

The MERRY MAGAZINE



Vol. IV Madras, 15th February, '36 No. 7

Mea -
A. A. Roland
Miss Cornflakes

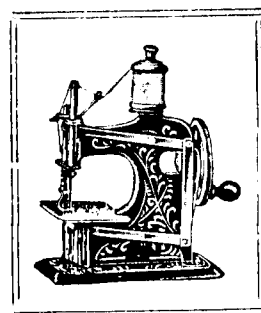


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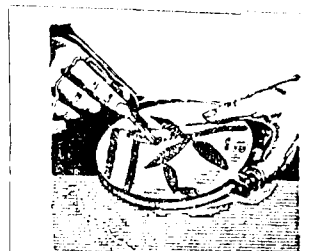
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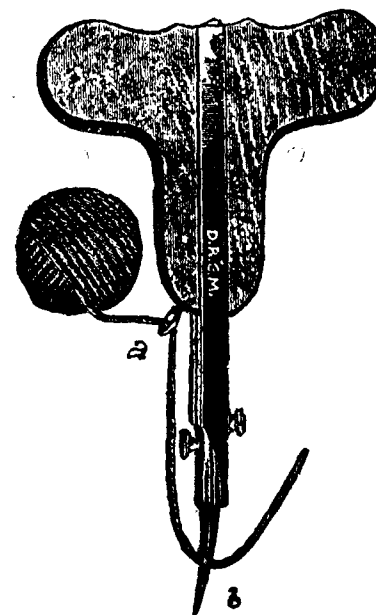
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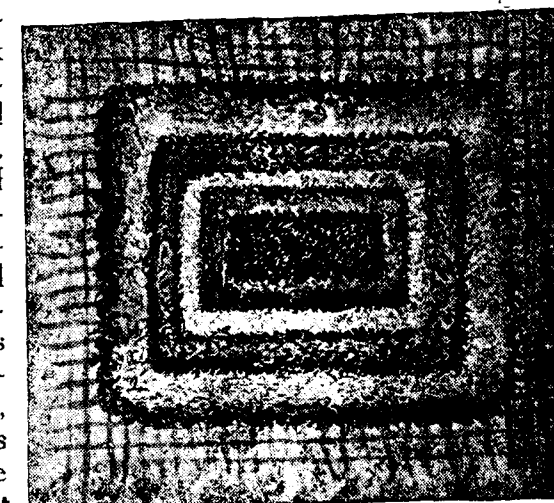
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The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



Madras, Feb. 15, '36

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Embusque

The Dissatisfied Wife

How to get along with a dissatisfied wife? Quite easy. Let her run past you. And Embusque gives a tip with refreshing impartiality to the girls—"If you are dissatisfied with your husband, put powdered glass in his dinner." A bit revolutionary, but workable.

Dorothy A. Scott

Training Schools

Timely tips for people who want to go into the Tutorial College trade.

V. Vyasa Rao

The Confession

Confession, especially the death-bed one, gingers up one's soul no end. But don't rush headlong into a confession, as this chap did.

Julian Adolphus Higgs

Glamour!

The author told us (privately of course) that he was an authority on Hellenic, Nordic and Britanic beauty cultures. We looked at him and at his name, and we believed him. So would you if you read his article.

Also

Auntie Replies
V. V. Narayanan
P. P. Samuel
MacNaughton Thomas
Etc.

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

India has beaten Australia in the final 'test match' by 33 runs.

It is only fair to say that no responsibility for this result attaches to the Selection Committee!

* * *

Cricket enthusiasts are now exercised over the question whether Major Nayudu would be dropped from the English tour.

If he is not, the same question should worry English players more!

* * *

The Nawab of Pataudi has resigned from the Selection Committee and the Captaincy.

We do hope he will be lucky enough to play for England at least!

* * *

Mr. Macartney describes Amar Singh as an 'electrical hitter'.

But we wish he wouldn't short-circuit himself so often!

* * *

As the result of a bye-election, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is back again in the House of Commons.

But with a changed front.

* * *

It is further said that his son is still suffering from a damaged eye.

That was apparently due to his egotistical canvassing.

H. H. the Agha Khan is reported to have said that he would accept nothing less than the Governorship of a province.

Evidently he is suffering from a fit of the blues!

* * *

Incidentally, there is considerable relief in Imperial circles that he does not insist upon the Viceroyalty!

* * *

"Why don't you pay four annas and join the Congress?" asked Sir Henry Craik of Sir Cowasji Jehangir when the latter voted against the Government in the first Assembly division of the present session.

We can think of one reason only: just to make our small tin-gods look smaller!

* * *

And Sir James Grigg added: "I'll lend you the four annas."

Melancholy meanness: for great salaries and little loans go ill together!

* * *

The Committee of Experts have come to the conclusion that Italy cannot find substitutes for oil.

This is the latest reason for postponing consideration of an oil embargo!

Mr. Surya Kumar Som'an M.L.A., proposes through a bill that widowers should only remarry widows.

It would serve to destroy the weeds.

* * *

Count Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law has left for Abyssinia, as a result of the recent Italian 'victory'.

With a few more such victories, we wonder for what destination Mussolini himself will leave!

* * *

In the Assembly, the Army Secretary is reported to have said that Indians may be trained in the higher branches of the army in the next great war.

We distrust these promises for the future, from past disillusionment!

* * *

A head-line says: 'French Population is Falling.'

That is how they get practice to get into the Cabinet!

* * *

A speaker in the local Council claimed that the Hindu Religious Endowments Board has done good to men and gods.

This surely must be considered the highest achievement of our ministry.

The Week in the Assembly

It was an extraordinary exhibition of futile rage which was given by the Treasury Benches when their unsportsmanlike attempt to choke off the non-official bill for the repeal of repressive laws was justly foiled by the House. The Congress is very much on the brains of the Home and Finance Members. This undisguised and provocative attitude is hardly decent; it is positively fatal to the growth of any sort of understanding between the Government and the people. It is to be hoped that both these gentlemen are heartily ashamed of themselves, in their calmer moments, if any. The Englishman is supposed to have the grace to take a defeat gracefully. Either this is an imaginary virtue claimed by him; or these two mighty and potent seigneurs are poor specimens of their race. A government which is identified with such men is not likely to command that measure of even passive tolerance which is after all what the bulk of every people gives to the state.

The demoralisation of the Treasury Benches is doubly deplorable; for it is a portent of what lies in store for us under the new constitution wherein autocracy in principle as well as in detail is clothed with legal sanction. How glibly the Home Member spoke some time ago about a change of heart among Congressmen, and how little he understood the implications of that phrase, as oddly it did come from such an unexpected quarter!

We shall not congratulate Sir Cowasji and Sir H. P. Moby for doing the obvious and decent thing. It was once said that if you scratched the Moderate, you'd find the Extremist. Which is only another way of saying that popular representatives cannot always be unpopular to oblige a third party! As the session goes on, there are bound to be further 'clashes' of this type. We only hope that the Opposition will muster in its full strength and play the game, whatever the Government spokesmen say or do.

The Wizard Again

Confession, they say, is good for the soul; and it is to be hoped that Mr. Lloyd George feels spiritually better after his recent speech in the House of Commons on Mr. Lansbury's motion for a pacific settlement of the present European situation. In effect, Mr. Lloyd George wants a redistribution of 'colonies' and mandated territories so as to avoid another clash in the next few years. The Imperialists were at once up in arms, and the resolution as amended by Tory fervour ended by saying just the opposite of what Mr. Lansbury wanted! But there is no doubt that Mr. Lloyd George laid his finger on the sore spot in European diplomacy. Hitler is deliberately, though guardedly, coming out of his shell. His recent speeches have the virtue of candour. He wants colonies, not so much for the usual economic reasons, but for others suggested by the pseudo-philosophy of Nazism. The British jingoes have taken up the challenge. In the same breath, they refer to Britain's responsibility in regard to mandates, and add at the same time that they would never surrender or share it with others. The piling up of armaments only accentuates the instability of the international equilibrium, and the inevitable crash must come, sooner or later. There is no indication, in Britain at least, of any attempt to forestall it, except by the old, discredited method of being prepared for any emergency. It is tragically true of politicians, as it was of the Bourbons, that they learn nothing, and remember nothing!

Indian Cricket

The present Australian tour has not only ended very favourably to us, but has revealed one or two truths which should be of great encouragement to us. There is plenty of first-class material. If we can only sink personal differences and prejudices, and think of the team as a whole; we are bound to shape into a force to reckon with. Wazir Ali was not only lucky but capable of inspiring loyalty. And of these, we need the latter far more than the former!

The Pen is Mightier than the Sword!



Mussolini: Your sword is broken, Badoglio, what'll you do now?

Marshal Badoglio: Never mind, Signor, the quill is still with me!

(Marshal Badoglio, it is said, is personally supervising news from the Italian front.)



The cricket temperature of Madras which ran dangerously high the preceding fortnight has come down. The fourth unofficial test contested in Madras by our Australian friends and All-India has ended in a reverse for the visiting team, rendering the honours of the tour even.

What I think of cricket as a rational sport is not much; it is not even sufficient to make a limerick about, let alone a song. However, that is no reason why I should not congratulate everybody concerned, including those humble band of selfless workers who, defying sun and rain, sold in and around the M. C. C. grounds baked peas and groundnuts to all and sundry. To these humble merchants, I wish increasing prosperity. To such of the All-India side who are not married, I wish lovely wives, perfect screams in point of beauty. To such who are happily married, I wish a couple of chubby babies each, like you see in Glaxo and Cow & Gate Baby Food advertisements. If they are birth-controllers, I shrug my shoulders and send up a prayer to Heaven.

To our visitors, I wish a pleasant voyage home, and all the foregoing wishes.

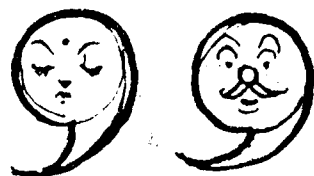
In one way this cricket jamboree was a disappointment for me. I and thousands like I (or me) have felt there was something missing on the Australian side. The something, as you have correctly guessed, is a Kangaroo. I beg of His Highness of Patiala to remember this next time, and ask the Australians to bring over a couple of Kangaroos, preferably with their babies—the Kangaroo babies, of course.

The March

by The Man

Last but not least I tender my humble thanks to His Highness the Maharajadhiraj of Patiala for giving Indian cricket enthusiasts a swell time, and the Cricket Board of Control for supplying the comic interludes.

In a letter to the *Hindu*, correcting a misconception or a misapprehension or something, Dr. Eileen J. Macfarlane, Ph.D., D.Sc., says: "...Sex with us is correlated with a pair of equivalent (homomorphic) chromosomes in the female, and in the male with a pair of non-equivalent (heteromorphic) chromosomes, called the X and Y chromosomes....."



There, in a nutshell, as it were, is the whole bally question of sex for every ass of a layman. If there be still some with impervious skulls, I am not at all impatient with them. I will simplify it still further for their benefit.

Now, a woman has got two x's. i.e., $(x+x)$.

A man has got one x and one y. i.e., $(x+y)$.

Therefore the whole idea of sex is simply $= (x+x) \times (x+y)$.

If by any chance these x's and y's get mixed up, what happens? Simple. A lot of baby x's and y's. What?

That is all there is to it.

Interviewed by a *Madras Mail* correspondent at Anantapur, Mr. T. Prakasam is reported to have said: "If necessary Congress

Ministers will not hesitate to surrender their salaries for National Purposes and be Satisfied with the Allowances that May Be Given by the Congress Organisation."

(As you have guessed, all the capital letters are ours.)

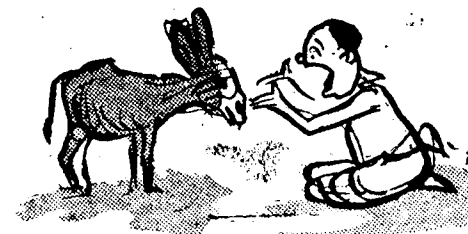
Well, this is sad news. As a consistent Congresswallah for ten years, I was expecting as my reward the Chief Minister's portfolio (not the thing of leather, but other thing, the real goods). To make sure, I had even gone to the length of registering my name with Bhulabai Desai, Nariman, Satyamurty and the three General Secretaries of the Congress. If the dark hint conveyed by Prakasam through his Anantapur interview is a rough idea of the shape of things to come, I notify for the information of all and sundry that I am withdrawing my candidature.

I must now cast about for a suitable and profitable line of business. I think, if nothing untoward



of Events

On The Move



happens in the interim, I will make and sell dung cakes to Mussolini as a substitute for liquid fuel.

After a lapse of thirty years spent in service throughout India, a Kumbakonamwallah returned to Kumbakonam. He advertises this fact through the "Letters To The Editor" page in a leading South Indian paper. What does the thirty years' absentee see? The same old mosquitoes, the same old wayside smells, the same old open drains, the same old periodical epidemic of cholera. The traveller is dissatisfied, disappointed. He exhorts the Kumbakonam Municipality to do its duty by its citizens.

I call that unreasonable. As it is, the virginity of our ancient tradition is no longer immaculate. It is being befouled by the impact of two civilisations. The game has proceeded far enough. Let us call a halt.

Ten years ago I visited Kumbakonam. It was love at first sight. I fell in love with its plump, musical mosquitoes, its nose-getting forget-me-not road-side smells, its rippling, giggling, smiling open gutters. My mind recorded an indelible picture. Last month I visited Kumbakonam a second time. I had a thrill. I felt myriad hands extending a spontaneous welcome. The old mosquitoes, older and plumper, the smells stronger and more forget-me-not, the open drains as mischievously giggling as ever. If all these weren't there to gladden my heart, I would have taken the next train back.

These are the landmarks of a hoary tradition. Let us preserve them, friends.

I like Poet Noguchi of Japan who had honoured us with a visit

not many weeks ago. My enthusiasm for the Poet and his mystic utterances cannot be allayed. Like you feel an itching sensation inside your tummy which you cannot scratch. But that is by the way.

Before leaving this country Poet Noguchi said—"Gandhi is the soul of India. I visited Gandhi.....I was not allowed to speak to him, but it is not necessary to speak to him.....We looked at each other, and that was everything."



I wish I were a poet. I wish I could look at Claudette Colbert and say that that was everything. I wish I could look at the broken nose of Sir Samuel Hoare and say that that was nothing. I wish, I say, I were poet enough to look at the India Act, and say it was *Purna Swaraj*. If I were a poet!

The Aga Khan says that he fails to understand Hindu-Muslim differences in the face of the fact that questions such as education, child welfare and maternity, hygiene, etc., were matters of common concern to all.

So do I fail to understand. I am particularly one with the Aga about Maternity. Except in the case of a fortunate few who descend on us *via* immaculate conception, I believe this maternity business is the same for all,

whatsoever his faith—Muslim, Parsee, Christian, Hindu or Atheist. That is, of course, my private belief; but I am always open to correction, because the doors of my mind are always open, like the doors of the Bishop in *Les Misérables*.

The method of our advent being such, it ought to be a bond drawing man to man (or woman if you will). Look at the monkeys, donkeys, crows, vultures, cockroaches, snakes, jackals—any department of sub-human life. You will notice in their communal life an order, a synthesis, a cosmic plan, the Hand of God—except when these unlovely creatures are much too hungry physically or sexually. Even then there is a definable method in their madness. It is so because to them God is not a tyrant. He just makes them and fades out. These creatures don't bother about God and the hereafter; but they do bother a lot over politeness for one another. Place a chunk of cow's meat before a drove of jackals. They will either eat it up or leave it alone. You will never hear one jackal calling it Manna and another jackal calling it Corporeal Sin. Throw a bit of pork before an ant-colony. The same thing happens. The colony takes it or leaves it. No discordant note is struck. One section of the colony doesn't call it Valhalla Sweet and another section does not call it Abomination.

If I sing to a donkey, he either hears me politely or ambles away in a bored way.

Boiled down, what does it all amount to? Comment is superfluous, as the millionaire said when he saw his wife kissing his chauffeur.

N. E. W. S.

Huey Long was a big noise when he was alive. Now that he is dead, one would think that all was silent. But no. His fan-mail after his death is over 2,000 letters a week. His tomb is guarded. When an English visitor asked a Louisiana man if they were guarding Huey's tomb to keep away souvenir-hunters, he was told that the guard was not so much to keep the souvenir-hunters out, as to keep Huey in!

Mr. Mark Angel, the famous clown, now in happy retirement, says that during the twenty years he was the laugh-maker of thousands of circus-goers, he received on an average, twenty slaps on his face every day. From this reckoning, he has left out the extra matinees. Angel says that the energy put up behind all these slaps would be enough to propel an express engine two times to the top of Mount Everest and then half way up again!

Bees without stings have been spotted in Rhodesia. In spite of this biological defect, or perhaps because of it, they are said to yield excellent honey.

Otto Purnanen of Minnesota was tired of life. He put a gun to his left side and...bang! He didn't die! He is in the hospital coming round famously. His heart is *not* in the right place. It is on the *right* side!

Here is the latest from Dollarland. A lady by name Mrs. L. Zeppenfeld was driving in her car by the countryside. She pulled up under a tree and had a little refreshing siesta. She woke up and stifled an

unbecoming yawn. Then she felt queer. Something missing-like. She put her hand to her mouth. The upper plate of her false teeth was missing. A thief had lifted it while she was at her forty winks! Some thief.

The late Kipling's fine house in Sussex is used by air-pilots as a land-mark. One day, not so long ago, Kipling met a pilot. "I know you, sir," said the pilot, "you are a round pond, a square pond and six chimneys in a row."

Kipling had a hearty laugh. The pilot didn't know anything about Kipling's books.

Some two and a half decades ago, a bull almost derailed a mail train steaming into Anakapalle platform.

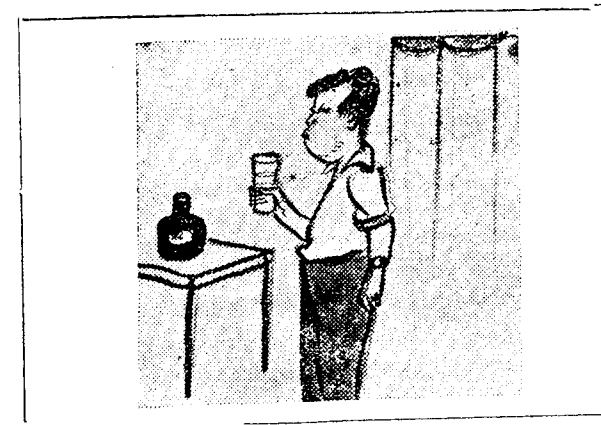
Not so long ago, in a Malabar village, a cobra bit a farmer at work in a paddy field, and, after an hour's struggle, came the end, not for the man but for the cobra. The man had only to bandage his wound and he was all right.

Near Fayum, Egypt, a passenger train was charged by a buffalo and derailed. Some passengers were seriously injured. The buffalo too was killed by the impact.

A 'black-out' is in store for the world a few months ahead. A total eclipse of the Sun which will last for two-and-a-half minutes. However the whole world will not be 'in at the death'. The lucky country to get the benefit of the whole show is the Soviet, where scientists are booking lodgings. The black belt will be 80 miles wide.

The Unemployed Graduate

by Embusque



When he realised what he had done, he dashed the glass to the floor. Heedless of the cries of the bartender, who wanted four annas for the breakage, he staggered into the street. The draught of liquor had done its deadly work. The young man went blindly along, a victim to delirium tremens.

He had only gone a few paces when he encountered a Salvation Army lassie, who was doing rescue work in the neighbourhood. In a drunken frenzy, the young man took a flying kick, and broke her tambourine.

When the maiden perceived what had occurred, she uttered a cry, and placed the mark of the Lord upon the young man, using an uppercut that she had learned before she was saved. Then a policeman came along and removed the corpse.

And the moral of this story is, don't go breaking other people's tambourines.

ONCE there was a young man who came to the big city to find himself a lucrative position befitting his talents. He haunted all the employment agencies, and nearly starved to death. At last he got a post—breaking stones—along with all the other college graduates.

His companions were abandoned fellows, the victims of despair and low habits. After work was done, they lured the young man into a dram-shop, and tempted him with a jorum of country spirit. Now the young man had promised his dear old mother never to put his lips to a glass of alcoholic liquor. To overcome this difficulty, his degraded companions proposed he should lie on the floor while they poured it into him.

The young man refused; whereupon his evil colleagues jeered at him, and called him a coward. This reminded the young man of the Old School Tie. He would let no one call him a coward. He seized the beaker of potent spirit, and drained it at a gulp.



THE END

"Ma, Do Yc

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

BEFORE his neat cottage stood Dharm Singh, looking at the distant hills; yet his mind was not there. His mental gaze penetrated those heights and stretched far beyond to the Khyber. He was in a reminiscent mood.

Dharm Singh bore his three score and ten years wonderfully. He stood erect as if mocking the puny weight of time. His flowing patriarchal beard lent a peculiar dignity to his furrowed face. He was a retired sepoy.

He stood gazing far away. An asthmatic gurgle close at hand brought him down from the reminiscent heights he was floating in. His crony, comrade-in-arms in many a scuffle across the Frontier, Rup Singh, ambled to his side leaning on a stick. He was of the same age as Dharm Singh. The contrast between the two was painfully marked. Dharm Singh defied age. It laid Rup Singh low. It was easy to see that his end was near.

They greeted each other with a smile in which was expressed the mutual devotion of a life-time.

"Bhai Rup Singh," said Dharm Singh, advancing towards his friend, "you are late today."

"Eh? Yes, yes. I am feeling—"

"How are you feeling, bhai?"

Rup Singh essayed a reply but lost himself in a convulsive fit of coughing. Dharm Singh took his hand and conducted him to the pial. Dharm Singh's daughter-in-law brought their customary evening tea. Rup Singh brightened at the sight of youth and cracked an old army joke with his friend's daughter-in-law. They laughed. Tea finished, the girl set their *hookha* before them, and left them to shift for themselves.

Rup Singh had the first pull at the *hookha*. He enjoyed the smoke, paid the price of it by coughing violently, and handed over the hubble-bubble to Dharm Singh.

"Bhai Dharm Singh," said Rup Singh, "I feel I am dying. I—"

Dharm Singh laughed. "Dying! It seems to you are as fit as a bridegroom." But he knew that friend's day was very near.

Rup Singh shook his head. "No, bhai. I am not sorry I am going. The world has used me well. But there is a heavy burden on my soul. For thirty years the memory of a crime is haunting me. Before I go, I want to tell you about it. I may die any day now."

"You commit a crime! I don't believe it," said Dharm Singh.

"It is a fact. I did commit a crime. It was thirty years ago. You remember that bloody engagement on the Frontier when we lost Randall Sahib, our Commander?"

"Perfectly."

"It was dark. The tribesmen were sniping incessantly. We were replying with greater effect. At about nine that night the Chota Sahib gave me a message, and commanded me to deliver it to the Commander Sahib who was further up the lines. I crossed the quarter mile to him under cover of the boulders and delivered the message. On the way I



Tell Lies?"

by V. Vyasa Rao

passed close to Virbal Singh who was a few yards behind the main line, crouching behind a boulder. He was leaning over it and peering into the star-lit night to locate any unwary ruffian."

Rup Singh paused for breath. Dharm Singh pulled on at his *hookha* without comment. The former continued.

"You know we had an old score to settle, I and Virbal. He killed my father and laughed at justice. We could not shake his cleverly put-up alibi. That slumbering wrong woke in me. On my way back from Randall Sahib I stopped behind Virbal. Twenty yards behind him. He was still staring in front of him. I thought I might not get another such opportunity. There was a deafening spurt of fire from the enemy. I took aim and shot Virbal through the back."

"We were engaged in a murderous game. My murder escaped undetected. I was disgusted with myself. I exposed myself all that night to unnecessary danger. I did things which passed for heroism and

earned me an unmerited distinction. We routed the tribesmen in the morning. The victory cleared the mists of passion from my brain. The crime of the night stood before me in all its enormity. I have repented for it all these weary years. God have mercy on me! I cannot meet death like a soldier with a crime on my soul."

Dharm Singh put away his *hookha* and laughed boisterously. He patted his friend's back lovingly. He said: "So you think you killed Virbal? Listen, bhai. You have nursed a wound for thirty years, which was never there. On that night, Virbal and I took our position behind the same piece of rock. A stray enemy bullet got him. He died without a word. I propped him up in that position which you saw, and took up shelter behind another boulder a little to his left. I saw you stopping behind him. I saw you take aim. I saw Virbal, already a corpse, collapsing to the ground by the impact of your bullet. I chuckled and kept quiet. It was not my business."

Rup Singh gulped. Emotion smothered him in another asthmatic fit. "You, you mean I did not murder Virbal."

"Yes, bhai. Nothing more, nothing less. You never murdered anybody. Sleep in peace."

Later in the night while his daughter-in-law was serving his supper, Dharm Singh asked her: "Ma, do you tell lies?"

"No, sir," said the girl, wondering at the question.

"Well, don't hesitate to tell a lie if it makes a friend happy. Just now I was telling the biggest lie of my life to my friend Rup Singh. He is the happiest man in the world today!"

THE END





Sensational! Colossal! Magnificent!

Imagine if you can a low room 20 feet by 30 feet fundamentally modern in design and yet with something vaguely elemental behind it. Superimpose Miss Ditchtrecht in her chauffeur's overalls and fireproof crash helmet. Add a liberal quantity of make-up to a face which was not intended for that variety of treatment. Introduce an orchestral accompaniment compounded of a braying donkey and on ex-operatic soprano. You will have a faint idea of the vision that burst upon my bewildered eyes when I entered the apartment of Leanette Ditchtrecht—Ditchtrecht the beautiful, the glamorous, the magnificent, the greatest actress of a generation, the platinum empress of the silver screen.

I sat on a sofa of morocco leather endeavouring rather unsuccessfully to fulfil my duties as a reporter. Miss Ditchtrecht of course is curled up beside the fire with half her skirt on the wrong side of the grate and that queer haunting look in her yes which comes from indigestion and an overdose of nitrogen peroxide. It is obvious even from a cursory glance that she is the best dressed woman in Hollywood. Her figure puts the Venus de Milo to shame. Her legs are the type which can safely follow the skirt into the fire,



without causing any appreciable loss to the nation. Nevertheless Miss Ditchtrecht has flair, dignity and individualism which glamorises even the most pedantic apparel. As a matter of fact her rose-and-milk complexion is amazingly well

My Theory

(Applying to Miss Leanette

Reading Time

About 7 Minutes

adapted to the *outré* fashions which are her choice. The helmet appeared to be a combination of tungsten and aluminium but the actual composition is a commercial secret. However in conjunction with her unorthodox and slightly dirty attire the effect was, to say the least, divine. An ink smudge applied with superb artistry completed a dashing original *ensemble*.

Her speaking voice is rich and warm and nasal. It carries the faintest trace of accent. I remember asking her how she came to adopt so peculiar a dietion. Her reply was characteristic.

"You like it, don't you?"

"Madam it is terrific—magnificent! It reminds me of a file among the pine trees."

"A file? How apt! And yet how cruel! But I want to be harsh. It is my destiny. Remember I am a human being—not a machine. I have the right to speak like a file, and I demand the right to speak like a file. Ever since my childhood I have loved the sound of saw-blades. They are so thrilling—So mellowed—So romantic. They drive me crazy with delight. I suppose you get what I mean. A file may be superficially ugly but it has a kind of artistic challenge. It may not be soft or tender but it is deep and stirring and elemental."

"But talking through the nose—"

She gave an expressive shrug.

"That is my temperament. I'm the type of person who cannot stand convention. I must be individual. And besides I sincerely believe that talking through the nose gives a woman originality and finesse."

I agreed wholeheartedly. Miss Ditchtrecht's conversation has all the mellowed sweetness of an untuned violin played by a dissipated musician.

On the subject of her private affairs she was remarkably eloquent.

"My life has never been happy. No one has appreciated me for what I am. The world has laughed at me, sneered at me, despised me. I have been called a sinner, because I have had six husbands. Can you imagine a greater, viler, more blasphemous untruth. Because I was fundamentally, honestly, sincere; because I would not allow the affairs of work to interfere with the constitution of love—I am I despised

of Happiness

Ditchtrecht, the Famous Film-Star)

by Miss Gloria Cornflakes



and forgotten? The world cannot appreciate idealism in its proper perspective. It is too hide-bound, too trammelled by convention or fixity of purpose. With me money has come first, the husband second. You can call me coarse, sophisticated and material. Criticism is the one true index of achievement. What does a husband's convenience matter when the fate of genius hangs quivering in the balance? Why consider a paltry bout of crockery-throwing when a woman's happiness lies before the stake? I may throw the dinner service at my husbands and I do make off with the gardener's watering can, but these things are only an advanced expression of genius. A man should learn to make sacrifices for a woman and the world should make its due concession to greatness."

When I remarked that a soup plate is a painful proposition, she showed no resentment but retorted.

"Personally I wouldn't think of injuring a flea but even film-stars need diversion. This is the only sport which provides for my artistic talent. Incidentally it keeps me fit and ensures my figure against over-development."

That brought us to the question of glamour and here Miss Ditchtrecht was in her element.

"Be modern. Be yourself. Study your personality and emphasize its characteristics. Don't try to imitate another. Be modern. Be yourself. Develop your assets. Remedy your faults. Be modern. Be yourself. Never follow fashions without intelligence. Cultivate commonsense. Be yourself."

Then she gave a few 'inside' hints on beauty and its culture.

"I advise sand for the complexion rubbed in with vanishing cream. To this add a mixture of barley and hot potatoes pounded carefully to a pulp. Boiled eggs and tomatoes employed with discretion can do a world of good to a woman's hair. A beef steak softened in orange juice and passed round the body in a counter clock-wise direction helps to eliminate that extra flesh. Incidentally a boot-brush vigorously wielded gives you that warm glow of vitality men find it so difficult to resist. Beauty is after all a

simple proposition. I adore 'Wardonia' soap because it gives me the largest commission. Commissions have a certain elemental fascination.

"Modern fashions will, I am convinced, tend in the streamline direction. This is an age of speed and it is absolutely necessary to reduce your wind resistance. The woman of tomorrow will be a masterpiece of scientific design. Clothing will be terse and dramatic. Sealskin should come back to popular favour. If you want to be really up-to-date, see that your automobile matches your finger polish."

And then she confessed that she yearned for the patter of little feet, that her adoration for infants passed the bounds of comprehension, that her greatest ambition was to be alone and to experience a solitude unhindered by publicity and newspaper reporters. She longed to kneel in carpeted woods, beside the scent of white gardenia, to lie beneath her garden oak, with the autumn leaves around her, to dream, to meditate, to wonder and in her own humble fashion to create.

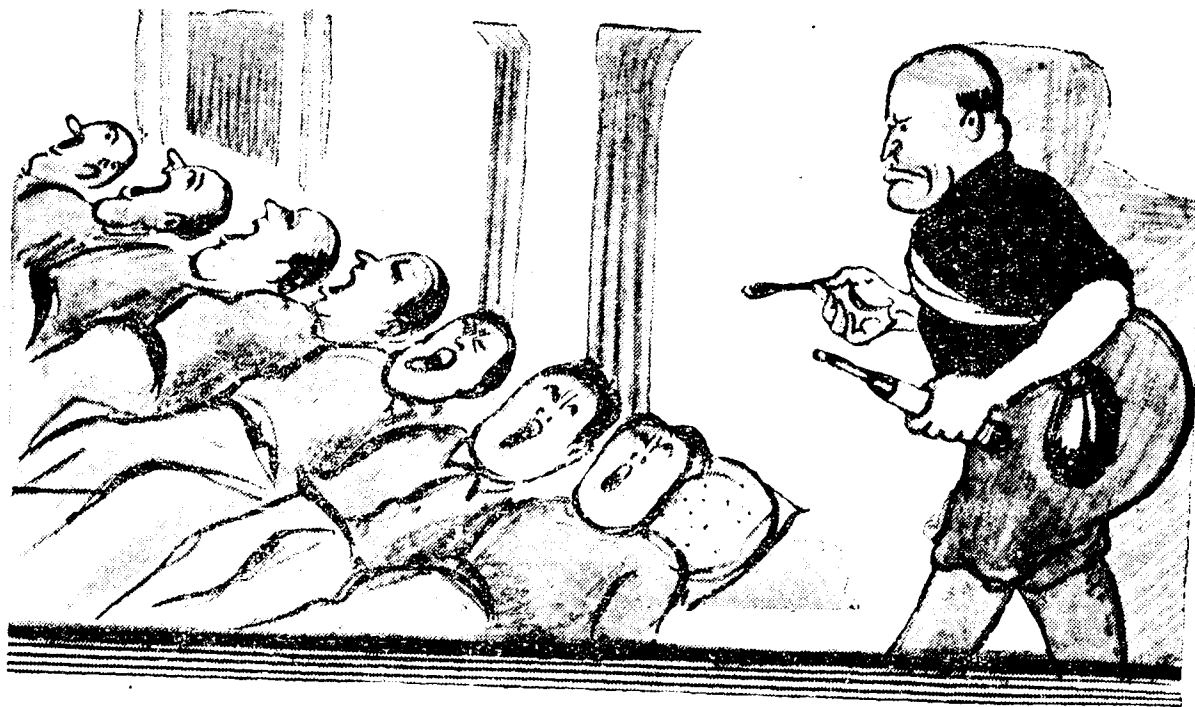
Comment is superfluous. There was only one tree in her garden and that was a sycamore.

I wonder sometimes what will become of her. She is an idealist and the world is hard on idealism. But in her mascara-laden eyes, shines the light of

great and commercial ambition, ambition that will either carry her to the heights of achievement or consign her to a glorious obscurity.

THE END





Oils & Italy

Reading Time • About 10 Minutes

by Mie

ADDRESSING his battalions at Leghorn Mussolini recently said: "People of Italy! We will fight till the last drop of our oils."

If Mussolini did not say so at least he meant it: for oil to Italy now is more precious than blood.

It is curious to note what an important part oils have played in the rise and spread of Mussolini and how much the political history of Italy has depended on them.

When fresh from the butcher's shop and the army, Mussolini stood on an upturned barrel and faced the many-headed monster and rotten eggs and carrots; when he brushed past the King of Italy, enthroned by divine right; when he first tasted the wine of triumph and the cognac of political power and when his foes were more numerous than his present legions and increased more quickly than mushrooms, oil—it was oil—that came to the rescue of Il Duce: oil it was that showed him a way of deliverance. In short oil made Mussolini what he is.

Castor oil. Not a denial of it but a surfeit. Not a ban on it, nor a prohibition, but abundance. Castor

oil flowed like water in post-war Italy and the land was purified, for none dared to look defiantly at Mussolini. A calm and restfulness and tranquillity pervaded the country. Whispers round the corners, meaning looks, hidden messages, poised daggers, all vanished. Mussolini's bitterest foes looked up and moaned, "Il Duce, Hail!"

How did Mussolini achieve this unity in the country? How did he bring round foes and retain friends? How did he remove the cloud overhanging Italy more threateningly than Vesuvius? As I have already indicated, the talisman was castor oil. Mussolini did not put his foes in internment or detenu camps; he did not apply "third degree" methods; he did not stand them against the wall at dawn. He gave them oil. To confirmed enemies he gave 5 tablespoonfuls; to ordinary enemies he gave 4; to those who merely did not like him 3; to those who were indifferent 2; and to such of his friends or partymen who showed signs of leaving him 1 spoonful. The effect was immediate and completely satisfactory. Friends again rallied round, and foes forgot their

bitterness, while all joined together and stood around him thanking him.

Yes, Mussolini had not forgotten the deeds of his illustrious predecessors or the great Italian traditions—the Medicis, the Borgias, especially the Borgias. But poison was nasty. It left corpses on one's hands, and dead men these days told a lot more tales than living men could, however hard they might try. It also meant a diminution in numbers, and didn't the country need its youths?

So the Duce cut out poison and substituted an article which was greater than poison, which worked like it and yet left the victim fully alive to its potentialities and its properties.

Gradually, as I said, there was silence in the land, and Mussolini became—Mussolini.

Then came the war with Abyssinia. The League of Nations did not like it. They sat and decided to punish Mussolini. The arms embargo. The Duce did not mind that. Shortage of money, Il Duce snapped his fingers. Coal. Pah!

Oil! The Duce frowned. He made the sign of the Cross. He did not believe in superstition but this was so strange. His former enemies looked up to heaven and said to themselves: "Providence. The Oil Sanctions! Was this retribution?"

But what oil?

Castor! Pollax!

The people of Kerala immediately conjured up a vision of Mussolini sitting under a palm tree and looking up with despair in his eyes. But to the people of Kerala there is only one oil in the world—coconut oil. I am not condemning it. It has its own uses, its own merits, but what did Mussolini want with it? He did not want a bath, at least he was not going to have a coconut oil one. What he wanted was an entirely different oil. Kerosene, Petrol.

* * * *

Having taken Mussolini to the war, let us examine how he is fighting it and why he is fighting it. The reason for his invasion is obvious. Expansion. Italy wanted to expand. The coefficient of linear and cubical expansion in the case of Italy had multiplied.

Stout Mussolini stood upon a peak and stared at the Mediterranean while all his men looked at each other with a wild surmise.

Abyssinia.

Italy told her King that he wanted more than half of the Kingdom and other things. The King refused. The League sat. Impatiently Italy landed her legions. The League made frantic efforts to talk the Duce round; even threatened him. But ships left Leghorn and Brindisi.

Like Oliver Twist, the Duce made the blunder of asking for more. If he had been satisfied with a slice or even a substantial chunk of Abyssinia and postponed his plans till a more favourable opportunity, all would have been well. But it was not to be.

Nations one after another applied the embargoes. Iron, food supplies, war materials and most of all, gold became scarce in Italy. People rushed to offer their ornaments and coins to the Duce; at least they were rushed. One man it seems spat out three of his teeth when he was asked to contribute gold: the teeth were false and gold-plated. Mussolini himself had not much gold, though certain people referred to his heart of gold.

The war began. Italian 'planes swooped on Abyssinian cities (composed of 31 huts and a cattle-yard) and bombed them. They came back and claimed to have destroyed half Abyssinia. The casualties mounted—in newspapers.

The fact is both Italy and Abyssinia had learnt the art of war-advertising from the English, who are masters of it. It comes naturally to the English. They don't consider it lying. They will be angry if someone says it is all lies. During the Napoleonic wars Napoleon was a monster who fried children and ate them. Kaiser and Prussianism are still not forgotten in England. The English have a principle in the counting of casualties. "We are the victors. Our dead numbers only 10: the enemy have lost 10,000."

Both Italy and Abyssinia adopted the method and the press reports make interesting reading. Italy and Abyssinia have won a certain battle. Then who lost it? Italy has lost only 3 men, 15 Eritreans and 75 Eritreans wounded; while Abyssinia lost 1,500 men, 2,000 Abyssinians deserted and joined the Italians with their chief Ras (for Mc) Kalum. (This message is from Rome.)

The Italians lost 2,000 Killed. Abyssinians lost only 300 men, a vast amount of war material captured. (Addis Ababa message.)

Leaving aside these Munchausonian legends, let us consider the repercussions of the war on the rest of the world. Perhaps the most significant is the fate of Sir Samuel Hoare. Sir Samuel is the British expert on the colour question. Sir Samuel unequivocally dealt with the future of 350 million brown people; but he committed the blunder of being as summary in the case of Abyssinia. To say that he was surprised is to underrate it. "Here am I with experience in governing 350 million coloured people, brown; and am I not competent to dispose of a handful of black ones? Why, I have only to apply the same theories I put into use in the case of India to Abyssinia *mutatis mutandis*!"

Somehow it was a mishit. Newspapers and people talked about pledges to Abyssinia and the League but there must have been something else for pledges and assurances. Lord Chelmsford, Lord Reading, Lord Irwin. We have had pledges in plenty!

It could not have been the hunger for colonies, for, if any country has more than enough colonies, it is Britain. It is not hunger but dyspepsia that Britain will have.

Abyssinia incidentally has sprung into the limelight. Articles about Abyssinian customs, people, produce, in fact, everything are appearing in the press. "Thirty Day's in Abyssinia" and "5000 Miles Across Ethiopia" are coming out in every newspaper and periodical. My only surprise is that no publisher had the foresight or enterprise to bring out a new edition of Johnson's *Rasselas*. It has what is known as topical interest. It is said after the big fire of London a publisher brought out an edition of Dante's *Inferno*. After the Great Plague of London a new illustrated edition of *The Pied Piper Of Hamelin* was brought out (don't mind the dates, please). When the Lusitania was sunk, *The Boy Stood On The Burning Deck* was in great demand. Similarly *Rasselas* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are two books which it would be found profitable to issue now in a new edition. What is the attitude of countries to all this? England, France and the other pro-Sanctionist countries feel a trifle chagrined and wonder whether after all they did wise. They realise that Italy has a chance of conquering Abyssinia and if so that is something gone into another man's pocket. If they had made

an alliance with Italy they could have claimed a share of the hunt. Now, however, it is too late.

And the Emperor, Haile Selassie? With hope in his heart and a light in his eyes he called his men to arms, thinking that a defenceless nation like his would have the support of all generous countries. The Emperor probably thought of Belgium and how the big fellows patted the little 'un on the back and said: "Well done, youngster!" But the Emperor was disillusioned. True his champions talked a great deal. They met at Geneva, at Paris, at Rome, at London; one foreign minister went to the capital of the neighbouring country and the visit was returned by the neighbouring country's foreign minister; they met in committees and appointed sub-committees; the sub-committee drafted a Council of Eighteen which in its turn handed on the onerous responsibility to a Council of Five. The councils reported to each other, presented memoranda, submitted special minutes, and then it was decided the time was not opportune for action.

Meanwhile Haile Selassie waited, his eyes fixed witsfully across the Mediterranean, plaintive but courageous. He should have remembered the difference between Abyssinia and Belgium. Belgium was not full of mineral deposits as yet unexploited; Belgium was not an uncivilised country offering a pretext for an invader. In fact Belgium, though small, was on the other side of the fence, and he was on the wrong side.

Why? Because he was black. No country would dare to declare war against another for the sake of a defenceless black 'un. When England melodramatically said in 1914: "We declare war to defend a defenceless nation against an aggressor," there was applause, full approval internally. But let her as much as fire a gun at Italy in defence of Abyssinia, then we shall see a different scene.

So Il Duce will meet with no outside opposition. All the rest of them will sit on and watch, partly because they have a guilty conscience: they remember Mussolini's words about their having enough colonies. No casuistry can explain that charge away.

So Mussolini looks like winning, unless the League administers to Mussolini a dose of his own oil. But will it? Well, well.



Fun For All



Barber: Haven't I shaved you before, sir?

Customer: No, I got that scar in France.

* * * *

The visitor was examining the class.

"Can any boy tell me what a fish-net is made of?" he inquired.

"A lot of little holes tied together with strings," smiled the never-failing bright boy.

* * * *

Visitor: And what's your name, my good man?

Prisoner: 9742.

Visitor: Is that your real name?

Prisoner: Naw, dat's just me pen name.

* * * *

"Waiter, are you sure this ham was cured?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, it's had a relapse."

* * * *

Pearl: You really ought to come to Shrimpton with me next summer. I had a wonderful time there this year. I won a beauty competition.

Ruby: No, I think I'd rather go to a more crowded place.

* * * *

The speaker had been droning on for half an hour and showed no signs of ceasing. A guest sitting near was nodding drowsily. A gentle tap from the toastmaster's hammer roused him slightly, but he soon dropped off again. The toastmaster hastily wielded his hammer once more.

"Harder," murmured the drowsy one. "Hit me harder. I can still hear him."

* * * *

A small boy entered a grocer's and said: "A pound of tea at 2s. 6d., a pound of butter at 1s. 10d., a pound of sugar at 5½d., and a tin of condensed milk at 8d. And how much change shall I get out of three-half-crowns?"

"2/0½d., my boy," replied the shop-keeper, after making a lightning mental calculation.

"Oh, thanks," said the juvenile gratefully, "that's my homework for to-night."

* * * *

"I shall miss you while you are on your hunting trip, dear," said the young wife affectionately, "and I shall pray that the hunters you are going with will do the same."

* * * *

Teacher: "Really, Johnny, your handwriting is terrible! You must learn to write better."

Johnny: "Well, if I did, you'd be finding fault with my spelling."

* * * *

"Jim will be in the hospital a long time."

"Why, have you seen the doctor?"

"No, the nurse."

* * * *

Editor: To be quite candid, I can't make out this drawing at all.

Temperamental One: Drawing! That isn't drawing, that's writing.

* * * *

A man stood on a pier contemplating suicide when he was approached by a genial stranger, who said, "Wait! Before committing this rash act, talk it over with me for fifteen minutes."

Whereupon the two walked over to a bench, and conversed for fifteen minutes. After which, arm-in-arm, they walked to the pier and jumped over together—into a boat, and had a pleasant row.

The Perfect Murder

by V. V. Narayanan

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

THEY were cousins, Ratanlal and Hiralal. Their fathers were brothers. Ratanlal's father was an adventurous man. He crossed over to Burma and worked his way up—from a humble clerk to a commercial magnate.

Hiralal's parents died when he was a little boy. So his uncle and aunt took charge of him and brought him up with all the loving care along with their son Ratanlal. They denied him nothing. He never felt the want of a mother or father.

After he had made his pile, Ratanlal's father returned to India and settled down to a comfortable life in Jubbulpore. Those were the years following the War. India, in common with other countries, was paying its terrific toll of life to influenza. In that foul epidemic, Ratanlal's parents died, leaving their vast fortune to their son. Hiralal was not forgotten. A handsome bequest was made to him.

The young men continued to live under the same roof as they did from their boyhood. Passing years softened their grief. Time moved on rotating new joys and new sorrows.

His father's friends advised Ratanlal to marry. Ratanlal was willing enough. But he was a weakling. He was a young man of high principles; he did not want to leave a young widow behind. All his life a strange debility pursued him. He passed through the hands of doctors, experts in their line. The prevalent and almost unanimous opinion was that his heart was weak. They administered potent medicines and advised change of place to Puri or Vizagapatam, where the climate was salubrious. He was a willing patient. They put him on special balanced diet. The debility that puzzled doctors slowly gave way. By and by he grew robust and plump. But that strange sensation in the heart lingered.

The question of his marriage again cropped up. He was undecided. His father's friends, well-meaning-neighbours, constituted themselves into a

marriage council and cast about for a suitable bride for Ratanlal.

At this time a strange change occurred in Hiralal. All these years he was counting on the death, by heart-failure, of his cousin. He would step into his fortune. If his cousin married and if a baby resulted out of the union, his chances of inheriting Ratanlal's wealth were gone. He was worried. He was in a rage. He looked on sullenly at the preparations for Ratanlal's wedding. Hiralal's dream of a wealthy life was receding out of reach. To check its retrograde progress he should do something. And that pretty quick.

He sat down and thought. There was only one way out. Murder. He decided to murder his cousin. He thought out every detail of the crime. He perfected every move.



Ratanlal owned a bungalow two miles out of the City. Occasionally Hiralal used to spend a day or two alone in that bungalow. Ratanlal, on the other hand, hated the bungalow for no discernible reason. He never spent a day there.

One day Hiralal said to Ratanlal: "Ratan, I am going to the bungalow for a day or two. I want a change. You too come along. You ought to live in it off and on. Really it is a cool, comfortable place."

"Damn the bungalow!" said Ratanlal without ire. "You go. I am quite all right here."

"What a strange fellow you are! Why do you dislike the place so much?"

"I don't know," laughed Ratanlal. "It gets on my nerves, I suppose."

Hiralal chuckled inwardly. He knew his cousin would not go with him to spend a day in that bungalow. He packed a few things necessary for a couple of days' stay and ordered the car. He was driven to the bungalow.

He spent the day hiking the country around and returned to the bungalow before nightfall. He had a hearty meal and sat up for a couple of hours chatting with the caretaker of the bungalow and a friend whom he brought over with him to strengthen his alibi. Before retiring, he and his friend had a final cup of

tea. He doped his friend's tea. The friend slept the sleep of babes till late in the morning.

At about two in the night, Hiralal left the bungalow unseen by anybody. The caretaker was sleeping soundly in his outhouse far away in the garden surrounding the bungalow. Hiralal's friend was as good as dead. He was snoring away marvellously.

In a loin cloth, an old under-shirt and a coarse turban which covered the greater part of his head, nobody would recognise the polished, suave Hiralal. The darkness was eerie. Hiralal avoided the thoroughfares and struck across the fields. He reached home by bye-lanes. He cleared the compound-wall and entered the grounds. The two servants who lived on the premises were in their quarters farther away in the grounds. The nightwatchman, an old retainer, was fast asleep in his little bunk in the drive in front of the house.

Hiralal entered the house by a window at the back of the house. He released the catch on purpose before he left for the bungalow. He traversed the spacious halls silently and stood before an open door. A few stars twinkled through the open windows on the other side of the room. In the middle of the room was a large bedstead. On the bed lay a form. No sound assailed Hiralal's ears. Not even that of breathing. He released a small dagger from his coarse turban. He clutched it and stood undecided for a moment.

There lay the man to whom he owed everything in life. A passing qualm of conscience. He shook himself out of this unfamiliar pusillanimity and approached the bed. He raised his arm.

It descended with all the brute strength behind it. The dagger stuck home to its hilt.

Ratanlal did not move. That was strange. No man ever died with a dagger in him without at least a spasm shaking him. A horrible thought crossed Hiralal's brain. In his frenzy, he forgot discretion. He laid a shaking hand on his cousin's chest. It was cold. He touched his cousin all over the body. It was cold and stiff. He peered into his half-closed eyes. They were fixed in a glassy stare.

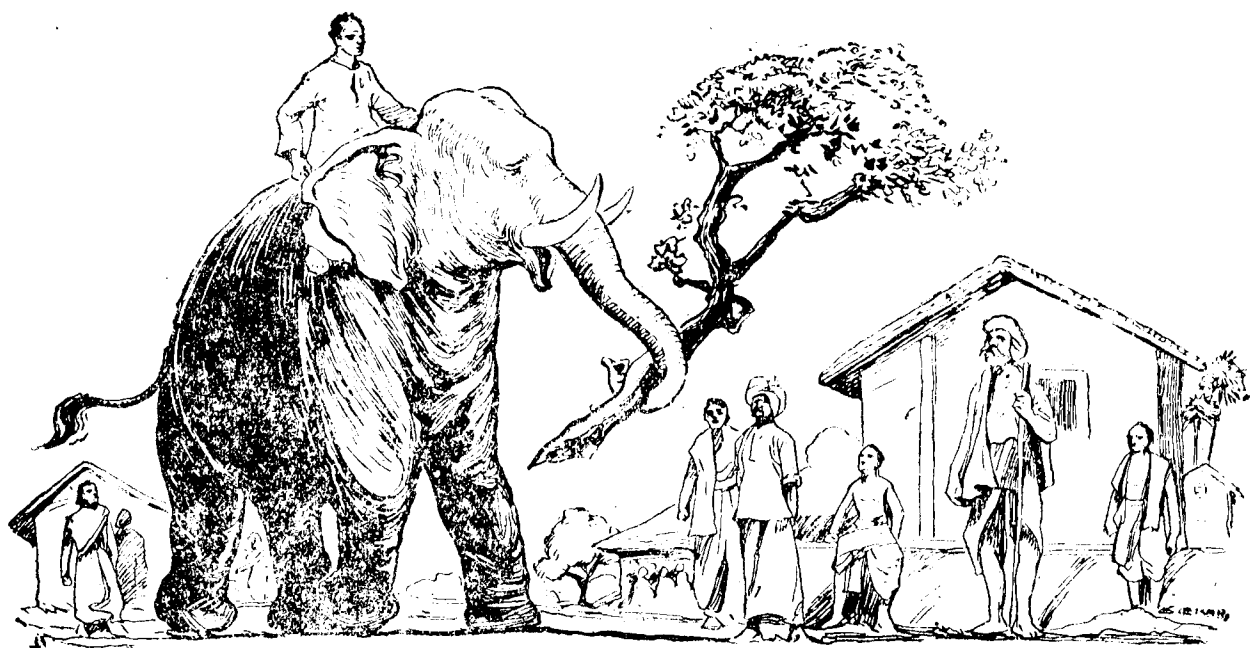
A futile murder.

Ratanlal was dead, dead before an ungrateful hand dealt him the blow. The old weakness of his heart. It failed him in his sleep.

The police arrested Hiralal next morning at the bungalow. In his fright he left his finger-prints all over the dead man's body.

The best laid plans of men and mice.....





Standing by His Friend

by A. M. Menon

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

DIVAKARAN was undoubtedly a young man of exceptional talents. But his father, obviously, did not share this view. The rare ability to tame and fly pigeons, to use a catapult well, or to poach mangoes from neighbouring compounds, was not what his father expected of him. Especially when these activities overwhelmingly banished other interests from young Divakaran's curricula, including his school books.

That was why Divakaran was now an employee of one S. R. S. Mudaliar, Bolakode, S. I. Ry., Timber Merchant. For Divakaran had not, a year ago, found the rather severe paternal discipline to his taste, and had accordingly bolted.

Bolakode was a nice place for any boy of eighteen, especially when he has to spend his time idly among coolies, maistries, and clerks who deal largely in the cutting, sawing and transporting of timber in the extensive woods outlying the place.

Divakaran was largely made use of by his boss, S. R. S. Mudaliar, in carrying errands to and fro, with urgent instructions to those in charge of the

timber depot, from headquarters, which was a mile or so near the Railway Station.

And there was another ruling factor in Divakaran's life in Bolakode. That was Ganesh, the elephant. Ganesh was the main prop of the timber business, and enjoyed much esteem amongst S. R. S. Mudaliar's employees.

To be counted the particular friend of Ganesh was a sure way of getting into the good books of the boss.

But this distinction had been denied to all, till Divakaran's arrival, a year before. Ganesh and Divakaran were bosom friends, much to the chagrin and envy of the rest of the men. If he had only realised his position of vantage as the chum of Ganesh, there is no doubt Divakaran would have exploited his advantage to the full, in his relations with his master. But he didn't.

One day Ganesh saw his friend Divakaran coming with some papers from the house of Mr. Mudaliar.

Ganesh was exceedingly pleased. He permitted only a nodding acquaintance with his other human fellow-workers, and their company invariably bored

and disgusted him. But Divakaran—! If he had not been so mindful of his manners, (and Ganesh was a perfect gentleman, you understand) he would certainly throw up his mighty head and trumpet joyfully every time Divakaran made his appearance. But he generally controlled himself, and only wound his smooth trunk in a brotherly embrace round the slender form of his pal.

This morning Ganesh had finished his work. He was feeling very dull.

Divakaran was issuing from the shed where the clerks worked, with a happy welcome on his face. He was glad to see his friend.

Ganesh put out his trunk, and slowly lifted up Divakaran on to his capacious back. Then he sauntered off to a corner, to have a heart-to-heart chat with his friend by himself.

Divakaran unfolded a surreptitious bundle and produced two large halves of a ripe coconut. Ganesh loved coconuts, and he registered his high appreciation.

"It was extremely thoughtful of you," he told Divakaran.

At least, that was what he meant to convey by his significant look, and flapping of his large ear-lobes.

"Now, what will you have?" seemed to be the query of Monsieur Elephant.

But Divakaran wanted nothing. Their friendship was quite disinterested, and Divakaran wouldn't dream of asking for anything.

"Really—!"

Ganesh was almost insistent.

He put up his long trunk, and searched about on the branches of a neighbouring tree. It happened to be a Flame of the Forest.

Ganesh artistically snapped off a colossal branch of glorious, red flowers and offered it to Divakaran. But the latter could not carry it.

Ganesh very, very delicately, and deliberately broke off a smaller branch, and held it out.

No lover could have been nicer, or more gentlemanly about it.

A merry hour passed.

Then a breathless maistry came upon them.

"Here he is!"

Divakaran was abruptly called away, and Ganesh strolled back to his quarters.

"Where is that form which we gave you?" asked the clerks.

"What—which—" Divakaran was breathless, flustered.

It did not take long to discover that he had lost it.

"And now we will have to spend another two days drawing it up!" remonstrated the clerks.

The clerks were jealous of him, on account of his favour with Ganesh. So, though they could have avoided all fuss, they went and reported Divakaran at headquarters.

S. R. S. Mudaliar was furious. That form lost! It meant delay. Possibly the cancellation of an important deal with a firm in Madras.

"Call that fellow here!"

Divakaran came, with some of the blooms of the Flame of the Forest still in his hands, in a sort of absent-minded way.

"What is that?" asked his employer.

But Divakaran only looked stupidly at his flowers, and gaped at his employer.

His employer sacked him on the spot.

"We don't want young fellows who sneak about picking flowers and losing important papers given into their charge!" was the comment at headquarters.

* * * *

Divakaran was walking disconsolately up the road that flanked the railway line. It was about seven P. M. A goods train hurled itself across, disappearing round the bend a hundred yards away.

Divakaran sat upon a culvert, and brooded. He had only a few rupees, and where could he go? Not back home—no, certainly not!

And then he thought of Ganesh. His eyes suddenly got misty and he thought he saw several visions of the dear big bulk of his friend in the uncertain twilight.

Once a tree swayed violently in the wind. A Flame of the Forest. Divakaran looked, and jumped. He thought he detected a form of dignity, an unmistakable gait you could hear yards and yards away, and a long, soft trunk in the dark vicinity of the tree.

But he was mistaken. Shadows. Mere shadows.

The lump in his throat—huh!

Divakaran stretched himself wearily on the grass near the culvert, and incontinently dozed.

Only when a very soft, familiar touch awakened him, did he get up and realise how foolishly he was acting. Sleeping alone on the road, at night, with a few rupees—!

But the familiar touch grew into a fond, definite embrace, and Divakaran presently found himself lifted into the air gently.

And then he was journeying—alone on the track, only with the silent stars and the murmuring trees to witness—on the friendly, large, comfortable (?) and reliable back of Ganesh.

* * *
“Where is Ganssh?”

“Where is Ganesh!!”

“Where—WHERE!!”

All the people were shouting.

S. R. S. Mudaliar was feeling peevish. First he had to lose a valuable document, then sack a rather smart young servant. And here comes now the nasty news. Ganesh gone! But where? Surely he couldn't be far off.

Search-parties went out, on all sides.

“He is such a good fellow, really,” expained the men. “We had just left him for a few minutes. He must be very near. He will turn up presently!”

He *did* turn up. The search parties had not to do much searching. The leader of one batch came in a hurry to S. R. S. Mudaliar and announced the return of the truant—though such a word cannot be applied to a creature so dignified as Ganesh.

“Where?” asked Mr. Mudaliar.

“Down the road from the Railway Station. And there is a man on his back!”

“What!”

There was a stir.

“Is it Ganesh, or some other elephant?”

“I am sure it is Ganesh, sir. There is no other elephant, you know, for miles around.”

In a few minutes all doubts were finally dispelled.

It was Ganesh himself, in person, calm and majestic, and if you were a little observant, slightly censorious of attitude.

He lowered Divakaran and deposited him on the ground, two yards from where Mr. Mudaliar was sitting on a bench.

Mr. Mudaliar blinked for a time.

Then Ganesh went further. He took Divakaran and placed him on the bench, by the side of the boss and directed a look full of menace and challenge at that personage. The large ears flapped, and the beady eyes commanded.

Surely, conduct could not be less unequivocal!

Mr. Mudaliar understood, and implicitly obeyed Ganesh.

He put his hand on Divakaran's shoulder as a mark of his signing the treaty.

Ganesh lifted up his head, and trumpeted victoriously.

Then he went home with the men.

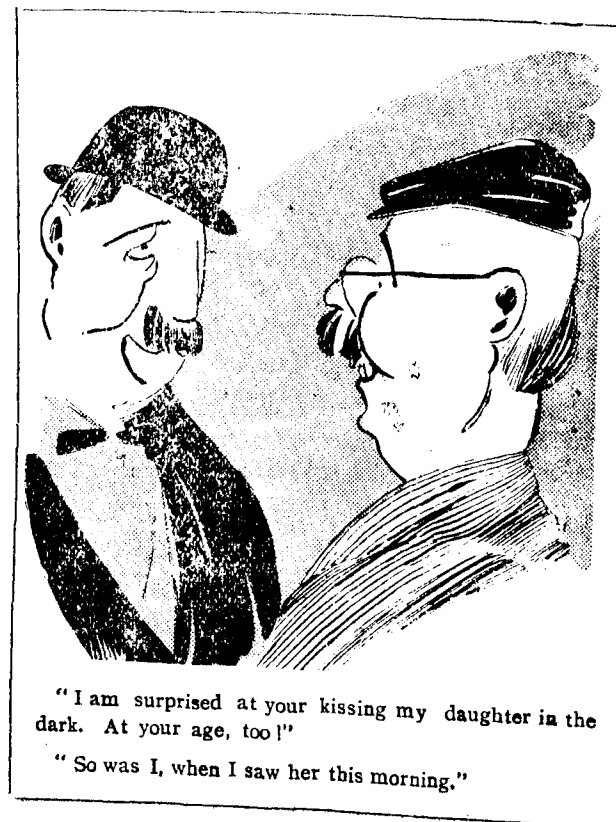
* * *
“These elephants!” cried one of the men, as he set Ganesh's supper. “How *did* he come to know of young Divakaran's trouble!”

“Queer creatures!” remarked another.

Ganesh snorted contemptuously, and would have kicked them to mind their own business. Damned impertinence!

But he didn't. Because he was a gentleman.

THE END



“I am surprised at your kissing my daughter in the dark. At your age, too!”

“So was I, when I saw her this morning.”

Auntie Awful



AN indulgent uncle is paying a visit to Madras, and he intends taking his nephew to the zoo. “Dear Auntie,” he writes, “would you kindly help me by outlining a few interesting remarks I could make while showing the boy round?”

Here is an opportunity for Auntie to spread herself, my dears! Of course, our indulgent uncle will make a start with the monkey-house.

Monkeys are interesting little animals. They do not mate for life, but they manage all right. A troop of monkeys is governed by an experienced male, who is governed by an experienced female. Monkeys are sticklers for etiquette. If a small monkey gets a banana from a visitor, the big ones snatch it away. In many other traits, the resemblance between simians and human beings is most marked.

Next you will see the elephants. An elephant has a kind face, but his brain is relatively small and old-fashioned. He believes in gratitude and other tiresome virtues. Elephants are silly only once a year. A baby elephant is only four feet high, and weighs a mere five maunds. When an elephant has toothache, he becomes a rogue, and is shot by humanitarians. The aching teeth are made into piano-keys and models of the Taj Mahal.

The fierce animal that looks like a prehistoric monster is called a rhinoceros. You cannot argue with a rhinoceros, as he is short-sighted. He snorts and paws the ground and tears up bushes and lady cinematograph-operators. His name is put up in large letters over his cage, so that people can point to him and say: “Ooo, look at the hippopotamus!”

The lion is the king of beasts. Hunters consider him a dangerous foe, as he objects to being shot. If you try and shoot a lion, he will sometimes kill you with a single blow of his paw. If you leave him alone

he will not hurt you, and if you point a camera at him he simply stares. There are lions in Kathiawar, but some people say it is only a rumour. Lions go about in troops, and eat zebras; so if you ever travel to Africa make sure that you do not look like a zebra.

Tigers are very handsome, and are fond of killing cattle. The greatest mortality among the cattle occurs when the Government Inspector comes round paying compensation. The best tigers are made into rugs for people to trip over. Tigers come from Bengal, and when they get old and rheumatic, they give up hunting cattle, and eat *babus*. This is a depraved taste. Normal tigers do not eat human beings, so if you are eaten by a tiger, you may rest assured that it was abnormal.

Zebras were invented to meet the needs of the compilers of illustrated alphabets. The only other Z is Zebu, which you will be surprised to hear is an Indian ox. Auntie knew the name of an Indian ox even before she learnt how to ask for a bottle of milk. This is known as Education. Zebras are conspicuously striped so that the lions will be able to see them and eat them. The natural history books say that zebras are striped so that the lions will *not* see them. But the writers of natural histories have never been about much.

The hyena is mentioned by Shakespeare, but possesses no other virtues. He likes robbing graves and devouring old women out gathering wood. He is supposed to laugh like a lost soul, but the noise is really made by jackals.

The gnu is made up of spare parts from buffaloes and donkeys. Without the gnu, crossword puzzles would have to be abolished.

The giraffe is called a camelopard because he is not much like a camel or a leopard. His neck is so long that if he gets a sore throat, it is fatal. Hunters spend days stalking isolated trees, under the impression that they are giraffes.

Of course, you will not see a whale at the zoo, but every talk on natural history should wind up with a reference to whales. The whale is a mammal, which only goes to show how learned we are nowadays. In case anybody should think that the whale is a fish, all children have to write in their copybooks, 'The whale is a mammal'. Those who refuse to believe it are called Problem Children, and professors of psychology write books about them.

Purist (Renigunta). "Is it slang to say 'He has been dished'?" No, dear boy. 'Dished' is good eighteenth-century idiom, and is a contraction of 'Disinherited'. Byron uses the word in this sense in *Don Juan*. Nowadays it applies to the frustration of any kind of expectation.

Lady With a Dog (Calcutta). "I went into the cinema with my lap-dog, and after a while the manager came and said the dog must leave." Really, dear madam, Auntie thinks that the League of Purity is carrying things too far. Surely the films will not demoralise a little dog?

Mere Male (Tirupati). "Last year you gave a forecast of ladies' fashions. Please give us the details of the latest garments for men." There will be little change in men's garments, dear boy. This particularly applies to the pockets.

Librarian (Punjab). "How can I avoid the nuisance of visitors monopolising the newspapers, and reading aloud to themselves?" Exhibit a notice, dear sir: 'Gentlemen learning to spell are requested to use yesterday's papers'.

Exegist (Narasaravupet). "Recently you said that if an early raiser found a purse on the road, the purse must have belonged to someone who rose even earlier. I do not like the moral of that remark." Very well, dear boy. The extremely early bird who lost his purse was a low fellow. He had been out all night, and was on his way home.

Overweight (Renigunta). "Why is it that a stout man is generally good-natured?" He has to be, dear sir. He can neither fight nor run away.

Orator (High School). "I have been asked to make an address on the occasion of the visit of one of

the governors of the school. Everybody will be anxiously listening. What shall I talk about?" About one minute, dear boy.

Historical Incident (Repalli). "My son has been learning a poem beginning, 'The boy stood on the burning deck'. Why did the boy stand on the burning deck?" Because it was too hot to sit down, dear sir.

Uncertain (Bangalore). "Recently I went to an Indian betrothal-party, and I was given a handful of sweets. Should I have eaten them, or taken them along with me?" Both, dear boy.

Homework (Hospet). "Please give me the correct version of the following sentence: 'The toast was drank in silence'." Certainly, my dear. The toast was eaten in silence.

Fear Naught (Marikuppam). "What I like is a man who speaks his mind." Yes, dear boy; but isn't it remarkable how such a man always has a particularly nasty mind?

Feline (Kotagiri). "Would you please tell me how you would treat a pet leopard suffering from a sore tail?" With respect, dear madam.

Politician (Macherla). "Kindly give me an outline of the duties of the Chaplain of the House of Commons. Does he have to pray for the members?" No, dear boy. Every afternoon when Parliament is sitting, he walks into the house, takes a look round, and then offers up a prayer for the country.

Strange Incident (Madras). "A certain person went into a shop recently, and stole twelve shirts. When apprehended, he said he was a racecourse-tipster. What do you make of that?" Obviously, dear boy, the fellow was making a daring effort to retrieve what he had lost during the racing season.

Office Assistant (George Town). "The boss goes out for tiffin about one o'clock, and he seldom comes back, as he gets inebriated. This is very awkward for me, as important people sometimes call in the afternoon, and insist on seeing the principal, and I do not know what excuse to make." You should tell them, dear boy, that his movements are uncertain after tiffin.

Critic (Malleswaram). "I think there are certain members of the Government who should pass an intelligence-test." Auntie doubts it, dear boy.

If I Were A Poet!

by Mea

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

POETS and Artists are lewd fellows who get away with it under the name of Art. An artist will paint a picture of his girl-friend in the nude, and people will say it is beautiful. He sticks it up for everyone to see. He feels smugly satisfied because he knows his men-friends who are not artists envy him his opportunities. He knows that when other women look at it they feel as if he had undressed them, even though they pretend to regard it as a piece of high art. This makes him feel a sort of hero.

Now, I'm not an artist but I can take photographs, and, after a considerable amount of persuasion I persuaded Sylvia to pose in the altogether for me. I began to realise what a lot I missed by not being an artist. She is one of those girls that any artist would love to have for a model.

I soon discovered that posing a model is anything but a dull business. I kept pretending not to be quite satisfied with the pose. I managed to take a dozen photos of her in various poses, in spite of the fact that my hand was trembling with excitement.

In due course I put one of these photos on the mantelpiece in my room. The first man who came in looked at the photo and remarked: "I see you've started collecting smutty photos! Not a bad little bit, and what a topping figure she's got! Seems a pity that a girl like that should have to turn prostitute."

"She's not a prostitute!" I replied, hotly. "She's a friend of mine."

It was impossible to convince him that Sylvia was not a bad girl, and I was beginning to see that if I were to leave this photo out it might lead to trouble.

The man had hardly departed when a lady called for some books I had promised to lend her. Her eye lighted on the photo.

"Perfectly disgusting!" she exclaimed. "Why do you have indecent photographs like that stuck up in your room?"

"It's not indecent," I replied, meekly. "It's high art. I took it myself."

"Art!" she exclaimed, sarcastically. "Art is quite another thing. If you take my advice you'll destroy

all the photos you have like that before you are run in for being in possession of obscene photographs."

I thought this a bit hard, and concluded that high art photography was not yet fully recognised, and that until it was, it would perhaps be better if I were not to expose my efforts in that line.

I am poetically inclined, but unfortunately am unacquainted with the technique of the thing, and have perforce to confine my outpourings to prose.

I was thinking of Sylvia when I came across the lines by F. A. Wright. It did not occur to my simple nature that what a well-known poet like F. A. Wright could express in verse would be considered unseemly when written in the less romantic prose.

I paraphrased Wright's famous couplet into prose and addressed it to my Sylvia.

On the whole Sylvia took it fairly well. She merely told me to take a cold bath the next time I was going to write to her.

It was the poet who wrote an ode to his lady's garter that was my undoing. I had discovered that Sylvia does not wear garters. I decided, therefore to write a symphony in prose on the subject of Sylvia's suspenders, taking the *Ode To My Lady's Garter* as my model. I found this even easier than I expected. When I got going I realised that I meant every word I wrote. I warmed up to my subject. I waxed eloquent as I mentally wandered over hill, forest and glade. I sounded a note of anguish and despair when the time came to cast them on one side at night. I felt my letter was a masterpiece of poetry in prose; a realistic idyll; a rapturous dream; a passionate pleading; etc., etc.

I regret to say my composition was not well received. In a cold reply Sylvia asked me whether I had been drinking, whether I was mad, whether I had no sense of decency, and how dare I insult her? And when I endeavoured to justify myself by showing her the *Ode To My Lady's Garter* she informed me, with the true logic of a woman, that it was different in poetry, and she proceeded to point out that the poet hadn't gone as far as I had.

Oh, if only I were a poet! That is, a fellow who could write in verse. What fun it would be!

THE END

Consider The Kangaroo

Words & Picture
by Albert A. Roland

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

WHAT every right-thinking person in India wants to know is, when will the League of Nations take up the question of the Kangaroo?

This question has nothing to do with the wholesale destruction, by Australian farmers, of that marsupial pest.

Nor, we hasten to add, has it any derogatory reference whatever to that little band of sportsmen from "down under" who have been teaching India a thing or two about cricket.

It concerns the Kangaroo purely as a national symbol.

We hear that a start in the right direction was recently made in Australia.

At a conference there of artists and pressmen, convened to consider the crying need for cleaner Kangaroo stories, attention was loudly drawn to the alarming increase in derogatory Kangaroo jokes in the American and European press. It was eloquently pointed out that the national symbol was being held up to ridicule, resulting in grave and universal loss of prestige.

Mr. Castironmonger wanted to know why their national mascot should be singled out for such contumely, whilst those of other nations escaped?

Take, as instances, the British Lion, the American Eagle, the Indian Tiger, the French Rooster. There was an aura of dignity and power about these which no amount of caricaturing or ribaldry had been able to dissipate. But that was because, in regard to those mascots, nobody ever went too far. But in the case of the Kangaroo, Mr. Castironmonger's hearers would bear him out when he stated—well—that it was the ruddy limit.

Loud cries of agreement, and repetitions of the phrase "ruddy limit" (duly emended).

Mr. Ryderless admitted that the pouch so thoughtfully provided by Nature for their mascot afforded a strong temptation to humorists. But it was clearly proved that they had taken an unfair advantage of it.

After all, there were many kinds of animals and birds, and even humans, to poke fun at, without

picking so shamelessly on the Kangaroo. He was willing to wager a season ticket for the coming Indian Test that not a single American comic paper was nowadays without its Kangaroo joke. (Significant silence.)

Mr. Macartaway described to the conference an illustrated joke he had recently seen in an American journal. A Kangaroo was depicted in the zoo, and its pouch was occupied by a baby elephant. A spectator was shewn asking the keeper a question. And the question was: "How long has this been going on?"

Cries of "Shame"—and sundry twitters of amusement, instantly suppressed as Mr. Macartaway's glowering eye fell on the culprits.

Mr. Oxenbacon told of a drawing in which a Mother-Kangaroo was shewn with five Infant-Kangaroos in her pouch. "I'm getting sick and tired," the Mother-Kangaroo was saying, "of minding the neighbour's children all the time."

Murmurs of protest, particularly from the married members of the conference.

Mr. Window-Bill said he had recently—no, not recently—it was sometime back—but the memory of it still lingered in his mind like the fragrance of a defunct skunk—he had seen the following cartoon published in a leading British comic paper: Two Kangaroo children were playing some game, when they were joined by a third. The newcomer had obviously given the slip to her mother, who was shewn enjoying a seista under a nearby tree. The newcomer was being asked by the other youngsters: "Does your mother know you're out?"

Hysterics provided by two lady members of the conference.

Mr. Ryderless, returning to the fray, declared he remembered seeing an illustrated joke in similar strain. Two adolescent Kangaroos were depicted all dressed up and obviously on their way to some social function. An acquaintance, happening to pass by, enquired their destination. "We," he was told, "are going to Ethel's coming-out party."

(Apoplectic seizure by the Chairman.)

After that official had been carried out and his place taken by the Vice-chairman, Mr. Love-in-bloom said a few words.

With perceptible emotion, he referred to a South-African paper which had published a political cartoon shewing an ostrich alarmed at the approach of a dust storm. Mr. Love-in-bloom had no quarrel with the political significance of the cartoon. But he certainly took the strongest exception to the manner in which the cartoonist had made his point. The ostrich had been shewn hiding his head—hiding his

head!—he could hardly bring himself to say the words—hiding his head—in the pouch of a bewildered Kangaroo.

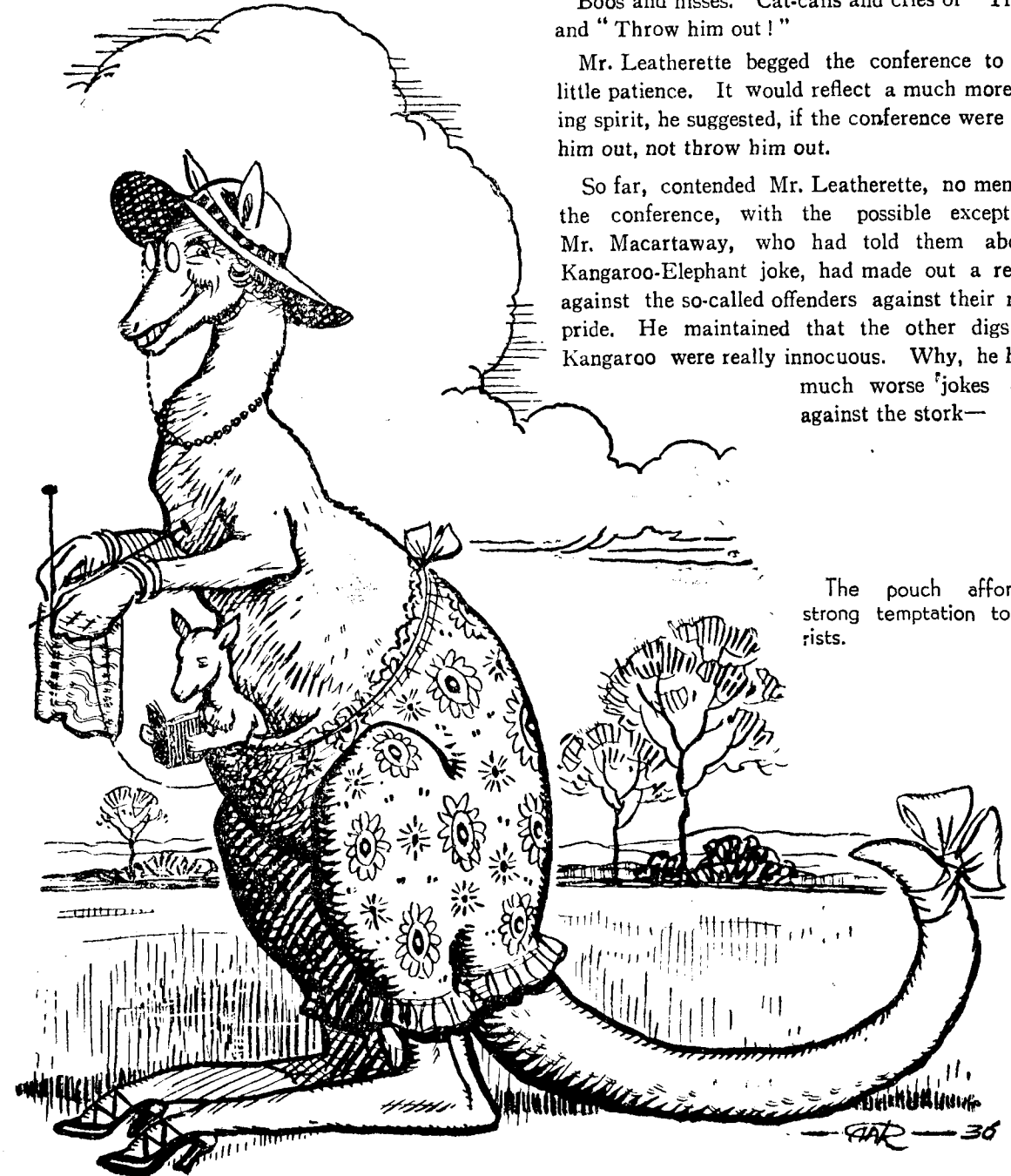
Cries of "Disgraceful!" "The South Africans need barracking!"

Mr. Leatherette now sprang a surprise. With all due respect to the conference, he said, he felt that it was somewhat inclined to magnify the gravity of the situation. What was wanted, he suggested, was a better sense of humour. Why should such a fuss be made about—

Boos and hisses. Cat-calls and cries of "Traitor!" and "Throw him out!"

Mr. Leatherette begged the conference to have a little patience. It would reflect a much more sporting spirit, he suggested, if the conference were to hear him out, not throw him out.

So far, contended Mr. Leatherette, no member of the conference, with the possible exception of Mr. Macartaway, who had told them about the Kangaroo-Elephant joke, had made out a real case against the so-called offenders against their national pride. He maintained that the other digs at the Kangaroo were really innocuous. Why, he had seen much worse jokes directed against the stork—



Cries of "Chuck him out!" "The stork's no mascot!" "Why did you attend the conference?" "Spy!" etc., etc.

Apart from the Kangaroo-Elephant joke, Mr. Leatherette insisted, no crime had been proved. For the sake of one misguided humorist, were they to—

Shouts of "What about the coming-out party?" "How about the ostrich?" "We don't want to hear you!" "Sit down!" "Get out!" "Grr-r-r-r!" And so on.

Mr. Leatherette sat down.

Mr. Bradawl now drew a six-shooter and, handling it carelessly, begged the chairman to allow him to say a few words. Permission being granted immediately, Mr. Bradawl, turning towards Mr. Leatherette, began.

No one, said Mr. Bradawl, would be permitted to say the Australians were wanting in a sense of humour—and live. Certainly no one would be permitted to say that he, Mr. Bradawl, had none—and live. He referred the conference, and particularly the last misguided speaker, to the many famous humorists Australia had produced.

Mr. Leatherette (nervously): "N—name them."

Keeping his finger off the trigger with commendable restraint, Mr. Bradawl instanced Low, the great cartoonist. And Norman Lindsay, the author-artist, whose recent book "The Cautious Amorist" had proved so impishly humorous as to achieve the distinction of being banned by a certain section of the press. Cheers.

But, Mr. Bradawl pointed out, neither of these great men had used the Kangaroo as a stepping stone to their success. Loud applause.

Now, Mr. Bradawl asked, would Mr. Leatherette show that he was a true Australian, and apologise? Mr. Leatherette, glancing at Mr. Bradawl's trigger-finger, observed that it was twitching. He thereupon withdrew his remarks and shook hands with Mr. Bradawl, to the accompaniment of prolonged cheering and applause.

Mr. Bradawl now chivalrously gave way to the next speaker, Mrs. Kappix. Mrs. Kappix, who was better known to thousands of juvenile readers as "Auntie Kate," said that incalculable harm was being done to the minds of the kiddies by the publication of these Kangaroo jokes in the papers.

How could the nation expect its tender plants to grow into sturdy saplings, and its sturdy saplings to develop into powerful trees, when their very roots were being corrupted by bad soil?

Auntie Kate pointed with pride to the splendid efforts now being made in Sydney to re-establish the

pre-war modesty and morals of the people. She referred, she need hardly add, to the new "neck-to-knee" bathing-costume regulation. There was unfortunately a certain amount of opposition to this regulation, but every worthy enterprise had its detractors—they were as inevitable (here she glanced pointedly at Mr. Leatherette) as maggots in cheese.

Mr. Leatherette squirmed and made as if to rise in protest, but remained seated as he noticed that Mr. Bradawl, too, was about to rise.

Would they, continued Auntie Kate with a snort, would they, as patriotic citizens and responsible members of their profession, allow the laudatory efforts of their Sydney reformers to be vitiated by the continued publication of vulgar Kangaroo jokes?

"No!" "No!"

Would they, as wise and affectionate parents, tolerate in their own newspapers, or other nations' newspapers, such reprehensible drawings as the following:—(Here the unmarried members of the conference looked sheepish, but all members showed the keenest interest in what was to come.....)

A zoo-keeper's children searching in the pockets of the Kangaroos for a lost cricket ball?

"No!" "No!"

Or an adult Kangaroo, with its pouch full of water and a cake of soap in its hand saying to its child: "Come, sonny, your bath is ready."

"NO!" "NO!"

Or a young Kangaroo reading a book in its mother's pouch and rudely asking: "Must you look over my shoulder when I'm reading?"

"Oh, NO!"

Or a mother Kangaroo, indicating its empty pouch and vociferating to its youngster to "Come in out of the rain!"

"Oh no, a thousand times no!"

Then, exhorted Auntie Kate, let the conference show its good sense by rising as one man and passing a resolution demanding the immediate and universal prohibition of this form of cartoon.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mr. Leatherette begged to be allowed to propose two votes of thanks. One to the chairman and one to Mr. Macartaway. To the chairman for his impartial conducting of the meeting. And to Mr. Macartaway for having regaled the conference with what was, after all, the best Kangaroo joke he had ever heard!

The meeting ended in an uproar.

THE END



Sandy Dresses Up!

by Alexander Bruce

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

EVER heard of old Henry? Well, he was one of the chaps in our hostel, a good sort, of course, but—conceited? My hat! Listen! One day, we peeped at him while he was dressing through the skylight—no, I mean, we peeped at him through the skylight, while he was dressing, (sounds better, doesn't it?) and what do you think he was doing? Gazing at himself in the mirror from all angles, doing his hair in various ways and admiring the effect, and pursing his lips into a whistle to see how he looked!

Well, we left him to it for a while, and then burst into a loud guffaw. You should have seen his face! Being very fair, his blush showed up to perfection! He was wild! But it didn't cure him. So we put our heads together, and the result was a plan—not your common or garden plans, but the real goods—A. I., unbreakable, waterproof, shockproof, etc.

Now Sandy was a bit shorter than Henry, and more or less slight in build, with a smooth face which did not show up the marks of shaving. So he was chosen for the girl. Yes! That was the idea. Sandy was going to dress up, and pull old Henry's leg for all he was worth, while we watched!

The clothes were found easily enough, Sandy's girl getting them for him from a tall friend. Except for the shoes, they fitted perfectly. Even Sandy's feet protested strongly against those bits of leather,

crossed here and twiddled there, and calling themselves shoes! Otherwise he could really pass off as a girl. So we put our heads together again—with a bang, this time—and resolved that darkness and a taxi would have to hide the deficiency.

Two nights later, a bunch of us planned to go to the pictures to see Janet Gaynor in *Adorable*. Henry was one of the bunch, but Sandy said he couldn't come as he was going to a dance with his girl.

We pushed off fairly early, bought the tickets, and strolled in. The second last row of seats was nearly empty, except for a fat Parsi, two youngsters, an oldish lady, and gosh, such a pretty girl!

"I'm for this row and the end seat," remarked Dennis, shoving in with elaborate shoulder-play.

Henry, all out for the lassies, was even quicker. He won by a short head, and planted himself next to the girl, who looked up coyly from beneath her drooping hat, bit her well-rouged lip, and looked down and away from him.

We resignedly took second place, but I'm afraid Janet Gaynor took a very back seat that night, for we were more interested in Henry, and the coy one.

Another look, a half-smile, a full smile, and—Henry's hand over hers—just the tips of her fingers,

mind you, for it was cold, and she was wearing a fur coat. We passed down each action for the benefit of the chaps at the other end, who couldn't see.

Once we heard a short conversation, at least I heard it, and passed it on.

"This picture is *Adorable*, isn't it?" she queried, demurely.

"Yes, and so are you," replied Henry, putting forth a feeler.

She giggled, and asked:

"Who is your favourite actress?"

"Well, it used to be Janet Gaynor, but I find that her type doesn't appeal to me now."

"And what does?"—softly.

"The tallish, fair kind," responded Henry, dreamily, "who look nice in big fur coats, and drooping hats, like—why, something like yours!" Henry was becoming gallant.

Then came the lights and we all filed out. Henry drew me aside.

"I say, tell the others I won't be coming home just yet—going for a drive—got ten chips to spare?"

None of us had.

"Tell you what, old top," I suggested. "Get a taxi, but only go as far as Hay Bunder—you know it, don't you?"

He nodded eagerly. "The very thing—I have enough coin for a short drive—cheerio! Wish me luck!"

"Sure, the best," I replied.

Of course, you have guessed by now that Henry's girl was our old friend Sandy, keeping his feet out of sight as much as possible. He didn't have much trouble, as he stepped straight from the crowded theatre into the taxi, and the darkness did the rest.

We couldn't overhear the taxi dialogue, of course, but Sandy told us later that they didn't talk much, but squeezed hands—or fingers, as it was a short run.

We sneaked up soon after, behind the piles of hay, from which the *bunder* took its name, and spotted the love-birds on the other side.

"Darling, you haven't told me your name yet," said Henry.

She looked up at him fondly. "I'm Patricia Spencer," she replied, "but they call me Pat,"—shyly.

"Pat!" Henry gazed ahead. "No, I think I like Patricia better. You are too queenly, too, er—too wonderful to be just Pat!"

Sandy swallowed, and we choked.

"I never dreamt what going to the pictures would bring me tonight," said Henry. "I loved you as soon as I spotted you. Old Dennis nearly bagged the seat—poor fish, I don't think you'd have looked twice at him!"

At this juncture, Dennis had to be forcibly restrained from dashing out and spoiling the whole thing. He subsided, breathing vengeance.

"No, he couldn't have been as nice as you," cooed Patricia. "Don't get conceited, but you have the heavenliest blue eyes I've ever seen."

Henry didn't turn a hair.

"Yes, I got them from my mother," he stated modestly.

"And I like that little kink in your hair," added Patricia, "but I mustn't tell you all this, or your hat won't fit you!"

Henry laughed.

"There's no harm—the truth never hurt anyone. After all," he argued, "a wonderful creature like you wouldn't fall in love with *any* one, now, would you? I don't think you'd care for any of the other hostel chaps. I pride myself on being a trifle above them."

We all mentally registered the blighter for a terrific hiding.

"Well, I couldn't like them now, anyway," said Patricia, with meaning. "Are they *awful* freaks?" she enquired prettily.



"Well, pretty awful," said Henry. "Not fit for you by a long shot. Mouldy, if you know what I mean, and I expect their girls correspond—what's that sound?"

"Nothing," replied Patricia. "No, don't go and see, you mustn't leave me for a little thing like that—if you do, I shan't love you any more," she pouted.

The sound was caused by our general wrathful uprising at his infernal cheek. Mouldy, indeed! And our girls were the same! But we quietened down and listened.

"Now you must let me give you a big hug for obeying you," suggested Henry.

"No, no!" Patricia was alarmed—and with good reason, for Sandy was anything but soft, and Henry would have caught on.

"My mother said that I may go out with boys, but I mustn't let them put their arms round me," she simpered.

The dear thing, thought Henry! So unsophisticated! Her mother said!

"Righto, darling, I won't force you. But why don't you take off your hat?"

"The breeze will spoil my 'Perm'," replied Patricia. "I only had it done this evening—Perhaps you'll see it one day,"—shyly.

"You bet," said Henry, kissing her finger tips.

"What about moving?" suggested Patricia, rather loudly.

We took the hint, and crept away, to await the pair at the hostel gates.

We afterwards learnt that Sandy had given the hostel address to the taxi-driver, while Henry was collecting his coat and hat, and the latter had been far too engrossed in his 'girl' to pay attention to the road they were taking.

After more squeezing of hands, they eventually arrived shortly after we did, and Henry started.

"Gosh—why, this is *our* hostel!" he protested. "I wanted to drop you first—"

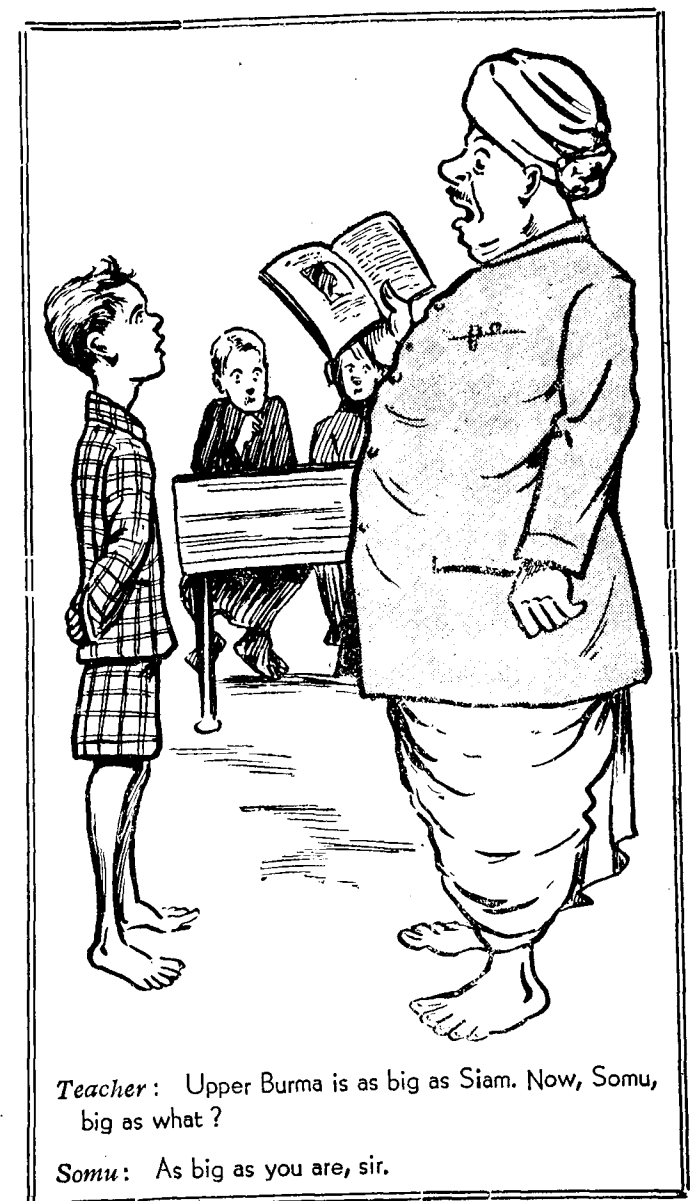
"I'm coming with you, darling," cooed Patricia. "Are these the 'freaks' you told me about?"

Henry, alarmed, wondered what predicament the girl was going to land him into. Then, fascinated, he watched Patricia shed her hat and frock. In his ears rang a loud guffaw—the second he had heard that week. Realisation came—full and bitter, and he fled to his room.

"Goodnight, darling—don't mix with those Mouldy Freaks!" he heard a chorus from below.

I don't know if our little joke cured him of his conceit, because he left the hostel the next day, but I believe he now avoids girls like poison!

THE END



Teacher: Upper Burma is as big as Siam. Now, Somu, big as what?

Somu: As big as you are, sir.

Why Women Smoke

by V. T. Neelakantan

"THERE is no use condemning," said my hostess answering my diatribe, "you must try to understand why women smoke."

If the question were suddenly asked most men would, I believe, reply that women smoked for the same reason as themselves. And until the psychology of the matter was explained to me a few days ago in the cosy corner of a women's club by a feminine votary of the weed, I never suspected that the appeal of the alluring cigarette differed according to the sex of the smoker.

"Of course," I protested, "we all know that women have worked as hard as any man and that they're as fagged and 'nervy' as we are. They need a sedative—as we do—but for goodness' sake let it be change of air or anything you like—but tobacco—"

Her clear grey eyes hardened. "In a moment," she retorted, "you'll be talking about your illusions."

"Well," I admitted, "I can't for the life of me see why, having surpassed all our virtues, women should try to imitate our vices."

"That," continued my hostess, "is one of those phrases which sound well, but the truth is not in it. Virtue and vice are not the prerogatives of either sex. They are human qualities. Nor is it true, as you said just now, that the tired woman needs a sedative. Tobacco may be sedative to a man, but to nine

women out of ten it is a stimulant. They light a cigarette in the same spirit as a man orders a whisky and soda—to induce optimism; that rosy faith in the future which makes life worth living."

"All the same," I added, "I could never fall in love with a woman who smelt of smoke. Fancy pressing a tiny hand that was stained with tobacco! Can you imagine anything more disenchanting?"

"Why should you?" she asked. "There are lots of women who don't smoke. There are still, I believe, some women who leave the dinner-table before the meal is over and sail off into a smokeless drawing-room, to spend a bored half-hour while the male guests finish their cigars. But the type is nearly extinct, so if you want a wife of that sort, you'd better make haste."

"Oh, you needn't tell me there are lots of men who like to see women smoke. They think it makes them more companionable—less ideal."

Her eyes smiled again as she blew a fairy ring of smoke into the frosty air. How exquisitely she did it, with what a delicate feminine grace! If all women smoked like that I might—I don't say I should—but I might.

"Not less ideal," she corrected in a silvery voice as she took another cigarette from the case I voluntarily offered, "but more real!"

THE END



To Meet Miss Mayo

[“The Government of India has banned Miss KATHERINE MAYO's latest book, *The Face of Mother India*.”] —DAILY PAPER

Hello! Miss Mayo, Salaam!
How is “Mother India's Face”?
And the itches, too, in your palm?
Isn't it good to check your pace?

Must you fly in the faces of folk?
Must you fan Communal flames?
What call had you to poke
Your nose, and call people names?

And why are you so voracious
To grab and swallow cash?
Your other book, so pugnacious,—
(May I whisper, it needed a wash!)

Lined your pockets to bursting,
Only a short while ago.
What a pity, this painful thirsting!
‘Festina Lente,’ you know!

You have counted, this second time,
Without your host, Dear Madam,
Again to export slime—
But, that's Woman, of course, since Adam

I suggest, across the pond
Your precious cargo you ferry;
(We calculate freight, per maund!)
Good-bye, good-bye, don't worry!

—G. K. Pillai



Go - As - You - Please

Reading Time
About 7 Minutes

by Yen Kay

AS we know and keenly appreciate, we live in the age of multiplying motion and speed. The immemorial household of mankind, which a thousand years ago used to look upon a hundred miles as an impossible proposition, is today flying in the air faster than wind, rolling over land quicker than

the rumble of an earthquake and diving under the sea more speedily than a tumultuous mountain-stream. In fact, today, Nature's ancient edict of barriers and distances stands annulled, and even nearly unremembered. And the hall-mark of accomplished manhood and womanhood today is the comfortable conscious-

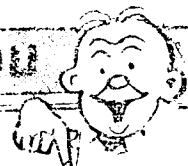
ness of having moved about and above the face of the globe and beheld the panoramas of phenomena thereon. I am in a position to feel the difference between the opposite states of having travelled and being untravelled, because I have been a vegetable all my life, chained to the soil of my birth by roots that dig deeper into the ground as the years build the arch of my life to its allotted span; and yet a strange vegetable that has an eye to see and realise how fast and unremittingly the rest of the world is moving (a tame, almost archaic expression to characterise an age on the eve of stratosphere-traffic and projectile-travel, which I use with apologies for want of a better one ready to hand) and hanker after the lovely wonders and romantic adventures through which it is ever careering.

It was only yesterday that somebody called on me in an instinctive act of condescension and fell to conversation with me so far as to demand some chapter-headings of my obscure autobiography. "Have you ever been to London?" he asked, his eyes twinkling. What to say to an interrogation such as that? "Don't ask me!" I implored in an agony of self-deprecation, but immediately recollecting that honesty and humility in these times oftener lead one to the Penal Code than to the honours list, I put my imagination to work and added with an unmistakable tang of pride in my tone: "You see, I am something of a local deity, like an idol installed in a temple. Cities and peoples come to me." But my interlocutor was nothing daunted, and he asked me: "Have you ever been to Madras?" It was the height of bad manners, surely, but that did not serve me for any self-defence or afford me a single grain of consolation in my utter poverty of geographical experience. My only answer was a silence like the deep alarming calm that often heralds a thunderstorm. So ready was I to burst into passionate tears. Recovering my balance by violent spasms of

egotistical introspection, I lost no time in making my adieu to the visitor, and when his back was turned upon my habitation I took a resolution that I must no longer remain a stranger to the miracles of motion and the delights of travel. I had the means: indeed, if I liked I could even fly, but I thought to fly was properly the avocation of angels and birds, that Man when he flew forfeited the estate of his particular existence without acquiring that of either angels or birds, and that, worst of all, when in the act of flying, he was often brought suddenly to a halt and heard of no further. So off I went to the railway station and bought me a ticket with a four-anna piece and boarded a train that had drawn up alongside of the platform and was already emitting clouds of steam and smoke as if impatient to thunder away, rolling up the distant landscapes and sending them flying backwards. The compartment which I had boarded contained no other occupant than myself. A spell of reflection seized on my mind, making me oblivious to the roaring engine, to the swinging earth, the falling skies and the dancing gardens on either side of the onward-sweeping train. But

I had only a four-anna ticket in my pocket, and money being the undisputed overlord of human destiny in these days, I recalled myself to the realities of my locomotion and alighted at the station indicated on my ticket. It was a solitary hole of a place where men and women looked alike and knew not how to spice their daily existence by mutual commerce, conversation and quarrel, or even what to do one to another. I wandered for a space in this curious village much as my fancy took me. But one gets tired sooner or later, whatever one be doing, and so back I scuttled to the railway station to catch the earliest train to my bunk in my native town and to have done with my journeyings. And it so happened, much to the piquancy of this unparalleled adventure of my life, that the earliest train was also the longest one, coming from a

DO YOU KNOW?



1. What does *i. e.* exactly stand for?
2. How do you pronounce the following:—Chalybeate, Gyrate, Imbroglio, Hermione, Aloysius?
3. What does the expression 'Sent to Coventry' mean?
4. What was the earlier name of the Russian town of Stalingrad?

Answers on page 38

thousand miles away gathering up the human consignments of a hundred tributary feederlines. It was a long affair, too, long enough for one to post oneself at one end of it and fling one's eyes as far as one could to catch a glimpse of the other. When it entered the station platform, zigzagging, and throwing up gruff puffs of steam and smoke, the platform was reduced to less than half the length of the train. I ran madly along the platform, down the foot-path,

over a hummock of broken road-metal, jumped on to the foot-board of the train, pushed a carriage-door with all my might, throwing myself, in a heap of skin, muscle and bone, on a throbbing, coagulated composition of passengers. My sudden and violent intrusion into this packing case of the travelling public, however, produced no visible effect except in so far as I rebounded from the elastic mass, and while so doing, had my head struck fairly forcibly against the ceiling. By and by, I too commingled in the coalesced population, from the interstices of

which many eyes and voices assailed me. "Where are you going? Where do you belong? Where do you come from? What are you?" Such and their variations, too numerous to be recounted, were the questions that now kept bombarding my attention and ears. What struck me particularly in this overwhelming output of examination was that everyone was asking the same questions and almost in the same tone and manner, and that everyone was looking in the same way, and with almost the same eyes, so that the inference dawned upon me that if in the spectacle there were really many bodies, there was in it only one common purpose and one common mind, like an electrical installation that kindles many lamps though there is only the same light everywhere. The truth was that they were all travelling on the same ticket, that wonderful ticket which set all South India, all ages and both sexes, leaving their homes and going to

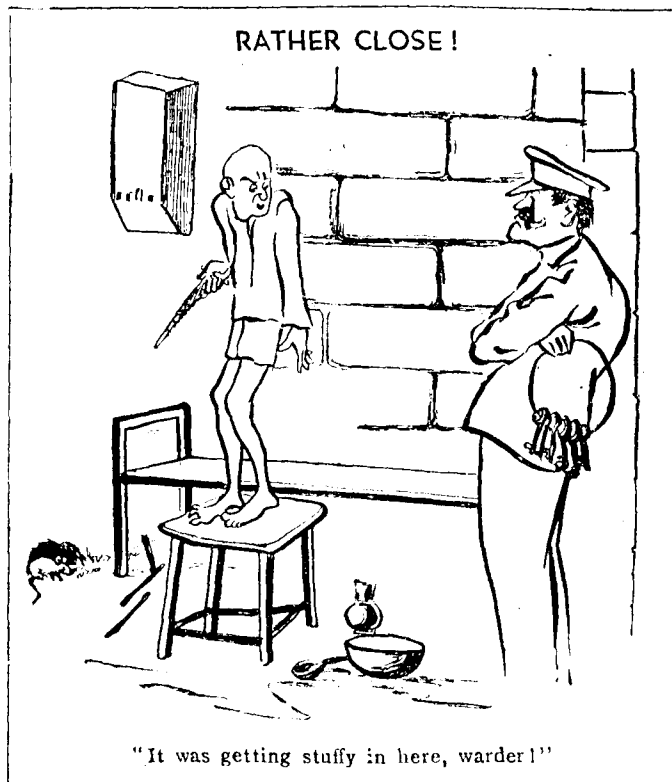
'see the world', the ticket that uplifted the poor to the high level formerly monopolised by the well-to-do one-tenth who used to rejoice in their travels in through trains from one end to the other of the peninsula, unhampered by obstructions from the many-headed multitude—the ticket that knocked at the door of every hamlet, calling the anchored inmates to come and 'GO-AS-YOU-PLEASE'! For a moment I did not know what to do in the face of this sea of

eyes and tongues catechizing me and analysing the elements of my life. Being no stranger to the uses of silence in critical junctures, I kept a still tongue in my head, hearing all they were saying and adding whatever I heard to the store-house of my mind. Indeed, they were telling a lot. They were coming from every place in South India, Madras and Madura, Guntur and Vellore, Tanjore and Coimbatore, Calicut and Chingleput, and so on and on, and they were all going, I must rather say 'coming', to Trivandrum, that wonderful city in 'Ladies' Land', where all things

are actuated by feminine thoughts, and touched by feminine fingers, look lovely, and where every heart is filled with romantic fancies and every eye eternally washed by visions of beauty. Oh, they were all 'coming' to Trivandrum with me! And when I perceived that I could hold my tongue no longer for I felt inexpressibly proud that all the rest of South India was coming to the very place where I saw the sun of my life arise and affix me to where I was born. Ha! they were all 'coming' to me. When I told them this great secret all the eyes in that human embankment flew out of their sockets, all the mouths stood agape, the tongues therein breaking into spurts and springs of speech.

I came home, gladder and wiser than I had been, having known what it was to travel abroad and come home with the fragrance of mankind on my body and soul.

THE END



My Fiver Friend

by Dago

Reading Time
About 9 Minutes



BEING on the loose end one evening, I wandered to the Island Ground where I saw a number of people watching a footer match. It was a free show and I noticed that hundreds of people had been afflicted with the same desire to see the match, and I pushed my way through and craned my neck over the shoulders of the taller poppies standing in the front row, to catch a glimpse of what was going on beyond.

There was a shout from the crowd which later turned into a laughter of derision.

"It's the Gymkhana centre-forward," laughed the tallest poppy. "He's gone and kicked the ball into his own goal. Ha, Ha!"

The rear guard joined in the laughter.

A voice rose above the din:

"If it isn't exactly what I did when I was in college at Trichinopoly, I'll eat my hat!"



"Hello," said I; "the voice is familiar. I bet hundred to one the voice is Chandran's."

"It is!" cried the voice, pushing its way towards me, unmindful of the protests of people over whose feet it was passing. "Old horse, is it you?"

I advanced and embraced my friend and together we fought our way out, hand in hand, to the smooth bit of turf beyond.

Ten years ago we were at college together.

Ten years!

"Old horse," said he, "you are not much changed!"

"On the other hand," I said, "I find lots of change in you. You, who were once so spruce and tidy, are now unkempt, with a fortnight's stubble on your chin."

"Cares, laddie, cares of the world," said Chandran.

I was surprised and shocked that ten years could work such a havoc in a fellow. It was the very same person who when caught quarelling with the next man in the class over a *Vadai* which he had smuggled into the room, stood up and unblushingly said to the lecturer: "It's only a little discussion, sir. I want to know the difference between a tower and a steeple."

Of course the class broke into unashamed laughter when the lecturer raised his hand.

"I am amazed at your laughter," he said. "That is a sensible question."

It was a sensible question. But look at poor Chandran now!

Take another instance. We were slack with our Composition notes and the tutor roped us in one day and fined us left and right, when he came up against Chandran sitting in front of a perfectly clean notebook.

"And what's your excuse, Chandran?" thundered the tutor.

"Excuse, sir? I have none to offer," said Chandran.

"But is this your Composition book?" asked the tutor, laying his hand on it and turning over the blank pages.

"It is, sir," said Chandran, while the class rocked about him. "I am beginning the second volume, sir."

And he got away with it!

It was that self same Chandran who was now sitting before me, unshaven and unkempt, the old fire dead in his eyes.

"You didn't see the fellow kick the ball into his own goal just now?" asked Chandran, suddenly. "He did it exactly in the way I did—ten years ago, at Trichinopoly. You haven't forgotten it?"

There was almost a look of anxiety in his eyes. Evidently he was living on past memories, whatever his present condition may be.

"Forgotten?" I cried. "Can anyone forget it!"

The incident he referred to happened in our hostel match. Our hostel provided the man power for the College football team and our warden, in a moment of devilish humour, decided that we should have a Hostel Day and the hostel should run a football tournament among the various houses. Each team was to be made up of one player from the regular team, and the rest rabbits. It was Chandran who was vehement in his protests, partly because he disliked the warden and more because he hadn't thought of it first.

All the same, the warden pushed through his proposals and secured the approval of the Principal, and Chandran and I, among the various teams, found ourselves roped in with A— (he may be knocking about the world somewhere and so I don't give his name) as our Captain. A— was extreme left in the

regular team, and was for playing in that position, but Chandran, just to tease him, said that he would strike if he did not play as centre-forward.

The idea is, Chandran explained to me, A— should do the rough work while we loaf behind and do pretty much what we like.

"You know, laddie," said Chandran to A—. "You play the offensive and the old horse and I will look to the defences in the rear. Hold the fort and all that rot."

"Be careful," said A—. "The regular Captain (centre-forward) is playing opposite and he'll be breaking on our goal more often than you think."

"In that case," said Chandran coolly, "you'll have to do without me and the old horse, that's all. We're going."

"No, you are not!" said A— with an oath. "The game's started, and no monkey business."

It was hard work. A— did all the heavy work in front, but all the same the ball kept hanging in our goal area.

"This is a scandal!" moaned Chandran. "A— is a hell of a centre forward. The nicest I ever saw."

"You keep your mouth shut!" snapped the Captain. "You donkey!"

"He's giving us more lip than we bargained for," whispered Chandran, after wrecking his toe against a fast ball, much to the merriment of the onlookers.

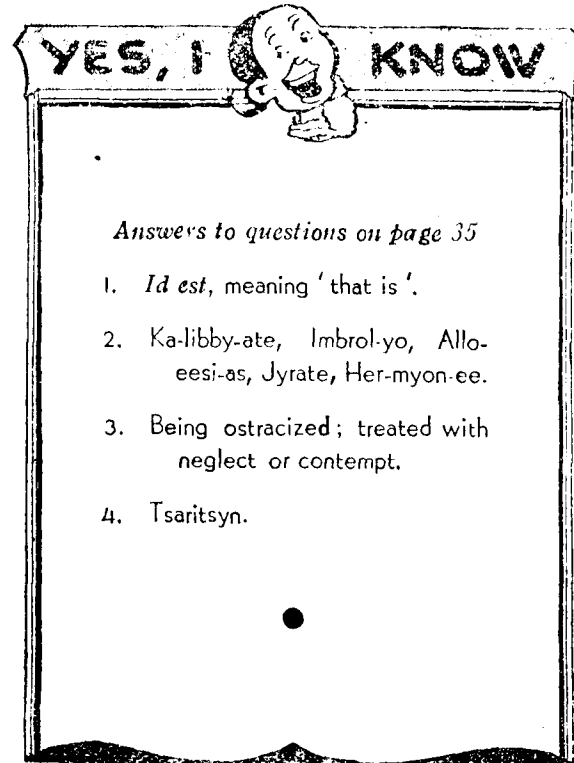
"Here, A—, I'm going home!"

"No, you are not!" shouted he, at which the onlookers roared. "You just wait till the match is over. I'll give you the soundest licking you ever had in all your mis-spent life!"

"Encore, captain!" roared the other fellows.

"You watch me, old horse," said Chandran, with a twinkle in his eyes. "There has been no scoring so far, but there is going to be!"

And what did he do, but kick the ball into our own goal, and the next minute broke through the ring of onlookers, with A— in hot pursuit.



"I'll kill him!" parted A—, as he disappeared in the wake of Chandran.

About half-a-mile from the playground was a coffee-hotel which we generally patronised. Chandran arrived there dead beat, bleating for Ammani, the ten-year old daughter of the hotel keeper. Of course all the fellows in the hostel made love to Ammani, but while affectionate to everybody, she was especially fond of Chandran. A strange sympathy existed between the two.

"Ammani!" cried Chandran, "there's a fellow after my life. Get a tray of *thair vadais* ready and take it into the room. He has a weakness for them as I."

So when I arrived at the hotel about five minutes after the Captain, I found him and Chandran discussing a tray of *thair vadais* amicably, with Ammani standing as a guardian angel beside Chandran.

"Ammani," said the Captain, with his mouth full, "you threw yourself in my way. My anger is gone. The *thair vadais* are delicious. Did you make them yourself?"

"I often wonder what has become of Ammani," I said, jerking myself out of the past. "Did you ever go to Trichinopoly after we left college?"

Without answering my question, Chandran said, "Got a fiver on you, old man?"

I took one look at his suffering face and unhatted the fiver.

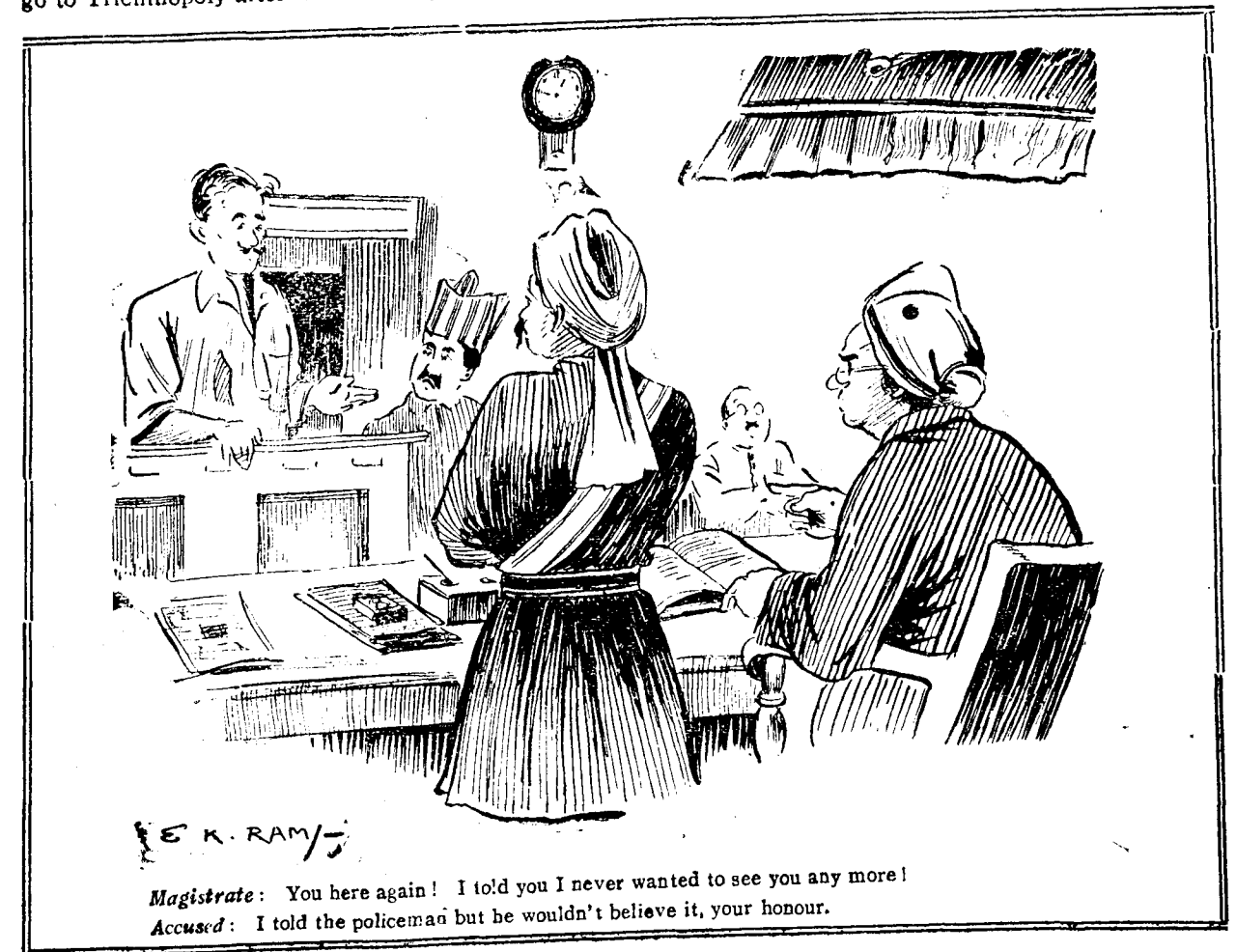
"Strange how the world uses some of us," Chandran mused. "Marriage can do a lot to a man, old horse. Look at what it has done to me. I hold a next-to-nothing job, and no spirit to look for a better one."

"I am sorry, Chandran," I said.

"Don't feel sorry for me, old horse," he said. "I am a philosopher. But look at women. From blushing brides they turn into viragoes. You will be surprised, but the woman I married was once a little, innocent girl, a little angel."

"Man alive!" I exclaimed, jumping up. "You don't mean—"

"Yes, I do," said Chandran. "I married Ammani. Three years ago it was. And every minute of it has been hell. But man," he cried, a momentary gleam flashing in his eyes, while a ghost of a smile played about the corners of his mouth, "her *thair vadais* are better than ever!"



Star Snaps—

Shirley and Japan

Japan, too, has her screen favourites, and according to *Nichi Nichi Shumbum*, Tokio, Japan's favourite film-star is Shirley Temple. By a ballot, Shirley received the largest number of votes. A cable was sent to Shirley conveying this message and the editor-in-chief personally called Shirley on the Trans-Pacific Telephone to extend New Year Greetings. Now Shirley's salary is 4000 dollars a week.



The Later 'Valentino'!

After Rudolph Valentino, John Gilbert represented Romance on the screen. His passing away has removed the only one of his type—the flaming, wild personality that he was. Between his last picture *Queen Christina* in 1933, and his sudden death, at 38, last month, a long time had elapsed—too long a time for a filmstar's fame to endure. What happened to him in the meanwhile? He was receiving his salary fairly regularly. But nobody knew what had come over him or what he was doing, until he died. There has been a lot of muffled gossip about his past. He was always worried about his future, and carried the worrying to extremes, nursing a number of personal grievances—mostly imagined ones. This bitterness and misery, John drowned in drink, they say. And then, he was given to periodic idleness—a severe handicap for a firebrand like him. About his career, apart from his unsuitable voice, a serious source of set-back were his contracts, which gave him 250,000 dollars per picture. They gave him an option, too, to stop at his will. These really spoiled him. A quarter million means a fortune to any studio and after that there is very little left for story, cast, director, and the other things that help a star to stay a star. When one such contract ended, he would sulk in some hermitage; until some smart producer offered him a supporting role in a picture. John will, however, steal all honours, free from self-consciousness, and then—sulk! A temperamental person, never free from changing moods and caprices, even his

closest friends were not sure how he would behave the next moment. He insisted on his full salary even when he was not doing any work for the studio for a long period.

Came the talkies and with them the end virtually, of his film career. He was unfitted to it, but he would not acknowledge it lest it should affect his salary. He was further allowed a personal manager, on 2,000 dollars a week.

The star whose fan-mail during the *Big Parade* days was the heaviest in Hollywood, was almost a forgotten man at the time of his death.

He came to Hollywood, as John Pringle, motor salesman aspiring to become an actor. He died when yet young, worth a very large fortune, unfriended.

Chaplin Speaks!

Modern Times will mark the end of the era of Charlie Chaplin's silence on the screen. *The City Lights* was a thundering success but it was a silent picture. In *Modern Times* he sings! He has composed the music himself! This fact was revealed by H. G. Wells on his return to England from Hollywood where he was Chaplin's guest.

Menjou's Illness

Adolphe Menjou has been ill for a long time and this has upset the production of *The Milky Way*. Veree Teasdale, his wife, has presented Adolphe Menjou with a son.

Honour for Astaire!

To Fred Astaire falls the unique honour of a paragraph in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, illustrated with stills from the *Top Hat*. This is indeed an honour for Hollywood too.



Amrutanjan

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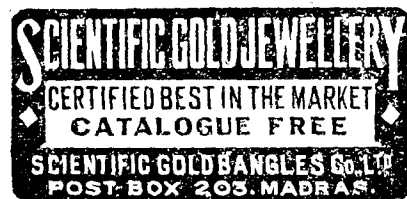
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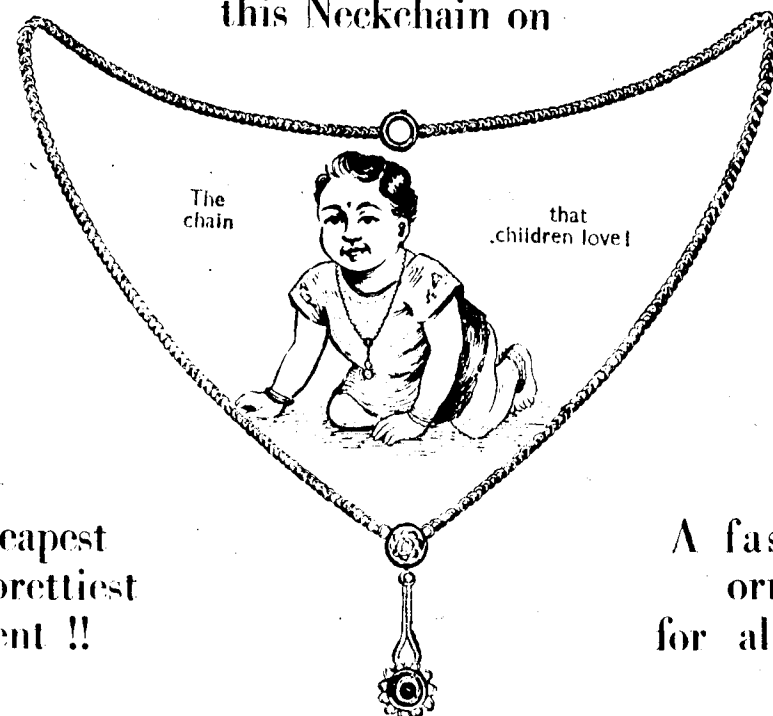
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