

LOVE'S LABOUR NOT LOST"

407

THE

MERRY

MAGAZINE

Vol. III

MADRAS, 20th APRIL 1935

No. 16

The Little Rascal!

Young Mother: He is tickled over something!

Ditto Father: Weren't you saying just now that he looks every inch like me?



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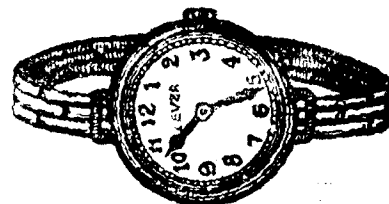
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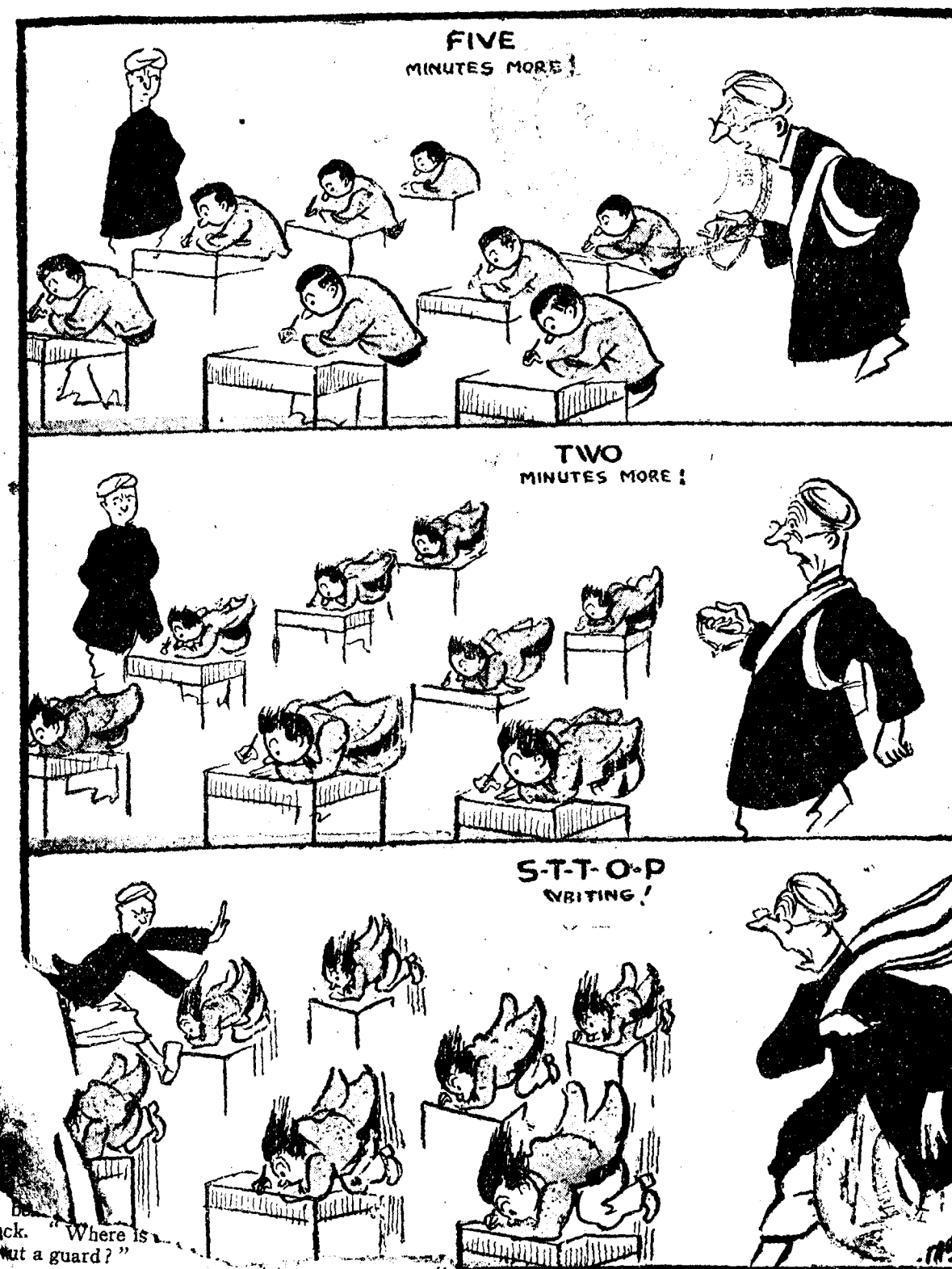
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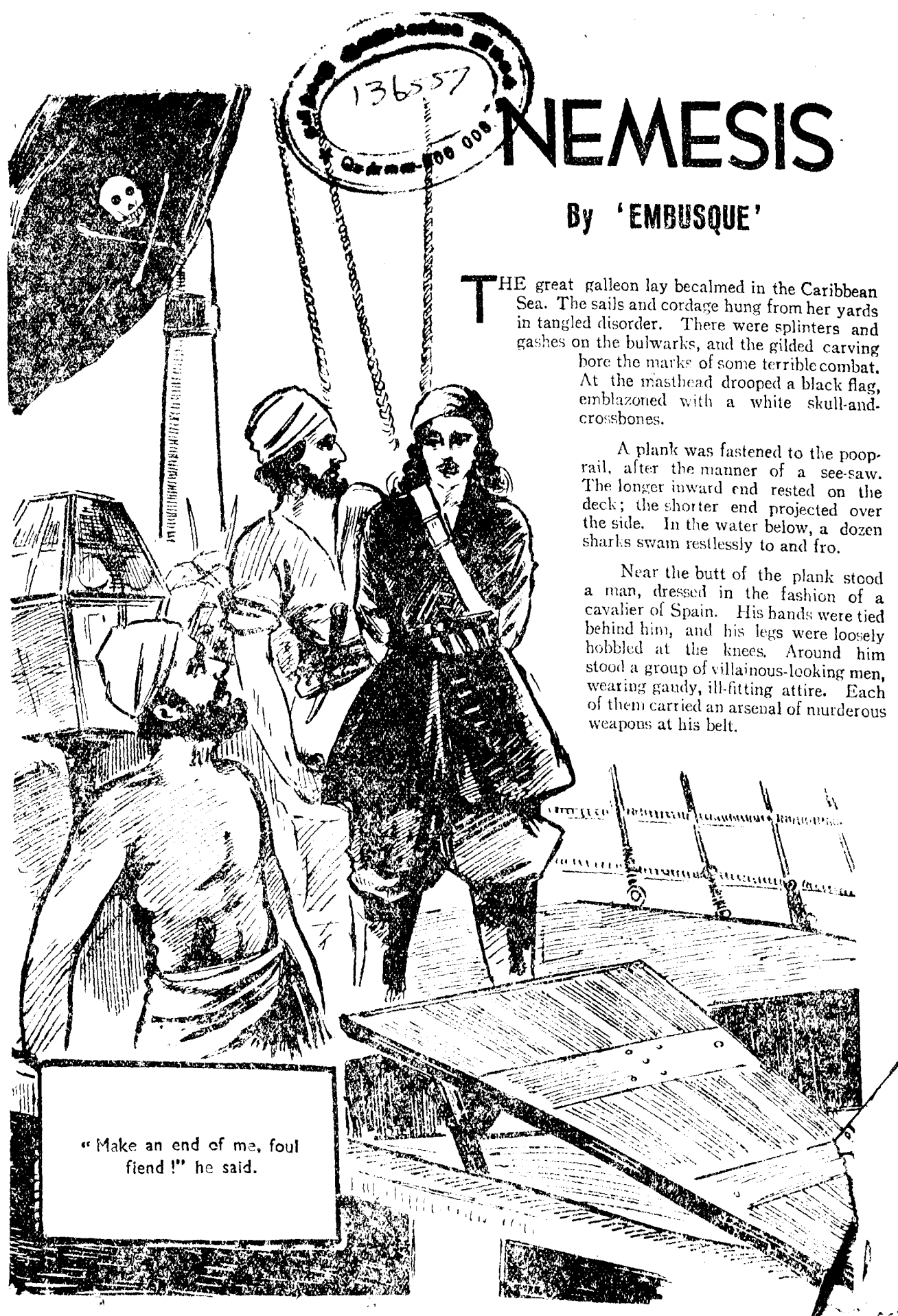
THE CLOSING STAGES



is
Gov

thunder.
travel
at a guard?"

"It thought safer that she travelled secretly."



NEMESIS

By 'EMBUSQUE'

THE great galleon lay becalmed in the Caribbean Sea. The sails and cordage hung from her yards in tangled disorder. There were splinters and gashes on the bulwarks, and the gilded carving bore the marks of some terrible combat. At the masthead drooped a black flag, emblazoned with a white skull-and-crossbones.

A plank was fastened to the poop-rail, after the manner of a see-saw. The longer inward end rested on the deck; the shorter end projected over the side. In the water below, a dozen sharks swam restlessly to and fro.

Near the butt of the plank stood a man, dressed in the fashion of a cavalier of Spain. His hands were tied behind him, and his legs were loosely hobbled at the knees. Around him stood a group of villainous-looking men, wearing gaudy, ill-fitting attire. Each of them carried an arsenal of murderous weapons at his belt.

The leader of the group was a man of great stature, called Sharkey the pirate, and his name carried terror all over the Spanish Main.

"Well, *senor* Captain," said Sharkey, "we have kept you till the last. Truly, my boys are great wags. Did you see how the little sailor howled when they tore off his ears? Was it not a merry jest to drive him up the plank with artful dagger-cuts, and keep him hoping and praying at the very point of balance?"

The Captain made no answer.

"Speak, you dog! Shall I burn out your tongue with hot irons?"

The Captain raised his head. "Make an end of me, foul fiend!" he said.

Sharkey burst into a roar of laughter. "Not so fast, my fine gentleman! Think you to die before you have given up your secret?"

The Spaniard started. "Ho, indeed!" roared Sharkey. "We are not such fools as that! Consider: here is a great galleon of Spain, sailing in the Gulf out of season. Heading for the Antilles and homeward, yet with not an ounce of cargo aboard. Armed with great ordnance, yet with not a soldier to man the guns. Commanded by a Don of Spain; yet he lives not in the great cabin, but in the fore-castle with a skeleton crew. The Governor of the Indies does not thus send the ships of Spain on an empty errand. What is the secret?"

The Captain remained silent. Sharkey drew him slightly aside, and thrust his face into the Spaniard's. "Tell me!" he whispered, "were you going for treasure, hidden in the islands?"

The group of cut-throats moved uneasily. "Speak up, Sharkey!" one growled. "If the Don has anything to say, let him say it in the hearing of us all."

"Back, dogs!" howled Sharkey menacingly. "If one of you dares to interfere, I'll tear out his heart with my bare fingers. 'Fools,' he added in a lower tone. 'I will but cozen the Don, and slit his throat afterwards.'"

The pirates retreated doubtfully, leaving Sharkey alone with the Spaniard. "Sea, *senor*," said Sharkey, "how I master this scum. You can trust yourself to me. Tell me the secret, and I will spare your life."

The Spanish nobleman stood stiffly upright, a curious glitter in his eye, and a curious curl to his lips. "Very well, Sir Pirate," he said, "I will tell you."

"Good!" replied Sharkey. "Then I will surely spare your life, and restore your possessions."

"Sir Pirate," continued the cavalier, "there is no secret in this ship."

"I know that," growled Sharkey.

"It is conveying something even more precious. It is conveying the lady of my lord and master, the Governor of the Indies."

"The beautiful Donna Isabella?" said Sharkey, thunderstruck. "Where is she hidden? Why does she travel without a guard?"

"It was thought safer that she travelled secretly."

"We have searched every inch of the ship," said Sharkey. "Where is she hidden?"

"You will spare my life?"

"Have I not sworn it?"

"He who spares, shall be spared," said the Don, cryptically.

"What nonsense is this?" cried Sharkey. "Tell me where the lady is hidden!"

"In a place specially contrived," replied the Captain. "A new deck was built in the great cabin. Beneath it is a secret apartment, lighted only by a stern-window, and reached by a trap-door under the carpet."

"Where were you taking the Donna Isabella in such secrecy?"

"To Tortosa, in the Lesser Antilles."

"But that is an uninhabited island!"

"It is not for a gentleman of Spain to question the orders of his noble master," replied the Don. "And now, Sir Pirate, will you indeed spare my life?"

"Spare your life!" laughed the ruffian. "It will give me the greatest pleasure to torture you by inches and throw your mangled body to the sharks!"

"I expected no greater mercy," replied the Spaniard calmly. "In faith, I was prepared for it." Before Sharkey could prevent it, he stepped on to the plank, and shuffled along it to the point of balance.

"Farewell, Sir Pirate," cried the Don. "He who spares, is spared." With hobbled limbs the Captain stepped firmly onward, overbalanced, and plunged into the sea. The sharks thrashed wildly for a brief while, and then all was still.

The waiting pirates came forward. "Did he tell, Sharkey?" they asked.

"The dog has escaped me!" cried Sharkey, in a rage.

"But did he tell?"

"He told me nothing."

"At what, then, did you converse so long?" demanded one of them, voicing a general suspicion.

"You gallows'-food!" shrieked Sharkey. "Who dares to say I would betray you?"

The men drew back. "Get to your quarters, dogs!" shouted Sharkey. "To the fore-castle, the lot of you. I will sleep in the great cabin."

Grumbling, the pirates withdrew.

Sharkey barricaded the door of the great cabin, and washed and perfumed himself. He put on a fine silken doublet and hose, and curled his hair. Then he removed the cabin carpet, and lifted the trap-door.

The apartment below was as large as the great cabin, but with less head-space. In a high chair near the stern-window, a beautiful lady sat, quietly reading.

"What is the matter?" said the lady, in the proud tones of one accustomed to command. "What are the noises I have been hearing overhead?"

"This ship is in my hands," replied the intruder. "Do you not know me? I am Sharkey."

(Continued on page 6)



Misunderstood :

Wireless Enthusiast (bursting into room): Auntie, I've got Vladivostoc.
Auntie: Dear, dear. Why don't you go and see a doctor about it?

Limerick :

There was a young lady of Kizique
Who possessed an adipose phizique;
She liked to play games
Like other boys and dames;
But the only one she COULD play was—
Bezique!

Splash :

There was a young lady of Dirst
Who possessed an abnormal thirst;
One day she drank
A ten-foot six tank;
But sad to say that she soon—birst!

Puzzle Corner :

Why is the moon a cheerful sort of fellow?
Because he is very rarely blue.

Faugh :

Then there was the man who made thousands of rupees by writing. No, he was not a famous author, but only a forger.

Cricket Cameo :

I don't allow cricketers to deposit money, says a bank manager.
Evidently he thinks that they will make runs—on his bank.

Perfume and Pun :

A slot machine in Germany ejects a quantity of scent whenever a coin is put into it.
When something goes wrong with it, the proprietor puts the notice "Out of Odour".

Funny :

The Post-master of a large town received recently a parcel containing the severed fist of a man.
Another mailed fist?

Epitaph :

"Give me a kiss," he said to the maid
When he thought his wife was out shopping;
The poor man, how could he know
That his missis was eavesdropping?

Unfriendly :

"Who was the friend with you last night at the theatre?"
"He was not my friend. He was my husband."

Epitaph :

"Of all the women I have known
You are the very best,"
He told a girl, his wife overheard;
No flowers by request.

Literal :

A post-office employee was charged with having knocked down a man, when he pleaded that he was only playing a game.

The Postman's knock?

Seeing Things :

I don't believe there are angels, says a reader.
We ask him to take a walk along the Marina any evening.

Epitaph :

Let's say a prayer
For Jonathan Duggin;
His wife was looking when
He was a blonde huggin'!

THE MIRROR OF LIFE



By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri.

ADULT EDUCATION

SOMETIME ago I sat down to write an essay on *Juvenile Education* for publication in the *Merry Magazine*. My readers know the upshot of that attempt. That beautiful essay never got written, as a school drama and a school prize-distribution butted in and drove out the most beautiful of my essays. The result was that a great educational push was lost to India. You know that India is the land of forlorn hopes and infinite regrets. So, one more lost hope and one additional regret does not matter very much. I now propose to write an essay on *Adult Education* and hope that the thing will come off and will not add to the above-said budget of hopes and regrets.

I have never yet been able to understand why adult education has not yet succeeded in India. There is no surprise in the failure of juvenile education in India, because in this remarkable country there are no juveniles. It seems that on a memorable occasion one of the greatest of South Indian educationists—Mr. W. A. Porter of the Kumbakonam College—said that in India all persons pass from childhood to manhood and that youth is non-existent. I rather think that there is no childhood at all. Everyone is born an adult and becomes an aged person eighteen years after birth. You know how Minerva was born in full panoply from the head of Jove. In the same way we have full-grown adult (not even adolescent) persons born in full panoply of experience which is but another name for disenchantment. There are of course some persons who are born old and grow older. These, however, are the exceptions—the bright and brilliant exceptions. The rule (however) is that persons are born adults and become aged after eighteen years.

Hence there is every reason for adult education to succeed in India. We have none but adults if we exclude the 'persons' who have passed their eighteenth year. If adult education cannot fail for lack of adults, then why does it fail at all? It fails because of lack of education. This reminds me of what was said by a Minister of Industries in the Madras Cabinet in 1923. They were the glorious days of Dyarchy. Please do not confound 'Dyarchy' with General Dyer. Do you know General Dyer? He was appalled by the rising census figures of India and he tried to redress the wrongs of India by the best of all forms of birth-control *i.e.*, shooting down the extras. Dyarchy is the skilful means devised to bring under control the rising prosperity budgets of India. I am not a politician—much less a statesman. I feel puzzled by politics which is often poly-sticks and nothing more. I have often wondered why a man is called a statesman. Does the word mean that he belongs to the state or that the state belongs to him? I am sure that it is the latter because that is what we find in practice. But I speak subject to correction. We had monarchy. It gave way to dyarchy. The law of evolution is said to dictate that homogeneity should make room for heterogeneity. If this be true we are the most evolved people, as we have attained the maximum heterogeneity possible to man. The law of heterogeneity demands that dyarchy must evolve into polyarchy. That is just what the Parliament is giving us in the year of grace 1935.

I set out to write a grand essay on Adult Education and am drifting into politics about which I know nothing. Not that I know more about education. But I know something about it—at least as much as the toad knows about the barrow. Where was I? I was with the Minister. He said: "I am a Minister of Development *minus* Forests, and you all know that development depends a good deal on forests. I am a Minister of Industries *without* Factories, which are a reserved subject, and industries without factories are unimaginable. I am a Minister of Agriculture *minus* Irrigation. You can understand what that means. How agriculture can be carried on extensively without irrigation in the hands of those who are responsible for it, is rather hard to realise. I am also a Minister of Industries *without* Electricity, which is also a reserved subject." Thus we have a portfolio of Agriculture and Industries *minus* Irrigation and Forests and Electricity and Factories. This is as good as six minus half-a-dozen. It is just in that way that we have got Adult Education *minus* Education. Let us work out this problem.

Adult education — Education = Adult.

That is why the adults of India are where they are.

The other day I attended that crown and consummation of Adult Education *viz.*, Convocation. A wag said that it was not so much a convocation as a provocation or a suffocation. I do not agree with that vitriolic view. I only know that convocation is not convocation. It does not mean con (together) vocation (finding work). You know that sometimes *con* is a contraction for *contra*. We talk of pros. and cons. A convocation is really a contraction for a contra-vocation. But that is by the way. I attended the convocation whether it be convocation or contra-vocation. I once wrote in these pages

about the pageant of the convocation. Let not my readers suppose that I am trying to trade on their exquisite virtue of forgetfulness and palm off an old article on the Editor. The Editor is a regular Argus. He has got more than a hundred eyes. As for the readers, I am too much of a self-respecter to suppose or concede that my original works could ever be forgotten. I see that you raise your eye-brows. Your tongue is in your cheek. You do not believe that I am a self-respecter. But I assure you that I am a true and invincible self-respecter. The sham self-respecter says that he respects himself too much to respect others. I respect others and I say that I am equal to them and they are equal to me. Hence self-respect follows from respect for others. The sham self-respecter cannot accept God because God makes him feel small in his own eyes. But I love God because God makes man equal to Him and hence self-respect must be equalled to love of God. But I must stop here. I attended a recent convocation to see the consummation of adult education. The V. C. (this does not mean Victoria Cross) asked the adults whether, if they were admitted to the various degrees, they would conduct themselves as became members of this University. I suddenly felt as if I were in the Land of Dreams (not the land of cakes). I seemed to hear those words as I heard them when they were addressed

to me. I forget what I said then. Did I say "I do promise"? What is the conduct that becomes members of this University? I did not know and I do not know as yet. The adults (of the fair sex and of the unfair sex) then promised to promote the cause of sound learning. This is another phrase, the meaning of which I did not know then and do not know as yet. Does it mean learning which is full of sound (and fury, signifying nothing)? The adults then promised to uphold and advance social order and the well-being of their fellow-men. How is this promise to be carried out? Of course by communal representation and communal rotation. Do you know what is communal representation? Two brothers owned a cat in common and effected a partition. Each took a half of it. Do you know what is communal rotation? It is the cat chasing its tail. Which cat? The cat so cut in two, each half of the cat pursuing its half of the tail. The adults then promised that they would maintain on all occasions their purity and reputation and never deviate from the straight path. What is the straight path? Of course the Marina. Their only work will be walking up and down the Marina. That is adult education in practice. Once again I have not written my projected essay. When I write my beautiful essay on Juvenile Education I shall write my yet more beautiful essay on Adult Education.

NEMESIS—(Continued from page 3)

The beautiful young woman recoiled in horror. "The pirate?" she whispered.

"Nay, do not be afraid," replied Sharkey. "I have never tortured or slain a female captive—at least, not a young and pretty one."

"What do you want of me?"

"It is needless to ask, my dear," replied the ruffian, smirking. "It is not every day that even Sharkey comes upon so choice a morsel. This is indeed a day, that Sharkey possesses the grandest lady in all the Indies, and the prettiest."

"I beg of you, sir, do not touch me," cried the lady, a fearful distress.

"Nay, nay, my sweet," said the pirate. "Think not that I shall treat you hardly. Sharkey is as gentle with women as he is ruthless with men. Am I not handsome? May I not be loved for myself? Am I not King of the Spanish Main? I will make you my Queen. Come, my dear, it is not in a young woman's heart to remain lonely and a prisoner."

"I am indeed lonely," said Donna Isabella, in strange tones.

"Then come to my arms!" replied Sharkey.

"Do you indeed desire my embraces?" asked the lady, with a burning glance full of foreboding.

"I ask no greater boon."

"Are you not afraid?"

"I fear no woman—or man."

"Have you no fear of God?"

"I will brave any consequences, to possess such beauty as yours."

The great lady looked at Sharkey, and shuddered.

"So be it," she said.

The morning Sun crept into the window of the cabin. Sharkey lay snoring in the great bed. Beside him was stretched the beautiful wife of the Governor of the Indies, wide-eyed, staring upwards. In his sleep, Sharkey put out a hand, and touched her flesh. The beautiful lady trembled, but did not move. A delirious smile spread over the features of the sleeping man.

Presently Sharkey awoke, and sat up. "Ah!" he said. "My Queen is still there! I feared I had but dreamed it. Truly, you shall be my Queen," continued Sharkey, with the greatest complacency. "My Queen, with real royal blood in her veins. Who thought that such a thing could happen to Sharkey? Between us we will rule the world! Never did I know that the noble ladies of Spain possessed such fire, such delight, such strange self-abandonment. Never have I enjoyed such love! My Queen, my Paradise of delights!"

The pirate began to pet his newly-found queen. She shrank from his touch, and yet offered herself with a strange eagerness.

"Pretty fingers, fashioned for joy!" cried Sharkey in an ecstasy of pleasure; and then his voice died away.

He was gazing at the hands of Donna Isabella. The skin had a peculiar scaly appearance. Between the fingers the flesh was blanched, and bore a kind of bloom that broke away like the filaments of a cobweb.

Sharkey's jaw dropped with a nameless dread. "Oh, God, save me!" he cried, in an agony of terror.

The lady looked at him. Sharkey grovelled to the floor in horror. "Oh, God, don't let it be!" he moaned. "What is that on your hands?"

The eyes of Donna Isabella glittered in dreadful triumph.

"It is leprosy," she said.



ONE of the worst scourges of our cities is the beggar nuisance. At street-corners and bus stopping-places, near churches and temples, at funerals and festivals, one always finds lazy, filthy beggars, in platoons, trying their best to look hungry. There is great competition in this profession, not only because of the opportunities for loafing it provides to the initiates, but also because it offers bright prospects for the clever man. If my memory serves me well, a member of the Madras Legislative Council recently mentioned that he knew a beggar who sent a remittance of five rupees to his family in the month of every week-end! With all this to their credit, Madras beggars fade into insignificance before the twenty beggars, who formed an organization, at Moravaska Ostrava, Czechoslovakia. These twenty men, trusty and strong, divided the town into wards, one to each beggar, to prevent overlapping. They all pooled their resources and invested it on a motor car. Ladislav, the big chief, drove the members of the organization to their respective 'constituencies' and some hours later picked them up again one by one and drove them to headquarters. The swag was pooled and shared. Ladislav getting an extra 10 per cent of the takings for his duties as 'organizing treasurer' and chauffeur.

Two merry, immaculately dressed men entered an inn at Domasin, in Bohemia, and ordered the best repast that Mine Host could lay on the table. They pulled out their wallets and flourished them before the eyes of the crafty landlord and spoke of a sudden stroke of luck they had had that day. To celebrate it, they consumed several bottles of the best in the landlord's private cellar and when the time for departure arrived, each insisted that he should settle the bill. Finally, unable to come to an understanding, they sought succour from the landlord. It was agreed that the latter should be blind-folded and the first man he caught hold of should pay the bill. An hour later, the land-lord's good dame came home after doing some shopping and found her spouse playing Blind Man's Buff in an otherwise empty room!

An impecunious Chinaman, Chen Ting-ngoh, was tramping the side-walks of Shanghai, with a borrowed dollar in his pocket, when he was accosted by a Russian, who offered a red pillow for sale. Thinking his wife would be delighted with a surprise present, he clinched

the bargain and took the pillow home. Feeling tired and drowsy, he stretched himself on a *charpoy*, with the pillow under his head. He felt quite uncomfortable and in abject disgust, he ripped open the erring pillow and to his wonderment, he found another covering of extraordinary embroidery inside. He went on peeling off successive layers, till he came to a ball of cotton-wool. This contained 49 pearls of great size and beauty. Chen is now richer by £ 3,867. The pillow is stated to have been lost by Empress Dowager Tsz Hsi during the Boxer Rising, when she fled from Peiping. She subsequently offered a handsome reward for its recovery, but it remained hidden, until Chen came across it.

Recently, consternation ruled supreme in legal and lexicographical circles over the use of the expression 'Oakie Doke', in a Seattle (U. S. A.) court of law. People began to whisper of the inroads American 'slang' was making into English literature and looked forward to the day when 'O.K.' would be 'K.O.' d' (knocked out). But Charles Funk, a well-known publisher of dictionaries became by no means funky, when he heard of 'Oakie Doke'. He emphatically declared: "Americans have abandoned false prudery and are willing to call a spade a spade. In my opinion such terms as 'you big Palooka', got the Heebrie-Jeebries' and 'getting the jitters' (i.e., feeling afraid) are 'Oakie Doke.'" Mr. Funk however, did not commit himself to actually inserting the above expressions in the forthcoming editions of his dictionaries.

Latest 'Howlers' to brighten the New Year (Tamil and Telugu).

A republic is a place where nobody can do anything in public.

Dust is mud with the juice squeezed out.

A 'Whip' is the slang name for a member of the Liberal Party.

Momentum is what you give persons when they are leaving.

Napoleon escaped from Melba.

The three parts of the human eye are pupil, the beam and the mote.

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

THE motive of life, apart from the hunt for food, may be postulated as a perpetual endeavour for appropriating power and position. The history of nations is the history of their struggle for supremacy. The history of political parties, that collectively go under the name of a nation, is the history of their struggle for the promotion, to the top, of a political concept and thereby control the prime mover that runs a state.

Of particular interest to us is the evolution of the British party system of government. First the feudal barons against the king hugging foolishly his 'divine prerogative'; then the State always hard up for cash ranged against the wealth and pageantry of the Church; later the middle classes in opposition to the nobility; and finally Capital *versus* Labour. These are the laborious stages through which England has evolved her political institutions. Contemporary history is just a frantic defence of a threadbare, discredited capitalist civilisation which stands for the perpetuation of unequal and iniquitous social values against a glamorous idea that philosophers have dreamt through the ages, the socialist idea of a society with equal opportunities for all: a wider application of the slogan raised by Rousseau and Voltaire, taken up by France with mad enthusiasm, but forgotten soon enough in the race for colonial expansion. It is evident that capitalism is fighting in its last ditch. Roosevelt is covering his retreat by a compromise—the N. R. A. Code. In Germany and Italy it is barricading itself behind a jerry-built structure of Nazism and Fascism. In England it is trying to cozen itself and the world by forming a hybrid government, drawing renegades from opposing parties, and calling it 'National'. Broadly, therefore, there are only two parties in any given state at the moment.

What about India? Ours has been an unfortunate history, something in the nature of a helpless and beautiful woman being ravished by every alien who passes her by. With a common cultural background, geographically one, we lacked, and still do, the conditions that go to make it a powerful nation—a common outlook, unity and discipline.

Happily the great mutiny of the eighteen-fifties ushered in a feeling of revulsion and a national consciousness. But the onrush of nationalism was stalled by forces that are exerting a baneful influence on our political life. The undignified sight of the two major communities of India flying at each other's throats is sad enough; as if this were not sufficient, we have the added humiliation of political parties sponsored by unscrupulous adventurers polluting public life, thriving on sub-communal hatred, on jobbery and on shameless mendicancy. Parties are all right for people who have a government of their own. In the peculiar condition of India where we are engaged in trying to find a synthesis for clashing interests and a national expression, we cannot afford the gilded luxury of plural political parties and fritter away our energies in internal squabbles. There is place only for two parties in India to-day: the rulers and the ruled. Need we prolong our struggle by tolerating these self-seekers who are side-tracking the main issue? As one of our publicists said last week, the day that we apply a manly foot to these unnatural and un-national adventurers and send them to the junk-heap, that day would be a great day for India. The results of recent elections in this province seem to indicate that the eminent and respectable Order of the Boot is gathering strength.

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FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

What He Meant
One Christmas a certain citizen was invited to dinner at the house of one of the leading men in the town. At the dinner-table he was placed opposite a goose. The lady of the house was placed on the visitor's left. Seeing the goose, he remarked:
"Shall I sit so close to the goose?"
Finding the words a bit equivocal, he turned round to the lady and said, in a most apologetic tone—
"Excuse me, I meant the roasted one."
Done
"When you proposed to Miss Jenkins," asked Jack, "did you tell her you were unworthy of her?"
"No, I didn't," replied Tom. "I was going to do so, but she told me first."

Uncertain Balance.
"Father, why do they call money you have in the bank a bank balance?"
"To show the great range of the English language, my boy. They call it a bank balance because it is the most uncertain thing there."

He Lost
Two friends were travelling in Ireland and one of them said to the other:
"An Irish cabman is never satisfied with his fare, however much you may give him."
"Well," said his companion, "I will bet you five pounds that, if we drive in a car, I will give the driver a sum that will satisfy him."
"Done!" said the other. "Shake hands on it."
They took a car and had a short drive. The driver was then given a sovereign for his fare. There was silence for the space of two minutes, and then the Irishman spoke:
"It seems a pity to change this, your honour. Have you such a thing as the price of a drink about you?"
Sadly the man who lost his bet paid his companion five pounds.

Hard Luck
Doris was rather backward in her studies, and one day, when her father was inquiring

into her standing at school, the little girl admitted that she was the lowest in her class.

"Why, Doris, I am ashamed of you!" exclaimed the mother. "Why don't you study harder, and try to get away from the foot of your class?"

"It isn't my fault," replied Doris, in tones of injured innocence. "The little girl who has always been at the foot has left school."

A Study
"Did you see the pleased expression on Mrs. Brown's face when I told her she didn't look any older than her daughter?" asked Mr. Jones, after the reception.
"No," said Mrs. Jones; "I was looking at the expression on her daughter's face."



Lover: (after a quarrel): "This is the end!"
She: "Alright! Have your own way. As far as I am concerned I refuse to believe this is the end. We are still six stations away."

MY DEAR SEENU,

SELLECT a paper that is most popular in our Presidency and make your bow to the public from it. It will cost you about two rupees to get an inch of space. It will be enough if you appear before the public about four times a month.

It would be idiotic to buy the space and just announce your name and address. That will never do. For aught the public care, you could be a grave-digger! The thing to do is to put the space to the best use possible. Send a copy of the following immediately to the paper:

"Wanted 4000 sufferers from depression, worry, fears, and harassments, to communicate their addresses to M. B. Jyothishalaya, Malendipost."

The response to this appeal will amaze you. Next week send the following advertisement:

"Free! Free! Absolutely Free!"

Send your name with the name of any flower or the hour of writing to the following address and receive a free-life reading by return post. Send only five annas in stamps to cover postage."

This will give you enough postage to carry you through your correspondence in the initial stages.

In the third advertisement, you must use a little more intelligence. Have it inserted under the 'Personal' heading:

"If Mr. N. Y. Z. of Kotipuram who has drawn a horse in the Derby Sweep, as per M. B. Jyothishalaya's prediction last August, communicates his present address to the Proprietor of the above Jyothishalaya, he will hear something of interest to him."

Between December and March when the Guindy Season is in full swing, you must run a series in the papers:

"Facts speak for themselves. Our spotters in last year's races: *Lightning*, *Star Dust*, *Domba*, and *Thug*. Consultation free for *bonafide* punters. Correspondence received after 6 p. m. on Saturday, 12th December, will not be attended to."

You may be tempted to think that these are wildly irrelevant, illogical methods. But my boy, these are precisely the advertisements I inserted when I started and the results overwhelmed me. To the first advertisement inviting 4000 sufferers, I received about 150 replies and I had to reject about 50 because their suffering was mainly physical—from falling hair to epilepsy. I had not thought of spiritual healing yet and so I felt it would be a waste of time to get into touch with them. I gave

my attention to the remaining one hundred letters. The amount of worry and despair, and harassment and fears in this world is simply astounding! Over seventy were chiefly worried about money; because they hadn't any, or couldn't keep any, or couldn't multiply what they already had. The rest formed a miscellaneous lot: (1) Marriage: Unmarried people eager to know when they would marry and married people asking when they would commence being happy in their married life. (2) Work:

No. 3.

Unemployed people wishing to know what career would suit them and when they would be recognised as suitable, and people already employed eager to know when they would be transferred, promoted, or pulled out of a stagnant position. I sat down at 10 in the noon everyday and wrote replies till 4 in the evening. My answers usually were that they were

passing through a bad period and if they cared to know when they would be out of the bother and what they would have to do to be out of it, they must send their horoscopes or date and hour of birth, and detailed accounts of their futures (together with warnings wherever necessary) would be sent to them by V. P. P. After this letter, at least fifty dropped off; but the remaining fifty were more than enough to help one to carry on. You can expect anything between three to five rupees from each; not to speak of some extra money from people who accept your suggestion and have a *puja* performed to placate the planets.

You might wonder what I did for postage at this stage, because to the four thousand sufferers in the first advertisement there is not the slightest hint of postage made. What I did was, I never posted the replies to the hundred letters till I received the response for my second advertisement, that is, the offer of a free life-reading for enclosing postage to the value of annas five. You will be surprised at the number of people who are eager to have free service done to them. They were so enchanted at the idea of a free life-reading that they did not bother to ask why I needed five annas for postage when the Post Office was prepared to carry our letters (in those days) for an anna or so, up to a weight of five tolas! Such questions simply do not occur to them. To the second advertisement, about two hundred people replied and among them there were only about forty or fifty that had overlooked that part of the advertisement which mentioned the postage. It cost only an anna to post their life-reading and from each I had still four annas of postage left and this I utilized for answering my first correspondents.

A balance sheet in regard to stamps at this stage was:—

Receipts:

Postage of 5 annas each from 150 correspondents	Annas. 750 worth of postage.
---	------------------------------

<i>Expenditure:</i>	Annas worth of postage.
Free life-reading to 150 ...	150
Answer to 100 correspondents (arising from the first advertisement inviting 4000 sufferers from worry etc.) ...	100
Total ...	250

Balance ... Annas 500 worth of postage to my credit.

That is business my boy, about 500 annas worth of postage conjured almost from the air!

The institution of racing is the greatest blessing of this century. To my racing advertisement in the Guindy Season I received as many as fifty letters by every post. I needn't tell you in what plight I was! I didn't know a horse from a donkey, and yet here were experts seeking the aid of my inspiration!

You see, "Consultation Free to *Bonafide* Punters" clause in the third advertisement was the work of a genius. Who was not a *bonafide* punter and who would miss a free consultation? The consultation given to them gratis was that my charge was Rs. 1-8-0 per sealed envelope containing the list of winners in the day's card. After despatching these replies I sat up at nights and read the columns in newspapers containing the names of horses etc., and tried to get something of the race business into my head. I have a fairly quick brain and I soon learnt what was what. I took small slips of paper and wrote on each the name of a horse, folded the paper bits, shook them up in a box and asked our little boy to pick them one by one. I wrote down the

winners in the order they were picked and despatched the list in a sealed envelope by V.P.P. to my clients. I had the winners picked a few dozen times thus, so that not more than a dozen clients received the same list of winners. Variety is the spice of life, my boy.

The race-goer is a very pleasant person to deal with. Almost all of them that had written for free consultation wrote back asking for a sealed envelope to be sent by V.P.P. Some even sent the money in advance!

I can't say that all my selections turned out winners. Nor on the contrary would I say that all of them proved duds. You see I sent out a variety of lists of 'Winners', and some horses mentioned in some of my envelopes did bring money to some of my clients. They were immensely grateful to me. They continued to be my clients for years. The others? I never bothered about them, nor did they about me, evidently. I never heard from them. Punters, as I said before, are the pleasantest fellows to deal with; they are the most philosophical lot that one could wish to meet in this life. When they don't get returns for their investment they don't grumble and make a fuss like ordinary folk, but take such things with a cheerful resignation and hope for better luck next time.

My dear boy, I have never written a single line free of charge for anyone till now. I have always sent my writings by V. P. P. But now I find I am writing reams to you, paying the postage myself! They say that blood is thicker than water; and they are right. If my example inspires you to get about and make money, I shall not feel that I have written at such length in vain. Wishing you the company of all the troubled creatures of the Earth,

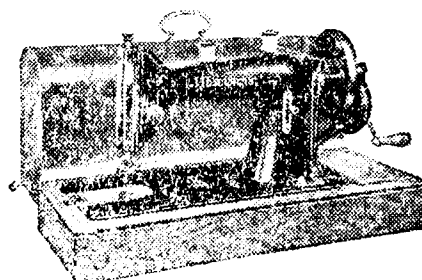
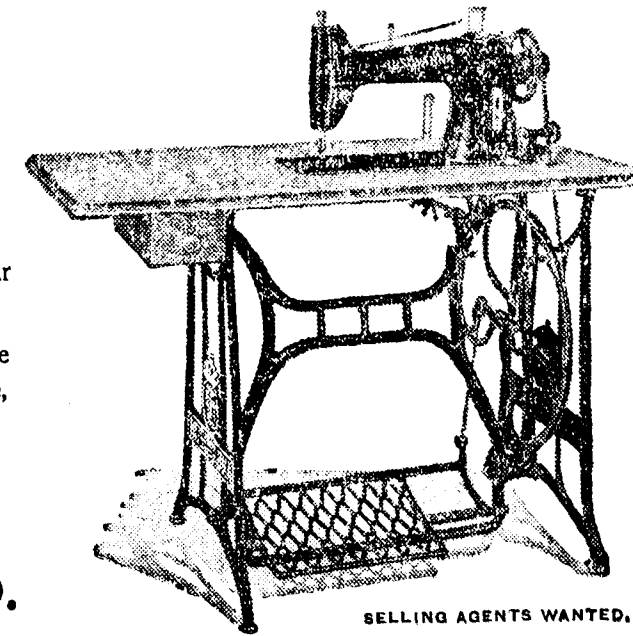
YOUR DEAR UNCLE.

R. K. NARAYAN SWAMI

HUSQVARNA

SEWING MACHINES.

(MADE IN SWEDEN.)

Finest Quality—Best Workmanship.

Strong, Simple, Silent and Speedy.

Incorporating many modern improvements so far obtainable only with the Husqvarna.

Ball-bearing Flywheel, Forward and Reverse Stitching, Stitch Regulator, Tension Release, etc., etc.

Vibrating Shuttle or Central Bobbin.

Send for illustrated Booklet M.

Sole Agents:

ADDISON & CO., LTD.

Mount Road, MADRAS.

SELLING AGENTS WANTED.



LOVE'S LABOUR NOT LOST

I. The Power of Whisky

BANG!!!

A leg shot out and caught the other fellow neatly on the seat of his pants. The girl on the settee screamed. That isn't the Editor kicking that pestiferous miasma, the aspiring poet; the screaming girl on the settee isn't the Editor's typewriter—I mean his typist.....But wait.

Let me correct a possible misapprehension, as the Big Boy with the blue pencil said the other day.

This is not a love story, at any rate not one worked out to orthodox specifications. No gushing, two-listed, go-getting hero is here; no whimpering heroine; no black-hearted, sinister villain, trying to get fresh with the girl and queering the pitch for the other. Neither is there any kissing or cuddling, licit or illicit. What little unavoidable kissing there is, is carefully screened off from the gaze of the plebeian and patrician alike. I am a red-hot purist. Also a doctor, of medicine and microbes. So, on grounds pathologico-pharmaceutical and on grounds ethico-moral, I vehemently object to one set of lips blazing away with another set of lips of the opposite order. Those of my readers who will not get along with a story without a sizeable complement of kissing and petting, are welcome to imagine, at appropriate moments, the hero having a hefty go at the heroine on her lips, nose, chin, neck, shoulder-blade, clavicle, ulna—er—and all the thou-

sand and one kissable places that God in His infinite mercy has provided her with.

On the other hand, neither am I a tragedian nor a sob-stuff stunt-monger. I don't make the hero go south towards Fort St. George sighing "Unhappy me!" and the heroine north towards Fort William with face like a diabetes-pills advertisement, wailing, "Jimmy, where are you?" Nor again do I make them barge into each other after an elaborate agenda of gruelling experiences and hair-raising horrors and pull off the climax with a grand little intra-labial conflagration against a sable background of lachrymal clouds.

Well, well, the Editor is toying with his cast-iron paper-weight. Cast-iron paper-weights are not exactly healthy for us literary chaps, if put to unauthorised uses. So, let's get started.

* * * * *
Christmas-day 9 p. m. Mr. Shakleton's drawing-room. Furniture and other appointments of the room, the usual. A gaily decorated Christmas-tree in the middle of the room. Mr. Jimmy da Costa standing on one side of the Christmas-tree, holding his trousers' seat. On the other side of the Christmas-tree, Mr. Shakleton, looking remarkably like a superannuated cross between the Chief Minister and Reichfuhrer Hitler, sprawling on the floor, legs in ether.

Why is Jimmy in that inelegant predicament? Because, Mr. Shakleton kicked Jimmy on his bottom. Why is old Mr. Shakleton in that ungraceful attitude on the floor? Because, though he landed the kick all right, he lost his poise in the unusual exercise to his nether limb. Why did Mr. Shakleton kick Jimmy on Christmas day of all days in the calendar? Because, being the season of good cheer, Mr. Shakleton had a couple of glasses too many and further because, that ass Jimmy chose the wrong time and demanded of Mr. Shakleton the hand of Hazel in holy matrimony. And who the blazes is Hazel? Mr. Shakleton's daughter, of course—that girl sitting in the settee with a scared look.

Mr. Shakleton wheezed painfully and slowly ambled up to his feet. He poured himself a long drink.

The great thing about whisky on Xmas-day is that you just don't know where you are. It heals up old and new sores with remarkable rapidity, like patching-solution. Very efficient, this high-ball business!

"Have I hurt you, Jimmy?" There was a shade of concern in that kind enquiry.

"Not at all, sir." However, as a measure of prudence, Jimmy kept to his side of the Christmas-tree.

"Have a drink, Jimmy."

"You are very kind, Mr. Shakleton.

Thank you, sir." Jimmy regarded Mr. Shakleton's right foot dubiously.

"Come out, you blinking cocker-nut, I won't kick you again," said Mr. Shakleton amiably.

Jimmy, satisfying himself that all was quiet on the western front, left cover and came out. Mr. Shakleton poured him a drink. They quaffed their drinks in silence and settled down comfortably into a sofa.

"Father!" The voice from the settee. "Father, I....."

"Cut the cackle!" Mr. Shakleton glared at his daughter. "Stay where you are."

He turned to Jimmy. "Jimmy, you are a blamed wash-out. An all-down hobo; nerveless as a lobster dead last year."

"I hope not, sir."

"Don't contradict me! You are. Now, what did I do to you just now?"

"Gave me a drink."

"That's modern history; go to mediæval."

"You....er..."

"I kicked you, didn't I?"

Jimmy nodded ruefully.

"If you had a grain of nerve in you, what should you have done?"

Mr. Shakleton waited for an answer. It was not forthcoming. He continued, "You should have punched me one on the jaw. You should! That was how I got my dear, dead Martha."

"Indeed, sir!"

"Yes." Mr. Shakleton rubbed the brother of his chin reminiscently. "When my father-in-law gave me the lurid eye, what do you think I did? I biffed him one on the tummy, bit the nose of my mother-in-law-to-be, and walked off with my Martha! How's that for a bit of wooing?"

"Su-perb! But, Mr. Shakleton, times have changed, you know."

"Times be damned! I want my son-in-law somewhat on those lines. Let's have another drink, Jimmy."

They had another. In fact they had another another. Being a 'vague' sort of fellow, Jimmy didn't get on well with the drinks. He grew maudlin and, to his cost, recklessly romantic.

"Jimmy, let's shake hands," said Mr. Shakleton with a burst of emotion.

They shook hands heartily.

"Jimmy, my boy, don't marry; they are the very devil. Give me your hand, Jimmy." Mr. Shakleton patted that hand. "Whatsh for do you want to marry, anyway?"

"Oh, sir, I love Hazel with a love as vast.....grh.....as.....as the expanding universh. There'sh nothin' in the worl' I wouldn't do to win her."

The old boulder eyed him steadily. "You mean that?"

"Indeed, I do. I will break into a lion's cage and bite it, if you put me on the job."

"H'm. Bite what—the cage?"

"He—he—he," simpered Jimmy idiotically. "The lion, sir."

Mr. Shakleton thought a bit. "Where do you bite it?"

Jimmy gulped, poured himself a drink, put it into himself, and considered. "On its right ear."

Mr. Shakleton beamed. He brought down his ample palm down on to the head of Jimmy in what he thought a jolly pat, but which was, in reality,

a sledge-hammer blow.

"Cricky, lad! You are now talking."

"You are very good, sir."

"The day you bite that lion, Jimmy, Hazel is yours."

"But, sir, suppose the lion bites me?"

"That—hic—that'sh your look-out," said Mr. Shakleton breezily. "Lishen, Jimmy. There is a circush in the city now, and there is a lion in the show. Have a go at it, boy, and claim your reward."

The poor girl in the settee screamed and was about to swoon away in the latest style, when Mr. Shakleton laid a kindly hand on her shoulder and said, "Be a man, Hazel."

Jimmy helped himself to three inches of raw whisky, stood up, filled out his chest and held out his hand.

"Done, shir,—hic—I'll do it!"

Mr. Shakleton grasped the outstretched hand and shook it warmly for five minutes, choking with spirituous joy.

"Let'sh have a lasht drink, Jimmy."

By the time the last drink found its home, they began to see and imagine things. Mr. Shakleton saw everything in doubles and Jimmy in trebles. They shook hands again, swearing eternal friendship. Suddenly and without any warning Jimmy fell on Mr. Shakleton's neck and sobbed, "Mummy, darlin' mumm, boo-hoo," nameless emotions surging in his heart and a gallon of whisky surging in his stomach; while Mr. Shakleton patted Jimmy's back caressingly, gurgling, "Martha, old gal, thish ish indeed—hic—the happiesht day of me life!"

(CURTAIN)

(Did Jimmy bite the lion? Or was it the other way round? Watch for the next instalment.)

We don't think.—Ed.

THE TEASER SERIES, NO. 2



[Here is a story which is deliberately left incomplete. A number of questions are asked at a particular stage in the story and the reader is expected to answer the questions himself and verify his answers by turning to page 17. Much amusement can be derived if more than one guess is made, before turning to the answers—Ed.]

The Man on the foot-board



A small attache case and an absurd little cushion on top of it was the barrier between her and the rest of the passengers in the II Class Railway Compartment.

Wedged in a corner-seat, absorbed in reading a book, oblivious to the desultory conversation going on in the carriage, she arrested my attention the moment I occupied the corner opposite to her.

She was the only lady in the compartment and I was the only other person who preferred a book to the boisterous company engaged in discussing election prospects.

My attention was divided between my book and her. Without being rude, I took mental stock of her. Apparently she was travelling unaccompanied. Orange-bordered white bodice and saree, velvet-strapped sandal on foot,

gold-rimmed glasses, hair parted over the ear and elaborately plaited, bound and decorated with jasmine, a pair of thin gold bangles on either arm, a gold wrist watch and chain: no nose screw: drops on ears, not expensive, but effective. I noted all these details. A school mistress? No. I felt she had more culture than that. A missionary worker? No. She bore conscious signs of having taken pains to make herself alluring. Unmarried woman, earning her own living? The way she crossed her legs and sat unmoved by the noise and crowd denoted independence and perfect sangfroid.

I would read a page or two, then, my mind would wander, guessing who and what she was and I would pull-up my rambling thoughts and return to the printed page.

There was the usual ingress and egress of passengers at the various halting places, fresh topics were taken up for discussion; but we two sat absorbed reading our books. And the barrier effectively gave her an air of aloofness.

At Poiwada I left the carriage for a cup of tea. I noticed that most of the passengers in our compartment were also getting down. It was dark and as the train wouldn't be starting from the station for a quarter of an hour, I went out and lingered over the cup that cheers but never inebriates. When I returned to the carriage, later, she was the sole occupant.

To travel alone with her? How long? The situation was so ticklish that I refused to believe that we two would have to travel alone, at night, in the carriage, together. Other passengers would surely arrive before the departure of the train. I walked a few paces away from the carriage and stood watching its solitary occupant. The first bell! Yet none entered the carriage. The whistle of the guard! Sheepishly I climbed into

the carriage and closed the door. She didn't even look up. Not a trace of uneasiness about her. If anything, it was I who was feeling uncomfortably nervous.

The barrier was there, though there was no necessity for it now. The train was gathering speed and, leaving the bright-lit station, plunged into darkness. Though I collected my books and newspapers and attempted to read them, my mind was in a turmoil. Who was she? Was she getting nervous too? What was she thinking? Would she cry or scream or pull the chain if I tried to engage her in conversation? Could I put her at ease by telling her that I was a perfectly harmless person and every inch a gentleman? I wished something would happen to give me a chance of saying something to her. Something did happen.

There was someone on the foot-board, behind her, for, a head craned forward to peep into our carriage and immediately withdrew. 'Railway thieves', said I to myself and felt like a knight of old, ready to succour a damsel in distress. Rolling up my sleeves and gritting my teeth, I dashed to the window by her side and looked out and saw the man.

She screamed!

The man on the foot-board was lying low but sprang up with an oath on his lips on seeing me.

Questions:

- (1) What did the man on the foot-board say?
- (2) Who was the fair passenger?
- (3) And who was the man on the foot-board?

[Guess the answers and see if your guesses are correct by turning to page 17]

(ANOTHER TEASER NEXT WEEK)

MYLAPORE READER WINS Rs. 50

Mr. G. NAMBERUMAL CHETTI,

SOUTH MADA STREET, MYLAPORE

Returned the copy of the Merry Magazine dated 9th March bearing Lucky No. 658920.

AND RECEIVED THE PRIZE AMOUNT OF Rs. 50

DAN Cupid is a deep schemer. In Hollywood, if anywhere, he plays with the heart-strings of the stars and, not infrequently, with the purse-strings of the studio executives. He is rarely communicative, for his efforts do not always bear fruit. Sometimes he feels desperate at his failures and groans as he bends over the grindstone, sharpening arrow-heads of varying shapes and sizes. The small, dainty ones are for young, tender hearts; others, larger and heavier, for the more hardened. He uses also big, jagged stones on the hearts of multi-divorcees and such other people with hearts of concrete. Cupid is old as time and is clever. He has discharged enough arrows to maim an elephant, but to no avail on Hollywood love-teams. Marriages and careers will not mix, he wails.



Cary Grant holds 'Diamond Lil' Mae West in his arms and whispers words of eternal love into her ears. There is all the ingredient that makes for romantic love, leading to the altar. The audience blesses them with the 'Aisle, Altar Hymn'. Do they really fall in love with one another? It is strange but here are the couples on whom Dan Cupid might run amuck; but he doesn't. Mutual interest, youth, attractiveness and even the emotionally exalted atmosphere are there; yet it does not result in romance. They don't even get up to, much less beyond, the chatter or rumour stage.

The greatest love team are Charlie Farrell and Janet Gaynor. They idealize the youthful sweethearts. But Charlie married Virginia Valli and Janet married and divorced Lydel Peck. There are Maureen O'Sullivan and Johnny Weissmuller, Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald, Kay Francis and Bill Powell, Myrna Loy and Warner Baxter, Clark Gable and Joan Crawford, Sally Eilers and James Dunn and Ronald Colman and Loretta Young. Cupid's arrows pierce these couples time and again but in vain. There have been one or two exceptions: Adrienne Ames-Bruce Cabot marriage is one; John Gilbert-Greta Garbo whirlwind romance is another; Pick-Fair long-period marriage is the third and wedding bells may ring for Loretta Young and Ronald Colman. Now, Douglas Jr. and Gertrude Lawrence, are making a brilliant pair in England. But generally, the love-teams are not even on speaking terms, off the set.

Well, why not?

Here are some of the answers by the stars themselves.

Mae West says: "Steel, not silk—that's love. When you have to kiss a man fifty to one hundred times

an hour, to please the director, to get the correct angle, one doesn't get any tingle out of those kisses. The only emotion is that of fear of the censor if you are over-doing it and of the fans if you are under-doing it. I'm sure the boys don't find our embraces overwhelming, after an entire day spent at it. Then, lunch is the only important thing to them as it is to me. When lunch is more important than making love, then Dan Cupid's tail is between his legs....."

Kay Francis: "When I am in the studio I have left my heart at home! Instead, I have brought my ambition along with me in my make-up box. I am infinitely concerned with myself, my looks, my lines, the way I am putting my scene over. I am concerned more with myself and less with the man. He is just an adjunct to me. In love, I'd think first of the man and then of myself; that makes both the difference and the explanation. Egotism, such as we have when on the set, shuts off love, and there is no room, no thought, for any other self."

Warner Baxter: "Love the girl you appear with in pictures! What a ghastly idea! I would kill such an emotion, if any, as soon as it is born. If I were to fall in love with the girl playing opposite me—Myrna Loy, let us say—I would be self-conscious, self-sacrificing, a thing an actor can never afford to be. I'd either over-play or under-play the part. Love isn't a mathematical question, nor is it one of timing and disposition. The tender love-speeches are learned by heart, positions calculated to a nicety and kisses photographed from every angle. Love is, therefore manufactured, and killed."

Francis Lederer: "In order to play a love-scene, I must imagine myself in love with the woman I am playing with for the time. I experience, for that time, all the emotion, all the exquisite pain and rapture and suffering the part—and the woman—call for. The actor must be able to cease the illusion that he is in love, not only for himself, but for the audience as well."

Irene Dunn: "A man and woman must be by themselves, and know it, to fall in love. On the set, there is neither the time nor room for private emotions to enter. Then, too, a good many of us are married and that does make a difference. Or, if we are not married, most of us are in love with someone long before a picture starts. If an actress or actor falls in love, it is not because of the circumstances, but in spite of them..."

ANSWERS No. 2 TO TEASER

on page—No. 14

Question I. What did the man on the foot-board say?

Answer:—He said, "Darling! Is this brute annoying you?"

Question II. Who was the fair passenger?

Answer:—She was the wife of the man on the foot-board.

Question III. And why was that man on the foot-board?

Answer:—It's a long story, but we will make it short. The man on the foot-board was a member of the Railway flying squad of ticket examiners. He was one of the newly-weds and had set up house at Ganggaum, a junction 100 miles up the line to Poiwada. But his work was to check trains running down from Poiwada. Since he was newly-wed, his wife, by previous arrangement

In The Next Issue

THE TALKING DOG By 'Embusque'

How it talks!

JANGLI'S DAY-MARE Teaser, No. 3
Hanuman in flesh and blood wanting to—
but wait and see.

BELIEVE ME OR NOT By 'Zitka'
We don't. What a fall was there!

WEDDING-BELLS By J. H. Acott

LOVE'S LABOUR NOT LOST—Part II By V. B. Prasad
The mystery deepens—in Jimmy's bed room.

Also
Joyfull, Auntie, Star-Dust
and our usual bright features.

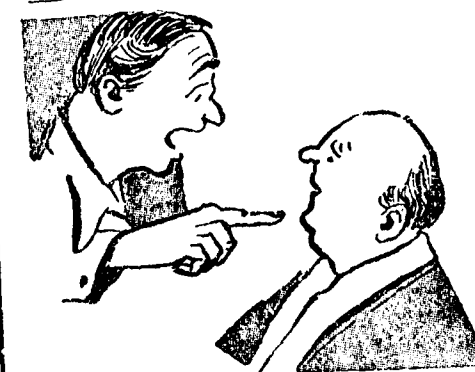
used to travel down (of course without ticket) to Poiwada where he would meet her and, when his ticket-checking duties were over, spend the night pleasantly in her company.

What is that—?

You say the 3rd question remains still unanswered. Well, you don't know that he very narrowly missed the train, got into the guard-van when the train was in motion and

as it wouldn't be stopping for another 45 minutes, he had to walk on the foot-board half the length of the train at great danger to his life. So great is the power of love; mark you! And he had to be careful too! Supposing the A.T.S. was travelling II for a change and in the compartment where his wife was! Have you had enough? Thanks.

DO YOU KNOW?



Please see answers on page 24.

1. Where is the skin on the human body thickest?
2. Why does 'No.' stand for number?
3. What is 'Voodoo'?
4. What is Hedonism?
5. What is phenology?
6. What does R.S.V.P. at the end of an invitation indicate?

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL

45. A MORNING'S DRILL

MADRAS,

20th April, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

WE were doing gas-drill the other day. There is always a lot of gas released on any parade, especially if Sergeant Oldbold is the instructor. He has a voice that shatters the air, blasts holes in the ground, and brings all buildings in the vicinity crashing down in ruins.

The Sergeant was cursing us like anything and we stood there looking terribly frightened, but really wondering if there would be apple pudding for dinner. Such thoughts are a kind of protective vacancy that you acquire in the Army. On parade your head is only intended to keep your ears apart; and your brains must not obstruct the free passage of the kind remarks of your instructor, in one ear and out of the other. When you get off parade, your cerebrum resumes its normal functions.

"Look at you!" cried the Sergeant, pretending to be overcome with anguish. "All you think about is what you are going to eat next!" As you see, these sergeants are remarkable mind-readers.

"You are a lazy, dirty, slovenly lot," he continued, more in sorrow than in anger. "You haven't any brains, and you come on parade and do what you like. Anyone would think you were officers."

The Sergeant paused, and began to amplify his remarks. All the grass in the vicinity shrivelled up and withered away.

At this moment, Second-Lieutenant De Montmorency came walking by. He is a nice youth just out of the Academy, and we call him Pansy. He has learned in the text-books that soldiers must be treated with fatherly kindness, so he fathers us. It is one of the peculiarities of the Army that a boy of nineteen can father a hard-bitten old warrior of forty, without either party seeing anything strange in the relationship.



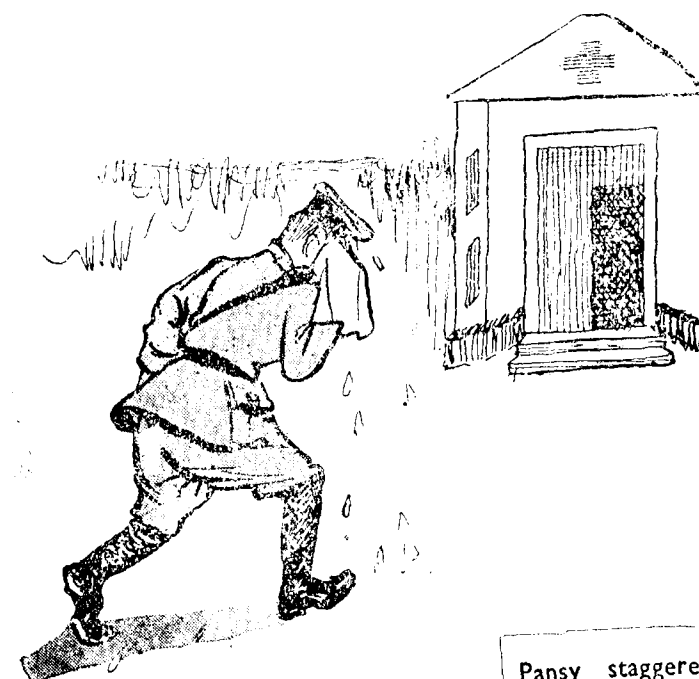
"Dear me!" said Pansy. "Did I hear you talking harshly to the squad? Tut, tut!"

"Who, me, sir?" said Sergeant Oldbold, looking surprised and virtuous. "Oh no, Sir. I was admonishing the squad in a fatherly manner. I was remarking, sir, that really, they were being very naughty."

Pansy looked at us, and we all assumed expressions to indicate that the Sergeant had just called us naughty boys.

"Carry on, Sergeant," said Pansy; but not knowing the customs of the Army, Pansy did not walk away. Naturally, a sergeant cannot carry on in the accustomed way if an officer is listening. Poor Oldbold was quite tongue-tied, and we all wished that Pansy would go away and stop fathering us.

As I was saying, we were doing gas-drill. Poison-gas is one of the humane inventions of modern warfare. It burns and chokes you in a nice, tidy manner, without any of the horrid noise and mess of high explosives. Besides, as the books say, it does not always kill you. How-



Pansy staggered away, holding his handkerchief to his streaming eyes.

ever, if you prefer not to take the risk, you have to learn to be quick with your gas-mask.

"Remember, my lads," said Oldbold, with an uneasy glance at Pansy, "this is your only protection against an agonising death. Preserve your gas-mask; your life depends on it. Besides, if you lose it, you'll have to pay for another."

Pansy now took up the lecture. "Your gas-mask is your best friend," he said. "Always have it beside you. In fact, treat your gas-mask as you would your wife: grease it well every night, and scrub it all over with salt and water."

"If by any chance you are surprised by the enemy without your gas-mask, you will have to employ strategy. Your strategy in this case will be to take no notice of the gas, and to continue firing as usual. The enemy will thus be deceived into thinking that you have a gas-mask."

While Pansy was passing these remarks, the Sergeant was toying carelessly with the valve of a gas-cylinder. We were on an open piece of ground, with a gentle breeze blowing from the instructor to our side. The cylinder was filled with lachrymatory gas, and at intervals during the lecture the Sergeant artfully turned on the gas. As soon as we smelt a whiff, we had to put on our respirators like lightning, and then, like a lot of hooded goblins, we had to carry out musketry-orders and evolutions. After a while we would be manœuvred back to our original position, take off the gas-masks, and listen to the instructor until the process was repeated.

Pansy was still telling us never to be without a gas-mask, and we were looking despairingly at the Sergeant. Suddenly, Oldbold came to our rescue, and turned on the gas. In an instant we had put on our masks; but Pansy discovered that he was without one. Tears began to pour from his eyes.

"Turn it off, Sergeant!" he begged.

"It's turned off now, sir," replied Oldbold.

Pansy staggered away, holding his handkerchief to his streaming eyes. "Open order, facing left, load!" shouted Oldbold. "At the retreating enemy, five rounds rapid fire!" Laughing behind our gas-masks, we rattled off imaginary musketry at poor Pansy, who disappeared in the direction of the first-aid room, in search of something to soothe his smarting eyes.

"Let that be a lesson to you," said the Sergeant solemnly. "Never be without a gas-mask. Treat it as you would your wife. Take it to bed with you. And above all, don't go monkeying around when the troops are on gas-drill unless you have it with you."

Just then, Johnnie Walker brought a message to the Sergeant. Johnnie Walker is a runner. A runner is a very trusted man, because he has to carry orders through bombardments or floods, and even across the parade-ground when the Sergeant-Major is in command. The army still employs runners, because often in battle the modern devices for delivering messages get put out of action. Johnnie Walker gets his name from the fact that he is a runner, and has been running for years, and is still going strong.

It turned out that an old soldier of one of the detachments was dead, and we were to give him a military funeral that evening. The Sergeant sent us away to disinfect the gas-masks and return them to the store; then he paraded us to rehearse the funeral.

"You will imagine," said the Sergeant, "that the coffin has just left the mortuary, and is approaching the gun-carriage. Private Jones, you will impersonate the deceased. Advance! No, not like that! Approach the funeral-party in a slow and solemn manner. You are in no hurry to reach the cemetery!"

Jones marched towards us, looking uncommonly sheepish. "Present arms!" ordered the Sergeant as he

entered our ranks, "Reverse arms! In slow time, move to the right in file!"

We followed behind Jonah in a slow, measured tread, bearing our rifles butt upwards. "Halt!" howled the Sergeant. "That isn't the way at all. Compose your faces, and remember that you are not on your way to a fun-fair! You are following an old comrade to his last resting-place. Your expression should be one of quiet cheerfulness, because he is going to a better world, modified by sorrow because he has not paid his mess-bills."

We tried again, but the Sergeant was not satisfied. "Jones!" he shouted, "you are the worst corpse I have ever had on parade! Halt! I will act the part of the deceased myself!"

"Isn't it nearly breakfast-time?" whispered my right-hand man, in a very bored voice.

"Now, then," continued the Sergeant, "we are approaching the place of interment. The bearers of the coffin halt at this spot. You divide ranks, and line the entrance to the grave-yard. Halt! Inwards turn! Rest on your arms reversed!"

"The corpse now passes between your ranks. Steady!" And the Sergeant proceeded slowly into the imaginary cemetery, trying to look like a deceased soldier in a coffin.

"Stand easy! You may talk!" said Sergeant Oldbold after passing through our ranks. "That was all right, but you didn't have the proper look of regret as I passed to my last earthly abode. Anybody would think you were *glad* to see the last of me."

"Oh, no, Sergeant," said Private Jones righteously, "we know it isn't any good to buoy ourselves up with false hopes."

"Too true, my lad," said Oldbold grimly. "Sergeants are immortal."

"Yes, Sergeant," replied Jones, "I suppose that is why soldiers are found dead on the field of battle, wearing happy smiles. They've escaped from the Sergeant at last."

"There is no escape!" said Oldbold in sepulchral tones. "When you arrive down below, you'll find all your old Sergeants in charge of the squads stoking up the fires. And before you know where you are, you'll be doing extra drill for having a dirty shovel."

We next practised the ceremonies at the grave-side. "I suppose you heathens don't remember the service," said the Sergeant. "Never mind, I expect most of you will have it well impressed on your minds during your last few minutes on earth."

I wondered what he meant, and then it suddenly struck me that the chaplain recites the burial-service to

a man when he is going to be hanged. It is strange to think that only the worst criminals have the privilege of listening to their own burial service.

The Sergeant now turned serious, and began to recite the prayers which begin, *Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live*. We all grew very still while he was speaking, because they are very wonderful prayers, and suitable for persons of all religions, and even for persons with none. There is no dogma or sectarianism in the words. They are full of fine thoughts and powerful descriptions, and must strengthen and console anyone who listens to them.

We stood listening, and felt a bit ashamed of our silly jokes and our thoughtless soldiers' ways. It was a relief when the Sergeant came to the end, and fell back to describing our duties at the grave-side. "When the parson comes to *We commit his body to the earth*, the bearers begin to lower the coffin," he said. "At the words, *Ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, the nearest comrade of the deceased will throw the first handful of earth on to the coffin. Then, as the interment proceeds, you will first fire three volleys over the grave, in farewell. Last of all, the buglers will blow the *Reveille*, as a sign that our comrade will rise again."

"After that," continued Oldbold, in quite a different tone, "you will march back to barracks in quick time, with the band playing cheerful tunes. And don't let me hear any of you scallywags singing any facetious parodies to the tunes. In particular, I would remind you that *Old Soldiers Never Die* is not appropriate to the occasion."

At this moment the bugles began to play *Come to the cook-house door*, and we all heaved a sigh of relief.

"Spend the afternoon polishing your equipment for the funeral," said the Sergeant. "Any man who comes on parade with a speck of dust on him, will wish that he were in the coffin! And don't forget to boil the barrel of your rifle as soon as you return to barracks. The explosion of blank cartridge has a very corroding effect. Any man found with a dirty rifle-barrel tomorrow, will pay for a new rifle. And don't forget——"

The bugles again played *Come to the cook-house door*, cutting the Sergeant short.

"Look at you!" said the Sergeant. "Like a lot of dogs that can smell a bone! Food! That is all some of you joined the Army for! Dis—miss!"

We hurried away thankfully, and put away our equipment, and rushed to the cook-house door.

I am glad to say that there was apple-pudding after all.

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL



XXV

AUNTIE is not writing from the office this week, my dears. She has been called away to the bed-side of her old school-friend, Gabitha Gumboil. Poor Gabitha has been laid low by an attack of the windy spasms, and Auntie has to administer a dose of peppermint every half-hour.

Auntie is the fortunate possessor of an excellent bed-side manner, and a ministering angel in any sick-room. Auntie is particularly successful in cases of chronic insomnia. Her method is to read aloud a selection of her literary works. In a short while the patient relapses into a refreshing coma.

By yesterday's post came a communication addressed to Auntie 'In the Editor's room, on the Editor's desk'. It was safely re-directed to the residence of Gabitha Gumboil. Auntie's correspondent has evidently read a story called "Who Killed the Manager?" The boss had betrayed one of his employees, so she sat on his desk and slew him with a dagger.

Auntie is greatly intrigued at the idea of such melodramatic situations arising in the sedate offices of the *Merry Magazine*. Unfortunately, there is a strict rule that all murders must be done outside, and even the authors of 50,000-word epics are permitted to depart unscathed. Young ladies never sit on the Editor's desk. For one thing, the Editor does not do business that way. For another, the desk is always piled with galley-proofs, artists' drawings, blue pencils, paste-pots, and heaps of 50,000-word epics. They are very good epics, but a trifle too long. So, you see, we have no time to conduct French farce and Grand Guginol in the midst of the exacting business of running India's best literary magazine.

The same correspondent wants to know if your Auntie has to scrub floors after finishing the office work. Well, my dears, Auntie has often scrubbed floors in her younger days, but her present activities do not permit her to pursue such an easy means of livelihood. The fact is, chickabiddies, that authorship is a very oppressive occupation. In real life, people do not sit down and 'dash off a witty trifle', in the manner of the brilliant Bohemians on the stage. Writing is very hard work, and your poor Auntie can never escape from it. It is not only a

vocation: it is a disease. Auntie is eternally pursuing ideas, and the pursuit of these elusive things leaves no time for the pursuit of anything else—not even the male members of the staff. Even supposing Auntie permits herself an hour or two's relaxation in the society of her friends, something is sure to be said or done to suggest an idea, and your poor Auntie is on tenterhooks to rush back to her desk, and get the idea safely on paper before it vanishes into the void.

That answers the third of the dear boy's questions, my duckies. He actually wants to know whether Auntie goes out with the Editor, or whether Mr. Varma is the favoured one!

Master Axfel (Penang). "Mr. Joyfull is for ever trying to show how dishonest we Orientals are. So I will give him something to add in his next letter. I am going to sell two-anna magazines to the soldiers for eight annas. It is only fair that they should pay four times the usual price, for they get good pay for bossing the show. I could boss the show for one-tenth of their pay. Tell Mr. Joyfull that we can make better reformers than Europeans, because we don't have such a nasty temper, and we don't put on superior airs."

Auntie understands and appreciates what lies behind your dislike of her countrymen, dear boy. You may take heart from the fact that the day of the overbearing, second-rate European in India is over. There is still a demand, however, for first-class Europeans with decent manners, and I think that sensible Indians will be glad to have the services of such men for some years to come, and even to pay them reasonably well. It is unfortunate that you selected poor Private Joyfull for attack. Do you know that a private soldier receives in cash only twenty rupees a month? I am afraid the soldiers will not buy magazines for eight annas. They hire the magazines from hawkers, and pay two pice to have them to read for one day. By coincidence, on the day your letter was received, Private Joyfull was standing in the street of a town in Northern India, enduring a shower of brickbats, soda-water bottles, and lathi-blows. He and his comrades were all that stood between a small community of inoffensive Hindus, and a raging mob of 20,000 murderous fanatics. The soldiers suffered exasperation and injury for ten hours, and though they could have easily mowed down the blood-thirsty miscreants, the mob was eventually dispersed without harm to themselves or to the lives and property of the Hindus. I do not suppose that Joyfull will allude to the incident in his letters, but you can hardly consider him an enemy of the people, or one who 'bosses the show'. Why not follow the rule which is observed by decent Europeans?—In India, take nothing for granted, but take every individual as you find him. Good luck to you, dear boy.

Johnnie (Park Town). Auntie is glad to hear from you again, dear girl. You say you do not care to be swathed like an Egyptian mummy, or to be wrapped in thick robes like a cave-woman. Your own grandmother wears but a single sari, and you wish to dress with equal simplicity; but your husband disapproves. He likes you to have a lot of fine blouses, and half-a-dozen layers of underthings. Well, my dear, if your husband prefers you to possess all these garments, I do not think you should object. It is nice to have them, even if only for showing to the neighbours. And, after all, he has to pay for them.

Teacher (Saidapet). "I asked my pupils to make a map as home-work, and one boy brought a beautifully-drawn specimen. He has a brother in the Survey of India, so I was suspicious, and asked the boy if he had drawn the map with the assistance of his brother. He replied in the negative. Should I punish the boy for untruthfulness?" Certainly not, dear sir. The boy evidently told the truth. He would have no need to draw the map with the assistance of his brother. The brother probably drew it unaided.

Marwari (Bombay). "I am executor to a gentleman who believes in personal resurrection. He has made me promise to leave five thousand rupees in his grave, in order to provide himself with funds for his journey through the next world. Should I comply with this request?" Of course you should, dear sir. You must always be conscientious in carrying out such sacred obligations. Place a cheque in the grave for the full amount.

Ramudu (Guntakal). "They have introduced table-tennis in the Club. I think it is a silly game. A fellow starts to play with a girl, and she knocks the ball off the table, and they spend most of the time on the floor, looking for the ball. I don't see any fun in that." Surely, dear boy, the fun is when they are on the floor, looking for the ball.

Proth blower (Sivaganga). "I have started in the cycle business, but the customs of the trade are very hard. When I ordered a dozen lamps, they sent me an invoice for six nickel lamps, and six black-metal dittoes. I refused to take delivery of the dittoes; but no matter what article I order, they always include some dittoes in the consignment. Why do they insist on sending me things I have not ordered? What is a ditto?" Well, my dear, if Auntie is an ass, you are a ditto; and if you aren't an ass, Auntie is a ditto.

Builder (Royapuram). "I would like to invest some money in putting up mercantile property, but a friend warns me that in these days of depression, firms often set the premises on fire to escape their liabilities. How can I avoid this risk without paying insurance?" The next best thing to insurance, dear sir, is to build a block with a swimming-bath on the top floor, and a police-station on the ground floor. You may then safely let-out the middle floor as business premises.

Punter (Kothapet). "I lost all my money during the last racing-season. Please tell me a sure method of making money at the races." Auntie knows of two good methods, my dear. You may start selling tips to the other mugs. But by far the most lucrative scheme is to rent a stall just outside the exit from the course, and set yourself up as a pawnbroker.

Country Pumpkin (Malabar). "Does the Mayor of Madras wear a chain?" Auntie is not sure, dear boy, but I expect they let the gentleman walk about loose as a rule.

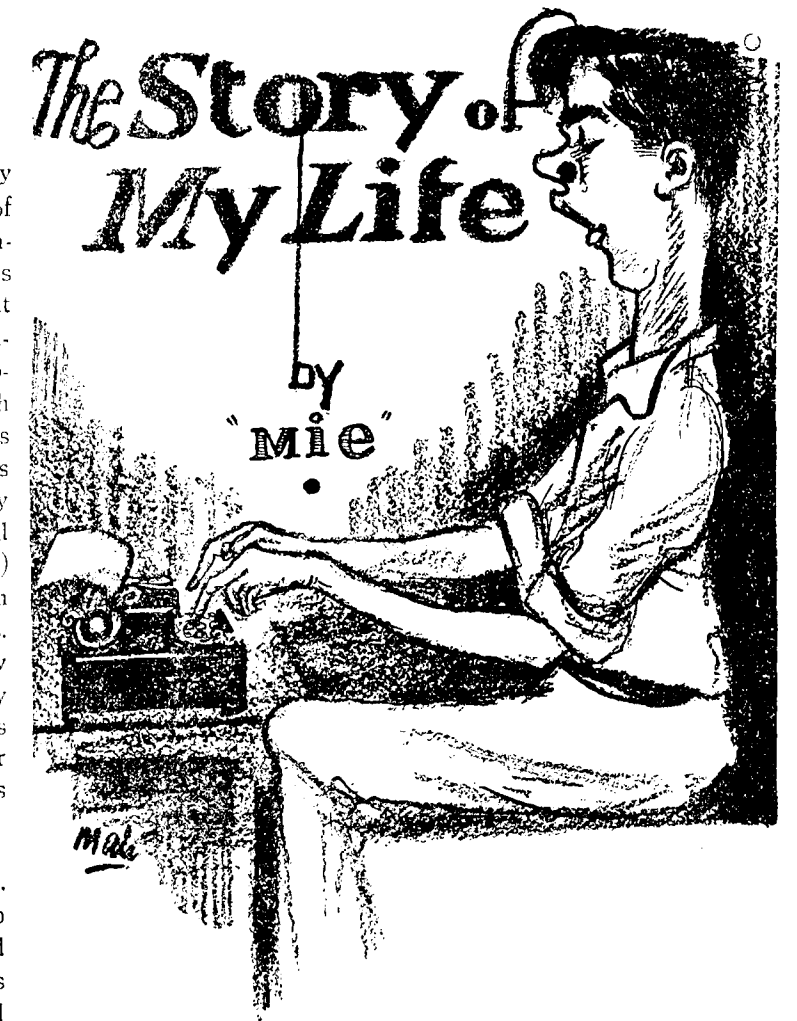
Subbu (N. Naik Street). "A gentleman dropped a rupee in China Bazaar Road yesterday evening, and quite a mob collected to look for it. I could not move until the crowd had dispersed." What, did you have your foot on the rupee?

Alarmed (Godavari). "The doctor prescribed some pills for my son, and I find that the boy has been taking the prescription to the chemist every day, and getting a hundred pills at a time. What shall I do if he has eaten all those pills?" Auntie does not think he has eaten the pills, dear madam. You will probably find that they exactly fit his air gun.

XVI

HISTORY was a subject which specially attracted me; not the dull history of institutions; not the details about 'Lancastrian Constitutionalism'; not the reasons for 'Tudor Despotism'; not the causes that led to the 'Fall of the Empire of Vizianagar'; not the tiresome clauses and sub-clauses in that great monument of English freedom—*The Magna Carta*. No, it was none of these that fascinated me. It was Romantic History that drew me—the history of individuals, the life and *affaires* and characters of monarchs (and their mistresses) of ministers and generals. This interest in personages also enabled me to eschew dates. It did not matter much to me whether Henry VIII lived in 1570 or 1783: I was merely curious to know how he conducted his various courtships and I mentally thank Henry for being what he was and providing Charles Laughton with an excellent role to portray.

I had always a great admiration for Henry. For, if there was any man who stood no nonsense from women it was Henry. And yet, he was so popular with the sex! His experiments in matrimony were various and even if he was a trifle unsympathetic towards his cases, he never lacked in material for further researches. What a manly fellow he was and how splendidly he managed things! And what a contrast to the men of to-day! We see all around us how the man of 1935 is made for trouble. Twenty minutes after he has led the girl of his dream to the altar, it will transpire that the girl of his dreams has a boy of her dreams who is not himself. The girl has married him to carry on an uninterrupted and fuss-less romance with her boy. What does the man do then? He does not, like Henry, act boldly, swiftly. No, he says nothing at all to her; he is too much afraid. He goes to Tanganyika for big-game hunting, takes to drink, presents the business end of a revolver to his head, tries to give one on his wife's boy's nose, or starts flirting with another girl, preferably married. He does not know how to handle women. But our Harry was different. If he had the slightest suspicion about his wife, he immediately rang the bell, 'phoned his executioner, and in an hour the affair was smoothly and satisfactorily settled. It was not constancy alone that mattered in his case. He was a regular hedonist and artist. He never could tolerate anything



effete or jejune. So if his wife failed to appeal to his æsthetic sensibility, he did not mind being a widower again. In these constant efforts towards perfection in conjugal felicity and avoidance of even a suspicion of boredom or surfeit, Harry stood alone, Bluebeard alone, of us puny moderns, making any sort of attempt on his royal rival's records. All the ladies in Henry's court—at least those with any pretensions to beauty—must have at one time or other felt his attention. Though flattered by the compliment, they must have instinctively raised their hands to their throats, as though they already felt the weight of the crown on their heads and also the executioner's axe on their fair throats.

Oh! I forgot something—Hollywood, and film-stars! They cannot be ignored. Marriage is as common as baths, and the publicity manager of one leading star has recently confessed that he has been unable to cope with the rush for the hand of his employer. Probably some stars will have to print application forms for marriage, on the following lines.

Candidate's height —
 Colour of hair —
 " eyes —
 Income —
 How many times married before and to whom —
 Of his ex-wives (or ex-husbands) whom did he (or she) love most }
 Why did he (or she) divorce them —
 Where were the marriages conducted (zoo, }
 aeroplane, diving bell, beach etc.) }
 How long does he (or she) wish to be }
 married to me — }
 Is he (or she) sure he has never before been }
 married to me (show certificates.) }

But I am digressing. I am speaking about historical personages and not Hollywood marriages.

Of all English kings my sympathies go out to King John. He has been violently abused not only by his own contemporaries but by later historians. He was no obscurantist, no enemy of the people's freedom. The real reason was that he did not gad about Europe with a two-edged sword in his hand like his brother Richard, Cur de Lyon, ostensibly with the object of driving away Gene Saracens out of Jerusalem and keeping the place exclusively for Christians. This pleasure cruise was known as a 'crusade' and besides Richard, King Leopard of Austria and other monarchs and nobles participated. Well, John, like a wise chap kept at home. Probably people thought he was a shirker and a coward. Anyway the nobles would not leave him alone. They pestered him and at last, their scribes drew up a long petition or something which the nobles wanted John to sign. John said, "Leave me alone, will you?" (in old English) and the barons who had no earthly idea what the paper was about, grew keener about John signing it. With a few damns and hells (also in old English) they presented it again and again until John, tired of all this, retired to a place called Ganymede. But they surrounded him and even made a few threats. John, who had been suffering from writer's cramp, (he used to contribute to *Ye Anti-Crusader*) managed to put his signature and the barons departed satisfied, leaving the paper on John's table; for when they saw that John signed it, they lost all interest in it and therefore started carousing and sat on till the small hours of the morning. John next morning sent it to them but they had no idea what the paper was until the scribes told them. Then they pretended John had stolen it and that one of them had recovered it. The paper got lost—the Baron Hugo of

Mercia's bull-terrier was seen playing with a piece of parchment. But generation after generation pretended that the paper existed and even copied imaginary passages from it and declaimed how their ancestors had wrung English Freedom from a cruel despot and tyrant. This is the authentic history of *Magna Carta* which still lawyers and politicians are fond of talking about. Politicians especially, when they near the General Elections, start talking about the *Magna Carta*, *Hachus Corpus* (another of the big hoaxes) though they are fully aware that there is nothing to prevent the Government from firing into an unarmed mob of fish-wives, or children with hook-worm, or nothing to prevent anybody from being haled into prison for no apparent reason.

Thus, John instead of being a cruel despot, was a nice gentleman, even, I should say, nicer than Alfred the Great whom no one is tired of praising to the skies. Well what are Alfred's qualifications for greatness? He burnt a poor woman's cakes once and was sufficiently rewarded by a piece of her mind. Then he is called the Father of the modern Navy but I have never heard of a battleship or destroyer or even a submarine called after him. He also did a lot (they say) for education and encouraged authorship. And look what he has done! He made Bede and other saints write (probably for a magazine he started) and the vicious habit spread and people took to writing until now how many are starving because they are authors! But for his brain-wave we (I speak for my tribe) could have turned our attention to such paying professions as butler, Government Minister, butcher, or executioner, not counting Agents of Railways or policemen.

And Alfred had also the passion for opening-ceremonies. He went about the country opening schools and monasteries when addresses were presented to him. Every now and then he went to the coast and launched a ship and made *speeches*. But probably he didn't do the opening ceremonies himself: he had enough ministers to do them. Perhaps, even, they as later in history, quarrelled among themselves for more opening-ceremonies. No, Alfred leaves me cold. I have greater admiration for his enemy, Guthrum who was a bold and fearless warrior.

YES! I KNOW!



These are the answers to questions on page 17.

1. On the scalp.
2. It is a contraction of the French word *Numero* meaning number.
3. It is a body of superstitious beliefs and practices including sorcery, serpent-worship, and sacrificial rites, African in origin and current among the negroes of the West Indies.
4. It is the doctrine of ethics which regards pleasure as the chief good or proper end of action.
5. Study of the times of recurring natural phenomena especially in relation to climatic conditions.
6. It is an abbreviation of the French phrase *repondez s'il vous plait*, meaning 'please answer'.

Ram Chandra's Hobbies

No. 4. RECIPES

By 'CHAPPIE'

MR. Ram Chandra sat down to breakfast deep in thought. His tea and toast remained untasted. The bearer hovered near with an anxious expression on his face. Was Mr. Ram Chandra suffering from some malignant complaint, or was he just ruminating on the culinary inefficiency of his commissariat.

Mr. Ram Chandra was a retired bachelor and his stomach revolted at the sight of the fare daily placed before him. The bearer nervously dropped a knife, and Mr. Ram Chandra awoke from his profound reverie with a start. His mind was made up. He would grant leave to his servant and himself take on the task of cooking his own meals. Besides, he knew that he could save some money by personally attending to his own wants. "Cook!" suddenly shouted Mr. Ram Chandra. "You can take ten days leave without pay."

The scion of the cook-house nearly collapsed from sheer amazement, and gabbled, "But sir, will you engage another cook?" "No," replied his master, a look of determination in his eyes. "I will fend for myself for the next ten days." The cook silently withdrew, to ponder seriously over the advisability of sending for the doctor.

Mr. Ram Chandra grinned, and extracted from the table drawer an ancient tome, entitled: *One Thousand Recipes for Cooks*. For a couple of hours he digested the contents. Proteins, carbo-hydrates and vitamins were rejected as being unobtainable in the local markets. He was at a loss why the author must refer to bread as the staff of life. Surely the staff of life was a fat bank-balance.

Satisfied that several of the recipes were within his power to cook, the budding chef went to the cupboard. Mother Hubbard's proverbial cupboard could never have been more bare. A tin of Madras curry reposed all forlorn on a shelf, but the other aids to cookery were conspicuously absent.

A visit to the cook-house followed and Mr. Ram Chandra felt somewhat forlorn. His cook, elated at the prospect of ten days leave, had hastened away lest his

master should change his mind. The cooking utensils of the previous day were still awaiting a wash-up. However, Mr. Ram Chandra decided that all this was part and parcel of a good chef's training, and set to work to straighten things up. It was a long time before he could remove the cold ghee from the sides of the *degchies*.

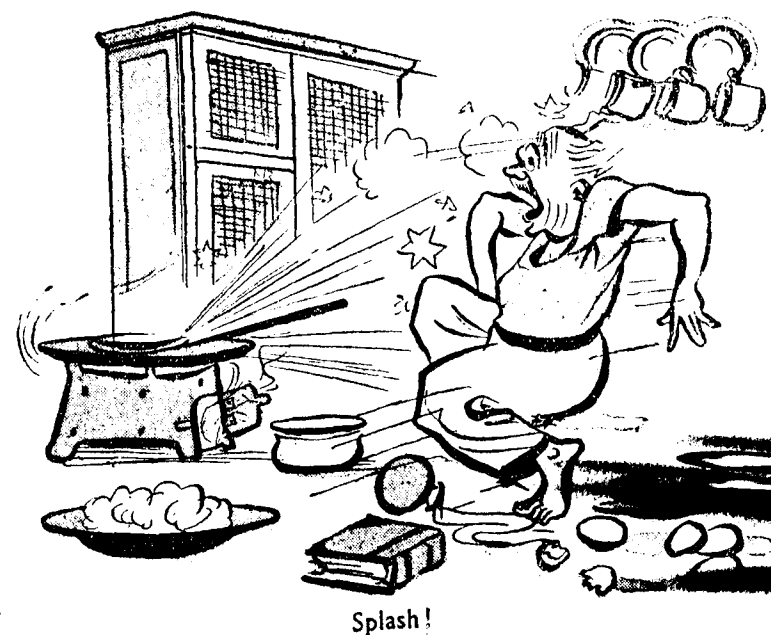
Time flew, and it was nearly lunch-time. Out came the recipe book. A hasty review of curry, broth, soup, bubble and squeak, etc., and Mr. Ram Chandra could not discover anything sufficiently appetising and easy for his mid-day meal.

Biscuits, buns, scones, rusks, pancakes, pies, pasties, puddings, fritters, etc., all required certain ingredients absent in the empty cupboard. He tore his hair and repeatedly cursed himself for being so hasty in deciding to cook his own meals.

Somewhat dejected and hungry, Mr. Ram Chandra trotted to the market and purchased a seer of flour and a dozen eggs. Returning home, he attempted to bake a pancake. All went well, with the exception of upsetting the flour on his clothes and dropping two eggs on the floor.

The ghee was boiling merrily in the pan. With a smile of triumph he gently placed the raw pancake in the hot fat. Splash! The scalding fluid sprang out of the pan on to his neck. The pancake now reposed quietly, and quickly turned black. Putting out his hand to remove the frying pan, Mr. Ram Chandra sprang back with a howl of pain. The handle was blazing hot. Alternately becoming hot and cold, he gazed sorrowfully on his culinary handiwork. The pancake was on the floor and the fat in the fire. He had ruined a new pair of trousers, and his hands and neck were burned. Turning round, his elbow caught the dish of eggs, and the lot joined forces with their friend the pancake on the floor. The stench of the fat on the fire was reminiscent of a chimney on fire.

Mr. Ram Chandra decided to make himself a cup of tea.



(Continued on page 25)

I cannot say if it was my little son, Hari's baby-box camera or the high-class one which that ostentatious cat, Selma, our neighbour, sported at the beach every Sunday evening that made my wife coax me to buy her a camera. Although it is unpteen years since I married Dhanvati, I confess, I have not, as yet, made out how she is geared. In this respect I am in the same boat as many other hubbies to whom their wives are everlasting enigmas. My wife is just a bundle of unreasonableness, unexpectedness and unmanageableness and how all these 'nesses' work within her, I have not the foggiest idea. Of course, she is trim and *chic* and all that. Well, she fell for a camera.

One day while I was writing a sketch she wafted into my presence and lit up the room with a hundred candle-power smile. I clicked my tongue as I felt it in my bones that another debit was looming on my already tangled financial offing. I fixed her with a look reminiscent of Polar regions. I mean, I looked at her with a just-out-of-the-frigidaire sort of countenance which a plate of ice-cream may have. Undaunted, she smiled again with higher amperage and adjusted her *sari* coquetishly. I thawed.

"H'm, what's it?" I asked.

She sat on my table and in the act inadvertently blotted the undried ink on my manuscript. Dangling her pretty legs, she wiped a smudge of ink from my nose with the free end of her *sari*. And she smiled bewitchingly.

"Yes?"

She giggled again and taking a cigarette from my tin, placed it between my lips and lighted it for me.

"Make out the inventory," I said, convinced that the symptoms indicated a request for something of value.

"Dhoro deal, I mean Dhalo dear, I've seen a ducky, dinky little camera at

THE WIFE LEARNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Saveccers
Won't you
buy me one?
It costs only a
little over a hundred
chips," she cooed.

"A camera! Not
this month, darling,"
I said coaxingly.

She pouted her lips and playfully snatched the cigarette off my lips.

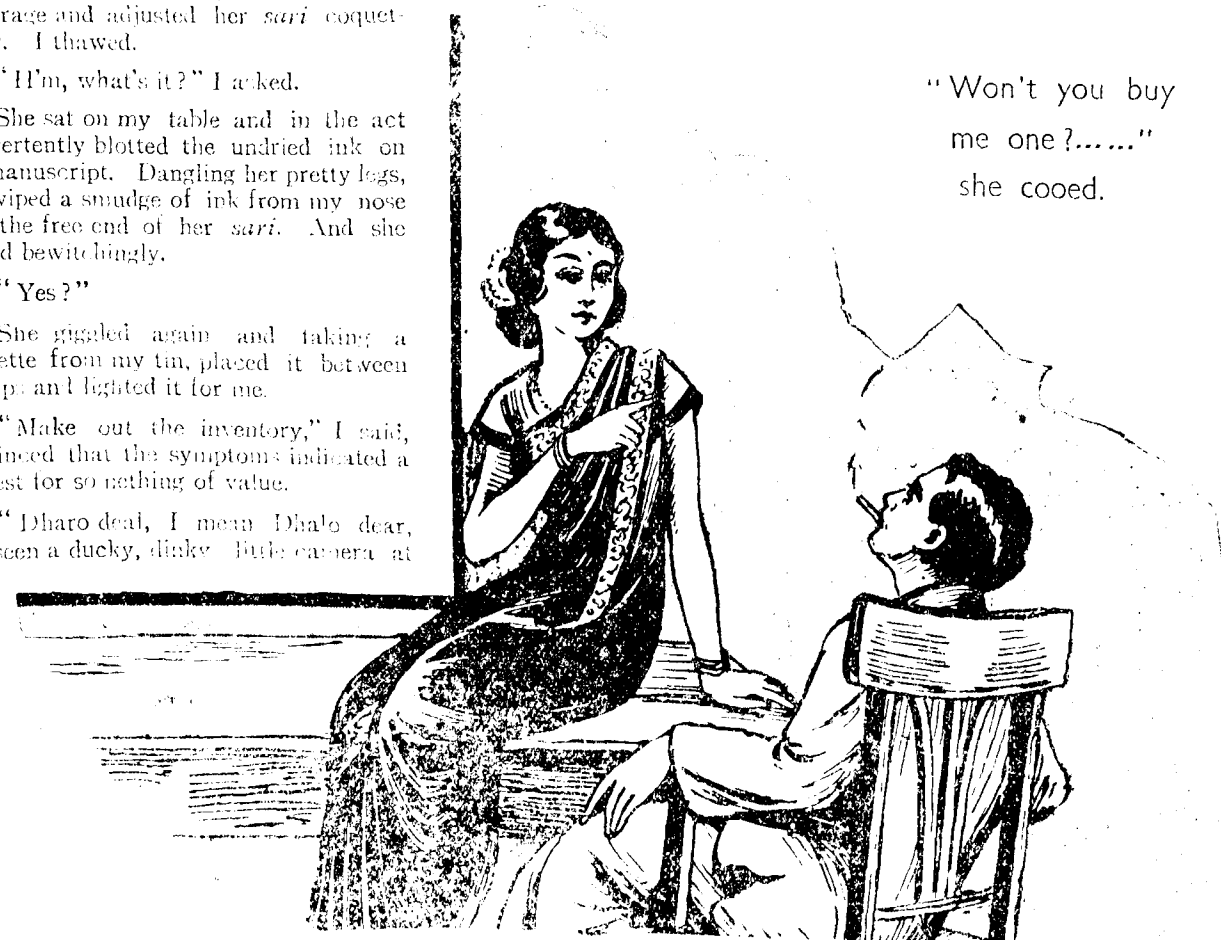
I think I have told you once before that when my wife sets her heart on anything, not even a locomotive can drag her off the idea. To escape her occasional expensive demands was like trying to light an electric bulb when the mains are cut off. I could only register defeat on my instrument panel. I capitulated and Dhanvati patted my back with the air of a race-horse owner patting his colt after it had won the Governor's Cup.

Over a hundred bright silver rupees left my bankers and the camera came home.

My worries did not stop there. I had dabbled in photography during my college days and unfortunately I had fed my wife with vain stories of my achievements in the art. Therefore when she tried to enlist my services as her tutor in her new hobby, I could not gracefully

BY
'DHALO'

"Won't you buy
me one?....."
she cooed.



refuse. In addition, on the slightest sign of reluctance on my part to help her, she threatened to learn from a professional. I certainly could not allow that, for, I did not wish her to hobnob with a stranger—well—in a dark-room. So the yoke fell tight on my neck.

But in spite of my learned lectures, practical demonstrations and occasional teasings, she failed to understand the technique of the art. The technical expressions ranging from 'shutter release' to 'halation' that I made use of, fell flat on her.

Considerable money was wasted on films spoiled by her ineptitude. Some of her pictures were as over-exposed as the body of a nudist, or as under-exposed as a purdah woman. Some portraits were *sans* heads, while other pictures appeared to be taken in a mist. Leaning buildings, smoky spirits and other queer things came out in print.

I was clean bowled. What with the mounting expenditure on films and chemicals and the sickening denseness of my pupil, I was getting blue in the face. I felt like an impatient bowler trundling away without effect on a star stone-waller. Exasperated, I threw up my hands in despair and gave my wife a good dressing down.

"You can do what you like," I fumed. "I shall not continue to be the goat."

My wife's vanity was picked. She snorted and disdainfully tilted her nose as if a rotten egg was fouling the atmosphere.

"You need not worry. But I bet you, in a month more, you'll find one of my pictures taking a prize in the *Picture Weekly*," she snapped and walked off in high dudgeon.

Curiously enough before a month was out I was humiliated. Dhanvati had collared a prize in the *Picture Weekly* and the winning picture was published with her name underneath. She flaunted the picture at

my face and jeered at me. I may have looked as silly as a sheep with the foot-and-mouth disease, but congratulated her warmly.

Next day I was intrigued when the local professional photographer barged into my drawing room with a grim look. I received him with knitted brows.

"I am sorry to trouble you, sir," he began, eyeing the appointments of my room appraisingly. "But your wife has infringed my copyright by publishing an original photo of mine as hers in the *Picture Weekly*."

He was blunt. He produced a negative which he held up to the light. I noted with consternation the truth of his allegation.

"H'm," I drawled, feigning indifference.

"To speak the truth, sir, my partner was for going to a solicitor immediately. But I know you would make amends and I have come accordingly," he said with a business-like air.

The man was out for money. I swore under my breath.

"All right," I said. "Thank you. I shall meet you to-morrow and see about it."

He left after casting another appraising look at me and about the room.

I called Dhanvati immediately and asked her what she meant by palming off another man's picture as her own product. I told her of the danger she was in—of being dragged to a court of law. She laughed.

"Don't worry, silly," she said with conviction. "Did you think I stole the photo? I paid four annas for a copy."

It was my turn to laugh and I laughed nastily. I explained to her that buying a single print would not entitle her to publish it as her production. But with her usual unreasonableness she refused to be convinced and poor me had to sign another cheque as 'amends'.

RECIPES—(Continued from page 25)

for food and tea had evaporated. Instead, he had a craving to commit justifiable homicide on the author of *One Thousand Recipes for Cooks*.

With an oath, Mr. Ram Chandra flung the hateful recipe book across the room. During its flight across the room it swept down a valuable cut-glass chandelier, and ended up by shattering the mirror into a thousand fragments. Babbling aloud for the author, he flung open the door, and crept furtively into the street, and to the nearest restaurant. An order for curry and rice was immediately given, and as Mr. Ram Chandra avidly ate his first meal for the day, he felt that the life of a cook was not all honey. The meal finished, Mr. Ram Chandra returned home, a sadder and wiser man.

At the door of his abode sat his old cook. Mr. Ram Chandra gave a bowl of delight, and felt like hugging his culinary *aide-de-camp*. Schooling his voice, he asked in husky tones, "Well, what do you want?"

The bearded old *khansamah*, with a break in his voice, replied, "Can I start work again, sir? I don't want to go on leave."

Mr. Ram Chandra nodded his head. He could not trust himself to speak. That night, Mr. Ram Chandra partook of a glorious dinner, and came to the conclusion that recipe books were written for the express purpose of causing domestic unhappiness, and promised himself that never again would he take on the role of a cook.

REMORSE

By
'THEA'

HE scarcely ever noticed her for the first few days, though she travelled in the same compartment with him, and got down at Park Station, almost every day, along with him.

She was a blonde, with that fierce compelling beauty which only golden hair, and sparkling, brilliant eyes give to a woman. Her skin had the gleam of ivory, and to set off her perfect body she always wore a beautiful dress of a light shade.

An acquaintance started between Francis Roland and Mary Smith which soon ripened into friendship. Her presence in the train gave him infinite pleasure; he began to look forward to each journey and, when sometimes he had to take the trip alone, he missed her, and thought the journey a trial. He always had a seat ready for her when she got into the train, and he always took care to see that she left nothing behind when she got out at Park Station.

After a long time and repeated requests, she consented to go out with him.

They were to meet at Park Station in the evening at 7-45. She was there first, more beautiful than ever, dressed in pink, and a gorgeous rose pinned to her dress. Francis Roland was pleased and happy that she should have taken so much trouble over her toilet.

He had brought a car out from his garage, and they both left for 'Fongilis'.



For answer, he sought her hand eagerly and pressed it. She drew it away, in sudden alarm.

"Please, Mr. Roland, after what you promised me."

Before he could reply, the waiter appeared with the bill. They were soon out of the restaurant, and in the car.

"It is not even 10 o'clock," he said, "would you mind if we see the Wax Show at the Marina. You know it is open till 12, and, afterwards, I shall drop you at your place."

She began to weep...

The cool breeze, as they sped along the sea-face quietened their minds. But neither of them spoke a word absorbed as they were, he with his thoughts, she with the sensations of rare happiness such as assail innocent minds accustomed to the dull monotony of a conventional, restrained life.

Neither did she speak much during dinner, her efforts at conversation being confined to one or two of the latest talking pictures. At last she said:

"I must be mad!"

"Why?" he asked.

"Am I not mad to come out all alone with you like this? And at this time, too?"

"Why, there's nothing in it. Do but look around, and you will see not one, but twenty couples like ourselves. Dear me," he added suddenly, "how gorgeous you look, how you eclipse everybody!"

The enthusiasm and sincerity of his voice touched her.

"No, really, I should not have come out like this. It is not—not natural—for me. If you only knew. Father was a priest, and he brought me up very strictly. But now I have only my mother. It is so dull. Just the same, day in, day out. As for myself, I try to be happy. But I should not have come out like this. At least you won't blame me for this?"

They were speeding now on the Marina. She was surveying the bright Moon with unimaginable pleasure. She drew the life-giving air in, face flushed, nostrils dilated, head thrown back, supremely happy, floating on the dreams of her own perfect bliss.

He waited some time, understanding her feelings, quiet, thoughtful and sympathetic. Then someone blew a horn, and she was startled out of her reverie. She blushed, a little ashamed that she should have lost control over herself.

He repeated his request to stop a little before going to the station which was drawing nearer and nearer every second.

"No, no, drop me at the station. I want to catch the 11 o'clock train. Do please, drop me at the station, Mr. Roland."

She was quite nervous now, almost anxious to get away from him.

"But, Miss Smith, the 11 P. M. Fast doesn't stop at St. Thomas Mount. Your next train is at 11-45. Now, do let me drive you along."

They watched the moon-light playing on the water.

"Oh, how lovely!" she murmured.

"Marvellous," he said. "Come, let us go nearer and watch the water." She readily complied now, completely taken up with the joyous beauty of nature.

Very soon they were walking on, silent, absorbed in their thoughts.

They were now a little closer to the sea, almost at the water's edge. Little did she care when the tides swept a wave or two on to her feet, wetting her shoes, sometimes even kissing the hem of her frock. Little did she care as her foot now and then caught softer sand and sank in and she would lose her balance and laugh gaily.

They were now in the shadow of small vegetation and stunted trees that sometimes grow near the sea.

She was a little tired now, but slightly bewildered with that happiness which seemed to have taken her by surprise. At his suggestion, they sat down in the shadow of a small tree.

They embraced, drew each other nearer. She closed her eyes. Soft tremors shook her as she clasped him tight, her mind, her whole body in one exquisite thrill of expectancy, reason abandoned, senses suspended.

She came to herself with a start, and a scream. She began to weep, moaning and rocking herself to and fro as one in great anguish.

"My God! My God!"

He tried to comfort her, he tried to take her arm. But she repulsed him.

Her cheeks were burning now, and her eyes full of unshed tears.

As soon as they arrived at Park Station, she left, without even bidding him good-bye.

The years rolled by. Roland had wandered a lot, and was now the head of the great motoring firm of 'Robinson & Robinson'. He controlled the interests of the firm for the whole of India and the Far East. He had a magnificent residence in Park Street, beautifully furnished.

But Francis Roland was unhappy. Wherever he went, in his office, in his evening drives, at his Clubs, theatres, parties, surrounded as he always was by smiling faces ever anxious to please, ever ready to bow to his slightest whim, Roland was alone, alone. Even when twenty directors sat around him, even when a hundred guests amused themselves all around him, he was alone. He was ageing rapidly.

One evening, as he was being driven along the beach in slow magnificence in his big Packard, absorbed in his reveries, the memory of a face blinded him. Had he been hit on the head with a hammer, he could not have felt the blow more. He shouted to the chauffeur to stop.

The chauffeur drew aside to the kerb and brought the magnificent car to a stop.

"Stop the engine, and wait here till I come."

He let himself out, unceremoniously, to the surprise of his servant, and walked away.

Yes, it was she! But where in all the crowd was her face? He could have sworn it was her face. He struck across the lawn, led by the impulse which drove him on.

(Continued on next page)

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He had reached the garden, and now, he was near the band-stand. A tired feeling came over him, a bitter pain assailed him round the small of his back, and the great magnate sank weary and exhausted on one of the benches.

Suddenly Francis Roland shivered. There on the seat in front was a woman, in the full bloom of her beauty, exquisitely dressed. Beside her was a boy of about eight, and playing on the lawn, a little girl of four. It was she!

Francis Roland trembled. His hands shook, his frame shivered. Would she recognise him?

"Mummy, Mummy, catch dis ball," and the child threw a small red ball at his mother. She cupped her hands to receive the ball, but the ball jumped out of her hands, and rolled away. The child chased the ball, and in chasing unwittingly kicked it. The ball lodged itself between the feet of the bowed figure on the bench.

The child came up to him, and touched him on the knee. He looked up. The child uttered a shriek of terror, and fled crying to her mother.

She raised her eyes, and looked at him. One look was enough. She gathered her children around her, and fled, with a faint scream of recognition and terror.

He had become so hideous that as he passed his hands over his face, he felt his ugliness.

Two hours later, his servants found him on the bench in a swoon, and in his hand was a small red ball.

Weeks passed by. He never saw her more. But he was suffering, tortured day and night, gnawed by remorse, and love for his son. The woman and the child whom he had abandoned so callously.

Just to hold the boy in his arms, just to embrace him but once, he would have sacrificed anything for this, would have committed murder, braved any danger.

His agents reported to him that she was married now, and living in Bhowanipur with a Railway servant, a man of moderate income, who knew her history, and had married her and adopted his child.

He wrote to her. Again, and again, and again. But she did not reply. After forty letters he realised that there was no hope. He was desperate now, ready

to leap over a precipice, ready to plunge into a shark infested sea, driven on by that one longing, ready to receive a pistol shot through his head if he failed, ready for anything as long as he could only hold his son in his arms for a second, for just a second.

At last, he wrote a short note to the husband asking for ten minutes' talk with him.

Sir,

My name is more hateful to me than it can ever be to you.

I ask but ten minutes talk with you.

Yours etc.

He received a reply by the next post:—

Sir,

I shall expect you on Friday at 7 p.m.

At 6.45 on Friday the magnificent Packard drew up opposite 45, Park Street, the great magnate's house. A uniformed servant jumped out. He rang the bell. A turbaned figure appeared at the door, looked at the man, looked at the car, and vanished, closing the door behind. The servant returned to his place beside the chauffeur.

The engine was still running. The chauffeur expected the master any time, the master who brooked no delay or unpunctuality in anybody around him.

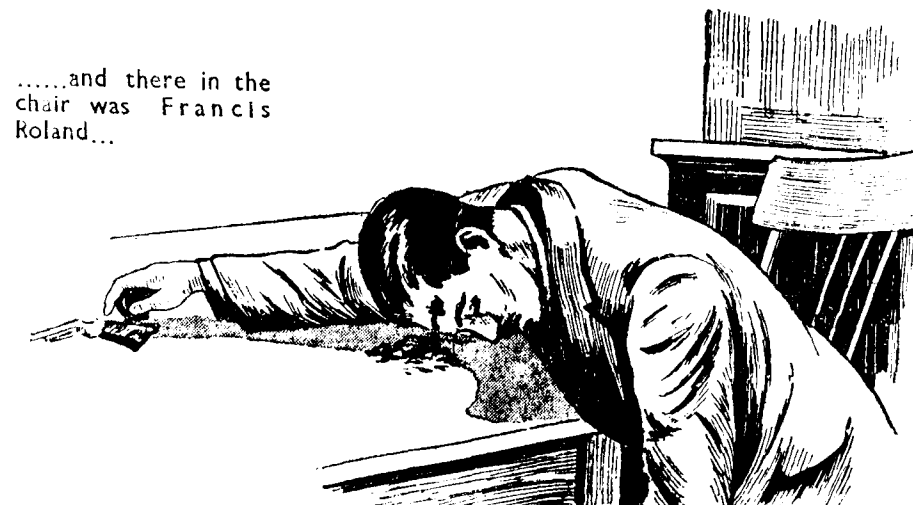
But there was no sign of the magnate. The minutes rolled by, the chauffeur was now looking up every now and then anxiously.

At 7.10 the doors opened suddenly, and a servant rushed out. He spoke something to the chauffeur, and the long lean car leaped forward like an unleashed cheetah. The bearer rushed back to the house.

Within ten minutes, a heavy, portly figure tramped its way upstairs in obvious hurry, to the private study of the magnate.

Two bearers at the door gave way, salaaming in profound respect.

The doors opened, and there in the chair was Francis Roland, with his head on the table, his right hand near a small pistol, shot through the head.



.....and there in the chair was Francis Roland...

THE DECISION IN THE 'IN-LAW' CASE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE, MADDINGTON.

(BEFORE ANNYAYAM J.)

JUDGMENT :

THE plaintiff, alleging that the defendant is his father-in-law, has brought this suit against him for a declaration that the latter is not entitled to stop the monthly payment of Rs. 100/- which he has been making to the former from the time he gave his daughter in marriage to him, for the grant of a permanent mandatory injunction directing the defendant to continue making the payments with promptitude and for other incidental and consequential reliefs.

The factum of the 'in-law' status of the plaintiff and the defendant has been proved beyond the shadow of doubt by the evidence produced before me, which, I am glad to note, was very convincing both in quantity and in quality.

Though on the whole only five persons were examined besides the parties themselves, it would be more correct to say that five witnesses were examined for the plaintiff and five for the defendant. Because everyone of them, viz., the Mrs., the two Masters and the two Misses of the plaintiff, was called by each side and cross-examined by the other, claiming relationship and support from both.

The wifely bashfulness and the boarding-school-girl modesty with which the Mrs. referred to the plaintiff as 'Avar' and the unerring precision with which the infant witnesses referred to the plaintiff, the Mrs. and the defendant as 'Pa', 'Ma', and 'grandpop' respectively have been so marked and persistent that I find the question of fact in favour of the plaintiff, viz., that the defendant is the father-in-law of the plaintiff.

The only other question that remains to be considered is this: Is the defendant liable to make the monthly payments to the plaintiff? Or to put it in general terms, is a father-in-law bound to help his son-in-law? Or to quote Sir Voyadi himself, is or is not the inflicter of daughters under a legal obligation to support his victim?

In proceeding to decide this question of law, it is necessary for me, in view of the novelty and importance of this case, to trace briefly the history of the origin, necessity and the legal incidents of the transaction called 'marriage'.

Jurists and historians of all times are agreed that this institution, variously called marriage, matrimony, indiscretion, mill-stone-round-the-neck, suicide, et cetera, originated in the ancient practice of supplying the members of the male sex with female cooks.

With the growth of the conception of 'property' among the nomadic tribes, an unfortunate but inevitable result ensued. Some one male member of a unit, being obsessed with that ever-expanding idea, experienced a sudden brain-wave, as it were, one fine morning and snapped his finger at the exotic girl-cook before him, exclaiming "This is mine!" in much the same way as he was wont to say "This is my nose," "This is my spear," etc. Thereafter, when others blindly followed suit, each man came to be associated with a girl more or less exclusively. Still later, when the system of barter came into vogue, girls were given and taken like any other piece of movable merchandise and the acquirers thus came to possess absolute proprietary rights over them.

As the fascination for names grew with the ancients, this particular kind of dealing also came in for its share of a random appellation. The specific transaction in which a girl was given and taken was called 'marriage', the proprietor making the acquisition a 'husband' and the property so acquired a 'wife'.

But whatever be the changed attitude which man has taken towards woman, she has, in the main, continued to this very day to perform the functions of a cook. This is amply borne out by the fact that man is always referred to as her 'lord and master' which clearly implies that she sinks under him into the office as a servant only. Hence it is that she occupies a subordinate—nay, almost servile—position in the Hindu Law.

It can now be easily seen, with this brief history in the back-ground, that the institution called marriage has outlived its utility and purpose. The world has reached a stage in which the male cooks have come to be as plentiful as cropped-heads and as cheap as the Madras 'ash-pumpkin'. As cooks of this variety can be imported from Malabar for nothing-a-month plus bare feeding, and as most of them are so much neater, smarter and even fairer than many of their co-rivals of the feminine species found elsewhere, there is absolutely no necessity for the continuation of this costly practice of offering and accepting girl-cooks.

Moreover, the girls themselves have, of late, revolted against this iniquitous institution. Many a case has come before me in which women have persistently sought to make out that they are being unjustly forced to cook much against their will and that such coercion is nothing short of legal cruelty. 22 Madd. 987 is a

case in point. I have held therein, rightly, in the light of modern conditions, that it does amount to cruelty.

With the result, the legal incidents of marriage have at present come to be exactly the reverse of what they were at its inception. Originally the man who took the girl was under an obligation to keep on helping her father in consideration of the continued services of the daughter which the former was badly in need of. But now that men do not stand in need of such services, as has been clearly shown by me, the girl's father must be deemed for all practical as well as legal purposes, to have thrust his unwanted daughter on some poor young man called his 'son-in-law'. The father-in-law of to-day has therefore got to keep on helping the son-in-law in consideration of the very heavy burden (which is further open to the risk of constant growth) thrown on him. This almost paternal obligation is imposed by law on the father-in-law, as is obvious from the tell-tale title conferred on him. This duty, I need hardly add, has got to be discharged even in spite of a contract to the contrary until, of course, the linking woman takes her departure to the divorce court or elsewhere.

Coming now to the case on hand, I express myself in entire agreement with Sir Voyadi, Sir Gasoji Rao, the learned counsel for the defendant, has, not to belie his name, as it were, advanced no argument worthy of my attention. I have been prudent enough to limit my progeny strictly to unity, and that exclusively to the male variety.

I therefore declare that the defendant is bound to pay every month Rs. 100/- to the plaintiff, which, I feel, is very reasonable in view of the fact that he has got to maintain five souls (God knows how many more in future!) for whose existence the defendant is entirely responsible.

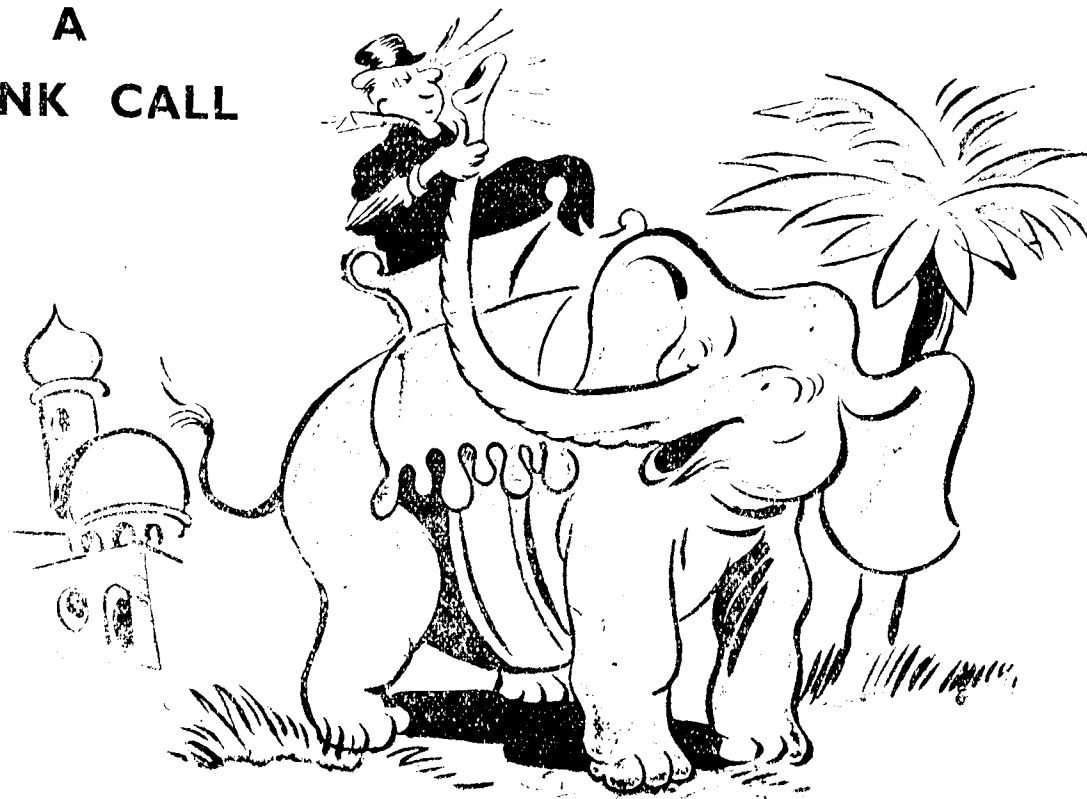
Lastly, Manu or Mandhata (I am not sure who) has said somewhere that the course of conduct exemplified by a judge, who is admittedly the apotheosis of virtue and justice, forms the basis of many a rule of law for the lay people to follow. That being so, it is open to the plaintiff to enforce his remedy, against the father-in-law in the same way as I have been doing. Whenever my bank balance reaches the zero point, I take my wife to her father's place, leave her in front of his house and, without giving him so much as a chance of catching a glimpse of me, return home by the very next train. Invariably, after a month or so, the man runs up to me with his daughter, with a sum of money which is ordinarily enough for a month's betting at the races.

In the result, the mandatory injunction prayed for is refused.

In conclusion, the worst part of this marriage business is, that we judges are made to bear the brunt of all its evil consequences. Things being what they are, there crops up, out of a single marriage, a whole world of 'in-law' relationships, which very often stretch themselves beyond the pale of the law. The mother-in-law, for instance, whose proprietorship over her daughter seems to expand so much and so rapidly that it begins to embrace, within a very short time, the very son-in-law and all that is his, constitutes, in particular, the greatest possible menace to the interests of law and order. Indeed these artificial and mushroom relationships have invariably brought in their train such a lot of litigation—the present case itself affording an instance—that my poor head has refused to stand any more strain.

I hope, therefore, that, in the light of this authoritative pronouncement, our Chief Law Factory will see its way to abolish this anachronistic and bothersome institution as early as possible.

A TRUNK CALL



Love and A Can Opener

BREATHING like a horse, and scratching my left ear with my tongue, I served. Either my racket was of inferior make, or the ball was filled with hydrogen, for, with a peculiar whistling sound, the white sphere sailed upward. The spectators of the match, which was the final of the Goofs' Championship, hurriedly grabbed their telescopes and binoculars and endeavoured to locate the ball.

"Good Lord!" I snorted to my partner, Mrs. Hairlip, "I must have hit the blasted thing out, don't you think?"

She smiled sweetly, and showed her molars in the process.

"That's not the first ball you've lost, is it, Mr. Amaggot?"

I blew through my left nostril at her and prepared to serve from the left hand court. Just at that moment, however, we were afforded fresh diversion in the shape of the return of the tennis ball, which swooshed out of the ether and hit Mrs. Hairlip in the left eye.

"Haw! Haw!" I said, this being the only sound on and around the court as my partner scraped the ball from her optic.

"Are you laughing at me, Mr. Amaggot?" she asked blearily, the hairs in her ears bristling with obvious anger.

"No," I replied seriously. "An errant caterpillar has just crawled up my leg and is circling my patella."

"Oh," was all she said, and we went on with the game. Bracing myself firmly and taking

a careful look at the service court opposite, I threw the ball well up in the air and swiped at it. With the noise of a bullet, it misfired and struck my partner, who was trying to play net, on the base of the spine.

She promptly sat down, stuck both her legs in the air, and groaned, "I'm shot! I'm dead!"

With great concern I went up to her in the silence that followed, and, using my racket as a crowbar, levered her on to her feet again.

"I'm awfully sorry," I wheezed.

"Go to hell!" she gasped.

"Certainly," I replied politely, and we resumed the game.

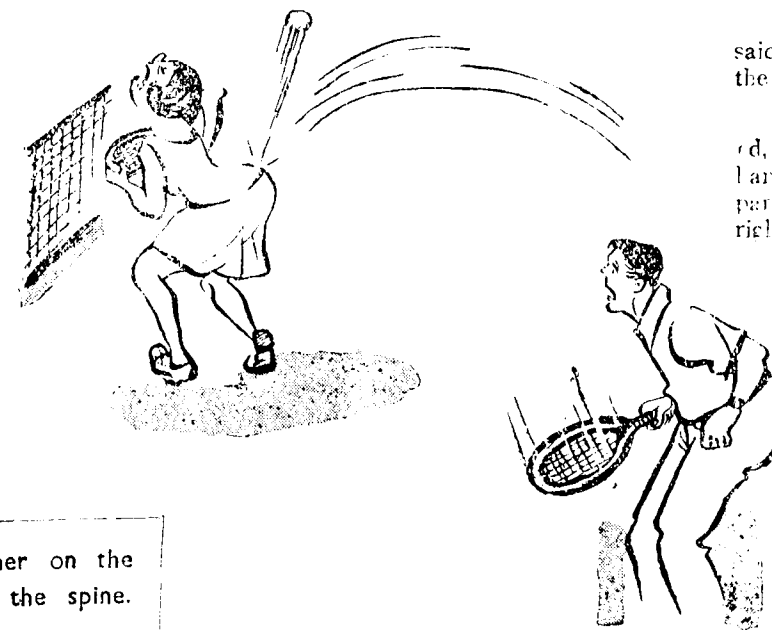
My third ball was slightly more obliging than the other two, for it only whistled to the side of the court, breaking seven cups and thirteen saucers on the tea-tables.

"Do try and be more careful!" said my partner, scratching the lower portion of her back.

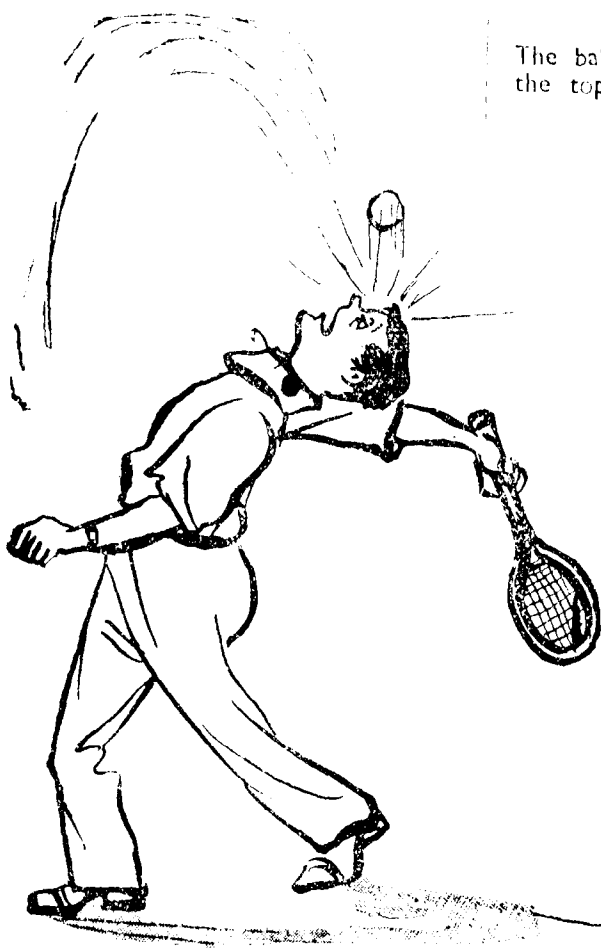
"Shut up!" I growled, now thoroughly roused and realising that the game was 'Love—'. I threw my fourth ball high up, bent my back almost double, swung my racket and hit out. The ball bounced on the top of my head and I struck myself a stunning blow on the shin.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!" said Mrs. Hairlip and the spectators.

"Blasht it!" I growled, and took the left hand court while my partner oozed on to the right.



Struck her on the base of the spine.



The ball bounced on the top of my head.

With a Herculean drive I struck the next ball. It whistled over the screen and disappeared, the spectators bawling "Tally Ho!" and "Gone away!"

My partner began her serve, all four balls striking the ground full two yards on our side of the net.

"Bah! Try Oxo," I said politely, but she took no notice.

Thereafter the game developed into a veritable battle. We lost all the points bar one, and that we gained by threatening the umpire with extinction.

"You should be ashamed of yourself!" Mrs. Hairlip hissed at me.

"Oh, dry up!" I snorted as we walked off the court. "What's wrong with you anyway? Didn't I try my best? We're the runners up, anyhow!"

"You should try running up a telegraph pole and making a noise like a dead cat," was her retort.

"Your moustache is not on straight," I attacked in return as we sat down to tea. She said nothing to this, but the glare in her eyes, and the whole look of her body spoke volumes.

We sipped awhile.

"When did your husband die?" I asked at last, hoping to patch things up somewhat. A tear trickled down her nose and was bitten off short.

"Six years ago," she almost sobbed. "And your wife?"

"Thirteen years ago," I groaned, beginning to feel like some more tea.

"How terrible!" she sympathised as she blew her nose.

"Awful," I agreed, and swallowed a banana without removing the skin.

"But there is always hope while life lasts," she put in, as I recovered.

"My dear woman," I replied, "the worms must surely have done their work by this time?"

"I don't mean that." She had begun to smile, and I thought that she didn't look too bad after all. I decided though, that she'd have to get rid of her moustache.

"I see," I said, taking one of her horny hands in mine. "Sweet girl, when will you marry me? Now or to-morrow?"

She laid her head on my chest, heedless of the stares of the bystanders.

"Good Heavens!" she clucked suddenly, lifting her head. "You've got asthma! You need someone to look after you!"

We were married next day.

And yesterday I went down to the club to have a look at the drawing for 'The Married Goofs' Tennis Championship.

"Mr. and Mrs. Amaggot," it read. "Plus 40 and five games in each set. Armour to be worn by spectators and umpire."

I went home and killed my wife with a can opener.

"Now see what you can do," I sneered at her and she stuck her tongue out at me, licking her moustache.

By this time I was thoroughly roused, and determined to win this championship.

Our opponent's first serve sizzled over the net, struck my partner in the stomach, and rebounded into the net.

"Hooroosh!" said my partner.

"Good!" said I, and prepared to receive the next serve. This I took in fine style, hitting the umpire in the mouth and dislocating his incisors.

"Thirty—Love!" he whistled through the gap in his gums.

Mrs. Hairlip had steadied up a bit by now, and she faced the next serve with determination in every curve of her svelte, elephantine body.

"Bag of spuds!" I thought rudely.

With the sound of an expiring dog, she took the serve—in her Adam's apple. This was too much for me. Going up to her, I leaned over and said confidentially, "Haw! Haw!" She promptly bit me on the left eyebrow and I went back to my place glowering.

CABBAGES AND KINGS

By
R Jagannathan

"HULLO, Raghavan, fancy seeing you back so soon," I exclaimed on happening to meet my friend on the Marina the other day.

"Yes, lad," he replied, "I've come back."

"On leave?" I queried.

"Put it that way if you like; but it happens to be a leave that knows no ending."

"What a pity; chucked the job?"

"Yes, my boy; you see I had to leave it. It's a long story. Let's go to the sands and I'll tell you all."

My friend Raghavan was a teacher and a very competent and smart one at that. But the great wave of retrenchment swept him off the active list two years ago. Since then he had to knock about various places for a job. At last he was successful enough to be taken as a teacher in the Raja's High School, Vimalapuram. That was barely six months ago. The reports that I had from him since indicated that he was getting on very smoothly and that he would be permanently fixed up there. That was why I was very much surprised to find him back at Madras.

As we proceeded to the water-line and sat on the sands watching the surge and fall of the waves, Raghavan began to unfold his story.

"Well, lad, to explain matters, I must take you to the very roots of things, as they call it.

The Raja of Vimalapuram, you should know, is not a twentieth century shadow-show nor is he a Raja reared out of a commoner. On the other hand, he is the direct descendant of a proud and royal lineage. He is the direct ancestor of the King of Amalapuram, once famous in the history of our land. In fact, Vimalapuram was part of that once powerful kingdom. It is recorded, too, in history that once upon a time they were able to overrun all the titled heads south of their confines and plant their victorious banner six hundred miles away from their kingdom. That was, of course, a very long time ago.

But the current Raja of Vimalapuram does not want to forget the past. He wants to perpetuate that golden age, at any rate on the stage. Therefore he commanded his court poet to embody this victorious campaign of his ancestor in a play which, under the Raja's patronage, is staged in the Palace Hall every year."

"What has all this yarn to do with your job?" I asked Raghavan impatiently.

"Don't you see what I'm driving at? I am giving the psycho-analytic version of the whole thing. You know

what a great man once said of India; that her need of the moment is not Swaraj, Socialism or the Sarda Act; these things can wait and bide their time. What she needs more than all is psycho-analysis. Ours is a land of complexes, inhibitions and suppressions....."

"Well, then, go your own way."

He continued:—

"When I was interrupted I was about to tell you that the Raja of Vimalapuram is not a king though his forbears were. You ought to know why.

Raja Vikrama Varman who was the king of Amalapuram married two wives; you may say that it is not a novelty in a king; but the novelty of the fact was that the king was so religious and good-natured that he did not prefer one wife to another, as other kings and commoners do, but distributed his affections evenly between the two queens. As a result he derived three sons from the first and three from the second wife. All these six princes were held by him in equal affection, for all of them were bright and promising. As they grew to man's estate, each one of them looked every inch a king; only, there were not as many kingdoms for distribution. The king grew old and wanted to be rid of the cares of royalty. But he could not decide as to who should ascend the throne.

Being a deeply religious monarch, he summoned his guru and asked for his counsel.

The guru contemplated deeply for a while and said, "Highest of the High, there need be no difficulty at all. Is it not said in the great *Mahabharata* that the meek shall inherit the earth?"

The king felt convinced of the guru's counsel but still could not see how he could act on it.

"Well hast thou spoken, Guru Maharaj," he said, "but my difficulty is that I cannot discriminate between my sons. All of them are nobly endowed and princely. I don't know who amongst them most deserves the throne."

"Oh thou brighter than the Sun!" ventured the guru, "I shall go into meditation and seek light on this point and come back to you with His Word."

Next morning it was announced that the aged monarch would pay a visit to the Great Temple of the Lord to say his prayers. The royal highway was thronged with spectators who came to have a *darshan* of their venerable monarch. King Vikrama Varman came walking accompanied by the guru. The six princes followed the king a few feet behind.

When the King had traversed half the distance, his ivory walking-stick slipped from his hold and fell into the dust.

Prince No. 1 saw it but fought shy of bending his knee to recover it, especially in the presence of the vast multitude which was watching the royal procession. Princes Nos. 2 to 5 behaved ditto. But Prince No. 6, a young and handsome lad of seventeen, bent down, took the stick, held it in both of his hands, raised it to the level of his eyes, touched the dust on it with his forehead, and restored it to the king with a solemn obeisance.

The King blessed him, looked at the *guru* with gratitude and made up his mind as to whom the kingdom should be given. Princes Nos. 1 to 5 were dismissed with *Jaghirs* and the title of Raja. Amalapuram went to the youngest prince.

The present Raja of Vimalapuram traces his origin to Prince No. 1, and therefore had blood royal in his veins, though his state is not kingly. All the same, he is a man of wonderful parts; of energetic and active habits. But the trouble with him is that he can't forget, even for a moment, that one of his blood once sat on a throne; and he affects to be kingly in state. He is therefore autocratic to the extreme, arbitrary in his decisions and ruthless in their execution.

Within a few days of my arriving at Vimalapuram I learnt what a powerful personality he was. Being fond of learning, he founded a college. He opened a railway line to connect the hinterland of his estates with the more progressive parts. He gave generously to charities and patronised all good causes.

But the vital defect in his character obscured all his good points. He had no objectivity. He had no capacity to see himself as others saw him. The sentiment of royalty ruled his life. To fortify himself in that belief he bedecked himself in purple and fine linen, sat bejewelled on a throne of gold and held *darbars*.

"Dear subjects," he commenced his *darbar* speeches, "we are happy to announce that our relations with foreign powers are friendly; our peasantry is contented and our coffers are adequate."

But no satraps thronged the hall, and no princelings came to pay him homage. Therefore, he maintained from his own purse a staff of cohorts and courtiers to keep up the show.

He proclaimed that he should be addressed in the royal style, "Your Highness". His tenants were willing to do this and even more. Indeed, one of them presumed to address him "Your Majesty", and got an encouraging pardon. They were too poor to know the distinction.

In all other respects, the Raja was, to tell you frankly, an excellent person. The rectitude of his conduct and the spotless purity of his life were well-known. His capacity for industry was infinite. He went through each and every file and directed every minute detail.

Now I come to my part of the story. I was appointed as a teacher in the Raja's High School not only because of my qualifications for the job, but also because Ratnam Iyer, the vet at Vimalapuram put in a good word for me. He was at the time treating the Raja's pet horse, Kala Moti, who had developed some complaint. Ratnam was a masterly hand at equine diseases; therefore Kala Moti registered improvement. The Raja was mightily pleased. My application went in right at that moment and I was taken forthwith. My fortunes therefore were linked with Kala Moti.

The Raja, you should know, was very fond of horses. Many a time his horses were marked out for success at the Guindy Races; but some mischance or other intervened at the eleventh hour and denied him the victory which was all but promised. But Kala Moti was something different from the rest of his stud. With Kala Moti, the Raja and the bookies seemed to be in no doubt at all. He was reckoned a sure shot. The Raja was therefore looking forward to that complete victory which had so far eluded him. Ratnam was paid handsomely to look after the horse till the great day of the Races.

Five months passed thus. In the meantime, I too laboured hard in the pedagogic line and gave every satisfaction. The Raja himself told me personally that he would permanently fix me up in his school.

Last month, however, Kala Moti took a turn for the worse. The best medical aid was of no avail and the bright horse passed away in a few days' time. The Raja's grief was intense and so was ours who were expecting a grand celebration in commemoration of Kala Moti's success. Now, alas, he lay in the dust.

My confirmation papers went to the Raja a few days afterwards. They were returned with the remark that, much as he appreciated my services, he would prefer, for sentimental reasons, not to have me in his school.

So, my lad, you see me here."

* * * *

I, for a moment, lost the thread of the story.

"Where's the bally sentiment and what has it got to do with you?" I asked.

"You are a dense bloke," said Raghavan, "if you are capable of a little imagination, you would have seen that the Raja's mind should have worked somewhat as follows. I remind him of Ratnam Iyer, the vet. The vet reminds him of Kala Moti. Kala Moti reminds him of the baulked victory at the Races. The baulked victory reminds him of Prince No. 1. Prince No. 1 reminds him of the ivory walking stick. The stick reminds him of his lost kingdom. Therefore, do you think that it is good for a chap to be constantly reminded of his lost kingdom?"

"Cabbages," I shouted at this hotch-potch.

"And Kings!" he concluded.

EUGENE

HOW the lad got his name was a moot point. He claimed that it was Bayard and that he was a descendant of a famous French knight. There is no need to challenge the authenticity of that statement.

He lived in Tangleall, a South Indian city, and, by all appearances, lived on his wits. Anyway, he didn't seem to work. A comely youth of sixteen, woe-betide other lads if they had the temerity to call out 'Bow-wow-ow', which was their interpretation of his name, to wit 'Bay-hard'.

Scrutiny of Eugene's features could not fail to give the impression that he was of mixed origin. If anyone ventured to question him on the point—provided he condescended to explain—he'd reply:

"I'm one of those damned 'half-chats'!"

In by-gone years, Eugene, bare-footed, clad merely in a pair of shorts and a glad-neck shirt had often been dubbed as a 'street urchin'. Consequent on his increasing age and stature the 'urchin' was substituted by the word 'arab'. Age—even tho' the 'grey-hair' stage be distant—does bring respect.

In Tangleall there is an evening bazaar and, congregated in that area, are a host of conspirators called 'dealers', all of whom have imbibed, and are nourished on, one creed.

For a pair of respectable 'part-worn' trousers they'll (in a generous mood) pay you a 'good' four-anna piece. For a wrist watch for which, maybe, you paid Rs. 20 in Commercial Street a month or so before, they may even bid up to a level rupee. If you sell, 'tis best to examine the rupee before you depart. There's no exchange afterwards.

Eugene Bayard, polluting God's atmosphere with clouds of smoke emanating from the 'stub' end of a Burma cheroot, took upon himself the duties of an inspector of the evening bazaar.

At one stall, majestically poised, sat a fat Moham-medan merchant. Eugene paused near the shop and surveyed its contents. He edged nearer and leaned on the guard rail which the merchant had wisely erected around the outer edge of his platform.

"Get away you imp of Satan!" the merchant hissed.

"Any bugs in your balustrade?" queried Eugene.

"Bugs!" snorted the shopkeeper. "Go to hell!"

"Anything amiss with your eye-sight?" countered Eugene.

"Grrrrhm." The shopkeeper bared his teeth.

"Class zero—infants' school," commented Eugene, as he removed his arms from the guard rail and inspected them carefully.

"Last time I came here," he remarked, "I got three bug bites." He paused. "Say, Fez-wallah," he continued, "guess those bugs must have tickled your posterior anatomy and you've given them a dose of vermicide. It was time——"

Fez-wallah glared.

"Get off," he roared, "before I——"

Eugene puffed vigorously at the morsel of Burma cheroot, which now threatened to burn his lips.

"You paying rent for the ground I'm standing on?" he asked.

The merchant was stumped. Eugene knew he had won the battle.

"A cigar, old bean," he remarked, "and I'm away."

For that cigar Fez-wallah had to squeeze through a small aperture leading to the inner confines of his shop. Eugene took the opportunity to purloin certain portable articles and hand them to a pupil who was near at hand. The pupil vanished like a whiff of smoke. He had been well coached.

Panting and puffing, the merchant wriggled back into the outer shop. He presented Eugene with two cigars.

Fez-wallah resumed his seat. Eugene lighted up and gently scratched himself under the armpit.

"Thanks," he said, as he donned his battered hat. "Guess that'll be K.O. *Au-revoir*."

Eugene departed.

The next day, Eugene, finding his budget for the day in danger of being unbalanced, repaired to the market. It was a shockingly wet day. The rain descended in sheets upon the town of Tangleall.

Eugene knew how to take advantage of such a situation. He carefully stationed himself at a point of vantage. Water rushed past that entrance to the market and it was a very busy centre.

He deposited his shirt and shorts in the custody of a shopkeeper, chased away some small boys from the area he had chosen for business, and, attired in his *jangiahs*, ventured out.

A saloon car drove up. Eugene was at hand and opened the door. The flood swirled about his sturdy legs to a height of several inches. A lady looked out.

"How can I go through that?" she murmured.

"There is no need, Madam," remarked Eugene. "Whatever you require, I will bring here for you."

"But," the lady was saying, "suppose——"

"Exactly, Madam, you pay after delivery."

Eugene, armed with a list of requirements, departed. Madam was thoughtful. "That lad," she ruminated, "understands human nature. He'll be a Viceroy or something if he doesn't look out."

Presently Eugene returned with a basket covered with a waterproof sheet. He arranged the supplies inside the car and presented the bill.

Notes to cover the bill, plus a visiting card passed into Eugene's hands. "Keep the change," Madam counselled, "And come and see my husband; he'll, maybe, find you better employment."

Eugene cut short further conversation.

"The merchant, madam," he said, "will be thinking I've vamoosed."

Eugene waded through the raging flood. He handed the notes to the shopkeeper, took the change and departed as if to deliver the balance to the customer.

He stopped just round a corner. "Ten annas, three pies, not bad," he commented, "and all because of a drop of rain!"

After a time he returned to the shopkeeper. "My commission?" he queried.

"What d'you get from the other side?"

"That's my business. Gimme my 'doings' otherwise there's plenty more shops—"

The merchant questioned no more. Eugene was well-known in the market. So the day proceeded and Eugene balanced his budget for some days to come.

* * *

Eugene had two rooms in a poor locality, for which he paid (or was supposed to pay) a small monthly rent. With him lived the small boy who had been his confederate the previous night, in the evening bazaar.

His name was Ram Lal, his duties, mainly household.

The boy's parents, tired of or unable to feed him, had one day deposited their offspring upon the station platform and themselves proceeded to an unknown destination. Eugene happened along and the rest is understood. On the rainy day of which we are writing, Eugene went home early, and Ram Lal was, busy with culinary duties of a more than usual lavish nature. Funds being available, Eugene was a firm believer in an occasional 'splash'.

Leaving the boy usefully and busily employed, Eugene decided to visit a neighbour—the only one with whom he had ever struck up anything.

She was a Mrs. Tinken, who eked out her existence on the dole of a charitable society.

History does not record how Mrs. Tinken and Eugene became friendly. Anyway, they did become friends and many times the passing of a couple of annas from one to the other had proved a godsend. Eugene, had, in the meantime, grown up and now, he was generally the donor. 'Tis not for us to question how he got the money.

He tapped at Mrs. Tinken's door. She opened it, glimpsed his happy countenance and dragged him inside.

"Lawks a mussy, Eugene," she exclaimed, "'tis two days past and you've never set foot here."

Mrs. Tinken became serious. "D'you know, Eugene," she said, "I'm sure you'll have a car some day and a big house and—"

Eugene 'braked' on Mrs. Tinken's predictions, and implanted a kiss on her forehead.

"Mums," he enquired, "anything to eat?"

"Sure," was the reply, "there's a *parota* and a chop ready for you." Mrs. Tinken went across the room to a cupboard. As quickly and as silently as a cat he followed and peeped over her shoulder. The *parota* and the chop had no companions!

By the time Mrs. Tinken turned, he had regained his seat.

(Continued on page 40)



"Cook-house commandant, can you feed two ravenous beings?"

"SIR, I want a jug," said my wife this morning just as I gulped my last cup of coffee.

"Certainly, Yamuna. What do you want it for—to stick paper flowers in?"

"Whoever puts paper flowers in jugs, sir! I want it for lemon pickle."

"Oh! Alright."

We belong to the old school, me and Yamuna. Hence the absence of 'dears', 'darlings', 'sweets' and 'honeys' when we hold converse.

I kissed the missus dutifully (in spite of their old-worldness, they expect this sort of thing), and sallied forth with grim determination like Sir Galahad after the Holy Grail.

Just as I stepped out of my house, my nose collided with that of Mani, which sudden meeting brought tears of emotion into the eyes of both, naturally. After our feelings subsided somewhat, we smiled at each other sadly and started for the jug.

"Did you say mug?" asked Mani.

"No! I said jug. Do you know any place where we can get one without being swindled?"

"Moore Market."

"Moore Market! I'd no idea that they sold such things there."

"That only shows you were not properly educated. Short of wives and husbands, everything under the Sun and the Moon is sold there."

To Moore Market we went.

The first thing we observed there was a policeman at the Market gate who, one would think, was placed there to direct traffic and keep a sharp look-out for misguided Communists who have, so the individualists say, an incorrigible habit of putting their hands into the pockets of the bourgeoisie. The policeman was doing neither. Instead, he was looking sorrowfully at the Central Station Tower-clock, while pedestrian and vehicular traffic directed itself. It is strange! I haven't seen one smiling policeman in Madras. At least three policemen in Allahabad stopped me, displaying their teeth in a spirit of *camaraderie* and asked, "Have you got a *beedi*, *babuji*?" At least five policemen in Calcutta winked cheerfully and encouragingly at me as I crossed Chowringhee Road during rush hours. And two policemen in Bombay all but hugged me when I admired their uniforms. Mani is of opinion that the Madras policeman is a saturnine stoic who thinks that this business of law and order is a mirage, just *maya*. I was really touched at the policeman's glum face. So I stepped on his toes and, as he looked austerely at me, squirmed my middle, in the Mae-West manner. Just to cheer him up. Poor policeman!

We passed in.

"Ah! Here we are!" exclaimed Mani, apropos nothing, so far as I could see. So I said "Where?"

He propelled me to the edge of the gravel walk. A middle-aged man who was exuding a fine, delectable smell of toddy (good thing, toddy: all vitamins!) and a woman, probably his aunt, squatted on the ground with two small puppies apiece wriggling in their laps.

Mani is simply crazy about dogs. You ought to see his face when he sees a dog. It does one good. He took a pup in his hands and examined it critically—its nose, its nails, its small belly, its hair, its navel, its ears, its tail. "What breed?"

"Terreerfoxsmallsarr."

"What price?"

"Ten half rupee, Saarr."

"Twelve annas."

"Grrr-um," said the puppy man.

Which, Mani explained to me, meant, 'nothing-doing, you hard-boiled pick-pocket'.

We passed on to the aunt. She dangled before my nose one of her mottled puppies, holding it by the ear, just as Mr. Bernard Shaw would hold Mr. Churchill if he were not afraid of the policeman round the corner. It appears that if you want to ascertain whether a pup is a pedigree one or not, all you have to do is to count

its nails (which must be an odd number) and swing it by its ear (at which it shouldn't squeal).

"What breed?" I asked. Not that I cared much, being a believer in the oneness of all life. But something was expected of me.

"Kamjathi perisango," said aunt.

"Oho! I see." Of course I didn't see anything. It never pays to look green before tradesmen. "Price?"

"Seven rupee, Saarr."

Now, as against an offer of Rs. 10-8-0, Mani countered with twelve annas. So I did mentally a little sum in proportion. "Eight annas," I said severely, much as the Finance Member presenting his budget.

She spat with fine marksmanship at a passing cur and said, "*Adey Pavay*." She sat down.

"She says that the deal is off," explained Mani.

As we approached the huge quadrangle of the Market, Mani asked me if I was interested in babies. I grinned noncommittally: I didn't know whether he meant real babies or babies in the American sense.

"Inside there," he said, "you will mostly find babies' frocks with a few odds and ends displayed, to bring the frocks into relief. So, if you....."

"No, cut it out," I said in disgust. "I'm not for the quadrangle."

So we roamed at large in the purlieus of the Market. As one who had always revered age, I felt a strange pleasure surging within me. Here is an antiquarian's paradise, if there is one in the world! Every article exhibited for sale in the various impromptu booths had all but grown whiskers and beards bleached with age. India has been rightly termed the land of lost opportunities! If this market were in England, or in any of the red patches on the map of the world, it would have been glorified into a national institution!

Being a lover of books, I lingered before a pile of books of representative English literature. At least three sacks-full of books were sprawling on the ground, not arranged with any attempt at order, but dumped like so many brinjals or tomatoes. Very nice man, that book-seller. He told me with engaging frankness that he bought those books by weight, from haggling housewives and sold them by size, colour and general appearance. I picked up two books—a brand new copy of the J. P. C. Report produced by the Imperial genius of England and a moth-eaten copy of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. He offered the J. P. C. Report for half an anna and the *Faerie Queene* for fifteen annas! What a fine sense of values! What discernment! From now on I will always have a sneaking affection for roadside book-sellers.

We sauntered along and came to the foot-wear section. We found ourselves in the midst of a party of American tourists who were staring fascinated at the array of shoes, slippers, sandals, boots, etc., all shined up and arranged in serried ranks, like a cosmopolitan army—a happy unity in diversity. One bright young thing in the party nudged Mani, the nearest approach to a sheik in India.

"Hi, Big Boy," said Miss Mayo's representative. "Hello! Babee! How's old uncle at home?" (Mani said to me later that was but common courtesy due from him to his country's guests.)

"What's the big idea?" "Which idea?" "These...those...things...you don't say you guys wear them?"

"No, dear. They are curios of great antiquity,

worn by the cavalry, infantry and the big noises what time Robert Clive gingered up our lives here."

"Oh yeah?" Mani winked affirmation. "Hell! But you aren't putting it over me?" Mani shrugged his shoulders. A take-it-or-leave-it shrug.

She turned to her husband, or boy friend or whoever he was. "Oh, Dick, this guy says those thingummies were worn here when Clive was Viceroy of Madras and bossed the racket."

A strange N.R.A. light came into Dick's eyes. He grabbed Mani's shoulder. "Fact?" "Damn, dead." Mani spoke with an air of finality.

Dick purchased the whole lot, had them bundled up and sent to his boat waiting in the harbour. He shook our hands effusively for putting him on to a good thing and the girl patted Mani's back. We parted, alas to meet no more.

Mani and I resumed our researches for the jug which my wife wanted. We floated along with the crowds with wide-awake eyes, sweeping the grounds for our objective. We turned a corner. We two stiffened and stopped dead in our tracks. There it was, towering majestically like King Kong, over a riot of lesser fauna of crockery in various stages of dissolution, that jug with a picture of a Chinese girl dancing on air, painted on it. We made a dash for it; yelled for the price; were told five rupees; offered five annas; and closed the deal at seven and a half annas. Very thoughtfully the jug-man wrapped the jug in a newspaper. We carried it, by turns, triumphantly home.

As Mani expected, my wife clapped her hands in glee at the China beauty, I mean the jug, not the dancing girl on it. She undid the wrapper and inserted her hand into the jug. She went white and pink.

"Miserable mugs!" was all she said. The ways of woman are inscrutable! She raised her arm. It stuck out from the other end of the jug. The jug had no bottom!

EUGENE—(Continued from page 38)

He wolfed the food as if he hadn't eaten for days. "Laddie," murmured Mrs. Tinken, "why didn't you come before? You're always welcome—and what about the poor kiddie, Ram Lal?"

Eugene rose to his feet. "I'll be back again later." He called Ram Lal. That youth, doing both a hot and a smoky job, had discarded all surplus clothing and had a diminutive towel twisted around his 'midriff'.

"Everything is ready," said Ram Lal.

"Mrs. Tinken will dine here. Put on your 'table-waiting' dress and then request her to honour us—"

"To come," interrupted Ram Lal, who was practical.

Ram Lal skipped across to Mrs. Tinken's room.

"Mrs. Tinken," he shouted through the keyhole, "Eugene wants you."

"Take a cig," Eugene invited, proffering the tin of 'My Lady'. Mrs. Tinken accepted and then remarked:

"Why didn't you flog them and buy some food?"

She refrained from asking how Eugene got the tin.

Eugene, evading a reply, called Ram Lal.

"Cook-house Commandant," he enquired, "can you feed two ravenous beings?"

"I'll manage something, Sir!"

"What?"

"I've a nice soup; cutlets, eggs and tomato sauce; prawn curry and rice; a macaroni pudding—coffee, biscuits and cheese."

"Go," commanded Eugene, "serve up those viands, in strict order as you have detailed."

Mrs. Tinken, the repast finished, was sipping her second cup of coffee and smoking her umpteenth 'My Lady'.

She touched Eugene's arm. "How d'yer manage all this?"

"Tis not," counselled Eugene, "a point advisable for us to debate. I've had a good day."

"BOWLERS" COMPETITION—RESULTS

The Correct Solution is:

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. MAR | 3. BAT | 5. HAS | 7. PAT |
| 2. FAT | 4. SIT | 6. TIP | 8. EVE |

The following three readers have submitted all-correct solutions and they share the first prize of Rs. 100 Each getting Rs. 33-5-0

1. T. Subrahmanyam, Asst., N. H. School, Mannargudi.
2. P. Rajagopal Pillai, 4, Thandavaraya Gounder St., Velappadi, Vellore.
3. S. Raghavachari, P. W. D., Oddigudem, Kunavaram P. O. East Godavari Dt.

The following 39 Readers who sent in one-error solutions, share the second prize of Rs. 50-0-0 Each getting Rs. 1-5-0.

Second Prize Winners:

- | | |
|--|--|
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No.	Words.	Meanings.
1.	BRVO	Well done
2.	SPRIT	Liveliness
3.	CENTR	The middle
4.	VOLT	Turns
5.	MEND	To improve
6.	OUGH	Violent
7.	PENN	A feather
8.	OUND	Whole

HOW TO WIN.

You will find in the accompanying diagram 8 words, but each has only one letter missing. What all you have to do is to add only one letter any where so as to get the corresponding meanings. For example, No. 1 is obviously BRAVO, and the missing letter is 'A'. Similarly complete the others. To help you still further, we may tell you that all the missing letters are among "A, E, I, R, S, T," and these letters may be used as many times as you wish. The letters of the words are there in their proper order, and no shuffling is necessary.

RULES.

1. *Reference*—Chambers XXth Century Dictionary. 2. Rs. 900 will be awarded to the senders of Correct Solutions, and a minimum award of Rs. 100 will be awarded to every sender of Correct Solution, irrespective of the number of Correct Solutions received by us. Rs. 50 extra will be awarded to the first five senders of correct solutions and another Rs. 50 will be awarded to the sender of largest number of entries. 3. An entrance fee of only EIGHT ANNAS must be sent for each entry by M. O. only, and P.O. receipts must be attached to entries. A single competitor may send any number of entries at the requisite fee. 4. Results will be announced in THE RAINBOW (A popular fortnightly magazine giving complete solutions and comments on almost all puzzles issued in India) of the 14th May, available at all Railway Bookstalls. Those requiring copies of THE RAINBOW from us must enclose two annas stamps. 5. The Prize amounts will not be reduced under any circumstances. 6. The decision of the Manager is final and legally binding.

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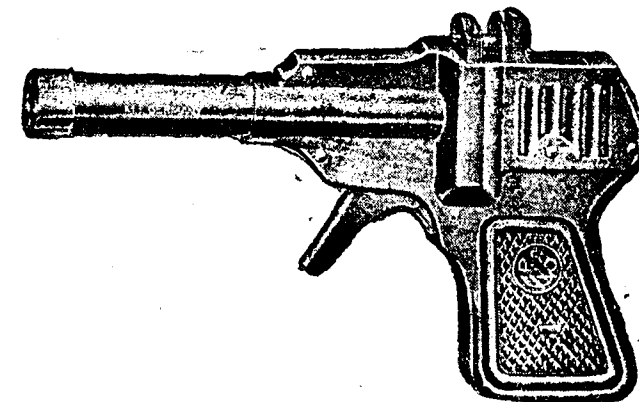
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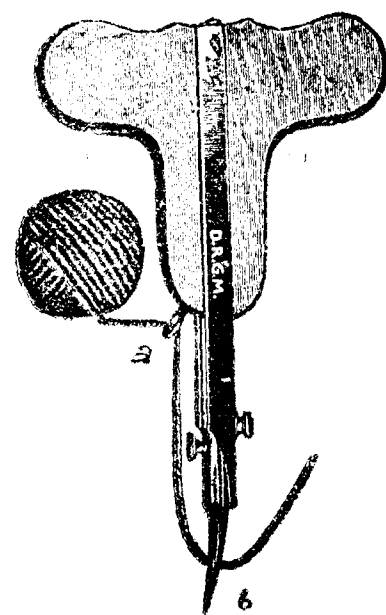
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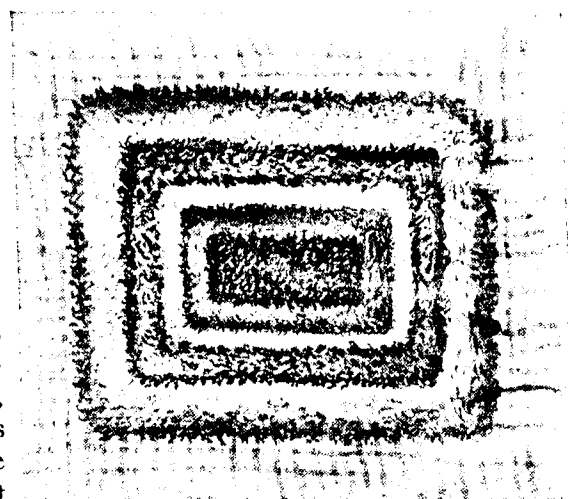
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