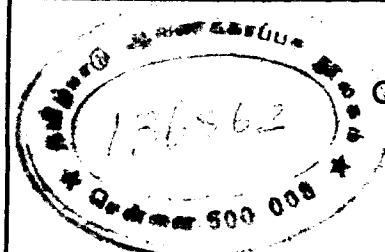




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HARINDRANATH
CHATTOPADHYAYA

The Wolf and The Fox A Poem. Part II

The bully goes down the pit
of retribution, dons a sham
clerical garb and cozens the
wide-awake fox!

'DEISVI'

Second Instalment of The Misfortunes of Meena

THE EDITOR



HIS PAGE

'DEISVI'

This week commences the 'Deisvi' serial, *The Misfortunes of Meena*. Those of the readers who have read 'Deisvi's *Rukku's Romantic Hour* will have found in him a past-master in blending pathos and humour, producing indeed a rare effect. This gift of the author finds full play in the great story which I am privileged to present in these pages, as even the first instalment would indicate. Begin reading it to-day and keep reading it on to its culmination. There is a grand treat in store for you.

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

Over a century ago Lord Macaulay wrote an infamous piece of composition, embellished in pompous verbiage, slinging mud at the manhood of Bengal. He died without recanting that damnable libel. Our concern is not for Bengal but for Macaulay's soul. Latterly a high-placed official said something equally libellous and unchivalrous about the womanhood of Bengal. But he was man enough to apologise for the slur he cast on Bengal's fair name. The reason why British jingoes single out Bengal for their attention is not far to seek. Bengal stands in the van of Indian nationalism to-day; and she stood there yesterday when the East India Company began casting greedy eyes around Fort William. In the palladium of India's cultural grandeur, not a few places are adorned by the noble sons and daughters of Bengal—Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananda, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Maharshi Tagore, Prafulla Chandra Ray, Sarojini Devi, Chittaranjan, Dwijendra Lal Roy and a brilliant host of others.

From this great province comes Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, patriot, poet and philosopher. Harindranath needs no introduction within the frontiers of India. I am publishing in this number his poem entitled *The Wolf and the Fox*. He is a great admirer of *The Merry* and has honoured me with a promise to write in these pages every week.

With Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, 'Deisvi', Joyfull, Mali and other talented writers and artists adorning *The Merry*, every week-end will be a great *Merry* treat to the reader.

'MIE'

Of forms of literary treatment,



THE WOLF AND THE FOX

By HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA
PART ONE

Far from the madding haunts of men
They lived together in a den,
A fox grey-hued and somewhat thin,
And a strong wolf with tawny skin.
But then the wolf oppressed the fox
And gave him shivers, gave him shocks,
Subjecting him to toil and grief,—
The wolf exploited him, in brief.
One day it chanced that in a nice
Spirit of giving good advice
He spoke unto the wolf and said,
"Brother! 'tis time for you to tread
The path of good, and leave, I guess,
The wandering ways of wickedness.
Give up old arrogance and pride,
And in a simple joy abide;
For arrogance is truly worse
Than every evil, and—a curse
Destroying him whose real soul
Is caught in its uncouth control.
Alack! pride goes before a fall,
This maxim's known to one and all.
And, further, know you not that Man,
The crafty Son of Adam, can
Trick us into his wily net
At any time? Do you forget
That God has given him a mind
Which sets him above creature-kind,
A powerful, superior shape,
From whom no creature may escape
When once his lesser life is lent
By God to him as punishment?
Beware of Man, old Adam's Son,
There is no thing he leaves undone
When once decided to fulfil
Whatever purpose that he will.
Lo, just according to his wish
He finds the fiery-coloured fish
Glide into his thrice subtle mesh;
The birds that wander young and fresh
Athwart the bluesome beaming air
Fall easily into his snare,—
And mountains which are strong and hard
Gold-washed by day, by midnight starred,
On whom a hoary silence sits
Are broken into little bits

By Man's uncalculated strength
Who conquers everything at length.
And that is why I am so keen,
O brother wolf! that you should glean
The joy that comes into the soul
Out of a life of self-control."

Although the fox's words were true
And with old wisdom dripping through
The wolf resented them and said:
"You creature with a little head!
How dare you offer me

And noticed that it had a breach.
Through it he saw the perfect shapes
Of luscious fruit that he could reach
With utmost ease..... "What lovely grapes!
Good God! the vineyard wears its robes
Of emerald and sapphire globes!"

Such were the thoughts that went and came
Setting his foxy heart on flame.
But lo, his instinct ever sly
Whispered: "Beware, or else you die!
Remember that a ditch or hole
Can bring destruction to your soul.
Beware, young Mr. Fox, beware!
That breach you notice is a snare,
Be wary how you enter there!"

He heard these words which seemed as plain
As measured drops of wisdom's rain;
Then spake the fox in his own mind:
"I will examine it to find
The real nature of this breach."

Then, without farther thought or speech,
He carefully went round and round
The simple, clever trap, and found
A covering,—and under it
A deeply-dug and dangerous pit,
And knew at once that it was laid
To prison beasts that prowled and preyed
Upon the vines, and so despoiled
The vineyards on which Man had toiled.

Withdrawing cautiously from there
He offered up a heartfelt prayer
To Allah who had saved his breath
From stoppage by a sudden death.
And after that he prayed within,
That Allah who had saved his skin
May in a retribution fit
Cause Mr. Wolf to see the pit
And end by falling into it.
So that when Mr. Wolf was dead,
Sole master, he would safely tread
The glowing vineyards and be lord
Of all the luscious wealth they stored.

And something in him grew aware
That God would surely grant his prayer.
Thus, while returning to his den
He sang a song no poet's pen
Might ever venture to essay;
The subject was, "The dying day
Of Mr. Wolf in coming times."

But who shall guess a fox's rhymes,
Or learn the way in which his curse
Works out its venom through a verse?
And when right through he sang his song,
Which didn't take him very long,
He came before the Wolf and spoke:
"I have performed a master-stroke
For you to-day, O lord!—your slave
Experienced a mighty wave
Of inspiration in his brain,—
Give me permission to explain."

"Go on," the wolf cried out, "I warm!
What miracle did you perform?"
The fox, he bowed his tiny head
And in thrice humble accents said:
"I walked this day at evenfall
Towards

The MISFORTUNES of Meena

STORY BY
DEISVI
ILLUSTRATED BY
J E K A R

Note by the Editor

"Deisvi" needs no introduction to the regular readers of *The Merry*. His "Bala, the Bad Woman," and "Devi, the Dancer" have earned for him the reputation of being a clever narrator of stories, among Indians. Serial story-writing is a difficult art. Judged by popular verdict "Deisvi" alone among Indian writers can be said to have successfully mastered the art. It has been my pleasure and privilege to watch him work on this story at close quarters. While doing so, I have often been reminded of the saying that genius is infinite capacity for taking pains. I have no doubt, that Meena, (who doesn't come into the story till the fourth instalment) though the third among "Deisvi"'s creations, will yet outrival Bala and Devi in claiming a warm corner in the hearts of the readers.

MALE AND FEMALE

Prognosis

DESTINY chooses strange instruments to serve its purpose. Who could have thought that Destiny would use the South Indian Railway Company as a means for bringing together Rangaswamy Iyer and Ramathilaka ammal? But, such was the truth, stranger, certainly, to fiction.

The South Indian Railway Company was justly famous for its capacity to coin perfect howlers. One such of its peerless coinage was the label 'the female compartment'. In other climes, in other times, the coiners of such a vivid phrase might almost be accused of being vulgar. But this was South India where a man called his better-half as his 'house' and his dog-days as 'insufficient time'. All of which is set forth merely to show that the unconscious humour of the Railway Company like all unconscious humour in this land, remained unappreciated.

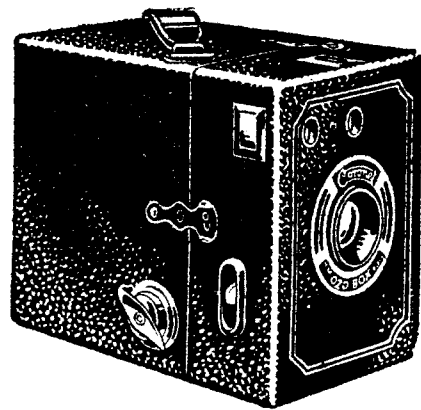
In such a 'female compartment' Ramathilakam was travelling. It would be correct to say that she was more busy weeping than whatever it is that a passenger travelling in South Indian Railway is expected to do. And what was worse and to the point, she was the only occupant of the aforesaid 'female compartment'.

There was a travelling ticket-examiner in the train—an Eurasian. He had acquired, thanks to the peculiar nature of his job, a flair for finding within three minutes of any train's departure, the prettiest face on board. He had developed this trait of his into a fine-art and his indolent colleagues invariably turned to him with the question: "Anything good going, Bob?"

Ramathilak

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