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THE

1406

MERRY

MAGAZINE

Vol. III

MADRAS, 2nd MARCH, 1935

No. 9

Futurist Art

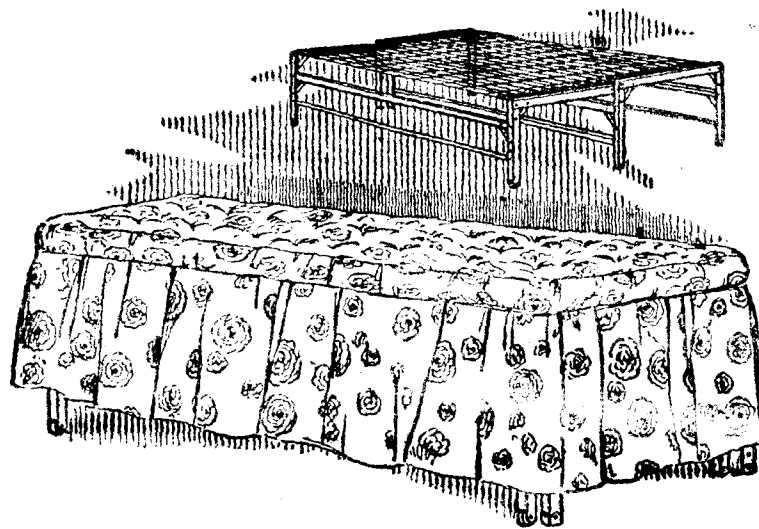


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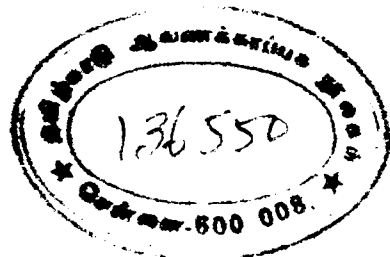
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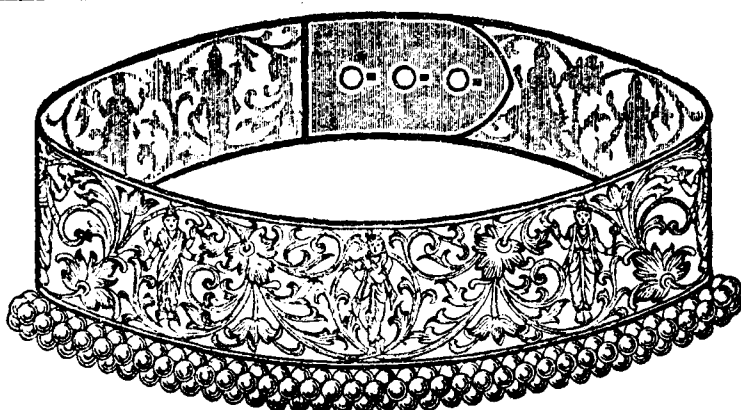
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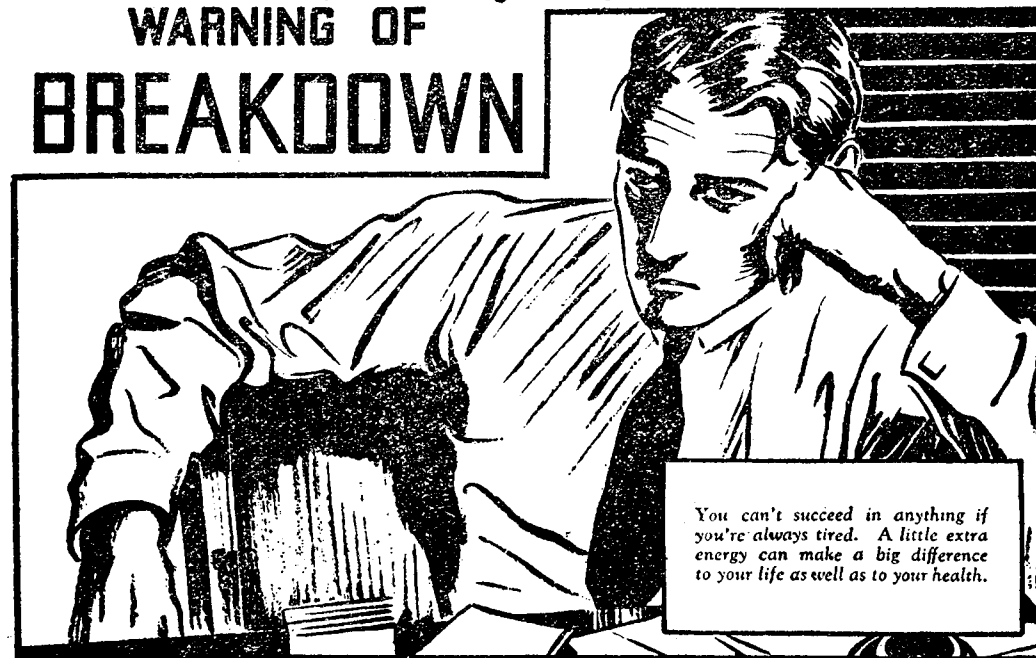
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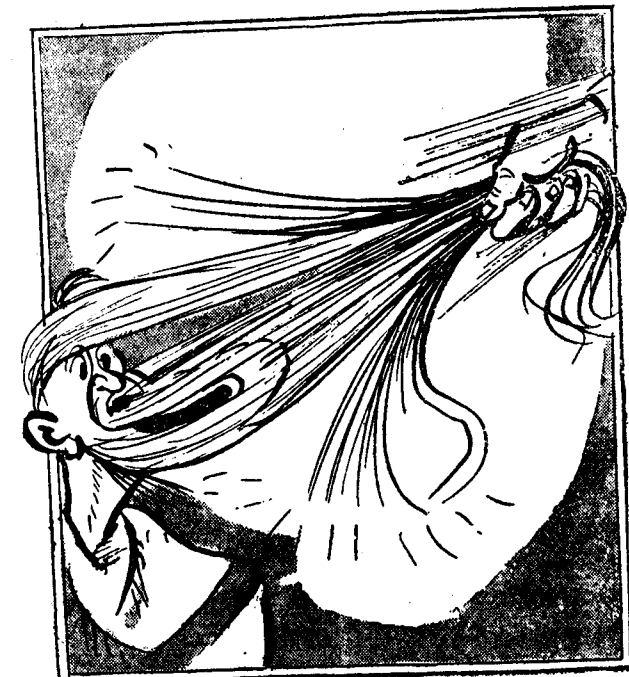
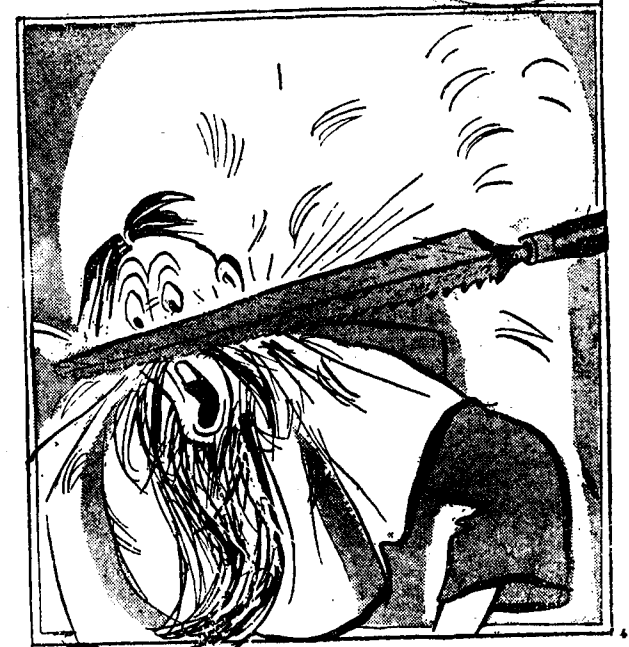
Vol. III

MADRAS, 2nd MARCH, 1935.

No. 9

Inside the Hair-Dresser's Saloon

What it felt like when the hirsute gentleman had his beard trimmed. — 'MALI'



We have all heard about the Great Unknown who became the Great Known—known in all lands and at all times on this planet. But the Great Unemployed, at least in India, remains always the Great Unemployed and never becomes the Great Employed or even the Small Employed. But all rules must have exceptions, as otherwise they would not be rules. It is said that very often exceptions eat up the rules. But so far as unemployment is concerned, the rule threatens to eat up the exceptions as Aaron's serpent did the other members of the brood. But rule or no rule, exception or no exception, Gunesan, M.A., M.D., M.G., M.L., M.Sc., was both rule and exception rolled into one.

He was a prodigy. Which Indian child is not—in the eyes of its parents? Every kindergarten boy carries the High Court Judge's silver mace somewhere inside his skin just as Napoleon's soldier carried the Field-Marshal's baton in his knapsack. It must be a rather irritating thing to carry an entire silver mace inside the skin. But as Indian women—of the old school, of course—used to carry tons of yellow metal outside their skin without wincing, even so the Indian boy could carry silver maces inside their skins. Gunesan went off like a rocket before he came down like a stick. Like Goldsmith who 'touched nothing which he did not adorn', Gunesan did not touch a single question paper without adorning it with ornamental answers which fetched



Unfortunate postman groaned under the weight of Mr. Nesan's applications.

THE MIRROR OF LIFE

Mr. G. U. NESAN, M.A., M.D., M.G., M.L., M.Sc.,

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri.

prizes and medals and what not. In fact he was be-medalled like a star-actor or star-actress or a circus heroine or a *harikatha* performer of to-day. I have always wondered why it is that these specimens of humanity flaunt their medals. Stars could surely shine in their own light. The poet says: "Star to star vibrates light." I thought at one time in my innocence that *harikatha* performers wore a garland of gold-pieces containing the figures or names of God. But to my amazement I found that the gold-pieces contained only the performer's name or the performer's form (with its feet of clay).

Gunesan had now qualified himself for entry into the White Company. I am not making fun of Conan Doyle. White is emblematic of purity. Money is said to be the root of all evil. Hence the White Company means the group which neither is, nor will ever be, contaminated by the source of all evil. It is the army of the Great Unemployed. All persons who are worth anything to-day dock their names and their tufts as well. To justify and announce his entry into the White Company, he styled himself G. U. Nesan (G. U. of course signifying Great Unemployed).

These are days of specialists. Mr. Nesan was one of the greatest specialists of the day. His field was the study of advertisements and of responses to them. These responses are not *response a prudentem* but *response a imprudentem*. He had an equally able specialist as a bosom friend. The latter was named Sukumaran but used to designate himself as S.U. Kumaran. He was quite right in doing so as he had qualified himself by a lifetime of continuous failure to find jobs to deserve the initials S. U. (Specially Unemployed).

Nesan:—What Mr. Kumaran? What shall I do? I have read everything and passed everything. My degrees are longer than my name. How can I convert them into money?

Kumaran:—Ay! There's the rub. Some people have empty brains and many people have empty pockets. It seems that Kunthi said that it is better to have lucky children rather than learned children. I belong definitely to the latter group. I am one of E. B. Powell's proficient. But I have always had only efficiency and not sufficiency.

Nesan:—You have seen life in all latitudes and longitudes and attitudes and specially in the beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor! For they shall never lose." What you do not know about life is not worth knowing.

Kumaran:—I have more acquaintance with the Gold Standard than with gold. I know much about bimetalism but I have had neither silver nor gold. I have however plenty of brass and worshipped at the shrines of all the tin-gods of my time.

Nesan:—Can't you give me a tip or two?

Kumaran:—O yes! Try answering advertisements.

That was how Nesan mastered the difficult art of answering advertisements. He devoured the *Parsi* and the *Muslim* and the *Christian* and yet his appetite grew by what it fed on. He applied for all appointments from the Chief Minister's down to a railway porter's. Unfortunate postmen groaned under the weight of his applications. He interviewed all the Public Service Commissioners. He knocked at all offices.

Nesan eventually married a poor girl and then his troubles became manifold. Children arrived with extraordinary regularity. Those were pre-birth-control days.

He had by this time tried all roads. But all roads lead only to the Rome of Unemployment. He had tried even the great *Kavacham* talisman. In fact he had been trying the *Kavacham* all his life. The *Kavacham* was effective against the glances of Lakshmi. There was but one hope—one forlorn hope left. He consulted Kumaran the proficient. The latter's breath was taken away by the genius displayed by the proposal. He bewailed the barrenness of his brain which never had a similar brain-wave. With the approval of Kumaran, Nesan rang the curtain down on his old life.

Nesan announced that God had come to him in his dream and asked him to devote himself to Him. He dug out the family idol which had got buried under an ever-

increasing mass of lumber. Nesan went about from place to place with his idol and performed *puja* on an ever-increasing scale. He was literally in sack-cloth and ashes. He radiated the odour of sanctity in the form of burning camphor. Flowers and 'golden flowers'

Flowers and 'golden flowers' began to pour in.



(*Swarnapushpam*) began to pour in. Men and women vied with one another in offering to Nesan the sinews of war against his long-continued unemployment. He has donned the orange robe and is now well-known in both the hemispheres as 'Nesananda'.

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By 'KEBI'

FOR sheer endurance and self infliction of pain, go to the religious fanatic. I have known *biragis* puncture their whole physique with a thousand needles or pierce their dried skin with rusty spears. They would, of their own free will, go through the most rigorous ordeals—I have seen a *biragi* hanging head downwards, from a tree, right over a blazing fire, hot enough to roast a sty of pigs—all because they believe that by doing so, their God would smile on them.

Two such are now crawling their way to Badrinath. They are both worshippers of the Goddess Badrinath, one a middle-aged Baria of Jaipur State and the other a sweet-meat seller of New Delhi. The former started from his village and was joined by the sweet-meat seller at New Delhi. They are accompanied on their crawling expedition by an inevitable Brahmin, on foot, who is administering to their spiritual needs and incidentally to his financial ones. The 'crawlers' hope to do their destination by about September. This mode of pilgrimage, they believe, would please their Goddess most. Nor are they afraid of Leveller Death. For they say that if they perish en-route, they would go straight to Heaven,—double-first by Express.

Ye Samuels and Pillieuxs, Auntie Awfuls and Private Joyfulls, all ye scribes, who keep the wolf from the door by exuding laughs and giggles into a jaundiced world, hear ye! Henceforth, I proclaim, ye need have no fears of that one-eyed ogre, the Editor. Ye can throw your quills away, burn your parchment and empty your ink-pots on the aforesaid personage's face and yet look at the world with balance and fortitude. For—mark my words—there is work awaiting ye in a far-off strand. An omnibus company of the city of Lublin, five score miles from Warsaw, is engaging well-known humorists as bus-conductors. 'Good-bye blues if you travel by our bus' (pronounced b-o-o-s). Two of the many such slogans used by that enterprising company are: 'Away with the crisis—Go by our bus' and 'If you have not heard the latest jokes—Go by our bus. Our conductor will tell them to you and make you laugh.'

I am not a seer, otherwise I would try to tell you whether this system will find followers in our jolly old city. But anyway, ye scribes, keep some of your facetiae in store, in case.—

Who said that the age of chivalry is dead? True, we might not have valiants going forth, armed to the

film on their teeth, rescuing fair damsels from fierce demons. But we certainly have silent men who will go to inordinate lengths to please a fair lady as the Cambridge undergraduate, who on peeping out of his window, saw a young man and his girl-friend passing down the street, happy, arm-in-arm. Of a sentimental disposition, their obvious love so touched the soft chords in our friend, that he threw a bouquet of flowers at them. Alas, the lover lacked humour and was prone to look on the world with suspicion. A policeman was fetched, who preferred a charge against the well-meaning undergrad. Result: Fine for carelessly throwing things out of the window.

Then again there is the case of Gunner Thomas Edward Hopkins of the First Training Brigade, Royal Artillery. Here is his story, in his own words, while pleading guilty at a Woolwich Court-martial, to a charge of deserting.

"Just before my friend left the Army he told me about a young girl with whom he had been keeping company, and who was going to have a baby.

I asked him to do the right thing towards her, but he told me to mind my own business.

I married the girl. I was young and foolish, little realising what I was doing.

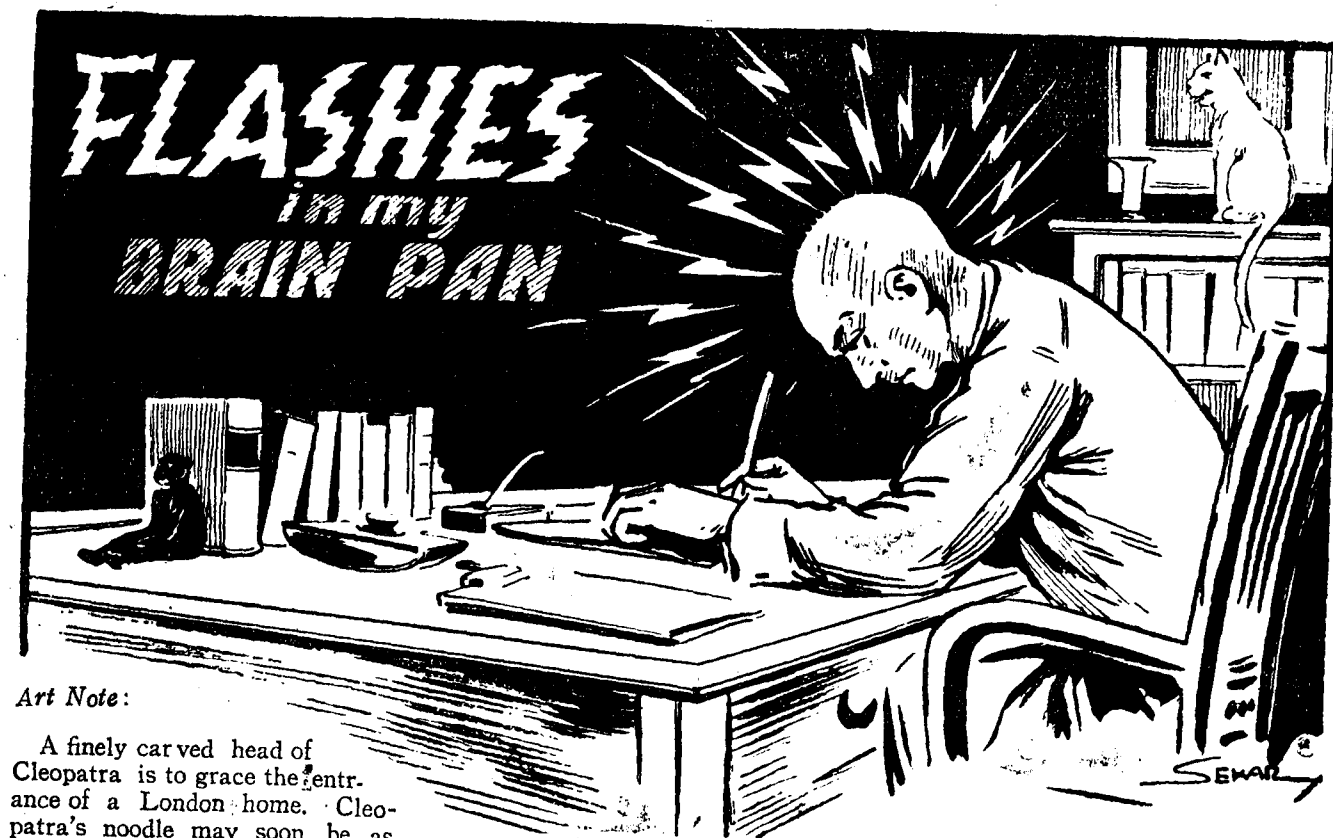
Everything went well for a month, then the baby came. I had given my life away to give the baby a name and save her from disgrace.

My wife forgot what I had done for her. She made me worried and upset. She always talked about my pal, how the baby was like him, and even had his photograph hung over her bed, and hung everywhere possible.

I tried to plead with her, but she did not love me. Her heart was not with me. I was living in hell, so it seemed to me."

Hopkins added that his wife's mother had died, her father was a farm labourer.

A Spaniard, an American and a Scotsman were discussing what they would do if they awoke one fine morning to discover that they were millionaires. The Spaniard said that he would build a bull-fight arena. The American said that he would go to Paris and have a good time. The Scotsman said that he would go to sleep again to see if he could make another million.



Art Note:

A finely carved head of Cleopatra is to grace the entrance of a London home. Cleopatra's noodle may soon be as famous a land-mark as her needle.

Correct:

One: You are very good at conundrums, aren't you?

Two: Yeah.

One: Well, when is a nose like an athlete?

Two: That's quite simple. When it runs.

What Happened:

He thought he could teach
His wife to drive;
The poor optimist
Is no longer alive.

Epitaph:

Let's shed a tear
For Mr. Smeeth;
Last night at dinner
He ate up—his false teeth!

Advice:

A lovely skin is everything
According to her Mater;
But her Pa says, "Remember girl,
A thick skin is even better.

Tail-piece:

If Henry VIII lived to-day,
He certainly would
Transplant the whole of his court
To Hollywood.

Nutty:

Editors of humorous journals, says a writer, are not very fond of nuts. Particularly the chestnut.

Capital:

A writer intends to bring out a book describing the worries and tribulations of workers in the silk trade. We suggest that he call his novel: *Sorrows of Satin*.

Swish Swish:—

A young woman in Switzerland makes her living by guiding travellers through windstorms. A sort of gale-guide.

Arabian Tale:—

A very rich Arab recently chartered a whole ship to carry one of his hens across the Persian Gulf. Much of a dhow about nothing.

Not Harf:—

A cork flew out of a champagne bottle, crashed through a window pane, and smashed a bowl in a crockery shop across the street. Another cork and bowl story.

Pathetic:—

There was a young fellow called Jekyll
Whose physique was quite symmetrikyll
Until a mule's feet
Which met in the seat
Made him look ever so like a sekyll.

Our Own definition:—

A pessimistic farmer is the fellow who believes that the corns on his toes are more plentiful than those in the field.

Our Opinion:—

And an artist is said to be successful only when he is able freely to draw—a cheque on his bank.

Impertinent Question—1.

Can anybody tell me who it was that killed the Dead Sea?

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

There was once a kind editor—believe me it is no paradox—who used the gentlest of expressions in his rejection slips, and who almost wept when contributors crashed into his office and presented their tales of woe and 'tales of 8000 words long' before him. Everybody liked him. Contributors adored the way in which he returned their 'entirely original' efforts. They said no editor in their experience rejected mss. as pleasantly as he did: and thus he grew to be popular. His issues multiplied in numbers. He was happy. At home too, the same thing happened. I dare say he was pleased at this too. But he had enemies. They were editors of other magazines. They hinted darkly about the increased circulation of his family. One day something happened which gave his traducers material for a joke at his expense. A stork was hovering over his household. But he was busy with an Annual Number. Later in the morning he received a note from the doctor informing him of the advent of the seventh issue. It was written in a bad hand—being a doctor's. The editor mistook it for blank-verse and so without hesitation he sent it back by the same messenger with a note. The note ran 'The Editor thanks you for your laudable effort but regrets his inability to accept or make use of the same.' The rejection slip is still in the possession of the editor's better-half.

I am telling this story merely to give the contributors a tip about the presentation of their matter; window-dressing is not exclusively confined to general merchandise. There is no need to write 4000 words, where a thousand will do. The first paragraph should grip the readers' attention and keep it till the end. Of late, I have been considering too many long-winded yarns most of which was milk and water—in fact, too much of the latter.

Coming to affairs in March, there is a new feature I told you about—*Literator in Excelsis*. I should like to hear opinions about it. And puzzles. Oh yes, puzzles. I am offering Rs. 750 this month and absolutely NO Entrance Fee! The January 'No Entrance Fee Competition' for Rs. 1000 has been successfully solved by two lucky readers; one gets the first-prize of Rs. 600 and the other the second prize of Rs. 400.

Beware of the Ides of March! Well, why merely of March? I find my lot the same in all the months. For one thing, take the staff poet! He clings to me like a leech throughout the year. Like to hear his latest? Well here it is:

Byron swam the Hellespont
To see his love he was so keen;
But I would swim any 'Big Pond'
To get the *Merry Magazine*. —Your Editor.

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FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Careful!
"Are you familiar with mules?" asked the farmer of the coloured employee.
"No, sir; Ah knows too much about them to get familiar wit'em."

Misplaced Sympathy.
There had been an accident, and the sympathetic old lady stooped and smoothed his forehead.

"My poor fellow," she crooned, "tell me your name and I will tell your mother."

"Thank you," gasped the victim, "but my mother knows my name."

What the Trouble Was
Auntie pushed the cake towards her small nephew.

"Won't you have another piece, dear?" she asked.

"No, thank you very much, aunty," said the boy slowly.

"What's the matter, Tommy?" aunty enquired. "You seem to be suffering from loss of appetite."

Tommy gazed pathetically at the cake.

"It isn't loss of appetite," he replied. "What I'm suffering from is politeness."

Truthful!
The mistress of the house entered the dining room just as a burglar was in the act of purloining the silver. "What are you doing?" asked the lady.

"I'm at your service, madam," replied the thief glibly.

Doing 'Her Best!

An old lady, who could not see eye with the taxi-driver on the question of fare, finally remarked:

"Don't you try to tell me anything, my good man. I haven't been riding in taxis for five years for nothing."

"No," replied the driver, "but I bet you had a blinkin' good try."

Doing the Job Properly

The police had photographed the convict in six positions and sent the pictures throughout the country, asking the authorities to apprehend him. Promptly came the reply from the Police Inspector of Hicksville Corners,

HE: Stop fidgetting with that cloth and give me a straight answer. Do you or do you not love me? Go on! Say yes or no.

SHE: Yes - or - no.

which read as follows:—

"Received the pictures of criminals. Have captured five of them and am on the trail of the sixth."

A THANKLESS JOB

By "TIRUMALAI NALLAN"

FOR the last three months Belat Shekh and his neighbour, Ramnath Babu, had ceased to be friends. It was everybody's opinion that the blame for the quarrel rested with Belat, for Ramnath was an amicable soul and got on well with people. Ramnath himself thought that Belat had deliberately picked up a quarrel with him.

A godown belonging to Belat stood on a piece of land about fifty yards off from his house. Ramnath's residence itself was near by. In this godown were warehoused many pieces of furniture in an inchoate state. Belat was a furniture-maker.

One night at about 2 a. m. Ramnath woke up from his sleep, and began to smoke a *biri*. The smoke released a vigorous train of thought in his brain on the general economic situation, with particular reference to the marketing of his own straw stacks. Casually, looking godown-ward, Ramnath noticed somebody striking a



match.
When you
read this,
you, being snugly
ensconced in your
easy chair, will interpret
it as possibly some other
Ramnath Babu trying to light
his biri, as a preliminary step



Ramnath noticed somebody striking a match.

towards reflecting on the general economic situation. But Ramnath's mind was quicker. It at once anticipated instant conflagration. "Help! Help!" he cried out, and "Fire! Fire!" The godown had indeed caught fire. The Raj Bashis, the Nondols, the Shekhs and the Bhaoraboys rushed to the scene. But Ramnath had proceeded to the spot earlier and emptied a bucket of water over the corner of the godown, where the fire had just begun. By that one stroke, he saved the situation. The Raj Bashis, the Mondols, the Shekhs and Bhaoraboys could do nothing more than praise and bless Ramnath for his meritorious act. The villagers predicted that the quarrel between him and Belat Shekh would disappear from that minute. Ramnath had saved Belat's property in such a generous, magnanimous and forgiving fashion!

The village was therefore disappointed to find that the relations between the two gentlemen did not improve; on the contrary, the wise man of the village, Prosanna Babu, thought that feelings had actually become more bitter. Ramnath felt that he had done a thankless job.

And Belat Shekh had good reason to be bitter with Ramnath. His business was going down and his financial complications were rising up. He had set great store by the fire of the godown, which was heavily insured. A single lighted match at 2 a. m.—and the work was done. Ramnath, the enemy, would be suspected, the insurance money would be in his (Belat's) pocket, and the world would go smoothly. But Ramnath came and bungled.

All of which shows that generosity can be misunderstood!

THE METAMORPHOSIS

THE question is being asked daily since that time in an indefinable past when Evolution distilled women out of moonshine and men out of monkeys, why it is that the less a man wishes to have anything to do with a thing or thingummy, the more that thing or thingummy shadows him, kicks him about like a foot-ball and otherwise harasses him, while the question remains unanswered. Vedantists call it *karma*; maulvis affirm it is *kismet*; padres would have it as the Lord's inscrutable way! But the rational world has always contested these explanations.

Holding a letter in his hand as if it were a half-dead scorpion, Mr. Shiv Prabhakar Puri asked this question of himself. Otherwise an estimable young man, he (metaphorically speaking) invariably stuck his tail between his hind legs and bolted whenever a woman loomed up on his horizon. Why Mr. Puri was so violently averse to the biological urge nobody appeared to be certain, including the author who is a very fast friend of his indeed. Amongst the rather wide circle of Mr. Puri's friends there are not a few hell-bent cynics who ascribe Mr. Puri's misogyny to an incident in the past when Mr. Puri paid court to his *dhoby's* daughter, Kannamma, which produced a number of interesting results,—to wit; a bundle of soiled clothes hurled at his head by Kannamma; Kannamma's father demanding and receiving fifty rupees from Mr. Puri's father to wipe off the alleged insult offered to his caste with a barrelful of toddy shared with his clan; a sound thrashing to Mr. Puri from Mr. Puri, senior; a copious flow of tears from Mrs. Puri. But this story was time and again officially denied by Mr. Puri with great vehemence; perhaps it was a libellous fabrication.

Mr. Puri commenced reading the letter for the third time with anger growing in his heart. And here is what he read:

NIZAMGAD,
1st January, 1935.

My dear Blazes,

That sister of mine. She took it into her head to study Ventrimorganal Hormonology in Madras. Mother said, "Don't dear, I can't bear to....." I butted in and delivered a straight-from-the-shoulder oration somewhat on these lines. "Look here, Gowry. You aren't going to study Ventrilogy anywhere. You are going to stick on right here and study multi-odouraneous kitchenology with darnology as a side line. I am the jolly old patriarch of this....." I saw a few bright stars round about here. She gave me one on the nose, a kiss to mother, took my purse, a steel trunk and the Mail to Madras of pre-historic odours. This happened last week. Mother is ragging me to write to you. She wants to brighten your drab life by awarding you the portfolio of chaperon

to Gowry. There are no darned safeguards. The whole thing is transferred lock, stock and barrel. Your discretion in the matter is unfettered. As her brother's son, she says, you won't decline the office.

Gowry, as you know, is fond of sweets, dried copra and practical jokes. I wish to Gandhi some caveman Johnny comes along and puts the lid on the girl. I wonder, old Puri, if you..... You ought not to let that dashed Kannamma episode stand between you and your duty to the race.

She lives in a sort of private hostel in Poonamallee High Road,— "Kannu Kutti Lodge". Be seeing her as often as you can. If she comes on you with any of her wise-crack stuff, bite her. You have our permission.

Affectionately,
Sri Prakash.

The opening salutation of this interesting epistle sounds a bit exotic. A little deductive reasoning, however, will establish the appropriateness of the application.

Sir James Jeans will tell you that the Sun is an awful mess of blazing blazes. And those of my dear readers who know anything of Anglo-Aryan philology will readily see the affinity between 'Blazes' and the middle name of the hero—'Prabhakar' meaning the bright orb of the day.

By the time Mr. Puri finished reading the letter, the accumulated steam in his inside found vent. He kicked a chair, and immediately regretted his action. "Why," he soliloquised nursing his foot, "why in the name of..... What do you want? Who the devil asked you to barge in unbidden?" The postman was unabashed. "A letter for you, sir." He held out a small envelope, winked encouragingly and passed out. Mr. Puri seeing the post-mark gulped. He tore open the cover viciously and read:—

"Kannu Kutti Lodge,"
Poonamallee High Road,
7th January 1935.

Dear Mama,

How many ages is it since you saw me? I guess you know the history of my advent here. This is quite a larky habitation. There are six of us. The chatelaine is Liz, a lass from sunny Malabar. Her name isn't Liz; but there is a remarkable resemblance between her and Her Late Britannic Majesty, Queen Elizabeth. We are expecting you this evening, 5 p.m. sharp and daily thereafter. If you don't come, I will resolve myself into a ghost and make your life miserable.

Yours,
Gowry.

P.S. Bring some chocolates. I leave the quantity to you; but it must be heaps and heaps.

Mr. Puri bowed to the inevitable. That evening, at about five, he alighted from a bus somewhere at the end of Poonamalle High Road, his pockets bursting with chocolate slabs, and stood indecisively on the road. A plump, matronly lady with the air of a college lecturer ambled by. Mr. Puri stopped her, parodying the Nazi salute, and asked her if she knew whereabouts Kannu Kutti Lodge had its being. He was told curtly that he was standing right in front of it. Mr. Puri favoured the Lodge with a long stare.

A young woman in a saree and blouse of vivid colours, sporting a pair of enormous ear-pendants, was leaning languidly against the facade, one arm akimbo, watching a couple of love-intoxicated sparrows disporting on the boughs of a tamarind tree that stood sentry over the Lodge. Mr. Puri decided this must be Liz from sunny Malabar and approached her like an amateur acrobat performing the rope-walking trick. Miss Liz was much too engrossed in the love affair of the sparrows to notice the acrobat. Mr. Puri let out an introductory 'ahem', and even that not producing the desired result, he proceeded direct.

"Is Gowry in?"

"Go away."

"What!"

Miss Liz looked at him. "Oh! I thought you were a....." She was about to say 'beggar' but checked herself. "What did you say?"

"Is Gowry in?"

At the mention of Gowry, she was all smiles. "Gowry? You are Mama?"

"I.....I....." Mr. Puri got himself confused before this brazen beauty. "I...I don't know. I am Mr. Shiv Prabhakar Puri."

"Then, you are Mama alright. Come in." In two strides she was in the hall. "Hullo! Girls, where is everybody? Rally round! Here is Mama!"

Miss Gowry followed by a contingent of four girls rushed into the hall from the nether regions of the house. Mr. Puri gasped in the presence of so much of blooming womanhood. Nearly a stranger to the society of the softer sex, the next quarter of an hour was a nightmare to poor Mr. Puri. Introductions and conversational inanities over, Miss Gowry mentioned the chocolates. He dumped them on the table and stood up.

"What ho, Mama, where are you off to?"

"Well, Gowry, I have a rather important engagement elsewhere. I will come again tomorrow."

"What a picturesque liar!" cried Gowry rapturously. "Look at him, dears. Doesn't he....."

"I really must go, Gowry. I....."

"Hold on a bit, Mama." At a sign from Miss Gowry all the girls withdrew to a corner of the hall and held a whispered consultation. Whatever they were

resolving, they resolved unanimously, for each wore a happy smile of concord. Miss Gowry came forward.



"Mama, we girls want to entertain you to dinner tomorrow night. Just a small, select party—we six and yourself. Won't you come?"

The appeal conveyed through those baby eyes proved irresistible. He accepted the invitation. After a good deal of hand-shaking, all round, he turned homeward.

Towards nightfall, next day, Kannu Kutti Lodge simmered with tense excitement. All the six inmates were in gala dress. The coiffures of the girls were particularly stunning, designed by the lass from Malabar. Precisely at seven, Mr. Puri made his appearance, dressed like another Captain Anthony Eden and was received by the girls with an unnecessarily elaborate ceremony. After exchanging a few commonplaces, they sat down to dinner.

In true Oriental fashion Miss Liz clapped her hands. Two maids in costumes of ancient Araby appeared in response, bearing in their shapely hands the first course. The first course consisted of china plates with *nothing* in them. Miss Gowry nodded. All except Mr. Puri fell to and ate the imaginary contents of their plates with a noisy plying of spoons. Mr. Puri looked into his plate, into all the plates, into all the faces. There was nothing in them. He lowered his jaw, rubbed his eyes, scratched the back of his head, pinched himself and did all the idiotic tricks which a stupefied man does.



He stood up holding his empty glass high, bowed to the company like a duke in the court of Charlemagne and made a royal speech.

The maids of Araby removed the plates and served the second course—all plates of airy emptiness. The young ladies simulated eating with great relish, gaily sustaining the conversation started by Miss Gowry on the merits of Bombay sweets over Bengali ones. So the strange Barmecide feast progressed till the sixth and final course. Now and again the girls threw a word of encouragement to Mr. Puri to go ahead and do justice to the fare. Miss Liz went so far as to belch shamelessly like a female Sancho Panza to lend colour to the joke.

Amidst these insane revels Mr. Puri sat as one demented. He gazed wildly from face to face, from plate to plate, from ceiling to floor. He wanted to run away, but the power of locomotion forsook him. His shirt stuck to his skin, he perspired that thick.

Finally the table was cleared and wine glasses placed all round; one of the Arabian girls produced a jug and filled the glasses—with air.

"You haven't tasted the like of this, Mama," said Miss Liz. "This is a species of cocktail special to

Malabar. I got the secret recipe from my granny. Don't stint, there's lots more."

Mr. Puri envied poor stricken Bihar. How he wished that earthquake changed its venue and shook Poonamalle High Road instead.

In the chastening shadow of great calamities the veriest of cowards and the most imbecile of human hobos have been known to don the armour of the brave and annihilate everything before them like rushing, ruthless, molten lava. At the cocktail stage a metamorphic spasm shook Mr. Puri. The Hyde part of his ego kicked out the Jekyll part. He smiled a malevolent smile. The hostesses exchanged glances. He stood up holding his empty glass high, bowed to the company like a duke in the court of Charlemagne and made a royal speech.

"Queens of our heart, sharers of our royal joys and sorrows, this is indeed the happiest day of our life, Darling duckies much as we would love to carouse far into the night at this festive board in your enchanting company, we are, alas, obliged to tear ourselves away for reasons of state. Those Northern Barbarians are at it again, harassing our dear, loyal subjects, pilfering their cattle and lifting their wives. We must sally forth and give the blighters a knock on their grisly nuts. Lo! The bugles are blowing the battle call. Here's to your everlasting beauty and health." So saying, His Majesty Puri emptied that glass-full of air into his mouth and playfully dashed the glass on the opposite wall. "Come, honies, give us a parting kiss apiece, to sustain us in the field of battle."

The dames stiffened in their chairs. Their faces went pale. Laughing with happy abandon, King Puri stood before Queen Liz, gazed at her with ineffable love in his eyes, toyed with her chin, bent down and impressed

(Continued on page 15)

In Defence of Fat Men

By 'OMEGA'



...arranging a fall by throwing a banana skin in an unsuspected part of the road.

THERE is a lot of misunderstanding in this world against fat people. They are subjected to all kinds of humiliations and indignities by those who are really envious of their ample dimensions. Lately there has developed a craze for slimming, and pills and potions and powders are being consumed by our corpulent friends in their frantic desire to reduce the size of their protuberant belly. It is being said that fat men die early and many men dig their graves with their own teeth. But this is all bunk. Fat men are the glory of the human race, and I have great pleasure in quoting the worthy sentiment of one who is legitimately proud of his Falstaffian corporation.

"We would rather die in full possession of our faculties in our middle age than totter about in scrawny-legged misery for a few extra years."

When Caesar said, "Let me have men about me who are fat," he paid a genuine tribute to the probity of our pot-bellied friends. He knew that there was a distinct relationship between girth and goodness and the one was in direct proportion to the other. The same view was expressed sometime back by a certain Insurance Company which quoted facts and figures to show that fat men were a more honest lot than thin ones.

What after all is the fault of fat people that they should be jeered at and booed by the rest of humanity? Why are so many people playing dirty tricks on these innocent and harmless people? I remember to have read somewhere the story of a mischievous prank played by a servant on his fat master. In order to ensure comfortable seating arrangement for himself, the master sent his man to get two seats reserved in a cinema show. The reply which he brought shocked the fat man. Unable to

find two close seats, he had got two seats booked—one in the fifth row and another in the second row.

I wish I could write a eulogy of fat people. If I had the nib poetic, I would get lyrical about them. It should at once be conceded that fat men can never stoop too low. But critics would say that it is due to physical reasons. I have found fat men to be always very jolly. They are happy themselves and, what is more important, the cause of happiness in others. Don't they provide unlimited merriment for others at their own expense? Every thing about them is amusing—their good round belly, their mincing gait, their panting breath. When a fat man slips on the ground it is a sight for gods and men to enjoy. I have seen mischievous urchins arranging a fall by throwing a banana skin in an unsuspected part of the road.

Fat men have invariably a keen sense of humour. Once President Taft used his huge bulk to his own advantage in an ingenious manner. The President, in his younger days, when he was a law reporter, had been studying a case in Somerville and found that he couldn't get back to the office that night unless he managed to stop a through Express. So he wired to headquarters, "Will you stop the through Express at Somerville to take on a large party?" The reply came, "Yes." When the Express stopped at Somerville, the young law reporter got aboard with his copy and the conductor inquired, "Where's that large party I was to take on." "I'm it," was the chuckling answer.

What I wish to urge most emphatically is that fat men are scrupulously honest. They are not intriguing. As Caesar pointed out, they sleep too much to be good plotters. A genial writer suggests that fat men are honest out of sheer physical necessity. Their bulk is their greatest handicap. To quote him extensively:



"Their thinner comrades can seize the cash-box and are up the chimney or away in a flash on those nimble legs of theirs. But the stout man is lucky if he has breath enough for the plausible falsehoods that are his only chance. He cannot disguise himself as can a thin man. For him there is no refuge beneath the sofa or behind the curtain and he has nothing to hope from running away."

I do not share this view. It is malicious piffle. A fat man is temperamentally honest and as he grows in dimensions, he also grows in moral stature. Everybody likes Falstaff who is the accredited leader of fat men, while no one has a good word for the lean and lank Cassius. With due apologies to all lean people I close this humble tribute to the tribe of Fatties.

(By the way, are you one?—Ed.)

THE METAMORPHOSIS—(Continued from page 13)

a resounding kiss on those correct vermilion lips, transferring a little vermilion to his own. He passed on to the second queen, the third, fourth, fifth, kissing them all. Lastly he stopped before Gowry and remembered Henley's famous lines:

"I was a king in Babylon,
And you were a Christian Slave."

H. M. Puri gathered H. M. Gowry in his arms and rained kisses on her hair, lips, eyes, throat, in short, all over her.

He approached the door with faltering steps, smacking his lips. He lingered on the threshold, threw a last regret-laden look at his queens and passed out into the night.

* * * * *

But nobody can kiss away half-a-dozen girls and romp home with that. Oh, no. Nemesis overtook Mr. Puri sooner than he thought, in the form of a letter from Nizamgad, five days later.

Nizamgad,
13th Jan. 1935.

Blazes and Future B-in-L,

Bravo! Congrats, old Puri. This is the greatest piece of news to me since Ramsay MacDonald cut his whiskers short. What a grand thing is a kiss! Where the combined pleadings of mother and self were of no avail, a mere kiss did the trick. Gowry beat a retreat here immediately after that riot of kissing. Oh, yes. I got the whole epic from her after a great deal of coaxing and offers of impossible bribes.

What a fall was there! How did you do it? Never knew you had the makings of a Sheik in you. My eye! I would gladly trade my soul with Satan to have seen that scene!

Frankly I envy you. Consider the advantages of having a wife like Gowry—every hour a whoopee and every day a practical joke!

We switched on to the dear old *purohit*; and he says that the conjugation (or is it conjunction?) of the stars is topping just at present. 31st of this month is *the day* for the grand climax, so look nippy. Meanwhile, you are to be put up for a sort of trade-show. Mother insists on it.

The lot of us are coming to Madras on the 10th, females naturally predominating. Cheerio!

Yours,
Sri Prakash.

Mr. Puri didn't pull at his hair; he didn't snarl; he didn't even kick a chair. Instead, he smiled, reflected a little and wrote a reply.

Madras,
14th Jan. 1935.

My dear Gowry's brother,

They got me at last. But I don't regret it. You can cut out that trade pre-view. I am dropping down in your midst tomorrow. I confirm the other part of the time-table.

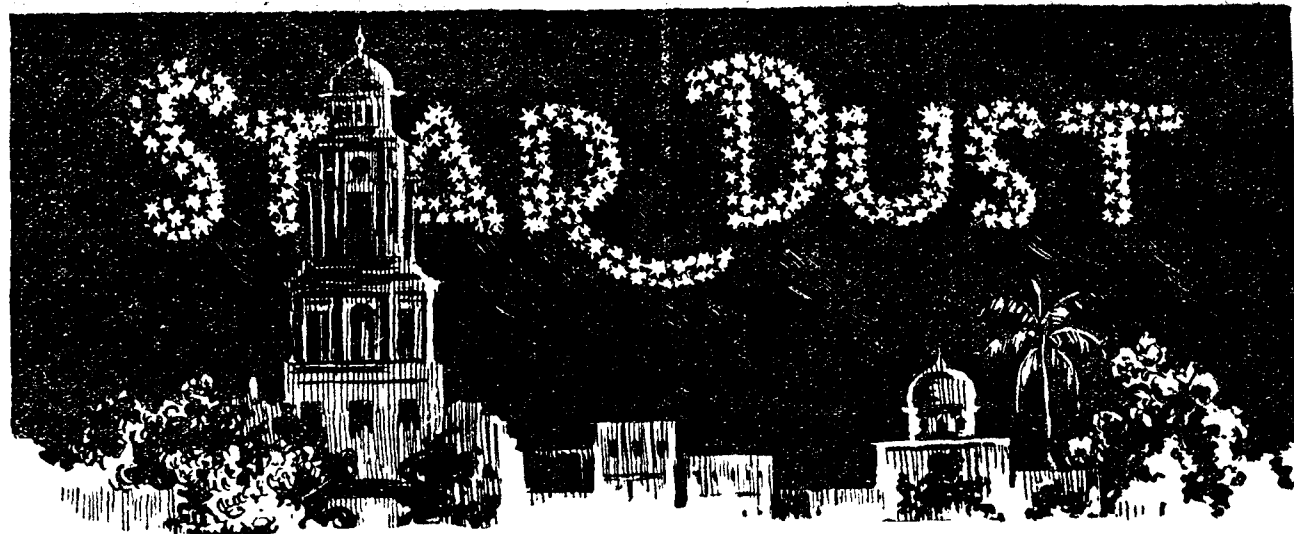
Yours,
Puri.

Talents for the Law

"I'm certain, William," she began, "When Johnny grows to be a man, And his mind's bias finds expression, He'll choose the medical profession. Last night I noticed, at the table, How thoughtfully he cautioned Mabel."

About the hurtfulness of pie." "His talents," William answered, "lie, Judging from what I heard and saw, Rather along the lines of law: Though all he told her might be true, He ate his pie and Mabel's too."

—Lippincott's



And still they come! The ranking of stars in America.

Another survey was made, to decide who are the most popular screen stars amongst the theatres of the United States, by the trade magazine, *Motion Picture Herald*.

A large and representative group of theatre exhibitors was asked to list the Ten 'stars' who drew the largest number of patrons to their box offices, in the past year, and the replies, when completed, gave Will Rogers the First place.

It is not surprising that Will Rogers should head the list this year, since he was sixth in 1932 and second in 1933. He is the first male star to head the list.

The First Ten in the list are as follows:—

1. Will Rogers.
2. Clark Gable.
3. Miss Janet Gaynor.
4. Wallace Beery.
5. Miss Mae West.
6. Miss Joan Crawford.
7. Bing Crosby.
8. Miss Shirley Temple.
9. Miss Marie Dressler (deceased).
10. Miss Norma Shearer.

Miss Katharine Hepburn is 11th and Miss Greta Garbo 29th.

The Los Angeles county tax-assessor lists Charlie Chaplin as the richest actor, with Mary Pickford in the second place and Douglas Fairbanks in the third. The same official assessed Garbo's auto at 80 dollars! And she admitted she'd be getting a new one soon.

Death has struck an astonishing series of heavy blows at Hollywood this year—Marie Dressler, Dorothy Dell, Lilyan Tashman, Lew Cody and—Russ Colombo. Russ was as promising a young man as the screen had seen for a long time. He died before he had really proved himself an actor, but his first—and last—big picture, *Wake Up and Dawn*, showed that he had the makings of a great film star. His magic voice, wafted on the wings of the wind to the far corners of the earth, had already won him millions of friends, and the combination of voice, charming personality and histrionic ability—the new and engaging Russ Colombo the screen revealed—would have added many more millions to his army of fans.

Hard-boiled, perhaps, but Victor McLaglen has a real heart under his vest pocket and puts to shame stars who are for ever quibbling about their "rights". To finish his part before his contract expired (and avoid re-signing him at more thousands for an extra week) it was decided to shoot on *The Captain Hates The Sea* all one Saturday night, Sunday and Monday. Fred Keating, who was in the McLaglen scenes, had been ill for a week, dragged himself out of bed to play and regularly collapsed at the end of every shot. The programme outlined would have been a terrific and dangerous ordeal for him. When Victor heard about it, he walked right into the office and offered his services FREE for three days to aid Fred's recovery. Bravo!

For a film-star, depending on his fans for his success, it must be highly flattering to be marked the most handsome man by them! This happened to Ronald Colman in 1932.

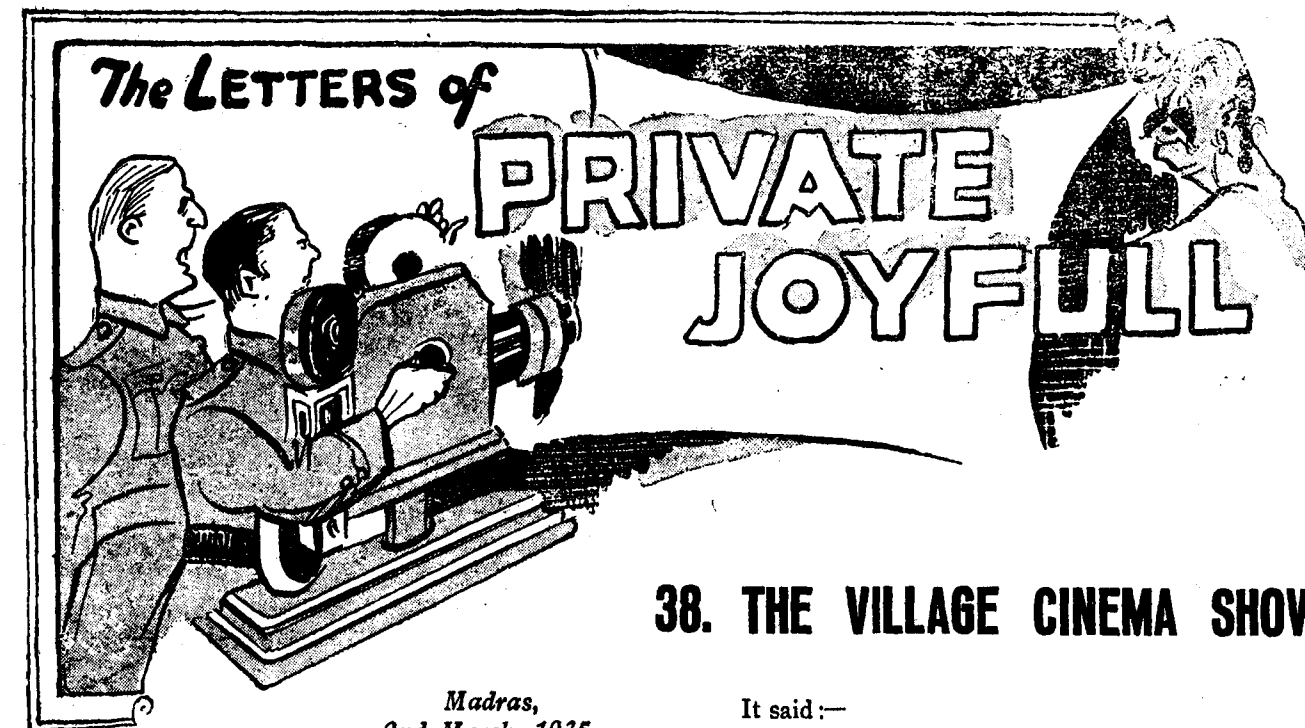
Now, he has conquered another world of hearts; this time the hearts of the screen queens. You can imagine the depth of his gratification when in the ballot for the handsomest man taken among Hollywood's feminine beauties, Ronald Colman received nearly 50 per cent of the total votes cast.

Those who voted included Misses Jeanette MacDonald, Norma Shearer, Madge Evans, Carole Lombard, Elissa Landi, Una Merkel, Myrna Loy, Ginger Rogers, Evelyn Laye, Dolores Del Rio, Sylvia Sydney, Lilian Harvey and a score of others.

Next in favour to Colman were Fredric March, Clark Gable and Nils Asther.

Miss Mary Pickford appeared in her first picture in 1909. Six years later, she was receiving a salary of £ 2,000 a week, and thought that she was being underpaid. It was as much as she could do to make ends meet. A year or two later Miss Pickford was receiving a million dollars (£ 200,000) a year.

In 1916, Mr. Charles Chaplin, who was then twenty-seven years of age, signed a contract with the Mutual Film Corporation which gave him an annual salary of £ 134,000, or nine times as much as Mr. Franklin Roosevelt gets for governing 120,000,000 people and attempting to get them out of the economic mess in which they are now floundering. Roosevelt is paid 75,000 dollars per year.



Madras,
2nd March, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

IN my last letter I told you how Boggins and I arranged to give a cinema-show at Appu's village. We were using the regimental cinematograph, which is a portable affair with a hand-driven dynamo. We hired the films from a second-hand film dealer.

The dealer had about twenty reels of old, silent film. There was no time to examine the reels, because the bullock-cart had to be loaded at once, if it were to reach Appu's village by the following evening. We explained this to the dealer, who agreed to let us take away his whole stock, and use only the reels we found suitable.

We arrived at the village late the next afternoon. To our surprise, the place was in quite an uproar. I had sent a telegram announcing our arrival, but no one in the village could read English, so the village elders held a consultation, and decided that the telegram was a sign that the Government was angry. The last time a telegram came to the village, it was followed by a posse of armed police. It appeared that the telegram concerned a dacoity in the neighbourhood. So, in the villagers' minds, telegrams were associated with policemen, dacoits, and similar calamitous visitations.

As soon as we entered the village, Appu came running to meet us. "Why are you here, Sahibs?" he said, in alarm. "There is great trouble. The police are coming."

"How do you know they are coming?"

"I have had a message from the Viceroy," said Appu, trembling. "Here it is." He handed me the telegram, much dog-eared by the village notables who had tried to read it. I burst out laughing.

"Why, good Appu," I said, "do you know the words of this telegram?"

"Well, not the exact words, brave sir."

I read the telegram.

8-2-3-34.

38. THE VILLAGE CINEMA SHOW

It said:—

Arriving with cinema Saturday evening. Joyfull.

"Are those the true words, master?" asked Appu, doubtfully.

"Indeed they are," I replied. "And look, there is the cinema, on the cart."

Appu went and looked at the cart. "Will those iron boxes indeed make pictures?" he asked.

"Certainly," I replied. "Show us where you are holding the show, and we will get it ready."

Appu gathered the elders together. "The police are not coming," he announced. "It is only the two soldiers and their cinema."

"But the telegram?" asked a grey beard.

"The soldiers sent it, to say they were coming."

This impressed the elders very much. They had no idea that we were so powerful as to be able to send telegrams, like the Viceroy. They brought some sweetmeats, on trays made from leaves, and started to produce all kinds of sons, nephews, and relations, who they said were highly qualified for every kind of Government service, and eminently deserving of favour.

We protested that the only position within our patronage was that of boot-boy, which was already filled. "Ah!" said the elders, "but the Sahib-people have countless employments in their hands. You have only to speak a word to other Sahibs."

We explained that there were different kinds of Sahibs, and at present we were not the kind that could talk to other Sahibs. We were just soldiers. The elders did not seem to believe this. A person never boasted that he was without influence. If he did, it was because he was unwilling to grant favours.

We felt sorry for the villagers, and tried to make them understand how things were. Even if we did have influence, it was not our custom to go to another man and make suggestions about his employees. For instance, Fred Jones was the range-warden, and employed a number of men to keep the rifle-ranges in repair. Not

even the Colonel would go to Fred and ask him to employ a particular man. Each of us ran his job independently.

This is a good system in England, because a man in charge of a job thinks only of his job, and engages the best men he can get. But out here, a man in charge of a job thinks only of his relations, and engages all his brothers and cousins. If the range-warden is a civilian-subordinate called Singh, by a coincidence all the labourers are called Singh too; and they have family tea-parties in the target-store, and do not bother about the range.

While all this talk was going on, Boggins assembled the cinema-apparatus. He chose a flat piece of land facing two trees, which would support the screen.

The screen was to be made from *dhotis*, and the elders made certain that the villagers gave up these garments. This caused a lot of commotion, because it appeared that the persons who gave their *dhotis* could not attend the performance. However, the elders said that it was an order of the Government, and the *dhotis* were forthcoming.

It was now getting dark, and we began to overhaul our stock of films. It turned out that the entire supply consisted of odd reels. We had Part Two of *The Love-Life of Insects*, and Part Five of *The Birth of A Nation* and so on. In the end, we decided to begin with Part Four of a drama entitled: *Driven From Home*. When we had seen what reception it received the audience, we would decide what to put on next.

Indians like dramas, but they did not seem to be very enthusiastic about this one. The reel began with a scene where the heroine was pushed out of doors by a stern father. She had a baby in her arms, and kept on weeping bitterly. There were numerous close-ups of the glycerine pouring down her cheeks. It was snowing, of course, but the spectators did not seem to be alive to the pathos of a misunderstood heroine wandering in a snow-storm. "Is it a cotton-mill?" asked one. "Why doesn't she feed her baby, then?" said another. A third contended that it wasn't a baby, but a roll of cloth which she had spoiled, and therefore the manager of the mill had given her the sack. But the most general complaint was that the heroine did not sing or dance.

We could not take much notice of the complaints of the audience, because we were having troubles of our own. The reel was a very old one, and the film kept on

jumping off the sprockets, and flickering and swaying on the screen. I was cranking at the dynamo, and sweating like anything. "Give me more light!" hissed Boggins, so I cranked harder than ever. "Not so fast!" howled Boggins. "You are setting the film alight!"

Boggins was struggling desperately with the ragged film, trying to hold it into the feed with one hand, and cranking with the other. To prevent the film from jumping, he turned the handle slower and slower, until the characters on the screen were in slow-motion, to the great bewilderment of the audience.

Presently the rotten film broke, and cascaded all over Boggins, who looked like Laocoon in the coils of the snake. The celluloid festooned all around him, and fell in tangled swathes to the ground. I had to leave the dynamo and go to his assistance. We laboured for five minutes to re-wind the film, and then messed about with the cement to join the broken piece, and then had to wait for five minutes while the cement hardened. At last we got going again.

Owing to the confusion, the reel had to be wound back to the beginning. The audience seemed to like this, and were quite interested to watch all over again the scenes they had already witnessed. Meanwhile we were operating anxiously, with many narrow escapes from further disaster. It was with great relief that we saw the horrible old drama flicker to the end of the reel without serious mishap.

"What will you have next?" I said to Boggins.

"For God's sake, give me a reel in good condition," he replied. "Anything, as long as the film is unworn."

Right at the bottom of the cart, I found a film that was almost brand-new. I did not bother to see what it was, but hastily handed it to Boggins, who thankfully fitted it on the projector. He started to turn the handle, and with a lovely, easy-running hum the reel began to unfold, and throw a beautifully steady picture on to the screen.

"Topical News, November 5th, 1925," said the title. "Tally-Ho!" was the next caption, and then, "The Prince of Wales Attends a Meet of the Rutlandshire Fox-hounds."

The audience could not read this, of course, but they waited in breathless anticipation. Suddenly they saw a picture of red-coated huntsmen on splendid horses, ladies and gentlemen being served with wine by magnificent butlers, and all the

(Continued on page 20)



.....looked like Laocoon in the coils of the snake.

LITERATOR IN EXCELSIS

As narrated by 'Pandit Vittalbai Puri'

I. GENESIS

...laid me on my back on a chic colorful rug in the hall.



to draw down the *purdha* on this indescribable male parental sorrow lest your Honour and Your Sub-Editor Sahebs are drowned amidst a volcano of soul eating tears.

The day duly dawned when a nomenclature must needs be bestowed on my humble self, and my horrorscope necessarily calculated on the strength of stellar conjugation that obtained what time I saw the light of day. Perhaps I should say the light of night for I came into this miserable Valley of Tears exactly at 24 hours on *Amavasya* night (which metamorphosed into official tongue is equal to the pitchest darkest night when undoubtedly the orb of night is absolutely not!)

The *bandas* and *purohits* graced their presence in my habitat with sacred books composed of hoary palmyra leaves from which tree as your Honour knows a highly inebriative juice is culled forth for commercial purposes giving a benefit thereof to our benign Government.

My Auntie powdered my nose bedecked me in silk pajamas velvet vest and Japan cap manufactured from machanised hair of white sheeps and laid me on my back on a *chic* colorful rug in the hall.

The afore alluded holy vedic men made a commencement with Sanscrit intelligible gibberish shooting fistfulls of saffronised raw rice into my poor optic limbs nasal organ cranium and general physiology which is our indigenous manner of benedicting babies freshly born.

MY DEAREST EDITOR SAHEB,

HEREINAFTER following I beg to introduce myself to your Honor's benignant perusal and commiserating disposal for which action of Editorial gracefulness I beg to invoke your Honours stupendous longevity and multiform felicitation.

As Dickens Nicholby said I like to begin for your elucidation at the very very beginning—otherwise called genesis—because truly the child is father of the Man!

Well, Editor Saheb, according to the *Chowkidars* fissiparous records (now, alas demised) my nativity was consummated on 6th May 1908 Anne Domino of grace in the town of Khuskarna situate under Gulshaban *Tehasil* in the district of North East Jhelum in the presidency *alias* province of the Punjab which being Sanscrit the interpretation whereof is seat of five rivers.

My saintly mother of heavenly memories relinquished her unfortunate ghost immediately soon after she saw my wee toosky poosky lovely visage and went and conglomerated with my departed for bears. My darling father was of course naturally struck with unavoidably machiavellian consoling grief. Better I think I am well advised

DO YOU KNOW?



1. Which is considered to be the most ancient civilisation in India?
2. Who is a Fabian?
3. Has the weight of a human brain anything to do with the intelligence of the individual?
4. What is sympathetic ink?
5. What is meant by 'em' and 'en'?
6. What is the difference between Fascism and Communism?

Please see answers on page 22.

A tremendous debacle interposed itself into the minds of my relatives males and non males about the *nom de plume* I must carry unto the burning ghat. If father says Ramsaran uncle says Gokuldas if cousin says Dwara Prasad Auntie says Jamuna Prasad if he aunt (namely fathers elder sister) suggested Bhargav Narayan another she aunt said Kali Bhaskar. This argumentation and hullabaloo and ballyhoo developed into such fundamental proportions that indeed I cannot do real appropriate justice to it except by hailing it as an Anglo Germanic Armageddon! Last but not least this horrible debacle was resolved by the horrorscope preparer who said with a great vehement countenance that I must undoubtedly be called Vittalbai Puri. And why so said my father and he aunt and granny in synchrony. To which he replied in convincing blatant voice Because Ladies and Gentlemen the heavenly layout of stellar bodies ordained it and if you present this baby with any duplicate name but except what I say he will burn and smoulder and worm eaten in perpetual monotonous Hell. So I was christianised by that name and I certainly dare say indeed that I have acquitted that name with great honour and creditability.

The family assemblage next took up the question of my horrorscope. After great elaborate pains taking and tappings of medulla oblongata and mathematical symbolism and differential calculus worked by the astrologer on paper supplied from my fathers W.P.B. my life scope was duly drawn up. According to these prognostic oracles I am blessed with three score and a half plus five years of well spentable longishness wallowing and skirmishing in Milk Honey Butter (a pure white substance without prostitution by fat of dead brute animals) and such like edible things. The greatest stress was laid and underlined on my heart and head predilections known in vulgar parlance as qualities of head and heart. On the heart side it is strongly predestined that I will diurnally love and fall for any woman on sight like bills of exchange payable at sight. This is undoubtedly *suggestio veri* because I can absolutely vouch the veracity from

the countless myriads of hot corners and nasty fixtures I got into owing to my amorous disportings from our milkmans daughter girl to our zamindars third wife. Not that I am what you denominate a sheik or Duan Jon or a green beard. O no. I only have got superabundance of the divine material and much sentimentality inside me. What I mean to say is, animal spirits and bucolic love and all that connotation.

On the head side of the horrorscope prognostications I am to become a thundering great breath taking literary big noise (as the Americans will say) before whom Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, G. K. C., Bertrand Russell Karl Marx Mary Pickford Wilhelm III and Baby Face Al Capone dwindle into niny cats who dont know where to get their next lunch. Uncannily my moving fingers write and having written move on and on like Ramsay Mac Donald Primate of Britain with surprising felicity and no satanic engine can stop me as your Honour certainly no doubt observed before now. I am a modest coy young man. Of my literary pervarications however sir anon and ever.

My dear mother being utterly dead my father surely became without a wife. On the other hand my uncle viz my father's brother being gone to Eden Gardens before my mother became an angel in Elysium consequently my aunty was undoubtedly without a husband. So my poor father gave a kind invitation to my poor husbandless aunty to come and live with him to bring me up. Naturally I had no milk of mother and also unfortunately my aunt also had no milk of her own she being a spinster once again. Therefore accordingly my chief diet during the first year was naturally inhuman milk got from the breasts of beasts like the sacred cow and black bafallow. The cow bafallow man who sustained my deatetics was fined one day by the health authoritatives for the excretable felony of passing away donkey milk as cows.

Therefore *lectum donec in bonis* which is indeed really classical Latin for meaning there may be some donkeys milk in my arterials bones and vericose nerves.

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL—(Continued from page 18)

grand panoply of the aristocracy attending the Sport of Kings.

"Hurrah!" shouted the audience. "Cowboys!" With mounting excitement, the audience saw the hunt gallop over the fields, and check at a covert. The waving stems of the fox-hounds disappeared into the undergrowth. A wiseacre among the crowd was heard explaining that the cowboys were chasing a bad man, and that the dogs were blood-hounds.

The pack picked up the scent, and the hunt dashed off round the covert, followed by the cheers of the audience.

Next came a shot of the hunters taking a stiff hedge, and, of course, close-ups of the nobility falling into the ditch on the other side, and scrambling out covered with mud. The audience was frantic with suspense, waiting for the 'cowboys' to catch the bad man, and groaning as each pursuer came to grief.

At last the 'cowboys' came to the end of their pursuit. There was a picture of half-a-hundred fierce hounds tearing at something, and then the Master of the Hunt held up a few fragments. The audience shuddered

in delighted awe at the terrible fate of the ill-doer. Finally, the Master presented the fox's brush to the Prince of Wales.

"Hurrah!" howled the audience, "hurrah for the chief cowboy!"

The wiseacre said that now there would be a marriage between the chief cowboy and the chief cow-girl. The chief cow-girl was thought to be a wench on a Shetland pony, who was hawking apples. But before the supposed lovers could fall into each other's arms, the reel came to a sudden end.

"Encore!" shouted the audience, in their vernacular, so we showed the reel again.

We showed it five times altogether, and the only fly in the ointment was that the film always stopped in the same place, and the chief cow-girl never fell into the arms of the chief cowboy. However, the picture was so entrancing that the villagers readily forgave us for this defect, and the show came to an end amid terrific acclamations.

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

The Story of My Life



IX

BY

'MIE'

ARE you superstitious? Don't answer. I know it already. An emphatic NO is shaping on your lips and you are drawing yourself up bravely to utter it. It being one o'clock in the noon with the thermometer registering 105 degrees in the shade, you feel it easy to dismiss such eerie and unhuman things as ghosts and spirits with airy impatience. Even mild things like number 13 or a cat crossing your path hold no significance to you. But if you live down in the country, after sunset, when impregnable darkness and chilling silence prevail (silence all the more enhanced by the occasional hoot of a screech-owl or the monotonous chirps of a cricket), then things take on unsuspected properties. The big banyan-tree, which, during the day you convert into a lavatory, seems to be full of moving nothings, grinning airinesses. Every bush seems to hold a hidden spectre. The least sound startles you. You refuse to discuss spirits—excepting perhaps the bottled ones; you draw your cot to the bedroom wall to escape observation from the window. You cover yourself up with your blanket head to foot. You shut your eyes tight and try to stop breathing.

Even those who do not believe in ghosts and things are mildly superstitious. They believe in seeing an auspicious omen the first thing they wake up, or when starting on a business trip. They will have nothing to do with the number 'thirteen': even if they are contemplating the thirteenth marriage, they would rather commit bigamy or bi-andry and label their partners 12b and 12c. They will not walk under a ladder, even if a lady is climbing it. They will not allow a black cat to cross their way whether it is homo or feline. I remember the story of a Brahmin who had to go on a business-trip to town and had to stay in a crowded hotel. The first thing he perceived on getting up in the morning was an unobstructed view of the substantial posterior of another man sleep-

ing nearby. Our hero being a believer in auspicious omens, thought about his business and swore a great deal to himself, punctuating the blasphemies with caustic remarks about people who took pleasure in exhibiting their naked bottoms to others. The neighbour was not really asleep and so he heard all the words of our hero. Later, the neighbour—we will call him Mr. Gounden—got himself introduced to our hero Mr. Dattan. The latter was still looking ferocious but Mr. Gounden soon insinuated himself into his good grace. He gave him an excellent lunch, took him out in his own coach, assisted in his business deal and towards evening Mr. Dattan had not only thawed but was actually beaming with good humour and cheer. When he retired that night, he requested Mr. Gounden, as a personal favour, to sleep alongside of him, preferably without clothes and facing the other way. He realised that behinds were not always inauspicious and Mr. Gounden's behind seemed to be specially beneficial.

There was a chap of the name of Pachu in my place who was another firm believer in omens. He was a born litigant and was never happy unless he was in the dock or witness-box. But whenever he started to the court, he took care to see the behind of a cow or the face of a virgin or something equally good. One day he had an important case in court and was starting when he saw a solitary widow approaching. He cursed her and stopped; but the next thing he saw was a buffalo. Then came a farmer carrying his plough; then an oil-man; then a Brahmin who asked him, "Where are you going?" At this procession of evil portents, Pachu clenched his hands, bit his lips, chattered his teeth and by these and other anatomical ways showed his impatience and fury. He had to wait for a couple of hours before he saw a good omen; but by that time the case had been taken up, his lawyer had pleaded 'no instructions', and the Judge had decreed *ex-parte* against him.

But I am digressing. My theme is superstition in relation to ghosts. Even the superior Europeans are not free from the weakness of believing in ghosts. A typical aristocratic English home has a skeleton in the cupboard, the portrait of a fore-mother who was an actress, the portrait of another fore-mother who was the mistress of a king, a Yew alley, a deserted and dilapidated left wing, but above all, it has a ghost. If you are fortunate enough to be the guest in their castle or mansion (as I was), you can see the ghost walking in the Yew alley when there is a moon, or hear it howling in the deserted left wing. It's true, of late the ghosts have begun to disappear. This can only be explained by the advent of the wireless receiving-set and the high mortality among policemen whose ghosts insist on seeing the haunting license of all the other ghosts. But in our country, fortunately, the ghosts have not disappeared yet.

One ghost I can never forget. He was not a personal acquaintance of mine; in fact I had not even seen him. The story was related to me some years ago and the end of it saw me strangely weak.

"Once upon a time," began my informant who was no other than my old nurse, "there lived a Nambudiri Brahmin of the name of Sankaran. He was the owner of extensive estates and he lived in a big house of his own in the centre of a very big compound. He had his wife and three young children. His income was steady, he owed to no man and if he used a strong hand towards his tenants, he did so only as a last resort. Sankaran

Nambudiri thus led a quiet and retired life, happy and contented.

But something happened one night which disturbed the placid course of his life. He and his family had finished dinner and were retiring for the night. His servants worked during the day and went to their respective homes for the night. So Nambudiri himself saw to the proper locking of all the doors and fastening of the windows. He came to the front door and before locking it, strolled on to the verandah outside, finding it cool there. It was a lovely night: his garden looked unusually beautiful. It was also very still, the stillness only broken by the melancholy, drawn-out shout of a distant watchman in the fields. Suddenly, Nambudiri stopped, for, some yards away, in the shadow of a clump of plantain trees, stood a figure covered from head to foot in green! Nambudiri thought it was one of his tenants—a low-caste come to inform him of some unexpected event. So he called out, "Who is that?" Instead of a reply, the figure gave forth a wild howl, which curdled the blood in his veins (and arteries). Nambudiri chanted many talismanic passages from the scriptures and what was wiser, jumped into the house and bolted the door fast. He somehow pacified his trembling wife and children, and went up. But sleep they had not. All night long the dreadful spectre ran round the house yelling and howling in an unearthly manner. With dawn the phantom ceased its activities and disappeared into nothingness, as it were.

That day Nambudiri offered special prayers in the temple but when night came on, the spectre again appeared and continued its horrible career. Brave man though he was, he had not the courage to go down and face the spook. His wife clung to him and wouldn't let him go.

This was repeated for many nights; but one day the phantom went one step further. That night the basement floor was invaded and the phantom shook the house with its yells. The family expected it to come up any moment. They huddled together in a corner and whispered comforts to one another. Nambudiri was ashamed to tell other people of this dreaded visitation and so he kept it to himself. But he knew that the righteous and the innocent had nothing to fear from evil spirits and was he not righteous? He had nothing on his conscience. Calamity breeds and enhances religious fervour and Nambudiri decided to offer a *pooja* in his own home that night.

He gathered fresh flowers; lighted an oil lamp; bathed and prayed. The *pooja* over, they had dinner and went up to await developments.

The phantom, however, was immune from the anger of Siva. It ran all over the basement, upset all the *pooja* materials and howled louder and fiercer than usual.

Undaunted, the next night, Nambudiri prepared a bigger *pooja* which took fully two hours to perform. He had fasted for the whole day and had been reading from all the sacred texts. With unusual observance and carefulness he offered the *pooja*, dined sparingly on the *pooja* remains and still praying, went up. Suddenly he had an idea. He would climb on to a rafter in the basement and see more of the ghost. In spite of his wife's protests, he locked them upstairs in a room and carried out his plan.

Perhaps the figure wouldn't come, he thought. But no... already he could hear the terrible cry afar. It approached and he could make out words. It was saying, "A fresh corpse! A fresh corpse!!—I want to eat A FRESH CORPSE!!!" Nambudiri could hear his heart pounding, could feel his fingers losing hold of the support. He felt dizzy and gave out a low moan. In a moment the ghost had entered. It kicked away all the *pooja* materials, ran hither and thither and at last came and stood just below Nambudiri! How Nambudiri managed to sit on, he is unable to explain even to-day but he sat grimly on, with tightly closed eyes. The figure was again yelling, "A fresh corpse! I want to eat a FRESH COR-R-RPSE!!!" Nambudiri opened his eyes. Something made him. Suddenly he started, looked down and jumped down from the height before the figure, exclaiming, "I too want a CORPSE! but I want it BAKED!!!" In an instant he had caught hold of the phantom. The phantom, as soon as it saw the turn of events, prostrated itself before the Nambudiri and begged for mercy.

"Get up, Narayanan," said the Nambudiri sternly. Narayanan, his former tenant whom he had to eject from his holding, abjectly cried for mercy.

"I shall not do it again, my lord," he wept. "I thought you would connect my ejection to this and would reinstate me in my holding. Pardon, my lord..."

Thus ended the episode. Nambudiri forgave him because of his ingenuity—Nambudiris are all fond of a joke, even at their own expense, and there haven't been any 'ghostly' visits in his house since.

I once saw a ghost myself.....

[Rather you employ one to write for you—Ed. (Severely)].

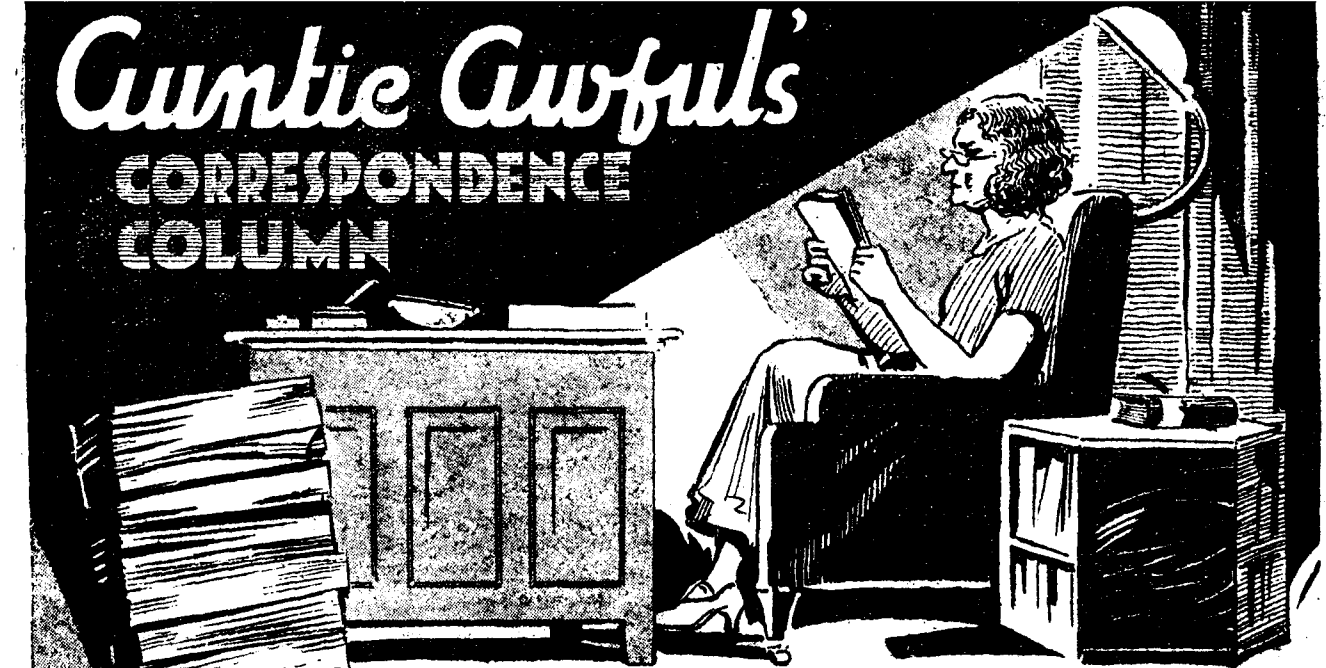
YES! I KNOW!



1. The recent finds at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in the Indus valley have disclosed a very advanced type of civilisation which flourished during the period between 7000 and 3000 B.C.
2. One who stands for gradual change especially in political and economic matters.
3. No. There are instances where weight and intelligence have no relation.
4. An ink which is invisible until the action of heat, light, or chemical makes it visible.
5. They are printers' measures of width.
6. Fascists are nationalists who believe in Imperialism, and the present order of society. Communists are internationalistic, and their object is to overthrow capitalism for the emancipation of the working classes.

For questions see page 19.

Auntie Awful's CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN



XVIII

A LOCAL damsel has asked Auntie to suggest a diversion for bright young people on dull evenings. "We usually get together after dinner," she says, "and some of the boys generally drop in. We are sick of ordinary parties, and, failing the cinema, there seems nothing to do."

Auntie thinks that an occasional juvenile masquerade would help to relieve the monotony. The boys turn up in bibs and rompers, and the girls in pinafores and panties. Everyone has to be determinedly infantile, and any person acting in an adult manner shall be spanked by the 'Governess'. The brightest of the young ladies is appointed to act in this important capacity, and her word is law.

"But won't we get tired of that, too?" asks the local damsel. Certainly, my dear; but the general idea of infantilism may be varied in many amusing ways. For example, you may have an evening devoted to nursery table-games. Auntie, with her ear always to the ground, and with her balloon making regular ascents, is always in touch with the latest nonsense in the best circles; and infantile table-games are all the rage. The 'Prince of Wales', and several other night-clubs, are simply mad about 'ludo' and 'snakes-and-ladders'. The most favoured game is 'Peggotty', which will be found to amuse and infuriate the most intellectual of bright young things.

'Peggotty' is played on a perforated board, with pegs resembling cribbage-pegs. The object is to get five pegs in a row. It is fearfully exciting, and it is practically impossible to have a game without at least one player losing his temper and referring to an opponent as a 'crafty blighter'.

It is most exasperating when a participant 'plays policeman', and concentrates on preventing the others from winning, rather than attempting to win himself. Under such provocation, an earnest gamer has been known to seize the board, and 'crown' the policeman with it.

You should see the mean expressions on peoples' faces while they are playing! Craft, and furtive greed, and desperate cunning! Oh, it is a lovely game! The pastime stirs up all the basest instincts of human nature, and hence is a howling success wherever it is introduced.

"You Know Who" (Madras) and many others. Auntie thanks all the darling boys who sent her a Valentine. She has endeavoured to dispatch suitable replies in what she hopes to be the right directions. One of the nicest of Auntie's unknown admirers wrote as follows:

"Shall this swain declare, or shan't he,
Love for such a one as Auntie?
Yes, he shall; for it is clear
Auntie is a sweet old dear."

Auntie also appreciates the more restrained admiration of this gentleman:

"Auntie is a quaint old trout;
You can never catch her out.
All the same, she plays good cricket,
And her shots are on the wicket.
I'll come up, midst City's din,
And be glad to catch her in."

The sole dissident to this chorus of adulation is a dear boy who pronounces 'Auntie' in the Oxford manner:

"All the horrors penned by Dante,
Are surpassed by Awful Auntie."

Thank you, dear boys. And you, dear girls. Several nieces sent Auntie a Valentine; and though this is a trifle irregular, Auntie was greatly touched by their good wishes.

Etiquette (Kilpauk). "Why is it necessary to hold one's hand in front of one's mouth while yawning?" Because otherwise, dear boy, one's false teeth might fall out.

Heavyweight (Bombay). So you hired a horse-drawn carriage the other morning, and at the end of the journey gave the driver four annas. He looked at the coin, and begged you to pass behind the carriage, and walk away in a direction so that the horse would not see you. You complied, but afterwards wondered if the driver had offered you some kind of subtle insult. Auntie is afraid he did, my dear Heavyweight. Evidently, his idea was that if the horse saw what it had been carrying for four annas, it would drop down dead.

Post Office (Islamia Bazaar). "I went to take delivery of a V. P. parcel, but the ink in the ink-pot was so thick that I could not write a receipt. The clerk said that I would have to return next morning. When I did return, I had to pay extra for the detention of the parcel. The quality of mercy was not strained." Auntie is not quite sure what you mean by the last remark: but the ink in the ink-pot certainly was not.

Complainant (Trichinopoly). What, another criticism of the Post-Office? You say you sent an important post-card to your firm in Coonoor in 1930, and it has been delivered. You complain of the delay. But be reasonable, dear boy. After all, the journey is up-hill all the way.

Radio (Srivaikuntam). "I have received particulars of a wireless set. It has dual control; what is this? Anyhow, my aunt and my mother-in-law are insisting that I shall get the set." Auntie thinks you had better get it at once. Your house is already provided with dual-control loud-speakers, so there will be no trouble if you instal the set. While there will certainly be trouble if you don't.

Valetudinarian (Darjeeling). You say that your doctor insists on your moving to a warmer climate, or he will not be answerable for the consequences. Auntie thinks you had better obey his instructions, dear Sir; otherwise you may find yourself in a warmer climate just the same.

Folies Bergere (Cochin). "When we went to Paris, we were astonished by the masses of nude girls in the spectacles on the music-hall stage. What do you think of these extensive displays of naked flesh?" Auntie has always thought of them as a shocking waste of space, dear boy. Think of all the advertisements you could paint on the ladies! (Not before children auntie! Ed.)

Modern Girl (Pudupaliam). "It is obnoxious to me, that in this benighted country a husband walks in front of his wife." I should not worry, my dear. The ones who walk in front are not necessarily the leaders.

Gate-keeper (Khargpur). "There was an accident at my level-crossing, and I was punished, although it was proved that I was waving my red lamp at the time." Auntie is sorry to hear you were punished; but you must admit it would have been better had you lit the lamp before waving it.

Miss C. (Anthiyur). "I am fond of a certain boy, but he is not interested in me. He loves a young woman, but she prefers a man who is already married, whose wife is very jealous in consequence. Is this what Western novelists call an eternal triangle?" It may be, my dear, but to Auntie it sounds more like an infernal polygon.

Graduate (Salem). "I see that applicants are wanted for the post of tutor in the harem of a Persian prince. What are the qualifications, please?" Auntie has not seen the advertisement in question, but as a rule, tutors employed in harems are expected to be able to add, subtract, and divide, but—not multiply.

Mrs. A (Srinagar). Yes, dear madam, the peculiarity of which you complain is common to most Chinese servants. They take all instructions literally. Auntie had a Chinese cook at the time when she was captured by brigands, but she had to discharge him, because he always used twenty-three eggs to make an omelette. It appears that a former master had taught him how to make omelettes, and the lesson took place in a district where the eggs were bad. Ever afterwards, the cook made omelettes in accordance with every detail of that first lesson. He put twenty-three eggs in a row, and broke them one by one. As he broke each of the first five, he said 'Damn', held his nose, and threw them away. The sixth went into the basin. Similarly, the eighteenth and twenty-third eggs went into the basin. The rest were 'damn'ed and thrown away. When Auntie expostulated about this method, and pointed out that it was not necessary to waste twenty eggs for every omelette, Ah Fong was most indignant, and gave notice. "Former master first-class, top-side master," he said. "Me make omelette same way as master. Master break egg, say 'damn', throw 'um away."

Lotta (Poona). So you are thinking of wearing a Tartan skirt, with red and yellow trimmings. You wonder if the combination of colours will be too bright. The best test, my dear, is to spread the skirt on the ground, and put a chameleon on it. If the chameleon bursts, the colours are too glaring.



THE WIRELESS

MESSAGE

TWO persons, far away from the unusual bustle and activity of Constantinople, sat in a room on the second floor. Outside, in the streets, people talked in excited whispers. One of them was Douglas—Reynold Douglas. He was a European, and handsome. He had come to Turkey as a tourist. The other was a girl—a Turkish girl—Marina. Her cheeks were smooth as velvet: her eyes bright as the spray of Marmora Sea.

"Darling," whispered the girl anxiously, "is it true?"

"Every word of it, Marina dearest," responded Reynolds.

Marina put her head on his shoulder and moaned.

Drawing her closer, he said:

"It's a fact that our Secretary for War has ordered the bombing of Rodosto, an unwalled town."

"But why," broke in Marina, "has he ordered that?"

"Well, the Allies intend to capture Constantinople. And for that, Rodosto must be bombed, even if it be against the International Law."

"But.....but," faltered she, "this order of the Pasha....."

"Yes," said Reynolds calmly, "he intends to teach us a lesson by substituting the Turkish population in Rodosto by the Allied population during the night."

Marina looked at him, her eyes full of tears. Her voice trembled as she spoke.

He was an Englishman, and she a Turkish girl—They were victims of the big game of politics. But an anonymous wireless message did it.....

"Why should you—Turkey's innocent residents—be punished? Isn't evacuation of Rodosto enough?"

Reynolds spoke in a deep voice slightly shaken with emotion.

"Marina dearest, I shall make one more effort. I will lead a deputation of leading men to the Pasha, just now."

"And if....." Marina shuddered.

"And if," said Reynolds calmly, "the

Pasha remains firm, I will carry the picture of the loveliest face in my mind, wherever I be."

"I shall wait outside the palace to know his decision and....."

"And my fate."

Marina the beautiful shivered at the words.

(2)

The Pasha sat in a chair in his study. The deputation stood before him—a group of pale faces.

"Gentlemen," said Anwar Pasha severely, "that cursed War-Office wanted to play a dirty trick and, but for the accident of the wireless message being intercepted, thousands of Turks would have been killed tomorrow in Rodosto."

"But," protested the deputation, "will not the evacuation of Rodosto be enough for your purpose?"

"No," said the War-lord, "it is a fortunate accident and we must teach the enemy a lesson."

"But Pasha, we have all along been peaceful citizens. It is exactly murdering us."

The Pasha frowned.

"Of course, you have been peaceful. But on the political chess-board, lives don't count."

The deputation gave up arguing as hopeless. They entreated him as beggars. They appealed to his sense of justice. They pleaded before him in the name of humanity. But Anwar Pasha, the man-in-marble, was unmoved.

"I must teach the Allies a lesson," he kept repeating.

The deputation came out—a procession of broken hopes. They dragged their feet as they walked—to their doom.

Then out of the shadows a figure came out, and Reynolds stopped.

"Darling.....?" The figure—Marina—put a mute question.

"It's all up, Marina. He won't budge."

A cry escaped Marina's lips.

"Marina, dearest," said Reynolds with emotion, "remember me sometimes when I am dead."

A strange light shone in Marina's eyes. Rising to her full height, she shook her fist at the palace before her and said:

"A loving woman carries both the worlds in her two hands. And," she continued with great vehemence "she can smash both for her love."

And then.....

A guard of soldiers surrounded the deputation and led them to a waiting bus.

With a stifled cry, Marina ran a dozen steps after it and then stood staring at the fast disappearing bus with bulging eyes.

(3)

The young wireless operator—Farrukh—was trudging his lonely way to the station, to relieve his fellow. The night was bleak and cheerless and the young man contemplated with a frown the



"Marina, dearest, remember me sometimes when I am dead."

lonely prospect of sitting cooped up in his cabin.

"Officer.....!"

He started and blinked. There stood before him the loveliest girl he had ever seen. Her neck was exposed, her eyes were laughing and care-free.

"Officer," she repeated with a languorous smile, "I am homeless. Could you give me shelter for the night?"

"I...er...I," he faltered.

"Yes, surely, you're not afraid of a mere girl," she laughed a mischievous laugh and held his hand. He thrilled as he felt a pressure on it.

So.....the officer thrilled as he anticipated the pleasures he was going to have with this lovely companion. But he could not take a stranger there. And yet she was so lovely. And what a story to tell the boys tomorrow!

"Come," he said.

"Darling," she cooed.

Farrukh held her hand. Marina smiled triumphantly. Who can resist a lovely woman!

* * *

It was late at night.

The officer held Marina in his embrace, feeling happy and ecstatic.

A cold, hard point touched his breast.

"Get up," said Marina sharply.

Farrukh blinked and then looked at his own revolver levelled against him.

"What's the joke, darling?" he asked dubiously.

Marina's hard eyes gleamed.

"It's no joke," she hissed. "Get up and send a message to the Admiral of the Allied Fleet that Rodosto is now populated by the Allied subjects."

The officer's eyes bulged out of their sockets. Sheer terror took hold of him.

"Are you...are you...?" he faltered.

"Get up or I shoot."

The officer got up tamely, and mechanically sat before the instrument.

"It will mean death for me," he moaned.

"Never mind," said Marina tensely.

It was 4 A.M. The officer sent the message apprising the Admiral of the whole situation.

"And now.....Good God! The next man must be coming to relieve me."

"Well," said Marina, "you can yet be safe. Come with me and don't speak a word to anybody."

"But enquiries will be made," Farrukh persisted.

"Who will know that the message was sent? Or that this station sent the message?" reasoned Marina lightly.

* * *

"Darling you are wonderful!" said Reynolds.

Marina raised her lips to his, and said:

"Love is a woman's all."

WHO KILLED THE MANAGER?

INSPECTOR Catfoot, look well before you leap! Don't be led away by 'Embusque's reasonings! It can't be so plain-sailing as all that. If murders are all so easily deduced, rest assured there would be fewer murders committed. Therefore we warn you—take your bearings well before making an ass of yourself. There is many a twist between the deduction and the arrest!

'Embusque' says Miss Keys killed the Manager. 'Keys' and 'Killed' both begin with a 'K' but that does not constitute hanging evidence. For all 'Embusque's arguments, that is what it all boils down to.

For, my dear Mr. Catfoot, think of it! A slip of a girl who could be 'overpowered', in the sense 'Embusque' means it, by the Manager in his office—mind you, office—do you think she had the muscular strength to plunge a paper-knife into his very heart so as to leave him stone-dead without a moan or a struggle—all in the fraction of a second—however unexpected her attack might have been? Moonshine, my dear Catfoot, mere moonshine!

Moreover, can you imagine even for a moment that the Manager could have been caught unawares by Miss Keys? Put yourself in the position of the Manager. The girl whom you are after, comes into your room, sits on your desk and gives you an ultimatum! What do you think you would do then? First thing, you would catch hold of her hands and draw her towards you. How then could she have killed the Manager? Moonshine, we repeat, mere moonshine!

And even if he could be caught unawares by Miss Keys, still we maintain Miss Keys couldn't have killed him. For, let us visualise the scene in our minds. Miss Keys is sitting upon the desk. The Manager is sitting in his chair and he jeers at Miss Keys, according to 'Embusque'. And what is his position, when he jeers? Either he is 'riding' in his chair or leaning over the table. In the latter case, it is impossible for Miss Keys to strike him over his heart, for his chest would be exactly over the edge of the desk. But if he is tilting back his chair, it is true his chest is bare and open to attack, but, my dear Mr. Catfoot, not to a person sitting on the desk! Miss Keys would have to spring down with the paper-knife before she would be able to strike at his heart effectively and thoroughly and then the Manager could not be said to have been caught unawares. So that too shows that Miss Keys couldn't have been the criminal.

Below is published a criticism of the story *Who Killed the Manager?* by 'Embusque' which appeared in the issue of the 12th January along with 'Embusque's reply—Ed.

INDEED A MYSTERY!

BY 'ARPIN LUSENE'

Above all, it is absurd to say that Miss Keys sat on the desk. According to 'Embusque's story, Miss Keys hadn't pre-meditated murder. She simply went to remonstrate with the Manager in which case, the most natural thing to suppose was that Miss Keys stood or sat away from the reach of the Manager. Her intention was inimical to the Manager and even if he had invited her to sit upon the desk, she couldn't have consented to do so.

All of which goes to show that 'Embusque' pitched upon Miss Keys as the criminal merely because her name and the word 'killing' both begin with a 'K'!!

Well then, who killed the Manager?

Most probably, John Fount killed him. Looking up from his composing, he might have just chanced to see Miss Keys coming out along the passage leading to the Manager's room. Already his suspicions had been aroused and when he sees Miss Keys not returning even after ten minutes when all the while the automatic perforating machine is going on, his already awakened suspicion grows within him. His jealousy is excited and he goes up stealthily to the Manager's room to see what is going on there. Probably he sees the Manager trying to mis-handle Miss Keys and in a blind rage, he suddenly springs on the Manager, snatches the paper-knife and plunges it into the manager's heart. For the rest, it may be that the table was polished, the hilt of the knife wiped and the bell rung by Miss Keys. It was said that the types were half set up in the printer's room. *It can be said even now that the types were half set up in the printer's room.*

Or it may be that Mr. File killed the Manager! It is quite possible that Miss Keys left the Manager at 10.16. It is possible that Mr. File overheard exactly what passed between Miss Keys and the Manager. It is possible that Mr. File, in righteous anger and indignation, nursing his own grievance, surprised the Manager in his den and killed him. After which, it is possible that Mr. File wiped out all clues and rang the bell and announced the Manager's death!

But all the same, our strong conviction is that neither Miss Keys, nor Fount nor File committed the murder; nor for that matter did Miss Needle or Hatchet! We strongly suspect that *the Manager was not killed at all!!* But if anybody did kill the Manager, it must have been 'Embusque'!!!

'Embusque's Reply

"Arpin Lusene" is to be congratulated on his perspicacity. He has hit the nail right on the head. The Manager was killed by 'Embusque'!

I can only throw myself on the mercy of the good Arpin, and beg that we poor struggling authors be permitted to murder our victims according to convention. Master-practitioners do their murders with yet-undiscovered poisons and mysterious death-rays. Best-sellers assassinate their victims through the agency of totally-paralysed deaf-and-dumb old ladies. Surely, then, a humble votary of the craft may use a perfectly good dagger, in the hands of a robust young woman?

That dagger. It is on the desk as I write. You will see a picture of it at the beginning of the problem. It is used as a letter-opener. To do the job well, it needs to be exceedingly narrow and sharp-pointed. It is, in fact, an Italian stiletto. It could be plunged into anyone's gizzard by a mere child. If the mere child happened to direct the dagger at the heart, the victim would die instantly, without a sound. That is what stilettos are for. I admit I put it in the Manager's office, nice and handy for Miss Keys. But that is within the rules.

Do girls get 'overpowered' in managers' offices, in broad day-light? They do, constantly. For details, I refer my friend 'Arpin' to almost any issue of *The News of the World*. It is to 'Arpin's credit that, although a detective, he has not been about much. He has never played the villain in his private office. Otherwise he might know that a quite athletic girl may be overpowered, in the technical sense, by a determined male.

Now I put myself in the position of the Manager, as requested. I am, in fact, already in position, while writing this letter. The desk is quite a large one—a real managerial desk. A lady happens to be about the place,

so I invite her to come and sit on the desk. Without prompting, she naturally selects a position three-quarters of the way along the desk, over the side-drawers. By measurement, the distance separating our bodies, even with this large desk, is eighteen inches. I tell her what it is all about. I lean back and sneer at her. She picks up the ruler (not the paper-knife, thank you!) and thrusts at my chest. Her hand slides up the ruler and comes thump against my chest. It seems all right to me.

When a girl is bent on a serious talk with a man, she avoids his advances. She sits tight, pressing her hands firmly on the desk. She will not let him catch hold of her hands. The Manager made Miss Keys sit on the desk, but she would not allow him to touch her. It is a half-compromise natural to a girl in the circumstances. She wishes to gain her point in a friendly manner, if possible.

John Fount did not emerge from his room, go along the passage, and slay the Manager. I thought of that! The door of his room, and his room only, is within view of Tom Hatchett!

Mr. File did not do the deed, because the murder had to be within eighteen inches of both the Manager and the dagger. The only possible position is a seat on the desk. Only Miss Keys and Miss Needle could be seated in such a manner while interviewing the Manager.

Miss Needle was not the one, because even an electric sewing-machine has to be tended by an operator. Her machine was running all the time, so she must have been operating it. A perforating-machine, on the other hand, will continue to work with no one in attendance.

So, although 'Embusque' killed the Manager, I submit he did it reasonably well!

Nevertheless, I congratulate 'Arpin' on an acute and interesting piece of reasoning.

Venus And Adonis

By 'Okey'

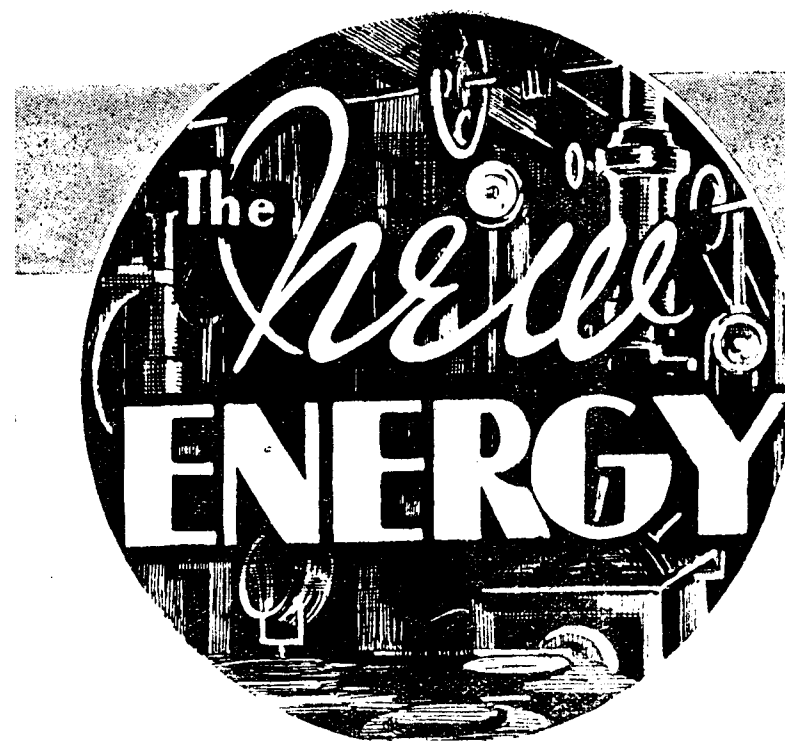
THE rains had just ceased. The clouds had dispersed, and the sun was shining on a glorious winter's afternoon. This sudden outburst of sunshine, was responsible for a sudden outburst of life everywhere. The bright-plumaged, multi-toned birds, had ruffled their plumage and were now flying hither and thither, gaining as much as possible of the winter's sun. The water-laden leaves, having dried up in the sun, were now dancing to the tune of the wind. There was an atmosphere of life and love everywhere. The beasts lying up till now in their lair, were now stretching their limbs and were silently treading the moist earth in search of food. And even in that remote part of the wilderness, the sun-bathing craze had taken its hold.

She was a beautiful creature, as God made her. Without even the proverbial 'fig leaf' she was moving about, holding her head high up in the air, as if she were the reigning queen of the jungle. Her sylph-like body would surely have turned the heads of a modern Adonis. She

was going in search of a suitable spot for stretching herself in the sun. Never did she in the least suspect that she was being followed all along by a hot-blooded Adonis. He was not going to take risks. He was waiting for an opportunity, when he could take her in his arms and claim her his own. Never was fate so lucky.

Chance had thrown them together. He followed her, unmanly though it may sound for a man to follow a girl, especially at a time when she was 'off-guard'. His chance had at last come. He could control himself no longer. With one mighty spring he was on her, had crushed her in his embrace, had imprinted on her neck a passionate kiss, and when he had left her, she lay there, a mass of blood and flesh.

Inhuman, you may say. But that was allowed here, in this part of the jungle, for that was the Law of the Jungle. 'SHE' was a deer, and 'HE' a leopard!



PART I

By 'JASON'

AT Dingley's Hostel, an establishment which catered for sailors, labourers, lascars and the poorer classes in general, three millionaires, disreputably dressed, were staying. Had this fact been known to Henry Dingley, far from deeming it desirable patronage, he would undoubtedly have been both suspicious and perturbed.

The advent of a single one in similar guise, even if known, might have been thought the result of eccentricity or the outcome of a wager; but three? No! A deeper explanation would have been necessary.

Although they arrived at differing times on the same day, they had, during their stay of nearly a week, created no impression of being acquainted, rather they acted as complete strangers.

Sir Oswald Calverley had now become William Larkin, bookie's tout—unemployed. To look at, he was a typical heavy-weight pugilist, a 'cauliflower ear' would have completed the picture.

The Earl of Bareedo went under the name of Timothy Bridges—odd-man of all work. When, on the day of his arrival, another guest had greeted him as Jim Bonehill and claimed to have met him in Wormwood Scrubs, the Earl had realised the safety of his disguise.

Isaac Zepler had merely become Alfred Moses—a German Jew who preferred to have distance between himself and the Nazis.

That completed the detail of the trio of millionaires who had temporarily forsaken luxury for the home comforts Dingley's claimed to provide. Outside the hotel, Calverley had discovered a rendezvous where

A scientist makes a great discovery—energy 'filched' from the sun, fraught with incalculable good—or harm—to mankind. On the one hand he copes with a gang of rough-necks who get wind of the discovery; on the other he offers to sell the proposition to Big Business—at his own price and is not over scrupulous in getting his price paid.

they could meet during evenings; this was a cellar in a tumble-down empty house.

"I'm clearing out of that den tomorrow," emphatically stated Calverley as they sat together one evening. "I'll tolerate this farce no longer. There's not a single square inch of me left which the bugs have over-looked during their explorations."

"I've overcome the vermin difficulty," rejoined the Earl. "You've heard of sand baths?"

"Sure—what've they to do with bugs?"

"Patience, Cal, I'll put you wise. I smuggled in a full dozen tins of insect powder, big tins; I'm sleeping on the contents and getting a kind of sand bath every night, and the insects don't like it."

"I'll pinch a bit of your bath 'o-night. How about you, Zep?"

"Me?" replied Zepler. "I'm O. K. Bareedo's too crude as usual. I'm using an insect spray. However, let's discuss this clearing-out business. You know the consequences if we do?"

"A fig to consequences!" retorted Calverley. "In my opinion Professor Sandcroft—as he calls himself—is working a big bluff on us. If we just show a bit of grit and defy him he'll come down to terms."

"I'm just as anxious to be out of Dingley's as Cal is," said the Earl. "But it's a step not to be taken rashly or impetuously. It's taken us years to obtain control of practically all the electric energy produced in the world. Now, along comes Sandcroft claiming a discovery which—if he's right—will supersede electricity. In that case we're smashed. Once it operates, our shareholders will be ruined. It would be the biggest financial

crash in the world's history. He'll sell to us or come to some terms, that's sure. We want proof of his claims. He says we shall have them. But, he's afraid of spies who've got wind of his discovery. Therefore, he'll demonstrate to us secretly. He's told us, in fact almost ordered us, to wait at Dingley's. There, in a nut-shell, is the situation.

"It's my proposal we do nothing in a hurry. Let us take time and think carefully and wait, say another three days. If nothing happens by then, we'll meet here again and decide what to do. How does that idea strike you?"

"I'm with you," opined Zepler, simultaneously aiming a vicious kick at a playful rat.

Separately, and at intervals, they stole away from—as Zepler put it—the 'House of the Rats'.

* * *

"Barlow," commented Professor Sandcroft, addressing his butler, "to-day, the three guests I mentioned yesterday are due to arrive. Have you understood my instructions?"

"Perfectly, sir, I shall attend to everything personally; already——"

"I do not wish to hear any discourse on the matter. Go to the laboratory and call Mr. Pym."

Ten minutes later, Barlow returned, looking pale and agitated.

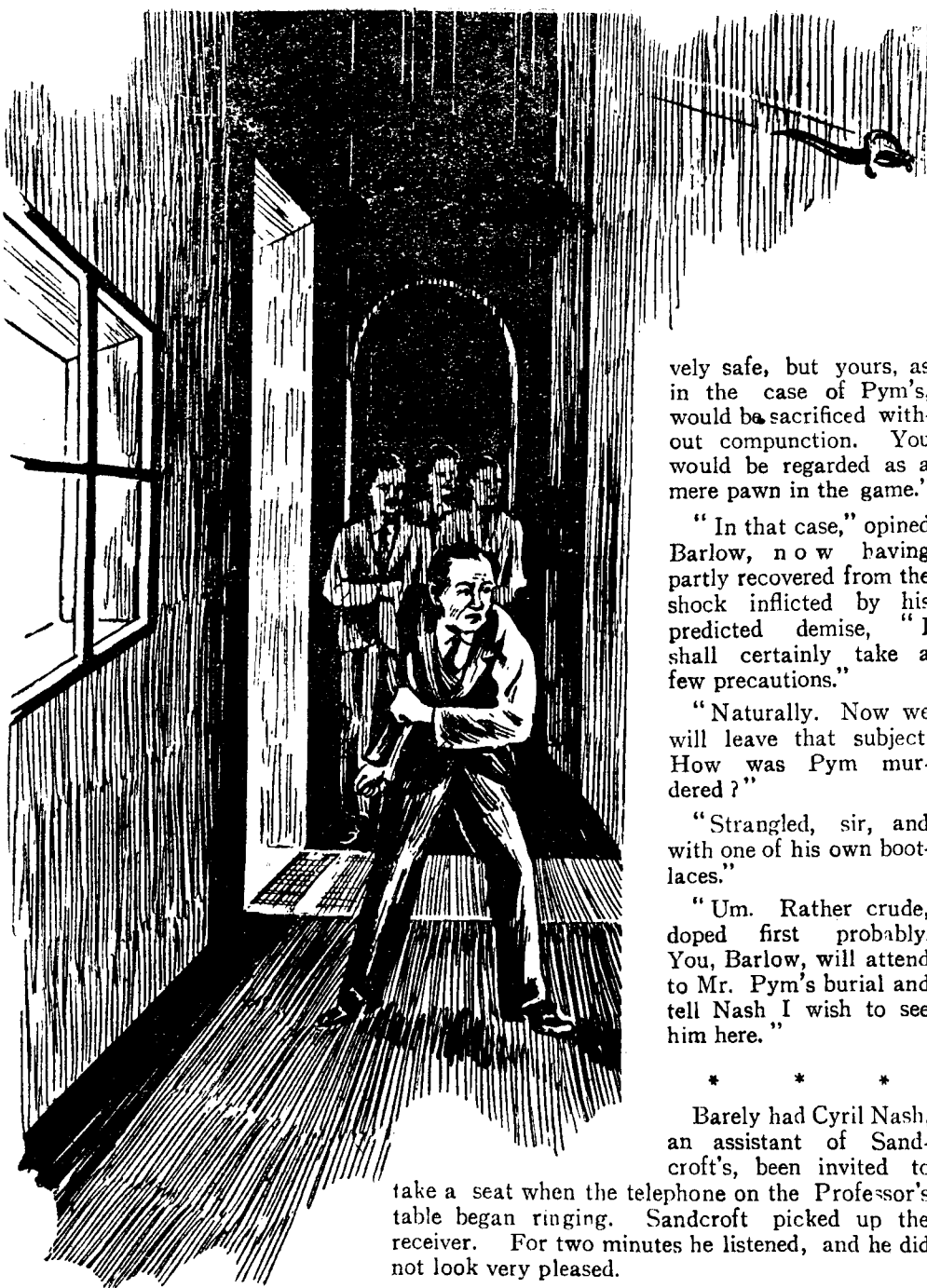
"Mr. Pym, sir," he stammered, "has been murdered!"

For a moment Sandcroft stood silent.

"That, Barlow," he then observed, "is bad news. I am not surprised, in fact I've been expecting something like this. Next, it may be you."

"Me sir!" exclaimed Barlow in horror. "Why should anyone kill me?"

"For the most excellent of reasons, Barlow. Pym's death is merely a blow aimed at me—to make me submit to certain proposals. My own life is comparati-



vely safe, but yours, as in the case of Pym's, would be sacrificed without compunction. You would be regarded as a mere pawn in the game."

"In that case," opined Barlow, now having partly recovered from the shock inflicted by his predicted demise, "I shall certainly take a few precautions."

"Naturally. Now we will leave that subject. How was Pym murdered?"

"Strangled, sir, and with one of his own boot-laces."

"Um. Rather crude, doped first probably. You, Barlow, will attend to Mr. Pym's burial and tell Nash I wish to see him here."

* * *

Barely had Cyril Nash, an assistant of Sandcroft's, been invited to take a seat when the telephone on the Professor's table began ringing. Sandcroft picked up the receiver. For two minutes he listened, and he did not look very pleased.

"Go to blazes!" were his only words in reply.

"That," he commented, "confirms what I told Barlow. You, Nash, have probably grasped the significance of Pym's sad end?"

"I've done a bit of thinking. Conclusion—hostilities have commenced."

"Precisely. Now, Nash, I'm giving you a choice—to stay on or leave as you think best. Take time to decide if you wish."

"No time is needed to settle that point—I'm not quitting."



The butler had driven his antagonist into a corner.

"Thanks! That being the case, will you carry on Pym's work and get ready for our demonstration to-night?"

"Certainly—I'll get ahead at once."

"Good. Let me know when you've finished. I'll go along and look into the point of Pym's death. I'm not satisfied with our defences."

With a bag of tools slung over his shoulder, a carpenter trudged along the road in the direction of 'Cliff-House', the residence of Professor Sandcroft.

"Looks like a fort," he ruminated as he neared the place. "Boundary walls ten feet high, capped with pieces of broken bottles and three rows of barbed wire; bastions with look-out posts at the ends. Isolated, built on the cliffs—some relic of olden times. Don't like it."

Reaching the entrance gates, he peered through.

"What d'you want here?" The question came in a snarling voice from a rough-looking man who was seated just inside. A huge savage dog bounded forward growling deeply. The carpenter drew back and produced a paper from his pocket.

"Take a look at this," he replied. "I've come to fix up the new tennis screens."

"Why the devil didn't yer say so at first, instead of peeping in here like a darned spy?" The man took the

paper and examined it. "Bin expecting you," he remarked as he unlocked the gates. "Step right in."

"Best you tie yer pet up first; he doesn't look very amiable."

"Heel, Dinky!" the man commanded the dog. "He'll not touch you," he informed the carpenter, "unless," he added, "I tell him to."

The carpenter went inside, the gates clanged behind him, and the gate-keeper turned the key in the lock.

"Go straight up the drive," he instructed. "Ask at the house for Barlow, the butler. He'll show you the tennis-court."

An hour later Sir Oswald Calverly, for he was the carpenter, had shaved and washed and was rigged out in clothes Barlow had produced.

"The other two gentlemen are in the library, sir," the butler informed him. "If you kindly——"

"Lead the way, Barlow," interposed Calverly, "and" he added, "if there's a spot of whisky going spare, trot it along."

"Certainly, sir," was Barlow's reply as they proceeded to the library.

"I'd be interested to know," remarked Calverly, after greeting his fellow guests, "how you two came here?"

"An hour or so ago," commented the Earl of Bareedo, "I arrived as a Red-Cross nurse, ostensibly to take care of a case of measles."

"And I," Zepler added, "came equipped as a rat-catcher."

"On the face of things," observed Calverly, after describing his own disguise, "I'm suspicious. Our intro-

duction here has been stage-managed for a purpose, that's my idea."

"Surmising will lead nowhere," opined Zepler, "but I've got your idea—walked into the parlour kind of business, eh?"

"Exactly!"

"Personally," remarked Bareedo, "I'm not much afraid of your spider, Cal."

Professor Sandcroft's exposition of his discovery—which he had named 'Sol-energy'—proved fully satisfactory to the three millionaires. It is not in our province to go into technical details, it is sufficient to say—using Sandcroft's own words—that the power was 'filched' from the Sun. He was able—as his demonstration showed—to produce every possible characteristic of natural light and to generate terrific heat. The cost would, he explained, be infinitesimal. It was an amazing and revolutionary invention—and astonishingly simple!

"The next point to consider," the Professor commented, after having answered many questions, "is disposal and exploitation. It has taken me many months to persuade you gentlemen to come here. This place is surrounded by spies—that I've already told you—and last night my chief assistant, Mr. Pym, was murdered. I am therefore anxious to make a deal without delay. My price is two million pounds. I shall expect your decision by nine o'clock tomorrow evening."

"Phew!" the Earl ejaculated. "It's a tall figure. What happens if we turn your offer down?"

"To that question I'll reply only when the contingency arises. Good-night, gentlemen." With which remark Professor Sandcroft left the room.

The door was just closing behind him when an explosion followed by an agonised muffled cry—half-scream, half-yell—rang through the house. Calverley, Bareedo and Zepler jumped to their feet and rushed out into the hall.

"God!" they heard Sandcroft exclaim as he bounded up the staircase, "they've got another!" They followed the Professor.

Cyril Nash met them on the landing. "Barlow's room," he muttered.

In a bunch they raced along. Sounds of a terrific struggle came from the interior of the apartment.

"Thank Heaven!" Sandcroft murmured, "Barlow is not dead."

He opened the door and stepped inside. The others filed in after him. The butler had driven his antagonist into a corner.

"Skunk!" Barlow hissed into his captive's ear as he gave his arm a playful but obviously painful twist. "A dagger, eh? I will teach you!"

Nash and Barlow trussed the man up.

Sandcroft turned to the butler. "How did this happen, Barlow?" he asked.

"Rigged up a dummy in my bed, then hid behind the palms in the corridor. Along comes Alphonso or whatever his name is, peering into the bed-rooms; walked into mine—I trailed him. He flashed a torch on to the bed and saw a portion of the dummy's head peeping above the bed-clothes."

"He took out a nasty bludgeon and having calculated the position of the brain-box, made a hefty swipe. Then came that bang! I'd have loved to glimpse his face at that moment! I switched on the light and, well, the rest you know, sir."

"The origin of that bang, Barlow," remarked Sandcroft, "requires explaining."

"Oh! that, sir. Simple—pig's bladder."

The prisoner scowled,—the others grinned.

"Brainy lad, Barlow," murmured Bareedo.

Sandcroft turned to the captive. "How did you get in here?" he demanded. No reply.

"You won't speak?" Stony silence.

"Take him away, Barlow," the Professor instructed. "Confine him in the cellars and tell Abraham to look after him. Tomorrow we'll try the effect of a red-hot poker on the soles of his feet. If that doesn't loosen his vocals we'll pull out his toe-nails—with the roots—one by one."

"But," protested Zepler, addressing Sandcroft, "you can't do that. It's torture!"

"Torture?" replied Sandcroft. "Yes! You've got the correct word."

"To my mind, Professor," Bareedo remarked, "that man couldn't have come from outside. Those boundary walls—"

"Exactly—but take Alphonso," he said, "and introduce him to the estimable Abraham. I'm going to bed."

Sitting in Bareedo's room, Zepler found opportunity to voice his feelings.

"It's definitely my opinion Sandcroft is half-mad; this torture business—it doesn't appeal to me; smacks too much of medieval ages. His attitude was positively nasty; makes me begin to think what might happen if we reject his offer. He has us absolutely in his power, no one knows we are here. Just imagine—"

"Getting windy, eh?" interposed Calverley. "What's to prevent us walking out of the place tomorrow morning? We're not prisoners."

"Not exactly windy," Zepler replied. "As for walking out, it might not be so easy as it sounds."

"I wish," commented Bareedo, "you two pessimists would push off to kip."

As Calverley and Zepler rose to go, someone rapped on the door. In response to Bareedo's 'Come in', Barlow stepped inside the room.

"Pardon my intrusion, gentlemen," he said. "I've brought some wedges for your bedroom doors and three electric torches." He laid them out on a table. "After to-night's episode," he added, "it's wise to be prepared."

"Thanks," Calverley responded. "Capital idea, those wedges."

"Thoughtful cove, Barlow," opined Bareedo, after the butler had departed.

[In the second and concluding part, Professor Sandcroft 'persuades' Barlow's would-be murderer to speak and lays the gang of international crooks neatly by the heels. The three financiers buy the Professor's invention at his own price, and—]



The National Chamber of Deputies sitting over the Second Reading.

Bill of 2002. Sub-section 45 of section 123 was under consideration.

The Rt. Hon'ble Somnath Alabaster, Secretary of State for Education, moved that the Chamber do accept the following:

"Every body continues to be in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line, unless compelled to change that state by impressed forces."

In commending the above to the favour of the Honourable Deputies assembled in the Yellow House, Mr. Alabaster made a succinct speech which evoked considerable Ministerial cheers:

"Every son of Adam and daughter of Eve knows that this is Newton's first Law of Motion—which we, trained in the British principles of law and order, trained in Britain's statesmanship and science—have come to look upon as being very fundamental to the working of the Universe itself. Besides being the cornerstone of the Physical Sciences, this Law, I may submit, has a moral appeal that we cannot and should not ignore. What is there more noble, more severely praise-worthy, than one's ability to do one's duty in whatever situation in life He in His Infinite bounty might have been pleased to place one? It is this sense of submission to His will and His wisdom that this famous first law of Newton inculcates in all the members of the body politic. And hence I have every hope that sub-section 45 under section 123 will meet with unanimous acceptance in this Chamber of glorious traditions."

The Leader of the Opposition, the Rt. Hon'ble Burchell Dundas, opposed the motion—

"Sir, I feel it my duty to oppose this so-called law of Newton, a more law-less law than which it is diffi-

THE Second Reading

By 'Rajaram'

THE National Chamber of Deputies was sitting over the Second Reading of the Educational Re-generation

cult to find. I should like to ask one question—are we now in this year of grace, 2002, or in that absurdly ante-diluvian and barbaric epoch of Newton? It is grossly irrelevant to speak of British principles. Here we are in the pure realm of fact and not in the misty cloud-land of principles. Aren't my Rt. Honourable friends aware of the celebrated Einstein, who about one hundred years ago, torpedoed poor Newton's theories and laws? Einstein murdered—aye, that's the word—with Teutonic thoroughness the Newtonian concepts of Space, Time and Matter—even of Gravitation, even of

children—born in our free Commonwealth—must not be made to grovel in the dust of out-moded sciences. I oppose this mischievous proposition vehemently!" (Loud Opposition cheers.)

A tense atmosphere prevailed in the Chamber of Deputies. The leader of the Independents, the Rt. Hon'ble Balancing Basu, thought it his pressing duty to intervene in the debate and find a formula that might satisfy all the parties concerned. He therefore moved an amendment to the resolution, as follows:

"Every body belonging to Newton and his supporters continues to be in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line unless

compelled to change that state by Einstein or his supporters."

In an explanatory speech, which was lucidity itself, Mr. Basu claimed he had reconciled warring elements in his mediatory amendment. He expatiated on the urgent necessity of preserving a united front—irrespective of party considerations—on national educational policy, and said that even a mistaken compromise was very much better than aggressive correctness. Mr. Alabaster rose again to speak:



Rt. Hon'ble Balancing Basu



Mr. Bulldog Rasputin

"The Government are quite willing to explore all avenues for an amicable settlement of this vexed question. Personally, I am willing to accept the Rt. Hon'ble Basu's amendment, provided, at least in this form, I can be assured of a unanimous vote....."

The Government Whip, Mr. Bulldog Rasputin, one of the most trenchant speakers and a violent Newtonian partisan caught the Speaker's eye and was allowed to speak:

"Even if I should be in a minority of one—however vast my responsibilities as Government Whip—I cannot accept the amendment. It seeks to place the Newtonian bodies in a less powerful category than the Einsteinian, for, according to the amendment, the movement of a Newtonian body can be deflected by Einstein and his supporters. I repudiate the mischievous view which is contrary to fact, usage and the probabilities of the case. I oppose the amendment."

The Speaker looked blue with dismay. Were all hopes of a settlement gone? Must he face another Governmental collapse? God knew how difficult it was in these days to form another Government! The Speaker tried his own luck at compromising:

"Honourable Deputies, if I rise now to speak, it is with a keen realisation of my stupendous responsibilities. I feel the Commonwealth is on the brink of a grave crisis and it is imperative we preserve a united front. In other words, I request the Leaders of the various parties to put their heads together and have the matter well adjusted."

Meanwhile Mr. Namaskar Olla had an inspiration: he moved an amendment to the original amendment and the doubly-amended resolution ran:

"Every Newtonian body (by Grace of Almighty God) continues to be in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line without prejudice to whatever an Einsteinian body might do under similar circumstances (also by Grace of Almighty God)."

Mr. Olla's comments on the amendment were characteristic:

"In my amendment all warring elements are beautifully harmonised. There is really no connection between the Newtonian body and the Einsteinian body; but in order that a fusion can somehow be forged, I have suggested that everything must happen only by grace of Almighty God. Thus the God principle will bring about the necessary unity."

The Rt. Rev. Suryanamaskar Sundaram, a Bishop of the New Cosmopolitan Religion, and before his initiation Mr. Olla's first cousin, now caught the Speaker's wandering eye, and spoke as follows:



Put their heads together

I am quite sure nobody can take objection to the resolution as it reads now and I place it before the Chamber for its unanimous acceptance."



all blessed the resolution

The Speaker's eye glistened, but his hopes were dashed to the ground as Mr. Fearless Fungus decided to oppose even this harmless resolution:

"Sir, this obscurantist resolution can never meet with my approval. This is the age of good sense, of clear-eyed rationalism. I object to the words 'by Grace of Almighty God.' I move that these five words be deleted from the amended resolution."

The Rt. Rev. Sundaram majestically declared:

"I would rather the earlier part of the resolution went away than the latter part."

There were interruptions and cries of 'Order' 'Order' and 'Withdraw' 'Withdraw' till the Speaker was forced yet once more to intervene. He said:

"As a last resort I suggest the Chair's amendment and urge upon you all to accept it: otherwise a grave situation will inevitably develop, compelling me to dissolve the present Chamber and force an election on the issue, Newton Vs. Einstein. My amended resolution is:

'Every body, Newtonian or Einsteinian or otherwise does its cosmically appointed duty.'

The word 'cosmically' can be interpreted as 'divinely' i.e. 'by grace of Almighty God' by the believers; and 'cosmically' can be simply taken to mean 'by processes of Nature' by the rationalists. I am sure a more reasonable amendment it is futile to search for." (Cheers from all parts of the Chamber.)

The Secretary of State for Education, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Independents and the Rt. Rev. Sundaram all blessed the resolution; and it was accordingly carried without a division. The Chamber adjourned for lunch.

The venerable G. Q. M. of the Commonwealth, the Duke of Windmill, writing to the *Evening Mercury* deplored the flippancy that characterised the debate and looked back wistfully to the "good old days" when a better temper and a more sober sense prevailed.

The *Evening Cuckoo* editorially commented: "The whole question has been shelved again. The Bill, when it is put into effect, will make education a mockery and ignorance a privilege. Compromising is all right, but there are limits. The folly of our Deputies augurs well for the re-birth of the Dark Ages."

The Government organ, *Tide and Tub*, congratulated the Chamber on its thorough statesmanship and the prevalence in its debates of a commendable, equable temper.

The *Freethinker* said that the Chamber consisted of "blunderbuss Malvolios".

The *Freebooter* cryptically remarked: "I pity you, Newton; I moan with you, Einstein."



A STORY OF VUNLOCK DOME, DETECTIVE

By. Dr. HOTSUN

Vunlock Dome smiled, and raised his pipe. A few contented puffs and then he resumed:

"You know, Hotsun, when a man writes, he rests his hand on the table. Well, if his little finger is gone, that means he loses the required support. It becomes difficult for him to write. After a time, of course, he gets himself accustomed to write without the support, but it takes time. In the beginning his writing must appear shaky and unbalanced. That is why I said this fellow, Blessington, has lost his fourth finger—and recently."

I sat silent, marvelling at my friend's powers of observation and deduction, as I had occasions to do many times before, during my experiences with him in his professional adventures.

At last the train steamed into the little station. We got down and were immediately pounced upon by an eccentric looking little man in a brown suit. His hair was carelessly brushed or not brushed at all and a felt hat was perched at a dangerous angle upon his head. With his left hand he mopped his perspiring brow with the help of a red handkerchief dotted with yellow, while with the right he shook Dome's hand as though it were a pump-handle.

"This is my friend Dr. Hotsun," said Dome, introducing me to Mr. Blessington, in answer to a keen inquiring glance made in my direction.

I gripped the proffered hand and felt his strong grip. I looked down and found the fourth finger of Mr. Blessington's right hand missing.

"A misfortune, sir," said he, following my gaze. "Was chopping wood at dusk. Mistook it for a d—d twig, and there you are."

And then, without ceremony, he thrust us into a waiting motor car, and seated himself between us.

"It's a calamity, Mr. Dome, a calamity!" he ejaculated as the car started, "a—a, family heirloom, sir. My God! I can't stand it. I can't, really!"

I looked at Dome. He was trying his best to pacify the little man.

"Perhaps you will tell us the facts from the beginning, Mr. Blessington," he said.

"I will," said the latter, fanning his flushed face with his handkerchief. "It's like this. Some three years back, an uncle of mine died, and together with

VUNLOCK Dome passed the letter to me across the table, while he and I were at breakfast. It ran:

Dear Mr. Dome,

Last night a burglary took place in my house, and it has thrown myself and my family into great anxiety and agitation. An heirloom is missing. Come at once. I shall explain matters when you come.

Yours faithfully,

Horace T. Blessington.

It was addressed from 'Paradise Cottage', Drainmouth.

I handed it back to him.

"We must go, Hotsun," he said, calmly flicking some crumbs off the table. "We must be quick. Dress soon. I shall be ready within five minutes."

A quarter of an hour later we found ourselves cosily seated in a first class compartment. The journey to Drainmouth would take an hour according to the time-table. Dome took out his pipe and leisurely began to fill it.

"It is a little queer," he said; "the man is not explicit. Perhaps he was very much agitated when he wrote the letter."

"That seems so," I remarked. "The hand-writing is shaky."

"My dear Hotsun, you are wrong. The hand-writing is shaky not because he was excited, but because he has not the fourth finger in his right hand, and he lost it recently."

"What!" I exclaimed.

other things, he left me a—er—gramophone. It wasn't a modern sort of affair. It was old and big and heavy. One would find its like with extreme difficulty to-day, or perhaps not at all, not even a single part of the machine. I wonder why the thief or thieves could have stolen it?"

I felt an awful sense of disappointment as I heard that. A gramophone? I imagined the pleasant hours I might have spent elsewhere. I looked at Dome. He was frowning.

"Yes," he said.

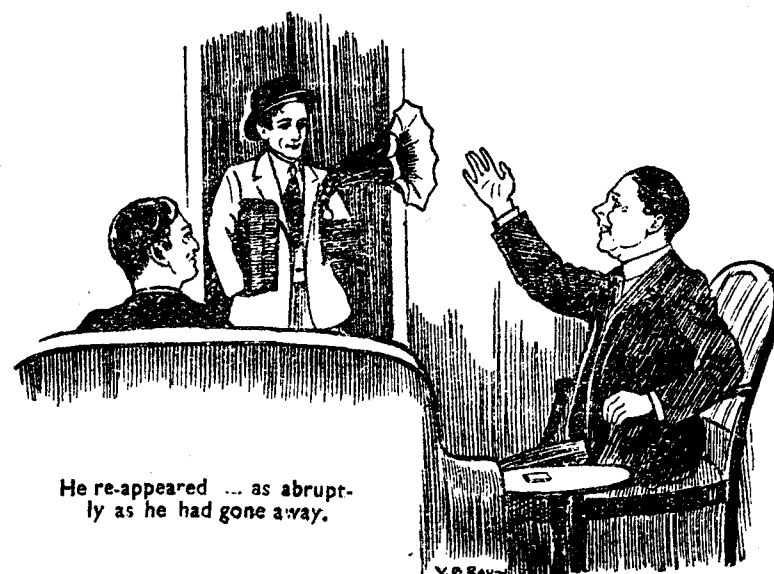
"Well, it is my habit every night to see that all the doors and windows are properly fastened. On Thursday night also, that is day before yesterday—I wrote to you yesterday—I did so. Imagine my surprise when I found that the gramophone was missing from its customary place upon a table in the drawing room. I called my wife and the servants and we searched the whole house and the garden. The only result was, we found that the two record albums were missing too."

Dome stroked the one solitary lock of hair on his bald crown and nodded.

"My records, my beautiful records!" wailed the little man. "Do you know, Mr. Dome, that they were more than fifteen years old? And by God! since the time they came in our possession we played them daily every night for the last three years or so without a hitch. You don't know, Mr. Dome, how my wife and I and the kiddies enjoyed the music. It is a great loss to us."

At last the car halted outside a pretty little cottage with a fine front garden. We stepped out of the car. Dome stood and surveyed the view around him. I did so too. I found that we were in a somewhat isolated place. Besides the cottage of our client there was another a few yards off. In the distance could be seen similar dwellings. All around was delightful scenery. Suddenly Dome stooped, gathered some soil in his hand and threw it into the air.

"I am a bit of a horticulturist myself," he explained with a smile. "An amateurish hobby. I study soils and all that. By the bye those are pretty roses," he added.



Mr. Blessington, in spite of his misfortune smiled a little. His roses were his pride.

"Yes," he said, "and they smell perfectly sweet. Our neighbours tell us they get the smell daily. The wind always blows that way."

We entered the cottage and were taken straight to the drawing room. Mr. Blessington was too overcome to speak. He pointed out a small but strong table to us.

"There—there it remained all these three years," he said at last.

Dome walked over to the table and examined it. Dust had collected upon it. Disappointed, he walked to the window which our client said he had found open the morning after the theft. Dome leaned over it for a few seconds, and then casually lifted his head and stared at the cottage next door. He moved away from the window and paced the room once or twice. Then suddenly he picked up his hat and said:

"I am going."

"Eh? Where?" asked our client.

"Out. I shall return in a few minutes. I wish to have a walk and think over the whole matter."

And before I could reach him or say anything to him he was gone.

A quarter of an hour, twenty minutes, half an hour passed and he re-appeared as abruptly as he had gone away. We found him suddenly, as if from nowhere, standing in the doorway, perspiring but triumphant, labouring under the weight of a heavy gramophone under one arm, and two fat record albums tucked under the other.

With a shout of joy the little man bounded from his seat towards Dome.

"My dear sir, my dear sir, how can I ever thank you? You have brought back my treasure. You are wonderful, wonderful! Allow me."

And he shook Dome's hand more heartily than ever.

Dome, however, when pressed for an explanation, refused to give it. He kept his mouth shut. He was firm about keeping the whole investigation of his a secret. It was the first time in his professional career he had ever done so. And I wondered.

Some twenty minutes later we again found ourselves in a first class carriage, a cheque reposing in Dome's pocket-book.

Dome stroked his single lock of hair more affectionately than ever, and I knew that explanations were coming forth after all. I sat silent, pricked up my ears and waited.

"What would you do, Hotsun," he said at last, "if you occupied a room next to mine and I thumped on my piano, or, worse still, blew on my saxophone, the same old song every night for three years in succession?"

(Continued on page 38)

THE other night Mr. Brown came home late, and in addition to being late, Mr. Brown was 'three sheets in the wind', or to be more accurate, 'two sheets in the wind'. But such is the peculiarity of this sheet-in-the-wind business that no matter how small the number of sheets may be, the breath is ever inclined to exaggerate, and people are convinced that instead of one or even one and a half sheets, you are actually 'one over the eight'.

A MIDNIGHT MEETING

By Mrs. A. HINTON

Now as Mrs. Brown did not appreciate this sheet-in-the-wind business and had a tongue like a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch saw, Brown was not anxious to awake her. Consequently, he took off his shoes and as his socks had to last another week as per his wife's orders, he could not be expected to dirty them just yet. He took these off as well and cautiously approached the door of his bed-chamber. He listened. He could hear his wife's gentle snore (it sounded gentle only because of the closed door). Brown tried the door; it squeaked. It had rusty hinges, and Brown realised that the quick sharp push was the only rational method of eliminating the tell-tale squeak. Accordingly, with a quick jerk he pushed. To his horror the door came bounding back like a challenged bruiser, and landed with incredible force on Brown's face. Brown staggered back two steps and then sat down forcibly on the floor. He glared at the offending door and to his astonishment saw that it was open. Brown approached warily and listened again. Silence. Not even the snore was heard. Wondering whether his wife had been aroused, Brown decided to make a dash for it. Unfortunately, he was unaware that Mrs. Brown with exemplary fortitude had placed a rocking chair against the door. This chair, after proving its antagonism by pushing the door back on Brown, had now with gifted skill, placed itself right in the middle of the bee-line, the ignorant Mr. Brown was about to make. Accordingly the first thing Mr. Brown knew was that he had stubbed his well-bunioned big toe and knocked the toe with the corn against the rocker of the chair, and as it was in the cold weather, his feelings can be better imagined than described. Nor was this all, the collision with the rocker brought the seat of the chair forward with a crash into the crazy bone of the unfortunate Brown's knee, and as he bent down to rub it, a boil on his head which had for days been worrying him collided with agonizing force against one of the long arms of the chair.

Simultaneously he fell over the chair side-ways, and as he stood on all fours in an effort to rise, the chair kicked him from the back and sent him sprawling. The spirit of 'Brandy' till now dormant in the anatomy of Mr. Brown arose and got the 'Whisky' frisky. Infuriated and insulted, Brown picked himself up or attempted to pick himself up. But 'the best laid plans of God and man.....' One of Brown's knees treacherously came into contact

with one of the long rockers behind, thus bringing the back of the chair on his head with such a whack that Brown found his nose in uncomfortably close contact with a bowl of smashed rice and half-cooked bones that had been placed there by his tender-hearted wife for the cat. The chair, yet unsatisfied, kicked him three times

on the afore-mentioned painful boil with the sharp end of the rocker. This proved too much for Brown plus Brandy and Whisky, not to mention a little toddy. Furiously the fallen man scrambled up and

rushed on the chair.

The cat, however, had been asleep on this chair and after striving in vain to discover the causes of its vigorous rockings, decided to climb and find out. Unfortunately for the feline pet, its desire coincided with the desire of Mr. Brown to attack the chair. As Brown rushed, he swung out a wild blow, which landing on pussy's unprepared and ever-fondled ear, that wondering animal spitting and pawing through the air on to the pillow of Mrs. Brown, where, imagining all bipeds had suddenly turned traitors, it proceeded to wreak summary vengeance on 'The female of the Species'.

In the meantime Brown had turned a complete somersault and landed with such force on his protruding abdomen that the wind was taken clean out of him with one single grunt. The chair, still unsatisfied, like-



wise somersaulted and landed to give Brown such a prod in his stomach that his legs shot out spasmodically. Simultaneously a shriek rent the air as the insulted and desperate cat landed blow after blow on the till now peaceful Mrs. Brown. In addition to three livid scratches showing distinctly through the mercerized wax, Mrs. Brown's face resembled a 'rose at dewy dawn' due to the amount of spitting, the vicious cat had done. Mrs. Brown had just reached her third *sforzando fortissimo accelerando* when her frantic hands encountered the cat. With all her might she pushed and to the misfortune of six year old Joe (affectionately called Jojo) Brown, the cat fell on him. Immediately the deafening *fortissimo* shriek of Mrs. Brown was strengthened by the squeaky howl of Jojo. The cat who evidently took the howl for a challenge, proceeded to answer it with no abated vigour.

Mr. Brown who till now had imagined himself to be the sole cause of the noise, now came to the conclusion that making himself known would end the commotion. He staggered to his feet and became dimly visible to the yell-cum-howl combination on the bed. The shrieks promptly reached deafening point ably seconded by the howls as Mrs. Brown and son broke cover to make as good a get-away as possible.

Poor Jojo did not get far, but landing in the aforementioned bowl of smashed rice and bones, found himself thrown spread-eagled on the floor, from which unenviable position he howled as much smashed rice out of his mouth as possible. Mrs. Brown dashed headlong into the chair, and fell with a butt into the arms of a devoted and anxious-to-please husband. Unfortunately for his good intentions his wife imagined she was in the arms of a burglar, terrorist, cut-throat, murderer and thug rolled into one and proceeded to defend herself. To Brown's surprise and horror, she scratched his already over-



Mrs. Brown had delivered another stunning blow.....

taxed nose, and stuck her finger in his eye. Mr. Brown almost retaliated, but before he could make up his mind Mrs. Brown had delivered another stunning blow on the same nose and sent Brown staggering back. His head encountered a little hard knob with considerable force, and the next instant the room was flooded with light. It was the electric switch which had raised a little lump on the back of his head, and now the erring Brown stood with a sueing-for-peace smile on his face. And there ended the commotion, at least the commotion I am talking about.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING GRAMOPHONE—(Continued from page 36)

"Why! I would smash it."

"Exactly. That is what Mr. Blessington's neighbour wanted to do; but he did not smash the gramophone, he stole it. Perhaps I had better tell you from the beginning. You know, when we entered the garden I threw some soil into the air. That was to ascertain the way the wind blew. Then talking about the roses our client said the wind always blew in the direction of his neighbours. That confirmed my theory that the neighbour must be getting the full force of the music."

"Then why did you go inside the house at all?" I asked.

"That was a ruse. I did not want to give the game away. I felt sympathy for the neighbour. You know, I went out a few minutes after we entered the cottage. I went to the fellow next door—a charming man," he added reflectively.

"And, then, of course I got the contraption and the records back."

"A minute, Dome," said I, "how could he have

opened the window of the drawing room from the inside?"

"Bravo, Hotsun, there's a puzzler. Mrs. Blessington opened the window."

"What!"

"Yes, she was in league with her neighbours. She was fed up too."

I let the disclosure sink in. A few seconds later:

"But Dome, now that the little fellow has got the whole paraphernalia back, he will be up to his old tricks again."

"He shan't—he cannot," replied Dome smiling. "All the old records have been substituted with modern music."

And then with a last pull at his pipe and a sly twinkle in his eyes he resumed:

"Besides, I have taken out the spring of the motor."

And as he said that, he took it out of his pocket and flipped it out of the window. Which shows that a detective can be a good thief when he likes.

PAPPU PATTI

By 'R. Brihanmadhawa'

EVERYBODY in the village knows her for a walking encyclopædia, a central sympathy-radiating human organism, a distributor of sweet words. And yet, with all her liberality and overflow of kindness, how much she is herself in need of that which she so abundantly bestows on others!

She is of medium size. Her mouth is devoid of teeth. She has a hump on her back. She has run three score and ten years of earthly existence, and God alone knows how many years more He has reserved for her.

Her stick—her never-failing friend which keeps her company day and night—goes two feet in advance of her; and her kindly voice with it.

For her age, her eye-sight is keen, her limbs strong, her voice clear, and her system sound. Only her sense of hearing has been slightly impaired.

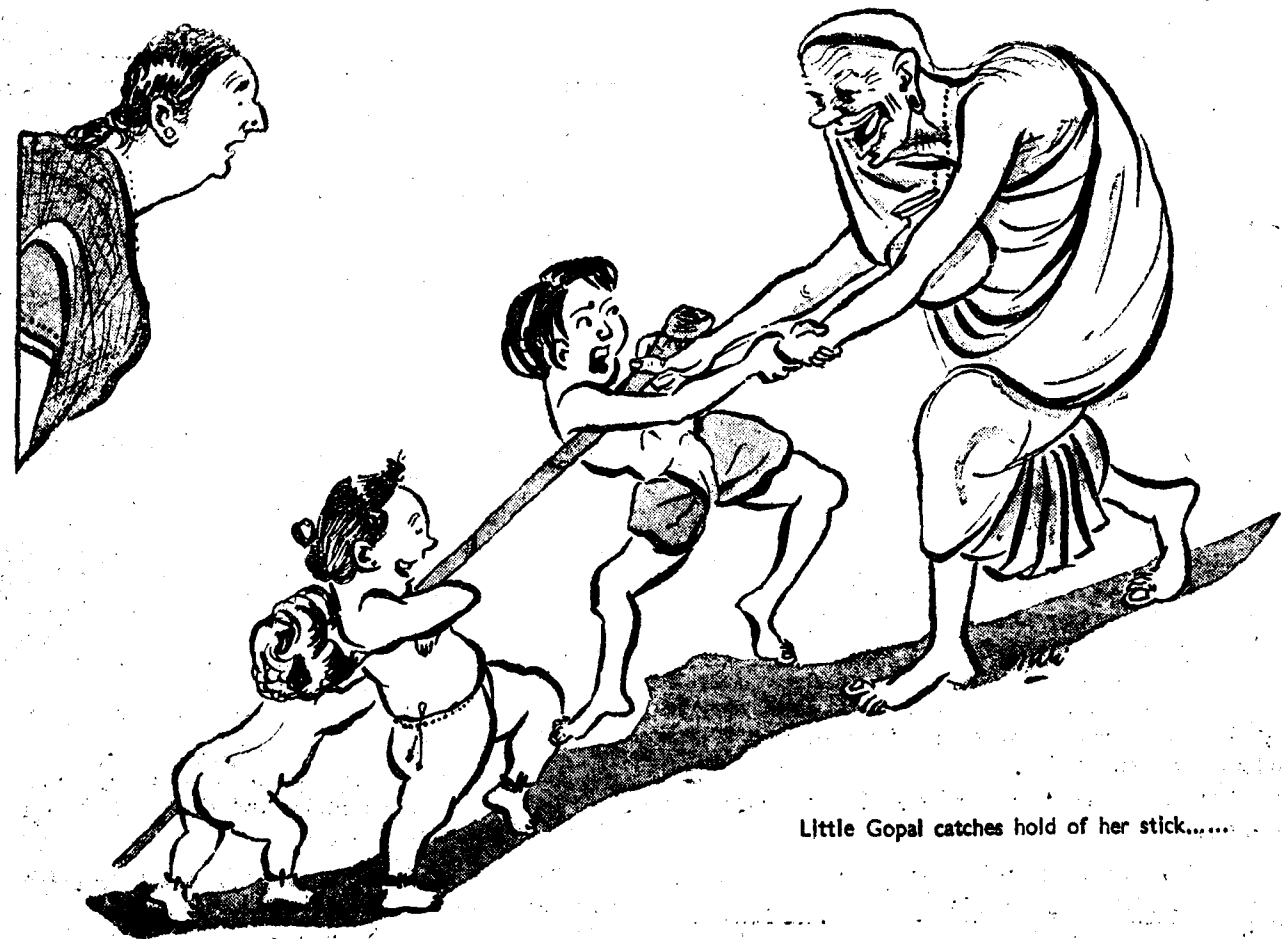
Morning dawns. Pappu Patti walks to the river, takes a cold plunge in its waters, be it foggy or rainy, and returns with a big pot full of water. She changes her dress, another white cloth for the one that is wet and

must be dried up, performs her ablutions, and starts her morning round with the begging bowl in one hand and her stick in the other.

On the way she meets Nanni. "Oh, it is you, Nanni." Patti stops to have a brief chat with the girl whose face is as fresh as a garden after a drizzle. "Eh, your husband has come? Ah, that accounts for your smartness. Hope he will remain here for some days and will take you when he goes. I wish to see you soon with a chubby boy in your arms. Ganesh is great!"

Nanni feels flattered. She blushes. "You old people are always for children," says Nanni, though within her heart of hearts she prays that Ganesh would say 'amen' to Patti's wish. Patti hears the words 'old people' and walks off muttering 'old, old'.

She enters a house. The thud, of her stick announces her visit to the children. Little Lakshmi, barely a year old, runs to her, shouting the solitary word 'Patti, Patti,' all smiles and all jollity. Patti covers the child with kisses. Gopal, a boy of three, comes to



Little Gopal catches hold of her stick.....

the scene shouting out 'Pappu Patti ki Jai.' Patti prods him gently with her stick and little Gopal catches hold of it. Their mother comes shouting and the children hearing their mother's voice keep quiet. "Patti, were the kids troubling you?" asks mother. Patti doesn't hear the words but guesses the idea correctly and says "No, no, they are such lovely-dovey little things." Patti receives a handful of rice in her bowl and speeds off.

It is getting late. And she has to cover both the streets. Yes, she has to, for her very livelihood. God had been a little unkind to her. He took her children first, then made her and her husband poor, and then, as if these were not enough, took him too. And here she was, deprived of everything in the world except life. Hard lot indeed and that for one of her age and status! And did she deserve it? She had never harmed anybody, had never committed a crime even in thought.

She meets Kuppayandi. At once she forgets all her sorrows and identifies herself with his troubles. "Is it true that fellow Murugan has duped you of all your money? Rogue! scoundrel! He has thrown mud into the mouths of all who had the goodness to trust him. What will you do, Kuppayandi? Hard, well-earned money to be lost this way! It is a cruel blow. But—but—is there no way of getting it, even by going to court?"

Kuppayandi becomes lachrymose but checks himself. "Absolutely no hope," he says, "the fellow has given the yellow paper* and has driven me to the blues." Saying this he raises his right hand, then the right index finger, and with it makes a circle in the air right over his head as though pointing out to Pappu Patti the place whereon is writ his destiny.

Thud, thud, thud. Tup, tup, tup. Patti's stick rattles on the gravelled road. Time is up, time is up, it seems to say.

She encounters street dogs, snarling, barking, fighting. Detestable creatures! And all over a discarded leaf with some crumbs sticking on. Lollh, lolh, and lolh... Their frenzied cries rend the air.

"Horrible! Horrible," says Patti, "is the way the dogs behave." She threatens them with her stick. They move a little but they do not run away. They know Patti will not harm them.

"Beastly dogs, these!" she exclaims.

Stones fly in the air hitting the poor dogs now here, now there. They come in showers, the stones. The sneaking beasts tucking their tail between their legs and sending forth ululating tones dash off for their very lives.

Patti is perturbed. She looks back and sees Kichu and Sami. As certain as she is, it is they. "You boys!" she shouts, "why do you hurt the poor dogs? What mischief? Won't you go away and attend to your studies?"

Boys are boys. Be they in the village or in the town, they are the same lot everywhere. They don't relish Patti's remonstrances. They don't want her to pass censure on their conduct.

"What is that to you," cries Kichu, looking her full in the face.

"What is that to me?" repeats Patti. "You go and hurt a poor forlorn animal." "As poor and forlorn

* Has become an insolvent.

as myself," she says to herself. And then aloud: "What is that to me? I will tell your father."

"Yes, you may," says Sami, coming to the rescue of his friend.

"Patti, run and inform him, lest it should be too late." The boys giggle and make faces at the poor old woman. Patti grumbles and goes on her way.

She steps into a house with the name of Lord Krishna in her mouth. There is only one inhabitant in it, a young lady just become a widow. Patti is all consolation and comfort to her. They mingle their tears, and sob.

Patti walks out and proceeds. She hears the sound of *nathaswaram* from Venu's house. "Why this mela?" she asks herself. Venu's boy's birthday comes tomorrow. Well, let me see. Monday 22nd, Tuesday 23rd; Wednesday 24th, Thursday 25th. Oh, I see, it is not tomorrow. It comes on this day itself."

She hurries on. The people in Venu's house are busy. No time for parleying words. Venu sees her. "Patti, take your meal here," he says. Patti puts him a thousand questions, but they are not answered.

Thud, thud, thud. Tup, tup, tup. Patti's walking-stick rattles again on the gravelled road. Time moves, time flies, time is not still, it says.

Patti meets Kambu Thattha, the forlorn old man of the village.

"What is the time?" asks Kambu Thattha.

Pappu Patti doesn't hear what he says. She thinks that the man has asked her, "Why late?" and answers: "I was talking with the people I met on my way."

Kambu Thattha does not hear aright what she says. "It is not yet ten," he murmurs, his mind still fixed on time.

"No, the Tamil date is thirteen," says Patti, believing he meant the date.

And so on they talk, these two half-deaf fossils.

Patti's bowl is only half-full. She has not gone to a number of houses. She has no time. Nor does she care much. To-day's meal at Venu's. And as for tomorrow, why worry yourself to-day?

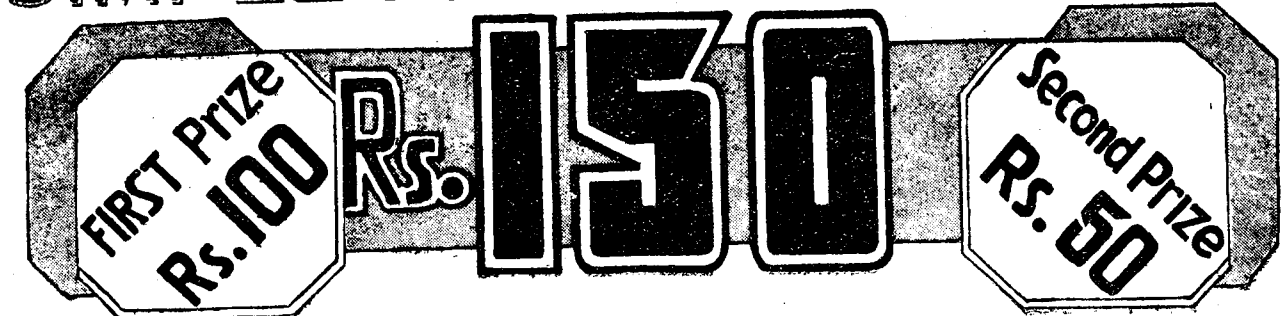
To-day, Tomorrow. What is to-day but a speck in Eternity and tomorrow another speck, a pin-prick point of time in that vastness of Duration?

But she has no time to think. Go to her house she must and be back in time at Venu's. After meal a light nap. Then she must visit Sita, sick in her bed, beyond cure. After that she must go and attend on Parvathi, the poor girl who was in the family way. Then.....And so on a round of visits till ten in the night, her time for bed. A few hours of death-like existence and then the caw-cawing of crows and cackling of cocks! And it will be tomorrow!

But who knows that she will be alive tomorrow. A little pain, a gasp and a gurgle, and the good gods may end their sport with her.

Patti smiles. The very thought has given her Elysian happiness.

SIMPLE FREE COMPETITION



MUST BE WON "ADD-A-LETTER" PUZZLE

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CLOSING DATE 20-3-35

HOW TO SOLVE "ADD-A-LETTER"

In "Add-A-Letter" the solution is completed by finding a single letter only. These letters are the Initial Letters of the words represented by the pictures. A clue is also given.

For example, the Clue for No. 1 is "Bracelet". The picture shows a Girl. This gives G, which when added to Banle gives you the word Bangle. This is the correct solution. All the other eight solutions can be found similarly. When you have found the eight missing letters, write the completed words against their numbers in the coupon.

The letters given in puzzle (3) are AG.

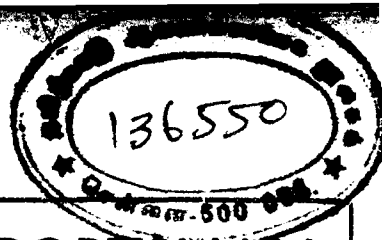
RULES AND CONDITIONS

Solutions must be written only on the coupon printed in another page. All entries must be received by last post on 20-3-35. Any received after this date will be disqualified. Entries from local competitors can be delivered at our office till 6 P. M. on that date. The first prize of Rs. 100 will be awarded to an all-correct solution and the second prize of Rs. 50 to the solution with one error. An all-correct solution is one which agrees in all respects with the Editor's Key Solution kept in safe custody with the Indian Bank Ltd., Head Office, Madras. 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. The Editor reserves the right of pooling the first and second prize-amounts and distributing them among the competitors according to the number of all-correct solutions received.

No correspondence can be entered into nor can interviews be granted. Persons connected with the *Merry Magazine* and its associated journals are not allowed to compete. No entry will be considered unless it is on the coupon. Intending competitors who are unable to secure copies of this Magazine from the agents in their area can address our Subscription Manager for the required number of copies either by sending stamps or Money Order to cover the cost of the copies or order them by V. P. P. COUPONS MUST BE FILLED IN LEGIBLY and sent intact. This office will not be responsible for entries lost or delayed in transit. CUT OUT THE COUPON and post to:—

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TIT FOR TAT!

As advised by
"AKKA"



'AKKA' writes to her younger sister:—

The sight of one's husband absorbed in reading a Magazine when one has been waiting all day for his return home, is nothing new to me, my dear. I have in the early days of my married life, like you, fretted, fumed and raved over his passion for these journals and his callous neglect of me. Sundari, the doctor's wife, told me to buy a copy of ANANDA VIKATAN

and see for myself. I have seen and now I know. There is no use in blaming him. Now-a-days, most of the night he reads the MERRY MAGAZINE while the Ananda Vikatan keeps me busy. And, believe it or not, we are happy!

My advice to you, therefore, my dear, is to order a regular supply of Ananda Vikatan. Make sure it is 'Ananda Vikatan'.