

MODERN HAMLET'S SOLILOQUY

THE 864

MERRY

MAGAZINE

Vol. III

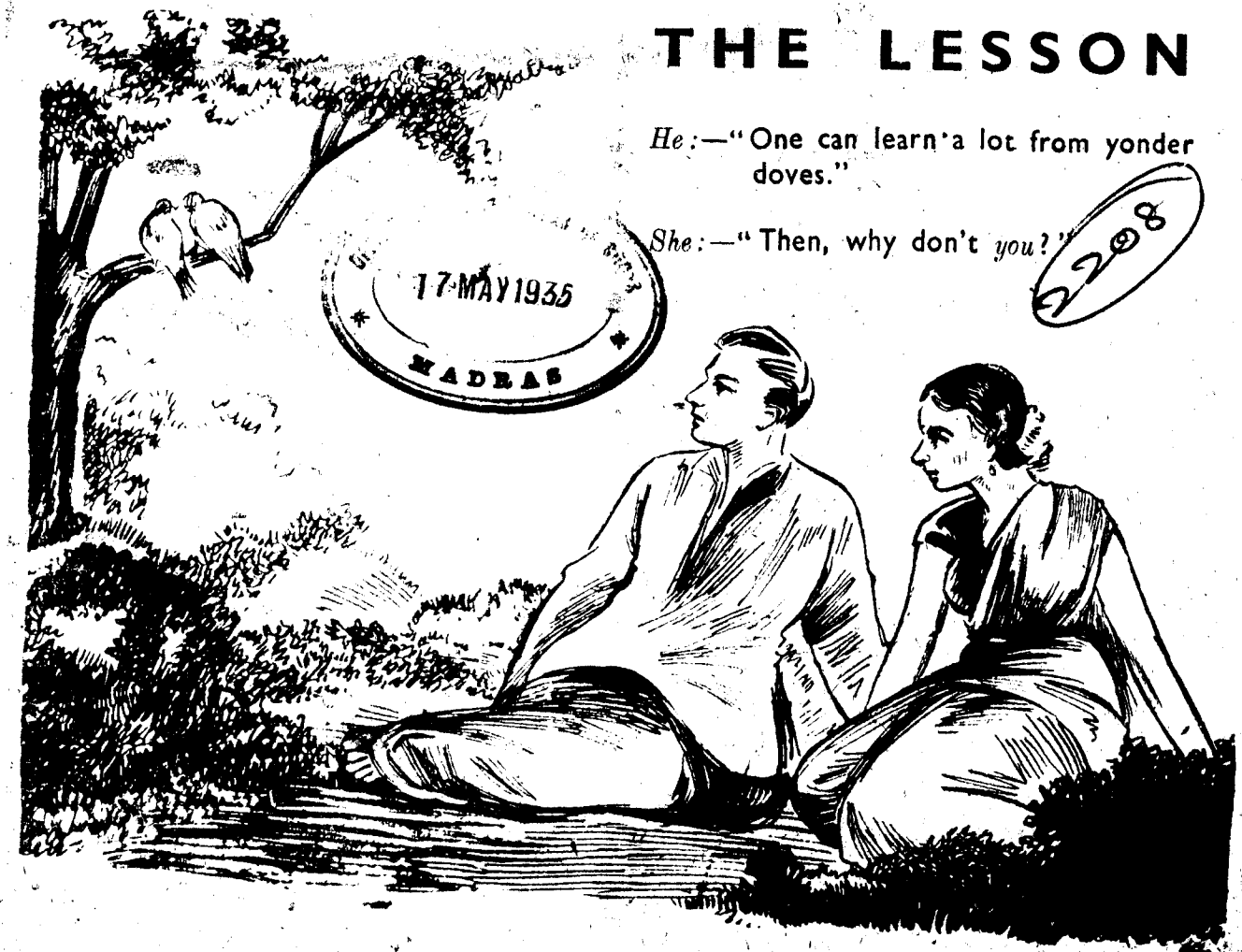
MADRAS, 18th MAY, 1935

No. 20

THE LESSON

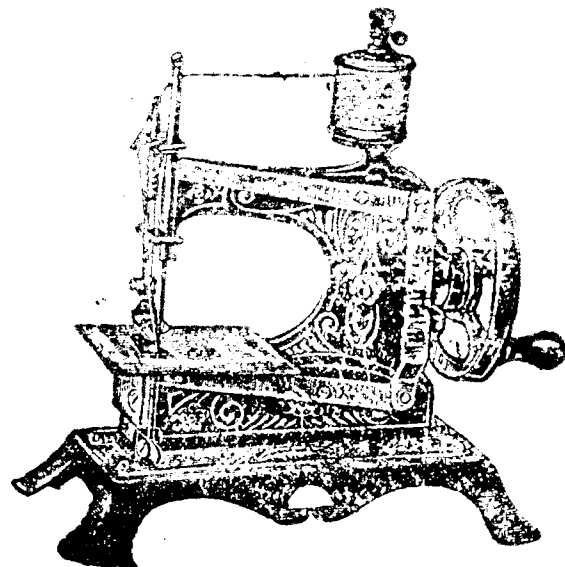
He:—"One can learn a lot from yonder doves."

She:—"Then, why don't you?"



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THE MERRY MAGAZINE

(PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY)

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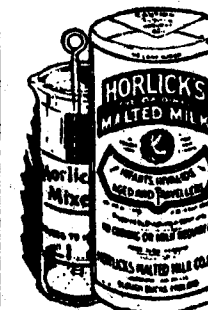
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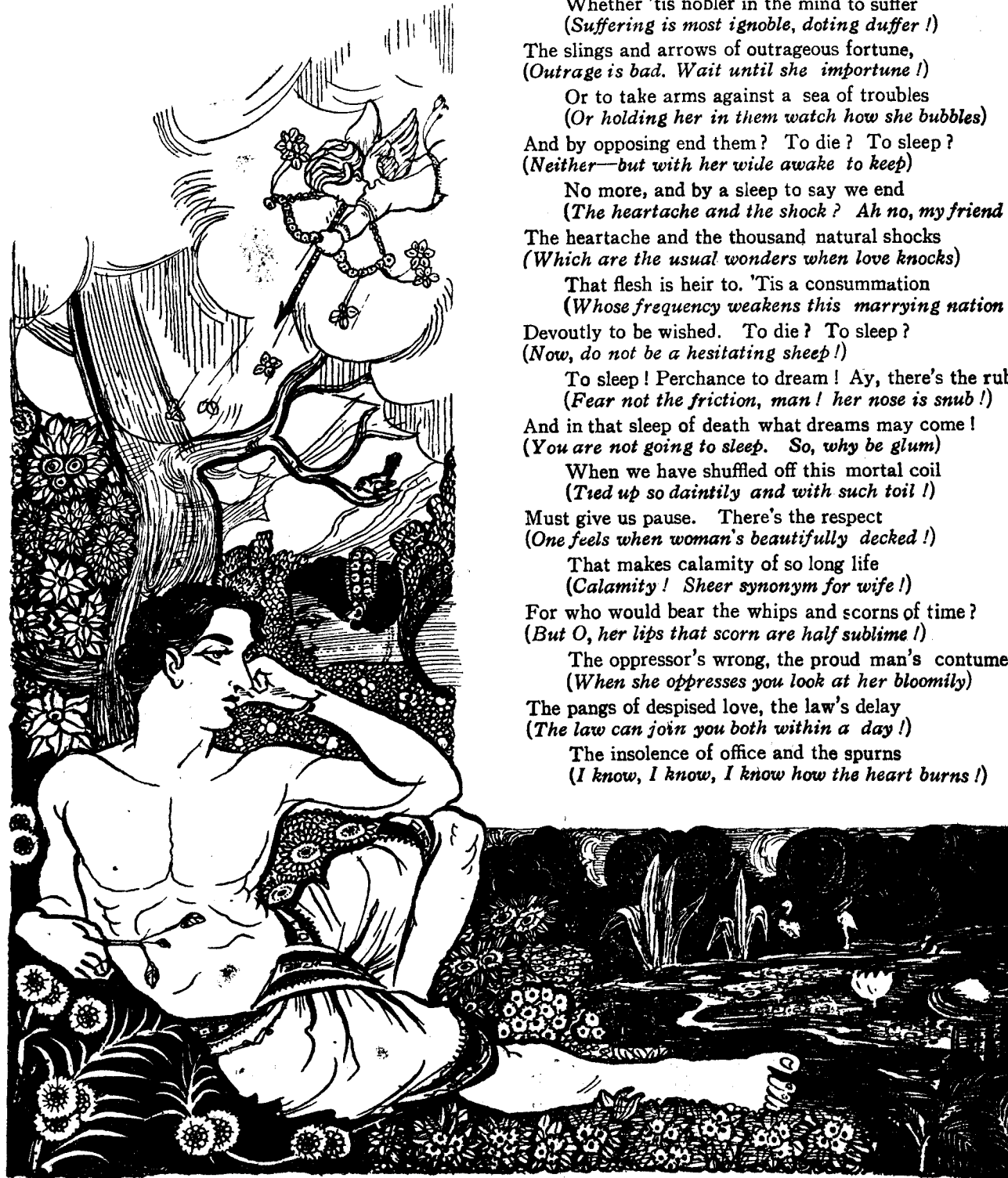
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Next Week

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya
In these pages.



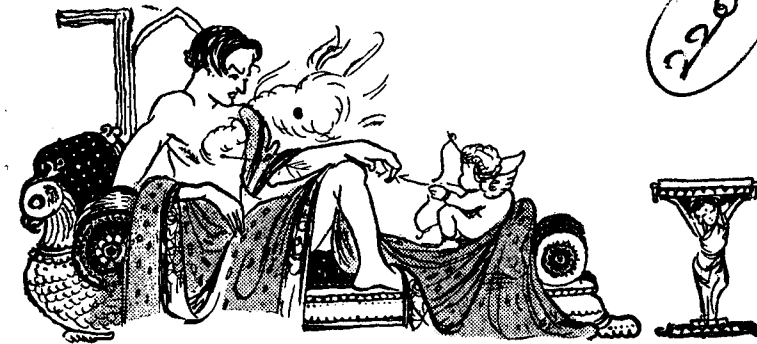
A Modern

WHETHER TO CARRY A KISS

To be or not to be, that is the question :
(To be, of course, since 'kiss' is her suggestion)
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
(Suffering is most ignoble, doting duffer !)
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
(Outrage is bad. Wait until she importune !)
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
(Or holding her in them watch how she bubbles)
And by opposing end them ? To die ? To sleep ?
(Neither—but with her wide awake to keep)
No more, and by a sleep to say we end
(The heartache and the shock ? Ah no, my friend !
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
(Which are the usual wonders when love knocks)
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
(Whose frequency weakens this marrying nation.
Devoutly to be wished. To die ? To sleep ?
(Now, do not be a hesitating sheep !)
To sleep ! Perchance to dream ! Ay, there's the rub
(Fear not the friction, man ! her nose is snub !)
And in that sleep of death what dreams may come !
(You are not going to sleep. So, why be glum)
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil
(Tied up so daintily and with such toil !)
Must give us pause. There's the respect
(One feels when woman's beautifully decked !)
That makes calamity of so long life
(Calamity ! Sheer synonym for wife !)
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time ?
(But O, her lips that scorn are half sublime !)
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumel
(When she oppresses you look at her bloomily)
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay
(The law can join you both within a day !)
The insolence of office and the spurns
(I know, I know, I know how the heart burns !)

Hamlet's Soliloquy

TO THE CONCLUSION OF MARRIAGE)



That patient merit of the unworthy takes
(The fire of love baketh the wedding cakes !)
When he himself might his quietus make
(You know you've got to suffer for love's sake.)
With a bare bodkin. Who would fardels bear
(Did you not know that love involves despair ?)
To grunt and sweat under a weary life
(Escape ? You cannot if you have a wife.)
But that the fear of something after death
(What is before it, takes away one's breath !)
That undiscovered country from whose bourn
(Comes many a longing, many a modern mourn)
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
(Presenting to the eye bill after bill)
And makes us rather bear the ills we have
(And look with tremour at the bills we have)
Than fly to others that we know not of
(Piling to figures that we ne'er thought of)
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all
(Especially when bill-collectors call)
And the native hue of resolution
(To cut expenses creates some confusion)
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought
(Think you of marrying still ? You'd better not)
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
(What does it matter if love itch a moment ?)
With this regard their currents turn awry
(You do the same and leave her wondering why)
And lose the name of action. Soft you now !
(Think twice, my friend ! before you make the vow !)
(Exit disappointed Ophelia)

NOT—BY—SHAKESPEARE



The Wolf and the Fox

A poem.





THE EDITOR • HIS PAGE •

Get Even With Summer

AS I write this, I am reminded of a funny saying of Chesterton that "There are two ways of getting home; and one of them is to stay there." I wish I could say that there were two ways of writing this page. It is not that I do not like writing this friendly chat. I like it immensely. But this is summer; and there is a close affinity between summer and sloth. This is the time when the less fortunate of the community yearn for the magic wand, with a whisk of which things get done by themselves. But whatever the condition of the mercury tube, laziness—a little reasonable laziness—is a luxury not vouchsafed to me.

The irreverent and flippant section of my readers has been asking Auntie, of late, how I keep myself cool in this maddening heat. Auntie is away in the hills (lucky girl!). I will deputise for her just this once.

Well, they say faith is a great healer. I will go a step further and say that imagination is a great emollient, if one observes the unity of time and place in bringing it into play. So, here I sit in this awful (nothing to do with Auntie) heat, the mercury shooting up beyond the legitimate mark, and imagine myself a lazy fellow sprawling in a comfortable sofa in an ivy-covered bungalow on the heights of Darjeeling or Ooty. It costs me nothing; and I

feel happy. My advice, therefore, to the summer-harassed is this—just imagine yourself in a cool place, the top of Everest if you would rather fancy it, with a jug of iced orange-juice at your elbow. You will be surprised at the fall of temperature around you, and the gentle language you use at noontide. Don't thank me for the tip.

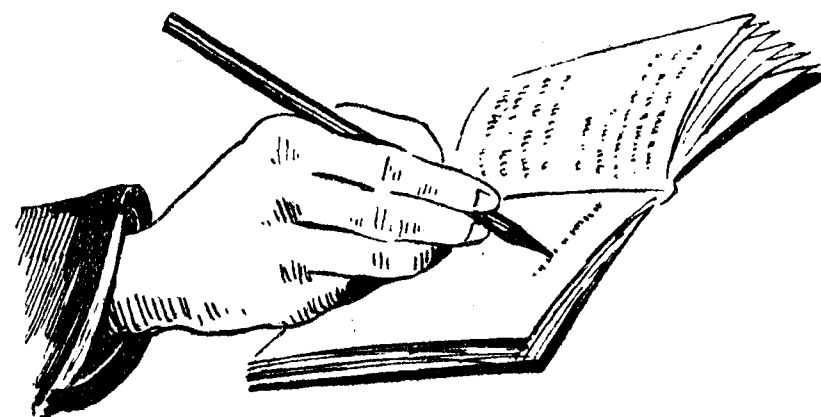
Private Joyfull

It is quite a time since I wrote about our esteemed soldier-friend. He is now describing a court-martial. The word court-martial usually conjures up a grim picture—a panel of cold-eyed military judges, a poor soldier—or a bunch of them—pale with terror, a blood-red dawn and a firing-squad. But there is nothing lurid in this trial. It is all about beer, hard-worked soldiers, a good many laughs and a surprise. A true Joyfull touch!

A correspondent, while evincing great regard for Joyfull, says that one or two of his recent letters smack of propaganda. We may not see eye to eye with our English friends, but there is no harm in sincere friends putting before us their honest criticism of some aspects of our life. It is a thousand pities that we have not as many Joyfulls in our midst as we would wish to have. It is such noble Englishmen as Joyfull that provide the silver lining to the dark cloud of Indo-British discord.

The Editor.

The Diary of a Bad Boy



By 'EMBUSQUE'

Jan. 1st. We have just had twins at our house. I think they are going to be called Thunder and Damnation. At least, that is what Father said when the doctor brought the news.

Jan. 19th. My big sister took me and the twins to the Park. There was a lady there, dozing on a seat. I found a loose piece of woollen thread hanging behind her seat, so I sat down and began to wind the thread. I kept on for a long while, and the wool grew into a very big ball. Presently the lady woke up and screamed. It appears that I had unwound her hand-knitted vest. Grown-ups make such a fuss about trifles.

Feb. 25th. When anyone visits the house, the twins are put out on the step like flower-pots, to be admired. Mother thinks they are ornamental.

March 8th. I found my big sister writing a letter. She put a lot of crosses at the bottom of the page. I asked if she was pretending that the letter was a voting-paper, and I said I would like to know who she was voting for. She smacked my head and told me to shut up, and gave me four annas.

April 1st. Every night, Father walks up and down the bedroom with the twins, while they squeal. They are always squealing. Father passes remarks in a deep tenor, Mother talks to him in a sustained soprano, and the twins come in on the high notes. It is like a mid-night concert.

April 11th. A young gentleman has started calling at our house in the evening. He sits outside with my big sister, under the tree where we hang the parrot's cage. The parrot has learned to make a noise like a cork being driven across wet glass. I asked my sister how Polly came to learn this new trick, and she smacked my head and told me to shut up, and gave me four annas.

May 10th. An influential friend of the family came to see the twins. I was told to entertain the gentleman. "Good afternoon, sir," I said, "how is the Deputy Commissioner?" "What Deputy Commissioner?" asked the gentleman. "Oh, any Deputy Commissioner," I replied. After all, he ought to know some Deputy Commissioners. He always acts as if he does.

May 28th. I have come to the conclusion that the twins are indestructible. They fall into the fire, drink boiling water out of the pots, swallow pins and small coins, and tumble down the well. I dropped one of them to day, but he only bounced.

June 1st. The young gentleman offered me a rupee if I would get him a lock of my sister's hair. I tried, but she became suspicious every time I went near her with the scissors. In the end, I clipped a bit of hair off our goat. It pleased the gentleman just as well.

June 2nd. It is disgusting, the way that lady visitors slobber over the twins. They cluck at the brats like a hen with chickens. But sooner or later, a visitor takes one of the urchins on her knees, and gets her ardour damped.

June 5th. I played tigers with the twins, and Father whipped me for biting them.

June 6th. The young man came to see my sister, and they played tigers under the parrot-tree. The young man kept on biting her face and even tried to strangle her, but Father seemed quite pleased.

June 11th. Last night, Father discovered that one of the twins had cut a tooth. He got quite excited, and made such a hullabaloo that the neighbours thought it was thieves, and shouted for the police. Then a rumour got round that the house was alight, so they sent for the fire-brigade. Father has to go and see the magistrate this morning, for raising a false alarm.

Aug. 5th. The twins have got measles, and I haven't got anything. Life is very dull.

Aug. 30th. I held a circus at the back of our house, and tried to teach the twins to ride the goat, but the silly idiots kept on falling off. In the end, the goat gave me a hard push with its head, and ran away.

Sept. 9th. My big sister was sitting under the parrot-tree with her young man, and she told him she loved him like a brother. Then she saw me hiding in the branches and listening. She pulled me down, boxed my ears, shook me, said I was a hateful wretch, and promised to thrash me within an inch of my life.

(Continued overleaf bottom)

The "Teaser" Series

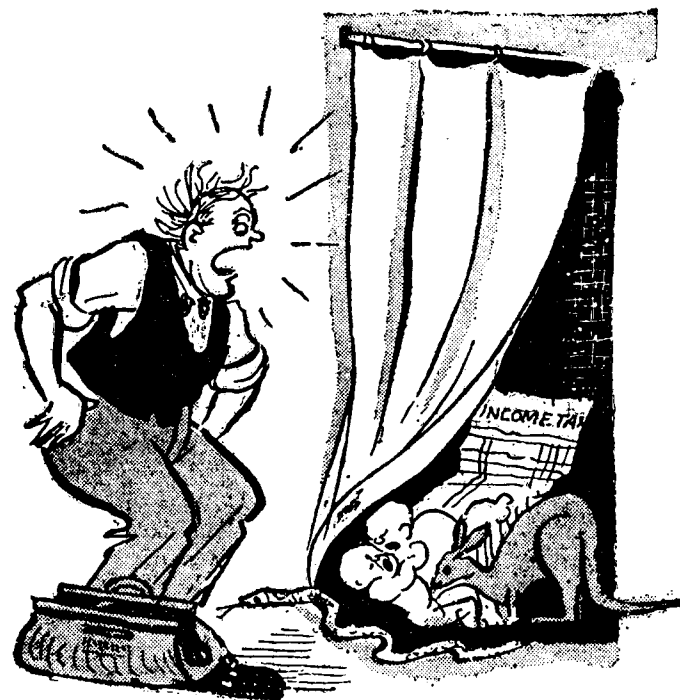
No. 6 NATIVITY

THE other day a certain news-agency flashed the news that a woman gave birth to a baby with horns! Had this happened in Europe when Rome was bossing Christendom, this mother and her baby would have provided Shaw with a theme for a preface with a play at the end of it, of course.

Talking of births, I am reminded of a strange happening in my village a few years ago. Our head man's wife gave birth on an auspicious day to the following bunch:—

1. Twins (Human).
2. A snake with a head at either end.
3. A small kangaroo (at least it looked like one) and
4. An Income-tax Demand Note!

What! You think I am a liar? I don't care a hoot. It is a fact, as solid as the type that made up this page. Queerer things than double-headed snakes and imitation Kangaroos have come from the ladies. Why, my aunt, when she was a young woman, what do you think she.....?



(Never mind the aunt, get along with your story.—Ed.)

O.K. boss! As I was saying, funnier things than synthetic kangaroos happened from Eve. But this Income-tax Demand Note makes the previous record in this line look as silly as Churchill in a loin-cloth bathing in my neighbour's back-yard.

But I am digressing.

Being a swell nob, our village headman called in a doctor, a young fellow full of beans, to... ..to whatever a doctor does at births. When the poor fellow (the doctor I mean) saw what he saw, i.e., the wonderful birth

of an Income-tax Demand Note, he said, "Ye, Gods!" in eight languages and rushed out. The first thing he did after reaching town was to ring up the Editor of the local paper and pass on the 'copy' to avid ears, for which he got into, not hot water exactly, but some jam.

Explain the nativity of the Income-tax Demand Note physiologically and award yourself 2½ marks if your answer is correct. (For Answer see page 24.)

The Diary of A Bad Boy—(Continued)

Oct. 2nd. Asked Father where the twins came from, and he said it was the same as with chickens: chickens came from eggs. I said I did not believe him, as I always understood that the eggs came from the chickens; and Father went away looking very thoughtful.

Oct. 9th. The young man sat under the parrot-tree with my big sister, and told her to hark to the trilling of the nightjar. She said it was wonderful and very poetic. As it happened to be Father gargling, I think the situation is getting serious.

Oct. 16th. I was told to look after the twins, so I gave them my sister's bottle of shoe-polish to play with. She is too lazy to clean her shoes with brushes, so she uses some patent liquid, which she applies with a sponge on a wire. The twins dabbed the polish over their faces, and as it gave them a patchy look, I blacked them evenly all over. Father was very angry, but I told him not to worry, as it will wear off in time.

Oct. 20th. The young man is going to marry my sister. I wonder if he ought to be warned.

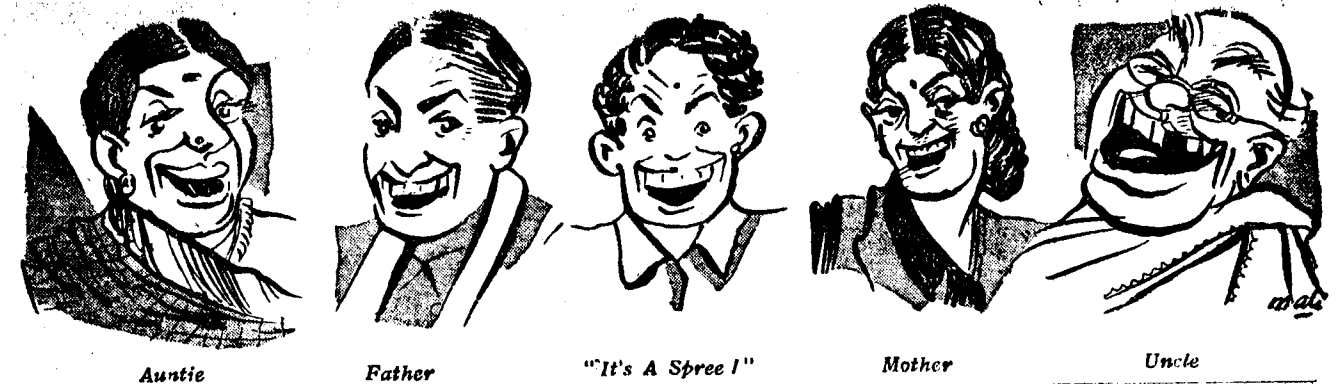
Nov. 1st. Two more twins have arrived at our house. This time, Father called them Hell and Fury.

Nov. 2nd. I asked Father how the twins were born, and he said it was a mystery to him.

Nov. 3rd. I asked Grandfather how Father was born, and he said it was a visitation of Providence.

Nov. 4th. I asked Great-Grandmother how Grandfather was born, and she said he was brought by a stork.

Nov. 5th. After making exhaustive scientific enquiries among those concerned, I have come to the conclusion that there has been no normal propagation in our family for four generations. I think I ought to write to the Indian Medical Association about it.



FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Up-To-Date.

Amateur Gardener:—"I want a packet of Mae West Seeds."

Shop Assistant:—"What do you mean?"

A. G.:—"The sort that will come up and see me some time."

Lucky at Last.

"Did you hear Doris is marrying her X-ray specialist?"

"Well, she's lucky. Nobody else could ever see anything in her."

Indiscreet.

"Oh, Clarence, dear, you should not sneer. 'Twill spoil your looks!" said she.

It did! For Clarence rashly sneered at a bigger man than he!

Absolutely!

"Did he furnish his whole house with second-hand stuff?"

"Yes—he even married a widow."

That's All.

"Are you married?"

"No. Just naturally discontented."

As Usual.

Employer:—"While I'm away you will take your orders from the mistress, Hobbs."

Gardener:—"Yes, sir—same as if you was at home."

Of course.

"I'm the happiest man in the world. I have the best wife in the county."

"Well, who wouldn't be happy with his wife in the country?"

A Rest Cure.

Motor Salesman:—"Can I show you something, sir?"

Pedestrian:—"No. I'm not here to buy anything. But it's such a wonderful change to be in the midst of all these cars, without having to dodge them!"

Very Old!

Client:—"I want to pay cash for this car."

Motor Salesman:—"Your request is unusual. I'm afraid I shall have to have references."

The Best Bargain.

Nobody enjoys a Jewish story more than Jews themselves, so here is one.

After the battle of Woerth, in 1870, Crown Prince Frederick of Germany went to visit the wounded. Among them was a Jewish non-commissioned officer who had greatly distinguished himself. He was smothered in bandages, dying. The Prince knelt beside the sufferer. "My son," he said, "you deserve a reward. Which would you rather have, a hundred thaler or the Iron Cross?" The wounded man slowly opened one eye. "How much is the Iron Cross worth?" he whispered anxiously. "Oh, about three thaler," replied the Prince, smiling.

"Then I'll have ninety-seven thaler and the Iron Cross, if your Royal Highness pleases," replied the soldier.

Love Among the Artistes (U.S.A.)



Film Star (she):—"What about my husband?"

Ditto (he):—"Oh, baby, what a question! Divorce him."

66 **LEELA,** I said in an expansive mood, "this heat is blighting. It tears my heart to see you fading away like a bluebell in a road-overseer's button-hole. A couple of months at Ooty, darling, will restore the roses to your cheeks, the sparkle to your eyes, the..."

A smacking kiss cut short my poetic outburst.

"Light of my heart," said Leela, "I am perfectly happy where I am. No Blue Mountains for me!"

"Rain in April (or May)," I parried, "I appreciate your spirit of self-sacrifice; but a husband has got to do his duty. Mrs. Ramaswamy and all the rest of them have gone to the hills, and however could you hold your head up in the club when all those august ladies return in June to talk Ooty till September?"

"There is something in that, dear, but we just can't afford to follow the Government about. The Government, you know, is about as rich as the people are poor."

I sat back dumbfounded. Leela to talk of economy! One could as well imagine Henry Ford haggling over the price of an almost fresh cabbage! The newspapers of the world had talked for five years on nothing but 'Depression', 'Slumps' and 'Retrenchments', without Leela taking the slightest notice of them.

"Never mind, my girl," said I, with a deprecatory wave of my hand, "I happen to have a nice little bank balance at present."

"How much?" she asked quickly.

"Five hundred," I said, expanding my chest. "And I'll gladly spend every pie of it just to see the roses on your cheeks again."

"Will you?"



P. P. SAMUEL.

"With pleasure, darling."

"Then please make out a cheque for four hundred and ninety-nine rupees in favour of the Lightning Electric Company. It is the price of the dinky little electric range I have just ordered."

"An electric range! Four hundred and ninety-nine rupees! Have you taken leave of your senses, Leela?"

"Yes," she replied, "perhaps I have. But I am not more mad than Mrs. Good. enough, the padre's wife. She has also placed an order for a similar range. And with a number of expensive gadgets."

"Woman!" I said severely, "you have committed a grave indiscretion. I absolutely refuse to sanction the amount."

"All right, be a caveman if you like. But weren't you prepared, only five minutes ago, to spend the whole amount over me? 'Every pie of it, just to see the roses (here she blushed) on your cheeks!'"

"Yes," I admitted, almost foaming at the mouth, "but I don't remember offering to pay a scandalous price for an overrated contraption and foot a blasted monthly bill on top of it."

"Oh dear, oh dear," she cried, "you don't deserve to have an affectionate wife. Anyway you needn't be so nasty about it. If you don't approve of it, back it goes. That is all there is to it. And, by the way,

if you do want to know why I am rapidly turning dry, bald and sere, come to the kitchen and stand in the smarting smoke for two hours on end."

"But, Leela," I said, "you have a 'smokeless oven', haven't you?"

"Yes," she freezed, "perhaps. The chimney, at least, is 'guaranteed smokeless'. But why argue about

it when you do not care for the comfort of your wife? So there!"

Twenty-four hours on and the atmosphere at home was no more electrical—literally and figuratively. Leela was buzzing about like a working bee from box to box, wardrobe to wardrobe, cupboard to cupboard. Another four hours, I thought, and we would be off to the Blue Mountains.

"Darling," she called, "do come and help me close this box."

"Have you finished packing, dear?"

"Yes, but this lid....."

"What lid?"

"The lid of this trunk, you.....!"

"What about it, dear?"

"Won't close."

"Naughty little lid!" I remarked.

"Darling!"

"Yes, dear."

"Please come and lend a hand."

"Half a tick, dear, while I get into my trousers. In the meantime....."

"Leela!"

"Yes, dear."

"Haven't you read humorous stories? I mean the posh ones?"

"Don't be silly! What have they got to do with refractory box-lids?"

"Everything," I said. "It is usually in humorous stories that boxes won't shut."

"You don't mean to suggest that I am a character from a humorous story, do you?"

"Not at all, darling. But I shouldn't be far wrong if I did."

"I wish you won't be silly."

"Same to you, child."

"Dear!"

"Yes, darling."

"What do they do in humorous stories if boxes won't shut?"

"They get cook to sit on the lid, to begin with."

"Oh! Good! And then?"

"They take the box to the dining-room and get cook to jump off the table and land bang in the centre of the lid."

"If the box still refuses to shut?"

"Don't be silly! Such boxes seldom get into humorous stories. In a genuine side-splitter the lid just snaps to at the sight of cookie. Jerome K. Jerome, W. W. Jacobs, P. G. Wodehouse—all leave their lids to cook."

"Very well, then. Muniamma!"

"Yes, dear."

"I wasn't speaking to you. Muni AMMA-A-A!"

"A-a-a-a," came a deep growl from somewhere in the basement.

Presently the wooden stairs started to squeak and groan. Cook was coming upstairs!

"This box won't shut, Muniamma. Will you just sit on the lid for a moment?"

Muniamma slowly poured herself on to the box.

"Dear!"

"Yes, Leela."

"It is no good. Cook is sitting on the lid for a minute now."

"And still it won't shut?"

"No."

"Ask her to get on to the dining table and employ her momentum."

"I don't quite know if she would do it. She is rheumatic, you know."

"Nothing like trying, dear."

"Muniamma, would you mind standing on the dining table?"

"Why?"

"So that you may jump on to the lid."

"Siva-Siva-Siva!" yelled the woman. "Jump down from the table! At my age! What do you take me for? A blooming Memsahib? I am fifty years, come *Adi*, and I have buried a husband and seven children and served under six different mistresses and none of them had the brass to ask me to jump about like a monkey; and once I said to Lakshmiammal, the wife of the fat Brahmin in the next street, 'Look here, Amma,' I said, 'if you will talk nicely to me and pay me well and give me your old clothes and take me to the hills with you instead of leaving me to fend for myself like an old cow, I will always be faithful to you and cook your food much better than that dirty woman next-door. God alone knows why they pay that woman two rupees more than I get, but, Amma, I want to tell you here and now that if...'"

A loud rap at the door cut short her eloquence.

"Muniamma," I ordered in a voice of thunder, "open the front door."

It was the telegraph boy, the messenger of the fickle gods.

Samy
Stanley Cottage
Willingdonpuram

I'll doctor kidney change Madras month starting tonight six daughters two sons.

"What do you make of it, Leela?" I asked, handing her the telegram.

"Hurrah!" she cried. "Mother is coming to stay with us for a month. Her doctor has advised her to come over here for a few weeks."

"What about the sons and daughters?"

"They are coming, too."

"How many of them in all, dear?"

"Nine, including mother," she enthused. "Hurrah! We will be a jolly crowd."

I unpacked the boxes in silence. There are moments when the human heart is too darned bitter to express itself.



Epitaph:

The maid called him
'My sweet'
And he let her kiss him;
His wife threw the
gramophone at him
And did not miss him!

Correct:

Recently a man was standing on the kerb waiting for his bus when a copy of "Everything Inside" was dropped on his head from a nearby window.

Everything comes to the man who waits

Now, now:

Sleep on the thing that troubles you, says a doctor. Well, well, we don't think most of our law-abiding housewives will follow this advice when they are being harassed by vacuum cleaner salesmen!

Observation:

When a girl loses her heart she generally loses her head as well, but when a man loses his heart he always loses his savings too.

Explained:

And the only difference between a man in love and a married man is that the former enjoys buying things for his girl, while the latter merely buys.

Correct:

A famous tragedian, recently carried his furniture to new quarters all by himself.

Critics, however, did not hail this as another moving performance.

Served Him Right:

Girl: Why did you refuse to marry that editor?

Friend: Well he has been rejecting my contributions so often that I decided to get even by rejecting him once.

His profession:

"What does your father do for a living?"

"He pulls wires."

"Ah! A great politician?"

"No; he plays the harp in the local orchestra."

Cause and Effect:

Wives are now learning archery, says a headline. Husbands had better learn how to duck more quickly.

That's Why:

Nudists, says an authority on the subject, are not at all sensitive to adverse criticism.

Well, they haven't any sleeve to wear their hearts upon.

Limerick and Love:

There was a young lady of Frason
Who fell in love with a stone mason;
She said, 'Oh my word
Tho' it sounds quite absurd
My heart has a funny sensason.'

From Turkistan:

The first wife of a Turkish nobleman works as his secretary. His second types his correspondence, and the third does the cooking.

The man with a wife in every post!

Art Criticism:

Some of our modern sculptures are well-wrought.

Others are well—ROT

A Speed Romance:

Fifty, sixty, sixty-five,
Said the speedometer;
Soon the driver, poor man,
Said 'Hello' to St. Peter.

Our Conundrum Corner:

Which is the most unhappy river in the world?
The Danube, because it is always blue.

Another One:

Which part of our body is a poem?
The leg, because it is an elegy. (L—E—G)

ON FALLING ILL

By 'RAJARAM'

MY Mercedes was before me, and I was typing (not this essay, of course). Somehow the thing wouldn't go off.....what the deuce did it mean?

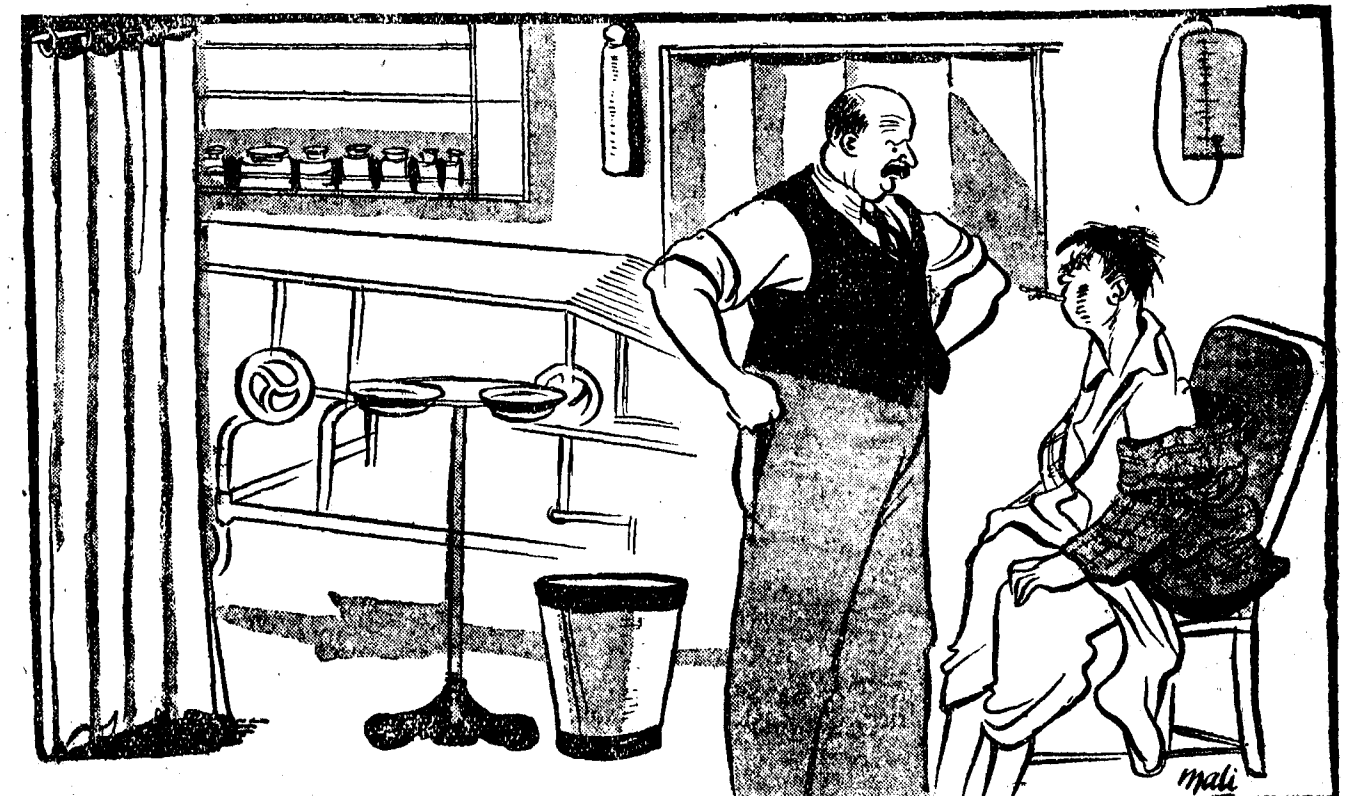
It meant I was not doing well. There was a pain in my head, in my joints, a burning sensation in my eyes, and my head was heavy. I felt my heart with my hand; sure, I had slight temperature. It was downright bad to spoil my work like that.....and just when I was getting on capitally with my 'Handbook of Colloidal Chemistry'!

However, there was nothing to be done except to take some medicine. What medicine? I hate going to

getting serious, without a doubt. I should immediately see a doctor!

There was a private doctor (I had been told) within a few yards of my house; I had often seen the board too in front of the dispensary, but I had never cared to read the name of the doctor. I went to the sanctuary with a trembling and palpitating heart.

I am not a stout man, nor a fearful bullying man, nor a very tall man; and fever and worry and literary labours on 'Colloidal Chemistry' had naturally made me, I presume, a trifle more tender and slender. I went in. The main chair was empty. I timidly asked of one of



.....while the thing was getting heated in my mouth

hospitals. With their stethoscopes and thermometers, the doctors frighten me, and even if I have no temperature to begin with, their sight brings in fever in a flood.

But something must be done! I took two tea-spoonfuls of Fruit Saline in a cupful of water. I stretched my limbs on my bed and awaited results. Fifteen minutes, thirty minutes.....the fever was getting worse, the nuisance! I put the thermometer into my mouth for a half-minute and anxiously withdrew it and saw, to my consternation, the temperature was over 100! It was

the gentlemen present, "Is the Doctor come?" (Never mind the Grammar!) That gentleman waved his head to the left, and turning to the left, I saw a wizened old fogey with enormous moustaches and a rickety cane. He did not come up to my imaginative picture of a doctor; yet there he was.....

I said in a dying voice almost: "Doctor, I am afraid I have some slight fever." The man looked at me strangely; we mutually decided that the other was stark mad. Fortunately, nothing untoward happened

and my attention was directed to a new-comer from a side room. This new-comer promptly took the chair behind the table and surveyed the room. I realised that this was the doctor.

The Doctor looked a doctor; imperious, stately, and nice. He looked at me and I looked at him. He asked me, "*Kai paijæ*?" I recited my poem readily, "Doctor, I am afraid I have some slight fever!" and, exhausted, sank in my seat. The Doctor knowingly winked, and motioned me to the side room; I wondered what next, but obeyed him all the same.

Inside the private room, the operation table made my heart go pit-a-pat. The Doctor put the thermometer into my mouth and while the thing was getting heated within my mouth, scrutinised me from head to shoes in a disconcerting way.

A further shower of shivers passed through me. He withdrew the thermometer, saw that I hadn't lied about my fever. "Lie down on the table," he said. What, was he going to rip open my abdomen or what?

He pressed down my belly rhythmically, asking the while, "Are you a student here?" Student? A student, a mere student! I felt a deep bruise. Did not the man know who I was? As if people did not know me for a far-famed professor of Colloidal Chemistry? In an injured tone, very much enfeebled (you see, his hands kept my belly firmly down so that I could scarcely breathe), I said, "No, doctor, I am a professor." It was the Doctor's turn to be dumbfounded. But, for a second, he probably thought, that I had not only fever but a simultaneous attack of insanity too! But eventually he believed me.

"Any pain in the stomach?"

"No, Doctor."

"Have you the head-ache?"

"No, thanks."

"How long have you had this fever?"

"Three hours."

"You can get up now." (I did.)

We returned to the sitting room. The Doctor wrote out the prescription. I was delighted to see that the ingredients of the mixture were as many as six. I exulted in the idea that I had succumbed to some ailment really honourable. He then asked my name, initials, address, and remarked, on learning that I was twenty-six, "You are very young for a professor, I think."

So that was the parting shot. How could I endure such things! For seven years now, sundry men and women have been telling me that I am too young to be

a professor. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you fair warning to-day. Say if you will that I am too much of a donkey to be a professor, too much of an ignoramus to be a professor, too lean to be a professor, too curly-haired to be a professor, too coffee-loving to be a professor..... but never say that I am too young etc., etc. I don't like it.

Well, I got my medicine (I paid 8 annas; three doses at 2 annas per dose and the bottle costing two annas extra), and returned to my flat triumphant. I drank the first dose.....not margosa nor asafoetida, nor all the repulsive bitter tastes in the world can ever make a concoction so hideous as that. But I drank it none the less, felt a martyr and went to bed.

It was 3 p.m. I was alone in the house. How was one to spend the time? I surveyed the ceiling and began my research work. One, two, three.....there were twenty-four little rafters. Twenty-four? I wasn't sure. I counted again, and again; the figure yet eluded me. I took my diary from the cupboard and legibly noted down the results.

Here they are:

No. of rafters, left to right, 24.

No. of bars in the window, black coloured, 13.

Cross bars in the window, green coloured, 3.

The crevices (counted diagonally) in the wire network at the top of the window, 17.

No. of whole white squares on my towel (the one generally covering my pillow) 15.

No. of blue lines in ditto above, 7.

No. of Cuddappah slabs on the floor, 13 plus 11 (broken).

No. of fingers on my hands, five plus five, *i.e.*, 10.

Then I slept.

Morning came; and though I knew I had less fever, I knew the little fellow was still there and the feebleness of limbs was intriguing. I saw the Doctor with five days' growth of beard and this, I believe, impressed him. He said that I should take an injection and nip this malarial mischief in the bud. I agreed. He was really (and his compounder also) very nice about the operation, and when the pin-prick was over, asked beamingly, "Did I give you much pain?" "Oh no, Doctor," I replied, stoutly. I knew now that I had given the slip to the Lord of the Valley of the Dark Shadow.

My work on 'Colloidal Chemistry' was rudely interrupted and my doctor's fees came to a tidy sum. Yet I do not complain.

The following are the familiar *Reel Names* of film stars.

1. Diana Wynyard.
2. W. C. Fields.
3. Karen Morley.
4. Boris Karloff.
5. Stan Laurel.
6. Joan Marsh.
7. Marian Marsh.
8. Paul Muni.
9. Lila Lee.
10. Lyle Talbot.

Do you know their *real names*? You will find them at the end of the page.

What Hollywood Men Find in Women.

"What is it in a woman that attracts a man?" is a question old as time. Especially interesting is it about Hollywood men.

Here are some of the answers by the leading Hollywood lights.

Bill Powell: The first thing I notice is a beautiful figure. In fact a woman is never interesting to me unless she has a beautiful figure.

Jimmie Dunn: I am attracted by a girl's eyes, first, the way she uses them. I like to have a girl look me straight in the eye—otherwise I have no interest.

Fredric March: It's a woman's carriage.....the way she holds herself both when she walks and when she is standing still...that gets me.

Clark Gable, the prize-boy of the year: The average woman places her best feature in the beauty-show window—and I never fail to see it—(A perfectly hypocritical remark this!)

Tullio Carminati: Simply said 'Femininity' and then shut his mouth like an oyster.

John Boles: I am continually looking for a woman with old-fashioned long hair. I actually hate bobbed hair—and no girl with a bob would ever attract me. (Wife and fan clubs please disregard.)

Fred Keating: magician, actor: It's the CURVES that make me look a second time! (An honest guy, this!)

Ronald Colman: Her eyes. Even when a woman smiles, I watch her eyes...they have a way of telling the truth about the smile.



STAR DUST

Nelson Eddy: A woman is attractive in my eyes if only she has vitality.

Maurice Chevalier: I could send flowers to a gorgeous voice without having ever seen the voice's face...and frequently have.

Dick Arlen: I'll never get over the habit of looking at a woman's lips.

Gary Cooper: While I look most intently at the eyes, I think I pay most attention to the mouth—it tells more.

Jimmy Cagney: At the first glance, I catch the lips, the eyes, the figure and the poise, but never as separate items—always in a sort of panoramic view. The thing that makes a woman interesting to me is the net result of that first glance.

Bob Montgomery: When I find a regular, with dainty ankles and long graceful hands, I've found what I'm looking for...when I look. But I rarely look.

Dick Powell: I think I look first at a girl's teeth. I like them in the order of (importance): white, beautiful, even and straight.

Sir Guy Standing—soldier, Knight of the King and actor de luxe: I always look at a woman's eyes and hair.

It is our considered opinion that if any of these boys found a woman with a sense of humour, a grand personality and a lot of charm, he would want another opportunity to answer the above question—which gives you all a chance, what?

Real Names:—

1. Dorothy Cox.
2. William Claude Dukinfeld.
3. Mabel Linton.
4. Charles Edward Pratt.
5. Arthur Stanley Jefferson.
6. Joan Rosher.
7. Violet Krauth.
8. Muni Weisenfreund.
9. Augusta Apfel.
10. Lyle Hollywood.



'KEBI'

IN these days of Silver Jubilees, it is a thousand pities that the unknown student of Rajkot—unknown because the purveyors of news have not disclosed his identity—did not celebrate the Jubilee of his failure. Way back in 1908, when the Minto-Morley Reforms had just been introduced in India, a boy, young in years and in experience, sat for the Matriculation examination of the Bombay University and has been battling with the examiners, no longer a boy, ever since. History has on record several endurance feats, freak and otherwise, but the case of this hero of Rajkot who is out to out-Sisyphus Sisyphus, stands peerless. Twenty-seven successive knocks have failed to cool the ardour of this examinee. His intention to earn the right to the portals of a College is still as strong as it was when he was his son's age. Unbowed, undaunted, he has vowed to go on attacking the Matric. Citadel till either he or it falls. Let us wish him luck!

Better late than never, said a sage. Karachi, with its penchant for the latest in everything, has taken to nudism. Not for the first time has the strange but interesting spectacle of undraped silhouettes of two young men, blotted the landscape before the eyes of a startled *chowkidar*, who testifies that the two men legged it up a road near Lover's Bridge and on to Bath Island. The two men jumped into a waiting car and drove off. Further enquiries, however, reveal that there exists in this aerial gateway of India, a group of men—it has not yet been ascertained if women are also in this 'joint'—who practice the nudist cult and who can be seen by discerning eyes, performing their daily dozen before the break of day, in the aforesaid neighbourhood.

Signor Garavani de Morano, who has made a fine art of love who claims to have conquered women of 47 countries during his peregrinations round the globe, but who still remains a bachelor, has just returned to his native Italy after a 'study' tour in the Orient, and has availed himself of the first opportunity to broadcast the fruits of his research in the world's oldest art. This modern Maestro of Love gives the following hints to would-be Romeos and Juliets, hints based on experiences dating back to his salad days—mark you, he confesses that he had his first affair while he was but 5!

"Woman is like a harp with a thousand strings and you must know the right one to pluck.

Most men to-day love too hastily.

Every woman has her psychological moment. It's up to the man to bring her to that moment if he would profit. Ninety per cent of women should be kept there. The other 10 per cent do not like to be dominated.

The best setting for love is in the country where the bees buzz, the birds chirp, the flowers bloom and the Sun shines.

Italian is the best language for love.

Leisured women of the upper classes are the most passionate.

Woman's most attractive age is from 29 to 35.

To be successful in love, every woman must have something of what the French call a 'petit cochon' (little pig) in her.

Champagne and white wines are the best love potions."

By George, what a Casonova!

Reno, America's famous divorce city, is quite used to this sort of thing. The other day Miss Dorothy Williams of Fresno walked into the Marriage Licence Bureau with two men.

"Which one is the groom?" asked the clerk.

Miss Williams answered she hadn't decided.

The clerk drew a half dollar out of the till and flipped it. One of the men said "heads" and "heads" it was. So he and Miss Williams were married shortly afterward by the district judge.

The next boat for Reno leaves on Thursday, folks!

An aspiring politician had a speech written out for him by a friend, who included instructions in the manuscript for the guidance of the speaker. The would-be politician duly delivered himself of the oration and, when loud applause greeted a statement he read out, he turned over a page and immediately convulsed the audience by adding, "Here, blow your nose and take a drink of water."

THE LETTERS OF PRIVATE JOYFULL



49. SERGEANT ALLSOPP'S COURT-MARTIAL

Madras, 18th May, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

I was telling you about Sergeant Allsopp, who was court-martialled for drunkenness. During the first stage of the proceedings, Paddy Ryan gave evidence that he found Allsopp asleep in the Colonel's car one afternoon, that the Sergeant was 'Regimentally drunk', and that he walked half-a-mile back to barracks, swearing all the while. Sergeant-Major Quirt testified that the accused was drunk on arrival, and was sent to his room under close arrest.

After the adjournment, the Sergeant's friend rose to cross-examine old Mossy-Face.

"When Private Ryan brought the accused to your house," said Lieutenant Power, "what made you conclude that the Sergeant was drunk?"

"It was his manner, Sir; besides, I knew he had been drinking in the Sergeants' Mess a short while before," replied Sergeant-Major Quirt.

"Where were you when the accused was drinking in the Sergeants' Mess?"

"I was there, too, Sir."

"And what were you doing?"

"I was drinking, too," said Mossy Face, with very red cheeks.

"How much drink did the accused consume?"

"Four or five glasses of beer, Sir."

"And how much drink did you consume?"

"Four or five glasses, Sir."

"Were you drunk?" demanded Lieutenant Power.

"Oh, no, Sir," said Mossy Face, highly scandalised.

"Then why do you assume that an equal quantity would intoxicate the accused?"

"He was in an excited state, Sir."

"Had anything occurred to excite him?"

"I don't know, Sir."

"Is it a fact that the accused suffers from sore feet?"

"Good gracious!" muttered the President. "The Sergeant is charged with having a weak head, not sore feet."

"It is relevant," submitted Lieutenant Power.

"Very well," agreed the President. "Does the accused suffer from sore feet?"

"Yes, Sir," replied Mossy-Face.

"Did you put the accused on picket-duty five nights running, knowing that such duty involves ten or twelve miles marching every night?" demanded the prisoner's friend.

"He's got to take his turn for duty, Sir."

"When there are forty sergeants available, isn't it strange that it was Sergeant Allsopp's turn five nights running? And, suffering as he was, wasn't it natural that he should get excited at the prospect of doing yet another ten miles on sore feet?"

"He should do his duty without grumbling, Sir."

"Come, come. Isn't it a soldier's privilege to grumble?"

"It is a custom in the Service," admitted Mossy-Face.

The next witness was Sergeant Brown. He described how he took Allsopp to his quarters, under arrest.

"Did the accused offer any remark?"

"Yes, Sir. He said that the Sergeant-Major ought to be made to do perpetual picket-duty in Hell, marching round the place with bare feet on red-hot ploughshares."

Lieutenant Power rose to cross-examine. "Doesn't that strike you as a very coherent speech for a drunken man to make?"

"I don't know, Sir. He was drunk, anyway."

"Another witness has described the accused as being 'Regimentally drunk'. Do you agree with that description?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Meaning that he did not reel or stagger, but had an ultra-correct and wooden gait?"

"Yes, Sir, he was 'Regimentally drunk'."

"Might not the woodenness of his marching be attributable to sore feet?"

"I don't know, Sir. He was drunk, all right."

"What happened when you got Sergeant Allsopp to quarters?"

"He fell on the bed in a drunken stupor."

"Was he still using bad language?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then he was not unconscious?"

"No, Sir."

"And he lay down on the bed of his own accord?"

"Well, yes, Sir."

"What did you do?"

"I observed the precautions laid down in the Standing Orders. I took off his boots, loosened his clothing, and sent for the Medical Officer."

"Did the accused object?"

"Yes, Sir. He swore and struggled, and said he wasn't drunk."

"So he was hardly in a drunken stupor?"

"Well, no, Sir."

Major Bolus was called. "I am the Medical Officer," he said. "I was brought to see the accused. When I entered the room, Sergeant Allsopp was lying on his bed. On my approach, he tried to get up, and began to curse violently. He fell back on the bed. He tried to get up a second time, and again fell, using most extreme language. The third time, he fell on the floor, and became unconscious. I examined him. His eyes were dilated, and his breath smelt of beer. Considering the caprolalia and nervous inco-ordination I had already observed, I decided he was drunk."

"Would you please explain to the court the meaning of the term 'caprolalia'?" began Lieutenant Power.

"It means, a tendency to uncontrolled outbursts of violent language," replied Major Bolus.

"Is that why you thought that the accused was drunk?"

"It is one of the symptoms of intoxication."

"But I know high officers who are addicted to caprolalia. Do you suggest that they are always drunk?"

"Coprolalia was not the only symptom in this case," replied the Medical Officer. "The accused's eyes were dilated, and he lapsed into unconsciousness."

"Might not a dilation of the eyes be present in a man labouring under severe excitement, arising from other causes than alcohol?"

"It might."

"And might not a severe blow on the head cause a man to lapse into unconsciousness?"

"It might."

"Did you examine the accused to see if he had a severe blow?"

"No. I only ascertained whether he was drunk or not."

"You are unable to say whether the accused had any marks of a blow on the head?"

"I cannot say."

"A man's breath might smell of beer, even though he had taken only a small quantity?"

"Yes."

"Then your evidence is simply that the man was dazed, and smelt of beer. You took no steps to account for his condition, except on the assumption that he was drunk."

"Other steps were hardly necessary," said the doctor, drily.

"That is for the Court to decide," retorted Lieutenant Power.

"I give my evidence as a medical man," said the M. O., assertively.

"I fear that drunkenness is not a matter in which expert evidence is admissible," replied Lieutenant Power in silky tones. "You stand in exactly the same position as any other witness. Drunkenness is a matter of opinion, and the Court is entitled to enquire of each witness how he arrived at that opinion. Private Ryan and Sergeant Brown based their opinion on the fact that the accused walked 'Regimentally', Sergeant-Major Quirt on the fact that he was excited, and you on the fact that he was dazed—"

"Thank you, Mr. Power," interposed the President. "You are not permitted to make your speech for the defence at this stage. Have you any further questions to ask the witness?"

"No, Sir."

The Adjutant stood up. "That completes the case for the prosecution," he said.

"Then we will have a recess of fifteen minutes," ordered the President, stretching his cramped fingers.

I ran over to the canteen for a bottle of lemonade, wondering how the case would go. I expected that the Sergeant would be found guilty and reduced to the ranks, because, in spite of the fight put up by Lieutenant Power, all the witnesses held to their conviction that the accused had been drunk. The utmost he could hope for was to escape a sentence of imprisonment, unless Mr. Power had something further up his sleeve.

I will tell you the result of the trial next week.

Your Loving Son,

OBEAH JOYFULL.

DO YOU KNOW?



Please see answers on page 23.

1. What is the difference between an illusion and an hallucination?
2. Who wrote 'It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'?
3. Who is the author of 'Tis strange—but true; for truth is always strange, stranger than fiction'?
4. What is the Capital of the Union of South Africa?
5. What three great bodies of water, located in different countries, are named after one man?

Quest



Where ish me collar shtud?

BY PROXY

By V. Ganapathi

SRINIVASAN hailed from the Tanjore District and always held his head upright, as well he might, for he was the chosen boy of his school for extraordinary intelligence with special aptitude for mathematics. He had passed his school and college courses with great credit and had joined an engineering college in Northern India. He was strong on the idea that men should marry only at the age of 22. That was the proper limit according to him.

There was only a short period of four months before Seenu would be 22; and while at his books, an imaginary page or two of his future life would appear on the pages, and his mind would fondly rest on the far-off ideal for hours together. When two years ago he had accompanied his uncle to Pennur where the latter sought the legal advice of Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer, Advocate, Seenu found that the world held a sweetness that was meant

for man to enjoy. While he was seated in the drawing-room he was struck dumb by the passing appearance of an angel who walked with a mischievous and love-provoking gait. Seenu succeeded in his attempts at catching two more glimpses of the sweet form. He did not hesitate to fall in love at first sight and he discussed within himself the probabilities of his marrying Sarojini, this girl. "Not just yet," he resolved; "I shall finish my studies and then I will claim her. She will not be married by then."

From then on, Seenu's one obsession was Sarojini and the imaginary developments concerning his marriage with her. He spent many restless hours. He entertained high hopes and saw no obstacles to his achieving his heart's desire. And the time fixed by him was almost near at hand. Time to him was on a very slow march. Yet he waited with patience.

.....and his eyes rested on Sarojini with significance and determination.



One day, in his room in the hostel, he was casually going through the pages of a daily newspaper from the South. He read an advertisement. It stated that a suitable bridegroom was wanted for a fair and accomplished girl of sixteen, well educated and of a respectable family. These details did not interest Seenu, but when the latter portion of the advertisement conveyed a solemn pledge that all correspondence would be kept strictly confidential, accompanied by a direction to apply with a copy of photograph to Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer, Advocate, Pennur, Seenu felt a rude shock.

The girl under reference was evidently the sweet Sarojini. Seenu had chosen the very girl for himself and had come to a decision in the matter. His own girl to be thus dealt with through the papers! He was only waiting to become 22 years old and to finish his course of studies. While he had definitely outlined the course of action, here was an advertisement blowing to pieces his glorious structure. "No, no, that won't do. Action, action!" he resolved and straight away penned a letter to his most intimate friend, Chandrasekaran, who was residing in the village adjoining Pennur. He requested Chandrasekaran to run up to Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer immediately and discuss the matter on his behalf and employ any means to make the father consent to give his daughter to Seenu. Any conditions that the father stipulated were acceptable to him. He did not require any dowry, or any support from his father-in-law.

Now, Chandrasekaran was a young man of 22 and rather good-looking. What was of greater consequence, he was a bachelor. He was upright, he was nice and he was sincere. He would never betray trust and confidence and was always ready and willing to oblige. He, therefore, lost no time in carrying out the wishes of his dear friend Seenu. He set out for Pennur. It was a very easy matter to fix the party, though he had never heard of Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer before. He greeted the gentleman and was offered a seat. No introduction was necessary on elaborate lines as Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer knew only too well that this was the first call in response to his advertisement.

As the matter had already been promised to be kept strictly confidential, Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer took Chandrasekar to his 'very private' room for necessary exchange of particulars. Chandru gave an unreserved description of Seenu, supplementing the information with his own observations of Seenu's excellent qualities and the very bright future that lay before him.

After Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer was satisfied about the eligibility of the candidate under discussion, he laid down his terms. He would give no dowry; on principle, he was definitely opposed to the system. He had spent a good deal of money on the girl, her education and, her accomplishments. She could play on the Veena and violin delightfully. She always stood first in school and was keen on continuing her studies in the college. But on account of his old mother who would rather die than see a grand-daughter of over sixteen remaining unmarried, Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer had to give in, though personally he would like his daughter to take up higher studies.

The interview rounded up with a request on either side for a photograph of the party concerned; and Chandru promised to get a photograph of the boy the next day, as he had forgotten to bring it along with him; while Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer suggested that the girl herself could be seen in person.

Sarojini was brought forward and Chandru who was till then quite indifferent to the whole affair was galvanised into admiration as he saw the girl who entered the room. He, however, regained his composure immediately, and his eyes rested on Sarojini with significance and determination. Sarojini's eyes looked up, too, her native shyness having been eliminated long ago by the 'education and accomplishment' process.

Without effort, thoughts come to our minds; and a thought did come to Chandru's mind all of a sudden. Sarojini disappeared from the room. Left to themselves, they made their respective thoughts the subject of deep and foremost consideration.

Chandru took leave of Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer and went home—not the same old Chandru, but quite a different person altogether. He bore a troubled look and his one central thought was of Sarojini. He was due at Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer's the next day with Seenu's photograph. But he determined never to use Seenu's photograph in the affair and had settled on Sarojini's early transformation into Mrs. Chandrasekaran. Did I say that Chandru was a young man of high integrity and respected trust? Yes, to be sure, so he was! But he knew that all was fair in love and war.

When next day he called on Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer, he was in rather a excited mood, for he had assumed a different role and had to play the party instead of the proxy. He went over the qualifications of the prospective bridegroom and enumerated them with greater precision and interest.

Have you brought the photograph?" asked Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer.

"Well, no, but I have brought the original," replied Chandru.

Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer's eye-brows demanded an explanation and Chandru explained.

"The boy is just 22."

"Good."

"He comes of a rich and respectable family."

"Very well."

"He is rather handsome, according to popular verdict."

"That's fine."

"He has a brilliant prospect before him, and he is a graduate."

"Good."

"And that boy stands before you!"

Mr. Ramaswamy Iyer stepped a little backward and stared at him in surprise. It was an agreeable surprise, for he had thought the day before that Chandru was handsome himself and evidently educated and rich and was a good proposition for the hand of his daughter. But perhaps he was already married. But now, when he realised the truth in all its importance, he was pleased.

"And that is a game well played!" he mischievously remarked. Chandru fumbled and blurted out, "I could not say bluntly it was I, but now I am....."

Well, that was how Chandrasekaran came to marry Sarojini. He sent out invitations to all his friends, among whom was the unfortunate Srinivasan. In his room Seenu opened the invitation card and, for the first time in his life, robust and strong as he was, he almost swooned. He was then in a mood which cannot adequately be expressed by any superlative adjective in the English language. He would surely have committed murder; at least he would have seriously contemplated it, if Chandru had been within reach.

XX

I PASSED my Intermediate Examination and decided to go to Madras for higher studies. This was to be my first long journey on a railway and it was then I fully realised the greatness of this invention. Deep down in my heart I paid a tribute to R. L. Stevenson for his magnificent gift to man. I could not decide whether I envied him more for his authorship of *Robinson Crusoe* or his discovery of steam as a driving force.

I had a memorable journey once. I was nearly fourteen then. I was returning home from a week-end visit to a friend of mine and had a third class half-ticket with me. He had come to the station to send me off. The railway allowed children up to 11 to travel at half rates. For all railway purposes I pretended to be less than 11 and hence the half ticket.

Well, my friend and I had the adventure spirit in us. We were discussing a trip to the unknown beyond and were visualising the adventures we would have together; rescue of damsels in distress; vengeance on the villains who brought the damsels to such plights, hair-breadth escapes, fights, endurance feats and other heroic actions. These things were not, however, for the moment. Suddenly an idea struck me.

"Suppose we travel second without tickets for a beginning?" I asked him.

The idea tickled him. Both of us toyed with it for some time, turned it over and examined it thoroughly. At last we decided.

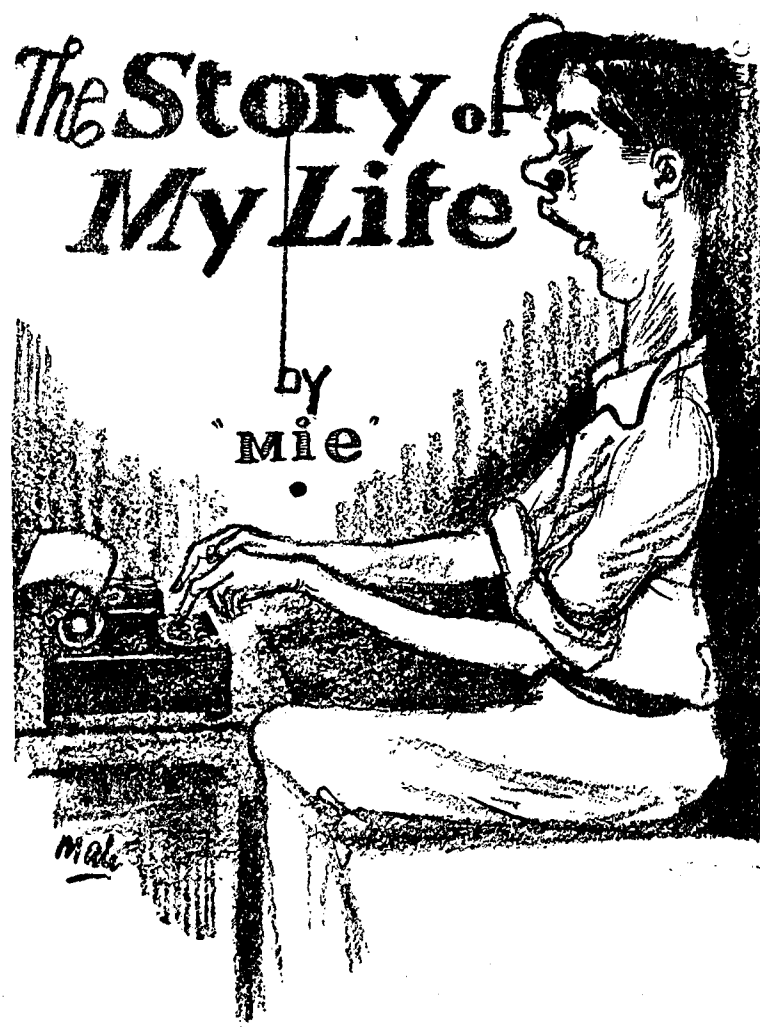
"Right you are! But there is the guard looking. If we get in now, he might want us to show him our tickets. We'll wait till the last moment."

When the train was about to start, we got in. There was a gentleman in the compartment, a railway doctor, though we didn't know it at that time. He was not above talking to boys and we discussed many things. With a lordly air we sprawled on the seats and talked. We gave him the impression that we were heirs to millions and were travelling second for a change from the first.

The next was our station. The train slowed down and stopped. We shook hands with our companion, hoped to meet him again and got down—straight into the hands of a ticket-examiner who had watched us getting in and who was sure we had no tickets.

"Tickets?" he said. "Ah! I knew it! Come along both of you."

A crowd had collected and we were taken to the station master and handed over to him. We tried to see the joke ourselves. I made a commendable effort to grin and wink with one eye at the crowd. They misinterpreted my sickly attempt. Some of them came over and said, "There, there, don't weep, my boy. The thing is done. And why cry over it?" They patted me fondly and stroked my hair. This was too much and I broke down. The most humiliating part of it was that



our doctor friend was watching the whole thing from his compartment.

We had no money to pay the excess. I proposed leaving my friend there and going out to procure money. Another friend of ours happened to be in the train. He came to our rescue. We said we would repay him afterwards. "No, no," he said, "Don't dream of it! I have got my money's worth, thank you. Ha, ha ha!"

I knew a chap who regularly travelled in a train without ticket and he went on long journeys too. He used to go to Madras from his place—a distance of 350 miles and started with a rupee in his pocket or somewhere close to his person. The Ramanar Express took about 13 hours to complete the journey but my friend took nearly a week! He would try the lavatory if an officious ticket-examiner came into his compartment. But latterly he admitted ticket-examiners never failed to wait for you to come out. They knew all the tricks.

Well, if a ticket-examiner caught him, he would go like a lamb to the station master who would search his person, for concealed money. The station masters, he said, never once found money on his person. His rupee was intact in an unsuspected place only known to him.

self. The station-master would detain him at the station for a few hours, give him a dozen or so juicy kicks and send him away. He didn't mind the kicks; in fact, he was accustomed to them. He would wander about the place till the arrival of the next train when he got into that train unseen. The process was repeated until he reached Madras.

Once, he told me, he reached Madras without changing train. He had as usual, got in without taking the trouble of paying for it. A ticket-examiner caught him and asked him to get down. He escaped from this official, slipped into the crowd in the platform and got into the train again when it was about to start. The ticket-examiner caught him again and made him get out. When the next station was reached, there was my friend K again in the train. The exasperated official kicked him out of the train. Imagine his astonishment when he found K sitting complacently in the train when the next station was reached!

"How long do you propose to travel like this?" asked the fed-up official.

"So long as my endurance power holds," replied K, gently stroking his still smarting behind.

I thought this incident really happened. Though the story did not place K in a complimentary light, he had got in the last word in the story and that I thought was the reason why he told it to everybody. But later, I found the same story as a joke against a Scotsman in *Tit-Bits*. Then I realised that K had merely pinched it and adapted it to suit himself.

Coming to my own railway experience, from childhood an unbounded admiration for the Railway possessed me. I did not know what it was that held my esteem most—the gleaming permanent way, the mighty engine, puffing, sneezing, blowing its nose, and whistling, or the comforts of a third class compartment or the efficiency and energy of the railway officials. Poor hard-worked fellows, these last! They have no sleep, no leisurely and enjoyable meals! They are so overworked! When a goods train arrives, they enter each wagon and feel the contents of each parcel or bag. When they find rice bags, they gently insert a long pointed needle into it, make a small hole and extract a few bushels of rice for their private use. Likewise with sugar, coffee, tea and other necessities. Mangoes prove difficult; for they are generally well packed inside baskets which shows what a suspicious and evil mind some people have! But the station masters are equal to the occasion. They skilfully extract as many mangoes as they want without tampering with the fastenings and seals.

For fresh vegetables, betel leaves and other things, they have to search the passen-

ger trains. With the assistance of the guard, they manage well for themselves.

Kerosene for house use is easily obtained. There is the company supply of kerosene for use in the station. The company is shrewd and allots only just the quantity necessary for daily use. But our poor hard-worked station masters are clever. They will not allow the company to cheat them. They light the station lamps only when a train is arriving and put them out after it has gone. Thus they save kerosene for themselves.

The persons I envied most were those in the engine, and the guard. For sheer swank it is hard to find any one to beat them. A driver knows that he is the object of many people's admiration and he is never happy unless there is a good-sized crowd about the engine. When a decent number have collected, he gets up from his seat, turns a wheel letting off steam, presses another thingummy making the engine snort, pulls a third what-dyou-call-it making a hideous noise. Then he opens the furnace doors and asks his assistants to coal in. The assistants meanwhile are not idle. They have their share of hero-worship. They take an empty oil-can and walk on the foot-plate of the engine, oiling unnecessary parts. They now put their heads inside the wheels, (just as an animal trainer puts his head inside a lion's mouth) and now disappear completely into the bowels of the engine. The spectators are agreeably thrilled.

I have noticed that the engine requires no ministrations unless there is a crowd around. If there is no one present, the driver and the firemen dose in their seats. The engine is left alone, and the poor thing glad of a few moments' respite snores contentedly. There is no oiling. There is no tampering with wheels and levers, there is no letting off of steam. But if there is any body looking on, all of them are feverishly busy oiling and coaling and scrubbing and rubbing. You can distinctly hear the engine protesting against such cruelty.

YES! I KNOW!

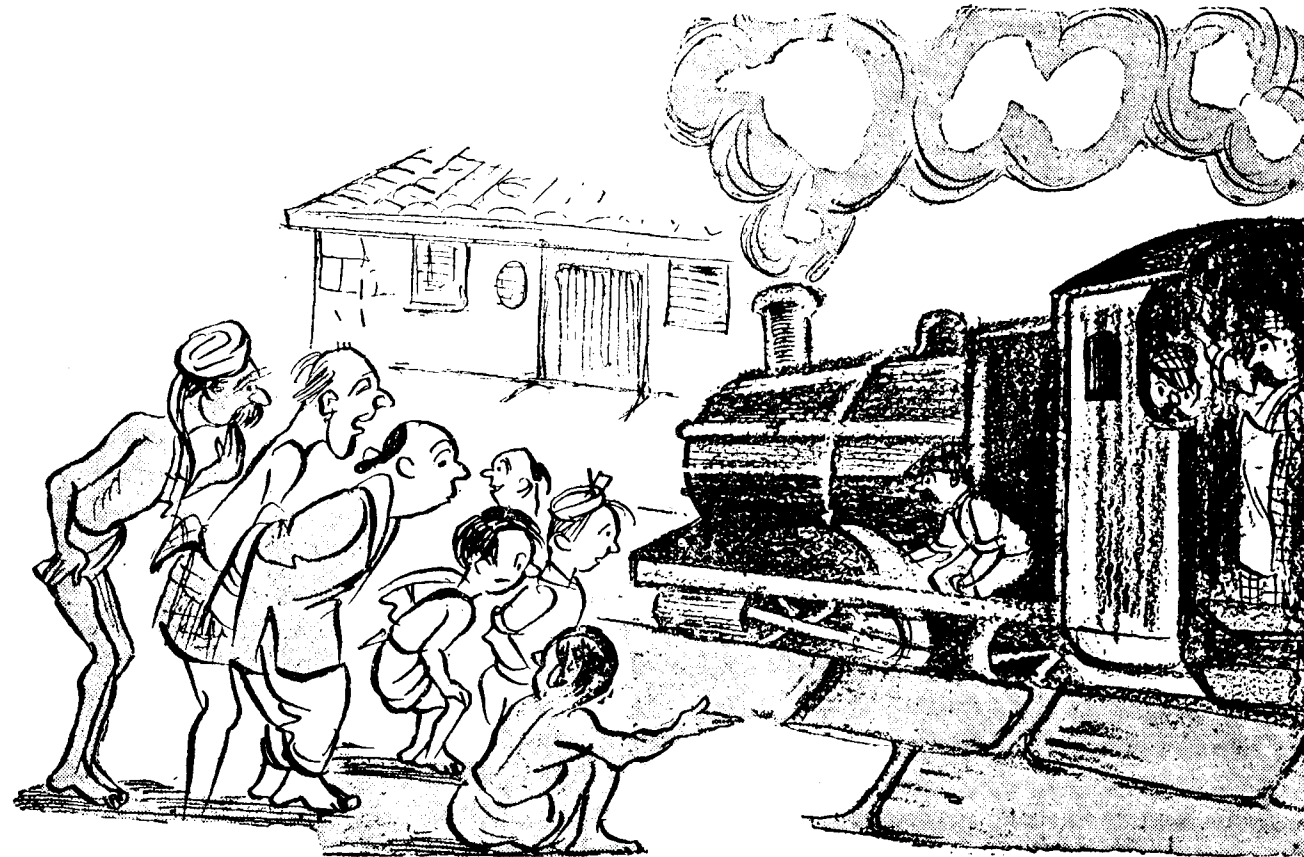


These are the answers to questions on page 18.

1. An illusion is an unreal or misleading image presented to the vision. An hallucination is the perception of objects with no reality or the experience of sensations with no external cause.
2. Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*, Act 2: Scene 5.
3. Byron, in *Don Juan*.
4. There are two: Cape Town, the legislative capital; and Pretoria, the administrative capital.
5. Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait and the Hudson River, all named after Henry Hudson, the explorer.

"What does he want to prod my inside for?" asks a young and inexperienced engine to an old and knowing one in a siding, referring to the fireman's activities.

the engine and proceed to the station (the engine is unfortunately at the edge of the platform always) ostensibly to adjust the time in their watches and get



"My dear, it's no use complaining; you have to endure it; you'll learn all these if you live as long as I have done," replies the ancient.

The engineers are satisfied even if their audience is just one small boy. They try their best, however, to get a good-sized crowd. When none collects, they leave

some water to drink but really to attract hero-worshippers. Their greasy, smudgy faces and dresses are conspicuous. When they return to the engine there is a train of people following them. I am really suspicious about their appearance. I think they can avoid having all that dirt in their dresses. I think they purposely smear their pants and shirts with coal dust.

ANSWER TO TEASER:

The word 'impossible' may not be found in the dictionary of Empire Builders. But we are not Empire Builders, at any rate, I decidedly am not one.

So the thing is impossible. Not only that, it is idiotic to suggest it even. Then, how did it happen?

Among the favoured citizenry, doctors of medicine are a class loved of the Income-tax Department. On this particular day, as he was setting out to the headman's house, our doctor was served with an Income-tax Demand Note. The doctor cursed the Department of Inland Revenue in lieu of tax-evasion and put the Demand Note in his pocket. How and when it slipped down and got mixed up with the kangaroo and the snake, nobody knows. But it was there in the haul when the doctor said, "Ye, Gods!"

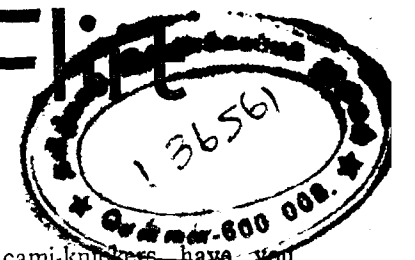
No wonder the headman put him in jam.

What do you think of it Mr. Editor?

(I think lying is a fine art with some fellows.—Ed.)

A Little Bit of Flirt

By J. H. Acott



As a writer of short stories, Henry Harris was a nuisance. Not, of course, from the point of view of his short stories themselves, but the confounded way in which everything gave him 'an idea'. If he saw a cow careering down the road with a bull after it, Henry would pull his note-book from his pocket and shout, "That gives me an idea!" If his wife said at the tea-table, "Henry, your moustache is not a tea-strainer. There's a tea-leaf sticking to it," Henry would yell, "An idea!" and write it on the table-cloth.

As a husband, Henry found his wife a bore. She didn't seem to humour him in a lot of things.

"How much money have you spent on beer this week?" she asked him one day as she was making out the accounts.

"Nothing," said Henry.

"Liar!" said his wife.

"I'm not!" said Henry.

"You are!" said his wife.

"How many damned cami-knickers have you bought in the month with my money?" asked Henry, out for a row.

"Sixteen," answered his wife. "All silk. Four blue, four pink, four....."

"Blast them!" exploded Henry. "And then you ask me how much beer—beer, I say—I've bought! Oh, you tyrant!"

"What?" said his wife in a dangerous tone.

"I said," roared Henry, "that you're a glutton! A hog for cami-knickers!"

Of course, that put the finishing touch to the fight. With a shriek Henry's wife threw all the household furniture at him and he fled from the house.

"Ah!" he grunted as he consumed a bottle of Lager in the 'Hash and Mash Restaurant', "there's someone who'll comfort me!"

His comforter sat at the table next him, a charming girl.



..... they were going through all the pretty things.....

Henry went over to her table and introduced himself. "You meet Marjorie," said Henry, "you give me an idea for a story!"

Marjorie blushed prettily, a thing she could always do, although her life didn't call for blushes.

"Oh!" she simpered, wondering why it was that flirting was such a pleasant pastime.

"Yes," said Henry. "Shall we commune together in the park?"

She willingly accompanied him to the park, and they sank down on a green-painted seat, of which there were many dotted around.

"Marjorie," said Henry, wishing to forget his wife, "you're a wonderful girl!"

"Oh!" said Marjorie again.

"Yes," said Henry. "I wish I'd married you instead of my wife!"

So the imbecile was married! Good! All married men were the same!

"Does your wife love you?" she asked.

"Yes," answered Henry. "She dotes on me! And that's one of the points I don't like about her. Sometimes she loses her temper, but she's always been faithful to me. That's another thing I don't like about her!"

"One of those sort who never make love to another man?" asked Marjorie.

"Yes," breathed Henry, feeling uncomfortably that his wife wasn't such a bad sort after all and that he himself was a bit of a dirty dog.

"Ah!" said Marjorie, and slipped her hand in his.

And Henry began to forget his wife in real earnest. After they'd kissed a few times he said:

"But you're not married, are you?"

"Oh, yes," answered Marjorie, and showed him her ring, which he had not noticed before. "My husband's something like your wife, but he likes flirting."

"Oh, does he?" said Henry.

"Decidedly," answered Marjorie, and snuggled closer to him.

Henry looked up at last to see that the adjacent seat was occupied by an obviously sweetheating couple, for they were going through all the pretty things that Marjorie and Henry were going through, their heads close together and turned away from their neighbours.

"Look!" said Henry. "We're not the only lovers in this world!"

"No!" breathed Marjorie happily. "Obviously. Just see how happy they seem!"

"Gives me an idea for a story," said Henry, and took out his note-book. When he'd jotted the idea down:

"Almost as happy as us, eh, Marjorie?"

"Yes," said Marjorie. "I suppose you'll be able to meet me again some time?"

"Absolutely!" said Henry. "Any time! All the time!"

"Your wife won't mind?" she asked.

"She won't know," Henry felt a bit guilty as he said it. "She'll be pottering around the house, washing saucepans."

Marjorie laughed.

"How priceless!" she said.

"Not as priceless as you!" flattered Henry.

"Darling!" breathed Marjorie.

"Sweetheart!" exclaimed Henry. "My little herring bone!" But he could not help but feel that he was being a traitor to his wife. In fact, after a bit more kissing and cuddling, he began to feel disgusted with himself and Marjorie.

"Look here," he said at last, "this is not quite playing the game, is it? I mean, it's not quite the thing where my wife and your husband are concerned?"

She laughed softly.

"Don't be silly!" she chided. "I suppose they'd do the same if they got the chance."

"My wife wouldn't!" said Henry proudly.

"Poor thing!" said Marjorie. "She should!"

"Not at all," said Henry, withdrawing his hand from hers. "My wife's not like you!"

"Thank the Lord!" said Marjorie. "Now, let me hold your hand. You must be sensible."

Henry was sensible a little while longer. At last he said soulfully:

"This little affair gives me an idea for a story. You know, faithful wife waiting at home for her rake and drunkard of a husband."

"I hope you sell it," said Marjorie, as he jotted the idea down.

"It's wonderful!" said Henry, feeling once again that he should not be so faithless to his wife. He resolved, mentally, that he would never meet Marjorie again, and that he'd try and be kinder to his wife. There was no doubt about it, a wife like Mary was a fortunate possession and her faithfulness taught a man what beasts males could be. Henceforth, Henry resolved, he would love his wife as no wife had been loved before.

At last they rose to go.

"Let's take a short walk through the park," suggested Marjorie, and, thinking that it didn't matter if he did, seeing that he was finished with her after that day, Henry agreed.

They walked past the seat that held the couple they had noticed a short while before. Disturbed, the lovers on the seat looked up.

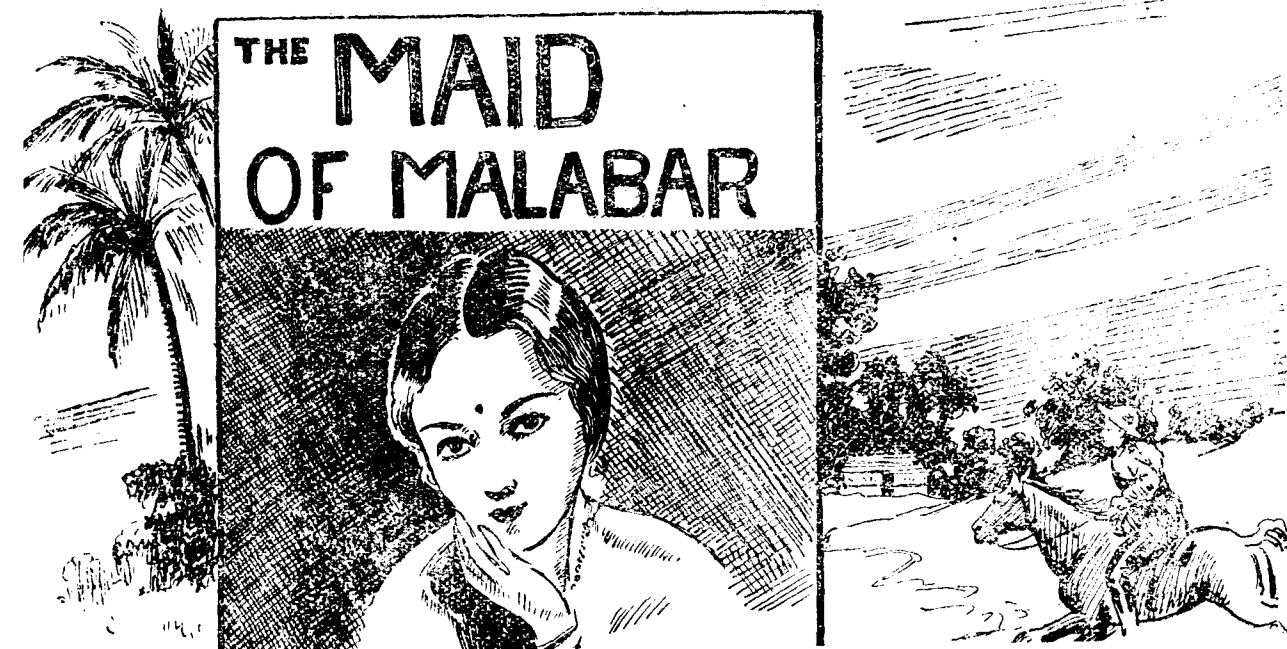
Henry and Marjorie walked on for a few yards, and then Henry laughed and took out his note-book.

"Gives me an idea for a story," he said.

"What does?" asked Marjorie.

"Those lovers we just passed," said Henry. "The woman was my wife!"

"Ha! I might have guessed," smiled Marjorie. "The man was my husband!"



BY R. FITZROY-BRONTÉ.

(Concluded)

The story so far:

Patric O'Neill, a planter in an out of the way part of Malabar, loves and is loved by a beautiful Malabar girl. Suddenly one day the girl disappears leaving no trace. O'Neill searches for her far and wide and at last is forced to give up the search in despair. The memory remains.

One day he has a visitor, Mulcahy. The two become friends and O'Neill confides his sorrow to Mulcahy. They go a-hunting and Mick pots at a panther. The wounded animal disappears. The two friends follow with difficulty through the undergrowth. Suddenly the ground beneath them gives way and they are hurled down through space.....

Now read on:

WHEN Mick awoke it seemed to him as if he had been asleep for years. But, in reality, he had only been unconscious for a few minutes owing to his fall. He tried hard to collect his senses but failed.

He had no count of time or anything else and was trying hard to recollect matters, when suddenly he heard a sound. He listened again, and this time it was more distinct. Though half-dazed, the instinct of self-preservation asserted itself immediately, and he drew his revolver. He was just about to fire, when a hand seemed to reach out through the impenetrable darkness and hold his. His nerves became taut.

"Great God!" he murmured hoarsely. "What was that? Am I losing my reason?" In his distress, he spoke aloud. A groan from Pat, however, reassured him, and suddenly his memory came back. "Is that you, Pat?" said he, in a loud voice. Pat heard him and tried to sit up, but fell back with a groan.

"Steady, old boy!" said Mick, as he groped about in the darkness for Pat. On finding him he put his whisky flask to his lips. This seemed to revive him somewhat, for he spoke to Mick.

"Have I been sleeping long?" said he. "What an awful dream I had! Don't quite remember it," he

.....the snake advanced
towards the prostrate
form.....



continued, "but I distinctly heard a sweet voice singing that song of yours. Then my little girl seemed to come to me from the far-away. She seemed to be in great distress and somehow the Baron Von Muller and a huge snake were mixed up in the dream."

Mick didn't take much notice of what his friend was saying, but handed him his whisky flask again, as he thought he was still silly from the effects of the fall. Pat took the proffered drink which revived him completely, and almost immediately his usually keen senses became alert.

"Have you any idea as to where we are?" said he.

"Not the remotest," replied Mick. "All I remember is that we were walking in the direction of the hissing sound, when the earth seemed to open up and swallow us. I'm feeling rather sore, old man," he added.

"So am I," replied Pat, "but the hole into which we have fallen cannot be very deep or we would have fared much worse. Anyhow, we'd better get out of this quickly, or that panther will probably get one of us before long."

With that he struck a match to investigate their surroundings. As the light flickered he discovered a flight of steps ahead of him. "I'm afraid that fall has knocked me silly, Mick," said he.

"Why? What makes you think so?" queried his friend sympathetically.

"Looks uncommonly like a flight of steps ahead of us," he replied. "But surely I must be dreaming."

With that he lit another match. And there, right enough, was the flight of stone steps. They both seemed mystified.

"Beastly mysterious!" whispered Mick. "I wonder where the devil we've landed?"

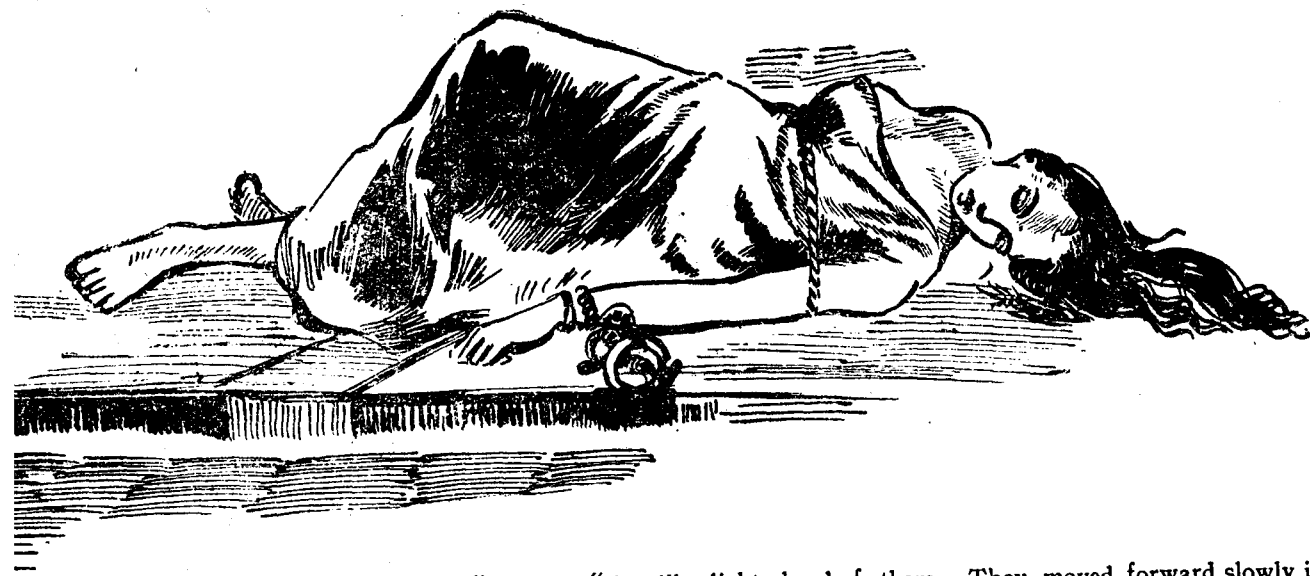
"Look's like a sort of cave to me," said Pat. "Anyhow, there must be a way out." And with that he lighted another match and cautiously descended the steps, his friend following him.

They lit matches by turns and eventually reached the bottom of the steps. Here the cave seemed to branch off.

Pat was just about to take the turning to the left, when he felt a hand pull him back. He stopped and struck another match. As it flared, he realised that his pal's action had saved his life, for he found himself standing on the brink of a deep well.

"My god!" he exclaimed, as he drew back, almost overcome with horror, as he thought of the fate which would have been his, if he had taken another step. As it was, the dark waters seemed to hypnotise him, for he couldn't move, but stood silently gazing into their awful depths. Then he drew back quickly, saying, "That was a near thing for me! You have saved my life, old pal, and I won't forget it. If you hadn't held my hand a minute back I would have toppled over."

Pat was just about to reply that he had not even touched his friend, when out of the impenetrable darkness there came a soft hissing sound. Both friends stood still, their nerves tense. Mick was the first to speak.



"If we don't find a way out quick," said he, "it will be a toss-up between the panther and the well. Of course, we've got our revolvers, but we won't stand much of a chance in the present circumstances against a wounded panther. This is probably the cave where the family resides."

"So all said and done, Pat, we'd better say our prayers, because one way or the other we'll soon be in Eternity."

"Anyhow," replied Pat, "I'll take this opportunity of saying 'Good-bye' to you, old pal."

Both friends knew that they were trying to find humour in a situation which had completely overawed them. But it was in keeping with the traditions of the brave Irish race to which they belonged, to face death with a smile. They both shook hands in the darkness and moved forward to face the unknown.

Death was awaiting them in a myriad forms. The cold damp walls were covered with huge hairy spiders whose sting meant instantaneous death. But death from these, and the snakes and scorpions which moved about silently in the darkness, was preferable to the prospect of dying from suffocation which would be their fate if they didn't soon find a way out.

Just then something rustled past them and their muscles became taut. "Good God!" cried Pat. "Did you see that?"

"See what?" asked his friend.

"The white figure with the long flowing hair," replied Pat.

"I saw nothing, old man," said Mick sympathetically. "I only heard a rustling sound. It must have been a bat or some other hideous, noisome thing, which hides in this damp slimy place."

"Not at all!" said Pat. "It seemed to disappear towards my right."

They immediately moved in the direction indicated. They hadn't gone far when they noticed a faint streak of

light ahead of them. They moved forward slowly into the mysterious unknown. As they reached the spot where the light came from, they heard the low hissing sound again. Both men stood stock-still and drew their revolvers.

They were just going to fire, when the sound of a strange, weird music was borne to them out of the dark. They listened intently. The music stopped as suddenly as it commenced.

Pat was about to speak when they heard the savage hissing sound again. And, this time, it seemed to be directly in front of them. Both men jumped back, and, as they did so, Pat's shoulder struck the wall of the cave. This caused a small stone to fall away from the wall, and form a tiny aperture. Through the opening thus made, there came a distinct gleam of light. Pat leaned forward, but could make out nothing. After a few minutes, however, his eyes grew accustomed to the peculiar light, and he began to discern objects moving about. But it was not until he had, after much difficulty, succeeded in removing another small stone, that the whole ghastly scene met his gaze.

What he saw turned him sick with mingled horror and fear. He was too stupefied to move. There, on a plank lay his long-lost love dressed in white robes, with her long dark tresses straggling on the floor. Nearby, sat a snake-charmer holding a huge cobra in his hands. As Pat looked, a tall man, whom he immediately recognised as the Baron Von Muller, crossed over to the bier and addressed the supine figure lying there. The expression on his face was diabolical.

"I speak to you in English," said he, "firstly because you are not worthy to be addressed in my native tongue, although you understand the same, because you ran away from the German missionaries at Sambalpur. And, secondly, that the last words you hear on this earth may be in the filthy English language—the language spoken by your lover, Patrick O'Neill, the pauper planter. The man whom you love so well that you have scorned my advances for four long years. I might have had my heart's desire, but that wouldn't have gratified my great love for you. I wanted to win

your heart but you have spurned my humble advances—you have spurned the wealth and happiness which I was willing to lay at your feet. And all for the sake of a miserable dog of a planter. You thought it was out of revenge, owing to a quarrel which this miserable wretch had with me on one occasion that I had you kidnapped. No! I loved you from the moment that I set eyes on you, and was determined to make you mine. I had one of my numerous spies watching your movements, and when he told me that O'Neill had made arrangements to marry you, I immediately had you kidnapped.

Since then I have treated you as a queen, with the hope of winning your heart; but you have scorned me. As I have already told you, you have been brought here as a last resort to break your proud Indian spirit. Oh, woman! For the last time do I lay my heart at your feet—Accept it or die!”

“Never!” she cried, and swooned away.

The Baron then made a sign to the snake-charmer, who immediately released the snake, and began his weird music. The snake fascinated by the music swayed its lithe body to and fro, striking viciously at the air, as it advanced towards the supine form.

All this time Pat seemed paralysed, but suddenly he realised the terrible death the Baron intended meting out to his beloved.

With that, he placed his revolver at the mouth of the small opening in the rock, and fired at the snake. As he did so, the wall against which he and Mick had been leaning seemed to crumble and fall away and they both fell headlong into the cave.

They arose dazed and badly bruised, to find that the Baron, the snake-charmer and the snake had disappeared.

Pat immediately placed his whisky flask to his beloved's lips, and after a short while she regained consciousness. Pat and his sweetheart were too overcome for words. They just embraced each other and their lips met, and that one long passionate kiss blotted out their past unhappiness for ever.

Mick who in the meantime had pursued the Baron and his evil companion, just then returned, and on hearing his foot-steps Pat turned around and cried, “Which way did they go?—we must find them!”

“No need to trouble, old man,” said Mick.

“What do you mean?” said Pat.

“Vengeance is mine!” said the Lord,” replied his friend—And, with that, he conducted Pat to the well and showed him the dead bodies of the Baron and the snake-charmer.

“When you fired,” said he, they made for that old door which fell through, and ran down this way. As regards the snake, I don't know where it is. You must have missed your aim, owing to the bad light and probably the reptile has hidden itself amongst some rocks nearby.”

Then Pat spoke. “My god!” said he. “And, to think, that if you hadn't held my hand I might have been in that well myself!”

“Hold your hand?” queried Mick, “what do you mean?” said he in astonishment.

“Didn't you hold my hand and pull me back when I took that turning?” said Pat.

“Not at all!” replied the other. “If you hadn't stopped and struck a match, we both would have been where those two devils are.”

“Beats me!” said Pat. “Can you make anything of it, little girl?” said he, addressing his sweetheart.

“Well,” she said, with a wan smile, “I swooned several times through fear, and the Baron always brought me around again with a powerful Indian stimulant, as he was determined that I should be fully conscious to the horror of the death he had planned for me. On one occasion when I swooned, I distinctly saw somebody trying to shoot you, and in my dream I pulled you back. I also seemed to leave this place, in an unconscious state, and bring you here.”

The two friends looked at each other, but neither spoke.

“They do say,” added the girl simply, “that when people love each other deeply, their souls are united, even if they are apart in person.” Pat silently raised her sweet lips to his! It was too sacred for words, this great love of theirs, and only comprehensible to the great God above!

Mick found the trap-door which led to the secret caves he had heard so much about, but never believed in till now. And silently the three of them stepped out into God's great star-dusted world.

The moon shone softly down upon them and with her kindly light guided them back to the place where they had left the motor car.

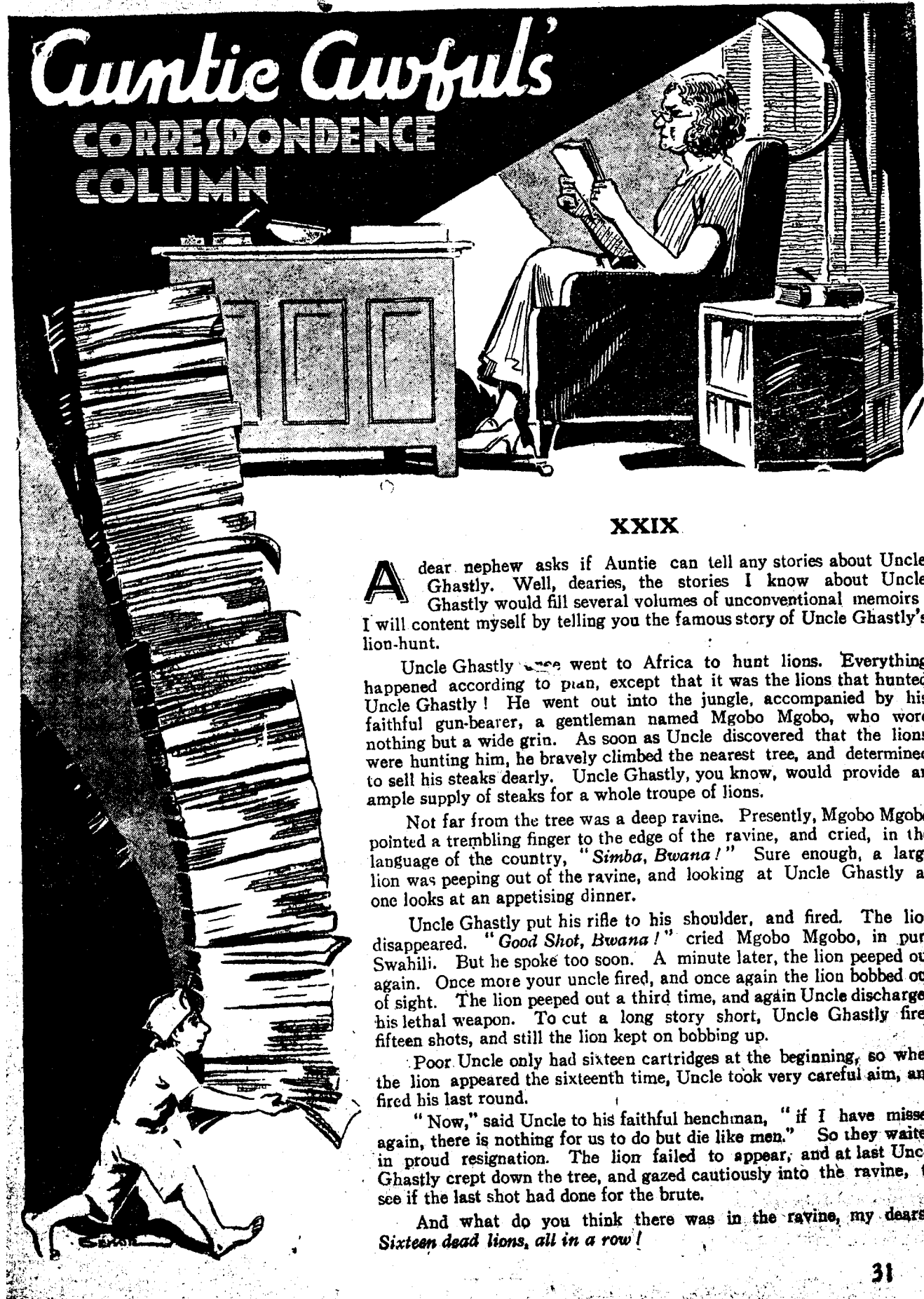
The following day Pat drove his little sweetheart in the motor car to Sambalpur, and there the missionary married them. Immediately the ceremony was finished, they returned to the Plantation at Bagedhi, and as they drove up to their future home, the soft shadows of night were falling. The stars shone down upon them, and through the magical Indian night, the soft strains of a man's beautiful tenor voice floated out to them. The song he sang was ‘The Maid of Malabar’. And as the last words:

“In my heart you'll live for ever,
Little Maid of Malabar,”

rang out clear and sweet on the mystic stillness of the tropical night, Pat tenderly kissed his beautiful little Indian wife, and said, “Amen!”

Then these two entered their new home. A new and beautiful home where East and West had met.

Auntie Awful's CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN



XXIX

A dear nephew asks if Auntie can tell any stories about Uncle Ghastly. Well, dearies, the stories I know about Uncle Ghastly would fill several volumes of unconventional memoirs: I will content myself by telling you the famous story of Uncle Ghastly's lion-hunt.

Uncle Ghastly once went to Africa to hunt lions. Everything happened according to plan, except that it was the lions that hunted Uncle Ghastly! He went out into the jungle, accompanied by his faithful gun-bearer, a gentleman named Mgobo Mgobo, who wore nothing but a wide grin. As soon as Uncle discovered that the lions were hunting him, he bravely climbed the nearest tree, and determined to sell his steaks dearly. Uncle Ghastly, you know, would provide an ample supply of steaks for a whole troupe of lions.

Not far from the tree was a deep ravine. Presently, Mgobo Mgobo pointed a trembling finger to the edge of the ravine, and cried, in the language of the country, “*Simba, Bwana!*” Sure enough, a large lion was peeping out of the ravine, and looking at Uncle Ghastly as one looks at an appetising dinner.

Uncle Ghastly put his rifle to his shoulder, and fired. The lion disappeared. “*Good Shot, Bwana!*” cried Mgobo Mgobo, in pure Swahili. But he spoke too soon. A minute later, the lion peeped out again. Once more your uncle fired, and once again the lion bobbed out of sight. The lion peeped out a third time, and again Uncle discharged his lethal weapon. To cut a long story short, Uncle Ghastly fired fifteen shots, and still the lion kept on bobbing up.

Poor Uncle only had sixteen cartridges at the beginning, so when the lion appeared the sixteenth time, Uncle took very careful aim, and fired his last round.

“Now,” said Uncle to his faithful henchman, “if I have missed again, there is nothing for us to do but die like men.” So they waited in proud resignation. The lion failed to appear, and at last Uncle Ghastly crept down the tree, and gazed cautiously into the ravine, to see if the last shot had done for the brute.

And what do you think there was in the ravine, my dears? Sixteen dead lions, all in a row!

Well, chickabiddies, what do you think of that as the super-lie of all lion stories?

Reader (Orathanad). "In accounts of the meetings of local bodies, it is often reported that there are cries of 'Divide! Divide!' What is it they divide?" Well, dear boy, some people say that they divide into vulgar fractions; others allege that they divide the loaves and fishes.

Critic (Srimushnam). "Auntie's replies are sometimes such clever exposures of human folly, that I wonder if her column is not written by the Devil." No, dear sir, your friend is not a contributor to the magazine, but if you can persuade him to send along a manuscript, perhaps the dear editor would consider it.

Practical (Tiruvarur). "Most of our troubles arise because we trust in others. If you want a thing done well, do it yourself." Auntie cannot agree, dear sir. For instance, have you ever tried to give yourself a hair-cut?

Boy Scout (Aruppukottai). "Please tell me how to obtain a uniform." If you do not care to obtain one through the usual channels, my dear, go to a book-seller, and purchase a publication which bears the announcement, 'Uniform with this Volume'.

Householder (Palamcottah). "My neighbour has annoyed me by erecting an unnecessarily high fence between our properties. How may I annoy him in return?" Little birds in their nests should agree; but if you must, try the effect of taking your evening stroll on a pair of stilts.

Taxpayer (Srivaiikuntam). "Do you think that the Finance Member will be able to keep the wolf from the door this year?" Yes, dear sir; his method is infallible. To keep the wolf from his door, all he has to do is to set it at ours.

Adornment (Ootacamund). "I went to the sale, and got a lovely sari for a ridiculous figure." It is nice to hear that you obtained such a pretty garment, my dear. For the ridiculous figure, Auntie advises a course of curve-reducing exercises.

League of Nations (Thuraiur). "There should be a law to compel all labourers to have one day's rest every week." Auntie thinks that employers will welcome the idea, my boy. It is such an improvement on the present system, whereby labourers enjoy seven days' rest every week.

Padre (Salem). "Some of my flock have the quaintest ideas. One man brought his twins to be baptised, and said he wanted them to have English names. When I asked what names, he said 'Steak and Kidney'. Of course, I scolded him." But the poor fellow meant well, reverend sir. He was only trying to say 'Kate and Sidney'.

Teacher (Bangalore). "I was trying to teach the boy subtraction. I said, 'Supposing you had three annas in your pocket, and I took one away, how many would be left?' But the boy insisted on saying he would have no annas left. Had I overlooked anything in my method?" Yes, dear girl; you have overlooked that the boy had a hole in his pocket.

Green Bench (Pernambet). "What are the aims, functions, and duties of an Assembly candidate?" It falls into three parts, dear sir: he is required to stand, he hopes to sit, and he may have to lie.

Reserved (Tenkasi). "Some low people entered my railway-compartment, so with great dignity I got up and sought another carriage. One of the impudent fellows looked out of the window and cried that I had left something behind. I knew this was incorrect, as I had no loose luggage with me." Nevertheless, Auntie thinks you may have left a bad impression behind.

Puzzled (Tirumangalam). "Please explain the difference between an Anarchist and a Communist." An Anarchist, dear boy, believes that every man should do as he likes, and if he does not, he should be made to. While a Communist is:

... one who has yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings.
In proof of his doctrine he'll gladly agree
To fork out his anna, and take your rupee.

Incredulous (Hyderabad). "Is it really true that a certain Indian Prince is a very poor man?" Auntie cannot say, dear sir, but she understands that he was born without a pice in his pocket.

Agent (Anthiyur). "The manager refused to prolong the conversation. He said he suffered serious losses by wasting his time on people who were only touting for insurance-policies." That was your chance, dear boy. Why didn't you offer to write him a policy, insuring him against the loss of time occasioned by interviewing insurance-agents?

Kabuki (Madras). "I have more football and athletic trophies than any other man in the city." Auntie is pleased to hear that the pawnbroking-business is still flourishing, dear boy.

Fancier (Calcutta). "A European here has asked me to get him a carpenter's dog. I promised to obtain one, but actually I am in a quandary. What kind of dog is a carpenter's dog?" It is one that is used to an irascible master, dear boy. Every time you kick it, it makes a bolt for the door.

Lawyer (Madras). "Should I consent to defend a pickpocket who has no cash to pay my fees?" Certainly, learned sir. Ask for bail, and then turn your client loose among the crowd in the compound.

Singleton (Cawnpore). "Is it true that a man can live as cheaply after marriage as before?" No, dear boy; he only feels cheaper.

Husband (Kilpauk). "My wife was sitting in my car on the Marina the other evening, and the hat of a passer-by flew off and struck her eye. Can I sue for damages?" Be thankful that you got off so lightly, dear sir. Many a husband has stood with his wife outside a shop window, and a hat has struck her eye, and it has cost him fifty rupees.

Business (Tiruppur). "I think the lowest trick you can play is to swindle people who trust you." Yes, dear sir; but if they don't trust you, you can't swindle them.

Local Option (Naduvalur). "It is suggested that if one district went dry, the residents would go to adjoining districts for their liquor; but even so, would not the community gain something?" Yes, my dear; exercise.

From up-Country (Madras). "Why is it that there are always gangs of men digging in the streets? Are they looking for anything?" Yes, dear boy; I will let you into the secret. They are really C. I. D. men, and they are leaving no stone unturned in their search for stolen property.

THE BABY SHOW

By Sheikh Iftekhhar Rasool

IN the bath-room, Mr. Somesh was striving with perspiring, slippery fingers to button his collar. He was cursing steadily, and wondering how it would be if he ran away from his wife.

In the room beyond, her right foot swathed in bandages, Mrs. Somesh was lying in bed.

"I'd think you were ashamed!" she wailed. "Here I am in bed with a sprained ankle, and just because I ask you to take Mohan to the Baby Show you act like a crazy man!"

"If this infernal heat keeps on I will certainly go crazy," Mr. Somesh informed her, surveying the now buttoned collar with smirking triumph. "What do I want to go switching around with a bunch of women at a baby show for? I want to go to the club and cool off!"

"Well, if Mohan wins the prize," said Mrs. Somesh, "we shall have enough money to go to a nice, cool place."

Mr. Somesh cast his eyes ceiling-ward and muttered something unintelligible.

At this juncture, the maid, from across the room, wheeled in little Mohan.



They merely stared at him.....

He was seated in the midst of a great sunburst effect of satin ribbon, the colour of deep rich rose where it connected the body of the almost nude infant, but fading away to a delicate cream as it branched outward. Mohan was a fat baby, very brown from playing practically naked in the sun, and in the centre of all this delicate satin frippery, he resembled nothing so much as a pale chocolate eclair.

Gaping, Mr. Somesh contemplated the spectacle.

"Just what," he finally managed to articulate, "is all this supposed to represent? The *Aurora Borealis*?"

"Listen to what funny daddy says!" Mrs. Somesh cooed, lifting the child from the decorated buggy.

Mrs. Somesh settled her son back in the buggy, fluffing up the ribbons around him, giving one final twist to the spit curl she had formed on his indifferent forehead.

"Now," Mrs. Somesh said to her husband, "you don't have to do a single thing but wheel Mohan past the judges' stand at Manohar Bagh. You just line up with the rest, and it'll be over in a minute."

Wheeling Mohan through the grassy plots, ignoring the stares of passers-by, Mr. Somesh reflected upon the possibility of his son's winning the first prize.

When, sweating and panting, Mr. Somesh finally arrived at Manohar Bagh, this hope was the only thing that made him stand the ordeal.

Never in his life, as he later expressed, had Mr. Somesh seen so many women. And each woman was measuring the other woman's offspring with merciless calculation and jealousy, only thinly veiled with smiles and exclamations of "Oh, doesn't it look cute!" and "I'm sure your baby will win the first prize."

But to Mr. Somesh they made no concessions at all. They merely stared at him and at Mohan as though both belonged to some strange branch of the animal kingdom.

Mr. Somesh grew hotter. By the time the parade before the judges' stand started, he thought—nay, he hoped—that he would melt away altogether.

It was over! Mr. Somesh stood on the side-walk with an envelope marked 'First Prize' in his hand. Through its thin fold, his perspiring fingers could feel a slip of paper, roughened in one place as with the perforations of a check-writer.

Dazedly, the envelope clutched tightly in his hand, Mr. Somesh found himself saying to a reporter of a local newspaper, "Call on my wife in the morning. She'll tell you everything you want to know. Sure, we got pictures of him. Plenty."

With that he detached himself from the reporter, making a lane for himself and his conquering son between the hordes of mothers. The women watched him go, their eyes shooting such baffled, venomous looks at him that, at any other time, Mr. Somesh would have turned into the nearest alley and slunk home like a whipped cur.

But Mr. Somesh, although present in the flesh and perspiring copiously, was cool in the spirit. He was thinking of a holiday with his wife and Mohan which seemed to be full of gaiety and merry-making.

"Well," demanded Mrs. Somesh as he wheeled Mohan into her presence, "what happened?"

Mr. Somesh grinned. Perspiration was standing out in great blobs on his forehead; his clothes were soaked through. But in his hand was an envelope marked 'First Prize' through which a place roughened as with the perforation of a check-writer could be felt. Mr. Somesh tossed it over to his wife.

"I didn't open it. Thought I'd let you have the fun," said Mr. Somesh magnanimously. "But don't forget, Mohan looks like me!"

With trembling fingers Mrs. Somesh tore open the envelope. Mr. Somesh looked over her shoulder. Under the engraving of a letterhead, written in neat type, were the words: 'Deliver to bearer, on demand, three tons of best, Grade A hard coal!'

USEFUL THINGS

A maiden's lips were made to kiss;
A donkey made to bray;
Fat men were made their trains to miss;
Editors to say "Nay".

A baby's made to worry Pa,
While Mum sits reading news.
There's something else—a motor-car,
For some to hide their shoes!

The moon was made for lovers' dreams,
The sun was made to shine;

That we may have some good ice-creams,
At eight annas for nine!

The cinema was really made
For spooning in the dark;
The lights to show a kiss delayed
When Tom can't see his mark.

My friends are made to make me pay
Half-anna for each letter.
To let the postman take away
The lot, I think is better.

—R. W. Davey.

"The Ghost from Chicago"



By
'PADMANABHA'

IT was two o'clock in the morning. I cast a lingering glance at the chapter entitled 'The Symptoms of Dyspepsia', closed the ponderous *Symptoms of Diseases* with a resounding bang, and finally opened my mouth in a huge yawn. Medicine can be a remarkably dull subject at times, and I was feeling very sleepy. I rose, and still yawning, stretched forth a hand to switch off the light, when—

"Rather a hot place this, eh, Mister?"

The words were uttered in a solemn, yet conversational tone, and seemed to proceed from a corner of the room.

I turned round sharply, but there was no one there. I stared hard at the ill-lit corner—and then very nearly fainted!

At a height well above six feet from the floor, something luminous was floating in the air like a toy-balloon. Gradually it began to assume shape and disclosed itself as a detached human face, with a pair of weird-looking eyes, gazing steadily at me with a strange unearthly expression. Only a face, mark you: it had no body!

I sank back into the chair, and stared at the apparition with terrified eyes. To say that I was startled would be putting it very mildly.

"Hold fast, there's a good fellow," I said to myself by way of auto-suggestion; "just remember that you are not a temperamental little Miss of the Victorian era, but a red-blooded, lion-hearted medical student, of whom great things are expected in the near future. This particular gentleman is probably one of your old acquaintances from the dissecting table. So, courage!"

After which mild self-reprimand, which did not make me feel any the better, I turned towards the face again, half-expecting to see it vanish into thin air. But nothing of the sort happened. On the other hand it looked more solid than ever.

It was a singularly swarthy and muscular face and bore the marks of much wear and tear. It seemed to

belong to a middle-aged individual, and the colour of its skin resembled that of an inhabitant of the New World. It had a large mouth, with thick black lips, while two rows of irregular teeth (about twenty-five per cent of the usual quota were missing), decorated its interior. A long scar ran up the left cheek ending near the eye, which gave the face a curious half-villainous, half-droll expression. The nose was beaten flat, and the ears were large and thick like those of a professional pugilist. The strong, aggressive, projecting jaw-bone, served to lend the face an extremely pugnacious and bull-dog-like expression. Add to this a mop

of flaming red hair, a clean-shaven chin, and a pair of keen restless eerie-looking eyes, and you have the description of the ghost in a nut-shell.

"I-I-I b-b-b-beg y-y-your p-p-pardon?" I enquired politely, while every hair in my head bristled uncomfortably like the quills of a porcupine, and my tongue felt exactly like a piece of leather.

"I was only observing, Mister, that this Madras of yours is one of the hottest places in the universe," returned the apparition in a highly disparaging tone. "In fact, its temperature is just two degrees higher than my present place of residence."

There was a pause which was utilised on my part to digest the above piece of information. Presently the face spoke again.

"Would you like to listen to a wee little yarn, Mister?"

"A yarn?" I asked uncomprehendingly.

"Yeah! A roaring little yarn, that will send cold shivers down your spine. A thundering little yarn that will make you feel like a thawing ice-berg—a yarn with plenty of blood, and murder, and beer, and whisky, and cops, and machine-guns and—things like that."

The preface to the 'yarn' was not very encouraging.

"Say, listen!" the ghost proceeded by way of explanation. "It was only three weeks ago, that I became an employé of one of the most exacting task-masters in the universe. Why, I know of at least a hundred chaps, who have been working day and night for the last ten years in the 'Boiling Cauldron of an Oil Department', without taking a single moment's rest! And what's their weekly wages, do you think? Why, just a pint of molten brass and a large chunk of sulphur—both to be consumed on the spot! Both are home-made food-stuffs, of course, but somehow these chaps did not look very happy about it."

"But to speak of myself. On my very first day there, the Boss summoned me to his office to allot me my task. He looked me up and down fiercely and then spoke. 'Hearken to our words, thou miserable worm!' he shouted in a voice of thunder, speaking in an outlandish jargon—'Hearken and tremble! Thou hast been a great sinner in thy past existence and thou hast committed murders without number. Listen now to thy dire and condign punishment. In the name of our august Lord and Master, the Almighty Jupiter and his gracious spouse Queen Juno, we do hereby pass sentence upon thee. For twenty-three out of every twenty-four hours thou shalt stay in this place working on a most congenial task. All that thou hast to do—"

"He smiled in a sinister manner and rising slowly, came close to me and whispered something in my ear."

"I was thunder-struck! It was horrible—too horrible for words! Flesh and blood could not bear such an ordeal. I threw myself at the feet of the Boss and prayed for a change in the sentence. 'Have mercy, in Heaven's name!' I cried in agony. 'Condemn me to any other task, but that. Let me be torn to pieces or be flayed alive, but don't employ me in that job!'"

"Silence, thou cur!" the boss cried, "and as for the remaining one hour," the boss continued after he had cooled down a bit, "thou wilt spend it in thy old planet, but only on one condition,—that thou wilt relate episodes out of thine iniquitous life to at least one human being, every night."

"And that's why I am here, Mister, and you might as well listen to my yarn."

"I tried to stand, but my limbs seemed bereft of all movement. There was nothing for it but to listen."

"You are right," I said humbly, "I think you might as well begin your 'yarn'—but won't you first introduce yourself?"

"Sure!" pat came the reply. "Meet the celebrated Horatius Lead-Discharger, Esq., late of Chicago, and called 'Al-Hort' for short, Gun-man, gangster, boot-legger, kidnapper, and now a ghost."

"Delighted to make your acquaintance, Mr.—er—Discharger," I said haltingly.

"That's right," said the ghost genially, "and now let me give you some bits of my autobiography."

"I had a jolly time of it in good old Chicago," the ghost continued wistfully. "All play, you understand and no work. A time there was, when I was simply rolling in dollars. What with drinking gallons of contraband liquor, and bumping off dozens of guys daily, (including a few cops) I led a pretty hectic life during my earthly existence."

"Whenever the funds ran low, I would sally out with my gang and stage a few hold-ups. When a mere

hundred dollars or so were needed, we usually directed our attention to a prosperous tradesman. If a larger sum was required, we raided a bank. When our wants ran into five or six figures (as it usually did), then of course we had no choice but to kidnap babies of millionaires."

"Say, Mister, you look shocked. But let me tell you there is nothing wrong in the business. What's the earthly use of a kid, if he is not to be kidnapped every now and then? I tell you, Mister, the sole function of babies in the United States is to keep us gangsters busy."

"You have killed many men in your time, haven't you, Mr. Discharger?" I asked.

"I guess I have," the ghost replied and I thought there was a touch of sadness in its tone.

"Would you put the total at fifty?" I enquired with interest.

To my intense surprise, the ghost burst into a loud fit of derisive laughter. At the mention of its exploits, the sadness had vanished as if by magic.

"Fifty, Mister? Ha! Ha! Ha! Did you say fifty? You serious? Why, we have killed twice that number in one mix-up!"

"You don't say?" I exclaimed in a startled tone.

"Gee! There is nothing surprising in it, Mister. When your boys have all the guns, and the other guys have no shooters you give it 'em."

"How did you die?" I asked.

"Ah, that's a sad story," the ghost continued mournfully. "It happened while I was in the boot-legging trade. A rival gang shot one of my boys, and something had to be done about it. So, fifteen of us rounded 'em up. Machine guns. Rap!—Rap!—Rap!—But before we could cheese it, a guy got me."

"How touching!" I said sympathetically.

At this point, I was suddenly reminded of something. I had wanted to ask that question all along, but somehow it had eluded me.

"And what exactly is your twenty-three-hour-a-day job?" I asked. "The job for which you expressed such an intense abhorrence only an hour ago?"

"Oh, it's horrible, Mister—," the ghost replied with a shudder. "I have gotta roll barrels of liquor to the river and then to dump them into the water, as if they was ditch-water. Makes me weep, it does, and me not getting a drop of it!"

The ghost heaved a profound sigh.

I heaved a sigh too—but it was one of immense relief—and wiped the clammy perspiration (which had no reason to be there) from my feverish brow.

When I looked at the apparition again, it was growing dimmer, and more and more indistinct. In fact, a section of the face, including the ears had already disappeared. I hastened to ask a last question.

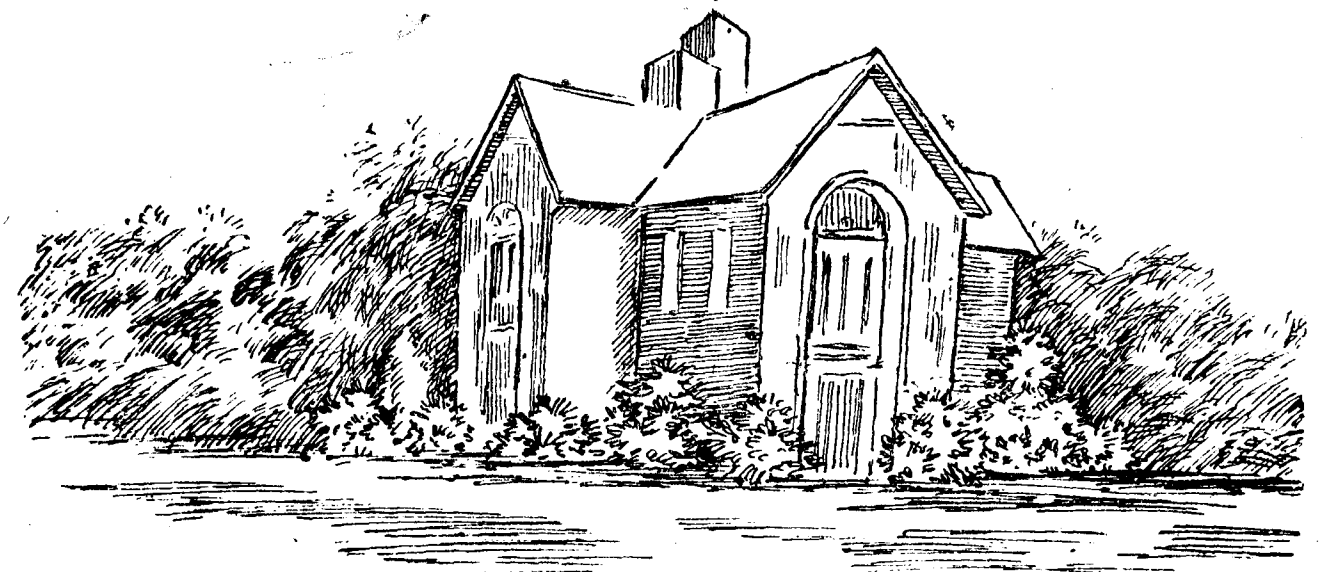
"What do you drink in Hell, then?" I asked quickly.

"Water—Hell! Oh boy—" groaned the ghost and vanished.

I shifted my gaze towards the *Symptoms* and uttered a tremendous oath of surprise. The book that I distinctly remembered having closed, had now by a strange inexplicable process, opened of itself, and from the top of an open page, the title of a chapter stared me in the face.

"The Symptoms of Lunacy," it read.

(I am glad to say the author is now much better—Ed.)



"NO sir, you can rest assured that the house is not haunted. Surely, sir, you would not have me believe that such a practical twentieth-century man as yourself believes in the supernatural?"

"No, I do not believe in ghosts, spooks or superstitious phenomena, but my old friend, Horace Bland, maintains that the house is haunted."

"But, sir," expostulated the house-agent, "Mr. Bland is obviously labouring under some mental delusion. Possibly your friend, begging your pardon, had had one over the eight, and the visions were merely figments of his imagination. Well, sir—do you wish to take the house or not?"

The house-agent ended on a note of finality, almost as if he did not care whether the house was tenanted or not. With a choice cheroot between his lips, he marvelously and expertly expectorated through the second and third bars of the fire-grate.

I wanted a place in Southsea to spend the twelve months' privilege leave granted by a benign Government.

There I cannoned into an old friend of mine, a canon. Now in military parlance, the bigger the cannon, the greater the bore. Old Bland was a real bore, and it was he who related the story of the haunted house. But Mr. Bland was a noted exaggerator and a parson to boot. Having obtained from him the address of the house-agent, I had arranged an interview with this bombastic person.

The Haunted House

By 'CHAPPIE'

Should I take the house or not? The agent seemed reluctant to discuss the question any further. I made up my mind. "I will take the house for one month," I informed the agent.

"Very good sir, here are the keys. The rent will be a pound a week to be paid in advance." He held out a greasy paw, and after some hesitation I handed him a cheque for the required sum. I took the keys and muttered a good-bye to the house-agent.

Two hours later I had transferred my few boxes and household gods to my new home. Oil lamps were the only means of illumination. As I lighted one of them, I could hear the subdued beating of the

surf on the beach. I looked out of the window and surveyed a morose-looking sky, laden with madly-racing clouds.

I shivered apprehensively and turned my attention to an examination of my temporary abode. The furniture was protected from cobwebs and the ravishes of Father Time by white covers. A tall grandfather clock in a corner was draped in a habit reminiscent of the cowl and gown of a monk. The machinery inside wheezed out the long strokes of ten o'clock.

I hastily removed all the dust-covers, and the room then presented a more human appearance. I smiled reflectively as I pictured Old Bland's face. The sheets must have frightened him. It would take more than that to frighten me, I reflected. I recalled the many

occasions on which I had slept out in the open in India. The star-spangled sky; the monotonous chirping and buzzing of countless insects; the tropic atmosphere—had never disturbed my rest. Would then an ordinary drab bungalow on the beach get on my nerves?

When eleven struck, I knocked out my pipe and prepared for bed. The bed was a massive oaken structure, more suited to the housing of six sleepers than one. I dowsed the lamp and crept between the chilly sheets.

I must have dozed for less than an hour when pandemonium broke loose. One moment I was reclining gracefully in bed; the next moment not so gracefully on the floor!

The four poles of the bed clattered around and on top of me. The head of the bed caught me a terrific smack on the shoulder, and I thought that my neck had been dislocated. I tried madly to extricate myself from

the wreckage, but the heavy counterpane nearly suffocated me. My mind immediately flew to spectral visitants. At last I managed to get clear of the wreckage, and after skinning my shins on a chair and poking my eye into a mantlesheff, I lighted the lamp. The light cast a fitful gleam over the scene. No sign of ghosts!

I examined the bed and found, much to my disgust, that the disaster was due to some fool removing or failing to replace the screws holding the bed-posts together. Turning and tossing in the bed had gradually worked the poles loose from their joints and down I had fallen!

I decided to sleep on the floor for the remainder of the night. Again extinguishing the light I settled down. I dozed. Some time elapsed and I again opened my eyes. I was petrified with fear to see two gleaming balls of fire staring me full in the face! I could not move—I could not even articulate. I was powerless. The glittering eyes approached nearer and nearer. With a super-human effort I kicked at the thing in front of me. It vanished.

Scrambling to my feet, I stood on something sharp that cut into my foot like a knife. I howled with mingled rage and fear. I again lighted the lamp. A big black tom-cat crouched with arched back in a corner and spat at me. I examined my foot and found one of the bed-screws embedded in the flesh at least one quarter of an inch. Opening the window, I chased the feline intruder outside.

Suddenly a door slammed behind me like the crack of a howitzer shell. I nearly jumped out of my skin. Then the open window dropped with a reverberating crash! I was hotter now than I had ever been in India. By the light of the flickering oil-lamp I took stock of my surroundings. Nothing had happened that could be put down to the supernatural. Just nerves and the human element.

(Continued on page 40)



.....managed to get clear of the wreckage

TROUBLE on trouble, life in the City was becoming more or less a tragic stretch. Practice was dull,—had been dull for quite a long time. A doctor's life might be all roses and no thorns for the select few who gather in their thousands. But then it is the same with all other vocations, too. To the ordinary man that I was, the doctor's job wasn't much of a gold mine. Of course, when first I set up practice there were a few idly tolerant visitors—I am loath to call them patients—who enlivened my boredom with their never-ending narrations of imaginary afflictions, took what medicines I gave them for the day, and never turned up again at my dispensary. I don't know if all of them died—for all the benefit their patronage brought me. The blighters never even cared to pay for the single dose of medicine they troubled me for. A month of such practice fairly put the lid on my bubbling enthusiasm, and the next month saw me as close-fisted as Mr. Barkis. I suppose that fairly put the lid on them too—on the patients I mean—for, nobody ever bothered to trouble me again for another free dose of medicine. During the second month nobody stepped into my dispensary or shop or whatever else you would like to call it. I myself call it a rotten hole. We will leave it at that.

Under the circumstances, I got disgusted with the whole show. The doctor's diploma was all right but not for the likes of me. Evidently it wanted some amount of luck also to make a good practitioner. You can be sure, I had none of it; so within three months of setting-up in business I found myself seriously cogitating as to whether it wouldn't be wiser to close the show and go in as an extra-qualified compounder to the chemist next door, who had already made a neat pile and was just then making another by selling half-baked powdered cow-dung at Rs. 2-8-0 the bottle to the gullible. The powdered cow-dung was a specific. Oh yes! It was! It biffed your rheumatism right on the nose, jammed your blasted liver back again into working order and cured your wife's head-ache at one full swoop, and if you were not at all content with its comprehensive healing power, the powder was even prepared to knock out the rabies out of your pet poodle and switch it on to your Pomeranian. It was a grand idea and the chemist thrived on it. After all, cow-dung is cheap, you know! Our friend sold it under the somewhat doubtful title of 'Dumber Mall's Divine Duples' and of course took care to hide the 'dungish' stench with powdered pepper. All ways considered, it was indeed a heavenly gift—not for the green-horns who purchased it, but for my worthy friend, the chemist. He lead a heavenly life. And I saw no reason why I shouldn't do likewise, knowing as I did the secret that made him what he was. So, off I jiggered along to the chemist's and, in consideration of my knowledge about his stunt, he obligingly agreed to fix me up as a compounder at Rs. 50 a month with free diggings. I was contented, very much so, but the wife was not,

"Full blown doctor! You to be working as a compounder! Incredible! You can as well go hang yourself."

My wife said that dispassionately—my wife is always that—and so I was not provoked to any emotional fireworks. "I will be contemplating that as the next step," I told her gravely. "Men have got to live and women have got to live on them, and there are your bally kids, three of them, to add pep to the struggle."

"My kids?" she flared up.

"Of course, if you weren't hanging around, there wouldn't have been any kids, would there?" I asked.

"Of course, no," she said with a vicious snap of her jaw. "And since you feel so much about man having to live and women having to live upon him and the kids adding pep to the struggle, and I being an uneducated woman, my father being only a poor village munsiff, and my mother being only a poor country brinjal, I think I had better go and drown myself in some old well with my children, so as never to give you again any cause for trouble. I am going this minute. God reward the man

who drove me to this!" With that she looked daggers at me, looked fondly at the ladle in her hand, thought better of it and ran from my presence in a grand huff, taking the unused ladle along with her. She for aged the house end to end, collected all the valuables into one

big bundle and was gone, and gone were the kids. I was monarch of all I surveyed, but I am afraid there was nothing much to survey. I know, of course, that the old well she mentioned was a synonym for her papa's place.

That solved one problem but that didn't help me. Working as a compounder to an upstart chemist wasn't exactly the job that I would have yearned for, and it would have been a pretty hot fix for me if any of my friends had caught me doing the humble stunt. After a time I didn't care. When a man is down and out he cares for nothing. The news that I had turned a compounder was bound to be pretty widely disseminated. When I thought of all my people knowing my altered position, the opinion of friends had no terrors for me. "Man has to live," I argued within myself, "and if he couldn't do it decently, he has to do it indecently, that is all." But the conscience said, "No, there is a limit to all things and there is a limit to what you could do as a doctor. This compounder-stunt is awfully *infra-dig* and rottenly disgraceful." It was a stiff fight between this ever-bothering conscience and an ever-gnawing relentless hunger-stricken stomach; but somehow conscience won the day against terrible odds and I kicked off the compounder business, bundled together my effects and shook the dust of Madras off my feet. One dark, cloudy night, when my poor optimistic landlord to whom I owed my

JUST A MIRACLE

By 'FENCER'

rent was soundly snoring in his room, dreaming of gold doubloons from the budding doctor, the budding doctor badly nipped his hopes in the bud and legged it to another place. I was miles and miles away. Where I was, I scarcely knew myself. I was in a train with only a platform ticket to help me through and was, for aught I knew, going straight into the realms of adventure and uninvited fisticuffs.

The fisticuffs came soon enough. An irresponsible ticket-examiner made it pretty hot for me, and to save myself from graver consequences, I had to peel off my coat for the poor ticket-examiner's benefit and get down hurriedly at the next station. Luckily or unluckily, the station I got down happened to be holy Thirupati. Being of quite a religious turn of mind, I thanked the Gods for dumping me down at this holiest of holy spots and decided to pay obeisance and render worship at the sacred temple on the hills. So thus I went to the top of the Seven Hills worshipping the Gods with right good will. I had to do it, for there wasn't much else that I could do. Along with divine worship you should know, 'tummy' worship also went on regularly and free of charge. I think you will understand the latter part of that assertion when I say that there are choultries in Thirupathi that simply love to gorge Brahmin 'tummies' to satiety; and I was a Brahmin before I was anything else—at least in holy Thirupati. So I ate and I worshipped. In the course of a few months, I was quite the greatest fed specimen of a religious devotee that you ever set your eyes upon. People observed me, observed my piety and started talking about me. It is in the fitness of things that a band of thieves also started talking about me and decided in course of time to burgle the great devotee's belongings. They did, but I am afraid that, apart from a few visiting cards, 'they could find nothing worth while inside my

trunk. My medicines, of course, they did not care to take with them. In the course of a week there was no nook or corner in the locality that did not parade at least one such defaced visiting card of the great doctor (that was me) who had given up all his greatness and come down to holy Thirupati to spend his day in divine meditation.

The result was astounding. Patients flocked to the humble quarters I had taken up in the local choultry. I gave them what medicines I could; they gave me what little they had. No fees, no consultation charges, mind you, but just heart-felt offerings at the feet of the great sage, that was my very humble self. Gold sovereigns, silver rupees, and ornaments in profusion—they littered the bowl I placed at my side. You can judge of the ultimate results when I inform you that now in the course of six months, I have in keeping enough gold and silver coins to last me a century and pay a host of unpaid assistants who are simply keen to fly at my bidding.

The wife, who had left for the disused well with the three kids that were a botheration, has come back to me to lighten the burden of the great wealth that my grateful patients are showering upon me. Piety is a good thing, friends, and sure enough I was thankful. I went to the shrine and prostrated myself before the All-seeing Deity and prayed, I suppose, as I never had prayed before, because there was more of sincerity in what I mumbled this time; the good Lord above who grants all prayers hearkened to mine. My practice is increasing everyday.

The Gods still have the power to work miracles, haven't they?

THE HAUNTED HOUSE—(Continued from page 38)

Shaking off my fears, I wrapped myself up in a blanket and sat in a chair near the fire. I left the lamp burning; I fell asleep, to dream of spooks chasing each other around the bed. Then something happened to instil fresh fear into my heart. I could feel a hand passing over my face! The fingers, cold and clammy, tweaked my nose as they passed by. I opened my eyes and screamed from stark fear. The lamp was not burning!

Bounding out of the chair I crashed over the fender and into the chimney. Clutching wildly at what appeared to be the ghost, I pulled the huge grandfather clock down on top of me. I tore at my hair and face in a mad endeavour to free myself.

CRASH went a sideboard of crockery! I could feel my hair turning white. Struggling to my feet I struck a match and examined the lamps. They were both devoid of any oil. The room was in a state of utter chaos. I then lighted a candle.

Glancing into a mirror I nearly fainted! My face was streaked with vivid, black finger marks! So the supernatural did enter into the matter! Then I looked

at my hands. They were covered with soot. Instead of ghostly hands, my own had caused the smudges on my face! I washed and brewed myself a strong cup of tea.

Next morning at nine o'clock I presented myself at the office of the house-agent.

"Good morning, sir," he grinned. "What can I do for you, and how do you like your new home?"

"I do not like it at all," I replied shortly. "What I would like to know is how much you would refund me if I gave up the tenancy right now."

"Nothing, my dear sir," smoothly replied the house-agent. "You signed an agreement to that effect."

I was crushed, and intimated my resolve to hand the keys back to him that same day. At three o'clock I returned and handed the keys to a clerk. The agent was speaking to some one in the inner room. I could hear his suave voice distinctly.

"No sir, you can rest assured that the house is not haunted. Surely sir, you would not have me believe that such a practical twentieth century man—?"

"SINGING-CIRCLE" ABSOLUTELY FREE!

FIRST PRIZE

Rs 125

Rs. 200

FREE MUST BE WON

FREE COMPETITION

SO SIMPLE-SO EASY!

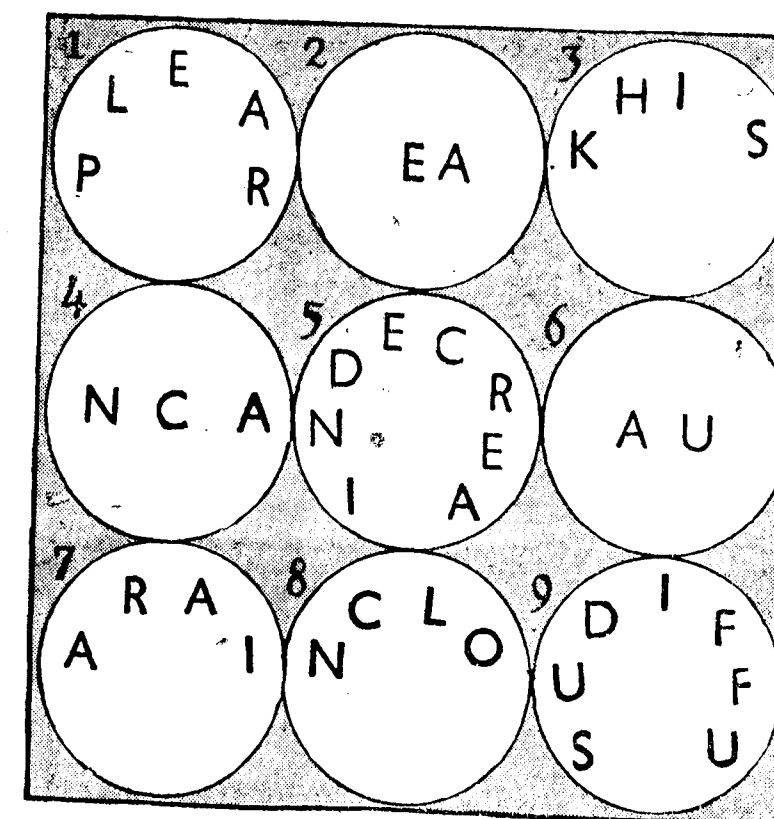
SECOND PRIZE

Rs 75

SET ONLY

CLOSING DATE 5-6-35

HOW TO SOLVE "SINGING-CIRCLE"



The circles do not produce melodious notes; nor need you do any singing in a circle or any such thing. The circles contain letters which make words ending with the syllable "Sing". Only there are letters either too many or too few which are indicated at the side of the 'Clues'.

For instance, in circle No. 1, the clue is 'Giving Pleasure' (Take 1). The letters in the circle are PLEAR. Take away one letter according to the indication (R). Add 'Sing', and you have the solution: 'PLEASING'.

But in No. 2, the clue is 'Stopping' and you have to 'give' to the letters EA and add "Sing". Put C, add EASING and you get the word CEASING. Solve the other seven similarly.

CLUES.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) Giving Pleasure (Take 1) | (5) Fluctuating (Take 2) |
| (2) Stopping (Give 1) | (6) When the boss flies into a temper he is: (Give 1) |
| (3) We come across this in picture-houses (Take 1) | (7) Starting (Take 1) |
| (4) Covering (Give 1) | (8) Shutting in (Give 1) |
| | (9) Spreading (Take 2) |

RULES AND CONDITIONS

Solutions must be written *only on the coupon on this page*. All entries must be received by the last post on 5-6-35. Any received after this date will be disqualified. Entries from local competitors can be delivered at our office till 6 P. M. on that date. The first prize of Rs. 125 will be awarded to an all-correct solution and the second prize of Rs. 75 to the solution with one error. An all-correct solution is one which agrees in all respects with the Editor's Key Solution kept in safe custody with the Indian Bank Ltd., Head Office, Madras. Failing an all-correct solution, the first prize will be awarded to the nearest correct entry received. In case of ties, the prize money will be equally divided. The Editor reserves the right of pooling the first and second prize-amounts and distributing them among the competitors according to the number of all-correct solutions received. No correspondence can be entered into nor can interviews be granted. Persons connected with the *Merry Magazine* and its associated journals are not allowed to compete. *No entry will be considered unless it is on the Entry Form*. Intending competitors who are unable to secure copies of this Magazine from the agents in their area can address our *Subscription Manager*, for the required number of copies, either by sending stamps or Money Order to cover the cost of the copies or order them by V. P. P. COUPONS MUST BE FILLED IN LEGIBLY and sent intact. This office will not be responsible for entries lost or delayed in transit. **CUT OUT THE COUPON-PORTION** and post to:—

EDITOR, 'SINGING-CIRCLE' Competition,
The Merry Magazine,
1-2/140, Broadway, Madras.

ENTRY FORM

"SINGING-CIRCLE" Competition

CLOSING DATE 5-6-35

1. PLEASING
2. CEASING
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

In entering this Competition I agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and legally binding.

Signed.....

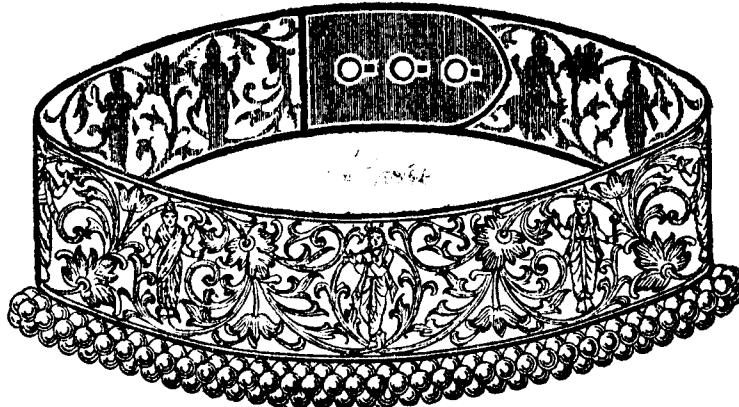
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SECOND PRIZE
Rs. 4,000
Special Prizes:
Rs. 400 for Correct Solutions Posted on or before 16th May, 1935.
Rs. 300 & 200 for the senders of largest number of entries.
Rs. 100 for the first 10 Correct Solutions posted.

A cheque for Rs. 10,000 down or Rs. 1,200 per year for 10 years! This will be your magnificent reward, if yours is the Correct Solution of this fascinating puzzle. If, however, there is more than one winner for this prize, Rs. 10,000 will be equally divided amongst them, but a **minimum prize of Rs. 500 is guaranteed for every such winner, whatever be the number of Correct Solutions received by us.** Besides this, every all correct winner will be presented with a TABLE GRAND MODEL GRAMOPHONE costing Rs. 160.

Then there is a colossal sum of **Rs. 4,000** for one errored solutions; another **Rs. 400** for earlier postings: 2 Prizes of **Rs. 300** and **Rs. 200** for the senders of largest number of entries; **Rs. 100** for the first 10 correct solutions posted. What an array of Prizes! Think of it, all these prizes can be won by you, and remember, **It's a Paramount's GUARANTEE, and the above prize amounts will not be reduced under any circumstances.**

Last Date for POSTING ENTRIES:—31st May, 1935.

Sealed Key Solution with "TATLER".

HOW TO WIN?

Below are 12 words, some of which contain too many letters and some too few. Spaces are provided where letters are missing. A clue appears at the side of each word with instructions in brackets as to how many letters are to be CUT or PUT, and this is what all you have to do.

In No. 1 you have RUPPEES—Offered for solving this Puzzle (Cut 1). A glance will show you that one 'P' must be removed and you have the correct solution RUPEES. Again in No. 2 you have E—GHT. Six plus two makes this (Put 1). Obviously you will have to put the letter 'I' in the vacant space and you have EIGHT. Similarly, solve the others. **Some have no alternatives at all.** The letters in the words are in their proper order, and no shuffling is necessary.

1	R	U	P	P	E	E	S	Offered for solving this puzzle. (Cut 1)
2	E		G	H	T			Six plus two makes this ... (Put 1)
3	S	T	I	N	G			Sound is heard when you do this ... (Cut 1)
4		I	L	L				A document ... (Put 1)
5	P	I	N	E				Lowest standard of value ... (Cut 1)
6	P		N					It requires a point to be effective ... (Put 1)
7	C	A	P	S	E			Worn by some people ... (Cut 1)
8	P	O	I		E			Weight ... (Put 1)
9	T	R	O	U	G	H		Violent ... (Cut 1)
10	G	R	E					A colour ... (Put 2)
11	S	P	A	R	K			A grass field ... (Cut 1)
12	B	U	M					Better keep yours hidden ... (Put 1)

RULES.

An entrance fee of ONE RUPEE per entry must accompany by M. O. only and P. O. Receipts must be attached to entries without which no solution will be considered. Any number of entries may be sent at the requisite fee and competitors are allowed to win any number of shares both in the First and the Second Prizes. Results will be announced in THE RAINBOW of the 11th June 1935, available at all Railway Stalls. A copy of it will be sent to those enclosing two annas stamps. Manager's decision is final and legally binding, and is an express condition of entry. Other rules as usual.

Address all your entries and fees to:—

THE PARAMOUNT PUZZLES, (Cut & Put), P. O. WASHHERMANPET, MADRAS, 12.

THE ROYAL ASTROLOGER 1,000,000



& more clients have had our remarkable foretelling. Family fame of 25 generations in Astrology. Medals and Certificates from Maharajahs and Zamindars. Annual life reading weekly details Rs. 2. Aroodam for 5 questions Re. 1. State birth details or writing time. V. P. extra.

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EVEN A CHILD CAN SOLVE THIS PUZZLE.
VERY EASY. TRY & WIN.

WIN Rs. 500.

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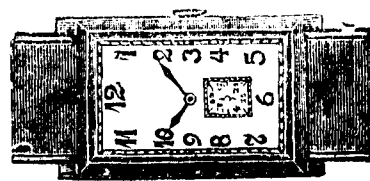
1. M O — E. negro. 3. F L — P. flipe.
2. — A L E. valley. 4. — — M B. to dress hair.

RULES:—A correct entry is one that agrees with the sealed key solution kept in our office. A sum of Rs. 500 will be awarded to anyone sending us a correct entry on or before 31st May. If ties occur, prizes will be divided. In all matters relating to this competition, the manager's decision shall be final. Send entries on plain paper and fees by M. O. or Indian Postal Order to:

The Manager.
Commercial Stores, Coimbatore.

LEVER WATCH FOR Rs. 1-11-0 ONLY

Absolutely correct timekeeper with unparalleled mechanism of high standard, Shape, Design and Durability are its speciality.



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CHARGES: Re. 1 for six questions.
Rs. 3 for five years' life reading.

Send birth details to:—
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CORRECTION

All Competitors to please note

In our advertisement "Shuffling Competition No. 6" Published in Merry Magazine weekly 4-5-35. (on last page) the key-word No. 3 should be "Pra" and not "Pray". Due to this mistake and the suggestions we received from various competitors, the above competition is extended to Last posting 5th June 35. Results within a week from that date.

Manager: THE DIAMOND PUZZLE BUREAU
89, Diamond Harbour Road, : : CALCUTTA.

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IT WILL KEEP YOU WELL

THE REAL SECRET OF GOOD HEALTH

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Agents: Shivram & Sawmy, 144, Broadway Madras.

HONESTY OUR WATCH-WORD. CHARITY OUR AIM.

Simple to solve. Easy to win.
Add-One Competition No. 1

Entrance fee:—Re. 1 or 1/6s. per entry
Last posting date 25.5.35. Results on 31.5.35.

First Prize:—50% for all-correct entry

Second Prize:—30% to runners up of the total net audited collections. Balance 20% to Charity Fund.

No.	Word	Clue	What you do?
1.	F—ND	SUPPLY	Just add one letter for each dash for the correct word, as in No. 1 by adding "U" the right word is "FUND."
2.	—OOT	BASE	Similarly solve the remaining words and send the entries with necessary fee to us.
3.	—ILLION	ANUMBER	
4.	IN—IA	COUNTRY	
5.	CA—	VEHICLE	
6.	B—ND	TIE	
7.	S—ARE	PART	
8.	DO—SE	PUTOUT	
9.	AI—	HELP	

necessary fee to us.

Rules:—Plain paper entries will be accepted. Send money by money order or Postal orders. Attach M. O. receipts to your entries. In case of ties the prize money will be equally divided. Manager's decision is final & binding. Other terms as usual.

Address all entries to:—

The C. Manager,
D. I. & S. Co., Ltd., AJMER.

VISVA & CO.,

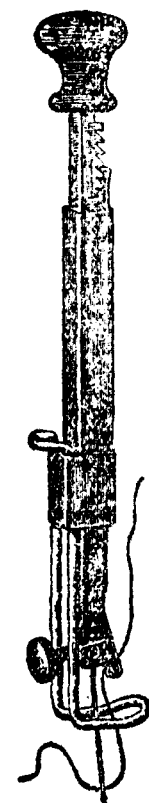
Engravers and rubber-stamp makers,
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50, Walajah Road, Mount Road,
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**Won't you decorate Your Home
- in the fashion of the day?**

**No need to worry about it!
Your ladies and children will do this
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This tiny Handy-embroidery Machine does promote happiness in your family.

It is very easy to work with this Machine.

Detailed printed instructions are sent along with the Machine.

You can produce
ornamental pictures,
suitable to be hung on
walls, with this
Machine.



Kinds of work done by this Machine:

Embroidery on Bed covers, Pillow covers, Table cloths, Window curtains, Children's gowns, Jackets, Caps etc.

This can also be used to prepare several kinds of flower designs on walls with clay.

In several schools, this has been used with the greatest success.

Price, postage paid, Rs. 2-11-0 only.

Order to-day
WITH

The Genuine Watch Co., : P. B. 119, Madras.

"ZIP" Gramophone Record Restorer

is easily used to make old records new and new ones better.

Once you possess "Zip" you can make the records play ALWAYS with a clear voice.

One bottle of "Zip" will renovate 48 records.

Full directions supplied.



Price per bottle Rs. 2-12-0 only. (Postage extra).

Two bottles at a time, Postage free.

Nothing will restore worn-out sound waves, but every record plays with better tone after treatment with "Zip". Records are expensive—"Zip" is inexpensive.

THE "ZIP" STORES & AGENCY, P.B. 1358, MADRAS.

Conquer Ignorance!

Overcome Shame!!

Know the Amazing Truth About Sex & Love

Know how to hold Love—the Magnificent Ecstasy!!

These Books will tell you how!

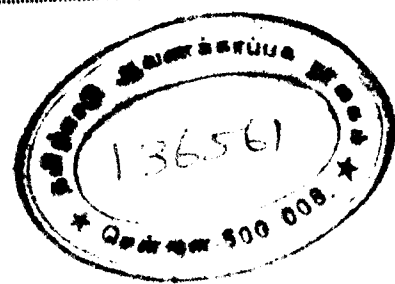
Sex Knowledge is no longer a sin—Sex ignorance is the cause of Misery in your Wedded life!

	Price		Price
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Sex Vice and how to avoid it. 2nd Edn. Illd.	1 0 0	How to Become Beautiful	1 0 0
Pleasures of married life	1 0 0	Mystery of Dreams and Dream reading	1 8 0
Kissing in theory and practice	2 0 0	Part I & II	1 0 0
Fruits of Married love	0 12 0	Horary Astrology 2nd (Edition)	0 12 0
How to woo and win	1 0 0	Guide to the study of Hinduism	0 8 0
Don't Marry	1 0 0	Short stories	0 10 0
Complete husband	1 0 0	Laughing Gas:	2 8 0
Happy lover	1 0 0	Your future thro' Astrology	1 0 0
Marriage before and after	1 0 0	God, One God, the only God (A mystic	1 0 0
Perfect wife	1 0 0	finger post for the Earnest Seeker)	1 0 0
Hidden powers in Men (4th Edition)	2 8 0	Kettle Drums (Short Stories)	1 0 0
Young mothers, guide and delight	0 6 0		

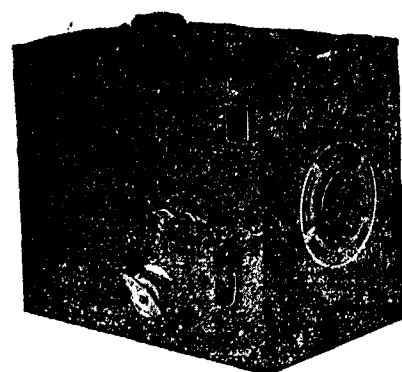
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is really useful as it takes both Time exposure pictures and snapshots to the size of $3\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$. It is fitted with the most powerful lens and contains up-to-date mechanism. Two clear view-finders. Working is very simple.

Sent with full instruction booklet.

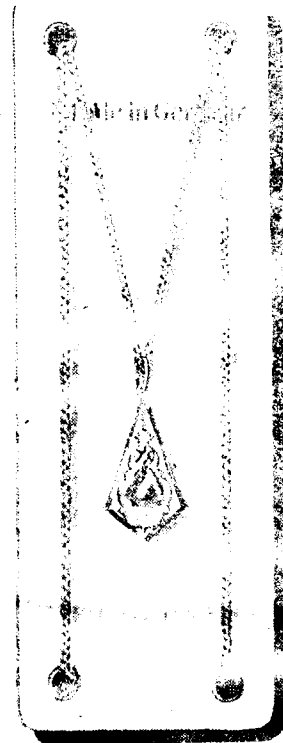
Price Rs. 4—8—0 only.

Film (8 exposures) Rs. 1—2—0.

(Postage Extra)

The 'Zip' Stores & Agency,
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Made of Gold with a central setting brilliant stones in red, white and blue. A real ornament with fine workmanship. It is the real Gold Necklace.

Two chains to choose. Postage free.

Note—Order for 1 chain at a time or time you like. Postage and one free round gold watch-chain.

4 chains at a time or time you like. Postage and 2 round gold watch-chains.

Special presents for larger orders.

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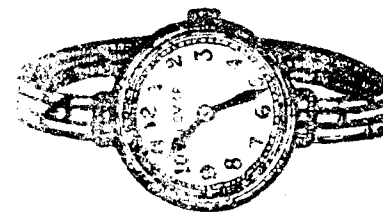
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