

3 The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



John A. Henry
Chattopadhyaya
C. V. Ramani



Embusque
—T. D. Irani—
Private Joyfull

August 10
1935

Werrypinklers



—By 'Nijinski'

The Editor's Mail

Published by the Editor from Monday to Saturday

The Editor of the *Movie Mirror* will be glad to receive letters and for publication. Letters will be returned, unless accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope. The Editor will be glad to acceptability for manuscripts. Payment for accepted manuscripts will be made at our usual rate. Letters should be addressed to: Editor, *The Movie Mirror*, 210, Broadway, Madras.

The Editor does not always share the views expressed by contributors to this Magazine. Characters depicted herein are all imaginary and no reflection is intended to be cast on any person.

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T. P. Scott-O'Connor

The Zamindar

A grand, intimate close-up of a blue-blooded aristocratic type, at once the glory of jolly old India and the hope of our future.

E. L. SHIPMAN

Sauce for the Gander

The dull monotony of an out-of-the-way township gingered up by a dramatic troupe. The fun started in the pit: but the laurels remained with the *dramatis personae*.

ALBERT A. ROLAND

Sweetbread Harvest

A bumper harvest which solved the economic troubles of this twentieth century Micawber family.

JOYFULL

Soccer played *à la* The Army. A spectacular sight! A startling revelation! A stupendous game!

t Week: New York—by T. D. Irani

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

News comes from Cochin of the formation of a new party of councillors pledged not to accept any post in Government service.



There is no foundation for the report that Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, the Dewan, has conveyed his good wishes to the sponsors of the new party.

At a jubilee luncheon to visitors from India His Highness the Agha Khan is reported to have said that England had much to learn from India, and should do so first and second-hand.

As regards the latter we are bound to admit that His Highness is doing his best.

Speaking in the Commons, Sir Samuel Hoare is reported to have said: 'One of the most difficult problems in the world to-day is that raised by the existence of states with empires and states without empires.'

And the only way out is for all states to be without empires.

Referring to press criticisms of her *landanar*, Srimati Sundarambal is alleged to have told a press representative that she would certainly try to benefit by their sage advice.

What, we think, she requires is stage advice.

An English speaker claims that England can afford to send capital to India.

That is one way of taking *unfailing interest* in the country.

Speaking on the new constitution, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar declared that his faith in democracy had been growing less and less in the last fifteen years.

He is wrong if he thinks that the process has been one-sided!

Addressing a conference of zamin ryots, The Rajah of Bobbili, the Chief Minister, claimed that the Justice Party, would be always behind them in all their legitimate demands. Our complaint against the party has always been this,—that it is ever *behind*!

'Baktha Nandanar
An Opera Set To Music
With Srimathi K. B. Sundarambal.
Additional Attraction—The
Quetta Earthquake.'

Advertisement in local dailies.

We must say for ourselves that we don't consider ruins an attraction.

Says Mr. Carr, the English cricketer: 'My own experience of the Australians is that if they cannot win, they will not stand to be beaten, if they can help or avoid it. They will go to any length to dodge defeat!'

Except writing articles to the newspapers!

Mr. Sarat Chander Bose has been released unconditionally.

And the Bengal Congress Committee has allowed him to practise—for the present!

Referring to the decision of the All India Congress Committee on the question of acceptance of Office, Mr. Satyamurti says that he would keep silent for the present.

But it is likely to be as emphatic as his speaking!

Speaking of tennis fashions, a writer declares that shorts have come to stay.

This is reassuring, as it would be so awkward if they didn't!

The *Observatore Romano*, the organ of the Holy See remarks: "For sometime the Catholics in Germany have been going through difficult hours in the defence of Catholic dogma..."

This does not mean that Catholics elsewhere find it easier!

Sgr. Mussolini is credited with the determination to make Italy go her own way with, without or even against Geneva.



Perhaps because it is the 'broad and easy way' he has chosen for her!

THE EDITOR



HIS PAGE

WITH a fine sense of dramatic fitness, the local branch of the European Association staged a debate on the merits of the India Bill (Act) soon after it received the Royal assent. The combatants in this wordy warfare were Mr. F. G. James for the European Association and Mr. Satyamurti for the Congress and the country. The speeches followed stereotyped lines, except for one notable interlude. Mr. Satyamurti hurled a straight question at Mr. James, little doubting that it was unanswerable. It was this: If Germany had conquered England and imposed a constitution on her similar to that contained in the India Act, would Mr. James accept it as in the best interests of England, and plead for its working with his countrymen? Mr. James' answer was devastating—but not to Mr. Satyamurti. He said *he would*! Years ago Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, the famous historian, wrote an essay entitled: 'If Napoleon had won Waterloo'. Mr. James' answer is such as to provoke a similar exploration of what might have happened if Germany had won the Great War. I wonder if any of the readers would make an attempt. I promise no prizes but shall give my best consideration to it with a view to its publication in these pages. The episode is interesting for the reason that Mr. James, in his anxiety to score a debating point, didn't mind if he let himself down and his countrymen very badly. Mr. Satyamurti's rejoinder was in the best British tradition and was cheered to the echo. Which shows that there are among local Europeans many *not* of Mr. James' persuasion.

The transformation of the India Bill to the India Act closes one weary chapter only to reopen another. Interest is again shifted from England to India and the event to which we are looking forward is the coming elections. These promise to be much livelier than we hope for. Already rumours are thick in the air of coalitions and re-alignments of parties. Mr. Satyamurti threatens dire destruction to the triple alliance of plutocrat, aristocrat and autocrat. But they are not so easily killed here or elsewhere. Further, it comes somewhat incongruously from the man who could, in the next breath, appeal to the Europeans to co-operate with the Congress, or rather not to ally themselves with the reactionary forces in the country.

Be this as it may, taking the prospects before the country as a whole, the Congress successes in the elections are at best likely to give office more than power. In the circumstances, therefore, the decision of the All India Congress Committee on the question of acceptance of office, under the new constitution must be considered a stroke of masterly indecision. The reason for it is simple. It arises not from its inability to know its own mind, but rather from its inability to visualise the situation, after the elections. It should be a tactical advantage if the unworkability of the new constitution could be demonstrated by the present or future supporters of the Act. It would make it easier for the Congress to step in later with a view to the abrogation of the more objectionable provisions of the Bill. The alternative to that would be autocratic rule by Governors. In law and in fact, we should discredit the whole scheme beyond hope of amendment. In either case, the function of the Congress would be to provide the momentum necessary for getting through the next stage in our national progress as quickly and painlessly as possible. But we forget the future is in the lap of the Gods.

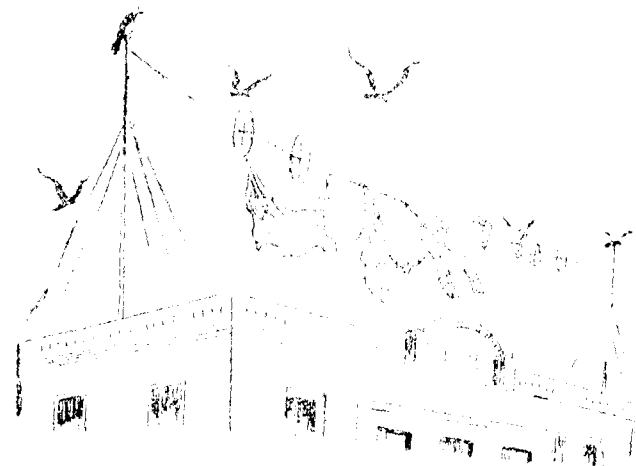
At long last, the statue of Dr. (Sir) Subrahmanya Iyer has been unveiled. Our only regret is the proceedings were marred by the discordant note struck by Sir V. Ramesam in the course of his speech. Most of it, by the way, might have been delivered by anybody since it was a bald record of the biographical details of the departed worthy; but we doubt if anyone else would have added, as he did, the wholly gratuitous sting at the end. It seems ludicrous to apologise for a man for whom the statue has been erected. Sir V. Ramesam was not called upon to agree with what all Sir Subrahmanya Iyer said or did. None should know better than he that this is the poorest test to apply to any man. To suggest as he did that he was guilty of a lapse in his old age was adding insult to injury. The symptoms of old age which were exhibited by Sir Subrahmanya Iyer galvanised the slumbering nation to a reassertion of its inalienable rights. The ancients were wise when they enjoined that nothing but good should be spoken of the dead. It is a prescription which we think must have been intended more for the benefit of the living.



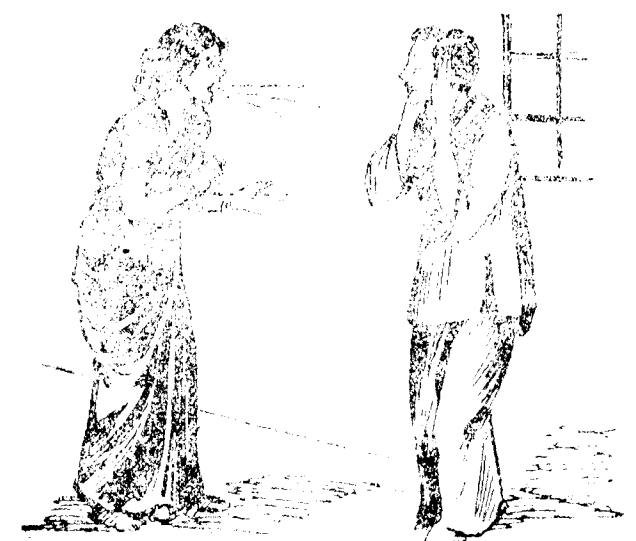
THE FINAL PHASE OF THE INDIA BILL

At a complimentary dinner given to him in the House of Commons, Sir Samuel Hoare was presented with a bound copy of the India Bill.

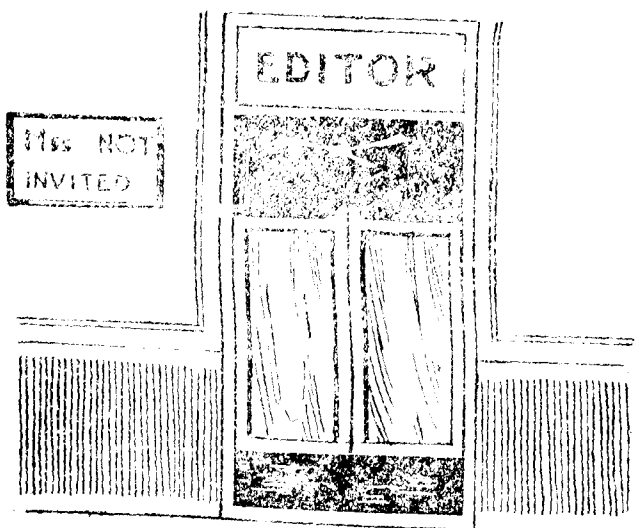
Conservative circles are pleased that they have got in exchange *India bound*!



Aerial.



Amplifier.



Base boards.

Hints on

ALL lovers of wireless complain of the ambiguous definitions employed. After a life-time of study, it has been the aim of the writer at no small cost to the Editor apart from getting writer's cramp or an illuminated rejection slip, to endeavour to simplify these terms. Wireless, as the name implies, means 'without wires'. Don't believe it. After one week on your wireless set, you will find that you are all wires, and bits of string. In that case, burn the definitions, sell or give away the wireless set, and buy a gramophone. (See Choke) Steady, we're away.

AERIAL.—Not a necessary component, if your set is a portable one. Appreciated as a perch by the birds of the air, and should be so constructed that it is easily convertible into a clothes line.

AMPLIFIERS.—Unnecessary if married, or the neighbours are inclined to be critical. You can trust your wife surely to amplify anything that she sees or hears.

BASE-BOARDS.—Cruel, unkind notices displayed on railway crossings, in public parks and on the Editor's office door. 'Don't cross here', 'Keep off the grass', and 'Mss. not invited', are a few examples of base-boards. Should be burned. (See Earth.)

BATTERY.—There are several kinds of batteries in India, especially Horse, Field, Heavy and Medium Batteries. When accompanied by assault, it is a legal offence. If you get a shock from a battery, call a policeman.

CABINET.—Volatile politicians. May be seen at any time in the L. A. or H. P. According to tradition, they are cabinet makers by birth.

CALCULATORS.—May be applied to unmarried women.

CHOKE. A definitely non-wireless definition. A useful method for eliminating sarcastic listeners. Not to be confused with *choker*, *choky* or *choke-off*. When employing the choke, press hard on the underside of the Adam's Apple. (See Battery.)

CONDENSERS.—Examiners for the Matriculation examinations, especially efficient at condensing dense answers. Distinct from condensed milk, and should only be employed when submitting Mss. (See Base-boards.)

COILS.—Akin to the 'mortal coil', serpent's coils, or the coils of a female—scorned! If coils are encountered, employ stern measures. (See Choke and Battery.)

CONVERTERS.—Is closely allied to convents and missionaries. (See transformers.)

EARTH.—A name applied to the third planet in order from the Sun (See Fry's Geography). Is opposite to the sea. Not connected with Fuller's Earth. We may be expected to leave it some day. The earth is probably all that some of us will leave. (See Base-board.)

Wireless

by 'Chappie'

GRID LEAKS.—So do my sauce-pans and whisky decanters. Distinct from Welsh leeks and not connected with the plumber. (See Pick-Ups.)

FUSE HOLDER.—A Bolshevik or an anarchist. When holding a fuse, particular attention is to be paid when applying a match. If justifiable homicide is contemplated, say your prayers. (See Choke, Amplifiers and Base-boards.)

INSULATE.—To separate or to transfer to the Andaman Islands. Closely allied to Consulate. A non-conductor of the G. I. P.

LEAD.—The main constituent of the rupee. Soldiers are often accused of 'Swinging the lead'. Its bearing on wireless is somewhat obscure—to me.

LOUD SPEAKERS.—In the same category as Cabinet Speakers. If stifled at birth, they may eventually become good citizens. If the disease has developed, intern on the top of the Mount or transfer to the Andaman Islands. (See Insulate, Plugs and all the bally definitions to that effect.)

METERS.—Not to be confused with the sweeper fraternity. If electric current is laid on, it is advisable not to tamper with the meter—unless you know how. (See, a recent ruling of the High Court, Calcutta.) It is simpler to pay the electrician than to fake the meter. It is not only cheaper, but he will give you the tip when the Inspector is out on his rounds.

PICK-UPS.—Sarsaparilla and whisky are good pick-ups. The Lost Property Office is another. Pickpockets and pick-ups are closely connected, and associated with fences. (See Grid Leaks and Receivers.)

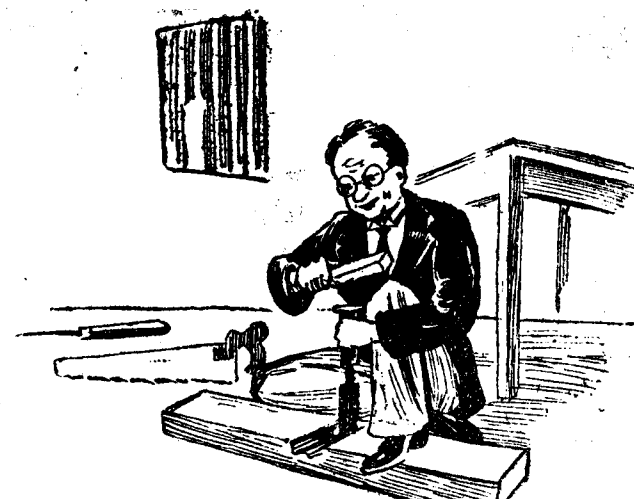
PLUGS.—The bung-hole of a barrel or the juicy substance that makes the jaws of a sailor waggle. See the dictionary for use of 'waggle'. Useful for stifling long-winded orators, who may be chewed.

RECEIVERS.—A fence, or a person who purchases pick-ups from pickpockets. Sometimes confused with auctioneers and Official Receivers. (See Pick-Ups.)

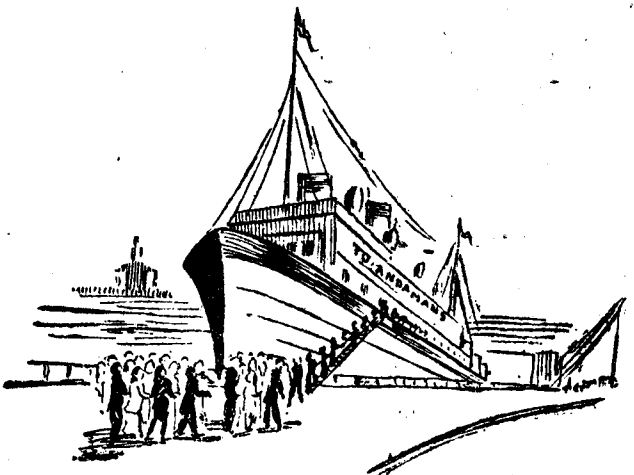
TERMINALS.—The appendages situated at the rear of most quadrupeds, especially the cow, goat, horse and camel. Not to be confused with terminus or termagants. If in possession of the latter, seek a divorce or employ Choke.

TRANSFORMERS.—Closely allied to converters. Counterfeiters can transform lead into money. If caught, they are transferred to a reformatory. (See Converters and Lead.)

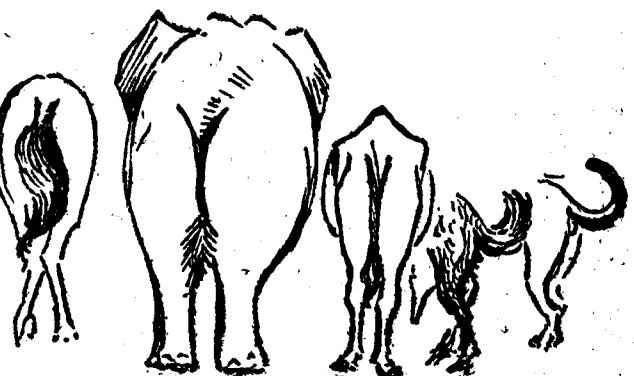
VALVES.—The lungs of fishes and females. The opening of the valves of the wife normally results in valvulitis for the husband or listener. (See Choke.)



Cabinet-Maker.



Insulate.



Terminals.

What will happen if the Dead come back to Life?

Is death the finality that man has accepted it to be?

by TIMURSHA D. IRANI

Philosophers through the ages had tried and tried desperately to distil the Elixir of Life. They failed, because they invoked half-guessed, half-understood, extra-mundane agencies to their aid; because they groped in the impenetrable gloom that the lamp of Science was yet to dispel.

However, the glamorous idea of cheating death, of restoring the dead to life survived, gained in intensity with each set-back, till today Science is stretching out its merciless claw farther and farther and is about to tear asunder the mystic curtain guarding the secret of Life and Death.

The Central Institute of Blood Transfusion in Moscow recently experimented on a suicide, apparently dead for three hours, and whipped up the atrophied cells and suspended metabolism of the corpse into activity, albeit transient. Dr. Robert E. Cornish of California created a furore by killing a few dogs and making them breathe again by drug injections and surgical wizardry.

Evolution is the progression of Life, from the simple to the complex, from the complex to the super complex. Are these experiments a fillip to Evolution or are they the beginning of the End?

A decade hence, maybe twenty years, fifty, a hundred years, Science will have spanned the hiatus between Life and Death. The prospect is at once grand and ghastly.

What then? Is Science courting the nameless vengeance of outraged Nature? Is blasphemous man striking a note of horrid discord amidst the beatific nuances of the Cosmic symphony? It is too early yet to canvass the possibilities. But then what were considered outrages against man and God yesterday, are accepted as part of the normal schedule today.

The whole fabric of society hangs on the fact, so far unchallenged, of the irrevocable finality of death to each man and woman. Once the impossible hurdle of physical decomposition that sets in

immediately after death is overcome, a dead person might be brought back, after he was in the "other place" for a year, a few years, even a few decades. What would be the state of society under this new dispensation?

A felon is hanged. A resurrection specialist injects the spark of life into him. How does he stand vis-a-vis the society he had wronged? As the law now stands, he has no legal existence: is not responsible for any act.

A rich uncle dies willing his possession to the inevitable nephew. Five years later he walks into the beneficiary's parlour and orders him out. Which of these two has the better title to the property?

A man insures his life. He dies a year later. His nominees gather the 'oof'. The dead one comes round, insures his life a second time, bumps himself off once again,—so on *ad infinitum*. What of the poor underwriters?

Suppose Queen Victoria sails majestically into the Buckingham Palace tomorrow morning. What happens? A nice question that—I don't think.

A widow tired of her weeds marries a well-to-do man and takes it easy. Suppose the 'late lamented' stages a 'come-back' and wants to kiss his wife. The idea is rich; but would the present incumbent allow it?

The complications are legion, some deadly, some funny.

But, above all, would the dead ones care for a fresh lease of life in this rascally world, after a taste of the Beyond? Will the as yet hazily guessed psychic changes produced by the shock of death roll back at the command of Science? Will this possibility tear up the long, painful process of Evolution and spell the doom of Man? Or will it usher in the millennium that the friends of man are striving for?

The answer is in the womb of the future.



The MISFORTUNES of Meena

17 AUG 1935

In the Previous Eleven Instalments.

Ramathilakam, a pretty young woman of the labouring class, alarmed at the depravity of her drunken husband, attempts to drown herself. Railway Police Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer rescues her and takes her over to Madras to restore her to her husband but finds that the husband had been locked-up for stabbing his Maistry in a drunken brawl. As Ramathilakam has nowhere to go, Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer leaves her under the care of an old quack-doctor at Saidapet. Sometime later, Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer has to return to the doctor for treatment. While staying at the doctor's house he falls in love with Ramathilakam.

A year later, Ramathilakam gives birth to a girl-baby and dies. Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer takes the baby, Meena, to his sister at Mayavaram. He cooks up a story about the parentage of the child.

Meena grows up in the Brahmin household but when she is ten years old the Dikshidar family learns the truth about her parentage. Rangaswamy had perforce to take away his daughter from the Brahmin family. Rangaswamy Iyer finds that people have somehow become aware of Meena's parentage and are unwilling to entertain any proposals for her marriage. He finally agrees to give her away to Mr. Somayajulu, a Telugu Brahmin of a Native State. Meena's letters to her father written from her husband's village reveal an amazing state of affairs. Meena is the fourth wife. The three previous wives are reported to have come to grief owing to the monstrosity of the husband who has been choosing and marrying wives from all corners of the country mainly with a view to offer them to inspecting officers and thus curry their favour to cover and condone his maladministration of the village. Alarmed at the news contained in Meena's letters, Rangaswamy Iyer proceeds to the village where Meena resides.

His son-in-law waylays him and threatens to kill him if he should attempt to rescue Meena from the village. Rangaswamy has to return to Madras. With the help of the Intelligence Department he arranges to have a notorious dacoit by name Maruti sent to the Nizam's State to rescue Meena. Maruti manages to join a dramatic troupe which is scheduled to stage the Ramayana in the village. Many of his men are at work. On the stage, when Maruti as Hanuman sets fire to Lanka, his men set fire to a number of houses in the village. In the confusion Maruti rescues Meena but without taking her away from the village.

He sends a cart as a decoy. The cart contains a female relative of the Somayajulu bound hand and foot. The

STORY BY
DIEILSVI
ILLUSTRATED BY
S E K A R

The Rescue of Meena

SOMAYAJULU pounced on Ella and gave the boy a vigorous shaking. "Tell me, son of an ass!" shouted he in rage, "what you are doing here and why you were following this cart!"

Ella remembered the instructions issued to him. He had to pretend fear and he did it well, wailing and quivering.

"We are waiting our time!" shouted one of Somayajulu's men. "To the Cross-Roads!" beckoned he.

"Aye, to the Cross-Roads!" agreed Somayajulu. "And if I ever catch that somnolent black-guard who put us on the wrong track, I'll wring his neck!" He turned to Gujji, who was squatting on the road. She was breathing heavily. "How came you to be in this cart, woman?" asked he.

Gujji choked with rage. "Where is she?" she asked, ignoring the question.

"We don't know. The man who acted as Hanuman is behind all this. He has kidnapped her. We set out on pursuit and near the Cross-Roads, we saw a bullock-cart. The oxen were unyoked. When we accosted the driver, he told us that a cart had turned this way and we came here. Who did this thing to you?"

"As you know," said Gujji, "I left for the house in the middle of the play according to your instructions. Gunda, who took me home, was very sore about his being prevented from witnessing the rest of the play. I allowed him to return to the play and bolting the front-door, I went into the back-yard. Three men pounced upon me, gagged me and tying me up, they put this *saree* over me and carried me to a cart. I wish I were dead!" And Gujji wailed over the humiliation of it all.

"That will do! Get into the cart! Let someone take charge of the cart! To the Cross-Roads!"

At the Cross-Roads, a council of war was held. "We know there is nothing in the road that proceeds to our village," said Somayajulu. "We know we were deliberately misled to traverse the south Khammapeth Road. The only inference is that our quarry has taken to one of the remaining two roads. Is it the east road or the west one? We will divide into two groups. I'll take charge of the group that will search the road going west. Bapaiya will head the group proceeding east. Get ready and show no mercy when you catch them!"

"What about the lady?" asked one of the men.

"I had forgot. Since you raised the point, you take her to the village in the cart. And the boy, too! Tie him up to a post in my house. To-morrow, I shall flay him alive."

The search party divided into two groups and hurried east and west. A man took charge of the cart, bade Ella sit by his side in the driver's seat and started north towards Warkal.

Barely had the cart traversed three miles, when the driver pulled up the oxen and brought the cart to a halt.

"What is the matter?" asked Gujji who was lying inside the cart.

"I don't know. I think I hear the distant rumble of a cart and the tread of many men. They are coming towards us."

"May be people who came to our village to see the *tamasha* now returning to their homes," said Gujji.

"I don't think so. Every one in the village is scared. Many think that Satan has been at work to-night. Satan or dacoits, no one would think of taking to the roads at this time of the night."

The man turned the cart, proceeded a few hundreds of yards and then leaving the road, he drove the cart into open ground. Parking the cart behind a thick bush and unyoking the oxen, he warned Ella.

"I am going to the road to see what it is all about. You stay right here. If you stir or attempt to run away, I shall smash your skull to smithereens."

Approaching the road, the man fell flat on his chest behind a bush and watched the road.

In a few minutes, a man came running. He was running easily and effortlessly like one who wasn't in a hurry. Ten minutes later, two men came running and they too were taking it easy. Fifteen minutes later, a crowd surrounding a cart appeared in the distance. The cart was being driven at a very fast pace.

"Help! Help!"

It was Ella shouting lustily. The cart and the men suddenly came to a halt. The men looked around bewildered. But the cry was not repeated as Gujji had effectively shut Ella's mouth with her hand. Ella bit her. She stuffed part of Meena's *saree* into his mouth. A scuffle ensued. The oxen which were leisurely chewing the cud rose from the ground, disturbed by the scuffle. At the tinkling of the bells round their necks, a man in the crowd on the road shouted, "This way! Over there, some one is hiding!"

Several men rushed towards the cart. Ella and Gujji were still engaged in a scuffle. One of the men separated them and peered into the face of Gujji and burst into loud laughter.

"Call Maruti!" he commanded.

Maruti came without being called. He was holding a man by the scruff of his neck and vigorously shaking his captive as a cat would shake a rat. The man was the driver of Gujji's cart.

"Hallo, my hero! What are you doing here?" asked Maruti of Ella.

"They caught me and put me along with this lady into this cart and were taking me back to the village."

"Hm! And which way did they go?"

"They divided into two groups and one group took to the east road, while another went west."

"How long ago was that?"

"More than an hour back."

"Good. Very good. Maruti's plans never go wrong. Tie this man to the cart-wheel somebody and tie him tight! I don't know really what to do with this lady. *Phew!* She is ugly and old. Wait a minute!"

Maruti went to the road, had a consultation with the occupant of the cart and returned.

"Turn the lady loose! No! Tie her to the other wheel! Ella! Someone inside the cart wants you!"

Ella ran to the cart which was standing in the middle of the road. It was dark inside the cart. He peered into it and found someone heavily wrapped in shawls and with a prodigious turban.

"You wanted me?" Ella began timidly, wondering who it was.

A peal of melodious laughter mocked at him. It was Meena!

"You!" exclaimed Ella.

"Yes. Is Gujji there and is she angry?"

But before Ella could answer, there was a command to move and the cart and men moved. Ella followed them with joy.

At the Cross-Roads, Maruti called a halt and harangued his men.

"Friends! Those of you who were skeptical of my original plans would have realised by now that I was right. Remember, to pursue is better than to be pursued. The village head-man and his rats have gone in pursuit of us, east and west. What is it that they pursue? Two empty carts! <If we had a mind, we can pursue them now. But that pleasure we must deny ourselves as we have a heavy responsibility on our shoulders. We must see that the contents of the cart reaches where it belongs. At the Cross-Roads here, our position becomes different. We no longer remain the pursuers. Our cart, under a strong escort, will now turn south. It is possible that any one of the two parties that have proceeded east and west may return, suspecting that our decoy was a blind; and if they should again take to the southern road, we would be pursued by them. Such an eventuality is remote. But this is war and we must arm ourselves against every possible danger. Therefore, I propose detaining here eight men. They will lie in ambush. If they see signs of the return of any one of

the two search-parties, and if the party should turn to take the south road, let them tackle the party showing no mercy. Let one of you, the fleetest of foot, bring me news, if anything should happen. If the enemy should proceed towards the village, do not disturb them or attract their attention. Are you ready?"

Maruti detailed eight men to stay at the Cross-Roads. Ella was overjoyed to find that he was not one of the eight.

From the moment the cart turned to the south-road a very fast pace was set to it and Ella found it difficult to keep the pace. He had to run. The men were silent and swift of foot. The route which they had to traverse had evidently been efficiently patrolled beforehand, for, at long intervals of the midnight march, a man would emerge from the bushes, hail them and wish them god-speed. On, on and on, the party marched all night until at about 2 A.M. they reached the outskirts of what looked like a big village. Maruti called a halt. He called one of the men and asked him, "Do you know the place?"

"Very well."

"See if the car is there and come back. Don't report your presence."

"Very good."

Maruti went near the cart and asked, "Why didn't you sleep, Sitamma?"

Meena's laughter rippled the surface of the silent night. "My name is Meena. How far have we to go? What is this place?"

"This is Khammapeth. We haven't very far to go."

"May I ask for something?"

"Certainly."

"Can I take Ella with me—if he would come."

"If? The blackguard would only be too glad. Lucky rascal!"

The man who was sent to scout, returned and said,

"It is there, Maruti!"

"Good. Stay here all of you. Ella, come here! Now then, get a move on there!" said Maruti to the cartman and the cart started on its way into the city.

After traversing several streets, the cart approached the market square. The square was deserted and silent. A car was standing there. In the driver's seat of the car, a man was sleeping. Another man was pacing the road to and fro, like one under the stress of intense excitement. He halted in his track and looked at the approaching cart. Maruti, approached him and slapped him on the shoulder.

"Head-Constable Iyah!"

"Where is she?" asked Head Constable Rangaswamy Iyer.

"Look inside!"

Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer looked inside the cart and caught a glimpse of the turban. He turned round in anger to Maruti exclaiming, "What joke is this?"

"Father!"

"Meena!"

Throwing off the turban and the shawls, Meena nimbly jumped down from the cart into the open arms of her father.

"The great Gods be thanked for bringing you back to me, my darling!" said Rangaswamy fervently, gathering Meena in his arms.

"And," said Meena with her head on his shoulders, "thanks be to Mighty Hanuman!"

"Yes, Maruti! I don't know how I can ever hope to repay you!"

"Well, I know!" said Maruti. "Give that man who is sleeping a kick in the seat of his back and get this contraption going. I hope it isn't the variety that splutters and stops in an emergency."

"It's a good car," assured Rangaswamy and turned to Meena with a smile. "But, my dear, why all this finery?"

Maruti laughed and gave the car a mighty kick that startled the driver out of his sleep.

"The Rakshasas had dressed Sitamma in her best so that Ravana's heart may be inflamed," said Maruti affecting his stage-manners. "They left Maruti out of count."

Rangaswamy turned to Meena, puzzled. "What is he saying?" asked he.

Meena laughed. "His Ramayana is getting rather mixed up. I was made to wear all these things as it was arranged to take me to the officer to night."

Rangaswamy took Maruti's hand and wrung it hard. "You are a gem! My life is yours!"

Command me whenever you like and I'll gladly lay it down for you!"

"That'll do. Get going now. Start the car!"

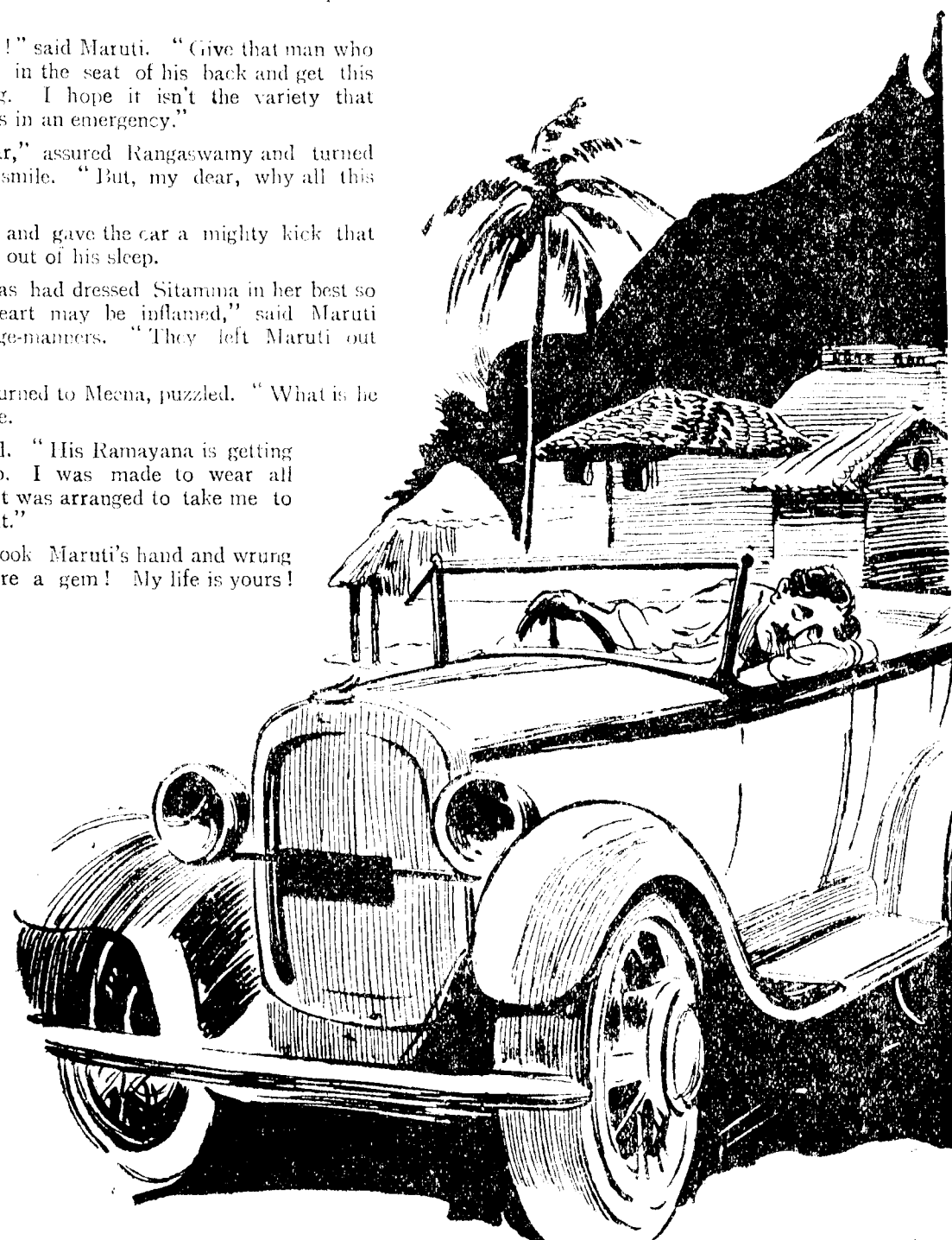
"Aren't we out of danger?" asked Meena.

"Not until you are within British territory."

"When do we see you again?"

"Let Sitamma command! Anjaneya is ever her slave."

"Seriously, I am asking you. When do we see you again?"



.....into the
of her father

"On Saturday at the Railway quarters in Bezwada."
"Don't fail to come, please!"
"Maruti never breaks his word."

The car was started. Ella climbed into the front-seat by the side of the driver, and Maruti opened the door for Meena.

She lingered and looked at him. Then suddenly she fell at his feet and caught hold of them. "My saviour!" she sobbed.

Brushing away a tear-drop from his eye, Maruti stooped down and picking her up as if she was a baby, he planted her on the back-seat of the car.

Two men came running and whispered into Maruti's ear. He frowned and turned to Rangaswamy. "Sure you can trust this car?" asked he.

"Quite. Why, what is the matter?"

"Your son-in-law! He is coming this way with his men!"

Meena stifled a scream.

"There, there, Sitamma! Don't get alarmed!" He turned to the men and asked, "What happened?"

"The Head-man's party which went east returned to the Cross-Roads after overtaking one of our empty carts," said one of the men who was covered with dust. "They waited for the other party and both the parties discussed the situation and took to the road leading to the village. One of our men followed them. You remember we tied the lady and the driver to the cart-wheels. They raised a hullabaloo and from what they told him, the headman guessed how he had been sent all along, on a wild goose chase. A man was sent to the village to organise and bring a strong party of men, while the headman is now on his way here with his men."

"How many of them has he?"

"Twenty."

"How long would they take to be here?"

"Less than two hours."

Maruti turned to Meena with a smile. "Have you ever thought of any special form of punishment, Sitamma, for your father's son-in-law?"

"No, why?"

"He is going to get it before sun-rise," said Maruti grimly.

"Please don't!" Meena pleaded. "I mean, I don't want you to take any further risks. Aren't we safe in this car?"

"I have no faith in these contraptions. If he enters Khammapeth, he will use all the available resources to pursue you. The telegraph, another car perhaps, the police and the whole lot of them—Very well, you can go! I'll tackle him."

"How?"

Maruti smiled. "How would you like me to tackle him?"

"Send him on another wild goose chase!"

"I'll, Sitamma, I will. Now, get going and God bless you!"

The car started. "Don't forget Saturday!" called Meena and Maruti waved back.

"I wish I had a daughter like that," sighed Maruti and turned to his men.

* * * *

In the railway quarters, within the station compound, Head-Constable Rangaswamy Iyer had been staying ever since he came to Bezwada to arrange for the rescue of Meena. Police Constable 526 had joined him later. Meena, when she arrived there without any mishap after leaving Khammapeth by car, was therefore pleasantly surprised to find Police Constable 526 there. He wept for sheer joy at the mere sight of her. A line-clear message was sent to Deputy Superintendent Sivaswamy Iyer announcing the arrival of Meena safely at Bezwada. Ella became one of the happy party and all were eagerly awaiting the Saturday.

Till late in the evening on Saturday there were no signs of Maruti. Everyone's spirit drooped and vague fears obsessed Meena. Ella was almost on the verge of tears, but he was bravely fighting them down. Police Constable 526 was out. Rangaswamy Iyer was at the Railway Station. It was dusk and Meena saw an old woman approaching their quarters. The woman had a basket on her hip.

"Want nice Brinjals, *Thulli*," the old woman asked of Meena, plaintively.

"No. We don't want anything."

"Quite sure?"

"Please go away!"

"You say you don't want anything. Don't say so. How about a Rama?"

"How about a what?"

"Rama: son of Dasaratha, Janaka's son-in-law, Sita's husband, Bharatha's brother, Hanuman's lord and master."

Meena called Ella. "Ella! Here is a woman who is evidently mad. Ask her to go away."

Ella came running and at sight of the old woman roundly abused her. "Go away you dirty old hag!" he ordered her.

The old woman shrugged her shoulders. "Yes my son!" she mocked at Ella, "we bring you into this world, and there comes a highly-mighty girl and you leave us and run after her. We are dirty and old and you call us hags. Shame on you! Have you any thought for your mother?"

"Who the devil are you?" asked Ella amazed.

"A dirty, old hag."

Ella turned to Meena. "She is not mad. She seems to know me. I have seen her somewhere before."

The old woman laughed and with a toss of her head, stood erect, shedding basket, wig, clothes and all.

It was Maruti, clad only in shorts.

"Maruti!" cried Ella and Meena in chorus.

"Aye, Maruti, selling Brinjals. But Ella, my lad, look, there is another dirty old hag selling onions. Bring her here!" And Maruti pointed to a figure silhouetted in the distance.

(Continued on page 16)

The French Revolution

by McNair

THIS revolution of France in 1779 could have been avoided that year. The whole question of whether they should have a revolution or not depended on just one person. That person was

Marie Antoinette (pronounced Mahe Anthvaney or something like that). This woman was a very beautiful one, (we guessed it) and, in addition, she was the Queen of France, at any rate, the wife of the King who bore the prosaic name of Louis XVI. These Kings of France were unimaginative people. One of them was christened Louis and he in turn named his son Louis II and so on *ad infinitum*. They never paused to think; they never wanted any variety. Monotony was their key-word. In contrast, what a variety of names is there among the Kings of England! William, 'Roof us', John, The Red rose, The White Rose (cf., Wars of the Roses) Charles, Edward, the Black, Richard, Cur de Lyons, The Orange William—

It is a good thing the French dynasty ended when it did. Otherwise by now we would have Louis plus enough Roman numerals to satisfy any school-master.

But coming to the Revolution itself, this Marie Antoinette was responsible for precipitating the event with her obstinacy and tactlessness. The people's committee sent her a deputation to request her to decide what food they should eat. The Queen said: "Bread". But they had no bread. "Very well, cakes then," was her answer. The Queen knew that the people did not like cakes. It was malice that prompted her to persist in giving the people a diet which not only did not contain enough vitamins and proteins for the French system but also was an article despised by the people who went under the name of Bourgeoise (pronounced Boorshva). The reputation went home dissatisfied and a date was fixed for the Revolution and invitations were issued forthwith (R.S.V.P.).

The Bourgeoise that is, the suburban type, were weepingly called *Canaille* by the aristocrats, (pronounced Kanai), and in their turn they retaliated with *à-devant* (pronounced see-devon) on the aristos.

Well, the Revolution was formally opened. First the people whose grievances the Royal party and the aristocrats had callously ignored, besieged a prison, known as the Bastille (pronounced Basthi), and liberated all the convicts and murderers who had suffered untold miseries and ains through what are known as *Letters de Cachet* (pronounced Lethrei di Catch it). These letters, or as Frenchmen like to spell it, lettres, were the only means of communication between the prisoners and their friends or relatives outside. The relatives had to throw up these *ny pellets* of paper up to the high windows where the prisoners were ready to 'catch it'. They rarely caught it, but the name is derived from this habit.

After storming the Bastille the people went and rested the King and the Queen and put them in prison. They also arrested many of the leading 'aristos'.

The leaders of the people at this time were many in number each succeeding another. Danton, Marat (pronounced more or less in the commonsense way), Robespierre (the final 'r' being ornamental).....There were women too, Madame Defarge, Charlotte Corday and others.

But the cleverest of them was Monsieur Guillotine (pronounced Missio Gillotheen), inventor, patriot. He it was that really created some ideal for the movement which otherwise would have drifted aimlessly. He invented his famous automatic machine which chopped anybody's head neatly; and what is more marvellous, which could chop off one's own head without undue inconvenience. M. Guillotine perfected his invention, patented it and presented it to his country. The country was grateful from the bottom of their—their, well the country was very grateful and rewarded him sumptuously by trying the machine first on himself. It was universally admitted that the guillotine was a great improvement. The public executioner made a touching speech.

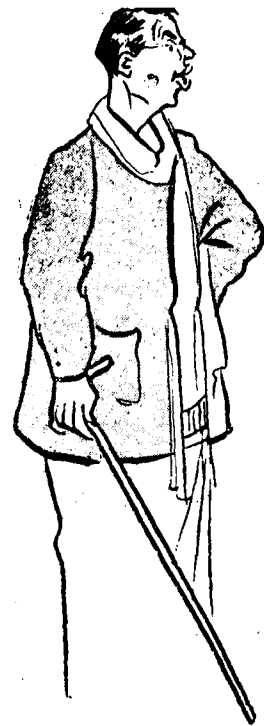
As if this were not enough, the Paris municipality provided certain carts, which were called Tumbrils, by the noise they made on the hard, cobbled streets. This guillotine and these tumbrils formed a starting point for the activities of the members of the Revolution.

Now Science was just then lifting its head. An inquiring mind had replaced a quiescent one. People not unnaturally wished to know something more about 'blue blood' which they had heard so much about. They therefore took the King, the Queen and the 'aristos' and tried to find out whether they had blue blood. No, the guillotine was stained an ordinary red. Nothing exceptional then! After this the people who had abandoned all their dukedoms and Rao Bahadurships and who had started calling one another 'citizen' (pronounced citoyen) waited for a time—in fact till September. It was April.

Meanwhile England had not been idle. Her Press was busy. Her Fox and her Burke were in the thick of the fight. England was furious at France for killing the King and the Queen. She showered diplomatic protests as usual on France but France pertinently asked England what the latter did with a certain King of hers, by name King Charles I. England grew more furious at this odious comparison. She said the French were regicides or asides or something and that she would wage war on France immediately. France asked what for, and England answered, to—to, to set an example. France asked of what, and for whom and England stiffly turned her back on her.

The statesmen of England were unanimous in condemning France. Dash it, killing a King, it was simply not done. King Charles? That was different. Charles was so—so different from Louis and moreover they had till the last done the right thing by Charles. Had they not employed an executioner, and loaned an axe? The

12



The Madrassi

The Spoken

MY fault, I admit; but not entirely. I am culpable only to the extent that I happened to set the ball rolling. Its trajectory was beyond my control.

There was hardly any reason for him to indulge in a patronising smile and put on an expansive air. But, you know, Kohli comes from the Punjab; and his was the land we were living in at the moment.

"That's it," he commenced, "you Madrassis have no sense of pronunciation. In fact, if you want to spot a Madrassi, there are two ready-reckoners. M and N. He will invariably say "Yem" and "Yen" instead of "em" and "en". There are other words also that betray....."

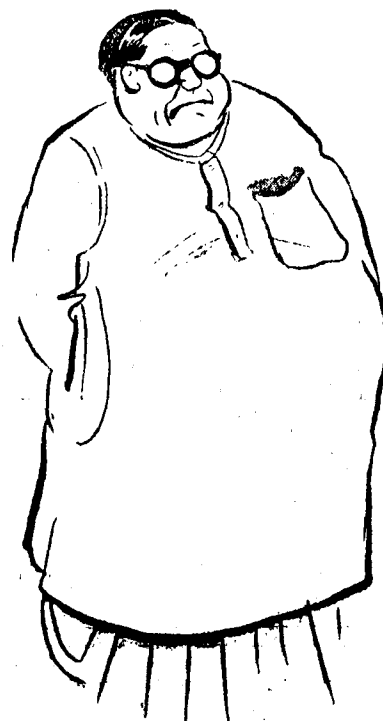
Before Kohli had his say, Banerjee cut in.

"Those who live in glass houses," he moralized, "shouldn't practise stone-throwing."

Kohli was quick to a fault.

"Well, what's wrong with my pronunciation?" he asked.

"As far as I know," replied Banerjee, "there doesn't seem to be anything right with it: At any rate, the Land of the Five Rivers does not hold a monopoly for correct pronunciation. Exhibit No. 1 is 'sokool' for 'school', No. 2 is



The Bengali

The issue arose almost out of nothing. We were five of us doing an evening walk on the hills: Kohli, Banerjee, Dwivedi, Jagat Prasad and the mover.

A little boy interrupted us to give us a handbill. I chanced to be the first recipient of the honour. For the benefit of my friends I read out the contents, "Y.M.C.A. Whist Drive."

"Just say it again," urged Kohli.

I looked at him and discerned mischief lurking in his eye. I ignored it and repeated, "Why. Yem. See. A. Whist Drive."

(To acquaint you with the facts of the case I have given the spoken version of the words in question.)

Word—

by R. Jagannathan

Sketches by Mali

satate' for 'state,' No. 3 'issegetry' for 'secretary' and No. 4....."

Dwivedi decided that he was the sore need of the moment.

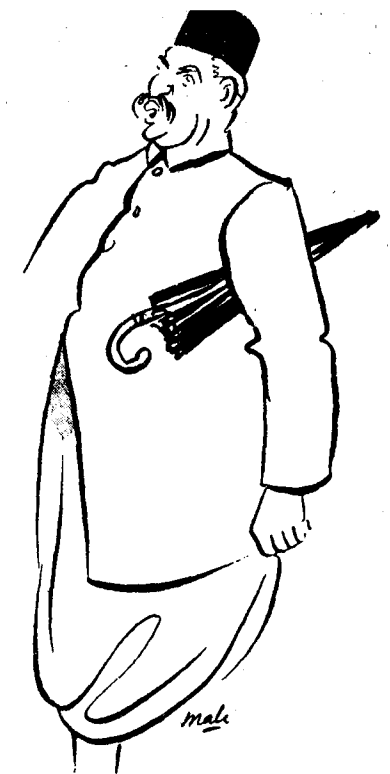
"Bengal may be impeccable so far as asgullas are concerned, but not certainly where King's English is the question. The O" complex of the Bengalis is notorious. To you, Banerjee, why does Raman become Bomon. Barkat Ali become Borkot Oli, Saraswati become Shorshoti? Another instance; can you pronounce the word which is spelt veterinary without bursting your lips and exploding a 'bhetirary'?"

"I shall answer you presently," vouchsafed Jagat Prasad, "by another question. Why do you Guzerathis arrive at a sorry predicament when it comes to saying volume or value? Why do you, like suffocated babes, pant for breath and utter 'vholume' or 'vhalue'?"

"Because," I ventured to put in, "the Gangetic Valley bounds in pojjez, meajurement, istop, ischool etc. Because, if you care to look

on it with a perceiving eye, there is nothing sacrosanct about pronunciation. I will even go so far as to say that there is no such thing as correct pronunciation."

"But, surely," Kohli corrected me, "there's the Oxford Dictionary to guide us with illustrations."



The Gujarathi



The Punjabi

"The Oxford Dictionary," I replied, "will not operate beyond the confines of Oxford, if it cannot swallow regional variations. You know the notorious fact about English spelling, that it is irrational. I tell you now that the thing called correct pronunciation does not exist. If anyone says it does exist, you may, with a clean conscience, call him a snob, and something else." And as to our difference this evening, think for a moment: Are they vital? Isn't it just an instance of Provincial Autonomy in action?

Shadography

With these fingers I can throw
Magie shadows on the wall;
I can make them come and go,
Two times twenty things in all.

I can make a Polar Bear
Seated like a king alone
On a charming carved chair
Which is nicer than a throne.

I can make a young Giraf
Which I hardly know to spell:
You will almost hear him laugh
For I make him rather well.

I can make a Crocodile
Of the sort you never saw:
You can almost see the smile
Breaking from his ugly jaw.

With five fingers I can shape
That which gives me real pleasure:
The queer figure of an ape
With a tail you cannot measure.

Then, with both my hands, of course,
In a minute, as it were,
I can make a Magie Horse
Rushing swiftly through the air.

And a Tiger, too, who is
Fiercer than the Bengal type;
On that mighty form of his
You can count each yellow stripe.

I can make a Camel, and
Make it move in real style
Right across the burning sand
Of Arabia for a mile.

I can also make a Bull
Which nobody dare control;
See, his two eyes round and full,
Terrible as red-hot coal.

And an Elephant who goes
Swinging a great silver bell
Through a city no one knows,
To what city, who can tell?

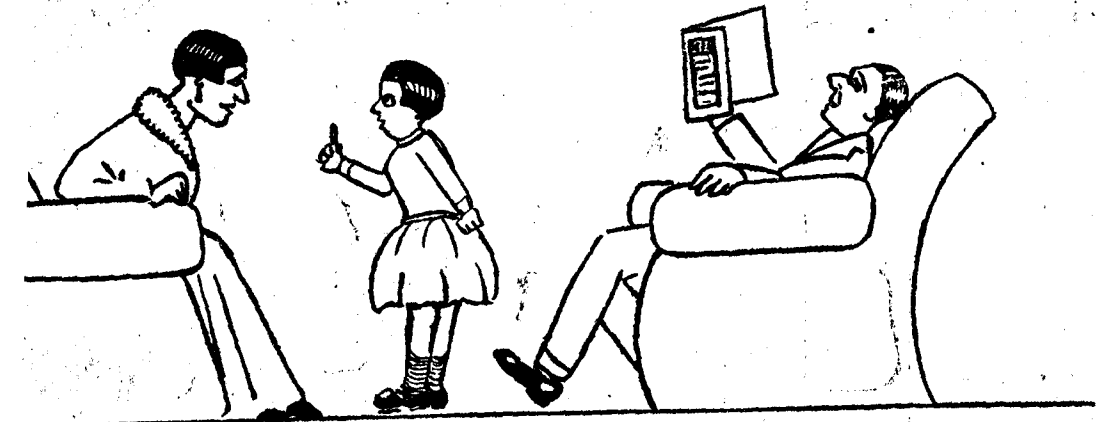
See, what I am making now!
Any one can recognise
That to be our neighbour's Cow
With her sad and gentle eyes.

I could make all creature-kind,
But, of course, the simple fact is
Being of the lazy kind,
I'm a little out of practice.

Very rarely, my good friend!
Do I call up my creation,
But its figures much depend
On your own imagination.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

Where Does he Come in?



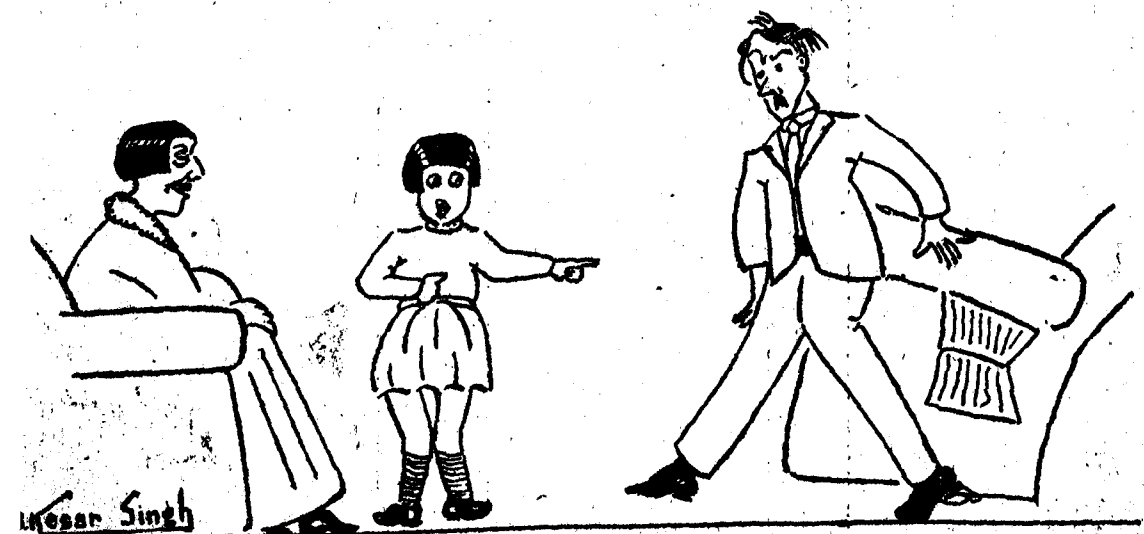
CHILD:—Mummy, does God give us food?

MOTHER:—Yes dear, God gives us the food we eat.



CHILD:—Does he give us clothes and all?

MOTHER:—Certainly, he gives everything.



Then where does daddy come in?



Love Mv

all the rouge rubbed off my lips with—or by—a moustache—a hateful moustache! Why, even when you whisper in my ear it feels as if an ear-drum is trying to get at my ear-drum!”

This was coming it a bit too strong. But, although I knew it was very little use arguing with Mary on the subject of hirsute upper lips, I resolved to try and win her over.

“But, Mary darling,” I said persuasively, “just think of the uses of moustaches.”

“I can think of none,” she snorted again. “They’re good for catching fleas and things.”

I was not going to give in too soon. “If we marry and at some time or other we are absolutely broken then you will see what a moustache can do!”

Mary made a funny noise with her pretty lips.

“That’s undignified,” I said.

“So’s a moustache,” she said firmly. “Makes you look like a dog with mange and its tail bitten off.”

“Now,” I went on, “imagine you and I married and without a penny to our names, married but on the rocks.”

“It’s sure to happen if you persist in knocking about with that bit of camel hair on your lip,” she said uncompromisingly.

“Nothing to eat,” I continued loftily, “nothing to drink. At our feet, a horde of children,” here Mary had the decency to blush, “all crying for food.”

“A boy and a girl,” stated Mary firmly, “that’s all. You’re a beast to think of hordes of children. I’m sure you were a cattle driver at some time in your life.”

“What,” I went on as if I hadn’t heard her, “what would we do then if I had cut my moustache off?”

“Sing all together,” said Mary, “that famous Dinky song:—

‘Disturb it not, but let it rot,
Way down in Tennessee.’

“Your callous attitude,” I declared, my Oxford accent coming to the fore, “makes these beautiful trees around us here in the park and the beautiful birds in the trees seem like a nightmare.”

“Behold!” said Mary. “Shelley hath risen again!”

“MOUSTACHES!” snorted Mary to me. “Why do you men wear them?”

I delicately fingered the adornment that flourished beneath my nose. I was very proud of my moustache, although it did, at times, remind me of a tooth-brush. But I was also very fond of Mary.

“They make us look distinguished,” I explained weakly.

“Distinguished!” exclaimed Mary with a note in her voice that convinced me that she was going to start telling me something very unpleasant. “Why, if you could only see yourselves as others see you, you’d guillotine those awful things on your upper lips as soon as you could. I have a strong suspicion that you’d even stand still and let goats chew them off for you. Apart from being a very effective grease-trap when a man is drinking soup, I don’t see what earthly use a moustache is.”

“Is that why you haven’t let me kiss you yet,” I asked plaintively, “although we were engaged a month ago?”

She nodded emphatically.

“Yes. You’ve hit the cork on the head with the cork-screw. I positively object to having my teeth cleaned and

Moustache

by John A. Henry

Illustrated by Rogers

In the distance a band was playing. The spot in the park where we were sitting was quiet and lonely.

“What would we do,” I repeated, “if I had cut off my moustache? Starve and die unhappily! That’s what we’d do.”

“How d’you make that out?” asked Mary, her pretty face curious.

“Well, the children would be miserable because I wouldn’t have a moustache that they could chew and play with; you’d be miserable because you’d have no moustache that you could stroke with compassion and pity, and—and—”

“Don’t be an ass!” said Mary. “Cut it off. Remove it. Throw it away. Wash it down the drain-pipe. Bottle it and send it to Hitler. Do anything you like with it as long as you take it from off your face.” She paused for breath. “Otherwise,” here she lifted a finger threateningly, “I’ll not marry you!”

“But darling—” I began.

“Not another word,” her pretty lips formed the dogmatic words. “I’ll meet you here to-morrow evening at seven o’clock, and if it’s not off by then—well—good-bye to those ‘hordes’ of children!”

Giving vent to Mary a pitiful groan, and letting fall a sly tear or two, I removed my moustache the next morning. I felt that I was parting with an old, valued friend. I’d had it for so long that I had often convinced myself that I had been born with a moustache.

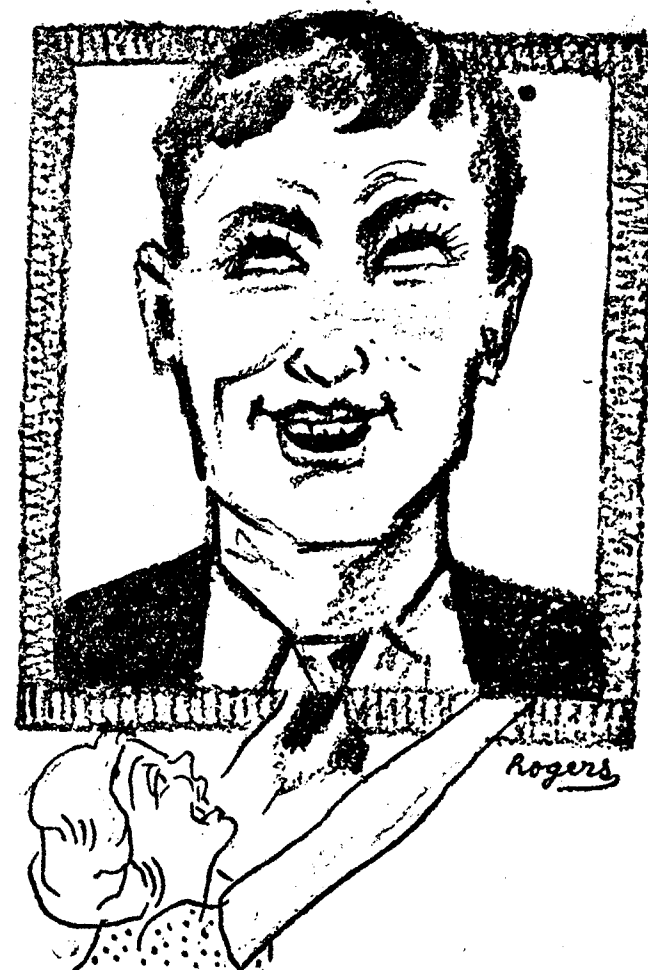
Mary’s face lit up wonderfully when I approached our garden seat in the Park at seven o’clock the same evening.

“Ah!” she breathed as she kissed me, “it’s gone!”

“Alas!” I groaned and just at that moment felt a heavy hand on my shoulder. I looked up into the face, heavy and stern, of a man who must have come over the grass with a peculiarly noiseless tread.

“I want you,” he said. He was in civilian clothes, but I knew at once that he was a policeman.

“Slick Jimmy,” he addressed me, “alias Cut-throat Cuthbert, we’ve been searching for you for weeks in connection with the Cucumber Murder Case and several others. And now we’ve got you! Are you going to



come quietly or will I have to drag you along by the ears?”

“What the hell!” I said.

“My God!” gasped Mary, clinging to me. “This is mistake, officer!”

The big man took a photograph from his pocket.

“Look at that!” he commanded maliciously.

We both looked, and Mary gave a little scream. For the photograph depicted an exact likeness of me without my moustache.

Of course, I spent the night in the cell. But I was soon liberated. Cut-throat Cuthbert was caught twenty miles away.

“Darling,” said Mary to me the moment I saw her after my release, “I think—er—that—er—”

“Yes?” I said eagerly.

“That if you want to marry me, you’d better wear one of those exquisite moustaches,” she said softly, “or else we’ll have you being arrested every other day!”

THE END

The Lady In Dispute

by C. V. Ramani

It was dusk. The park was empty except for the two young men and their good-looking companion, who sat on a bench under a spreading tree. One of the young men wore a grey suit, and the other, a blue blazer and white flannel trousers.

They were talking very earnestly, in low voices. Their companion was silent.

Suddenly, the young man in the grey suit raised his voice.

"I tell you, you shan't have her!" he cried.

"Who the devil are you, to say that?" questioned the other hotly.

"Well, it was I who first saw her, and made friends with her. She was entirely mine, until I introduced you to her. So, as the first friend, I have a greater right to her than you," replied the other.

"I don't care for all that rigmarole," was the contemptuous rejoinder. "I mean to have her, and I shall have her, even if I have to fight you for it."

"Bah!" said the other scornfully.

It looked as if they would come to blows. But the young man in the blue blazer ignored the insult.

"Look here," he said more peacefully, "I love her more than you do. And I must have her, whatever the cost."

"Oh! You love her more than I do, do you?" sneered the other. "Pray, how do you arrive at that conclusion? Who was it, my fine friend, that took her home and gave her food and lodging, when she wandered the streets in the rain that night? Who was it that fed her from then, and gave her little presents every day? Who was it, you chump? You or I? It was I; and yet you have the cheek to tell me that you love her more than I do. Go and tell that to the marines you poor fish!" finished the young man, on a note of disrespect.

"How dare you talk to me like that, you monkey-faced blighter?" burst out the young man in the blue blazer, his face twitching with anger.

"Oh, shut up, you blackguard!" retorted his late friend.

"You rotten swine!"

"You dirty cad!"

The air grew hot at this verbal fire.

By this time, both the young men were on their feet, with their coats off. Anger, mad and passionate, sparkled in their eyes. Their faces were livid with emotion. They looked as if they would murder each other at any moment. Still, their little lady friend sat silent! She looked from one to the other with anxious eyes, but she did not interfere.

"Come on, you white-livered skunk and let us see what you can do," challenged the young man in blue.

Suddenly the young man in the grey suit, temporised. "Look here," he said mildly, "there is no use our fighting over her. As you say, we both love her. But, after all, dash it, she has also a say in the matter. Let us therefore, leave her to choose for herself. I think that will be the best way out, what do you say?"

"Right! I am game," answered the other after a moment. "Good! We will do like this. We shall both stand about ten yards from the bench and call her. If she comes to you, you can take her, and if she comes to me, she is mine for ever. See? And to make it all fair and above-board, let us toss to decide who calls first. Do you agree?"

"O. K.," said the young man in blue.

Accordingly, with great seriousness they tossed a coin. It fell. The young man in grey won. He walked ten paces off from the bench, called the lady with a whistle and a wink. She jumped down from the bench, and ran to him. He put his arms round her fondly, and tried to kiss her. She wriggled out of his embrace, and ran to the other young man. He also tried to kiss her and failed. The little lady went and sat exactly between them.

"Oh, damn!" swore both the young men at the same time. They were in a fix. For a long time they sat and wondered, just what to do. Obviously their girl-friend liked them both equally.

It was an awkward situation.

At long last the young man in the blue blazer broke the silence.

"I have it!" he exclaimed, "it is a peach of an idea. It is very simple, too, and both of us, can be satisfied. It is like this: you keep her for a week, and then I will keep her for a week. And so on alternately. It is a jolly good solution, don't you think?"

The young man in grey did not speak for a long time. He seemed loath to part with her even for a short week. The other looked at him anxiously, eagerly. The little lady hung her head and remained silent! Then, "Alright" came the muttered answer.

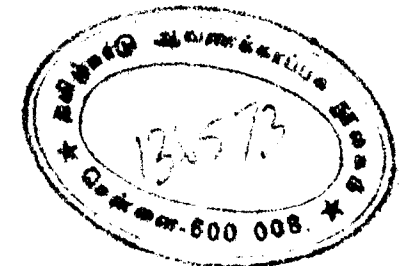
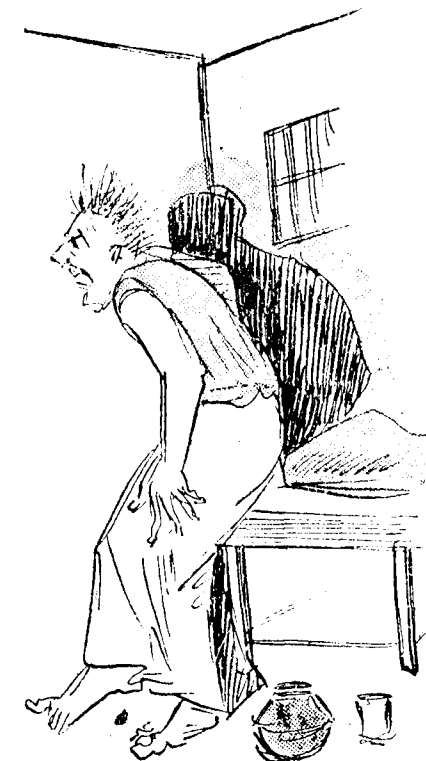
Thus, the affair settled amicably, the two young men, now friends again, shook hands, and walked off side by side towards their home. And she? She trotted happily between them, seemingly quite satisfied with this arrangement.

Presumably the ethics of the matter did not trouble her in the least. For you see, the little lady in dispute was a lovely wire-haired terrier.

A Ghost Story—

by Miss Leila

Illustrated by Schulz



seemed to haunt every corner and nook of the house, while the stillness of the night was broken by the monotonous hooting of owls and the weird cries of the animals and insects that searched for food at night. Tom lay sleepless. He tossed on his bed wishing he would soon fall asleep—but in vain. The old clock in the hall struck twelve.

THE night was dark and shadows were creeping around the corners of the house. Moonlight crept in through the little home that lay in absolute quietness. Inside, in a comfortably furnished room, two young men were chatting in loud, gay tones, as if to dispel the quietness of their environment. These two men were David and Tom—cousins and the best of friends. David, as was his custom, was relating many exciting tales that held his cousin's attention the whole while. At the present moment the story-teller was relating a story about a haunted house.

"You believe in ghosts!" exclaimed Tom in an incredulous tone. "Frankly," resumed Tom, "I never believe in ghosts. I always regard people who see these supernatural beings as possessing a great amount of imagination. A sane, sensible man never sees a ghost, though some out of mere curiosity will give much to behold one."

"My dear fellow, I really think you do not know what you are saying! Why, man, even great men believe in ghosts. I bet you a rupee, you will see a ghost one of these days!" retorted the other.

"Right, 'tis a bargain!" replied Tom, while his eyes twinkled at the thought of the money he supposed he would get.

For a while both the men talked over old times and then as the clock struck ten, went to bed. The shadows

Unnatural noises began to assail the restless man. He imagined a thousand things around him. Though a strong-willed, practical individual by nature, Tom found it hard to disbelieve in the forms that slowly gathered before him—forms that were menacing and cruel in themselves. "Hark! What was that—a footstep? Ye gods, defend me now! What can this mean? Who can be walking about the place at this unearthly hour?" So the unfortunate man soliloquized. Beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead as he saw the door slowly opening. A tall, slim figure, draped in pure white, with only two slits open for the eyes, stood before him. Slowly this creature advanced and each step brought terror to Tom. Poor man! How he wished he was once again safe in his own home than in this ghost-haunted bachelor's place. Would the apparition never stop! It had reached his bed and placed a hand, cold as death, on his frightened face. Desperately, he tried to cover his face in his blankets. Then Tom lost consciousness.

When he awoke, it was already day. Tom got up and went to his cousin's room. David lay sleeping with an innocent, peaceful look on his handsome face. Tom's eyes wore a startled, incredulous look; for, beside his cousin, lay a white cloak with two slits.

"Dave, old man," said Tom shamefacedly, "I congratulate you. You lucky devil, you win the bet after all!"

THE END

25

The Spur Tank

Murder—

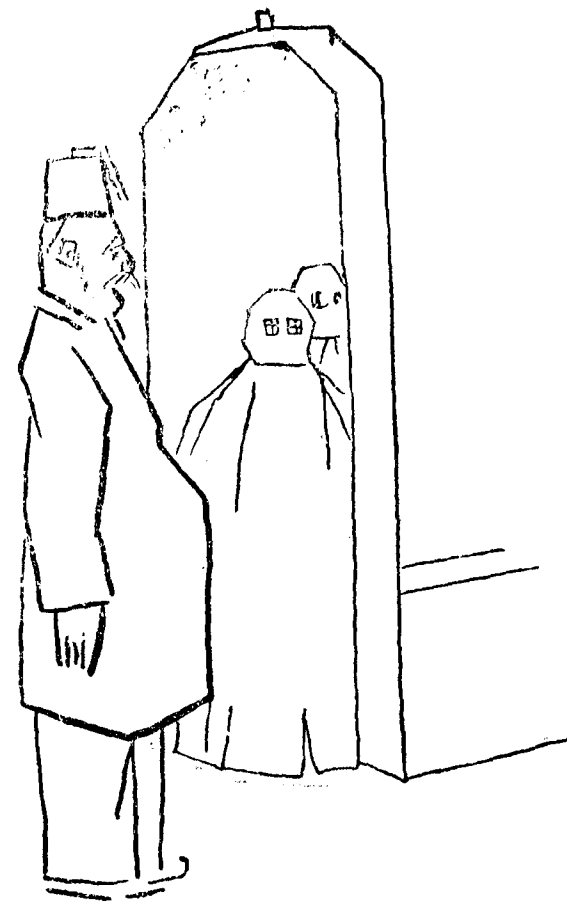
by 'Narak A. Nurak'
Illustrated by Bahadurje

It was Kuppan, the servant of the deceased, Gopal Chetty, who raised the alarm. The neighbours, living close to the scene of murder, at the border of Spur Tank, between the Tuberculosis Hospital and Chetpat railway station, ran up hearing the cry. They found Gopal Chetty lying dead, face downwards, on the wet grass, and the attache case which he usually carried was found by the body, open and rifled. It was about 11 p.m. The police arrived on the scene and took Kuppan into custody as it was conjectured that he was the only man likely to murder the deceased.

Kuppan's version slightly perturbed the police. He said he was innocent. After closing the shop on Egmore High Road at the usual time, his master and he had proceeded in the direction of his master's house on McNicholl's Road near Chetpat railway station. But when they were about to step into the Spur Tank Maidan, a Mohammedan who had purchased some jewels from his master for Rs. 200/- that day, had accosted them and requested that Kuppan be sent to Egmore railway station to bring a hand-bag he had left in the station master's room. His master had agreed on the assurance that the Mohammedan would escort him home where Kuppan was asked to take the bag. At the railway station the servant found that no bag had been left with the station-master. He had then rushed back only to find his master lying dead near the rifled hand-bag which had contained about Rs. 2000/- in cash and Rs. 3000/- worth of jewels. On seeing the body, he had cried out. He had served his master for over ten years faithfully. The relatives of the deceased had vouched for the fidelity of Kuppan and had even pleaded that Kuppan was not likely to have done the dastardly act.

Yet, the police with their mechanical methods begotten of ordinary routine, stuck on to the guilt of Kuppan and began to collect evidence in that direction. A search of Kuppan's house ended in a failure and nothing incriminating was found. Other enquiries went to show that the servant had no financial worries and that there was no motive for him to murder his master. The police were flustered. In the absence of any other possible theory, unhappy Kuppan continued to be in custody.

The post-mortem examination of the dead body showed that death was due to an injury on the back of the skull, just below the cranium, which must have been caused by an instrument which though soft, must have been fairly heavy. It was at this stage, when no possible theory could be trotted out and the police were restively champing their official bits that the Deputy Commissioner of Egmore division consulted Mr. Bulla Shama Rao, the criminologist and amateur detective who had already won fame as an astute sleuth.



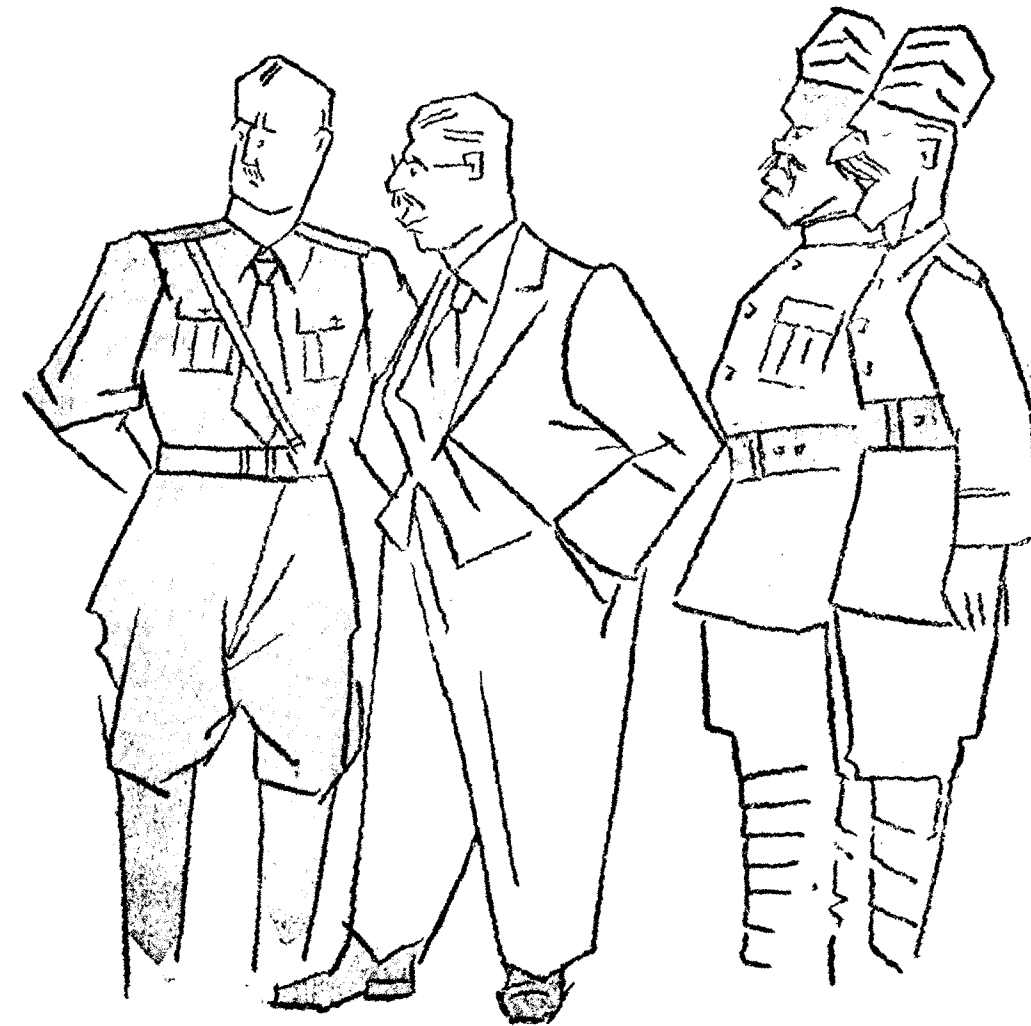
When the Deputy Commissioner called on Shama Rao at his chambers in George Town, the former smiled at the officer and his eyes twinkled mirthfully.

"You have come in connection with the Spur Tank murder case. Do you know that the victim was sand-bagged?" asked the detective.

"Sand-bagged!" exclaimed the Deputy Commissioner with a touch of sarcasm. "Whatever is that?"

"Well," explained Shama Rao genially, "it is a method of killing followed by the South Sea Islanders who bash their victims on the head with a bag filled tight with sand. A heavy blow with this weapon drives the skull bones into the brain without leaving any perceptible injury outside. This method, as far as I know, has never been adopted in India. I am of opinion that an educated man who has read about this had a hand in this murder. Poor Kuppan whom you have in custody is innocent."

"I agree," replied the police head. "About his guilt I have serious doubts, for, the station-master proved that



he did ask for a hand-bag on the night of the murder. We really want your help to trace the murderer."

"I am with you and shall willingly take up the investigation, provided I get a carte blanche and none of your underlings poke their interfering noses into my brew."

"Sure," agreed the Deputy Commissioner much relieved, "we shall give you all possible help."

The Police officer left.

Mr. Shama Rao lighted his pipe and sat on his office chair, thoughtfully sucking in copious smoke. His mouth puckered as he arranged the plan of investigation in his mind. He whistled softly and noted something in his note-book.

Next morning, the detective went to the scene of murder. He deputed the three Constables detailed for his help to search round the place for any weapon that may be seen. He was sure that after the murder, the culprit was not likely to take away with him the heavy sand bag or something of that nature, and that in all probability the weapon would be somewhere at the scene. His conjecture proved correct, for, one of the constables found under a cactus bush, a lady's hose filled with sand and sewn up tightly at the top. The find drew a triumphant smile from the sleuth. He felt that with the discovery his task of tracking the offender was easier. The weapon was heavy and lethal enough to drive the thickest part of the skull into the brain.

On examining the contents of the bag, the detective was intrigued to see a few bits of light-blue paper mingled

with the sand. He took up a bit. It was the top portion of a letter-paper with printed address on it. The bit of paper showed the following details.

No. 48.
K. Kutta Chetty,
Oil seeds merchant.
42, Choolai Street,
Park Town,
Madras.
8th Jan. '35.

Shama Rao carefully inserted this bit of paper in his note-book, got out of his office and whistled for a taxi.

At 42, Choolai St., Kutta Chetty was at first reluctant to give out the details. But by tactful coaxing the oil-seed merchant referred to his files and informed him that letter No. 48 was addressed to his purchasing Agent, Soman Pillay, who was then in Coimbatore district, advancing money to the cultivators for ground-nuts, and that the Agent was living at 17, Pandaram St., in Coimbatore. The Agent had been away for over a month and to his knowledge had not returned to Madras after he left. Thanking the merchant, Shama Rao returned to his office.

After sending a note to the Deputy Commissioner about the progress of his investigations, the sleuth took train to Coimbatore.

A week later the Deputy Commissioner got a wire from Shama Rao in rather cryptic language. It ran:

Bird spotted start immediately with bracelets.
Shama Rao

The Deputy Commissioner hurried to Salem and met the detective at his hotel.

"You have been very prompt," greeted Shama Rao. "But have you the heart to arrest a gosha lady?"

"A gosha lady! By Jove!" exclaimed the Police head. "What do you mean?"

"Yes; a gosha lady and that a rich party," replied the detective mirthfully. "Why not we do it now and get it over?"

"There is no snag anywhere, I hope?"

"The arrest is on your responsibility. Are you prepared to take the consequences in case the bird is found to be innocent and a dreadful cackle results?"

"Right ho! I am your man and I am prepared to face the music," agreed the Commissioner.

"That's the stuff, my boy. I can make a man of a woman."

An hour later, a detached house at Suramangalam, a Mohammedan abode, was raided by the detective and the police party. A brawny Mohammedan servant of the house was directed by the police to ask all gosha ladies within to file out one by one into a vacant room behind the house for the purpose of conducting a search in the house. It was also ordered that all the ladies may put on their *boorkas* but it was essential that they should walk out in front of the police.

The servant went in. There was sound of excited talk from within. Shama Rao winked at the D. C. and puffed stormily at his cigarette. He detailed two of his policemen to be at hand in case a scuffle ensued. Eventually the women began to walk out one by one, all covered from head to foot in white flowing *boorkas*. The Deputy Commissioner was all on edge. He was afraid that after all the police may be letting loose a hornet's nest about their heads.

As the women walked out, Shama Rao suddenly pounced upon one and held her tight by the shoulders as if in a vice. The constables were ordered to tear the covering of the face. There was confusion and the other women let out a joint and cumulative scream. The Deputy Commissioner was aghast.

The removal of the veil disclosed the face of a Mohammedan youth who looked balefully at his captors. He suddenly whipped out a long dagger and aimed it at Shama Rao's heart. The detective cleverly hit the hand that held the knife with the butt-end of his revolver and the dagger fell to the ground. In an instant the policemen caught the man and pinioned his hands behind him.

"Let the hand-cuffs do their duty," ordered Shama Rao with a voice as arrestive as a pistol shot.

The iron bracelets clicked and the prisoner was led out.

"Now for some third degree methods without the contusion-causing stunts," observed Sama Rao smiling and offered a cigarette to the Deputy Commissioner.

"You are asking him to confess?" queried the D. C.

"No, I shall just make him follow my clues to enlighten you about his guilt," replied the detective.

The Deputy Commissioner and Shama Rao seated themselves on a bench in the verandah of the house and the captive was made to stand before them.

"You are an educated man?" asked the detective with a fierce light smouldering in his eyes.

"Yes."

"Rather fond of thrillers?"

"Pardon. Oh! thrillers, yes."

The prisoner grimaced in utter fear of his questioner. He gaped at the apparent irrelevant talk. But the detective plied him with relentless questions with the quickness of shots from a machine gun.

"Now, don't confess at a stretch. Only answer my questions and you are safe. You lost your job at Salem Mills as you were suspected of complicity in the murder of your enemy, Mahdi Khan?"

"No. Yes."

"Then you went to Coimbatore and stayed at 17, Pandaram street?"

"Yes."

"You purchased a pair of lady's stockings from Sams and Company and this is that pair," continued the sleuth displaying a pair of lady's stockings. The prisoner looked at the stockings and shuddered. He began to sweat like an over-worked julka hack. He groaned.

(Continued on page 31)

The Letters of Private Joyfull

61. The Mutiny Veteran.

Illustrated by Mali

Madras, 10th August, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER,

I was sitting in the barrack-room the other afternoon, trying to read the Essays of Elia, while Tiny Hopkins practised on the flute. Tiny Hopkins has lately gone in for one of these instruments, and evidently hopes to become a modern counterpart of the Great God Pan. He sits on his bed puffing like a grampus, with a soulful expression irradiating his rugged countenance. All this expenditure of soul seems sadly wasted on the production of a succession of wails and shrieks.

Tiny was playing 'The Cat Among the Chickens', one note at a time, and at each note Boggins groaned twice. There were many false notes.

The ear-torture ceased, and Tiny gazed doubtfully at his sheet of music. "Here, Boggins," he said, "what do I have to do when I come to a part marked 'Refrain'?"

"Follow the instructions," said Boggins spitefully.

The Great God Pan looked up suspiciously, and Boggins shut up. Tiny is a heavyweight boxer, and to make it worse, he is very religious, so that you cannot even swear at him.

"Come on, Joyfull," said Boggins. "Let's leave him to his misery, and go and visit Corporal Bangs."

Corporal Bangs is a veteran of the Indian Mutiny, and he is over ninety years of age. He lives here in a little house in the suburbs. He is looked after by an old Indian lady whom he married many years ago. You always see her sitting on a little stool on the verandah, smoking her hubble-bubble. She never speaks, and her face is covered with wrinkles. But from little things I have noticed, I think she makes a very good wife for the poor old corporal.

"Hullo, Ma," said Boggins, "is the corporal at home?"

You will be interested to hear that the word 'Ma' is used in these parts, just the same as we use it in our village. A number of the simple expressions out here are the same as our own, although they are not words that you will find in dictionaries. For instance, in Appu's village I once heard a man calling to a cat, and to my

astonishment he said, "Puss, puss, puss!" exactly like one of our village housewives.

People say that this is because of the remote common origin of Indian and European languages, whereby a few homely terms have been preserved unchanged. I notice that when we use various dialect words meaning 'brother' when addressing Indian cronies, they generally have a similar word which means the same thing in their language. The use of such words is comically appropriate, as it suggests the verbal hostility, yet underlying mutual interest, which exists between brothers. A lot of the hostility between Indian and English people is really only verbal. Sensible chaps on both sides are aware of the benefits which may be derived from mutual association, though they do not always find it politic to admit it.

To enter Corporal Bangs' house is like visiting a by-gone India. Our greeting to the old lady on the verandah was a kind of formality, as she neither moved nor answered. Yet, by the expression of her face, we understood that we were welcome, and could go into the sitting-room and talk to the corporal. I have noticed that a certain type of elderly Indian lady generally has this remarkable power of communicating her thoughts without moving or speaking.

"Is that you, comrades?" called the old soldier, from his arm-chair in the sitting-room. "Come in. I'm hanged if I can see you properly. It's very dark in here. The sun doesn't shine as brightly as it used to, when I was a young man. I wonder how you got past the recruiting-sergeant? They enlist mere lads into the army nowadays."

"Well, corporal, how old were you when you took the Queen's Shilling?" asked Boggins, handing the old man a packet of his favourite tobacco; a very rank kind you can buy in the bazaar.

"Thank you kindly," said the veteran, "though this tobacco isn't what it used to be. When I was a young man, a couple of whiffs of it fairly took you by the throat, but nowadays there's no bite to it. What was it you asked?"

"How old were you when you enlisted?"

"You needn't shout. I can hear quite well. Only people mumble so nowadays. People spoke plainer when I was a young man. Well, I don't rightly know

how old I was. I never learned to read or write till I joined the army. I reckon I was about sixteen years old. A fine strapping man I was—not an undersized infant like you boys—no offence meant, of course.”

“Of course not, Corporal. Did you shrink in size as you got older?”

“Maybe. May be it was the long sea-voyage. Thirty-eight months we were, sailing from Cork Harbour to Fort St. George. That was in '52. But we stopped on the way, to fight the Kaffirs of the Cape Colony. That was where I earned my name for musketry. I could load and fire my Brown Bess once a minute, as regular as clockwork, and hit a barn-door a hundred yards away. I guarantee neither of you lads can do that.”

“No, Corporal, we can't,” I admitted, thinking of our automatic rifles that fire six hundred times a minute, and hit at a range of a mile-and-a-half.

“I well remember landing in a *masula*-boat, under the ramparts of Fort St. George,” said the old Corporal. “I hear they've got a fine roadway there now. Destroying the Empire, I call it. How are they going to bring troops into the Fort, if they've put the sea farther away?”

“The troops come by railway nowadays.”

“Yes, I've heard about railways. There used to be one from Calcutta to Raneeunge in my time. East Indian Railway it was called: a potty little affair. But what I say is, if God intended us to travel by such contrivance. He would have fitted wheels on our behinds.”

“What was Madras like in your day, Corporal?”

“Ah, the Europeans did business in the Fort in those days, and had fine houses out in the suburbs. We were on easy terms with the population, as you might say. We used to walk down Broadway of an evening, and fraternise with the merchants and business-men, rich fellows, each with his golden turban on his head, his sword at his side, and a couple of armed retainers at his heel. Aye, old Swami Dubash was a great friend of mine, and I married a girl out of his household. There were no *memsahibs* in those days.”

“The old Swami must have been very unorthodox,” I remarked.

“Nay, he was orthodox enough—in some ways far stricter than they are to-day. But he was broad-minded-like. There was none of the modern suspicion and separation. You see, we lived close to the people, and followed their customs. The greatest in the land, when the morning's work was over, put on his *dhoti* and sat on the floor with his *hookah*, and welcomed his Indian friends. He would keep four cooks, to cater for all castes, and his pretty Anglo-Indian daughters would entertain the guests. Aye, many a man married his daughters to his Indian friends, and the marriages were honoured by everybody.”

“Were there no class-barriers in those days?”

“Aye, there were; but not what you would imagine. There was great jealousy between the Queen's men and the Company's men, and between the Civil and the Military. But such things did not affect our dealing with the Gentoos.”

“The Gentoos?”



“Ah, I was forgetting. We called the inhabitants Gentoos. 'Twas a convenient and harmless word. We used the word Native, too. It was a word of good esteem: a man liked to say he was a Native of the land, and not a mere sojourner. Most of us intended to be Natives, for we enlisted for life.”

“Was there no short service then?”

“Aye, they were introducing it during my time. Short service for twenty-one years. I never held with such ideas. It was the same with the officers. The Queen's officers bought their commissions, and served for life. It was one of the causes of jealousy between them and the Company's officers. The Company's officers got their rank by promotion, and the Queen's officers grudged them the advancement, and despised them as mercenaries. Aye, there was a Lieutenant in my regiment who was eighty years of age, and had been a Lieutenant for sixty years. He won his lieutenantcy at the storm of Seringapatam, and could never afford to buy a captaincy.”

“I wonder what has made the great difference between the India you knew in 1852, and the India of today?”

“It is these railways, and steamships, and telegraphs and that Suez Canal there was a talk of.”

“Why, that is what Mr. Gandhi says!” I exclaimed.

“Mr. Gandhi? I've never heard of him. He's one of these modern young whipper-snappers, I'll be bound. But 'tis the new ways of travel that altered everything. Why, they say a man can leave here to-day, and be in London within a month.”

“Within a week, Corporal.”

“Now then, my boy, don't you take liberties with an old soldier. Why, no one could get to London in a week. They'd have to fly.”

“That is what they do, Corporal.”

“Gammon! I've heard talk about flying-machines, but you can't tell me they will ever be any good. What I say is, if God intended us to fly, He would have fitted us with wings.”

“On the same place as the wheels, Corporal?” suggested Boggins slyly.

“None of your lip, my lad—”

“But how has quick travel altered things?” I intervened hastily.

“It has altered us, my boy. In my day, when a man came to India, he came for life. He settled down among the people, and adopted their ideas, and looked to be accepted by them as a Native. But now 'tis different. People can be running home to England every five minutes, and they've learned to turn up their noses at the country of their adoption. Aye, my grand-daughter, who has lived here all her days, is after telling the neighbours that she comes from Ireland, and has got sunburnt on account of the climate there.”

“Why doesn't she go back?” suggested Boggins.

The Corporal leaned forward confidentially. “She couldn't, my boy. She's a Native of India, and she would

find Ireland a hard, cold, strange land. 'Tis India that has given her all she has, and 'tis of India she should be proud.”

“When did all these changes come about?” I asked.

“It was after the Mutiny that we began to notice the difference. The Mutiny was the great dividing-line, my boy. Ah, they were great days. We shall never see their like again.”

And the old man began to tell us about the mutiny.

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

The Spur Tank Murder—(Continued from page 28)

“Answer my question.”

“Yes, I did.”

“One of the stockings you filled with sand from a box lying in the verandah of your neighbour at Pandaram Street and hid the other under the box?”

The prisoner's eyes widened with fright. He gulped.

“Yes.”

“And got the nearest tailor to stitch up the top of the sand-filled stockings?”

The captive sagged on his legs and sat on the floor.

“Yes, sir.”

“You know what 'Sand-bagging' is?”

“Yes.”

“And you got the idea from of your thrillers?”

“Yes, sir.”

Shama Rao calmly filled his pipe and lighted it with a broad grin. He ordered the constables to remove the prisoner.

“Well done, my boy,” gushed the Deputy Commissioner, patting the detective on his back as they both walked towards their car parked at the end of the road. “But what about Soman Pillay?”

“Oh, Soman Pillay. He is innocent. I had started from Madras with the idea of arresting him. But he had a water-tight alibi at Pollachi. The sand was taken from the verandah of his house and the bit of paper we got from the weapon was only a part of the letter thrown into that box. It was the tailor who directed me to Salem where the prisoner arrived only yesterday in the guise of a rich purdah lady.”

“How did you pick out the man from that bunch of women?” asked the D. C.

“My dear Commissioner, that was easy. I had already the information that our quarry was slightly lame and I made out the man from his gait.”

“Splendid!” said the D. C., as both motored to the hotel.

by I. M. Holidaywallah

Here's something which is guaranteed to give birth to Million-Dollar idea to that 'Stop me and Buy one' ravelling Temptation. One unwashed youngster had gun an uproarious bawl 'cause Mumsey had peremp- rily despatched him to soap-and-water whilst he was larding the gate—and meanwhile the 'Stop me,' Chef-yclist had whizzed past at mail-timings. How about

(But when anticipated, ...)



There is one difficulty. If Auntie challenges Mr. Mie to a duel, he will be entitled to name the weapons, in accordance with the etiquette of mortal combat. From what Auntie knows of the fellow, he will promptly choose bladders on sticks. As Auntie is determined to butcher Mr. Mie to make a Roman holiday, she perceives she will have to use guile. By asserting the prerogative of her sex, she hopes to be able to arrange something lethal, such as pistols for two, and coffee for one.

Litigation (Worrier). "I have become involved in a very vexatious affair with a business associate. My case is perfectly clear, but he insists on taking me to court. As I am sure to win, and there are no complexities, I want to avoid expense, and appear in my own behalf. Surely, an intelligent man can be his own lawyer?" He can, dear sir, but unfortunately, when a man is his own lawyer, he has a fool for a client.

Wanderer (c/o G.P.O.). "My business takes me all over India, and I put up in European hotels. My complaint is that everywhere the beds are most uncomfortable. On the average hotel-bed I suffer agonies that would delight the most fervent ascetic." You supply the explanation in your last sentence, dear sir. Hotel proprietors, well aware of the saintly character of travelling gentlemen, have taken care to provide them with penitential beds.

Temperance (Nannilon). "Wealth is a disease!" Auntie is glad to hear from you again, dear sir, and is slightly relieved to note that you have changed the subject. Auntie considers your opinion an interesting one, and, for her part, she hopes that all her readers are enjoying serious illnesses.

Tatcho (Ramnad). "Some time ago you replied to a soap-manufacturer. Although your answer was humorous, I noticed that your suggestions regarding modes of advertising were quite sound. I therefore write to ask if you would give me some ideas for advertising a brand of hair-restorer." Auntie is only too pleased to help. In giving publicity to any curative agent, the chief thing is to demonstrate to the public your own unshakable faith in your nostrum. I therefore suggest that you advertise the free presentation of a comb to every purchaser of your hair-restorer, on the assumption that he will need one almost immediately.

Student (Law College). "Please settle an argument for us. When a European judge of the High Court suddenly dies, does anyone officiate?" Yes, dear boy; the undertaker.

Enamoured (Basavangudi). "I am deeply in love, and it is a wonderful feeling. It is like the rushing of a strong tide in the waters of a deep river." Auntie was deeply moved by your letter, dear girl. Unfortunately, when the river of love runs into the ocean of matrimony, the strong deep tide becomes a lot of nasty waves.

Papa (Vadavanur). "My son has one rather remarkable gift. If he is tied with ropes, he soon releases himself. He can even be confined in a strong cage, with the same result. He seems to be able to wriggle out of anything." Congratulations, dear sir. The lad is undoubtedly destined to become a politician.

Touring Secretary (Basine). "I am afraid that my employer has no artistic appreciation. In Europe we saw the famous statue of the Venus de Milo. My employer gazed at it for a long time, and then said, 'My Aunt!'" How interesting, dear boy. Was it really his aunt?

Financier (Bombay). "I am in the midst of a delicate negotiation, which will be very profitable to me if I can pull it off. The chief thing is to inspire confidence,

as I am not very well-known here. How can I spread the impression that I am a wealthy man, constantly engaged in large transactions? Please do not suggest anything too expensive." Obtain last year's telephone-directory, dear sir, and each morning tear out a dozen pages, and cut them in half. Walk down to the post-office, and send the pages to yourself by registered post, insuring them for large amounts.

Curious (Itkial). "You make jokes about the races, but do you really put money on horses? I am inclined to think that you do not go at all." Yes, dear boy. Auntie does go to the races, but she never has much on.

Juliet (Lahore). "I have been secretly corresponding with a gentleman, and he wants me to elope with him. What worries me is that, if I elope, my husband will pursue me." Auntie does not think so, dear girl. Judging from the rest of your letter, he is more likely to remove his residence, so that you won't be able to find him when you come back.

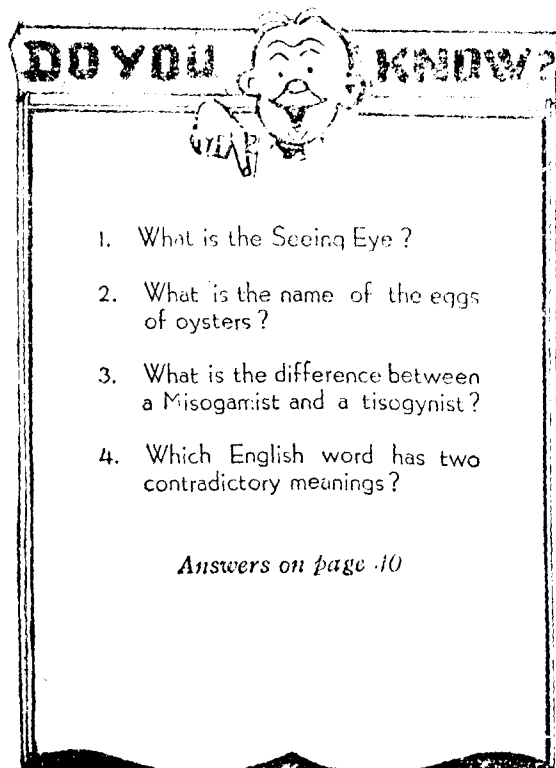
Competitor (Fyzabad). "I want to make a large number of entries for the competition, but have not the necessary copies of the paper. Will it be all right to correspond with the firm whose name I enclose? They say, 'Back numbers executed with the greatest celerity.'" Write to them, dear boy, and ask them to execute the editor. If he runs competitions requiring numerous coupons from previous issues, he is certainly a back number.

Nationalist (Calcutta). Yes, dear boy, it would be an excellent idea to hold an all-India swimming-championship. You have some fine swimmers up your way, but Auntie imagines that some of the local lads would show them their heels. However, Auntie suggests that the event be postponed until after the monsoon: otherwise the competitors will get wet.

Spartan (Mambalam). "I have no patience with the mamby-pambies who crawl about and complain of the heat. Physical exercises are the best way of keeping cool." Auntie agrees, dear boy. The most cooling exercise for the hot weather is that lively movement known as bending the elbow.

Old Friend (Straits Settlements). Auntie is sorry to hear that, at the time of writing, you were still waiting for a reply. Auntie has petitioned the Postmaster-General, with a suggestion that her letters be accelerated in transit, owing to the large number of nephews and nieces pining for their replies. Perhaps you would like to help? Try printing the following mantra on the back of your envelope:

*Flee, postman, flee,
With this letter to Auntie.*



The Tribe of Werrypinklers—I

by 'Nijinski'

Illustrated by Sekar

IN the archives of the British Museum or the Zoo or the Catacombs of Paris—anyway, wherever such records are stored—might be found the scanty information which was known anent the tribe of Werrypinklers.

The Werrypinklers dwelt in the remote jungle of Africa. In bygone days they had been cannibals. It was a nasty habit of theirs and to satisfy their tastes, they had to make constant raids—for succulent morsels and, maybe, bigger and tougher chunks also—on the personnel of another neighbouring tribe—the Dinna-taiglers.

It is needless to chronicle the fact that the Dinna-taiglers paid back the Werrypinklers by measures of retaliation, also cannibalistic.

Such inroads on the population statistics did the raids make, that eventually a truce had to be called. We strongly suspect that the Census officials, scenting unemployment, had something to do with this. The Chiefs of the two tribes met in solemn and serious conclave and later issued edicts to their subjects.

Henceforth the Werrypinklers and the Dinna-taiglers must, perforce, feed on ground-nuts, cocoa-nuts, pea-nuts (but not the Vendors thereof), grass-hoppers, cockroaches, red-cabbage, crocodile trotters, jungle fowl, frogs' legs etc., etc., or anything else they fancied, but—cannibal-fare was strictly taboo.

Here ended the record as aforementioned.

Unfortunately, the Chief of the Werrypinklers—himself on a changed diet—became sick and languished near unto death.

All this was in times rather remote, when missionaries and explorers had just begun to set foot in Africa. So far only the genus missionary—in number three—had honoured the Chief of the Werrypinklers with a visit. I'm rather afraid those missionaries departed to preach elsewhere, but history is here obstinately reticent.

Recollection of the missionaries gave the Werrypinkler Chief a brain 'sparkle' and he summoned his Head Sorcerer to his bedside.

The result of that conference was the hatching of a cunning and wicked plot, justified only by the Chief's desire to defer joining his ancestors.

Winkle, was the God worshipped by the Werrypinklers. Near the Chief's abode was a compound, with a huge stone effigy on one side—a supposed representation of Winkle—(really we feel sorry for Winkle if he ever existed and was like that effigy). In the centre of the compound was a dry well, some 100 feet or more in depth. It was this well which was responsible for the Chief's plan.

Came one night, when the Chief, mustering up his remaining strength and giving full scope to the working of his will-power, met the Head Sorcerer near the well.

"All is ready," said the Sorcerer, "and the blessings of Winkle be upon you, Chief."

A rope of grass of great strength was produced by the Sorcerer. He had fashioned an improvised seat at one end and—in short, the Sorcerer was lowered down into the well.

The Werrypinkler Chief let the rope also fall into the well and, for a time, lay exhausted.

"So far, so good," he muttered. Presently, somewhat revived, he quietly returned to his hut and slept peacefully.

On the following morning, to the surprise of his household, the Chief rose early and sent for his Prime Minister.

"Go," he said, "to the Public Announcer. Tell him to summon all my subjects, who are able to walk, to the place of worship. God Winkle has ordered me to be there, he will give me a message for our future guidance. And, tell every worshipper to bring a stone—the biggest they can carry—whether they be man, woman or child. I'll give prizes to those bringing the largest in proportion to their size. After God Winkle has given me his message, we'll build a temple on that spot, that's the purpose of the stones, we'll collect them ready."

"But," interposed the Minister, "we can't build without masons and mortar and—"

"It is not for you to question. If you value your job then—jazz!"

The Prime Minister jazzed and so the Chief's plan progressed. Two hours elapsed and the Minister returned.

"All are assembled, Chief, and await your presence."

"God Winkle," replied the head of the Werrypinklers, "has sent me further inspiration. Keep ready a strong cord—a hundred and fifty feet in length. I will come now."

The Chief, resplendent in robes of lions' skins, bedecked with scintillating jewels, crowned with a cabbage leaf (it was hot weather), and accompanied (sad to say) by his concubines—we refrain from exercises in numeration—arrived at the place of assembly, and stopped near the well.

His subjects bowed unto the dust and many imbibed doses thereof. The Chief had prepared his speech in advance and carried his shorthand notes in one hand. To his dismay, after fumbling in his pockets, he realised he had forgotten his spectacles and so, his memory being a mere abject apology therefor, he must speak practically extempore.

"God Winkle," he said, "the omnipotent, will to-day give me a message for the future guidance of our tribe. His edicts we must obey." He turned to the Prime Minister. "Lower that cord into the well, the message will come from there, that is the instruction to me."

The Minister obeyed. The Head Sorcerer—down below—a fact only known to the Chief—attached the message. The cord was drawn up and the subjects gasped with astonishment and awe and wonder.

The Chief took the message but refrained, at the moment, from opening it. He addressed the assembly.

"Winkle be praised," he remarked. "On this spot we'll build a palace for worship dedicated in his name.

First, we must fill up this well. Advance, all my subjects, those with the biggest stones first, relieve yourselves of your burdens and lay the foundations."

It was this wise that the Chief's diabolical scheme succeeded and the Head Sorcerer met an unpleasantly stony death.

After the well was filled to the brim, the Chief again spoke.



The Chief, resplendent in robes of.....

"I promised," he said, "rewards, in strict order of merit, to those bringing the largest stones. You all forgot my promise in a moment of excitement. Forgetfulness is a crime and so I sentence all here to bring another stone, or any other appropriate contribution, for the super-structure of Winkle's temple."

"The message?" one or two bold subjects ventured to ask.

"Question me not now," replied the Chief, who still held the message in his hand. "I'll acquaint all of you with its contents by public announcement to-morrow."

They were simple people who accepted their Chief's word. The Werrypinkler Chief, contrarily, was a wise man (he shouldn't have been Chief, should he, otherwise?) and—he didn't even trust the departed Head Sorcerer.

In due course The Message of God 'Winkle,' was revealed to the Werrypinklers. It so happened,

that the Head Sorcerer had 'played the game'. Werrypinkler Chief, realising that fact, had certain regrets, but realised also the uselessness thereof. He sighed in sorrow, but such sighs would not raise the stones from the well or restore life to the Head Sorcerer. Anyway, the Sorcerer, rested in peace or in pieces under tons and tons of stones, and that's that.

The Message? Well, it ran this wise:

'Whereas the Chief of the Werrypinklers has been sick nigh unto death, I, God 'Winkle', hereby accord him permission to revert to his previous diet, with the proviso that he shall restrict himself to the 'white' trespassers who come into his territory or near. And, I hereby decree, that the privilege extended to the present Chief shall continue hereafter unto his successors; failing the latter observing the diet now prescribed for the present chief, even they and their lands shall perish. But, in so far as the

tribe are concerned, they shall observe a strict diet as per their pact made with the tribe of the Dinnataiglers, and, if any depart from that diet, they shall perish on that day before the sun goes down. This is the decree of 'Winkle'.

You, dear reader, will observe the depth of cunning possessed by the, that time, Chief of the Werrypinklers. He was far too clever to allow his subjects to suspect that the decree was for his benefit only.

In this world, it is the privilege of an author to skip decades and centuries and periods just as his pencil, pen or typewriter responds to the dictates of his brain.

Africa had changed, but the tribe of the Werrypinklers remained little altered. Mooshimanka is now their Chief.

(To be Continued)



Crowned with a cabbage-leaf.....arrived.....

Terrestrial to Stellar—

by 'Anion'

Illustrated by Nadkarni

THERE was only one compartment unoccupied. It had two berths. I boarded it. "You will be feeling terribly lonely," said Mr. Swami who came to see me off.

"Yes. I wish I had a companion. Besides I won't get a wink of sleep in a train," I answered.

The guard's whistle blew. The bell went clanging. The train moved out of the station.

Placing my portmanteau on the lower berth, I spread my bed on the upper, stretched myself on it, and began to read the evening edition of the *Hindu*. In an hour the train steamed into the Arkonam Junction. I got down to have a peep into the station. Then I took up the novel I had purchased at Madras and was soon

absorbed in it. I am a voracious reader of these catch-penny romances. Nothing like novel-reading when in a train. The train had reached Katpadi.

At Katpadi, a pretty young Anglo-Indian girl boarded my compartment.

She had come alone and there was no pleasant guy to see her off. The porter stuffed her belongings into the compartment which consisted of a portmanteau, a bed, and a bundle of old magazines and periodicals. She wore a loose thin silk-skirt, scarcely reaching her knees. Her chemise shone through her translucent skirt. Her face was thickly powdered and her lips painted. A thick smell of pomade issued from her attractively dressed hair. Pink-coloured silk stockings covered her

shapely legs. There was a vampish air in her gait. In short, she struck me as an accomplished flirt, an attractive actress and a professional gold-digger.

I had a vague sensation of fear and suspicion. My first impulse was to get down and board some other compartment. But my love of adventure and a lurking desire to spy her movements to the end of my journey gained the uppermost. Never in my life had I been left with an unknown woman alone in such a place. Fighting down my nervousness, I removed my portmanteau to my berth and feigned reading.

She arranged her toilette things before the mirror. Now and then she stole glances at me. Evidently she was waiting me to look at, and admire, her shapely features. I felt uncomfortable.

Suddenly I remembered that I drew Rs. 4000 from my bank in the morning. I did not distinctly remember having placed it safe inside my portmanteau. I opened it to see if it was there. My hurried search did not locate the bundle of notes. I had to turn the whole contents upside down and then, sure, there it was, hiding in at the bottom. Relieved I repacked my portmanteau. My companion was a spectator of the whole scene. But she spoke not a word. She seemed to be seriously immersed in some thought.

Presently the train steamed into the Jalarpur Junction. I saw the Anglo-Indian guard peeping into the compartment. On seeing him she jumped up.

"Hullo, Johnnie! Have you forgotten me?" she said with a shake of her pretty head.

"Susanie dear, me forget you! I'd fain join you but for this d—d charge of this blooming train. Sweetie, dear, I'll be relieved from Podanur, and then we will have the whole day to ourselves," he said with evident emotion.

They stood clutching each other for a minute, then giving her a parting kiss, he shot off in the direction of the booking office. I could distinctly note that once or twice he looked daggers at me. The whole thing was plain to me now. Evidently she was in liason with the guard. And this increased my uneasiness. I could see that he regarded me with distrust and perhaps took me to be an intruder—nay a rival.

The train moved again. The girl was obviously ill at ease. But why? The sight of the money bag might have caused it in her, I thought. You might call me a misogynist or a cynic or whatever you like. I was non-plussed. But I carefully concealed it. Soon my worst fears came true. She had resolved to dupe me and had found a venue of attack, when I got down to have a brush and wash-up. With a tempting shake of her pretty outline she asked me in a voice of studied sweetness, "How far you go mister? What shall I call you?" Fortunately, my lawyer's brain did not fail me. I had smelt a rat and had determined not to be duped so easily. I pretended not to hear her. She repeated her query twice. Still I did not answer. I could note from the expression in her face that she was seriously offended. But I had already drawn my plan of defence in the case of an onslaught. My loopholes were well protected, and I was ready to ward off a *coup-de-main*.

I pretended to be thick of hearing—nay stone deaf. She called me an unmannerly brute, a heartless wretch, and such other names. But still I did not say a word. I was watching her all the while from the corner of my eyes.

The train had steamed into Salem Junction. The guard paid his usual visit. The train left Salem in a few minutes. When the train was in motion she stretched herself on her bed. Suddenly she got up and put on the blinds, as a chill draught was now blowing. In a few minutes she again got up saying, "I can't sleep with this damned light on," and switched off the lights. I was forced to give up my reading. I was now left alone in the dark, with an unknown lady, and that a vamp!

Presently she sprang up, switched on the lights, and faced me boldly. "Look here, mister! Hand over that money you've got, or I'll pull up the train and scream that you are making improper advances to me."

She paused for an answer. She had now played her trump card, boldly.

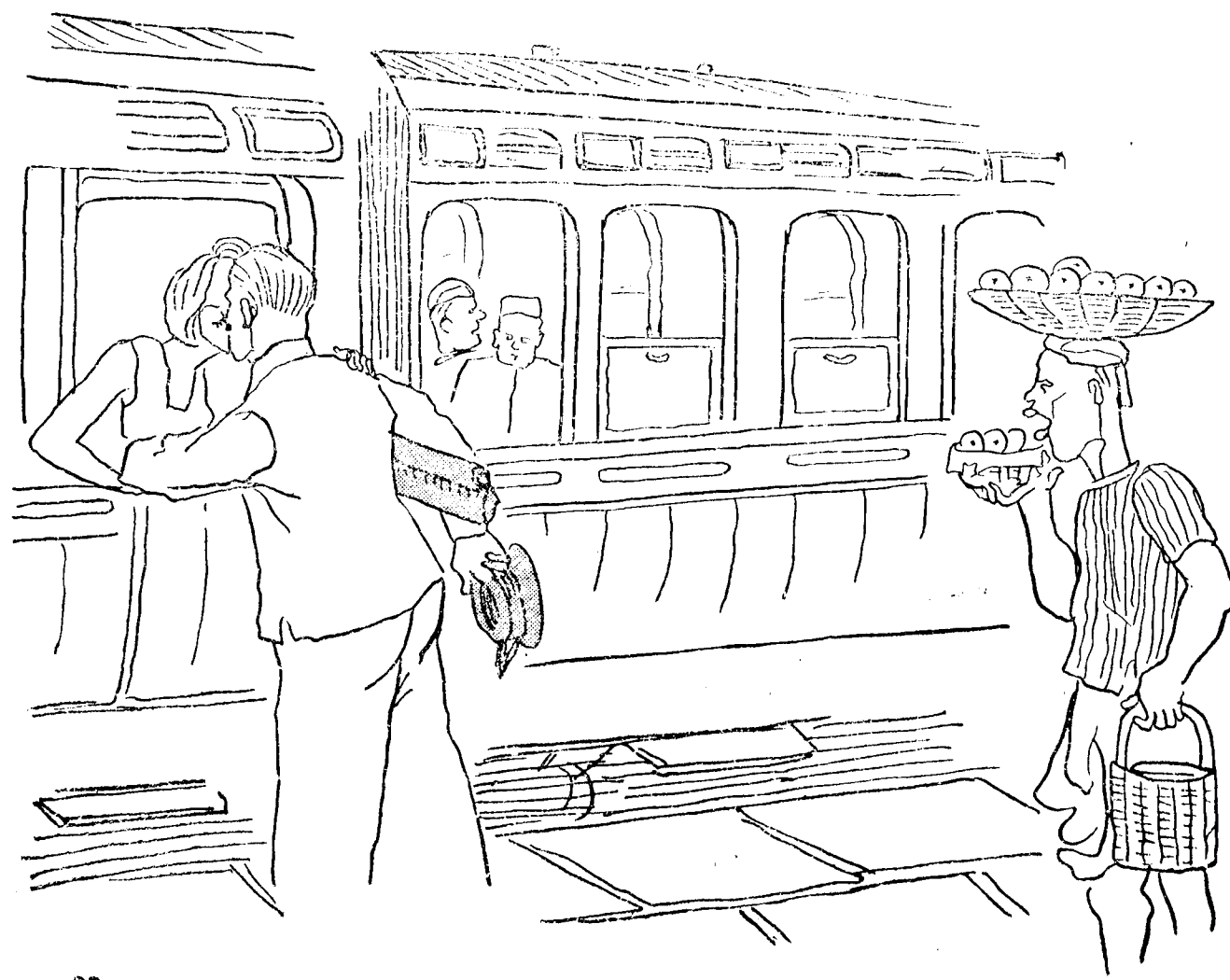
I little thought that she would attack me so foully. But I was prepared.

My fear was that she would make a dishonourable advance and tempt me with her infinite grace, a modern Cleopatra that she was, but only now I realised that she was not after my person and thence to my purse by degrees as is usual with them, but directly after my purse.

I pretended not to hear a syllable of what she said. Stretching my ears, I showed signs to the effect that I was deaf and made signs to her to have what she wished to convey, written out. The trout greedily devoured the clever bait. Without wasting a minute she fetched her hand-bag and drawing out a piece of paper and a small pencil, wrote her demand and handed it over to me. I made a show of reading it. Then I put it in an inner pocket.

Throwing away my pretence I turned to her. "My clever girl, I have proved far too clever for you. Your designs on my purse have fallen flat. I have caught you on the hip. The joke is now on you. You cannot swindle me so easily. I am neither deaf nor dumb, my deafness was only a hoax to catch you. I have your own written statement of your avowed designs on me. Now I can easily turn the tables on you. The moment I observed you, I had a vague suspicion and now it has come true. I know a bit of women and their ways. I have noticed that you are a talented actress. Although your theatricals did not succeed with me I see a finished film-star in you. I am a lawyer. I will not expose you if you promise to mend your ways, and give up this shameless life."

She was listening intently to my words with evident surprise and mortification. As I commenced my harangue she was boiling with impatience, but now she had considerably cooled down. Her face was well worth a study. She sank down on her berth, beaten. She was beyond herself with remorse. After all she was a woman. She resolved into a flood of tears. She sobbed as if her heart would break. This moved me deeply. I had thought her to be incapable of improvement. Now I found that her vulgarity was not inborn but only



Imbued. She was not so thorough a wreck as I took her to be. After a time, composing herself with an effort, she said with evident emotion, "Sir, I am an orphan. I fell into evil society early in life. I was leading a very riotous life of which I am sorely ashamed now. You have stirred something in me, and turned the search-light inwards. I am fed up with this life. I had obtained a bit of an education—thanks to my mother who is now no more. My father was a good man. He was a barrister and a Brahmin convert. From the moment you exposed my designs, I have become a changed woman altogether. Do take pity on me and show me the way to lead an honest life." With this she began to sob afresh.

I could not bear this any longer, for my heart was touched. "You have spoken wisely," I said. "You speak like a Mary Magdalene. But remember I am no Jesu. I am glad to note the change that has come over you. And the Lord be praised for that. I may well take the pride that I have been able to reclaim at least one single woman from the clutches of evil. There is a friend of mine who is the Managing Director of: 'The Oriental Pictures Corporation'. If you have no objection I shall give you a note for him. When I met him last in Madras he told me that he is in need of a talented actress. Well, there is a chance for you."

She was glad to grasp the opportunity. She thanked me profusely for my generosity. "I must cut off with Johnnie and give him the slip," she said.

The train now steamed into the Podanur Junction. I got down from my compartment and a porter carried my luggage. She was anxious to accompany me. After a minute's reflection I agreed. I engaged a taxi and soon we were in my bungalow. My wife was eagerly waiting for me. She saw my companion and perhaps took her to be a client of mine. When at night I informed her of the incident, she showered a world of abuse on the head of the adventuress.

She was to go that very evening. I took her to the station and saw her off by the Blue Mountain express.

* * * *

It is now five years after the incident. The other day I was walking along the Marina when I saw a baby

car flying along the road. It was driven by a fair-complexioned woman dressed in a beautiful saree. On seeing me she applied the brakes and brought the car to a sudden stop. Calling me by my name she asked me to get in. I was amazed and nonplussed. Who could she be? Her voice was distinctly familiar. The whole thing was dramatic. I obeyed her without a word. After a time, seeing me lost in a reverie, she broke the silence and asked me in a sweet voice, "You don't seem to recognize me." I confessed I was at a loss. "I am Miss Vilochana of the Shree Lakshmi Film Coy. Ltd., formerly of the Oriental Pictures Corporation," she said with a merry twinkle in her eyes. In a flash I remembered it was Susanie of the Railway Train episode. So changed she was! She was now a leading film-star. Only two days back I had witnessed a film in which she had played the leading role which was a tremendous success. I little dreamt that it could be she for she had not written me about the success of her enterprise, and I had forgotten her. However I was delighted to meet her under changed circumstances. She was now rich and prosperous. She was equally glad to meet me.

"Sir," she said as she steered, the car "I owe all this to you. Lucky I met you on that fateful night in the train. I don't regret it now, although I am heartily ashamed of the designs I contemplated on you. That day was a turning-point in my life. I have turned over a new leaf since. I look upon you as a brother. I was ashamed to write to you about my metamorphosis. Besides I wished to give you a surprise one of these days. Happy I have met you," she said, not without a little emotion.

I was delighted beyond measure. "There for once is the right one in the right place," I inwardly remarked.

She drove me to the theatre to see her own film. We occupied a special box seat. When we were passing through a very interesting portion she remarked, "I have dashed it all pretty well. Haven't I? Little thought I would be able to do it so well," she said with a merry twinkle in her eyes.

"I was not wrong, Vilochana. You have found your vocation."

YES, I KNOW

Answers to questions on page 34

1. An institution in New Jersey which trains German shepherd dogs as guides for the blind.
2. Spat.
3. A hater of marriage is a Misogamist; a hater of women is a misogynist.
4. 'Cleave' can be used to mean both to hold fast and to cut apart.

The Shot-Gun Wedding

By 'Embusque'

Illustrated by Varma

OWEN Dare came down to breakfast, and found a telegram beside his plate. He tore open the envelope. "Come at once. Your brother died yesterday. Hetty."

It does not take long to depart from a Chicago boarding-house, where rents are paid strictly in advance. Owen packed his bag, and called a porter to take it to the Central Station. He went down town, and interviewed the foreman of the granary where he was employed. By mid-day, he was in the Culver County Local, heading for the back-blocks of Wisconsin.

Hetty was his deceased brother's wife. The farm was out in Culver County. It was the normal American holding of a hundred and sixty acres, heavily mortgaged. The land had been worked by his brother, with the assistance of only a mechanic and a cow-man. Hetty would need help at once.



Early the next morning, Owen was jolting over the prairie-trail in the ancient car he had hired at Two Forks. Two Forks was the nearest township, a collection of crude wooden buildings at a point where the trail divided.

The farm-house was a tall, gaunt, weather-boarded structure, standing alone on the monotonous prairie. Away on the horizon stood the next farm-house, a similar desolate place, similarly surrounded by an ocean of wheat. In a sordid, cluttered-up farmyard, Owen met his brother's widow for the first time.

Hetty was a typical female of the Middle West. She was one of the great army of strident women who dictate the abysmal quality of American motion pictures. For the sake of the twenty million Hetties in the United States, no film may contain an idea beyond the intelligence of a child of five, no film may show a woman in a position of inferiority to a man, and no film may offend the mawkish set of prejudices that pass for morality in the Middle West. The film may be smeared-over with rottenness and nauseating sentiment, but it must be acceptable to the prurient minds of America's Hetties.

Hetty surveyed her handsome young brother-in-law with marked approval, yet shrewish sharpness. "You'll do, young man," she said, in the raucous accents of her kind. "I guess we'll get along all right, as long as you understand who is the boss around here."

"But my brother—?"
"We buried him yesterday. We've no time for a lot of funeral-making around here. My, but the minister's sermon was lovely."

Hetty burst into tears, and suffered herself to be led into the house with the solicitousness that the American female demands from the male. Her weeping was an illustration of the peculiar outlook of her class. A dead husband was an encumbrance to be pushed under the ground as speedily as possible; but the minister's lovely sermon was a fit subject for maudlin tears.

Owen, however, was not inclined to be critical. He was soon taking stock of the farm, and working from dawn to dusk at the management of the property. "I'll stay until the harvest," he said. "Then you'll be able to carry on with a hired man."

"I guess things are all right as they are," replied his sister-in-law significantly.

Owen failed to see any significance in the remark. He was thinking of Clementine, the young girl who owned the next farm.

Clementine came over one morning to borrow the hoeing-machine. She was a fresh-faced pretty young woman, with a sweet and cultured voice. Owen gazed at her in frank admiration. "Certainly," he said, "use the hoe all you want."

"I'll send it back this afternoon," promised Clementine. "Thanks a lot." But she lingered, and added impulsively, "Why don't you drop over and see us some evening?"

"Oh, could I?" replied Owen eagerly. "I'll come this evening, if I may."

From then on, Owen spent every evening at Clementine's place.

"What do you mean, trapping over to that girl every evening?" demanded Hetty. "Aren't the people on this farm good enough for you?"

"Why, Clementine is all right!" Owen expostulated. "She's—she's a young lady. Her old dad was a college professor."

Hetty rose, and stood over her brother-in-law, her arms akimbo. "I say she's a slut and a brazen hussy! She hasn't got the ways of respectable farm-folks. I won't have anyone from my place visiting over there!"

For answer, Owen picked up his cap and walked out. He spent the evening with Clementine.

The next day, Hetty confronted Owen in the barn. "See here, Owen," she said, "you and me could run this farm pretty well between us."

"But I'm leaving after the harvest," said Owen.

"No, you're not," replied Hetty, and came closer.

"See here," she said, in lower tones, "do you think it is right for us to be living here together, with no proper chaperon?"

"What's the idea?" demanded Owen, astounded.

"Well, what about you and me getting married?"

"God Almighty!" cried Owen.

"Don't you swear!" said Hetty. "I mean it."

"Let me out!" cried Owen. He ran past his sister-in-law, and into the house, locking himself in his room.

Hetty followed him. "What are you doing?" she shouted, through the key-hole.

"Packing my bag."

"Say, you worm, you can't leave me in the lurch like this! What about the farm?"

Owen unlocked the door. "I'll stay and work the farm until the harvest," he promised, "but I won't live in this house a moment longer. I'm going over to Clementine's, and I'll board and lodge there."

"Going to that stuck-up street-walker, are you?" screeched Hetty. "All right, go then! But I'll pay you out—both of you! I'll teach you to refuse the love of a good woman!"

Owen departed, leaving his sister-in-law to writhe with the chagrin of a woman scorned. He came to the farm only to work, and returned to Clementine's place as soon as the day was over.

Hetty sulked in the background, until one morning Owen went about his work so blithely that she was compelled to remark it.

"What's eating you?" she demanded, bitterly.

"Aw, Hetty," replied her brother-in-law, radiating good-will, "let bygones be bygones. Listen; Clementine has promised to marry me. We've nothing to wait for, and the minister is coming out this evening. Won't you come to our wedding?"

Hetty ground her teeth, turned her back, and hurried into the house.

"Hi! Where are you going?" cried Owen.

"I'm going to Two Forks—you philanderer!" said Hetty.

Owen shrugged his shoulders, and set to work in the five-acre paddock. Three hours later, he stopped the mechanical cultivator, and sat under the only tree on the farm, to rest and eat his lunch.

At this moment, he was surprised to hear the noise of automobiles lurching along the trail. There were three of them, and on the front seat of the leading vehicle was the minister. The convoy halted a few yards away.

"Why it's the sky pilot!" cried Owen cheerfully. "Hullo, minister, you are early. How do, folks? This is very unexpected. It was surely kind of you to come out for the ceremony. Very neighbourly, I'm sure."

There was no answer from the wedding-party. Grimly they tumbled out of the automobiles. They carried shot-guns, and wore stars to show that they had been impressed by the Sheriff as deputies. Two of them seized Owen and pinioned him. Two more threw a noose over a branch, and tied the slack of the rope to the trunk of the tree.

"But, folks!" cried Owen. "What is this for? What have I done? Surely you'll let a man speak before you string him up?"

The Sheriff stepped forward, and hit Owen across the face. "Shut up, you filthy hound!" he ordered. "We are going to teach you not to play your smart city tricks in Culver County. We respect our womenfolk in these parts."

"But I've done nothing against any woman!" cried Owen. "Surely it isn't a crime to want to marry a girl like Clementine?"

Again the Sheriff struck his face. "You dirty seducer!" he said. "You go and do wrong to your own sister-in-law, and then make love to another girl!"

"I haven't done wrong to my sister-in-law! She—"

Again the Sheriff hit him. "Shut up! Hetty says you've done her wrong, and that's good enough for us. Hetty!"

Hetty got out of the rear car, and confronted the hapless Owen. His lips were swollen and bleeding from the blows of the Sheriff.

"Well, Hetty," said the Sheriff, "do you want the dirty rat, or shall we string him up?"

Hetty considered. "I guess I'll take him," she said, gratingly.

"I'd sooner have hung him," said the Sheriff regretfully.

"Well, minister, go ahead."

Hetty stood beside the pinioned prisoner, and the minister read the marriage-service. At last he came to: "Do you take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife?"

Owen looked round frantically, like a creature in a trap. The deputies growled. Two of them looked at the Sheriff, as if for a signal. The rope tightened about the boy's neck.

"I do!" he gulped.

The deputies slackened the rope, put away their guns, and removed their hats. "Say, boys," said one of them, "what about the nuptial hymn? We ought to finish the job proper-like."

The congregation agreed, and with complete solemnity raised their harsh voices to the tune of "O Perfect Love!" Then they knelt for the minister's blessing, released the bridegroom, and drove away.

Owen was left alone with his newly-made wife. He picked up his cap, and without looking at her, said, "I'm off. Burn your farm yourself!"

"You can't do that!" screeched the bride. "I claim you as my lawful wedded husband!"

"I'm going. I'll never set eyes on you again, even if they hang me for it." And he strode off down the trail.

Hetty ran after him. "I'll have the law on you!" she shrieked. Owen quickened his pace. Hetty fell behind, still shrieking threats.

Owen took refuge on Clementine's farm. There were five husky men about the place, and they had guns. They

adored their mistress, and vowed they would allow no one to conduct any further persecution. At nightfall, the place was barred like a fortress.

Clementine was broken-hearted, but brave. "Never mind, Owen," she said. "Nobody can force you to live with your wife. Perhaps some clever lawyer will be able to get the marriage annulled. I will wait for you, even if it takes seven years."

"It's not easy to get a marriage annulled in Wisconsin," said Owen gloomily.

A week went by, and then one morning the Sheriff drove out to Clementine's farm, accompanied by his deputies. The farm-hands gathered loweringly, fingering their guns.

"It's no good, boys," said the Sheriff. "I've got a warrant here, sworn out before the State Supreme Court. If you resist, you'll have the State Troopers down on you."

Clementine went to the Sheriff. "What is the warrant?" she asked.

"It is for you, miss, and that Owen Dare. You are charged with adultery, and it is my duty to warn you that it is a penitentiary offence. You had better come quietly."

Owen and Clementine went quietly, and were thrown into the Culver County Jail. They languished in that insanitary hovel for a whole year before being brought to trial. Owen passed the time by executing innumerable delicate drawings of Clementine on the walls of his cell.

It is the law of Wisconsin that a man and a woman may not be charged jointly with a sexual offence. Clementine's case was taken first. The trial lasted only five minutes. To the surprise of everyone, the State Physician certified that the accused was *virgo intacta*. Her acquittal automatically followed.

Owen stepped into the dock, and faced the jury of hard-eyed, tight-lipped Middle Westerners. Counsel opened the case against him.

"You must not allow your decision in this case to be influenced by any previous verdict," he began. "The prisoner is accused of adultery. His supposed accomplice has been found innocent. However, the law of this State is that each case must be considered separately, on its merits."

Evidence was led to show that Owen was a man of evil reputation, who had seduced his own sister-in-law, and then deserted her. He was a scoundrel notoriously addicted to loose opinions, who showed no respect for womanhood, and no regard for the high moral principles of Culver County. He treated the law with contempt, and flouted the obligations of matrimony. He was a moral degenerate who even in prison covered the walls of his cell with lewd pictures. He was a human beast who ought to be sent to jail on general principles.

The jury retired, and in two minutes returned with a verdict that Owen Dare had been guilty of adultery. They added a rider that they regarded his conduct with the utmost reprobation.

The judge addressed the criminal. "I have no hesitation in saying that you are a perverted moral monster," he remarked. "You are one who should be permanently inhibited from spreading corruption and loose ideas in

our fair community. Unfortunately, if I give you a life-sentence, there are various technicalities which might permit you to escape justice by resorting to an appeal. I therefore reluctantly sentence you to seven years' hard labour, appeal-barred."

"Thank you, judge," replied the prisoner calmly. "It means that for at least seven years I am safe from my lawful wedded wife."

"I'll get you when you come out!" screeched Hetty from the back of the court.

However, there is one place in America where a man is safe from his lawful wedded wife, and that is the

underworld of Chicago. When Owen emerged from prison, he attempted to regain his position with the granary-company, but everywhere he was pursued by Hetty's writs and processes. There was no refuge anywhere, save in the underworld.

So that is how Owen, a decent young man full of promise, became the most desperate bootlegger in Chicago. Clementine, the sweetest and most innocent of girls, became a gunman's moll. Even in the underworld, however, character counts for something. If you enquire on La Salle Street for a really honest bootlegger, they will recommend you to Owen Dare; and his fidelity to Clementine is a matter of respectful admiration even among the gummen of the East Side.

THE END

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Blow, Blow

(Being a heart-breaking lament of a loyal officer on not finding his name in the recent Honours List).

Blow, blow, thou summer wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As Simla's ingratitude:

Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Though thy breath be rude.

What boots it to sing unto the green holly:
Most 'At Homes' are futile, most fawning, mere folly.

Burn, burn, thou sultry sky,
Thou dost not seorest so nigh
As 'loyalty' forgot;

Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp,
As 'friends' remembered not.

What boots it to sing unto the green holly:
Most 'At Homes' are futile, most fawning, mere folly.

—C. H. Thakore.



Merry-Magus

I The free offer of character-reading which I made on 6-7-1935, and am continuing, proved very popular with readers. Merry-Magus free readings will be published in these pages every week. Announcement and free character-reading coupon, page 48—Ed.

S. K. Chelliah (Secunderabad). Are not others cajoling you to do some great things for the good of others? You are a martian with mental courage only. You are the Adjutant General—the brain behind the army, but you hate to be in the front. You are a serpent in your stings waiting for an opportunity to strike your mental blow, concealing your opinion from others all along. The prevailing force of your character is you are intensely emotional. You have no delicacy of feelings when you deal with others and you only see the goal and go to it straight without caring for what is in the way. There is an admiring crowd behind you for your dashing schemes. You have a commanding and powerful tone.

★

"Ramam." Are you not fond of social intercourse with a desire to please and be liked by all? You are influenced by the opposite sex in every act of yours but you cannot be happy in your love affairs. You are a doting father. In temperament you are merry and mildly-mocking. You consider the pros and cons of every question in the most conscientious manner. You weigh everything too much; this is your fault. Act on your first impressions or intuition. Are you not trying to master a profound subject? Take care of your nerves and don't give place for melancholia.

★

Mary Mag. Are you not assured of success in sports both in

and out-doors and in oratorical contests by your repartee? You can act well. You possess a good influence over others. Have you decided for yourself what actually you want in life? Want of fixity of idea and continuity in action spoils your plans in life. Therefore try to overcome this inclination. You believe you are truth incarnate but every moment has a separate existence. If you want to be successful you must force yourself to stick to one thing. The fault in you is if you think over a subject for a long time you will be irresolute. Be careful of your digestive organs and the tongue.

★

K. R. Krishna Murthi. (Birur) Hello! My generous and magnanimous friend! How much did you give for the Quetta Earthquake Fund? Had you been approached you should have contributed generously, more than your mite. You are of course amorous by nature but you are not vicious. The fault is you want to domineer and refuse to listen to any reason, but act independently, however much such action of yours may be injurious to others. Why are you hasty? Don't you regret after the explosion is over what you have said or done in the heat of the moment. Eschew that temperament. If you want to be happy in home life, create proper understanding. A singular fact in you is, success will be your ruin if you do not 'keep your head' and succumb to flattery and praise. By being impulsive you lack caution. Take care of your head.

D. Sankar. Hello! Mr. Aristocrat! With a sonorous voice and with large eyes, smiling and melting, you are essentially warm-hearted and charitable. Your contempt for miserliness is rather exaggerated. You are easily pleased and consequently have many friends but at the same time, on account of your extreme frankness in speech, you are misjudged in your criticism and have many bitter enemies. Were you not a worry to your parents in your younger days, and why, even now, on account of your independent spirit? The worst fault in you is you are inclined to go to extremes and consume entirely your efforts and jump in another direction in a most inexplicable manner. You are delicate in throat and lungs.

★

Sem. Develop the art of writing, especially about things emotional, as you are gifted to give dramatic description of everything. With a cool and determined head you can face any danger and crisis. The main fault in you is you are too adaptable to your surroundings and hence I warn you not to associate with evil-minded persons. Don't have Utopian ideas to set right the world because you are tickled to do so. Are you not indecisive to place yourself in some special career? This is due to your being many-sided. Don't be crafty in your dealings and plans. It will not lead you to success. You are liable to suffer from kidney and bladder troubles and after the middle age you are inclined to corpulency.

Replies

Risso. Do you know H. R. H. the Duke of York was born on 14th December. Being a conservative you do believe in law, order and hierarchy. You love peace and it is good in you that you fight without hesitation those who are deceitful. Though of religious bend are you not for outward show and splendour? I do not call it a defect. Be active; despondency and early decay will be the result of inactivity in your case. Find fresh fields for your work. Why are you so proud to admit your errors? It is a fault in you. Don't go to extremes and change your mind too quickly. You can appreciate music well. Rheumatism is your enemy.

★

Bright. Yes! You are bright in organising, bright in debates and arguments and bright mentally rather than physically. You have a magnetic power which is being wielded by you unconsciously over others. If you want to be bright always, avoid the company of perverse persons and control your sex nature. Your advice to others will be sound but you will never profit by it. Fix your ambition to attain a position and then work hard to get it. Without ambition you cannot get on. Are you not strongly inclined towards occultism and abstruse societies? Your stomach and digestive organs will give you trouble.

★

Black Cat. It would have been more appropriate had you selected your nom-de-plume as "Balance." Your judgement is always good as you mentally balance everything. You love spiritually rather than sensually. Has your proverbial 'Black Cat' psychic experiences and dreams as you have? Don't weigh and size up matters; this is the reason why you are unhappy in your home-life also.

★

You are asking for impossible proofs; don't you know there are certain things which cannot be proved but only accepted? You do not err in your first impressions. Act according to them instead of being analytical. You are inclined to exhaustion of nerves, melancholia and mainly, headache.

★

Shivdas. Dear friend! Please let me have the correct date of birth according to English Calendar. Merry-Magus has no time at his disposal to cross-refer dates from various calendars and find the date.

★

V. S. Vaz. You are richly endowed, physically as well as intellectually. Are you not fond of fine clothes, rich furniture and splendid jewels? You are eloquent with ease but you do not go deep. Your weak point is you speak out your mind too quickly and frankly. You love intensely and hate intensely. Are you not extremely proud of yourself, and thereby easily wounded in your feelings by others? Don't you see for yourself that your impetuosity and hot temper costs you much by creating unscrupulous enemies? Why are you so over-anxious in money matters? But you may be sure there is a gulf between you and the stakes. Be careful of ptomaine poisoning and diarrhoea.

★

Character. K. G. F. Your greatest fault is you want some inspiration or a 'call' from outside to arouse you from your lethargy and to show your talents. Don't let the opportunity slip past you and then regret afterwards. Seize it when it presents it-

self. Your reasoning quality and successful argument will shine well, provided you want to be convinced of the opposition arguments if convincing. But you don't want to be convinced. Overcome that sensitiveness in you and develop your will-power; then only will you succeed in life. Don't support unpopular causes and get disliked by others more powerful than you. You love theatres and concerts. You are prone to swellings and dropsy in the legs.

S. V. Subbaiya (B'city). Your rhetoric is based on facts and not fancies and its manifestation is that of quick and clear logic. You can mimic well. You are a delightful friend to have, but I cannot expect you to be so till to-morrow. Can't you have a fixed idea of what you are going to do in life instead of being wavering. Your fault is you are at times very obstinate and unyielding. Affectionate side of your nature is predominating over your passions. Don't have consultations; decide everything for yourself. Don't you think this is a strange advice? Yes! Because, if you consult you get yourself confused with others' ideas and you do not know what to do and consequently you are led astray. Why are you so restless? Contentment will cure you of this. Don't wish to have anything you have not got. You have a good constitution but be warned against throat troubles and affections of the nose.



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Name (or Nom-de-plume).....

Correct date of birth
(with time of birth
if possible) }

Address.....

RESULTS

'Brevities' Competition

The Correct Solution:

- | | | |
|------------|----------|--------|
| 1. STICK | 4. FORTY | 7. DUE |
| 2. END | 5. BEEN | 8. ICE |
| 3. ELEVENS | 6. TEASE | |

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| L. A. Rao, Matunga. | (10) S. P. Chetty, Calcutta. | | (18) M. Ba |
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| | | | (20) K. Ramaswami, Mysore. |
| | | | (21-22) |
| | | | K. Bhakta, Alleppey. |
| | | | (23) C. N. Gopalakrishna Iy |

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S. Raman, Nannilam. (45-46) R. Subramaniam Pillai, Tirupapuliyur. (47) P. S. Krishnaswamy, Krishnapuram. (48-49) P. Rajagopal Pillai, Velappadi. (50-59) R. T. Velu, Vandipalayam. (60) R. Venkatasubramanian, Kosapet. (61) M. Somasundaram, Choolai. (62) P. R. Ramaswami, Madras. (63) M. Ponnudurai, Chunnakam. (64) M. A. K. Naseem, Gujranwallah. The Prize amounts will be remitted on 15-8-'35



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Below you will find 7 incomplete words and in each of them, only one letter is missing, and is marked by a dash. Against each word there is a clue. What all you have to do is to substitute one letter for each dash to get the corresponding meanings. For example, No. 1 is SPORT. Similarly, you will have to solve the others. Chambers' XX Century Dictionary (without bracketted or hidden words) is the sole reference to this puzzle.

No.	WORDS.	CLUES	No.	WORDS.	CLUES
1	SPO—T	Mirth	5	SIR—AR	Head of affairs
2	SA—T	Pungent	6	S—IP	Omit
3	SINGL—	Alone	7	SL—NG	Cast
4	SA—NT	Angel			

Rules:—Those sending single entries can send the entrance fee in quarter anna stamps. Others should send the fee either by M. O. or crossed Indian Postal Orders. In the former case, P. O. receipts for M. O.'s must be attached to entries. Rupees 450 will be awarded to the senders of correct or nearest correct solutions; Rs. 25 for the first five correct solutions received and Rs. 25 for the sender of largest number of entries. The correct solution is kept sealed with The Calicut Bank, Ltd., Madras. The results will be announced in *The Merry Magazine* of the 31st August. The Manager's decision is final and legally binding and is an express condition of entry. Entries may be submitted on plain paper in any readable form. The Prize amounts will not be reduced under any circumstances. Address all your entries and fees to:—

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(For the competitor who submits the maximum number of entries)

One All Steel Rouco Wardrobe (Valued at Rs. 120.)

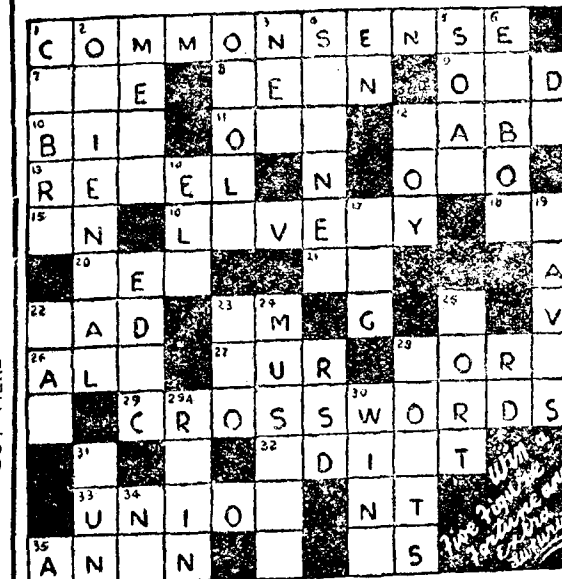
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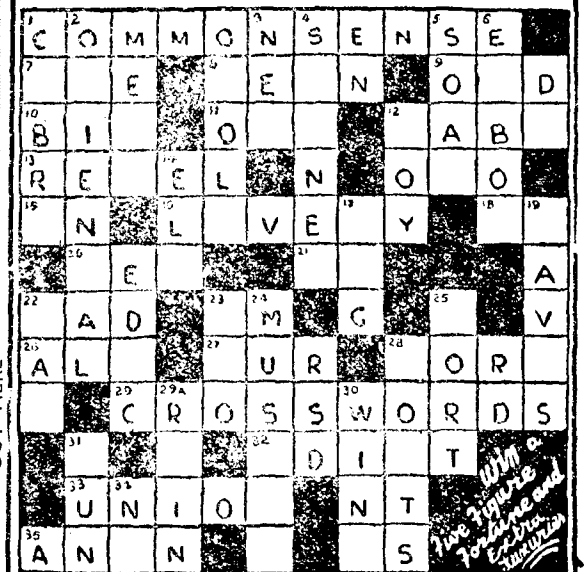
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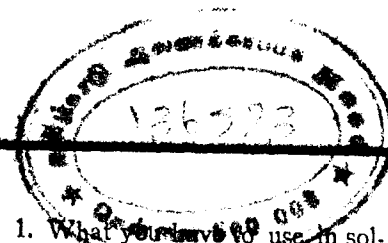
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CLUES ACROSS

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. What you have to use in solving this puzzle. | 13. Soldiers sometimes do this in war. | 26. Liquor. |
| 7. Metal is extracted from. | 15. One. | 27. Belonging to us. |
| 8. Branching ribs in a leaf. | 16. Some women are attracted because they are this. | 28. You will hate to be with this sort. |
| 9. Advanced in years. | 18. You and I. | 29. What you have to do to earn a fortune. |
| 10. Small piece. | 20. India's popular beverage. | 32. Fool. |
| 11. Complete and add two letters. It means "Due" | 21. Act. | 33. Concord. |
| 12. Child. | 22. You do not wish to be this. | 35. Immediately. |

CLUES DOWN

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Venomous snake. | 6. To push with the elbow. | 24. Meditating. |
| 2. Eastern. | 12. Native servant in India. | 25. Place of safety. |
| 3. Recent. | 14. 26 across reversed. | 28. Cover feet. |
| 4. You may be committed if you have done this. | 17. Stupid person. | 29. (A) Often follows storm. |
| 5. Very dirty clothes require the use of a good one. | 19. Projecting edge of roofs. | 30. Often encourages gambler. |
| | 22. 22 across. | 31. Liked by children. |
| | 23. Collection of animals. | 34. Negative. |

Compiler's Sealed Solution lodged with THE IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA, COCHIN.

Read Rules and Conditions very carefully.

The Entry Fee in this competition is One Rupee for each one entry. Competitors must write their **surname** only, in block capitals, on the back of the envelopes containing their Entries, stating number of Entries enclosed. Families having the same surname may send in their combined entries in one cover and pay for the same by one Money order or Postal order. The surname of the family and the total number of entries submitted must be written on the back of the cover containing the combined entries. The separate initials of each competing member of the family must be written on their entry coupons.

All entries must be filled in with ink (in block letter) or typewriter. Pencil entries will be disqualified.

All entries must be received by the last post of August 31st 1935. Local entrance fees (in cash only) may be handed over to the counter up to 5 P. M. on the closing date. An extension of three days is allowed to competitors in distant places in India. Any received later will be disqualified.

The first prize will be awarded to the competitor who sends in an all correct solution and which agrees with the compiler's sealed solution. Failing a correct solution, it will be awarded to the nearest correct entry. In case of tie or ties the prize money will be equally divided at the discretion of the Secretary. A winning competitor can receive only one prize in this contest.

Keep an exact copy, so that you can compare it with the correct solution, which will be published in "Madras Mail," on the 4th Sept. 1935. Each wrong word counts as one error. Thus one wrong letter which makes two words wrong counts as two errors, and so on. Any letter space left blank disqualifies the whole coupon.

No claims are required in this contest and the names and addresses of the winning competitors will be forwarded to all competitors who enclose an addressed and sufficiently stamped envelope with their entries. Entrance money must be sent by M. O. or Indian Postal Order only (stamps not accepted). M. O.s must be addressed to "Treasurer" Indo-European Club, Kottayam. Address of the sender must be filled in block capitals on the space for the same in it. M. O. coupon space must not be filled as they are being returned intact. **Post office receipt for the M.O.s. (not the acknowledgment) must be affixed to the solutions.** If more than one entry is submitted the entrance fees may be sent by one M. O. Indian Postal order remittances must be made payable to "Indo-European Club" and crossed. The postal order must be affixed to the solution and the counterfoil should be retained by the sender. Entrants who remit their entrance fee by postal order must write the official number of the postal order in the space provided on the entry coupon. Where M. O. s or I. P. O. s cannot be obtained, British Postal Orders of equivalent value will be accepted. The same condition applies to these as I. P. O. Employees of the Indo-European Club are not allowed to compete. No responsibility can be accepted for any entries lost, mislaid or delayed. No correspondence can be entered into or interviews granted. The decision of the secretary in all matters relating to this competition is absolutely final and legally binding and is an express condition of entry.

In no case can any entrance fee or monies sent with the entrance fees be refunded or credited to another competition on account. Coupons should be cut round the dotted line and must be sent intact. Plain paper entries similar to these coupons will be accepted. Extra Coupons can be had of "Publicity Dept., Indo-European Club," at annas two for every twenty-five coupons (postage extra) stamps accepted for this. No alterations or corrections whatever will be allowed. Mutilated answers will be disqualified. Competitors submitting more than one entry must number their entries serially. Prize scheme is proportionate to the collection received. Any entry which does not comply with these rules and conditions will be disqualified. Entries will be acknowledged on receipt of a nine-pie stamp.

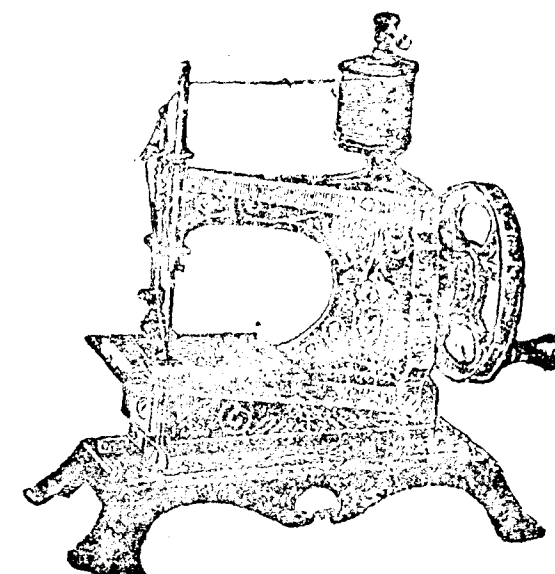
Any number of entries may be submitted.

Address all entries to:— "SIMPLE COMMONSENSE CROSS WORDS,"

INDO-EUROPEAN CLUB, Club Buildings, KOTTAYAM, S. India.

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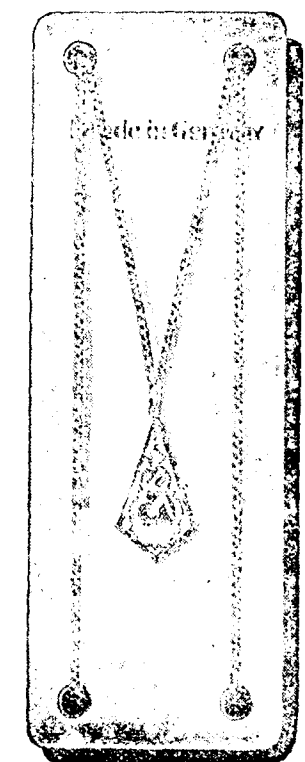
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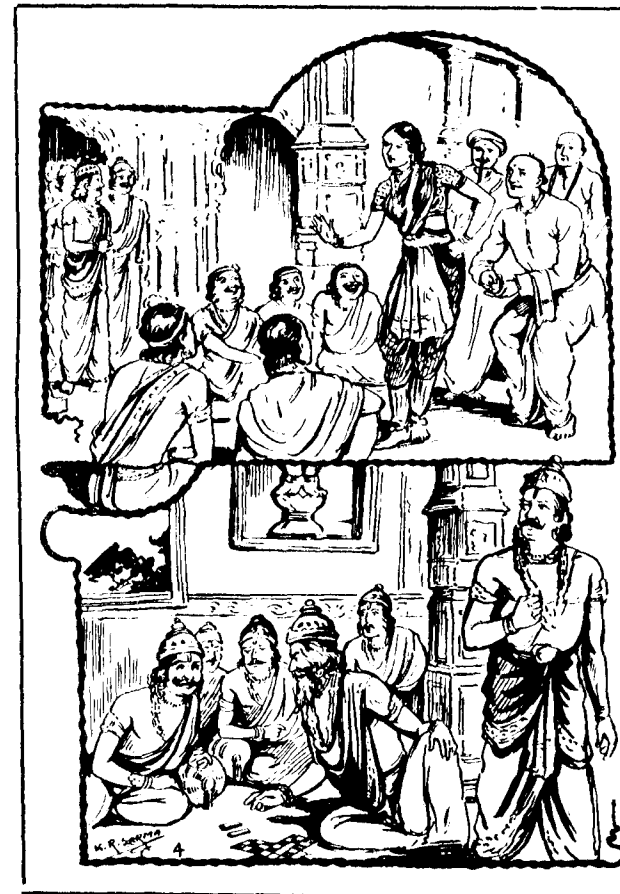
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