

176

III

The

No. 36

MERRY

MAGAZINE



What's 'Lipsikis'?
Joyfull Resigns —
'Wife's Comforter'

Sept. 7
1935

Tidings from Tribunals—

[The Goosmopartisan Club Case]

THE
MERRY
MAGAZINE

Published
from Madras

Every
Saturday

The Editor of the Merry Magazine will be glad to consider Mss. offered for publication, but no Ms. will be returned unless it is accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope. The Editor will take no responsibility for manuscripts lost. Payment for accepted manuscripts will be made at our 'usual rates'. Letters should be addressed to: Editor, The Merry Magazine, 2-140, Broadway, Madras.

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The
MERRY
MAGAZINE

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• Next Week: Cricket and Politics by 'Teekay' •



A. A. Roland

The Monsoon Murder
Mystery

Who killed Brutus Bigg-
Buttugs—and why?

V. S. Krishnaswami

Man in 1990!

Incidentally woman, too.
The curtain raised a few
decades in advance.

'Lummie'

Locked Out!

Enthusiasm of a servant
girl runs riot.

'Seven Stars'

Whiskers

Oh, the hirsute glory that
is departed!

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

The Hindu reports an interview with Sir S. Radhakrishnan, just returned from Geneva, under the caption: 'What the League stands for'.

It throws no light on the more momentous question of *where* it stands just now.



An astrologer opines that it would be safer for Mussolini not to precipitate a war in the present juncture of the planets.

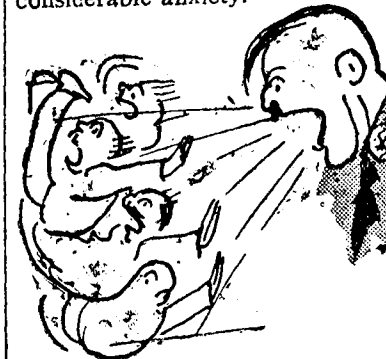
The report that Sgr. Mussolini has sent a warning to the planets concerned lacks confirmation.

In the course of an interview, the Empress of Ethiopia declares: 'Neither Abyssinia's men nor our women would surrender without fighting.'

We hope they will not surrender even fighting.

It is now revealed that Herr Hitler has been successfully operated upon for hoarseness of voice.

We have heard the news with considerable anxiety.



'A gramophone record containing a message of good-will to the Abyssinian Emperor from Queen Victoria has been discovered in the archives of a London company. Engineers are now experimenting in an endeavour to amplify some of the indistinct words, and to remove surface noises.'—*Reuter*.

Should Italy declare war, Britain is determined to lift the embargo, and allow it to be exported to Abyssinia.

From a sketch of Sir M. Viswesvarayya in an English journal: 'You have only to say 'Dam' to him, and the words begin to gush forth.'

The experiment may be tried with equal success on almost anybody!

Mahatma Gandhi is understood to be experimenting with a diet of fresh leaves.

After finishing one, he turns over a new leaf!

Referring to the modern girl, Baroness Orczy the famous novelist declares: 'It seems such a pity that girls of to-day have nothing to conceal.'

Still, we can't figure out most of them!

The syndicate committee appointed to consider the low percentage of passes in the law examinations is understood to have satisfied itself that there was nothing wrong in the valuation of the answer papers.

This still leaves the question of what is wrong with the committee as vague as ever!

Replying to a municipal address of welcome, Mr. P. T. Rajan confessed that he owed it entirely to the kindness of the councillors.

We hope the Minister's candour was duly appreciated.



He further opined that portraits of public men should not be unveiled before their retirement from active life.

We ourselves think a sounder idea would be to unveil the portraits of those whom we would like to see retire from public life!

Says Sir A. P. Patro: 'There is ample room for the exercise of genuine and self-less service in the new Assembly for all political parties.'

This kind of sweeping generalisation is sure to bring the gallant knight, one day or other, into trouble with *his* party.

In the course of an exhortation to the students of a mofussil college, Mr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar told them to face the many problems that would confront them in after-life.

Let us hope that the students will learn something from the Dewan Bahadur's example or—warning!

Addressing the members of the Ladies Club at Annamalai Nagar, the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri advised them to cultivate the 'Club spirit'.

Unfortunately no safeguards are indicated for the husbands!



Parties And Policies

THE fate of ideas is very much like that of men. Some are still-born, others are burdened with the incurable maladies of infancy, some die of want of staying power before reaching adolescence, while some others that struggle into manhood are killed by—ridicule. Only the fittest survive; but the condition of their survival is a perpetual struggle against the forces of reaction. We are unable to predict the fate of the idea of a *Reforms Party* which was conjured up by Sir Homi Mody over a congratulatory cup of tea. Politically as well as geographically, our country is tropical, and provides ample scope for the growth of rank weeds, noxious under-growths and poisonous plants. The stigma of the *Reforms Party* is in its very source. Though it looks like being still-born, we are not sure that we have heard the last of it. Hardly any one noticed it in the North. But Dewan Bahadur Ramaswamy Mudaliar welcomes it with open arms. In his exuberance, he has already given it a more pompous *alias*, namely, the *Federal Party*. This reminds us of the story of a careful householder who proposed to plant cotton with a view to spin and weave the cloth required for his family. His young hopeful who was by, jumped with joy, and begged that the first dhoti should be given for him to wear. The sanguine father was shocked by his son's extravagance, and abused him saying that he would tear the dhoti to tatters in a day. The net result of the grandiose plan was a box on the ears of the son. Somebody must tell the Dewan Bahadur and the Bombay knight that their plan is a little too previous. It is true that Federation is in the air; but it bids fair to remain there for a good while; and to safeguard it before it comes into being looks suspiciously like trying to safeguard one's self from being left out in the cold.

But the motive of Mr. Mudaliar is easily understandable. The Justice Party is unknown beyond the frontiers of our presidency; and it is well-known that the Party has been suffering from an inferiority complex for a long time. The Assembly elections reduced its prestige, if any, abroad, and wiped it out at home. Mr. Mudaliar wants to revive the vogue of his party by associating it with some all-India organisation or other. Hence his anxiety for a coalition with all those who are against the Congress. Like the leopard, the Justice Party would change its spots—by moving from one place to another!

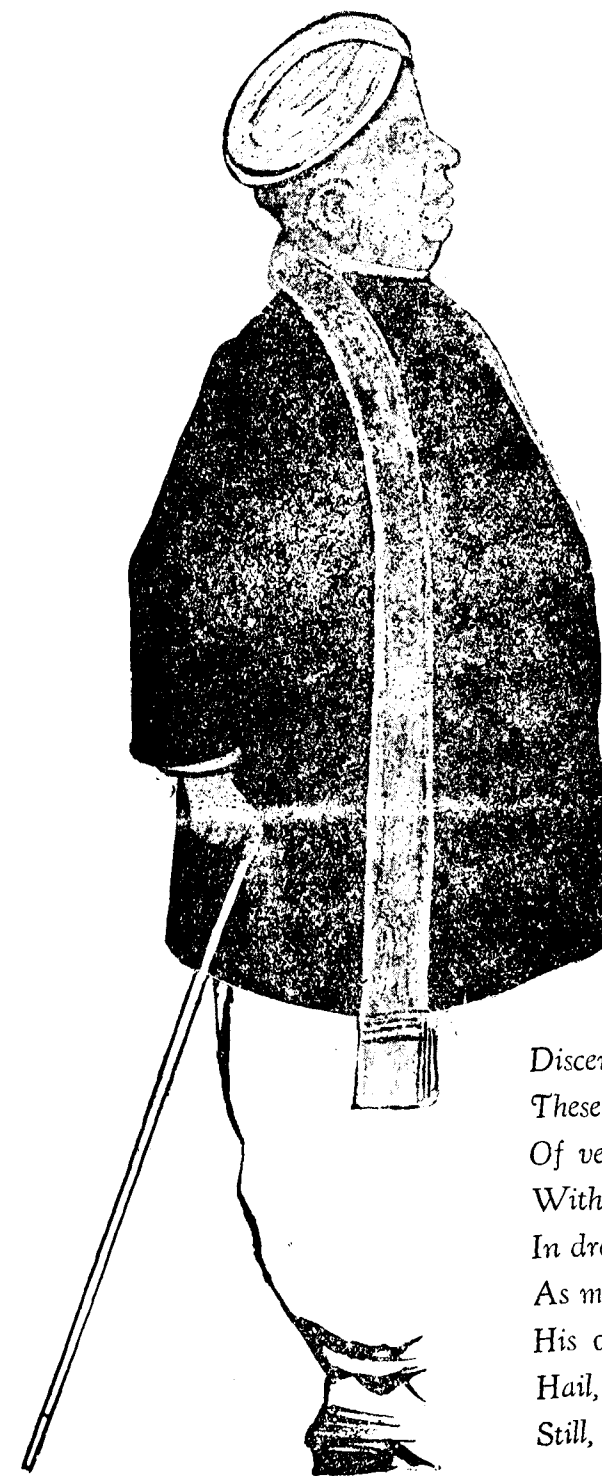
But the need for parties is clear and urgent, and this, in spite of the famous saying that 'subject-nations have no politics'. When bad men combine, the good must associate. And men may be bad, not so much ethically, as politically. The campaign now being half-heartedly carried on in our province by the Justices is a sinister reminder that the communal

snake has been only scotched, not killed. They have not scrupled to appeal to the worst passions of the crowd by exploiting communal and sectarian differences. Fortunately for the country, the anti-Brahmin feeling found a solvent in the Civil Disobedience Movement, which claimed the loyalties of both communities in abundant measure. It is as clear as daylight that the centre of political power has shifted definitely away from the Brahmin. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the Brahmin has fallen on evil days, and on evil tongues fallen. And it is clearly ludicrous to make a bogey of him. The one-time solidarity of the Justice Party stimulated by a common hatred of the Brahmin has now given place to internal dissensions born of that very feeling of enmity. A party cannot subsist on negatives.

The Justice Party have no programme yet. But the pronouncements of the leaders have a certain delightful incoherence. Mr. Reddiar speaks at Tinnevely on the Land Revenue question, and says that it is oppressively high, and unjust. Sir A. P. Patro says that the trouble is not there, but in the indebtedness of the ryot. The Rajah of Bobbili threatens to give us a ten-year plan of compulsory, free, education, while the Education Minister says that the settled policy of the Government is to dole out grants to aided schools. All these cannot be true at the same time; and even if they were, the action indicated in one case renders it impossible in another. The reason for all this incompatibility is the simple fact that there is no settled plan at the back of the Party. Frederick of Prussia is reported to have once remarked: 'My people say what I like; and I do what I like.' There seems to be a much simpler understanding among our Ministers. They say whatever they like; but only do what the Reserved Half likes! In the circumstances, it is somewhat amusing to find the Ministers appealing to the public to study the respective claims of the Congress and their Party, and make their choice accordingly. We seriously suggest that the Party should organise a 'Summer school' for clarifying their own minds as to what they mean, and how they should say it. They badly need some study themselves. One tip we may give them. The moment they evolve a national programme of reconstruction they will find, to their dismay, that they have stolen the Congress thunder. The better minds among them will return, like the prodigal son, to the national fold. The rest will continue to be up against the Congress with such aid as accidents may give them. They masquerade as a party, but are really a caucus deriving its inspiration from anti-national forces, anxious to maintain things as they are.



Merry's Personalities-II



Of courtly manners, and polished style,
A lavish heart that's free from guile,
By heav'n endowed with solid parts,

Discerning patron of the arts—
These be the virtues various
Of versatile Mr. Vivius!
With pen and tongue he's equally handy
In dress, perhaps—a bit of a dandy!
As man or counsel, above mean tricks,
His only weakness is—for walking-sticks!
Hail, doyen of the Madras Bar
Still, may they sunset be afar!

— V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar —

Tooth & Nail Tactics

By 'Jan'

Reading Time
About 5 Minutes

ABYSSINIA seems to be very much in the limelight of late. There, now! I wish you would stop guessing. Nothing is further away from my mind than to comment on the current Italo—Abyssinian conflict. Any cad capable of deciphering a newspaper poster knows that Il Duce and Ras Tafari are not exactly bosom friends at the moment—it does not need a man like me to tell them that. These two potentates have fallen out over something and maybe when I get a reply to my circular air-mail letter which I addressed to them last week I'll be in a position to tell you what that something is. But all the foregoing is by the way. This article, I can assure you, is not going to be a political harangue, and if politics does somehow creep in at a later stage through a side entrance, I for one disclaim all responsibility.

What I am actually alluding to is the press report issued recently about the Abyssinian prince who bit off the tip of his sweetheart's nose. Of course, it may be argued that any lover is free to help himself to a liberal hunk from his fiancée's face without thereby dragging his country into the limelight. I agree. But then, when the lover happens to be an Abyssinian prince and the sweetheart an Egyptian girl, things, you will admit, begin to take on an entirely different aspect.

You see, Abyssinian princes cannot go on biting the noses of Egyptian belles without incurring the rightful wrath of the Egyptian people. Moreover, this is precisely the time when Abyssinia should do all in her power to keep on friendly terms with her neighbours, and nowhere in the Book of Ethics by the writer, (Bosh and Bank Ltd. 7/6) is it said that the best way of securing a friend is by pecking at his nose.

So there you are. The general consensus of opinion is that the amorous prince should have bridled his ardour. After all, Egyptians possess only one nose apiece, which, like the rest of us, they like to preserve

intact, and naturally, they are bound to resent any petty larceny in respect of these precious possessions.

You may be inclined to ask, "What's in a nose?" Well, a great deal, if you know what I mean, and if you have ever had the misfortune to catch a common cold, you're bound to know. The really important question however is, "What is the motive behind the act?" The Press has very discreetly refrained from commenting on the motive, and one can well imagine why.

Maybe the prince was merely trying to illustrate and drive home the truth of the saying 'All is fair in Love and War', maybe he wasn't. Another theory is that the young man must be just another of those relic hunters, and as at the moment of the bite he was in the act of bidding his sweetheart good-bye, it is just possible that he wanted something of her as a keep-sake and souvenir, something which, when distance parted them, he could gaze at and fondle and kiss. You see, he would be lavishing his caresses on his own sweetheart in the flesh and not on a mere picture or representation of her.

The explanation emanating from certain quarters that the prince was merely trying to do his sweetheart a good turn must be ruled out as unsound. True, there is a croud of people parading our planet, whose facial profiles could be considerably improved by a judicious pruning of their nasal organs. But the Egyptian belle could hardly have been in any need of having her face lifted, otherwise why should she have gone into the trouble and expense of getting a surgeon (so the papers report) to graft a slab of live flesh on the injured organ.

In any event, whatever the motive behind it, the act itself was so sudden and unexpected that it clean bowled the young Egyptian over—that is if the scream she uttered at the moment of the impact can be taken to indicate anything. The man begged for a kiss, and

(Continued on page 8)

Behold! The Conquering Heroes Come!

By 'Teekay'

Reading Time
About 6 Minutes

CURIOSLY enough, the first match of the Indian Hockey Team just returning from their trip to New Zealand, was a cricket match on board the *Larg's Boy*. A couple of interesting days were spent in the encounter, when the hockey champions, with what help an unseaworthy Gopalan could render them, inflicted a crushing defeat on the ship's crew. Anyway, the distinction is ours that Gopalan was the only member of the team who grew susceptible to an attack of sea-sickness during the voyage.

The Indian Hockey Team is a queer combination. The members speak several languages and profess different religions. Their ages greatly vary. Two of them wear gay-hued turbans, one possesses a striking beard and no two of them look alike.

Judged by the analogy and example of Indian politics, it beats me how such a conglomerated lot could render such a good account of themselves as a team.

Four hockey matches had to be played in Australia before the Indians could meet a New Zealand XI. By a happy coincidence, the date of the first of the four matches synchronised with the opening of the hockey season in Australia and the West Australian Team had the rare distinction of starting their season with a fixture against an international side. But the most noteworthy event of the sojourn in Australia was the chance it afforded India's wizard in Hockey to meet Australia's wizard in Cricket. And when, for a time, Don's presence looked like eluding the Indians, Gupta had to register the mock threat that unless the Don was brought, he would stop his men from playing the scheduled game!

I am not going to bother you with a recital of the matches that the Indians played at New Zealand; how many goals they scored against such hard sides as Horowheuna, Wainarapa, Whangarei, Te Aroha etc.,

or how many goals they missed to score against such poor sides as Poverty Bay, Manniverke, Bush Union etc. For information of that kind, as Cheiro would say, see my book: 'With the Indian Hockey Team Abroad'.

Suffice it to say that the Indian Team won all the matches as they liked. An exception to this was the Second Test match, which was won by the Indians in the manner that Watts liked them to win! In the last two minutes of the game, we are told that two penalty bullies were awarded against the Indian side which went unconverted. Watts, the New Zealand centre forward, succeeded in failing to get the better over of the goalie on both the occasions; and India was lucky to win the Test by 3 goals to 2. This was the closest fight that the Indian Team encountered during the tour; the other sides, they simply swept like an avalanche. As a New Zealander puts it, goal scoring in other matches seemed to the Indians as easy as consuming ice-cream.

But, in other ways, the tour was a strenuous one. The Indians were simply raced thro' the country to play the 28 matches arranged for them. Often to fulfil an engagement, they were made to travel more than 100 miles a day in a motor-bus and in extreme cold. The weather was most unkind and the grounds oftentimes quite unsuitable for play. But to satisfy the hundreds of spectators who had come miles from the interior to see the World Champions in action, the team had to play in rain, sleet, slush and mud. Well may Gupta complain: "Your welcome is warm but your reception is cold." Any way, "Ranjit Singhji's side" won the matches right through.

The Press in New Zealand and Australia reported the matches prominently, minutely and fully. The form of the players was appraised from day today with discerning justice. The main occupation of the Indian XI, when not engaged in any match or sight-seeing, consisted in securing elaborate newspaper cuttings and

filing them seriatim. This must have considerably added to their strain.

Much sentimental stuff had been poured out in after-dinner speeches about the tour as promoting the bonds of friendship between two component parts of the British Empire. I shall refrain from commenting on that sort of cant that one is obliged to indulge in on such formal occasions.

But a lot has been said of the educative value to New Zealand of the Indian visit and of the great benefits that the tour had conferred on the New Zealand Youth, whose eyes, we are told, had been opened to the possibilities of the push-shot and the back-pass and the value of positional play. It is a moot point however whether Hockey can ever oust Rugby in the affections of the New Zealand Youth. The value of the education, then, is greatly to be discounted.

The more striking results of the tour, I would detail hereunder thus:

(1) A football tour to New Zealand is the direct consequence of the hockey triumphs. The trip is imminent.

(2) The hockey tour revealed to us that the expression 'Wizard' is an over-worked one. It has been used 1,23,37,893 times within the last 4 months. Reporters have to be on the look out for a new word.

(3) The tour showed to us clearly that having a name like Doctor (Behram) is no guarantee or protection against falling ill.

(4) The tour proved to us that 'milk' incidents—not 'butter-milk' incidents which are peculiar to our presidency—cannot fail to happen in places so renowned for cows and dairies as Australia and New Zealand.

(5) The tour brought home to Gopalan in what great demand a dancer could be in other lands, and how incomplete he himself was without being able to dance. We are glad to know that he has since learnt to dance. And

(6) The tour disclosed to us what an accomplished speaker India has in Mr. Gupta.

Although some of his speeches were adversely criticised, none can quarrel with his remark that it was his ambition to see India beat Australia at Cricket and Australia beat India at Hockey. As a comparative calculation of chances, the statement is correct and cannot be bettered.

THE END

TOOTH AND NAIL TACTICS

(Continued from page 6).

before the girl could say 'Jack Robinson', he had made a morsel of her nose. Now, this little artifice on the part of the young, Abyssinian should warn the world that Abyssinia is certainly not such a negligible quantity, when it comes to strategy, as one may sometimes be led to believe. Her sons can be relied upon to do unexpected things when necessity demands it of them. They will fight tooth (and perhaps even nail) in the defence of their fatherland.

What for instance is to prevent an Abyssinian army from ambushing an invading force at the dead of night, and after nipping off the noses of each individual soldier, send their yelling owners back to their homesteads, there to have their amputated organs attended to by an army of plastic surgeons?

And I'm sure they could use their nails as well as their teeth when occasion demanded it. They might suddenly break into the enemy's camp on a moonless night and scoop out with specially prepared claws the eyes of the invaders, leaving them to kill one another in their blind wrath. Perhaps however pacifists will take exception to this latter method of attack. Very well, but suppose instead of plucking the sighters of the blighters, the Abyssinians, armed with safety razors, merely shaved half their heads,—what then? If I may venture an opinion, I should say the war would be as good as over. No self-respecting soldier would dare expose himself in public with a head like a half-moon on a cloudless night. And he couldn't wear a helmet either, because that would hurt. By the time the hair once more grew to harvest size the League of Nations would probably have called an urgent meeting and the quarrel would be forgotten.

So that's that. Who knows but this apparently rash act of a patently impulsive prince may help show the world that the situation after all is not so abysmal for good old Abyssinia, that her sons have a thing or two up their ample sleeves, and that they can do things, who knows?

(You are right, Jan! The latest cables are screaming about Ras Tafari's big joke on Il Duce—Ed.)

THE END



Readers' Forum

Auntie Replies

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is an advance copy of Auntie's reply to your letter. You will also see what Auntie has made of the riddles propounded by your friend.

Perhaps you would like a fuller answer to the question: "Does character shape destiny, or destiny shape character?"

From the Western point of view, character would undoubtedly shape destiny in a perfect state of society. A person's innate abilities (what the scientists call his 'G') would automatically decide his station in life. In this sense, some men are born rulers, and some men are born servants.

'Destiny' is a word hard to define, but for the purpose of this discussion I will take it to mean those influences outside oneself, which are brought to bear on one's lot in life. In the present imperfect state of society, these irrelevant influences often override the natural ordering of society by innate ability. For example, a person with the endowments of a servant is often the son of rich parents. He does not

serve, but he cannot rule; so he becomes a drone.

But while destiny will make one man a drone, character will make another man a ruler. Rulers have often started life with no outward advantages, and climbed to eminence by sheer force of personality. This is, however, a difficult feat, performed by comparatively few.

I would say, therefore, that while character is the primary touchstone, modern social conditions tend to modify the worth of individual merit in favour of chance or 'destiny'.

However, discussion in abstract terms such as these is never entirely satisfactory. So much depends on the interpretation of terms incapable of definition. For example, the whole of the preceding argument may be turned about by anyone who claims that character is a part of one's destiny!

But of this I am sure: character is a definite and precious possession. Better to cultivate the character we know of, than to woo a vague and chance-controlled 'destiny'.

With all good wishes,
AUNTIE AWFUL.



IT is hard to find oneself left a waif in a harsh and uncharitable world, with nothing between you and the wolf hanging round the door. Yet that was how I felt. Of course, I don't blame the old man, my father. He is by no means a bad egg—generous, loving and all that. A bit hard boiled and gruff, maybe, inclined to break out at unexpected places, but he had a lot to put up with, with me for a son. He cut up rough and miserable when I had crashed at the University, and the old man had hoped that my name would be blazened in the chronicles of Indian History. I had failed twice in the

Wife's

Reading Time
About 9 Minutes

Intermediate, and graduation became out of the question. But seeing the graduates tramping the streets of the City with dismal faces and empty stomachs, I took courage and told myself, "Don't get disheartened, Lummie. You see, graduation has not got these fellows anywhere." All the same, the wolf at the door is an exacting brute, and I was feeling desperate.

It was then that I tumbled on a book called *Getting on in Life* written by a bloke who, without doubt, had been getting on very well merely by telling others how to do it.

The book gave me a positive brain-wave. A practical book that. "An amount of impudence, brass and bluff may often be necessary for success," it said.

"Come on Lummie, old fellow. Here is a thing for you. If you don't have them, who has? If you haven't brought anything out of the University, you have brought at least a good bucketful of impudence, brass and all that sort of precious stuff. Haven't you? With them you could make a boom in the world, the book says. Won't you? Impudence and brass indeed! Don't tell Lummie he hasn't got them. He has got plenty to use for himself, and to spare for a thousand others that tramp the streets. And now for it."

Pretty well, all the time after I had left the University, the idea of a job had been hanging over me but I was a bit hazy about where to start. In fact not much of a chance came my way. At first I thought that I would just insert an *ad* in the local papers, informing those strong, gruffy employers (who do nothing all day except sit at their desks and grouse at hundreds of employees) that I was free, and was willing to be employed by the highest bidder; and after that, I fancied, I had only to sit back and watch those strong gruffy beggars scramble for me. How would that be for impudence or bluff for a sample? But the book said it was not the way. All big successful men started at the lowest rung of the ladder, and afterwards told every fellow how when

Comforter

By 'Lummie'
Sketches by Mali

they were of his age, they worked their bones for twenty-five hours a day. That was the thing—to go and clutch at any job that came in the way and start climbing the ladder. And the job came in my way through an advertisement in the local Daily—"Wanted a smart young salesman, handsome, tactful and pushing."

"There you are, Lummie. That is you. 'Smart', yes, you are smart. 'Young', of course, you are young. 'Handsome, tactful and pushing', well, find another bloke as good as Lummie at tact and push, and aren't you handsome?" I verified myself in the mirror.

The time appointed for interview was nine in the morning. I would be there at half-past-eight, get appointed and cheat the other beggars. Won't that be stunning? But on this I lost. There had been two hundred of them crowding and jostling and pushing one another already, when I reached there. "You are a topper, Lummie! There is nobody like you for an idea," I said, as a bright idea suddenly titillated in my brain-pan.

"Give way all of you!" I shouted with authority, and it worked. I took up a 'To Let' board that was hanging downstairs, turned it the other way, and wrote 'Vacancy Filled Up', and hitched it up to the door of the office. Some in the crowd grumbled. Some interjected disgustedly 'already'? But the crowd soon melted. One or two that came afterwards looked dismally at the board, and trailed off, except one who stood aghast.

"Is that your doing?" he asked.

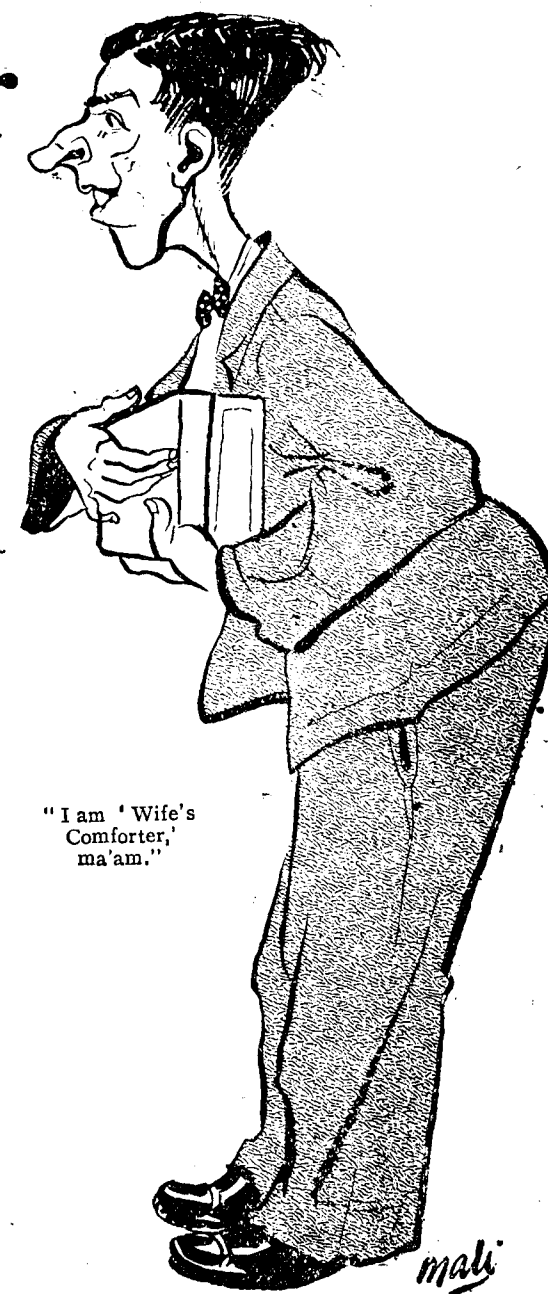
"You have hit right," I said.

"May I ask who is filling the vacancy?"

"You may."

"Stand aside, will you," he broke out with a sneer in his face.

"Who do you think you are?" I queried in defiance.



"I am 'Wife's Comforter,' ma'am."

"If you must know, I happen to be the unfortunate man whom you seem to have chosen for your employer."

Well, wouldn't that have staggered any fellow? But Lummie it didn't.

"Well, sir, allow me to congratulate you heartily," I said, and stretched out my hand for him to shake.

"Well, I am damned if it isn't the limit of impudence!"

"No. Not the limit. There is more where it came from, if you call it impudence. Have you read a

The Simple Way

By John A. Henry

Illustrated by Roger

Reading time

About 8 Minutes

"FOR sheer beauty and tasteful exquisiteness," said the Professor seriously across the table to William, "you can't beat the simple but well-known *Rosa canina*."

William gasped. Then he felt a nudge in his left side. None of us like nudges in the left side, or the right, for that matter, or anywhere else, but this particular nudge was not resented by William. For, it emanated from a deliciously pretty girl—Sarah, the Professor's daughter.

"Er—yes, yes," said William hurriedly, wondering why Sarah must go and have a blinking Professor for a father. "Yes, of course, of course! *Rosa canina*. That's right. We had a few the other night for supper. They looked beautiful on the dish. The pater ate thirteen of them. Said he'd never tasted anything so sheerly beautiful and tastefully exquisite since the Boer War."

Thin beads of perspiration broke out all over William. He didn't dare look at Sarah. This job of getting on the Professor's good side was proving rather dangerous. He felt slightly annoyed with Sarah for saying that it was the only way to deal with clever men who had pretty daughters whom you wanted to marry. This was the first time he had met the old man, and, he reflected, after all, Sarah must know him best. She should know her own father. And he, William, must not lose this opportunity, gained by



Sarah after three weeks, to talk with her father. Professors are such busy people that William must get down to it. That's what William thought.

"He ate thirteen?" the Professor was incredulous. "You say he ate thirteen *Rosa canina*?"

"Thirteen *Rosa canina*," agreed William. "Nearly all at one helping."

"Well, well, well," old Professor Saddle seemed mildly surprised. "We do get some queer people in this world, it is true. I once knew a man who enjoyed nothing better than eating sunflowers."

"But what a fool!" said William in a shocked voice. "Er—I mean, a sunflower is a flower after all, and after all, we don't usually go round eating sunflowers after all." He was so shocked at the sunflower-eater's folly that he didn't notice all his 'after all's'. "Now, *Rosa canina*, being made from good pure sausage meat, are unbeatable. Indeed I don't know why anyone should want to eat a sunflower when there's a *Rosa canina* knocking about. I mean to say, it's not done, is it? I believe the Yanks call them hot dogs. And a hot dog—or *Rosa canina*, whichever you like—is—is—er unbeatable."

At the expiration of which passionately learned speech, William felt another nudge. The Professor was looking somewhat puzzled.

"Hot dogs?" he asked. "Hot dogs? What hot dogs?"



"*Rosa caninas* then," said William, wishing the carpet would roll up and envelop the Professor in its toils.

"But I always thought," the Professor's voice sounded a bit tetchy, "I always thought that a *Rosa canina* was a Dog Rose—a flower."

Another nudge from Sarah.

"Yes," said William. "That's one type of the species. But the type that is less well known, especially out here, is the hot dog variety. I—"

But the Professor was obviously annoyed that somebody knew more than himself about this obscure hot dog variety of *Rosa canina*, and so he went on with his fish, stabbing that unoffending denizen of the sea with vicious and pitiless thrusts.

After the dessert the Professor tried again. His attitude suggested that he was jealous of William's knowledge.

"I wonder if you know much about the *Ranunculus bulbosus*?" he asked William.

William was all for denying any knowledge of *Ranunculus bulbosus*. But yet another nudge from Sarah put him on his mettle and, racking his brain, he remembered something he had seen in the Dictionary the night before when he had been working out a crossword puzzle.

"Nothing much," he replied triumphantly. "Except that it is commonly known as the Bulbous crowfoot or Buttercup."

"Then, what are Lipsikis?" asked William.

"Ha!" The Professor obviously felt that he was coming into his own again. This young man didn't know more than he did about something anyway!

"And the *Homarus vulgaris*?" said the Professor, spurring himself on to fresh victories.

"Oh that!" said William, who fondly imagined the talk was still about flowers, making his tone sound almost contemptuous. "That's the common or vulgar wall flower. I believe its name originated from the walls of a house. Walls encircle a house, and this flower grew on these walls. But they couldn't very well call the flower *Walrus vulgaris* as it would have been rather misleading. So they changed it to *Homarus vulgaris*. It's a lovely flower, anyway."

The Professor's eyes gleamed. He leaned back in his chair.

"And the *Warmus sausogia*?" he asked quietly.

"Nothing but a common mushroom," stated William as Sarah nudged him once more. "Nothing much to look at but—"

"Stop!" the Professor had reached the end of his tether. "Young man, you're a humbugging humbug! There's no such thing, no such thing! I merely gave your hot dog a new name—warm sausage. What d'you mean by this? And you think *Homarus vulgaris* is a wall flower? Well, you imbecile, it's a common lobster."

William subsided gently, like a balloon that has been pricked. Sarah came to his rescue.

"Father, you seem to forget that Mr. Brown is my fiancée!"

"Fiancée or no fiancée," snorted the Professor, "I object very strongly to being made a fool of. Especially by a young jackanapes who knows nothing about Latin. Trying to put one over on me, by Jove! Never heard of such a thing. Almost took me in for a moment. Don't you realise, Mr. Brown, that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing? And I wouldn't let a man like you, who obviously knows no Latin, marry my daughter."

William thought rapidly. He knew now that it was quite useless trying to get into the old man's good books any more, especially through Latin and herbs and flowers and things. There was only one way. He took a long shot, relying on something Sarah had told him before dinner.

"I believe you're a good sportsman, sir," said William, and Sarah's father looked eminently pleased.

"You're right, young man. For all my notorious absent-mindedness, I backed the Derby winner in 1900. Raked in £ 20 for a few shillings."

"Then," William knew that Sarah's plan had been all wrong. He also knew that the old man would have to have him as a son-in-law. "I'll wager I know something about something the meaning of which you will not be able to guess in three guesses!"

"Done!" said the Professor. "What're you wagering?"

"This gold wrist-watch of mine against your daughter's hand in marriage, sir."

"Done!" said the Professor jubilantly and heartlessly once more. He was obviously quite sure of himself.

"Then, what," asked William coolly, "are *Lipsikiss*?"

The Professor jumped. This was indeed a stunner! And spoken in a strange language. He was used to Latin and Greek, but this must be some barbarous and long-forgotten language. Every-day language was barbarous to learned Professors, but this was even worse!

After five minutes profound thought he gave up.

"I won't attempt to guess," he said. "You've got me there. But if you can't prove that this word of yours is genuine—well, you lose your wager."

William smiled. Then he leaned towards Sarah and pressed his lips to hers in a long kiss.

"I couldn't beat you with your brainy language, Professor," he said when he could speak again. "But it just shows that the simple way is always the best. Well, there's your answer and my proof. What are *lipsikiss*? Lips I kiss—Sarah's. Quite simple, eh?"

And then the learned Professor burst out laughing. He was still laughing in the dining room when Sarah cuddled happily into William's arms in the moonlit and glorious garden outside.

THE END

WIFE'S COMFORTER—(Continued from page 12)

ing his tricks. He will be all right presently," I said to comfort her. But the blaze caught up a curtain and was spreading to the furniture.

"A little powerful this—damn it!" I said. The blaze had caught the furniture and was reaching a picture that was hanging on the wall. I looked up "Whose picture is that?" I queried. "My husband's," she said.

The man in the picture was the damned fool of my employer.

But the place was getting literally hot for me, and I thought I had better really get away. And I did, forcing a passage through eight policemen, two fire brigades, a dozen newspaper reporters and about a hundred Boy Scouts.

The wolf still hangs round my door. But the book is all right. The damned old fool oughtn't to have given for demonstration a thing as powerful as that. He deserved to have his house burnt down for his stupidity.

THE END

The Suit Case

Reading Time
About 2½ Minutes

By 'Ettinne'

IT was a Sunday and we—five of us of the 'Idlers' Club—sat watching a cricket match in progress at the S. I. A. A. The game had commenced at noon correct to schedule, and for half an hour we had fidgeted with disgust to see two hefty batsmen stop the ball with their pads or bat. Thirty minutes of such dullness was enough and we turned round to have some fun at the expense of the late-comers, who never to fail to provide us such fare at all places.

"Eh! Here comes a doctor with his bag," said Gopu and set the ball rolling, as a man in an ill-assorted suit, carrying a small battered tin suit-case that serves so many purposes now-a-days, came up.

"Not at all! He is no more a doctor than you. He looks more like a briefless lawyer," interrupted Kittu. "His suit-case most likely contains all the briefs he ever had. Better ask him to argue the merits of Amar Singh vs. Verity in the Madras Test."

"Foo! He is only an insurance agent. The suit-case contains only company prospectus and rot," broke in Rangu who had been dodging in vain half a dozen agents for three months.

"What fools all of you are! Can't you see he is only a vendor of tooth-powder!" cried out boisterous Balamam. "You see a score of his like in China Bazaar every evening, and if he does not take round his obnoxious red-dust packet at lunch interval, I

shall give you any odds you like. What do you say, Ettinne?" and he turned round to me.

"Done!" I put in. "And if you go wrong, will you stand us lunch to-day?"

"Certainly I will, on condition that if I prove right, each of you must play the host a day this week," retorted Balamam.

"Oh! Yes!" I answered back gleefully. "I am sure you will lose the bet. The fellow is only a miser and his suit-case contains nothing but his lunch—and our to-day's lunch."

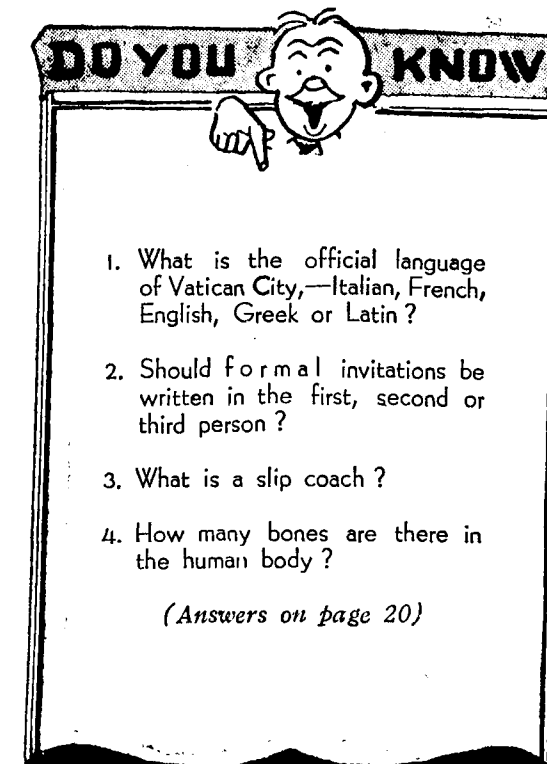
"That, we shall wait and see at lunch time," said Balamam and all of us nodded assent. Then one of the players had his bails nipped off, for at last a ball, a yorker, had got below the barn-door bat. The player who followed livened up matters till the inevitable lunch hour came.

The bell in the pavilion rang and we rose with the

rest of the spectators. We saw the fellow go behind one of the galleries and squat down. We followed and came on him just as he opened his suit-case. We expectantly peered in and saw him take out a paper parcel of cold curd-rice which he began to munch.

We all ran off dragging Balamam, yelling, "Come on, our host!"

Poor Balamam had to shell out a fiver before we came back to see the afternoon's game.



1. What is the official language of Vatican City,—Italian, French, English, Greek or Latin?
2. Should formal invitations be written in the first, second or third person?
3. What is a slip coach?
4. How many bones are there in the human body?

(Answers on page 20)

Tidings from

Before Mr. Justice
Vendakkaimonirao

Grave and Sudden Provocation

Reading Time
•
About 9 Minutes

Maddington, 7—9—35

GRAVE concern is caused in social and sporting circles by the decision of the court of appeal in what is known as the 'Goosmopartisan Club' case. His lordship in delivering the judgment said:—

This is a petition praying for the revision of the order of the 6th stipendiary of the Maddington Magistracy convicting the accused for offences of hurt and or assault and sentencing him to 3 months' hard labour. I shall directly proceed to state the relevant facts giving up for the moment the established practice in law—a practice as widely established as it is condemned—of narrating all the irrelevant facts before finding them irrelevant for the paradoxical reason that a finding as to their irrelevancy may be relevant. The accused, the complainant, and the several witnesses before me are all members of the Maddington Goosmopartisan Club. The accused as has been borne out during the course of these proceedings is a leading but respectable citizen of high attainments, sterling character, a most amiable disposition, charming manners, who is never known to have so much as murmured a protest against the tax periodically levied on his unearned income, who always kept to the correct side of the road and followed the queue at all public ticket windows. The complainant does not suffer in the least by comparison with the accused. If I may confess in confidence, on going through the records of this case, I discovered for the first time, and I hope not for the last time, not one but two men who are the nearest approach to the 'ordinary reasonable man' known only to law and if in my enthusiasm at

such a discovery I did not run disrobed through these spacious corridors, crying, 'Eureka' emulating the great Achimides when he discovered an equally great principle, it was because of the most deplorable lack of precedents in this court sanctioning such a demonstration of my delight. To proceed with the narration, on the eventful evening the accused and the complainant were inveigled into a game of Auction Bridge. It fell to the lot of the accused to partner the complainant while P.Ws. 3 and 4 partnered against them. The rules of this fascinating indoor game—not to be mistaken with Indore game, an altogether different pastime of the rich in Indore—are too well known to need elaboration. They are, however, much simplified in their application to this case as it is admitted that the players were not playing up to any exacting conventions. Nevertheless it is admitted that the most imperative of these unwritten rules, a rule as imperative and inviolable as any law of Tyre and Sidon, a rule as well known as the law to which the complainant is subject to, is that the third hand must cover with his highest card.

It is relevant to observe that the accused and the complainant had lost heavily during the course of the several rubbers and during the game under consideration, the rubber game, the audacious declaration of four 'no trumps' by P.W. 4 with the queen of diamonds as the only check in that suite stood doubled by the accused and redoubled by P.W. 4. One cannot fail to observe that the cumulative effect of these circumstances on the mind of the accused should indeed have been most disturbing. It was at this

Tribunals

crucial stage of the game that the accused led with a rag of diamonds, a suite that he had declared, when the complainant failed to cover it with his king of diamonds as he should most certainly have done, with the result that P. W. 4 secured that trick by his queen, gathered all his 9 more tricks in the two other suites that he ruled in and won the rubber. As to what transpired after this is clear from the deposition of P. W. 5. He says: 'The accused was transformed into a raving lunatic. He pounced on the complainant and socked him thrice on the jaw.' The accused admits having done so and is not ashamed of it. On this evidence the Magistrate, strangely enough, convicted and sentenced him to 3 months hard labour.

Before me the accused relies on sections 334 and 352 of the Indian Penal Code. The relevant portion of Section 334 reads: 'Whoever voluntarily causes hurt on grave and sudden provocation... to any person other than the person who gave the provocation.....' A like exception is provided in section 352 which relates to assault. It is urged on his behalf that the undeniably wrong game of the complainant is grave and sudden provocation within the meaning of the sections and the accused should therefore be acquitted. I am impressed by this argument. It is quite obvious to the meanest capacity that the act of the complainant, which was accomplished in a wink, deprived the accused of his normal powers of calm deliberation or reflection and rendered him absolutely incapable of exercising proper control over his passions which were gathering force during the course of the game; in other words it caused grave and sudden provocation. While this appears to be the most reasonable view to take, it should, however, be borne in mind that absolute certainty can seldom be obtained in human affairs. Reason and public utility therefore require that judges in forming their opinions should be regulated by the superior number of probabilities on one side and on the other. It is therefore eminently desirable to refer to certain cases laying down the limits of grave and sudden provocation as a defence to an action of this nature. It will be sufficient to advert to a class of cases too well known and established to be elaborately discussed and which in substance and result have established that such a defence on facts analogous to this case is perfectly tenable.

In *Plantain Vs Goofie* 6 J. K. B. L. 345, a case decided as early as 1832—it is not argued that human nature has changed much since then. Plantain was trimming his precious lawn with a rusty lawnmower that was emitting intolerable shrieks. Mr. Goofie his neighbour addressed a polite request to him saying 'Mr. Plantain, will you please oil your mover.' Plantain equally politely answered, 'Mr. Goofie will you please oil your baby,' hardly suspecting that in doing so he was touching the tenderest part of Goofie who was a normal father. Needless to say that Goofie replied with a thundering assault, battery, mayhem etc. In the action that followed Goofie successfully pleaded grave and sudden provocation.

In *The Secretary, Puddle-on-Pond Golf Club Vs Steelie*, the accused, a retired old colonel of choleric temper, while putting in the 9th hole, was stung under his armpit by a *quadupus probascantheritus quintupus* (by the moderns called the bee). He chased the insect and when it ultimately sought shelter inside the club pavilion, he wielded the bag-ful of his clubs most violently on the secretary of the club, all the while calling him the vilest names, as he considered that the secretary had failed and neglected to do his duty which was to maintain the course free from such pests. Here again in setting aside the conviction of the lower court and acquitting the accused on his plea of grave and sudden provocation, the eminent law Lord Bloofinch observed: "Of what use is a 19-hole course with perfect bunkers, lawns, holes and tees if the whole area is infested with bees? Can it be maintained for a moment that a bee stinging under the armpit of a golfer while putting is not grave and sudden provocation? The answer is a most emphatic negative. To hold otherwise on the authority of *The Secretary, The Oat and Thistle Golf Club Vs Psnype* which has no bearing on human nature, will be nothing less than by quasistry and construction to pervert, confound and mystify plain language; to do which in defining the nature of crimes and punishments where the public interest is so much involved is neither the province of a legislator nor the office of a judge.

In a more recent Indian case, reported in 1933, *M. D. H. J. 0006, The Proprietor, The Venus Photo Stores Vs Kamakshi*, the photographer by mistake caused to be delivered to the accused Kamakshi her mother-in-law's photo instead of her own. When he

called to collect the bill he was assaulted by her with a broom, to suffer which is considered by people of this land as the worst form of indignity. His Lordship Sir Fly Swatter in setting aside the conviction of the lower court observed: "The provocative nature of Mother-in-law's photos is so well recognised that in the army and the navy the bands and the drums are covered with the picture of the drummer's mother-in-law to ensure lusty beating. Where drummers have more than one mother-in-law the drums are covered with as many pictures as they have mothers-in-law. Now, I ask, how much more so in the present case of a Hindu girl?"

I am aware that these cases are not in their circumstances precisely similar to the present and perhaps in respect of some circumstances entirely different. But I have no hesitation in relying on them as illustrative of the correct application of the exception provided in the section relied on.

On the other hand the recent full bench decision of this court in Darjeeshah Vs Stoneybroke 1934 M.D. H. J. 65 is canvassed for the complainant. Here the accused received per bearer the complainant a bill from his butcher, apparently for value of rotten mutton supplied, with a covering letter reading: "Dear Sir, I shall thank you to foot this bill." The accused footed the bearer bill collector instead of the bill. His defences to the action that followed were two-fold. Firstly that he did so under a mistake of fact and alternatively that he suffered grave and sudden provocation. The court, Justice Podalangaraue dissenting, negatived both these defences and confirmed the conviction. It was, and rightly so, impressed by the ingenuous argument of Sir Allasami that the offence

was aggravated by the circumstance that the accused kicked with his left leg instead of the right. His lordship Justice Podalangaraue, however, for reasons that are not quite intelligible in his dissenting judgment, considered that this was not an aggravating circumstance to warrant a conviction. It is needless to consider this judgment any further as it does not cover the present case.

In conclusion I uphold the defence of the accused. The conviction and sentence shall be set aside and the accused shall be set at liberty.

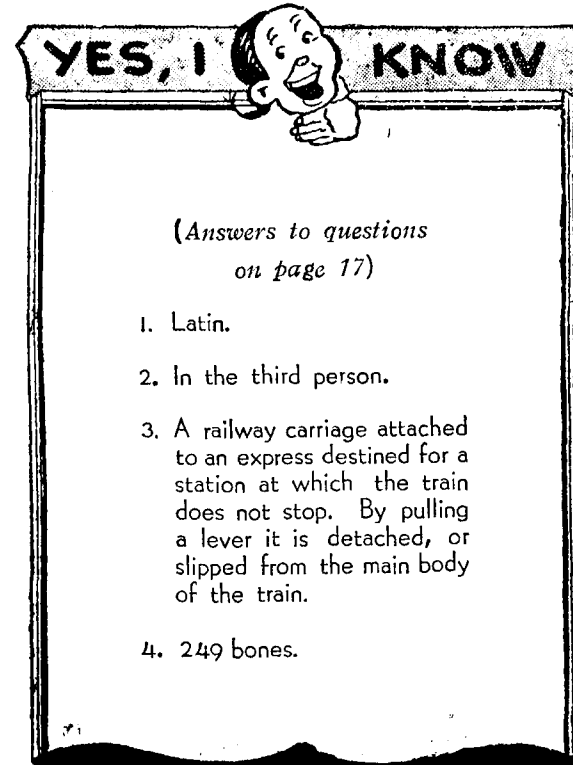
I cannot part with this case without expressing my sense of profound regret that an innocent pastime should have led to this rupture between two otherwise ideal citizens. I consider that apart from the parties to this action larger issues are involved and such actions will militate against free social intercourse which is the very essence of civilised life. But in the present deplorable state of the law I am unable to avert such actions. It is therefore my desire that at least the parties to this action should not in future resort to the courts in the event of a

similar occurrence. They should forget all about this action, forgive each other and in token thereof shake hands, hug each other after the true Indian fashion and if they prefer rub their noses.

ACCUSED: Mylod! Mylod!! Mylod!!! He snuffs Mylod!

The court was considering the situation arising out of this complication when it adjourned for lunch.

Sir Grunt appeared for the accused while the complainant was represented by Mr. Shabhas Ali.



Stripes—

Reading Time
About 2 minutes

EVERY one in the crowded Court-room admired the pluck of the little man in the witness box.

To be sure, he was having a bad time of it. Mr. Cornelius Drutten, the defense counsel, was putting him through the mangle as only Mr. Cornelius Drutten the defense counsel knew how.

It wasn't a very important case. The cross-examination did not matter much one way or the other. And yet with the ferocity for which he was notorious, the defense counsel fired question after question at the little man in the box, and gloated over the bits of information fished out of the unwilling lips of the witness.

"Did you see the defendant any time during the evening of the 24th June?" Cornelius pressed his knuckles deep into the desk before him and put the question.

"I did," the little man returned. "I told you once I had had a glimpse of the man."

"A glimpse, eh? Well, what exactly do you mean by a glimpse?"

"A momentary look," explained the witness. "I couldn't have seen him for more than about ten seconds."

Clearly visible on the broad features of Cornelius was a smile of victory.

"And where pray, was the defendant standing at the time that you had a glimpse of him?"

"In a crowd of people. Must have been no less than a hundred men there. Yet I was able to recognise him clearly in another crowd two hours later."

Obviously, this was the confession Mr. Drutten, counsel for the defense, was seeking to squeeze out of the witness' lips. For he turned and beamed at the judge. Then turning with a fierce scowl to the witness:

"You say that you had only a momentary glimpse of the defendant, standing in a crowd of over a

hundred men and yet you were able to recognise him clearly in another crowd two hours later?"

"Yes I do," coolly came from the little man in the witness box. "I recognised him because when I first saw him he was leaning against some railings."

"How do you suppose that can make any difference?" fumed the counsel.

"Well, you see, I had finished painting those railings only five minutes before he leaned against them."

THE END

Statistics

Has nobody counted
the children of stones?

Those hard, little pebbles
of frost-bitten birth,

Stillborn in the winter,
of splintering groans,

And left to themselves
in the dark of the earth?

Won't somebody make out
a census this year

(Obstetrically speaking)
computing how fast

A stone bears its young?
In my garden appear

A million more pebbles
this spring than the last!

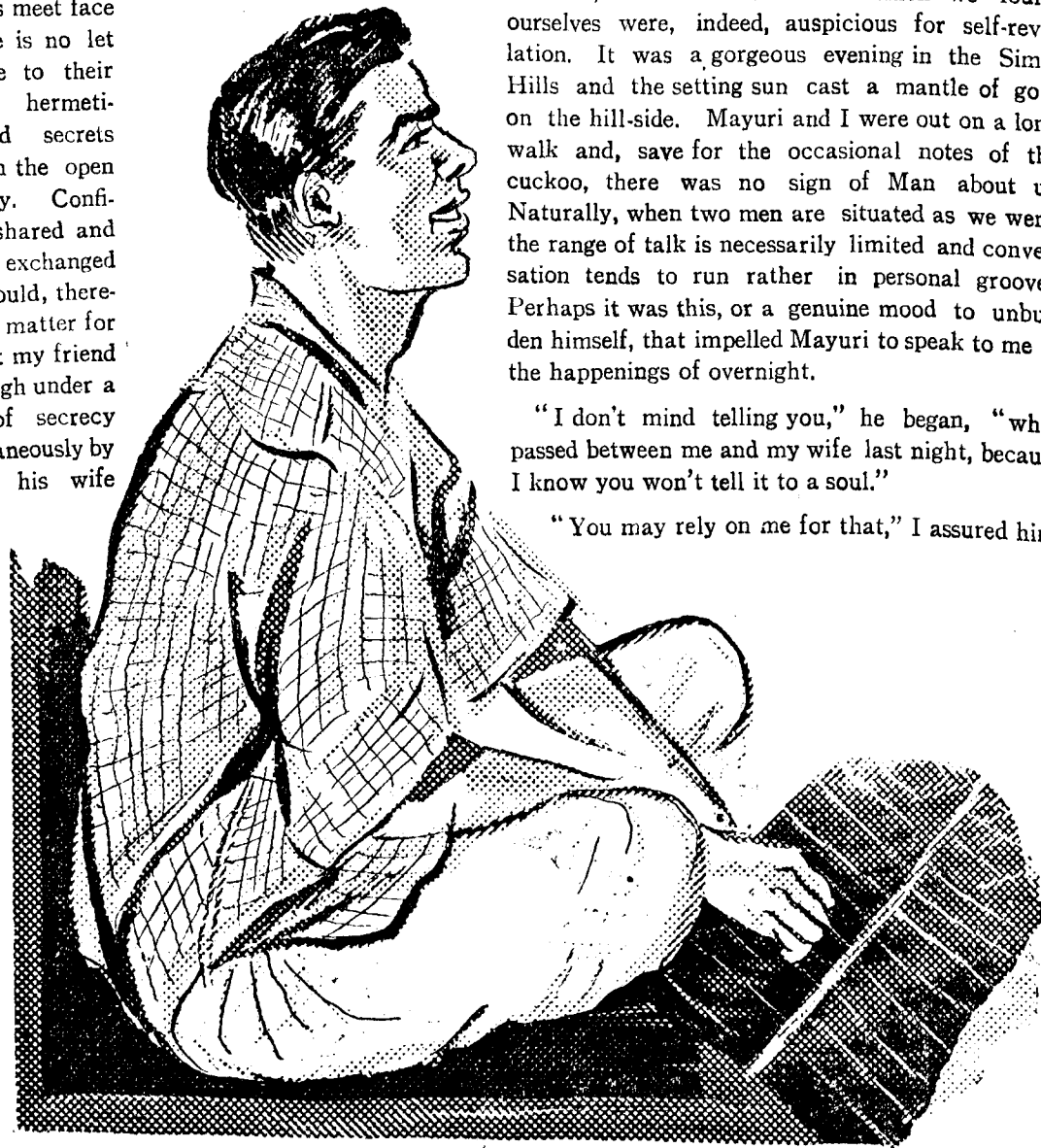
The First Rift

Reading Time
About 7 Minutes

By R. Jagannathan

Sketches by Mali

WHEN two strong men meet face to face, there is neither East nor West—and, I dare say, you know the rest. Similarly, when two good friends meet face to face, there is no let or hindrance to their talk. Even hermetically sealed secrets come out in the open spontaneously. Confidences are shared and opinions are exchanged freely. It should, therefore, be no matter for surprise that my friend Mayuri, though under a strict vow of secrecy taken simultaneously by himself and his wife



Saraswati, began to disregard his pledge and let himself off for the nonce.

Moreover, the circumstances in which we found ourselves were, indeed, auspicious for self-revelation. It was a gorgeous evening in the Simla Hills and the setting sun cast a mantle of gold on the hill-side. Mayuri and I were out on a long walk and, save for the occasional notes of the cuckoo, there was no sign of Man about us. Naturally, when two men are situated as we were, the range of talk is necessarily limited and conversation tends to run rather in personal grooves. Perhaps it was this, or a genuine mood to unburden himself, that impelled Mayuri to speak to me of the happenings of overnight.

"I don't mind telling you," he began, "what passed between me and my wife last night, because I know you won't tell it to a soul."

"You may rely on me for that," I assured him,

"When I come to think of it," he reflected, "I see it is but an instance of how the subconscious gets the better of our judgment. What I mean to say is that we are at times forced to say things which is far from our intention."



"What's all this generalisation?" I asked him. "You seem to have suddenly turned metaphysical."

"No, no. I am only explaining myself. You know I am a pacifist; always have been and don't intend to be otherwise. That's why Saraswati and I got along swimmingly and without a hitch. Yes, till the baby arrived. Since then, however, things have been getting slightly difficult. The little one, you know, can be a dreadful nuisance and try our patience and tempers. But, I hardly minded it and kept smiling through.

"But, last night, our differences came to a head and surprisingly sudden it was; even before we knew what we were about. Well, my lad, we quarrelled; we bandied words against each other—"

"You quarrelled!" I interrupted him. "I don't believe you; you are not made of that stuff."

"Nor is Saraswati either, for all I can vouch. But, the fact is there, we did fall out. The baby was the cause of it all."

"How?" I asked. "Wasn't the kid comfortably asleep?"

"There wouldn't have been any trouble if the baby sleeps at night. That's precisely what he refuses to do. He seems to think that sleeping at night is sheer waste of time; gets up at all odd and unearthly hours and keeps on howling or playing or destroying. Saraswati usually pretends she is asleep and leaves me to deal with the infant terrible. When pretence is not possible, she wakes me up and coolly deputes me for the job, her invariable excuse being that she is tired and aching after the day's arduous toil. I wonder how many aches these women have in reserve to be used against their husbands. But what can I do? You know that ever since my school days, I have been strongly certified as a painstaking-and-industrious type. So, I have to keep up my reputation and—"

"Would you kindly proceed to the events of last night, cutting off all this rigmarole."

"Well, the fact was, last night I was determined to sleep like a top, come what may, and indeed slept so. But at midnight, came a rude awakening from Saraswati. She gave me a dig in the ribs and cried:

"'Won't you get up for Heaven's sake? The baby is gasping for breath.'"

" 'Why should the baby gasp for breath?' I asked her sleepily. You see, I was in no mood to excuse her for kindling me in the middle of the night."

"But she thought my question was sheepish, and did not scruple to say so. Having no other go, I got up and examined the child. Sure enough, something had gone wrong with his breath. It got stuck up somewhere. His eyes which were but partially open looked askance."

" 'Look at the baby,' she said. 'His throat seems to have swollen. He has vomitted everything he took in the evening.'"

" 'Oh,' I said and stood mute."

" 'Why are you standing idle,' she turned on me. 'Can't you see that his condition is critical?'"

" 'What can I do?' I replied somewhat piqued. 'I haven't taken my degree in Children's Diseases. All that I can do now is to ask you to keep him alive till the morning; then I will go and fetch a doctor.'"

" 'But, what is to be done now?' she persisted."

" 'Bless me if I know,' I replied."

" 'You call yourself a man and yet you know nothing. Why don't you know what should be administered to him now?'"

" 'Why don't you know?' I answered back with considerable heat in my voice. 'What were you doing in your father's house with tons of your sisters and their children? Why didn't you observe them? Why haven't you learnt anything about children's common complaints and their remedies? What was your mother doing all the time? What earthly benefit did you derive from your grandmother? Why haven't they taught you how to take care of children gasping in the dark?'"

" 'Aren't you ashamed of barking at your wife? Is it manly, I ask?'"

" 'Don't say I didn't give you any manly advice. I told you even in the beginning, even before the baby began to stir in your womb, that you couldn't manage the baby alone and that we should request my mother to come and stay with us. It was you who rejected my advice, I know, out of sinister motives.'"

" 'Well, I am not ashamed to confess that I turned down your advice because I knew that your mother is an impossible woman. She would hardly have been of any assistance to me. She would have come here with your sisters and their enclosures and I wouldn't have had a moment's peace.'"

" 'Keep a civil tongue in your head. Don't presume to talk ill of my mother.'"

" 'I am not at all anxious to talk anything about her. It was you who dragged me.....Let it go. What shall we do now? Oh, see, the child seems to struggle for breath.'"

" 'Can it be diphtheria?' I said, looking at the swollen throat."

" 'What's diphtheria?' she asked."

" 'An infectious disease, something to do with the throat, some membranous growth, often very serious.' I too was rather perturbed about it. 'Look here, Saraswati,' I said, 'keep a watch over the baby, I will run to Kalyanam's house and fetch his mother. She may know some ready remedies.'"

"I set out in the starkness of the night to Kalyanam's house. His mother, poor old woman, was sound asleep. But she got brisk and busy as soon as I bugled my distress call. The old woman came with me to my house and examined the child keenly. But she was not afraid."

" 'I know you young people get needlessly alarmed,' she remarked. 'There's nothing serious with the child. He has got heavy cold and sore-throat—Saraswati! give him a small bit of *sitha rathai*, and he will be quite fit in the morning.'"

"I profusely thanked the old woman and saw her off. Well, she was perfectly right. Before I got up from my bed in the morning, the baby was up and doing. But, Saraswati would not speak to me on account of the hot words that passed between us—But, you see, man and wife can't keep estranged for long. It only remains for me to say that we made it up and kissed again, and promised that nobody should know of our tiff. So, don't tell this to anyone, not even to your wife."

When I returned home that night after the walk, and sat down for my meal, my wife put on her best smile and began:

"What I am going to tell you is between ourselves. I shouldn't tell it to you even, but I see no harm. Last night, it appears, that Saraswati and her husband had a tiff. The baby got suddenly ill at midnight—"

"And Kalyanam's mother came and diagnosed it as the commonest cold and cured him," I short-circuited her narration."

"Who told you?" she asked."

"Who told you?" I answered."

THE END



" 'DEAR Auntie,' writes an ingenuous niece, 'have you had any experience of daily journalism? I would like to know how a modern newspaper is run.'"

It is no secret, my dears, that Auntie was once the sob-sister of the *London Lyre*. A sob-sister is a female journalist who gets the 'human angle' of calamities and tragedies. When a great financier is found out, and sent to prison for a few years, the sob-sister worms her way into the farewell banquet, and describes what it feels like to consume champagne and caviare in the company of an arch-criminal. If possible, she accompanies him to the prison gates, and sends shudders down the spines of her readers with descriptions of echoing vaults and clanging iron doors. She ends on a pathetic note, describing the great man's mistresses in their fur coats and diamonds, waving sorrowful farewells from outside the grim portals. "Ah!" writes the sob-sister, "who can tell how many tender broken lives and desolate hearts are hidden behind these brave farewells? Think of those condemned to face an empty future—alone!"

Sob-sisters are generally attached to the staff of the News Editor; but the proprietor of the *London Lyre* liked to accommodate the sob-sister in his own office. Before Auntie's time, the sob-sisters were a succession of capable, beautifully-attired, and exquisite young damsels, but Auntie broke the tradition. "I can stand your face," said the worthy proprietor, "as long as you continue to bring home the bacon."

Auntie was famous for bringing home the bacon. There was never a fire, a murder, a divorce, or an execution, when Auntie didn't return with harrowing, sentimental descriptions calculated to wring the withers of a soft-hearted public. When anyone com-

mitted suicide, Auntie always got hold of his love-letters before the police did, and had a column of emotional comment, all ready for the next edition."

No difficulty was too great for Auntie. She peeped through all the key-holes in London, and even interviewed film-stars in their baths. Nobody minded Auntie. Of course, a few inconsiderate persons sometimes kicked her down the front steps and called her a prying old vampire, but that was all in the day's work for a sob-sister."

The proprietor, Lord Grandiose, was a veritable Napoleon of newspaperdom. When he entered the towering offices of his mighty newspaper, a wave of awe swept through the departments, and the very printers' devils shivered in the remotest sub-basement. Thousands of employees owed their livelihood to this terrible autocrat, who distributed dismissal and ruin with the same God-like inconsequence as he distributed five-pound bonuses."

Lord Grandiose cracked the whip like any lion-tamer, but there was a whip whose crack even he obeyed. This was wielded by the Association of Advertisers. The *London Lyre* consisted of twenty-four sheets of advertisements, interspersed with a certain amount of news and editorial matter. A single page of a single edition cost the advertisers thirteen thousand five hundred rupees: they paid the piper and they called the tune. Without the advertisers there would be no massive circulation, no stupendous free-gift schemes: in fact, no *London Lyre*. Lord Grandiose could fill his columns with Government-wrecking articles; could set the nation by the ears with coloured and selected news; but if he printed a paragraph calculated to lower the sales of art-silk stockings, the advertisers cracked the whip."

Auntie had many quaint experiences in the service of Lord Grandiose, some of which she hopes to recount next week.

Anxious to Marry (Kasauli). "A young man has been paying me a lot of attention, but he does not make any declaration. Please tell me how I can bring him up to the scratch." It is determination that does it, my dear. Get him somewhere so that he cannot escape, and say, 'Are you going to marry me? Have you any objection?' If he says 'Yes', he is going to marry you; if he says 'No', he has no objection. If he is mean enough to keep silent, all you have to do is to throw yourself into his arms, and murmur, 'Darling! Silence means consent!'

Papa (Dharmapuri). "My son has a wonderful ear for music. Play any record to him on the gramophone, and he will tell you the name of the tune." Auntie knows of an even more remarkable case, dear sir. There is a young man in a music-shop, and when you play any record to him, he will tell you the name of the tune on the other side.

Terpsichore (Lahore). "I went on the floor with a very awkward fellow who trod on my feet and spoiled my shoes. When the music stopped, he said, 'May I have the last dance with you?' How should I have replied?" In similar circumstances, my dear, Auntie always used to say, 'You've had it.'

Social Student (Sandur). "Is it a fact that the cleverest men make the worst husbands?" No, dear boy. The cleverest men do not become husbands.

Enterprising (Naini Tal). "I am going to open a beauty-parlour here. I have two apprentices to help me start the business. I shall want an all-round man to act as door-keeper factotum. Please advise me the sort of man to get." Auntie thinks you had better secure an ex-policeman, as you are sure to have to deal with a lot of ugly customers.

Disillusioned (Maitenga). "I stood in the bar of the Club, and reflected that nothing in this sad world is what it is cracked up to be." Not even the ice in your glass, dear boy?

Miserable Clerk (Madras). "The boss is always calling me a gross fat fellow. He is threatening to stop my increment. Let him beware. He will have to do it over my dead body." Cheer up, dear boy. Perhaps, when the time comes, the boss will not be in the mood for hill-climbing.

Empty Dream (Nilambur). "I am fed-up with my wife. I renounce the whole sex. Women are but an

illusion." What a lot of morbid correspondence Auntie is getting this week! You also must cheer up, dear boy. Go and hug your illusion.

Trainer (Poona). "I have a good horse for the winter season. It has not yet been given a name, but it travels very fast. What shall I call it?" Auntie thinks that 'Bad News' would be very appropriate, dear sir.

Ram's Pop (Mokaula). "My son is most anxious to drive my car, but I fear the consequences, as he is so erratic. However, I have decided to let him try. What is your advice?" Auntie advises you not to stand in his way, dear sir.

D. V. K. (Chaklala). "I am lately returned from Europe, and for the last week a stranger from Lahore has been loitering in the neighbourhood, and making enquiries about me. What motive could have brought him here?" Possibly a locomotive, dear boy.

Constant Reader (Chatrapur). "I note that the British Cabinet contains ministers without portfolio. Presumably the remainder possess portfolios. What do they carry in them?" It is a mystery, dear boy; but the last time a minister spilled his portfolio on a railway platform, the contents included old socks, some crossword-puzzles, and a supply of chewing-gum.

Temperance Lecturer (Dowlatabad). "A cheeky youth in the audience asked how I cultivated my red nose. I told him sharply it was my business." Indeed, dear sir; and have you any other business?

Communal Strife (Lahore). "How can we enjoy peace and amity between the different races?" Avoid arguing with the bookmakers, dear boy.

Broker (Madras). "I have much pleasure in enclosing a list of used cars. They are most moderately priced, and a number of the models are just the thing for a business lady like yourself. Inspection cordially invited." Thank you for the list, dear sir; but Auntie does not inspect used cars nowadays, except the 42-seaters owned by the Corporation. The last time Auntie bought a used car, every part made a noise except the horn.

Morning Star (Salem). "Why don't the nations submit their case to arbitration as laid down in the League Covenant?" Evidently you do not know much about diplomacy, dear boy. When a nation is so deeply in the wrong that it cannot argue, it calls on God and goes to war.

Modern Youth (Coonoor). "We are not going to have the usual flamboyant wedding, with pages and

(Continued on page 33)



She saw the photo.

Extermination—

Reading Time
About 7½ Minutets

By 'Narak A. Nurak'

Illustrated by Nadekarni

I am one of the inmates of the Kamala Hostel, attached to our College. In the College, registers record me as Rani; but among my chums I go by a more prosaic appellation—Ragi.

Donia and Meeta are my chums and class-mates. We share one room in the hostel. Donia is a frisky thing, a bundle of mischief. Meeta is cute and not far behind Donia in mischief. We lead the hostel crowd in all pranks. As we are sometimes called Do, Ra and Me, we are collectively called 'The Notes'—That's us.

Ordering our lives is 'The Ogre', our hostel warden, Miss Seshamma, a maid ambling up the forties and as Mrs. Gundy has it, only lately scratched from the matrimonial stakes and given a comfortable niche on the shelf. You can't say she isn't pretty; only she is much too Mid-Victorian with prudish

ways and an over-developed sense of propriety. She is a back number in this age and no wonder she was lost sight of by eligible young men in the scramble for latest models.

Under the Ogre's strict rule, we girls of the hostel were always on tenterhooks. Our slightest lapses were magnified as sinful acts and not a day passed without one or more of us being scolded in searing terms. We winced under the relentless lash of her disagreeable, though well-intentioned, harangues.

One morning we, 'The Notes' were on the verge of a fit of giggles as the Ogre was seen proceeding towards the room occupied by Lena, a senior girl, and also by the only typewriter in the hostel. The warden's face was drawn with ire. She strode up with pursed lips and knitted brow. We knew that Lena was up against it. Donia had typed

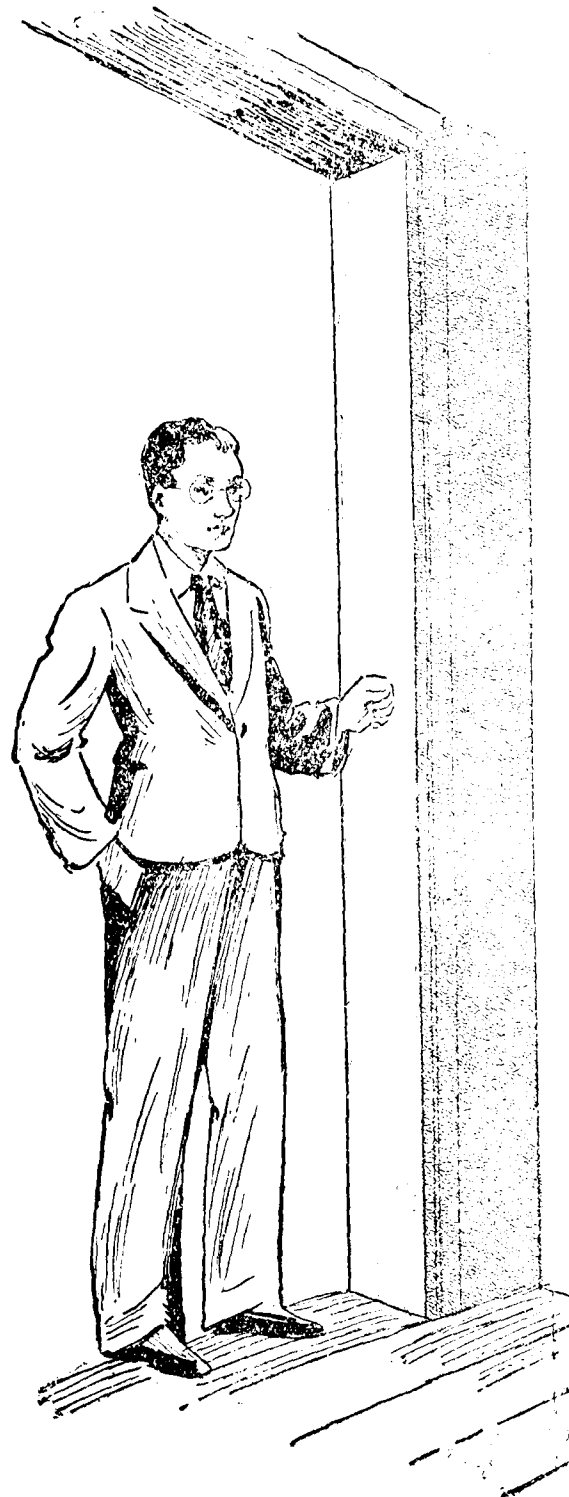
No. 27 Across

By A. T. MacNaughton Thomas

Illustrated by Varma

Reading Time

About 12 Minutes



80

SHIRIN, ever since she was a girl of fifteen, was an enthusiastic cross-worder and was the first girl in the State of Baroda to find out the meaning of 'cassiolette', 'sjambok' and 'zucchetta'. Before she was turned of twenty, she knew more about the gas Azote, the coin Toman, the bird Urubu, the star Pollux, Cassandra the prophetess, Nimrod the hunter, Thor the god and Pegasus the winged horse, than anybody else in the State.

As for Merwanji Petit, the young lawyer, who had come to holiday at Shirin's place, in response to the invitation of her brother, the whole cross-word business was anathema to him. He was distinctly of opinion that cross-word puzzles had something Mephistophelean in their very composition and people who compiled them ought to be hanged, drawn, quartered and cast to the vultures. Squeezing the tooth-paste back into the tube, was, in his opinion, an easier job than solving a cross-word puzzle. Whenever his eyes rested on the slender, stream-lined figure of Shirin, he thought it was a thousand pities—any way, nine hundred and ninety-nine—that girls of this type should waste their time, wear out their brains to the bone and work themselves into all sorts of bedevilment, over cross-word puzzles, when they ought to be darning their stockings, or taking musical lessons or occupying themselves usefully. But since the day Petit saw her for the first time, with roses pinned on her breast, roses in her hair, roses in her cheeks—aye, roses, worth gathering too, on her lips—he decided she was *the* girl for him and the next moment, cupid had gripped his heart-strings and was twanging them like a Neapolitan's mandolin. When he awoke to the truth that Shirin was a cross-word fiend, he thought that the wisest course to win her affection was to co-operate with her in solving the puzzles and in due course, it would be easy for him, when Shirin had given the clue, to fill up the squares in her heart with a four-lettered word signifying 'affection'. As luck would have it, one day Shirin

was stumped with a legal term, as girls invariably are, and Petit pulled her out of a tight corner with 'primogeniture'. From that day onwards, a mutual understanding had sprung up between them but it

could not be so complete as it should be, even the reader of the best emotional fiction will agree.

"Fish, eh? How many letters?" asked Petit.

"Seven."

"Try 'whiting'."

"It begins with a P."

"Why, 'pomfret' of course."

"Pomfret is an Indian fish. What I want is a West-Indian one."

"Pomfret is precisely a West-Indian fish. It is found all along the West Coast from the Gulf of Cutch down to Trivandrum. If this can't be a West-Indian fish, I'm hanged what else is."

"I am afraid, Mr. Petit," she said with a superior smile, which only comes of solving cross-word puzzles, "you are confusing things I am referring to West Indies."

"I see," he said colourlessly.

It was, of course, a nerve-shattering experience to him. Not one of the distinguished legal luminaries of the Bombay bar, to whom he dished up gup time after time, had ever told him he was confusing things. He mentally tabled a resolution: *To induce his friend C. V. Boovarivala, M. L. C., to bring in a bill for the suppression of cross-word puzzles throughout the Bombay presidency, whether they are meant to be worked out for pleasure or for profit, since they enable girls to play the devil with the members of the legal profession.*

"Can it be penguin?"

"No. It is a West-Indian fruit," she enlightened him, looking encyclopaedias.

For a space of ten minutes or thereabouts, they both fell a-musing. Petit was looking hard at Shirin, as though the elusive West Indian fish was lurking somewhere in the depths of her blue eyes, while Shirin who had developed a scientific taste for chewing pencil-ends in the course of solving some nine hundred puzzles was composedly employed in that performance, with her eyes glued to a flower-vase, as though it could be elucidative.



31

"What is the second letter?" asked Petit presently.

"I don't know. The third letter is M. If you work through P with every vowel, I think, you may be able to locate it."

"Darned if I can," he muttered under his breath, as he proceeded with his task.

Shirin began to attack some other clues that had baffled her. Without considering that he was already absorbed in the work that was assigned to him, she now looked up and asked, "No. 8, down. Necessary for a musical instrument."

"Fiddle-stick!" exclaimed Petit, in suppressed rage.

"Correct. How clever you are!" she complimented him, pencilling the word in the squares.

"No. 12, down. A domestic bird."

"Poppy-cock!" Petit erupted, a trifle angrily.

"No, doesn't tally with No. 16, across."

"It will jolly well tally if I land it across you," he said—mentally.

The next moment it pained him considerably that he should have thought of the dearest creature in the world in this manner. His mind accordingly framed another resolution: *The accursed cross-word puzzles warp one's thoughts and poison the warm, chivalrous instincts in man. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that Boovarivala must press this point home in the Home Member's homeless mind and see that the cross-word puzzles are proscribed.*

After a while, Petit rummaged out the wanted word and announced his discovery, "pompano, pompano," with such a ring in his voice that good old Archimedes' "Eureka" was like a blast of a toy-whistle before Gabriel's trumpet. He worked off his joy on sundry books that were heaped on the table, which protestingly groaned under his thumps.

"Pompano, is it? Pompano," she rolled the word in her delight, round her tongue like a jujube—oh, how sweet the name of that disagreeable fish sounded in her voice!—and looked thankfully at Petit, who immediately vowed that just to call Shirin his wife, he would scour the Five Oceans (in the dictionary, of course) for any kind of fish she would like to have for her blasted puzzles. When she was pencilling 'pompano' in the squares, he leant across the table to see the next clue. Accidentally, their foreheads came into slight collision; Shirin found herself burnt up within; Petit found himself shaken to his foundations. There

was something supremely pleasant about the whole thing that Petit was for ever craning his neck on the off chance of coming in contact with the fair brow of Shirin, who, by now perceived, that it was something wrong to allow her anterior phrenological development to be used as a buffer for Petit's India-rubber neck.

"Next, please. No. 22, across. Six letters. Largely used in the composition of palindromes."

They both fell to thinking again.

"Look here, Miss Shirin. There's our friend Tarapore, who writes a lot of verses which he never publishes. I shall go round to him and find out what is largely used in aerodromes."

"Palindromes," she corrected.

"Palindromes, is it? I shall make a note of it."

His mind automatically tabled another resolution: *Cross-word puzzles muddle one's brains. I hope, Boovarivala will present this point without muddling the minds of the Honourable Members of the Legislature.*

Tarapore, the yet-unknown poet was out. Petit, as he retraced his steps, thought that the only course left to him now was to drop a card to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, asking for a six-lettered word, largely used in palindromes. As he was coming back, a strange sight arrested his attention. He saw a mill-labourer chased down the street by a catamaran of his wife, who was coming a close second, termagantly flourishing a broom-stick. It was a glorious sight, with plenty of news-value in it. Petit stopped to watch the chase. "Hard luck," he mused, "the poor fellow won't hold his own for long. All this comes of marrying. Yes, marriage brings in its train a broom-stick." He almost shuddered when he reflected whether he would also be similarly subjected at the hands of Shirin. The next thought assured him it would not be so. It informed him that girls of Shirin's type would do things more artistically—but assuredly not with a broom-stick.

His train of thought was suddenly interrupted when he found the hunted man running beside him, yelling for all he was worth. The next moment, Petit caught hold of the termagant's wrist and said, threateningly, "Hey! What's all this?" The woman, as she was made out of the raw material of an ogress, wrenched herself free from his grip, stepped back, executed a *pas seul*, darted at him with the broom-stick. The prospect of being publicly complimented with a broom, no man will court—least of all, a lawyer. In

double quick time, Petit did the rope-trick on himself and at the next instant, we find him flopped down in a chair breathlessly, close to Shirin.

"Got it?" eagerly questioned Shirin.

"Was about to get one?"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Why, you're panting—" solving cross-words had given her some strange images, "like that African antelope, don't you know, the klipspringer, when it is in search of the waters of the Zambesi."

"Shirin, cut out this antelope business," Petit said severely, resenting the comparison, though he inwardly admitted he ran like an antelope that was in training for their own Olympics.

"As you wish. No. 27, across. That part of a girl's life which comes between a lipstick and a broom-stick."

"How many letters?"

"Eight."

"Marriage, of course."

"Correct. It tallies with all the clues!" she exclaimed joyfully, giving him a perfect broadside of her eyes.

"How do you know?"

"I just happened to know it."

"Talking of marriage, what about you marrying me?"

Shirin, needless to say, went beetroot in the face at the proposal.

"Mr. Petit, this is so sudden—"

"Call me Merwanji. It isn't sudden. Think of your happiness ahead. We both are cross-worders. Won't you be my wife, mate, spouse, married woman, matron, help-meet, partner, consort, better four-fifth or *feme covert*?" he asked, from a force of habit contracted from Shirin.

"You see, there are already ten candidates, suitors, solicitants, aspirants to my hand. You make the eleventh."

"Work backwards and get a good man. There are not many men like me going. Dog-cheap at my price. Snap me up before it is too late."

Shirin weighed his offer.

"I agree, we both have like tastes. And that would help us a lot to lead a happy, joyful, delightful, pleasant, blissful, cheerful, merry, gladsome, pleasurable, rapturous, ecstatic, life. But—"

"No buts." He put his arm round her. "What I want with you is a marriage, wedlock, matrimony, union, wedding, espousals, or nuptials."

"You'll have it, Merwanji, because I love you, like you, care for you, cherish you, admire you, dote on you, adore you, worship you, idolise you, revere you, yearn for you, go dippy over you."

"So be it, Shirin my love, sweetheart, flame, idol, inamorata, pet, darling, beloved, duck, mouse, popsy-wopsy, lovey-dovey, poppet, sweetie-pie, honey, lady-bird."

Even in these holy moments, Shirin could not forget she was a cross-worder.

"Merwanji darling, this is the last clue. A word of seven letters meaning—"

"For Heaven's sake, keep aside that beastly, loathy, detestable, abominable, odious, nauseous, hateful, obnoxious, repulsive, abhorrent cross-word puzzle for a moment. What you want immediately is a four-lettered word signifying 'caress given with lips'."

And he helped her with the clue.

AUNTIE AWFUL—(Continued from page 26)

bridesmaids and all that nonsense. A rough and ready affair is good enough for us." Quite so, dear boy; you are rough, and she is ready?

Invalid (Golaganj). "I have been confined to my bed for a week, but the doctor cannot say what is wrong with me." Never mind, dear sir; he will find out the truth at the post-mortem.

Strong Man (Baroia). "I am entering for the next wrestling championship, but owing to restricted means I am unable to obtain proper training. Can you suggest any inexpensive means of exercising my strength?" Yes, dear boy; offer your services at the nearest railway-station, and spend your time opening and closing the windows of railway-carriages.

Reading Time
About 10 Minutes

The Letters of

65. Joyfull Resigns His Post

Illustrated by Bahadurjee

DEAR MOTHER,
Madras, 7th September, 1935.

I am sorry to say that I am no longer acting as temporary chauffeur to Major Firebrace. The job has been taken over by Boggins, who is less susceptible to petticoat Government.

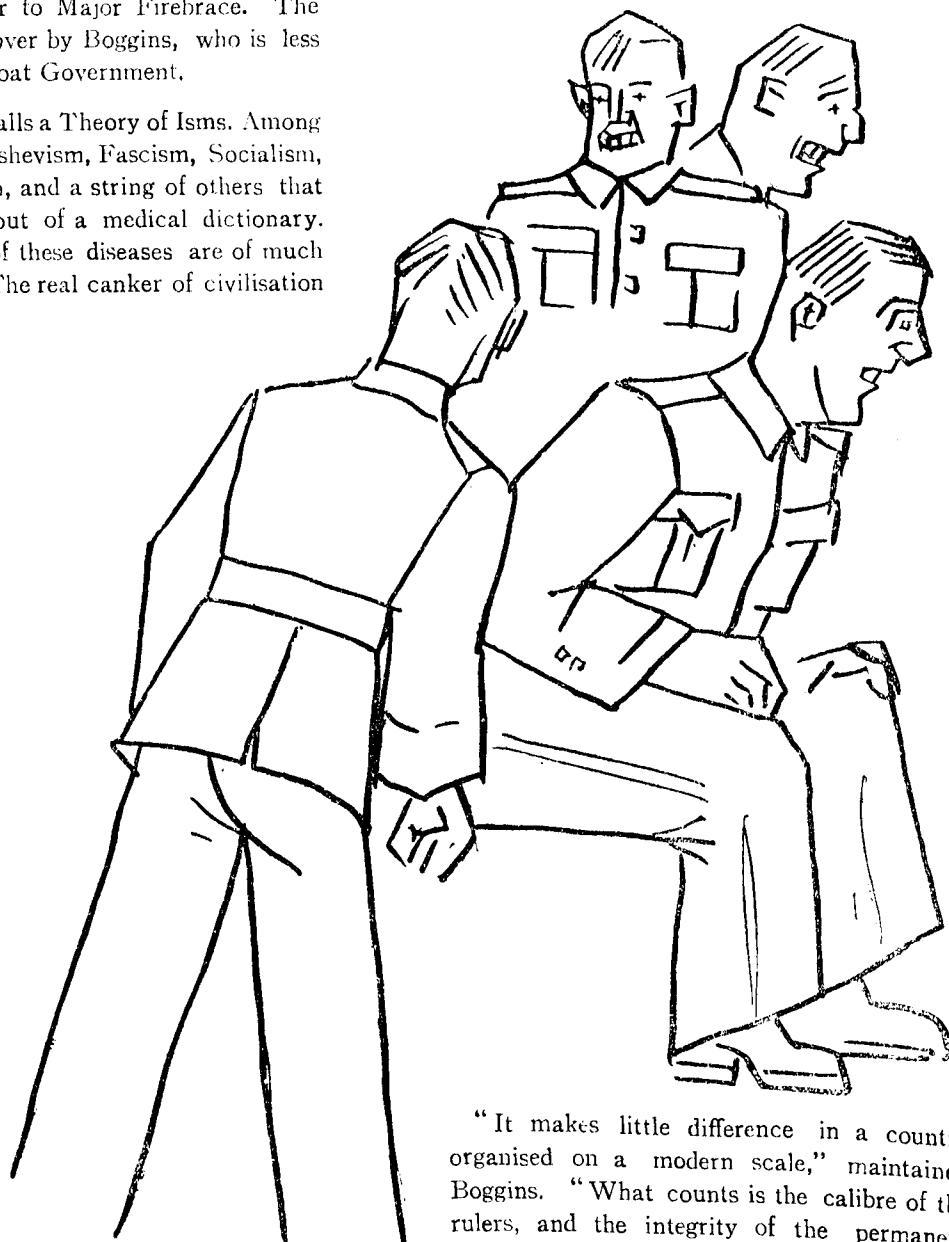
Boggins has what he calls a Theory of Isms. Among the Isms are Nazism, Bolshevism, Fascism, Socialism, Imperialism, Nationalism, and a string of others that sound as if they came out of a medical dictionary. Boggins says that none of these diseases are of much practical importance. The real canker of civilisation is Feminism.

"What!" said Tiny Hopkins, who is a red-hot socialism. "Do you mean that my political principles are of no importance?"

"Of very little importance," asserted Boggins. "Principles of Government are like principles of office-organisation. Some people say that a central registry is the only salvation for a business firm. Others swear by departmental card-indexes. Others manage quite well with the old-fashioned running files. One system, in short, can be as good as another. They have all been tried, and they all work."

"Here!" shouted Tiny Hopkins, "are

you saying it is a matter of indifference, whether a country is ruled by despotism or by socialism?"



"It makes little difference in a country organised on a modern scale," maintained Boggins. "What counts is the calibre of the rulers, and the integrity of the permanent officials. In such a country, good despots

Private Joyfull

can be just as successful as good socialists, and inefficient socialists can make quite as unholy a mess as the most inefficient despots."

"Would you see us ruled by an unbridled autocrat?" shouted Tiny.

"Or by an irresponsible revolutionary?" howled Nigger White.

"It would not matter," replied Boggins, "when a good man is actually confronted with a job of Responsible Government, he gets down

"During the War," replied Boggins calmly, "Ramsay MacDonald was called a traitor and a

seditionist. He happened to believe in pacifism and socialism at the wrong time. But once he became Prime Minister, it did not matter whether he believed in Baptism or Astronomy. He was confronted with a financial crisis, and the threat of European re-armament. Dealing with practical emergencies, he took just the same steps as a Die-Hard Tory would have done."

"He was a turncoat!" shouted Tiny Hopkins.

"Any sensible man turns his coat a few times in his life, if only to let in a little fresh air," replied Boggins. "Even your hero Lenin did so. When he found pure Marxism unsuited to the practical necessities of the moment, he unblushingly introduced the New Economic Policy."

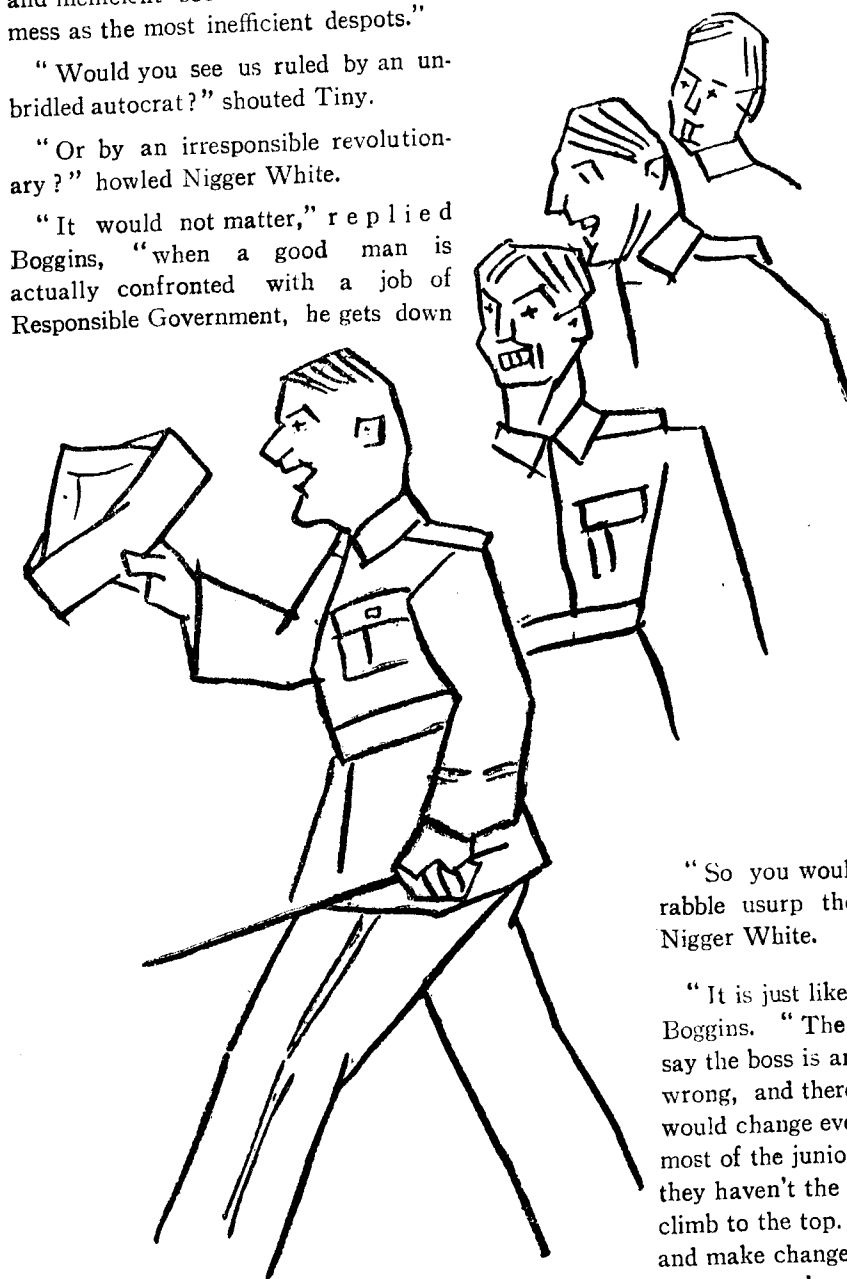
"So you would stand by, and see a mean, envious rabble usurp the government of a country?" cried Nigger White.

"It is just like the office we were talking of," said Boggins. "The junior clerks whisper together, and say the boss is an old tyrant, and the filing-system all wrong, and there is too much favoritism, and they would change everything if they got a chance. Well, most of the junior clerks never get a chance, because they haven't the talents. But one or two of them do climb to the top. They reorganise the filing-system, and make changes in the office; but once they are in the manager's chair, they devote themselves to the same grand principle as their hated predecessors—the prosperity of the firm."

to it, whatever his private beliefs. It is human nature."

Nigger White jumped to his feet. "Can you imagine any part of the Empire handed over to a lot of traitors and seditionists?" he demanded.

"Fancy!" said Useless Eustace, "you say it doesn't matter about any of these Isms?"



"Only Feminism," said Boggins sternly. "Feminism matters. The male sex has been caught bathing on the political sea-shore, and the feminists have stolen their breeches."

"Go on!" said Nigger White, sarcastically. Tiny Hopkins arose, and crowned Boggins with a dunce's cap, and thrust a schoolmaster's cane into his hand, and we all sat round with mock awe.

"Civilisation is like the monsoon," declared Boggins. "It sweeps over the parched earth, bringing life-giving grace to the peoples thereof. It arrives amid storm and clamour; but there follows a period of calm, when all enjoy its benefits. Alas! After the period of calm, there is the return of the monsoon. It sweeps back across the earth, destroying its own works in floods and hurricanes. Gentlemen, the world is experiencing the return of the monsoon."

"Coo!" bleated Hopeless Horace, overcome by the flood of oratory.

"Please, teacher, may I go to the bathroom?" asked Tiny Hopkins.

"Why?" demanded Boggins.

"Because your lecture has given me a pain," replied Tiny.

Boggins ignored his tormentor. "Civilisation was born in the East," he said. "It swept slowly across the world from East to West. The beneficent monsoon of civilisation passed on across the Atlantic, and reached its farthest point in the United States of America. From America, the monsoon is returning upon us."

"What is he talking about?" whispered Hopeless Horace to Useless Eustace. "Is he expecting some rain?"

"The evils brought by the returning monsoon may be variously described," continued Boggins. "But to my mind the greatest of its evils is Feminism. The civilisation that spread from the East was a masculine civilisation; the civilisation that is returning from the West is a feminine civilisation. It is emasculate, hysterical, uncertain, and domineering—in short, it is a monsoon of petticoats."

"But women don't wear petticoats nowadays," objected Tiny Hopkins.

"How do you know?" flashed Boggins; and Tiny blushed, for he is a very religious man.

I was reminded of this conversation when I went to report for my first evening's work as the Major's

chauffeur. I dressed myself smartly, and reported to the officers' quarters at tea-time.

"Good afternoon, Joyfull," said the Major. "You will find that the cleaner has got the car ready. Just check that everything is all right, and then find Miss Laud. I want you to take her and the children to Elliot's Beach. Do you know the way?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Very well. Look after them, and bring them back by half-past seven."

Miss Laud was the children's governess. I went and tapped at the door of the nursery. "Hullo!" I greeted her, when she came out. "The Major says I'm to take you to Elliot's Beach."

"Indeed!" replied the young woman. "Don't you know how to address a lady?"

"Certainly," I said.

"Then remember that you are a private soldier, and I am the Major's governess."

"By all means," I replied. "Are you thinking of putting me under arrest for insubordination?"

"Oh, no," said Miss Laud, kindly. "Come in and have some tea."

"Are you sure it wouldn't be vulgar to have tea with a private soldier?" I asked, cautiously.

The governess giggled. "You are a funny boy!" she said. "Of course, I never presume on my position with my inferiors."

The two children were sitting at the nursery table, eating a tea of bread and jam. They gravely rose to their feet and shook hands, and politely enquired after my health. They were very charming children, but the governess was constantly correcting them. A continual flow of reproof and admonition beat upon their ears, and I wondered if they found life worth living. Yet the pretty candour and natural brightness of childhood constantly peeped out from behind their painful correctitude, and I found them delightful. Bobby wanted to know if I had a big gun, and did it go bang, while Hilda said I could play with her best doll if I liked.

In the intervals of admonishing the children, Miss Laud grew very affable. To my surprise, she discussed all the affairs of the regiment, distributing censure and comment with an air of supreme authority. I wondered, in some alarm, whether she was a sort of unofficial Commanding Officer. It was quite a relief to escape from her keen questioning and embarrassing criticism, by suggesting it was time to start.

The drive to Elliot's Beach was the most painful I have ever made. Miss Laud sat in the back with the children, and delivered instructions and warnings the whole time, until I was quite flustered. At last I stopped the car, and suggested that we changed places.

"Why?" asked Miss Laud, resuming her haughty air.

"Well," I said, "if you insist on driving the car, you will do it easier from the front seat." Miss Laud tossed her head, and said I was an insolent wretch, and she would report me to the Major.

When we reached the beach, Bobby and Hilda begged me to play on the sand. I was delighted, and promised to build them a lovely sand-castle, but Miss Laud forbade it. "Remember, Bobby, that you are a little gentleman," she said. "And you, Hilda, don't forget you are a little lady. As for you, Joyfull, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Such conceit! Come and sit here at once, and entertain me."

I had to sit by Miss Laud, and answer questions. She wanted to know whether I smoked or drank, and what was my religion. She made me tell the story of my life, and listened critically, and said she would have altered it if she had her way. She said she would give me some tracts, and I must promise to read them, as she did not altogether approve of some of my ideas.

"Here," I protested mildly. "Even though I'm only a private soldier, surely I can keep my own ideas?"

Miss Laud pressed her lips together. "Not if I have anything to do with you!" she said.

"Hang it all," I said. "Mind your own business!"

"If I am good enough to take an interest in you," she said, "it is my business. And I shall report you for swearing."

"Why should you take an interest in me?"

"Well, you are a nice boy, and naturally I want to use my good influence on you."

"What for?"

At this, Miss Laud gave such a simper that I was thoroughly alarmed. "Here," I cried, jumping up, "it is time we went back."

Miss Laud seemed quite pettish that the evening had passed so quickly. She nagged at the children, and I felt selfishly relieved that she was giving me a rest. We got into the car and started off, Miss Laud driving from the back seat.

I was practically a wreck by the time we got back to the Fort. Things had got to such a state that

every time Miss Laud lifted her voice, I jumped a if something had stung me.

The same evening I went to the Major, and said I did not feel equal to the responsibility of being his chauffeur. I suggested that Boggins was just the man for the job. The Major was a bit puzzled, but said he would not employ me against my wish. He said he was sorry, as he thought I would be a nice influence for his children.

And now Miss Laud is telling everyone that I am an uncouth fellow, quite lacking in decency and chivalry. She says I don't know the way to treat a lady, and by rights I ought to be severely punished.

I am wondering what will happen when she meets Boggins.

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

EXTERMINATION—(Continued from page 28)

"You placed it here?"

Donia's eyes sparkled with naughtiness just for a split second. She cleared her throat.

"No, Miss Seshamma. He had asked me to give it to you. But I refused as I had thought you'd be offended. I am glad you have accepted it," lied Donia brazenly.

We giggled. We could not help it.

The Ogre's face was livid with rage, shame and indignation. The wings of scandal had crushed against her. Her pride and propriety were crushed. She bit her lips. It looked as if she would burst and explode all over the room.

"You bag of mischief!" she hissed and walked imperiously away. She took shelter in her room and did not come out for two days.

The Ogre was exterminated. We felt sorry for her and longed to soothe her outraged feelings.

Meeta and I cornered Donia in our room and nagged her for the brazen hoax. She was repentant.

"Donia, you vixen!" I abused, "you have gone too far. The Principal will surely kick up a terrible stink over this. You'll get it in the neck."

"But I shall make up. My uncle is goofy about her. I shall make him marry her. A nice pair they'll make," replied Donia with a smile.

And she managed it. The dear old Ogre married Donia's uncle. A dinky little wedding gift from the hostel girls went to the pair.



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. **I** Announcement and free character-reading coupon elsewhere—Ed.

Nadira. You need caution as well as tact. The result is enmity and opposition wherever you go. Don't be impatient; let things take their own course. Don't become a victim of flattery, you will then become arrogant and obstinate which means courting your own ruin. You commit blunders in your relations with the opposite sex and you cannot then expect affection and sympathy; the return can only be worry. What is the latest scheme you are evolving? You hold a peculiar attraction to accidents. Sleep well and do not overwork your brains.

★

Krishna K. Rau. Don't be idle. Be always actively employed, or else you will become gloomy and morbid. Patience and truth are virtues in you, but on account of your extreme honesty you will be terribly deceived. Don't be impetuous and quick-tempered. Of course, subterfuge must be condemned and while condemning you have the disadvantage of creating many enemies. There is no doubt sincerity and firmness are assets, but self-conceit should not find a place. It is good your ambition is coupled with determination. Rheumatism and fainting fits are likely to affect you.

★

Lily (Guntur). Don't be dogmatic in your opinions; listen to

the advice of others in time, there is no use regretting after it is too late. Cultivate repose and self-control. Your impulsiveness spoils your good qualities. Rashly rushing into difficulties without considering the pros and cons will spoil many opportunities. Be tactful, avoid all intoxicants and pleasures of the senses, as otherwise your life will become unhappy. Be amenable to reason; no use refusing to understand others. You are liable to have wounds in quarrels.

★

Shiyalal Dullabhbhai Rana (Jalalpur-Surat). Can't you shake off your love of pleasure and society and make use of your gifts. You can be a success in literary work. Put forth your ideas and schemes and ask others to do it under your lead, but don't attempt to do it yourself, as you lack steadiness. Don't be so obstinate. Eschew that jealousy; if not, it will lead you into troubles. You will have many opportunities in life, but you are not likely to use them properly. Forgiveness is an asset in you. Be careful with your brains.

★

Kailaspati (Bagalkot). Have you not an inclination to associate with higher personalities? Vanity accompanies this inclination of yours with the result that you are easily wounded in your feelings. There is a lot of difference bet-

ween plain-speaking and being hasty. You may cultivate the former but avoid the latter at any cost. Choose good society. Don't be without any work, it will make you lose your individuality. Though you are patient, you are of independent spirit. You are liable to suffer from troubles of the heart. Be careful about your eyes also.

★

Flora De Clare (Moodbidri). Why are you suspicious? It makes you lack veneration. Don't isolate yourself and dislike mankind. As you don't want to be under the control of others, you are easily discouraged and lack self-confidence. Blind faith has no place in you. You want proof even for imperceptible things. Are you not fascinated by mysticism and occultism? If you are inclined to be religious, don't go to extremes. Don't doubt the sincerity of others' affections. Be guarded against rheumatism and gout.

★

A. K. Selvathurai (Colombo). Your love is spiritual rather than sensual. Don't hesitate and miss your opportunities. Are you not fond of studying the hidden side of nature? Don't weigh things too much, especially in love-affairs. Don't be exacting. It spoils peace and happiness. Curb your desire for pleasure; if

Replies

it predominates, your life will be spoiled. Headache and nervous debility will worry you.

★

Kalidas. Do you not love life in spite of all its miseries? This is because you are unselfish. It is good to be truthful and constant, but the pity is you are deceived thereby. Another redeeming quality is you forgive easily and freely. Are you not considered richer than what you are actually worth? You are gifted, but unfortunately you are not able to use the gifts on account of your ease-loving nature. Decide all questions for yourself. Consultations with others will mislead you. Be careful about your throat and lungs.

★

Sitti Fatima (Colombo). My child friend of 1933! Are not your eyes large, smiling and melting? Are you not treating your father with contempt because he refuses at times to buy the things you want? But you are not pleased even when things you want are given to you. You are very fond of being coddled. You are confident that what you ask for will be given you. Are you not resenting when your mother tries to deceive you? Ask your parents to allow you freedom. Don't be selfish; share your sweets with others. Ask your mother to see that you do not get boils and skin troubles.

★

Pudjar (Trivandrum). Be careful; you will be a victim of

deceit and treachery as you try to force people to go against their will. You are generous and sympathetic even to a fault. Are you not easily wounded through your pride? Don't be so impetuous and hot-tempered. You can invent sometimes but imitate often. You cannot study hard, but yet, you learn everything by intuition. The fault in you is you are speaking out your mind too quickly and too frankly. Are you not abused by the opposite sex for your good-humoured laxity? And so, you are not a success as a husband. Anger with you is only a thing of the moment. Your eyes need care.

★

Busmar (Trivandrum). Are you not unyielding and tyrannical? What is the use of your obstinacy? You are an abject slave to whom you are devoted and to those who hold your affection. You are quick-tempered and so you do not put any restraint on what you say. Consultations with others will lead you to confusion; do therefore what you think is right. Don't be so jealous; you will bitterly regret afterwards for what you have done in that mood. I would like to have you as my friend, as you are loyal and faithful. How is your garden? Beware of inflammation of throat.

★

Good Luck. Of course you will have good luck if you have a good backing from others. I don't think luck is going to favour you unless you overcome your sensitiveness and develop your will-power. Why don't you want to be convinced? Have an open mind.

Don't wait for the 'call'. Create opportunities. Develop your social instincts. Don't shut yourself up with your own thoughts and feelings. Try to mix with good people; else you will feel lonely.

★

My Queenly Ideal. What is it? Is your queenly ideal to be the 'head' of your home? Do you know where this ideal will lead you? To sufferings in family, for want of proper understanding and want of mutual adjustment. Have some delicacy in your intercourse with your fellow-beings. Audacity is no virtue. Seek the advice of others before it is too late to achieve your purpose. There is no use of coercing you as your temper is bad. Your generosity can shine if your words and actions are not so spasmodic. You are prone to attacks of fever and blood-diseases.

★

Sury. You are getting a lot out of little. Your love of the sensational governs you. Yes, it is fair to fight in the open but the pity is your foe is forewarned of your intentions and you are defeated at the outset itself. You are fond of social intercourse and you desire to please others and to be universally liked. Your ambition is not much and that too is for the sake of the one you love. The opposite sex is playing a very important part in your life? You are not fit to carry out your plans and schemes as you lack steadiness; get them done by other fit persons under your lead. Headache and throbbing of the eyes may worry you.

Punch. You possess more moral courage than physical. You can carry your day with words in debates and arguments but not with swords and sticks. Be in constant contact with good influences and surroundings. Don't procrastinate; it is the worst sin in you. You are a better adviser to others than to yourself. Be ambitious and don't place too much value on the opinion of the world. Don't be selfish and think not only of the moment, consider the future also. Iron rule will spoil your domestic bliss. Be a sport in family matters. Keep your sex-nature well under control.

★

T. N. Narasinga Rao (Malleswaram). Though you are mentally ambitious you lack self-confidence and that is the reason why you are not able to make people believe in your plans. Push yourself forward; don't stand aside. Why are you so eaten away by anxiety in money matters? Are you not superstitious? You are a conservative, respecting law and order. Don't incline to luxury and self-indulgence; you will become easy-going. Avoid drugs and drinks. You are likely to suffer from nervous disorders and insomnia.

★

D. C. H. Perera (Panadina, Ceylon). I regret I cannot rely on you. You are liable to be fickle and a bit selfish. Don't confuse superstition with religion. Why are you so quickly tired of everything? With a phlegmatic constitution, you are slow and lazy. Put on some briskness. Be generous in action, not in words. You hate all conventions. Stand on your own legs, don't enter into any birding partnership. Don't marry early. You are inclined to inflammatory diseases.

★

G. Nagarajan (Kuttalam). Having good intuition and foresight you are a successful speculator. Exaction spoils the gifts in

you and spoils the happiness of home. Act on your own. You love the soul and not the sense. Don't be too analytical, you will miss good chances. Are you not influenced by material considerations? Don't spy on the weaknesses of others and take advantage of it. Depression of spirit and severe headache will worry you.

★

Vijayaraghavan (Madura). You have given the month and date only and not the year of your birth. Please let Merry Magus know the year also.

★

Saturnicus. Self-possession and self-reliance make you a success. It is good to be discriminating in the choice of friends. Are you not materialistic in your views? Originality is not in your line, but you can succeed in carrying out others' ideas on account of your industry and persistency. Don't shut yourself up with your own thoughts, you will then become selfish. You are not inclined to be crafty in money matters. Your digestive organs are liable to be upset.

★

S. Ramanathan. Do you know Sir John Franklin (Explorer) was born on a 10th April! You are energetic and you go through any amount of peril and fatigue. Don't be overbearing; listen to the arguments of others. Don't be puffed up by others' praises and flattery; you court ruin by being arrogant and not seeing straight. You are ambitious but you should be cautious and tactful to gain your ambition. Don't overwork your brains.

★

B. V. Subba Rao. Do you not often lose control of yourself on account of high-strung nerves? You are a good debater but you don't want to be convinced. You have good visions, follow them up and you will be a success. Don't you feel lonely inspite of the fact

you attend all public functions and be in the crowd. Your fault is you require some inducement or waking up. You fail to grab at the first chance. You are liable to suffer from bladder and kidney troubles.

★

Stiff Beard. I am not surprised at your nom-de-plume. Your obstinacy and unyielding determination make others call you a 'stiff-neck'. But what becomes of your 'stiff-beard' while you stand before the person you adore. Are you not fond of social intercourse? You hate quarrels. When is your next party to your friends? Will I receive an invitation? You are easily influenced and misled by emotions. Therefore don't live in uncongenial conditions.

★

Rednus. You are a slave to the person whom you love and a deadliest foe to your enemies. Susceptibility to the surroundings is likely to make you morbid. Don't therefore live under unsuitable conditions. You are so changeable in moods that every moment has a separate existence for you. Are you not always excited in your brains? Jealousy will spoil your life. Are you not very critical and sarcastic? The fault in you is you have no fixed idea of what you want and so you change your ideas too often. Indigestion, decay of bronchial tubes will worry you.

★

Gopalan. Tell your father that your feelings are delicate. Is he not wounding you in your feelings? He thinks that you are only a child; tell him that you can feel better than him and that if you begin to hate, you hate intensely. Let not your mother leave you alone. Don't cry for things that are not popular for children. If this tendency develops, you will in later years espouse unpopular causes and be an 'underdog' in the fight. Ask your father not to bring you purely in religious line? You are liable to be a fanatic in religion. Tell your mother to feed you carefully as you are liable to the peculiar melodies of the stomach.



Do you know yourself?

?

WE know you will say you do. But ten to one you do not. It is a hard job, to weigh yourself, to be aware of your weakness and strength in their true proportions. We generally over-estimate our abilities or sadly disparage them to ourselves. Have you seen yourself as others see you?

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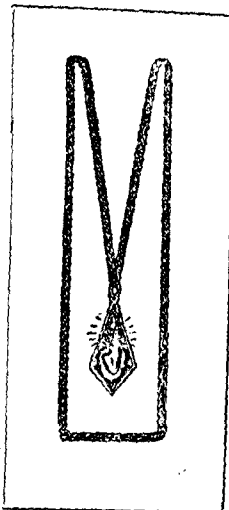
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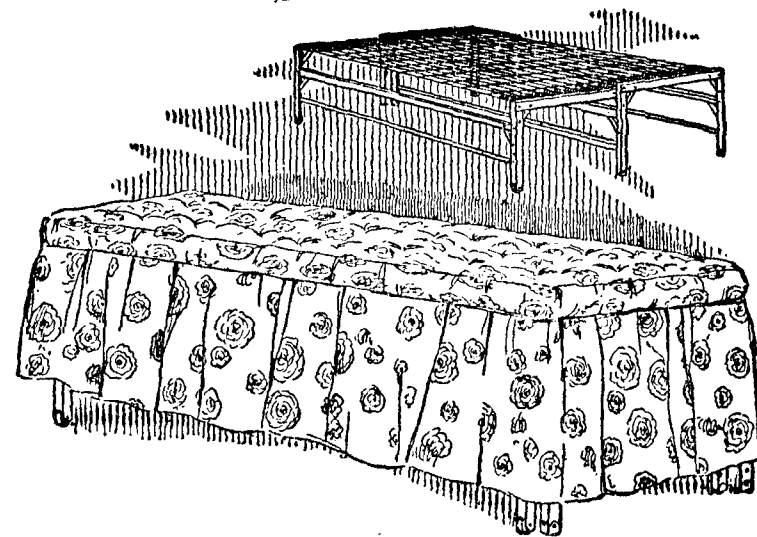


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ENTRANCE FEE: ONLY FOUR ANNAS PER ENTRY

HOW TO WIN

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 BRISK. 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	BR—SK	Active	5	BO—RD	Enter a ship
2	BE—K	Nose	6	BL—NT	Dull
3	B—DE	Wait for	7	BRAV—	Hired assassin
4	BES—T	Become			

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 28th September. The Manageress' 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:—

The Manageress,

THE EGERIA COMPETITIONS, P.O. RAYAPURAM, MADRAS.

MISSING LETTERS No. 52:—1. DEAR. 2. DIKE. 3. DRESS. 4. DOWSE. 5. DOLCE. 6. DESART. 7. DAUD. The prize of Rs. 450 has been equally shared by the following 25 All-correct competitors, each getting Rs. 18:—1. R. Rajan, Madras; 2. B. R. Hari Hara Iyer, Trichy; 3. N. Sundaram, Mulbagal; 4 to 5. H. N. Ganapati, Bangalore; 6 to 7. R. Karunakaran, Calicut; 8. V. Balasubrahmanyam, Yedatore; 9. A. V. Narasimha Rao Naidu, Peddapuram; 10 to 11. N. V. Choran, Bombay; 12. K. R. Rodrigues, St. Thomas Mount; 13 to 15. S. V. Bacha, Poona; 16 to 17. L. Sridhara Rao, Mysore; 18. J. Ramayya, Arkonam; 19 to 20. P. N. Sundaravaradan, Madras; 21. R. Rajagopalan, Tuticorin; 22 to 23. B. R. Sindhe, Bakerganj; 24. Sudhindranathsen, Karachi; 25. N. Rama Iyer, Rameswaram.

Rs. 25 has been equally shared by the first 5 winners, each getting Rs. 5 extra. The prize of Rs. 25 for the sender of largest number of entries, has been awarded to Mr. S. V. Bacha, Poona, for sending 192 entries. All prizes have been remitted. Rescrutiny fee Re. 1.

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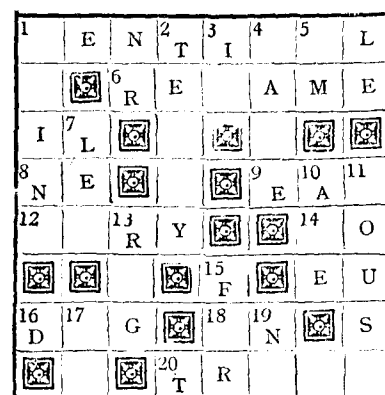
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Rs. 100 for the Correct Solutions posted on or before 21-9-1935.

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Clues Across: 1. Sentry. 6. Give a new name to. 8. Never. 9. Organ of hearing. 12. Brood in the nest. 14. Proceed. 16. Thrust. 18. Above. 20. Beam.

Clues Down: 1. Backbone. 2. Peevish. 3. During. 4. Noun. 5. Them. 7. Meadow. 10. Period of time. 11. Stir up. 13. Dress. 15. In quest of. 17. Pronoun. 19. Not.

Rules and Conditions:—Sole Reference, Chambers XXth Century Dictionary. Bracketted words are not used. An entrance fee of Rupee ONE per entry or Rupees TWO for every Three entries is payable by M.O. or by Indian Postal Orders, crossed. M.O. Receipts must be enclosed along with the entries. Entries on plain paper with your name and address in Block Letters. Write your name and address and also the number of entries submitted, on the M.O. coupon and also on the reverse of the envelope containing the entries. Any number of entries may be sent at the requisite fee. The first prize will be awarded to the all correct solution agreeing with the sealed key solution in the possession of the Editor, and the second prize to the solution with one-error. A winner in the first prize will also get shares in the second prize. In case of ties the prizes will be divided, but every correct solution will receive Rs. 200 whatever may be the number of correct solutions received by us. The results will be published in "THE COMMERCIAL TIT-BITS OF INDIA" on the 10th of October 1935, and copies of the same will be posted only to those enclosing 4 quarter anna stamps along with the entries. The decision of the Contest Editor is final and legally binding and is an express condition of entry. Address all entries and fees to:

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THE COMMERCIAL TIT-BITS OF INDIA, 17 & 18, Broadway, Madras.

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No.	WORDS.	MEANINGS.	No.	WORDS.	MEANINGS.
1	PA---ER	Animal akin to tiger.	4	---OW	Animal of the feminine gender.
2	---L-PHANT	Animal with tusks.	5	D---KEY	Well known stupid animal.
3	SAMB---	Big Indian stag.	6	---KAL	Animal allied to Dog.

RULES: An entry fee of Rupee ONE per entry or Rs. TWO for every three entries by M.O. will be charged. Entries may be sent on plain paper. Results will be announced in the "My Magazine of India" 28th September 1935. The decision of the Manager must be accepted as final and legally binding. *Said Answers Lodged with The Calicut Bank Ltd. Madras.* ADDRESS ENTRIES AND FEES:

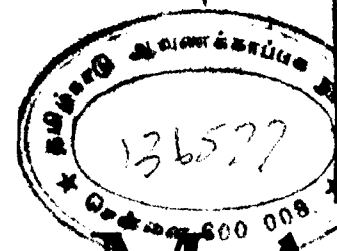
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Music by
S. G. Kasi Iyer

Magical Sequences
conceived by
R. Padmanabhan

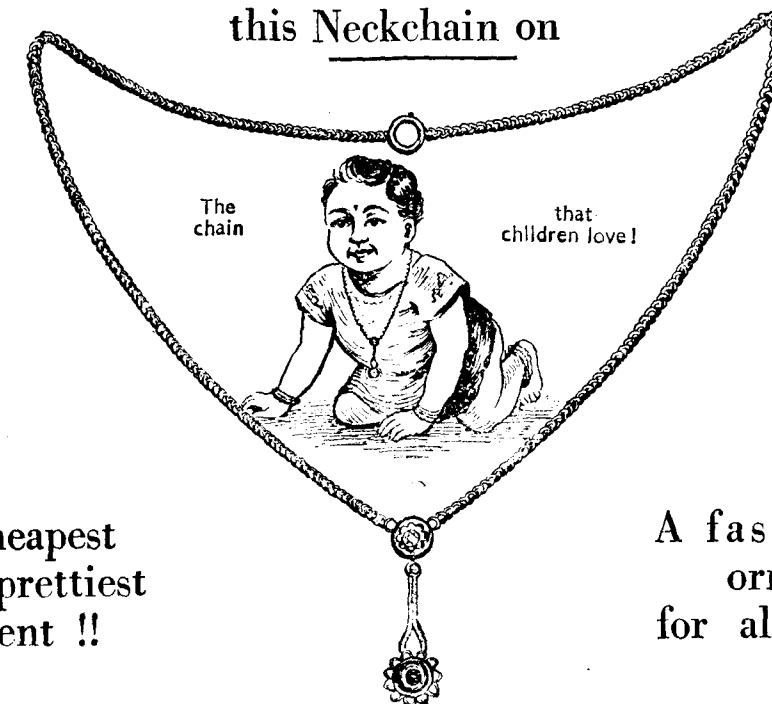
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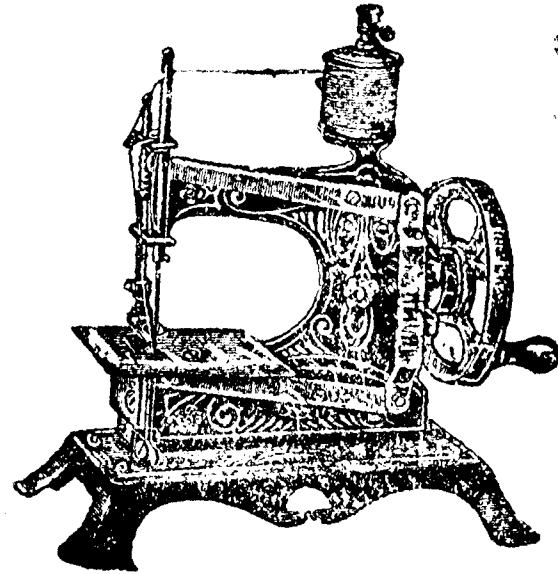
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