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The MERRY MAGAZINE



2188

Vol. III Madras, 14th December, '35 No. 50

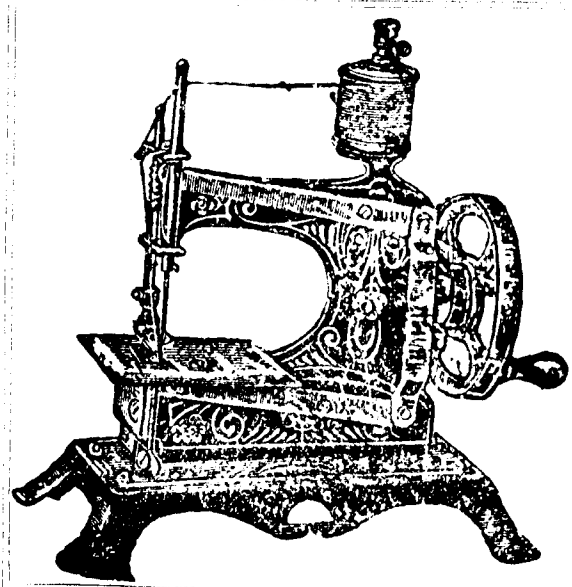
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T H E S U B S C R I P T I O N M A N A G E R
The Merry Magazine Broadway : Madras



Madras Dec. 14, 35

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Next Week: Ping-Pong—By R. Jagannathan



Dewan Bahadur
K S. Ramaswamy Sastri

If I were Dictator

It is not given to every Smith, Brown and Munusamy to become a dictator of the Aryan or Roman type. But there is not one so low but has a scarecrow beneath him to boss over. Here are possibilities canvassed for the benefit of such, by a speculative philosopher.

M. A. S.

Just as politics is the last resort of bad fellows, prayer is the last refuge of souls tortured by suspense. Gandhi says it, 'Dick' Sheppard confirms it, and M. A. S. proves it. To lighten a heavy heart whether the heart belongs to a 'papi' or punter, there is nothing like prayer.

Devendra P. Lahoti

A Cock and Bull Story

Those who can tell such stories as this, are invited to apply to the author who is a collector of cock and bull stories and pays for them handsomely.

Mea

About Fat Women

May their shadows never grow less (Amen!)

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

As a result of the protest of the German Embassy in London, the name of a page-boy in a new play has been changed from Hezekiah Hitler to George Bernard Gandhi.

We shall not protest, but merely exclaim: 'Pshaw!'

Opinion on the proposed application of sanctions in regard to the export of oil to Italy is said to be slowly hardening.

This makes it doubtful whether it will be a means of liquidating the present war.

Dr. Voronoff, the monkey-gland expert, has sent a kilogram of gold as his contribution to fight the sanctions.

This should warn off his prospective clients in the 'sanctioning' countries!

Italian cinemas are reported to be accepting scrap iron for the price of tickets.

By and by, we hope to see Sgr. Mussolini triumphantly haranguing his countrymen, mounted on one of these scrap-heaps!

A writer describes Sgr. Mussolini as the world's most accomplished plagiarist.

The only exception would seem to be in connection with Abyssinia which he wants in the original.

In the course of his speech on Foreign affairs, Sir Samuel Hoare is reported to have said: "I appeal to Sgr. Mussolini and his countrymen,—I draw no distinction between them in this matter."

For our own part, we doubt if all Italians are as bad!

Sir Austen Chamberlain warns Abyssinia that Britain will not continue the pressure against Italy indefinitely.

This was no doubt said to give the impression that the pressure is now being applied definitely!

St. Andrew's Day was celebrated on the 30th November last in many parts of the world.

Beyond the praise of the Scotch, no new jokes seem to have been invented!

A Hollywood gossip says that there are 3000 chorus girls unemployed.

Still, they must be kicking their heels!

Commenting on the Rev. Father Elwin's announcement that he has severed his connection with the Anglican church, the *Times of India* remarks that he should not hereafter be addressed as 'Reverend' and 'Father'.

But Elwin more than lose!

At the Naval Conference, Japan insists on security for herself.

Particularly against China!

A new edition of the India Act has been published with corrections intended to meet the demands of good grammar.

It is doubtful however if it will better promote the country's concord.

Pleading for a settlement of the Egyptian question, Dr. Dalton of the Labour opposition said: "Whatever the Egyptians may think of us, I doubt if any of them wish to see the Italian dictator scowling at the pyramids."

This must nevertheless be a welcome change from the present practice of the English scowling at them!

The first 'test' match against the Australians was marked by a spectacular display by the Indian batsmen.

This is the bare truth; for we see that many of them earned their spectacles!

The second 'test' match is to be played in Calcutta.

There is general belief that the result will not be worse!

Andhras and St. Andrew

The connection between these two will, at first sight, seem no more obvious or natural than that between Gokul-ashtami and Gulam Kader. Yet human ingenuity is such that it triumphs over natural incompatibilities, and endeavours to span the gulf by a bridge of wise or otherwise explanation. Ambitious of achieving some such distinction, H. E. the Governor utilised the St. Andrew's Day for a homily to the Andhras warning them against the unwisdom of working for a separate Andhra province. St. Andrew, one of the disciples of the Master, suffered his crucifixion somewhere in Asia Minor. By one of those marvels of medieval faith, his hallowed bones wrought the miracle of finding an honoured home in Scotland as its patron saint. What moved the saint, or rather His Excellency to refer to the Andhra question in preference to many others more insistently crying for authoritative clarification, must remain a mystery, if not a miracle on a par with those of the middle ages! We should have been delighted to know what His Excellency thinks of the extension of the lives of District Boards so soon after the elections; of the proposed disfranchisement of the graduate as graduate; of the seasonableness or otherwise of the introduction of the Tobacco Bill, and so on. But we forget; these are controversial topics. The governor as constitutional ruler must keep himself above them! But so is the Andhra problem, though it seems to be quiescent for the time being. The Andhras are a sturdy race with memories of a distant past when they flourished as a great imperial power, stretching over half of central India, and the whole of the Deccan. The missionary zeal of St. Andrew is paralleled by their militant sense of nationalism. They are achieving a renaissance in matters of art and thought which has stimulated the growth of a sense of pride in themselves. The demand

for a province of their own is thus backed up by forces which cannot be conjured away by the bland warnings contained in a post-prandial utterance.

The moment any section of India's vast population demands a separate province, officialdom shakes its head more in sorrow than in anger, and is ready to overwhelm us with the most unexceptionable sentiments of unity, solidarity, nationality etc. But it actively promotes such movements when they suit its own books. Consider the proposed separation of Sindh, and Orissa. Both are intended to drive wedges into national solidarity. What is good for one is apparently not good for the other. In the face of such glaring disparities in official outlook, it is hard to take advice such as was gratuitously given by His Excellency, without misgiving.

Then again, it is too often assumed that a separate province would inevitably entail the wasteful and wicked farce of a top-heavy system, with a costly secretariat, costlier ministry and the costliest of all, an ornamental figure-head. National feeling sets no store by these trappings of brief authority. It is more intent on shaping the life of the masses within linguistic or geographical limits, so that we may evolve variety amidst the essential unity of the country. Linguistic movements cannot be curbed; even in Scotland, the Gaelic Society has been doing wonderful work towards preserving and augmenting the spirit of national character, and national genius, without impairing the sense of political solidarity of the Union. Why should His Excellency think that such an achievement is impossible in this country, specially under the fostering care of the British who have always been protesting a little too much? In spite of all precautions to the contrary, the threatened Federation may still work towards such an end.

Beauty and the Beast



The Tiger: Grrh! I want meat, not butterflies.

The March of Events

By The Man On The Move

December 1st:

In the galaxy of Indian political stars, good old Satyamurti stands out in a glitter all his own. Speaking at the Teachers College at Saidapet, he suggested to his audience that they must sing to their students if they had a voice. What a peach of an idea! All the Directors of Public Instruction in India must give this suggestion of one of our most voluble politicians, the respectful consideration it



calls for. Had my old mathematics teacher taught me the differential calculus and things in music, Einstein would never have been born. Potential geniuses like me go untapped while the other chaps get all the kudos. Anyhow, if they begin saying it with music in schools, I will start my education all over again.

★
December 2nd: It is alleged (blessed word!) a vice-chairman of a South Indian municipality added "B.A." after his name, without any authority for it. And (it is further alleged) the councillors kicked up an awful

shindy. We are not concerned with the sequel of this funny affair. This takes me back to my boyhood when I was all dirt with a voice attached to it. In those days I had a strange fascination for illustrated catalogues. I would write to all the big shops in the cities requesting them to send me their catalogues. The mean fellows would never oblige me. I consulted our postman, and he gave me a rare piece of advice, for a small consideration. I changed the style of my correspondence to something like this:

From
G. E. W. Munusamy, B.A., P. Hd.
Gunner Street
Vizagapatam

To
Messrs.....
Madras or Bombay or
Calcutta or London.

Gentlemen,
Please send us by the post office at the quickest conveniently your exhaustive catalogue illustrate it if possible. I can order you very very big orders.
Yours Etc.

The success of this dodge was tremendous. Each post brought me at least six bulky catalogues.

The moral is, in this hyper-competitive world a harmless artifice like that should not be made the cause of municipal or political controversy.

★
December 3rd: It is reported that the Italian troops in the Ogaden region fled in panic, mistaking the noise made by animals for Ethiopian warriors advancing to attack.

An unconfirmed private message to me from Addis Ababa says that what scared the descendants of the Caesars was neither the beasts of the forests nor the Ethiopian warriors. It is that slippery chap, Ras Seyoum. Ras Seyoum happened to see some time ago in Algiers a film called *Tarzan And His Mate* and he liked Tarzan immensely. Under cover of darkness,

the Ras sneaks close to the Italian lines and reproduces with remarkable fidelity the fearful yell of Johnny Weismuller. No wonder the Italians fly helter-skelter when they hear that horrid cry so close on them.

★
December 4th: "What is the whole Indian nation?" asks Mr. Rowland Knox. It is a sad commentary on contemporary trends of education that Englishmen like Mr. Knox should be so ignorant of Empire history.

Well, the whole Indian nation is in a hole, and not a cosy one either. The nation comprises Christians of all denominations, Muslims, Harijans, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, the rope-trick, Hindus and last but not at all least, many a son of a gun. We are frolicsome chaps,



and now and again cut one another's throats for fun. That is only an exception proving the rule—unity in diversity. We are very humorous chaps, too. Some of us Hindus are what you might call futurists. We pour kerosene down Harijans' wells. That affords us some innocent fun, because the Harijans will make funny faces while drinking that water. And then when the world's supply of kerosene will have given out, we will draw back our kerosene from the wells and sell it to other countries at great profit.

Registration of Nurses in C.P.
Bill for Local Council.—

So says a headline in a Bombay paper. And strange as it may seem, these headlines have put me in an embarrassing position. My middle name happens to be William, in honour of Wilhelm who is now in Doorn. My uncle who gave me that name was a great admirer of the Kaiser and, I suspect, of German girls when they were not Aryans. And so the more intimate of my aristocratic and nationalist friends call me Bill. I am daily receiving congratulatory telegrams from Sir Prabhasankar Pattani, Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Sir Phillip Chetwode, Satyamurti, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Jinnah, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer and a host of distinguished ladies and gentlemen felicitating me on my entry into the C. P. Council. As it is not possible to thank these friends individually, for their kind wishes, I do so, dear Editor, through the columns of your esteemed journal. But the Sub-Editor who edited the above news-item should have been a bit more respectful, and called me Mr. Bill, if he had me in his mind. However, I am not entering the C. P. Council, nor have I had anything to do, at any time, with nurses registered or unregistered. Still, I thank my friends for the kindly thought behind their messages.

★
December 5th: The *London Gazette* announces that Sir Philip Cunliffe Lister (Air Secretary) has adopted the title of Viscount Swinton of Masham, and that Sir Bolton Eyres-Monsell (First Lord of the Admiralty) that of Viscount Monsell of Evesham. An astrologer who has on hand so many unsolicited testimonials that only an astronomer can count them, predicted that I would die at least a Viscount. Not unlikely, for, like most captains of industry, I began on the lowest rung of the ladder—namely, licking envelopes. (They didn't trust me with stamps.) So I shouldn't be surprised at all if a grateful government makes me a Viscount and gives me the run



of the House of Lords. I have already chosen a title. I will call myself Viscount Mussorie of Moonsham. That ought to make a swell show.

★
Lord Zetland says that an examination of the text of the India Act has revealed a few printers' errors and that some changes are desirable to meet the demands of good grammar. Why all this bother? The India Act is quite a lovely thing as it is. Mistakes, like failures, are stepping-stones to success. A friend in England writes to me saying that this move is initiated by A. P. Herbert (the humorous purist or pure humorist) who got into Parliament. These literary men should never have been given the vote.

★
December 7th: Unveiling the portrait of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore in a Madras restaurant, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri remarked that it may be said of His Highness, as it was often said of good men and women, that if the seasons came round in regularity and the heavens gave rain in due time and in due measure, that good fortune was due, among other reasons, to the existence among us of men like the Maharajah of Mysore.

No doubt about it. I am a shy, modest man, but I feel I must

record a certain incident in my life. It happened some years ago. I was going to a village in Central India in a bullock-cart. A band of robbers stopped the cart and looted what I had. The cartman disappeared like Houdini. One of the robbers wanted to cut my throat. But the chief robber looking sadly at my rather beautiful eyes kicked the would-be murderer. They left me and disappeared into the jungle. I wandered in that terrific heat for hours, and at last reached a small village. More dead than alive, I stretched myself in the courtyard of the village temple. Thunder rumbled in the distance. A cool breeze sprang up, and presently it began to rain like heaven and hell let loose. As soon as the downpour abated somewhat, the entire village turned up at the temple, singing devotional songs, burning frankincense,



and bearing a palanquin. The headman approached me and kissed my feet. I thought it was a dream. He explained that their village was experiencing a terrible drought and my sacred presence in the village brought them rain.

I was carried in the palanquin round the village and brought to the headman's house where I was fed so royally that I almost died of cholera. Next day the headman offered me his daughter. I declined the honour gracefully, because the girl was only nine years old. Much against their prayers I left the village at last in a decorated bullock-cart.

What I meant to say was these things really happen, though I say it who should not.

N. E. W. S.

THE world's heaviest married couple, at least this couple is claimed to be such, are in Windhock, Union of South Africa. Both combined tip the scales at 57 stone, the hubby contributing 32 stone. The man's age is 40 and the wife's 24, so she has ample time to catch up with and shoot beyond her husband's weight. They use specially made furniture, as the ordinary furniture declined the tremendous responsibility.

Little Stanley Hubert, a thirteen month's old child was playing in the garden of his home near Vancouver, British Columbia. A deer from the neighbouring jungle blundered into the garden and, seeing a small, toddling fellow playing in it, it decided to play with him. The baby too didn't object. So they played and romped to their hearts' content. Suddenly the child's tunic got caught in the deer's antlers. The deer was frightened and galloped off into the jungle with the child in its horns.

The distracted parents and their neighbours combed the jungle for hours. At last they located the runaway kid who was none the worse for his unusual ride.

An incident in the recent general election in England has a comic bearing on a public question that is now scaring a section of Hindus in this country.

A candidate addressing his constituency ended with the peroration: "I was born an Englishman, I have lived an Englishman, and I hope to die an Englishman."

An unemployed Scotsman happened to be watching the fun from the back seats. He said: "Mon, hae ye nae ambeestion?"

According to an Italian doctor, if you live up to seventy years of age, you will have spent your life like this:

Talking	... 13 years
Eating	... 6 years

Pleasure	... 23 years
Washing	... 18 months
Sleeping	... 23 years

That makes only 66 years 6 months. The doctor does not say how the remaining three years six months will have been spent. Star-gazing, probably or dodging street-cars.

Is it sheer nerve or what? Mr. Manuel Nunes, of Centerville, California, was preparing to drive off in his car when a gangster poked a gun in his ribs.

"Drive down the street," ordered the gunman.
 "I won't," said Mr. Nunes.
 "Give me your money, then."
 "No."
 "Give me five dollars."
 "I won't."
 "A dollar, then."
 "No."

"Wal, darn it. O. K." and the gunman slunk away.

Mrs. Wakelin of Victoria listened to a funny story told by her husband two months ago. She laughed at the joke. Then her laughter became a yawn. She has been yawning ever since. Doctors are puzzled at this strange development.

England's youngest voter is Shirley Ellis. Take three guesses to spot her age. No, every one of you is wrong. She is seven months old. How she got into the list is a mystery.

The East is coming to its own, and those of us who read with envy the exploits of American and European mystery crooks will read this with a feeling of pride.

An avenue of thirtysix trees has completely disappeared from Heliopolis, a suburb of Cairo. Considering the tremendous bulk of the *corpus delicti*, this is a feat worthy of the highest praise.

Fun For All



A young man bounced into the office.

"I wish to see the manager," he demanded.

"I'm sorry, sir," said the clerk, "but the manager is not in. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"I don't deal with the juniors," was the rude reply, "I'll wait for the manager."

Nearly an hour passed.

"How much longer will that manager be?" demanded the visitor impatiently.

"Nearly two weeks, sir," quietly replied the clerk. "He's gone to the south on business."

Gim: Does your wife drive the car?

Joe: Yes, old man. I only hold the wheel.

Sweet Thing: Is this the Grand Trunk Express?

Porter: Well, lady, the station-master, the guard, the engine-driver and the fireman say it goes to Peshawar. That is all I know.

Obviously Jock was in a bad way. Swathed in bandages and resting upon crutches, he looked a pitiful sight.

"How did it happen?" asked his friend sympathetically.

"Oh, I was Judge at the dog show," said Jock.

"Well?" queried the friend.

"Some blighter yelled 'cats!'" explained Jock.

Conjurer: Now, sir, you hear your watch ticking inside this handkerchief. Are you satisfied?

Young Man: More than satisfied. It hasn't been going for a month.

"I'm sorry to drag you so far out in the country on such a bad night, Doctor."

"Oh, it's quite all right, because I have another patient near here, so I can kill two birds with one stone."

"One of us is a cheat."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. Five minutes ago I had a fifth ace in my boot-top and now it's gone."

"Daddy!" said Jimmie, running into the drawing-room, "there is a big black cat in the dining-room!"

"Never mind, Jimmie, Black cats are lucky," replied his father.

"Yes, this one is," said Jimmie. "He's got your dinner."

It was flag day for the hospital, and all the village maidens were selling flags. Suddenly one girl noticed the squire's son coming down the street in his dashing sports car. She walked into the roadway and stopped him.

"Will you buy a flag for the hospital?" she asked.

"No," growled the young man. "I am a regular contributor to it. Have been for years....."

"Oh, yes," interrupted the girl, "we know, but we're collecting money today, not pedestrians."

The famous Madame Recamier said that she always found two words sufficed to make her guests feel they were welcome. Upon their arrival she said, "At last!" and when they took leave she said, "Already?"

The Guardian Angel

by Thirupathi

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

Illustrated by Varma

KRISHNALAL Thopa came of fighting stock. His forbears fought under one Rajput prince or other against the organised forces of the Moghuls in those grand, hectic days. No wonder fighting blood ran in Krishnalal's veins. He enlisted in the British Army. His gallantry won him many recognitions from Headquarters. He retired an honoured soldier, a subedar, with a grant of land from an appreciative Government.

Krishnalal was a widower. But his wife left behind her a keepsake—a son. They called him Ramlal. Krishnalal loved his motherless boy with more than fatherly love. Which widowed father does not his only son? So Ramlal grew up from childhood to boyhood, from boyhood to adolescence, having a good time all round.

Krishnalal had only one regret in life. Atavism failed on his young son. The unbroken military predilections of his race found an impregnable barrier in young Ramlal. He did not care to seek his fortune in the army. He made fun of his old father when the latter related to him, as a bait, tales of military glory, factual or imaginary. Old Krishnalal was a very imaginative person, and a great story teller.

Krishnalal sighed and did the next best thing to getting his son into the Army. He searched far and wide and brought to his son a wife. Girija was not

much of a beauty. She was a gem of a girl, though. Dutiful, obedient and all that. After seeing his son comfortably mated, Krishnalal had him fixed up in the Secretariat at Lahore in the Department of Land Survey, through the good offices of his late Officers in the Army. Having done that much for his son, old Krishnalal promptly died.

An year later Ramlal, who was a diligent, intelligent fellow, was shot up to the Imperial Secretariat at New Delhi.

Then it happened.

He took to drink. It was not association with bad fellows. He had no bad companions. It was not any secret sorrow that drove this fine young man to alcohol. He had no sorrows. It was not a nagging wife. Girija was a gem of a girl.

It simply happened, as so many things happen in this world, the effect of an unknown or inexplicable cause.

His alcoholic progress reached a point when even poor, docile Girija had to protest, mildly, as becomes a gem of a girl. He heeded not.

He changed, of course. From love to indifference, thence to unkindness was a natural transition. That is the alcoholic law. But he did not sink down to bestiality, yet.

One day Ramlal berthed more drink than he could safely

carry. He staggered home late in the night. His wife helped him to a chair by the table. No hot word rose to her lips, no protest. She caressed her husband's curly hair. She passed her little hand across his fevered brow. She looked into his tipsy eyes with a mute appeal. She was indeed a gem of a girl.

The devil probably kicked Ramlal in the pants. Not pants, exactly. Ramlal always wore dhoti. He jerked himself up. He stared at his wife with a brutal leer. He clutched a heavy paper-weight from the table, and hit her with all the drunken strength of his arm. She collapsed at his feet, unconscious. A pool of blood gathered. Ramlal bent down and saw the warm blood gushing from Girija's brow. He stared at the fast growing scarlet pool stupidly.

All at once the realisation of the awful thing he did came upon him. He ran for the doctor.

The doctor came and rendered first aid. She rallied. He asked Ramlal what happened. Ramlal was mute. He repeated the question turning to the girl gently. She lied gloriously. She smiled and said that she tripped and fell; in falling she caught her head against the sharp corner of the table.

The old fox of a doctor shook his head. He glared at the sinner, and said: "It is not for me to explode such a beautiful lie. If that lie does not make a man of you, nothing will."

Two days later Girija's cruel wound got worse. She died the next day. Her last words to her husband were: "Ram, I will be your guardian angel. Won't you think kindly of me?"

Of course widower Ramlal was reformed Ramlal; otherwise this would not be much of a story.

At his urgent request, his father's military record helping him not a little, Ramlal was transferred from civil to military survey. He was drafted with a party of military engineers for duty beyond the Khyber.

One day the survey party, which included Ramlal, was returning to its base. They were ambushed. Before they could seek shelter behind the boulders in that inhospitable country, half of them were shot down. Ramlal got a bullet on his heart. He fell down without a word. Help was rushed from the base. They collected their fallen and carried them to hospital. All were dead. Ramlal was not dead yet. He was bleeding from his breast pocket. He moaned and said, "Girija".

His tunic and shirt were cut off. The doctor gasped. Half driven between two ribs on Ramlal's left side was a small bronze casket-like thing. The doctor extracted it and dressed up the wound. It was not fatal. Ramlal opened his eyes.

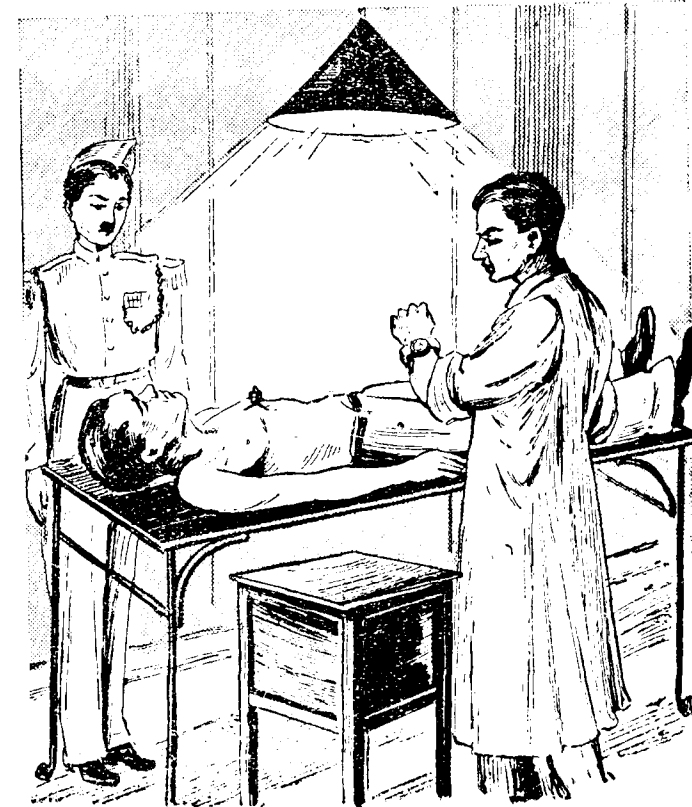
"What in thunder is this—this bronze thingummy, George?" asked the doctor of an officer who was watching the operation. "This couldn't have come from a gun."

"No, of course not," said George.

Ramlal smiled sadly. "No, sir. That little casket contains my wife's ashes. I always carry it in my breast pocket."

The hardened soldier took up the casket reverently. "May her soul rest in peace," he said. "She is your guardian angel."

THE END



The Students' Corner

Words' Worth—IX

IT was recently announced that a new kind of blue had been discovered by the Nobel Chemical Industries. As we all know, blue is one of the primary colours of the rainbow, while the rainbow itself is a sort of communal representation of ordinary sunlight! It is perhaps the only instance in nature of the part being *prettier* than the whole. Colours play a predominant part in our lives, and minister to the gratification of the aesthetic in us. It should therefore be interesting to pursue this particular colour with a view to extract all the significance which man has attributed to it.

The origin of the word *BLUE* is in some doubt. One theory is that it is derived from an old Norse word *bla* which means livid; another claims it as descended of an old French word *bleu* indicating the colour of heaven. Some cranky pundits who have a weakness for tracing all words back to Greek or Latin affirm that it goes back to a Latin word *flavus* which means yellow. This manifest absurdity is sought to be got over by the explanation that the primitive people mixed up the nomenclature of the colours, so that they said yellow when they meant blue, and vice versa! There is something to be said for this fascinating theory, if the analogy of children's speech can be used as evidence. Lastly there are a few who assert that the word is cognate with blow, and explain that blue is the colour which results when a man receives a blow. As proof of this, they cite the example of the phrase, *Black and blue!* You may adopt any one of the above theories according to your fancy.

Coming to the uses of the word, it is interesting to find that it expresses the best as well as the worst things. We all know that it is the official colour of our Lord Sri Krishna; for *Megha Syamala* is literally blue-black, the colour of the ink, I am using. On the other hand, such common things as smoke, vapour, distant hills and thin milk are also blue. And there are Gillette blades—the latest brand—which are specially commended to our notice for their blue colour.

Then this colour is modified chemically as well as verbally into clear-blue, dark-blue, deep-blue, light-blue, ultramarine-blue, Prussian-blue, Berlin-blue,

China-blue etc. But for these lures, ladies would find shopping a bore.

Now to the phrases: *To burn blue* is said to be an omen of impending death, or the presence of ghosts or spirits. The candle burnt blue in the socket just before Richard III had that terrible dream on the eve of his fatal battle, as also I think before Brutus met the ghost of Caesar. *To look blue* is to be dispirited, as you would when you back a certain winner only to hear that he also ran! Topers also look blue, after a particularly heady bout of drinking. *True blue* is an emblem of constancy, and is affected as the distinguishing mark by the English Conservative Party. The phrase was also applied to denote the seventeenth century Presbyterians as opposed to the 'red' of the Royalists. The *Blue Squadron* was one of the four divisions of the British navy in the seventeenth century. The *Blue-coat* was the dress of servants, paupers, charity-boys etc. Charles Lamb was a 'blue-coat' because he was a free scholar at Christ's Hospital, one of the famous public schools of England. *Blue-blood* is aristocratic blood, blood not contaminated by inferior alliances. The phrase is imported from Spain which the Moors conquered and colonised in the middle ages. People who had no admixture of moorish blood prided themselves on their *sangre azul*—blue-blood. It was so called because in fair-skinned people, the blue veins can be clearly seen, while in dark men, or men with a swarthy complexion the veins are invisible. *Blue-stocking* was a contemptuous term to denote learned and pedantic women in the 18th century. In those days literacy was low among men, and much lower among women. It would appear that the women who started these *salons* were not particularly noted for their fashions or appearance. So they were derisively dubbed blue-stockings, which must be a horror whether among men or women! The *blue-line* is the service-line in tennis, for which we use chunam in this country. *Blue-jackets* are seamen; while *Blue-mantle* is the name of one of the officials in the College of Arms. *Blue-Monday* is the Monday previous to Lent, generally spent in dissipation by the pious, so that they might atone for it during Lent! *Blue-moon* is very rare; while *Blue-*

(Continued on page 15)

Samsara Nauka

(A Canarese Play)

Enacted by Mysore Kala Seva Mandali

Reviewed by Bhaskar Rao

Samsara Nauka, a Canarese play now running at *Soundarya Mahal*, Madras, ought to be seen by every lover of south Indian dramatic art.

It is a melodrama true to conventional specifications. The story is nothing new. Indian novelists have treated the theme from various angles.

A young man marries the girl of his heart against his people's wish, gets kicked out into the streets, is disinherited and touches the utmost depths of poverty and misery. His younger brother who murders his own wife and his evil confederate, foists the crime on him. Ultimately he is found innocent, inherits his grandfather's fortune and all is well that ends well.

The great thing about the show is the actors. They have made a remarkable success of their job.

B. R. Pantulu, as *Sundara Rao* in the leading role is splendid. His transition from easy opulence to the other end is an effortless glide. He overdoes the thing in one place—where he declaims against friendship and God. One of his whilom 'friends' kicks him for his importunity. That was a blunder. Such things are not done—at any rate not in these 'enlightened' days. These two incidents in an otherwise perfect piece of acting, have stumped the effect somewhat.

M. S. Madhava Rao, as *Madhava Rao*, the half-wit brother of the hero, is marvellous. Given opportunity and encouragement, he should top the list of South Indian comedians.

In one or two places he lapses into unconvincing mimicry. But



B. R. Pantulu

that should wear off with a little polish and experience. The way he swallows whole bananas and oranges without troubling to cut them to manageable portions is a grand piece of entertainment.

M. Madhava Rao, as *Kanya Kumara Deekshit*, the friend of the idiot Madhava Rao romps home with easy honours. His personation of the rather difficult role of the suave, polished scoundrel is true to type.

B. N. Narayana Das, as *Achar Shukdev* the professional priest

and sanctimonious humbug does great credit to his part. His personation is a fine piece of fun and it touches the type uncomfortably near. He does some fine singing.

K. M. Moudgal, as *Purushottam Rao*, the hero's father-in-law, provides a fine satire on our pedants and sycophants who ape Western modes of life, missing its charm altogether.

Ramakrishna Bhat in bodice and sari as *Susila*, the idiot's wife, is quite an eyeful. It is fine; the make-up, not the acting.

K. Subbamma (*Sarala* the hero's wife) is tolerable. She has the promise of developing into a good artist.

Narasimhamoorthy, as *Gundu Bai*, the hero's aunt, is a typical widow, a faithful representative of that brood of uncompromising old hags who spell so much unhappiness in Hindu homes.

All the actors are young men, and if their present performance is any indication of things to come, their future is undeniably rosy.



M. Madhava Rao

M. S. Madhava Rao

A Chronicle History

26th Congress: 1911—Calcutta: President—Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar.

This was a notable session of the Congress, as it met to celebrate the annulment of the partition of Bengal. During the year, their Majesties the King and Queen were brought to India, and a second ceremony of coronation more imposing and gorgeous than the first was staged at Delhi. At the end of it, a Royal proclamation was issued, unsettling the 'settled fact' of the partition, and transferring the seat of the imperial capital from Calcutta to Delhi. It was one of the most spectacular triumphs of the Congress, and may be presented to those who ask what the Congress has done for the country. The Viceroy was Lord Hardinge, and Lord Crewe, the then Secretary of State, had also come with the King. It would be interesting to speculate on what would have been contained in the Royal proclamation if there had been no Bengal problem at the time. The Government would have been hard put to it to find an adequate substitute for such a great boon. It is equally futile to consider what would have been the consequences if the partition of Bengal had remained, in the light of Mr. Macdonald's so-called 'Communal Award'. West Bengal at least, it is likely, would have been saved the undemocratic, anti-national infliction of that apple of discord which is probably going to account for all the mischiefs in our body-politic for the next generation or two. However I am writing chronicle history, and must stick to facts.

The 1911 Congress has another title to special distinction. It was originally arranged that it should be presided over by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, then a very disreputable agitator, thoroughly obnoxious to the government both here and in England. It was a great domestic calamity that prevented him from fulfilling the engagement. He lost his wife, a great loss as she was a remarkable woman with intellectual and other gifts of a high order. Even at this distance of time, her death deserves to be mourned for private and public reasons.

Other personalities prominent in this Congress were 'C. P.' who spoke on repression, and A. P. Patro who moved a resolution on local bodies. It is the same as our Sir A. P. Patro whose interest in local bodies is still as great as ever, and who is anti-Justice so far as the abolition of Taluq boards is concerned!

Another resolution blessed the passive resistance movement in South Africa conducted by 'Mr.' Gandhi. The chief speaker was Mr. H. S. L. Polak, one of the sufferers there, who gave an account of the persecution of the Indians. It bears a remarkable

resemblance to the working of the 'Aryan Clause' in present-day Germany. The Jews and the Indians are the two greatest and most ancient of persecuted races; and Indians are greater than the Jews, because their persecution has not only been in their own homeland, but also abroad! By the way, Polak was a Jew.

27th Congress: 1912—Bankipore: President—R. N. Mudholkar.

This year's Congress was marked by a pictorial pageant of the ancient history of Maghadha. There were 28 gates to the Congress pavilion, each of which was named after one of the rulers of ancient Maghadha. The lull in the political sphere following the fruits of the Royal proclamation of the previous year was rudely disturbed by a fortunately abortive attempt on the life of the Viceroy. The Congress registered its unqualified condemnation of the dastard and the deed. The other subject of all-India interest dealt with by the Congress was the announcement of the appointment of the Public Services Commission in reply to an age-long demand of the Congress. It was the famous Islington Committee, composed among others of Gokhale, Malaviya and Ramsay Macdonald.

28th Session: 1913—Karachi: President—Nawab Syed Muhammad.

This year marked the attainment of majority by the Muslim League, as the ideal of self-government for India was adopted by that body also at its annual session.

One of the grievances ventilated this year related to the emigration of Indians to Canada. A large number of Sikhs from the Punjab had settled down there. Alarmed at their growing numbers, the Canadian Government enacted an ingenious law called the 'Continuous journey clause'. Its effect was to prohibit those who arrived after breaking their journey at any European port. There was no direct steamer service between India and Canada; so Indians had to tranship at one of the European ports. The law was applied against them more than against others. From this event followed the *Komagatu* chapter in the history of recent times. Wacha and Khare, the retiring Congress secretaries of the year were very warmly praised for their work. Mr. 'C. P.' who proposed the vote of thanks, made a prophetic statement which gives his later association with the office considerable autobiographical significance. He said that the greatness of the Congress was due to the greatness of its secretaries!

of the Congress - 4

29th Congress: 1914—Madras: President—Bhupendranath Basu.

This Congress met under the shadow of the World War which had begun in August. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Sir S. Subrahmanya Aiyer. But there was not much 'pep' in the session as a whole. Surendranath Bannerjee moved the 'loyalty' resolution, and His Excellency the Governor of Madras, Lord Pentland, very kindly came to the Congress pandal to hear the speeches thereon. At the end of that resolution he said a few words by way of acknowledgement, and left soon after. (Sir) A. P. Patro spoke on the despatch of the Indian expeditionary force to France, and expressed the gratitude of the country for thus being given an opportunity to fight for Britain, Justice, Righteousness, the rights of small nationalities, and all other virtues which were then understood to be on the side of the allies. It is a matter of great regret that no light is thrown on the rather intriguing question why Patro himself did not go and fight for the above-mentioned causes, specially as we know him to be such a tenacious fighter!

This year was also marked by two notable events. A Congress delegation was sent to England. M. A. Jinnah was one of its members. Mr. M. K. Gandhi returns to India after the triumphant conclusion of his campaign in South Africa.

30th Session: 1915—Bombay: President—Sir S. P. Sinha.

Unlike other Congress presidents, before and after him, Sir S. P. Sinha entered non-official life after having been the first Indian Law Member to the Government of India. In other cases, the practice was that brilliant but ambitious men would retire into official life after making their mark on Congress history. His presidential address furnishes the legal case for Indian self-government with cogency, moderation and force. Unfortunately, as we all know, reason has little or nothing to do with politics. The war provided a new subject on which resolutions came to be reiterated annually. A demand was made for the repeal of the Arms Act, which had in the course of its long operation 'emasculated' the nation's manhood. Besides, the usual resolutions, including one on self-government on the 'colonial model' were passed.

31st Session: 1916—Lucknow: President—A. C. Mazumdar.

This Congress marked the healing of the wound caused by the split at Surat in 1907. Both wings of the Congress were re-united. The 'extremists' who had long been wandering in the desert came to the parent

fold, and all joined hands on the simple and single issue of self-government on the colonial model. This was brought about by various causes, chief of which was the 'time-spirit'. Next in importance came Mrs. Besant who threw herself into the political struggle with a fervour which put the most extremist politician to the blush. She had been interned, had been released, and was to march straight from the prison-gates to the presidential gadi with the full-throated acclamation of a grateful people. She was responsible for the union of the warring factions within the Congress fold. So Lucknow was hailed as the turning point in the history of the country and the Congress. The session presented the rare spectacle of erstwhile enemies fraternising with one another, jail-birds like Tilak rubbing shoulders with respectable Rao Bahadurs and gallant knights. President Wilson's idea of self-determination provided the inspiration for the proceedings of the Congress.

(To be continued)

STUDENTS' CORNER —(Continued from page 12)

rain is an expressive term to denote gin of bad quality. *Light blue* and *Dark blue* are the colours of Cambridge and Oxford respectively. To *win one's blue* is to be selected to play for one's university. *Blue-beard* is a mythical person who murdered his wives and then locked them up in a tower. An actual case of such a monster was dealt with by the French courts a few years ago. *Blue-book* is any government publication, and is so called because most government documents are depressing reading.

Finally, we have the *Blue ribbon*,—the emblem of the highest honour conferred by the King, viz., the Order of the Garter. It was instituted in commemoration of a gallant episode; vouched for by tradition more than by history. It is said that King Edward III once saved the face of a high-born dame who had the misfortune of dropping one of her garters in his court. There was a titter among the assembled ladies and gentlemen as the 'incident' was noted and passed round. The gallant King went forward, picked up the offending garter, and wearing it round his knee exclaimed: "Disgrace to him who thinks ill." Later he established an order of knighthood with that motto, and restricted admission to it to a select few. It later came to be applied by extension to pre-eminence in other spheres also. Thus we have the blue ribbon of sport, the Derby, so called for the first time by that adventurer among politicians—the Earl of Beaconsfield! No one has worn this with greater grace than that marvellous product of Indian culture and civilisation, His Highness the Agha Khan.

Star Snaps—

by Satellite

1. What film star made 81 pictures before her name was made public?

2. What actor forfeited a possible fortune of 15,000,000 dollars for 15,000 in cash?

3. What star neither drinks, smokes, nor attends parties?

(For Answers see the bottom of this page.)

EXACTLY five years ago, in December 1930, a well-known film correspondent made the important announcement that Greta Garbo's next picture was going to be *Camille*. This never got beyond the rumour stage. Again the rumour is definite that Garbo's next picture is going to be *Camille*. Five years hence?

The Man Who Wouldn't Come Up!

A morning scene in the *Metropolitan* set. Milton Marks, Cesar Romero's 6 foot stand-in wanted before the Camera. All ready. To come up to Cesar Romero's height, Marks has to wear the 4-inch soled wooden shoes. Marks goes to Romero's dressing room where he had left them the previous evening. The whole set, waiting, sees Marks stepping into the wooden shoes, then making frantic efforts to leave the room, waving his arms, jumping and all that, but his feet wouldn't budge? Hypnotised? Stage-fright? Anyone holding him from behind? None, you bet. What is the matter Cesar-double? Look at the shoes! They are nailed to the floor!

Gangs and Gunmen.

A war with California whether from an invader or a murderous chain-gang means a war against the studios. Within the confines of the 20th Century-Fox Studios is the largest arsenal in the West of America.

An invader would be up against the studios, that is, the studio-arms depots, capable of presenting at a day's notice, a greater assortment of arms, field pieces and machine-guns than Fort McArthur, California's mightiest Coast defence.



Cesar Romero

In less than 'one day, this arsenal could be prepared with equipment and arms for 20,000 men and enough practical field pieces to wipe out a city of 100,000 population. Altogether there are over 6000 practical pistols, 16 000 rifles, 50 machine-guns, 20 heavy artillery pieces and numerous Civil War cannon, modern mortars and Hotchkiss, one-pounders purchased from the surplus stores of twenty foreign governments.

Most of these, by the way, are used for the anti-crime picture *Snatched*. In this picture, there are four ruthless gangsters, dividing a haul of two hundred "Grand"—paid as ransom for a kidnapped child. The gangster parts are played by Cesar Romero, Bruce Cabot, Edward Brophy, and Warren Hymer, all robust masculine physical specimens. Their nasty work is lighted only by an old-fashioned kerosene oil lamp.

Cagney as a G-Man

G-men, another gangster picture with just as many battle equipments is headed Jimmy Cagney. Here he is in his element as an agent—and Regis Toomey—of the United States Government's forces to fight the underworld. This picture literally goes with a bang and all Cagney-fans will find him at his best, distributing shots right and left, running down the gangsters at unexpected quarters. He is ably assisted in his work by Ann Dvorak and Margaret Lindsay. This is Warner Bros' contribution to the anti-crime campaign. One of the fastest gangster pictures produced, it is remarkable for the vividness of its action and the ruthlessness of both the underworld and the G-Men.

(Answers to Questions at the top)

(1) Mary Pickford, between 1907 and 1908 when she was known simply as the "Biograph Girl".

(2) Dustin Farnum. In 1913 he refused a fourth interest in what is now Paramount for 15,000 dollars representing his salary to play in "The Squaw Man".

(3) Mae West!



James Cagney

THE LETTERS OF Private Joyfull

Getting A Shooting-Pass

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

Sketches by Mali

Madras, 14th December, 1935.

DEAR MOTHER.

THE weather has been cooler lately; and last week Boggins suggested we should apply for three days' shooting-leave. Not that we ever shoot much. It is really more of a picnic in the jungle. The last time we went out, all that we bagged was a goat, which Boggins shot in mistake for a panther. The goat was supposed to be the bait.

The rules about shooting-leave are very strict, because careless or ignorant men might get into trouble, roaming about with guns. A lot of men are never allowed to go. "Let us send a post-card to Appu," said Boggins. "He can vouch for us, and be entered on the pass as our interpreter."

Appu is the head-man of a village in the jungle, and he has been our friend for the past two years. He is very cheerful and companionable, and no fool. Some people might imagine that he was ignorant; but there is no one wiser in the simple lore of the countryside, and no one shrewder in everyday human things. He reminds me of my great-uncle Micah. I wondered why he was put down as our interpreter, when he cannot speak a word of English.

"The interpreter is really a sort of good-will agent," said Boggins. "He explains our peculiar ways to the villagers, and persuades them we are harmless. He also puts us wise to the villagers' peculiar ways, and keeps us out of mischief."

Boggins had to pass a test as the English interpreter of our party. We both had to report to the Staff Captain, and this gentleman inspected our conduct-sheets, and then led us to the gate of the Fort. He picked out the stupidest-looking rickshaw-man he could see, and said, "Tell that man to come to me."

Boggins had no need to say anything, because the rickshaw-man came running of his own accord, and almost scooped the Staff Captain into the rickshaw, in his eagerness to be hired. In a few moments it slowly dawned on the man that something unusual was afoot. His mouth dropped open, his eyes glazed with terror, and he fell into an attitude of supplication.

"Do not be afraid," said the Staff Captain, in Tamil. "I want to see if this soldier can speak with you. If you answer well, I will pay you." He turned to Boggins, and continued in English, "Ask him his name, and where he belongs."

Boggins put the question very carefully, and repeated it several times, but the man would only say that he was a poor rickshaw-puller, and the Staff Captain was a great lord.

"Never mind," said the Officer. "Ask him how long he has been doing this work."

Boggins could get no answer from the man. He persisted as well as he could, but the man only began to moan and pray. Boggins made a long speech, and ended with, "Come, brother, only tell me how many months you have been pulling this rickshaw."

"Four annas, great gentleman," groaned the man.

Boggins made another long speech, and the rickshaw-man gradually began to raise his eyes and listen. Boggins was encouraged. "You are a good man," he said. "Come, tell the gentleman since how long you have been pulling the rickshaw."

"Three annas, sir," wailed the rickshaw-puller.

Boggins reported this reply almost tearfully. "Do not worry," said the Captain. "See if he can tell you where I can get a drink of water."

Boggins made no attempt to put the question directly. He saw he would have to lead up to it. "This gentleman is a very great lord," he began. The rickshaw-man groaned in agreement. "This gentleman is a thirsty gentleman. Do you understand?"

The rickshaw-man gazed at the Staff Captain with wondering eyes. "This gentleman is an exceedingly thirsty gentleman," continued Boggins, warming to his work. "This gentleman is a great drinker." He paused impressively, and began to enlarge on the subject. "This gentleman does not drink beer. This gentleman does not drink toddy. This gentleman drinks water!"

"Water," repeated the human donkey, at last making an intelligible contribution to the discussion.

"Good!" said Boggins. "Bravo! You understand that this gentleman drinks water. Now, brother, tell me. Where can this great lord get water to drink?"

The rickshaw-man gazed at Boggins with dull eyes. "Water?" he said.

"Yes," replied Boggins. "Where can the great lord find drinking-water?"

"The sea," said the rickshaw-man.

"Well, strike me senseless with an air-balloon!" said Boggins, cursing softly in English. "*Drinking-water!*"

The rickshaw-man looked frightened out of his wits. "Drinking-water?" he asked, like a fellow coming out of an opium-dream.

"Yes, brother, drinking-water," said Boggins, encouragingly.

"No," replied the rickshaw-man, decidedly. And, taking a sudden desperate resolution, he ran away down the road, shouting "Murder!"

"Call him back," said the Staff Captain, unmoved.

"I've forgotten the word for 'come back'!" cried Boggins, in despair.

"Then say 'good-bye'," suggested the Officer, laughing.

"I'm sorry I've failed, Sir," muttered Boggins. "It was hard luck to get such a chap."

"Oh, you haven't failed," replied the Staff Captain. "You did quite well, though your grammar is atrocious. What is more important, you did not lose your temper. Remember, you may come into contact with men just as stupid as that one, and much more dangerous in their stupidity. Be careful."

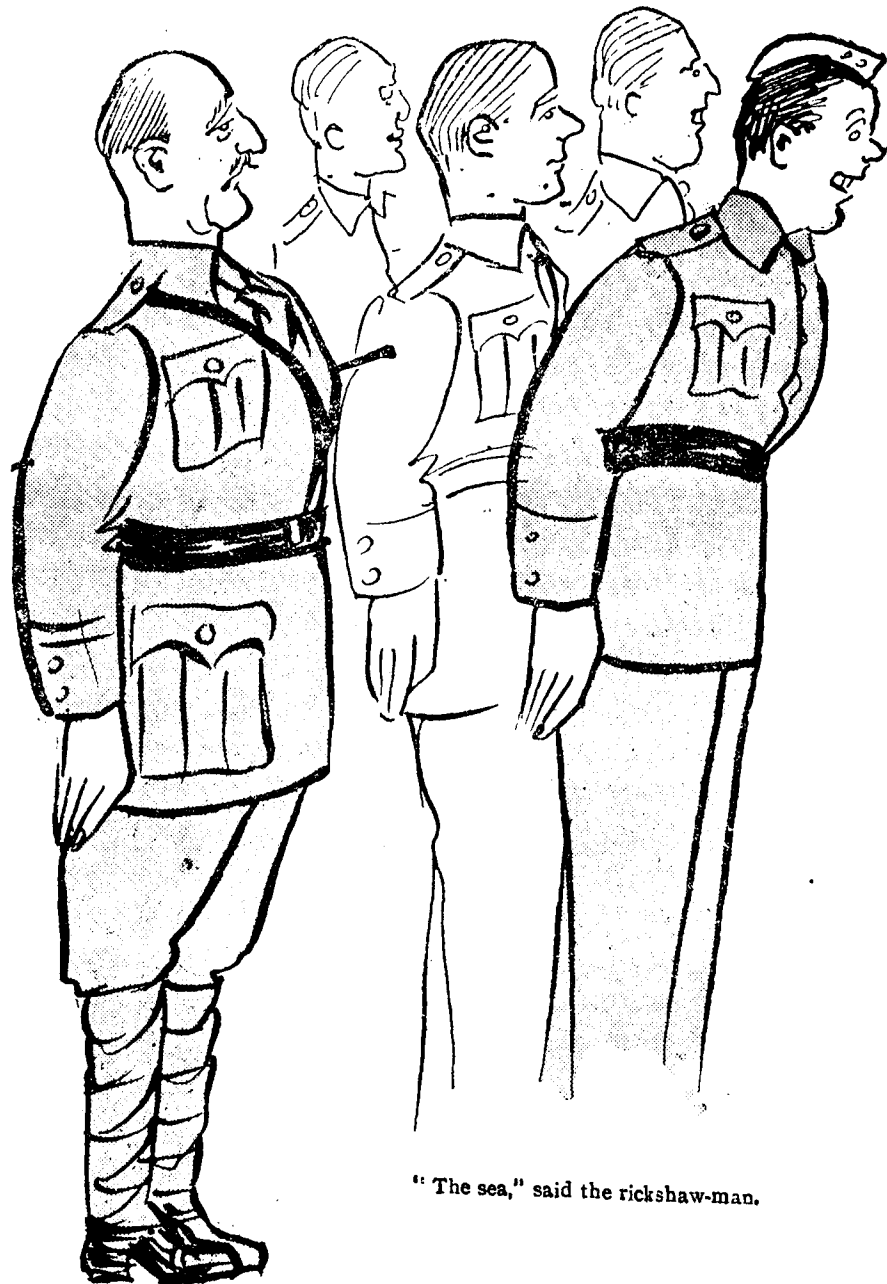
"Very good, Sir: thank you," said Boggins.

Next we had to take our arms and ammunition to the armourer, and he certified they were short-range sporting weapons in good condition, not dangerous to the public if properly handled. Then we had to read a lot of good advice about the conduct of members of shooting-parties, and sign to say we understood the instructions.

"Now let us send the post-card to Appu," said Boggins.

"Won't he be offended?" I asked, doubtfully.

"What do you mean?" demanded Boggins.



"The sea," said the rickshaw-man.

"Well, isn't it very impolite to send a private communication on a post-card?"

"Not in India," said Boggins, decidedly. "In this country you can even send a petition to the Viceroy on a post card."

"But people will read Appu's post-card, and get to know his business."

"So much the better," said Boggins. "It will save them the trouble of having to steam open the envelope."

It must be on account of such curiosity that registered letters are quite common out here. Until I got to India I had never seen a registered letter. I thought they were only for sending diamonds and such-



like through the post. In India, even parcels have to be registered. Once I had to post a parcel for Captain Bullfrog, and the man in the post-office actually said it was compulsory to register the parcel. I protested that it only contained a pair of trousers for the dry-cleaners, but the clerk insisted, and showed me a notice. Who has ever heard of a registered parcel? It only goes to show that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives.

"All the same," I told Boggins, "I think it would be more courteous to send the post-card in an envelope."

"Not a bit of it," said my friend. "A message in

an envelope would create a lot of unhealthy interest in the village, and Appu would be worried about the contents until he could get some one to read it. And when the message was read, all the village would be listening, anyway; but no one worries about a post-card."

We sat down to compose the message. Boggins began with our address, carefully written in block capitals. "If we don't do that," said Boggins, "the reply will be addressed to such high-sounding people that we will never get it."

The body of the post-card was easy. "Dear Appu," wrote Boggins, "We hope you are well. May we come and camp at your village next Friday week? Good wishes from Boggins and Joyfull."

We waited for days, and no answer came from Appu. "Don't worry," said Boggins, "Appu is consulting with the village elders about the exact wording of the reply. It is a weighty matter."

The next day, the civil postman brought a very dirty envelope, covered with *dhobi* marks, and said we could have it on payment of two annas six pies.

"Go away!" I replied, indignantly. "Who ever heard of a person having to pay for receiving a letter?"

"Give me the letter," interrupted Boggins, who forked out two annas six pies. "It is the reply from Appu."

"But we expected a post-card!" I exclaimed. "You said that personal messages were sent on post-cards."

Boggins grinned. "Oh, no," he said. "The post-office won't accept unstamped post-cards," and I was astonished.

We had to take the letter to the post-office and pay an anna to a man to read it.

"High-born soldier-persons," Appu had written. "After greetings."

"After what greetings?" I asked.

The clerk did not know. "I am well," continued Appu's letter. "My new wife is well. She has borne another child, but it is only a girl. I now have two cows. My house has fallen down. I am starting a new law-suit against my enemy in the spring. The money-lender is dead. All is well. From Appu."

"Is that all?" I cried. The clerk said there was no more in the letter. "But he doesn't say anything about our coming to the village!" I protested.

"That is all right," replied Boggins. "The letter means that we are welcome, but Appu is too polite to say such a thing."

So we went and started loading our camp-things on the bullock-cart.

Your Loving Son, OBEAH JOYFULL.

An Uninhabited Island

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

Illustrated by Mali

SHEIK Ismail, a dealer in pearls, stood in the bows of his launch, and surveyed the island of Kamafars, now fast approaching. The island was a mere uninhabited sand-bank in the Red Sea.

"Where is the bay, Suleman?" he asked.

"It is beyond that promontory, master, where the three palm-trees stand. It is sheltered and deep, and the bottom is covered with the finest pearl-oysters."

"The island belongs to nobody?"

"It is claimed by the Sultan of Yemen, but he has not troubled to establish ownership. The fishing-rights



are owned by Sheik Osman. He will sub-let at a small price if the secret of the bay remains undiscovered."

The launch slid into calm water, and came to rest, drifting. The pearl-dealer took a big one-ended telescope, and put it in the water, examining the bottom of the bay through the lens.

"You are right!" exclaimed Sheik Ismail. "It is the finest bed of pearl-oysters I have ever seen. Let the launch cruise slowly forward, while I watch."

The launch floated gently across the bay, while Sheik Ismail kept his eyes glued to the sea-telescope. "Wonderful!" he said, at last. "There are at least five acres of the finest pearl, quite untouched."

"Let us return quickly to Aden, master, and get a sub-lease from Sheik Osman."

"I will first stretch my legs," replied the dealer. "Look, land me by that clump of bush, and tell the cook to set out food and drink underneath the tree."

"But we should go right round the island, and see that all is good for our purpose, before leaving."

"I will eat in peace. While I am resting, you may take the launch and go round the island. You should be back in three hours."

Sheik Ismail settled himself comfortably beneath the tree, and eyed his fine sea-going launch with pride. It made a pretty picture, casting off into the deep blue waters of the lagoon. He suddenly thought of his latest expensive toy, a cine-camera. Fitting the telescopic lens, he sighted the camera, and took a picture of the departure of his vessel. The film stopped with a sudden click.

"It is the end of the reel," muttered Sheik Ismail. "I have yet one more in the haversack." He detached the finished reel, and carefully loaded three hundred feet of new film into the camera. He stretched himself luxuriously, performed his ablutions, and commenced his repast.

When the meal was over, the dealer surveyed the scene with appreciation. The burnished sun beat down upon the deep blue of the bay, the darker green of the open sea, the tawny yellow of the dunes, and the parched tones of the sparse scrub. The bay was as lonely and silent as the grave.

Even while Sheik Ismail was contemplating the solitude, it was surprisingly broken. A dhow was sailing quietly into the lagoon! "It is a French-owned boat from Djibouti," muttered the dealer, anxious for the secret of the pearls. "What can it be doing in such a place?"

Despite his anxiety, he could not resist the beauty of the picture. He exposed a twenty-foot shot of the stately sailing-vessel gliding over the still waters, against the background of the three palms.

The dhow ran on to the sand a scant hundred yards away. Immediately, a swarm of Negroes leapt ashore, and began to erect a canopy on the sands; a shamiana, Sheik Ismail called it, to himself. Soon a carpet was spread, and cushions of state. The dealer, now excited and alarmed in equal proportions, drew into close hiding.

A new surprise awaited him. A small European gunboat, flying a tri-colour flag, was steaming into the bay! A crew of white-clad sailors smartly lowered a splendidly-appointed dinghy. A magnificent figure descended into the stern-sheets. Ismail's eyes nearly popped out of his head. He had seen pictures of that imposing person in the newspapers. It was General d'Abbanio, Supreme Prefect of the Italian Colonies!

At the same moment, an equally-imposing person stepped ashore from the dhow; a dark-skinned man in a wide-brimmed hat and a splendidly-jewelled white cloak. It was Ras Dingaan, President of the Royal Council of Ethiopia!

Feverishly, Ismail focussed his camera on the ceremonious meeting of the plenipotentiaries of two warring nations. This was indeed a picture! As the film whirled softly, Ismail wondered why the representatives were meeting, even in secret. Had not the Italians constantly proclaimed to the world that no compromise was possible with the barbaric Ethiopians?

Two hours later, Ismail was taking a shot of the signing of an immense document, from which dangled heavy seals, when he was distracted by a commotion on the gunboat. Looking round, he saw his own launch chugging unsuspectingly into the bay!

The Italian warship lowered another boat, full of armed seamen. It made straight for the launch, and the two boats ran on to the sand opposite Ismail's hiding-place almost simultaneously. A naval officer leapt ashore, and covered Sheik Ismail with a heavy automatic.

"What are you doing here?" screamed the Italian, white with rage. "You are spies! You are all under arrest!"

"I and my men are British subjects," replied Ismail. "My launch is under the British flag. These waters are within the Sultanate of Yemen. I am here on my own business. You cannot detain me."

"I will blow you and your launch out of the water!" shrieked the officer. "Dead men tell no tales!"

"This dead man will," replied Sheik Ismail. "My partner in Aden knows my whereabouts, and if I do not return by tomorrow, the British patrol-sloop will be here to find me."

"Who are you? What is your business in this bay?"

"I am a dealer, prospecting for pearls. There are none here," added Ismail, hastily. "I am sorry I intruded on your picnic."

"Picnic?"

"Yes," said Ismail, innocently. "You naval gentlemen are having some fun, aren't you? I saw the *dhow* arrive with your servants."

The Italian gazed searchingly at Sheik Ismail, wondering if he were really so innocent. Then his eye wandered to the British ensign drooping from the stern of the launch.

"This picnic is secret," he said, at last. "I will get into great trouble if it is reported. If you breathe a word, my men will seek you out, and knife you, do you understand? Now begone, and do not say anything of what you have seen!"

"Why should I talk about a picnic?" said the pearl-dealer, stepping into his launch.

As the launch drew away, the Italian officer suddenly saw the cine-camera in Ismail's hand. "A thousand devils!" screeched the officer. "Indian swine, come back! Mother of God, the fellow has a film!" But the launch continued to head out to sea.

The Italian returned hastily to the warship, and the anchor-chain began to clank. "The infidels' ship is following us," said Suleman, in the launch. "The big gun is pointed at us."

"They dare not shoot," replied his master. "They will try and overtake us." Nevertheless, he looked anxiously seaward. What he saw brought him a huge sigh of relief. A British destroyer was moving smoothly along the horizon.

"We are blessed," muttered Sheik Ismail, piously. "As the good Book says, our Governors hold the pathways of the sea."

The destroyer, attracted by the unusual spectacle of an Italian gunboat chasing a British pearling-launch, put on full speed, and hoisted a pair of signal flags. They were the international code-call, 'Do you need assistance'?

Suleman looked behind him, and hoisted a white flag with black crosses on the stumpy mast of the launch. It was the international 'Negative reply'. The Italian gunboat had turned in a wide circle, and was steaming away at full speed.

When Sheik Ismail reached Aden, he found that Sheik Osman, the owner of the pearling-rights, had gone to Bombay. The trader therefore booked a passage on the evening mail-boat. It was not until he was on board that he thought of his cine-camera.

He had neglected to buy a new film. The old film was still in the camera.

A Greek named Papadulos came on board at the last moment, and went straight to the purser's office. The Greek emerged with a berthing-ticket for Ismail's cabin, though Ismail had bribed the purser for a cabin to himself.

The Greek showed great interest in Ismail's cine-camera. When he heard that it was filled with film exposed the previous day, he offered to buy it. He was so eager to buy it that he offered ten times the price. Ismail surlily refused, and locked the camera in his trunk.

That night Ismail caught the Greek trying to open the trunk. He took the camera to the ship's captain, and had it locked in the safe.

The next night, there was an attempt to burgle the ship's safe. The captain had the safe removed to the strong-room, under guard with the mails.

The following night, the sentry outside the strong-room was found drugged, and the door partly burst open. The captain cursed fluently, and set double watches.

When the mail-boat sailed into Bombay harbour, Ismail's camera was still in the safe in the strong-room. The dealer withdrew it. Just before going down the gangway, Papadulos the Greek made a last offer of five thousand rupees for the camera, just as it was. Ismail refused.

At that moment, the Greek stumbled clumsily against the dealer, and the camera clattered to the deck. "Be careful!" cried Ismail. "If the case is damaged, the film will be spoiled."

Papadulos picked up the camera, and handed it to the owner with such careless violence that it nearly flew over the side into the water. "Idiot!" howled Ismail, making a miraculous catch, and went down the gangway. Papadulos followed, looking haggard and desperate.

(Continued on page 41)

With A Butterfly Net

by P. P. Samuel

Illustrated By Mali

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

THROUGH the corner of my eye I saw Leela slipping out of my study.

"Hullo, darling!" I said, "come on in—and sit on our knee."

"Why, is it stiff?" she smiled. "I never knew you believed in homeopathy, dear. Besides, I am too old for that sort of thing. Don't they say that Romance curls up at the altar and dies at the birth of a baby?"

"Oh, don't try to be a Roman Matron, girl. You are only sweet and twenty-two and youth's a stuff—"

"Will not endure," she completed, swinging my chair round and planting a huge, smacking—

Well, well, you know the way with a live married couple, in spite of the writers of popular fiction who think that a chap who is in love with his wife ought to be put in a glass case in the museum. It is all foolish, perhaps, (I mean the expression of love) and highly revolting to *The Lancet* and Thumbu Chetty Street; but a little nonsense now and then gives life its balance and makes it thoroughly worthwhile.

"Da-a-a-rling," she crowed, trying to do two things at a time, in spite of the copy-book maxims she had learned at school, "I thought I shouldn't disturb you. That article, you know, is overdue, and I have come across a couple of dinky little corsets in a shop window in Mount Road."

A bad paragraph.

"Not at all," I said, having demonstrated that I was in good form too. "As a matter of fact I have been chewing my pencil for an hour now with no palpable result. Gossip-writers say that the best journalists in Chichihuahua eat their pencils when they get stuck. But graphite is a terribly over-rated stuff as you can learn from that blank sheet there."

"Ah, not half bad for a beginning," she encouraged, picking up the sheet of foolscap and admiring the beautiful 'PAGE I' which, I am glad to say, was worthy of an R. A.

"But what are you going to write about?" she asked,

"Well, that's where you come in. You know wives often help their husbands in choosing things—ties, typists, topics and things of that sort."

"Ha, ha," she laughed. "But I am a frightfully bad chooser."

"Not at all!" I exclaimed. "You are about the most dependable chooser in this suburb. Haven't you chosen the best *sarees* and the best husband in the market?"

"*Sarees*, yes," she said thoughtfully.

And she sat for a few moments, her head cocked sideways in profound thought, as pretty girls often do in penny novelettes.

"Hurrah! I've got it," she cried, with such sudden enthusiasm that she almost dislocated my knee-cap. "Don't you think, angel, that the obvious thing at the moment is to write an article about Abyssinia? News-value and all that sort of rot?"

"Oh, no. I fear a long-suffering world has had enough Abyssinia and Ambedkar to last a couple of decades. Try again, Leela."

"You chump!" she remonstrated, raising an admonitory forefinger. "You keep forgetting that I don't like to be labelled 'Leela'. Call me 'Laali' or something, or I shall walk right out and you will have to mind the baby the rest of the evening. 'Leela' indeed!"

"Don't get excited, dear. It is bad for your hormones."

"Do you think a right-minded Indian girl would love to be called Leela when Leelas in their hundreds crawl over the pages of Indian magazines? I have heard of a healthy English girl who gave a cabinet minister a black eye, because he happened to call her 'Daphne' by mistake—"

"But dear," I put in edgewise, "I can't say I am fond of the name 'Laali'. It sounds a bit Moghul. May I call you 'Sheba'?"

"Sheba?"

"Yes, you know you are so fond of Ethiopia."

"No. I won't have it. Old Sheba was a cat."
 "Then, I suppose, I shall have to call you 'Eve'."

"Why?"

"So that I may call you 'Morn' or something in case you want to change your label again."

"Righto, Adam. That settles it. Here's—for luck. Now be a good boy and finish that article and let me have the cheque when it arrives."

She disappeared forthwith in a cloud of silk and sophistication, leaving me plastered with quite four annas' worth of cosmetics.

And definitely dashed, I should say. The virgin sheet of foolscap kept smiling derisively at me. "Come on, you chump!" it seemed to challenge, quite in the manner of virgins.

The chump came on. Why not Abyssinia after all. One could tackle the subject from various angles. *The Truth About Abyssinia, The Lies About Abyssinia, Abyssinia From Within, Abyssinia From Without, Abyssinia in 1835, Abyssinia in 2035, Abyssinia—*

But it was not to be. A faint smell of lavender pervaded the room, and turning round I saw Leela standing behind my chair.

"Drawn blank again?"

"Not quite. I reckon I have a rough sketch of it in my head."

"Must be sketchy, dear, very sketchy: you have been at it two hours if a minute. Looks rather the labour of Sisyphus, doesn't it?"

"For goodness' sake," I fumed, "cut out the classical. Greek Mythology gives me a head."

"I am afraid you will have to be psycho-analysed and freed from your complexes if you should become

a good citizen. Why don't you take a correspondence course in Practical Psychology? It will—"

"Thank you very much," I snapped. "I am quite all right as I am. And I tell you you won't catch me throwing away good Indian money on British fads."

"Don't be silly. A course in P. P. is sure to increase your income-earning power."

"Ah, you seem to have been reading the advertisements, child. Here is the whole bag of tricks, if you care. 'Can't and Imposs. will slip out of your vocabulary the moment the postman hands you the first lesson (per V. P. P.); your personality will develop like any thing; your forehead will broaden and bulge; your—'"

"I wish you won't be cynical, dear. The cynic, you know, lives in a sort of blind alley. All his life. But those thousands of 'unsolicited testimonials' mean something, don't they?"

"Yes, that there is money in it as long as the fair (but rather dense) sex form the majority of the population. I am jolly well going to give up this

pettifogging and pie-a-line-ing and start an Institute of Practical Psychology. And I know that women who want to develop dinky, dynamic personalities (whatever it means) and creative, directive ability (search me, lady) will soon be standing in queues at the counters of the post offices throughout India."

"And where do I come in, dear?"

"Oh, you will just be rolling about in Mount Road with the filthy lucre, buying all the fetching little things you have seen in the windows."

"On new tyres, may I hope," she said thoughtfully. "I don't think there is another advocate in Mylapore whose car runs on so much canvas. Just imagine

(Continued on page 41)



MEMORIAL TO

Blue-Pencil Wallahs

by Old Soldier Jim

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

I do not suppose that this will ever be published. Editors are a tribe of human beings with one set purpose in life—to air their views on life and everything connected with it; and when their own grey matter is exhausted they may pay for the efforts of others—sometimes. (Ingrate!—Ed.)

Everybody who reads a book or newspaper is expected to believe the Editor. It is most dangerous to express disbelief in an Editor. An offender is liable to be brought to that huge court of justice—'Public Opinion'—the particular public opinion controlled by the said Editor.

To make matters worse, these blue-pencil wallahs stick together. They would take up the war-cry and the poor doubting individual would be hounded from the country. He would be far safer had he committed a few murders.

This tribe of paper and ink merchants is all-powerful. Even the forces of nature work for them. When their own thinking apparatus is out of gear, (and they're too stingy to pay for the good stuff humbly sent to them by many striving young writers) an earthquake is ordered, or a flood; or a fire happens.

This year, 1935, they have made fortunes, just because their brains wouldn't function and Nature helped them.

When the forces of Nature are having a rest, a couple of Editors in different countries will write to each other and arrange a war. Wars are their delight, for, once a war has started they can say what they like. They know which side is going to win before the fighting starts; and work on the imagination of their readers accordingly. Their plan of operations is so simple. After the preliminary secret letter, the two blue-pencil merchants start throwing mud at each other. Then each calls in other Editors on his side (all arranged previously of course). When it's all fixed up, and they cannot go on any longer promising a war, fighting has to start. The number of casualties and the result of the first battle is all settled before the actual declaration of war. It's usually arranged for a last-minute ultimatum so that they can bring out a 'Special Edition'.

These philosophers never poach. Their territory is all settled. Has been for years. They don't need a League of Nations—except as an unofficial part of their staff.

(Continued on page 28)

Milk-O!

by A. A. Roland

Illustrated by the Author

Reading Time

About 8 Minutes



"You're putting water in the milk, sir."

I'VE recently inherited a dairy.

Its former owner, my cousin George, was returning from market one night in his new car. It suddenly began misfiring and then stopped.

"Musta run outa petrol," opined my cousin George, and got out.

He removed the cap of the petrol tank. But he couldn't see into it clearly on account of the darkness. So he struck a match to see if there was any petrol left.

There was.

So I've recently inherited a dairy.

It's quite a novelty being connected with a dairy. I've had no previous experience in the milk line, except for my connection with it in the days of my infancy. And in my early boyhood, when I sometimes attempted (with remarkable lack of success) to milk the *mali's* goats.

With my present grasp of technical detail, I'm inclined to attribute my failure on those occasions to a childish inability to distinguish between a nanny-goat and a billy-goat. The ferocity displayed by my victims in butting me round the garden indicates how keenly they must have resented my attempted operations on the wrong kind of goat.

But that was long, long ago.

Since inheriting the dairy, I've learnt practically all there is to know about goats, cows and buffaloes.

And my friends consider me quite an authority now on milk, cheese, butter and eggs.

If any of you have expectations of inheriting a dairy, or are thinking of buying one, the following hints may prove of inestimable value.

Keeping ahead of your rivals is of paramount importance.

That, and refusing to put up with any nonsense from your customers.

We were selling butter at 14 annas a pound when I took over my dairy. Our competitor across the street charged 15 annas, but did a much better business because he employed more go-ahead methods in advertising and marketing than my poor cousin George. I soon began gingering up my dairy, with the result that he was presently forced to placard his window with the notice:

Try Our Butter at 13 Annas a Pound
To Pay More is to be Robbed!

If he thought this was going to beat me, he made a sad mistake. The very same afternoon I had a placard up in my window. It was quite a scriptural-looking affair, being embellished with jolly little cherubims and things. And it said:

Trust Not in the Word of Self-Confessed Thieves
Try Our Butter at 14 Annas a Pound
To pay Less is to be Poisoned!

I've got most of his customers now.

'Difficult' customers present a very great problem to the dairyman. But I've made it a rule never to let this type of nuisance have the last word.

When an angry customer comes into my dairy and jeeringly informs me: "The difference between a cow and a dairyman is that the cow gives *milk*," I retort quietly but firmly: "Yes, but there's another and greater difference,—the cow doesn't give credit."

When a customer complains: "I can't understand how it is there's no cream in your milk," I explain that my roundsmen have orders to fill the bottles so full there is sometimes no room for the cream.

"Are these eggs fresh?" a suspicious customer asked me once. "Fresh!" I exclaimed indignantly. "Why, they wouldn't have been laid till to-morrow, if I hadn't torn a page too many off the calendar by mistake!"



"The difference between a cow and a dairyman is that the cow gives milk."

"I admit that sometimes a customer wins a round; but this doesn't worry me unduly, so long as I know they're paying for rich milk and getting poor, while I'm selling poor milk and getting rich.

"I want you to change this egg, which I bought here yesterday, for a Madrassi one," said an Indian customer once. "But that is a new-laid Madrassi egg, sir," I told him. "Is it?" he said cynically. "Well, when I opened it this morning at breakfast it certainly addressed me in a language with which I'm not familiar."

Then there was a nasty customer who wrote me the following letter: "I never ordered this beastly cheese. If I did, you didn't send it. If you sent it, I never got it. If I got it, I paid for it. If I didn't, I won't. Yours respectfully, Sandy McTavish."

If customers complain of the quality of milk in the cold weather, I tell them it's due to the shortage of grass and that even the cows are upset by it because they feel they're not doing themselves credit. "I've seen them crying over it," I once said, rather jocosely.

"Perhaps so," my customer told me, "but you might see that they don't drop their tears into *our* can."

A factor that conduces to the efficient running of a dairy is the imparting of proper knowledge to one's assistants.

"What am I doing?" you should ask your apprentice. "You're putting water in the milk, sir," he'll answer. "If you look more carefully," you correct him, "you will see that I'm doing nothing of the kind. I'm pouring milk into the water. Now remember that, in future, if anyone asks you if I put water in the milk, you can say 'No'. Always tell the truth. Cheating is bad, but lying is worse."

Here's another suggested catechism:—

"Have you closed the blinds?" you ask. "Yes, sir."

"Have you poured the milk into the water?"
"Yes, sir."

"Mixed the fat with the butter?" "Yes, sir."

"Made out the new labels for the old eggs?"
"Yes, sir."

"O. K. Now you can go home. And don't forget to say your prayers."

I prophecy that my own young son has a brilliant future before him. As soon as he's finished with school I intend to start him in my dairy. The other day his teacher was giving the class a lesson in mathematics.

"In order to subtract," said the teacher, "things have to be of the same denomination. For instance, we couldn't take three apples from four tomatoes, nor six horses from nine dogs."

My son's hand shot up promptly. "Teacher," he shouted, "can't you take four quarts of milk from three cows?"

Let me advise all dairymen to be on the look-out for traps set by cunning customers for the unwary. I recently saw the following notice in a local paper:

"Yesterday I bought four pounds of butter and found nearly three pounds of adulteration in it. If the shopkeeper in question doesn't send me four pounds of pure butter at once, I shall publish his name in this paper."

Next day, I heard it was impossible to get to the advertiser's door owing to the throng of gowls delivering four-pound packets of butter. My dairy was probably the only one not represented, because I happened to remember that I hadn't had any four-pound orders on that occasion.

If you contemplate installing modern mechanical-milkers, let me advise you to select and purchase the necessary apparatus yourself. Don't leave it to an underling, as I did. I relied on my headman for my mechanical-milkers. And what happened?

I'm damned if he didn't obtain a couple of second-hand machines from some relative of his, and experiment with them on two of my best cows—with absolutely disastrous results to the cows. His relative owned a hair-dressing saloon. And he'd sold us two permanent-wave machines.

I haven't been able to straighten out matters yet.

THE END

MEMORIAL TO BLUE-PENCILWALLAHS

(Continued from page 25)

So much stuff about this Italo-Abyssinian stunt has been thrown at a gullible public that Mussolini and the League of Nations have to read the newspapers to know what is supposed to be happening.

I read the papers fairly regularly, so I ought to know more about Abyssinia than Haile Selasse.

There is a statue to Lord Clive which depicts him holding a pen in one hand and a sword in the other. A more demonstrative one than that is needed now. A memorial to those who won the Great War, before it started, is contemplated. The only difficulties are: (1) to decide where to put it and (2) there are so many, to whom it would have to be dedicated, still living.

Editors are like old soldiers; they merely fade away. (That's mainly due to the advent of 'Wireless'.)

The design for the statue will be:—

A figure of a man sitting in a chair with a table in front of him. On the base, below the table, in front and behind, will be the broken bodies of humans; on these broken wrecks will be written the word 'rejected'. Directly above the figure at the table a light will shine, an electric light with a dirty globe. On the forehead of the monster will be an eye-shade (similar to those worn by lady tennis stars). In either hand it will hold a blue-pencil; scattered over the table will be manuscripts (actual manuscripts, not dummies—there will be no trouble in keeping up a supply of these—to infinity).

In front of the ogre, directly beneath the blue-pencils, will be a manuscript tablet and on it the words: 'The Editor regrets.....'

The epitaph for this vision of faded glory—if it ever does entirely fade—will be:—

"Get a paper—and a pen,
write down words
my fellow men.
Stanza, line and poetry
about an elephant up a tree.
When you've done
pass down to me
for I'll be resting in purgatory.
I'll read those words
and if you've won, my darling son,
you'll pay the postage, just for fun."

THE END

The Prime Mover—

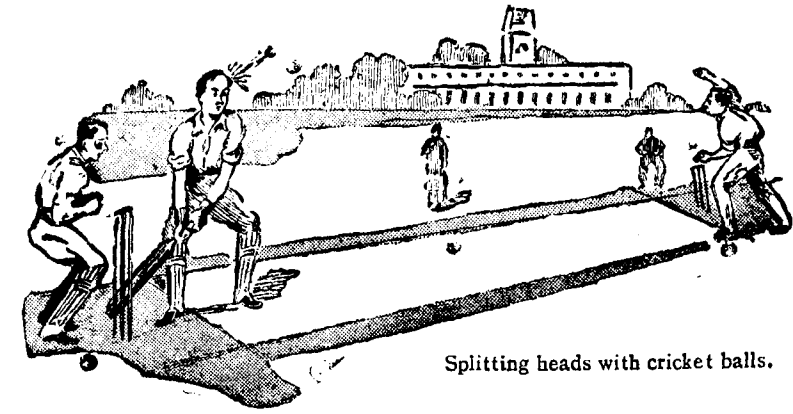
by Stortler

Illustrated by Varma

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

"WHAT is bluffing?" said Jestling Pilate and would not stay for an answer.

Rather a hard thing to define—bluffing. You can hear it, you can feel it, you can fix it at first sight, but you can't squeeze into a couple of phrases the colossal significance of the word. Perhaps the nearest makeshift for a definition would be that a 'bluff' is a fib in glad-rags, hundred per cent swank and zero per cent substance. A significant fact about bluffing is that, in a great or a small measure, everyone bluffs. From Dante down to the Sunday-newspaperman who reported snow in Sahara or serpents in Iceland, from Law Members to scavengers, and from Magazine Editors to marriage brokers, everyone bluffs. The one touch of Nature which makes the whole world kin, and of which the poet made a lot of fuss, is, now I've got it, the bluffing capacity. Only while



Splitting heads with cricket balls.

*Full many a bloke is born to bluff unseen
And waste his bluffs upon the desert air.*

others who are more fortunate, get paid for their 'bluffacious' propensities, and rush to fame via the camera, the telegraph-wires and the daily newspaper.

But never before in the history of old mother Earth has bluffing acquired the privilege, prestige and power of an art as it has to-day. In this art-infested world of the twentieth century—where 'inspiration' is as cheap as chocolates and 'genius' as common as cucumbers—when you hear of the back-to-nature art, the divorcing art, the black-mailing art, the kidnapping art, the brassiering art, the lip-painting art, and the abortionist's art, it is no wonder that bluffing is recognized as an art too. If I live up to the age of

125—and it is very likely that I will, and write a history of the present era, I wouldn't think twice before I labelled it: 'The Age of Bernard, Benito, Blurb, Baldwin, Boost and Bluff'.

Take, for instance, one of the mightiest bluffs of to-day—advertisements. Present-day ads are more than a tribute to the power and possibilities of bluffing. Reading these ads I have often wondered—well, I have wondered quite a lot of things.

For example, I wondered why, with all the cute girls going, I didn't get a fair, accomplished and all-that-sort-of female to wive.

Then I wondered why I wasn't the height of the lamp-post round the corner, and why, instead of an adroit Adonis with the sinews of a Sandow, I remained a scraggy, skeletonish chap.

Then I wondered why men and women still suffered from bald

heads, diabetes, neurasthenia, corns, *ennui*, bugs, mosquitoes, doctors' bills, daughters' marriages, and the Trade Depression.

I wondered, too, why, with Egypt's secrets packed up in cartons and 'available at your chemist's', women still possessed blotting-paper skins and Bengal-gram complexions, and why the bulk of them were geometric straight lines instead of graceful curves and spheroids as per the illustrations in the weeklies.

Beauty is not Truth, Truth not Beauty

I have emended Keats, going over these illustrations. Indeed I have derived as much fun out of a 'beauty-secret' advertisement, as out of the broadest farces of P. G. Wodehouse or the wildest antics of Charlie Chaplin. Of all the ads I have read or heard

I shall never forget the boosting of an Indian specific, which Mr. Aldous Huxley says he came across somewhere in a Bombay paper which set out to cure, among a multiplicity of ills, 'adultery'!

Which only shows, perhaps, that Mr. Aldous Huxley is even less expert at the game of bluffing than his obviously impossible Indian manufacturer. It requires the very essence of puerility to take in that bosh about an advertisement at a gulp. Men of letters are, very often nowadays, men of lies. And when an acutely 'intellectual' member of the fraternity begins poking fun at a country, of which the only representative specimens he has met are, probably, the coolies and the *chokras*, you can look for imagination, ingenuity, but truth?—Well, not too much of it!

Talking of letters I am reminded of that bumper bluff called blank verse. It was only a couple of weeks back I saw one of those pathetic jargons of heterogeneous punctuation marks alternating with cacophonous phrases, a large percentage of which find it difficult to stand on their own legs, which goes nowadays by the name of a 'prose-poem'.



I wondered why.....

Bonda Sambar!
Bonda sam
Bar!!!

As out of elemental deluge sprung earth skinned potato.....

So ran the composition. Call it what you will. That evening I had a talk with Jaya about prose poetry in general and the day's doggerel in particular.

"All this talk about blank verse and mystic poetry is bluff," I began—and regretted the beginning as soon as I detected war clouds on Jaya's brow.

"You understand neither," she snapped.

"Possibly. But take, for instance, that nauseating thing appearing in to-day's paper, apostrophizing *bonda sambar*. You wouldn't call it poetry, would you?"

"You haven't understood the point in it."

"I have. The point in it is *bonda sambar*. And if I haven't understood *bonda sambar*, there is not one fellow in Madras who has. For one thing, it is the cheapest edible on the menu. The most republican of savouries. Available, morning, noon and evening. Contains, for anything I know, the vitamins B, O, N, D—"

"You are straying from the point."

"I am not—because the point is *bonda sambar*. What I meant to tell you was, if I were a dictator in the world of letters—"

"You never will be. So you can wind up."

"I am only putting it hypothetically. Suppose I were a Hitler in the Realm of Poetry, I would hang all these pretenders, poetasters, and pseudo-mystics. Especially the author of to-day's rubbish."

"Oo—Oo—Oogh! You heartless man!"

The war clouds burst, the deluge was in full tide. And it took thirty minutes by our grandfather clock, ten grains of smelling salt, two and a half dozen 'darlings' alternated with as many 'dearests', and a promise to go to the pictures that evening, to restore domestic peace.

Jaya had written the poem!

[Moral: Never write under pseudonyms.]

Bonda Sambar leads me on to the champion medical bluff of the century, viz., that oft-repeated myth about the vitamins. I must own I have no great knowledge of vitamins; I have understood as much of these elusive what-nots as of Tamil Talkies or Tagore's drawings. Once I asked a full-fledged medico about the vitamins.

"What!" he yelled. "Are there blokes existing who don't know about vitamins!"

I assured him there *are*.

"It is all so simple," he said. "As easy as, say taking your luncheon. The properties of the vitamins are, in the order of the alphabet, antixerolphthalmic, antineuritic, antipellagic, antiscorbutic and antirachitic. There's Vit B complex—"

I remembered an urgent engagement, and excused myself hurriedly.

'Playing the game' is itself one of our biggest bluffs. I, for one, don't see much of 'playing the game' in observing Satyagraha on the football field, or splitting heads with cricket balls. To me it is bluff cent per cent.

(Continued on page 32)



The Punjabi Palmist

by G. Viswanatham

Illustrated by Varma

Reading Time • About 5 minutes.

IT was the college anniversary day. Mr. Seshachalam, an ardent exponent of the 'Karma' theory, was not willing to remain at home even on that day. He attended college, as usual. He was the Physics lecturer, and his services in that capacity stretched over a decade. Mr. Seshachalam directly went to his room and sank into an easy chair.

He took a book and began to read it.

At about eleven Mr. Seshachalam was interrupted by a sharp knock on the door. "Come in!" said the professor.

A Punjabi entered, his face pigmied by his mountainous turban, and his body covered in saffron robes.

The new-comer greeted Seshachalam with a reverential bow, which was an ingenious mixture of a southern *namaskaram* and a northern *salam*.

"Good morning," said the lecturer. "What do you want?"

"Sir, I am a palmist and of great repute too, and the bundles I have in my hand are mainly composed of the great testimonials I really receive from many of my big clients," replied the palmist and unfolded a jumble of parchments in various stages of decay.

Seshachalam, being a scientist, had a hearty dislike for quakery of all sorts.

"I am sorry," said Seshachalam kindly. "You have come to the wrong person. I have no faith in palmistry."

"Sir, as a science sahib you must believe in futures and pasts which have supported by positive proofs. I reveal some things about your past conduct. If you have satisfy, then you give me a trial," said the Punjabi.

Seshachalam was tickled by the application of the attribute of 'scientist' to him. Therefore he welcomed the proposal and said "Alright." Seshachalam stretched out his palm. The scrutiny of the lines of destiny by the palmist lasted for ten minutes.

"Sir, I will reveals to you truthful details in your life from your appointment in this institute," said the palmist.

"Alright, go ahead."

The Punjabi started:

"Sir, on the first day of your career as a teacher you commit mistake on some problems and was hooted by the students."

"I don't remember exactly," said Seshachalam, inwardly cursing the palmist for reminding him of that past humiliation.

"Alright, I will tell to you recent events," said the Punjabi. "On the 10th of July you had a good tumble down from your cycle. On Monday the 11th of August you received order at eleven o'clock..."

Seshachalam was admiring the palmist's accuracy.

"What happened on that day?"

"Your salary was increase from Rs. 125 to Rs. 150," replied the palmist.

Seshachalam jumped up, hearing such an accurate reading of his past.

"You are a prophet, my man!" exclaimed the professor. Now, read my future!"

The palmist began after a long and serious consultation:

"Sir, you got glorious future for you. I see you as the Vice-Principal of this institute..."

"What! The Vice-Principal-ship for me!" exclaimed Seshachalam.

"Yes, sahib. Your chance for getting the vice-principalship will be strengthened by a slight changes in your dresses. Give up dhoti and wear trouser and throw away your long coat and put up a short open coat."

The Punjabi refused to take any money as remuneration but insisted on getting the professor's old pocket-watch.

Before leaving, the palmist advised the professor that he might try his change in dress, to advantage, the next day itself on the 'College Day' gathering.

The arrival of Seshachalam that evening to the meeting in a neat suit was greeted with all round applause. People began to start theories, for explaining the novelty in old Seshachalam's attire. At last the Principal came to the platform and began to distribute the prizes.

"Gentlemen!" said the Principal, "the first prize for fancy dress competition goes to Mr. Krishnan of class IV for his clever and exact impersonation of a Punjabi-palmist, the perfection of the disguise being authenticated by the metamorphosis of our Oriental Seshachalam into an occidental Professor. If my friend Mr. Seshachalam has still any doubts he can take back his pocket-watch from Mr. Krishnan."

The rest of the speech was drowned in a babel of 'hurrahs' and 'Seshachalam ki jai', while the unfortunate Seshachalam sat benumbed, perspiring profusely.

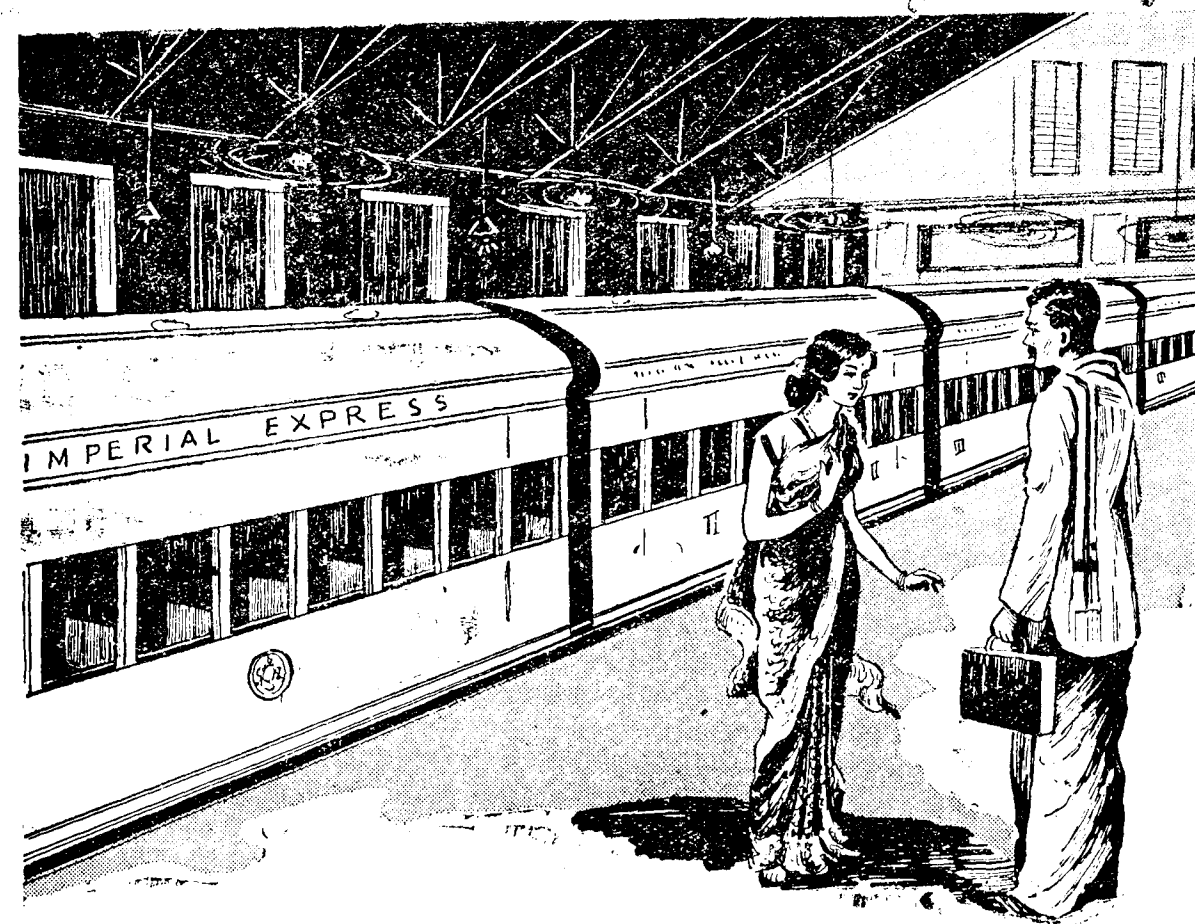
THE END

THE PRIME MOVER (Continued from page 30)

Then think of the bluffs imported every day from starland—the magnificent boosting of stars' salaries and stars' opinions and stars' affairs and stars' engagements and stars' divorces and stars' abominations and stars' pets and stars' mascots and all the moonshine stars. When I read that Platinum Blonde so-and-so has insured her gums for umpteen thousand dollars, or that Glamorous X— believes in half-a-dozen separations per month, or that Exotic Y— has an instinctive aversion to clothing of any kind, I just put my tongue against my cheek. Starland has many short cuts to notoriety! The secret behind every one of them is: Bluff.

Leaving behind the wholesale bluffs from exotic screendom and coming down to the lesser world of unemployment and bad weather and nagging wives, you find that bluff is the word still. Meteorologists bluff when they predict all sorts of earthly aberrations. Convocation Presidents bluff when they talk glibly of the 'land'. Boxers bluff about the result of the bout and tipsters bluff when they tell you "the stable's on it." Dhobies bluff about your dilapidated pants and Editors bluff when they return your attempt 'with thanks'. Clerks bluff the boss, wives bluff hubbies, everybody bluffs everybody.....

(And you?—Ed.)



Errant Wives—

By G. R. K. Aiyengar

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

Illustrated by Varma

THE Calcutta Mail drew into the Victoria Terminus and stopped with a bump that awoke Prof. Ramesh, who was dozing in a first-class compartment. He yawned, stretched himself, let down the window and looked out.

He rose up, and taking down his suitcase from the rack, stepped out on to the platform.

Now that he was here he asked himself what he was here for.

By the merest accident, a letter meant for his wife, fell into his hands. For years she had been systematically lying to him! The Ladies' Club where, she

told him, she spent so many evenings was nothing more than a blind! Prof. Ramesh, her husband, was not the only pebble on the beach.

There had been a stormy scene ending in his packing his bag and leaving home. What he was going to do about it all he did not know, nor had he yet made up his mind. All he had known at the time was that he wanted to get away somewhere and think.

He looked at the train indicator and finding that the next train out for Bombay was immediately leaving, he bought a through ticket and here he was!

The platform was empty, but for him and a young woman who was regarding the empty train ruefully.

The woman's face was so beautiful and pathetic that Ramesh's dormant chivalry came up.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "are you expecting somebody?"

"Yes; my husband," she replied.

What a charming voice! So she was married. And she looked little more than a school-girl.

"He wrote and told me that he was coming down on this train," she went on. "And he hasn't come."

"Probably he missed his train," said Ramesh.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" she murmured. "Whatever shall I do?"

He thought she was going to cry.

"You mustn't take it like that!" he said kindly. "I expect he has missed the train. We are all liable to do that some time or other."

"No, no," she sighed, "it isn't that. I was afraid this would happen."

There was a pause. She was obviously very much upset. He deliberated what to say or do next.

"Do you live here?" he asked at length.

"Oh, no," she replied. "I only arrived here this morning. I am staying at the Raj Mahal Hotel. It is so awfully awkward," she went on. "I took rooms for my husband and myself; he was to have come down by this train, and now he has let me down! He always does!" she added resentfully.

"Well, there is no great harm done, is there?" observed Ramesh.

"Oh, I don't know about that," she answered. "You are not a woman—you have no idea how horrid hotel people are to a woman all by herself—especially in a place like this. They always suspect her of being—a—you know!"

Ramesh nodded.

"You see, there are no more trains in to-night," she added. "I told the cashier that I was going to the station to meet my husband, and now, when I return without him, he will think all sorts of beastly things!"

"Oh, no, he won't," reassured Ramesh.

"Do you live here?" she asked.

"No," he replied, "I have only come here for a few days."

"Holiday?" she inquired.

"Well, hardly," he answered. "I have had a lot of trouble at home, and I have come down here to try to forget it."

He wondered why he was telling her his private business, but somehow he felt that there was a sort of affinity between them.

She looked at him sympathetically.

"I think I understand," she said simply. "I have had lot of trouble, too."

"Poor little soul!" he murmured to himself.

"Well," she added quickly, "I have kept you quite long enough. Good night, and ever so many thanks for your kindness."

She held out her hand; he took it.

"Not good night yet," he corrected.

"I am staying at the Raj Mahal Hotel. Can't I give you a lift?"

"What! Are you really staying at the Raj Mahal Hotel?" she exclaimed, gladly. "What a coincidence!"

"Yes, isn't it?" agreed Ramesh, who until a minute ago did not know that there was a Raj Mahal Hotel at Bombay.

They took a phaeton. He felt glad that they did not engage a taxi. A taxi would get to the destination in no time, and he felt he would like the journey to last as long as possible.



It was very dark inside the phaeton; he could not see her face distinctly, but something in her manner told him that she was silently crying.

The phaeton started. Was it his imagination, or was she actually leaning against him? He put his arm round her; she made no effort to remove it. He became bolder. Little by little he drew her to him until she was nestling in his arms like a child.

Suddenly he kissed her.

"You mustn't!" she said.

He kissed her again.

And so it came to pass that during that one mile drive from V. T. to the Raj Mahal Hotel Ramesh got to know all about the little lady whom he had just met.

Her name was Suseela, but she was generally known as Leela. She had no objection to Ramesh calling her Leela if he wished to, and of course he wished to!

Her surname was Rajendranath and she lived at Santa Cruz. She had only been married a matter of months, and her husband was a brute!

She had returned from her honeymoon only a few days ago when she discovered that he was having affairs with several other women.

To-night was the crisis of her life. She had promised to forgive and forget all if her husband would only return to her once more!

He had sworn he would, but he had failed to keep his word. She knew only too well the reason. The other woman—she broke off, crying.

Ramesh did his best to comfort her, and then, holding her throbbing body in his arms, he told her his story, so strangely like her own.

What a coincidence it was! Fancy the two of them being thrown together like this! It seemed as if Fate had a hand in it all.

Was she a fatalist? Yes, she was. She believed that some things were meant to happen, and, do what we would, we were powerless to escape. Ramesh also held similar views. How strange that they should think alike!

The phaeton stopped in front of the Raj Mahal Hotel. The porter opened the door and they alighted. Ramesh paid the fare and entering with his newly found friend, walked up to the bureau.

"My wife told you I was coming down this evening," he said boldly.

"Is it Mr. Rajendranath?" inquired the cashier.

"Yes," replied Ramesh.

"Will you register, sir?" said the cashier.

Ramesh did so, signing himself as Rajendranath, Zamindar.

He turned to speak to his little friend; she had been standing just behind him, but she was not there now.

"She'll be back in a minute," he said to himself.

He waited for twenty minutes in the lounge. Still no Leela.

"You didn't happen to notice if my wife went upstairs?" he asked casually.

The cashier looked surprised.

"She is gone," he replied.

"Gone!—Where?" gasped Ramesh.

"To the station," answered the cashier. "Her taxi was at the door, she is catching the train to Lahore, at 10 p.m."

Ramesh looked at his

watch. It was 9.55 p.m. now.

"I'm going to the station after her," he said. "She has forgotten something—most important. Is there a taxi anywhere?"

"I'm afraid you won't get there in time," said the cashier.

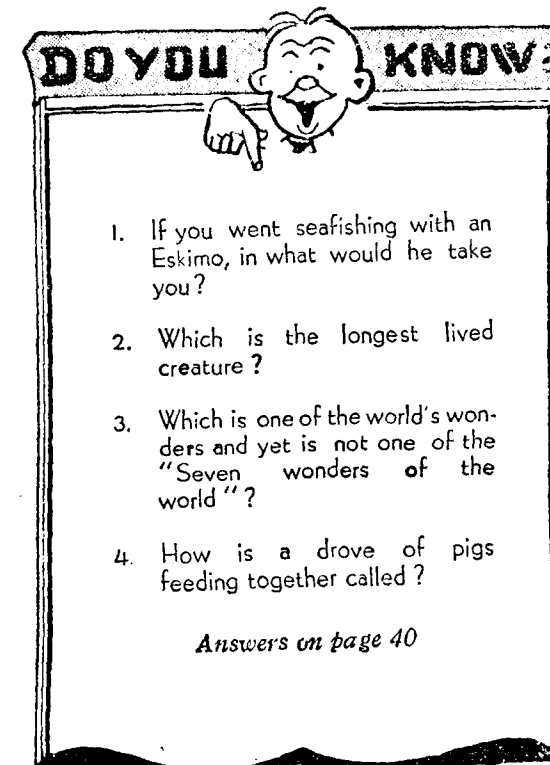
Ramesh was bewildered. He didn't know what to say or do.

"By the way, sir," the cashier went on, "she said you would settle her bill. Will you pay now, sir, or would you rather have it in the morning?"

"Her bill?" said Ramesh in a dazed tone.

"Yes, sir," answered the cashier. "One thousand two hundred rupees and fourteen annas. She has been here for two months, you know, sir, and she has been rather unsparing and very heavy in her demands at the hotel."

THE END



1. If you went seafishing with an Eskimo, in what would he take you?
2. Which is the longest lived creature?
3. Which is one of the world's wonders and yet is not one of the "Seven wonders of the world"?
4. How is a drove of pigs feeding together called?

Answers on page 40

Auntie Awful



A gentleman sends Auntie a most tremendous letter from Kattiawar. "I am conducting an unrecognised school on a purely honorary basis," he says; and adds the startling information, "I can afford it."

Stand back, all you boys and girls. Proposals of marriage, applications for free tuition, and requests for charitable donations, must be accompanied by self-addressed envelopes. Auntie will lick off the stamps in strict rotation, and add them to her collection. Personally, Auntie thinks that the gentleman conducts his school in a coffee-hotel a long way from Kathiawar, which is the way the inhabitants usually spell it. The clientele probably consists of a snug little gathering of the more ribald members of the learned professions.

"My pupils are many," says this jolly pedagogue, "and most of them read the *Merry* in the school library, particularly your page. Their guesses as to your identity are numerous, and I crave your permission to mention a few."

The bright boys of the class hold that Auntie is a male writer. In short, there is no Auntie. The replies must be written by the Editor.

The suggestion almost amounts to blasphemy, dear boys and girls. Editors do not write; some of them even do not know how. Auntie speaks as a hireling, and therefore a foe of Editors; besides, she has just had a tiff with our own dear Editor on the subject of how many words make a thousand. An Editor, my chickabiddies, is a sort of deity with at least four pairs of arms. While one pair scribbles Mr. Merry's Page, another is dealing out rejection-slips and so on; and all the time the Deity is sitting like the Lord Buddha, and contemplating the Infinite. Auntie does not have to be a mere man. There are both male and female *avatars*.

Another theory propounded by the pupils is that Auntie is an ex-star of the films, now grown old and addicted to snuff. But no star, however ex would deliberately label herself 'Auntie Awful', another little matter that puzzles the pupils.

Well, my dears, in the beginning, Auntie set out to be a kind of step-mother Auntie, in gentle derision of the heart-throb sisters and baby-pap experts who infest the pages of other magazines. Auntie felt that these females were all wet, from not having the gumption to come indoors when it was raining. However, so many nephews and nieces trustingly brought their troubles to Auntie Awful, that she had to cast off her Mephistophelean disguise on occasions and hand out a little solid worldly advice. So Auntie remains a paradox.

Finally, the pupils dispute as to whether Auntie replies to real letters. Of course, all the letters are composed by Uncle Ghastly, as our nephew is bound to realise as he sits among his scholars in Kattiawar, and reads Auntie's comments. Uncle Ghastly sometimes travels a couple of thousand miles overnight, and sends Auntie letters of twenty pages from distant spots.

"My pupils are unanimously of the opinion," concludes this entertaining nephew, somewhat illogically, "that Auntie must be a millionaire passing her life in literary pursuits, and that she is at least an Oxford graduate."

The 'at least' is a nasty one, my pets. When Auntie was a girl at Lady Margaret, and went to tea-parties with the Indian boys from Balliol, she little thought that her education would be thrown in her face by one of their compatriots. There used to be such a bond between the Lady Maggy girls and the

boys from Balliol, too. They, and we girls, were the only students in the 'varsity who ever did any work.

* * * *

Match-Maker (Mount Road). "A middle-aged constable friend of mine, who is in the traffic-regulation service, proposes to enter into a matrimonial compact of convenience with a stout young lady who sailed past him the other day when he was on duty. 'Supposing,' he asks me, 'my would-be wife were to violate the rules of traffic in the home, should I be justified in bringing my *lathi* into play?' Dear Auntie, I like you awfully, and your valued opinions more; please suggest a solution." As the young lady is of hefty dimensions, a long *lathi* might be necessary, dear boy. However, a traffic-constable is not usually equipped with a *lathi*. Auntie is afraid your friend will have to do the best he can with his short truncheon.

Alice (Primary II). "I hope you will not spend sleepless nights trying to find the answer. What is cut and put on the table, and cannot be eaten?" A pack of cards, dearie. By the way, do you know any good riddles?

N. P. (Ipoh). "In my opinion, boxing should not be encouraged. It involves cruelty, and spoils the features. At present boxing is greatly encouraged in my place. In every corner you see a promoter with a group of gangsters who are busily battering each other. It was different in the old days, when boxing was a sport performed with the bare hands." I suppose you are referring to the Malay open-hand style of fighting, dear boy. Boxing implies closed fists. The earliest recorded matches took place in ancient Greece, where the boxers wore heavy metal knuckles, and fought to the death for the sake of a laurel wreath. Eighteenth-century fisticuffs were almost as gladiatorial, and the prizes were small. Nowadays a champion is given a fortune to go into the ring and give an exhibition of lying down.

Film Fan (Gobi). "I have seen a mystery-film about a haunted house in a fog. How do they make the fog, and the cob-webs inside the house?" The cob-webs, dear boy, are made of liquid rubber sprayed from a syringe with a fine nozzle. The fog is created by burning smoke-powder in a frying-pan.

Pussy-Cat (No address). At least, Auntie presumes you are a pussy-cat, as you simply sent a few blots on a piece of paper, apparently the imprint of your fore-

foot. The paper is of a kind commonly used in schools. I suppose you are a typical junior pupil, my dear, your paws always in the ink?

Subscriber (Straits Settlements). Auntie is pained to hear that the subscription-department think that the Straits Settlements are in the Federated Malay States. To which Government shall the Editor send an apology?

Miss Jane. "I think that our Indian men are the cause of our backwardness. If I were a dictator, I would make them dress all alike, as a lesson in equality." Well, my dear, Auntie expects you will eventually be in a position to make at least one man dress as you like. As to the country at large, it seems possible that we shall all be reduced to uniformity by being unable to afford any clothes at all.

Unfortunate (Sowcarpet). "For want of fifty rupees I shall be ruined. If you could see your way to lending me this sum, I would be indebted to you for life." No doubt, dear boy!

Rhymester (Podanur). "I enclose some copies of my work. Have you any openings in your office for a poet?" Yes, dear boy; a door, and several windows.

Cheeky Rhyme (A.C.G.S.)

"Truly kiss the coolie.
If he's nice, kiss him twice.
If he's bad, kiss his wife."

Really, dear girl, isn't the last suggestion rather like a diet of bread and bread? And don't you think that at least one line ought to rhyme?

Cause Unknown (Ferozepore). "A fire broke out next to the English Bookstall, but the cause of the outbreak is a mystery." Perhaps, dear boy, the proprietor had just got in a stock of the reminiscences of Mae West.

Master Awful (Address illegible). "My ancestors were fortune-tellers and snake-charmers, and if you don't answer my letter, a snake will come and bite you in the night." Well, my dear, this will at least add some variety to Auntie's nightly but fruitless search for a burglar hidden under the bed.

Riddle (Penang). "What is the difference between a lady in church, and a lady in the bath?" In the first case, she has a sigh full of hope, and in the second an eye full of soap. At least, that is the version current in polite circles.

A Hairy Romance—

Reading Time

About 8 Minutes

by John A. Henry

Illustrated by Sekar

66 TALKING of the plans of men going astray," said Ahmed Bux to me one day in his sumptuous living room, "brings to my mind an incident in my own life when I was young."

"Listen to Grand-Pop," I said sarcastically. "Anyone would think you had more than your normal number of wives and that about three hundred of your great grand children were living."

He smiled, his handsome young face lighting up. Ahmed had a strong face, a face that showed he had struggled in life against difficulties—and which indicated that he had not always been one of the wealthiest men in Delhi. Kashmere Gate boasted no shrewder business man and no more attractive personality than Ahmed.



".....you—you—you—!"

"You were indeed ambitious," I put in, "to seek to climb *that* pedestal!"

"Right," I agreed. "Look at me. Twenty-two, grey-haired, and still struggling to make a living out of petrol tins and petrol," I paused suggestively. Then, "The last time—"

But Ahmed is nothing if not an opportunist. And he had heard most—or should I say all?—of my anecdotes before—not once either!

"It was here in Delhi that it happened," he went on. "Three years ago. As I said, I was a young and ambitious fellow then—and a keen film fan. And the light of my eyes was Miss Zohra of the Stellar Film Company."

"I was pursuing my present line of business at the time—hair-dressing. And you will perhaps refuse to believe me when I tell you that, out of that business, ever since I started it four years ago, I have made about three thousand rupees profit. I run it now as something to occupy my mind."

"But you're worth lakhs!" I said, amazed. "How did you make it all, then—burglary?"

"I'm telling you," he smiled. "I used to haunt the studios of the Stellar Film Company for a glimpse of Zohra. And I couldn't get much nearer than a glimpse either! Not for a long time, anyway. She always used to have that greasy-haired, Adonis-faced villain of the screen with her—Bahadur. A chimpanzee with half an eye could see that he was mad about her. The only trouble was to prove whether she was crazy about him or whether she preferred wearing silk sarees."

"However, one day Bahadur developed measles or glottitis or housemaid's knee or something—nothing unusual from the way he used to sing and scrape his knees along the floor when proposing on the screen—and Zohra came through the studio door alone. She got into her car alone too, and I seized my opportunity, dashing up to the car and hoisting myself up onto the foot-board."

"Miss Zohra," I said, "I have been waiting for weeks to have a word with you!"

"She looked at me haughtily out of those almond eyes of hers."

"'Could you,' she said freezingly, 'wait a few years longer?'"

"That, as you will realise, was a smack in the rib for me. But I hadn't waited all those weeks for a snub like this. I became rather masterful—my barbers' chair masterfulness."

"Will you allow me to take you to the theatre tonight?" I asked commandingly. "I shall be delighted!"

"And I," she said, "would be perfectly bored and sick. No, thanks, Romeo; you can, if you don't mind, go and suck your thumbs."

"Despite the fact that her tone showed me that I had caught her in a bad temper, and that she would make a shrewish wife if she was often like this, I was too infatuated to swallow even that gross insult."

"Miss Zohra—Zohra," I said, almost bleating now, "I love you! Will you marry me? I'm only a humble hair-dresser, but—"

"She smiled coldly. I had most certainly caught her in a bad mood. Her next words, however, took my breath away. She suddenly drew her *saree* from her head."

"See my hair? Well, —if you can give me the glossy, long and silky tresses that I *must* have if my screen career is going to continue—then I'll marry you!"

"I was aghast when I saw that her hair was of the poorest variety—almost, I may say, like the remaining bristles of a second-hand Japanese hair-brush! She must have worn a wig for her films, and her boss had evidently just told her that wigs were a nuisance."

"I will!" I cried excitedly, and she drove off.

"From that day I began a feverish search for the most wonderful hair restorer I could find, my heart going out even more strongly to this poor girl with the scraggy hair. I fiddled with the test tubes and Bunsen burners and essences and oils. I sweated for months, and at last I turned out an oil that would have made hairs sprout on an egg-shell."

"My assistant, who was a brisk young man whose energy and dash were, more often than not, misplaced, congratulated me."



Zohra

"Zohra agreed to come along to the shop for treatment, the publicity thus afforded her, offering, no doubt, a subtle attraction.

"She arrived amidst cheers from the populace, and with trembling hands I settled her in her chair, draped a sheet around her and began my bid for her hand in marriage. My assistant looked on, rather anxiously, I thought.

"I massaged and rubbed for half an hour, and then began to comb her hair out. I did—comb it out. Right out—by the roots! I mean! It came away from her scalp in armfuls, making the floor look like a hay farm. It fluttered about the room. Its abundance of joy at being free was fairly sickening. And what I hadn't pulled out obliged itself by falling out as clean as a whistle!

"One look at my assistant's face told me that he had been experimenting with my product."

"'You—' I glared at him, and sacked him on the spot.

"'You—you—you—' began Zohra at me. 'I'll—I'll sue you for damages! A thousand rupees damages! No,' this as she saw the hair floating round the room and felt the smoothness of her scalp, 'no—five thousand rupees damages!' Her pate resembled nothing more than a billiard ball. She was, this light of my heart, in short, bald—bald as six coots!"

"And so you lost her?" I put in curiously.

"No—listen!" he held up a finger, and I listened appreciatively to the sound of a woman's soft voice

crooning some happy little air somewhere from the back of the house. "That's Zohra!"

"But—" I gasped. He smiled.

"She is the best wife a man ever had, barring none! I wouldn't change her for a white elephant—although she's still as bald as coot!"

"But—but—" this was beyond me!

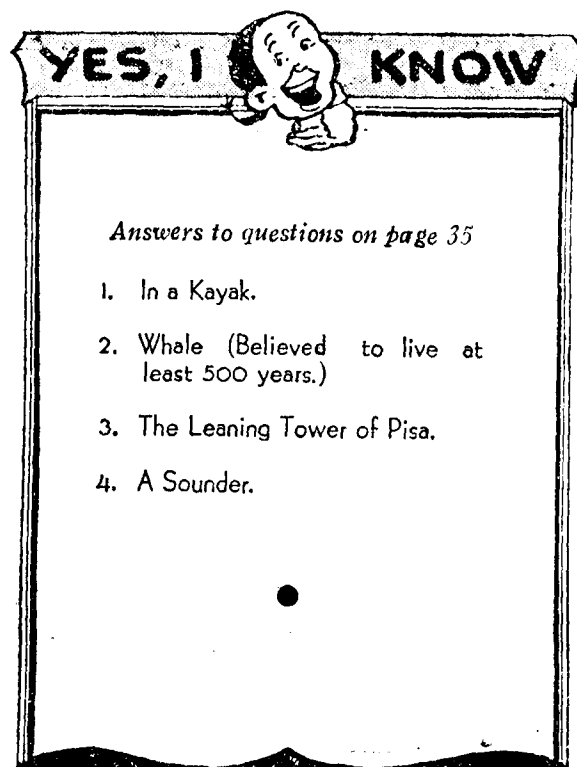
"Well, you see, people with poor heads of hair are very often troubled with ugly, superfluous hair on their bodies. She used to have to camouflage all that in her films—and it was the bane of her life. I'll admit it was all her idea—calling me to see her next day I mean. She suggested that I should treat her for superfluous hair, and she also told me that she had changed her mind about me, the way in which I had taken her scolding making her heart ache for me. When I kissed her, she have must thought I was indeed a genuine sort of guy—for it's not often that a man continues to love a girl after all her hair has fallen out!"

He paused, flicking a speck of imaginary dust from his immaculate coat.

"She withdrew the threat of damages."

"And your wealth?" I asked. "You haven't cleared that point up yet. I suppose your wife brought that with her as a dowry?"

"No. She hadn't a bean. Expensive living, y'know, in these film colonies. No, I made my money by selling the most wonderful hair remover in the world—my hair restorer that had gone astray!"



WITH A BUTTERFLY NET

(Continued from page 24)

what Mrs. Bombachari asked me yesterday, at the club! She wanted to know if the Japanese are making motor-car tyres out of canvas and glue. The cat! Ab, that reminds me, dear, she would lend herself nicely to literary treatment. A topping subject! Won't you write a couple of pages about her?"

"Anything to serve you, angel. But who is Mrs. Bombachari, by the way?"

"Oh, she is the wife of a dealer in provisions in the 'Garden Suburb'."

"Where is that?"

"Mambalam, you chump. Don't you know that the Corporation of Madras extravagantly calls it The Garden Suburb?"

"Mambalam!" I cried, "Mambalam! A pretty kettle of fish! If folks are honest they would say that it is just a mosquito-ridden, fly-blown, doggone bog where half the population lives on pensions and regrets and the other half by selling provisions and plantain leaves to each other. I can very well imagine a character—"

"Like Mrs. Bombachari," she prompted.

All of which, of course, shows that both of us can be quite catty at times.

"If her husband," Leela continued, "was selling cloth or hardware or—"

"Tyres," I suggested.

".....or tyres I shouldn't perhaps mind her trying to score off me."

"Certainly, certainly," I agreed.

"And her scarlet car is the very limit. Outre is the word. Darling, you must write the skit at once. That'll l'arn'er. Japanese tyre indeed!"

"Well, Mrs. B. was a fruity subject for a skit, I should say. And she seemed a godsend (bless her ghee-soaked heart!) as I was at a loose end and mighty sick of chasing elusive topics with a butterfly net.

"Righto, old girl," I cried, "we will set to work on the scenario right away, if you don't mind. Where is the diamond-studded fountain pen presented to us by the Maharani of Munronagar?"

THE END

An Uninhabited Island—(Continued from page 22)

He approached Ismail in the customs-shed. Beneath his clothes he was fingering a knife. "I must have that camera!" he hissed. "I will kill you for it! Come, be reasonable, and take ten thousand rupees for it."

"What's that?" barked a customs-officer. "Some new smuggling-trick, eh? Give me that camera!" He seized it, and began to open it.

"Don't do that!" cried Ismail. "You will spoil the film!"

But he was too late. Three hundred feet of film cascaded out of the instrument, and uncoiled itself over the floor of the shed, turning yellow and useless.

Papadulos the Greek, with a satisfied grin, presented his Italian passport at the barrier, and told a surprised clerk that he wanted an immediate return passage to Massawa.

And Ismail's pearling-ground? Sheik Osman burst into roars of laughter at the dealer's careful hints and offers.

"Are you thinking of that bay at Kamafars Island?" he chuckled. "I have known about it for years. The oyster-bed in the lagoon consists of nothing but non-nacreous fish—what you call false pearl-oysters. The whole island is not worth a cent!"

THE END

The Duck

Our neighbour's duck is clean and white
Like snow upon a mountain-height;
Its bill is dark and bluish black
Like night upon a mountain-track;
Its feet are yellow as the damp
Blurred flame of some far mountain-lamp.
Our neighbour's duck glides slowly on
A silver poem in the dawn,
And seems an angel half-aswoon
Along the water in the noon;
And under evening's drowsy blue
A passing dream that isn't true.
Our neighbour's duck is very fond
Of voyaging across the pond;
As though it were a lonely boat
Before the ages set afloat
Towards some undiscovered realm,—
An unknown Master at the helm.

—Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.



Marshal Badoglio

The Sanctions Take Effect

by Conrad

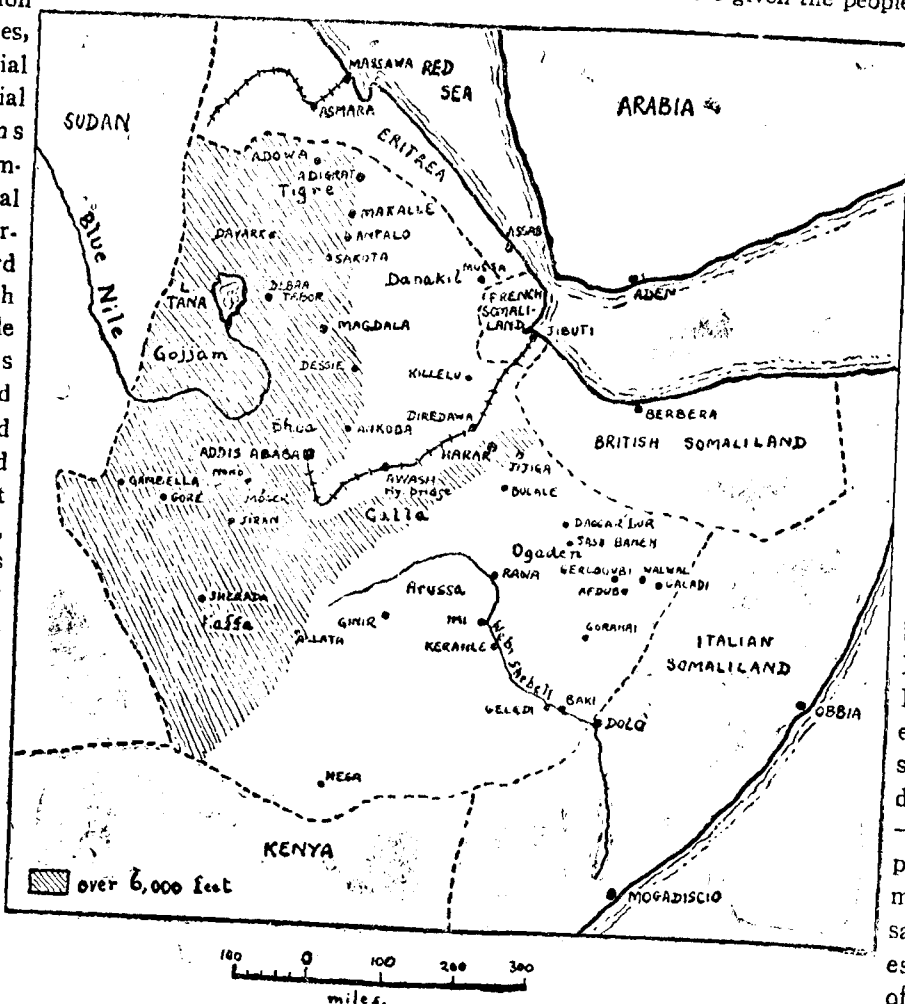
AS outlined in previous articles, the Italian plan in Abyssinia was directed at the solid occupation of the highland province of Tigre, to be followed by an early cessation of hostilities, with territorial and commercial concessions from the Emperor. General del Bono carried forward this plan with considerable success. His mechanised force rolled slowly forward flattening out all resistance, leaving in its wake an army of road-makers and a huge procession of supply-lorries, in a territory thoroughly occupied. In the South it was different. The open, uninhabited deadly wastes of Ogaden,

were not seriously invaded. Columns from Italian Somaliland took possession of wells and strategic points, and, by the threat of further advances, prevented the Emperor from concentrating his forces in the North.

The imposition of sanctions has had the effect of both prolonging and hastening the war. Under normal circumstances, Italy's financial position could support a full-scale war for only three months. The sanctions have relieved Italy from the necessity of meeting foreign liabilities, and have given the people an incentive to impose severe war-restrictions on themselves. Italy is living on its fat, and can continue to do so until April or May.

As it happens, May is also the crucial month in the new and lengthened plan of military operations. General del Bono has been recalled, and superseded by Marshall Badoglio. Del Bono was the exponent of the sure and safe doctrine of war—the use of ponderous modern organisation, the establishment of a continuous front, the building up of adequate reserves, the concentration of superior force at the objective; occupation; consolidation.

Badoglio is the apostle of 'brilliant' strategy—the use of quick-moving, light-columns; a liquid front;



conquest by infiltration; the striking of sudden, mortal blows. The danger of this kind of war is that the sudden, mortal blow may come from the other direction!

In the North, Badoglio is dispensing with the masses of mechanised material, and equipping his forces with mule-transport on a light scale. He is thus forestalling the prospective shortage of petrol. He will doubtless continue to hold the conquered portion of Tigre; but any further advance will be by independent columns thrust at strategic points. Penetration by columns, of course, offers the Abyssinians opportunities for extensive ambush, hitherto denied them.

The imposition of sanctions has given the Southern front a sudden imperative importance. Munitions are pouring into Abyssinia by the railway from Jibuti, and by the caravan-route from Berbera to Harar. It is essential for the Italians to cut off these supplies as soon as possible, and in any case before May. Once the rains begin, the Italian armies will be hopelessly bogged in the mud, and the re-armament of Abyssinia will continue uninterrupted until October. By that time, the Abyssinians would be fully equipped with modern weapons, and offer a formidable problem to the best of armies. And the Italian army, demoralised by continuous rain and sickness, would be far from its best.

Marshall Badoglio is thus committed to an immediate heavy thrust northwards from Italian Somaliland. The wastes of Ogaden are suitable for quick-moving mechanised vehicles; and in such country isolated columns are less liable to disaster. Here, then, the Italian Marshall can gamble his reserves of petrol.

We may expect a comparatively rapid advance across the desert. The decisive battle may be expected when the Italians reach the edge of the highlands just south of Harar. If the Abyssinians can hold the enemy at that point, every day will tell in their favour. The Italians will have behind them a long and insecure line of communications, and the meagre supplies must come across stifling and deadly wilderness. Failing the Italian capture of Harar at a comparatively early date, the moral and physical deterioration of their troops must be rapid, while the Abyssinians will grow in strength day by day.

It is, of course, open to the Italians to make their thrust southwards from Assab; and on the surface, the alternative seems an inviting one. However, the country is far more difficult on that side. It is not so suitable for mechanised vehicles, and it is seamed with dry watercourses and outcropping hills, offering endless opportunities to Abyssinian guerrilla tactics. I think the Marshall will bank on a campaign in Ogaden.

The fundamental position remains as it was in the beginning. Mussolini is gambling with time and fate. He has put his shirt on a horse, and has now swapped horses in mid-stream. His chances are already much reduced, compared with a month ago.

THE END

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Auntie Replies

"I have been reading the story of Mirza and the Shepherd. He asked the shepherd to explain the meaning of misery. The shepherd compared misery to the valley which Mirza saw. What is the use of this? To understand a problem, our poor human minds must be told the truth plainly, and not in idle and deceptive comparisons.

"Dear Auntie, what do you think about this? Please accept my humble *namaskaranis*."

—Vardha (Park Town).

I agree with you that all truths can be, and should be, expressed in plain language. This, however, would not be to the liking of people who set themselves up as prophets. They have two reasons for wrapping up simple ideas in incomprehensible parables. Firstly, the words can be made to mean anything, so the prophet is never proved wrong. Secondly, an idea which sounds impressive in symbolical language, is often absurd when reduced to plain words.

For example, anyone could start a new religion, based on the doctrine that the moon is made of green cheese. The prophet could say as much as the liked, provided he was not explicit about the moon and the green cheese. Suppose some troublesome disciple demanded a clear explanation of the sacred parables? The prophet need only reply that the inner meaning of his words is too profound for human minds.

In Auntie's opinion, any doctrine that cannot be stated in plain words, must be suspected of self-deception.

What is misery? Auntie thinks it is a lack of adjustment between a person and his environment. Human beings are infinitely adaptable, and a man *can* be

happy in any circumstances. If he is miserable, it is because his circumstances are different from what he expects, and he is unable to revise his desires to meet his circumstances.

A miserable man is one who is bewildered by the inevitable nature of things.

The nature of things is sometimes called Fate. In Auntie's opinion, a man's fate is partly within his control, and partly beyond his control. To achieve happiness, a man must first think of the circumstances that are beyond his control, and adapt himself to them. Then he must take hold of the circumstances that are within his control, and adapt them to himself.

The advance of science has brought more and more circumstances within human control. Auntie thinks that the human race will eventually obtain a very great control over its fate. Even in these days, knowledge enables us to control many things. We are no longer the helpless victims even of natural forces. With self-knowledge, and knowledge of the world, a person today can foresee and steer clear of many of the common miseries of mankind.

Unfortunately, most people are afraid of the facts of human psychology, and they shun those studies which bear on human welfare. People dislike the hard truths of cause and effect. They dislike taking a part of their fate into their own hands. They prefer the comfortable illusions of tradition, with its resulting miseries.

Yours Sincerely,
AUNTIE.



Mook (Allahabad.) Don't criticise others. They resent it. It is bad to assert your views. Give others credit for some intelligence. Which form of music do you like, instrumental or vocal? I think, instrumental. You must admit your error. Your throat and lungs are delicate.

★

S. (T'epakulam). What a sensitive child you are! This will weaken your will-power. Don't be depending on circumstances. If you do you will lose many opportunities. Your imagination is good! Develop it. Again you are ease-loving. Anaemic conditions may worry you.

★

K. Ramamoorthy Iyer. (Thambikkottai). You may have luck in money matters but not in 'love'. Your sympathy is so overflowing that your actions may sometimes be termed as stupid. Tenacity of purpose and a strong will are your assets. Your ill temper and impetuosity are your weaknesses. Don't allow this latter tendency to outbalance your better nature. Don't sit idle; you will become gloomy. You can make a good leader, but you expect others to obey you implicitly. That is rather difficult. You may have ear and eye troubles.

★

Tom. You are full of ideas. This is due to your intuition. Why do you worry about your money matters and future? If you think you should not enter into

Merry-Magus Replies

a financial scheme that may have even the fluke chance of collapsing, don't think of it. No use of doing things on the spur of the moment and then worrying about it. It is fine of you to keep well. Push yourself forward before the public. Don't be so retiring. Be careful of your associates as you are too impressionable. Insomnia and despondency due to nerve troubles may affect you.

★

G: Ramakrishnan. You require some nerve tonic, for your high-strung nerves. You have some fine qualities; to show them, create yourself the opportunities. Then work for your ambition with confidence. Jaundice and like diseases will worry you.

★

K. S. Rajaram (Guindy). You care more for brain development than physical. You have no fascination for material things. If you want to realise your ambition you should have more courage. Push yourself forward and claim your reward. You must get over that over-sensitiveness. Losing good chances, you will be regretting when too late. You carry likes and dislikes to extremes. You may have troubles with the stomach.

★

Pichu. You should never get mixed up with perverts. Haven't you realised that by procrastination you have lost many good chances? Your vesatality often makes you undecided in choosing a life. Don't overstrain your heart.

M. Dhandapani. You are very hard-working. You cover the many lapses in your life, by your cleverness and tact. You are a bit showy in outward appearance? It is only your wit that helps you out of difficulties. You are very materialistic. Don't live under annoying conditions; it will tell upon your nerves.

★

Noshir (Itarsi). It is unfair to take advantage of other's weaknesses. You are a conservative to the core, respecting rank, position and law. You require precedence for everything. Your self-possession helps you in life. Don't be crafty in money matters. You simply imagine ill health, that is all.

★

Ravindran (Bombay). You dream romantic, pleasant dreams. You can achieve your ambition by perseverance. No speculation nor gambling can help you. Do your duty; work hard, and take the ups and downs in your life cheerfully. You dream of large plans, but have you the capacity to carry them out? It is a pity your home-life should be a troubled one. Diarrhoea and rheumatism may worry you.

★

A. R. Sundram (Colombo). Many people do not like your plain talk. Never mind. But don't incite others to fight, from behind. It is wrong. All your failure is due only to lack of confidence in yourself. You don't gain anything by arousing opposition. That is why you

feel lonely. Take care of you teeth and beware of accidents.

★

C. V. Ratnam (Bombay). You are quick, keen, brilliant, and witty. Your ambition is to be at the top-most rung of the social ladder. Will you be satisfied even then? You will not and you will be tired of every position.

Lack of consistency and constancy spoils your life. Your own valuation of yourself will not stand good. Others should value your capacity. Don't think you are the incarnation of truth. It is a myth. You may have troubles with digestive organs.

★

T. S. Appaji (Dadar). You are so emotional that you are liable to be led astray by miscreants waiting for an opportunity to land you in some scandal. Don't give way to excesses of any kind. Be ambitious always. Work to achieve it. Better not to be so stinging in your expressions. Don't strain your heart.

★

Emmar (Bangalore). Arrogance never pays. It will only lead you into difficulties. Never think of idling for a moment. Being out of work means despondency to you. The tenacity of purpose helps you much in life. May be frankness is a virtue, but it is not appreciated by others who are affected. They turn into enemies. Be tactful. You are lucky so far as money is concerned but not so in love or affections. Don't give room to despondency. Are you having pains in ears and head?

Felix (Madras). God has endowed you with good will-power and tenacity of purpose. This is even now evident though you are a child of not even 12 moons.

★

R. Venkateshan. Though you lack originality, you are hard-working. You are very materialistic. Again you are never moderate in your actions. Don't be a law unto yourself. Your tastes are refined and you are extremely sensitive to your environments. Hence don't live under uncongenial conditions.

★

Agma (Madras). Your kindness and sympathy have no desired effect; others leave you to isolation. Why? You are so suspicious of others' affection or love and your ideas about love and duty are rather curious. Those around you are unable to understand you. Your religious faith is good but it should not be carried too far. Many succeed with eloquence in oratory but you achieve it with your plain-speaking. But this plain-talk has its own bad results; enemies are created. Be warned against skin diseases.

★

Electrician. Don't always be thinking of revenge; be a bit accommodating. Again don't carry your likings also too far. You will be a bit doting. Your nerves require calm. Don't keep them at high tension, it will make you lose control of yourself. Don't wait to be aroused by others, wake yourself up and catch the

first opportunity by its forelock ere it slips past you. You have good imagination. Why don't you make good use of this? There is nothing wrong in arguing, but you should be open to conviction. Are you worried with stomach troubles?

★

D. M. L. You are so emotional that you are not safe in the midst of people who are capable of appealing to one's emotions. Perverts are always adept in this matter and hence you should be careful to avoid their company. It is a pity your versatility is no blessing. It makes you indecisive in your career. Don't postpone any matter; do it and do it at once. Your advices are wholesome to others, but when applied to your own case, they are unhelpful. Dogmatism is no virtue. Your heart is your weak organ.

★

G. Natarajan (Mylapore). Have you not got a great inclination towards science, especially electricity? It is a great fault in you to wait for an opportunity or circumstance. You are a successful debator. You require to be told by others what to do. It is not so good. Can't you pull yourself up and follow your imagination? Don't fear that you will be misled. You should create a proper understanding, then only you will not feel so lonely. Bad circulation of blood is the cause of all your worries.

★

Kittu (Kolar). You can be successful in life by your in-

dustriousness. This tendency to scrutinise all things leads one to do right things at the wrong moment. Don't be so assertive. Pride never pays; you will be wounded in your feelings. Never be inactive. You may have troubles with your eyes and ears.

★

Durgadas (Kakabi). People are not out just to deceive you. You are not able to fall in line with others' ideas; that is the trouble. That is why every one leaves you alone. Shoulder the responsibilities of life boldly, don't funk. Certainly one should be religious, but not fanatical. Is not fate playing a strange part in your life, independent of your will and action? Try to understand others and fit in with their company. You might have troubles due indigestion.

★

K. R. Patoo (Madras). Can't you win over that over-reasoning faculty? It spoils all the good gifts of intuition and presentiments. Act on your first impressions. The finer qualities of man cannot stand a severe test through a microscope. You will have to accept them *en masse*. If you begin to analyse it will lead you only to disappointment. Unless you are a sport and be accommodating, you cannot expect happiness at home. Kill that hesitating habit. Nervous depression will worry you.

★

Gupta, N. S. (Colombo). If you can meet Mr. K. R. Pattoo (of Madras), you will find a prototype of you in him. Are you not decisive in your actions? That is your asset. Don't carry your love of proof too far. Blind faith is

not in your line, but at the same time you should understand that there are certain things which have to be accepted as they are. You want to be an adept in research work, is it not? You appreciate all study which require thought and steady work. Are you not having pains in the back and head?

★

Neelu (Madras). God has endowed you with unusual intelligence but why are you spoiling it by being rickety? Be firm and consistent in your thoughts. Fix your aim, chalk out a plan and proceed systematically. Lack of continuity of purpose alone spoils all your good changes. Every moment has a separate existence for you. I am sure if you are asked to repeat the same story a few minutes hence, it will receive a totally different colouring. I know you won't admit this. Think well yourself. Do you think it is gentlemanly to take advantage of others' weakness? Throat and bronchial tubes will need constant attention.

★

G. Ajax (Conjeevaram). Practise self-control. Your nerves are at very high tension, that is why you are so easily put out. Temper your love and hate. Don't carry them beyond the limits. Vengeance is bad. Though you are always in an excited state, you have the capacity to control also other excited people. It is a gift. The main fault in you is you depend on circumstances; you do not push yourself forward. No use of losing a good chance and then crying over it. All your ailments are due to bad circulation of blood. Are not your hands cold?

Sally. Is the date of birth 15-12-1934 correct please? You cannot be Mrs. so early!

★

Ome (Conjeevaram). A very obstinate child you are. Don't be so stiff. I am glad you respond to affection at least. Your life will be governed by sensation only. Don't be so impetuous and hot tempered. Your mother is not mother to you only; she is mother to your brothers and sisters. She should care for all. You should not be jealous of your pals. Jealousy should be nipped in the bud. Let you not marry early. Don't live under depressing conditions; be bright always. Train yourself to be secretive a little. Troubles with throat and nasal conditions will affect you.

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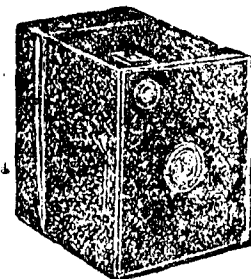
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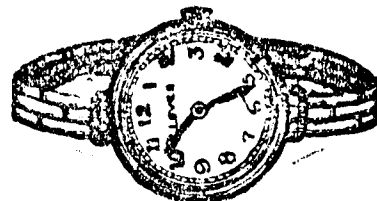
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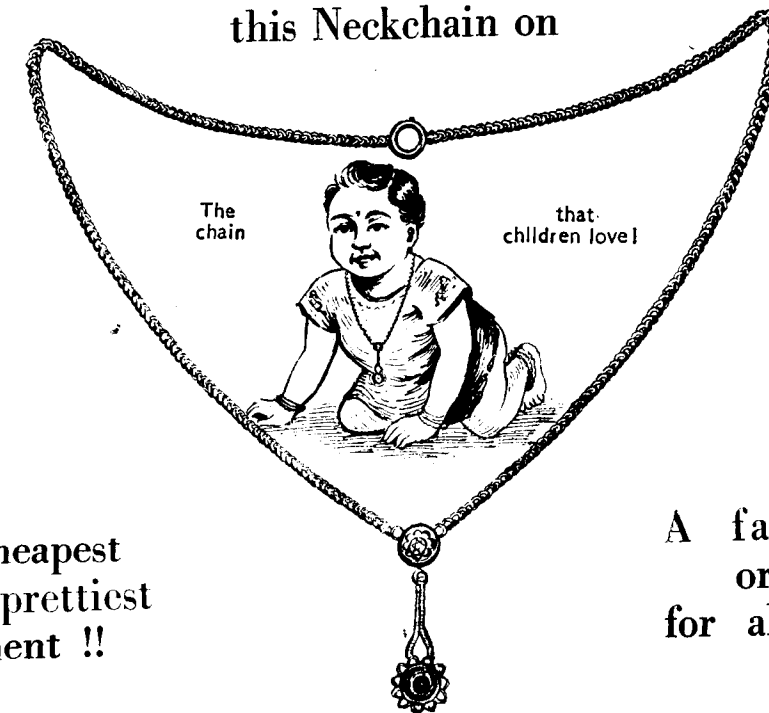
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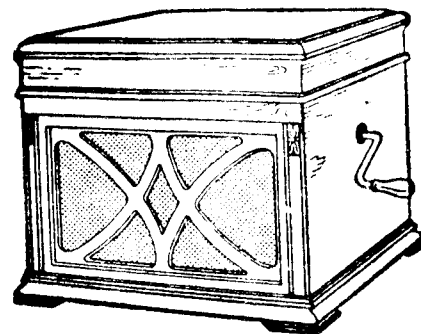
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