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THE MERRY FANS OPEN FORUM

THE 526

MERRY

MAGAZINE

Vol. III

MADRAS, 27th APRIL, 1935

No. 17

CAVEMAN STUFF



The Camera-Man: Stop being silly and let us have some caveman stuff!



Do You Make these Mistakes in ENGLISH?

MANY persons say "Did you hear from him to-day?" They should say "Have you heard from him to-day?" Still others say "between you and I" instead of "between you and me." It is astonishing how often "who" is used for "whom", and how frequently the simplest words are mispronounced.

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THE MERRY MAGAZINE

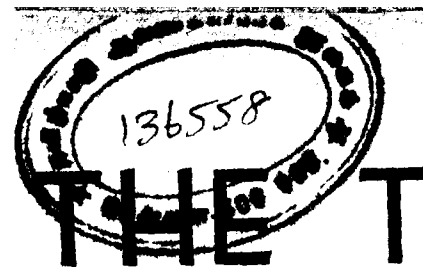
Vol. III

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A QUESTION OF DEGREE!





THE TALKING DOG

By 'EMBUSQUE'

RAMU shouldered his bundle and slipped out of the train on the wrong side. It did not seem a very promising sort of place, but gentlemen like Ramu are circumscribed in their choice of railway-stations. In this case, his choice was dictated by the fact that it would be broad day-light in half an hour, and the next stop was a checking-station.

Ramu eyed the unclimbable fence with disfavour. An uncharitable railway-company had erected it for the discomfiture of such passengers as he. He proceeded to trudge along the permanent way. In a few minutes, he was beyond the precincts of the railway-station, and in a few more minutes, he was approaching a level-crossing. His luck was in. The gate-keeper was having an altercation with the driver of a touring-car, who considered it a gross personal insult that the gate-mechanism should be coupled to the railway signals. While the driver of the touring-car was threatening the apologetic menial with unimaginable retribution, Ramu passed unobtrusively through the wicket-gate, and headed for the town.

Ramu strolled along with the air of a gentleman of leisure. There could be no apter description. Ramu was a gentleman of unlimited leisure, with a genius for gaining a comfortable livelihood by the exertion of his not inconsiderable wits. He had been an agent for aphrodisiacal pills, a seller of the bath-water of the holy, a ventriloquist in a variety-show, and the managing-director of all kinds of small, lucrative, but short-lived enterprises. At the moment, he was disengaged, and was looking for funds. He needed two hundred rupees in order to start a school of aviation. Ramu was nothing if not p-to-date.

You and I would two hundred

rupees an inadequate sum with which to finance an aerodrome: but not Ramu. The two hundred rupees would suffice to provide an alluring advertisement in the press, an imposing accommodation-address, and some expensive note-paper. Ramu proposed, as usual, that a confiding public would furnish the real money.

It was while Ramu was cogitating these matters, that he saw the dog. It was an attractive-looking little terrier, but neglected. It gazed at Ramu with appealing eyes. It was lost, hungry.

"All right, old chap," said Ramu, "I'll fix you up with some breakfast."

Ramu approached an old crone who sat by the wayside with a basket of cakes. Raising his imposing eye-brows, he stared at the dame with surprise and reproach.

"Why, mother," he said, "are you so indifferent to the blessing of the Gods, that you would permit the attendant of the Most High to pass by unfed?"

"Pardon me, holy sir," replied the crone, "I did not observe that your worship was sanctified. Also I fear that my cakes are not fit to be touched by your holiness."

"Madam, you mistake me," replied Ramu. "I am but a sinful mortal. I referred to the dog."

"The dog?" screamed the old woman, losing her respectful air.

"Scoff not!" thundered Ramu, "lest the Most High blast you with a thunderbolt! This dog is the heavenly attendant of *Caveat Emptor*, the Deity whom I worship."

The old crone gazed at the dog in bewilder-



ment. Then a most overwhelming thing happened. The dog looked at the cakes, and then at Ramu, and remarked, in a conversational tone, "Is the old hag going to give us some breakfast, or shall we transform her into a scaly lizard?"

With a terrified screech, the ancient crone arose, upsetting her basket as she went. She hobbled towards the town on swiftly-tottering feet, calling on the Gods to preserve her, and announcing to all and sundry that a miracle had occurred.

"We'll give her half an hour, old chap," said Ramu to the dog, feeding it with cakes, and staying his own hunger from the old woman's stock. "What a pity she doesn't sell mineral-waters! Never mind, we will pass a hydrant on the way to town."

Ramu made the dog presentable and effected some changes in his own appearance, to fit his new character of guardian to the miraculous attendant of *Caveat Emptor*. He blithely set forward to the town, with the grateful terrier at his heels.

By the time Ramu reached the main street, he was followed by a wondering crowd, which grew in numbers every minute. Ignoring his followers, Ramu sauntered on till he arrived at the best, largest and most modern coffee-hotel in the place. Here he took his seat at a table just within the entrance. The dog settled on the threshold. The proprietor obsequiously took Ramu's order, with timid glances at the terrier. The crowd formed an audience at a respectful distance.

The local notables came hurrying to the coffee-hotel in twos and threes. They sat at the tables and toyed with unwanted refreshments, gazing at Ramu and his dog. Presently the crowd was packed tight, inside and outside.

At last, a reverend elder ventured to address the stranger. "Pardon me, sir," he said, "you must find this exhibition of curiosity somewhat embarrassing."

"Oh, no," replied Ramu engagingly. "One gets used to it."

"Then you receive this attention everywhere?"

"Unfortunately, yes. It is my fate to be the possessor of a miraculous dog; and, of course, these superstitious people ascribe the manifestations to supernatural origin."

"It is said that the dog talks," ventured the old gentleman.

"It does," said Ramu simply.

"Then surely you must ascribe such a phenomenon to supernatural causes?" cried the grey beard, with growing excitement.

Ramu shrugged his shoulders. The coffee-house buzzed with animated comment. Yes—a miraculous dog. Attendant of some up-country deity. It cast spells, and talked.

"We have not yet heard the dog talk," sneered the leader of the local bar.

"If I have kept silent, it was in the interests of such as you," remarked the dog, suddenly.

Amid an awe-stricken silence, the lawyer jumped to his feet, a dark flush mantling his skin.

"Who pays secret commissions to touts?" continued the dog, in the same even tones.

The barrister rushed out of the hotel, heedless of the cries of the proprietor over his unpaid bill. He was hurriedly followed by the town's remaining lawyers.

"I can hardly believe my ears," said a local doctor, after the legal exodus.

"The dog never speaks, save to tell the unwelcome truth," remarked Ramu casually.

The doctor started, rose to his feet and hastily departed.

Ramu calmly went on with his coffee, while the crowd outside murmured. A movement was already afoot to provide a religious endowment for the miraculous dog, and to erect a shrine in the market-place in honour of *Caveat Emptor*.

The privileged persons within the hotel could not contain their sense of wonder. They persisted in provoking the dog to speak, and each time they succeeded, they regretted their temerity, and hastily departed. The company inside rapidly diminished, while the crowd outside continually grew.

At last, Ramu was left alone with the proprietor, who drew him to the depths of the shop.

"Sir," said the proprietor, "that is a wonderful dog."

"I wish I could dispose of it," replied Ramu. "I am tired of the commotion it creates everywhere."

"Such a dog would be invaluable in my business. Not only would it attract trade but it would provide me with precious information about my customers."

"The animal is a sacred trust," said Ramu. "I cannot dispose of it, except under proper conditions."

"Then you can dispose of it?" said the proprietor with ill-concealed eagerness.

"I will need a sum of two-hundred rupees, with which to propitiate the deity."

"You shall have it!"

"At once, please. There is a mixed-passenger leaving at mid-day, and I will jump—I mean, I will catch that train. Is there a back-entrance to your premises? I wish to avoid the crowd."

With trembling hands, the proprietor counted two hundred rupees into Ramu's palm. The dog looked on.

"That's all right," assented Ramu. "*Caveat Emptor*!"

"What did you say?" asked the proprietor.

"I was calling upon my tutelary deity," said Ramu. "Good bye!"

The dog followed Ramu to the back door.

"What, are you deserting me?" asked the dog.

"I am afraid I must," replied Ramu. "Good bye!"

"Then I'll never speak again!" vowed the dog, in determined tones.

And it never did.

Seaside

By "The

A party *en route* to Waltair
To gulp down some draughts of the salt air,
Found their footsteps did lag,
When they got to Vizag—
They were persuaded by friends to halt there.

There was a young girl of Feroke,
Who thought it was quite a splendid joke—
To bathe in the sea,
By the side of the quay,
But her conduct shocked most of the townfolk!

A corpulent man of Colombo,
Who resembled the once famous Jumbo,
Dev'loped a notion
To swim in the ocean,
The crowd cried "A porpoise, by Gum—bo!"

In a place on the West Coast called Mahe,
If you stay by the briny salt sea;
There are mermaids with tresses
Who discard flimsy dresses,
And will sometimes invite you to tea!

There's a lonely backwater at Bimli,
Where the moon sometimes shines rather dimly,
Very often, it's said,
That spooks rise from bed,
And perform ablutions quite nimbly!

When the tide comes in, near ancient Nega,
A maiden displays a fine leg. Her
Mane may fall down,
She pretends she will drown,
When up hobs a sportive young beggar!

Limericks

"Lobster"

A couple once went up to Quilon,
She was Mary, and his name was St. John,
He could not get going,
For she needed towing,
When he let go the rope—*she was gone!*

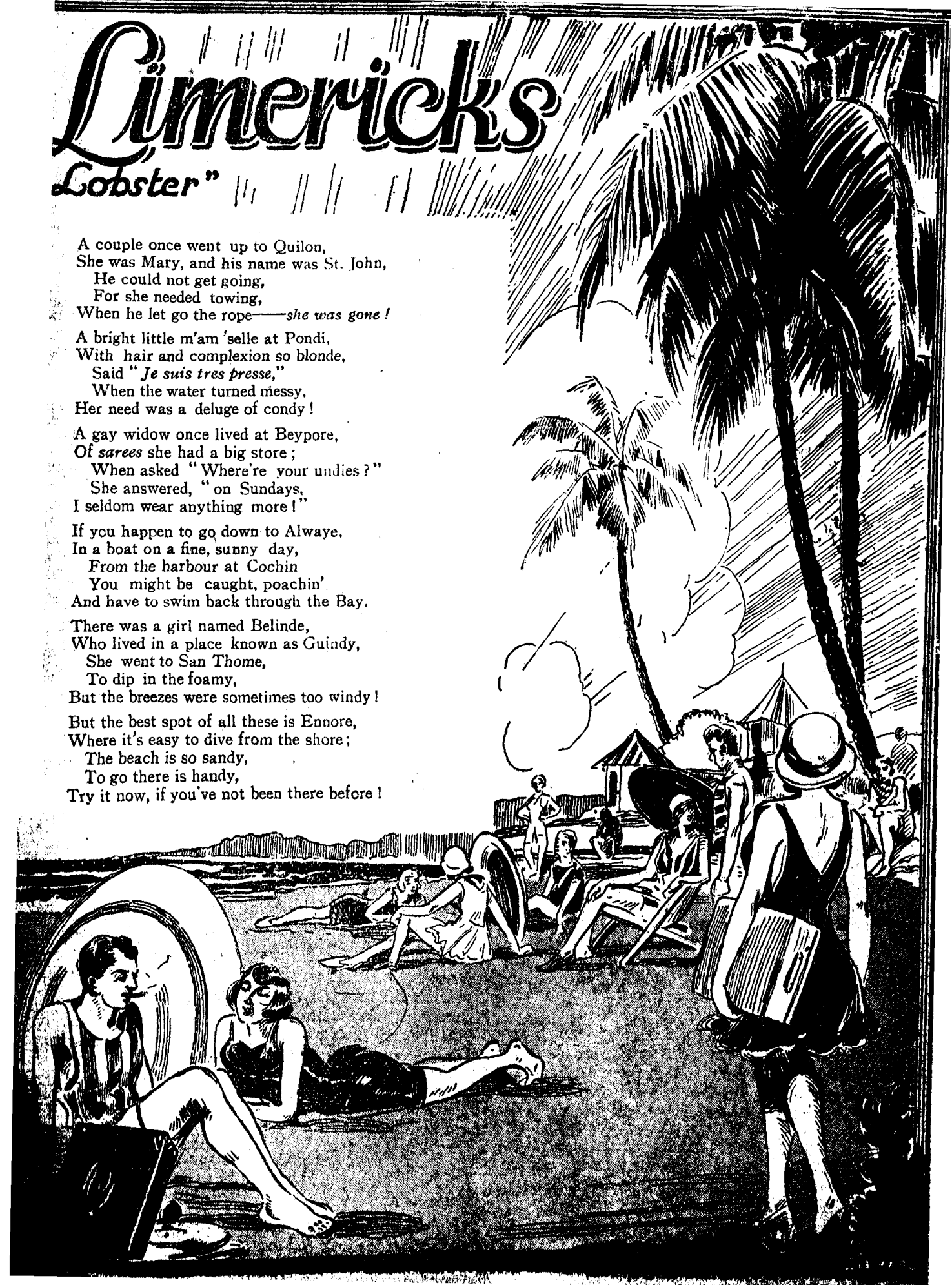
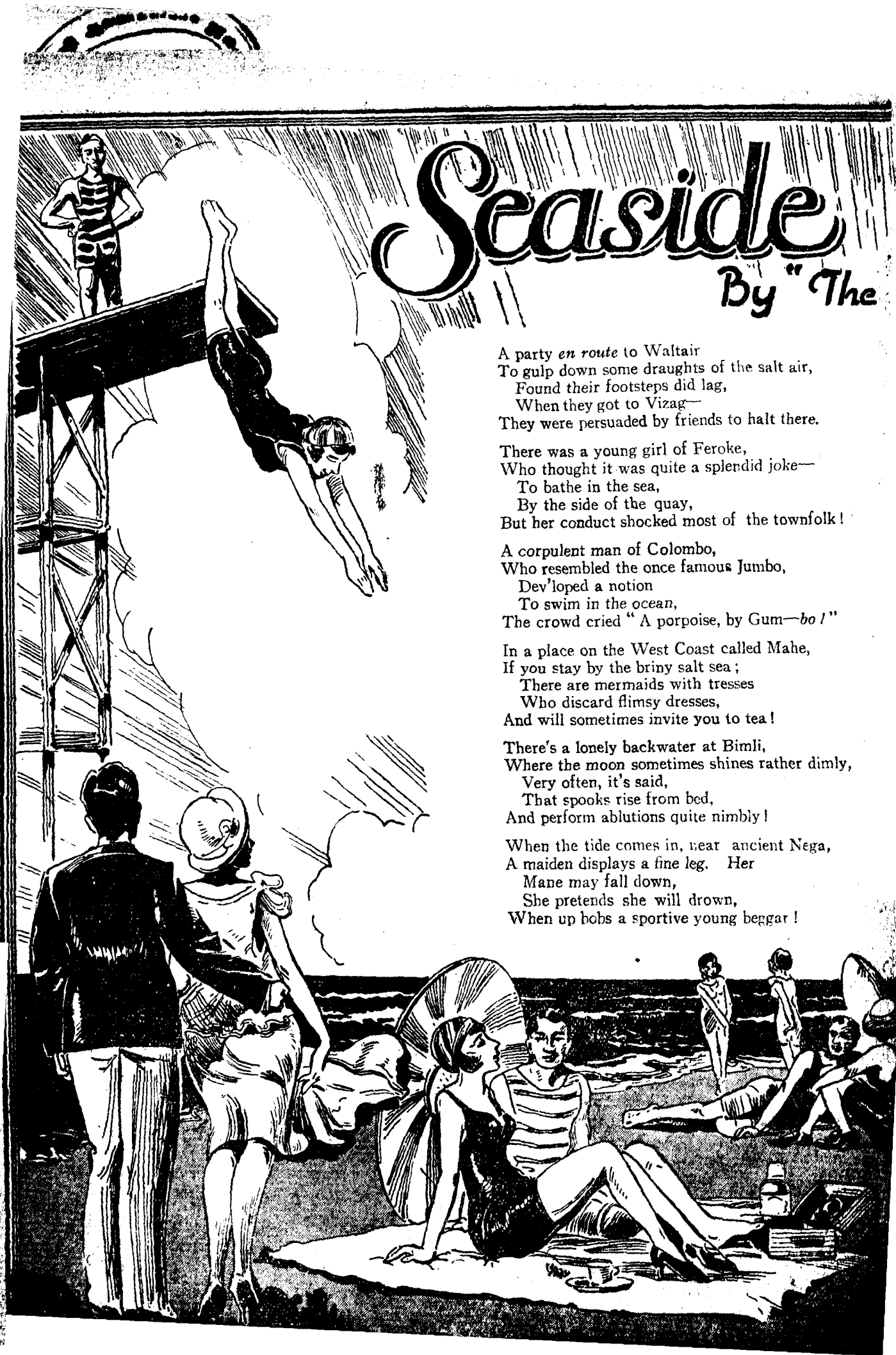
A bright little m'am 'selle at Pondi,
With hair and complexion so blonde,
Said "*Je suis tres presse,*"
When the water turned messy,
Her need was a deluge of condy!

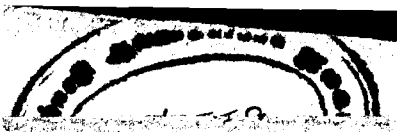
A gay widow once lived at Beypore,
Of *sarees* she had a big store;
When asked "Where're your undies?"
She answered, "on Sundays,
I seldom wear anything more!"

If you happen to go down to Alwaye,
In a boat on a fine, sunny day,
From the harbour at Cochin
You might be caught, poachin'
And have to swim back through the Bay.

There was a girl named Belinde,
Who lived in a place known as Guindy,
She went to San Thome,
To dip in the foamy,
But the breezes were sometimes too windy!

But the best spot of all these is Ennore,
Where it's easy to dive from the shore;
The beach is so sandy,
To go there is handy,
Try it now, if you've not been there before!





THE claim of a young Serb of Belgrade, Petrovitch, to the world's record for feats of memory is challenged, with justification, by a young Indian, V. Sundaresan, of the Military Test Audit, Maymyo, Burma.

Petrovitch memorised in ten minutes a number containing 81 digits and repeated it without an error. But Sundaresan went one better and in the same space of time memorised 30 numbers totalling 90 digits and repeated them correctly. At a garden party, he eclipsed his previous effort by getting by heart 30 different English words in conjunction with 30 separate numbers of three digits. He was able to quote the numbers correctly in serial order and was, besides, able to quote the figure shown against any of the 30 words. Sundaresan, I am given to understand, is proposing to throw out on open challenge for the world title in this "racquet."

* * * *

"For whom exactly do women paint and disfigure themselves?" is the question put to the editor of a North Indian journal by one who signs himself "An Inartistic Young Man." This man—mind you, he confesses he is inartistic—says that in his quite youthful experience he has yet to come across the man who "expresses anything but ridicule and contempt for the modern female's make-up." "Painted lips," complains this young man, "will always remain an insurmountable barrier to the pleasant pastime of kissing—no matter how enticing the woman's shining eyes may be! But the young inartistic man quite forgets to ask himself, whether, in the absence of the paint, there would be the same urge to osculate."

* * * *

In Great Britain, there are a number of Public Assistance Committees to investigate cases of distress and to give relief to such as are found to be genuine. As is only to be expected, quite an army of poverty-stricken women apply for succour and their letters are sometimes very amusing, sometimes startling, but mostly unintentional. And in very many cases, the letters are lecherous, without intention to be so. Here are a few to bear me out:—

"This is my eighth child. What are you going to do about it?"

"Sir, I am forwarding my marriage certificates and two children, one of which is a mistake as you will see."

"Mrs. B. has had no clothes for a year and has been regularly visited by the clergy."

"Unless I get my husband's money, I shall be forced to lead an immoral life."

"You have changed my boy into a girl. Will it make any difference?"

"I have no children; my husband is a bus-driver and works day and night."

"In accordance with your instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope."

* * * *

Talking of births I am reminded of a death which occurred in Kaiwiki, a prosperous trading station in the South Sea Islands. Kuni Andrews, a fairly rich, half-caste copra merchant died intestate and was buried with due ceremony. His plantations and bank balance passed to Sam, his nephew. The very day that he buried his uncle, Sam quarrelled with his fiancée Mimie and broke off the engagement. His sudden prosperity swelled his head. Mimie, in a fit of rage, lodged a false complaint with the police saying that Sam murdered his uncle. The police rushed the coffin out of its grave and were loading it into a van when the coffin yelled! The native policemen took to their heels but the sergeant in command ripped open the top of the coffin. There it was, the corpse of Kuni Andrews, very much alive and kicking, using shockingly bad language. Andrews is now hale and hearty and has married Mimie. Poor Sam! He turned atheist and is creating a lot of trouble for the missionaries there.

Truth is stranger than fiction, you know.

(Oh Yes!—Ed.)



Domestic Problems

Solved Here:

"What should I do when my wife refuses to be drawn out of a bottle?" a reader wants to know.

Well, if it's a castor-oil bottle give up making attempts. If a whisky one, break the neck.

Editorial Note:

Nudism isn't as rare a cult as it is believed to be, says a writer.

As a matter of fact all of us were confirmed lists on the day of our births.

From Hollywood:

A famous actor was killed by gunmen, says a news item.

Shooting stars?

Result of an Accident:

There was a young fellow called Kerr
Who sat down one day on a cherr;

Now he is, you see,

In ward two, bed three,

For the chair wasn't really there!

Meeting Ourselves on the Back:

There was an old Colonel, called Colic

Whose temper was quite diabolic;

But now he laughs and sings

And does jolly old things

Since he reads this page of fun and frolic.

As a Daisy:

There was a gay chappie called Siccups

Who drank in all twenty-three cups;

After an hour or so

He couldn't say 'No',

For the feller had got mighty hiccups.

Dialogue:

She: Every time I talk to you, I am reminded of the spring.

He: Really?

She: Yes. The cuckoo and all.

True:

The workman was standing on a narrow ledge when his foot slipped and he fell.—News Item.

A little or no ledge is a dangerous thing, we always said.

Epitaph:

Let's say a prayer

For Mr. Ben:

Where he thought was a step

Were really ten.

Wellerism:

"Oh hang it," as the judge said when he received his portrait from the artist.

Advice to Girls:

Fall from the house-tops

Fall from above;

Fall from anywhere

But don't fall for a cove!

The Editor Replies:

Why do some men refer to their wives as their ducks, asks a subscriber.

Well, we think because they have got to 'DUCK' every time the missus throws the frying-pan at 'em.

Good Job:

How can I cure my little son of his lying habit? asks a mother.

Don't worry: he'll make a movie press agent when he grows up.

Certainly:

There can be pathos even in the sight of a mason breaking up a fire-place, a poet tells us.

Really, the whole scene is hearth-breaking.

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

AS I write this, I have before me quite a large heap of Readers' Opinions on the *Merry*, as a weekly. Reading this correspondence—critical, suggestive and laudatory, I have a feeling very much akin to that of a successful candidate at an election. If I were to quote a para apiece from each of these letters, they would fill the *Merry* twice over! I am therefore printing elsewhere in this issue excerpts from a few letters. The adjudication for the purpose of awarding the prize offered was by no means an easy task. I am happy to announce that a lady romps home with it—the prize I mean. The charming owner of a charming name, this lady prefers to call herself 'Elvius'! The ways of women are indeed inscrutable! Not content with that, she begins by snapping her fingers at me and the prize-offer; and in the next sentence she wails at 'wasting twelve precious pies' on the postage that conveyed her letter to my table. Life's little ironies, these!

Another lady wants to know something about the lips behind the "Flashes". I hope the author doesn't bulge and burst, and I further hope that we may not be called upon to say a prayer for him.

One of my North Indian correspondents suggests that I reserve space in the *Merry* every week for contributions from women. I accept the suggestion. Ladies, go ahead. However, the *Merry* has a standard to live up to and a reputation to preserve. So, if some of your effusions come back home boomerang-wise, I beg I may not be treated to a logic of tears.

Another correspondent wants nothing but fun, frolic and humour in these pages. I am quite equal to providing such a fare. But there is a catch in it. While I decidedly do not approve of the other place, everlasting bliss in heaven is too beatific a prospect to be really enjoyable. Unrelieved humour is all right. But it has a tendency to pall after a time. Human capacity for enjoying fun, as for suffering pain, is not infinite. The line that the *Merry* has struck is, I am persuaded, a happy *via media*.

Yet another suggestion that has been seriously put forward is that I should allot some space for news of a topical nature from the Far East, the Malayan Peninsula for instance. I am afraid the idea is not practicable. If I begin with the Far East, I may have to end with the Middle and the Far West. That is the sphere of the daily press.

I would like to remind you that the "Forum" on which are extracted readers' letters, is your own. Any subject discussed with intelligence and within the rules of decorum, will find a place there. Generosity, such as this, ought not to go in vain.

The space at my disposal (my modesty, too) does not allow of a comprehensive review of all the opinions I have received. I am grateful. I am gratified. I have every reason to pat myself on the back. But I won't do so. The pleasure that you derive from the pages of the *Merry* were enough reward to the bright boys behind the *Merry* and to—

Your Editor.

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FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Which?

If your wife laughs at your joke, you can be sure it's either an excellent joke or you've got an excellent wife.

Knew Him Too Well

"Mother, have I not been a good boy lately?"
 "Yes, Mani, you have been a very good boy. What f it?"
 "And don't you trust me?"
 "Why Mani, of course I trust you."
 "Then why do you go on hiding the sugar-candy?"

Be Prepared

A doleful little boy went into a chemist's shop and eaned confidently over the counter.
 "Do you keep anything to relieve pain?" he asked.
 "Where is the pain?" the chemist inquired.
 The boy shuddered.
 "It hasn't come yet," he replied; "but father is just reading my school report."

The Correct Indication

"Halt!" said the bandit, pointing a revolver at the learned professor. "If you move you're dead!"
 "My man," said the professor unperturbed, "you should be more exact in your statements. If I moved, it would be a positive sign that I was alive."

Just A 'cheetah'!

The hotel proprietor was demanding payment of a large bill which had been "run up" by a dashing young client.
 "I never pay my bills till I go!" said the young man. "I am trusted everywhere—I am one of the 'lions' of society!"
 "One of the 'lions'?" said the other.
 "Your last landlord described you as one of the 'cheetahs'!"

Satisfied!

Minister: Do you take this man for better or for worse?
 Bride: No, sah. Jes' as he am, passon. If he gets any better the good Lawd will take him and if he gets any worse ah'll tend to him mahself."

We Know the Kind

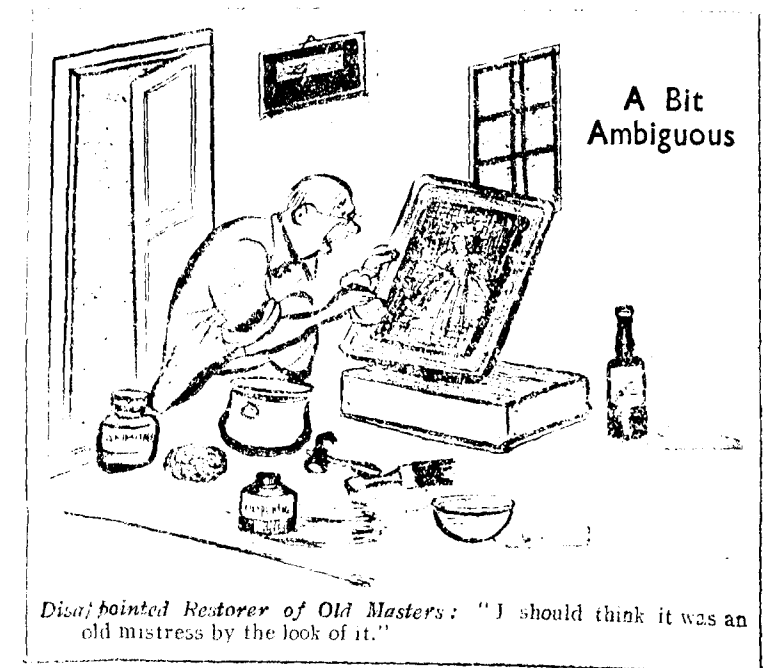
We read that there are many thieves who have reformed and who now keep shops. Some of them, on the other hand, just keep shops.

Far Too Noisy!

Kittu was gazing with a mixture of curiosity and disdain at his one-day-old brother, who lay squealing and wailing in his cot.
 "Has he come from heaven?" he inquired.
 "Yes, dear."
 "No wonder they put him out."

She Tamed the Tamer

Pedro, the lion-tamer, was ill and unable to take his performance at the circus that night, so his wife applied for the job.
 "Do you think you can manage the animals?" asked the circus proprietor.
 "Did Pedro manage them all right?" she asked back.
 "Most successfully," said the other wonderingly.
 "Well, that's all right, then," she returned, "I manage Pedro."



Disappointed Restorer of Old Masters: "I should think it was an old mistress by the look of it."

THE TEASER SERIES

No. III

Mr. Jangli's Day-mare

THEY met in the vestibule of the Victoria Jubilee Hall. First time in six months. A dramatic performance was on.

"Hello, Jangli!" said Mr. Director Narayanan Nair.

"Hello, Nair!" said Mr. Jangli.

"Funny! Meeting you here of all places in the world!"

"Fact is, Nair, I am now in the *Justisgal*."

"In the what?"

"I should have said, on the staff of the *Justisgal*. You see, I am now a dramatic critic. I am an authority on histrionic art."

"Hell! Are you?"

"Certainly not! The Editor says I am. So I must call myself one. Got to give the benefit of my expert views to the readers of the *Justisgal* over this piece."

"Is the.....is your *Justisgal* boosting this play?"

"That depends."

"On what?"

"A number of things."

"For instance?"

"The number of drinks the Editor gets from the promoters."

"I see—the number of drinks you get doesn't have much of a pull, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes! It has. A pretty long pull. Try me."

Mr. Narayanan Nair had an idea.

"Jangli."

"Yes, old horse?"

"You know how I stand now?"

"Oh, yes! In your pants."

"Ha-ha-ha.....same old blighter.....Jangli, old boy, I have gone into business, you know. I want a little boosting myself. Will you do it for an old pal?"

"Boost you? Certainly. I can boost you to anywhere between heaven and hell."



"Give me a match mister!"



His cigar came toppling down.

the next day at noon in high spirits. But his high spirits became low spirits when the office-boy told him that Mr. Nair was out. However, there was a message for Mr. Jangli. Would Mr. Jangli please walk into the boss's room? Certainly. Mr. Jangli walked into the boss's room. The message said that Mr. Nair regretted very much that urgent business should have called him away. He would be returning in an hour, though. Meanwhile, "Jangli, old rag, make yourself cosy. The dear old stuff is in the side-board to your left, below Gandhiji's picture on the wall."

Mr. Jangli's spirits rose again at the sight of spirits. He made himself cosy in a cosy chair and had a couple by way of a sampler. Great Stuff! He had another couple by way of appreciation. He waited till one hour after noon, telling himself ribald stories and an assortment of 'Hooley' jokes.

Mr. Nair was evidently a bad businessman, with no sense of time and of the sanctity of appointments. He didn't return, as promised in the message, at 1 p.m. Not even by a quarter past one. How was a fellow to while away his time against the arrival of Mr. Nair? There was only one way to do it. And Mr. Jangli did it. He had another couple.

What with the April heat, what with one thing and another and what with the three couples in him,

Mr. Jangli slowly lowered his jaw and, presently, he snored.

His Editor appeared with a big cigar held between his teeth and a bucketful of sewage water in his right hand. He methodically poured the sewage water over Mr. Jangli's head and patted it, as if he were anointing him with Biblical oil. Then he called Mrs. Jangli, who was slicing onions in the kitchen, not as a gentleman should call a lady, but something like this—"Hi, kid! Wor yer mean by leavin' me in the cold outside? Nippy's the word. Let yer toddlers rip." In response to which Mrs. Jangli came tripping forward smiling, and kissed Mr. Jangli's Editor on the nose. After that both of them eloped on an aquaplane waiting for them with motors humming on the limpid waters of the Cooum.....

Mr. Jangli woke up gnashing his teeth, i.e., in boiling bad humour. He put himself into good humour by putting another couple into himself and, by way of relieving the balance of his feelings, if he had any left still, he cursed his Editor (who, poor gentleman, was an elderly man with six daughters—three married—and four sons). Mr. Jangli parked a cigar in the left-hand corner of his mouth and struck a match, preparatory to enjoying a quiet smoke. The door opened and in walked

HANUMAN THE MIGHTY

with green hair all over his body, a beautiful downy tail two yards long, a red bulging snout, a burnished golden *gada* stuck nonchalantly under his left arm and an unlit *beedi* sticking out of his scarlet snout.

"Give me a match, mister," said Hanuman the deity.

Mr. Jangli extended his jaws till they extended no further. His cigar came toppling down to earth. The ignited match-stick burnt his thumb and index finger. Hanuman came a step forward, smiling amiably. Mr. Jangli's hair stood on end. Hanuman looked a bit surprised and held out his right hand for Mr. Jangli's match-box. Mr. Jangli let out such a voluminous yell of stark terror as no human being ever let out in all the weary pages of history or fiction. Just then a car deposited Mr. Nair at the door-step of his place of business. He heard the cosmic yell. He rushed in. Who will not?

"Save me, Na—yar," screamed Mr. Jangli and fell on his friend's neck.

Now, what is the Big Idea?

(1) Was Mr. Jangli so damnably tanked that he started seeing things?

(2) Was he dreaming again?

(3) Why did Hanuman visit Mr. Jangli? And why did he want to smoke a *beedi*? Not even a 'De Reszke' which he could so easily afford, being a god!

Now, Readers, have a go at it. The successful ones will be introduced to Mr. & Mrs. Jangli and treated to a couple from Mr. Nair's one-mile range.

What? Not one? Not one of you could produce an answer? Fie!

Ah, well, turn to page 17.

THE MERRY FANS

(The Prize Winning Letter).

DEAR MR. ED.,

AT the very outset let me tell you and din into your ears the fact that I am not writing this epistle from any remunerative point of view. In fact, I can pay you double the amount or even treble on any day or week or month of the year. Your tanner is less than a pittance to me, and if ever I should write for that shameful sum, this letter would run in a different vein.

The real reason for my taking the trouble in writing this long and laborious letter to you and wasting twelve precious pies on it is due to my large-heartedness and extreme benevolence. I am one of those who always like to pay the devil his due (but never for a moment think that you are the devil).

Ever since the *Merry* metamorphosed into a weekly, the happiness of the people in general and me in particular has been doubled. The reason for this enhancement may be a question that requires an immediate answer. Well, there is enough reason and rhyme for this. Every article and every cartoon appearing in the pages of the *Merry Magazine* seem to be in a class by themselves. They possess, breathe and emanate originality. Besides, there is a harmonious admixture of subtle humour, rare knowledge and sound common-sense. And in addition, this is peppered and salted with brilliant witticisms and seasoned with the flavour of romance.

No wonder such a dish is a feast fit for a king or a cop. And only the man who does not have his head on his shoulders will call the price of this magazine unreasonable. To tell you the truth (and this is the first time I am telling one) I call the price dirt cheap. In these hardest of hard days, two annas means so much; so much, that one can do wonders with it. I for one can do no less than two dozen wonders with a couple of annas. When a he or a she sacrifices so much to spend it on the *Merry*, the he or the she must have some deep-founded, deep-thought-out and deeply-considered reason for doing so. The very fact that I am doing so week after week is a sufficient reason to explain the cheapness and celebrity of the magazine.

Every Saturday morning means awaiting the post-man with joyous anticipation. Till I have devoured and digested the last word in the last page, every other matter is mere oblivion to me.

It is said that humour is as necessary as food to humanity, and the 'rose-coloured mag.' has stepped in to serve the former with a vengeance. I say rosy, because the *Merry*, as the rose, is liked by one and all. But it differs from the rose in one respect—and that is—the *Merry* is the only rose without the thorn.

Well, well, well, let not these praises swell your head and puff you up with pride. The magazine is still far away from the goal of perfection and it is up to you to cut out all irrelevancies and add up those new features which will make the *Merry* a still merrier one. One of my opinions, which I hope will receive due consideration, —or rather is it appreciation?—is to have a new design of the outer cover for every issue. And also have two separate sections for ladies and kiddies! These two groups are becoming a menace to humanity and until and unless due recognition is given to them, the very bulwark of the male species will be in a deplorable state.

These are some of the features which need immediate attention and I sanguinely hope that ere long the *Merry* will reach its full bloom. Out of the abundance of the heart, my hand has written these. And if there is anything exaggerated or 'sugar-coated' it is not my fault.

I don't care two figs what you do with this letter so long as you do not reveal my name, since one of my strictest principles in life is not to allow others to call me by my name. You may call me anything, but I will be more pleased if you will call me

"ELVIUS"

P.S.—Please remember I am anything but envious.

EXTRACTS FROM OTHER READERS.

Bouquet to 'Jippy' and 'Rajaram'

South India is noted for its intelligence and your journal typifies the same.

* * *

Your 'Jippy' comes in and regales his readers with very complex problems of every-day life solved in the easiest way without the least strain on one's imagination. Your 'Rajaram' comes forward with a soul-stirring story expounding the possibilities of a misguided genius or misplaced power. He places before the world a clear picture of nature's inexorable laws and proves to the hilt the monstrosity of 'A tall man being bulky'.

P. SUBBA RAO, Benares.

We Shell Out on Time

There should be a Rs. 1000/—each week, with an entrance fee of As. 8 only to begin with. This should go on step by step and in the near future you should announce Rs. 10,000, Rs. 20,000 competitions each week. There will be many competitors in your competitions because you are the only man who is offering the prize amount with the least possible delay.

T.S. HARI HARA IYER, Trichur.

OPEN FORUM

The Fever of Expectation

That which is most needed to a vast number of people is a light hour. Jaded with work all day long, one turns with eager gladness to some means of relief and your worthy fortnightly was one such. But it was only a fortnightly and the fever of expectation used to be great. Your decision to make it a weekly must have thrilled everyone of your readers, and for me, why, I was simply enraptured. Retaining all its usual features, full of enjoyable wit and fun coupled with a fund of enlightening information, the *Merry* weekly is a messenger of light and happiness to every home, especially mine.

R. DHARMARAJA AYYAR, Madurai.

Modern Oliver Twist Wants More

"Ish, what a pity! Last three or four pages full of advertisements and they could have easily put in another story there," says a rotund retired revenue official rolling in his club-chair with a closed copy of the *Merry Magazine* in his hands. His statement reminds me of an Andhra humorist. He was offered once a Homeo pill to relieve him of stomach-ache due to over-eating. He replied to the good Samaritan that if there was space in his tummy for the pill, he would have eaten four or five more *vadais*.

M. SOMASUNDARA RAO B.A., Ellore.

Vote of Confidence

Have full confidence in you and take it from me that the *Merry Magazine* is as good as, if not better than, any other Indian magazine of the same value. You need not invite appreciations or remarks from readers.

V. BALAKRISHNAN, Madurai.

Spice Humour: Serve the Ladies

Humour: Don't let fun and humour be the sole contents for merry-making. Spare a page or two for your own views or brain-wave, or a summary of the world's most important events in a week. Deal with items which you think are important.

Ladies: Spare a page or two solely for contributions from ladies only, e.g., articles from ladies on marriage problems, toilet, manners in society, cooking various kinds of food and preparing Indian dishes in different provinces in India and even abroad. Such things will be very instructive to readers in general. Thus a lady reader from Madras will show her skill to ladies of other provinces and *vice versa*.

NANDLAL D. DATTA, Indore City.

Overworked Joyfull—Bold Young Auntie

It should not be difficult to say whether we have had enough of Joyfull's letters. Poor boy, he has been over-worked, has had an arduous time writing over forty

letters and needs a holiday. A tommy playing the propagandist—what an irony!

Auntie Awful is getting younger and bolder. She has a fund of preposterous suggestions and advice. She is flippant, and amusing. Extend her lease of life if you want to, but let your 'blue pencil' take its toll whenever occasion warrants—Auntie may become garrulous.

Why not give us a new "Deisvi" serial with Sekhar to decorate? A happy combination!

G. J. KAUSIKA, Mylapore.

Local Colour

There is a tendency among our writers to attempt to create the local colour in their stories by using vernacular words in italics. No doubt the vernacular word has to be used when there is no corresponding word in English. But when vernacular words are deliberately introduced to create an Indian atmosphere, the effect is ridiculous. It is the surest sign not only of lazy writing, but also of an unthinking, uncreative mind.

The 'Fun For All the Family' page is not dull, and thank goodness the Editor has the good taste not to steal crude jokes from others.

There is a craze nowadays to know everything about a film star and the 'Star Dust' supplies a long-felt want. This page makes quite interesting reading.

Finally, let me say a word in praise of that delightful writer, Private Joyfull. It is pleasant to read his weekly letters to his mother.

Taking into account the general intellectual ability of the readers and the difficulty of securing trained Indian writers, the *Merry Magazine* is certainly one of the best in the market.

M. N. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, Mysore.

Let's pray.....for the Author of 'Flashes'

The 'Flashes' have been flashing so well that even when I am in school I find myself repeating:

"Let's all come together and pray
For Mr....."

Well you know the rest.

I wonder how many modern girls have kissed the author of 'Flashes'! Tell him not to lose his head, or there will be no more flashes from his brain pan to cheer the Merry Fans.

AMY MARAGATHAM HENRY, Penang.

I Have Drawn A Blank

By 'Teddy Bear'

PEOPLE who have studied the causes which led to the Third Mahratta War, and others who have advanced as far as the third theorem in Geometry, will tell you a peculiar fact about the different American Presidents. The strain of the office of the President is so great that hardly any President survives more than ten years after retiring from office. Government documents and statistics hardly make interesting reading, which explains why the whole atmosphere at the White House, is so depressing.

Now if you have studied Obstetrics and Child Welfare, you will know that the average life of a compositor or an editor is also very short, and whenever an insurance company is called upon to insure the life of any person who belongs to these professions, the agent of the insurance company feigns cramp of the fingers, and refuses to sign the policy papers, simply because of the risk involved. Reading articles, sketches, and stories, is a depressing business, and one should not wonder why so many editors and compositors die young and leave behind widows and unread manuscripts.

Similarly, in everybody's life there is something which has a highly depressing effect on the spirits, and makes life a burden. The average father sees nothing but dark clouds, minus the silver-lining, when his son's school report comes in; the average husband feels suicidal when his wife's tailor and beauty-parlour bills come in; the author feels gloomy when his cherished article comes back with a rejection slip. Thus you will readily see, if you have passed your course in Midwifery and Sick Nursing, that all these documents make very depressing reading, and I am sure you will be able to add to this list, till it will extend from one corner of America to the other.

But the most depressing reading that I have come across so far in my life is contained in the result of the Irish Sweep, which was recently drawn at Dublin. I have read the list from top to bottom, and again from the bottom to top, and again column-wise, and alphabetically, but it all points to one fact, *That I have Drawn a Blank!* Instead of the results being hopeful and bringing sunshine into my life, I feel as if Goddess Fate has returned all my prayers, pinned on to a rejection-slip.

The fact of my having drawn a blank is not likely to affect the Gold Standard. Yet the lifting of the world depression, and unemployment, will be postponed for some more time; trade-recovery will be delayed for another year, and many people who were going to be happy will now not be happy—all because I have drawn a blank. If you understand anything of high finance, Economics and international exchange, you will be

surprised to hear of some of the most disastrous results of this.

To start with, the most disastrous result of this will be that you, dear readers, will have to continue reading my articles in this paper, week by week, month in and month out, and the newspaper-wallahs will have to keep on parting with good, sound rupees. The rickety old chair in my office which groans under my weight will have to keep on groaning, because I shall have to go on working—one of the great tragedies of life. The vacancy which was about to occur in my office will now not occur, and the notice-board announcing 'No Vacancy' will keep on hanging outside my office. My boss—that old fool of a pig—will never learn so many new things about himself, nor will he realise how 'popular' he is with the staff; because now I shall never be able to tell him that. All the trouble I took to rehearse each word of the speech, every sentence, every gesture and the correct modulation just to be able to deliver my final speech to my boss, on the day the results of the Irish Sweep would be published has been in vain, and so now, gentlemen, there will be no speech, no revelation of some of the 'golden' qualities of my boss, there will be no farewell-address, all because I have drawn a blank, and one of the finest examples of oratory will be lost to the world and my colleagues.

A nice lovely villa, called 'DENTON' in the South of France which was for sale will now remain unsold, and untenanted, and what is more, one of the thousands of unmarried French girls will not get married, but will have to remain single, or choose the greater of the two evils and marry a Frenchman. Won't you join me, dear readers, in extending our sympathy to one of the so many unmarried French girls? You will That's right.

The sale of whisky will not at all increase, and Scotland will suffer very acutely from trade depression because an order for three cases per month of the fine Scotch Whisky, bottled in 1763, but brewed in 193 which was about to be placed has been cancelled me, and the sale of Irish liquor will also not improve. The Irish distilleries should blame the Hospitals and authorities for this, and not me.

One Bolls-Boyce saloon which you must have on the premises of Messrs. Hadas & Coy., will remain unsold, and may have to be re-shipped to manufacturers. The sale of petrol and lubricating will also not improve, and America will experience a financial distress, and at least one chauffeur and cleaner in India will remain unemployed. At the end of the year when statistics are published, I am sure you mark a great difference—all because I have drawn a blank.

(Yes and at least 87 pedestrians will die in bed—Ed.)

The chocolate manufacturers are likely to suffer acutely this year, and if a few of them fail to pay dividends on their company's shares you should not be surprised. All the different girls I wanted to take to the pictures (one at a time) will now have to go with somebody else. Besides I shall not be able to buy all the chocolates I otherwise would have bought for these girls. And a lot of ladies' handkerchiefs, bottles of perfumes, shoes, parasols, hats, gowns, garters and chemises will remain unsold in the shops of Bombay and even the drapers and hosiers will have a bad time.

What is more, that fool of a man Brown, my next-door neighbour, will not stand before the local magistrate, charged with throwing all the litter over my garden-wall, into my backyard, because I cannot now sue him as I intended to do and my other neighbour, Jones, will continue to put his chest out, while walking into and out of his garage, where he keeps his old 6-cylinder decrepit 'Bullbrand' car, while I can't afford even a push-bike. Dolly's mother will continue to look down upon me and keep on saying, "I knew you'd never make good," and what stings most is that William, my grocer, and Rahim Bux, my tailor, will continue their guarded hints and remarks about bailiffs, attachments and decrees. Moreover I shall have to continue applauding the singing of that crack-headed, crack-voiced Harry,

simply because I have to touch him occasionally for a few chips.

The ugly-looking and cock-eyed children of Mrs. Hadfield will still be angels to me, and Mrs. Hadfield will still remain a *Prima donna*, because old Hadfield holds a position in my firm, and can make or mar things at promotion time.

This makes most depressing reading, dear readers. Perhaps, you will say, as depressing as the results of the Irish Sweep itself. So I will wind up by saying that the Editor will continue posting me rejection-slips, and I shall continue addressing him as 'Sir', and ending my letters to him with 'Your most obedient servant'. (Your discernment is praiseworthy—Ed.)

And last, but not least, in a little church, in Northern India one wedding less will be solemnized this year, and a sweet girl who was going to say 'Love, honour and obey', will not say it, and a ring that was going to change hands will remain nestling in a jeweller's tray, while a Church of England parson is quite likely to be deprived of his fees for performing one more marriage ceremony, and what's more, a certain woman who was going to become a mother-in-law, and was thinking of bossing me, will not be able to do so as I am not going to get married, at least not this year, simply because I have drawn a blank!

Now read on.....(Where is my blue pencil?—Ed.)

THE BREEZY CALL OF.....

By Krishnan Nair

THE day dawns for me when I sense a finger jabbed between my sixth and seventh ribs or thereabouts. This podgy weapon for digging people in exactly those places belongs to my grandpa. My aged ancestor is somewhat autocratic and, as his desire is that no one should sleep after 4-30 a.m., I have the choice of foregoing sleep from 4-30 or getting digged between the ribs from 4-30 onwards.

Even the profession of lunacy has numerous advocates; which phenomenon will vindicate the parallel existence of early-risers. In the face of their favourite adage, 'Early to bed and early to rise make a man healthy wealthy and wise,' we of the opposition have something to say. I am strongly of the opinion—and the Ed. will also agree—that we need not go to bed early, because the bars round the corner close only at 11. p.m. As for its making anybody wise, even the most liberal-minded of critics would think twice before saying that the ancient relative had anything in that old nut of his.

Another of their arguments is that late risers miss the fragrance of the dawn and the song of the birds. I myself one day—it was in 1922, October, when my grandpa was not with us—woke early and went out to have a 'dekko' at this fragrance and it was so overpowering that I had to go to the doctor to do something for my cold. It was for the song of the birds, if it is so ravishing, let somebody record it. And in the evenings with a dinner tucked in your inside, you can lean

back in your *de luxe* arm chair (if the creditor has not already taken it) and start your gramophone records by Mr. Swallows, Miss Nightingale, Master Robin Redbreast and the rest of them.

Thus once again I take up my pen for the blessed article and turn to the Ed. who is rehearsing with a suicidal air, his next editorial and ask him, "I say, dear sir, do you know where these lines, 'The breezy call of something something morn'... occur?" "You blighter, if you don't stop talking I will give you such a whacking that it will jolt your grandchildren," says the Ed.

After all, Man lives for posterity and nobody should do such things that would fetch disastrous consequences to posterity. These lines may well indicate our position:

We don't want to fight;

But by jingo! if we do,

there will be a post-mortem and another job for the hangman. Editors being what they are, a fellow needs to be thirty-nine kinds of an ass to rebel. And I am not thirty nine kinds of an ass, though some of the best character judges including the Ed. have unanimously agreed that I am something very near to it. So having a very natural desire to preserve our bones from getting broken we deem it healthier to stop here.

(You are wise—Ed.)

SPEAKING of stars, Madras Film Fans were given an opportunity in the beginning of the month to select their favourite pictures, Indian and foreign; and the stars, male and female.

Ballot-papers, with the list of the more important pictures shown in Madras during 1934 and the stars who played in them, were made available by the Madras Film League at all the picture-houses in Madras.

Last year, nearly four hundred new films were shown at the cinemas. This number has been steady for many years. There are at least five thousand regular film-goers. Most of them would have seen only a small proportion of the films but they would have seen most of the better ones. The pictures can be classified under the following types:—

- (1) Melodrama. (2) Outdoor Life.
(3) Musical Comedy. (4) Historical Drama.
(5) Comedy. (6) Drama. (7) War Films
and (8) Thrillers.

Nearly four hundred fans participated in the ballot.

The discrimination of the Madras fans is noteworthy.

Sixty-four of them have plumped for *Queen Christina* and 29 for *The House of Rothschild*.

It does credit to Madras to have honoured 2 historical dramas with the first and second place. These two pictures are considered to be marvels of acting. The third place is taken by *The Tarzan and His Mate*. (26 votes). *Roman Scandals* is a close runner for the third place with 24 votes.

Male Stars (Foreign)

George Arliss takes the palm with 66 votes while Clark Gable, Charles Laughton and Wallace Beery have snatched the 2nd, 3rd and 4th places by securing 28, 27, and 26 votes respectively.



Female Stars (Foreign)

The surprise selection is that of Greta Garbo for the first place by 113 votes. The second place is given to Norma Shearer by 27 fans. The third place goes to Joan Crawford with 26 votes and Maureen O'Sullivan is fourth (18).

Indian Pictures

The first four are:—

- (1) Chandidas (Hindi) 86 Votes.
(2) Bhama Vijayam (Tamil) 59 Votes.
(3) Valli's Wedding (Tamil) 45 Votes.
(4) Seetha Kalyanam (Tamil) 35 Votes.

Indian Stars

The first four are:—

Male		Female	
Saigal	... 67	T. P. Rajalakshmi	94
D. Billimoria	... 52	Uma Devi	... 63
M. R. Krishnamurthi	48	P. S. Ratna Bai	... 51
Master Rajan	... 28	Sulochana	... 49

* * * *

Janet Gaynor heads the list of film stars whose films have made most money. Seven of her pictures have each made more than £200,000. Second is Harold Lloyd, five of whose pictures have exceeded that amount. Edmund Lowe comes next with four, followed by Charlie Chaplin, Rudolph Valentino and Warner Baxter with three each.

Only about seventy pictures have reached the £200,000 mark in Hollywood history. They include *The Singing Fool*, first with a million pounds, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* with £900,000 and *Ben Hur* with £800,000.

ANSWER TO TEASER No. 3

(Appearing on page 10)

Question I:—Was Mr. Jangli so damnably tanked that he started seeing things?

Answer:—No! Certainly not, as Mr. Jangli would have said. If he were drunk he would have said to Hanuman, "H'llo, old top! How'r yah!" and shook his hand cordially. A fellow who had four couples, i.e., one full bottle, is never scared, as Mr. Jangli was, but would tuck up his shirt sleeves and fight the whole lot of Hitler's Blackguards single handed with a heroic smile on his lips.

Question II:—Was he dreaming again?

Answer:—No, to this also. In testimony whereof stand one empty bottle on the table, his unlit cigarette on the floor and the match-stick which never lighted his cigarette, but which burnt his fingers instead, still giving him a beastly pain. You don't get burnt on your fingers in dreams, would you? Certainly not.

Question III:—Why did Hanuman visit Mr. Jangli?

Answer:—Ah! There's the rub. Why, indeed!

One can conceive a god (with or without a tail) visiting, in a burst of celestial love, the houses of religious, honest, blameless citizens like me or Auntie Awful in the bizarre hours of night when lightning forks and thunder roars across the heavens. But, for a god like Hanuman to visit, in broad day-light, a dud dramatic critic and a beer-swilling, whisky-sampling, salacious rascal as Mr. Jangli undoubtedly was—pooh—it is absolutely impossible! Unheard of.

But the difficulty is he *did* visit the bad journalist Jangli, sending him rocketing into the arms of Mr. Nair. Here is a debacle. Let us reason it out.

At what auspicious moments and holy places do the Celestial Gentlemen (or Ladies) visit mortals?

When one is drunk. When one is seeing a nightmare. In a forest (according to story-tellers). Or in a temple.

Let us eliminate.

Mr. Jangli was not drunk.

Neither was he seeing a nightmare.

Still less was he in a forest. He was lolling in a lounge. And a lounge can, by no stretch of imagination, be called a temple. Even such an unsavoury, hard-boiled diehard, like Churchill, would never do us the injustice to call a lounge a temple.

And, moreover, Gods in temples are made of granite or some such nice, time-resisting substance.

We have eliminated all possibilities. Golly! We are in a *cul-de-sac*. No way out—Ah! Hurrah! There is another place where Hanuman could be found smoking beedies.

A talkie studio!!!

Where they manufacture anything from a rolling-pin to an Olympic God.

We said at the beginning of this authentic story something about 'Mr. Director Narayan Nair'. And a director wanting Mr. Dramatic Critic Jangli to boost him, can *only* mean a director *a la* Hollywood.

That is that! God Hanuman (known in private life as Abdul Lateef) was waiting on the sets all made up for *Lanka Dahanam* for Mr. Director Nair to direct him. And finding his time hanging a bit heavily on his hands, the bored deity sauntered into the boss's room in search of a match-stick.

And dash it! Why did he want to smoke a beedi and not a De Reszke?

How can a poor Hanuman earning a salary of Rs. 25/— per month from the Indo-Commercials Limited smoke anything more prosperous than a beedi?

I ask, how can he?

In The Next Issue

THE PRIZE BRINJAL By 'Embusque'
(There are brinjals and brinjals.)

THE SHORT STORY By J. H. Acott
(How to write it—and sell it.)

THE TANK By 'Amphibium'
(A labour of love queered by a doctor.)

JUBILEE AWARDS By 'Teddy Bear'
(Sort of Give unto Pilate his due.)

RECONCILIATION By Sardar Mansingh
(A blackmailer gets it on board a yacht)

SECURITY By 'Jeevi'
(A murder mystery.)

TEASER SERIES No. 4
Bill Sykes and the Lady

LOVE'S LABOUR NOT LOST By V. B. Prasad
(Concluded)

Joyfull, Auntie, Star Dust, The Story of My Life etc.,

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL

46. The Transport Course

Madras, 27th April, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

YOU will be pleased to hear that I have passed the Transport Course. They never let you alone in the Army: they are always teaching you some thing or other. The Army is like a university, with all kinds of schools for different subjects. A soldier who makes full use of his opportunities, can receive training for almost every conceivable occupation except that of a holy man, and he is disqualified from that owing to the shocking bad language he employs, through having undergone tribulations in so many schools of instruction.

It is noticeable, nowadays, how eager the Indian soldiers are to take these courses. The students come from all branches of the Indian and British armies.

The Indian soldiers are very industrious and conscientious. We regard courses as rather a bore; and we master the subjects as quickly as we can, and then relax. But the Indian soldiers look upon courses as heaven-sent opportunities. They arrive with their pockets full of notebooks, and never relax for a moment. As if the course were not thorough enough, these wonderful chaps actually hire tutors, and pursue extra studies late at night.

At the end of a course, an Indian student knows every possible detail by heart, and can quote chapter and verse for every statement. You can absolutely rely upon his following the exact instructions in the textbooks, even to the misprints.

We envy the Indian soldiers this power of conscientious concentration: we cannot do it ourselves. For the first week or two we are industrious enough. We are anxious to understand the underlying principles of the subjects, and are interested in tracing cause and effect. Once we have grasped these things, we are only bored by the instructor's reiterations.

The Indian soldiers, on the other hand, love to learn every possible detailed application of first principles, without bothering about the principles themselves. If they are studying electrical circuits, they do not worry about the fundamental phenomenon of electricity.

I think these opposite habits of mind could be exploited to great advantage in India. It should be

possible to distribute jobs according to racial and individual talents. If I wanted a man to run a well-established and highly-equipped wireless-station, where great administrative efficiency and attention to detail were required, I would appoint an Indian expert to be in charge. But if I wanted someone to go and start a wireless-station in a primitive place, and could supply him only with a number of old boxes, some pieces of wire, and a few illiterate labourers, I would send a scatter-

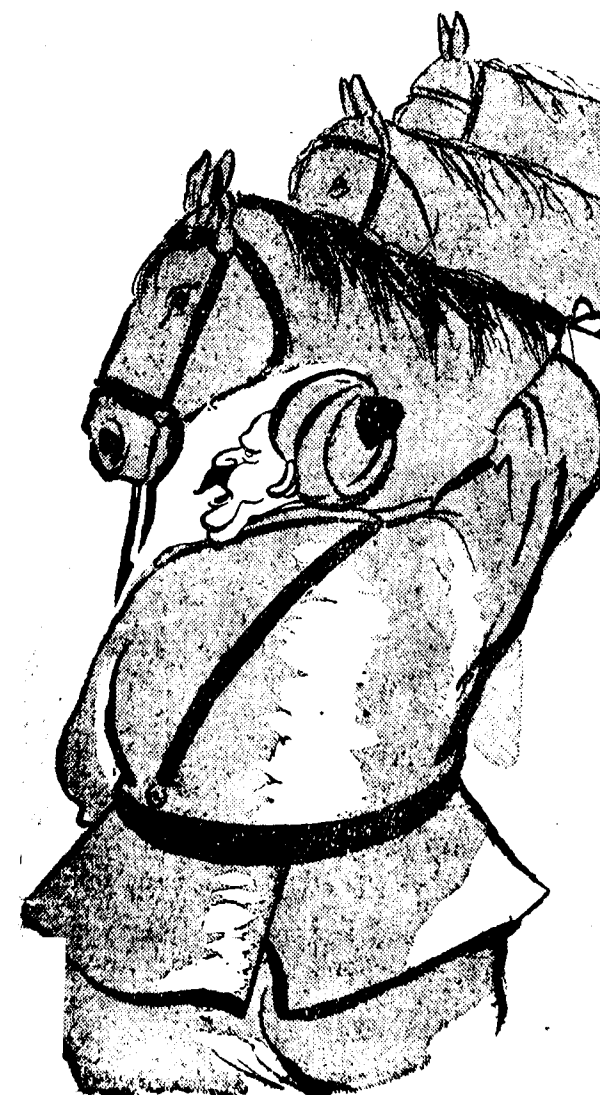


"Up you go!"

brained Englishman. An Indian loves to operate a complicated official machine; an Englishman loves to improvise.

This principle would solve something in India known as the communal problem. For instance, everyone knows that Ghurkas make good watchmen, while Moplahs make good sailors. It is therefore reasonable to choose most of the Government watchmen from the Ghurka community, and most of the Government launch-crews from among the Moplahs. But the present idea is that everyone must share all Government jobs. Therefore half the crew of every launch must be sea-sick Ghurkas, while half the guardians of the public treasuries must be soldiers from Malabar.

The different communities in India often get annoyed with one another, and it even interferes with our courses. My Transport Course was interrupted last week because a lot of men of one community wanted to murder everybody of the other community. I had to go and stand in the street and have bricks thrown at me. It is very hard to stand up and be a cock-shy for a lot of miscreants who need to be taught a lesson. It makes you inclined to lose your temper. However, we managed to be patient, and in the end the miscreants went home without harming anyone but us poor soldiers.



On a Transport Course, naturally, the first thing you have to do is riding-drill. The drill takes place in a circular enclosure with high walls. The walls are to prevent you from escaping. The riding-master is a pitiless little sergeant called the Roughrider, and he stands in the centre and barks at us. At first we have a lot of great big horses with broad backs. They are real old soldiers, full of wisdom, and quite devoid of vice. They know all the drills perfectly, and take no notice of the signals of the poor worried mortals bumping about on their backs. The steeds plod round sedately like performers in a circus, and when the drill is over they look at their riders in a pitying way, and yawn, and go to sleep standing.

There was a very stout Indian officer on the course, who was a Subedar Sahib. We were very fond of him, because he was such a fine old character. He used to sit with us during the stand-easy, and tell us funny stories. He endured terrible tribulations in the riding-school. He could never get on his horse, and would stand there panting and struggling, and begging to be allowed a stool to mount by. But the Roughrider showed no sympathy whatever. "An officer and a gentleman cannot walk about with a stool tied to his belt," he used to say. "Nor can we send to Bombay for a crane, every time you want to get on your horse. Up you go!" And he would give the Subedar Sahib a hard push in a place, and shoot him into the saddle.

After the third day, the Subedar Sahib could not sit down to tell us stories: he remained in a standing position. "Come on, Subedar Sahib!" barked the Roughrider, "you are like a raw recruit on that horse!"

"I have twenty years' service, Sergeant," groaned the old gentleman, "but I admit that I am raw."

We all laughed, so the Sergeant looked at us with a beady eye, and said, "Off saddles!"

We clambered down and took off our saddles. "Mount!" said the Sergeant. "Walk march! Trot!"

The old horses ambled round, while we raw soldiers looked piteously at the Sergeant, as if to promise that we would not laugh any more. If you have to endure friction in a tender spot, a saddle is at least smooth, whereas a horse's backbone is all knobs and ridges. "Now laugh!" said the Sergeant.

After some days, when we had all become proficient, the old horses were taken away, and we had to do the same drills with young remounts. These were replacements straight from Australia, where they had run wild, with a whole continent in which to kick about. They objected to the performance of monotonous drills in a confined space, and showed their resentment in their customary manner. We began to be glad that the walls were so high.

"Please, Sergeant," complained one young officer just out from home, "may I have a different horse? This one kicks me every time I go near him."

"Hold his head, sir, and he won't kick you," advised the Sergeant.

"Yes," said the young man bitterly. "And if I hold his tail, I suppose he won't bite me."

The next stage was the jumping-lane. This consisted of a narrow alley with high walls, and there were different kinds of fences every few yards. We were all driven into one end of the lane, and the only way of escape was over the fences and out at the other end. The Subedar Sahib went over the jumps clasp ing his horse round the neck, with his prominent hinder-parts bouncing towards Heaven. "Sit your horse, Subedar Sahib!" cried the Roughrider, "you are taught to be kind to him, but there is no need to kiss him!"

This so unnerved the Subedar Sahib that he fell off, and was left in the lane between two high fences.

"Now how are you going to get out?" asked the Sergeant unsympathetically.

The Subedar Sahib could not jump the fences, so in the end we had to make a hole in the wall to let him out. Fortunately, it was only a mud wall. We all patted the Subedar Sahib on the back, and consoled and encouraged him, but he was very sorrowful.

"If my poor mother could see me now!" he lamented. "It is a punishment upon me, for having neglected her tears, when I told her I was going to leave home and become a soldier!"

Another part of our studies was called Animal Management. This refers to all matters regarding the care and maintenance of animals. You learn how to load them, and feed them, and house them, and even doctor them. When you have to give a horse a pill, you place the pill in a tube, and blow it down the horse's throat. One day, when there was a horse needing some opening-medicine, the Roughrider showed us how to prepare the pill, and then handed it with the tube to the Subedar Sahib. "Go on, blow it down the horse's throat," said the Sergeant.

The Subedar Sahib got the horse's mouth open in the way we had been taught, and then gingerly put the pill in the tube, and got the tube down the animal's gullet. The Subedar Sahib applied his lips to the tube, and the horse gave a snort. The old gentleman staggered back with a very doleful expression on his face, and holding his ample stomach.

"What's the matter?" barked the Roughrider.

"I used the tube as directed," groaned the Subedar Sahib, "but the horse blew first. I have swallowed the pill myself!"

We all wondered if the Subedar Sahib would be poisoned, but the Roughrider simply laughed. "That's all right," he said; "horse-medicine is the same as human medicine, only stronger." And he gave the horse another pill.

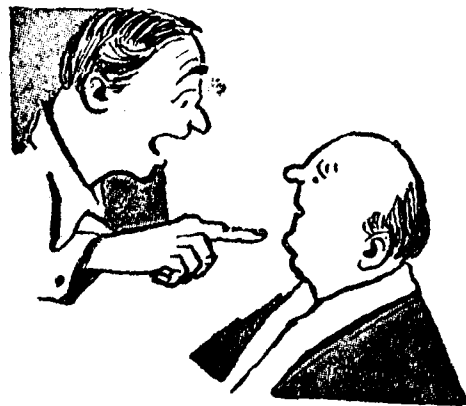
The Subedar Sahib stood groaning and rubbing his stomach. "Don't worry, Subedar Sahib," said the Roughrider. "The inconvenience will only be temporary. But don't forget you'll have to pay for the pill you've made away with. We are stringently limited in veterinary supplies nowadays." So the poor Subedar Sahib had to pay for his involuntary dose of horse-medicine.

The curriculum also included the care of vehicles. We learned the construction and care of all kinds of Army vehicles. The Roughrider had a spanking pony-tonga of his own, in which he drove about when off duty. The students at the school had to take it to pieces every few days, and scrape and varnish it, and polish the harness, till everything glittered like gold. The Roughrider used to say that his carriage had been polished by all the high officers in the Army, because even high officers have to pass these courses.

So, dear Mother, what with one thing and another, I will be able to take care of all the farm-carts and the animals when I get home. I will teach young George all that I have learned, but you can promise him that I I won't be as severe as the Roughrider.

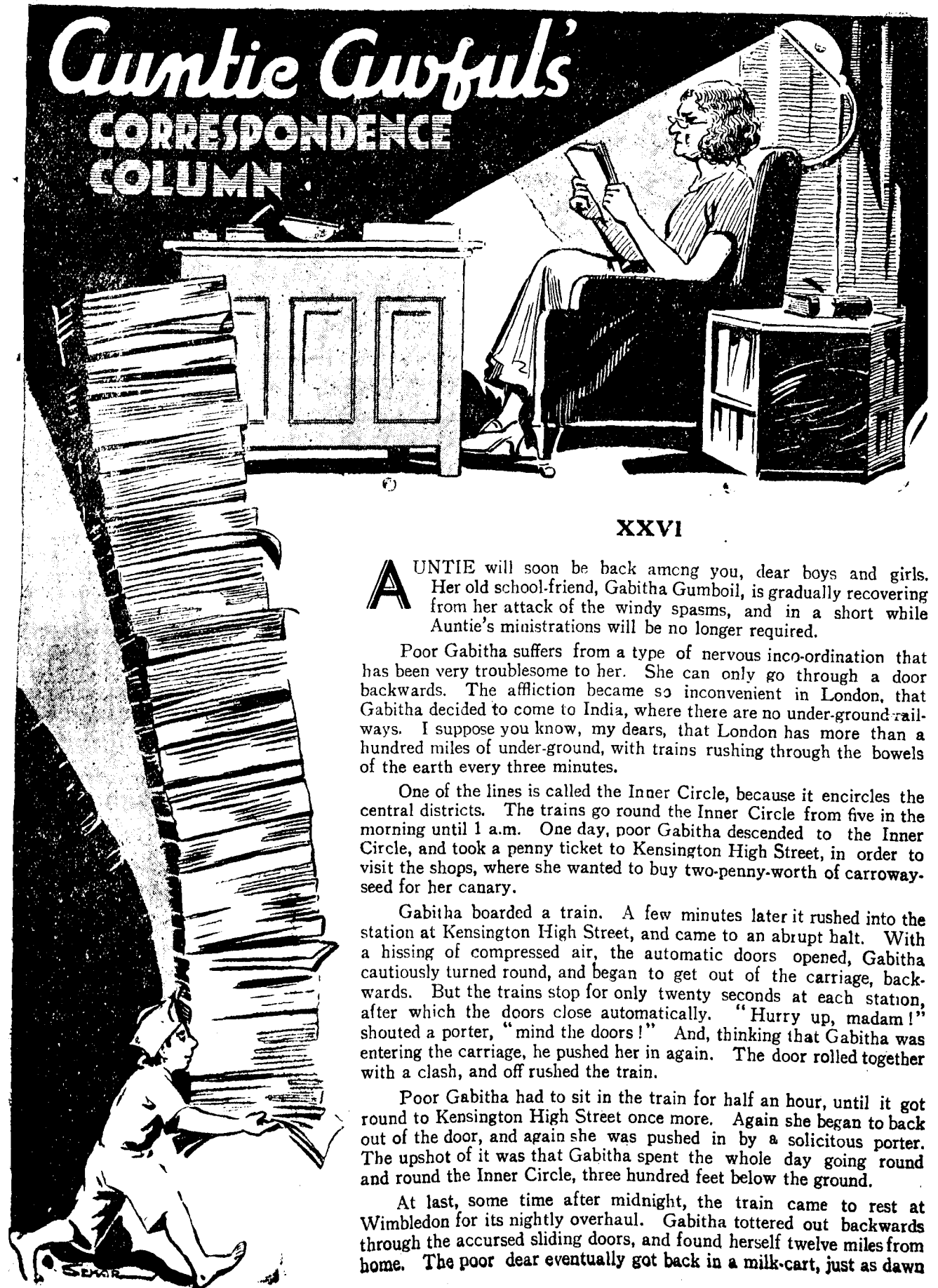
Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

DO YOU KNOW?



1. What is meant by 'The Chiltern Hundreds'?
2. What is Cleopatra's Needle?
3. Where is the Kiel Canal?
4. Who is a Kanaka?
5. What is "sus-per-coll"?
6. What is the other name for Japan?

Please see answers on page 24.



XXVI

AUNTIE will soon be back among you, dear boys and girls. Her old school-friend, Gabitha Gumboil, is gradually recovering from her attack of the windy spasms, and in a short while Auntie's ministrations will be no longer required.

Poor Gabitha suffers from a type of nervous inco-ordination that has been very troublesome to her. She can only go through a door backwards. The affliction became so inconvenient in London, that Gabitha decided to come to India, where there are no under-ground-railways. I suppose you know, my dears, that London has more than a hundred miles of under-ground, with trains rushing through the bowels of the earth every three minutes.

One of the lines is called the Inner Circle, because it encircles the central districts. The trains go round the Inner Circle from five in the morning until 1 a.m. One day, poor Gabitha descended to the Inner Circle, and took a penny ticket to Kensington High Street, in order to visit the shops, where she wanted to buy two-penny-worth of carraway-seed for her canary.

Gabitha boarded a train. A few minutes later it rushed into the station at Kensington High Street, and came to an abrupt halt. With a hissing of compressed air, the automatic doors opened, Gabitha cautiously turned round, and began to get out of the carriage, backwards. But the trains stop for only twenty seconds at each station, after which the doors close automatically. "Hurry up, madam!" shouted a porter, "mind the doors!" And, thinking that Gabitha was entering the carriage, he pushed her in again. The door rolled together with a clash, and off rushed the train.

Poor Gabitha had to sit in the train for half an hour, until it got round to Kensington High Street once more. Again she began to back out of the door, and again she was pushed in by a solicitous porter. The upshot of it was that Gabitha spent the whole day going round and round the Inner Circle, three hundred feet below the ground.

At last, some time after midnight, the train came to rest at Wimbledon for its nightly overhaul. Gabitha tottered out backwards through the accursed sliding doors, and found herself twelve miles from home. The poor dear eventually got back in a milk-cart, just as dawn

was breaking. So you will understand, my dears, why Gabitha prefers restful and unhurried ways.

Compassionate (Ceylon). "One of my neighbours found a poor suffering coolie sitting by the road-side in the pouring rain. He took off his own coat and covered the man with it. Can you instance a similar act of kindness among your own people?" Certainly I can, dear boy. Why, only a few days ago, Uncle Ghastly was telling me that he put his shirt on a horse that was scratched.

Geography (Gobichettipalayam). "Does it always rain in England?" No, my dear. Sometimes it snows.

Senior Year (Nannilam). "I am very anxious to get through my examinations this year. Please tell me how I may increase my knowledge of Ancient History in my spare time." Go to the local cinema at every opportunity, dear boy, and study the news-reels.

Straight Eight (Kumbakonam). "When I drive my car along the Marina on an evening, I sometimes hear a squealing noise from under the front wheels. What do you think it is?" Only a pedestrian, dear boy.

Deceived (Bazaar Street). "He has eloped with my wife, and I thought he was my best friend." Cheer up, dear sir. Perhaps he is.

Medico (Poona). "I charge regular patients a reduced fee. The other evening, a stranger came in, and pretended he had consulted me before, in order to escape the higher rate of payment. He then described his ailments, and asked for a prescription. What should I have done?" You should have replied, "Oh, yes, I remember your case perfectly. Continue the same medicine."

Disappointed (Mudaliar Street). "I followed your advice, but my wife created a fearful scene, and went home to her mother." Auntie is afraid there has been a misunderstanding. I told you to flatter her; not flatten her.

Sceptic (Adyar). "You were quite right in your exposure of fortune-tellers. One of them came to my house this evening, and said that I would have sixteen children, and would die at the age of thirty-nine. I am already thirty-eight years old, and am a bachelor." You must not be unfair to the sage, dear sir. Perhaps it is your fate to be inveigled into an immediate marriage with a widow with fifteen children.

Wondrous (Dewas). "How great are the works of Creation! The handiwork of the Lord can be seen in every creeping thing." Yes, dear sir; I suppose He even made passenger-trains.

Night Owl (Calcutta). "It is interesting when you visit a cinema, to see all the different nationalities that come ashore from the ships and flock to the universal entertainment of modern times." You can even distinguish the different races by their method of leaving the cinema, dear boy. The stolid John Bull looks round to make sure he has not forgotten anything. The volatile Yankee swaggers out without a thought for his belongings. But the careful Scot searches to see what the other patrons have left behind.

M. L. A. (Delhi). "Please tell me what you consider the essential qualities of a member of the Assembly."

There are two essentials, dear sir: first, to suffer fools gladly, and second, to answer letters by return of post.

Scholiast (Benares). "I am much annoyed by a certain professor whose degree was obtained from a dubious organisation; yet he wears a hood resembling that of an Oxford M.A. The man has a lie upon his back." Don't say 'a lie,' dear sir, say a 'false hood'.

Traveller (Vandipaliam). "What is the use of a time-table, when the buses are always late?" But how would you know the buses were late, if there were no time-table?

Run Down (Madras). "In the circumstances, I think I will go to a hill-station for a change and a rest." Do so by all means, dear boy. When you go, the coolies will get the change, and the boarding-house proprietor will get the rest.

Debating Society (Tirupapuliyur). "The season has closed with a small credit balance. Please advise us of the best use to which the money could be put." Auntie advises you to devote the money to the inauguration of a fund to check the spread of dry rot in the premises.

Wayway (Bangalore). "I am afraid I am provoking a tragedy. I was engaged to marry a young man, but one evening I met a gentleman I liked better, so I got engaged to him. Then I had to break it off with the first one, and he was very upset. Now he is coming to my bungalow every evening, and demanding to know the address of my new fiancée. He is very vehement, and I am afraid he wants to know the address in order to go and shoot his rival." Auntie's experience, my dear girl, makes her think that your former sweetheart is unlikely to shoot his supplanter. Most likely, he wants to sell him the engagement ring.

Epicure (Park Town). "The doctor has warned me not to sleep on a full stomach; but I am fond of taking a hearty supper before going to bed. What shall I do?" Sleep on your back, dear sir.

Dish of Herbs (Sungamaman). "My aunt is very grumpy. She says that if she were my wife, she would give me poison." That's all right, dear boy. Tell her that if she were your wife, you'd take it.

Pole Squatter (Madras). "I see that in America, men gain large rewards for sitting at the top of a pole for a record number of hours. What do you think I would get if I sat at the top of the High Court for several days?" A cold in the head, dear boy.

Nineteen Platoon (Fort St. George). "We are fed-up with a fellow in our platoon, who is always telling tall stories of his adventures on the Frontier. He says that during a battle a bullet passed through his chest and came out at the back. This is impossible, because in that case the bullet must have gone right through his heart." Not necessarily, dear boys. I expect his heart was in his mouth at the time.

Jaya (Girls' School). "To settle an argument, please tell us if a girl's tongue is an organ." Not exactly, my dear. You see, an organ has stops.

Suitor (Muttra). "I asked the girl's father if he would consent to our marriage, and he kicked me out of the house. What does a well-bred man do in such a case?" A well-bred man, dear sir, ignores what has happened behind his back.

XVII

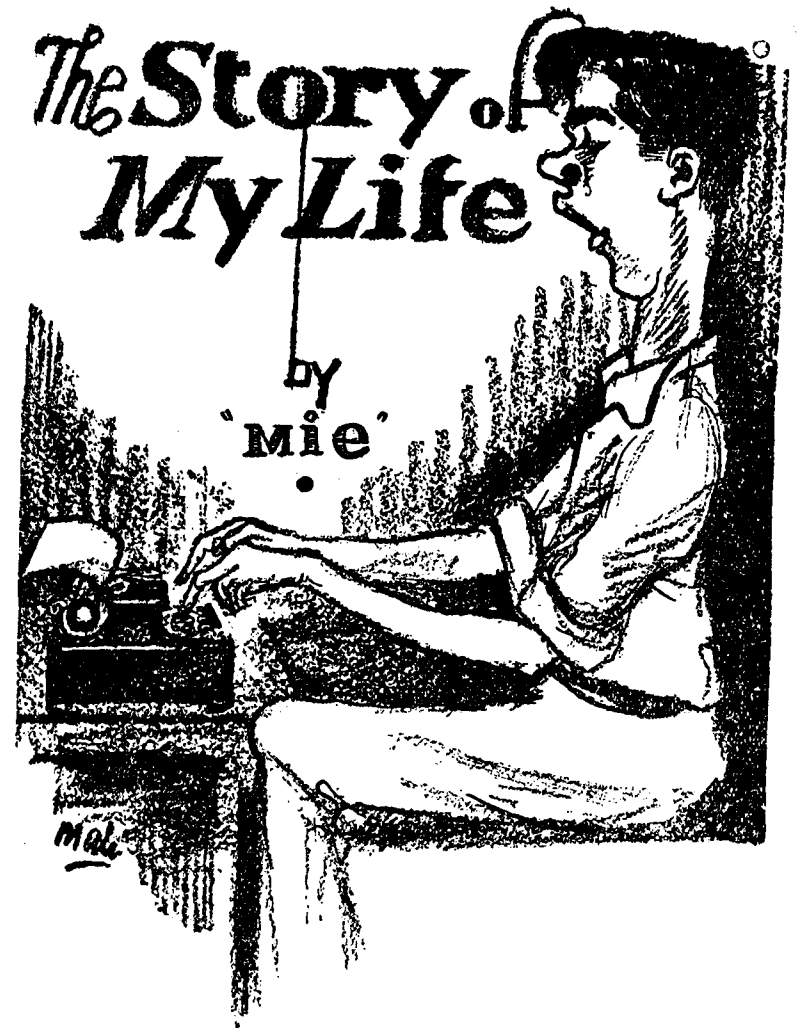
Othello (contemplating his black face in the mirror):

"It is the cause, my soul, it is the cause."

THE history of India as it is written by British historians for the special use of Indian students is an edifying tale. It is divided into three periods, the Early Hindu, the Mohammedan and the British. In the early Hindu period the kings were ruthless empire builders who were never at ease unless they were waging war against a neighbouring state; or they were madmen, pious, yes, but utterly incompetent to rule a vast country. The people, of course, groaned under the exorbitant taxes. Famines and pestilences were monthly occurrences. The Brahmin priests who often were also the king's counsellors were fanatics and the people groaned again. No doubt the royal and aristocratic personages did not lack in physical courage. This is graciously admitted by our 'scrupulous' historians. But they had no sense of values and they were cruel despots who spurned those beneath them. Altogether a distressing period taking everything into consideration.

Then came the Mohammedan period. The British historians sound tired when describing this. Squeamish or prudish though they are not, they simply cannot bring themselves to mention certain details connected with this period. Their repugnance gets the better of their artistic sense. So briefly touching on some of the generalities, they let dark hints do the rest. What a long line of ferocious, blood-thirsty, debased, licentious, merciless kings! What an amount of suffering on the part of the people! Harems, homo-sexuality, bow-strings, eunuchs, wine, and hunting were about the only things that there were to talk about in connection with the monarchs. There was no administration, no government. Everything was chaotic. The king's whim or word was law. If anyone smiled when he should have guffawed, his head was chopped off. Parents and relatives of monarchs were always thrown to the elephants by order of the king. People lived in dread of their lives, wives and property. The whole atmosphere in these pages reminds one of the dark days of the French Revolution; only it is a hundred-fold worse.

There is of course not a good word for the early conquerors of India; but even the great Moghuls are not spared. Babar's aggressiveness, Humayun's chicken-heartedness, Akbar's vanity, and perfectly insane ideas, Jehangir's innate cruelty, Shah Jehan's streak of madness, Aurengzeb's fanatic ferocity, all these are set down in detail. Shivaji, too, was a mountain robber, a rat in fact, who had never heard about 'the quality of mercy'. Poppo Sultan and Hyder Ali were religious fanatics who



used to kill Hindus by the hundred for (a) the sheer pleasure of killing (b) the good of their souls.

The two periods I have mentioned reek of blood, stink of putrefying bodies. 'Asia's sceptre trembled in hands weakened by many a vice'. The heart-rending cries of innocents, the wail of starving children along with drunken laughter from the court, whispers, over-worked gibbets, executioners working overtime, all these are characteristic of these periods (according to our British historians who tell us all these stories in such a fatherly manner).

Then came the Dawn! The resuscitation! The release! The relief! The millennium! A thankful sigh escapes stricken India! The starving and the ailing rise from their death-bed to say "Hail" and "Amen" and "God". The still active (and they were few) shout "Deliverance is at hand! Hearken ye! Allah (Vishnu or Siva) is merciful! Welcome, O, White Man!" With the rejoicings and acclamations of multitudes the White Man takes up the knotted reins of Government and unaffected by his own mighty deed, with a simple sense of duty, he goes ahead.

In fact the British period begins. What a contrast this is to the two already mentioned! Gone are the dark, evil days, and in their place are days of Elysian happiness

for prince and peasant alike. One by one the Native States rebel against their hereditary but coloured monarchs and pray for the White Man's rule. The White Man refuses. His responsibilities are already great. His aim moreover is commercial and peaceful. He does not want to interfere in domestic quarrels, but if the people really wanted.....pressed so much.....with tears in their eyes... well what could one do? No, no, no NO, they needn't offer *him* money because he is straight. Besides it is not cricket to take bribes. A present? Well, if they put it that way, why not? It is after all a sincere token of their gratitude.

What a noble array of gallant, fearless splendid rulers! Clive, Warren Hastings, Wellesley, Dalhousie!Clive of India! How much have we to be thankful for to that one man! He was a simple Englishman, a clerk; and yet when it came to the test, how meagre and insignificant he made the greatest of Indian Kings look! He led assaults, he captured forts, destroyed armies, conquered kingdoms. But always he did it with 200 British soldiers and 500 sepoys. I have never read of any battle when Clive had more than 1000 men under his command. His enemies always had 20000 men, 5000 cavalry, 800 guns 700 camels 600 rhinoceroses (or is it rhinoceri?) 500 hippopotamuses, and countless zebras and yaks, and znus and porcupines. These thousands of men and yaks, rhinos and hippos became bleeding corpses to feed the birds of the air. The battlefields resembled shambles. At the end of the day's work Clive, however, retired with 198 out of his 200 British (the 2 others had duodenal ulcer) and 350 out of his 500 Indian soldiers (the other 150 unfortunately were gored to death by the porcupines) to his stronghold which he had to defend against another enemy army of equal strength throughout the night. Clive knew that he could expect no help for another six weeks. But he spoke a few simple words to his assembled soldiers explaining their position and adumbrating the steps he proposed to take. The soldiers cheered as one man and the rafters shook. Then they shared their simple meal and went to bed after reading two chapters from St. Paul's Gospels. The most touching incident was the altruism his troops displayed. The sepoys gave their 'Tommy' friends all the clear soup, marmalade, orange jelly, and Peche Melba and were content with what was left—crumbs of bread, last

week's meat and *no dessert*. Note that, no dessert at all! How touching. What a gesture! How infinitely tender! What selflessness! It makes one weep. (Where's my handkerchief?)

When Clive conquered a state, the mercy he showed drew tears from the bitterest of his foes. He touched not a penny out of the spoils. He simply took the photograph of his girl and gazed longingly at it. There was one crafty and unscrupulous fellow called Amin Chand who tried to tempt the hero with money. Clive's rage was indescribable when the affair came out.

And Warren Hastings! Some traducers have contemptibly spoken of his interference with the private lives of the Berums of Oudh, of his action in the Nand-kumar case, Rohilla War and Chait Singh, the Raja of Benares. History (by E. Marsden & Vincent Smith & Co.) will clear his character. Edmund Burke, a foolish Irishman, said many things about Hastings but the Parliament kept a clear head.

It were impossible to enumerate the names, characters and achievements of all the great men who have ruled India (in the third period only). It were further impossible to set down the benefits that India has experienced as a result of the long reign. Someone wrote in a book, "The two things that the European has brought to India are tobacco and venereal diseases." How erroneous this statement is, is shown by the fact that we had tobacco long before the European brought it in another form. These are the statements of revolutionaries, of extremists. Anyday, anywhere can be seen the effects of British rule—statues, telegraph posts, policemen.

This is Indian History distilled by British Historians and served to the juveniles of India. I thrived on it and I believed every word of it. It edified me. It saddened me. It saddens me still when I think of it. Gr-r-m-ph. There is a lump in the throat of my pen.

YES! I KNOW!



These are the answers to questions on page 20.

1. Since a member of the House of Commons is not legally permitted to vacate his seat, he applies for the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, a titular office under the Crown, acceptance of which implies the loss of his seat in the Commons. He later resigns the Stewardship, and gets free.
2. It is an Egyptian obelisk on the Thames Embankment.
3. It connects the North Sea and the Baltic.
4. A native of the South Sea Islands in the Pacific, employed on plantations etc.
5. It is an abbreviation of the order *suspensatur per collum* meaning 'let him be hanged by the neck.' The entry of this phrase records that a person was hanged.
6. Nippon.

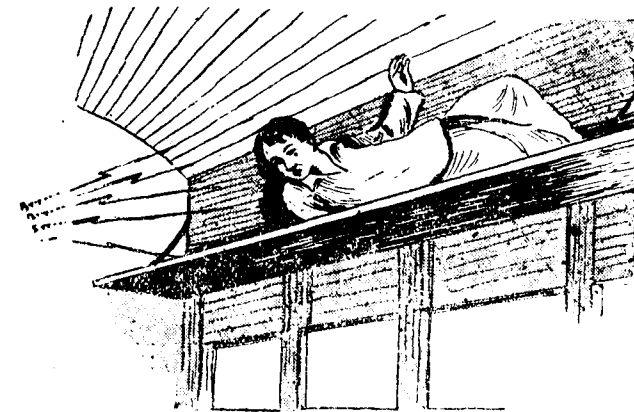
MIDNIGHT SNORATA

By 'DHALO'

"MUSIC hath charms to soothe a savage breast," said some poet. I do not know if it was Shakespeare, Seshuayyar, Sheshappayar or Sheik Piyari. There it is, one poetic hobo has saddled the unsuspecting world with that adage. Talking of music, I am reminded of the Moonlight Sonata that ravishing musical rhapsody, which fills one gushingly with pictures of silvery moon-beams scintillating on coral strands and of *senoritas*, hula-girls, and other alluring creatures. But Midnight Snorata, though it is a bit of music, is on the other hand one that would make the meekest of the meek the savagest among the savages. I once had the misfortune to be forced to hear a midnight snorata and I may tell you that if there had been a handy lethal weapon within my reach, I would have been a murderer with sufficient justification for a plea of self-defence. If you will just put your ear-phones on and listen-in for a while (wave-length .0008 metres) I shall broadcast my experience.

On my way to Sadram, last Christmas, I was as happy as a sand-boy when I found that I could get a berth to myself. A fellow passenger and I, having with due respect to old age, allowed the two lower berths to two asthmatic old gents, spread our beds and occupied the two upper berths. I may confess that my solicitude for the old gents was prompted by the fear that their congested bronchial tubes might be a source of danger to the occupants of the lower berths. What was more, with their stiff, disobedient, unresponsive limbs they were likely to plant their feet on any part of one's body in their compulsory acrobatics while climbing down from the higher regions.

But there was a snag. As I lay wooing 'nature's soft nurse' to send me to the land of Nod to the lullaby of the puff-puff of the engine and the tuk-tuk of the wheels, I found that an unwelcome sound was mingled with the rattle of the train. At first it was a hiss as if an over-inflated lorry tyre was being deflated through the valve. Then, it became a combination of a kiss and a low feeble whistle. Anon, the sound developed into staccato gurgitations, very much like a playing card on the spokes of a rotating cycle wheel. I could not even guess what was causing this racket. I thought it was the escape of the extra steam from the engine or perhaps the result of defective vacuum. But closer listening conveyed to my mind the startling fact that



But there was a snag.

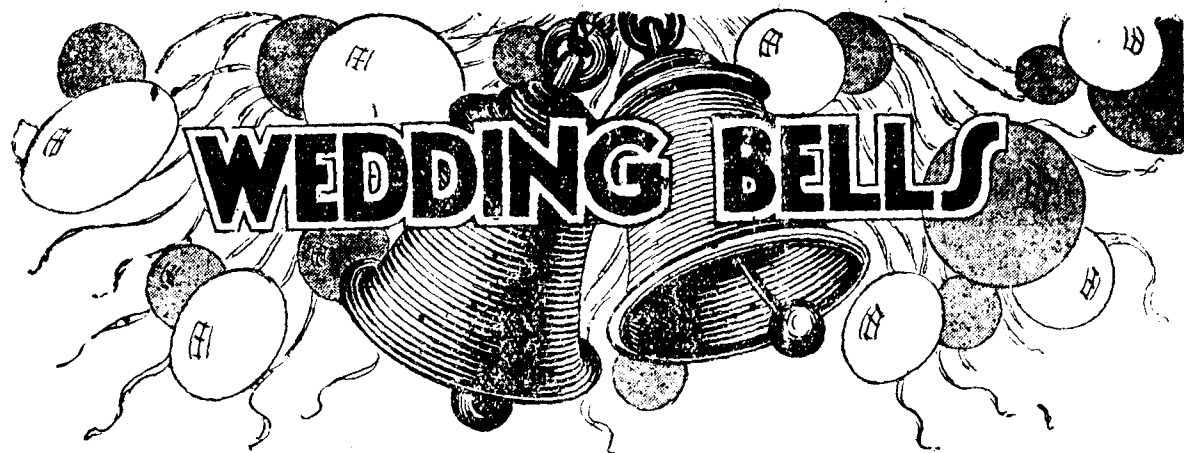
the source of the unwelcome sound was nearer home and that it emanated from the throat of the guy on the other upper berth. His breath in its impeded career between the interstices of his adenoids, the uvula and the tonsils was rattling its way out. In short, he was indulging in a very throaty snoring. He had unconsciously struck up an overture from his respiratory orchestra and was giving me a free performance of 'Midnight Snorata'.

The throaty rumbles got on my nerves. I could not have my beauty sleep and I was distracted. I lay quiet for a while thinking how best I could stop the music. While doing so, I noted with disgust the constant

(Continued on page 32)



I pretended to be a hero.



By J. H. Acott

THE speech of Hector Adolphus Short, whose brain weighed about one ounce, but who was always a fairly likeable fool, was not progressing favourably.

"Martha, my dear," he blurted to the girl by his side one night as they sat beneath the mango tree in Goofy Lane.

"Hector," said Martha severely, "use your handkerchief!"

"W—what the heck do you mean?" bleated Hector.

"You sound as if you've got a cold, and you haven't got a nurse now."

Hector used his handkerchief.

"Martha, my dear," he began again, flopping on one knee before her.

"Have you been bitten by a mad dog?" asked Martha, rather irritably, it must be confessed. "And if you don't look out, you'll be getting a corn on that knee of yours!" Hector took no notice, but a pained expression came into his voice.

"Martha, my dear," he went on, "I feel that I could do anything for you, but..."

"Then climb up that lamp post and imitate an electric bulb," said Martha, a sly gleam in her eyes. She knew what Hector was wanting to say. He was going to propose. And, in her heart of hearts, Martha thought he'd make quite a nice husband. These males had to be kept in their place a bit. She was glad that he kept his hands to himself, though. If he'd started praying and putting his hands together before her nose, she wouldn't have liked him so much.

"You are being cruel," blurted Hector in a pained tone.

"Not at all. I just wanted to test your words."

The night was dark, and she could just see his round face in the gloom before her. He seemed to be getting rather annoyed because he couldn't tell her what he wanted to. "Ah!" thought Martha, "this is the way to treat these poor males that are hoping to become your husband."

After a moment's silence, Hector got up from his knees and sat down again by her side. His voice began to sound more sensible, and Martha was glad.

"Martha, dear," said Hector. "Have you ever contemplated marriage?"

She blushed in the dark.

"N—not till just lately, Hector, dear," she said, feeling that she must not give herself away. "Only very lately."

"Do you think it would be any good, this marriage business, I mean?" Hector's voice was urgent.

"Well," she answered shyly, "I think, personally, that there is no other institution to equal it!"

"But I've heard some wise Johnnies say that it's a gamble," said Hector.

"Don't you believe it!" She was indignant. "Why, it's unchivalrous and nasty even to think that such a statement is true! Now suppose, just suppose, that you contemplated marrying me. Would you think that would be a gamble?"

"No, of course not. But....."

"But me no buts, Hector. There it is."

"Then—then—you think that marriage is the goods?"

"The whole goods and nothing but the goods!" Martha was firm. She could imagine dear old Hector sitting at her knee after they'd got married and manicuring her toe-nails for her before the fire.

"But, Martha, dear," his voice was trembling again. "What about children? They rather frighten me, you know."

She blushed again in the darkness. His dear frankness was so refreshing!

"Oh, well, you just sit back and wait for them to come along," she explained.

"What!" Hector suddenly jumped up from his seat. "Me?"

"No, not you, silly, but—er—the married couple."

"But, good lord! I thought the girl always had the children! How could they both have them?"

"Now, you're either being stupid or you're trying to get me to discuss improper details," said Martha. Hector was immediately apologetic.

"N—but-no! I wasn't, honestly! I never even gave that a thought!"

She patted him affectionately on a shoulder blade, and they were silent for a while. At length.

"Hector," said Martha softly, "will you work hard for your wife?"

"Not half!" replied Hector enthusiastically.

"You bet I will! I'm sure she'll be the sweetest wife a fellow ever had, don't you think so, Martha dear?"

Again she blushed. But she wasn't going to start blowing her own trumpet. So she said.

"And when you come home from work every day, I suppose you'll let her massage your poor, tired calves and comb out the hairs on your chest?" she said this dreamily. Nothing would please her more than combing out the hairs on dear Hector's chest!

"You bet I will! Er—er, rather, you know!" He seemed to be getting more and more enthusiastic every minute, and Martha was pleased to a degree. Marriage with Hector would, indeed, be glorious!

"I only hope," she went on, "that my sister will have as good a time as I will when she gets married. I rather think she's in love, for I haven't seen her all day."

"Oh, she's bound to, you know," said Hector. "You and she are very much alike in your good and bad points, and you both deserve good husbands."

Again at a loss for words fit enough for the occasion, she patted him once more on a shoulder blade.

"Which do you think will be the best sort of curtains to have in the house, Martha dear?" asked Hector.

"Colour, you mean? Well, personally, blue is my favourite colour. What do you think of blue?"

"Couldn't be better! Blue they'll be!" Hector said. "And—and," he began to sound alarmed again, "when—the first baby arrives, er—I mean—er—that is to say, the wife doesn't usually get angry and banish the husband from her sight for ever?"

"No, silly, not as a rule. Not unless the baby looks like a monkey."

"But good heavens! They always do!" Hector seemed to be conjuring up dreadful visions.

"You my think so, but the wife's ideas are different. Now, I think they're all perfect dears. And Hector, dear, do you think you could manage to love and help to bring up about fifteen children?" She blushed again in the dark, her voice soft and shy.

"Sure thing," said Hector stoutly. "Make it twenty-five!"

"You'd want two wives for that!" Martha giggled. "And those days are over!"

"Well, I wouldn't mind two wives, provided they were both nice," said Hector.

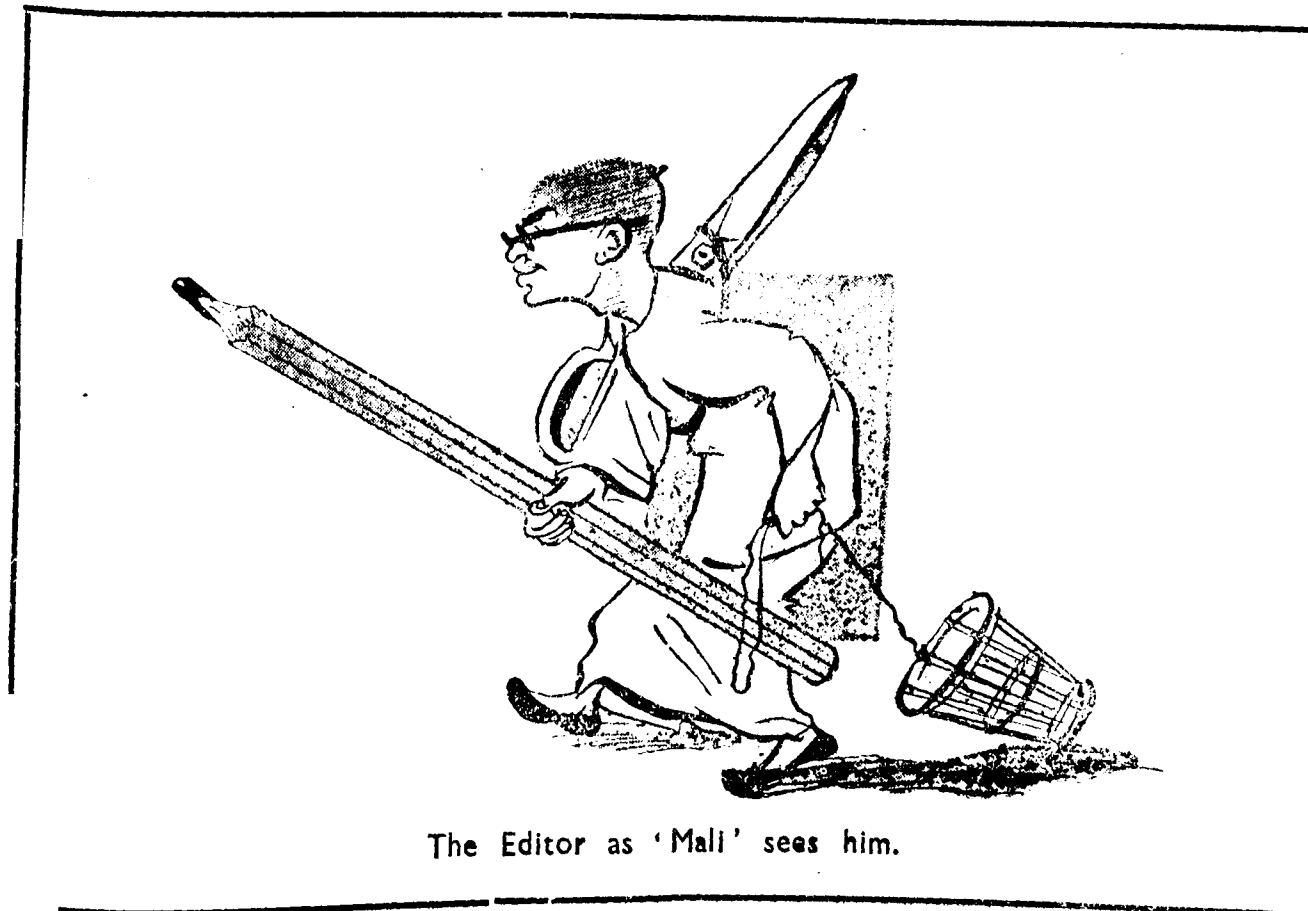
"And what," asked Martha slyly, "is your idea of niceness? Do you mean nicely powdered, nicely scented, or nicely obliging when the husband wants his back washed...or..."

Hector broke into her laughing speech.

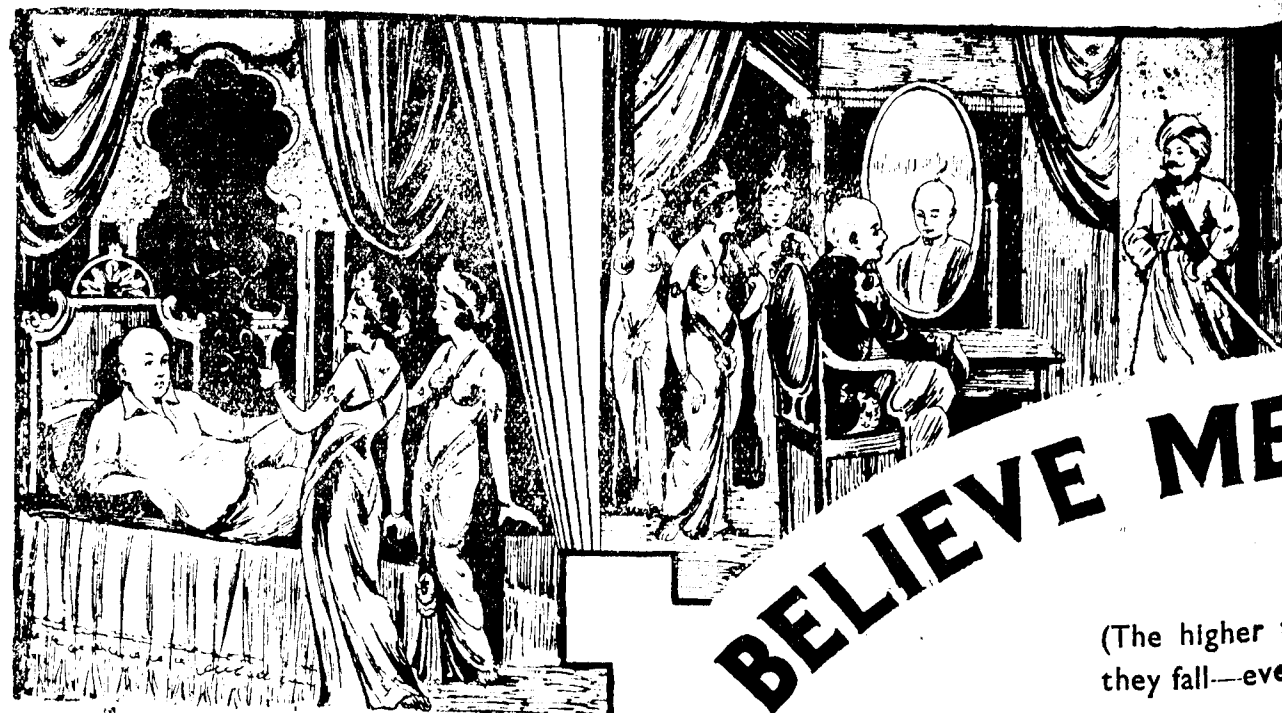
"Well—er—well, I think the best way I can describe the word 'nice' is by referring to you and your sister."

"That's a pretty speech," said Martha lovingly. "So you wouldn't mind marrying both of us, then?"

"No," said Hector sadly. "But those days are over, you know. I was going to tell you something a little while ago, but you kept interrupting me. You see, I married your sister this morning."

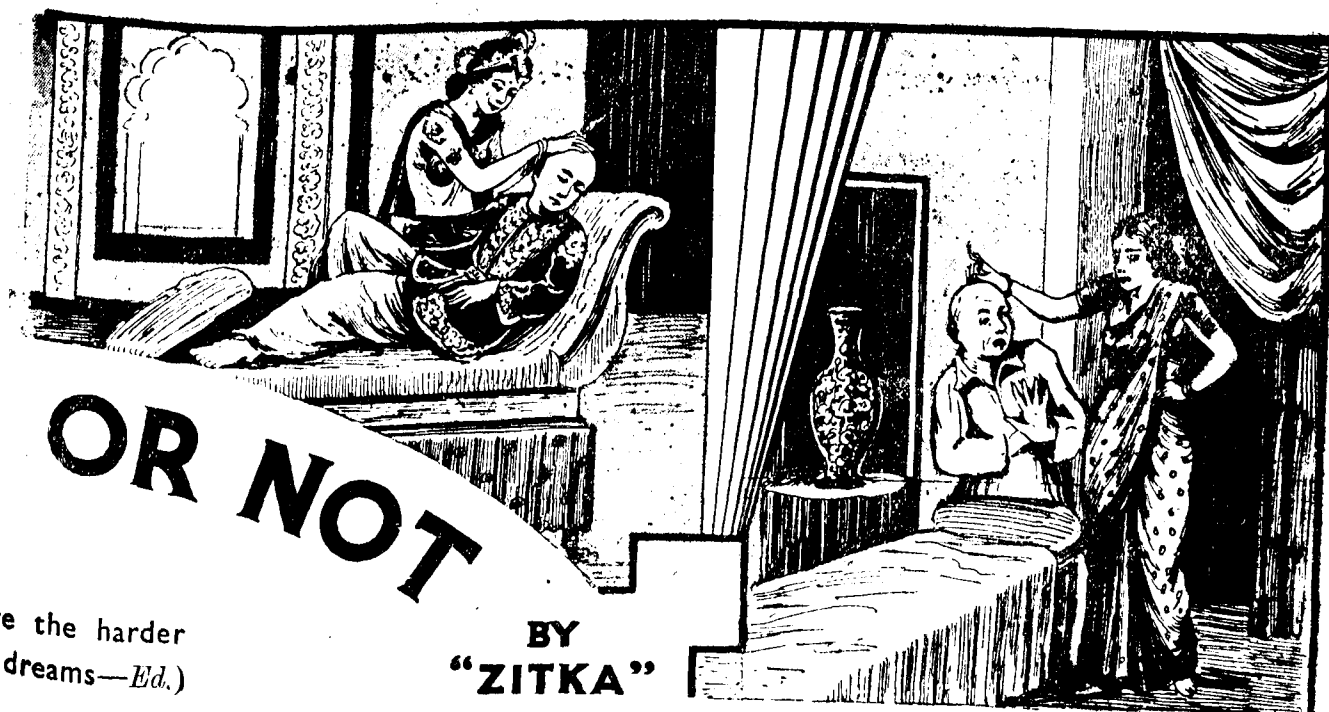


The Editor as 'Mali' sees him.



BELIEVE ME, OR NOT

(The higher the dreams—the harder they fall—even Ed.)



BY
"ZITKA"

66 YOUR Majesty, the bath is ready," they trilled in unison. Then with one of them—a Sylph with a sinuous movement—in front of me, a voluptuous Venus behind me, and the remaining daring Dianias one on each side of me, we moved forward, until we reached a magnificent room of marble, wherein sizzling with scented water, was the bath. Then, oh then, I found to my dismay that the Sylph was closing the door from the inside, and that the Dianias with sponge and scented oil bottles, were sidling up to me with set faces, while Venus with graceful gestures was persuading me to peel myself.

"Here, hold on, you daughters of Sodom!" I cried, just for a second loosing my grip on things. "Buzz off now like good old daddy's darlings until His Nibs steps out of the bath room." Then calling up all my manliness to the fore, I closed the door.

You should have seen the room after I had finished my bath. A cyclone hitting it wouldn't have caused such a havoc. Scented water everywhere with empty bottles and sponges floating on it along with the soap suds. Though I regularly bathe once every *Deepavali*, I can say with my hand over the heart, that this was the bath of the year.

The gorgeous things that were laid there for me to dress in, I couldn't make head or tail of. I let my body-guards rig me up as best they could. (Don't snigger). If you want to know how adept they were in doing certain things, you ought to have seen them doing my hair. They took it strand by strand, scented it, oiled it, and did it up so grandly that when I looked at it in the mirror, there it stood on the middle top of my head in all its solemn grandeur, like a tarred and waved arecanut palm.

No sooner was I ready, looking somewhat a mixture of King Henry VIII, Charlie Chaplin, Tippoo Sultan, and Chaka the Zulu King, the door opened, admitting some-

one dressed like a Major Domo, a big silver star shining below his neck—or what there was of it—and a purple sash crossing his manly chest from North-east to South-west. He wore a long sword that clanged ominously as he moved. His bristling moustache that ended in pin-points, and his whisky-befumed, blood-shot eyes that fixed me in an unwavering bulls-eye thrust, made my heart desert me and slide somewhere downstairs. But, all this lasted only for a second, to be immediately replaced with such a reactional daring as I never knew I was capable of. The object of my fear meekly bowed to me three times like an old servitor, booming out, "Ave Rex Doll O' Panjandrimus."

"Now, that's the stuff I appreciate most," I complacently said to myself. "Yet if I am not careful enough, it may eventually land me into the *soup de la abdicationimus*."

"Well, it is our royal pleasure that you reel out what is seething inside you," I said with such an amount of majesty and condescension as would have been enough to keep open even my wife Menaka's granite jaws, if she had been present there.

"Your Majesty, I have brought you a speech which you have to broadcast to your subjects on this memorable day at 10 A. M.," he rang out.

"His Majesty's jaws are stiff to-day; hence make another jolly day the memorable one," I sang out.

"Your Majesty needn't worry, your voice duplicator will do his duty. Now, Your Majesty, in our Slavic Empire, the people are rising, headed by a lunatic demanding freedom, which is treason of the first degree to your royal person," he said loyally.

"O, leave them poor chaps alone," I said magnanimously. "You can reason them out if they are misguided."

"Pardon me, Your Majesty, they are not amenable to reason."

"You give us a pain in our neck," I said in a tired voice. "Will you vamoose?" Thereupon, he bowed and removed his insufferable presence from the room. Then, my body-guards surrounded me as before, making it plainly known that I was in for another march somewhere.

Now the room I was led into, presented a new aspect. There was a table in the middle, groaning under the weight of sumptuous viands. Now, if there was a good sized banana leaf with a nice rice hill in the middle, with ghee and *sambar* flowing from the top, surrounded by fried vegetables, fish and fowl and some nice *vadais* and *chutneys*, you can watch me free of charge dive in and play with all my fingers (of my right hand, you silly,) making the said leaf look innocent of any food within a triple of minutes. But this was different; and with eight charming eyes watching, it was worse. So I just ordered them out.

With no eyes to watch me out of countenance, I pushed off the golden shovels and such like instruments with contempt and shoved my fingers in. Suffice it to say that by the end of an hour the plates and things were looking as bare as they were when they came out of the factory. Bones? Well, they were the tastiest tit-bits.

It was an hour afterwards, when I was luxuriously lounging on a velvet-cushioned settee, with my heart at peace with the whole sweet world, that there came a coy little maid, a flouncing Dresden figure, chirping out an announcement that the queen was coming a-visiting my royal chambers. If she had dropped a seven-ton bomb on me, it wouldn't have made the havoc this statement created in my heart.

"Now, who is this queen? Is it my wife Menaka transformed into a queen? If so, I think it would be better if I do the vanishing trick," I mused. "Poor myself," I said to myself. "Let me wish you my *lieux*." I rose with a long drawn sigh.

Every moment I expected to hear the brazen voice shouting at me, "There you are! While I am slaving my life out to keep our bodies and souls together, you sit like an image made out of buffalo dung."

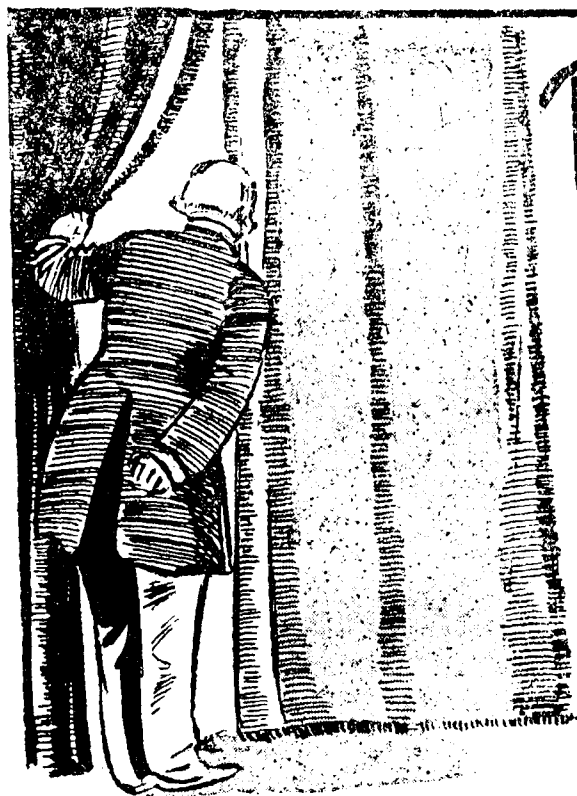
A minute, two, and three passed and yet no jarring vibration on my auricular drums! Then a cool soft hand caressed my forehead. It was far too delicate to be my wife's and it was so fragrant that it brought to my mind all the sweet scented flowers in creation.

Then I opened my eyes to meet two liquid dark blue eyes scintillating with love and desire. When I forcibly removed my eyes from that enchantment and let them wander and feast over her, I couldn't but wonder if so much beauty could be packed in a single human being.

Then I became blind to the rotten old world and what mattered with me then was, that beauty and I were royal husband and wife. I pulled her to me and was just going to imprint a kiss upon those lusciously moist and inviting lips, when an imp from somewhere inside me nudged me and said, "Oh! if that pig of a Menaka were to see you now!"

The shadow of Menaka followed me. I could see her features distorted with fury and her ham-like arms rising and falling, with an agonising regularity.

Then it was, my precious *kudumy*, my pride, nay, the pride and a sort of a heirloom of my family jerked with such an excruciating force, as to make my eyes jump out of their parental abodes. Thus I came down, plop to earth. My bed was crazily leaning on two legs. I was on the floor beneath it, and there was my good old Menaka making me feel her presence by shaking me like a bundle of rags and saying such nice things to me with her sixty-elephant power lungs that a runaway pre-war bus braked itself in front of our door and was listening to her with envy.



Behind the Curtain

By 'Jason'

OLD Father Time, using his proverbial scythe as a 'plane, was leisurely cruising along somewhere up in the stratosphere.

"On the whole," he mused, "the people of the world are getting wiser. What with gland tablets, monkey-gland operations, injections, rest-cures and the 1001 elixirs, my scythe is not so busy as of yore!"

Old Father Time collected his thoughts. "Yes! Yes!" he muttered, "I'm thankful for even a modicum of rest—"

His further soliloquy was disturbed. Flying merrily along, wreathed in smiles and whistling, came a gay self-satisfied fellow—Young Child-Mortality—mounted on an empty milk-bottle.

"Halloa! Old grass-cutter," he greeted, "what're you doing up here. Taking a holiday?"

"And you?"

"Oh, me! I've run short of bacilli and I'm going to old Satan for replenishment. D'you know," he continued, confidentially, "what with pasteurisation, added vitamins, birth clinics, lady visitors, *creches* and so on and so forth, I'm not feeling so happy as I look. Naturally, if I go to headquarters appearing despondent, I might find myself transferred and—"

Young Child-Mortality resumed his journey. Old Father Time again meditated.

"It's all wrong," he soliloquised, "I must speak to God about this. We must put a stop to that young

fellow's activities. Give the kids a chance—that's my motto. After all there's my scythe when they ripen. Scythes were not made for cutting green corn! That's the work of—"

Touching a nut here and a screw there and with a kick to the blade of his scythe, Old Father Time accelerated and manipulating another screw, he rose rapidly to Heaven's gates.

A sentry was on guard. He saw the scythe, he knew Old Father Time.

"What are you doing here?" he enquired.

Old Father Time stood up on his scythe and produced his visiting card.

"'Tis not for you to question," he replied. "I come for counsel with the Almighty."



The Scythe-wielder.



Young Child-Mortality.

The gates were opened and Old Father Time was ushered inside. But he reappeared almost immediately with a woeful look on his face; for, he had been told to mind his business, in effect. The exact words were: "Wait. Things will take their own course."

The Ladies' Club at Kutafpore had functioned for a number of years. Needless to say, their activities had brought benefit to the village. Their advocacy of pure milk, the annual baby-show, the promulgation of hygienic principles and other items of a progressive policy had increased its population until Kutafpore earned the designation of 'town'.

It was on the 15th of September, that the annual baby show had been held—that was the last one.

Mrs. Rukmani, as usual, got the first prize and the woman who was most unhappy in Kutafpore that day was Mrs. Jan who was childless.

Ahmed Jan was a monied man with considerable lands and property. Mrs. Rukmani had a dairy farm adjoining Ahmed's lands. In short, they were neighbours.

Ahmed understood his wife's longing for the company of children, but, as he expressed things, "It's the will of Allah."

Mrs. Jan wore a much-advertised charm for months and months, but, in spite of the potency claimed for it in many directions, remained as barren as the desert of Sahara.

But one day a telegram arrived for Ahmed from his brother, informing him that he was seriously ill and Ahmed immediately motored out to see him.

"Ahmed," his brother said, "I know I'm going. Look after the children—"

Those were his last words and the reaper garnered him in. Ahmed could not do other than comply with that last wish.

In such wise it came about that Ahmed arrived home at dusk the next day with three orphans, a girl of eight years, a boy of four and a second girl still needing the feeding bottle.

Ahmed ushered his charges through the door and explained matters.

Mrs. Jan sat for a few minutes deep in thought.

"I suppose we'll have to take care of them. We'll want a cradle for the mite and napkins and—"

"Mrs. Rukmani will know," suggested Ahmed.

Mrs. Rukmani opened the door in response to Ahmed's knocking.

"I came to see if you've got a spare cradle and a few napkins."

Mrs. Rukmani looked at him keenly—but he was looking serious.

"You're a most deceitful pair," she commented. "Why, only a few days ago I called on your wife. I never noticed or suspected anything!"

"It came as a surprise to me!" Ahmed interjected.

"Fiddlesticks! Bunkum! D'you think I don't know better than that? You'd certainly take first prize as the champion truth-dodger of Kutafpore."

Ahmed was just about to say, "We didn't know." Then he thought better of it. He was somewhat amused at the manner in which the situation was developing.

"It was this wise," he started explaining, when Mrs. Rukmani cut him short.

"How's the wife bearing up?"

"Oh! she's quite well. I left her boiling some milk for—"

"Snakes alive! She must be made of cast iron! There it is, some women are like that. I knew one before—she was digging up potatoes the same day: another produced twins and then calmly proceeded with the family washing. However, we're doing no good here gassing about such things."

Mrs. Rukmani hunted out a spare cradle and the other requisites.

"I'll come along with you," she observed.

They started down the road.

"I suppose," questioned Mrs. Rukmani, "you've got a girl? That's generally the way when the husband is as big as an elephant. Now—"

Ahmed put a stop to Mrs. Rukmani's ruminations. "There is a girl," he said, "in fact—"

"I guessed as much."

"As I was saying, there's two girls!" continued Ahmed, who was thinking it time to clear up the misunderstanding. "In fact, there's a boy and two girls!"

Ahmed could not help quietly enjoying the situation. In his thoughts he consoled himself thus: "I only told the truth; she nipped my explanations in the bud."

Mrs. Rukmani took time to recover from the last shock.

"Ahmed, I'm thinking one cradle is not enough."

"The wife only said one."

"She's inexperienced. I'll soon put things right."

They neared Ahmed's door.

"I'll come in in a minute," said Ahmed.

Suddenly they heard someone inside the house, crooning a nursery ballad.

Mrs. Rukmani clutched at Ahmed's sleeve.

"Do you hear that?" she exclaimed. "She's gone 'loco', 'potty', and no wonder! Three at one time! Poor girl! It's all your fault; you should have had a nurse here in advance."

"Open the door," counselled Ahmed, "and go quietly in. You'll soon mend matters, I'm sure."

Mrs. Rukmani still hesitated.

"The predictions!" she said. "I went to an astrologer the other day to get his forecast for the next baby show. He told me I should get opposition or competition from an unexpected source."

"And it's come!"

Mrs. Rukmani went inside.

A few minutes later, he tip-toed inside, but he was not a light stepper and Mrs. Rukmani heard him coming.

"If it wasn't," remarked Mrs. Rukmani, "for fear of waking the children, I'd let you know my opinion of you, Ahmed. You've simply pulled my leg all along."

"You wouldn't let me explain. You chirped in every time I tried to do so."

Two years had passed. Old Father Time was again flying along in space. He had been reading of the progress of the Ladies Clubs, at Kutafpore and other places.

"Young Child-Mortality," he was thinking, "must be finding business on the down-grade."

Just then Child-Mortality hove in sight, mounted on his usual milk-bottle.

"Think of the devil—," Old Father Time ruminated, "anyway this is one of his satellites."

"Things are damned bad," said Child-Mortality. "Slum-clearance in England, Baby Shows and Health Centres in India, sterilisation in Germany etc., etc. Well, you know the whole category. It's making a proper change in the world."

"All for the good," observed Old Father Time.

"I sometimes begin to think like that myself. Anyway, I'm taking a course in sanitation, hygiene and food analysis myself."

"Getting prepared for a change of occupation and employer?"

"Must be prepared."

"All right, cut along. I don't like talking too much with any of Old Nick's henchmen. After you change over, we'll have a longer chat."

Young Child-Mortality whizzed away.

"Cheerio," he shouted, "guess you won't have long to wait for that other talk."

He had work to do, he thumbed the blade of his scythe. "So long as corn ripens," he was thinking, "there's work for the reaper. I must go on with my job."

Midnight Snorata—(Continued from page 25)

changes in the pitch, the depth and the nature of the snores. I saw red and even wanted to take violent measures. But I merely switched on the light and told the pest that unless he stopped the nerve-racking sounds he would be lynched. When the compartment was flooded with light, the snoring stopped suddenly. I was relieved. I switched off the light and prepared to sleep. But hark! The throat articulated again.

This human failing of snoring had spiked me once before. One night as I slept peacefully dreaming I was jolted out of that pleasant dream. I felt that somebody was pinching my ear. I woke up with a start.

"Who's that? What's up?" I barked sleepily.

"It's I," whispered my wife. "A burglar is filing the iron bar of some window downstairs."

I went stiff with fright and listened. Sure, there was a rasping sound—the sound of a file on iron.

"Yes, it's a burglar," I admitted. "But there is no money in the house. What can the thief get except my battered pen and dirty ink?"

"True," said my wife, "but there are the cooking vessels. Go downstairs and do something."

I trembled with fright. But I pretended to be a hero, for I know that if I showed the white feather in front of my wife, her usual nagging would increase a hundredfold. With a palpitating heart and wobbling legs I proceeded downstairs a lamp in one hand and a stout stick in the other.

Meanwhile the rasping continued and my knees in their tendency to feel each other's presence knocked with vigour. A sickening fear held me when I discovered that the sound was really coming from underneath the staircase. I peeped through a chink and found that what resembled the sound of filing was only the nosey snoring of my servant. That was another 'Midnight Snorata'.

Do I snore? My wife says that I do. She complains that my 'snorata' is like the sound of iron cart wheels on a hard road. But I know I don't snore because I haven't heard myself snoring yet. If this sketch makes you somnolent, I shall stop.

(Time you did—Ed.)

JIMMY'S father, Barthelmu was an Italian who supported his large family by the earnings he got from his profession as barber. The earnings were not much and there were many mouths to be fed. Jimmy was the youngest.

The family lived in one of the ugliest of New York's East sides. When he was ten Jimmy was initiated into his father's profession. His work consisted of lathering the faces of customers. Jimmy's extra-professional activities in these days were many and, often enough, these led him into conflict with boys of his own age and class in the streets. Gang-fights, bullying and practical jokes occasioned many a black-eye and broken nose but, nevertheless, had their own value in the education of young Jim.

Al Smith, the Democratic candidate for the U. S. Presidency was a customer of the Durantes. One day he remarked to Jim, "You learn to play the piano, kid," and added reminiscently, "I wish I had." Jim overcame his prejudice against what he called a milkop's pastime. His mother, Rose, too, took an interest in it and Jimmy began his first musical lessons.

But soon he was tired of classical and operatic music and abandoned them in favour of jazz, his favourite. He progress-

'SCHNOZZLE' DURANTE

By
McNair



ed creditably and soon earned his first engagement at Night-Club social. Jimmy's regular work in those days was first that of newspaper boy, then as errand boy and finally at a photo engraver's. During the two years he was at the engraver's he did well with his music and got occasional engagements at church festivals, and socials and sometimes in Bowery Night-Clubs.

He got his chance unexpectedly as a regular at a Night-Club in Coney Island, where the revellers converted night into day. He saw the seamiest side of New York life, the ugliest and filthiest, but with an unmoral indifference to what happened around him, he stuck on.

Then he met Jeanne Olsen, a pretty young singer in a cabaret in Broadway. Jimmy being sensitive about his nose and looks, had hitherto left women alone. But this girl was different. She was sympathetic if not actually responsive to his attentions. Their acquaintance developed and culminated in their marriage in 1921. Neither has had any occasion to regret this step. Now Jimmy, assured of a princely income and steady popularity, lives with his wife in Hollywood, proof against the divorce epidemic that is raging in that city of glamour, proof against the many wiles and the many temptations.

(Continued on page 40)

MY DEAR SEENU,

THERE is a kind of advertisement which you can get gratis, and you must not miss it. For this, you must make unobtrusive excursions into journalism. Of course, as in all other matters, you can count on my help in this also.

You must have what the newspaper men call a sense of 'timeliness'. Let us take the New Year first. On the last day of every year the newspapers print prophecies for the coming year. And who is more qualified than an astrologer to speak on that occasion? In the last week of December you must copy down the following and send it to the newspapers:—

"The coming year is full of interest to a student of astrology. From January 9th to the 13th of April the Sun remains the reigning Lord. After the 14th Saturn will be in the ascendant. Jupiter changes place with Mars and the Zodiac signs undergo a change. It is, hence, a year full of significance and forebodings. In England, violent party changes will occur. Central Europe, being in 42 degrees latitude, will be very much affected by the Sun's reigning influence. There will be panics of wars but actually no wars. There will be civil strife and typhoons in South America. Economically the United States will be unbalanced till the 6th of June and then will play a great part in the world of commerce. Disarmament conferences will fizzle out. The power and the prestige of the League of Nations will have a set-back till the end of November, and after that it will emerge into brilliant light with added prestige and power.

Coming nearer home, India will have an unquiet time. Agriculturists will suffer. There will be heavy floods in Northern India in January; a great earthquake is indicated in the North East in February; a disastrous fire will break out on the West Coast in March; in Central India there will be a peculiar epidemic that will cause much loss of life among men and cattle in the months of April and May; there will be a second flood in Northern India in October, and another earthquake in the North East. There will be practically nothing worth noting in December, after which India will enjoy peace, plenty, and prosperity.

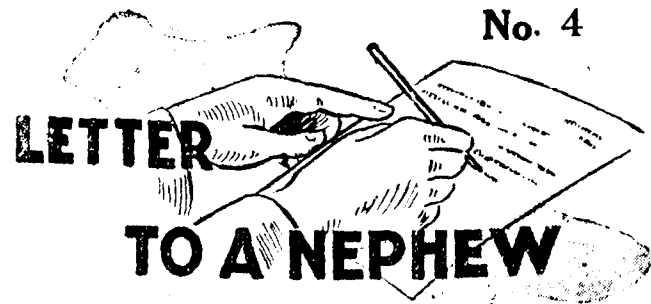
In the coming year, Gandhiji will retire from active political work, and his popularity will be a little on the wane. However, towards the end of November he will come before the public with added prestige and power."

You can send this prophecy to the papers in the last week of every December, and you may rest assured that it will be printed. You will be thrilled when you see

your name in print without paying for it. You will feel really ten times taller. However, it is not for your own personal gratification that I want you to send this to the press. It is, as I have already said, for advertisement. An ordinary reader of newspaper, who reads your prophecy will say to himself, "Ah, this sounds a sensible prophecy. I should like to know what he would say of my own future....." Or if he is a race-goer, he will say to himself, "This prophet is sure to know which of the horses will break their necks and which of the jockeys will fall off their saddles at the next event. I must get into touch with him." He will then turn the pages over to find your address. In the same issue get the following pre-paid advertisement inserted:—

"Wanted: A graduate, strong in English and knowing Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, for correspondence and translation duties in an office. Preference will be given to those who know shorthand and type-writing and one or two minor South Indian languages. No personal interviews. Applications only by correspondence. Recommendations will automatically disqualify. Apply sharp to the Proprietor, M. B. Jyothishalaya, Malgudi Post."

No. 4



By R. K. NARAYAN SWAMI

I needn't tell you that this advertisement is not meant so much for the linguistic graduate as for our friend to whom the New Year prophecy has appealed. As soon as the latter sees the advertisement his first thought will be, "This is a big astrological office. They want a graduate!" and then he will note down your address and become your life-long customer.

Lakhs of persons read the newspapers every day. At least five hundred will notice your prophecy, and out of it at least fifty will like it and note down your address. This is more than enough for our purpose.

It is not the New Year alone that provides one with an opportunity for publicity. You must watch the papers and seize Time, as they say, by the forelock, because Opportunity, like your good uncle, is bald behind. Watch the activities of Gandhiji, Macdonald, Hitler, Mussolini, and Roosevelt, and whenever the newspapers say that they have taken an important step in some direction, write at once to the papers a short prophecy of how they will fare because of the behaviour of such and such planets. The memory that the public possesses is notoriously short. If your prophecy turns out false, you will be none the worse for it, because the public will not bother to keep you in mind. If your prophecy turns out well, you can expect a substantial addition to your business connections.

Elections offer a good opportunity for one to come before the public with an utterance. Suppose there are two candidates A and B for the Assembly. If you follow the newspapers intelligently, you will know which candidate stands a better chance than the other. You can write to him and get his horoscope. Make a copy of it

and send it to the paper which supports him, with some astrological comments on his chances of success. As usual, if he comes out successfully, you will receive credit for foreseeing it, but if he doesn't, nobody will remember your prophecy.

You must devote at least two hours a day for reading newspapers and you must have a perfect knowledge of current events. The profession of astrology is not only a harbinger of hope for others but is an intensive education for the astrologer himself. What is more, like other kinds of education, diligence, application and knowledge receive an ample reward here.

Another minor opportunity for publicity is the time certain festivals. For instance there is *Upakarma*. Suppose all the almanacs and calendars print August 15th as the date for this religious function, you must immediately drop a bombshell into the orthodox circles on or out the 7th of August, by writing a letter to a newspaper, saying that *Upakarma* must be performed on the

18th and not the 17th. Two days later you will find another letter in the same newspaper, violently asserting that the 17th is the correct date. Thereafter, for about a fortnight more, the 'Letters to the Editor' Column of the newspaper will be converted into a battle-ground, where all independent-minded people will muster under your banner (18th August), and all orthodox almanac-makers will range themselves on the other side.

You need not worry. For every orthodox almanac-maker that becomes your enemy, there will be a dozen others who will like you for saying something fresh and thus keeping the air lively.

I think I have covered all the important aspects of the profession. I have dwelt at length on certain of the aspects that have struck me as being more important than the others. I hope you will read every line carefully, digest its sense, profit by it, and be a worthy nephew to

Your dear uncle.



The Newly-weds—



settle down to—



—perfect conjugal harmony!

Ram Chandra's Hobbies

5. HOSPITAL BEDS

THE nurse looked stern, the surgeon looked grim, and Mr. Ram Chandra felt sure that his days were numbered. As the doctor bent over the patient, his dangling stethoscope swung backwards and forwards like a pendulum, each forward motion making contact with the tip of the patient's nose. From the capacious pockets of his spotless white smock, the surgeon produced a formidable and terrifying instrument. The surgeon indifferently referred to it as a scalpel, and in a low monotone discussed with the nurse the necessity of trepanning!

"Mr. Ram Chandra buried his head hurriedly under the bed-clothes, and cursed the accident that had brought him to a hospital bed. Less than twenty-four hours ago, he had felt hale and hearty, full of the joy of life. Now he was stretched on his back, listening with bated breath to a recital of multiple injuries, and the prospect of being trepanned. What a fool he had been! Why should Fate have played him such a low trick?

The events of the previous few hours were still vivid in the mind of Mr. Ram Chandra. He had left home that morning intent on doing his one good turn for the day, when suddenly he espied a wallet lying in the gutter. The wallet was made of goat-skin leather and bulged with its contents. Mr. Ram Chandra picked up the wallet and placed it in his pocket, intending to examine it on his arrival home.

Before he had gone a few yards he heard a cry of 'Stop thief! Help, Police!' He turned and looked around for the thief. Mr. Ram Chandra was a model citizen and was prepared to do all that was in his power to assist the police and the course of justice.

Another old gentleman of about the same age as Mr. Ram Chandra, was gesticulating wildly, and pointing his umbrella in the air. Two hefty Madras policemen were trotting at his heels and hurling lurid threats against the evil-doer. Mr. Ram Chandra walked on in the direction of the trio.

"That's him," screamed the old man, pointing at Mr. Ram Chandra. "That's the thief!"

Mr. Ram Chandra stopped suddenly in his tracks, and then remembered the wallet. Possession is popularly supposed to be nine points of the law, but not when the possession is that of someone else's wallet.

Findings are keepings, decided Mr. Ram Chandra, and with a turn of speed surprising for a man of his years, he sprinted through the vegetable market and on to the road beyond. As the policemen ran, many people followed them and, before long, hundreds of people had

joined in the chase. A sharp turn through a number of alleys, and he had thrown off the pursuers for a few minutes. Regaining his breath, Mr. Ram Chandra started off again at the double. He dumped the wallet into a convenient refuse bin.

He was now trotting past the Civil Hospital. Then the accident happened. An errand-boy on a cycle careered between Mr. Ram Chandra's legs, knocking him on to the road, and into unconsciousness. A few minutes later he was in the hospital. What had taken place in the interim he did not know. When at last he awoke, he heard the doctor whispering to the nurse, of fractured skulls, concussion of the brain and dislocated collar-bones. Oh, dear!

Sometime later two orderlies carried the passive Mr. Ram Chandra into the operating theatre on a stretcher. Glittering instruments; the faint but unmistakable odour of anaesthetics; softly treading nurses and doctors, played havoc with his jangled nerves. He swooned and knew no more until he awoke safely back in bed.

Gingerly moving his legs and arms, Mr. Ram Chandra tried to compute the extent of his multiple injuries. His arms moved, his legs moved, his neck moved, well, what was wrong with him? A nurse glided softly to his side. "What is the matter?" she asked. "You should know," replied Mr. Ram Chandra testily. "Am I seriously injured?"

"Why, no," smiled the nurse, "you are quite alright. The X-ray failed to reveal anything serious." So that was why they had taken him into the operating-room. Not to amputate his legs! "You may go home to-night," said the nurse finally.

Mr. Ram Chandra gave a deep sigh of relief, and in his home that night, he decided to endow a hospital bed under his name. "THE RAM CHANDRA ENDOWMENT BED." The hospital authorities were duly grateful, too. If the youngster had not knocked him down, he would have been taken to the Civil Jail instead of the Civil Hospital.

At the Railway Institute that night he proudly referred to his endowment of the hospital bed, and implored his cronies to go and do likewise. He said that his conscience was the only factor in deciding on this course of humanity.

Mr. Ram Chandra now had a horror of policemen. Would one of them recognise him? He sincerely hoped not, but the next day the inevitable happened. Someone called out 'STOP', and Mr. Ram Chandra ran—ran like a being possessed, right through the gates of the Civil Hospital, up the stairway and through the wards, into a private bedroom, and there tucked himself in a



"Who are you?" thundered the doctor.

bed. Silence reigned for a few minutes, and then a clatter of feet was heard, gradually getting nearer to the room. The door was flung wide open—and doctors, nurses, orderlies, and a policeman stood gazing in astonishment at Mr. Ram Chandra sitting up in bed—complete in pyjamas! "Who are you?" thundered the doctor. "Do you know that you are occupying the 'Ram Chandra Endowment Bed?'"

"Yes," replied the supposed patient. "I am Mr. Ram Chandra." Suddenly one of the nurses recognised him, and turning to the assembled congregation, exclaimed, "It is Mr. Ram Chandra, but what is he doing in bed?"

"I did not feel well, so I thought that it would be a good opportunity to occupy my own bed," replied the old man naively.

Then the policeman stepped forward and enquired, "You are the gentleman who stole a wallet on the fifteenth instant?" Mr. Ram Chandra indignantly repudiated such a vile accusation, and turning to the doctor, said:

"Doctor, on the fifteenth instant I was ill in bed in this Hospital. Don't you remember?"

The doctor remembered. The policeman turned away, and left, baffled.

Mr. Ram Chandra was kept under observation for a few days, and was then allowed to return home. In the fullness of his gratitude he endowed a bed in every ward in the hospital. He was even prepared to make a hobby of hospital beds.



The Fat One: Say! What do you think you are? A blooming whirl-wind?

The Sun's Progress

By K. K. N

THE girl whom he had been led to look upon as his future wife, and for whom he had developed a sort of sneaking love, seemed suddenly taken away from his hands!

Hari was only ten when he became more or less engaged to the girl his aunt was going to give birth to. It was a contract made before the witness of *God Ayyappan*, between Hari's father, Hari's uncle, Hari's mother and Aunt, Hari himself—a contract made in all sincerity. But as the years rolled on and Hari's uncle got richer and richer by trading in the decoction of chicory, out of politeness called coffee, he began to view the contract with less and less favour, till at last on the fateful day of the 1st of April, 1929, when Hari's father formally broached the subject to Hari's uncle, the latter turned down negotiations abruptly.

And that brings us round to the fact that Hari was very much intrigued. He brooded and pondered over the matter, but could find no immediate solution. But Hari was not one to acknowledge defeat so easily. He simply bided his time.

Under the circumstances, it was with feelings of secret joy and happiness that Hari read about the passing of the *Sarda Bill* by the Assembly. It gave Hari his cue, and he prepared himself for his final coup.

On the 31st day of March 1930, preparations for the marriage of Alamelu, Hari's niece, were going on vigorously in the house of Hari's uncle, and the rising Sun blushed like the young bride.

The sun rose higher, to have a better peep at all that was going on, and then blazed with anger at what he saw. For, on that day of all days, when there should have been 'peace on earth and goodwill among mankind', the telegraph peon had no business to bring the following express telegram to the bride-groom:

'Aunt passed away suddenly stop heart failure stop am alone stop come quick.....Rajan'

The sun rose still higher and simply boiled with rage as it saw the bride-groom and party packing for Bombay! To spoil Alamu's marriage thus! The Sun grew white-hot.

Alamelu's father was thunder-struck. Alamelu's mother was in hysterics. Poor Alamelu herself began crying softly. Her relatives blinked. The villagers talked. The servants stopped work. The old hags

gossiped. The elders wagged their heads. Hari whispered in his father's ears. The father whispered in turn into the ears of the priest. The priest consulted his fellow-priests in further whispers. The fellow-priests nodded their heads vigorously. And then the priest began:

"Alamelu is fast growing up, though only twelve. From to-morrow, the cursed Sarda Act comes into force. There is no knowing when Alamelu will flower forth into womanhood. From to-morrow onwards, girls under fourteen cannot be married. The long and short of it is that if Alamu is not married to-day, she would never be married, for, a girl has got to be married before she attains puberty, and a girl in future cannot be married before she is fourteen! So that her marriage *should* take place to-day itself! Unfortunately the chosen bridegroom has gone away. But let that not deter us. Let us seek another bridegroom. In any event, the marriage *has* to take place to-day."

"But where to go for a suitable bride-groom?" moaned Hari's uncle.

"Let us have Hari! It is God's will," said Hari's aunt.

Hari's uncle shrugged his shoulders and resigned himself to the inevitable.

Alamelu stopped crying. She blushed with pleasure.

The Sun relaxed his anger. He began to descend from his majestic height. He smiled and lit the house with myriad-coloured rays, and again blushed as the marriage chants began to fill the air.

The sun then went to bed, in a glory of happiness and joy!

A little later, Hari also went to bed with happiness and joy. In the secret of his room he laughed to himself loud and long.

In Bombay, three days later, the 'bridegroom and party' received the greatest shock of their lives. For, Rajan said, "I never sent any telegram! Aunt is as hale and hearty as ever."



(Continued from the previous issue)

THE PLOT SINISTER

Murder! Lions! King Kong!

EARLY next morning Hazel started for a walk down the sea-shore. At least that was what she told Auntie when questioned about her destination. The little darling lost her way (it is surprisingly easy to lose yourself in the—what is his name?—labyrinthine bye-ways of Madras if you want to) and a little later she found herself to her great astonishment at Jimmy's flat. John, i.e., Jimmy's friend, philosopher, valet, cook and boots—a lad of twelve summers with a pug nose and a visage like a second-hand frying-pan—let her in with a doleful mien. Hazel noticed it—the dole on the boy's face and kindly patted his head.

"Is your master up yet, John?"

"No, miss."

"Anything the matter?"

"No, miss, only—"

"What is it, John?"

"Master's gone blarmy, miss."

"What!"

"He's a-torking and a-hollering in his sleep."

"And you were scared? Poor boy! Don't worry. He'll come round all right." She remembered the revels of the night before.

Hazel approached Jimmy's bed-room and tapped at the door. No indication of animate life within. Being a pure girl she didn't enter the room; instead, she applied her eye to the key-hole. All that she was able

to make out in that wintry light through that restricted perspective was a blanket rising and falling with a rhythmic regularity, and a nose redder than the U.S.S.R. sticking out of the blanket. She removed her eye from the key-hole and applied her lips to it and sent in a low compressed voice. 'Ji—mmy' and again 'Ji—mmy'. She followed her own voice into the room five seconds later.

Considering the romantic relation between the two, she may be pardoned for what she did to Jimmy. She took hold of his scarlet nose and gave it a playful twist to the left.

What with the heavy Christmas fare and the heavier whisky of the previous night, poor Jimmy was just then passing through a nice, horrible dream. It so happened that Hazel gave that playful twist to his nose at the correct moment; it synchronised with a particular

phase of his dream.

"Rape! Murder! Lions! King Kong!" yelled Jimmy, starting up and staring wildly about him.

"Hush, Jimmy, dear! It is only me."

"Who the—" The fog in Jimmy's top lifted somewhat. "Oh, Hazel, what a fright you did give me!"

"Where's your manners, naughty?" she enquired coyly.

And he drew her into him and said 'good morning' and many more things of a sweet and tender nature with his lips.

V. B. PRASAD

Five minutes intermission. Stand by and look away, ladies and gentlemen; it were execrable taste to stare at lovers at work.

* * *

"And what have you decided about it, Jimmy?"

"Decided about what, honey?"

"The lion."

Jimmy scratched his head. "Did you say 'lion'?"

He was totally at sea.

"Don't you remember what happened last night?"

"The only thing I remember is the prime one that bald buccaneer gave me on the old seat."

"Just as I thought! You bragged that you'd bite the lion in the show to win me. And—"

"Sainted Androcles! But, dash it, Hazel, I couldn't have said such a screaming fool thing!"

"Oh, yes! You did. Or rather whisky made you say it. Both of you were so infernally drunk that you called father, 'mummy, darling mummy' and father called you, 'Martha, old girl!'"

"Oh, God!"

"Darling, something's got to be done about that lion. Father is holding you to it."

"The Devil he does!" Jimmy added a few inches to his face length-wise. "You don't want me to commit suicide, dearest, do you?"

"What a tweety-dweety silly! Don't you again say such nasty things. Seriously, though, Jimmy, did you think of a way out?"

"Think! Way out! I don't even remember my talk last night. The old devil doesn't really mean it. He can't be so blood-thirsty."

"You are mistaken, Jimmy. Of course, he isn't blood-thirsty. But once an idea gets into his head, it

won't get out unless an earthquake gets going. He thinks, wrongly of course, that you are a champion chump and not good enough for me. Your, and with it my, redemption lies in biting that lion. So—"

"Oh hell! How can a fellow do that to a lion unless he urgently wants to have a look at Queen Victoria with wings on?"

"Fat lot you know," she said in disgust. "And you a—!"

"I don't understand."

"Of course you don't. Else I shouldn't be here—Jimmy, I thought out a scheme, whereby you can not only bite the lion without being bitten in return, but also come out of the ordeal with a halo of publicity as a wedding-present."

"You don't say so?" said Jimmy without much enthusiasm.

"Listen, darling, I have read somewhere—"

For the next quarter of an hour she talked in such low tones that I couldn't catch one blessed word of what she said. But one thing is certain. Whatever she was saying, it was undoubtedly of a startling nature. A kaleidescopic transition of expressions flitted across Jimmy's face. During that brief space of time his face registered blank astonishment, stark incredulity, reckless admiration, unreasonable worship and raging lunacy. When she finished speaking, he reproduced a Polynesian war-whoop.

"Oh, my Hazel! Oh, my Madame Machiavelli! Oh, my Cleopatra! Oh, my Hoop-la! Oh, God! What a ripping girl!"

And he gathered the unresisting damsel unto him a second time that eventful morn and.....dots.....

(CURTAIN)

(What did Hazel say to Jimmy? What caused that frenzied outburst? Read the thrilling climax next week.)

By my rotary machines! You really are getting on our nerves.—Ed.

'Schnozzle' Durante—(Continued from page 33)

Though he took her out of the Night-Club when they married, he himself did not leave it. He shifted his operations to Broadway where he did extremely well so that by the end of three years he was drawing \$ 3000 a week. But he would not remain a paid entertainer. He got hold of a couple of friends, Clayton and Jackson and the three started a Club of their own. Clayton danced, Jackson sang and Jimmy played and talked. Irresponsible fun and madcap music were enough to draw hundreds of customers; and, in addition, there were Jimmy's talks, fantastic, fascinating, incongruous; leaping from theme to theme like the gambols of a mountain goat. He did short work of King's English and Durantisms like 'Hot-cha', 'So I ups to him', 'You can't take it', and 'Am I mortified?' sparkled in profusion in his talks.

Theatres saw the wisdom of engaging these comedians and Ziegfeld put them in one of his musical comedies. Even during this period Jimmy never lost

interest in his Club. His popularity increased there and he became Broadway's greatest entertainer.

At last Hollywood heard and decided. An offer was made. Jimmy, however, would not leave his friends in the lurch. Like a good pal, he insisted on their accompanying him.

The rest is history. In Hollywood his rise was meteoric but, unlike a meteor, he did not fall. He stayed a star and gave us again and again such great entertainments as in 'Passionate Plumber', 'Hollywood Party', etc.

This Italian, with his extraordinary nose, challenging eyes, infectious guffaw and brisk movements, with his own peculiar dialectal coinages, wise-cracks and gags, non-stop talks, pretence, and with Greta Garbo, has more of a romantic affaire because of what he has done & reason to feel flattered entertainers of Hollywood, & to amuse people than most

"CLUE-PICS" COMPETITION—RESULTS

The Correct Solution is:

- | | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|----------|
| 1. HOLE | 3. WASH | 5. DUFFER | 7. HAT |
| 2. BAIL | 4. PUP | 6. POTTLE | 8. MATCH |

The following eleven readers have submitted all-correct solutions and they share the first prize of Rs. 100 Each getting Rs. 9-1-0

1. Salehbhai S. Samsuddin Bohra, Godhra.
2. P. G. Masurekar, Samantwadi, Nasik.
3. PTE. Gethings, District Head Quarters, Lahore Contonment.
4. K. V. Appa Row, Station Master, Nagalapatti, (N. S. Ry.)
Begampet P. O.
5. Y. S. Ramamurthy, Yedavalli Bros, Powerpet, Ellore.
6. Y. Kanakaraju, Ellore.
7. S. Govindasami Chetty & Sons, Timber Merchants, Cuddalore O. T.
8. S. Balakrishnan, Post Office, Valavanur.
9. N. S. Rajagopalan, C/o Headmaster, Nannilam.
10. G. Radhakrishnan, Clerk, Construction Audit, S. I. Ry., Trichinopoly.
11. U. Shamanna, Coffe club, Komaraswamipatti, Salem.

The following 62 Readers who sent in one-error solutions, share the second prize of Rs. 50-0-0 Each getting Rs. 0-13-0.

Second Prize Winners:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. C. R. Punyakoty Raju, Madras. | 34-38. G. Radhakrishnan, Trichy. |
| 2-3. N. Ramachandran, Triplicane. | 39. K. S. Singari Ammal, Madura. |
| 4. T. V. Krishnaswami, Mylapore. | 40. Mrs. C. Barboza, Palni. |
| 5. V. Subramanian, Mylapore. | 41. A. Dorai, Coimbatore. |
| 6. O. H. Rabiabeevi, Cuddalore O. T. | 42. K. R. Sundararajan, Gobichettipalayam. |
| 7. C. Venkasami Rao, Cuddalore O. T. | 43. J. A. Gonsalvez, Naduvattam. |
| 8. V. Gopalasami Rao, Cuddalore O. T. | 44-45. U. Shamanna, Komarswamipatti. |
| 9-14. S. Govindasamy Chetty Sons, Cuddalore O. T. | 46. T. S. Hari Hara Iyer, Puthennadakavu, Trichur. |
| 15. T. A. Subramania Vajapeyar, Pudupalayam. | 47-50. Y. Kanaka Ruju, Ellore. |
| 16. R. Subramaniam Pillai, Tirupapuliyur. | 51-56. K. V. Appa Row, Nagalapalli. |
| 17-23. S. Balakrishnan, Valavanur. | 57. R. Vedavalli, Gooty. |
| 24. P. Rajagopal Pillai, Velappadi. | 58. L. A. Rao, Matur. |
| 25. R. Alagirisamy Naidu, Tanjore. | 59. S. R. Iyengar, Poona 4. |
| 26-28. N. S. Rajagopalan, Nannilam. | 60. S. Nagaratnam, Lahore. |
| 29-30. G. S. Raja, Komal. | 61. Pyati S. N., Galli-Hubli. |
| 31-33. M. Krishnamurthy, Komal. | 62. L. R. Gregory, Rangoon. |

The Prize amounts will be remitted on 30-4-35

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1. TEA-H
2. -ARE
3. -ORE
4. GA-E
5. -ILL
6. -IGHT
7. TOR-
8. FLA-E
9. CO-K

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(Sealed Key Solution deposited with "Tatler of India.")

Last POSTING Date: 11th May, 1935. Results Within 10 Days.

HOW TO WIN.

In "Singles," you have to find out a single letter only to complete the word. That single letter is the first letter of the word illustrated by the picture given above that word. Insert that letter in the vacant place marked by a dash, and the resulting word thus obtained is the required solution.

For example, look at No. 1. There is a picture of a Chair. Below it, the letters TEA & H are printed with a dash after A. The initial letter of the picture is "C." Placing the letter "C" after "A" in the place of the dash, the word TEACH is obtained, which is the required solution. Similarly, the others will have to be solved. While giving solutions, competitors should first write down the solution, and then, within brackets, what each illustration represents. Thus the full and correct solution for No. 1 is "TEACH" ("C" representing Chair). Failure to observe this rule involves disqualification.

N.B.—You may send any number of Entries but an Entrance Fee of As. 8 is to be paid for each Entry of 9 words. But a competitor who sends a consolidated sum of Rs. 5 is allowed to send any number of entries in a cover. In such cases it is enough if all the alternatives alone are shown in a single sheet of paper. All remittances should be made by M.O. only and P.O. Receipts must be attached to entries. Entries may be on plain paper. No Coupons are necessary. The First Prize of Rs. 250 will be awarded to the senders of correct or failing which the nearest correct solution, and the Second Prize to the next best. The correct solution has been kept sealed in the office of the "Tatler." For Results please send 2 half anna stamps. The manager's decision is final and legally binding on all matters. Address all Entries and Fees on or before 11-5-35 to:

The Manager, The Paramount Puzzles (Singles),
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FIRST PRIZE: Rs. 15,000

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20 Special Prizes of Rs. 50 each for largest number of entries.

Entry Closes: 1-6-35.

CINEMA STARS.

Results on 10-6-35.

Key Solution lodged with the Bank of Commerce, Ltd.

What to do? Names of seven Cinema Stars with a list of key-words are given below. Select for each name TWO key-words whose letters can be rearranged to form the name of the Star in question. Thus, "SHEARER" can be built up out of the letters of the two key-words "RARE" (16) and "SHE" (23). Use numbers only for the solution taken from the list given. All the letters of the two key-words must be used, and no key-word can be used for more than one name. It does not matter which numbers are placed first or second, as only the two correct numbers will be considered in each case.

Complete List of Key-words

Name of Cinema Star

1. SHEARER
2. CHEVALIER
3. HAROLDE
4. WAREING
5. BARNETT
6. TAUBER
7. KEATING

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. Are | 9. Gin | 17. Rat | 25. Tea |
| 2. Awe | 10. Had | 18. Reach | 26. Tent |
| 3. Bar | 11. Hive | 19. Rich | 27. Tub |
| 4. Bat | 12. Hold | 20. Ring | 28. Veil |
| 5. Bent | 13. King | 21. Role | 29. Vile |
| 6. Brat | 14. Leave | 22. Rue | 30. Wear |
| 7. Clear | 15. Net | 23. She | 31. Wing |
| 8. Ear | 16. Rare | 24. Take | |

RULES & CONDITIONS.

(1) An Entry fee of Re. 1/- for every entry must be sent by M.O. Any number of entries can be submitted for Rs. 35/-. P.O. Receipts for M.O. must be affixed with the entry. (2) Prizes will be divided in case of a tie or ties and the prize amount will vary in proportion to 30,000 entries. (3) No responsibility can be accepted for the entries lost, mislaid or delayed. No extension. The Manager's ruling on all matters relating to this contest is final and legally binding.

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