of British troops in India. It is not to have retrospective effect. Considering that the tribunal might have argued that on account of Pax Britannica, India should pay even more than she does towards Imperial charges, we must accept with gratitude this slender instalment of tardy justice niggardly administered.

Ticklers

- (c) A bill has been sponsored by Lord Salisbury, whom all India knows as 'a plain, blunt man that loves his country.' The aim of the bill is to extract in advance, the fangs of a future Labour Government. It was the late Asquith that crippled the power of the House of Lords; the present bill is an attempt to regain not only the lost powers, but to seek to entrench the forces of reaction more compactly for the future. It is an attempt to provide safeguards for the die-hards in England; and thus to provoke a more militant extremism in the forces of the left. A labour peer described it as an attempt to 'hamper, handicap and hamstring a future Government.' Being a private bill, it is not likely to get much 'forarder'; but it is apparently the futile Utopia of many members of the present National Government. In the circumstances the use of the word Reform in the context seems nothing less than an audacious euphemism.

3. (a) One of the ornamental footnotes to our landed aristocracy. He went to England as a representative of the Zamindars. Made himself conspicuous some years ago by donating Rs. 50,000 towards the construction of the Madras-Guindy race-course. He has gone out of his way to explain why he has refused to read an address of welcome voted by his District Board. He says he has great respect for Mahatmaji; yet if he read an address of welcome to him, it might be taken to mean that he was a supporter of the Congress! It is an ironic providence that has condemned the Zamindar class to make up with their wealth for their lamentable lack of logic. Mr. Ladden presented an address on behalf of the city of Madras, without exposing himself to any such imaginary mental anguish. And finally, may we tell the Kumararajah that the Congress is more anxious not to be identified with the Kumararajah than the Kumararajah can be with the Congress? But we have hopes of this young scion of an old house. We believe he is a cricketer; let us hope he will learn to play the game, if not for himself, at least for the sake of his side.

- (b) This gentleman was born in 1873; he came to India as a civilian in 1893. In due time he retired; but reappeared as the Pudukotah Administrator in 1933. We cannot say anything more about his future career until after 1943. Anyway, three seems to be his lucky number.

- (c) He is Bombay's representative in the Assembly. Took a heroic part in piloting the Reserve Bank Bill successfully through the Assembly. We wondered why, until we read him saying at the third reading:

'I come from a pro-British family. I will continue to have this connection.....' We cannot help repeating his last sentence in a slightly modified form: 'God forbid that such members should be sent again by any province.'



I popped the question.....and she took me.

I WAS scamping in a semi-somnolent mood through the gory pages of a 'Sixpenny Shocker' when I was jerked into wakefulness by a profound statement.

"The life of a new husband," says the sixpenny novelist, "is crammed with surprises—especially so if his wife is 'highly educated'."

I sat up. It was so dashed good that I had to call my wife and read it aloud to her.

"Leela," I called down the stair-case, "please do come up for a minute."

But, as usual, Mohammed waited for ten minutes and then sheepishly went to the mountain. Leela was in the kitchen.

I found her by the oil stove, with perspiration on her brow.

And a cookery book, open at p. 25, was lying on the floor.

"*Dosais*, dear?" I asked, in such a tender voice that anyone could have guessed it was still the first month of our married life.

She smiled.

"It's so wicked of you to come in without knocking," she pouted, putting on a mask of annoyance.

I wasn't deceived, the dimples were there. I married Leela not for her cookery, or her degree, but for her adorable dimples. She had all along been in hostels, learning Logic, the Gold Standard, the History of Uganda and things of that sort, and it just wasn't her fault if she didn't know housekeeping, darning and such darn things that some idealistic husbands expect their wives to know. With better luck she could have married an I.C.S. officer instead of a pettifogger—that's myself—and gone through life distributing prizes, opening jumble sales and presiding over ladies' meetings. But man proposes, woman accepts. I popped the question, and she took me.

"*Dosais*?" I asked again.

"Half a minute to clear out," she said, trying her very best to look serious.

But a man isn't married three weeks without knowing when his wife is serious and when not.

"Hullo! What is that?" I asked, pointing to a lump of indifferent-looking brown paste. Evidently it was cooked stuff.

"Ah, er—that's something for the pup," she replied.

"Are you sure Ginger will survive it?" I chaffed.

"Don't nag," said Leela, raising an admonitory fore-finger. "Didn't you read the novel 'Love After Marriage—Is It Possible?' by Ursula Bloom or somebody? Well, she has made it quite clear that love after the wedding-bells is possible only in the absence of nagging."

"*Peccavi*!" I cried. Her logic was unassailable, though I wished she weren't quite so strong in the subject. In fact, all these days—twenty-five, in all—I have been unusually happy, except on the few occasions when I had cause to remember that she had won a College Prize for proficiency in Logic. And I don't quite know if I would have had the courage to propose if I had heard of the prize—dimples or no dimples!

"Nagging apart, dear," said I, "do you really think that Ginger will get away with it?"

"Seeing is believing," she declared. "Ginger!"

Ginger was in the garden, trying to tackle a hard bone from all possible angles.

"Ginger! Ginger! GIN-N-N-G-GER!"

A scuttling noise, a rattle of falling crockery, and a bundle of wool with a flickering tail at the end of it shot into the kitchen.

"Naughty boy!" said Leela. "Whoever asked you to enter the kitchen? Get out."

The pup looked reproachfully at her. Was he summoned from his bone only to be asked to get out? "Oh, these women!" said Ginger to himself, as he stared at her and swept the floor with his bushy tail, just to show that he was a thankful son of a bitch.

Leela repented.

"Come along, Ginger dear," said she, leading him out of the kitchen.

Ginger was dynamic once again. He pricked up his ears, flopped his tail all over the place and gave yelps of joy that filled the room with noise and my heart with sunshine.

While Leela was at her motherly act I sneaked into the kitchen and had a glance at p. 25 of the book. "How to make *dosai*," was the title of the page. And I knew that the indifferent-looking brown lump was love's labour lost. That is to say, a couple of mangled *dosais*.

When I returned Ginger was on his back, whining dolorously and trying frantically to remove something from the roof of his mouth. He coughed and belched, spat and spluttered; he switched his head from starboard to larboard and from larboard to starboard again; he gasped, rolled about, tried his paws and his hind-legs in turn, but the stuff stuck like carpenter's glue.

Leela was blubbing. What else could she do, poor dear? None of her professors had taught her how to render first aid to a pup with a lot of food sticking to the ceiling of its mouth.

"Oh, my Ginger, my Ginger, my Ginger!" she wailed. "I didn't mean it, Ginger! Honest, Ginger! Pardon me, Ginger!"

"What's all this sob-stuff, Leela?" I asked, as sternly as a husband should.

"I've killed Ginger," she whimpered, and, like Rachel of old, would not be comforted.

"You call that dead?" I asked, pointing to the dynamic mass on the ground. I should have laughed, but didn't have the heart to do it. Rather the nerve.

"Shall I phone for the Vet.?" I asked.

"Please do."

"But do you think he is so bad as to need a veterinary surgeon?"

"Do shut up. You are too terribly self-contradictory," she warned.

I shut up. What chance had a fellow against a woman graduate who had won a prize for proficiency in Inductive and Deductive Logic?

Meanwhile Ginger had changed his tactics. The canine rascal ran round and round my rugged self, working his head like the piston of a steam engine all the time.

"Leela," I tittered, "I have half a mind to report you to the S. P. C. A."

"Do you call yourself a man?"

"*Genus homo*, to be exact," I replied.

"Instead of trying to be humorous, why can't you do something?"

I did. Catching hold of Ginger by the scruff of the neck, I scooped out the wretched stuff from his palate. Leela was delighted.

"Come here, my tootsy-wootsy-doo-doo," she said.

"No, thanks. I've had enough for the day," said Ginger, dropping his tail to half-mast and peering timidly at her through the corner of his eye.

We had *idlies* for breakfast.

"Leela," said I, "you are a marvel. Only thirty minutes ago you were trying to make *dosais* and now I see that you have landed *idlies*."

She blushed with modest pride, and her dimples were dimplier than ever. I felt like picking her up and smothering her with kisses, but the crockery intervened. And the table. As it was, I could only croon:

Dimples! Dimples! Little star,

How I wonder that you are

No hundred-per-cent Cine star!

"Leela," I purred, "you are the best wife I ever had."

"How many have you had in your life?"

"Oh, the number is immaterial. You are easily the best of the lot."

After breakfast I had another squint at her cookery book. At the bottom of page 25 I saw the following words:

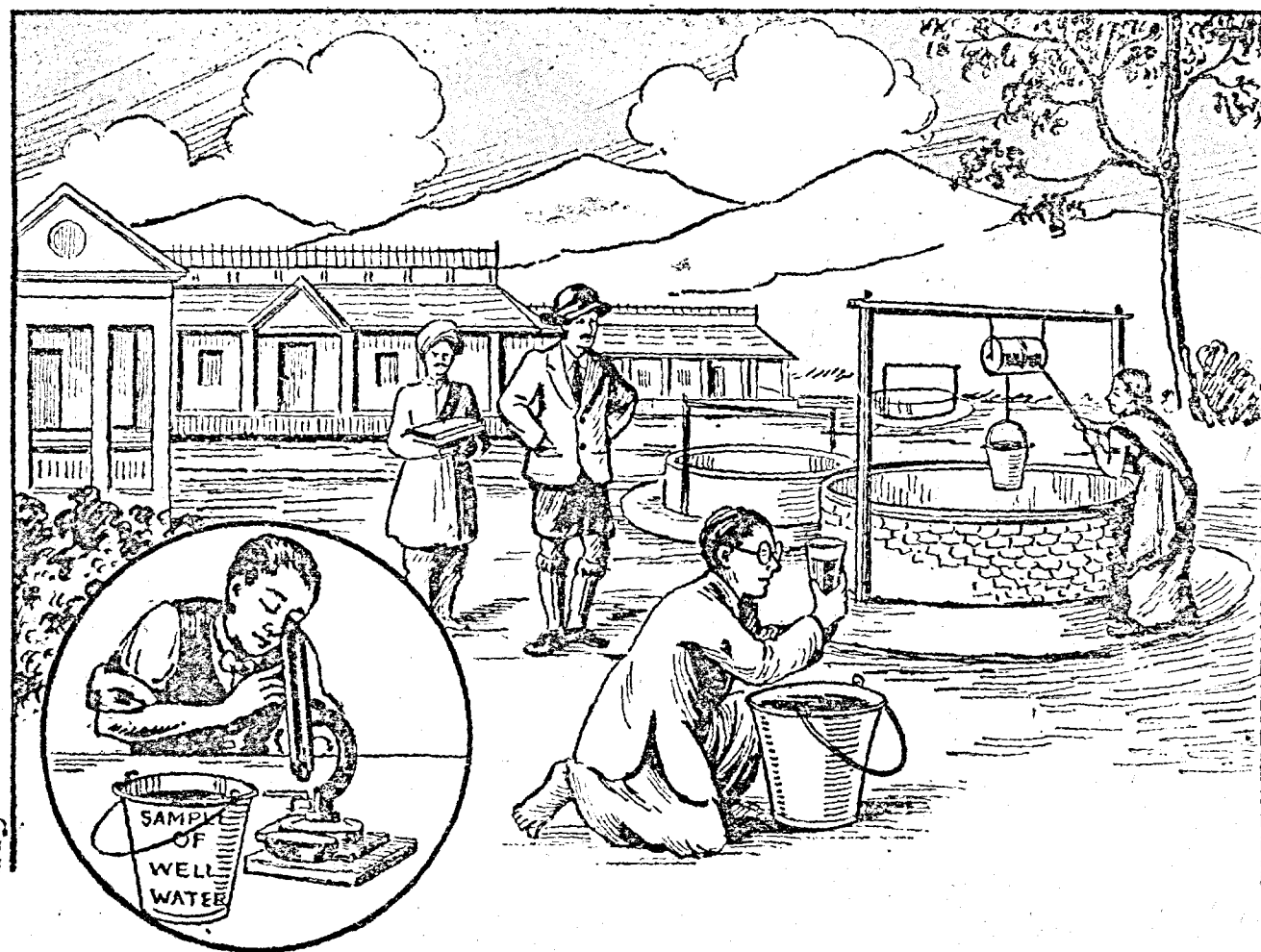
"If the *dosai* does not readily come off the pan—well, why worry? A resourceful housewife can always convert the stuff into *idlies* in practically no time."

Well, well, I never will forget that Leela is a Bachelor of Arts. And I daresay Ginger won't forget it either.

SUSILA ARRANGES A PICNIC PARTY

N. S. PILLIEUX

Susila



.....The Health Staff came down and inspected the locality.



I can't explain it really, but I have an inveterate hatred for what they call 'parties'—I mean, dinner parties, tea parties, picnic parties and so on. Most of my friends ascribe it to the fact that I am shy and reserved by nature; the less charitable of them, that I suffer from acute dyspepsia and a few even go to the length of suspecting that I am a neurasthenic exhibiting a morbid 'phobia' for crowded places. Whatever the real cause may be, the fact remains that I always hate these parties like the plague.

Susila is very particular that I should celebrate her birthday every year, and usually I do the 'celebrating' by giving her a birthday present. But last year Susila voted that we should arrange for a picnic party for a dozen or more of our select friends. Naturally I stoutly refused to do anything of the sort; but persistent nagging reinforced by a judicious exhibition of the ocular brine and curtain lectures running on for days on end, gradually won me over and I had to yield at last.

The exact locality best suited for arranging the party agitated her mind for a while; but, she decided,

on consultation with some of her friends, that 'Amaparai' just over five miles from Kanjiyur should be the venue. The question having been solved once for all, a jubilant Susila set about issuing invitations both written and personal to her select coterie of intimate friends. The exact date offered some difficulty, because unfortunately her birthday fell on a Wednesday and I knew that my boss would never grant me casual leave if he ever came to know that it was for a picnic party—no boss will, I dare say. But Susila was equal to the occasion.

"Oh! we can have it on a Sunday, say the Sunday following. Of course, there is no harm if it comes off a day or two prior to or later than the exact date. You know my birthday comes off on the 18th, we shall have the party say on the 22nd."

The 22nd day of April arrived in due course. Susila was in full charge of all the arrangements. The vessels and the provisions were sent along with the cooks even the previous day. Early next morning we and the whole party motored to the place. There was a choultry at the foot of the hill in the middle of a small village. We put our things in the choultry and went hiking to

the top of the hill. Susila had brought her gramophone and a splendid collection of records. We spent our time hearing the latest musical hits of some of our famous musicians. The less musically inclined of us played bridge. Somehow or other we spent our time pleasantly till it was time for the dinner.

It was past 12 o'clock and we came down the hill as hungry as the proverbial wolf. We thought we could do justice to the splendid feast that awaited us down below. The cooks had already laid the leaves and were waiting for us. Just then I saw two strangers coming into the choultry. They stood on the verandah for a while and coughed apologetically.

I came out and asked them what they wanted.

"Did you take water from the well over there, sir?"

"I did not, but my cooks might have; for I don't see any other well near by. But why?" I inquired.

"Please ask them, sir," the fellow was persistent. The cooks informed me that they had utilised the water from the well for cooking purposes.

The two chaps held a short consultation for a while.

"Sir, I don't know whether you will get angry and all that, but it is our duty to inform you that the water from this particular well has been condemned by the Health Department as unfit for human consumption. Recently we had a virulent epidemic of fever, they called it—er—Typho—Typhoi—"

"Typhoid fever?"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir, it was Typhoid fever. We had a terrible epidemic of this disease, which practically decimated the whole village. The Health staff came down here and inspected the wells in the locality. They even took samples from the different wells. A few days later they returned and informed us that the water from that well," pointing to the well from where we had taken our water, "was the cause of the epidemic. They had also put up a notice to that effect, but some mischievous urchins must have torn it away, I dare say."

By this time the whole party had come to the verandah and was hearing his words with rapt attention. There was a look of unmistakable consternation on the faces of the whole party. The atmosphere of gaiety vanished as if by magic, giving place to one of horror. Susila was really panic-stricken.

We held a short consultation among ourselves.

"I am glad that the fellow informed us at least now, or else—" Susila shuddered.

"I say, Mr. Pillieux, we shall do one thing." It was Seshu. "We don't mind going back hungry and all that. Any day it is better than catching the infection of Typhoid."

"Yes," joined Mrs. Leela Ramanathan, "we don't want to catch enteric fever."

"Of course, Typhoid fever is a terrible disease you know," out came the voluble Mrs. Subhadra Ammal, "my brother died of Typhoid last year, as also my first cousin twice removed the year before last: and I don't want to emulate them this year," trying to be humorous.

But her humour was lost in the gloom prevailing all round. We unanimously resolved to leave the dinner untouched.

I called the country gentleman.

"I say, take this as a present," I gave him a five-rupee note, "for giving me this valuable information. I dare say you have actually saved the lives of about a score of us." He murmured his thanks.

All that remained for us was to pack our things and return home forthwith. But there was this difficulty. The vessels had to be emptied of their contents and cleaned. That would have taken time, but Susila made a valuable suggestion.

"Dear, we can entrust that job with the country gent. He seems to be a nice sort of chap. We may pay him something. Let him empty the dinner into the gutter or dispose of it in any other manner he thinks fit and return the vessels to us tomorrow."

"That certainly is a capital idea," I acquiesced. The country gent appeared to understand and appreciate our difficulty and graciously offered to take the vessels to our house the same evening.

"I shall have to throw such a grand dinner into the gutter!" he exclaimed sorrowfully.

We forthwith left the place and motored to Kanjiyur, taking the cooks also along with us.

A week later, I casually met the Health Inspector on the road. He was a particular friend of mine.

"I say, Mr. Subbier, you are very busy nowadays, aren't you? Lots of Typhoid fever horeabouts, eh?"

"Where? Where is Typhoid fever? I have never heard or come across a single case of Typhoid fever or cholera anywhere here for the last two years."

"No! But I heard that recently there was a violent epidemic of Typhoid in Amaparai?"

"Fiddlesticks! as if I wouldn't be informed if there was such an epidemic."

I then told him all about our picnic party and how we had to forego our grand dinner simply because we had utilised the water from a well that had been condemned by the Health Department.

"Ha! Ha!! Ha!!!" he laughed outright. "You were fooled, one and all. There was neither any epidemic anywhere near Amaparai nor was any well there condemned. It was all a plot to deprive you of your grand feast, so that the villagers might partake of it to their heart's content after you left. But, did he return the vessels?"

"Oh, yes, he did; the same evening. And I remember Susila was so very pleased that she gave him a five-rupee note."

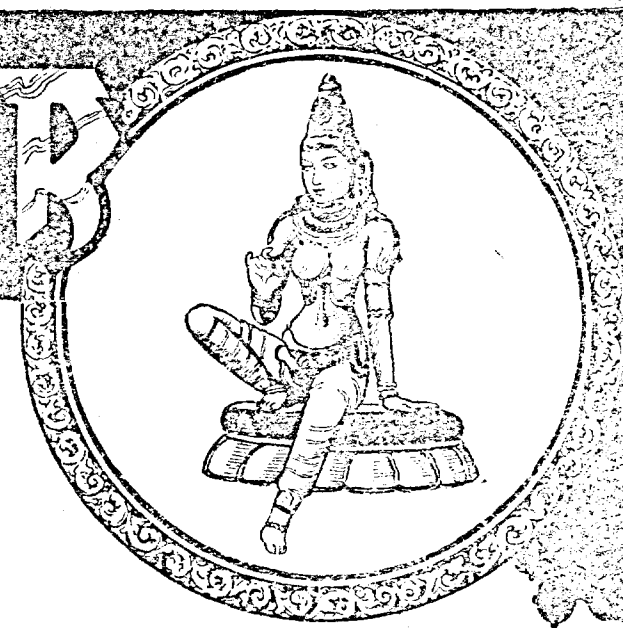
"That is to say," drawled Mr. Subbier, "you have in all paid him ten rupees for a mere nothing, and given a grand dinner to the villagers of Amaparai while yourselves and your guests had to come away with empty stomachs and watering tongues. A capital story for a humorous magazine!"

"Yes, and I promise you shall read it in our favourite fortnightly in the near future. Good evening!"



THE PRINCE

"WE CAN'T
LIVE ON LOVE!"



In the previous nine Instalments.

In the days of her adolescence, Devi (the only daughter of a Devadasi) falls in love with her boyfriend, Seenu. A rich Chettiar from Madras takes Devi under his protection and while living with him Devi meets Seenu again and he visits her frequently. They find themselves hopelessly in love.

The Chettiar comes to know of it, gets furious and drives Devi out of the house stripping her of all her jewellery. The lovers go back to their village but Devi's house is locked and Seenu has not enough money with him to take them back to Madras.

Story By Devan
Pictures by Sekar.

Sattai, who was sauntering along that street, suddenly stopped in his tracks. "Is it Deva, or am I dreaming?" he exclaimed, puzzled. Seeing she was silent, he turned to Seenu with a question in his eyes, but Seenu too turned his head away.

"Why, what is the matter?" exclaimed Sattai again, sensing that something was wrong.

"Well," said Deva, "the matter is, I am unable to get into my house!"

"Do you want to?"

"Certainly!"

"Then, it is easily managed though so far as I know, there isn't anything inside the house worth looking at. But, tell me, why are you looking like this?"

"All in good time, Sattai. What about opening that door?"

"I will break it open!"

"Do so, please!"

"Wait till I get a hammer."

Sattai brought a hammer and broke the lock. The house was full of dust and cobwebs. There was not a single piece of furniture or a single brass vessel anywhere. The house was as empty as space.

Deva told Sattai of her plight. Sattai listened to her story with a glum face and at the end, spat contemptuously on the floor.

"You are a fool, Deva!" said he, not caring to hide his contempt. "You get a swell Chettiar and you go and live with him and you come back and tell me you haven't got a single rupee with you. You were sweet always on this Brahmin and he hasn't got a copper coin with him. Who is going to feed you, clothe you and look after you?"

"Sattai!" said Seenu, "you ought not to talk to her like that and frighten her. Things are bound to improve shortly. There is a God above!"



"Oh, yes, I know. He is always above,—so far above, that He doesn't see what's going on down below here. Please leave God alone and tell me wherefrom she is going to get her next meal?"

"We both belong to this village," said Seenu haughtily, "and there must be people here who wouldn't allow us to starve."

"Alright!" said Sattai shrugging his shoulders and extending his arms. "Let those kind and good people come and take good care of you. I wash my hands entirely of this affair and I am going."

"Don't, Sattai!" Deva pleaded.

"What do you want me to do?" asked Sattai.

"Can't you think of something?"

"I can. As a matter of fact, I have been doing all the thinking ever since I saw you. This morning I had an excellent omen. But ..."

"Go on!"

"Remember, Sattai works alone. Judge him by results!"

"What would you have me do?"

"I'll tell you. But only you," Sattai winked.

"Seenu! Would you mind sitting on the pial outside for a minute? Let me hear what he has to say." Seenu went out without a word.

"Sit, Deva!" commanded Sattai with a smile, "and listen to me. I have a plan and if this plan is to be pushed through successfully that Brahmin must get out of here."

"What is the plan?"

"I can't tell you now. I want ten rupees. You haven't got it; nor has he. No one in Devipatam would lend me ten rupees. If I can only lay my hands on ten rupees, I will make a queen of you!"

"How?"

"Ah, that is a secret not to be divulged now!"

"Ten rupees! Let me see!—Is Neela here?"

"Which Neela?"

"Why, there could be only one. I mean Neela of Nadu Street who had asthma."

"Yes, she is here. Do you think she will be of any help?"

"Run to her and ask her to come here immediately. Don't tell her anything."

"Oh, Deva! Do try to get me ten rupees from her somehow and see if I don't make you a queen!"

"You go now and bring Neela. We will discuss all else later."

"And what about the Brahmin squatting outside?"

"We will deal with him also, later."

As Sattai went out, Seenu looked up at him. Sattai spat viciously.

"Why don't you go out and borrow some money instead of sitting here like a statue? You brought her to this and you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" said Sattai.

"Mind your business!" flared Seenu and rising went inside.

"What has that fool been saying to you?" Seenu asked of Deva.

"Oh, Seenu! After all, it looks as if I have one friend here. I have sent Sattai to fetch Neela."

"Who is Neela?"

"She is a friend and so clever. She will surely be able to help me out of this difficulty."

"I am feeling like a fool myself, Deva!"

"Oh, why?"

"I brought you to this!"

"And I made you do it! Don't be silly, Seenu! This is not the time to blame anybody."

"But look at me, doing nothing, when you are in trouble!"

"Please don't say such things. Don't you think it would be better if you went round in the village and found out if we have any friends here who would be of some help?"

".....And leave you alone?"

"I am not afraid. Neela will be here any minute."

"Well then, I'll go out and stroll about a bit. I hate to leave you, but you are a brave girl."

Seenu went to the tank first and had a bath, and then he wandered about aimlessly visiting his familiar haunts. In the bazaar street a fat, burly fellow slapped him on the shoulder.

"Hallo! Don't you know me, old chap?" the man asked Seenu.

"You aren't by any chance Maddu, are you?" asked Seenu, scowling.

"I am. How do you do?"

"Could have done better. At the moment, I am without visible means of subsistence in my own native village!"

"You are joking! Where are you staying?"

"I don't know, myself. I came here only a few hours back."

"Do please then come and stay with us."

Seenu shrugged his shoulders.

"Forget the school-boy quarrel," said Maddu. "Be a sport and come!" he pleaded. Seenu followed him, wondering at the much-changed Maddu. At Maddu's house Seenu learnt that Maddu was a public-works contractor and was doing well.

Maddu insisted on Seenu dining with him and though Maddu was frank and outspoken about his affairs, Seenu was reticent and didn't tell Maddu why he had to come to Devipatam. Instead, he cooked up a story. "Well, Maddu, old chap!" said he. "Thank you very much for your hospitality. You are the good Samaritan all right. I just came to Devipatam to visit the old haunts and in the train I lost my purse. I had just enough small change to pay the jukawalla. Could you possibly lend me some money? I'll return it as soon as I reach Madras."

"Certainly. How much do you want?"

"About ten rupees would be more than enough."

Maddu went inside and brought some currency notes. "Here are five notes of five rupees each. You can have them and return them whenever you like."

"Thanks, old fellow. It's a relief. Here is my address. On your next visit to Madras don't fail to look me up."

"Do I see you before you leave this place?"

"Yes, certainly. I'll call on you again. Thanks, once again, for the loan."

Seenu walked on air. He had with him enough cash to take Deva back to Madras; or, if she should choose to stay at Devipatam, to keep her provided with the necessities of life. He mentally planned out a future course of action. He would go to Madras and somehow or other, raise more money. He would keep on supplying Deva with funds. He would leave the college if necessary and, if he could get a job. It was up to him to look after her and her comforts. And perhaps, very soon, he would be able to afford all the luxuries she was accustomed to. As he was walking along, thus musing, his old school-master accosted him and enquired after his welfare. The garrulous old man plied Seenu with innumerable questions and took Seenu to the school. Seenu couldn't get away from the school quick enough to go and tell Deva that he had enough cash—and more—to return to Madras.

When eventually Seenu reached Deva's home, he found it locked once again. He felt silly and dazed standing in the middle of the road, staring at the locked door.

He made enquiries in the neighbourhood: but no one knew of Deva's arrival or of whether she had gone. He asked for Sattai's whereabouts. "Sattai has no permanent residence. You can find him in the Bazaar Street," said someone. Seenu went there. Sattai was nowhere to be seen.

An old classmate of Seenu recognised him. "Aren't you Seenu?" asked he.

"Yes: you are Patta, aren't you?"

"I am Patta. How you have changed!"

"I say! I want to know where I can find Sattai. You know him, don't you?"

"Don't I? I'll never forget the ghost. I saw Sattai five minutes back at Neela's house."

"Who is Neela?"

"Don't you know Neela of Nadu Street? Oh, yes, I forgot. You have been away from this place for such a long time. Come on, I will find Sattai for you!"

"Don't worry yourself. Tell me where this woman Neela lives and I'll go and find him myself."

Patta told him where Neela's house was situated and Seenu proceeded there. The front-door of the house was ever so little open. There was no one outside the house or on the pial. Seenu rapped with his knuckles on the door. An emaciated woman of thirty peeped from within.

"I want to see Sattaiappan. I was told he was seen here. Is he inside?" asked Seenu.

The woman shook her head but stood looking critically at Seenu, surveying him from top to toe, with an arch smile.

"Was he here sometime ago? Can you tell me where I can find him?" asked Seenu.

"Why?"

"It is a very important matter."

"Then come inside."

Seenu went inside. A mat was spread for him on the floor and the inevitable Pansupari plate was placed in front of him. Neela stood a little distance apart, fumbling with the end of her saree, like a coy maiden of sixteen. Seenu began to wonder if the purpose of his visit had been misunderstood.

"What is the important matter?" asked Neela looking archly at Seenu with the corner of her eyes.

"I said that my business was with Sattai," he said, a little frigidly.

"I don't think so," Neela smiled.

"What do you know of the nature of my business?" asked Seenu.

"We always guess. It is part of our business. And we guess rightly. May I sit down?" She sat close to Seenu and picking up a betel-leaf spread *chunam* on it's back, all the while looking shyly at Seenu. She must once have been beautiful, thought Seenu. She was a finished coquette. Seenu was getting fidgetty and wanted to get out of the house.

"You belong to Madras?" asked Neela. Seenu nodded assent.

"Profession?"

"Student."

"Oh!"

"Why? Doesn't that interest you?"

"No. It is not a profession that interests us. There is no capital in it."

"I should think not."

"And yet, some of these students have rich parent Minoes—we call them."

"I am not of the variety."

"Very unfortunate. However, let us hope for the best."

"Look here, what are you driving at?"

With difficulty Neela controlled her laughter. She assumed a grave air and asked Seenu, "You seek strange places to educate yourself, Mr. Student!"

"Thanks! I didn't come here to be lectured."

"Nevertheless, listen to me. I'll make it short, though I cannot guarantee to make it sweet. You must have heard of the saying, 'Beggars can't be choosers' and I'll tell you more if you will come with me into that bed-room." Neela rose and beckoned to him.

"Nothing doing," said Seenu.

"Please yourself. You came here. I didn't ask you. I'll give you another chance. Go into that room and I'll come there when you call me."

"I am going out," said Seenu rising and started towards the door.

"Don't tease him Neela, please!" said a voice inside the bed-room. It was Deva speaking. Seenu turned and like an arrow sped into the room. Deva was lying on the bed covered with a heavy blanket. Her face was pale. She turned her head away at sight of Seenu.

"Why, Deva, what is the matter?"

"I am ill and feeling miserable. But for Neela I would have been dead by this time. After you left me, I felt giddy and I fainted. Neela and Sattai brought me here. She is an angel and has promised to keep me here with her."

"I have got some money!"

"How much?"

"Twenty-five rupees!"

"That's better than nothing."

"Yes, and I am resolved to get you more. We will fight this out. Be brave! Don't get disheartened!"

"I can't be a burden to Neela for long."

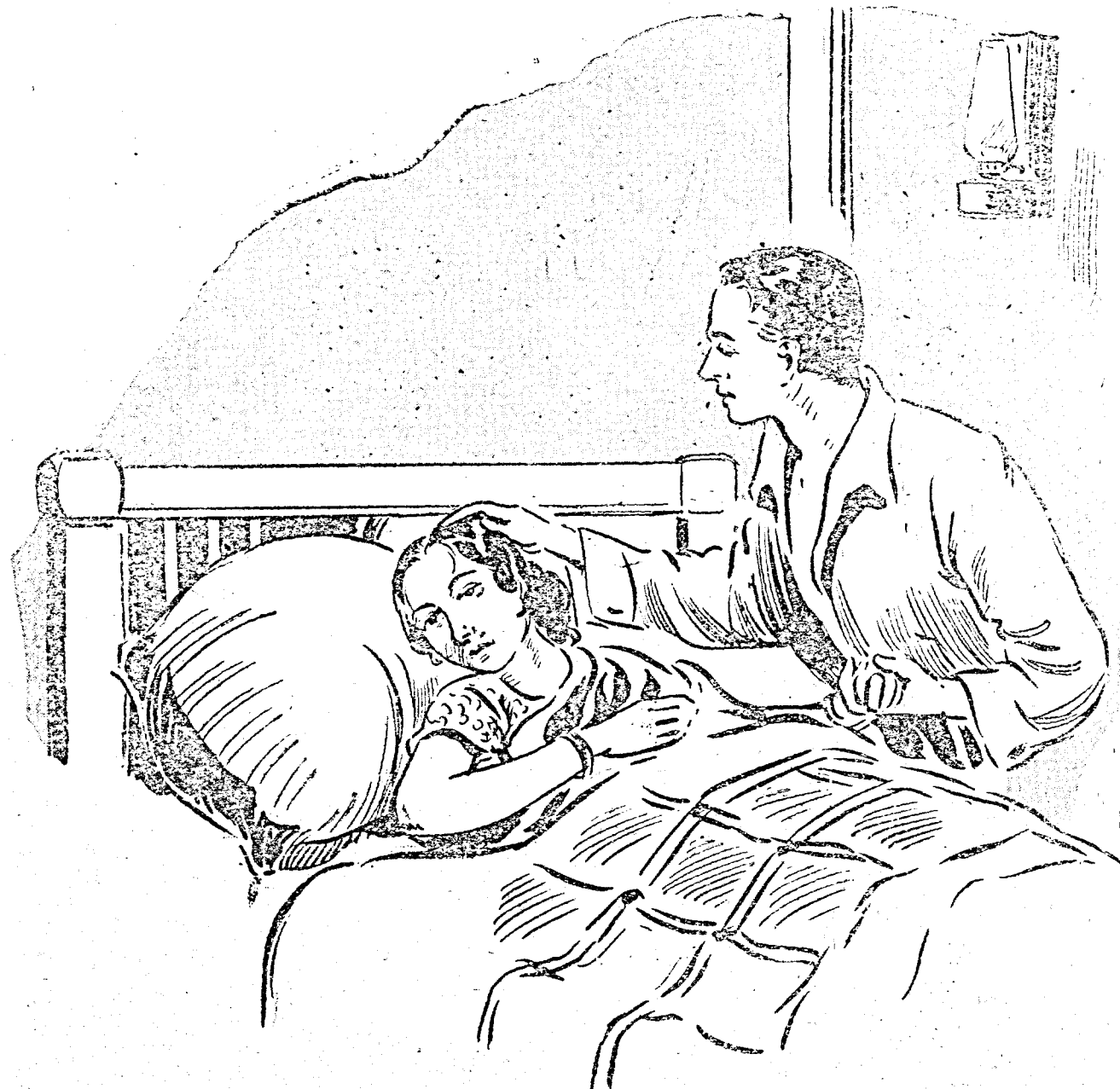
"Don't I realise that? I'll make good, Deva. Have you no faith in me?"

She was silent and turned her head away. . . Seenu sensed a change in Deva and felt hurt. "No, it couldn't be," said he to himself; "she is ill and out of sorts."

"Deva, you don't know what you are talking about. You get well and we will discuss all else later."

"I can't get well without money."

"Keep this money. . . I'll go to Madras and get more money even if I have to steal it. Meanwhile, don't worry



"Have you no faith in me?"

"I have been talking to Neela," said Deva looking away from him, "and she tells me that we are a pair of silly sentimental fools. We can't live on love."

"Neela told you that?"

"Yes."

"And what else?"

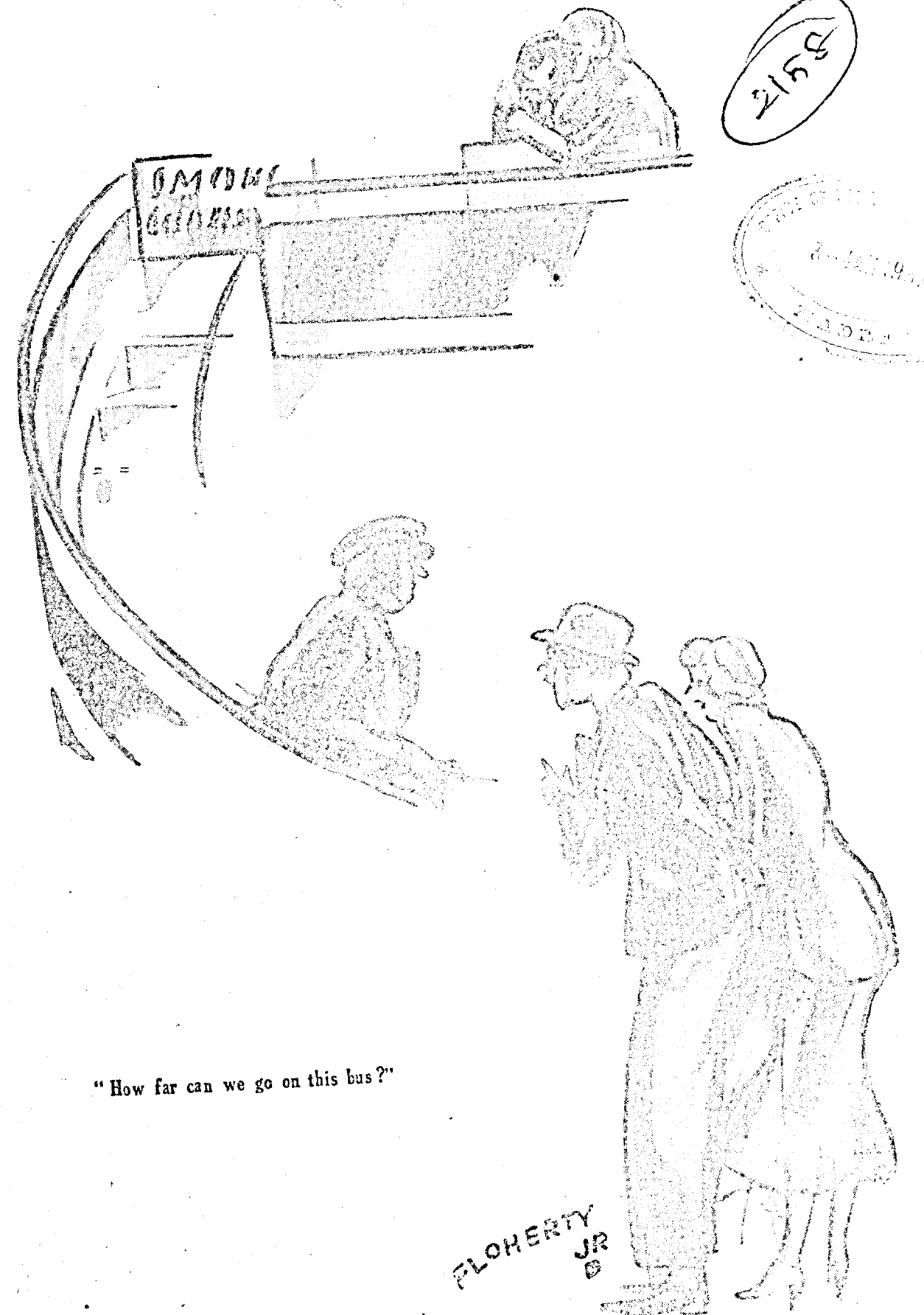
"I want you to return to Madras. Neela is right. If we go on like this, I'll be ruining your life and mine."

yourself about the future. Don't listen to Neela, either." He placed the currency notes beneath her pillow.

"Kiss me!" he pleaded. But there was Neela coughing behind him. "After all," said Neela, "you didn't call me. I had to come because the patient shouldn't be excited. How are you, Deva?"

"Better, sister."

"Carry on! Now then, Mr. Student, are you ready for the lecture?"



"How far can we go on this bus?"

From

'BALLYHOO'

135

1073



"I will shave off this moustache if I don't capture the whole gang this night," he boasted.

"WHO is talking about Arsene Lupin?"

"I am. What's wrong?"

"Why tell grandmothers' tales here? Have you nothing better to talk about?" asked Anand.

"But what's wrong with Arsene Lupin? He is a most wonderful thief," said his friend Pratap.

"But it is all nonsense. Such things never happen in actual life. You come across with it only in fairy tales. Imagine a thief giving notice and carrying off a coup in the presence of an army of Police armed to the teeth! Pooh! Cock and bull stuff, of course."

"Why, such a thing actually happened the other day and that is what I was telling Sadanand. If you care to listen, you will develop more respect for Arsene Lupin."

"Where did it happen?"

"Not far. It was in an adjoining native state."

"Where the Police are no Police at all," added Anand.

"You are mistaken. The Police there are as efficient as anywhere else in this world."

"Then let me hear it," said Anand, laying aside his evening paper.

This discussion took place in the local club between four fast friends. They had something to do there to kill time and so they had to abuse someone or talk scandal or blame some one or other. So it is not surprising that the talk turned on thieves and thief catching.

Pratap started his story after clearing his throat, but there was an interruption.

"I suppose I am to believe everything you are going to say?" put in Anand.

Pratap cleared his throat again.

"Believe me, chaps, I am telling you the honest truth," he began.

"That is what one says before starting a string of lies," said the mischievous Anand.

"Well, believe it or not, here is the story, or rather the details of actual facts. The incident happened at Maringapatam in the native state of Dharawara. There was a series of daring burglaries in this town, which is by the way the capital of the state. The Police were baffled. The Police there are known as Bardans. An officer corresponding to the rank of Circle Inspector of Police here was called there the Chief Bardan.

"Well. The thief who was responsible for the burglaries was working on the lines of Arsene Lupin."

"How?"

"He gave notice before he broke into a particular house on a particular day."

"What kind of notice?"

"A public poster posted in a public place. At first the people and the Bardans did not take any notice of these warnings, but when it was found that the threat contained in every one of them was duly carried out the Bardans began to sit up and take notice."

"Well, it did take a good deal to wake up your wonderful Bardans," put in Anand.

"Well, you will be confirmed in your belief when you have heard the whole of this. Well, very soon another notice appeared on the market wall. This time it was to the effect that the house of the merchant Mansur would be burgled that night. Information was at once carried to the Bardan Station. The Chief Bardan read it and twirled his moustache and patted his beard and said, 'This is the last notice this fellow will put up or I will shave off my moustache,' and with this he began to make elaborate preparations."

"By the way, I would like to know something about this Chief Bardan," interrupted Anand. "You just now referred to his beard. Who is he?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you? He is a Muhammadan. Though the state is ruled by a Hindu Raja there are many Muhammadan subjects and officers there....."

"Never mind all that. Who is this Chief Bardan? I believe he is the hero of the story and naturally I am interested."

"He is a giant. He is said to be 6 feet tall and 60 inches round the chest and all that. His name is Shah-ul-mulk."

"Oh! With that name, that height and that chest he must be able to capture single-handed any gang of thieves, I should think."

"Yes, that is what you think. Well, as a matter of fact, he took fifty Bardans to help him in catching this thief."

"Fifty?"

"Yes, and all armed to the teeth. He stationed fifty Bardans in merchant Mansur's house that night. Shah-ul-mulk was at the head of the party. 'I will shave off this moustache if I don't capture the whole gang this night,' he boasted.

"He shouldn't have to shave off his moustache with all that army behind him?" put in Anand.

"Wait and hear to the end. Merchant Mansur's house was a single storey building with many rooms and one large hall and one small strong room in which he kept his valuables. The Bardans were given the hall to occupy. This hall adjoined the property room. That night the Bardans made themselves very comfortable and partook of a hearty dinner of *pulav* and fowls provided free by the anxious merchant."

"You make my mouth water. I wish I had been one of the party," said Sadanand.

"You won't wish it when you know the end. The plan of the Bardans was to wait for the thief and catch him in the very act of making off with the boxes."

"What boxes?"

"The strong boxes, of course. There were two boxes in that room. One contained the gold ornaments worth about Rs. 10,000 and the other contained important documents and cash to the extent of about Rs. 5,000. The owner in spite of the presence of so many Bardans was rather nervous about the safety of his valuables. He said he would take out all the valuables and leave the boxes there empty. The Chief Bardan and his retinue laughed at his fears. The Chief said, 'Look here, I am myself going to sleep in that little property room of yours with two other sturdy Bardans. What more do you want? We are going to cover ourselves with sarees in order that the thief, when he enters may take us for the females of the house.' The merchant had to be content whether he would or not."

"I understand. Then what happened?"

"The Chief Bardan called all his men and gave them final instructions. He finished off saying, 'On no account should you enter the other room before I whistle. whatever other sound you may hear, understand?' 'All right, sir,' answered his Bardans. Accordingly they settled down to their duties. The forty-seven Bardans in the hall had to sit up awake and the three in the property room had to lie down in their beds awake."

"Lying down in beds awake doesn't sound possible to me, anyhow," said Surendranath.

"Well, so it seems. Hear me. At first everyone was vigilant. Every sound including the sound made by a mosquito was duly noted and commented upon. In the property room the Chief Bardan's brain was working fast and he was building castles in the air out of the rewards that he was going to reap the next

morning from the Government. He counted 12 o'clock, then one and then 2 o'clock. The clock didn't strike any more—at least so far as the three in that room were concerned."

"What happened to them?"

"Well. Some say the clock stopped striking after that. Others say a sumptuous meal has got its after-effects. Some again say these three were quite tired from over-work on the previous day. Others again say that they were drugged with a clockwork drug—one of the latest. Some pointed out that lying down on a soft bed and keeping awake was a difficult feat. More superstitious people believed that the thief hypnotised them. Anyhow the fact remains that soon after 2 o'clock the three Bardans in the property room were fast asleep and snoring!"

"Well, that is a good beginning!"

"Yes, and so also is the end. Those in the hall kept awake also till about 1 o'clock by the simple process of poking each other when anyone showed signs of sleepiness. By two o'clock there was no one left to poke another. Every one was uniformly snoring."

"That sounds nice. Uniformed Police snoring uniformly?" chuckled Anand.

"About 3 o'clock one of the Bardans in the hall suddenly awoke. He couldn't say what woke him up. He listened. He put his ear to the floor. He could hear nothing. He next put his ear to the wall. Yes. There was some sound. There was no mistaking the sound. It was distinctly the sound of a crowbar on the stone wall of the adjoining room. He started to action. He woke up the others in the room and asked them all to dress and be ready with gun and lathi. They got ready very silently, and waited. A long half

hour, and yet there was no whistle. They had entire confidence in their chief. They had also the dread of his displeasure in case his orders were not carried out. They were restless through waiting too long. One said, 'Wait, don't do anything in a hurry. If the thief runs away the chief won't spare us.' Another said, 'Yes. Chief's orders are that we should be ready and only act after we hear his whistle.' There was another wait. One of them at last put his ear to the communicating door and said, 'I can hear someone moving in that room.' One of the Bardans said, 'Be quiet. That must be the chief getting ready for the thief.' The man with the

ear to the door whispered again, 'I can now hear someone opening the boxes.' The other Bardan said, 'Wait. Don't be in a hurry. It is the chief keeping the box ready for the thief.' The man with the ear on the door then whispered, 'I can hear someone snoring.' The other Bardan said, 'That is the chief pretending to be fast asleep so that the thief may be misled.' The Bardans then said one to the other, 'Now wait for the whistle and then rush in.' They waited another ten minutes and then.....came a shrill long blast on the whistle,

not from the property room but from outside! The Bardans in the hall were at first surprised, but anyhow they opened the communicating door and rushed into the property room and were shocked to see three dusky forms rolling out of their beds there. 'Who blew the whistle? And.....and.....where is my whistle gone?' the chief asked. No one could answer."

"Oh, Lord! Then it was not the Chief who blew the whistle?"

"No. The merchant hearing all this hubbub came running now with a lamp. He looked at his boxes and a startled exclamation came from his lips. 'The locks



"Lord!" said one Bardan, "this is our chief!"

are broken,' he cried. 'Impossible,' shouted the Chief Bardan who was by then very much upset by the turn of events. The merchant shoved open the lids of the two boxes. There to his utter astonishment he saw one pumpkin in each box in the place of his valuables. 'Gone! gone!' shouted the merchant and tore his hair."

"And there was good reason too," said Sadanand.

"The Chief Bardan was bewildered. Where did the pumpkins come from? What happened to the properties? Certainly the thief could not have entered there. Then he turned round and gasped. There was a big hole in the wall. His further thoughts were cut short by another shrill blast of his own whistle from outside. 'The rascal has got hold of my whistle? I will teach him yet.' And with this all of them rushed out of the door as more and more blasts of the whistle were heard very near. When they went outside they heard other whistles from several directions instead of one. So some Bardans ran north, some south, some east and some west, all intent on catching the thief. They all returned in about an hour after a fruitless search."

"Pity the Bardans! After all they are Bardans and not the Police. And so I suppose your story ends," said Anand.

"Only the first chapter closes. The second and last chapter just begins and that is the most interesting one. The Bardans all collected in the hall of the house and found that the Chief Bardan was missing! Where was he?"

"You don't say that your Arsene Lupin had kidnapped him?" asked Anand.

"God knows how it happened, because the Chief Bardan wouldn't give all those fine details. And as it happens only the Chief Bardan and the thief knew what really had happened. The Bardans set out in search in all directions. The search continued till dawn. Tired and worn out, one party, while returning, saw something move suspiciously in a thorny bush. Their thoughts at once flew to the thief. Yes, he must have hidden there. The six Bardans of the party took out their lathis. 'Catch him alive,' cautioned one of them who had some authority. They went silently near the bush and suddenly started beating mercilessly at a figure that they could dimly see in the bush. After some time they stopped. No one jumped out of the bush as they expected. One of the Bardans who was particularly bold went near and peered in. 'The man is tied hand and foot and cannot move,' he said."

"Then why were they beating him like that?" asked Surendranath.

"They didn't know. Even now they did not know who it was. They however lifted him out as he appeared to be unconscious as a result of the blows just delivered. They laid him down on the grass. He seems to be in Bardan uniform," said one. 'His face seems to be familiar,' said another. 'But who can this be?' asked a third. 'Can it be the thief.....the Arsene Lupin?' said a fourth. 'Then who could have tied him up like this?' asked a fifth. 'He must have been tied

up by the Chief Bardan,' said the sixth. 'Then where is the Chief Bardan?' asked the first Bardan. Then as if in answer to that question, the man lying on the grass opened his eyes. He looked at all of them. Everyone thought then that his face was very familiar to them. 'What the hell are you all looking at? Why can't you do something? What made you beat me blindly like this? Have you no eyes?' 'Lord!' said one of the Bardans, 'this is our chief! But what is wrong with him?'"

"Why so much doubt?" asked Anand.

"Because his moustache and beard were missing. He had been given a shave to save him the trouble of doing it himself next day as per his oath."

"Oh! I see."

"But the Chief Bardan did not see it yet. He asked the Bardans to get him some ear at once...a closed one preferably and take him home at once. When the Police asked for particulars as to how it happened he said, 'It doesn't matter.' And the secret is locked up to this day in the breasts of two people, the Chief and the thief."

"Was this not talked about in the town?" asked Sadanand.

"Not much. The Bardans asked the chief what they should write in their reports. The chief told them to write nothing. 'Remember, all of us were sleeping in our own houses last night,' he told them. 'Then what about all that happened last night?' asked one Bardan. 'Keep mum,' he advised. 'And about the insult to you?' 'Mum is the word,' repeated the chief again."

"And so it was all mum—mum—mum—"

"But then the merchant? What about his loss?" asked Sadanand.

"It appears he was advised to report that there was a burglary in his house that night without mentioning anything else."

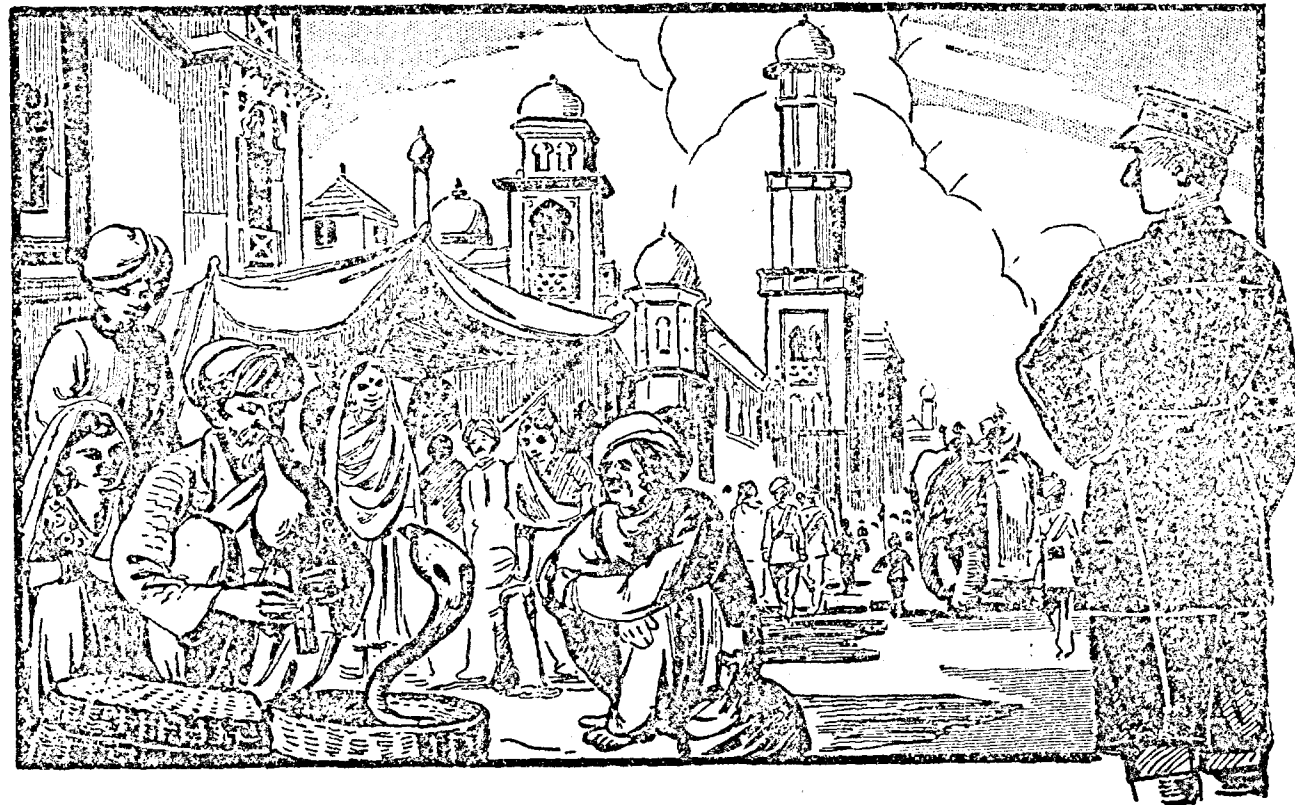
"That is a good idea. And what about our Chief Bardan's moustache and beard? How did he appear in public again?" asked Anand.

"I have no correct details about that. But it is rumoured that he went next morning to another town where there were theatrical outfitters and got a false beard and moustache for his use till his own got their normal growth."

"And what happened to your Arsene Lupin?" asked Surendranath.

"Well, he is still at large. And the Chief Bardan is still hoping to catch him. The thief, on the other hand, is hoping to give him still another shave after some time. And now what do you think of this story, Anand?"

"Now that I have heard the whole of it, I still think that this can be swallowed only with a potful of salt," said Anand.



Madras, 1st January, 1934.

DEAR MOTHER,

I am sorry to hear that Mabel Jones was fined ten shillings for forgetting to pay her dog-licence. Tell her not to mind, and when I come home I will bring her a parrot in a cage. Mabel must be eighteen years old now, and I suppose she is earning enough to live by herself. I remember that Mabel always wanted to have her own home, and a motor-bike, and be independent until she was twenty-five. Then she said she could start thinking about finding a sweetheart and getting married.

The other day I went into a shop to buy a film for my camera, and I was served by a nice intellectual old gentleman. I told him I was surprised to notice that there were never any crowds of girls in the streets, going to and from work, and going out to amusements in the evening. The Indian gentleman said it would not be proper for a girl to walk about the streets without an escort. When I asked why, he looked at me in a peculiar way, and said it would be bad for morals. I told him that at home I used to see thousands of girls going about alone, and it never hurt my morals. He said he didn't mean my morals, but the girls' morals.

After a while, I understood what the old gentleman was driving at. He meant that if girls went about as they liked, they would make the acquaintance of strange men. When I told him that my sisters often made the acquaintance of strange men, and brought them to our

house, he seemed rather shocked. He asked if my sisters ever had suggestions made to them, or if any ruffians ever enticed them away, and I had to tell him not to be silly.

All the same, the old gentleman persisted in his enquiries, so I admitted that once, when our Ethel was walking through the park late at night, a man came beside her and said "Hullo, dear." The gentleman asked me what happened to Ethel, and was quite surprised when I said that, of course, Ethel hit him on the head with her umbrella, and held him until a policeman came.

The gentleman said that Indian girls were more timid, and were married when they were only school girls. I asked if that was what made them timid. The gentleman said sadly that his wife was far from timid in the house, but she never went walking through the park late at night or hitting men with umbrellas. He said that if girls didn't marry when they were fourteen, they would start having sweethearts, and perhaps have a misfortune, such as giving birth to twins.

This sounded to me like the ravings of a madman, but I could see that the gentleman was serious. I said that not many of our girls had misfortunes, because for a long while they thought that babies grew in cabbages, which were brought to the house in a black bag by the doctor. Hence they didn't have much curiosity before they were married, and liked boys just for company, and would even spend their wages on taking boys to the cinema.

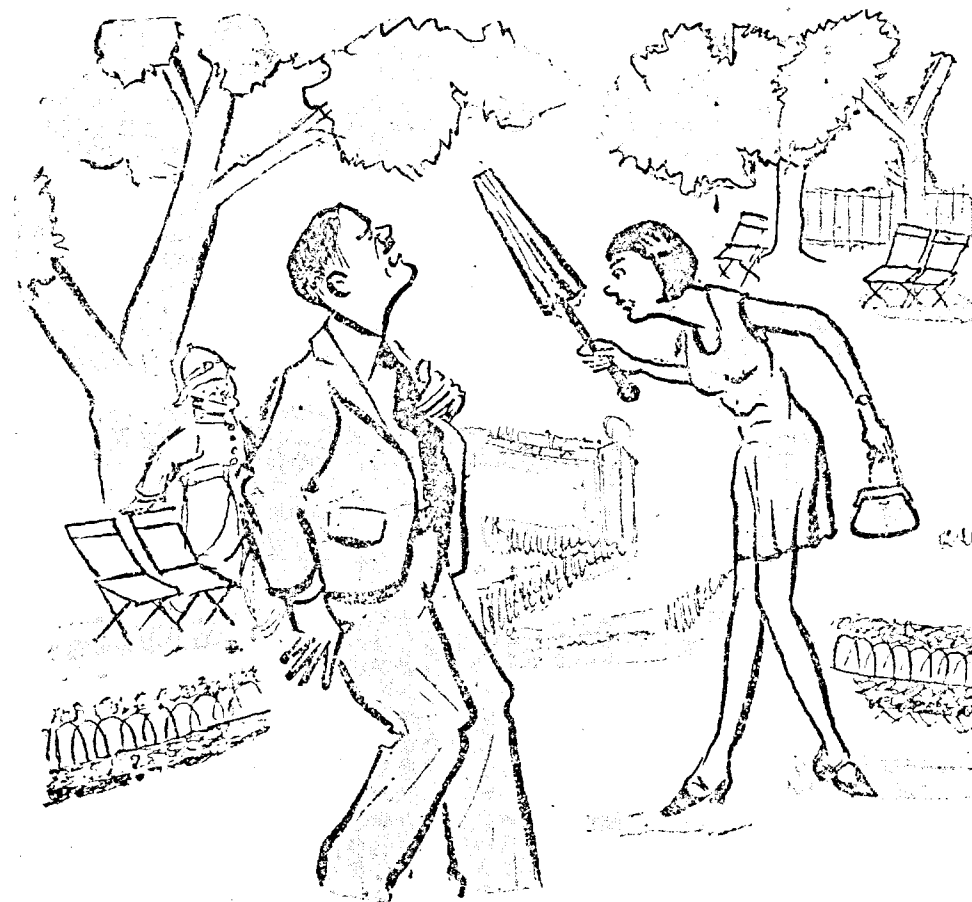
Afterwards, I thought over what the gentleman described to me, and I began to see how it explained things. For instance, I have been quite puzzled by the behaviour of European girls out here. The ones that I go and speak to, seem to be on their guard, as if I expected them to be sweethearts. And the ones that come and speak to me, seem to expect me to be sweethearts immediately. I can now see that this strange behaviour is due to the fact that the girls have been brought up with the same ideas as the old gentleman. Girls out here don't believe in cabbages and black bags, but want to have sweethearts. This is very awkward, because it is

quite a thing for a girl to be brought into court to discharge her ordinary duty as a citizen, and they arranged it with bated breath and special precautions, with a lot of solemn talk about her modesty. It appears that in India a girl's modesty is quite a lot of bother, and the law assumes that everybody will outrage her modesty if there is a chance.

There were a lot of lawyers standing about as if they had nothing to do, and they eyed all the passers-by in a hungry sort of way. I went to speak to one of these lawyers, and he welcomed me most eagerly, and

asked if I wanted any advice. So I asked him about modesty in India, and he told me there was a special law to punish any man who outraged the modesty of a woman. I asked if there was a law to punish a woman who outraged the modesty of a man, and he looked surprised, and said no. I thought this was a pity, because it seems to me that in India a man's modesty is more likely to be outraged than a woman's.

The lawyer asked me if I were concerned in a case of rape or anything, and seemed disappointed when I said no. He asked if I were in court as plaintiff or defendant, and when I told him I merely wanted to see how justice was administered, he looked at me as if I were insane, and went away quite quickly, with his shoulders hunched, and his hands buried in the back of his gown.



"..... Ethel hit him on the head with her umbrella"

impossible to be natural and friendly to a girl with ideas like that.

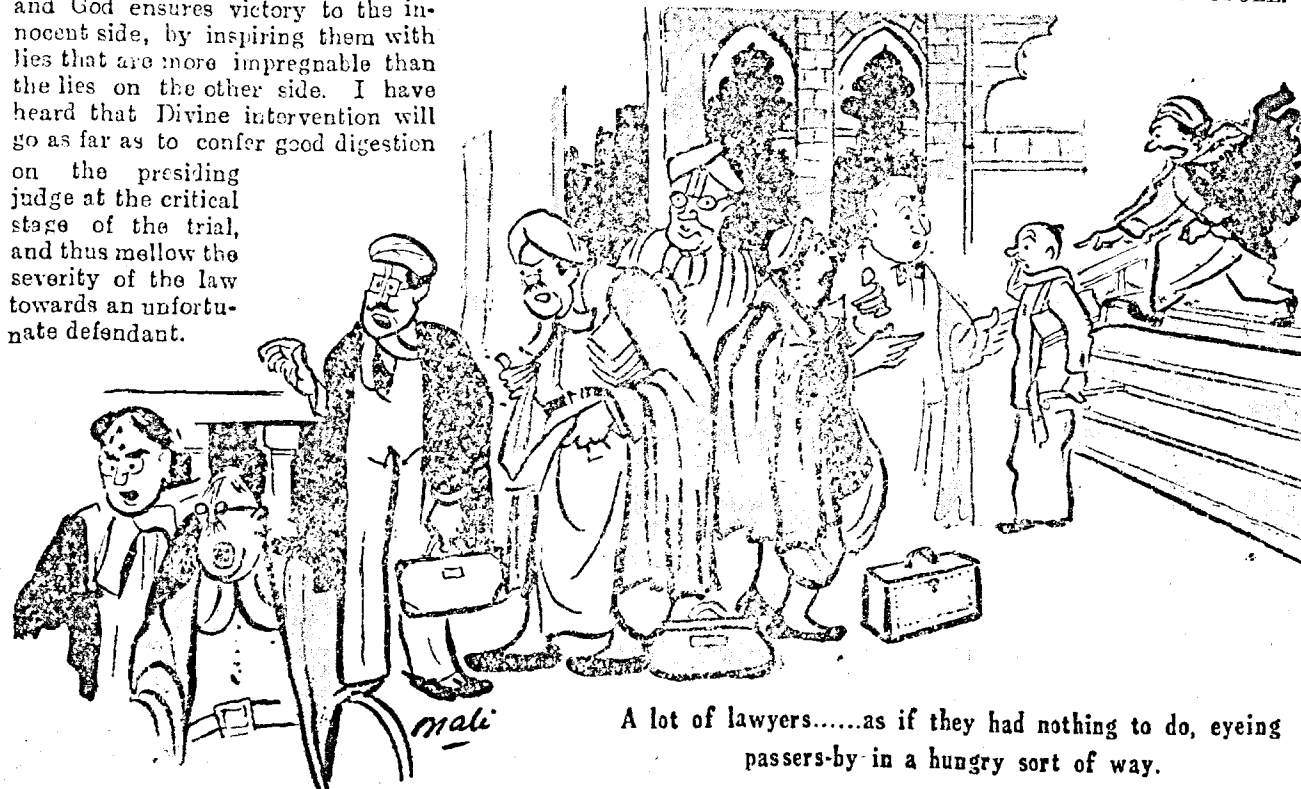
Another thing about girls out here is that they aren't expected to be responsible human beings. You will hardly believe this, but there are actually separate compartments for ladies on the railway trains. When I went to the High Court a few days ago, there were no girls conducting their own business, and no women barristers; and even the clerks and reporters and cleaners were all men. In one case that was in progress, it appeared that a girl was required as an essential witness, and everyone was in a dither about it. They seemed to think it was a most extraordinary and deli-

The principles for the conduct of a case in India are most peculiar. As far as I can make out, certain things always have to be done, and without these things it is not considered a proper case. When a crime has been committed, the first thing to do is to think of one of your enemies, and then collect about fifty of your relations who are willing to be eye-witnesses that he committed the crime. You then lock up your enemy, and beat him until he makes a voluntary confession.

This is quite fair, because once your enemy has made his confession, he is allowed to have a lawyer and arrange his alibi. There must always be an alibi, and it has to be in a certain accepted form. Suppose it is a

case of murder, and the accused was ploughing a field three miles away when the murder was committed. That would be no good as an alibi. The best sort of alibi is something that never happened, but with which the judges are familiar because it has been pleaded so many times before. An imaginary wedding is a good alibi. All that the accused has to do is to get fifty of his friends to invent convincing details of his presence at the non-existent nuptials. The alibi is much improved if the fifty friends can swear that they were not only at the wedding, but also eye-witnesses of the murder at the same time, and that it was done by the village banker, to whom the accused owed a lot of money.

It is most interesting to follow these cases, because the issue is decided in favour of the party whose untruths are most subtle in conforming to the rules of jurisprudence. On the whole, this remarkable system works out quite fairly, and is suited to the religious feelings of the inhabitants. You see, both sides are allowed to produce as many untruths as they like, and God ensures victory to the innocent side, by inspiring them with lies that are more impregnable than the lies on the other side. I have heard that Divine intervention will go as far as to confer good digestion on the presiding judge at the critical stage of the trial, and thus mellow the severity of the law towards an unfortunate defendant.



Strange things do sometimes occur. I was reading some old records recently. There was one trial for murder, and at the beginning everything went according to precedent. The case arose out of enmity in a village, and there were confessions and supplementary confessions, retractions and re-retractions, petitions and cross-petitions, alibis and non-alibis, and lots of eye-witnesses who were ready to prove that the murder was committed by the accused, or alternatively and separately by five different other persons, in a dark room in the middle of the night. The case went on for days and days, and the fees went on for days and days, and everyone said what a nice normal law-case it was. But in the end it was unfortunately made clear that not only was all the evidence invented, but even the murder itself, and the alleged corpse was in fact sitting in court and taking a lively interest in the proceedings. So, dear mother, when you go into a court in India, you have to be quite open-minded.

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

G. B. BURGIN REMEMBERS

A shipwrecked missionary, under the impression that he had landed on a cannibal island, climbed up a tree every night to be out of reach of the natives. One night he saw a great fire, and thought it was the natives who had discovered his retreat, and were getting ready to roast him. He was reassured, however, by hearing a voice at the fire say, "Hell! You've played the wrong card." "Thank heaven!" said the reassured clergyman: "they must be Christians!"

There is a story of Mark Twain, when he and Whitelaw Reid and Joseph Choate were lunching together in New York. The waiter was about to pour out some wine for Choate, but that gentleman prevented him.

"What, no wine, Choate?" asked Mark Twain.

"No," said Choate. "I am sixty to-day, and I have never yet drunk a glass of wine, or tasted tobacco, or gambled."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mark Twain, "I wish I could say that."

"Why don't you, Mark?" drawled Whitelaw Reid. "Choate did!"

W. S. Gilbert was fond of amateur theatricals, and once agreed to take the part of Pierrot. The company, unwilling to run any risks with so important a part, enlisted the services of a very fascinating "pro." for Pierrette. Gilbert was much pleased with her attractive personality, and they became friendly. As they went down in the train to a place some distance from London, where they were to perform, the Pierrette confided to Gilbert that on occasions like the present she invariably took her mother with her as a precautionary measure. Gilbert looked at her with well-feigned astonishment. "Do you mean to tell me that you cannot trust your mother alone in London for one night?"

Once only have I served on a jury—a common jury—regrettably common. As I was nearest the box, the man next to me pushed me in first and I was elected foreman. Five other young men followed me into the lower seat; six elderly men took the seat above us; and we promptly set to work. Not without a few dissenting murmurs from the elderly men, we convicted three prisoners straight off. Then came a dog-stealing case, and the prisoner's defence was that he was walking quietly along with a piece of string hanging out of his coat pocket. The dog seized the string in his mouth and followed him home. I turned to the upper bench

and said, "I suppose, gentlemen, there is no doubt about our verdict? The case is clear." "I don't care," said one old man, "I don't like to see young people so 'ard."

At one bend of the river I saw three Chinamen, and this reminded the ticket-man on the train of a story about their predecessors. Ah Sing had won all the money off his two friends at fantan. Their only means of crossing the river was a basket slung to a rope, in which they pulled themselves across the foaming torrent. It occurred to Ah Sing's friends that they would wait till he got into the basket and reached the middle of the river, and then cut the rope. They did so, waited for Ah Sing at a bend of the river, took the gold dust out of his pockets, and buried him with much pomp. Then the survivors quarrelled over the spoil, and killed one another. The next party of Chinamen who came along divided the money between them, and bought a steel cable with part of it to take the place of the rope, in case of—well, accidents.

The womenkind of these fierce freebooters [the Kurds] do not veil themselves, and, as I thought, all wore brown leather belts about three inches wide. "It—it isn't leather," a blushing woman missionary explained to me: "it's the place where the jacket ought to join the skirt and—doesn't!"

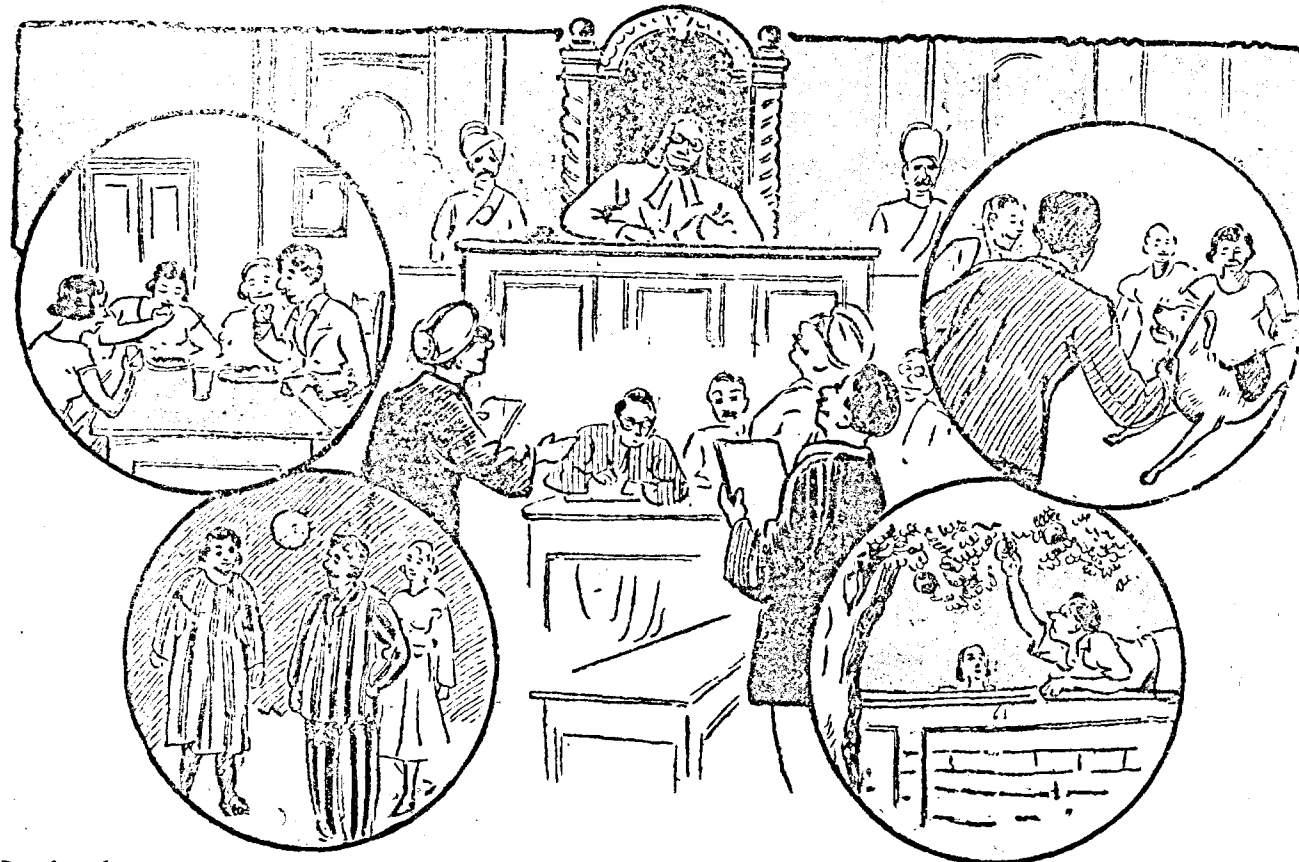
An old countryman and his wife wanted to be taken up in an aeroplane. "I'll take you both up for five pounds," said the aeronaut. They shook their heads. "Very well, then," he offered, "provided you don't speak I'll take the pair of you for nothing. If you do speak you pay me the five pounds." They agreed, and, though he tried to frighten them by performing all kinds of dangerous "stunts", the silence remained unbroken. When they landed, the aeronaut could not hide his surprise. "I thought you'd be scared out of your wits," he said, as he helped out the old man first, "but you didn't utter a sound." "Oh, aye," replied his passenger, "I'd hard work to hold my tongue, but I nearly said summat when my old woman fell out."

A parish priest visited one of his flock in jail and read him the story of the Prodigal Son. The prisoner came close up to him and made the priest read it three times. "Why are you so interested, my son?" asked the good priest. "Sure, Father, I've not had a drop of poten for three weeks, and your holy breath's like the dew of heaven."

On & after 1st January 1934
The Merry Magazine
will be published on
the 1st & 15th of every month.

TIDINGS FROM TRIBUNALS

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)



People who eat rice and curry with their bare hands, wander in the garden in striped nighties, pinch apples and tease little Freddy.....

Before His Lordship Sir Fly Swatter. J. Todd Patrique Vs Todd Patrique.

Maddington, 1st January, 1934.

THE cross-examination of the petitioner in this sensational divorce case concluded today. It was rather unfortunate that admission into the court hall had to be greatly restricted as most of the floor where the public and the practitioners generally stand had to be used for stacking up the innumerable volumes of law books and reports which, if necessary, had to be used by the learned counsel for the parties. Several persons took a firm legal stand as it were on the law books themselves; any alteration or change in their position involved as much, if not more, trouble than an amendment of the law itself. Others who were safely entrenched behind the embankments of these law books were of course in a more enviable position; but they could go out only when cartloads of books had been moved out of their way.

Before the commencement of the examination-in-chief of the petitioner, Sir Fly, apprehending a prolonged examination in view of the fabulous retainer fee stipulated by the counsel in the case, said, "Sir Allasami take it very shortly. The issue is very simple. Was there legal cruelty or not? If there was legal cruelty your client wins. If there was no legal cruelty your client is out of court."

Sir Allasami:—I am obliged to your ludship for summarising the position so tersely, so precisely, and yet so clearly. I shall make it as short as possible. I am only anxious that my client.....
(Here Sir Allasami conferred in whispers with his juniors. The words 'Day Fao' were distinctly overheard.)

Sir Allasami:—(continuing) I am anxious that my client's case should be effectively placed before your ludship. *It does not matter to me now milud.* However I shall make it very short.

Sir Allasami then commenced the examination-in-chief of the petitioner. The petitioner during the course

of the examination, which was profusely punctuated with sighs and sobs, deposed to the various acts of cruelty, particulars of which have already appeared in these columns. She stated that since the respondent commenced living a Christian life she "never got no new 'ats nor clothes, nor shoes nor powder, nor rouge, nor even kiss-proof lipsticks. Of course scents were never to be thought of except in dreams." She further deposed that she was never permitted to speak more than 'yea, yea' or 'nay, nay' and that the breach of any of these injunctions involved penalties in the nature of week-end sermons by Samuel Solem, confessionals, prayers and even fasting. She also stated that she was accustomed to swear when she lost her temper, which was quite often, and that on these occasions she either said 'hoot' or 'my Goddess,' for she believed that there were only Goddesses and never any Gods. She complained that the respondent took exception to this and that he insisted on her loving Mrs. Tubby Morphia and her 'tribe'. She confirmed her age given in her petition and maintained that that was correct.

Mr. Kiyomiyo, the counsel for the respondent, then jumped up, pulled his gown almost over his head, cleared his throat, and adjusted his glasses low down on his nose so that he could see the judge, the witness, and the papers in his hand, all at once. Here two young women screamed and fainted. They were thrown out. Several junior members of the Bar and apprentices who were observed casting the optiques in their direction during the proceedings were seen rushing towards them to render the necessary aid.

Mr. Kiyomiyo:—Lady Toad, do you remember what your oath was?

Lady Toad:—Oh-h-ho-o hoooohooooo.....Mie Lodd! Look at him mielodd. He is worse than my hubby. I swore only because I was asked to.

Court:—Compose yourself, madam, and answer the question.

Mr. Kiyomiyo:—Never mind why you did it. Answer my question.

Petitioner:—Yes. I swore by almighty God that the evidence I give before this court shall be the tooth, the whole tooth and nothing like the tooth.

Counsel:—Let me correct you Lady Toad; it is nothing but the truth. Please be so good as to remember that.

Petitioner:—Yes sir. But I cannot see the difference.

Counsel:—Speak up. Don't address me. Address His Lordship. (The petitioner was visibly shaken.)

Counsel:—Now as regards your age—I am sorry, melord, to doubt a lady's word, particularly as regards her age, but in the interests of my client who is the tamest and the most humble being I have ever known in all my professional career, melord,—that however is another matter melord—Lady Toad, please tell his lordship your correct age.

Tidings from Tribunals

Petitioner:—Do you want to know my age before the operation or after the operation?

Kiyomiyo:—(Counsel for the Respondent.) The operation is irrelevant.

Sir Alla:—The operation is absolutely relevant.

Kiyomiyo:—I submit melord—

Sir Alla:—I also submit milud—

Kiyomiyo:—Melord, melord—

Sir Alla:—Milud-milud-milud—

Court:—What is this operation about? The petitioner's examination-in-chief contains only a bare indication. Sir Allasami's opening did not clear the ground much, I fear.

Kiyomiyo:—I follow you lorship. I am sorry I did not appreciate this difficulty at the outset, melord, though it was obvious—Lady Toad, please tell his lordship in your own words what this operation is all about.

Petitioner:—My husband could not afford a real Guindy winner. So he obtained the best available hackney horse glands and the best available glands from the monkey at the People's Park Zoo. Even this was rather expensive; but he managed it somehow. It was so difficult to pay with the ten per cent. cut, you know. But then he had saved quite a lot by cutting my cocktail and clothing allowance. I have only two gowns a year now and no *lingerie* at all!

Kiyomiyo:—We are not concerned with the financial aspect of the operation or with your—er—other garments. Please tell his lordship the details of the operation.

Petitioner:—What do I know about the operation? The doctor told me I would know nothing when I was operated upon. He said I would be unconscious. So I took care to count the money I had in my hand-bag and note it correctly. He then gave me whiz... whiz... I was in bed for a week. When I got up I was a new person altogether. Now I can do anything.

Kiyomiyo:—You mean to tell his lordship that you felt like a new woman altogether?

Petitioner:—(In rather high tones) Oh! Please, please. Do not insult me by calling me a woman. I am not a woman. I am a ludee. Please remember that. I do not live in Perambur any longer, ever since I got my husband knighted.

Kiyomiyo:—After all melord, a lady is a woman. It has been so held consistently by our own courts melord, though the Dungbay and the Halvabad High Courts have held differently. I suppose I did not wish to be insulting, melord.

Court:—I understand you perfectly. You did not want to insult the petitioner, I know. Please proceed with the case.

Kiyomiyo:—So you think you are entitled to calculate your age as if you were just a maiden of eighteen years on the day of the operation.

Petitioner:—Aizacly.

Kiyomiyo:—I leave it there. It is now for your lordship to say whether the age given is correct or incorrect. With your lordship's leave I shall now proceed to the other points. Now, Lady Toad, please tell his lordship whether or not you swore at the marriage altar to obey your husband.....yes or no please.

Court:—It will do no good to your case if you press that question too much. As married men we all know (here Sir Allasami indicated by a very low bow that he agreed with his lordship) who in fact is the master and who obeys. In my view the marriage service ought to be altered. It would conform to the truth if the husband swore that he would obey the wife till death do them part.

Sir Allasami:—Your lordship's knowledge of human nature, particularly in relation to holy matrimony, is profound and reliable.

Court:—On the other hand it is elementary common knowledge of all married men, Sir Allasami.

Kiyomiyo:—Am I to take it as your lordship's considered view that in this case I ought to assume that the husband always obeyed the wife?

Court:—I think so, in every case.

Kiyomiyo:—I shall then proceed on the footing that the husband obeyed the wife melord before he began reading the Holy Book.

Court:—We are concerned only with the life of the parties subsequent to the advent of the Holy Bible into the Patrique household. If you can help the court by eliciting more information in that direction, please do so.

Kiyomiyo:—Yes, melord. Oh! yes melord. I see the import of your lordship's observations. Now, Lady Toad. What in your opinion is the reason which weighed with your husband when he, according to you, insisted on your maintaining friendly relations with Mrs. Tubby Morphia, your right hand neighbour, except that to be friendly was in proper accord with the Holy Bible?

Petitioner:—I dunno what was at the back of his mind. How could I see it? He is not even bald yet. But I tell you I never liked the Morphias and their manners. How could you expect me to be friendly with people who eat rice and curry with their bare hands like natives and wander in the garden in their striped nighties, pinch my apples and tease my darling little Freddy?

Court:—Who is Freddy? The co-respondent?

Petitioner:—My lord, that is short for Alfred the Great. He is the cutest, darlingest little peke I have ever had, and he responds quite a lot, my lord.

Court:—You mean your dog. Hm!! Excuse my ignorance, Sir Allasami. I hear for the first time that the natives do not use spoons and forks. Is that so?

Sir Allasami:—That seems to be so in this country milud, more marked in the mufassil which, in some respects, is not quite so advanced as the Presidency towns milud. But milud I am free to confess that I use spoons and forks.

Kiyomiyo:—I also use spoons and forks melord. Now Lady Toad, I do not wish to wound your feelings, but I have strict instructions to ask you—it pains me melord—very much melord—whether or not during the whole time you knew him, had you or had you not feelings of an anti-matrimonial character in favour of the left-hand neighbour of yours, Mr. Brekhart Brilliantino? Yes or no please.

Court:—(getting decidedly interested). Who is this gentleman, pray tell us. Does he belong to the Income-tax department, or is he an Italian or is he Spanish? Or is he the co-respondent in the action, I wonder? By the way is there any allegation of adultery by the respondent?

Petitioner: Darling Brekhart is a cinema star.

Court. I fully anticipated he would turn out to be a home-wrecker.

Petitioner:—Your lordship! Brekhart is just seven years old. He is paid seven thousand rupees a week by the Gigantic Picture Corporation. Your lordship must see his pictures. Oh! so sweet. The pictures are a scream from start to finish.

Kiyomiyo:—Is Mr. Brekhart seven years from the date of his operation?

Petitioner:—He had no operation whatever. He is a small boy born seven years ago.

Court:—I stand corrected. (To Sir Allasami) I must say I was not favourably impressed with your client's dealings with this Brekhart who has now turned out to be an infant prodigy. I now see that he earns more in a week than what I do for the whole month. Let me conclude the cross-examination myself. Lady Todd, apart from reading the Holy Book, has your husband any other occupation?

Petitioner:—Yes, your lordship. He is an inventor.

Court:—Has he invented anything of importance?

Petitioner:—He has invented a new use for old safety razor blades.

Here every one in court pricked up his ears and even Sir Allasami, who, thanks to his barber, had never felt the need for a safety razor, was seen to be intently listening.

Court:—Then it must be a very useful invention. What is the invention?

Petitioner:—Not much use to me your lordship. But he shaves with them. (Every one was disappointed).

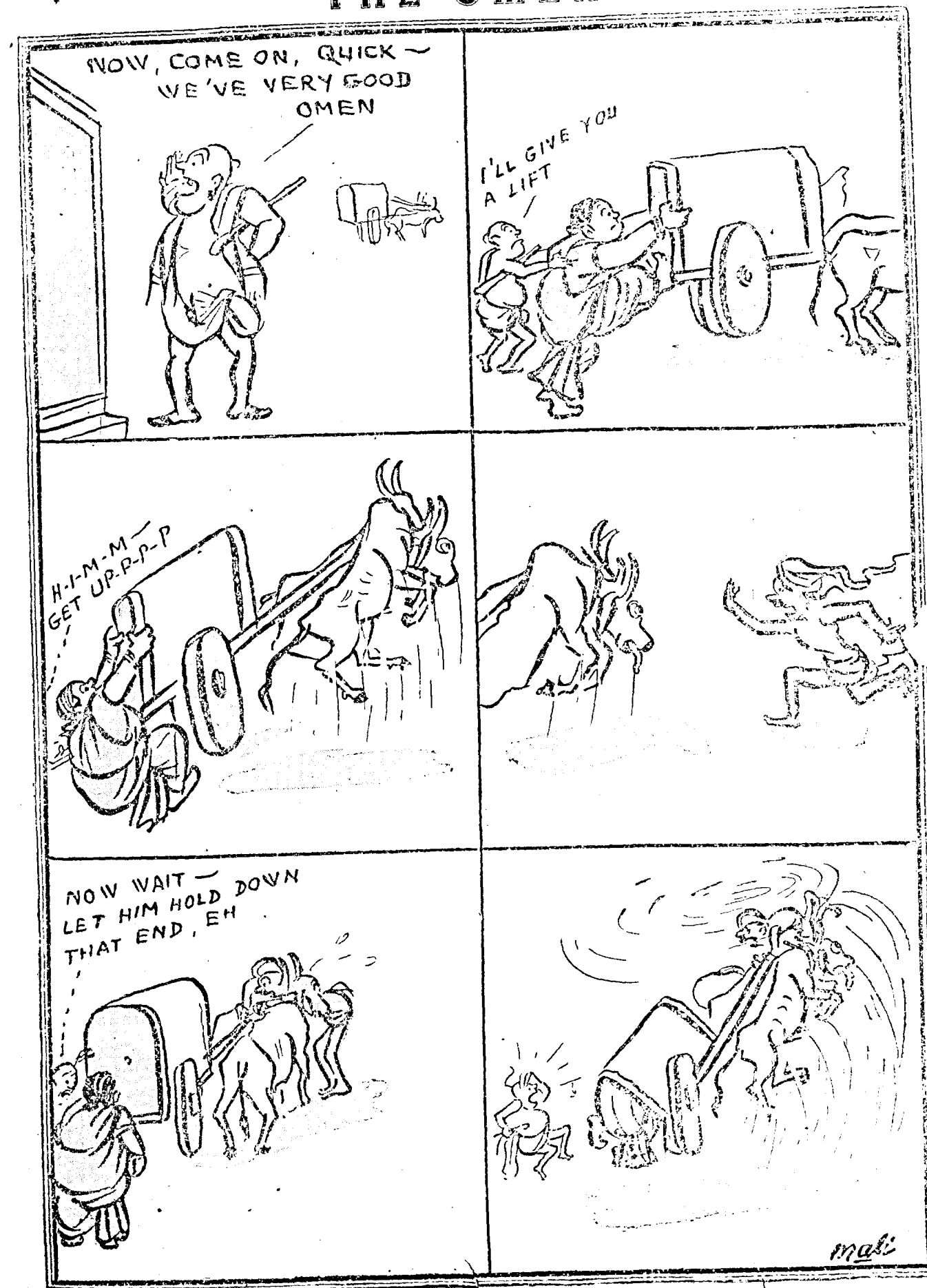
Kiyomiyo:—(with disgust) I have no more questions melord.

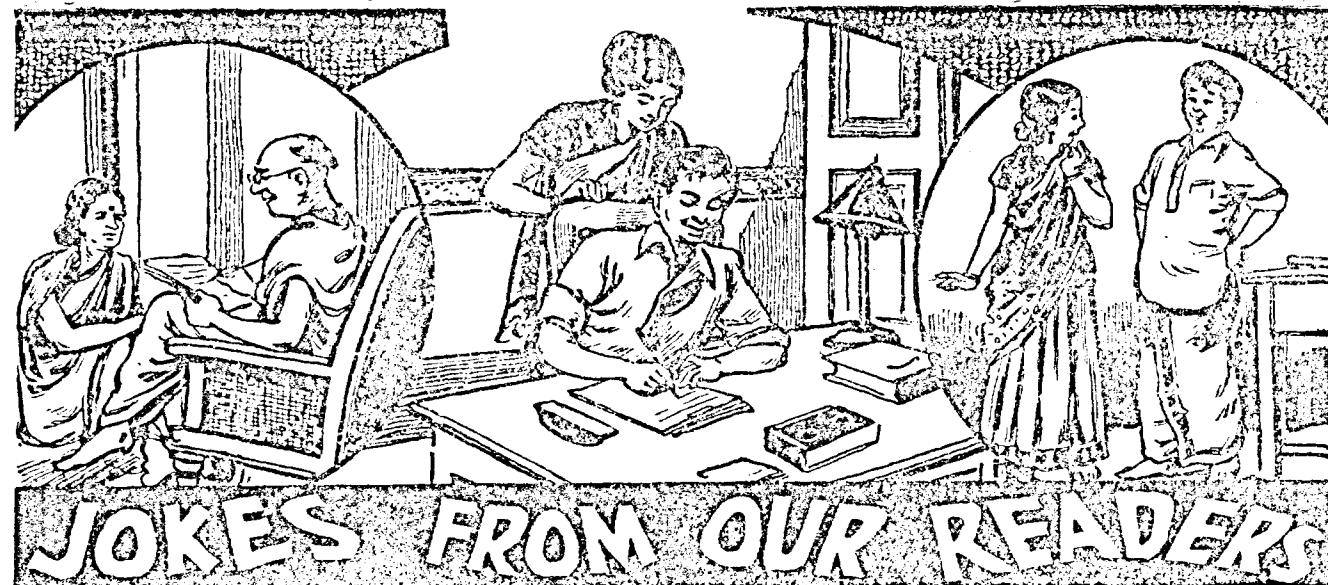
Sir Allasami wanted to ask the petitioner a few questions about the alleged new invention, but on his lordship indicating that he was inclined to believe the petitioner, there was no re-examination.

The court adjourned for lunch at this stage.

Sir Allasami assisted by Peddakeerthi and instructed by Morose and Thirsty, Solicitors, Maddington, appeared for the petitioner, while Messrs. Kiyomiyo and Wintoo appeared for the respondent.

THE OMEN





Grandfather (pointing to a vessel full of sweetmeats): Kittoo, don't go near that vessel. It is full of rats.

After a while Kittoo was found eating them.

Grandfather: Kittoo, what are you doing?

Kittoo: Dear grandpa, I am destroying the rats!

—N. Narayanan, Madurai.

"Hard work, pushing your invalid husband about in a wheeled chair all day," said the sympathizer, dropping a piece in the tin-cup.

"Well, sir, it would be, but we do it by turns. He rides in the morning and I ride in the afternoon."

—Narasimhachar, Mysore.

Ramu: You said the days of grace of your insurance premium for this quarter lapse to-day.

Kittu: Yes. My attempts to pay it to-day have failed and I think the days of disgrace will begin for me from to-morrow.

—A. Viswanathan, Triplicane.

Land-lady: "I think you had better board elsewhere."

Boarder: "Yes, I often had."

Land-lady: "Often had what?"

Boarder: "Better board elsewhere."

—Xavier Francis, Jamshedpur.

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. NARASIMHACHAR, Mysore.

An old offender charged with larceny was brought before a Magistrate, who had sentenced him twice before.

Magistrate: "What, you here again! Did I not tell you last time not to come before my face again?"

Accused: "Yes, your worship. I conveyed your desire to these Policemen when they arrested me; but they wouldn't hear me."

—R. N. Rajan, Triplicane.

Teacher: "Why is our language called the Mother Tongue?"

Scholar: "Because the father never gets a chance to use it."

If the kiss you miss

Is really a miss,

The miss you kiss,

Is really a miss!

—R. D. Madhavan, Egmore.

Hostess: I always have a cold bath before seven.

Guest: Rather a large audience, is it not?

—K. S. Mahalingam, Madras.

Doctor's wife: Please do not tease me any more. My heart will completely break.

Doctor: Don't you worry about that, darling. I have got the X-ray apparatus to examine your heart and see how much of it has broken.

—S. Devasirvadam, Coimbatore.

A gentleman finding some swine amongst his vines, said to his servants:—"Some fool has let loose his swine here!"

One of them informed him, "Sir, they are yours."

"Well," rejoined the gentleman, "as I have said it, I shall not contradict myself." —S. Srinivasa Rao, Srirangam.

Mr. Iyer was very vain about his singing, and, at a party, was asked to sing.

"Now, my lad," he asked a small boy afterwards, "what have you to remark about my singing?"

"Nothing," he replied; "it's not remarkable."

—Mrs. M. H. Yeggammal, Mysore.

"Well, what did you think of the animals?" enquired Uncle of his little nephew who had paid his first visit to the Zoo.

The boy pondered. "I think the kangaroo and elephant should change tails," he said.

—G. Singamuthu, Pudukkottai.

Teacher: What was the first thing Akbar did when he got the throne?

Student: He sat on it.

Teacher: Tell me the past tense of "I am living."

Student: "You are dead, Sir."

—T. V. A. Narain, Bangalore.

THE WAY OF THESE WOMEN

(HARI RAJ)



".....Not with you!....."

My dear Tulin,

Well and truly has the immoral poet Damn-Him-Who sung, "Go to the Woman, thou sluggard, and learn her ways."

Verily, many and varied are the ways and wiles of these women!

Having been married only three days, the Female-of-the-Species considers herself an old hand, learned in the subject of Love and Husbands; she imagines that she is omniscient about the ways of the world, and capable enough to understand her lord and master in all his moods and humours.

A blonde, rather plump and not very tall, my Rajalakshmi, you know, has the most ravishing smile which comes and goes through the sweetest of kissable lips. Having a perfect complexion, rosy cheeks and full red lips, she of course employs rouge, powder and lip stick. The proud possessor of long, flowing, curly black tresses, she deems it necessary to defile nature's charm by using abominable hair-oils and scents.

The episode I am going to relate happened last Wednesday. As usual Rajam looked at herself in the mirror, stuck a brooch here, pinned a locket there, and adorned herself everywhere. The finishing touches of her toilet over, she softly glided into the dining room.

"Ah! dear, there you are! I was wondering where you'd gone."

She spoke so vivaciously and charmingly and lovingly that any one who had a spark of manhood glowing in him, would have sprung at the young girl and kissed her on the spot. Anyway I would—on the spot.

But lo! The young man who sat huddled up in the chair, her husband Master Courage, who had married her for better, for worse only a short month before, did not move. He did not even glance at his young bride. He glared aside—at nothing. He bit his lips. He clenched his fists and ground his teeth. He was evidently in a state of great mental strain.

The young girl who ought surely to have understood the signs of the approaching tornado, maintained a beautiful calm—a calm which hastens the tempest.

"Aren't you coming to the cinema?" she asked sweetly.

"No!" burst out the husband. "I'm not—not with you!"

"But what is the matter?" she demanded in a tone which registered cent per cent amazement. Either she was a completely innocent girl, or a consummate actress.

"My dear, what's the matter with you?"

In that moment Master Courage stood astounded at the power of duplicity of a woman. Here was a girl whom he had considered to be the very incarnation of virtue, honest, sincere, loving, straight, a second Diana even, and now every tone of her voice, every syllable of her utterance, every movement of her limbs, every glance of her eyes, betrayed her. She knew fully well—so at least the husband thought—that she was standing at the brink of a smouldering Vesuvius, about to scatter its 'ever-burning sulphur half-consumed,' and her odious tranquillity, her calm demeanour, her nothing's-the-matter air, all showed that she was insensible to his suffering. A word, a single word, would have put out the miniature volcano, but alas! she had not the mind or the time to utter that word. Oh! these women!

"I'm not coming with you until you show me that photograph which you concealed in your trunk this morning," declared Courage with an air of finality.

Rajam gave a low, little laugh.

"Oh! it's that! You are still worrying about that?" she exclaimed as though it were a matter of no interest at all.

"I tell you I'm not coming," said her husband with brutal savageness.

"But don't I tell you that it is nothing serious? It is a very, very precious secret. I will show the picture to you later."

The storm burst.

The dreadful thoughts, unspoken suspicions, accusations, criticisms, all surged up in a sweeping wave and escaped in speech. He called his wife this, he called his wife that, he called his wife a flirt. He referred to her burning passion for pleasure and luxury, her vanity, her behaviour towards his friends, and so on *ad infinitum*.

"I'm afraid I've married a Moor of Venice," said Rajam flippantly. "Still there it is, and there it has to remain. Anyhow, if you aren't going to the theatre I am."

Master Courage watched her depart. His hands roaming over the table rested on the inkstand for a moment. Such was his fury that he did not feel the glass cracking under the strain. Rushing wildly across the room, he sped into his wife's boudoir, snatched her trunk, tossed all her costly dresses aside and stood gazing at the face staring at him from the bottom of the trunk—And the face was—his own!

Underneath the photograph was written in a beautiful round hand:

"To my Loving Husband on his twenty-second birthday."—Raj.

Dear Tulin, I am sure you are admiring the wonderful resourcefulness of the girl. Yes, as you thought it was my photograph that she was looking at when her husband came upon her in the morning. With woman-like cleverness, she evaded him and then in the afternoon the new photograph found its place in her trunk.

It may come as a matter of surprise to you when I declare that my feeling towards Rajam has changed and that she is now my own little sister.

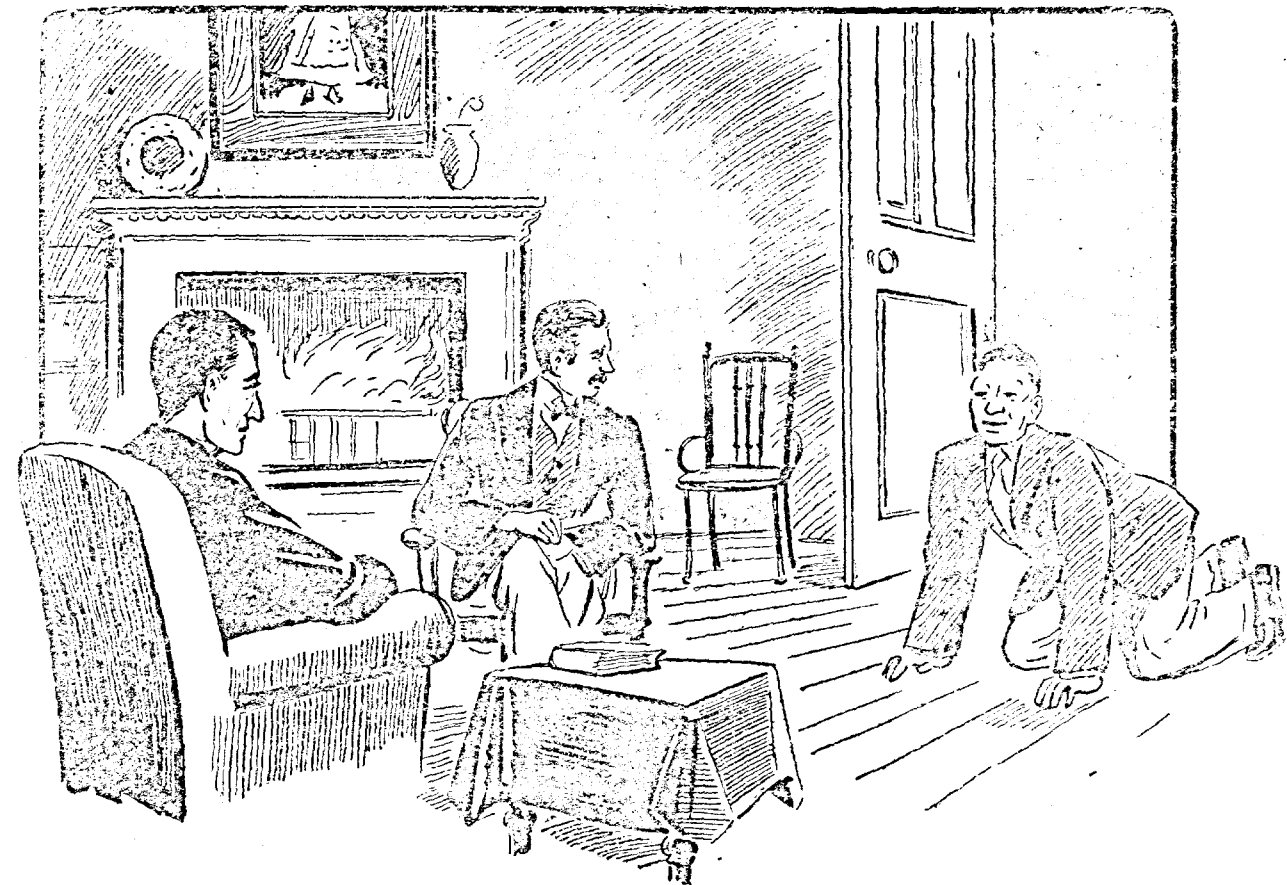
Hoping yourself, the missus and the kiddies are enjoying sound health,

Yours affectionately,
HARI RAJ.

SHAKE HANDS!



"What do you call your house?"
"Happy Arms. And yours?"
"Venus Arms."
"Venus Arms! Venus has no arms?"
"And I haven't any house either!"



".....A man entered on all fours....."

SILLYCOCK OAMES

THE SUPER-SHERLOCK-HOLMESIAN SLEUTH

THE CASE OF THE MISSING EYE-BROWS

(AUTOLYCUS)

MY friend Sillycock Oames had been strangely silent for some time. I looked up from my book; he was smiling quizzically at me. "And so, my dear Hotson, you are not going to invest in Cuban bonds," he said. Used as I was to my friend's uncanny powers of penetration, it yet rattled me to hear him reading my innermost thoughts. "My dear Oames, however did you know it?" I could not help exclaiming. "Tut, tut, elementary, my dear Hotson, elementary. By glancing at your right boot I can quite easily deduce it."

"I confess, Oames, that I may seem woefully obtuse but it still beats me how you could have done it," I said.

"Trade secret, my dear fellow, trade secret. If I were to explain all these things, you, my dear fellow, even you will catch first time itself the tricks of the trade—foot-prints and all that. Then where would I be? Even you, I repeat, even you, would prove a formidable competitor and take away my bread. You

know, we poor sleuths have got to live," mocked my friend.

Fond as I was of my friend, I could not but be repelled by such irritating, though occasional, exhibitions of egotism on his part. A joke is a joke, no doubt, but this was carrying things a bit too far. My friend with his usual perspicacity must have sensed the fact that I was a bit nettled, for with that exquisite tact that so charmed an Oriental client of ours, the Nawab of Bismillahpur, that he offered my friend on the spot the pick of his collection of emerald-set gold tooth-picks—and a goodly collection it was by all accounts—an offer, which, needless to say, my friend instantly declined, well, with that exquisite tact he changed the subject.

"Remember, my dear fellow, this firm is Hotson and Oames. Presently I will be requiring your invaluable help in solving a case. That, if I am not much mistaken, must be the ring of the party himself," he said.

It must be clearly understood that my friend was not a bad sort really; it was just his idea of time well-spent to tease me occasionally; anyway, he always made ample reparations. I suppose I am not duller than most men; in fact, Oames himself had frequently complimented me on my remarkable *grasp* of things, as for instance, when we had successfully solved that celebrated case 'Scandal in Sofia' and I had grasped his hand and shaken it warmly. But I digress.

We have had many queer visitors to our room; many queer entrances and exits. There was, for instance, that of the Prime Minister of Pomerania. He had crept into our room, wept, flung his arms round my friend's neck and insisted on leaving *via* the chimney, because, he said, Communists were waiting round the corner for him with a bomb or two. There was the Duchess of Blankshire who had swept into our room, giggled, and straightaway swooned on the hearth. Then there was that negro bruiser, Sam Fazenda, who had entered our room with a meat-chopper and silkily enquired which of us was that d--d Oames, and slashed at the sofa where my friend was sitting. There was that cheery gentleman who entered, daintily cleaned his boots on the doormat, unlaced them, placed them on his head and announced ingratiatingly that he was a firm believer in the "turn and turn about philosophy" of life. He insisted on climbing down the rain-pipe. Well, we have had rather a lot of such distinguished visitors. But the gentleman who entered now was even more distinguished in his manner of entering.

A man entered on all fours barking piteously as if his (its?) heart would break. "Why this, Oames? Do you know anything about this rather strange mode of walking?" I asked. "Possibly, possibly, he is becoming a Higher Thinker. Who knows, in these days? But let us not be obsessed with his unconventionality of procedure. Let us to business. And what can I do for you, sir?" he asked the stranger who had been contentedly sniffing round the room.

At these words the stranger jumped up. He was quite a good-looking, upstanding young man of the later twenties. In fact, there was distinction and refinement about his face. But I noticed something rather odd about his face, all the same. I realised with a start that he had no eye-brows. Doubtless he saw my start, for with a humorous twitching of the mouth he said, "Now you understand my odd behaviour. It was merely to draw attention away from my eye-brows, or rather, from the absence of my eye-brows. You have got to solve the problem who stole away, so to say, my eye-brows. But possibly it is too slight a case for your notice," he said turning to my friend.

"We are not a bit eye-browish, I beg pardon, high-browish, if that is what you mean. Please begin at the beginning," my friend reassured him.

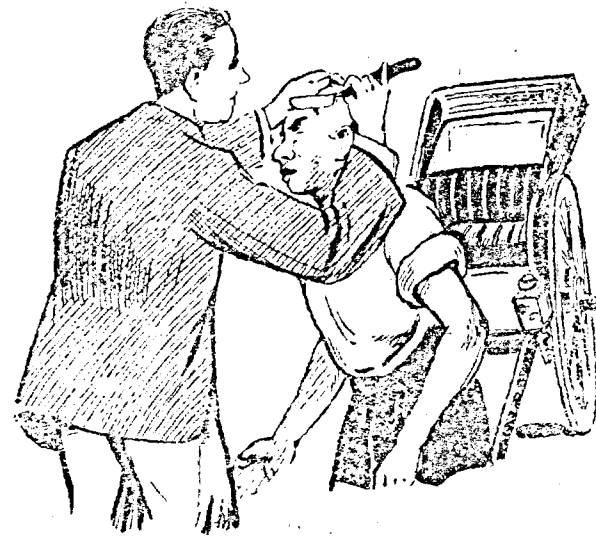
"Well, gentlemen, to begin at the beginning, I am the fourteenth son of my parents. My mother died giving birth to her seventeenth baby. Come to think of it, my relatives on my mother's side did have rather large families. Her sister, for instance, had....."

"Twenty-three and died. Yes. Yes. Doubtless, doubtless," my friend replied, I am afraid rather impatiently. "Pray let us postpone the consideration of these interesting coincidences in your family to some other time. When I said begin at the beginning, I did not mean quite at the beginning. Let us assume that you were one of the sixt..., ahem, large number of children of your mother who survived. Let us also assume, for simplicity's sake, that you survived the attacks of measles, whooping-cough, mumps, diphtheria, infantile cirrhosis of the liver and all that and safely arrived at manhood. Now, proceed."

The young man grinned sheepishly and proceeded. "Well, I guess I had better cut the cackle and come to the point at once. At once. I am the third mate of S. S. 'Pagoda'. This morning we docked. I guess I dozed a bit. Just a bit, y'know. When I woke up and looked at the mirror....."

"At the what?" almost screamed my friend, jumping up from his easy-chair.

"The mirror."



"...Shaved off the eye-brows of a Chinese rickshawallah"

"Now, what would you say a mirror is, Hotson?" my friend asked me.

"Well, you know, a....., that is, a looking-glass, a glass you know, into or at which we look....."

"No, Hotson, that definition won't do," said my friend gravely. "You remember, my friend, you once defined for me the word 'grotesque', which definition was all wrong. No offence meant. But one had better get these things straight. Reach me down that dictionary. Well.....What does this say...a mirror is a 'polished usu. glass surface reflecting image.' Well, proceed please," he turned to the young man.

"As I was saying, I looked at the 'polished usu. glass surface reflecting image.'" Here the young man winked at me. Poor fellow, he did not understand the scientific ways of my friend! "And I found that my eye-brows were, or, as one might say, had gone."

"Gone, eh?" asked my friend.

"Yes, gone. Past participle of the verb 'go'."

"Fourth mate?" enquired my friend.

"Beg pardon."

"I mean, what is the name of the fourth mate of your ship?"

"George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott."

"Ha! If you don't mind, Hotson, reach me down that file."

My friend turned the pages of the file and went on reading something...*"chews match-boxes".....* "uncle used to beat him"...."at Singapore...Chinaman...only three months".....We heard these brief snatches of his reading. He closed the file and appeared satisfied with what he had read. His left ear lobe began to wiggle and his right nostril to quiver. To the uninitiated, if such there be, I may explain that these were the symptoms that the giant intellect was on the trail of a hot clue. He unlaced his left shoe, took off the sock and began to chew the big toe with a look of intense and *concentrated*, concentration on his face, all the time lolling on his back in the easy-chair. Time was when my friend had contented himself with merely placing the fingers of his hands tip to tip as an adjunct



"Chewing match-boxes....."

to concentrated thinking. But now, what with the whole tribe of detectives having copied it and what with his advancing rapidly into his second childhood, my friend had adopted this practice.

"Solved!" cried the lolling figure of Oames, coming suddenly to life.

"Solved, Oames?" I must have asked it a bit incredulously.

"Yes, solved, odd as it may seem to you," rasped out my friend, "I flatter myself that there has been no enfeeblement of intellect in my case. Well, young man, it is this way. This George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott is *not* George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott....."

"No?"

"I should say not. This George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott is merely George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp. He probably thought that by thus cunningly anagramming his name Topp into Pott he would escape my detection. But he has not. I know him for what he is. He is George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp, the lunatic with criminal tendencies. This lunatic was brought up by his uncle, the cruel variety, you know. This uncle, the late lamented Alexander Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp was a disciplinarian of the old school and believed in not sparing the rod. And as this disciplinarian had rather bushy eye-brows, young Topp had, what the psychologists would call, the high-brow, I beg pardon, the eye-brow complex implanted in him early in life. Going about shaving other people's eye-brows is a manifestation of this complex. Chewing match-boxes is what the psychologists again would call the auxiliary-subsidary manifestation. But let that pass. Let us concentrate on the main manifestation of the eye-brow complex. Young George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott, or as I should call him, George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp shaved off the eye-brows of a Chinese rickshawallah at Singapore. For this he was dealt with leniently by the trying magistrate and got off with only three months. As the trying magistrate remarked, "The Chinese do not have marked eye-brows. In fact, so sparse is the growth of hair in their eye-brows that one has to look rather closely indeed to find out if there are eye-brows at all. So, I consider that the plaintiff has not suffered materially by the loss of his eye-brows. Considering this and the youth of the defendant etc." So, young man, this George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp must have shaved your eye-brows as well... How did I deduce and detect all these, eh?" Here I must sorrowfully remark that my friend made a movement which I cannot but call a preening movement. "Well, the moment I looked into that file under the heading George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Topp I deduced all these and knew this George Clarke Conyngham-Conyngham Pott for the impostor that he is. Pott...ah...ah! 'Pott', indeed! He is no more a Pott than I am a top. He is a Topp, that is all there is to it. Eh...what...cheque?...no, thanks. No, send on the cheque to the Home for Strayed Cats or better still to the National League for the Proper Protection of Eye-brows. It will be thankfully received," and my friend's eyes twinkled merrily at his happy joke.

"What shall I do? Whatever shall I do?" the young man cried, wringing his hands passionately.

"Come along, be a man. What is an eye-brow or two? Hotson, my dear fellow, there is as much sense in Hafiz as in Scott. 'When pain and anguish wring the brow, brow-beat them,' that is what Hafiz says somewhere. Well, good-bye, young man," and my friend turned to his tabala. For, ever since his visit to India in a case on behalf of the Maharajahdiraj of Halwar, my friend had forsaken his violin and taken to the tabala; and this was scarcely odd, because you know tabalas are hard to beat. I mean, hard to beat as musical instruments.

OTHER PEOPLE'S HUMOUR

Rain

"You weren't at school yesterday. Was it due to the inclemency of the weather?"
"No, sir. I couldn't come because of the rain."

Room for One

The train was about to leave the station when a smart young fellow thought he would air his sense of humour.

He walked up to a carriage and said: "Is this Noah's Ark full up?"

"All but the ass," was the prompt reply. "Come right in."

The Reminder

A visitor to a lunatic asylum was approached by an inmate, who begged that his case might be laid before a magistrate and his release obtained. The visitor promised to take the necessary steps immediately.

"You won't forget?" said the lunatic.

"Oh, no."

"You are sure you won't forget?"

"Certainly not."

As the visitor turned to go, he received a kick that landed him in a heap a few feet away. "That," said the lunatic, "is in case you should forget."

Open for Advice

"When you have a desire to yawn," advises a physician, "do so to the fullest extent."

But don't forget to close your mouth.

The Look of the Month

Her eyes were turned up to mine and I shall never forget the expression in them, half fear, half defiance, half desire and half love.

Incognito

A New York bank cashier has disappeared. It is thought he may be evading arrest by going about disguised as a gangster.

Instalment System

"Where's old Bill been lately? I haven't seen him for months."

"What? Haven't you 'eard? He's got three years for stealin' a car."

"What did he want to steal a car for? Why didn't he buy one an' not pay for it, like a gentleman?"

Auto-Suggestion

Swell Patient: Don't you think I have traumatic neurosis, doctor?

Fashionable Medico: Not yet, but I'll give you a list of the symptoms and you can go home and start working on them.

No Fear!

"Is it quite safe for my husband to bathe here?"

"Quite, Ma'am. There ain't no mermaids 'ere for 'im to go off wiv!"

Nothing For It!

She: My face always gives me away when I have to tell a lie.

He: Yes, you might just as well give your right eye.

Why he is Reckless

"Henry, dear," said Henry's aunt, "aren't you sometimes afraid you'll lose control of the car?"

"Constantly," replied Henry: "I'm two instalments behind already."

Mutual Obligation

Hotel Porter:—What time shall I call you, sir?

Resident:—Don't bother, I am always up early.

Porter:—In that case, would you mind calling me, Sir?

Not his Fault

He:—I didn't make a sound when I came in last night.

She:—The noise woke me up!

He:—Well, don't blame me. It was the four fellows carrying me who made that!

Their Treat.

A number of old cronies met in the Duck and Drake on Christmas morning to wish one another the compliments of the season.

After several rounds of drinks had been bought, Smith turned to Sandy McTosh.

"Well, Sandy," he said, with a merry twinkle in his eyes, "I think it's your turn to stand treat all round now."

There were bursts of laughter from all corners of the bar. When the merriment had died down McTosh turned to Smith.

"Weel, weel," he said artfully, "now we're quits. ye've all had a laugh at ma expense."

His Cheek!

The snow was coming down heavily as Dusty Rhodes, the tramp, made his round of calls on Christmas morning.

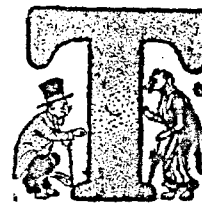
Coming to one house, he touched his cap to the householder.

"Happy Christmas, ma'am!" he said. "Could you give me ninepence for a shave?"

"Ninepence?" she cried. "But, my dear man, you can get a shave for threepence."

Dusty Rhodes nodded. "I know, ma'am," [he replied; "but I ain't had a shave for three days."

THE BUDDING ORATOR (DIJAM)



Use a popular phrase, Joseph Williams had the gift of the gab. True enough that during his school career he was considered a crank, but that was through sheer malice. He had been, however, a force to be reckoned with in the school Debating Society. His speeches—he spoke on all occasions on every conceivable subject ranging from something to nothing—had been brimming over with words of learned length and thundering sound. His post-school days were even more distinguished for perfervid oratory.

One night as he lay in bed about to enjoy the repose that follows from something attempted, something done, he began to think seriously. He had been that evening to hear a learned discourse on "The Art of Public Speaking" by Professor David Longwind, a reputed elocutionist. The latent embers of oratory in him were beginning to be fanned into a blaze as he recalled to mind the examples cited by the learned lecturer of Demosthenes, Cicero and Catiline, of Lord Chatham, Erskine and Curzon. He was determined to improve himself by following their methods. He would even go one better than they by practising auto-suggestion. Till he fell into a sweet slumber, he suggested to himself mentally, "I am resolved tomorrow morning at 5 o'clock to recite as loud as possible for the development of my lungs, some lines from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar."

His subconscious mind responded with clock-like precision. Sharp at 5 in the morning he rose and began in a stentorian voice Antony's funeral oration. To judge from the volume of his voice, his lungs needed no exercise. They seemed already developed to an enormous degree. But to the enthusiastic and ambitious Joseph it was not loud enough. Then a second time. Even that was not satisfactory. Therefore he commenced for the third time.

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears." Just then, a thundering voice exploded at his ears,

"Be damned if I do,"

and was followed by an egg that crashed through the open window on his head, pomading his hair with its contents. Poor Joseph was bewildered for a moment, and could not proceed with his speech. The voice continued,

"What the dickens do you mean by disturbing people's sleep by howling out like an idiot?"

Joseph at once realised the situation, but surely, he thought, a fellow is entitled to practise elocution in his own room.

"You forget, my friend," he politely replied, "that I am practising....."

"Be blown with your practising," interrupted the other fiercely. "The sea-shore or the lunatic asylum is the right place for you, not crowded tenements where people are sleeping." "But look here, old chap," put in the budding orator, this time somewhat sternly, "I am entitled..." "Be blown with what you are entitled to," again interrupted his raging neighbour whom Joseph could now see standing close to his window with a menacing look. "Your madness has robbed me of my sleep and a fresh egg which I was to have taken the first thing in the morning."

Joseph felt his head and ugh! it was sticky. Anyway a fresh egg was preferable to a rotten one. Even that would be better than a stone. At any rate, discretion was the better part of valour, and it was best to pacify the silly fool who had no ear for the charm of oratory and who could not admire the beauties of Shakespeare.

"Alright, mister, I'll pay for the egg," he said.

"Never mind the egg," said the neighbour, now somewhat appeased, "but beware of repeating your bally-hooing," and went back to his slumbers.

After all, thought Joseph, it's a case of the old story of casting pearls before.....But this was not going to damp his enthusiasm. In fact, it whetted it. He felt that his first experience augured well for his success, for did not Demosthenes fare the same at the outset—though, of course, minus the egg? This was a happy omen. He could now hope one day to "sway listening senates".

That evening he went to the beach. Standing on a solitary rock he began addressing the waves. This time it was Tennyson's "Break, Break, Break." The ozone he inhaled from the sea-breeze exhilarated him. His voice grew louder and as he concluded the lines,

"Oh! for the touch of a vanished hand,

And the sound of a voice that is still,"

he received a rude shock.

(Continued on page 1096)

STORIES OF THE GREAT

(N. T. VAZIRANI)

VICEROY'S PRIVATE PHOTOGRAPHER

AFTER the Burma War, one day the Maharaja of Holkar asked Lord Dufferin, the then Viceroy, whether he intended to annex Burma. But the clever diplomat answered gracefully, "All that I want to annex is your friendship." Holkar, shortly after, observed that Lord Dufferin had not sent him the photo of the Rawalpindi Durbar as promised. His Lordship turning to Mr. Mackenzie Wallace, asked him to make a note of it, upon which Holkar enquired, "Is this gentleman your private photographer?" "No," replied Lord Dufferin, "Lady Dufferin is my private photographer; this gentleman is the keeper of my conscience."

QUEEN VICTORIA SOBS

Two of Queen Victoria's weaknesses as a little girl were climbing trees and cantering about on a donkey. One day she climbed an apple tree and was afraid to



Queen Victoria

get down. She remained there sobbing till Davis, a gardener, got a ladder and brought her down. The grateful girl, opened her purse and presented him a piece of gold.

ALL RED

When Lord Auckland paid a visit to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he showed the Maharaja a map of India. The Maharaja asked why some parts were blue, some red and some green. Lord Auckland told him that the blue showed the Maharaja's territory, the green that of the Rajputs and the red that of the British. Upon this the great Sikh ruler observed, "It will be all red before long."

A KING WHO KEPT NO SERVANTS

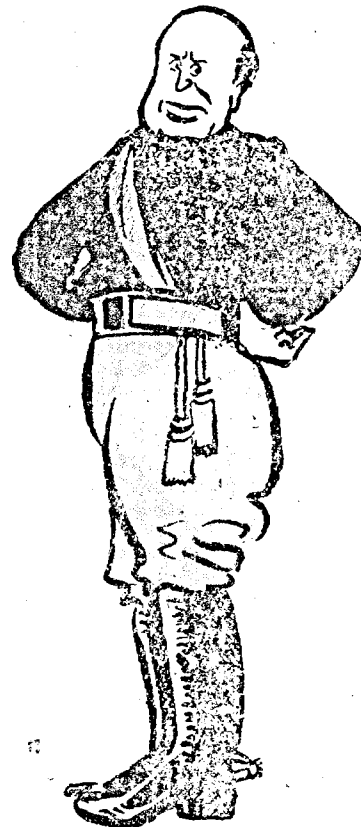
Nasir-ud-Din, the Emperor of Delhi, lived on the proceeds of the Quran he copied and sold. His wife had to cook his food and run his house like an ordinary lady. He refused to employ any servants for his personal comforts from public funds.

BEAT HIS BROTHER AND BECAME BRILLIANT

Sir Isaac Newton, the famous scientist, was very low in his class. One day he had a fight with his brother and gave him a good smacking. This inspired him to exert himself. He was soon at the head of the class.

MUSSOLINI—EX-CONVICT

Mussolini, Dictator of Italy, is a blacksmith's son. He worked as a hod-carrier. He had to sleep under bridges in pouring rain, often nearly starved. He was once arrested for vagrancy. "Live dangerously" is his motto. He likes to speed in aeroplanes and autos. For relaxation he plays the violin.



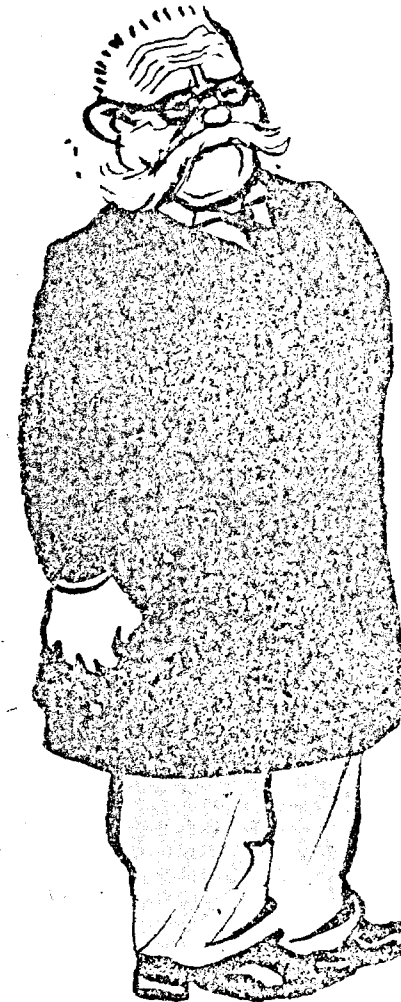
Mussolini

LORD ROTHERMERE NOT ALLOWED

One day Lord Rothermere appeared at the "Daily Mirror" office to find the ordinary commissionaire temporarily away. A new man on duty at the door would not let him pass: he must sign the usual form and send it up. In his neat beautiful handwriting, he wrote: 'Lord Rothermere would like to speak to his secretary!'

A PRESIDENT WHO NEVER GOES TO A THEATRE

Hindenburg, the dour old soldier, who is the President of Germany, has very small interest in sports. He does not care a rap if Germans win or lose. He never goes to a theatre. Modern literature means nothing to him!



Von Hindenburg



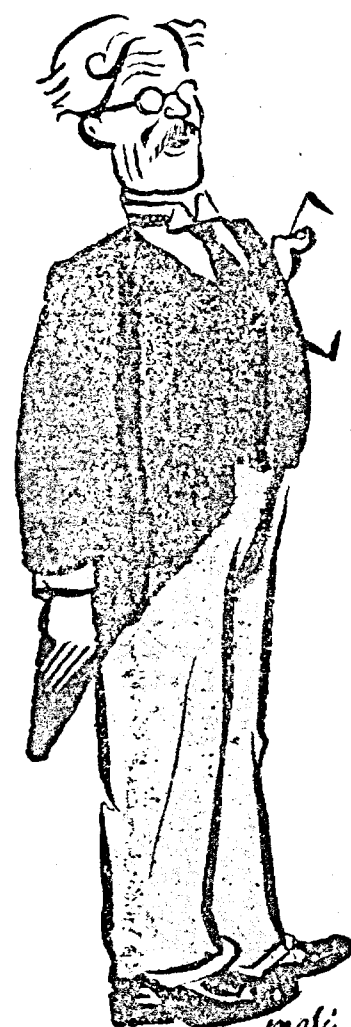
Lord Rothermere

BABAR: A SHY HUSBAND

Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire, was a very shy husband. He was specially shy with his first wife. Passage of time brought no improvement. His shyness only increased and he lost all love for the lady. His mother, therefore, used to scold him for this and send him off to his wife once a month or forty days.



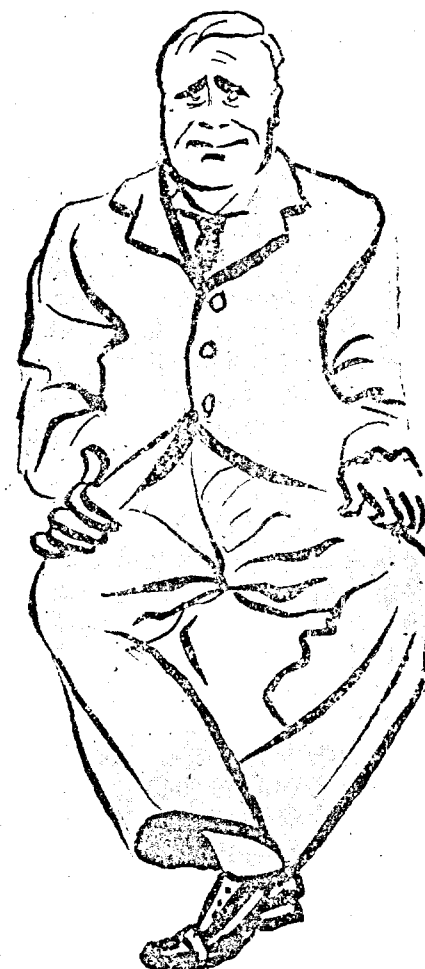
Babar



Mr. MacDonald

PREMIER'S VISIT TO A RESTAURANT

A pleasant story is related about Lord Sankey and his first meeting with Mr. MacDonald. In the nineties he went to a meeting as a hard-up law student, and sat next to a young journalist. They talked, and eventually adjourned to a nearby restaurant for cocoa. "I'll pay," said the future Prime Minister, when the bill for four pence was presented. When he felt in his pockets, he could only produce five pence, and he needed three pence for his bus fare home. The future Lord Chancellor had six pence; as he had intended to walk home anyway, he paid the bill.



Lord Sankey

THE BUDDING ORATOR—(Continued from page 1093)

"I'll still your infernal voice," furiously bellowed some one close by and the next moment a heavy blow caught Joseph on the jaw and sent him down into the salt water. Drenched to the skin, he hurriedly clambered up the rock to be confronted by a bulky man who had brought his bulkier wife, an invalid, suffering from nervous breakdown and palpitation of the heart, for an airing.

"Kicking up a deuce of a row here, eh!" threatened the fat man with the paunchy stomach. "I'll still that damned voice of yours for good."

Joseph knew it was useless, if not dangerous, to argue with an ass who could not appreciate the music of Tennyson's poetry. He, therefore, beat a hurried retreat.

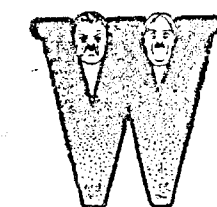
On the way home he saw a large dictionary lying on the lawn of a rich resident of the place. It had been left there by the man's daughter who had been

doing a cross-word puzzle. Joseph immediately recollected that Lord Chatham went twice through the folio dictionary of Baily examining each word attentively. He would do likewise, for it should be a part of his training. He possessed no good dictionary and here was his chance. He entered the garden and avidly pounced upon the book and walked out. Just then the girl coming out, noticed it and raised an alarm. Joseph, of course, never meant to steal the dictionary. He intended returning it after use. But the father of the girl handed him over to the Police. The well-meaning Joseph was not daunted. The following morning he explained everything to the magistrate, who seemed to be a genial old soul, nodding his head to Joseph's lengthy statement. But the budding Demosthenes was taken aback when the magistrate in a calm unemotional tone said,

"I remand the accused to the House of Observation."



1934



We have passed one more milestone. 1933 is now a thing of the past and few will there be to grieve over its passing. To the serious thinker and student of human problems, it has left a legacy of unhappy memories. Disarmament Conferences dwindled from front page importance in newspapers to short paragraphs in the later sheets: first class Powers withdrew or participated in the Conferences with scarcely disguised boredom, what time Big Business in the Armaments Line watched these antics with a scorn they did not even deign to conceal. Politicians, if that were humanly possible, talked more inane rubbish than usual and the Nobel Prize Award Committee withheld the Peace Prize, in spite of the look of pained disappointment plainly visible on the faces of famous pacifists like Churchill, Hitler and Mussolini.

INDIA

India has had a somewhat quiet year. Round Table Conferences have been held and the usual quota of 'reasonable' Indian 'leaders', determined to give the White Paper a chance, have loyally assisted at the proceedings and have 'represented' India on different occasions.

UDAY SHANKER

Uday Shanker, after a long absence from the homeland, came back, was seen, and ravished the beholders by the incomparable grace and rhythm of his dancing—an art essentially Eastern in its origin and

development but an art, which with our usual unhappy perversity, we have allowed to fall into desuetude.

CRICKET

In the realm of sport, the past year saw the coming of age of India. We have now attained Test Match status and whatever be the results of the Tests still to be played, we shall be content if, though beaten, we are not disgraced. Incidentally, the somewhat undignified and unedifying Anglo-Australian controversy about Body-Line Bowling seems now to have definitely ended.

THE NEW YEAR

We stand now on the threshold of a New Year and prince and peasant alike look forward to it with hope in their hearts and faith in the future. We may take consolation in the old tag: "When things are at their worst, they must end or mend." For our optimism there may be little reason, any reasoned or logical forecast of the immediate future may not contain much ground for rejoicing but human nature being what it is we look forward ever hopefully to the good time that is coming. But it is usually a good time coming. Be things what they are, we wish all our readers a Happy and Prosperous New Year. And, incidentally, we may wish ourselves and our Magazine long life, prosperity and an ever-increasing circle of appreciative readers.

OUR MAGAZINE

Twenty-four calls we have taken before the curtain and bowed our thanks to an audience which has grown in numbers each time. We have had more than our fair share of good fortune. Even when we were born, however, we were no puling weakling but a lusty infant.

who gave early promise of robustious growth. We venture to think that our readers will agree that performance has more than kept pace with promise. The services of the best artists have been enlisted, we have sought writers far and wide and our quest has borne fruit in very large degree. Deisvi's serial, 'Bala, the Bad Woman,' has had a sensational and well-merited success; and his next story 'Devi, the Dancer,' bids fair to repeat and if that were possible, to surpass the success of its predecessor. When 'Devi' comes to an end, a new short serial, the rights of reproduction of which we have already purchased, will appear. About this new feature we shall not now say much; readers who read

the first instalment will realise the gripping human interest of the story. About our other usual items, it is needless to say much; it will be enough for us to assure our readers that fresh and interesting features will be added from time to time while the old and familiar coterie of brilliant contributors will continue to add lustre to our pages and merriment to your homes. We are advancing and with your continued co-operation and goodwill, we shall go on from strength to strength. We will not reach our goal for there is no summit to human ambition but when we reach the high places, we shall still look upwards seeking for fresh worlds to conquer.

Our usual feature 'People in the Public Eye' will be shortly resumed.

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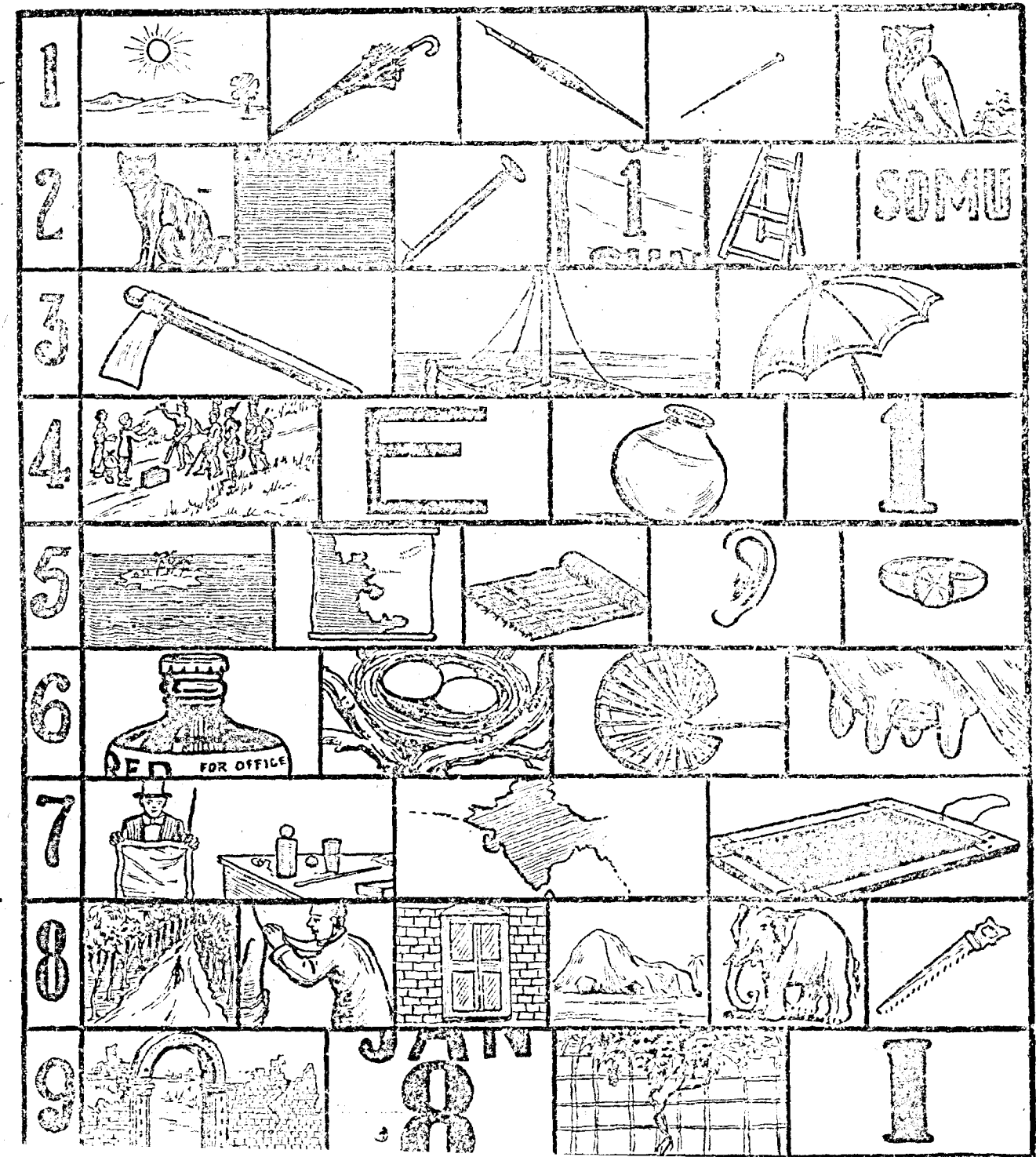
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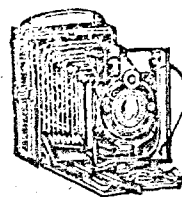


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RULES AND CONDITIONS

Solutions must be filled in on the coupon printed in the next column. Any number of solutions may be sent but an entrance fee of *annas eight* must accompany every entry submitted. Where copies of the Merry Magazine are not available, competitors can send in their solutions on ordinary paper but an entrance fee of *annas ten* is payable with each entry thus submitted. All entries must be received by last post on 3-2-34. Any received after will be disqualified. Entries from local competitors will be received in person at our office till 6 P. M. on that date. The first prize of Rs. 600 will be awarded to an all-correct solution and the second prize of Rs. 400 to the one which the Editor considers the next best. An all-correct solution is one which agrees in all respects with the one in the Editor's possession. Failing an all-correct solution, the first prize will be awarded to the nearest correct entry received. In case of ties, the prize money will be equally divided. In case there are three or more than three all-correct answers, the total prize of Rs. 1000 will be divided equally amongst them. A winning competitor can receive only one share in a prize and the winner who ties for the first prize shall not be eligible for a share in the second. No correspondence can be entered into or interviews granted. Persons connected with the Merry Magazine and its associated journals are not allowed to compete.

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

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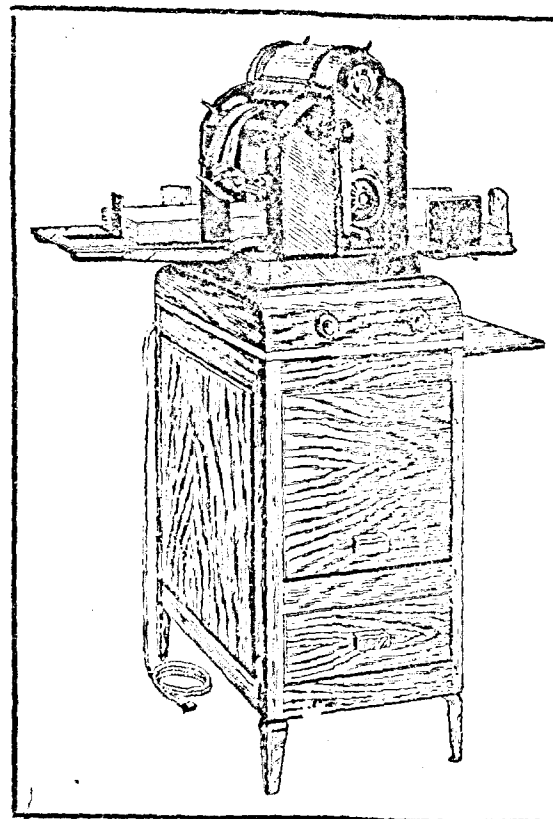
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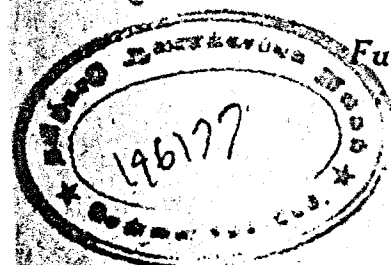
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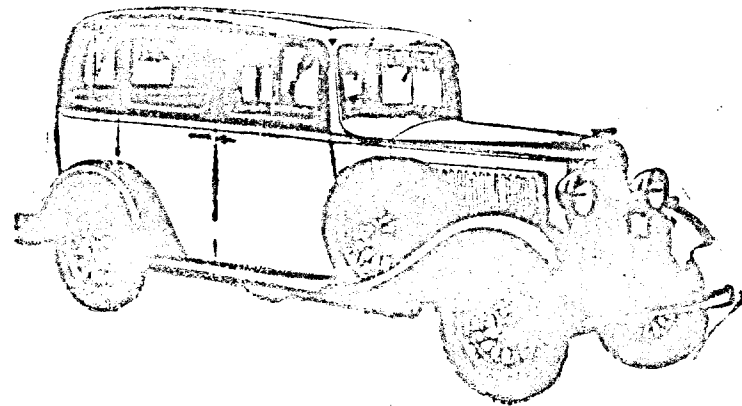
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