

96

THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE

THE

MERRY



MAGAZINE



Vol. III

MADRAS, 23rd MARCH, 1935

No. 3
JOTTU ?

THE INDIRECT METHOD



He:—You brew tea excellently well. What about brewing it for the rest of my life?

THE MERRY MAGAZINE

(PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY)

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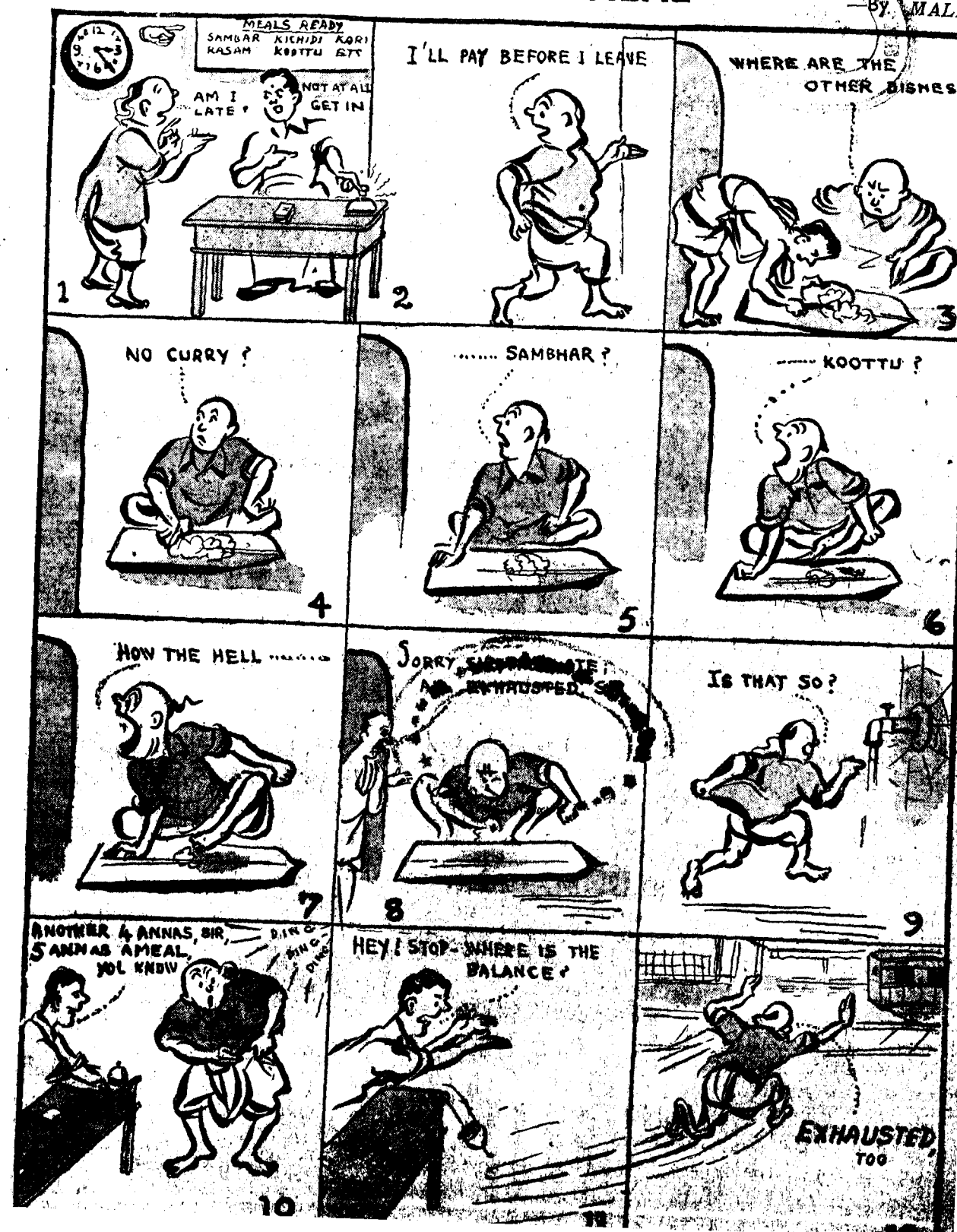
Vol. III

MADRAS, 23rd MARCH, 1935.

No. 12

THE LATE MEAL

—By MALI—



THE DICTATION TEST

ALL this happened years ago—it must have, because now-a-days an irregularity during an examination is quite unheard-of.

It was not a very recondite examination: nothing so profound as the Inter-Arts or even the Matriculation, though perhaps more lucrative in its results than either. It was, in fact, the Joint Examination for Government Stenographers. If someone from Delhi writes to say that there is no such examination—well, didn't I tell you it all happened long ago?

My friend Rajagopal was instructor in English subjects at the Technical Institute, where many of the candidates were prepared. The educational portion of the examination comprised four tests: Elementary Mathematics, General Knowledge, English Essay, and English Dictation. The first three subjects presented little difficulty to the candidates, but the dictation worked havoc among them. They were allowed only eight mistakes in a passage of 150 words longhand, and the examiners, with cruel ingenuity, managed to introduce half the pitfalls of the dictionary into the 150 words. The results were deplorable.

After the receipt of a particularly devastating pass-list, the Principal of the Institute sent for Rajagopal.

"It is the dictation," said my friend, in response to his senior's reproaches. "Not only is the passage very difficult: it is read very fast by an examiner whose voice is unfamiliar to the candidates."

"Ah!" said the Principal, not unwilling to seize upon an explanation which tended to rehabilitate his establishment, "the candidates have difficulty in following a strange voice. Quite so. Quite so. I will address the memorandum to the Government."

The Principal was very fond of addressing memoranda to the Government. This particular communication happened to bear fruit. The Government saw the force of the Principal's submission, and enacted that in future the dictation should be given at each centre by a reader whose voice and pronunciation were familiar to the candidates. The test would take place, of course, in the presence of the invigilator, and there would be suitable safeguards against fraud.

The fingers.....could be employed in signalling to the class!

The Principal waved the Government notification at my friend. "You see, Rajagopal," boomed the pompous old fool, "the authorities appreciate the suggestions of a well-trying public servant like myself. Of course," he added, "I will have you appointed the reader in dictation for this centre. Now, I have secured this concession entirely for your benefit, and I expect a good percentage of passes." And he shot a significant look at the unfortunate Rajagopal.

By
'EMBUSQUE'

Rajagopal departed from the Principal's presence in low spirits. He was aware that accent and intonation had little to do with the failures in dictation. The fact was that the blighted idiots in the Stenography Class could not spell. Even with all his arduously-prepared lists of catchy words, learned by heart, the fools spelled atrociously. The next examination was due in a month, and Old Pompous expected a high percentage of passes. What would happen when the lists came out, heralding the usual miserable result?

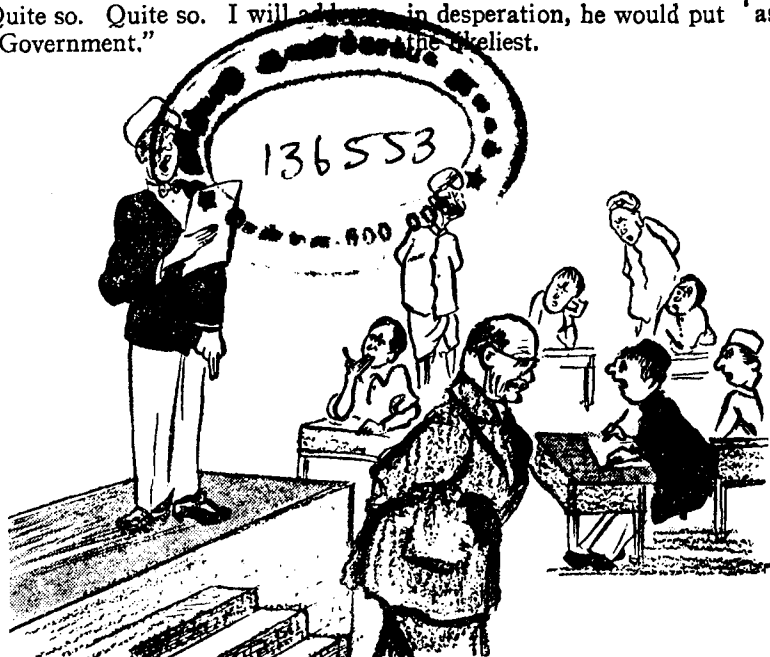
Well, there must not be a miserable result. Somehow, a way must be found to pull the dunderheads through their dictation. Rajagopal began to burn the midnight oil in an endeavour to trace the fundamental cause of spelling-errors.

In a little while, my ingenious friend decided that, to a well-drilled student, the stumbling-block was uncertainty about doubled letters. The sequence of letters in such a word as 'assimilate' was fairly easy to learn. But in the crisis of the dictation-test, the candidate had to worry whether it was 'ss', 'mm', or 'll', or these pairs in various combinations. At last, in desperation, he would put 'asimmillate.' It sounded the most unlikely.

If only there were a way to tell the candidates that it was 'ss', and nothing more!

There was a way. Always, when Rajagopal was dictating to the class, he held the paper in his right hand. The thumb of his left hand was stuck into the front of his jacket, and the fingers hung loosely down.

The fingers, instead of hanging loosely, could be employed in signalling to the class!



The method would be as follows: if Rajagopal kept all his fingers closed, the word he was calling contained no doubled letters. If he straightened the first and second fingers, there was a doubled letter near the beginning of the word. If he straightened the second and third fingers, there was a doubled letter in the middle of the word. If he straightened the third and fourth fingers, it indicated a doubled letter towards the end of the word. Four fingers meant two doubled letters.

If the thumb were brought out from its hiding-place, and all five digits exposed, it meant: "Storm signal! Double everything!" This was required for such words as 'Mississippi'.

Rajagopal explained the new spelling-indicator to his class, and they followed him with the greatest interest. He tried them with 'accredited' (first two fingers), 'vacuum' (last two fingers), 'metallurgist' (middle two fingers), 'procedure' (no fingers), 'commissariat' (four fingers), and 'committee' (five fingers). The result was almost a hundred per cent!

For the next few weeks, Rajagopal and his class assiduously practised the spelling-indicator. They were soon perfect in the art. Rajagopal paused naturally at every difficult word, and the students naturally looked up. As he read, my friend twiddled absent-mindedly and unobtrusively with his fingers; and the class wrote securely conscious that there must be 'll' and 'oo' in 'balloon'. It was perfect, and it was undetectable.

At last came the day of the examination, and the hour of the dictation-test. Rajagopal entered the room radiating confidence, and bowed courteously to the invigilator. The candidates prepared their papers, and the invigilator handed the tutor a type-written sheet. It was the dictation-test.

Clearly and unhurriedly, with suitable pauses, Rajagopal began to read. The students wrote industriously. There was an air of quiet satisfaction in the room. Everything was going splendidly.

Rajagopal signalled 'maritime' (no fingers), 'disappear' (middle fingers), 'distaff' (last fingers), 'disseminate' (first fingers)—and, in fact, negotiated all the danger-points with the ease of practice.

The invigilator watched closely for a while, and then, reassured by the scrupulously fair way that Rajagopal was giving the dictation, he began to stroll aimlessly about the room. As Rajagopal read the last sentence, the invigilator was strolling slowly up the centre aisle, with his back to the reader.

Rajagopal called out, "...and the passengers (first fingers) ...descended (no fingers) ...from the..."

His voice died away. The last word on the sheet was 'waggon'. Was the 'gg' a typist's error, or did the examiner always spell it that way? Was it correct to write 'gg'? What was my friend to do? Signal 'gg', and run the risk of everybody writing an identical childish error in an otherwise-perfect paper? Or signal 'g', with exactly the same risk? For the life of him, Rajagopal could not remember whether 'gg' was correct, or 'g', or both.

He had to make up his mind in the fraction of a second. He drew a deep breath, said "...waggon," and straightened his two middle fingers.

Several of the candidates looked puzzled at the two fingers, but there they were, so they wrote 'waggon'. But Mody, that bumptious little brute, who was sitting on the aisle in the middle of the room, refused to accept the signal. Worse, he began to make urgent signs for Rajagopal to remove the two fingers. Curse him! The invigilator might turn round at any moment.

"Waggon!" repeated Rajagopal loudly, and stuck out the two fingers straighter than ever.

The beastly Mody shook his head vigorously, and gesticulated more markedly than ever. Rajagopal was furious. Suppose the invigilator turned round!

"Waggon!" he shouted, and, raising two fingers in the air, he shook them angrily at the obstinate pupil.

The invigilator, I may say, was a gentleman of the highest academic qualifications and official prestige. Even as Rajagopal made the motion, the invigilator turned round. With pain and amazement, he saw Rajagopal gazing straight at him with an expression of scorn and contempt, and making an insulting gesture.

Has anyone a vacancy for an ex-tutor of the Technical Institute? He is a most ingenious fellow, and an excellent instructor in English. His last class scored a hundred per cent in the Joint Examination for Government Stenographers.

At present, he is unable to secure employment owing to an unfortunate allegation that he was once unpardonably rude to an eminent member of the Board of Examiners.



The School-girl Complexion by P.P. Samuel.

I have just read a newspaper article: not a powerful leader full of 'a priori', 'inter alia' and similar Latinisms, but a cute little chat, full of face-powder, rouge and cold cream. The writer—a retired Hollywood luminary, I shouldn't wonder—tells the grown-up girls of India how they could build up a school-girl complexion without going back to school.

An expensive affair, the writer admits. In England, it appears, the women spend sixty-five million pounds a year on being beautiful. Thirty-five per cent of the sales in Britain's chemists' shops, she remarks with satisfaction, are feminine beauty preparations. British chemists sold 50 million lipsticks in 1934. Every penny of the 65 millions is well spent, I should say, for it would be rather foolish to expect Britannia to rule the waves if her complexion is allowed to run muddy.

Hair oils, snows, cold creams, oxygen-pastes, skin-foods, rouge, powder, lipstick, depilatories and hair-dyes have come to stay, and the sooner a man realizes it the better for him; unless, of course, he wishes to have a daily scrap with the wife.

A well-known writer of ultra-modern novels remarks somewhere that cosmetics have become quite an obsession with the modern girl. It appears she seldom uses the

weather as a conversational gambit as her mother and grandmother used to do. She talks lipstick, instead.

"Pardon me, dear, what's your favourite lipstick?"

"Any old lipstick."

"Don't rag. Is it Stick-o?"

"No, silly. Mine is Cherry-la. And yours?"

"Pick-Craw."

"Whatever is that?"

"Lipstick, child. 'Pick' for Pickford and 'Craw' for Crawford."

"Ah, that reminds me. Did you see—I mean hear—the latest Harold Lloyd film?"

The ball has been set rolling, and the conversation leaps from crag to crag, like the nimble chamois, until it ends up with the latest society scandal. Hurrah for lipstick!

It is estimated that there are two thousand two hundred and twenty-five registered beauty preparations on the market at the present day. Is it surprising, then, that one of the greatest problems of Miss 1935—or even Mrs. 1935 for that matter—is to decide what cosmetics to buy? For instance, let the reader try to decide between Brown's skin-food and White's. Brown's is a

super-cream recommended by a couple of famous beauty specialists and half-a-dozen chemical analysts, while White's Hyper Super Cream comes attested by a cabinet minister's wife and half the denizens of Hollywood. "A teaser", as the half-penny papers might put it. Naturally, Miss 1935 in her desperation decides to have both, as old King Solomon did, when he was asked to choose between two ravishingly beautiful sisters.

And that, no doubt, means money. What with the income-tax, the import duty, the high cost of foreign liquor, the average parent finds it hard to meet his daughters' constant demands on his purse. But "First things first," the girls insist, and, you know, women will have their way, as the man grudgingly admitted when he was pushed off his feet by his mother-in-law.

And as the area to be beautified increases every year with the modification of the public's sense of decency and the resultant abbreviation of dress, parents and husbands find it increasingly difficult to keep their girls well supplied with the necessary rouge, powder, snow, cream and such. Twenty years ago only the face, neck and hands needed scientific skin-food, but the acreage has increased tenfold since, as the region to be systematically exhibited now in-

cludes the arms, legs and seven-tenths of the torso. But the expense has increased out of all proportion to the area under cultivation, and the reasons are not far to seek.

In 1915, any old talcum powder was good enough for any occasion, but now things are different. The shade required by night is different from that required by day, as the electric light is different in composition from sunlight. And in sophisticated circles it is imperative that the powder, rouge and lipstick should match the hair, the hat and the frock. Delicate shades of colour are in demand, and they aren't so cheap as brinjal.

And the motif and treatment varies with the colour of the skin. If a platinum blonde, for example, employs the cosmetics designed for an ivory blonde, dark blonde or just blonde, she never can hope to catch that indefinable and elusive loveliness which modern novelists call Sex

Appeal. Anyone who has a nodding acquaintance with Havelock Ellis and modern literature can imagine what it means to the poor girl who fails to possess the appeal which sweeps young men off their feet and makes them stammer and stutter fateful words before they know what they are about.

What has a woman to do to bring out her latent loveliness?

Well, in a city she need only walk into a beauty-parlour and hand in a few guineas. She might walk in looking like the witch Gagool and come out of the swing-door after a couple of hours, twinkling all over like Greta Garbo. But away from the highly trained specialists the process is rather long and tedious.

To begin with, she scrubs her face with a special brand of soap to remove the dead tissues. Then she plasters her map generously with a heterogeneous mixture of oxygen cream, skin-food and snow, and goes to bed with a mask on, as soldiers did on the Western Front. And in the morning she removes the plaster with a silver trowel and puts on layers of cream, powder and rouge, in the order mentioned. She then trains a couple of curly curls down her temples and gives a final dash of lipstick. Eve is ready

for the day.

In a few months she will have acquired the school-girl complexion and she can then set about recasting her features. Nose-shapers, ear-shapers, chin-removers, tweezers and similar appliances are pressed into active service. Slim-o is administered internally if she is balloony, plump-o, if she is scrappy. And gradually her sex-appeal unfolds itself as a rose-bud opens in the morning.

Like a rose, I repeat. The comparison is deliberate, for she is now as beautiful as the flower. Perhaps the only difference is that water cannot wash away the loveliness of the rose, while a tumbler of water and a bit of sponge can wash away a girl's loveliness.

In The Next Issue

ROMANCE By 'Embusque'

The ways of Romance are so uncertain, and often lead back to the starting point.

THE CALL OF THE EAST: By 'Ram'

A modern *Trisanku* with a very modern automobile.

PERFUMED KISSES By 'MEA'

Osculation, with authorities galore cited.

RAM CHANDRA'S HOBBIES (I) Wireless By 'CHAPPIE'

The curiosities of a superannuated person in a new serial. With little incidents like servants hanging washed linen on wireless aeriols.

BRIGHTER DETECTIVE STORIES By 'CAPER'

Also 'Teddy Bear' Joyfull and other usual features.



By 'KEBI'

66 **B**Y the bones of my ancestors, I took a solemn oath to rob the Lucknow police, on the day my offer to serve the Lucknow public as a constable to catch thieves was turned down by the recruiting officer," confessed Bhagwant, a Brahmin of Gonda, when he was arrested by the Lucknow police in possession of a quilt belonging to a member of the force. When Bhagwant's offer to serve as a constable was turned down and he was sent about his business, things began to happen. Passes, raiment and other sundry articles belonging to the city's (lynx-eyed!) watch-dogs began to grow wings and fly away one by one and nobody any the wiser. But, when during the recent cold wave, the quilt—how precious a possession when the mercury is near about zero!—of a policeman did the vanishing trick, Robert decided it was time to call a halt. Followed action and the force came to the enlightening conclusion that a stranger, attired in Khaki, like one of their clan, ought to be responsible for the thefts. And ultimately it led to Bhagwant and his arrest.

A man of action, who could not merely look on, this Bhagwant!

Another 'thiefy' item from the same city of the United Provinces. The police of the place claim to have succeeded in arresting the man who was responsible for a series of thefts in Lucknow and Cawnpore. The way in which the man, it is stated, disposed of stolen cycles is daring, if anything. He not only gave genuine receipts for the money he received for the goods he made over to purchasers but also gave them copies of his photograph! Presumably a ruse to ward off suspicion. But you know all about the strong arm of the law, which always gets its quarry.

Members of the Japanese Imperial Diet are being plagued by friends to give them meals in the Parliament House Restaurant. But the only dish the guests yearn to consume is oyster-soup. And if you are

really curious about it, the reason for it is the glittering pearl on the neck-tie of Premier Okada.

One lucky day, while taking oyster-soup, the Premier encountered a hard object in his soup. "Waiter," he bellowed in righteous indignation and was about to complain to that quaking dignitary, when he chanced to examine the substance. It was a magnificent pearl. A Premier never lacks tact, and the waiter, I presume, was sent away with an order for more soup, wondering why the customer had bellowed, if more soup was all he wanted. Perhaps he knows all about it now. At least Japan does. If you go to Tokyo, you will always see the Parliament House restaurant doing roaring business. And don't pause to ask why?

Nosey Parkers, who generally fail to see the beam in their own eyes in their assiduous search for the mote in their neighbours', I am sure, will give India a breather now and turn their attention to Scotland because of the following figures given by Major A. R. T. Haverfield, while speaking at the Diocesan Council for Glasgow and Galloway, at Glasgow recently. He was referring to the "terrible moral conditions" in Scotland. Illegitimate births per 1,000 of the population were 68.9, he said, as compared with 44 in England. Illegitimate births per 1,000 among unmarried women of the total population, were 11.3 in Scotland and 5.16 in England. Giving figures for various counties in Scotland and England, the Major pointed out that the illegitimate birth-rate per 1,000 in the western counties in Scotland was 178.8 as against the highest figure in England of 42.

Some record, Andrew!

THE WEEK'S BEST:

School-teacher: Who comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb?

Bobby: Father, please, teacher!



The Modern girl:

She can't cook or darn or sew
She can't even wash a dish;
She can't mind babies or the house
But Oh! How she can—kiss!

The Modern boy:

He can't work at this or that
With the shovel or the nib;
He can't work at anything
But my! How he can—fib!

Crash:

My pal broke his collar bone
When he fell into a well;
Later on he fell in love
And soon was broke himself!

Caution:

Give your girl any car you like
A Rolls-Royce or a Ford;
But before you let her drive it
Please get the car insured!

Her only fault:

She's rich and beautiful and smart
Is my second cousin;
But I wish her tongue did not go
Nineteen to the dozen!

Poor Harry:

Our Harry did marry
A girl from the town;
She wears the latest fashions
Poor Harry wears a—frown!

The flaw:

Oh, Daisy's hair, they shine like gold
Her cheeks are red as the rose;
Her eyes are blue as summer skies are,
But, drat it, so's her nose;
Yes, Daisy's eyes are blue as the skies
Her cheeks are like the rose
And Daisy's hair, they shine like gold,
But, darn it, so does her nose!

Elegy:

He thumped his piano day and night
Both flat notes and the sharp;
His neighbours soon lost their temper
And now he plays—the harp!

Funeral fun:

Let's all come together and pray
For Mr. Brunt;
What he thought was the back of a car
Was really the FRONT!

Plaint:

Lovely little lady
My heart I broke for you;
But I wouldn't mind it so much
If I wasn't broke too!

The latest musical film is to be called 'Caterpillars':

"Sounds to be an apt name,
Murmurs the man who knows;
"I bet it is going to be
One of those LEG shows."

Have you met her?

I know a girl called Paula,
She simply leaves you guesaing;
She is always in a hurry
Except when she is...dressing.

Industrial concerns can prosper only if the fullest possible use is made of electricity:—

Very great wisdom
This remark contains;
There surely can be
No gains without —MAINS!

Rhyme:

Paula D'Boggins
Is my honey
(As long as her father
Has tons of money)

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

Last week I attempted to answer a correspondent's question about the purpose of writing. But, this week, another correspondent sets me a harder question—one that seeks to shake the very foundations of my existence. "What is the purpose of *the Merry*?" asks he and lest I should immediately answer, "To amuse: not to instruct," he fires a premeditated volley of supplementary questions, not unlike the shining lights that illumine the question hour in Legislative Assemblies.

A dog bites a man. A crowd gathers, the dog is chased and chastised and much sympathy is extended to the man who is taken home for treatment. It is all so simple and sad. Not so to the writer, who looks at life from new angles. He goes home and woos the Muse and emerges with umpteen lines of verse ending with the climax, "The dog it was that died". And the world rocks with laughter.

"Eat and drink," says the rationalist, "and be merry," adds the entertainer, thus opening a side-door upon the wonderland of art. There is no dividing boundary line between entertainment and art.

Throughout the ages, Man has been faced with some major pressing problem or other. Nevertheless, he has always had a surplus store of energy. This overflow of energy must find an outlet. We cannot say, where play (the happy overflow of energy) ceases and where art begins. The real artist whether he wields pen, brush, or chisel, urged by this overflow of energy, explores his kingdom beyond space and time and endeavours to convey his discoveries therein to appreciative minds. He is merely the show-man.

A story, a statue, a picture, a song, these evoke admiration, the nature and extent of which depend largely on the artist's skill in interpretation and the receptivity of his audience. But, what of the artist himself?

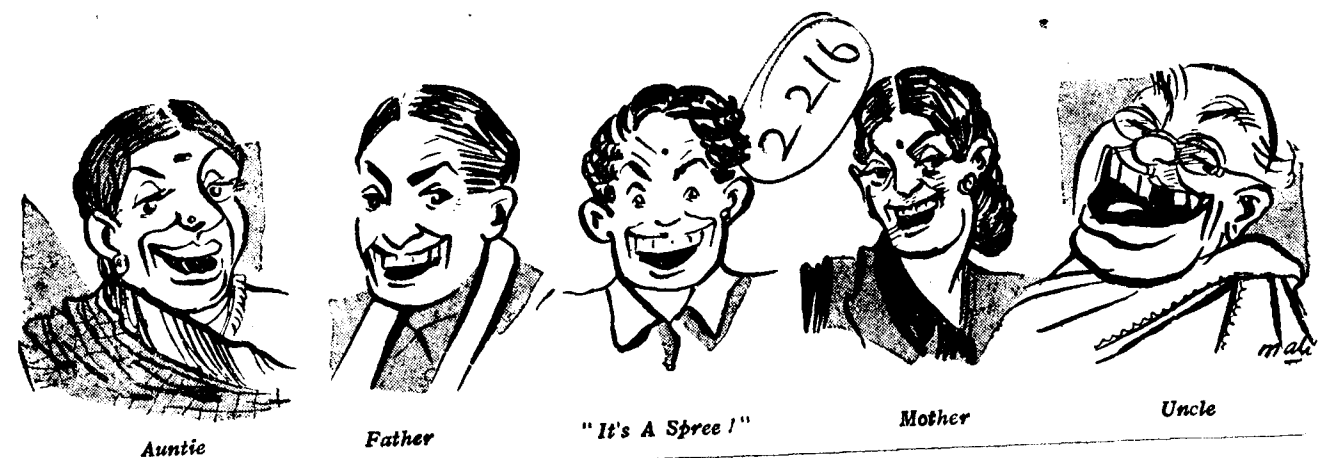
His life is in many ways a distressful life. He is never an artist, all the time. The moments when he is absolutely sure of himself and of his vision are far-between and few. He is jostled by a great number of pretenders who imitate him. His world of art is made feverish and miserable by its evident need for criticism, appraisal and condemnation. It exacerbates him to think that he should make a living by his art. He cannot keep his mind indifferent to those banalities of criticism and publicity on which his reputation and his income depend. He is a tragic hybrid. All the same, he is divine. He is pitifully human too.

Coming down from generalisations to particularisations, the craftsmen who with well-chosen words build the edifice of an entertaining story or skit and the pen-and-ink artists who emphasise and bring into relief the points that require such emphasis are all examples of the bubbling overflow of energy common to all creative artists. *The Merry* acts as the medium for conveying from the Cape to the Himalayas all this delectable store of abundant overflowing energy, converted into exquisite compositions of prose, verse and picture, to delight the hearts of the readers. Such, as I conceive it, is the purpose of *the Merry* and so far, I have reasons to believe, the purpose is being achieved to your satisfaction.

Your Editor.

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FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Reinforcements

One day, in Ireland, a man came upon a little group in a village street. One man was cleaning a gutter and two more were watching him.

The new arrival stood still and looked at them. Then he said:—

"Well, boys, this is what one sees in Ireland—one fellow working and two looking on!"

"There's three o' them now, sir!" responded one of the lookers-on, politely.

A Versatile Animal!

A little girl from the slums of a big town was paying her first visit to the country. She watched intently as the good wife at the farm got a glass of nice milk straight from the cow.

"Well, and how did you like that?" asked the Good Samaritan.

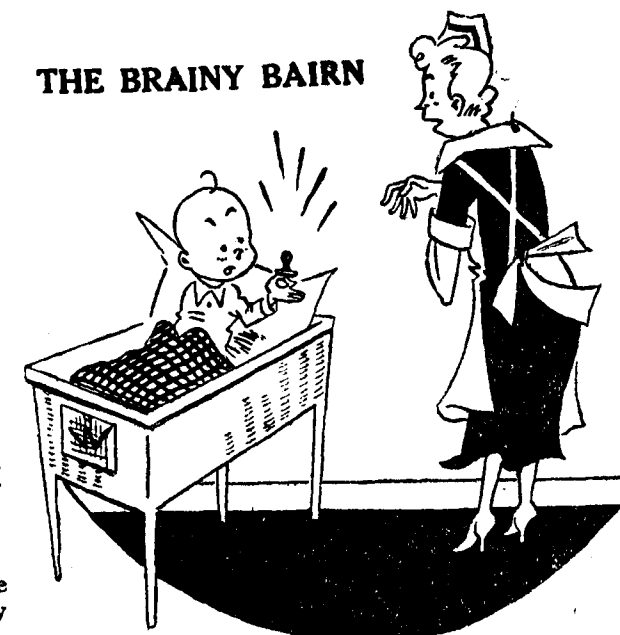
"Oh, it was lovely," said the little visitor, "but what are those three other taps for—tea, coffee and cocoa?"

Ought to be Thankful

McGinty:—"I've a terrible corn on the bottom of my foot."

Pat:—"That's a foine place to have it. Nobody can step on it but you."

THE BRAINY BAIRN



"Don't kid me—where's the bottle of milk that goes with this?"

Beacon Mindedness

BECONtemptible and BECONFounded
BECONtrary and BECONFused
BECONsoled and BECONdemned
but

BECONstructive and BECONFident
BECONverted and BECONvinced
BECONgenial and BECONtented
BECONducted by BECONcrossings.

Well Meant

At a reception, a woman chatted for some time with a distinguished visitor, and displayed such intelligence that one of the listeners complimented her.

"Oh, really," she said with a smile, "I've merely been concealing my ignorance."

The celebrity spoke gallantly.

"Not at all, madam! Quite the contrary, I assure you."

H'exactly!

An amateur dramatic society was giving a show, an affair with royalty in it.

"Come," said the actor, who was playing the king, "let us go into the 'ouse."

There was a titter from the boxes. "He said 'ouse," an occupant remarked. The actor, overhearing, turned to the offender. "Yus, I said 'ouse—do you think a king would live in hapartments?"

Free Publicity

"I'm sorry, sir," said the constable, "but you'll have to be summoned for driving at fifty miles an hour along this road."

"Couldn't you charge me with driving at eighty, officer?" said the culprit. "I want to sell the car, and it would put the price up."

Twins!

He stayed a bachelor, for he saw...
In every home a mother-in-law;
But not for ever; for there came
A girl, and Zilla was her name—
Young, blonde, and sweet, and motherless.
He married her, as you may guess.
Incredible though this may sound,
Within a year or two he found
That Zilla, in the long, long run,
Was wife and mother-in-law in one.



Mr. Alagusundaram

AMONG the numerous fascinating and delightful gentlemen whom I have the honour to count as friends, there is one who goes by the beautiful name of Alagusundaram. But, things being as they are, he is by no means beautiful—nay, he is positively ugly! And so is his wife Kamalavalli. It may all sound ironical, but—

Ya-ah! I can hear you exclaim this animal scream as you turn a somersault at the mere mention of these hard facts. But inconsistencies of this kind ought to surprise no one. We are every day rolling in lots and lots of them.

With all our moral and religious instruction classes, for instance, we remain blissfully ignorant of the damned condition of our souls, but the man in 'red' at the street-corner easily peers right into them in a moment, and what is more, hails us fittingly as 'sinners' and makes the generous offer of a ready panacea, the Divine Tablet of the holy West, to wash out all our sins.

Ardent Hindus though we are, we would very nearly forget all about *Vaikuntam* but for the benign M. S. M. and S. I. Railways coming to our rescue at the proper moment. And it is only when they take the trouble of explaining to us the heaven-sending effects of a visit to Srirangam on the *Vaikunta Ekadasi* day that we set about seeking *Moksha*—of course via the railway companies.

Our *Sanatana Dharma* has got to be expounded by a Gidney. Peace is being established by threats of war. The 'sound' ideal of disarmament is sought to be achieved by a speed race in armaments. And—

Well, I fear I am giving myself up to a non-stop multiplication of instances. Suffice it to say that the

THE IRONY OF IT ALL

By S. NANJUNDIAH

world as it is abounds in irony. It is unfortunate that it should be so, but so it is. And there is no good quarrelling with facts or kicking at hard reality.

So it is with names—this inconsistency business, I mean.

Surely no parents worry themselves to see whether or not the names they give their kids tally with facts. They just think of a name and tack it on to the new-born babe. It is certainly too much to expect people to launch at the time of christening on any elaborate consideration of the propriety of a name and to put it to the acid test of veracity. And so long as the name serves to help police investigations, inquests, *et cetera*, it doubtless fulfills its purpose.

But it must be conceded that the choice has something to do with the mental condition of the progenitors at the time.

A 'poor rich' man who has grown awfully desperate of begetting a heir may, when his wife presents him with a son, make the best possible selection. As becomes the aristocracy, he may seek the advice of overseas experts, or even proclaim an open reward for the suggestion of the most excellent name.

An ardent follower of *Sanatana Dharma* in similar circumstances may search and search all the sacred scriptures in his library and pick up the holiest name for him who would redeem him from the very hell of *Put*.

Or it may be the other extreme. A man surfeiting with progeny may, when his ever-green wife makes her umpteenth contribution to the world, dub the unwelcome offspring indifferently as a Kallu or Gundu. The poor father may be at the end of his resources for finding names, as he is of finding food for so many mouths.

But either way, ten to one, the name may not reflect the qualities. In the one case the enthusiasm is so great that the name is chosen for its own sake. In the other the choice is made with a callous indifference.

With the result, we have a galaxy of grandiloquent names which belie their owners at every turn.

A wealthy Zamindar bearing a cannon-like name—Raja Veera Dheera Sura Bujaparakrama Rao Bahadur, for instance—may prove an imbecile and so many odd things may have to be done for manufacturing an issue.

There may be a Baktipriya who is after all a *Stri-priya*, pure and simple, and a devoted worshipper only at the mundane shrines of the uxorial and other allied unofficial deities. There may be a Karunaivallal whose benignity consists chiefly in helping a few dozens of people 'to shuffle off their mortal coils.'

A Rupavathi, far from possessing any correct, classic features, may be a crook-kneed, crook-shouldered, crook-everythinged beauty. And a terrible virago without anything like a character may bear the delightful name of Gunamani.

WHEN Rameshwar met Savita in their customary trysting place in the garden that afternoon, he had a funny look on his usually handsome face. If she had not been so hopelessly in love with him she would have described it as a foolish look, but thanks to Cupid's correction it did not strike her as such.

After they had been sitting side by side for some time while the minutes slipped by and lengthened into seconds (this is more logical than it sounds, considering how seriously they loved each other), Savita became more and more conscious of a distinct and unusual nervousness in her lover. At first she wondered, and then grew alarmed. Then intuition told her something which only intuition could tell, and the anticipation of what she expected to follow gave her a delightful thrill.

"Savita, darling," ventured the young man after a fidgety pause, "there's something I want to ask you, but I don't know just how to put it. Can't you help me, dearest?"

"It all depends," was the demure response.

"Depends? On what?"

"Why, on what you want to ask."

"Oh yes, of course. Well, it's like this. You love me, don't you, darling?"

"With all my heart, Rammy." And to dispel any doubt left, she slipped a slim olive arm about his neck.

"Sweetness, you nearly suffocated me," murmured Savita, patting her hair back into shape, after a while.

Ram was still holding her as if he never meant to let go. "Sweetheart," he said huskily, "I can't wait another day—Savita, will you marry a crazy fool?"

"No, of course not," returned Savita with an air of seriousness, "but I'd gladly marry a nice young man like you, darling."

"Savita, you angel! I almost shouted Rameshwar, "I'm not going to lose another day—we'll be married just as soon as the wedding can be fixed."

"But, Rammy, you haven't talked to father yet. We must have his consent, you know."

There was no keeping Rameshwar back now. "Leave that to me, dear," he replied, "I'll go in and do it right away. Just wait for me here." The next moment he was striding briskly towards the house.

Rameshwar paused at the drawing room door and tapped. "Come in!" said a voice.

The young man went in, but with less assurance than that with which he had walked up to the house. He did not know Savita's father by sight, but the vision of the bald-head-

ed, somewhat meek-looking man who sat by the window, reading a newspaper, lent him courage. This was going to be easy work.

"I'm sorry to disturb you, sir, but I've got something very important to ask you," Rameshwar launched forth.

"Yes?"

"It's about myself and your daughter. I met her at college, you know, and we fell in love—"

The elder man, whose eyes had returned to the paper, grunted something indistinct.

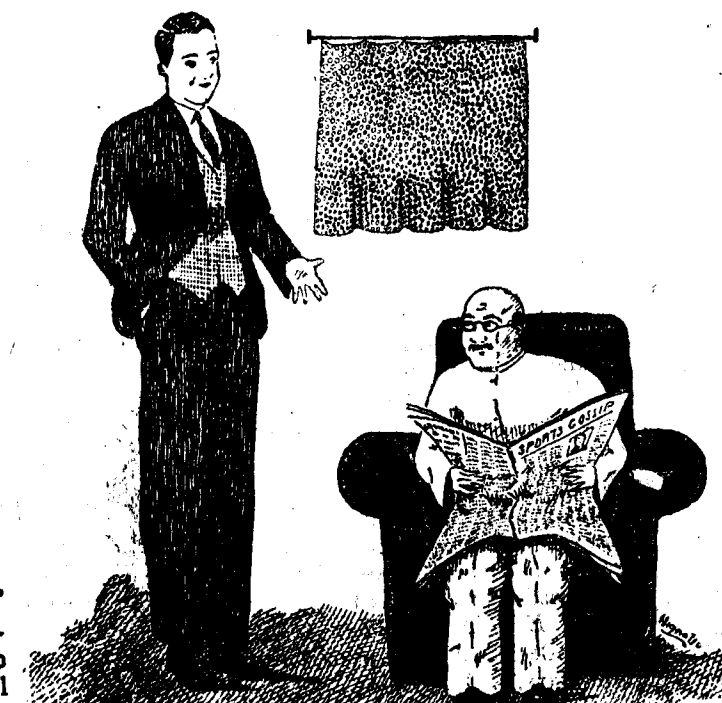
"I beg your pardon," said Rameshwar.

"Oh, nothing. I was thinking of putting something on Waddler in to-morrow's race, but from what I see here—er, you were talking about something, I believe?"

"I was saying," said Rameshwar with all the patience he could command, "that I love your daughter and she loves me. We want to get married."

"Look here, young man," protested the other suddenly, "either you're crazy or I'm crazy, or you're making a big mistake—"

"Not at all," said Rameshwar hastily, "I realise you don't know anything about me, but you'll be pleased to hear that I'm really very well-to-do and in a position to support a wife as she ought to be supported without the pawn-broker's assistance."



"Your daughter and I fell in love—"

(Continued on page 15)

THE ORIGIN OF JOKES

BY
H. N. CLAY

(A paper read by Professor Holler-Holler at the annual meeting of the Society for Revolutionising the Nation's Humour)

WHAT is the origin of jokes? Where do jokes come from? Why do they come at all? Where do the naughty ones go when they die? Do jokes die at all? These are some of the momentous questions gentlemen, which I propose this evening to discuss. Momentous they are, as none will gainsay, for upon a clear and unequivocal answer to these questions depends the welfare of at least one section of humanity, and what is doubtless more important, my reputation as an acute and original thinker. Momentous and difficult. As difficult I may say as the age-old problems, 'Which comes first, the egg or the chicken?' Or; 'Do H. M. Bateman Colonels explode with a bang?' Or; 'Who is Mr. Churchill and why?' and 'Why do we call ourselves civilised, when we still have income-tax officials, anna-in-the-slot machines, and our neighbour's wireless set?'

With these few preliminary remarks, I will now plunge into my task. What is it I hear? Somebody hopes my task is digging wells? Let me tell you, young man, that I have nothing but contempt for people, who lift jokes from 'alleged' funny periodicals and palm them off as their own. However, to continue, what is the origin of jokes? Let us take the mother-in-law jokes. No literature, whether it be English, Assyrian or Holler-Hollerian, is complete without a stock of mother-in-law jokes, good and not so good. For, there are no *bad* mother-in-law jokes, just as there are no *good* mothers-in-law. I am quite aware, gentlemen, of the perils of making such a statement. But am I afraid? Was Galileo afraid to propound his theory that the longer the kiss, the larger the number of smashed box-offices? It was not Galileo you say? Then who was it, pray? Ramon Novarro? Ma! Ha! Young man, I can see that your zeal has led you astray. Ramon Novarro was merely the pen-name of Galileo, just as Mark Twain was the pen-name of George Sand.

As I was saying, before that young ass with the chunk of toffee in his cheek interrupted, there are no *bad* mother-in-law jokes. Why? I am sorry to say, gentlemen, that the paucity of our language makes any answer impossible. Our language is in dire need of reform as I have so acutely pointed out in my *English, as She Shquid Be Spoke*. I am reminded, gentlemen, of a rather painful experience of my youthful days. Those were the days, when teachers believed in wielding the birch and Oscar Wilde in giving 'em their money's full and overflowing scarlet measure.

My teacher told me that "buss" meant a kiss. The next day he asked "You there, Holler-Holler, you think you're too damned clever, don't you? Give me your pocket dictionary and tell me what is meant by a blunderbuss."

I gave him my pocket dictionary. The fellow turned the pages and discovered—my prize cigarette card! It was entitled "The Toilet of Venus." And would you believe it, gentlemen, he simply put the card into his pocket without so much as a 'by your leave'! I would not have minded so much, if it wasn't for the fact that my father had given it to me for safe custody, my mother being employed at the time in spring cleaning.

"Out with it," snapped my teacher. "What do you mean by a blunderbuss?"

"Please, Sir," I said, "if buss means a kiss, then blunderbuss must needs mean kissing your mother-in-law." The school authorities had to telephone for a doctor, but do you think, gentlemen, it was my fault?

After the discovery of chloroform and painless dentistry, not to mention test matches, boot-leg liqueur, patent cigarette-lighters that won't light, hot water bottles guaranteed to leak, elusive collar buttons, world conferences, co-eds., cross-word puzzles and such other instruments of torture, the mother-in-law joke is the greatest invention of our age. And yet what have we done for the great inventor? For all we know he may have lived a life of dire want, and died like a rat in a garret, and no Mickey Mouse either. How many of us even know who the great man was? Or was he a 'she'? How many of us care to know? I would tear my hair, if I had paid for the wig and say, "NOT ONE". Have we any mention of his great name in our history text-books? I thump the table and say *No!* Have we any monuments reared to his memory? I thump the table louder and say *None!* Have we any books written about him? I thump the table with both hands and say *Ouch!* Have we any poems written about him? *Don't* thump the table this time, and still say *None!* And yet they made such a fuss about the 'Charge of the Brigade', which was merely the fortunate result of somebody's mistake, as I have so fearlessly pointed out in my *Knocking The Lid Off History*.



She must be either thrown over a precipice.....

I was saying, gentlemen, that we have no poems written about the great benefactor of humanity. Such is this base, ungrateful world. I do not want to air personal grievances in what is essentially a scientific gathering, saving Your Grace the Archbishop's presence. But talking of our world and its baseness reminds me of a mean skunk, who sued me for the price of a wretched suit. Just because I did not pay his wretched bill and



"Out with it," snapped my teacher.



Sits down on a chair with a pin in it.

A big businessman of Calcutta, Told his typist, "Take down, Miss Datta: Yours of 14th received. To reply we are grieved, That we set alight your Bill Collecta."

The true test of a mother-in-law joke is what I will call the climax-test. Look at the climax, at the tail, where the sting is. Look, I say, whether something drastic happens to the mother-in-law in the end. She must be either thrown over a precipice, in mistake for a sack of old love-letters, or in mistake for the cake your wife prepared because you wouldn't buy her a new hat. or a Christmas present from your dear Aunt Matilda or a book of modern poems, or a book of classical poems, or your unshrinkable swimming suit, or even a saxophone with a piece of soap in it. It does not matter what your mother-in-law is mistaken for. The only point, the all-important point, is whether the mother-in-law is thrown over the precipice like they do the villain in thrilling Westerns. Or, if the mother-in-law is not thrown over the precipice, she should be eaten by cannibals, (poor cannibals!) or boiled in oil (poor oil!). But all that ever happens to the mother-in-law in a pseudo mother-in-law joke, is that she sits down where there ain't no chair, or on one with a pin in it, or that she swallows iodine in mistake for good old Madeira or that just a flower-pot falls on her head. The joke, gentlemen, in all these cases is not on the mother-in-law. It is on the chair, or on the pin, or on the iodine, or on the flower-pot.

Once you get hold of the right data, the rest should be as easy as winking—saving Your Grace's presence. Take the following joke (reference *Soap Maker's Weekly*, 27-2-02).

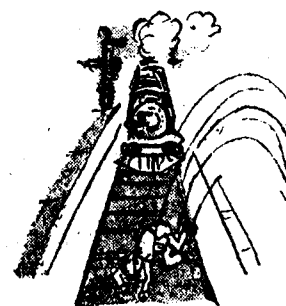
Brown: Hey, Jones, why the hurry?

Jones: We had fish for dinner and my mother-in-law is ill.

Brown: So you are off to fetch the doctor?

Jones: No, off to fetch more fish.

Here, gentlemen, is as good a specimen of a mother-in-law joke, as you would expect to find in a good day's work. The mother-in-law has evidently eaten a generous helping of fish. There follows acute abdominal agony. The dutiful son-in-law rushes off to buy more fish. There is something to be said after all for the theory of killing off people in pain. (I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I cannot supply you with that particular fishmonger's address.)



Go and jump under the Frontier Mail.

threw his Tom Webster caricature of a bill collector out of my window. I did not know it was only the first floor, or I would have thrown him harder. It was on this occasion, gentlemen, that I was inspired to pen my famous limerick.

What would you do, Sir, in similar circumstances? Would you rather let your "mother" suffer all the slings and arrows of outrageous fish? Or would you hasten to correct her intestinal irregularities? If you are a dutiful son-in-law, which I doubt, saving Your Grace's presence, you would choose the latter alternative. But how to set about the remedy? You might give your "mother" some aspirin.....and go and jump under the Frontier Mail. Or you might give her more fish and go and order a double at your favourite bar—saving Your Grace's presence, if Your Grace is any longer present.

In the one case, you will be a mug and an idiot and the world is best rid of you. In the second *ditto*, you will be a hero and a saviour and mother-in-lawless into the bargain.

Now I confess, gentlemen, that I have not succeeded in tracing the mother-in-law joke to its source. I have never made any difficulties about acknowledging my failures. But am I daunted? No, and very emphatically, Ourchh! Am I cowed? Was Napoleon cowed when he met his Waterloo? No, he kissed her, I mean Josephine. Look here, Sir Boops, if you don't sit down at once, I will tell the world you have got a large green patch on the seat of your—whad you call'em. Anyway, if you knew your French History as well as you know your *Moulin Rouge*, I daresay, Sir Boops, you will not have interrupted me in that silly fashion. Napoleon called his Josephine, Waterloo. Why? I suppose because, he first met the girl in a *cafe* and she wouldn't touch anything stronger than absinthe. Was Caesar cowed? No, he smoked a *cheroot*. Was Hannibal? No, not even when the bees stung him where you never get tattooed. Was Alexander? No, he conquered another continent. Was Archimedes? No, he discovered why Platinum Blondes are so popular in Hollywood. Was Edgar Wallace? Ask editors. Then how in the name of all that is holy, will Professor Holler-Holler be cowed? I will not be cowed. *Never* (That table is gone anyway!) I will begin with new data. Indefatigable you will call me.

(Boos, catcalls, laughter, yells.)

News Item: We are sorry to announce the death of Professor Holler-Holler the great scholar, philosopher, writer, poet, inventor, artist and ping-pong player. He died during his lecture last evening. The cause of death is believed to be arsenic poisoning; at about six in the evening the Professor waved his arms about in agony, and muttered "Soap" at intervals of exactly two and a half minutes. The chairman rushed to his aid. Somebody from the audience offered to administer first aid. That somebody drew out a small green phial from his coat-pocket and forced it down the gasping Professor's throat. Before anybody had time to stop him, he ran out of the door laughing with hysterical delight.

Stop Press:—The mysterious person who offered to administer first aid to Professor Holler-Holler is believed to be his mother-in-law, who had by some stratagem sneaked into the lecture hall. The green phial is presumed to have contained arsenic.

Editorially Rejected

By "Keki"

"WAIT here sir, if you please," said the office boy leading me to the waiting room of the *Daily Blunderer*, as I placed my card in his hand.

After fully half an hour, a very important-looking young man, with my card held almost contemptuously between the tips of his fingers stalked majestically into the room. No, he was not the Editor; for I had the pleasure and honour of meeting that great, great Editor himself and of speaking to him for fully half an hour only a fortnight ago.

"Mr. Keki," said the important-looking young man, "I am afraid you can't see the Editor."

"If you please..." I began nervously.

"No!" cut in the other emphatically, "I'm Mr. Augustus Pogustus, the sub-editor!"

And he looked at me steadily as though expecting me to collapse at having met such a mighty wielder of the pen.

But I was not impressed. Augustus was a Roman Emperor, but this gentleman was simply a 'Pogustus', and I insisted on seeing the Editor.

"But he is extremely busy," protested Mr. Pogustus; "you had better tell me your business," he added, leading me to his room.

"I have come, Mr. Pogustus," I said placing on his table a bundle wrapped in brown paper, "in regard to several manuscripts which....."

"Stop!" he said, and then, with the speed and precision of a parrot, he repeated the editorial formula:—

"We are much obliged to you for having submitted to us your articles, which we regret we are unable to make use of."

"But," I protested, "you have not even seen my mss. and Mr. Pogustus," I said firmly, confidently and determinedly, "You can't refuse these mss., because the Chief Editor has approved of them entirely!"

Mr. Pogustus surveyed me quizzically. His respect for me had increased ten-fold at this bit of information about the signal honour which his Chief—the Mighty Chief Editor—had conferred on me.

"My dear Mr. Keki," said the "Sub" with the greatest humility, "pardon me—pardon me—pardon me."

"Alright—alright—alright," I said, not to be out-politeness.

"I'll show you in and I'll take you to the Editor. Let's go to the Editor," he said, as if trying to make up for his curtness in the earlier stages of our interview.

"He's not very busy—not very busy; as a matter of fact....." here Mr. Pogustus whispered as if imparting to me a state secret on which hung the destiny of the British Empire, "as a matter of fact the Editor is writing....."

"Articles?" I put in.

"Love letters!" whispered the "Sub" in my ears.

"Love letters?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Hush, hush, not so loud Mr. Keki, not so loud," warned Mr. Pogustus. "Yes, he is writing love letters."

"But he is married," I protested.

"He is," conceded Mr. Pogustus, "but his wife says he didn't write her love letters before marriage (as he ought to have done) and she threatens to divorce him if he does not make up for his remissness during courting days by writing her love letters now. Understand?"

I understood. I am a married man!

A few minutes later I was ushered with due solemnity into the editorial sanctum by the "Sub".

"I'm so busy," said the Chief. "What's it you want, Mr. Keki? Pray, be quick."

"These are the mss.," I began, unrolling my parcel of papers, "which—"

"Mss. mss. and yet more mss.!" said the Editor in the tones of a martyr. "Mr. Keki, we are much obliged to you for having submitted your articles which—" and he completed the editorial formula of rejection.

"Mr. Bluster," I said (that was his name), "Mr. Bluster, if you listen to me but one minute—"

"Dear me!" he said, "how obstinate some people are! I can't spare one minute; no, not even one second."

"But you have yourself approved of these," I said.

"When was that?"

"Only a fortnight ago," I replied.

"Ah, a fortnight ago," said the Ed., "but I am sorry I don't require them now. Owing to pressure of space I much regret that—"

I cut him short. "Are you quite sure, Mr. Bluster that—"

But the editorial patience was not of Job's calibre.

"MISTER KEKI!" shrieked he, "GOOD MORNING! You can leave by the front door!"

But I was not in a mood to leave, either by the front door or by the back door.

I threw the bundle of mss. across to him. "If you please, have a look at them."

"If you insist," said Mr. Bluster, with the calm voice of a general about to court-martial a deserting soldier, "I'll put this thing into the fire!"

My blood was up. "You may," I replied, defiantly.

"I will," he replied; and he was as good as his word.

Within a few minutes, my bundle was reduced to ashes.

"Now," said the Ed., looking triumphantly at me, much as Nero would have looked after burning Rome, "you see I'm as good as my word? Good Morning!"

"One minute," I said, drawing out my wallet.

"More mss.?" shrieked the Editor in consternation, aghast at my impertinence.

"No," I said, "I have to pass you the official receipt of my firm for Rs. 2000 for the mss. purchased by you."

"Which mss.?" he asked incredulously.

"Those you have burnt just now. They were the rare, old, Chinese mss. which you selected and purchased from my curio shop a fortnight ago, and made payment for them, and asked me to leave them with you here."

The Editor paled; his lips quivered; he shook in every limb.

"Why the devil didn't you say you were NOT a blasted author, or a darned contributor or a writer or something equally detestable?" he demanded.

"You were so impatient," I replied.

"Impatient? Impatient? Impatient!" he repeated.

"I shall leave by the front door," I said, picking up my hat. "A very good morning to you, Mr. Bluster."

The next day two editorials appeared in the *Daily Blunderer*. One preached the ancient sermon on "Haste Makes Waste", while the other bore the trenchant caption:

"Curio Dealers—Are They Good Business Men, Or Simply Swindlers?"

Asking Father—(Continued from page 11)

The man he addressed made another effort to protest. "That's all very well, but if you'll give me a chance to talk—"

"Our happiness depends on your answer, sir," interposed Rameshwar; "you must consent to give me your daughter's hand."

"But I have no daughter!" said the meek-looking man.

"What! But Savita—isn't she?"

"You see," explained the other, turning again to his paper, "I'm a guest here—so if you'll excuse me, I'll get busy and try to spot that winner."

Ignoring a strong desire to kick himself Rameshwar faded out of the door as inconspicuously as he could manage.

"Well, darling?" questioned Savita, scrutinizing his gloomy face anxiously as he strolled dejectedly back to her.

"I—er—I haven't asked him yet," faltered our hero confusedly.

"You haven't asked him? But wherever have you been all this time, dear?"

"Oh, I've just been having a rehearsal," Rameshwar laughed, and was on the point of gathering Savita into his arms when a rasping cough sounded close at hand. As they sprang guiltily apart to face the intruder, Savita gasped an involuntary "Father!" The dignified person who confronted the young lovers was sizing up Rameshwar with a stern eye.

"Oh, daddy, we were just looking for you—" Savita began.

"And you were so busy looking you couldn't see me standing here!" retorted her parent. "Well, young man, I'm waiting to hear what this is all about," he added sternly.

"It's this way, sir," Rameshwar told him, "I met Savita in college last year and she has come to mean more to me than anything else in the world. She feels the same way towards me, and—"

"And so you want to get married?" interposed his listener, "well, of all the infernal cheek—carrying on a silly love affair behind my back! Savita, what the devil do you mean by encouraging this irresponsible person to fall in love with you?"

"I beg to differ with you there, sir," said Rameshwar politely. "I'm not irresponsible—I'm really very well-to-do and my regard for Savita is perfectly genuine. I am in a position to care for her as she deserves to be cared for."

Savita's father blew out his cheeks. "I must say you have a nerve, young man," he said; "but I'll be hanged if you haven't succeeded where I have failed miserably. I've been trying to persuade my disobedient daughter for the last two years to realise that it is high time she got married and settled down, but she as good as told me not to be a silly old man and mind my own business. Savita!" he added sharply, "where are your manners? This young man is going to be my son-in-law and you're keeping him standing out here in the garden. I will not have so important a guest treated with such a lack of consideration. Get along now, and invite him to a cup of tea in the parlour."

THE following names of film-stars are very familiar, aren't they? But they are not their real names? You will be surprised to see how totally different their assumed names are from their names in private life. Read them at the end of this page.

Reel Names:

1. Cary Grant
2. Kay Francis
3. Ann Harding
4. Fredric March
5. Helen Hayes
6. Gene Raymond
7. Elissa Landi
8. Frank Morgan
9. Jean Parker
10. Gilbert Roland

Hollywood Salaries.

The prices paid in Hollywood to the film-stars who can deliver the goods, look fabulous to us, outsiders. For instance, the weekly salary paid to any baby-star is much higher than what most of our highest-paid government officials can hope to get per month before they retire. As for those on the top, well, we cannot believe they deserve it. Producers, however, are not philanthropists and they ought to know. They pay, and pay well, where they can and do get the high-quality goods, more especially when the quantity of this is strictly limited. I started reading aloud the salaries of the leading stars for the benefit of the fellows around me. They presented, everyone them, a 'Stan Laurel' look. It very nearly chilled my enthusiasm. I just told them that if they could produce that stupid look of theirs to order, they might as well take up the more lucrative business of acting for the pictures.

Now, Greta Garbo gets £1,800 a week which in our money works out to about Rs. 25,000 a week or a lakh of rupees a month! But those who saw her as Queen Christina, abdicating the throne, will know that she earns every pie of her salary.

Will Rogers is the most popular American film-star and his £1,500 a week must be a very inconsiderable fraction of what the producers make on his pictures. And then there is Maurice Chevalier, the world's greatest entertainer, who earns the same as Will Rogers. Miss Constance Bennett commands £1,400 a week and, last year, thousands of American film fans thought she was the most boring and affected ornament on the screen! There is a funny side to these Hollywood salaries. Judging from their individual popularity with their fans, Clark Gable and Jimmy Cagney must be getting about at least £1,000 week. Cagney's pay cheque is £560 a week and



STAR DUST

£60 less is Clark Gable's salary per week. It is not commensurate with what their pictures are making for their producers. The reason is that their rise has been so sudden that they have not yet been able to capitalise their popularity and make their box-office pulling power pay them as well.

Mae West and Norma Shearer are on the £1,200 a week grade; also Ann Harding.

Richard Barthelmess, whose pictures we don't see nowadays as we did five years ago, is paid a weekly £1,200 and John Barrymore £1,300. Wallace Beery is the only great actor on £1,000 a week scale.

Miriam Hopkins, Jean Harlow, Janet Gaynor, Ruth Chatterton, Gary Cooper, Cary Grant, Roger Pryor, George Arliss, William Powell and the other stars are between

£500 and £1,000 a week.

The surprise earning on the pictures is that of Irving Thalberg, who, in one year, made £180,000 as a producing department executive of M. G. M. Studios. This works out to a modest £3,600 a week.

Baby Le Roy, Shirley Temple, Jackie Cooper and other juvenile stars make between £60 and £400 a week. And there are extras in the same Land of Liberty hardly making 7½ shillings a day!

Coming nearer home, we have Miss K. B. Sundarambal on a contract of One Lakh of Rupees for a single picture—*Nandanar*—and on her own conditions!

Sangeetha Vidhwan Maharajapuram Visvanatha Iyer, is to receive Rs. 10,000 for co-starring with Miss Sundarambal as *Vedhiyar*. Well, well, that looks like a tall-story in these days of depression and with a woman playing the masculine role!

Real Names:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Archie Leach | 7. Elizabeth Marie |
| 2. Katherine Edwina | Christine Kunkelt |
| Gibbs | 8. Francis Wupperman |
| 3. Dorothy Gatley | 9. Mae Green |
| 4. Fredric McIntyre | |
| Bickel. | 10. Luis Antonio |
| 5. Helen Brown | Damasca Botana |
| 6. Raymond Guion | De Alonso |

LITERATOR IN EXCELSIS

By Pandit 'Vittalbai Puri'

[“O! The mystic incomprehensibility of Jehova's dispensary,” says Mr. Puri. So are the ways of mankind under the spell of womankind.]



IV. At Loggerheads

VERILY I do venture to hope Dear Editor Saheb that you are not bored and scared by these my few absolutely indispensable preambles. Remember what I told you at the genesis of the resume of my self history, namely, *The Wherefore Of Why I Became A Literary Undertaker*. The interesting events that leaded up to this ultra grand climax must be recounted in their strictest evolutionary formatism; so that forsooth the eternal cannons and tenets of literary forms, of unities, of sequences, of artistry, may blatantly not be transgressed. Remember again the abysmal wiseacre utterance of David (who bumped off Goliath) to the effect that the sturdiest chain is only as strong as its weakest link. You are intelligible enough, I do fervently hope passionately, to assimilate the subtle under current of Psycho logical thought contained in the hereinafore mentioned epi gram. Consider again the unpriceless gain to British Literature through and indeed as a consequential corollary of my revolutionary reformist movement in the reshuffling and reorientating of

literary expressionism—an altruistic non sans remunerative endeavour second to none in the brilliant galaxy of English Literature Stars, past, contemporal, and let me hope, yet in the unformed embryo of a mystic futurity.

To resume the broken balls or rather threads!

Of course you may be unquestionably sure that my deputy grandfather virulently objected to being nefariously deported like a bomb manufacturing revolutionary into the backyard where cow cattle excretations and musical mosquitoes and bilgewater have their legitimate beings. But no. The Chair-man of the deliberations, by which no doubt you already guessed to be my father, was inexorably granitic and adamantial. Everybody voted for the dear poor Ancient's exit including that startling irony of parliamentary machinery called the Casting Vote. I, as may be expected, stepped into the breach and loomed large in self imposed chivalrous advocacy. I inhaled a large breath and surveyed the assembled family tree contemptuously and delivered thus:—“Father and family connexions! Let the poor old darling stay; because consider dispassionately Sir, what he was and to what a

degradation fallen! Remember you not, Dear Sir, that he was one time a whilom flame and harbinger of joy to that late toothless granny of mine, who but last year paid her honorable debt to Nature, God and The Devil? Desist therefore from this insenate maudlin foolhardy cruelty and let alone that gibbering old Wonder, who, I may not remember you all was respectively my duplicate grandfather and your under study, father!”

A silence as resembling the eternal Antartical water congealed wastes of Aurora Borealis possessed them bound in an admiring spell at my compassionate Ciceronic

DO YOU KNOW?



1. Who was Alfred Lowenstein?
2. What is the population of the world?
3. What is meant by “Massacre of the Innocents” in parliamentary procedure?
4. Who first invented the wireless set?
5. Who is a ‘gigolo’?
6. Who wrote *The Forsyte Saga*?

Please see answers on page 18.

Peroration. The consequential upshot was the dear old man was only sent away to the next room.

Thereupon a cousin of mine removed to the fourth digit stood up to contribute the benefit of his advice for my wellbeing. He said that if I was to carve a mark and money bags and uphold the family escutcheon I must unhesitatingly go into the Ghee Trade, because the price of smell-deleted animal fat of whales, pigs, buffaloes and such other mammals was, thanks to the present terrestrial economic misadjustment, phenomenally next to nothing. The net profit was, he said, five hundred per centum, nothing less or anything more. Furthermore there was not absolutely any meaning in squeamish religious scruples, for the benefits accrued from fat-mixed-in-ghee by far outweighed the so called alleged objections. Because pigs etc. fat contained and will continue to contain valuable dietorial value by way of calories, Garbo hydrates and what was more, introgenous vitamins F, L and X which Harley Street Specialists maintained were indispensable for a correct balance of mental equipoise. This suggestion was very welcome received by my family M. P's as one deserving their enthusiastic consideration and it was actually carried *nem con i.e.*, all standing as if it were The National Anthem. But my father rendered irresponsible as he was by ordinance making prerogatives, shook his head in non approbation. The scheme perhaps was, he said, unchallengeably big with large net profits but there was the Devil to recon upon namely the municipal busybodies with their irritating food adulteration laws. What one gained in fatty ghee commerce with the left hand must unfortunately be transferred with the right hand to municipal under lings either as fines or bribes or not unoften as both. So the motion was mercilessly vetoed by my auto crat parent.

Then another one advisarily suggested a sweet meat shop, another leather cobbling still another race horse training—Malabar *pappadam* manufacture—milk and dairy produce producing—swadeshi nicotine cigarette making—*Ayurvedic* physicianry-plus Allopathic surgery—ready prepared tea hawking—discursive lecturing in America on the eternal verities of Hindu-Islamic philosophic concepts—fresh laid eggs incubating and so on and thus forth. It must be remarked *eng passong* creditably to my father that he considered a *nd* cogitated every individual view above tendered in all its bearings but rejected them all either on account of some incompatibility in them or as unworthy of my unchartered genius.

My younger grandmother rose up to deliver her contribution, but unfortunately for self the welmeaning old darling could not, try as she might, catch the eyes of the presiding chairman. So down she went like a dumb inglorious Paradise Lost.

Lastly my female aunt, I mean the husband demised spinster who brought me forth with a maternal solicitation under the kind aegis of my surviving parent, gave the meeting the benefit of her considered thoughtful contribution. I was, she harangued, eminently fitted for a career of legal life, the only privileged profession (with the exception of diplomatic chancellories) in the whole of creation where lying was a Fine Art in the De-Quincian annotation of Art. Consider, she continued, the illimitable possibilities of this prince of professions so gracefully decorated by such eminent pieces of phosphorescent humanity as Sir Edward Marshall-Hall, Lord Birkenhead *alias* Smith, Lord Reading *nee* Rufus Isaac etc. etc. "I dream of the day when our dear Vittal may be sent (and why not!) to South Africa under the indentured repatriation scheme as the Hon'ble Agent of his Britannic Majesty and as a fitting crown to this prelude, he may be, more likely as not, turned into a Law Member to the glory of our family and the signal honorarium of India."

A change passed across my father's facial fysionomy because there was a limpid depth in his eyes as he looked fondly and approbatingly at my dear auntie. Unlike the previously disposed off advices, he banged the table, no no, he hanged his thigh, and ejaculated. "At long last! Here is a clincher of all this damned futile debatable argumentation. Vittal, my boy, put your back up. I will make you a legal luminary. What an aunt to have! Thank your lucky stars!"

O the mystic incomprehensibility of Jehova's dispensary! Look at this screaming business Dear Editor Saheb, for what everybody moved for my behoof, my father turned a dumb and deaf ear on the one score or the other cause. For what he set his soul and heart upon in complete league with my auntie, I was violently disagreeable like Congress to the Hoarean idea of Indian Responsible Government. What a sad embroglio!

YES! I KNOW!



1. He was a Belgian stockbroker, born in 1879. He rapidly amassed money by speculation in securities till he became the 'third richest man alive', and controlled the finances of many European Governments. Died in 1928 in an aeroplane accident.
2. Nineteen hundred millions.
3. It denotes the dropping out of all incomplete bills in Parliament at the end of a session.
4. The first wireless-set was made in 1896 by Marconi who demonstrated its practicability over 1½ miles.
5. A male dancing partner or prostitute.
6. John Galsworthy.

Answers to questions on page 17.



"Then strip, my lads, and to it....."

—Sir Walter Scott.

'WATERLOO was won on the playing fields of Eton' (or was it Wigan?). This was a remark made by some famous British statesman who easily won in the next General Election. Somebody went one better and remarked that all British victories were won on the playing fields of Eton. Harrow and Winchester were offended at this slight done to them and ceased to invite statesmen to make inaugural addresses. The statesmen therefore conferred together and an amendment was made to the original resolution to the effect that all British victories were won on the playing fields of Eton, Harrow, Winchester or Dartmoor, wherever it was that any statesman made a speech. The British defeats had been left severely alone (not that anybody admitted there had been any). We presume therefore that British defeats (granting there had been any) were suffered in the Common Rooms of Eton *mutatis mutandis*. Thus when the National Govt. won in the last General Election, Mr. MacDonald must have shouted, 'The Playing Fields of etc.' Mr. Lansbury should have murmured, 'Common Rooms of etc.' Sir Oswald Mosley, who was nowhere, could have gasped 'Lavatories of etc.'

Applying these slogans to India, we can say that we have had more 'Common Rooms' than 'Playing Fields' or 'Lavatories.' To go still further, what was a Playing Field for one was a Lavatory or Common Room for another. So much confusion was there among the combatants. But one thing was common, whether it was a Common Room or Lavatory for the Indian participants, it was always the triumphant Playing Field for the British.

But I am digressing. I was about to tell you about games with reference to my own activities. There was a playing field attached to my school. It was not a good field as fields go. For one thing it had too definite a slope to one side; for another it was studded (by Nature of course) with sharp stones which made our game resemble a gouty old Colonel's performance when he accidentally kicks a chair. Then again, cows and poultry had a habit of sauntering in for their afternoon constitutional when we were in the midst of a game of football. Still we managed to get something out of it. The ball would, of its own accord, roll down the slope and one team spent their time rolling the obstinate ball up the slope and the other team in checking the ardour of this dashing ball. There was, in addition, a deep well, hard by the touch-line. Of course we had a bucket and ropes to rescue the ball.

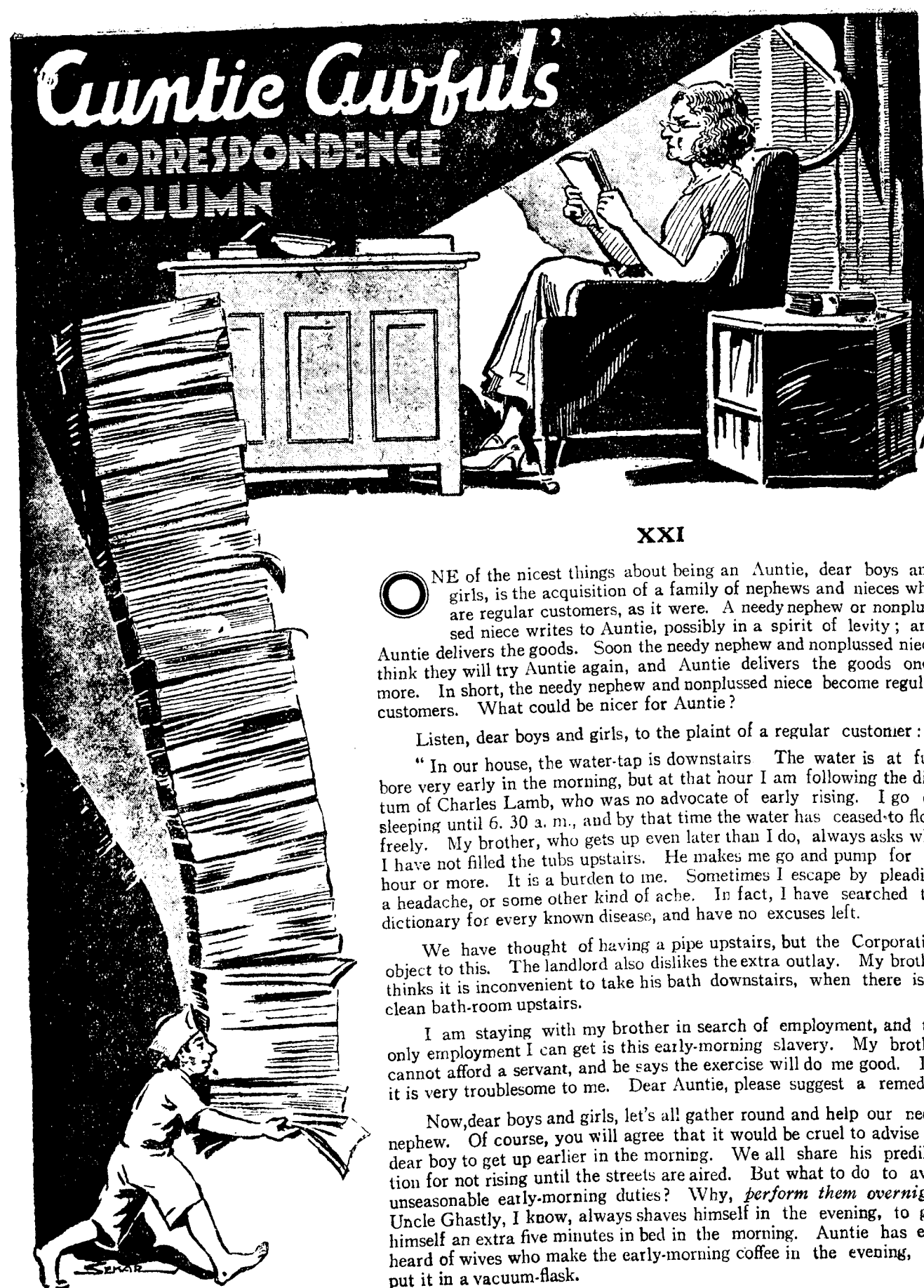
Before embarking on technicalities, I must pause to describe the game. The ball itself is a round volume of air surrounded by an equal-sized rubber covering which in its turn is contained in an epidermal leather. This ball is placed in the centre of a rectangular space (dimensions vary) before the game, and during the game, is kicked about by twenty-two people—eleven on each side—in an effort to get it in between another rectangular space at each extremity of the ground perpendicular to it, called goal. The eleven on each side have their positions. In addition to these twenty-two, there is another man who is not dressed colourfully like the others and who cannot touch the ball himself. He whistles, though there is not the slightest joy in his heart; for the leaders of each eleven, called captains, have their eyes on him. If he whistles at the wrong time, or the wrong tune, he gets it from one of the captains afterwards or from a section of the spectators immediately. The ball cannot be handled. The game lasts for an hour with an interval, when the 23rd man called referee is sought by the twenty-two but he hides himself. At the end of the game, a Govt. Minister makes a speech about 'playing the game', and 'the great game of life' before he gives one eleven cups and the other eleven medals and insincere commiseration. The man who has arranged all this also makes a speech and there are cheers, according to programme three hearty, but actually one and a half half-hearted. Afterwards the hunt for the referee continues.

In certain details, the game differs in different countries. In America, it is said that the ball rarely is a major factor. When once the ball is started in motion, the participants comport themselves according to their impulses. Generally they are too much engrossed with one another. An undertaker and a florist always are present in their professional capacities during a match.

The Italians are a rising people (they have the finest Air-force). Being a rising people they are very self-conscious and very touchy. And so they do more than touch their opponents. They date their family trees back to the ancient Romans as an earthworm claims kinship to a python.

The Germans are perfectly disciplined and will 'play the game' with efficient team-work; but they drink too much beer and they have (especially nowadays) a tendency to shout 'Heil (Hic) ler!' in the midst of the game.

(Continued on page 24)



Auntie Cawful's CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

XXI

ONE of the nicest things about being an Auntie, dear boys and girls, is the acquisition of a family of nephews and nieces who are regular customers, as it were. A needy nephew or nonplussed niece writes to Auntie, possibly in a spirit of levity; and Auntie delivers the goods. Soon the needy nephew and nonplussed niece think they will try Auntie again, and Auntie delivers the goods once more. In short, the needy nephew and nonplussed niece become regular customers. What could be nicer for Auntie?

Listen, dear boys and girls, to the plaint of a regular customer:

"In our house, the water-tap is downstairs. The water is at full bore very early in the morning, but at that hour I am following the dictum of Charles Lamb, who was no advocate of early rising. I go on sleeping until 6.30 a.m., and by that time the water has ceased to flow freely. My brother, who gets up even later than I do, always asks why I have not filled the tubs upstairs. He makes me go and pump for an hour or more. It is a burden to me. Sometimes I escape by pleading a headache, or some other kind of ache. In fact, I have searched the dictionary for every known disease, and have no excuses left.

We have thought of having a pipe upstairs, but the Corporation object to this. The landlord also dislikes the extra outlay. My brother thinks it is inconvenient to take his bath downstairs, when there is a clean bath-room upstairs.

I am staying with my brother in search of employment, and the only employment I can get is this early-morning slavery. My brother cannot afford a servant, and he says the exercise will do me good. But it is very troublesome to me. Dear Auntie, please suggest a remedy."

Now, dear boys and girls, let's all gather round and help our needy nephew. Of course, you will agree that it would be cruel to advise the dear boy to get up earlier in the morning. We all share his predilection for not rising until the streets are aired. But what to do to avoid unseasonable early-morning duties? Why, *perform them overnight*. Uncle Ghastly, I know, always shaves himself in the evening, to give himself an extra five minutes in bed in the morning. Auntie has ever heard of wives who make the early-morning coffee in the evening, and put it in a vacuum-flask.

So that is the answer, isn't it my chickabiddies? Exercise before bed-time is so much nicer than exercise before getting-up time!

I'm sure we all hope that our needy nephew will find an appointment which will relieve him of the necessity of performing this disagreeable duty.

Meanwhile, all you boys and girls have been waiting for a further instalment of Auntie's adventures as a professional co-respondent. Never mind, my chicks; Auntie will see what she can do next week.

"M.B.K.B.K." (Mint Street). Unless Auntie's old eyes are deceiving her, you are the needy nephew who has to bring his brother's bath-water every morning! Of course, dear boy, you know that there are liars, damned liars, and handwriting-experts; Uncle Ghastly is in the third category, and he says that if you are not the amateur water-man, you are at least his twin brother. Auntie, on the other hand, thinks it just possible that you learnt an identical style of handwriting in the same school. Anyhow, you want to know why Tarzan, the jungle-man of the films, always roams the forest with a face newly-shaved by a tip-top barber. Well, dear boy, Auntie thinks that Tarzan is shaved every morning by his wife. You will have noticed that his wife has plucked eyebrows, pearly teeth, and a well-powdered figure. Therefore she must have an ample supply of toilet-preparations stocked away in some convenient tree-top.

Student (Mhow). You want Auntie to settle an argument regarding the nature of a sentence. Your friend says that a sentence must contain at least two words, a subject and a verb, and if they are missing they are at least implied. Whereas you maintain that anything which conveys a complete thought is a sentence. Well, dear boy, suppose someone asks you to lend him five rupees. You can convey a complete thought by raising your eyebrows. If you object that gestures are not included in the argument, you may consider the case of Lord Sandwich's snuff-box. His Lordship was a great gambler, and had an understanding with his servant, that anyone who brought his Lordship's snuff-box, was to be given a hundred guineas immediately. Therefore, Lord Sandwich's snuff-box meant, "Give me a hundred guineas," which is quite a complete thought. The question arises, is a snuff-box a sentence?

"Half a Mo" (Sukkur). "I can get the short-wave broadcasts on my set. The other evening, there was a debate between two English politicians about the White Paper. One of them said that the J. P. C. Report enabled the Indian people to take another step towards Utopia. What is Utopia?" It is the Greek word for 'Nowhere', dear boy.

Proud Mater (Kotara). "I can truthfully say that only one man has ever kissed me." Auntie is glad to hear it, dear madam; but are you boasting, or only complaining?

General Knowledge (Dontholi). Yes dear boy, they do ask the most extraordinary questions, don't they? It is a pity that you said that an epistle is the wife of an apostle. On the other hand, there is good authority for your statement that Algebra is the sister of Euclid.

Bride-groom (Fatchpur). Auntie thinks you had better follow the old proverb. Before going to war, say one prayer: before going to sea, say two prayers; and before getting married, say three prayers.

Absurdity (Gady). "I have been reading about the interview between Eddie Cantor and Mr. Hore-Belisha. I think it is a disgusting state of affairs, when a mere comedian earns a bigger salary than a Cabinet Minister."

I don't know, dear boy. On the whole, I think that Eddie Cantor is funnier.

Middle School (Dharwar). "Have you noticed the significance of 'stan' in the names of countries? Kurdistan, a place where you find Kurds, and Afghanistan, a place where you find Afghans." Yes, of course, dear boy; and Umbrellastan, a place where you find umbrellas.

Padma (Madras). "The young men are always twitting us for being so talkative, but the truth is, they like talkative girls better than others." What others, dearie?

Lad of the Village (Egmore). "Please, Auntie, how can I learn to drive a car with one arm?" Don't, dear boy. Hire a taxi, and use both arms.

(Hush, Auntie—Ed.)

Getting on (Calcutta). "Although I am thirty-five, I am still reckoned to be the best centre-forward in our Club. But because I am bald, some of the committee are saying I am too old. Baldness is no disadvantage to a footballer, is it, Auntie?" None at all, dear boy, provided you are careful to chalk your cue before heading a ball.

Would-be Blonde (St. Thomas Mount). "I think my friend is jealous because I am fairer than she is. She says that if I bleach my hair, it will affect my brain." Well, my dear, it will certainly make you light-headed.

Statistics (Central Station). "Why is it that there are fewer accidents to railway-trains than there are to motor cars?" Perhaps, dear boy, it is because you never see the driver of a railway-train with his arm round the fireman's waist.

Canine Friend (Itarsi). "Why has a dog always got his tongue hanging out?" To balance his tail, dear boy.

Richard III (High School). "Why did the king call out 'A horse! My Kingdom for a horse!'"? Auntie thinks that the gentleman must have had a ticket in the Irish Sweep.

Hubby (Hubli). "My wife is going away for a long while, and she wants me to come to the station to say good-bye. But I object to public scenes, and would much rather say good-bye at home." Nonsense, dear sir. Surely it is worth paying an anna to see the last of your wife?

Dentist (Park Town). Auntie is grieved to hear that Mrs. Gumboil refuses to pay for the nice set of dentures you supplied to her. If all other methods fail, you should put an advertisement in the paper, worded as follows: "For sale, an excellent set of false teeth. May be seen at any time in Mrs. Gumboil's mouth." I expect the bill will be paid the same day.

Hard Up (Chowpatti Sea Face). No, dear boy, Auntie cannot pay your debts, so it is no good sending the bills to her. It is the same over this side, too. In the midst of life we are in debt.

Housewife (Karachi). "These egg-hawkers are arrant swindlers. I asked him if the eggs were fresh, and he said they were fresh from the country that very day. Yet when I started to use them, they were all bad." I expect they were Chinese eggs, dearie. After all the hawker did not say which country they were fresh from.

Observant (Triplicane). "I have never seen much in these transparent sarces." Ah, dear boy, but have you looked at them in the right light?

Traveller (Egmore). "I threw a banana-skin on the platform, and a ticket-collector told me not to, as the station-master would not have it." If the station-master would not have it, dear boy, you should have asked him to share it among the porters.

The Letters of Private Joyfull

41. THE TORCHLIGHT TATTOO

Madras, 23rd March, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

I have been away from Madras for the past week, taking part in a torchlight tattoo. Of course, it was only a local tattoo, and not so grand a display as the ones in Aldershot and other large garrisons at home. Still, the people came to see it in thousands, because a tattoo is a novel spectacle out here.

India is an ideal country for the holding of tattoos, because you can depend on fine weather, clear, calm air, and warm nights. We do not have to risk giving the tattoo in a rain-storm, or a fog, or on a bitterly cold night.

The beginning of the programme was the grand entry of all the troops, headed by the massed bands. It looked very fine, because under the strong ghostly glare of the searchlights, it seemed as if thousands of men were pouring into the arena, and forming serried ranks. When all the troops were in position, the trumpets played a fanfare, and the troops presented arms.

All the lights went out together, and when they came on again, all the soldiers had vanished. Instead, standing all alone in the middle of the huge arena, was a little toy Sergeant-Major!

I suppose you know that we are allowed twenty enlisted boys in each regiment. They are usually soldiers' sons, and proper little devils they are. They have more tricks than a wagon-load of monkeys, and are always up to some mischief. They are brought up very strictly, and are not allowed to smoke or drink. They have to be in bed at 8-30 every night, and they are under special supervision, and have to go to school. But in spite of these restrictions, the drummer-boys are always in hot water.

The spectators were surprised to see a boy there, especially a toy Sergeant-Major in full regimentals. He was in an old-fashioned uniform, such as you find painted on wooden soldiers.

With very stiff gestures, the wooden Sergeant-Major drew a whistle from his tunic, and gave a childish *peep* on it! The drums began to play a slow beat: *bom...bom...bom*; and into the searchlights came marching a little army of wooden soldiers. They moved with stiff legs and arms, and they had rosy red circles painted on their cheeks. They halted in front of their Sergeant-Major, and all the people laughed and cheered. The Sergeant-Major began to drill them, very solemnly and stiffly. There was one naughty wooden soldier who always did things wrong, and in the end the Sergeant-Major put him on one side in disgrace. When the Sergeant-Major was not looking, the soldier put out his tongue at him. Then the

audience gave a terrified shout, because a great big golliwog suddenly appeared out of the darkness, picked up the naughty soldier, and bore him off, struggling. The golliwog was really Tiny Hopkins, walking on stilts.

After a while, the Sergeant-Major wanted the wooden soldiers to do a certain drill, but they kept on doing it wrong. In the end the Sergeant-Major got angry, and with an air of finality beckoned into the darkness. Out came the giant golliwog, and pushed over the first of the wooden soldiers, and the whole line fell down in a heap. Lastly the golliwog caught hold of the Sergeant-Major, and dragged him off too; then the lights went out.

With very stiff gestures, the wooden Sergeant-Major drew a whistle from his tunic, and gave a childish *peep* on it!

While the wooden soldiers were performing, we in the darkness were erecting the Kashmiri Gate of

Delhi. I forgot to tell you that Boggins and I were in the "effects" party, which worked the scenery in the dark, and arranged the electric wires, the pots of gunpowder, and so forth. So when the lights switched off from the toy soldiers, and switched on again in a slightly different direction, the spectators were astonished to see the Kashmiri Gate of Delhi, as if it had sprung from the ground.

At first the audience sat in silence, wondering what was going to happen. Then they could see that there were rebel sepoys on the walls. They were really "A" Company, in red coats and darkened faces.



The sentries cried "All's Well!" in Hindustani, the cries growing fainter as the word passed round the walls. Then the great clock of Delhi struck four strokes very awesomely: *Bong!.....Bong!.....Bong!.....Bong!* Then there was silence again.

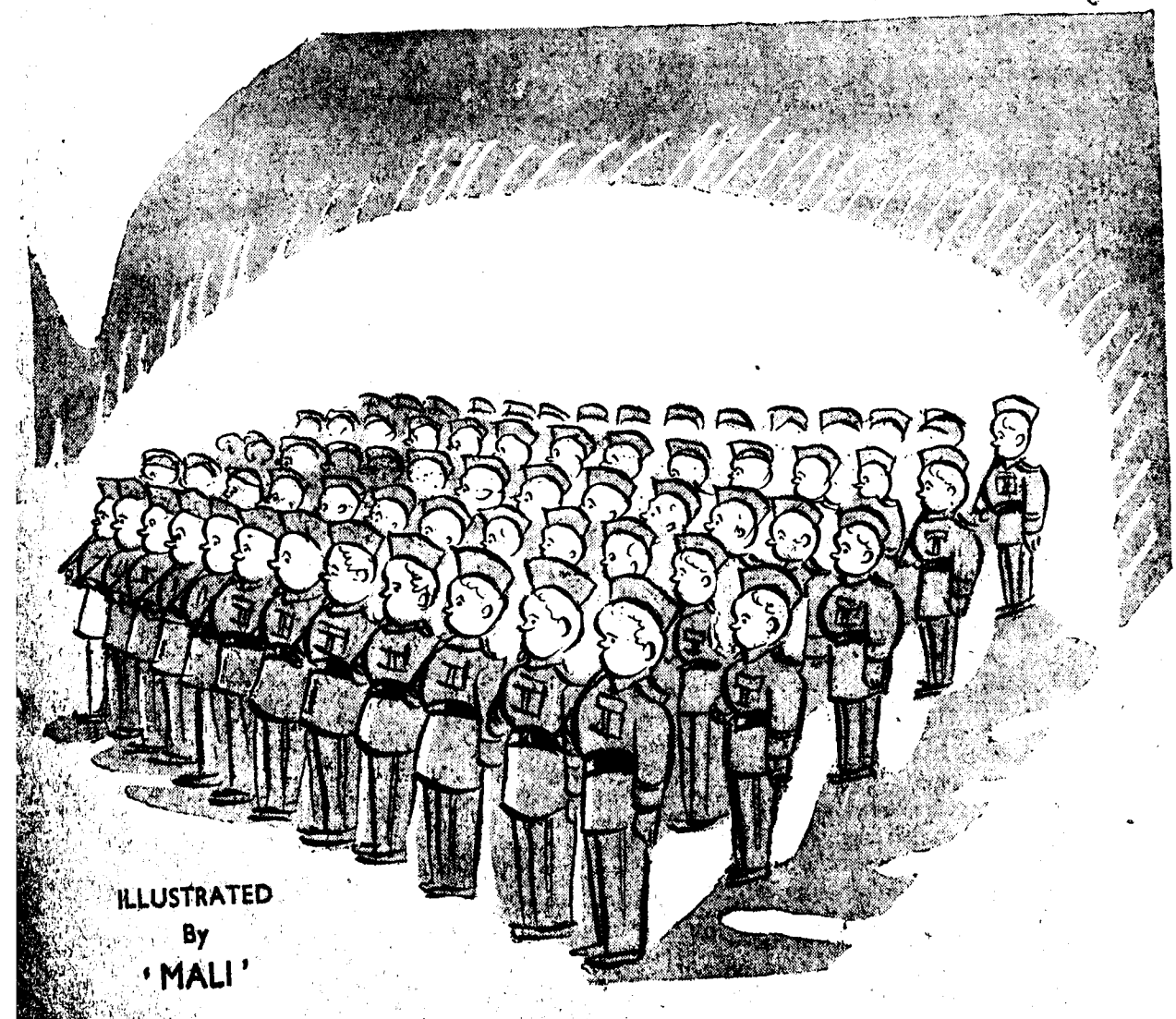
All at once, it could be seen that there were six men crawling towards the gate, dragging heavy bags with them. They were accompanied by a bugler-boy. Everyone watched breathlessly, wondering if they would get to the gate.

There came a fearful yell from the walls. A man in white robes was leaping about, howling and pointing. The sepoys rushed to the walls, and began to shout, and to fire at the creeping figures. The big guns opened in the distance, and the whole place was a pandemonium. The gate was lit by a strong light, and the bursting shells made fearful flashes. Terrific bangs rent the air, and the musketry made a continuous rattle. The six men with the bags were hiding in a ditch, and it could be seen that lines of British troops were lying farther off, firing at the rebels. Over everything could be heard the mad yells of the fanatic in the white robes. He stood at the highest point, shrieking defiance at the British. Suddenly he was struck by a bullet, and fell headlong

into the moat. The audience cried out at his dreadful fall, but actually it had been well-practised, and brought no harm to the performer. At the moment of falling he bobbed down out of sight, and threw a life-like dummy over the walls.

The battle grew more terrible, and everyone was watching the men with the bags. Suddenly, one of the men shouldered his bag, and ran with it to the gate. The bridge in front of the gate was broken down, and there was only one plank left. The man staggered across the plank, shot in a dozen places, and fell dead against the postern. Then another and another, until there were four bags piled against the gate, and only one of the six men was alive. This man could be seen methodically laying a fuse to the bags of gunpowder. At last it was ready, but before the man could get away from the gate to light the fuse, he too was shot down. As he lay dying on the bags of powder, you could see him carefully blowing on his slow-match. At last the match was burning brightly, and he put it to the gunpowder on which he was lying.

There was a dreadful bang, and the gate was blown in. But the storming-party in the distance could not see that the gate was down; they thought that the bang was



ILLUSTRATED
By
'MALI'

just the bursting of a shell. There was only the bugler-boy left near the gate. He was hiding behind a pillar near the broken bridge.

When the bugler-boy saw that the storming-party did not rush forward, he ran out from behind his pillar, and stood on the broken bridge, and began to trumpet, "Charge! Charge!" He sounded the call three times, and then fell, riddled with bullets. Still, the troops had heard him, and with a great cheer they rushed through the gate and into the City. The lights faded, and the sounds of battle died away.

First came the ancient Britons, then a phalanx of Roman-British soldiers, stamping along in a measured tread. They looked workmanlike and formidable in their body-armour, big shields, and short kilts. They were singing a hymn to Zeus. Again I thought that soldiers came marching just like this to Hindustan centuries ago, and left their colonies on the banks of the Indus.

Next came a horde of savage Saxon pirates, in their horned helmets, uttering their dreadful battle-cry. They were followed by carts of loot, and strings of miserable captives. When I looked at these rough uncouth men, I was surprised to think that most of our English character and customs are derived from them.

(Next week: Joyfull on Social Discrimination.)

The Story of My Life—(Continued from page 19)

Frenchmen hug one another and slobber on one another's shoulders when they win i.e., when they are told they have won; but they bite their opponents when they lose.

The Scots are hardy and grim. They think of their national poet Bur-r-r-ns and by an easy step to their national characteristic, whisky and their national hero Wallace Beery. The captain of a Scotch team once found a spare ear after a match and seeing that his own team were sufficiently eared, gave it to the captain of the opposing team to be returned to the owner.

The Russians sing the 'Vodka Boat Song' and call their opponents comrades before killing them. Their Parliament called Okapi looks after the game. The Welsh, judging from Lloyd George, talk of their hills, chief of which is (Viscount) Snowden. The English have made it a limited concern.

There is another kind of foot-ball, commanding great popularity in the British Isles, called 'Rugger'. The other is sometimes called 'Soccer', derived from the phrase which the players shout out often "I'll 'sock yer'." Rugger comes from 'Rug yer,' rug here standing for strangulation. The ball in this case is oblong and can be handled. It is tucked under the arm. There are fifteen players on each side and as usual a thirty-first who is called referee. The goals (different from those of soccer) resemble an H. Everything is different in Rugger from Soccer. The game is said to have originated in Scotland and bears marked resemblance to sheep-lifting. The player (or thief) takes hold of the ball (or sheep), runs pursued by the other players (or the owner and his men) is caught sometimes and roughly handled or escapes carrying the ball (or booty) to the touch-line (or The Border). Later, it has developed into a game. The Scots say it is a good game. They say it generates fellowship and camaraderie. Certainly it seems an affectionate game. One player playfully tucks the ball under his arm and runs. The

The next party was led by a Norman knight, with his retinue of men-at-arms and English archers. I think the bowmen were the pleasantest of our ancestors; good honest countrymen, and the steadiest and best of mediæval archers. They were singing the jovial "Song of the Bowmen".

Next came a troop of Cromwell's Ironsides, big stern men, with unsmiling faces and severe expressions, singing mournful psalms. No wonder they were the terror of Europe.

They were followed by a platoon of 18th Century soldiers, in scarlet and cross-belts, drilled after the Prussian fashion. They did not sing at all, but were constantly yapped-at by the sergeants, and re-formed with the greatest fuss and most absurd ceremony.

The next party was cheered like anything. It consisted of the soldiers of forty years ago, in old-fashioned white *topees* and red tunics. They were singing "Soldiers of the Queen", and everyone seemed to recognise them. Indian pictures of soldiers are generally in this style, and the people still call us "the red-coats".

One thing I noticed. The Indian people delight in a torchlight tattoo just as much as we do.

Your Loving Son, OBEAH JOYFULL.

others follow and try to catch him by the waist as a maiden does when her lover is departing for the wars. They seem to say to the man with the ball, "Don't go Edwin." Then suddenly the running stops and they cluster together in a circle and hold one another's hands and bend forward (perhaps singing 'Auld Lang Syne'). Meanwhile there is a constant service of stretchers between the field and the pavilion.

The English Public School boys play a game called 'wall game'. As in Wall Street there is constantly a crash here. They also behave like 'bulls' and 'bears.' The game is simple enough. A few boys put on some kind of jerseys, approach a wall and begin acting like battering-rams. A minute later, they become a mass of moving legs and arms. They seem to be glued to one another and look like a Hydra or a few dozen reptiles in a glass jar. Everybody applauds. There is no ball. At the end they sort themselves out, search for their lost ears or fingers and depart satisfied, *sans* teeth, *sans* a few ounces of blood.

Well, coming back to foot-ball; yes, I used to play occasionally, though the captain used to say that I didn't know which was a foot-ball and which a Belisha Beacon. That man's swank! How he used to stick side. He had been a lamb before his election and had almost licked my boots for the favour of my vote! Now he never recognised my existence at all. And the Palayam match settled it. The Palayam match was where I was talked about a lot. I was included because there was nobody else to play and I repaid this honour by scoring a goal in our own goal!

"Don't be a fool, you," said I to myself; "don't be disheartened. After all, you have scored. What does it matter against which side? Moreover, later in life if you tell this story, people will laugh with you because you will be an important figure. Anyway if foot-ball has failed, there is cricket....."

(Next week 'Mie' will write about cricket—Ed.)

THE DOCTOR'S DOCTOR



FROM whatever point of view you look at it, you will always find that the eldest son has a tough time of it. That is the general feature of all joint families, especially when it is a numerous one, like Chinnaswamy Iyer's.

That's why I wish to focus your attention on Mayurinathan, Chinnaswamy Iyer's first-born. In fact, I ought to have commenced with Mayuri even when I introduced the family instead of digressing, as I did, to Ramamritam's marriage. My only excuse for having taken the second point first was that the latter was of more recent occurrence and Ramamritam was my best friend.

But priority must be respected, and no one would grudge the precedence that is Mayuri's due. His life was one of a pioneer's struggles and a pioneer's victories.

When I said that Mayuri was the first to arrive in the vital statistics statement of Chinnaswamy Iyer's household, I forgot to add that not only did he arrive first, but that he arrived fairly early as well. For Mangalam, his mother, was hardly sixteen when she was called upon to the onerous duties of a mother. And a girl who is called upon to be a mother at the age of 16 is thereafter neither a girl nor a mother. She is too old for the one and too young for the other.

That was precisely Mangalam's predicament. She found that it was a far easier thing to manage a husband than to manage a first-born child. Because the husband, as he happened to be Chinnaswamy Iyer in this case, was clerking away the hours of day-light and sleeping away the hours that were not day-light. Consequently, there was hardly trouble from him.

The innocence of a child is proverbial; but in the light of practical experience, proverbial things are generally found to be fallacious.

That was Mangalam's experience with Mayuri. Being the first-born and a son at that, Mayuri was theoretically the darling of his parents. But his pranks and atrocious deeds were past her endurance. He was obstinate and mulish, wanting something or other and having no language but a howl to express himself. He was chaotic as regards food, eating lumps of earth, bits of charcoal and all other things that he was specifically warned not to taste, and refusing, with all the violence

that he was capable of, to take his normal and authorised food. There were few things in the house that he left untouched and none that he touched that he did not soil, break or lose.

Such was his anarchic childhood. And it cost Mangalam many a tear and caused him a good deal of misery. His boyhood was no better. The other youngsters began to arrive quickly and he, as the eldest boy, was supposed to take charge of them and was held to be responsible for their peace and good conduct. He had, therefore, to lay down the law for them; but when he erred on the side of arbitrariness, he would get a reprimand for his cruelty; if he remained indifferent, he would be scolded for his slackness and incompetence.

His contact with the outside world aroused in him a desire for modernity and a thirst for newness. But his parents regarded his wishes as subversive and heterodox. Take such a simple and non-contentious matter as cropping one's hair. Oh, what trouble it created. He held interminable discussions with his father as to the merits of a crop over a tuft; but the old man remained obdurate and unconvinced. Finally he had to disobey him to keep pace with modernity; and it created quite a sensation in the family. When his brothers did the same a few years later, it was regarded as a matter of course and passed unnoticed. So it was with every little change that he fancied. What he did was disapproved as an undesirable innovation; but when his brothers did the same afterwards, there was hardly a ruffle or comment.

Contending against all these conservative forces, Mayuri came out unscathed with his modernism.

He qualified himself as a doctor and set up practice. Very soon he earned a good name. For, he was capable, honest and keen to get on. He was also able to lend a helping hand to his father whose responsibilities had increased owing to his sons' education. Mayuri rose to the occasion, managed the household and in every way acquitted himself creditably.

During the fourth year of his practice he came across a patient. She was a young woman; a graduate and a school-mistress; she was living with her mother. Her name was Shakuntala. She was then unmarried.

(Continued on page 32)

AMMU'S ALLEGED SEDUCTION

MY wife and I are the only reformers in our *agraharam*. Naturally, we came in for a lot of comment and criticism from the other residents of this Sanatanist colony. The opposition was particularly strong to start with, but three years of martyrdom and grim determination to go our own way had, in the end, won for us a degree of tolerance from our orthodox neighbours. By an implied understanding, the feminine part of the colony gave up making faces at my wife as she went out for her evening tennis, and, in return, my wife forbore from sniffing with suggestive scorn whenever she saw one of those unfortunate women whom the dictates of orthodoxy put on the pail for three days in the month, dressed in dirty rags and carrying a dirtier pail of water. The men-folk also got reconciled to the sight of my kissing my wife on my door-step twice a day as I went out to office and returned in the evening. In appreciation of all this favour, I ceased commenting on these pillars of the Hindu religion being shaved in the semi-nude on their door-steps on Sunday mornings.

Into this heaven of mutual toleration and good-will, the recent elections introduced a disturbing element in the shape of a Sanatanist pundit from Benares. He gloried in the name of Mahamahopadhyaya Vedantatwa-gnani P. U. Ramachar. He knew the four Vedas from Z to A and could quote from any *Upanishad* in favour of any Sanatanist candidate and against any Congress candidate to the Assembly. As ill-luck would have it, he was temporarily lodged in the house next to mine and every time my wife or I passed him, he would point us out to his crowd of *chelas* as glaring examples of lost souls.

Kamala, my wife, rushed into my room when I was at my morning shave and announced that Ammu had disappeared. I have never been able to cure my wife of her habit of bursting in upon me when I am shaving and thus disturbing the concentration which this ritual calls for. In the early days of my married life, I used to keep a diary and note down in it all the things that my wife and I said and did to one another each day. Now, I can tell you the number of times I fell foul of my wife every week from the scratches on my face where I cut myself with the razor as a result of Kamala's choosing this time of the day for her conversational relaxation.

"How often have I told you to leave me alone while I am shaving," I cried out as I scratched myself on the chin.

"But Ammu has disappeared, I am telling you," shouted Kamala inconsequentially.

"What do you mean, disappeared?" I snapped.

"Yes, she is nowhere to be seen."

"Oh, go away, for God's sake and search for her. She is hiding somewhere, I daresay."

"I have searched everywhere, but cannot find her. Oh, I don't know what to do," wept my wife.

I bundled her out of the room in exasperation, while the soap and the blood trickled down my face! A wife is all right in her place, but a man's shaving hour should at least be sacred to him, in his house, I argued.

Kamala sat in the open court-yard in the middle of the house, and howled out her woes loud enough for the whole street to hear. She was by nature of a reserved and dignified disposition and this vulgar exhibition of emotions was rather strange. I finished my toilet and tried to comfort her, but she was inconsolable.

"After all the trouble I have taken to bring up Ammu, that she should be suddenly lost like this! Oh, my God, it is unbearable," wailed my wife. "Do you remember, dear, how she took ill and no one could do anything to her and I had to sit up night and day, nursing her? Oh, my heart is breaking! I have nobody to turn to in my sorrow, with you abusing and threatening me all the time. Oh, my mother—"

I took her on my knee, dried her tears and patted her reassuringly.

"Don't sob like all that, darling," I entreated. "What is there to make all this fuss about? Ammu will turn up, all right, soon. You know she is rather free and wayward, Don't cry, Kamala dear. I am sorry I was upset and rough a little while ago. Don't be worried, my love."

But when I returned from my office in the evening, my wife met me at the door with a drawn, tear-stained face. Her hair was dishevelled and the end of her *saree* was wet with tears. She greeted me in a hoarse voice:

"Ammu hasn't turned up yet!"

I was a bit scared myself. It was so unlike Ammu to be away for a whole day. I promised my wife to scout for her and went out after a wash. I returned at a late hour in the night and announced that I couldn't trace Ammu. I suggested reporting to the police. My wife vehemently opposed the suggestion.

Sometime back she had lost a bangle and we had reported the matter to the police. They pestered her with umpteen visits a day. Though we had definitely mentioned that it was a pearl-studded bangle, they took Kamala on a wild-goose chase to identify various specimens of silver and gilt bangles in all the pawn-shops of the city. Kamala wasn't having any more to do with the keepers of law and order.

And then, she broke down again. Her uncontrollable sobs almost shook the house to its very foundations. She charged me with callous indifference, guessed I was unfit for married life and wondered what she had ever seen in me once.

I never had such a scene with my wife in all the three years of my married life and I found it difficult to understand her present mood. Her shouting and wailing could be heard by all our neighbours, I was sure. I lost my temper and found my tongue. But that only aggravated matters and made Kamala more vituperative.

"I am sure that young man in the opposite house has something to do with her disappearance," cried out Kamala. "I have caught the rascal many times making faces at my darling Ammu. I have always told you not to give Ammu so much liberty but you would never listen to my words. And now you cannot even be decent to me in my sorrow. I wish I could die and end all this misery." How she shouted!

I went to bed without dinner that night. Kamala's unreasonable attitude and vulgar exhibition of temper made me almost mad. What would the neighbours think? The next day I left home early without a word to my wife.

The temple *mantapam* in our *agraharam* was the only place available in our part of the town for holding public meetings. Naturally, the Sanatanists had monopolised the place for their propaganda meetings. With the polling day for the Assembly elections just a day ahead, canvassing was going on very briskly. The leanings of our local community were definitely anti-Congress. All the wavering spirits amongst the voters had been bamboozled into submission by threats of eternal damnation which the imported pundit from Benares held out to all adherents of the Harijan cause.

As I was returning home in the evening, I passed the *mantapam* where the Sanatanists were holding their final pre-election-day meeting. I stood at a distance and listened out of curiosity.

"Friends and brothers," the Mahamahopadhyaya was saying, "It is not even necessary for you to look up to the teachings of the *Puranas*, for guidance in your present-day problems. The world offers living examples of the end to which good and bad lives come. Since I came here to contribute my mite to the cause of *dharma* I have had the misfortune to live next-door to a misguided couple who call themselves reformers and defy the dictates of our great religion. A life like that has retribution closely following on its heels. I learn that

Kamala sat in the open court-yard.....and howled out her woes.....



yesterday, the daughter of that house, brought up without the reserve and the religious training that our great thinkers have enjoyed, has been seduced by a youth from the opposite house. Let the story of this girl Ammu, who is paying for the sins of her parents, be a lasting lesson to you. My friends....."

(Continued on page 32)

THE MERRY FANS

These two pages are open to Readers for the expression of their views and letters from them are invited. This week some of the letters received from readers regarding the article by P. A. S. entitled "South Country English" are being published. The Editor will be glad if readers would take up for discussion in this Forum such questions as "Have we had enough of Joyfull?" "Is Auntie Awful getting old?" "Do we want a 'Deisvi' serial?" "Do 'Flashes' flash?" "Is there anything in 'One thing and another'?" etc. etc.

SOUTH COUNTRY ENGLISH

I

SURELY, P. A. S. does not expect every English-knowing citizen of India to speak and write King's English! Personally I am of opinion that Indians are at liberty to include Anglicised Tamil words (or for that matter words of any other language) in their English letters to friends and relatives, either for the sake of convenience, or to give forcefulness to expression, or even for want of a sufficient store of adequate English vocabulary! Those who scoff at this suggestion will do well to delve into the origins of the English language itself. The following extract from Prof. O. T. Williams' book, *A Short Sketch of the History of the English Language* (Cassells) will amply justify our use of Anglicised vernacular terms:

"The most important event of Modern times to leave its indelible impress on the vocabulary of the language was the Revival of Learning. The intellectual revolution that is so termed made an augmentation in the word stock of the language inevitable. New vehicles of thought had to be found. The new stock of words necessary to make good the deficiencies of the vocabulary in abstract terms was to be obtained either by utilizing the materials already at hand in the creation of new words, or by borrowing extensively from Latin and Greek, the two languages whose literature had played so momentous a part in bringing about the revolution."

* * * *

Such observations, on the part of P. A. S., as "I don't know what exactly an Englishman would do on reading the last word—*gaubrafied*," and "we in this country come across many words which sound like English words, but which uttered in the hearing of an Englishman, would simply confuse him," go to prove very clearly that the writer has not moved very much among Englishmen. In the first place *there would be no occasion* for an Englishman to come across such words as *gaubrafied* and *kolorufy* (since these words are exchanged only in a limited circle and among those who can understand them). But granting that a particular Eng-

lishman does come across such an expression, he will no more be confused at them than P. A. S. will be confused at being served with *Sambar* and *Rasam* at Constantinople. Englishmen are past-masters in the art of using Anglicised foreign words! The inclusion of words like *Catamaran* (derived from Tamil *Kattamaram* vide p. 128 of *Oxford Concise Dictionary*) and *Mulligatawny* (the Anglicised form of the Tamil *milagutannir* vide p. 532 *ibid.*) in the English Dictionary, and the everyday-use of words like *Bando-bast*, *pucca*, *katcha*, *chhota-hazri*, *khabar*, etc., by Europeans themselves, leave no grounds for complaint on the use, by Indians, of Anglicised vernacular terms.

I would advise each and every Indian, who looks down upon his fellow-countryman's limited range of knowledge of the English language, to closely study Prof. Williams' book, referred to by me in the beginning of this article, which will undoubtedly enlighten the reader as to the origin and development of a language which is (to quote the author) "Second to none in political, social and literary importance the world over, and which epitomizes in itself the history of that wonderful phenomenon—human speech."

Word-borrowing for the English language is a practice of many centuries' standing, and, even the modern English vocabulary, which is apparently only coined to supply the need of the advancement of Science and Industry, is not exonerated from the stigma of 'borrowed feathers'!

T. N. M.
Karachi.

NORTH COUNTRY ENGLISH

II

Though a pukka Madras Tamilian by birth, upbringing and education, I have been living, moving and having my being in these parts for about eighteen years or so, and have been closely watching and studying the various English expressions as spoken or written by the Northern people in the course of their official duties or private talks and conversations.

OPEN FORUM

I take the following few examples for our discussion in this issue. The very first grammatical blunder that has struck me forcibly in these northern parts whenever I found myself chatting with an English-educated friend of mine, is the neglect of the difference between 'since' and 'for', when either of these two denotes 'time'. I invariably find my Northern friend here saying, "I am sick since a long time," while what he actually means is, "I have been ill for a long time." This friend of mine usually happens to be, more often than not, in possession of a degree no less than a Bachelor of Arts. He has never cared, it seems, to know that 'since' denotes only a *point of time* and 'for' only a *period*—the little yet great difference between a point and a line or a series of points, if you like it that way.

Again, there is another amusing fashion current here, of using the word 'deny'. Frequently, I observe in conversations and in correspondence, too, the sentence, "He denies he has not done it." A large proportion of English-speaking men over here, be they officers or mere clerks, are found to be entirely ignorant of, or rather deliberately indifferent to the 'negative' sense that there already is, in the term 'deny' itself. Unconsciously, as a matter of long habit, they go on using yet another negative after 'deny' and thereby unwittingly drive home a positive sense, the two negatives destroying each other, quite the reverse of what they mean, in all conscience. A splendid piece of evidence, this, in a law court, where sometimes a literal and grammatically analytical interpretation may come to be placed on a litigant's expressions in the course of his solemn statements.

R. N. A.
Jamshedpur.

ABOUT CHINESE LANGUAGE

III

I know there is a tendency among our people to speak English when both parties can speak perfect Tamil. Sometimes even the people out here Malayalise the English language. There are quite a lot of words we use in similar way and they don't spoil the English language: in fact it adds beauty to the language when we give it a local touch. Chinese girls speak English with the 'lah' and 'ah' at the end of their sentences. Sometimes they even translate Chinese into English which is nothing but English minus its grammar. There is no grammar in the Chinese language. English grammar is no longer taught in schools. The Children are given plenty of practice in writing sentences in simple English. If a teacher asked a child, "Did you bring your school fees?" The child will stand up and say quite calmly, "I no take come." She has translated her Chinese

word for word into English. (Goa = I boh = no *giah* = take *lai* = come.)

And yet we use the 'Direct Method' as soon as the child comes to school at the age of six. Children under six and above eight cannot be admitted into an English school. This is the only way to have more uniform classes. The teacher, too, will find it much easier to teach when the class is more uniform. In Chinese the word '*pua*' stands for 'broken' and 'torn'. So when a child's book is torn she will say, "My book is broken." Again the word '*chia*' stands for 'eat' and 'drink'. So the child will say, "I eat water." Anyone who does not know Chinese will think these children are stupid, but we understand them perfectly well. Indian children, coming from educated homes speak good English; so, after all, our South Indian English is not so bad compared with the English in other parts in the East.

JANE HENRY,
Penang.

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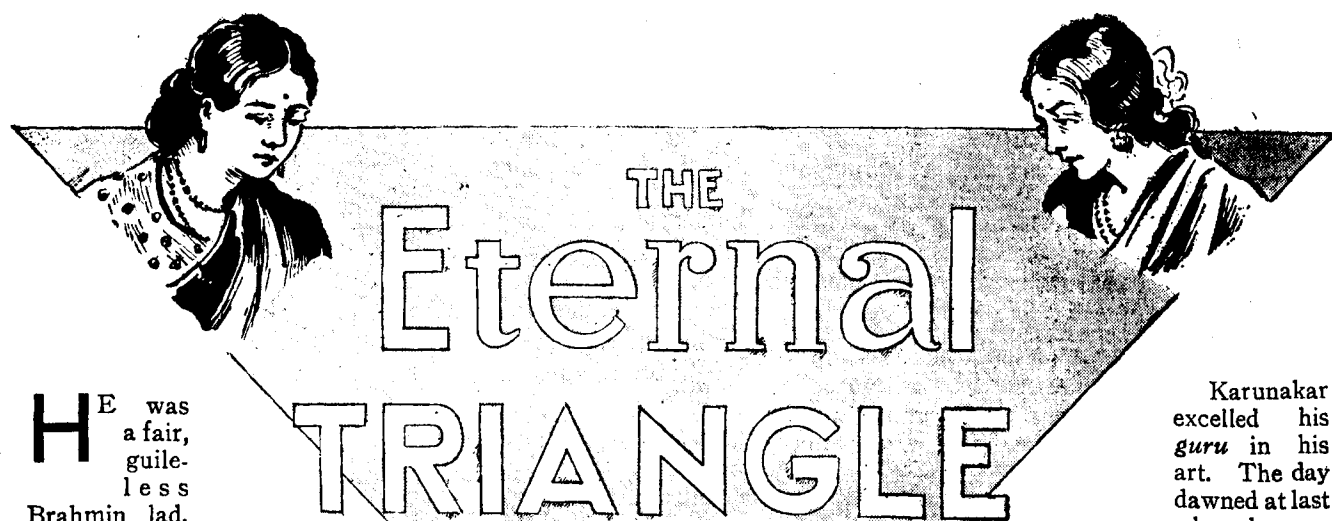
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HE was a fair, guileless Brahmin lad. I should have made him a fair, guileless non-Brahmin lad in deference to the party in power in the Madras Presidency. But I want to bring a *Yagnopaveetham* into the story. You cannot (can you?) dangle a sacred thread athwart the thorax of a Harijan boy without making him look silly, more or less. I cannot dispense with that sacred thread, really.

So let it be a Brahmin lad invested with a *Yagnopaveetham*. Now this lad (whose name, by the way, was Karunakar) was a born artist, almost in a class with Gainsborough, Sargent and Kelly, for the very reasonable reason that ever since he found out the use of charcoal, he drew on the kitchen wall, with remarkable fidelity, the faces and profiles of his grannies, aunties, uncles and even of his father. The family wisely decided, therefore, that Karunakar should be made into a great artist.

It so happened that there was a Brahmin in the neighbouring town, a great friend of Karunakar's father and an artist of no mean repute. Karunakar's father, instead of sending up his son to the University, apprenticed him to his artist friend.

This artist had a daughter, Hemakumari, a comely lass with a dimpled darling of a chin, velvet cheeks, a body of young unformed curves promising a glorious womanhood waiting round the corner, large dark eyes shooting mystic fires, suggestive of loud sex complexes, but, oddly enough, not at all sentimental. Only, a little theatrical.

Being a diligent and enthusiastic student, and not a little encouraged by Hemakumari, Karunakar made splendid progress under his master. Two years rolled by.

Two years close association with a girl of the type of Hemakumari, and nothing happening! As I said he was a guileless lad. Hemakumari bit her lip. In fact, of late, she did almost nothing except biting her lip.

Karunakar excelled his guru in his art. The day dawned at last when he was

to leave his master's roof and go to Benares to another artist (a giant at the trade) to finish off his training. Towards evening that day, sitting on a sofa, head

cocked to one side, Karunakar was viewing critically, a finished picture of his on an easel, to detect possible penumbral flaws. Hemakumari sailed in, glowing in a lovely *sari* with a killing blouse to match, hair done up in cuty, darling curls, a perfect picture of radiant health and beauty, like one of those pain-balm advertisements. She stood by the side of the engrossed

artist. He didn't notice her, but went on staring at the picture. Hemakumari bit her lip.

She toyed with the hem of her *sari*, plucked a few threads from it and—unconsciously apparently—she dropped her lace-woven hem into Karunakar's lap. He looked up, smiled the usual idiotic smile of his and resumed his scrutiny of the picture.

"To the eternal shame of manhood!" murmured Hemakumari.

"What did you say, Hema?" He still kept his eyes on the picture.

"You are a fish!"

However much a hobo you might be you won't sit tight when a beautiful girl calls you a fish. Karunakar turned to her with a jerk and for the first time now he realised that he missed his bus for two years going, realised he was facing something grand and thrilling. He sat entranced at this

revelation before him, at those blazing eyes, those red brackets of lips quivering with passion, that lovely *sari* and blouse, hiding nameless possibilities.

She placed her hands on his shoulders.

"And you call yourself an artist!" She burst like a tropical storm, her voice vibrant with thwarted, unrequited love. "Can all the beauties you have transferred

to your life-less canvas equal the beauty before you? Two long years I have waited, Karuna and to-day..... you blink like a fish! Don't I strike a responsive chord in your cold heart? Does not the man in you cry for a mate, as the woman in me yearns for you?"

She held him in a frantic, passionate hug and—

All of you have no doubt heard of institutes managed by gimlet-eyed, square-shouldered experts who offer (for a small cash consideration) to rake up your inside and bring out the latent he-man in you. The fury of Hemakumari's wooing did to Karunakar what twenty gimlet-eyed Johnnies couldn't have done. The poor fellow was stunned. This side of the question never struck him. Now that it did strike him, he was clean swept off his feet. The dormant Sheik in him asserted himself violently. He liquidated his overdue liabilities with interest. They plighted their troth.

So left Karunakar that hospitable home, fortified by his master's blessing and the kisses, smiles and tears of his new-found love.

The great artist at Benares also, unfortunately for Karunakar, had a daughter, beautiful Vihari—not a volcano like Hemakumari, but a limpid lake of smiling ripples and sweet zephyrs.

This new master at once recognised in his *chela* a genius who would bring honour to himself and his country. So he set matrimonial negotiations afoot with Karunakar's father; and before the poor fellow was many months old, and in spite of his vehement protestations, he and Vihari were made man and wife.

Karunakar's father was a wise old man. Vihari was heiress to her father's money bags.

When Hemakumari heard of this marriage, she laughed a bitter laugh, at which her father wondered. A few days later she disappeared from home.

Karunakar was a devout Hindu. And what more does a devout Hindu want than a daily dip in Holy Ganges? Soon after he became a *grihasta* he made it a daily practice to go down at dawn to *Dasashwamedh Ghat* and bathe in Mother Ganga, performing his *gayatri* and praying to his God to forgive him his sins, not the least heinous of which was the villainy he perpetrated on Hemakumari.

One day after his bath, while yet the East was blushing in a mantle of orange and gold and a few plucky stars were holding out bravely in the Western sky, Karunakar sat erect at the water's edge, with legs crossed, eyes quiescent and half-closed, forehead, chest and arms a blaze of sacred *vibhuti*, holding the consecrated knots

of his *yagnopaveetham*, pouring his soul to his Maker. To his right the bosom of the Sacred Mother was still, enveloped in that orange gloom; to his left rose up the temple of Viswanath, and almost touching it reared proudly into the sky the minarets of the mosque built by Emperor Aurangzeb, whether as a synthesis of warring creeds or symbolising the spirit of conquest, only historians can decide.

A shadowy form obstructed the line of vision of Karunakar. So intense was the concentration of the man in prayer that he did not heed the shadowy form before his eyes. He finished his prayer, and stood up.

Hemakumari faced him.

They looked into each other's eyes, Hemakumari's belching black fury and Karunakar's a sheet of abject shame.

She caught his sacred thread with her left hand and tugged him towards her, pointing, a shaking, accusing finger at him. She hissed in concentrated rage:

"I gave you my love willingly, unrestrainedly..... and you left me in a nameless hell.....To whom shall I trade this body after....."

"Stay, Oh God! Hema....."

Before he finished, the injured girl whisked a gleaming dagger from her *sari*, brandished it aloft, hesitated a fraction of a second and.....

Karunakar didn't raise a finger in self-defence. She cut his *yagnopaveetham* asunder, gathered it into a ball in her palm and dropped it into the still waters at her feet. She raised her arm again and sent the dagger hurtling across into the depths of the river.

"I meant to kill you, Karuna.....but—but....." Reaction set in. She fell on his neck and burst into tears. "Give me my right.....to call you my husband I will be content to share you with Vihari."

Karunakar passed a caressing hand over the dishevelled tresses of her hair. "So be it, darling.....I..... I....." He could not say anything more.

"That is the story of my fall, Vihari," concluded Karunakar in the privacy of his room: "Need I add to my sin by leaving her to....."

"No! Dearest, you will not and shall not." Vihari rose up to that sublime height of self-effacement, which only a Hindu wife can attain. "I will welcome her with open arms."

So the happy triangle ran its appointed course till the three sides were gathered into Time. And thanks to the Hindu Law which doesn't punish a man for bigamy.

FROM A NEW ANGLE

By
V. B. PRASAD

The Doctor's Doctor—(Continued from page 25)

Her complaint was hysteria. He handled the case and came to the conclusion that she needed a change. He advised her to take leave and go out somewhere for a change. She followed his advice and returned better. Her fits of fainting occurred less frequently and there seemed to be general improvement. Then he found that her mind was overwrought by constant brooding.

"Don't bottle up your better self," he advised her, "express yourself as fully as possible; go to the pictures; read poetry; hear music; and do anything and everything you take a fancy to."

She found his visits very welcome; his conversation was engaging and his powers of auto-suggestion were effective. Gradually her drooping spirits revived. In a few weeks' time she grew normal and brightness and charm radiated from her countenance. He was so much impressed with her vivacity that he continued his visits even when his work as a doctor was finished.

The result was that the doctor got it back; not exactly hysteria, but something equally annoying. He found that all his thoughts were tending towards Shakuntala. He was feeling miserable when he was absent from her: but there was no longer any valid reason for him to pay her any visits. He was in a dilemma. As a doctor he had no business to cherish thoughts of love towards a patient. Wasn't it a breach of trust, or faith or some such thing? Therefore he ceased his visits abruptly. But the patient came to his help. She sent for him and told him that she would be obliged for a few more visits.

"What for?" asked the doctor, "you seem to be well out of your complaint."

(NEXT WEEK: THE ADVENT OF SAKUNTALA)

Ammu's Alleged Seduction—(Continued from page 27)

The audience tittered and smiled. Some of the crowd laughed outright and nudged each other in merriment. The *Vedanta-tatwa-gyani*, encouraged by the seeming ridicule he had put a 'reformer' to, waxed still more eloquent. From a distance, I watched the scene. Light dawned upon me. I rushed homeward.

My wife was waiting for me on the door-step as of yore, all trim and toiletted and tremulous with eager expectation. A look at my face told her that I knew. As I gathered her in my arms, she laughed softly in my ears and whispered.

"Forgive me, darling, for causing you pain, but it had to be. That Sanatanist monster has been glueing his ear to the partition wall to get some news of us that would help his propaganda. When I found that the feeling against the Congress ran high, I couldn't resist the temptation to let the pundit man make an ass of himself. There is nothing like ridicule to alienate the sympathies of his adherents and I am sure he has dug his own grave. Don't you want to thank Ammu, dear?"

"True, doctor, but I seem to get it as soon as you go."

The doctor saw hope and continued his visits; at the propitious moment he declared his love; and Shakuntala was willing. When he broached the subject to his parents, his mother objected to their marriage on the ground, firstly, that a girl who was not married before her attainment of the age of 13 was no longer orthodox and therefore no longer within the same marriageable group; secondly, that a graduate wife might be good as a sleeping partner, but would not cut ice so far as her responsibility in the house-hold was concerned; thirdly, that marriages were either made in heaven by God or made on earth by one's parents. There was no third way of making it.

Chinnaswamy, too, shared all these objections. He deplored that Mayuri should have fallen in love without notice and come to them with a *fait accompli*. But as a practical man, he reviewed the situation in the light of certain other considerations. He considered that his duty as a parent was to see his children married early. The question before him being a question of marriage, he was inclined to sanction it. Secondly, Mayuri as the first-born had acquitted himself creditably and there was no point in giving him a heart-break. Thirdly, and decisively, if it was a graduate girl this time, what guarantee was there that it would not be something much worse later on. So he concluded that the better part of one's morals was marriage and voted for Mayuri. Moreover, Shakuntala being an educated girl would enhance his status as a father-in-law.

So, he overruled Mangalam's objections and celebrated the marriage with pomp and ceremony.

Kamala took me to her room and opened a trunk. Bound and muzzled into silence, the little pup lay there and lifted her naughty eyes to her mistress in entreaty. Kamala untied the puppy and smothered it with kisses. Ammu wagged her stubby tail and licked her mistress in evident understanding.

"Oh, Ammu darling," she cooed, "I am so sorry for you but I do wish you could know what service you have rendered to the cause of the country to-day."

Kamala had not exaggerated. When our Sanatanist colony went to the polling booth the next day, all the sensible ones voted for the Congress. The previous evening's *faux-pas* had provided the turning point in their decisions. The Sanatanist *pandit* went back to Benares with curses on his lips. The Congress candidate got in by a thumping majority. I gave Ammu a brand-new silver collar and Kamala—!

But that is really between us two.

(To be sure—Ed.)

THE

UNWANTED CHILD

By "AKTHAR SINGH"

HARKISHEN'S marriage was a mistake, for, though love was supposed to have precipitated the event, both he and his girl-wife, Santa Kumari, entered into the holy state of matrimony, with their young heads stuffed with dangerous ideas.

It was not entirely their fault. In an earnest endeavour to attain an ultra-modern standard with regard to that rather important phase of life, they had fallen victims to a more or less common peril of the times, *viz.*, the menace of modern Malthusians and the perverted promoters of the commercialised crime of ruthless 'race-suicide'.

And to crown the calamity, some anonymous 'well-wisher' sent them by way of a marriage-present, a case of books, supposed to lead young couples to the superlative degree of conjugal bliss, a type of literature, let loose from and peculiar to a country, where, in spite of them, divorce-courts are as plentiful as betel-shops are in ours!

Harkishen was pleased with the gift. Yes, he would read them, follow their directions and his life would be a long drawn-out love-dream of eternal youth and perennial pleasure!

Even when on closer acquaintance, the perfect maze of confused cant and psycho-analytic terms, refused to yield a bit of sense, he deluded himself that as long as the problem of the 'child' could be postponed, 'the ideal marriage' of the 'perfect wife' and the 'complete husband', could preserve its novelty.

Poor Santa Kumari was thrilled to err in the company of her husband. For, was not that the practice with the celebrated 'stars' of the celluloid firmament? It was grand! Their cup of joy should be full to the brim! No howling piece of mischief should toddle in between and spill the contents of the cup.

For about two years, in that rarified atmosphere, over which their flame of love, as fresh, as pure and as fierce as on the day of the marriage, shed its rose-tinted radiance, they revelled in unclouded happiness.

Then slowly, they felt the light dim, the penumbra of an impending doom fall between them. The house lost its brightness—its attraction for Harkishen. He longed to be out.....and alone. A certain restlessness entered into his movements and his tones when he spoke to his wife, lost their tenderness. He felt that somewhere a rift had occurred in the lute. Had he been hasty? Impatient of calmer retrospect and possible regret, he assured himself that he had kept his part of the 'fifty-per-cent contract'. It was she.....that other 'partner', that had done it. Done what? That he did not know, nor did he care to ask or answer! But one thing was certain. She had failed in some way to fulfil his hopes!



"I can put you on your back in a jiffy."

That distressing disappointment brought about a violent change in his life. He had to drown his cares somehow, somewhere. He joined a Bohemian 'Bachelors' Club', converted nights into days and kept out of the house as much as possible. The 'cup that cheers', kept him constant company, and yet he failed to find that elusive happiness that he had missed at home.

In search of every pleasure that money could buy, Harkishen could be found, tearing through the streets at odd hours of night at break-neck speed in his car, and his friends whose company he shunned in those days, predicted a premature death for him.

Meanwhile his poor neglected wife bore her misery with the traditional patience of the Hindu wife, trusting in a Higher Power to restore the harmony in her household.

Four years passed. Harkishen was standing with bared chest in the consulting room of his friend, Dr. Lalta Prasad Varma, a specialist in lung diseases.

Dr. Varma placed the stethoscope on the table and looked down with deep concern. In grave professional tones he addressed his friend, "How long have you had this complaint?"

Harkishen started at the strange note in the other's speech and replied carelessly, "About a year, off and on," and added as an afterthought, "nothing serious, I hope."

"That depends," replied the doctor, with grave reproach in his looks, "on the value you place on your life."

"Life?" laughed Harkishen. "Where does the question of life come in here? I am as strong as a bull." He thumped his well-formed chest, catessed his bulging biceps, and continued in mock challenge, "I can put you on your back in a jiffy. Care to try?"

Dr. Varma looked at his friend with pity in his eyes and with a sympathetic smile added, "My dear boy, I spoke plainly, for your own good. You have wasted your life. The energy that ought to have sustained you for fifty or sixty years has gone in as many months! Even the strongest steel chain snaps under heavy strain. You are now called upon to pay, for, unless you retire to some quiet, corner to the care of tender and loving hands.....you have about a month to live! No! Don't interrupt me. As a friend I tell you the fact, which professional etiquette should have prevented me from putting so bluntly."

For a while, a glint of fear showed in Harkishen's eyes and the blood drained from his face. Then he stamped his foot in annoyance like the stubborn child that he was and burst out, "By God! I won't! If I am to go like that, I will go with all my colours flying. Retire to a corner and be nursed like a baby! I prefer a glorious death to the decay of a vegetable!"

Harkishen stamped out of the room in a towering frenzy of rage. One month, was it? Well, there was some satisfaction in being fore-warned. He could enjoy every minute of it, knowing it to be his last chapter!

He drove madly to the farthest picture-house, and stared blindly at the white square of canvas before him, with the doctor's serious face and voice still haunting him. After a time, the trend of the story on the screen wove itself into his thoughts, ousting a part of the gathered gloom.

It was the story of a young rake driven by remorse into the hands of his first 'sweetheart', whom he had thrown over years back for the unrestrained liberty of a drunken life.

Harkishen spat in disgust. What were films coming to these days? Even Hollywood was crying for a 'halt'. Remorse and repentance seemed to be a fashionable fever with all modern heroes! For every scamp drifting like a rudder-less ship in the storms of rakish revelry, the final haven of rest seemed to be the shelter of a girl's petticoat!

He dashed out of the theatre, and made the car hum through the crowded streets as if the Furies were chasing him, and jerked it to a standstill at the gates of his Club.

His nerves were on edge that night. Every little thing annoyed him. Nothing—nobody could console him. He had to do some-

thing violent, something very wicked to relieve the agony of that nervous tension.

He ordered a double drink of brandy and climbed up to the terrace to be alone with his thoughts.

Only a month.....He felt a violent contraction at his heart, and fire-flies seemed to dart before his eyes. The glass dropped from his fingers and was smashed to smithereens. Within a month, he would be dead as mutton.

The fragrance of fresh flowers was wafted by the cool night breeze towards him, and he gnashed his teeth with rage. He wouldn't live to see the summer! There seemed a cowardly conspiracy afoot to make him cringe for mercy.

For a moment he stared at the star-spangled sky in a mute appeal and then went to his car. With impotent rage surging within him, he kicked the self-starter into action and raced through the roads. Life seemed to be mocking at him. The world was full of laughter that night. Everybody seemed to be happy and gay. But the sounds of mirth grated harshly against his bruised soul.

Wild, haggard and weary, he staggered into his house and crumpled in a heap upon the bed. The process of thought seemed to torture both body and brain. How easy had it been to brag before his doctor about his courage in the face of death! The very suspense was becoming too much for him! Ideas of suicide, urgent, immediate, swam through his muddled brain.

Her husband's unexpected return at such an early hour, shot a gleam of gladness through Santa, but the next instant she realised that something must be wrong, and rushed to his side.

Though she had endured the ordeal of witnessing his slow self-inflicted moral degradation, she was startled to see the despair in his face that night. Both her hand and heart longed to give him some comfort—to smother him with the love that had been locked up within her for years, unfed, unclaimed, even rejected. But she was afraid to speak, for he had almost become a stranger to her!

Harkishen read the unspoken message.....read it in every quivering lineament of her face.....read it in the black rings round her eyes.....

The 'unwanted child' clapped two chubby palms and chuckled with delight.

(Continued on page 36)

AMATEURISH LOVE

By 'MAYBIRD'

I cannot for the very precious life of me understand why some blokes go, break their hearts on some stray lass or other for just a smile or a giggle, then go about trying to retrieve the broken pieces and spoiling the rest of their lives. Blooming asses, I call them. Don't you think so? And what do they call it? Love at first sight! Pooh-pooh! All hotchy-potchy nonsense.

Inexperienced youngers who have not a notion about the A B C of love come to grief too often where girls are concerned. These worthies would go potty for a mere nothing. Either it would be for the sunny smile of Sally, the lingering laugh of Lily or inevitably the grin and giggle of Gwennie. Do not pity these birds. As for

me, I have no patience to sympathise with such sentimental good-for-nix rovers. If they are soft-bellied enough to rave about the facial beauty of a dame and run away thinking that they have tumbled into love for good, they should be horse-whi—er—they should be smacked—er—I mean they should be left unnoticed.

Now look at Walter. Last year he turned the scales at a hundred and fifty pounds, shoes, coat and all off. But look at him now! He would, without an effort, turn seventeen somersaults if Primo Carnera did a breathing exercise within ten yards of him. What did happen? you may ask. Well, it was a gay gown and a sly smile that did it. Believe it or not!

Now, hark ye brethren, Walter had the rotten luck to squeeze a girl at a dance last year. Some giraffe-trot or some such silly jig-jig, when you have to hold the delicate hand of your partner. Now Walter instead of letting the things off after just 'a touch and go', lingered on it, that is, if I make myself clear, he gave the hand a nervous little wee bit of a squeeze. The girl happened to be a true breed of the Eve-standard and she returned the squeeze with the addition of a sly giggle as compound interest. Of course, if I know girls right, any one would have just taken it as a matter of sport. Electric lights, gay costumes and crowded crowds give girls the impetus to flirt with men. But as for Walter, that was the beginning of his end. The 'pore' fellow's head turned the wrong way. Small wonder that he has since pined away pounds and pounds over that particular lass.

I would also quote you the fall of Funko Fargawn. Funko met Fanny at a fancy *fete* farce. The local convent brought up a concert. There were a number of people to witness it. The hall was crowded. Polished shoes and silk stockings glided up and down the hall. To cut the thing short, pals and gals were galore within and without. Fanny had a part to perform on the stage as a peacock or some such thing.

Now, after the perspiring audience had been bored with three parts of Red Riding Hood or something and two other parts, Fanny put in a peacock-ish appearance. Her appearance coming as a change from the previous grave-yard performances, woke up the bored-to-death audience. Everyone was impressed. The audience gave Fanny a splendid ovation.



.....Funko had a close view of Fanny on the stage and in the heat of the moment he clapped for an extra few seconds,

Funko Fargawn who had been hungry for love all his five and twenty years was also impressed. He too gave her an ovation. But even after the collective hand-clapping had ceased and the echoes thereof had been forgotten, a distinct solo hand-clap could be heard. The fact was, Funko had a close view of Fanny on the stage and in the heat of the moment he clapped for an extra few seconds. This solo attempt on the part of Funko drew everyone's attention in general and Fanny's in particular. Fanny was happy to receive such enthusiastic response and she gave vent to her feelings of excitement by directing her glances towards Funko and extending a smile. Funko had paid a fancy sum for the front seat and he felt more than rewarded. Fanny's smile was a Honolulu one and there was a mixture of a coy giggle in it. The face value of the smile after all meant only "Received your extra hand-clap with thanks."

But alas! That was the end of F.F. Funko went all butter and jam on her. Absolutely gone on her was Funko from that moment. That blithering idiot misread the thing. He made the wildest stroke possible instead of merely stone-walling. No wonder the result was what it was. Funko is still alive and kicking.

A smile for a smile and grin for giggle is well and good. But a whole heart for a flippant smile is far from being a fair exchange. So beware! Use your brain and take a few lessons. Any amorous amateur who has an idea to angle after any Annie or Adeline, to have a bit of sport, fun and frolic but to come back scot-free without losing your wicker, should read my books viz. *The Art of Tackling Maiden Hearts, 33 ways of Pleading your Cause, How to Pop the Smiles and Giggles Analysed, Remedy for Faint Hearts etc.*

THE UNWANTED CHILD—(Continued from page 34)

in the undying anxiety and affection that seemed to ache visibly in the wet velvet depths of her eyes. Conscious of his guilt, he shifted his gaze.

The enormity of his crime slowly dawned upon him. He had wrecked not only his life. He had dragged an innocent, trusting girl with vain promises from a happy household, and made her sample hell! And now, like the coward that he was, he was thinking of suicide, indifferent to the life that had been linked to his own! Could anything inflict greater misery on a Hindu girl than early widow-hood? She had nothing.....not even a child.....to comfort the long-drawn agony of an empty life. Child.....! He shuddered, and stole a half-frightened glance in her direction.

But in her, there was not the slightest sign of reproach, nothing but the light of a wonderful all-forgiving love, which a woman's eyes alone could reveal. Harkishen saw the contrast.....what he had not seen for years.....the wealth and enduring purity of wifely devotion. The repressed cravings within him suddenly urged wild desires, and a wistful tenderness towards the wife whom he had wronged for ever. Yes...for ever! For, what atonement could he offer, he.....who had but a month to live!

But he must! He would not be able to rest in peace even beneath the grave, if he left her without even an attempt at possible atonement! He had just thirty days in which to make her understand that he was not a brute, but only a misguided youth.

With the pent-up passion of years, he gathered her in his arms and in halting phrases punctuated by passionate kisses, sobbed out the story of his interview with the doctor, begging her to forgive his neglect, and to allow him to dedicate the last days of his existence to give her that joy which he had robbed her, to accompany him on a belated 'honey-moon' trip to some far off place, where they could bury the memory of unpleasant

associations, and with the combined strength of their newborn love, wrest from Life the secret of undying happiness!

But she was already in Elysian heights and with her rose-bud mouth hungering for his caresses, stopped the plaintive plea. She scoffed at the doctor's wisdom and between tears of joy, assured him that she would nurse him back to health and thus demonstrate to Dr. Varma the life-giving properties of a woman's love. A merciful God had given him back to her, surely not to snatch him away soon!

Harkishen's fears were being soothed. He felt a strange satisfaction to be swept away by that tempestuous tide of love, and with the lullaby of her soft voice pouring tender epithets into his ears, with her clinging caressing arms around him, he sank into the silent realms of slumber.

It was three years later, that a robust, radiant Harkishen, accompanied by a smiling sweet-faced Santa Kumari and a bouncing baby, laughing like a condensed-milk advertisement, drove up to Dr. Varma's place.

After slapping the doctor soundly on the back, Harkishen roared with mirth, "Well, doctor, I am alive still, in spite of your ominous predictions."

Dr. Varma's face beamed with satisfaction and mischief, as he replied, "Yes, boy, I knew it long ago! With that cast-iron constitution of yours, nothing short of a cannon charge would have stopped you. But I wanted," nodding towards Santa Kumari, "for somebody's sake, to put the fear of God into you. And this bonny kid of yours tells me that I have succeeded. I hope you won't think ill of me!"

The 'unwanted child' clapped two chubby palms and chuckled with delight.

FURTHER OUTLOOK UNSETTLED

By 'LESLIE LATTER'

from the local Off-license.

If there was a sight more melancholy and depressing than that offered by my shaving mirror in

the early morning before we came out to India, it was the uninviting spectacle provided by our tennis-courts, when we paid our first visit of inspection in the late winter, early spring or midsummer, according to whatsoever season it had pleased smiling and/or lamenting nature to shower on us.

In 1930 it was pouring and they appeared even more devastating than usual. We viewed them with intensified dismay, our carry forward of £ 7.9.2½ from the previous season having developed into an overdraft of £ 1.17.8, the security for which was the grim necessity of putting the bank manager's wife in the match team occasionally.

Something had to be done to ensure that the appalling scene before our eyes should develop, by the first Saturday in May, into that desirable messuage which gladdened our hearts on Saturday evenings throughout the season.

Nasty, bare patches called out pathetically for re-turfing; boundary netting was forlorn and dejected in appearance; the ground was crying out for a heavy roller; the pavilion (*sic*) had developed a decided list to port and very obviously needed painting if it was not to collapse.

As secretary, I felt it my bounden duty to take the matter in hand, but none seemed enthusiastic about undertaking those labours, for which we definitely had not the wherewithal to pay. Gloom and depression were rampant. The atmosphere was not right. After a hurried consultation with Marjorie, I suggested we should all collect together at our place in the evening for further discussion, and each one could bring something towards the refreshments.

"Something in keeping with the weather," I said, with a significant wink at the male members of the party.

"They are sure to forget the drinking part," I confided to Marjorie on the way home, "so I'll just pop in and order a dozen bottles of beer as our share."

Robinson was the first to arrive with his wife under one arm and a bottle of whisky under the other.

Young Thomas brought his girl and a bottle each of gin and French and Italian Vermouth.

Parker and his sister weighed in with a couple of bottles of port, and the rest soon followed with varying purchases or credit acquisitions

By 8.30 we were complete with the finest array of filled bottles I have ever seen at Mon Repos, but not a bite to eat, beyond two bottles of salted almonds and half a ditto of olives, which Marjorie scrounged up from somewhere.

By 9.30, the tennis courts were entirely forgotten and the wireless was enjoying all the attention of the happy and dancing throng.

The break-up in the wee, small hours was hilarious, to say the least of it, but Marjorie was furious.

"Of all the useless, drunken orgies," she began, when I stopped her with an imperious gesture.

"Not useless, darling," I ventured.

"And how?" she retorted sarcastically.

"Well, to begin with, we have the nucleus of a nice cellar in the shape of sundry untouched and half-filled bottles, not to mention what we shall collect on the empties."

"A fat lot of good that will do to the tennis-courts," she countered crisply.

"Oh, the tennis courts," I intervened calmly, "that's all arranged. No need to worry about that."

"Arranged?" she queried dubiously. "Why, we never even discussed the matter."

With the air of a mining magnate producing his balance sheet, I flourished before her eyes a nice piece of foolscap, with numerous quite straight dotted lines and an equivalent number of not quite so straight signatures.

I DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY PROMISE.

and went on:—

To re-turf court I. Signed.....A. E. Robinson.

To " " II. "T. I. Thomas.

and so on down to the last:—

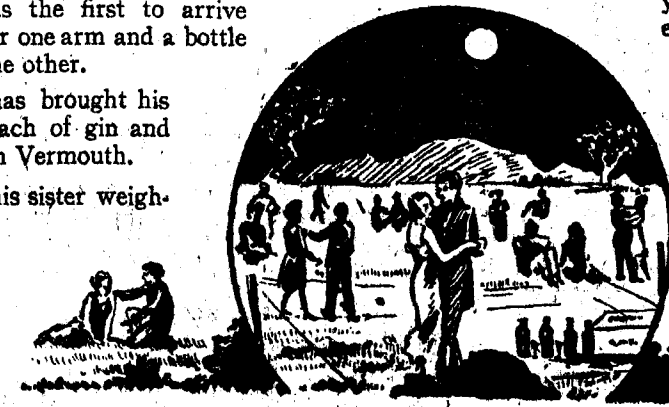
To paint pavilion. Signed.....S. A. Parker.

"Marvellous, darling," gurgled dear Marjorie, "but your name's not down; how did you escape?"

"Oh, I collected the signatures towards the latter part of the evening."

"What beats me," said Marjorie as she was on the point of dropping off to sleep, "is, why nobody brought any food."

"It was a strange," I acquiesced, hiccupping reflectively "perhaps the weather had something to do with it."



Keep this copy of The Merry Magazine.

It may bring you a Prize.

EUREKA!

By
D. P. LAHOTI

AT the top of the stairs, oblivious of all that had happened only a few yards away from her, stood the Duchess, looking more buxom and repulsive than ever. The smell of strong gin assailed my nostrils as I bent over her pouting lips to do the little homage that was required of me.

"Robert!" she said, "we are dining with the Lancelots at eight to-night."

The best I could do to enjoy myself until 8 o'clock was to raid the larder, but everytime I stood on the threshold of a feast, a cough announced a vigilant butler from within.

At length, however, the clock struck the hour and with it the footman announced, "Major, Mrs. and Miss Lancelot."

I went to receive the guests. "The Duke!" cried the Major with surprise, stretching his hand, "how do you do, my lord?"

"Precisely," I said, "how do I do is the question."

The Major and his wife laughed. Then the Major turned to his daughter—allowing her to advance into the foreground.

"Allow me to present my daughter, Dorothy Lancelot," he said, bowing. Dorothy extended her gloved hand and curtsied.

"Charmed, Miss Lancelot," I said shaking her hand tenderly. "You have grown bigger since I last saw you."

"Oh! But it's only seven months, and your Grace talks as if it is years," said Miss Lancelot, reproachfully.

"Oh yes," I said, "my fault. What I meant was that you have grown more lovely, if that were possible."

I found myself slipping irresistibly into love with her. Her mauve frock and genteel manners did the whole trick, and before I knew where I was, I found myself wishing to be in the moonlit garden, with lots of pretty girls forming a step-dance-chorus in the back-ground.

The party eventually broke up in good time. I say "in good time," because on the face of our butler who stood silhouetted against a collection of antique pewters,



I could faintly discern that helpless look which signified beyond doubt that he had run shamefully short of further supplies. However, the Major drew his first long breath and declared 'no more' and attacked the liqueur. Therefore, as I say, things ended in good time and as we followed the ladies into the smoking room, I could hear the head-butler exchanging the first official chuckle with a minor member of the establishment.

11 a. m. at the beach is considered, in polite society, an outrageously early hour.

I found it deserted as usual. The morning sun—'fresh-bathed in shimmering waters'—was shedding its

Illustrations By 'ESVI'

She stood framed in the doorway.



Our clandestine meetings were going strong every day. We were in the kissing stage. The 'may-I-have-the-pleasure-of-a-dance-with-you-Miss' stage had long passed. But I didn't want to be dragged to the divorce court.

One day, the Duchess spoke to me over the 'phone and asked me to see her immediately. Humming a catchy tune, I hopped to her study and tapped.

"Well, here I am, darling."

"Oh, yes," said the Duches glancing up; "now that you say it, I see that you *are* there. Well, sit down, honey. I wished to speak to you in the shamefully trifling matter of this little note."

"Gangsters at the old game again, what? Let me see."

I took the little note and scanned the contents. At the first sight, I found it to be a painfully realistic facsimile of the note Dorothy had given me making our first appointment at the beach. The same impression continued on a second, and a third perusal. At length, the staggering reality came to me. The note *was* the same one. My secretary had been careless again. Anyway, there was nothing for it except have a 'go' at the thing.

"It's—er—a note," I coughed.

"Exactly," said my wife, "but who *is* she?"

You see the note wasn't signed. There was yet a loop-hole then, thank God. I recovered lost ground instantly.

"A woman, darling, who wished to speak to me about her little son and his education. Out there, they are such a poor lot, you know."

"And pray, what exactly did you do in this case?"

"Oh nothing—nothing much—nothing at all, that is to say. I merely gave her a few pounds to start with and then took her to a bishop who controls a public charity-fund."

"Ah, I see. To a bishop? Are you quite sure, darling, that you took her to a bishop and not to a registrar?"

I checked my amazement with great effort, and put on the mask. "Can it be possible that you are joking?" I said, tapering my voice to a sharp crescendo.

"Of course, I am. You don't for a moment suspect I was serious, do you, darling? How could I?" replied she, throwing at me one of her super-buxom smiles.

The next day, just as I was debating the propriety of writing to Dorothy, I had a 'phone call from her announcing that she was coming right up that very moment to sip a cup of tea with me. I nearly cried with

plentiful rays over the vast expanse of sand. And the sole, tiny figure of Miss Lancelot up against the fading crimson of the sky, waving a silken handkerchief at me, gave just the right human touch to the scene.

"Allow me to point out," said I, "that you are looking tremendously adorable."

"Your Grace is getting decidedly naughty," said Dorothy.

"And from naughty to naughtier is an easy transformation," I said, pursuing my advantage.

sheer delight, and rushed about the household giving orders to the cook and doing things a duke may not ordinarily do. It was nearly a week since I had seen Dorothy. And now she was actually coming up to tea! The Duchess had excused herself for the day on the strength of a telegram from some week-end merry-makers and she and a portmanteau had departed to the rendezvous early in the morning.

Just as the kettle began singing, Dorothy appeared on the threshold—looking exquisitely loveable in her purple frock and the becoming straw-hat that had been pulled well over her forehead. She sailed smoothly to where I sat.

"What is this?" she asked, allowing me two minutes for my ecstasy to ooze off.

"A poem that has you for its theme."

"Silly," she said, crushing the paper childishly.

Tea finished, we proceeded to the business of the evening. I had determined to make the most of my wife's absence, and therefore plunged into the agenda without delay. Taking both her hands in mine, I began in earnest tones. "Darling!" I said.

"Sweetheart," said Dorothy.

"My own!"

".....and so on," she added, smiling.

"Will you be mine?"

"Most certainly, darling. But there are impediments."

"I know, darling," I said painfully; "there is, for example, the Duchess."

"Yes. 'S' is three-fourths of them."

"Anyway," I said, "at least we might love each other."

And with this, I drew her closer to me and rained a shower of kisses all over her.

I was still raining them when, preceded by a suitable bang, the face of the Duchess loomed large on the horizon. She stood framed in the door way and looked maliciously at us the love-lorn couple. We were flabbergasted. Hastily disengaging myself from Dorothy's arms, I stood up to welcome my wife.

"Darling," I said in a guilty voice.

The Duchess stood nonchalantly for a while. Presently, her expression underwent a phenomenal change. A grim look jammed the corners of her lips and she heaved with excessive in-take of breath.

"Eureka!" she cried, and shot out of sight, crackling a parchment in her fingers—evidently a divorce petition.



"Oh, that must have been an awful blunder! Everyone looked at me so queerly. I wish I could ALWAYS be sure of myself."

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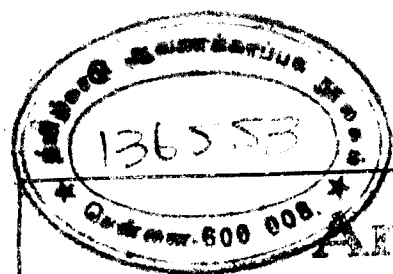
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