

The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



2079

Vol. IV Madras, 25th January, '36 No. 4

V. V. Narayanan

Artiji

- Omega -

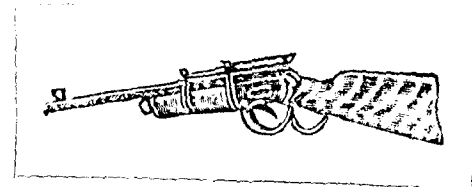
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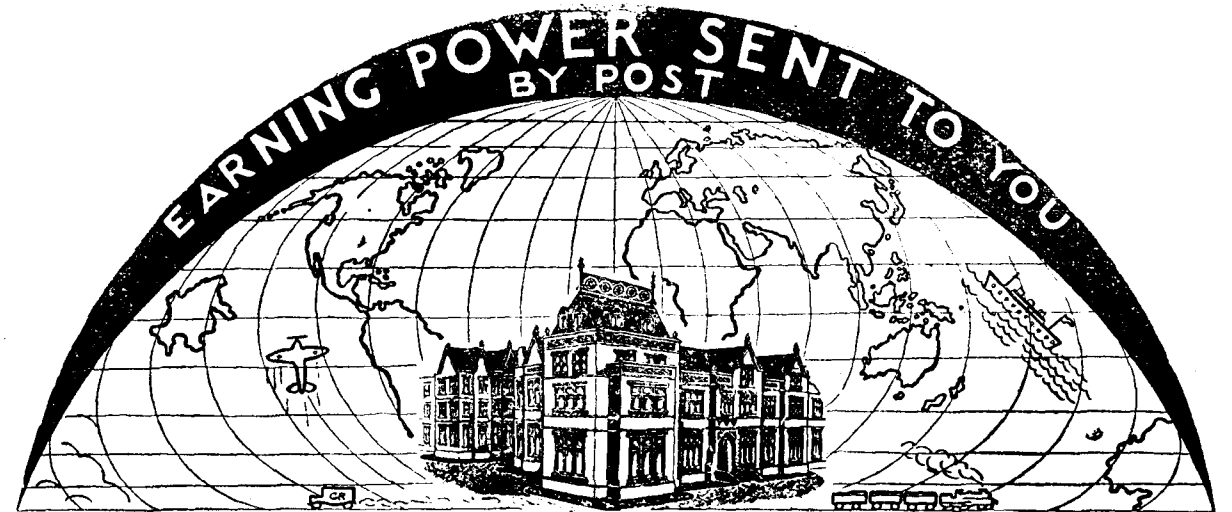
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OPEN LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Sir or Madam,—When your children first arrived they brought with them a wonderful lot of sunshine. Later, you became proud of the intelligence they displayed, but, still later, you became anxious as to what would become of them in the future. Perhaps you were anxious when you visualised them as grown men and women. Even with plenty of money it is not always easy to select the right career, and a parent is sometimes inclined to ask advice of some relative, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred that relative knows nothing at all about the possibilities of employment.

Why not let me relieve you of some of your anxieties? In fact, why not let me be their Father?

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If you have any anxieties at all as to what your sons or daughters should be, write to me, or better still, let them write to me personally—Fatherly Advice Department—and tell me their likes and dislikes, and I will give sound practical advice as to the possibilities of a vocation and how to succeed in it.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. Bennett

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The
MERRY
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Madras, Jan. 25, '36

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Private Joyfull

His Farewell Letter

For twentyseven months next week, first fortnightly, and latterly every week, Joyfull has been a source of unfailing joy, and instruction to readers of this magazine. Next week's letter will be his last. Few Englishmen have understood India as Joyfull has. This letter sounds a hope in India's future, it is a benediction by a gentleman and a friend.

V. V. Narayanan

Vengeance is Mine

A tale of bye-gone India, with a code of ethics that has not survived to these unhappy days.

Taurus

Tale of Two Surgeons

Two great enquiring souls dedicated to scientific research get hold of.....but I am anticipating the author. It is all about corpses and their love of filthy lucre.

Albert A. Roland

The Wonder Girl

Written specially for girls over eighteen, so girls, don't miss it!

V. Vyasa Rao

We Must Worry

But don't worry the Editor after reading this.

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

The Japanese poet Yone Noguchi says that in essentials the Japanese are like the Indians.

How different it would be if the Indians were like the Japanese!

* * *

In the course of his first speech as Foreign Minister, Mr. Eden is reported to have said: 'Britain is not for or against any country, but always for the collective system.'

But most impartial people think that she has already collected more than enough!

* * *

It is reported that Sgr. Mussolini's son had a narrow escape from being hit by a bullet.

It would be so sad if the parent's sins are visited on the head of the son!

* * *

As part of Italian propaganda in India, it is said that Rome broadcasts in chaste Hindi.

The manner may be chaste: but the matter is very much tainted.

* * *

Leaflets issued by the Italian planes, while regretting the bombing of churches, undertake the rebuilding of them in better style when peace comes.

This should settle one of the terms of the peace to be imposed on Italy.

Says a news head-line in a contemporary: 'Welsh Wizard's son for India; the Hon. David Lloyd in Bombay.'

No, by George!

* * *

In the course of an address to Bombay Europeans, Sir Homi Mody exhorts them to make their contribution to the country's future.

Instead of taking it away as hitherto!

* * *

Referring to the exclusion of Indians from their Clubs, he is said to have remarked: 'I refuse to enter paradise by the side door.'

It is good to know that he has an option in the matter!

* * *

An Indian professor is said to have invented a rolling air-feeder for tyres which is expected to revolutionise motor travel.

This will be particularly noticeable in the wheels!

* * *

Speaking against birth-control, Mr. Satyamurti says: 'I resent this movement as immoral.'

We hope he will present more concrete reasons!

The Rev. Father Basenach said that he understood that Mrs Sanger was not a doctor but a nurse.

We hasten to inform our readers that the reverend gentleman is not a 'father,' but a professor.

* * *

President Gomez of Venezuela who recently died has left 114 children, although he was unmarried.

He seems to have been one of the most eloquent opponents of birth-control!

* * *

Speaking on Germany's need for colonies, Herr Goebbels says: 'The case of Italy shows what may happen when a country cannot expand.'

Obviously, it must bust!

* * *

As part of the Jubilee celebrations, His highness the Agha Khan has been weighed in gold.

It is pleasing to note that the gold has not been found wanting!

* * *

There have been strong rumours of the impending resignation of our Chief Minister.

As it failed to create any public interest, we understand that it has been postponed to a more suitable occasion.

King George V.

KING George is dead. A great gentleman has passed away.

This great loss will be mourned by the Empire, not merely with a strip of sable crape on its sleeve: the grief is much more profound.

It is the devout wish of every one of us that we may have a peaceful end, an end without pain. Such was our King's end, a peaceful passing away of a life, which was a passionate dedication to peace at home and abroad.

The reign of no king of England had been so momentous as that of King George V. The sorrows and joys, the pain and pleasures, of a century have been crowded into a hectic two and a half decades. It triumphed through the murderous nightmare of a war that came very near to wiping out a civilisation evolved out of twenty centuries of ceaseless striving. It was a quarter of a century of progress born of the disillusionment of the war fought to the chorus of hypocritical shibboleths.

The close of the war witnessed a strange harvest in Europe and beyond. It was a harvest of crowns, of over-ripe ears too heavy with bloated ambitions for their withering stalks to bear. This aftermath of the war has left the Crown of England more strongly entrenched in the hearts of its subjects than ever before. It was so because the Crown represents a cardinal force, a living link between the man and his monarch.

The world has looked on with a drooping jaw at the devotion of the Englishman for his King, at the grand emotion he had betrayed himself into on the twentyfifth anniversary of the King's accession to the throne. The sentiment is transcendental, too real to be hypocritical.

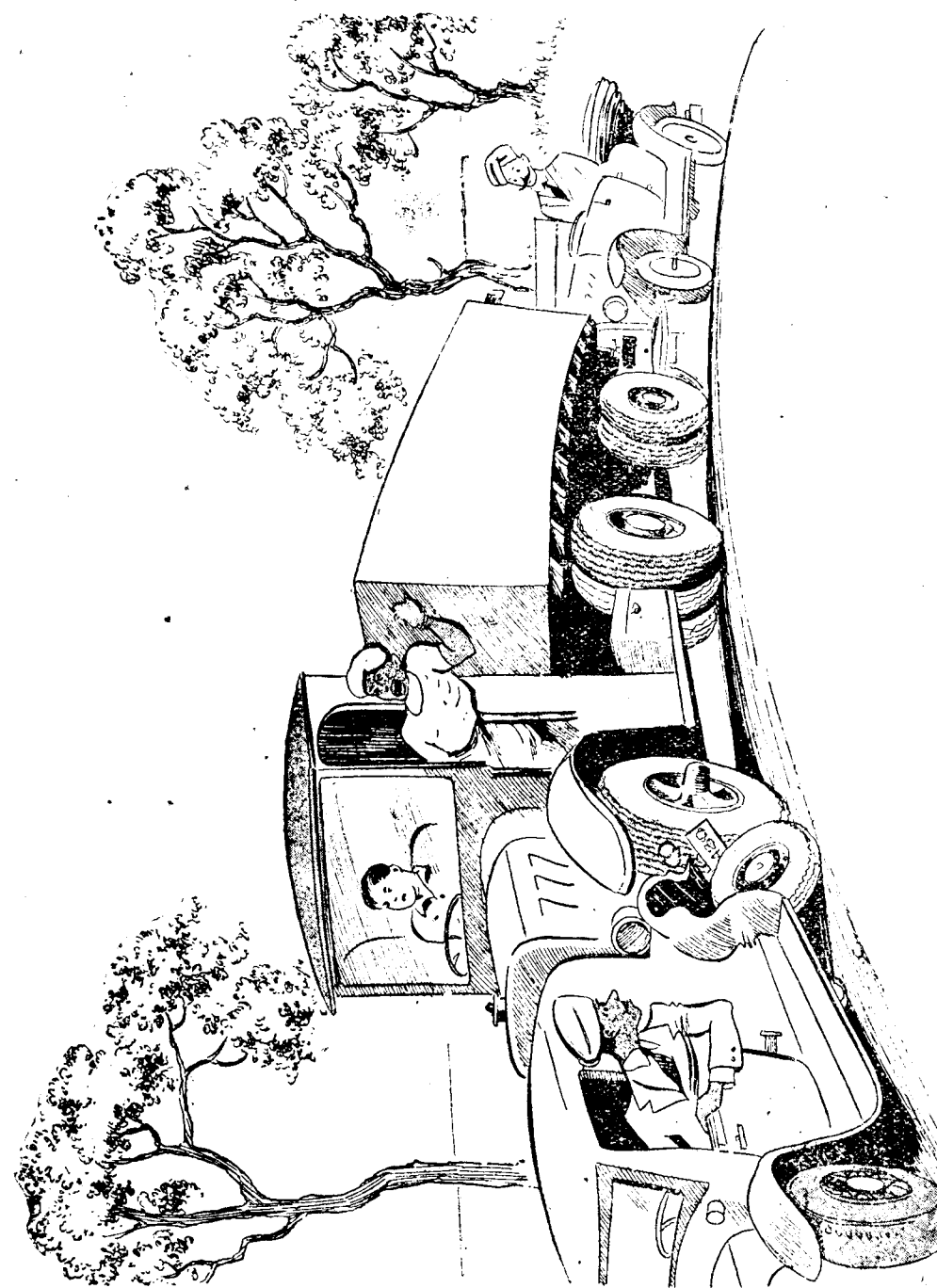
The place of our King in the political and social economy of England and its far-flung Empire is a living pledge of the Empire's vitality, and its permanence. King George has symbolised in himself this pledge as no British sovereign had done. His broadcast message to his subjects on the occasion of his Jubilee, and particularly his simple, soulful words spoken into the 'mike' on last Christmas Day reveal a man intensely human.

We are a wronged nation. But we bare our heads in sorrow at the passing away of a noble man. We have a sense of the beautiful; we grieve at the passing away of a beautiful life. We may thank our stars for placing us in a plan of things infinitely superior to comic *parvenus* who would have us believe that the first blood of humankind is running in their veins. Political passions, however justifiable, should not blind us to this merciful truth.

In the death of King George, the House of Windsor has lost its presiding genius, devoted husband, a loving father, a happy grandfather; the Empire a great king; the world one of its most lovable gentlemen.

—The Editor.

Not His Fault!



Apologetic Lorry-driver: That man shoved me, sir!

The March of Events

By The Man on the Move



The Bard of the Empire is dead. Kipling is no more.

He lived to the last, breathing Imperialism. He was its High Priest. The mighty waves of the changing world which have carried other structures into unknown, or but partly plumbed depths, have dashed on the rocks in which Kipling carved out a cave for himself, only to recede in disorder. There was the man whom the spirit of the times could not affect.

He did not know post-war, Gandhian India. Had he known it...but why brood over might-have-beens!

May his Imperial soul rest in that part of Heaven which is bound by neither East nor West!

★

Bravely defending Nippon's piccalillic Odyssey in China, Poet Noguchi said the other day in Madras: "...But we have never fought a war for the sake of conquest. Our battles with other countries were for the maintenance of the nation's safety and for the great lesson of freedom and peace that followed the war. Conforming with the Cosmic Law of sacrificing everything to strengthen the true self, we suffered pain before the divine fire under whose destroying power we were resurrected in a far truer birth..."

What do you think of it? Verbiage? I pardon your unkind thoughts.

Suppose my neighbour walks into my house when I am at breakfast and pockets without so much as a 'by your leave', say, my egg-cup. Naturally I clout his head. Suppose he returns the clout with interest? How would you construe his action? Clearly, by returning the clout, he is maintaining his safety. He is so truly his own self that he sacrifices everything to strengthen his his true self. He suffers pain (the wallop I gave him) so that he may come out in a far truer birth, which, everybody agrees, does one good.



We are indebted to the venerable poet for unfolding to us the inner soul of Japan.

★

I was very much surprised to read yesterday a report of the speech delivered by Prof. G. E. Monod-Herzan, Rector of Kabul University, at Adyar. He said that we can now make matter with light.

Such a great scientific discovery ought not to be patented. It must be released for general use, like Gandhiji's "My Experiments With Truth."

Poor, blighted chaps could make gold out of light-rays and live happily ever after. Plain girls whom nobody would marry could make nice-looking males and hold them for ever. Mussolini could make as much land as he likes and enjoy the largest space under the sun. And so on down the catalogue.

Those interested in the matter, may apply to me for membership in the delegation I am leading to Prof Monod-Herzan. As I expect a rush of applications, you had better look sharp.

★

The great American exponent of birth-control, Mrs. Sanger is now an honoured guest in this country. Those who are in the opposite camp (which of course includes Mr. Satyamurti) are saying a few hard things about the lady and the cause she represents.

Speaking the other day against birth-control, Father Basenach said that Mrs. Sanger was a nurse; that he had the greatest admiration for nurses; that they were ministering angels of suffering humanity; that as long as they stick to their wonderful work we would welcome them with open arms.

I find myself very much in agreement with Father Basenach over the question of nurses. They are indeed ministering angles. I must however strike a discordant note. I doubt if they would care to be welcomed with open arms. No, not doubt, I am sure of it.

Last year I happened to fall ill. As it was a case for X-Ray and Radium, I was carried to hospital. Two ministering angels attended upon me. They pulled me round admirably. I came out of hospital sinfully hale and hearty.

As an expression of gratitude, I arranged a little tea-party for my ministering angels. They responded to my invitation graciously. As they entered my house, I welcomed them with open arms. I was very much surprised at the way they behaved. One ministering angel gave me a black eye, the other ministering angel gave me a swollen nose.

So my advice to the admirers of nurses is: "Don't welcome them with open arms, unless you have a gas mask on."

★

Commenting on the present increase of half a million in the unemployed ranks of the Fatherland, Dr. Goebbels said that it was due mostly to their lack of colonies and the weather.

This pronouncement of Goebbels strikes a responsive chord in me; not that I am a fiddle or something. He is right. He must be right: I feel that most of what is spoken and written about unemployment in India is silly doctrinaire stuff.

India is a dashed hot place. If Europeans are living here, it is only because they love us. India has no colonies. We are administering Aden, it is true; but that is becoming a past tense.

I suggest we ship some of our heat to Germany to make its climate warm, and import cheap German snow to salubriate (?) our climate. That is half the problem solved.

Then, what about colonies? It is hard to get colonies. If you want to know just how hard, ask Mussolini. I read the other day that the lost continent of Atlantis was located at last under the ocean. I suggest we engage the services of the Salvage Department of Lloyds and raise up this continent. That would solve the other half of the problem.

I beg of the U. P. Legislative Council to consider my suggestions as an alternative to the scheme presented by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Sir Otto Niemeyer, the great financial expert of the Bank of England, accompanied by his wife and secretary, landed on our shores last week. "Our own correspondent" of a leading newspaper says that Sir Otto will not cost India anything by way of salary which will continue to be paid by the Bank of England.

I must say it is awfully kind of the Bank of England. When I read about it, I burst into song (can you blame me for it?), and being a minor poet, I composed a panygeric addressed collectively to Sir Montagu Norman, the City of London and Lord Zetland. My

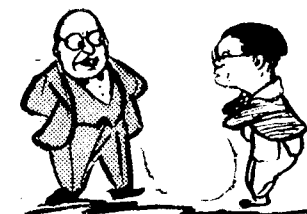


secretary (who is also my aunt) sent it absent-mindedly to Sir Samuel Hoare in Switzerland. Sir Samuel sent it back saying that he thanked me for kindly submitting the poem but regretted his inability to avail himself of the same, as he had not yet started editing a magazine.

★

The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan, Minister of Development, Madras, says that Government were not able to carry out their programme to establish more land-mortgage banks, as there was a lack of the right type of man to work the banks.

I am sorry Mr. Rajan did not get into touch with me. With no disparagement to those gentlemen now running the few land-mortgage banks in this presidency or



elsewhere in India, I say with a becoming modesty and humility, that I am one of the rare souls in India, not dead yet, who could successfully run a land-mortgage bank.

Why?

I was born on land. Literally. I was born in a cow-shed. Because it all happened suddenly, and there was no time to get a midwife. Anyhow there was no diplomaed midwife within a radius of fifty miles of the cow-shed which witnessed my nativity. I terded cattle ever since I was so high, making cakes out of dung. The permeation of land and myself is so thorough that at this day, well-nigh twenty-eight years after birth, I smell strongly of land.

So I request the Development Minister to open at least one more land-mortgage bank and put me in it. He will be astonished at what I will do.

★

"I refuse to enter Paradise by a side-door," says Sir Homi Modi anent the recent controversy over the exclusiveness of European clubs in India.

So do I. I am living a good life, because my objective is Paradise. My objective is Paradise because, I want to see the front of angels and not their backs. I want to get in through the main entrance particularly, because I always wanted to see St. Peter and Milton. If I sneak in through the back-door, not merely would I miss St. Peter, Milton and the fronts of angels, but would also land in the company of lesser angels like Huey Long. I repeat I refuse to enter Paradise by any other door except the front-door. Heavenly journalists, please copy.

N. E. W. S.

PRIMO Carnera the giant Italian boxer, will not box for yet a while. He has come under the conscription laws of Fascist Italy.

He has been drafted to join a mountain artillery unit in Abyssinia.

Soresi, Carnera's manager, to whom this news was cabled, has refused a number of fighting engagements offered to Carnera.

There is a vexed controversy now going on in this country, whether examinations in schools are desirable at all.

Tasmania has taken the lead in the matter. The Director of Education directed that henceforward headmasters should dispense with examinations and give their pupils certificates of efficiency.

What is the best definition of truth presented to the world so far?

To say what did happen.

That was the definition given by a little girl of nine the other day at the Lambeth Magistrate's Court. The Magistrate, Mr. Barrington Ward, said: "The best definition of truth I have ever heard!"

Have you ever heard of an animal committing suicide? Last week a dog jumped into the Manchester Ship Canal at Runcorn. The astonished captain of a launch riding at anchor near-by picked it up and placed it on the bank.

The dog jumped into the canal again and disappeared. It was drowned. Several people who witnessed it said the dog took its life deliberately. It is a mad world, probably, which affected the poor dog's brain.

A report from Prague says that Miss Zdenka Koubkova, the noted Czecho-Slovakian woman athlete is to be operated upon to bring about a sex-metamorphosis. In anticipation of a successful operation she got her certificate of birth altered to record her as a male with the name Zdene Koubek.

The doctors are very confident of success. The operation they say, is a simple one, is to come off any day now.

Excavators digging around the ruins of Tepe Gawra in Assyria (a city sacked four thousand years before Christ was born) under the direction of Dr. E. A. Speiser of Pennsylvania University, came upon a unique find.

It was a clay tablet. It shows a bearded man with a woman supporting him, a serpent following the two. That is Adam and Eve and the Serpent.

It is said that this clay picture is one of the most important archaeological finds of all time. No wonder. It shows how the Biblical version of the beginning of things was handed down to posterity before men learnt to record their thought in writing.

Dr. Owens, Chief Surgeon of the Department of Public Safety, Philadelphia, has adopted an official test where motorists charged with drunkenness are concerned. He asks the offender to say: "Susie and Sally Simpson sat in the soup." If the motorist repeats it without difficulty, he is pronounced sober.

FAMOUS COMPANY HONOURED

Horlick's Malted Milk Company Limited announce that they have been honoured by His Majesty the King Emperor with a Royal Warrant of appointment. Horlick's Malted Milk has been famous in India for over half a century as an ideal diet for infants and invalids. It was provided to His Majesty's Forces during the Great War and has played a conspicuous part in many famous expeditions and record-breaking achievements.

Horlick's Malted Milk Company Limited is one of the few great English private companies still owned and directed by members of the founding family.

Fun For All



"The last speaker," said the chairman of the Health Congress, "is a striking example of the efficacy of the doctrines he so eloquently advocates. Hale and hearty at eighty years of age, he could tire out many a man younger than himself."

A Voice From The Audience, "He did."

A newly married couple were entertaining and among the guests was one whose conduct was rather flippant. At supper he held up on his fork a piece of meat which had been served him, and in a vein of intended humour, remarked, "Is this pig?"

"To which end of the fork do you refer?" asked a quiet-looking man sitting at the other end of the table.

Musicián: (after much pressing) Well, all right, since you insist. What shall I play?

Host: Anything you like. It is only for the neighbours.

Country Constable: Pardon, miss, but swimming is not allowed in this lake.

City Flapper: Why didn't you tell me before I undressed?

Constable: Well, there ain't no law against undressin'.

She: All my life I have been saving my kisses for a man like you.

He: Prepare to lose the savings of a lifetime.

She was sitting in a dark corner. Noiselessly he stole up behind her, and before she was aware of his presence, he had kissed her.

"How dare you?" she shrieked.

"Pardon me," he bluffed readily, "I thought you were my sister."

"You dumb ox, I am your sister."

One of the clerks at the employment agency was a bit of a wit, and he was preparing to gain a laugh at the expense of the next in the line.

"Where were you born?" he asked the man, a Scotchman.

"Glasgow," replied the other.

"Glasgow! Whatever for?" continued the funny one.

"I wanted to be near mother," said the other with devastating meekness.

"You didn't seem to be very hot about the efficiency expert," remarked the secretary.

"No," replied the boss, "his explanation of how I could cut the overhead was over my head."

"You say you served in France?" said the restaurant manager, as he sampled the new cook's first soup.

"Yes, sir. Officer's cook for two years and wounded twice."

"You're lucky, man. It's a wonder they didn't kill you."

A Scotsman was strolling along the quay one day, when his dog stopped beside a basketful of live lobsters. Instantly one of the lobsters snapped its claws on the dog's tail, and the surprised collie dashed off down the street, yelping.

The fishmonger was speechless for a moment with indignation, then, turning to his prospective customer, he bawled: "Mon, mon, whustel to yer dog! Whustel to yer dog."

"Hoot, mon," returned the other, complacently, "whustel to your lobster!"

Hiralal Gets It!—

by V. V. Narayanan

Illustrated by Verma

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

MR. Ranchodlal Hiralal was a banker in Peshawar. He was of course rich. He was so rich indeed that his brother, bankers in and around Peshawar heartily agreed with his views on interest rates, gold export, religion or politics, whatever their private ideas on these matters might be.

Hiralal chose his debtors with such extraordinary care and discernment that he had never had occasion to call any of his investments a bad debt. If Shylock had married a fox and begot a child, it would be Hiralal. His greed and craftiness were complementary. He never overreached himself. So his business prospered and prospered. Idolised by his clan, hated by the impecunious, Hiralal lived a jolly life amidst his money bags. However, his jollity was not unalloyed. There is no unalloyed jollity in the world. The alloy in Hiralal's happiness was the absence of a child, a son, to carry forward the traditions of his house and its money bags. He waited for the blessed sign in Mrs. Hiralal for twenty-five years. It never came. Now on the threshold of old age Hiralal clutched at a straw in the current of his childless life. He married another wife. But no straw ever saved a drowning man. His second wife did not present him with anything approaching a son. She did present him, however, with a good many domestic problems. The chief of them was keeping the peace between the two wives.

Hiralal resigned himself like a good Hindu to his fate and redoubled his banking activities to console himself,

Hiralal had a brother. Their father divided his fortune equally between the two brothers and died. While Hiralal carefully husbanded his patrimony, his brother gambled in stocks and shares. His initial success at speculation emboldened him. He went at it with great gusto and did some very tall things to American cotton futures. The slump came without telling anybody. He was cleaned up. He retired to his room and smoked a bundle of *beedies* thinking out ways and means. His thoughts bore fruit. He ate



three tolas of opium and washed it down with half a pint of gingelly oil. He composed himself to sleep. He never woke up again.

He left a son behind, whom they called Neithram. He was a wild fellow for a Marwadi—always for fun and frolic. Hiralal brought to his home his orphan nephew. He placed Neithram in his bank. By way of wages he fed him on *chappatis* and brinjal curry and gave him each year two dhotis, two shirts and ten yards of multicoloured cotton strip to adorn his head.

There were lakhs and lakhs of rupees around him, but poor Neithram could not call a single pie of it his own. Hiralal never gave him any pocket-money. Neithram wanted to take an occasional evening off and enjoy the pictures. He could



take a number of evenings off, but the pictures remained an ideal to strive for. So he spent his days writing his uncle's accounts and smoking occasional *beedies*.

Like Dr. Ambedkar, he couldn't help being born where he was born. But Neithram was determined that he would change the face of things when he stepped into old Hiralal's lakhs. He would compensate for his present enforced continence.

Man proposes and God disposes. Old Hiralal was tough as raw rubber. He went on living indefinitely in aggressive health. It seemed as if he was out to snatch the unbeaten record held by Methuselah. He completed eighty years of life and moved forward with sinful optimism, smiling through.

Neithram began to lose hope of a life of ease. He felt like strangling his uncle. But that would be only inviting the law to strangle him in turn. He thought and thought and thought of plans for murdering his uncle. Not having the least strain of crime in his blood he finally gave up all thought of a short-cut to his ideal.

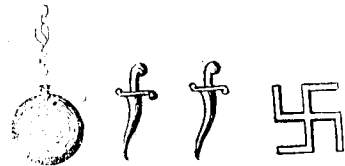
So matters stood.

Peshawar was passing through an orgy of crime, burglaries, murders and kidnappings. Particularly the last. Rich men disappeared most unaccountably and ransom money flew about like leaves in autumn.

One day Hiralal received a letter from an anonymous person. The letter said,

Send twenty thousand rupees this day next week by your nephew Neithram at eight

o'clock at night to the fourth mile-stone on the Kashmiri Road. He must be alone. If you play any tricks you will rue it.



The man who wrote it had perhaps no parents to give him a name. He signed himself as a bomb two daggers and a swastika, which showed that whoever he was he was an admirer of Aryans.

Hiralal placed the letter in the hands of the police. The day appointed by the man of bombs and daggers came and went. With it went Neithram too. Neithram disappeared completely, leaving no trace. He was kidnapped. On the day of Neithram's disappearance, Hiralal received another letter from the lover of Aryans. The letter said :

No use Hiralal. You must pay up. I took your nephew from under your dirty nose, just to show you what my power is. I am releasing him. Be well advised and send through him to-night at eight twenty thousand rupees to the place I mentioned. If not something is going to happen to you!



That afternoon at about four, his clothing very much dusty, as if he had tramped a long distance along a dusty road, his hair all askew, a scared look on his none too prepossessing face, the kidnapped Neithram came home. He told his story to his uncle.

He was going for a stroll in a quiet street when a motor car coming from his back at a tremendous speed stopped beside him with a screech of brakes. Two ruffians sprang out and manhandled Neithram. They bundled him into the car and drove away. As he was blindfolded he could not say which way the car went. He was taken to a dilapidated building in

a wood and threatened dire things to himself and his uncle if the money did not reach them that night. They again blindfolded him and left him at the fourth milestone on the Kashmiri Road.

Hiralal was scared. But to part with twenty thousand rupees! Impossible! They retired for the night. When next morning Hiralal woke up he found on his bed an old dagger. To that dagger was sticking a piece of paper. On the paper was written :

Barred doors will not hold. I am giving you one more chance. I expect Neithram to-night at eight with twenty thousand rupees at the fourth milestone. If he fails to come you will wake up in hell tomorrow morning.



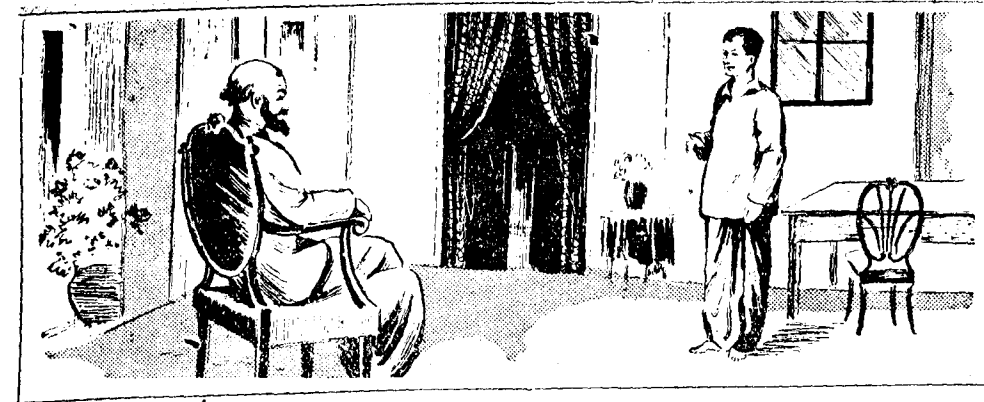
That evening at six with innumerable sighs Hiralal handed over to Neithram twenty thousand rupees in notes neatly bundled up. Neithram went into his room to get into a coat. Inside the room he did a funny thing. He placed the bundle of notes at the bottom of his box. He made another bundle out of some old papers. He put this bundle in his pocket and, bidding a sorrowful good-bye to his uncle and aunts, he stepped out into the gathering gloom.

He did not go to the fourth mile-stone on the Kashmiri Road. He went straight to the city's best cinema instead and enjoyed the show till midnight.

Three eager souls were waiting for him at home. He crept home sighing horribly and threw himself on a couch. When his uncle and aunts asked him to tell them what happened he only said, "Don't ask me. Oh, our twenty thousand rupees!" He refused to eat his supper.

From that day on Neithram never missed a good picture showing in Peshawar City.

THE END



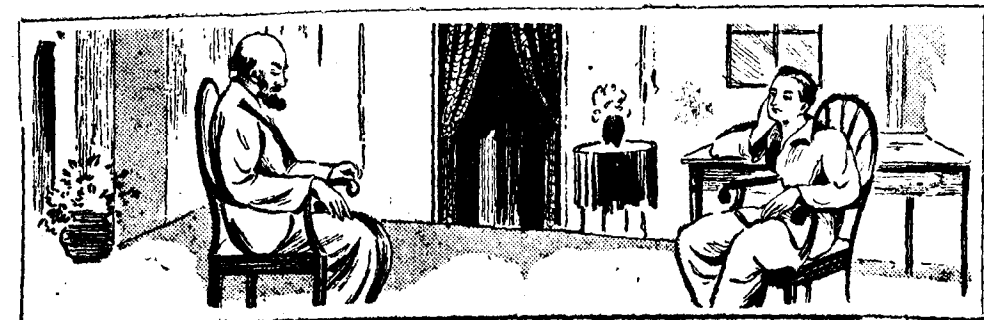
Youth and Age

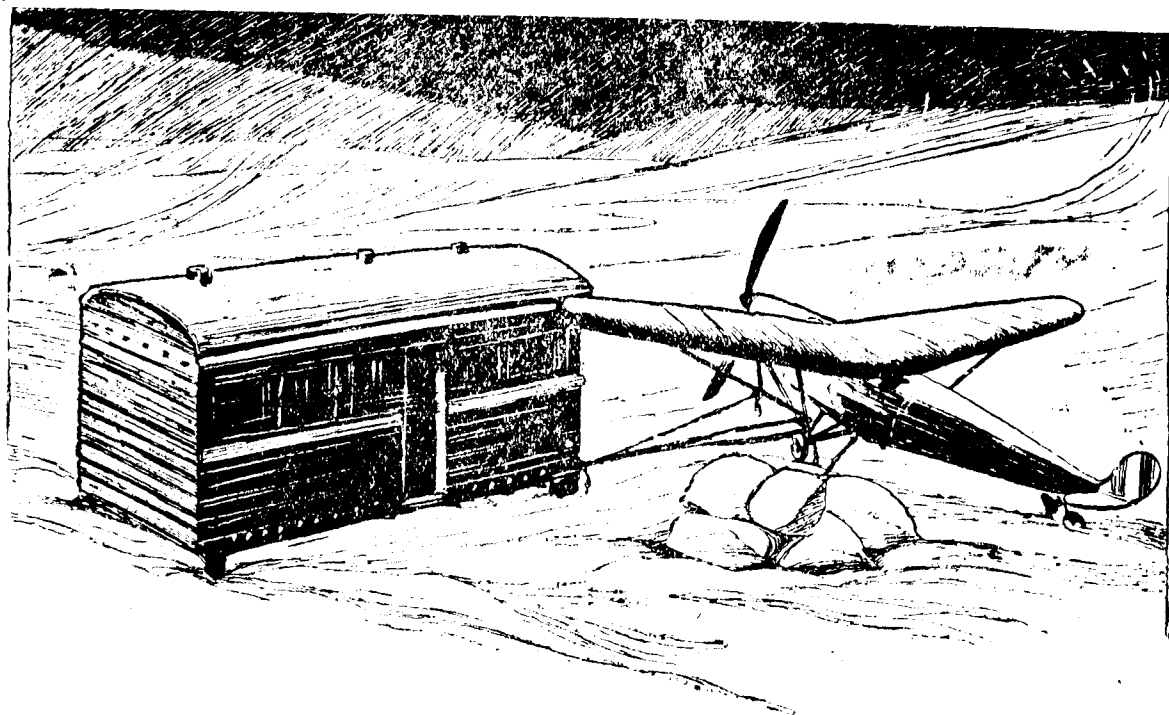
Flaxen silver framed his face,
Serene Old Age there shed its grace.
His edgeless speech was soft and smooth,
Time had taken toll—his teeth!
Thus he would start: "In my father's days—
But look at people's new-fangled ways—"
Playful Youth then answered (in rhymes?)
"Grand Dad! you are hard on changing times!"
And spouted: "—yielding place to new—"

The topic changed to 'German Jew';
And shifted back and forth again—
'Which is mightier—Sword or Pen'?
'Free Love', 'Trial', 'Divorce Law';
'Birth-Control', and 'Bernard Shaw';
So on, so forth...the clock struck—Nine!
Why, surely, it's now time to dine!

But too serious Youth in thought was deep;
Benign Old Age—just fell asleep!

—G. K. PILLAI





At Bidon Seven

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

by Embusque

Illustrated by Seker

BIDON Seven was an old Turkish railway-truck, deprived of its wheels. It stood alone in the desert, a hundred miles from anywhere. It was the seventh petrol-station on the Damascus motor-route.

The route ran north-west by west across the hard shingly sand. Every half-mile, it was marked by an empty whitewashed oil-drum. Woe betide the car that missed these guiding beacons.

North of Bidon Seven, a bluff of red sandstone rose from the desert. In the shimmering heat-haze, its face could be seen pitted with ancient caves. A few Syrian hermits lived there.

Pere Drouet lived in Bidon Seven, alone with his precious tanks of water and petrol. When he shut the door of the truck, it was almost dark inside; and no lamp could be used, because of the petrol.

The old man did not feel lonely. Sometimes he saw a hermit. Sometimes one of the pipe-line employ-

ees rode by. And, twice a week each way, the Indian air-mail droned past in the heavens.

The pipe-line and the air-mail were established after the motor-route. The pipe-line carried oil from Mosul to the Mediterranean. The air-mail passed between Rutbah and Baghdad, the comfortable passengers gazing down curiously at the lonely little hut. They did not know it was an emergency-station for fuel, water, food, and first-aid. But riders along the pipe-line, drivers along the motor route, and pilots of the air-mail, had cause to bless Bidon Seven.

On a March morning, Pere Drouet stood at the door of his truck, surveying the western sky with anxiety. A sandstorm was blowing up. A great wall of dirty yellow obscurity was advancing over the desert. Pere Drouet listened for the drone of the mid-week plane, east-bound.

"The machine has not left Rutbah," he reassured himself. "The pilot will wait until the storm has passed."

The expectant ears of the watcher were assailed with a noise. An aeroplane was coming from the direction of Baghdad. The sharp eyes of Pere Drouet picked out a light single-seater gliding down to Bidon Seven.

The aeroplane taxied almost to the door of the truck, and the aviator clambered out of the cockpit. "Emergency landing," he said, in Arabic. "Sandstorm coming. I want to anchor my machine."

"I am Pere Drouet," replied the caretaker. "Do you speak French?"

"I am Jamsetji of the Bombay Flying Club," replied the airman, in a very fair accent. "I am going solo to Europe. Have you ropes and sandbags?"

By the time the aeroplane was secured, the air was the colour, and almost the thickness, of pea-soup. The caretaker and his guest took refuge in the darkness of the truck. During a lull in the conversation, Pere Drouet suddenly said, "Hark!"

They listened, and exclaimed together. Both had heard the faint hoot of a motor-horn being continually sounded.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said Pere Drouet. "If they do not find this place, they will perish." He took up a powerful klaxon syren, and went out into the whirling storm braying furiously. Within a couple of minutes, a battered motor-car became dimly visible through the flying sand. With boiling radiator, it drew up under the lee of Bidon Seven, and two figures staggered out.

"Thank God we have found it," said the driver.

"But I must get to Rutbah!" cried his passenger, a middle-aged man with graying hair and anxious eyes.

"Come inside," growled Pere Drouet. "Do you want my hut to fill up with sand?"

And so four men, strangers to each other, and mutually invisible in the darkness, sat inside Bidon Seven. "I tell you I must get to Rutbah!" came the voice of the passenger. "It is a matter of life and death!"

"What is the trouble?" grumbled Pere Drouet.

"I am the medical officer of the pipe-line camp at Elifeh. The trouble is plague!"

"Plague!" said two voices, together.

"Two cases broke out this morning," continued the medical officer. "If I cannot get serum from Rutbah, the men are as good as dead. Depend on it, others also in the camp have taken the virus. Every hour's delay means a spreading disaster."

The occupants moved in the darkness, as if anxious to get away from the speaker. There was an uncomfortable silence. At last, Pere Drouet muttered, "It is impossible to proceed to Rutbah by any means, until the sandstorm has abated."

There was another silence, while the marooned men contemplated the likelihood of having to spend several hours at close quarters with one who probably carried plague fleas.

The silence was interrupted, in most unexpected fashion, by a gentle knock on the door. The three visitors felt their scalps creeping; but Pere Drouet unconcernedly unfastened the latch. "It will be the hermit," he said. "Sandstorms are nothing to him."

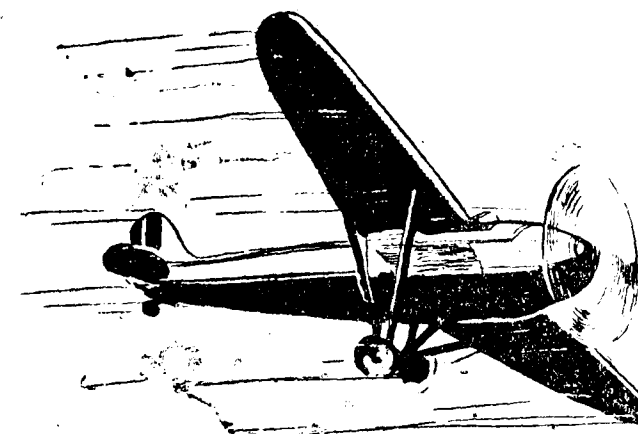
The door opened to reveal a dim figure in an Arab cloak that concealed the features. "I have callers, sir," said Pere Drouet, closing the door.

"It does not matter," came the voice of the hermit in the darkness. It was a gentle voice, speaking cultured French. "Have you my tobacco?"

"I have it, *Monsieur le Capitaine*," replied the caretaker, respectfully.

Jamsetji could hardly suppress an exclamation of surprise. A hermit who walked abroad during a sandstorm, smoked European tobacco, and held the rank of Captain!

"*Monsieur le Capitaine* was of the British forces in this region during the War," explained Pere Drouet. "He received an injury, and turned his life to solitude and meditation. He retired to the caves over



there. He is a recluse. Only once in three months does he come here to receive his parcel of tobacco."

"My last remaining weakness of the flesh," said the hermit, softly.

All this while, the doctor unheedingly lamented that he could not get to Rutbah.

"Tell me your trouble, sir," said the invisible hermit, quietly.

The doctor poured out an account of the plague, and of the extreme urgency of his mission.

The hermit remained silent awhile, as if meditating. At last he said: "There is an aeroplane outside. I will go now, and bring the serum."

"But you cannot fly in a sandstorm, even if you understood the control of the machine!" protested Jamsetji.

"I was once a captain of the Royal Flying Corps," said the gentle voice of the hermit.

"You would crash on landing. The machine is not equipped for blind flying," insisted Jamsetji.

"But I am," said the hermit.

"What do you mean?"

"I have very sensitive hearing. The air-mail is detained at Rutbah, is it not? There is the big hotel by the aerodrome, where the passengers stay overnight. Pere Drouet has told me of these things. How marvellous that there is such a hotel in the middle of the desert, equipped with the latest radio, and every comfort! I shall land by ear. When I reach the vicinity of the hotel, I will shut off the engine, and listen. The music and gaiety of the hotel will guide me."

"It is impossible! Besides, how will you be guided when you get back here?"

"I shall be back in two hours. When you hear me coming, let the good Pere Drouet sound his klaxon syren."

Hypnotised by the voice of the invisible hermit, Jamsetji suffered himself to be led outside, to superintend the freeing of his machine. Five minutes later, the plane took off, vanishing at once in the tawny-black curtain of choking sand.

"A hero going to his death," said the hard-bitten car-driver, surprised into emotion.

Pere Drouet said nothing.

Two hours later, the silent company in Bidon Seven were electrified by the sound of a distant aeroplane-engine. "It is a miracle!" cried Jamsetji, unbelievably.

Pere Drouet went outside, and plied his klaxon syren. The hum of the aeroplane ceased. The machine was apparently circling overhead, picking up the exact location of the sound.

With startling suddenness, the outline of the single-seater came into view through the gloom. It taxied straight towards the hut. Pere Drouet energetically pumped the handle of the syren, while his companions uttered cries of alarm. Suddenly the machine swerved, and came to a standstill a few yards away.

"It is a miracle! It is incredible!" cried Jamsetji.

The hermit climbed slowly out of the cockpit, bearing a sealed wooden box. "Here is the serum," he said, simply.

"It is the most amazing and heroic thing I have ever heard of!" stuttered the doctor. "But what shall I do? How shall I get back to the camp in this storm?"

"I will drive you," said the hermit.

"But my good sir!" protested the doctor. "It would be madness, suicide—to drive over the open desert in a sandstorm. One cannot keep direction. You have performed a miracle in flying blind; but no man can drive blind."

"I can," said the hermit. "I am blind."

THE END

Don't Worry!

"So you think you would be a suitable valet for me," said the old man to the applicant. "I must remind you that I'm pretty much of a wreck. I have a glass eye, a cork leg, an artificial arm that needs looking after, not to mention a wig and false teeth."

"That would be all right, sir," responded the other. "I've had plenty of practice. You see, I once worked in the assembly-room of a big motor concern."



Reading Time • About 2 Minutes

Quins and Quads

by Old Soldier Jim

Sketches by Varma

Another catastrophe is approaching.

It started in Canada some months ago. Then it got to England. I do hope it doesn't get as far as India. Professors tell us that the Gulf Stream has a warming effect, and as this sea-stream only washes the shores of America and Europe, we may be safe; but then India doesn't need any warming.

A Canadian mother presented her husband with five daughters. Why? I don't know. Then an English mother found four sons underneath a gooseberry bush.

Seems to be Eastwards for Sons, Westwards for Daughters. So we'll have to look for a S. E. and S. W. breeze. Oh! won't it be a disaster if the monsoon blows the wrong way?

It's really up to the League of Nations to make some preparations: This will have to be stopped before the tornado reaches India.

Why, we'd have to have the Simon Commission all over again.

There'd have to be another kind of Rural Reconstruction.

Now, if this does get a grip on the country and starts at Madras! What a catastrophe! Six editors having six sons each and seven journalists having eight daughters apiece. All following in their father's footsteps. It would admit of preparations being made

for the provision of literature for the coming generation; but look at the commission that would have to be paid.

Of course, if the breeze started in another direction, there would have to be a bridge over the Gulf of Mannar; or a heat wave on Mount Everest.

There is some talk of revising the English dictionary now. Such words as triplicate, quintuplicate etc., do exist, but they can't get a word for the meaning of six times ten plus one and three-quarters.

A book will have to be opened in each town and village, for arrivals to sign their names in. Military Bands might be used to welcome them. Lotteries will not

be allowed after the breeze touches the South-West corner of Honolulu.

There is some talk of asking the cows to produce condensed milk.

Yet there is one bright spot on the horizon. None of the new arrivals will be old soldiers.

THE END



Taking It by Storm

by A. M. Menon

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

MR. Sarkar, Editor of the *Daily Dash* was not what you would call a man who could be taken by surprise.

He was such a news-hardened, case-hardened man that he would not so much as lift his eyebrows if he got a Reuters telegram to the effect that Sgr. Mussolini had apologised to the Ethiopians and presented the Negus with ten ship-loads of spaghetti.

But Mr. Sarkar had reason to be surprised, and to lift his eyebrows, that morning. For he had received the following letter :

Dear Sir,

This is only a mild sort of hint. In the next letter you will learn more. Beware!

DIREVENGE.

It had been addressed to: 'THE EDITOR, *Daily Dash*,' and marked prominently, 'Private'.

"Probably the fellow didn't know my name," thought Mr. Sarkar.

He threw the letter into the waste-paper basket and tried to forget it. But, try as he may, 'Direvenge' popped up in his mind all through his day's work.

Mr. Sarkar went home in the evening resolved that he would, at any rate, refuse to share this ludicrous incident with his wife. But he was wrong. Before he was an hour in her company he had let the cat out of the bag. He didn't know how it happened. It just slipped out.

"You know, my dear," said Mr. Sarkar, reaching for his cup of tea, "I had a very—er—a very funny letter this morning. At the office. Very funny. Ahem!"

His wife waited, good-humoured interest on her face.

"I put it," he continued, "in the waste-paper basket, of course; but it was very funny."

"Oh, really!"

Mrs. Sarkar was evidently losing interest now. She thought he might have at least refrained from making any reference to a 'funny' letter which he did not care to bring with him.

"'Beware!' I think, was one of the phrases used," concluded Mr. Sarkar, slowly. "And the person signed himself, or herself, as—er—as some sort of 'Revenge' or something—"



"Revenge?" asked his wife, now definitely gripped.

"Er—yes—yes—'Direvenge', he called himself."

"Threat, was it?"

"I don't—I cannot guess," he said, rising. "Details to follow. I think. Something like that was mentioned."

During the next three or four days Mr. Sarkar tried to forget Mr. 'Direvenge'. But on the fourth day he was again rudely reminded of his fantastic correspondent.

The reminder came in the form of a large poster in red-ink lettering.

The poster was pasted up on the front door of Mr. Sarkar's abode. It said:

"Are you, or are you not, going to take steps to satisfy me? What have you done to meet my demands? Beware!"

DIREVENGE.



Mr. Sarkar was on his way to his office. He called his servant.

"Did you," he asked of that faithful retainer, "see this poster at any time?"

"Yes, sir," replied the servant. "I saw it this morning when returning from the market with vegetables. I thought it was—"

"Yes?" prompted Mr. Sarkar.

"Well—" The servant was wondering what he *had* thought of it. "Well—I thought it was of no importance."

Mr. Sarkar looked at the poster.

"Probably you are right."

Mr. Sarkar called his wife.

"Good heavens!" cried that respectable lady. She was obviously dismayed. "What have you been doing, darling? Not writing in your paper against some terrorists, or some sort of secret society?"

"Emphatically no," protested Mr. Sarkar. "Terrorists or secret societies!" Mr. Sarkar concluded, with a wry chuckle, "why, I sort of patronise them, you know!"

Mrs. Sarkar was in a flurry.

"What do these people want, anyway? They give no address, you see! How can we answer them?"

"Tut-tut!" Mr. Sarkar waved away the fears of his spouse. "Leave it to me! I will deal with the matter, whatever it is."

At the office, however, Mr. Sarkar's serenity of mind was shattered by a specimen of these strange communications more violent than usual. It was an ordinary postcard which said, in block letters of red ink:

I am coming tonight at eleven. Meet me alone. You disobey at your peril!

DIREVENGE.

The whole office was agog with the news. Sub-editors suggested the rather obvious line of calling in the police. The manager said that Mr. Sarkar should of course not risk the interview.

"Better try to meet the fellow half way," warned a reporter, darkly. "It is probably the work of some gangsters. It would do you no good, sir, to get on their wrong side."

Mr. Sarkar at length decided to grant the interview. How to inform the queer correspondent, anyhow? "I will remain in my office," resolved Mr. Sarkar, "till 11-15 this night. We shall await developments."

Strange headlines flashed through Mr. Sarkar's mind, as he sat on his chair in his office that night. "City Editor Murdered" "Strange Secret Society's Victim's Throat Cut"; "Vendetta of Unknown Avenger", were a few that stood out prominently in Mr. Sarkar's mind.

He waited patiently. He had given strict orders that no one was to hang about or attempt to molest any visitor.

A message had been sent to Mrs. Sarkar, saying that urgent business detained her husband.

Eleven o'clock struck. Mr. Sarkar glanced at the door.

A man was standing on the threshold.

"Come in," said Mr. Sarkar, gulping in spite of himself. "Sit down."

The stranger sat down.

"What do you want?" asked Mr. Sarkar.

The stranger, who looked not more than twenty-five, and not very tidy either, twisted his mouth in a smile.

"I won't beat about the bush, Mr. Sarkar. Time is valuable, and I am immediately in need of nourishment. Well, the fact is, unemployment drove me to this. It was hard, very hard, getting a job. So I thought I would just try to butt into my fortune with an original method."

The young man stopped speaking. Mr. Sarkar watched him wet his lips.

There was a moment when his reply hung in the balance.

But Mr. Sarkar's sense of humour prevailed.

"You can be one of my sub-editors," said Mr. Sarkar. He took out his purse. "And now," he added, taking out a five-rupee note, "go and have a good, hearty meal. Meet me at this office," he finished up, with a chuckle, "at eleven tomorrow and I'll fix you up. Good night!"

"Whatever made you come so late, my dear?" asked Mrs. Sarkar, as she brought some hot tea for her husband on his return.

"Oh, it was nothing. That terrorist fellow, you know—"

"Ooh!" his wife screamed.

"He turned up with a revolver, a bomb and a double-barrelled gun—"

"Ooh—ooh—OOH!!!"

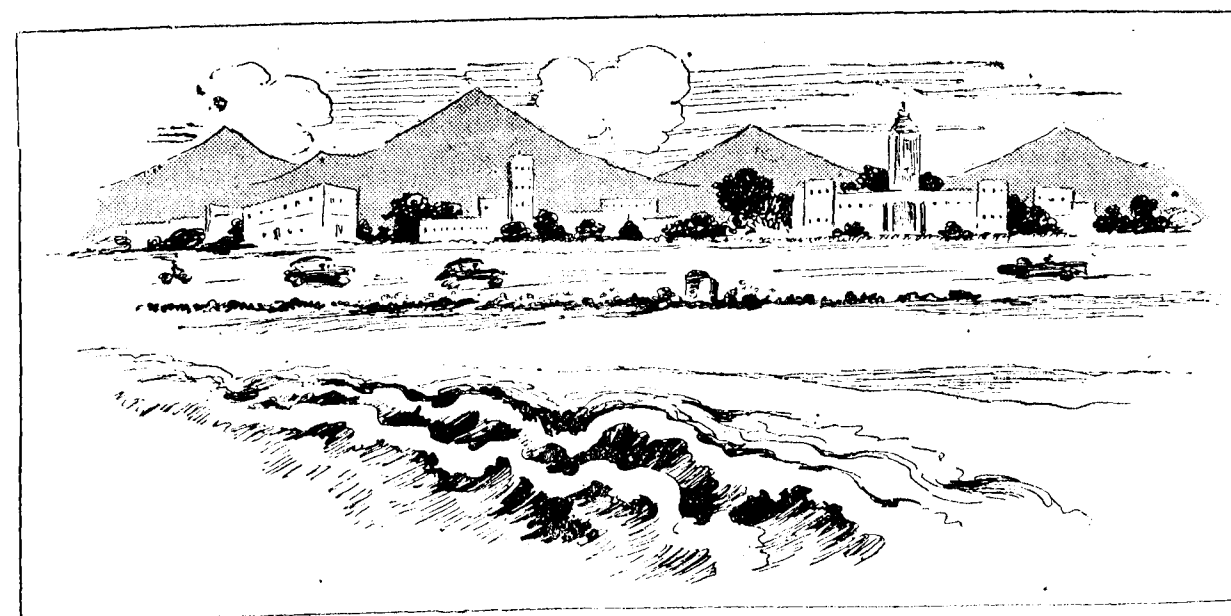
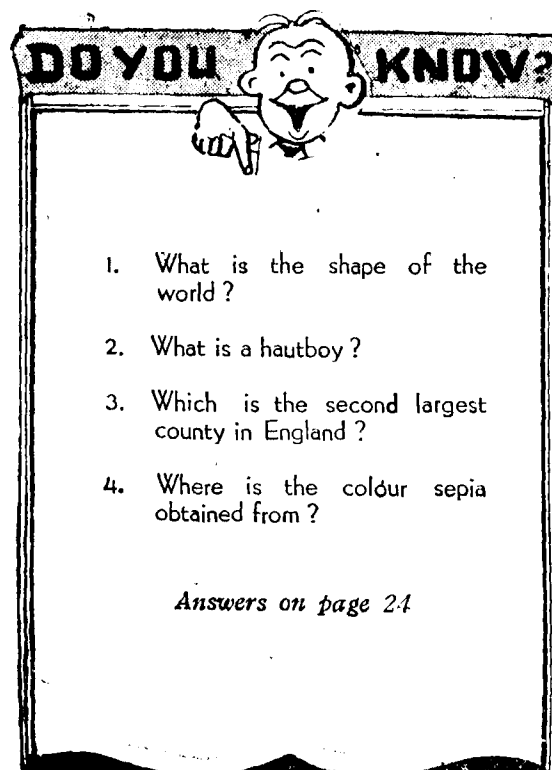
"—but I quelled him. This water, my dear," said Mr. Sarkar, "is definitely and very hot—I mean this tea. What I want now, is a bottle of whiskey."

"Is he—is he dead?" asked Miss Sarkar.

"Oh, dear, no. I tamed him. He is to be one of my sub-editors!"

"My hero!" said Mrs. Sarkar.

THE END



Sightseeing in Naples

by Artiji

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

A well-known author once asserted: "See Naples and then die." The statement is true—very true—though not quite in the sense the writer intended.

Naples can best be seen by using your eyes, someone else's motor-car and a rich uncle's season ticket. Before setting out upon this hazardous expedition you would be well advised to pen your last will and testament—preferably on "Corona" stationery which costs only two-and-six a box.

Having arrived at Naples (we will presume that you have safely weathered the discomforts of Trans-Italian travel) the next problem is how exactly to perish. One convenient method is to refuse the steward his morning cigarette after which you will find the luncheon very much doctored. Another consists of simply exploring the intricacies of the city—or to put it more concisely, sightseeing. We will adopt the second method, because it has originality, freedom, and artistic finesse. It brings out your inherent characteristics—the fire, the stubbornness, the

grim battling persistence and the ability to weather the quicksands of adversity.

Naples consists of three parts:

- The majestic sweep of the Bay of Naples
- The majestic sweep of the Bay of Naples
- Naples.

The majestic sweep lies between Naples and the ocean. It is reported to cause the death of 25% of the tourist population. There is something about its symmetrical proportions which makes you feel not merely your eligibility but the absolute necessity for a celestial existence. A committee of thirteen presides over its destiny. Every three months the whisky bottles on the shore are removed, the bodies of tourists are stowed away in neat, water-tight compartments, and an expert carpenter goes round with a mallet and chisel hammering the majestic sweep into conformity with the existing fashion conditions. In the circumstances we can only be thankful that it is so adorned with the still more magnificent curve of bathing beauties.

The town of Naples merits a detailed analysis. You have heard about it, read about it, sung about it, and are more than likely to swear about it. Its distinguishing features are its proximity to Vesuvius, Pompeii, Capri and Herculaneum, its restored Gothic cathedral, and of course, the fact that it possesses a bay with a majestic sweep.

The cathedral contains relics remarkable even for Italy. There is the usual slice from the Crown of Thorns, the still more conventional nail from the Cross and the North-Eastern corner of St. Peter's moustache. But the star exhibit, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the phial of St. Januarius, a gentleman who suffered martyrdom during the Diocletian persecution. His body is preserved in the

crypt, his head enthroned in the chapel. On the nineteenth of September (the day when he decided to abandon this terrestrial existence), a phial containing the preserved and clotted blood of St. Januarius is brought into contact with that worthy's head. It liquifies immediately and in that condition is presented for the veneration of the people. When the miracle fails to come off, it indicates:

- (a) That you are a sinner beyond redemption.
- (b) That the saint is tired or bored.

In any case I fail to see why a gentleman of Januarius's standing should spend his time in the trivial employment of liquefying blood.

There are two hundred and ninety-nine churches beside the Cathedral. There is also the Castel Nuovo, built in 1282 by Charles of Anjou, and euphemistically described as 'a magnificent mass'. You may visit the aquarium claimed to be the best in Europe, a statement that is hotly contested by the respective aquariums of London, Berlin, Nice and Monte Carlo. But, since a couple of days on the Neapolitan bill of fare will have

depleted your physical condition, I advise you to finish off the process by seeing Vesuvius. Vesuvius is a volcano, not an American cigar. It can be ascended either by the discreet manipulation of your feet or with the assistance of the *funiculaire*. The crater is a cross between a Birmingham pig iron depot and an Indian wedding rehearsal. It consists of smoke, smoke, smoke and lava. The smoke gets in your eyes, the lava in your boots, the tourists in your hair, and the whole business reminds you of a second edition of Dante's *Inferno*. Nor is it rendered any happier by a *svelte* young gentleman from the Neapolitan plain who persists in hawking about selected ashes from the first six days of the 1906 eruption. If you are not dead in five minutes it speaks wonders for your physique. If you do pass out, which is more than likely, you will be buried with full military honours or accorded a lasting place among the relics of Pompeii.

I almost forgot to mention Pompeii. It consists of a few odd bricks at the foot of Vesuvius. The only essential for a Pompeian tourist is imagination. It needs imagination to construct

an amphitheatre from a pebble or Marcus Aurelius from dislocated tooth.

After Pompeii only one man in a hundred is likely to survive. To that hardened specimen of human endurance I recommend Capri. If there is anything which represents the climax of earthly disillusion it is this little piece of rock with its inevitable cathedral in the distance, hollowed out by a couple of grottos, well-known to posterity and Nestle's album picture collectors. The grottos are inaccessible nine times out of ten. The scenic properties of the isle are hardly likely to cause a furore in local artistic circles. The only point of interest about the church is that it contains a vacant tomb for the reception of your body.

THE END

Auntie Awful



'MODERN CRITIC' has been reading *Julius Caesar*, and has a word to say about that famous passage:

*Cowards die many times before their death;
The valiant never taste of death but once.*

"In our daily life," remarks this shrewd young man, "we find that all persons die only once, and no one dies even twice. Must we take it for granted that we are all valiant? I should not think so. What is Shakespeare trying to bring home to us?"

Behold the trap for Auntie, my pets! 'Modern Critic' is a naughty lad who wants to get Auntie prosing away like the foot-notes in a school edition. And while Auntie is composing her address, in words of one syllable, on the subject of English Metaphors for the Feeble-Minded, the clever nephew will be laughing in his sleeve, and telling his pals to hark to the pompous old Auntie!

Have you ever played this game at school, dearies? It is lovely fun. When Auntie was a girl, she had a teacher who was a bit batty about Votes For Women. Those were the days when Suffragettes chained themselves to the galleries of the Houses of Parliament, threw tar at the Prime Minister, and set fire to public conveniences. Well, when the teacher (who was a tyrant) started to bring up nasty subjects like irregular French genders, Auntie would put up her hand in a winning and innocent manner.

"Well, what is it?" snapped the female dragon.

"Please, miss, why are there so few feminine nouns in the English language?" And then all the class would sit back happily, and pass the rest of the hour listening to an impassioned speech about the injustices done to the female sex, even in grammar-books, and how the laws of Nature would be reversed, if only there were Votes For Women. Auntie was never quite converted to Votes For Women, because she thought that if it involved giving a vote to Miss Grindface, things would be better left as they were.

Another sure winner was to ask, "Please, miss, I don't quite understand what Shelley meant by a 'Still unravished bride of quietness'." This would give us at least half an hour's peace, while Miss Grindface talked eagerly on the Sacred Mysteries of Sex. There was never any concrete information in these talks, much to the disappointment of us girls. Miss Grindface, poor dear, was never likely to acquire any first-hand experience of the subject; but she liked to yearn about it.

However, to return to the subject of dying. Auntie once fell in love with a strong man at a circus. His speciality was to escape from an iron-bound box which was thrown into a tank of water. He wore tights for the act, and was such a handsome man, tattooed all over. Auntie was so thrilled that, the next time the circus came to the neighbourhood, she determined to visit the show-ground after the performance, and get an introduction to her hero.

When Auntie arrived, the lamps were dying, the noise was dying, the fire in the office was dying, Auntie was dying with excitement, and the strong man was dying with impatience.

"I have been dying to meet you," cooed Auntie.

"And I am dying to get home to my wife," replied the strong man.

"I am dying to know the secret of your escape."

"It will die with me."

"I am dying for your love," murmured Auntie, kicking at a ball belonging to one of the jugglers.

"I am dying for my supper," growled the unfeeling wretch, picking up the ball, which was dead.

Auntie went away and died of grief, and the strong man went away and died of laughing.

Legal (Periamet). "Suppose I was knocked down by a motor-car belonging to the ruler of an Indian state, what would be my position?" A horizontal one, dear boy.

Harry (Bellary). "What is Tonkina?" This, dear boy, is a simple singing-game played by Japanese children. The music has a strong accent to each bar. Three children take part. At the first beat, a child holds up two raised fingers to represent scissors. At the next beat, he holds up his flat hand to represent paper. At the third beat, he doubles his fist to represent a stone. The other two children make the same motions, but in different order. The music suddenly stops, and the competitors must keep still. Scissors will cut paper, and paper will wrap a stone; so when the music stops, the one who is 'stone' is the loser, and must pay a forfeit. A grown-up version of the game is played by girls in low houses of amusement. In this version, the game resembles 'strip poker', and the forfeits are not innocent ones.

Sunny Boy (Peddanaik-pet). "What do you call a man who takes life easily?" A doctor, dearie.

Shop-keeper (Park Town). "I never have enough money to pay my expenses. All the customers want credit. My friends say that a shop-owner must give credit to keep his customers." While this is true, dear sir, a shop-owner must also take cash to keep himself.

Impressed (Thiyyur). "There is a very wise man living in my house. Yesterday evening, he suddenly said, 'It is raining'. I said, 'How do you know?' He replied, 'By the cat which has just come in'. By what means could the cat tell him it was raining?" Perhaps the cat was wet, dear boy.

Proud Parent (Egmore). "My daughter has a beautiful singing voice. Do you think it would be a good thing to give her a course of electrocution?" Yes, dear sir; it would finish her off.

Abyssinia (Hospet). "We have not had a limerick from you for a long time. What about one on Adowa?" Thank you for making the rhyme an easy one, dear boy. Here goes:

*There was a young girl of Adowa,
A choice Ethiopian flower.
She just winked her eye
As a General passed by,
And the war was held up for an hour.*

Good Resolution (Triplicane). "The next horse I back will be the last." Quite so, dear boy. They generally come in last, don't they?

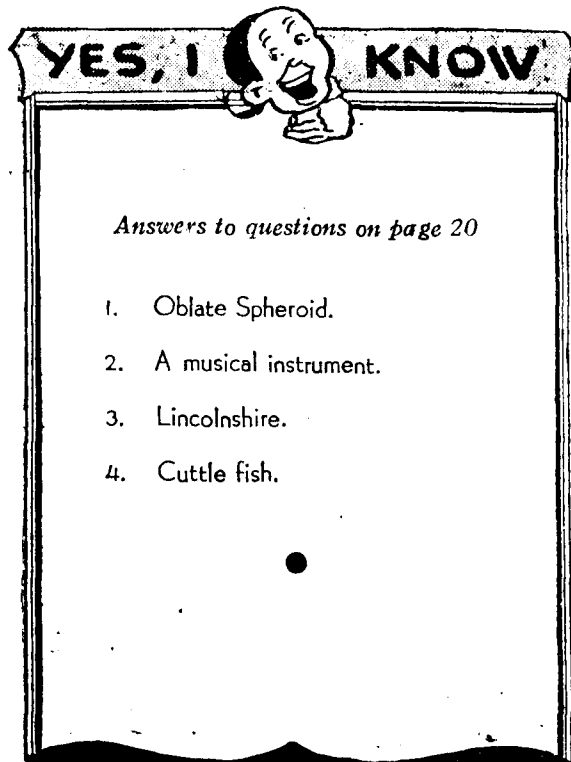
Not As Reported (Bombay). "Some enemy of mine has published an announcement of my death in the obituary column of a local paper. Please advise me what to do." Auntie is glad to hear that the report of your death was grossly exaggerated, dear sir. The best thing to do is to insert a notice in the births column of the same paper, and begin a new life.

Dutiful (N. India). "My grandfather is aged and useless, and yet he wants to wear a fine blanket in the cold weather, to make it dirty.

I gave him an old blanket that was good enough, but he refused to wear it, saying he would rather not have any—What should I do?" Give the old blanket to your grandson, dear sir, with instructions to store it away. When you are aged and useless, your grandson will be able to offer it to you for wear.

Premonition (Poona City). "A relative of mine predicted the day of his death, and the very hour, and the way he would die; and it all came to pass exactly as he said. How do you account for this?" I expect the judge gave him all the particulars while passing the sentence, dear sir.

Memsahib (Bangalore). "I engaged a table-boy on the understanding that he would pay for any plates and cups he broke. He has already broken more crockery than his wages amount to. What shall I do?" Raise his wages, dear madam.



Answers to questions on page 20

1. Oblate Spheroid.
2. A musical instrument.
3. Lincolnshire.
4. Cuttle fish.

The Scottish Karna

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

by V. Vyasa Rao

WAS there ever a multi-millionaire who dared say that the man who died rich died disgraced? There was. It was Andrew Carnegie who at the age of sixty-five had in his hands a fortune of three hundred million dollars.

At the age of thirty-five, as ironmaster and organiser of business, Carnegie had an yearly income of 50,000 dollars. At this time, in 1864, he expressed privately a private thought of his in a memorandum in these words:

"The amassing of wealth is the worst idolatry. Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately; therefore should I be careful to choose that life which will be the most elevating.

"To continue much longer with most of my thoughts wholly upon the way to make money must degrade me beyond hope of permanent recovery. I will resign at thirty-five."

This thought of retirement at the age of thirty-five remained but a thought, for before his thirty-fifth summer passed over him, fate threw him across Henry Bessmer who perfected a process which segregated silicon and carbon from iron ore by blasts of cold air elemental in strength. That meant ridiculously cheap steel which was to transform the economic face of America and the world. Carnegie saw a demonstration by Bessmer. He immediately gauged the limitless possibilities of this process. From then on his was but one dream, of himself as the Brahma creating steel.

Though his roaring furnaces roared releasing rivers of molten base metal, ultimately expressing itself in piles of dollars at a breathless rate, the native nobility of this Americanised Scot remained constant.

One of his thoughts expressed in his private memorandum when he was a young man was that he should live in Oxford for a few years to give himself a 'thorough education' and move in the society of English literary giants of the time. Another thought was that he should settle in London and run news-

papers and through them to fight for the lowly and the unfortunate.

Though his ideal of education at Oxford did not materialise, his inquiring soul found solace in extensive reading. His reading was so wide that in knowledge of letters and philosophy he had many dons at a disadvantage. Amongst his friends he counted Morley, Matthew Arnold, Mark Twain, Herbert Spencer and many such eminent men.

With his great steel interests in the States constantly claiming his attention, his ambition to settle in London was not fulfilled; yet he managed to spend six months in the year in England and Scotland. He supervised his business on the other shore of the Atlantic by dispatch and receipt of cables.

He purchased over a dozen 'organs of public opinion' in England and Scotland. He believed the American conception of state the most perfect conceived by man, and his mission was to educate England in the ways of Republicanism and to make it finally a pocket edition of American political and social life. It is said of Carnegie that when he first met Gladstone he told the latter in all seriousness that if England were to endure, she should ship her royal family back to where it came from, drop its aristocracy in the valleys and fill up the resultant void with a President, a Senate and a Supreme Court.

Carnegie's proprietorship of the journals came to nothing. Not to nothing, surely, seeing that all the great reforms inaugurated by Gladstone and his successors were pressed with warm advocacy by Carnegie.

In 1889 Carnegie released on the world his testament of economic faith which savours of latter-day Gandhian ethics. Not long ago Mahatmaji said that the rich ought to hold the bulk of their riches as trust for the nations. When our Mahatma was just a lad in his teens wondering at the world's follies, Carnegie held that the millions of the millionaire were not his private property, but funds held in trust for the good

(Continued on page 29)

The Letters of

Reading Time
About 9 Minutes

Cheering up Boggins

Madras, 25th January, 1936.

DEAR MOTHER,

BOGGINS is sick with a fever called dengue. He woke up one morning with all his bones aching. He said he did not feel very bad, but disliked the sensation of his eyes creaking in their sockets when he moved them about. He went off to sick-parade, and the rest of us fell in for early-morning drill. When we were dismissed, I went in search of Tom Cobboly, the medical orderly.

"Hullo, Tom," I said. "How is Boggins?"

"Oh, we took him off to hospital," replied Tom.

"Is he all right?" I asked.

"Not bad," replied our poultice-walloper. "I think he will stay in the hospital for a good while."

"Why?"

"When he got to the hospital, he looked round, and said it seemed comfortable enough. Then he saw the nurse, and said he was going to be ill as long as possible."

Nurses like having soldiers as patients. We are used to treating nurses as officers, and that idea is not very common out here yet. There is a certain

amount of suspicion about a girl who works independently, even at a noble work like tending the sick. It is difficult for people to know how to behave with such a girl. Sometimes the girl herself is not sure of the way to behave. Still, this is a difficulty that will pass away. Indian ladies are doing much to teach their menfolk about self-respect between the sexes. When a man learns to respect his wife, he is bound to respect others.

In the evening, Tiny Hopkins and I went to see Boggins. We took a bunch of flowers, and some oranges and grapes. I reminded Tiny that we were



Private Joyfull

going to cheer up Boggins, and I warned our pious heavyweight not to worry the patient about his soul.

"He shall be a brand plucked from the burning!" intoned Tiny. "When the fear of death is upon him, he will turn to Salvation! I shall wrestle with his soul!"

"But he's only got dengue!" I protested. "If you go wrestling with his soul while he's got dengue, he'll be rude to you."

"He had better not be!" exclaimed Tiny, doubling his mighty fist.

"What, would you strike a sick man?" I asked this follower of the Prince of Peace.

"No; I suppose I couldn't," replied Tiny, regretfully. "Ah, well, we servants of Salvation must expect to be kicked about for the sake of our faith."

Yet I don't think anyone has ever kicked Tiny.

Boggins was in a small ward with only two beds, and the second bed was empty. The nurse showed us the way, and gave us particulars about the case. She was a small person, with a fair skin and a composed manner. It was a civil hospital, and though she was in European nurses' dress, I think she was a Hindu lady. There were other nurses wearing sarees. While she was talking, Tiny looked at her searchingly. "Excuse me, sister, have you found the Lord?" he asked suddenly.

"I do not think he is a patient in this hospital," replied the lady, sedately; and folded her hands and walked quietly away. Tiny was quite disconcerted.

"Hullo, you ghouls!" said Boggins, greeting us, "you've come to gloat over a helpless comrade, have you?"

"I thought some cheerful company would buck you up," I replied.

"Then why did you bring Tiny?" demanded the impolite Boggins. "Come on, Tiny. Do you know any stories about deathbed-repentances, or lost souls howling in grave-yards?"



"Certainly I do," said Tiny, virtuously. "But they would be wasted on a miserable heathen like you."

"That's right," said Boggins. "Go on. Cheer me up."

After this there was a silence, and presently the silence became oppressive. "How do you like it here?" I asked, in desperation.

"Me? I'm getting on like a pick-pocket," replied Boggins.

"Like a pick-pocket?"

"Yes; I'm taking things quietly."

"How can you say such things?" remarked Tiny, in a tone of disapproval.

"It's easy," replied Boggins. "I just open my mouth, and the words slip out."

"You are a lost sheep," said Tiny. "A prodigal son."

"Ah!" cried Boggins. "Go ahead, Tiny. Tell us the one about the prodigal son."

Of course, we like Tiny Hopkins really, and let him pray and preach as much as he likes. We just throw in a few sarcastic remarks now and again, so that he won't bully us into being too holy.

Owing to Tiny's practice as a street-corner evangelist, his Bible stories are quite interesting. He does not tell the stories in an orthodox way. He dramatizes them, and makes them simple for the poor lost sheep. According to Tiny, all the people in the world except the fifty-odd members of his chapel at home, are a lot of lost baa-lambs, and he talks to them accordingly. We love his version of the parable of the prodigal son.

"It shows you how a wayward son will always return to his heavenly father in the end," began Tiny. "There was once a foolish young man who left his father, because he wanted to be independent. He had the family property partitioned, and took his share away to another country. He fell among evil companions. He went to the races, and to coffee-hotels. He attended night-clubs and dance-halls, and gave away diamonds to actresses. He soon lost all his money. His companions would not help him. He was hungry, and he had to sell his coat to get food. Then he sold his waistcoat. Next his shoes had to go. Then his trousers. He even had to sell his shirt. At last there was only his vest and pants."

"Yes?" we cried, breathlessly.

"And then he came to himself," said Tiny solemnly; and we burst out laughing.

Our pious heavyweight gazed at us reproachfully; but he is used to unseemly interruptions. Unmoved, he completed the story of the youth's repentance, his return to his father, and his gratitude for the kind treatment he received.

"Ah, gratitude," said Boggins, heaving a sigh. "It reminds me of the elephant."

"The elephant?" howled Tiny Hopkins.

"Certainly," replied Boggins. "Didn't you know that an elephant has a remarkably long memory, and is famous for its gratitude?"

"I was telling you a sacred parable!" bawled Tiny.

"Well, we listened, didn't we?" said Boggins. "Now it is my turn. When I was hunting elephants in Montenegro....."

"There aren't any elephants in Montenegro!"

"Yes, but this is a parable," said Boggins, unperturbed. "One day, in the forest, I came across a magnificent, young elephant. I had just raised my pea-shooter—"

"Pea-shooter?"

"Certainly. We always hunt elephants with pea-shooters in Montenegro. As I was saying, I had just raised my pea-shooter, when I observed the elephant lifting his fore-foot, and gazing at me in a piteous manner. I advanced cautiously. The elephant trumpeted mournfully. He lifted his foot again, and seemed to be begging for assistance."

"—So you kicked him in the pants," suggested Tiny, spitefully.

"I did not. I went closer, and observed that there was a terrible thorn in the elephant's foot. Addressing a few soothing words to the distressed mastadon, I bent down and removed the thorn."

There was a long pause. "Is that the end of the parable?" enquired Tiny.

"Oh, no. Thirty years later—"

"But you aren't thirty years old yet!"

"Of course not," agreed Boggins, unruffled. "The elephant-shoot in Montenegro took place before I was born."

Tiny Hopkins made a choking noise, and offered no further resistance to Boggins' wonderful parable.

"Thirty years later, I happened to attend a circus in Verkoyhansk."

"Isn't that up in the Arctic Circle?" I ventured.

"Ah, it is now," admitted Boggins, "but in my younger days they used to draw the Circle in a different place. Well, after a while, the ring-master announced the appearance of the largest and best-trained elephant in the world. When the elephant appeared—"

"It was the elephant from Montenegro," I suggested.

"Quite right," agreed Boggins. "The recognition was mutual. Though I was in the eight-anna seats right at the back, that elephant knew me at once. Headless of the alarm of the spectators, he made his way to the back of the enclosure, and picked me up with his trunk."

"Yes, yes; go on!" cried Tiny Hopkins, interested in spite of himself.

"You talk about gratitude!" said Boggins. "Do you know what that elephant did? Holding me firmly in his trunk, he marched back to the arena, and set me down in the five-rupae seats!"

I shrieked with laughter, and even Tiny Hopkins condescended to guffaw. In the midst of the uproar, a young doctor walked into the room.

"Good heavens!" he said. "Are you trying to kill the patient?"

"Oh, no," I replied. "We were trying to cheer him up."

"What was all that noise?"

"We were laughing over a funny story."

"Indeed?" said the doctor, quite interested.

"Who was telling the story?"

"He was," I replied, pointing to Boggins.

The doctor began to laugh. He said he had never heard of anything so funny as the way we were cheering up the patient.

"You wouldn't think it funny," growled Boggins, "if you were lying on a bed of sickness, and a couple of professional mourners came to cheer you up."

The doctor laughed louder than ever. "Well, come on, gentlemen, time's up," he said. Tiny button-holed him.

"Excuse me, brother," he said, "have you found Heaven?"

"What, has somebody mislaid it?" enquired the doctor.

Tiny gave the doctor a dignified look, and marched off down the passage with a martyred air. The doctor gazed after him, between amusement and astonishment.

"Cheering up the patient!" he chuckled, still laughing to himself.

Still, I think we did cheer up Boggins; don't you think so, dear mother?

Your Loving Son,
OBEAH JOYFULL.

THE SCOTTISH KARNA (Continued from page 25)

of his fellows. He held, it is true, that competition was the incentive to progress; but he also believed that society created fortunes. Thus according to him it was but elementary justice that all 'surplus' wealth should go back to society.

When Carnegie broadcast these startling ideas, his fortune was estimated at over three hundred million dollars. People wondered if Carnegie would apply this grand code of economic ethics on himself. There were sceptics.

What was the greatest clog on progress? To Carnegie it was ignorance. 'Level up mass intelligence', was his slogan. How? Place books in the reach of all. Educate every man, woman and child. Show each a purpose, a goal to strive for.

At the age of sixty-five, in 1901, Carnegie retired from business and commenced giving away his vast fortune. He gave away library buildings to those who asked, on the condition that those who received the benefit should undertake to meet the maintenance. He endowed the four universities of Scotland with ten million dollars. For scientific research he founded the Carnegie Institute of Washington. The Museum and Art Gallery at Pittsburg, The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Peace Palace at the Hague, all these and many more came out of Carnegie's steel.

Yet after all this deluge of gold, at the age of seventy-six, Carnegie was still left with over one hundred and fifty million dollars. "The man who dies rich dies disgraced," said he. He did not die 'disgraced'. In 1911, he assigned one hundred twenty-five million dollars to the Carnegie Corporation which was established by statute of the New York Legislature, "to promote the advancement of knowledge and understanding among the people of the United States."

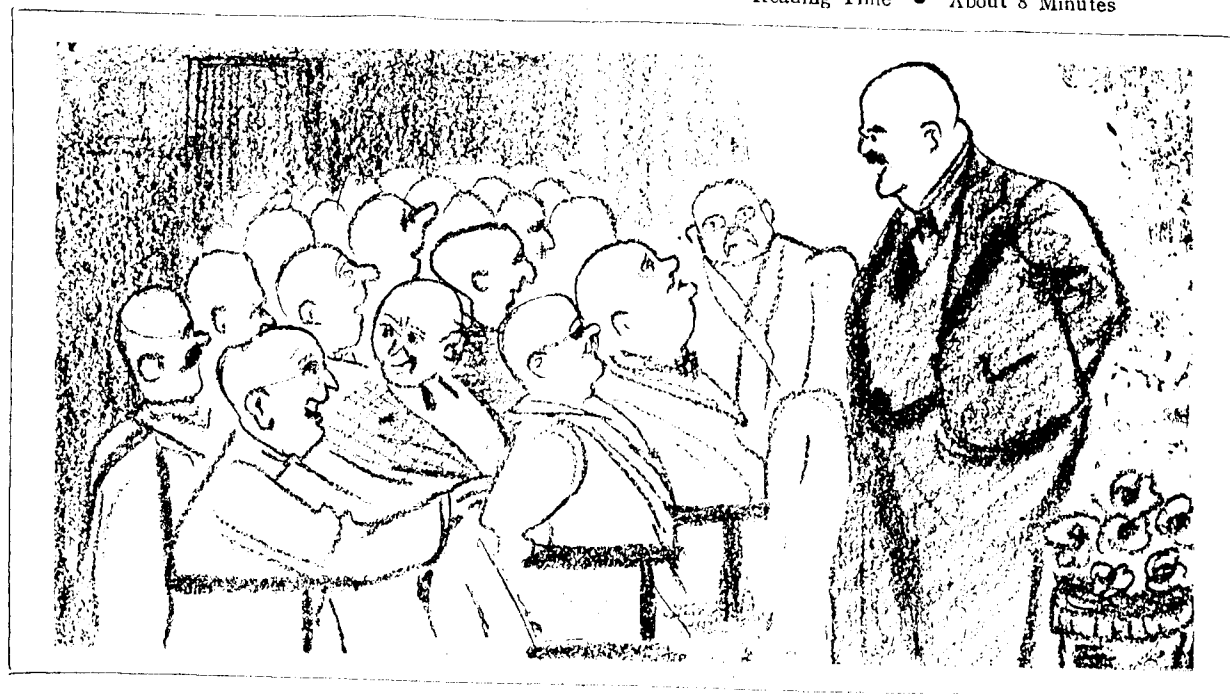
He gave away over ninety per cent of his wealth. When this fact became known after his death the sceptics dissolved in amazement.

Here was a man who made money but to spend, as it should be spent, amassed millions to hold them in trust for his contemporaries and posterity, a true gentleman, an immortal whom the world will hold in loving memory.

THE END

A Conference

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes



VERILY, truth is stranger than fiction. News has been received that an All-Japan Conference of Baldheads has recently concluded its sessions amidst scenes of great enthusiasm in Nagatora, a place one hundred miles from Tokyo. An elaborate programme was gone through and many thoughtful resolutions were passed. The example is worthy of emulation, and I hope similar conferences will be held in all parts of the world. Baldheads in India, it is authoritatively understood, are exploring the possibilities of such a gathering in the near future.

There is an old vernacular proverb that baldness is the symbol of affluence. Not so in Japan. Though Japan is a very rich and prosperous country, the number of baldheads (genuine brand!) is very small. The Japanese have long, dense hair and, it is understood, that this enterprising race makes money out of its hirsute growth to the tune of 12 lakhs of yen per year. If perchance a baldhead passes through the streets of Japan, he becomes the butt of all the people. All the street urchins call him "Fakir! Fakir!" and have a lot of fun at his expense, because, in Japan, only *fakirs* get their heads clean-shaved by barbers. This sort of thing is very provocative for a

natural baldhead. For long the Japanese baldheads—many of them being very rich—pocketed these gratuitous insults, but you know that even a worm does turn. In a storm of indignation all the baldheads were circularised and an All-Japan Conference of Baldheads was summoned to voice their resentment and assert their intellectual superiority over people with long hair. About 105 baldheads—hailing from every nook and corner of Japan—attended the Conference. Messages of sympathy were received from a few others who could not attend owing to a variety of reasons.

Among the resolutions passed at the Conference, one was that all the students and teachers in the educational institutions of Japan should be instructed by the Government that baldheads are not paupers but affluent and prosperous people who are worthy of great respect. Reactions to these instructions are awaited with great interest.

The problems of baldheads are peculiar not only to Japan. In each country baldheads have to encounter popular flings and jests. In India they are not addressed as "Fakirs!" but still their status is distinctly

of Bald-Heads by Omega

inferior to that of those who have plenty of hair on their head, and so it is time that a conference was called to safeguard their interests. I have, therefore, much sympathy with the proposal that an All-India Conference should be called at an early date, and I have also prepared a Presidential address, for I have no doubt I will be elected President. It is important that delegates should not put on any head-gear so that the visitors may be impressed by a vast sea of baldheads. I suggest that the walls of the pandal should be decorated with posters and inspiring mottoes such as: 'Up, up with Baldness'; 'Down, down with Hairiness'; 'Baldness and Affluence go together'; 'Give your Head plenty of Air and Sunshine'.

And now to the Presidential address:

"Brother and Sister Delegates:

"I am deeply grateful to you for the honour you have done me by asking me to preside over the deliberations of this first session of the All-India Conference of Baldheads. I have no pretensions to greatness. Nor is this the time to indulge in empty commonplaces and conventionalities. It is the time for action. We must consolidate our position or we are wiped out.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is an open secret that most hairy-headed people (I hope you will excuse me for this improvisation) find in us fit objects for derision. Only the other day a schoolmaster who happens to be my acquaintance described what he supposed to be an excellent classroom joke in my presence. Said he: 'I was taking a class of little boys and in the course of the text there came the word 'desert'. I had got to explain it. I began by saying that a desert was a lonely spot where no rain fell and where no vegetation grew. As I repeated it I noticed that a child's face beamed with satisfaction. Immediately I addressed him: 'Well, Tom, do you understand what a desert is?' 'Oh, yes, it is the bald head of my papa!' This story of the schoolmaster which, I dare say, is a mere product of his diseased imagination, was greeted with loud laughter in the company, and all eyes were riveted at my pate. Two or three persons, among whom one was a lady, (I expected better manners from these members of the so-called fair sex) came near and closely examined my

pate—so sleek and smooth—of which I am justly proud. They applauded the ingenuity of the school-boy who compared a desert to a baldhead. A lady remarked that she was reminded of her looking-glass. She warmly congratulated my wife for, as long as she went in my company, she had no need to carry a looking-glass in her wallet.

"Brother and Sister Delegates, this is only one of the many examples of jokes that have been cracked at my expense. I am sure most of you have got your share of derision. And all this simply because we do not carry about a large quantity of hair on our heads.

"But now that we are assembled in this Conference, I must indulge in some truth-telling even though it is unpalatable to the hairy-headed or shall I say 'hare-brained' people who mock at Nature's dispensation. I have made a very careful study of the effect of long hair on the brains of people and let me tell you without any intention of flattering you, that baldheads are immeasurably superior in intellect and wisdom to hairy-headed people. Lord Buddha, our great spiritual teacher, was convinced of it and so he got his head clean-shaved as soon as he entered the hermitage. I have collected figures which clearly point out that 99% of the Eastern savants, sages and philosophers were either baldheaded by birth or by choice. They did not like to flaunt a large quantity of hair over their head for they knew that hairiness and intellectual acumen did not well go together. Most of them had no superfluity of hair on their head right from their birth—an evident mark of genius. The rest of them delivered whatever hirsute growth they had to the barber's razor. For the full development of the brain it is necessary that this parvenu of hair must be eliminated. I have noted in many cases that, as intellect advances, the hair begins to fall from over the head. Many people in their profound ignorance make frantic efforts to get back the hair. They apply all sorts of hair-oils and ointments in order to stop Nature's inscrutable working, but their efforts prove of no avail.

"It is not realised by most human beings that hair is a great obstruction in the mental health of their wearers. Now medical science has established the fact that the scalp of the head requires fresh air and

sunshine as do other parts of the body. With a dense crop of hair growing over their heads people do not get the energising influence of good fresh air and sunshine. The brain draws its food from Nature through the skin at the top of the head. If you cover this skin with long dense hair, you are mentally dwarfed.

"Moreover, you should know that in the present age it is a luxury to keep hair. These are times of economic depression, and all nations, as well as individuals, are making efforts to cut down useless expenditure. If you have no hair on the head, you save a lot of expense. I assert with all the emphasis at my command that from an economic point of view 'hairiness' is sheer extravagance. You can't allow the hair to grow wild. It must be regularly cut, combed, brushed and oiled. All this means a huge waste. If you don't keep your hair tidy, you are sure to fall a prey to many skin diseases. It has been estimated that in clipping the hair of the head about 4 crores of rupees of the world are being spent every day or 120 crores of rupees are being wasted every month. This huge fortune is enough to feed the poor of the world who do not get even one square meal a day. Nor is this all. Just think of the millions and billions of rupees that are wasted in manufacturing hair oils and hair creams. I was really astounded to note the colossal extravagance into which the world had fallen by reason of superfluous growth of hair over the head. What a boon it would be to humanity if scientists succeed in discovering some depilatory lotion which would once for all remove all superfluous hair.

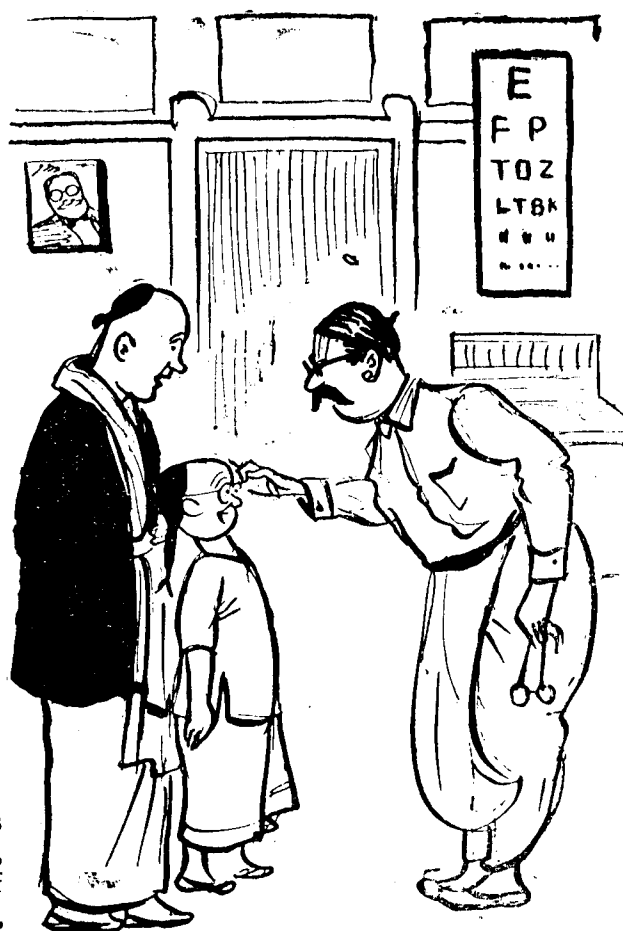
"Brother and Sister Delegates, you have often heard the proverb that baldness and affluence go together. This is not a mere coincidence, as some of you might suppose. It is a direct corollary to that axiom which I have laid down, that baldness means intellectual or brain development. In the wake of intellectual advancement prosperity must follow. Most of the brain workers, professors of universities, Judges of High Courts, research scholars, Executive Councillors display a beautiful and clear pate which is symbolic as much of their clarity of thought as of material prosperity.

"To my lady hearers I have a special word to say. At the outset I must confess that the number of bald-headed women in the world at the present moment is very very small. If you will pardon me for saying so, it is an evident sign of intellectual inferiority of women to men. When your brain develops fully, you will also begin to shed superfluous hair from above over your head, and men will bow to your judgment

and mental strength. So far men have encouraged you to wear long hair with the selfish purpose that you may never reach their intellectual eminence. It was a skilful move to keep you in a state of perpetual mental subjection. I am happy to find that many women have now given up long hair and shingling is getting into vogue. It is my earnest hope and prayer that in the course of a few decades women will give up their hair altogether and a new era of female emancipation will dawn on the face of the world. Some of you might say that hair is a sign of feminine beauty and that women who have shaved their heads will look hideously ugly. This is wrong, absolutely wrong. I say that clean-shaved women will look simply charming. Beauty has been described as the elimination of superfluities, and who can deny that this hair on the head is a rank and needless overgrowth? The sooner it is consigned to the barber's clippers, the better it will be for humanity."

THE END

A GOOD PAIR



The Optician: This pair will make him look ten years younger.

A Lesson In Mesmerism

by T. M. Francis

Reading Time
About 5 Minutes

I met him suddenly in the bazaar.

"Why, Seenu!" I gasped, looking eagerly at his long face. "How did you manage to make yourself scarce all these years?"

I had not seen Seenu for five years and I had missed him very much. He greeted me as effusively as ever, though with a touch of superiority.

"How do you do, Hipps?" he called out, extending his arms like a performing doll. He had not changed, at least not in calling me with that dear old name of Hipps, as he was wont to, and I smiled happily.

"What were you doing all this time?" I asked him.

"I was studying," he replied, triumphantly. "I was studying Mesmerism and the Mysteries, and now I am a master in them. Come to my rooms."

We reached his place and settled ourselves comfortably in his study.

"My dear Hipps," he said, "of all the arts Mesmerism is the most useful. I can twist you round my finger and make you do all that I want you to. I shall exhibit my skill. Wait a minute, old man." He left me for a while.

Presently Seenu reappeared dressed in an old garment.

He stood before me, fixing his eyes intently on me. After staring at me for some moments he began:



"Now, now, my dear boy, you are standing before a great, great power—Repeat that," he said.

And I repeated, laughing within myself. "But," I began—

He raised his hand solemnly to enforce silence and continued:

"Now, you see before you a devil—a devil with an ugly face and a long nose. Don't you, my child, don't you see the ugly devil?"

"Sure, I do," I confessed, gazing on his face—moving with ugly and violent contortions.

Again he began, his voice rumbling: "Now I am going to kill that woman there—Repeat," he said; and I did so.

"Now you are going to kill that woman there, do you hear?" And he gave me a dagger and pointed to some place and said: "Go!"

"But, my dear Seenu, there is nobody there," I assured him. "Are you dreaming?"

"Is that so?" he said. "Why, one of my calculations must be wrong. All right." He brought forth a

(Continued on page 35)

Flapper Ahoy!

by Koi Hoi

Reading Time

About 6 Minutes



THEY have been at her again! I really feel it in my heart to pity the poor flapper. She has a very bad time of it indeed. Now, as I say, they have been at her again!

The latest offender, as it were, in this respect, is Lady Pauline Applesauce. According to her, our flappers' faces are a mass of powder. Their mouths are simply gashes of applied red—you remember, of course, that red is to be the prevailing colour this season. The flapper, according to this authority, is doing her best to emulate the courtesan. "The stinking reek of her," says the lady elegantly, "makes me long for a breath of God's sweet air."

This is drastic language. This is indeed going for the poor old flapper with the gloves off. This is out Bernarding the late Father Vaughan with a vengeance.

I really think not.

Every now and again—as regularly as somebody hears the cuckoo in March or somebody else discovers that it is impossible to broadcast the nightingale—somebody is bound to discover new sins and virtues for the flapper.

General Flappdoodle, M. P., you know, only the other day said that girls in his constituency never used powder. Perhaps, of course, he meant baking powder—but everybody inferred that he meant face powder. The result was a storm of denial. The modern flapper does not mind being credited with a shining halo, but she objects strongly to being accused of a shiny nose.

That, however, is by the way. I mention it merely to show that there are two sides to the flapper question.

Some girls, I believe, still go about with faces—and noses—that shine like a polished apple in a fruiterer's shop. They radiate health. They are obviously good potential mothers of heroes. Nevertheless, the average man will engage them as housemaids, and when it comes to booking a wife, he will want something that does not shine quite so much. When you come to think of it, it's only natural that the girl who uses powder should be the first to go off.

Some old savant who ought to have known better once said that Nature unadorned is adorned the most. He may have just visited some ancient picture gallery, or he may have been arguing with a wife who wanted a new dress.

Nature is a much over-rated impresario, or virtuoso, or entrepreneur, or whatever you like to call her. She is to art what an artist's colourman is to an artist. She supplies the raw material. A canvas and a tube of paint are not in themselves a picture. In exactly the same way a female, a box of rouge, and some powder are not in themselves a woman. To achieve that much desired effect they have to be skilfully

mingled. If there were no shiny noses there would be no race problem.

I don't, of course, refer to the Grand National. But I dare say you know perfectly well what I mean.

I should like you to consider this one question: Is it fair to ask a flapper to be natural?

What would it mean? Instead of the dainty, delectable, bright damsels we take out to tea today, we should have grubby, ragged-haired brats, who would fill us with a general great desire to hie us to a monastery.

But the flapper as produced and perfected by art—she is the essence of all roses, all the peaches on the tree, all the gardenias in the garden. She is entrancing, and bewitching, and altogether desirable. The powder she uses on her cheeks—on her pretty little nose—is the real bloom on the peach. The little rouge which sometimes she rubs upon her cheeks only hides a passing paleness. One might as well blame a man for having a black eye painted out!

Perfumes, too, become her. We do not blame her for wearing flowers, but if she dares use the essence of their fragrance there be among us who seemingly regard her as a lost creature. She is nothing of the sort. She is just a delightful, pleasure-loving, pleasure-giving person who makes herself pleasing to the eye. Nobody quarrels with her dainty dresses, her silken hose, her high-heeled shoes. Why on earth, then, should they expect her to be content with a shiny nose? It is scarcely logical.

Of course there are limits to this sort of thing. None of us likes to see any woman, much less a flapper, wearing so much powder that if she happens to weep, her face becomes something like the sketch map of the canals of Mars. Nobody likes to see a woman painted up that you cannot even take tea with her without sustaining a severe attack of painter's colic.

There was a model once who went to Chelsea studio so made-up that the artist for whom she was to pose absent-mindedly put her on the easel and placed his canvas on the model's throne. But perhaps that instance is a little too far-fetched.

The sweet unadulterated bloom of youth is a very much over-rated thing. It smells of brown Windsor soap, and has corn-stalks in its hair. It makes no appeal to any but the bucolic male, who, as likely as not, prefers turnips to hot-house peaches.

You remember that old story about Venus and Adonis? A promising young writer called Shakes-

peare had something to say about it. The goddess tried all her charms upon the lovely boy, but in vain. She relied upon Nature—and the fastidious fellow simply jumped into the pond.

Now, if she had only used a little powder and rouge, the course of mythological history would have been altered. It was her shiny nose that put Adonis off. Probably, too, her face had caught a touch of the Sun, and she had no cold cream handy. I think Venus is much over-rated as a vamp. Any modern flapper could give her eighty yards in a hundred and beat her in a walk. If Adonis were to be tempted today in Piccadilly he would not dive into any pond—he would merely dive into the nearest bank to cash a large cheque.

I think we should allow the modern flapper to have her own way in the matter of assisting Nature. If she wants to use a little powder, then for goodness' sake let her use it—so long as you remember to brush your coat before you go home to your wife! No battle was ever won yet without powder. As for rouge—well, again I must point out that red is to be the fashionable colour this season.

You can take it from me, a staid old bachelor, that the flappers of today make the mothers of tomorrow; but the shiny-nosed flappers of today make the old maids of tomorrow. A shiny nose can never seriously poke itself into any man's matrimonial business.

A Lesson In Mesmerism—(Continued from page 33)
glass full of colourless water and proceeded: "Here you see a glassful of water. Now, now, hear me, this is turning redder and redder—redder and redder like the rays of the setting sun in the golden West. This is wine," he said. "Drink!"

"Thanks for the water," and I gulped down the contents of the tumbler as my friend gazed at me with horror.

"Failed again!" he murmured. "Now you have drunk that wine. Do you hear? You have drunk that fiery red wine and you feel giddy. You feel sleepy; your eyes close and you are immersed in a deep, deep sleep and now you are sleeping."

I closed my eyes and walked towards the door.

"Where are you going?" Seenu's voice called after me.

"I am walking in my sleep," I said, as I closed the door behind me.

I learnt a few hours later that poor Seenu was off his nut.



Leave It to Latif

By A. T. M. Thomas

Illustrated by Verma

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

LATIF, my man, you know, is a very resourceful chap. Whenever I run short of ink, he nips in with a strange mishmash of water, soot, methylated spirit and *pulvis* charcoal. No wonder, the editors often complain of receiving smudgy Mss. from me! Well, he is as resourceful as he is good at inferences. If he sees me with a few samples of woollen material, he will deduce a tailor and send for him. Sometimes when I go up the terrace and contemplate the landscape for inspiration, Latif will surely stand beside me with a binocular. Very smart, I call it.

One morning when I was skipping through an old furniture catalogue, I heard Latif's voice come floating on a short-wave from the kitchen, ordering the gardener to go and fetch Munuswamy the carpenter immediately.

"Latif," I said, "I am thinking of getting a furniture-piece from CHOPWOOD & Co."

"If I may suggest, sahib, the prices of these English firms are extortionate. We can locally get made as good a piece of furniture as the Chopwood's."

"Is there any good carpenter hereabout?"

"Lots, sahib. There is Munuswamy, for instance, who can make excellent cabinets."

I didn't want cabinets and left them to the French Prime Minister who is better than any cabinet-maker I can think of.

"I don't want cabinets. I have an *escritoire* in my mind."

"*Escritoire*, sahib?"

"Yes. A writing-desk of sorts with drawers and things."

Latif did a spot of puckering with his eyebrows. He cast about in his mind for a motive which would show my explanation comprehensible. He, by a logical process, which is his own secret, came to the conclusion that the sahib was going to commit matrimony. His mouth split into a grin.

"Stop grinning, you son of a grasshopper. Can you trot out a carpenter who can make *escritoirs*?"

"Yes, sahib. Venugopal is the man for writing-desks."

Within three minutes, Latif produced Venugopal from the kitchen. According to him, Venugopal was a master-craftsman and could carpenter anything, and that an *escritoire* was a mere child's play. His craftsmanship must be seen to be believed. But we—that is my sister and myself—were not favourably impressed by this super-craftsman. Though I have not the makings of a physiognomist in me, a look at his index was sufficient to goad my mind to supply me with the info, heavily underlined and in capital letters, that the fellow was an arch blockhead. Somehow I consoled myself that his unpretentiousness might be the sign of a good craftsman and pointed out to him that he should make an *escritoire* similar to the one in the catalogue.

Venugopal contemplated the *escritoire* with the meditative eye of a mackerel and then shook his head dubiously. After brooding a while, his eyes, by an inexplicable chemical process, became phosphorescent with intelligence. "Ah! A table!" he said, looking at us knowingly.

"No, your ass-ship, an *escritoire*," I corrected him.

"A writing-desk, like the one at the Jones sahib's," amended Latif.

Venugopal was nonplussed and became exophthalmic for a while. He then held the picture close to his eyes and pored over it as if it were a geometrical problem. My sister suggested whether we could not pick up an *escritoire* for a song at any of the auction-

neer's instead of trusting our orders to Venugopal and his type. I could have fallen in with her suggestion without demur but for the fact that the carpenters 'endorsed' by Latif could make *escritoirs* for half-a-song. Finding the follower of Sheraton still brooding over the picture in a goofy sort of manner, we gave up all hope of his reproducing it in wood and as an almond-for-the-parrot, stipulated that we would be content with an *escritoire* that should be as near an approach to the one in the catalogue.

Latif was hurt. He thought we were belittling the carpenter's capacity. He assured us that *escritoirs* were in the line of Venugopal and if he only went at it, hammer and tongs, he could make a magnificent *escritoire*—with baize on its surface, plush inside the drawers, carved knobs and so forth—that would strike our friends dumb with envy. I had to put in the good old caveat because (1) we were socialists; (2) we were lowbrows; (3) our house was too unworthy to contain Venugopal's masterpiece; (4) our friends should be chatty and not remain as fish; (5) envy might lead to aphonia. Considering these things, I insisted on having a plain mahogany *escritoire minus* baize, plush and carvings.

When the disciple of Chippendale had gone, I let into Latif. "Shame upon you, you cousin of a caterpillar! This is how you let us down, you grandson of a cub of a Werewolf. Why do you try to pass upon us mutton-headed blokes for carpenters? Your mug-ship, no doubt, is a useful adjunct to any household!"

"May the curses of Aladdin's Jinn rest upon my head if I had let you down, sahib," protested Latif, greatly pained.

"The first curse of Aladdin's Jinn will take the form of your dismissal."

"Let me be the sport of the Jinn if I do not see that you get your money's worth, sahib. It is unthinkable that I shall ever bring an incompetent carpenter. Ease your mind off it, sahib. I make myself personally responsible for the *escreeet*. Leave it to Latif, sahib."

We left it to him, of course, with gloomy forebodings. A week later, the *escritoire* arrived. To our surprise, it was quite a good one. It was mahogany—in colour. Its dimensions defied geometry but withal, it was solidly built and neatly varnished as to be serviceable. After pointing out to Venugopal that all the drawers were innocent of locks, we worked ourselves into an appreciation over Venugopal's masterpiece.

"Excellent," crowed my sister with delight.

(Continued on page 39)

The Business Side of It

by T. A. S.

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

[BEING some letters from Mr. A. B. Iyer, to Professor X. Y. Iyengar, A. M., L. B., S. E. R. F., Principal of the Tiptop Tutorial College]

June 3, 1934.

My dear sir,

Yours of the 1st., enclosing the bill for my son's fees at your college for the coming year. I have directed my Secretary to make payment immediately and remain,

Very truly yours,
A. B. Iyer.

July 6, 1934.

My dear Professor Iyengar,

Your letter of the 5th received. I find, on investigation, much to my chargin, that you are right in thinking that you have not received tutorial fees for my son. The matter was bungled by a clerk in my office, who also, I regret to state, stupidly lost your bill. Kindly send another, when the matter shall have my prompt attention. Begging your indulgence.

Very truly yours,
A. B. Iyer.

August 10, 1934.

Dear Professor Iyengar,

Yours of the 9th July should have had attention sooner. My absence from the city on important business accounts for the delay. I find, on examining your second bill, that it is Rs. 25/- in excess of the first. I dare say this is only a clerical error, but before receiving my remittance I am sure you would prefer that I have a corrected bill. Awaiting this, and with kindly greetings for the approaching festive season.

Yours truly,
A. B. Iyer.

September 5, 1934.

Dear Professor,

Yours of August 12th is received. Of course, your second bill was the same as the first, now that I recall

it, I cannot understand why I should have thought it to be otherwise. Please inform me by return post if you can use a cheque on my local bankers, or if you would prefer a draft. On receipt of this information, the matter will be squared without delay.

Very truly,
A. B. Iyer.

October 17, 1934.

My dear Professor Iyengar,

I find your letter awaiting me on my return from Burma. I cannot understand why you have not been paid, as I left specific instructions in regard to this matter before sailing. My own illness and the absence of my General Manager have, however, somewhat demoralized my office staff; still I cannot believe that your cheque was overlooked in the face of my positive orders. I shall institute a rigid investigation and write to you presently. My son writes to me that he is making rapid progress and enjoying life immensely at your college.

Yours sincerely,
A. B. Iyer.

November 2, 1934.

Dear Professor Iyengar,

Yours of recent date. My investigations took more time than I expected, but I am pleased to say that they show a cheque was sent on September 17th. I cannot understand why you have not received it. I would suggest that you ask your local Postmaster to search his office for it. I doubt not that it will be found. I still have glowing reports from my son, and remain,

Yours truly,
A. B. Iyer.

December 31, 1934.

Dear Professor,

I regret exceedingly to learn that you have been unable to get any trace of any letter of mine containing the cheque. I shall see that the General Post Office takes up the case. I am confident that the

cheque will yet turn up. Anyhow I am running up to your place to-morrow, and shall hand you the money personally. I make the trip, partially that I may see something of the splendid work you are carrying on in your school, so enthusiastically reported by my son.

Sincerely yours,

A. B. Iyer.

January 12, 1935.

Dear Professor Iyengar,

Sudden illness prevented my visit to you on the 1st inst., as planned, and pressure of work has since made it impossible. That I at least should not fail in my promise, to put the money in your hand, on that day, I sent the clerk with the cash, and I am dumbfounded to learn from you that you did not receive it. The fellow has, since, left my employ, and I fear he has defrauded me in other ways also. I have put an expert on his books, and I have also notified the police. I should enclose my personal cheque, but since you mention that you expect to be in town on Saturday, I beg of you to call at my office, that I may hand you the money and thank you personally for your kindness to my son. Can you not time your visit so as to have coffee with me at four in the evening? With pleasant anticipations of your call.

Yours sincerely,
A. B. Iyer.

January 29, 1935.

Dear Professor,

I beg a thousand pardons for my seeming rudeness in being absent when you called. The sudden death of a brother took me away from the city. I telegraphed back instructions to my cashier to hand you the money and explain my absence, but it seems the message was delayed. A new business arrangement requires that all cheques be sent on the first of the month; yours will accordingly go to you after to-morrow. By the way, kindly send me a dozen copies of your school prospectus. I desire to give them to such of my friends as have boys who will attend school next year. Again begging your pardon, and with the earnest hope that you will visit the city again soon, I am,

Yours truly,
A. B. Iyer.

February 20, 1935.

Dear Professor,

Your letter is received. I should have written to you before, but supposed that you saw in the newspapers the account of the fire which destroyed the buildings where my office was situated and would understand the reason for my silence. My affairs are in a chaotic condition. In fact I am a ruined man. In the circumstances, I am afraid, you will have to wait indefinitely. Yes, thanks, my son has reached home safe. He has nothing but praise for you. I share that sentiment heartily.

Hastily,
A. B. Iyer.

LEAVE IT TO LATIF—(Continued from page 37)

Latif, the sly dog, beamed expansively. He was supremely satisfied that he was able to procure for us the paragon of an escritoire. I dismissed Venugopal, paying him Rs. 55—the sum agreed upon—and with a testimonial, since he badgered me for one so that he could finesse some cuckoo of a somebody into an acceptance of his services.

"Now that we have got the escritoire, why not we auction the old writing-desk?" suggested my sister.

"Good idea!" I exclaimed and immediately rang up the auctioneer, asking him to come over to our house.

The auctioneer—an old acquaintance of ours—examined the writing-desk and said he would be able to bring it under the hammer for Twenty-five rupees or thereabouts. We then proudly displayed to him our escritoire, which, we told him, had cost us fifty-five rupees. The knight of the hammer ran a critical eye over the escritoire.

"Oh! I didn't know that you were purchasing this escritoire?"

"What do you mean?"

"Last week, your servant Latif was bidding for an old, worm-eaten—"

"Whew! This is Venugopal's masterpiece. The escritoire is brand-new. Fresh as paint."

"No doubt, fresh as the paint—it has on. Looks quite new, what? Very deftly touched up. Fresh as the Jubilee Medal, isn't it?"

This auctioneer evidently belonged to the Jupiter school. Every statement of his was a thunderbolt. With his final bolt he transfixed me.

"Not a bad bargain—for twenty rupees!"

Star Snaps

Toll of Film-fame—(concluded)

Playing Love Scenes With Torn Legs!

Claudette Colbert acted in *Four Frightened People* suffering from acute appendicitis. She was sent to a nursing home for operation but, fearing that someone else might be assigned for her role, she came back, hardly a fortnight after her operation. She played the part standing waist-deep in a swamp for hours on end in a Hawaiian jungle. There was a continued downpour to add to her difficulties. No camp fire, no hot food and no warm blankets! Everyday she reached the swamp, ten miles from her camp, riding most of the distance, and footing the rest of the way, barelegged, through the dense, thorny undergrowth which fairly ripped a part of her legs and shin. In the middle of these torments, she had to play light-hearted love scenes with William Gargan!

She Smiled With a Broken Heart!

Katherine Alexander, who acted with Norma Shearer in *Barrets of Wimpole Street*, was in the middle of a comedy scene when she was told there was a telephonic call for her from New York. She went to the telephone laughing and, after a few minutes, came back, to continue her part, with a bewitching smile on her face. The scene was completed and everybody on the set took the message to be of no great importance. When she was leaving, the director dropped a query as to who called her. It was from her lawyer, she said, with unmoved calmness, to tell her that her husband, William A. Brady, was killed in an accident. Her continence was praiseworthy for, if she had given way to her grief, she would not have been able to complete the scene and the hundred odd extras would be thrown out of work and lose the meagre salary they were so badly needing!

Realism!

Clark Gable's part in *After Office Hours* included his fighting with Hervey Stephens who plays the villain. The fight was to be carried on, around and over a two-ton heavy sofa. In the picture, as we have seen, the situation reproduced is strikingly realistic. It is so because the sofa turned completely over and caught one of Gable's legs pinned beneath it. The agony was terrible but neither the director nor Clark Gable himself allowed this to interfere with the take. They didn't want the realism spoiled! In spite of the situation being a little different from the script, the take was finished with a grin on Gable's face. When it was over, a doctor was sent for and an X-Ray made. The sofa had broken two small bones in his foot!

Astaire-Rogers Split

The great dance-acting team—Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers—is to split.

Two years ago, neither of them was a famous stage dancer, held back from the stage as

lacking in screen personality. Ginger Rogers was just a rising actress.

This team made three sensational successes together—*Gay Divorcee*, *Roberta* and *Top Hat*. Each of these hits was a record-breaker, breaking even the box-office record of its predecessor. They have netted millions for the producers. This team will make one more picture *Follow The Fleet* before going their different ways. Fred's partner in his next film will be Harriet Hocter, the American stage dancer.

Astaire has signed a new contract with Radio Pictures which will fetch him over half-a-million dollars in 1936. His rise to film fame has been phenomenal. Ginger Rogers whose partnership with Astaire has secured stardom for her, also got a rise in her salary from 1000 to 3000 dollars a week. It was rumoured, but promptly denied each time, that they were not getting on well but Astaire's is too nice a man to give trouble! Whatever the reason the break will be greatly regretted by Astaire fans.

He is 35 and his wife is Phyllis Potter, a millionairess. The Astaire home is awaiting the stork next month!

Thelma's Tragic End

There has come another split, but as a result of a tragedy. There will no more be the 'Todd-Pitts Corporation' comedies.

Miss Massachusetts of 1932, Thelma Todd, is dead. Her end is reported to have been under very tragic circumstances. Foul play is suspected as her body was found abandoned in a car near her cafe in Pacific Palisades, two days after she was dead. There were discovered bloodstains in the car and over the dead body.

Zasu Pitts and Thelma Todd were an uproarious team of unique screen comediennees, and this tragedy must have come as a severe blow to Zasu Pitts.

John Gilbert Gone Too!

Death has removed John Gilbert too. After Rudolph Valentino, John Gilbert was the greatest romantic actor. His fame was built during the days of 'silent' pictures. The advent of sound handicapped him severely for his voice was not suited to the 'Talkies'. The only talking picture in which he has acted is *Queen Christina* with Greta Garbo whom he had helped considerably to become a star. He was forty when he died (2nd week of January). He married and divorced four times. His first marriage was with Olivia Burwell in 1917 whom he divorced in 1922. His second wife was Leatrice Joy, 1923, whom he divorced in 1924. His third wife was Ina Claire, married in 1929 and divorced in 1932. The last marriage with Virginia Bruce, at 1932, also ended in divorce. He was divorcing her in 1934. He has one daughter. At the time of his death, he was an M. G. M. star.



I WAS RIGHT OFF MY GAME



GOVIND, WE'RE HOPING YOU'LL PLAY IN THE MATCH ON SATURDAY. YOU WERE BOWLING WELL LAST SEASON

I'M AFRAID I'M RIGHT OFF FORM, BUT...



SATURDAY

WILL YOU TAKE ME OFF NOW—I'M TIRED OUT

WHAT, AFTER THREE OVERTS? YOU OUGHT TO SEE A DOCTOR!



SO YOU ALWAYS FEEL TIRED? YOU ARE NOT REPLACING YOUR ENERGY AS FAST AS YOU USE IT, AND YOU SUFFER FROM ENERVATION. —I WANT YOU TO START TAKING HORLICK'S AT BEDTIME



TWO MONTHS LATER

BY JOVE! YOU WERE RIGHT. GOVIND CAN PLAY. THAT IS THE SIXTH WICKET HE HAS TAKEN!

YES, AND HE SAYS IT'S ALL DUE TO HIS DOCTOR PUTTING HIM ON HORLICK'S

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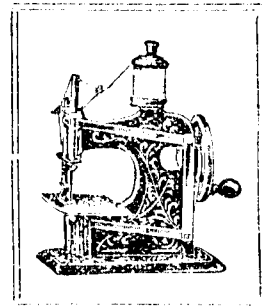
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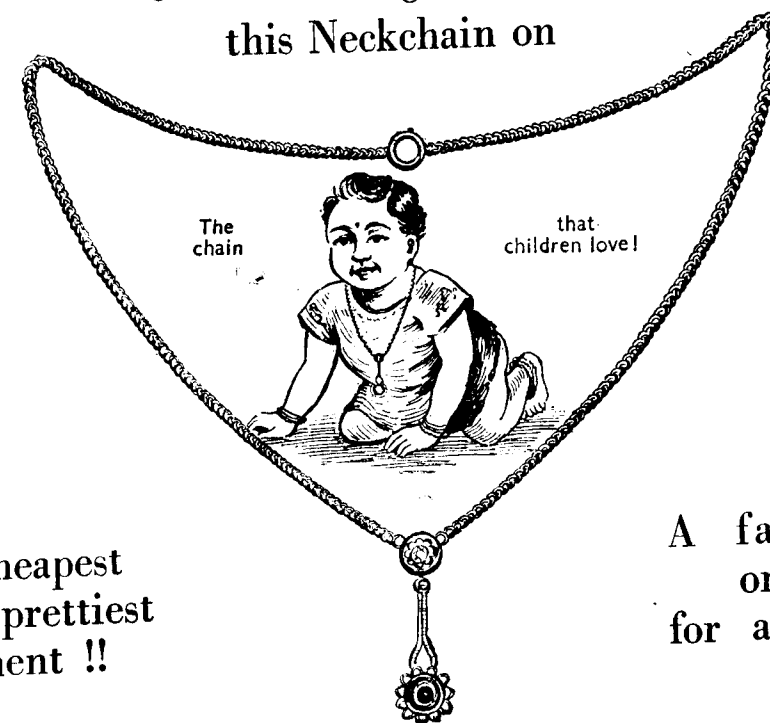
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ZIP

Gives Them New Life

Zip makes old gramophone records new and new ones better. There is nothing so jarring to the ear as the screeching noise of worn-out records. But it is not just to throw them away for that reason.

Dr. Zip offers you a remedy. "ZIP" oil is an infallible restorative. A little poured on a piece of cotton wool and rubbed round the worn-out record with a brisk circular motion brings back the tune with full richness.

Each bottle can restore 48 records. Neatly packed in a card board box with instructions for use.

Price Rs. 2-12 per bottle

(Postage Extra)

THE "ZIP" STORES, P. B. 1358, MADRAS.