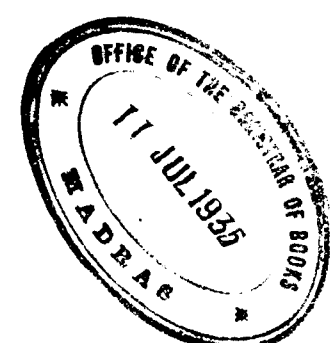


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SNAKE—T. P. SCOTT-O'CONNOR

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MERRY
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Vol. III Madras, 13 July '35 No. 28

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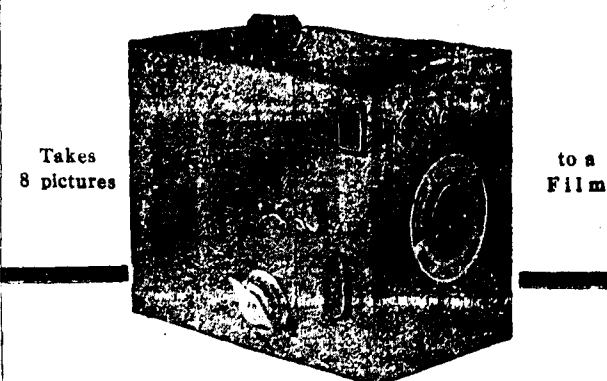
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The MERRY MAGAZINE

MADRAS, JULY 13, 1935

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THE EDITOR HIS PAGE

UNEMPLOYMENT

Governments the world over are spending anxious hours over the nightmare of unemployment.

The problem is no less acute in India as it is abroad. But the funny thing about our unemployment is that whereas other countries know how they are placed, we don't. And whereas other countries are doing something about it, we are not. Exactly how many are without work in this country? Echo hits you back in the eye as answer. But all are agreed that the number of our unemployed is staggering. A few well-meaning, harmless gentlemen, glued to their arm-chairs, make a noise here and there trying to count, as a preliminary to something wonderful, the unemployed in India. But the result is as silent as the noise is deafening. If we are not making any effective noise, it is not because the Delhi pantheon is distributing manna, but because Hindu and Islamic family economy is not so delightfully individualistic as to kick its unemployed into the street. A friend here, an aunt there, an uncle, a sister, a brother elsewhere, will share his or her food with the poor fellow who has no job. Where

an educated young man has nobody to turn to, he will shave our chins, wash our linen, black our shoes, under protest, or, easiest of all, turn a bad fellow. Barbering, laundering and shoe-blackening need not be cavilled at: but is that all a cultured young man should do for his country?

Not many days ago, in a Northern city, a young man raised a fire alarm. Fire engines were rushed to the place, but there was no fire to extinguish. Asked to show the fire, the young man pointed to his stomach. The fire was there. There are millions of fires in as many stomachs in this land.

Most of the remedies suggested by theorists are hare-brained. There is the Socialist remedy. But it is a far cry. This is a matter for the state. One way to find work for the workless is the state undertaking large-scale public works, as they are doing in England. Unfortunately this is the East. The love of our bosses for public health and education is none too overwhelming. To expect them to sink capital on works of national utility is a luxurious dream.



TOPSY-TURVY or THE MUTTS BILL IN ACTION

"The effect of the Bill is to reduce the Matadhipathi.....to the position of a subordinate.....compelling him to look even for his maintenance.....to the Executive Officer....."—Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, Advocate General, Madras.

Chewing Gum—

by 'Narak A. Nurak'

"I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays
I babble on the pebbles."

So like Tennyson's brook, I chatter. Only I am allowed to do so but once a week for, the Editor glares at me and shoos me away from the neighbourhood of his sanctum. He calls me a chattering magpie. He has such a grim look, you know. The other day, a budding poet went to him with a manuscript. The Ed. read it and then looked at the poet with a sort of look which Siva fixed on that meddlesome guy, Cupid. There was just a puff of smoke and the poetaster was 'napoo'. That's why I am afraid of the Ed.

Last week I was trying to dissect a steak in a restaurant, just to find out if it was made of crepe rubber, gum arabic or gutta percha when a bozo sitting next to me detailed to me how a man was killed in a motor accident. The gory picture left me aghast and I spared the steak from my prodding attention. I thought awhile.

The toll of the road is increasing day by day. It is time a 'safety first' campaign is started with vigour. 'Safety first' slogans with expressive posters should be put up on all the city roads, so that both the pedestrians and the motorists may constantly be reminded of the dangers of the road. In India, the pedestrians' carelessness contributes a good deal to the number of accidents. 'Joy walking' is much too common and the average man in the street seems to ignore the fact that motor-cars are fast-moving vehicles.

"Pump me not with plated bumpers
The street is but a human stream.
For the man who walks and slumbers
The grave is but an easy dream."

A Railway Police constable was lecturing on railway accidents and haranguing his fellow-passengers with 'safety first' slogans. He sniffed. The passengers also sniffed, for there was a distinct smell of burning cloth.

"There you are!" said the constable. "Somebody has been careless and is burning a hole in his dress. The passengers fidgetted while the arm of law smiled.

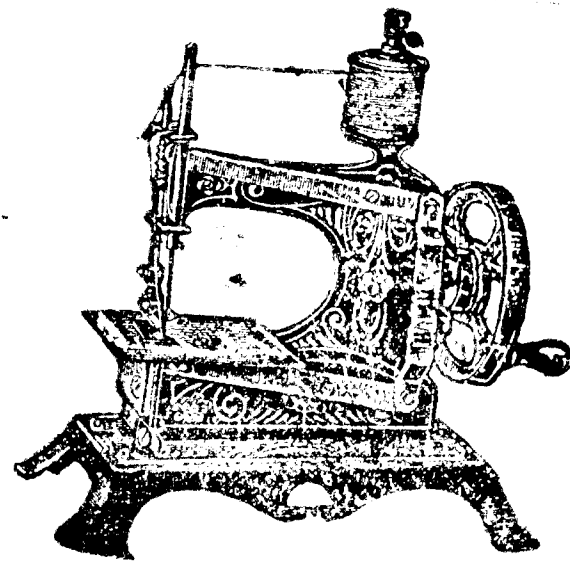
All on a sudden "Abbabba," screamed the constable, and shot himself up from the seat. He had sat on a live beedi which had slowly worked up through the seat of his shorts. 'Safety first' indeed!

And deaths by snake-bite. This is also taking a big toll. Prompt treatment either by anti-venom serum treatment or the Indian system saves the victim. Will our health ministry see that every village gets the benefit of a snake-bite physician? I know, in Travancore, almost every village has a State-aided dispensary for treating snake-bites. In our province too, every rural dispensary should be equipped for snake-bite treatment.

In Germany Herr Rust, the Reich education minister has equipped over 2000 schools with Cinema plants to give the children a more tangible method of getting knowledge. Many more schools are to be thus equipped. I wonder when our land will give this amenity to our kids. Our educational department might take a leaf from progressive Germany.

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