

The **MERRY** MAGAZINE



Vol. IV Madras, 29th February, '36 No. 9

Thirupathi

E. L. Shipman



A. A. Roland

V. Vyasa Rao

Sex-Metamorphosis



- Vizagwallah

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Embusque

The Educated Tiger

Kipling sang of East and West as two parallel lines running to eternity, never converging. This tale shows that beast is beast and man is man. You can educate a beast but its nose remains the same.

Thirupathi

Loyalty

Of a woman to her man. Ultimately, who is more dependable—man or woman? This story supplies the answer.

A. A. Roland

Man Proposes...

And the padre finishes the job. All about a nervous swain and how he won his girl.

K. Gopalan

Nothing!

Yes, on absolutely nothing.

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Justifying the Order-in-Council setting up Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas, Dr. Hutton said it was not due to their educational backwardness, and cited the case of a minister drawn from them.

This by no means proves that our ministers are necessarily well-educated!

He further pointed out a custom among them according to which one had to marry his own mother-in-law.

Apparently this is one of the things to be jealously preserved!

Dr. Aykroyd says that more research on food-values should be undertaken in this country.

This will no doubt be possible as soon as the present search for food is satisfactorily solved!

Referring to the alleged victory in the recent Tembien battle, Marshal Badoglio is reported to have told press-men: 'The mountain which has been weighing on our stomach so long is now ours.'

Mars has been in labour, and has reduced a mountain!

The Nazi Government has banned Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*.

This is just another reminder that it is still in the Dark Ages!

Addressing a Muslim congregation in the Badshahai Mosque,

Mr. Jinnah is reported to have said that he would leave no stone unturned to bring about a peaceful settlement.

Still, we hope he won't go about raking up the debris!

His Highness the Agha Khan addressed a meeting of Muslim M. L. A's.

Mr. Jinnah was among those not present.

Speaking at a dinner in honour of His Highness, Sir M. Zafarullah Khan said that there was no place in the modern world which he did not worthily adorn.

We rather think that he cares more for wins than for a mere place.

His Highness in reply referred to Sir M. Zafarullah thus: 'With his disabilities and modesty, he would be Prime Minister one day.'—*Madras Mail*.

This confirms his earlier statement that he is not in the running!

An Arab woman aged 140 who recently died is said to have ascribed her longevity to assiduous performance of domestic duties.

It is significant however that the number of her employers is not given!

Speaking in the Assembly, Mr. Leach, non-official member

from Burma, said that he would personally much rather be tried by an honest magistrate than by a jury of shopkeepers.

We fail to see what pleasure he could have derived by fouling his own nest!

Captain Lalchand remarked that so far as violent crime was concerned, his community of Jats stood on the top in the Punjab.

Which only proves that it takes all sorts of members to form the Assembly!

Referring to the discovery of synthetic rubber in Germany, it is now pointed out that it is only five times as costly as the natural product.

Another striking triumph for Nazi economics!

It is anticipated that Britain will close the financial year with a surplus.

Britain has recovered, while we have still to find a cover!

Speaking on the need for the spread of co-operation, Sir D. Hamilton is reported to have said that without unity, India would go to pieces or to Moscow.

It is pretty certain that the country will not easily be allowed to go to Moscow!

The Excluded Areas:

The Assembly debate on this subject throws interesting side-lights on the psychology of the Government. Dr. Hutton from Assam played the part of the expert, and handsomely confused issues. This gentleman, by the way, was the compiler of the last census report, taken in the troublous times of the C. D. Movement. His report was attacked from more than one quarter for being more than ordinarily misleading and inaccurate, as it is well-known that the inquiry was not helped by the people. The aboriginal tribes scattered in various parts of India may no doubt require special consideration. It would be interesting to know what has been done to them during one hundred years of British rule. The desire to segregate them for ever springs less from humanitarian considerations than from a scientific passion for preserving them as anthropological specimens. The so-called impersonal zeal of the scientist often masks an inhuman insensibility to human values. Dr. Hutton cited the examples of the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. In both cases, the people are left alone, and have no 'benevolent' outsider to take charge of them. Another argument advanced was that some of the tribes are warlike, and have to be kept in check in the interests of the helpless population adjacent to them. This is a pretty commentary on the glories of *Pax Britannica*, the much vaunted unique gift of Britain to India. If it is remembered that these tribes have been there for centuries before the British came, the hollowness of this plea is at once apparent. What then is the motive for their segregation? One has been suggested by the ominous fact that the scheduled areas are believed to be fertile in actual and potential agricultural and mineral wealth. They are being removed from the purview of meddlesome ministers even as

Burma has been separated from a troublesome neighbour. And the scientific cranks provide a convenient camouflage in the name of anthropology. If the government do not embark on a forward policy of education and economic amelioration, these primitive tribes have nothing better to look forward to than their ultimate and inevitable extinction, like the Red-Indians of America and the bushmen of Australia.

Alarums and Excursions:

His Highness the Agha Khan has punctuated his triumphal progress in the North by speeches admirable in sentiment as well as in language. To read him one would imagine that Hindus are the villain of the piece, that all the sacrifices have been on the Muslim side, and all the gains on the Hindu. He has adumbrated a programme which he claims is based on economic rather than communal issues. If His Highness had made such a pronouncement at any of the Round Table Conferences, he would have created a sensation, and we would have been eternally grateful to him for his courage and prescience. But his discovery is second-hand; for the only true begetter of that analysis of our ills is Jawaharlal Nehru. It is true that any one else can arrive at the same conclusion. Nothing would give us greater joy than to know that His Highness has done so. But if he believes that economic factors alone count, it is a little odd that he should lapse so frequently as he does into the communal way of approaching the problem. If His Highness would follow up the implications of his programme, his place would be at the head of the national movement; and his would be the rare privilege of effecting a union of hands and hearts which would be irresistible, against the whole of the world. Is he prepared to undertake the responsibility?

A Mountain In Labour!



[The Under-Secretary of State for India deplores lack of attention to the progress achieved in rural industries Etc.]



The Ministry of Labour in England is employing special women welfare workers, and they are unofficially known as 'official aunts'. Their job is to watch over the girls who are gathered to London and other cities in England from the distressed areas, under the new schemes for training of the unemployed. We have copied so many things from England that we might as well copy this idea to mutual advantage. The other day, Lord Linlithgow, out of sheer love for India, appealed to British youths who feel attracted by prospects of service among Oriental people (meaning us natives) to consider the career of I. C. S. Now these British lads when they come to India would feel helpless for a time, because the New Constitution will have changed the face of things to some extent. To help them feel at home during the initial stages of their service, our Labour Ministry ought to create a Corps of Indian Aunties to look after the bewildered lads. The Aunties should be instructed to be extremely kind to the boys. For instance, whenever the boys feel worried, the Aunties would pat their heads with a gentle hand or chuck them playfully under the chin. And when the boys retire, after an arduous day, to sleep, our Aunties would kiss them goodnight. That strikes me as the correct way to start the new phase in Indo-British relations.

★

Answering Sir Alfred Knox in Parliament about the Government

The March

by The Man

of India's ban of Miss Mayo's *Face of Mother India*, Mr. Butler, Under-Secretary of State for India, said that the book was banned because it would outrage the religious feelings of the Hindus and increase communal tension. Sir Alfred came again and said that a book published in such an artistic manner and costing fifteen shillings could not be considered liable to increase communal tension.

I think Sir Alfred Knox is right. If you convey an insult to a fellow you dislike, in an artistic, costly manner, he wouldn't think it is an insult at all. There is a man in Mussorie whom I dislike. In fact I hate him. He is such a bounder, and did me many a bad turn. Last New Year's Day I purchased a fine gold cigarette-case for Rs. 100 and had engraved inside it all the dirty words I could think of about him. I sent it on to him as a present, to remind him hourly of my feelings towards him. The fellow received it and wrote to say: "Thanks ever so much. That was a fine present you sent me, old chap."

Let Miss Mayo call me all the bad names she learnt at school and outside school. Let her put all those names on the back of a ten-thousand rupee note and send it on to me. I won't abuse her at all.

The moral is, sin defeats itself.

★

Mr. A. L. Gardiner, special correspondent to the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Hindu*, cabling from Addis Ababa says that the reported sabotage of the Negus's plane is grossly exaggerated. It appears it was a case of jealousy.

No, there was no woman involved, as your unholy mind suggests. The facts of the case are these: The King of Kings has a German pilot, Herr Weber, in whom he reposes the greatest trust. The Ethiopian pilots of the Emperor are swadeshi-minded, naturally. So they put sand in the oil-tank of the plane, so that Herr Weber may look silly in mid-air. I recall a like happening some years since. It concerned not kings, but cabbages. An elderly friend of mine (who, alas, is now no more) used to be very fond of cabbage soup. He had a wife. He had also a cook, a plump woman. Now, this cook was a great hand at preparing cabbage soup, with different flavours and different sauces. Whenever my friend came upon the cook in the house, a soulful look came into his eyes. Naturally his wife did not like the soulful look, of which the monopoly was hers. So one day she put sand into the cabbage soup. The husband ate the soup, sand and all, and kissed the cook twentyfive times, loudly, in full view of the wife. The moral, you see, is jealousy defeats itself.

★

Mr. J. H. Spans, the West End wig-maker is a friend of mine. I



of Events

On The Move

got a letter from him by the last air mail. He says that scores of women in the smart set, not only old ones, but quite a crowd of young ones too, are wearing wigs. Many of them have four or five wigs each in a range of colours, all made of natural hair. There is no period in English history when so many wigs were in circulation as they are today, except the Regency period. The reason, says my friend, is the belief that gentlemen prefer blondes. But since all the wigs sported in Ye Olde Englande at the moment are not platinum coloured, he says, that perhaps the reason is gentlemen don't prefer blondes such as lot after all.

Whatever the rights of the case, the subject under discussion has a special interest for us in India. Have you, friends, ever mused on the physical beauty of our leaders, so far as the hair on their tops is concerned? No? But I have. I shall pick three of the lot at random and place them before you. Gandhi, Bhulabai Desai, and Sir A. P. Patro. On second thoughts I will rope in Jawaharlal Nehru, because he is the President-elect of the Lucknow Congress. Now the pates of the first three are woefully sparse of hair. Jawaharlal has got a mop of sorts, but not quite enough, don't you think? Visualise in your mind's eye all these four



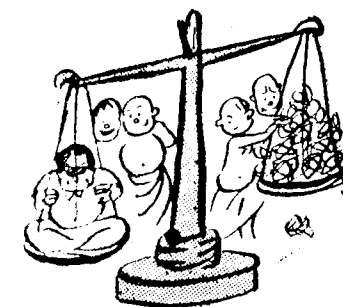
sons of India in beautiful wigs with permanent waves on. Personally I prefer to put Jawaharlal in a bright red wig. Look at this picture and that. You will agree, if the sense of the beautiful is not dead in you, that the wigs will improve their looks enormously. Beauty is not merely skin-deep: it is also hair-deep.

★

A London doctor says the best way to get round insomnia is to take a hot cup of milk, I mean a milk of hot cup, sorry—a cup of hot milk, just before retiring. Lie down and say to yourself or the ceiling: "I care two hoots for sleep. Sleep, old chap, you give me a pain in the neck, get along and leave me alone." Inside of two minutes you will be snoring.

I don't think I suffer from sleeplessness. But the night before pay-day is a restless night for me. I scarcely sleep a wink. I spend the earlier part of the night in an orgy of mental arithmetic, trying to slice up and adjust my pay to past and forward commitments. And being rather weak on figures I get the whole thing wrong, and give up the job of harnessing expenditure to revenue as hopeless. I spend the balance of the night counting sheep and things. Last night (which was the night before pay day) I tried the London doctor's formula. The result was marvellous.

The idea, it seems to me, could be applied with success by the Congress members in the Legislative Assembly to the Treasury Benches. Anyhow it is worth a trial. I commend it to them. They should drink a cup of hot milk, not one cup of milk shared by



all, (that would be objected to by the orthodox members) but each one a cup. Then the members should stretch their legs before them, lean back in their seats, look fixedly at the ceiling and say in loud chorus: "We care two hoots for the Treasury Benches. Treasury Benches, old dears, you give us a pain in the neck, get along and leave us alone." That ought to get us nearer our objective.

★

They weighed the Aga Khan in Gold and utilised the gold for charitable purposes. Inspired by it a Daltonganj man got himself weighed in *Batasa*, a famous local sweetmeat, and distributed the resulting *Batasa* among his friends. It is reported that this gentleman might go down in history as *Batasa Khan*.

This is rather a good one. The time is not yet for me to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee or Golden Jubilee or Silver Jubilee of my married life. True, I can celebrate my Brass Jubilee; but I don't want to start a bad precedent. So I am afraid I'll have to wait for two decades more to reach the Silver stage. However, I have decided to have myself weighed in *jilebis*, because I always liked *jilebis*. I will distribute the *jilebis* to all readers of this Magazine, for I count them as my friends. In anticipation of the happy occasion you may start calling me *Jilebi Khan*.

Those who want to imitate me and Mr. 'Basata Khan', might get in touch with me. I think we ought to form a party inside the Congress.

N. E. W. S.

There is a law in Berea, Ky., which lays down that after dark, any animal going in the street, should be illuminated. Don't get me wrong; not by setting fire to it! We have headlights and tail-lights for automobiles plying after dark. Even so, lights must be attached to the animals: dogs, cats &c. (Lions, tigers and Hippopotamii not excluded, if you have such pets prowling round in the streets).

A Tokio Detective, Funagoshi, was enjoying a hot bath, in a public bath-house. So also was another man, not a detective, but a thief. Nothing wrong in a thief having a bath! But the detective recognised the face of the thief he had been hunting after for a long time.

"Hey, you!" he shouted, "I want you!" Surprised, the thief got out of his bath and legged it. Funagoshi, dashed after him. He forgot himself. Enroute, juicy oaths and scared on-lookers greeted them. They could not understand why people were glaring as though they had seen ghosts. The pair sprinted for over a mile. Suddenly the C.I.D. man overtook the 'wanted' man and collared him when each discovered that the other was as Adam made him!—Nude!

Gundar Bjerke and his son Nels, visited a saloon bar in Viroqua, had their drinks and walked out—without paying for them. The owner stopped them, demanding money. But the pair didn't seem to mind a bit. They just indicated a sign which was hanging over the bar and passed on. The laugh now was on the owner.

The sign read: "Liberal credit extended to those eighty years of age and over when accompanied by a parent." The father was ninety-seven and his son eighty!

If you will be a motorist in Turkey, your blood will have to be examined and subjected to a careful

analysis before you can secure a licence. There are other tests, besides, for a driver, including the tests of eyesight, hearing and nerve reflexes. After all these there will be the trial of your skill at the wheel.

If our heart and pulse stop beating, we don't know what happens afterwards. Only one thing happens, the end. But in the case of Swami Vidyalankar, it is only a question of control. This feat was performed before Col. Harty, Civil Surgeon of Ahmedabad, when the yogi suddenly stopped his heart and pulse for a pretty long time. He was seated and his eyes were closed—only for the temporary period. After a time he came to as if getting up from slumber. Meanwhile his heart was auscultated and an electro-cadiogram taken. He also remained buried in a pit for over 24 hours.

As a protest against the unkindness of the Capitalist world, G. C. Dube, M.A., LL.B., of Calcutta, withdrew into a rest house, in an island in the Royal Lakes, Rangoon, and paid the final penalty with a written curse on "All Capitalists and unemployment which caused him untold misery, leading to suicide." His body with the letter containing the above condemnation was discovered a few days ago.

Mother Nature has been and is providing the Railway Station at the village of Heathfield, Sussex, with lighting, free. During water-boring operations, the engineers were taken aback to find natural gas emanating from the earth. Scientists were called in who pronounced it Methane, the dreaded fire-damp emitted by coal.

Pipes were laid, the escaping gas was arrested and conveyed to various points, and until last year had been used for lighting that station!

Now it is being put to a better use: it is collected and sent to the "Safety in Mines" Research Board, who are experimenting to discover how to overcome fire-damp explosions.

Fun For All



The man with the suit-case chased the train to the end of the platform, but failed to catch it. As he slowly walked back, mopping his brow, an interested on-looker volunteered:—

"Missed the train?"

"Oh, not much," was the disarming reply. "You see, I never got to know it very much."

"Mother," she said, "was so pleased with all the nice things you said about her in your letter to me. She opened the letter by mistake."

"Yes," he answered, "I thought she would."

Alice (at the Zoo): I wonder what that tiger would say if he could speak?

Alec: He would probably say, "Pardon me, miss, I'm a leopard."

An absent-minded man called upon his old friend, the family doctor. After chatting for a couple of hours over a few drinks, the doctor saw him to the door, and, as he was shaking hands, he said: "Come again soon, old chap; family well I suppose?"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed his visitor, "that reminds me. My wife's in a fit!"

A doctor presented his bill to the executor of the estate of a deceased patient.

"Do you wish to have my bills sworn to?" he asked.

"No," answered the executor, "the death of the patient is sufficient evidence of your services."

Steeplejack: 'Ullo, Bert! Where's that mate you took on—the chap that used to be an artist?

Second Ditto: 'Aven't you 'eard? Soon as he laid a couple of bricks, he stepped back off the scaffolding to admire 'is work.

"How do you get rid of your wife's headaches?"
"Oh, I give her the money for a new hat."

A hatchet-faced woman entered the office and inquired for the head of the firm. The junior clerk informed the great man that a lady wished to see him.

"Is she good-looking?"

"Yes, sir, very beautiful," was the reply.

"Show her up."...After the caller's departure, the head remarked, to the junior, "A nice judge of beauty you are!"

"Well, sir," returned the youth, "I thought she might be your wife!"

"So she is!" replied his employer.

"What's the shape of the earth?" asked the teacher suddenly.

"Round," replied John.

"How do you know it's round?" asked the teacher again.

"Well," said the boy, "it's square then; I don't want any argument about it."

The absent-minded man had decided to take himself in hand. In the bathroom in the morning he squeezed the tooth-paste on to his shaving brush and was about to clean his teeth with it when he recovered himself. "Ah! Just caught myself in the nick of time!" he remarked triumphantly, lathering his chin with the tooth-paste.

The Daggers

by Thirupathi

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

If anybody were to ask me why I purchased the two daggers I shouldn't be able to give any sane reason. For I have not 'psychoanalysed' the motive behind the purchase. That is rather a far-fetched way of expressing a commonplace occurrence. Nonetheless it is true.

The other day I was spending an idle hour in the Badsha Market. I passed along the booths at the northern end of the Market. These booths specialise in odds and ends, fifth hand, tenth hand, possibly hundredth hand, all apparently useless, but each attracting some day a crazy purchaser.

I picked them up. Two rusty daggers. They were twins. They were obviously the handiwork of the same artisan, perhaps made simultaneously. The grips were inlaid with gold or ivory or both. Of course all that was gone now. But the tracery of a beautiful design was still there.

I held them in my hands and tried to weave a story around them. They were sinister-looking enough to inspire a thriller-writer to spin a gruesome murder-story around them. They were innocent enough for a romance-monger to write a charming love-story out of them. Being neither, I simply stared at them. They were not without a certain fascination even for a dull-witted man like me. The reason possibly lay in their peculiar shape. The shape of the hilt was nothing out of the ordinary. The shape of the blade, which is after all the 'business' side of a dagger, was out of the ordinary.

The blade was about two inches wide at the hilts. For five inches down the hilt, the blade ran straight. After that it tapered down to a point in the shape of an 'S' with its two 'hooks' elongated. That was the intriguing part of the business.

I asked for the price. I was quoted—not a reasonable price, but a fairy story. Eventually I got them for five annas. The man in the booth said: "Five rupees." I asked him what language he was speaking. The sarcasm went home. I too went home with my daggers.

I gave them to my wife and asked her if she could make any use of them. She said that they were useless. The shape of the blades, she said, did not

lend itself for slicing vegetables. I was on the point of throwing them away when an idea occurred to me. Why not decorate my bed-room (which was also my study) with them? Under that picture of Sri Krishna oggling a dozen Gopikas they would make a good show. I soaked the daggers in kerosene oil for a week. The rust fell away. I polished them for a whole day, much to my wife's disgust. The steel was true. It shone wickedly with a dull lustre. I stuck them up crosswise just under the picture of Sri Krishna, the philandering deity.

I stepped back a few paces to assess the effect. My wife did the same. "Chi!", she said, "I don't like them."

"What does an ignorant woman like you know about interior decoration?" I retorted in jest. There the matter of the daggers ended as far as my wife was concerned.



That night my wife retired earlier than usual. I sat up a bit late with a novel and snuggled up to her side near midnight. I fell asleep immediately. I am not sure how long I slept. A queer smell, rather unpleasant, woke me up. I yawned and looked around. I sat up with a jerk. I looked at my side where my wife ought to have been. She was not there! I looked around the room. It had an old world air about it. It was not my room anyway. The crude appointments of the room raked up memories of a forgotten India. Where was I? I laughed. I knew. It was a dream. I smote my nose playfully and curled up to sleep again.

A little later, perhaps an hour, I had again a funny feeling that something was wrong. I seemed to smell burning wood. I slowly opened my eyes. I had another laugh. For this time I was not only in that funny old room but there was also an oven in a corner in which a bright fire was burning. I shivered, as a cold blast of wind from the open door swept past me. Cold wind! And it was May! My wife was still absent from my side. I sat up and looked around once again. The only thing familiar in that room



was the two daggers I had purchased. They adorned the wall to my left.

Instinctively I turned my eyes to the door. A cautious head appeared round the door. Then the rest of the body came into view. It was an Afghan, the kind one sees in old Moghul paintings. He looked cautiously all over the room but at me. He tiptoed across the room and came to my left where the daggers were. He took down a dagger and crouched in the shadows at my back. That did not strike me as funny. What was the fellow doing there?

A tense two minutes passed. A tall, sturdy Rajput came into the room, bearing a tray of wheat flour. He too ignored me. He made straight for the oven. He placed a pan on the fire and prepared to make cakes.

The Afghan began to move. All the hatred in the world came out of his red eyes. His body was tense. He held the dagger to his chest. He advanced towards the Rajput, like Fate. The Rajput's back was turned to him, so he did not see what was coming to him.

A murder was about to be staged, with me as audience. I tried to rush to the Afghan. My legs wouldn't move. I tried to yell. My voice forsook me. I tried to avert my gaze. A compelling force glued my eyes to the imminent tragedy. I jammed my wrist into my mouth to suppress the horror of it all.

The Afghan neared his victim. He poised the dagger, uttered a demonical cry and plunged the dagger into the Rajput's back, the whole length of it. My teeth closed on my wrist. I bit myself savagely, in my impotence.

The strangest part of the tragedy was yet to come. The Rajput did not double up and crumple to the floor. He stood up, straight as a dart. In one bound he was at the wall. He snatched the other dagger. He faced the murderer. The Afghan stared on, his face a compound of wonder and fright. The Rajput smiled. "So, Abdul, you killed me! That was futile. You gain nothing by it. I know who sent you. But you won't get your wages of murder. You are coming with me."

The Afghan dropped his jaw. The Rajput plunged the dagger into the murderer's throat.

Both of them rolled down simultaneously.

A din around me woke me up late next morning. My mother was on one side of my bed; my wife was on the other. The children were howling at the door.

"What is the matter with you all?" I asked wondering.

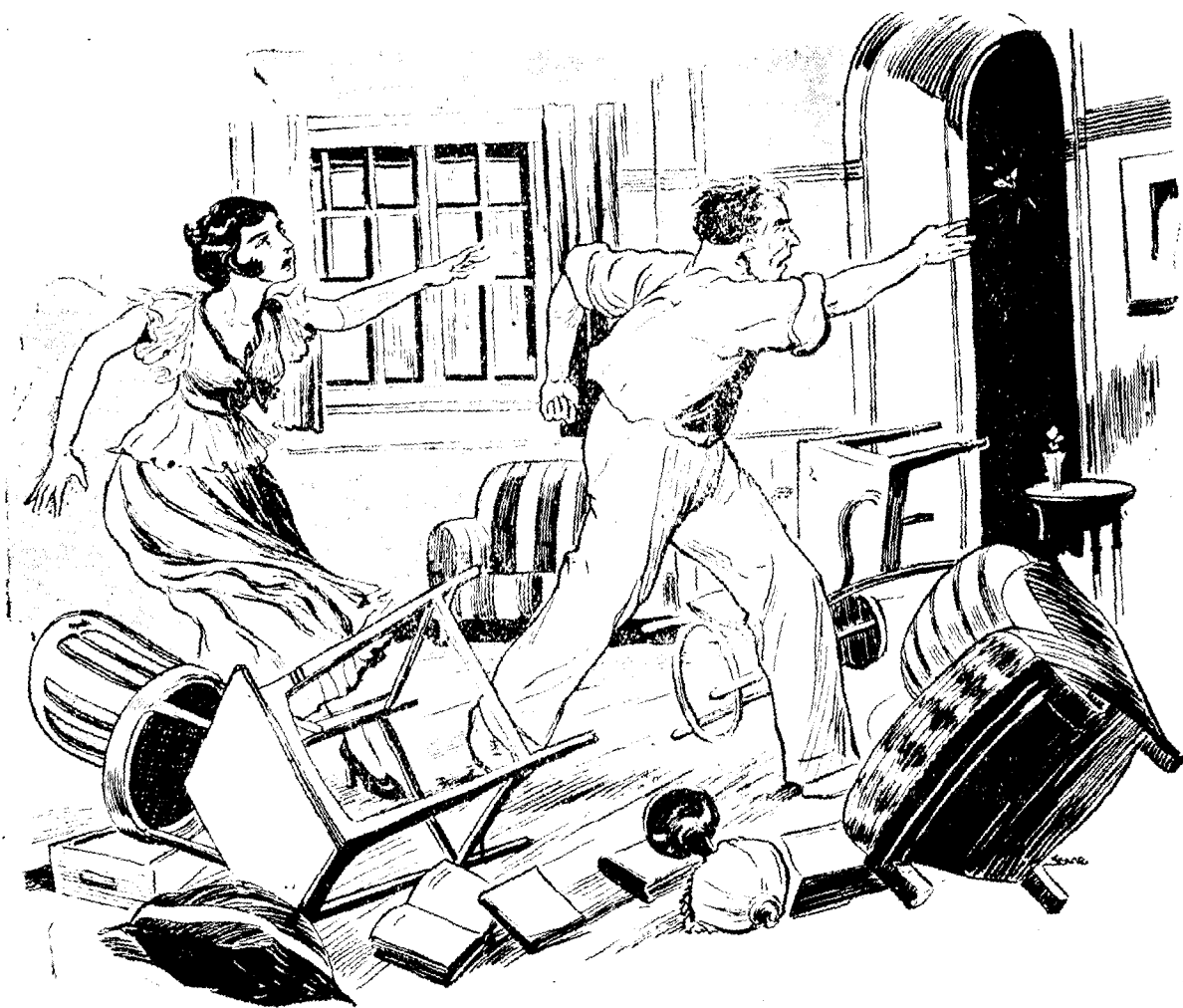
Nobody answered. All looked at my bed clothes. I followed their gaze. My bed clothes were red with blotches of blood. I glanced at my wrist. The skin on either side of the wrist was hard with congealed blood.

I looked at Krishna's picture on the wall. The daggers were not there. They were on the floor.

"Who was fiddling with the daggers?" I asked.

"Nobody," they said.

I took the cursed daggers to the local smithy and had them melted.



The Be-Quest—

by E. L. Shipman

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

Illustrated by Seker

OUR family has seldom, if ever, been noted for their clannishness. Immediately after his wings have become sufficiently strong to sustain his flight, each member of the growing generation has almost invariably taken the bit between his teeth (excuse the jumbled metaphor)—or, should no bit be available for the purpose, ground his empty molars, one on the other, with a fearful clashing sound—and taken his departure for some foreign clime in search of fortune.

Various, not to say curious, have been the ways and means adopted in this search. Some of us have made a living by the ascent of mountain peaks, though that living has often terminated abruptly on their leaving the beaten tracks to try a quick descent. Others of the family have taken to the Law, and the Courts seem to have been only too ready to reserve standing room for them in the Dock, and, later, provide them with continuous entertainment on a stretch of years. South American politics, filibuster

ing expeditions, searches for hidden treasure and sundry other and nearly innumerable adventures have accounted for most of the survivors.

Having the foregoing in retrospect, can it be any matter for astonishment that the death of an uncle of whom I had not heard since childhood (mine, not his) should have left me cold? Although invited thereto, I resolutely declined to attend the funeral, and relegated the occurrence to the limbo of forgotten and unregretted happenings. In doing the latter, however, I was a little premature, for, ere many days had elapsed, I received a letter from a firm of solicitors, which, after a few perfunctory phrases, eulogistic of my deceased uncle and informative as to sundry of his bequests, continued as follows:

".....A small legacy has been bequeathed to you by the deceased, who, in his will, directed that the nature of same should not be divulged, nor the legacy itself handed over to you, save on the condition that you attended in person at his residence to take delivery thereof. We shall be glad to hear from you as to your intentions in this matter at your earliest convenience."

The wife convened a conference.

"Did your uncle leave much money?" she enquired.

"My dear," I replied, "you know quite as much about the man as I do. Judging from the rest of my uncles, I shouldn't imagine he left anything worth writing home to mother about."

"Still," she opined, "one never knows—and, after all, it *would* be something for nothing, wouldn't it? I think you had better go and get it, dear, whatever it is. We must think of the children."

The edict having gone forth, further argument seemed superfluous, and I accordingly looked up trains, wired the solicitors, and immediately made all preparations for an early departure on the morning following.

On arrival at my destination the next day, I found that my late uncle has been housed rather more sumptuously than I had expected. A fair sized, and tolerably well furnished house it was, standing in its own grounds of several acres. In one corner of the garden stood an apiary of several hives, towards which the solicitors' clerk, who had met me on my arrival, led me. An ancient servitor, whom we found pottering round the hives, appeared to be the only person in authority, and of him the solicitors' clerk accordingly enquired:

"I understand the deceased left a small parcel to be delivered to this gentleman personally?"

"Well, no, sir," was the reply, "there ain't no parcel, rightly speaking. What the master *did* say was that his nevy—if this is him—was to have his champion queen bee, the one as he called 'Sheba'. If so be, as you'll wait a bit, I'll get her boxed for ye."

And the old man tottered off. Some minutes later he returned, bearing in his hand a small cardboard box and sundry impedimenta connected with bee-keeping. Bees look all alike to me, and I am quite unable to recognise royalty amongst them in the absence of any distinguishing label. The old man though, hesitated not, but, donning a pair of gloves and enveloping his head in a kind of butterfly net, he speedily smoked out one of the hives and therefrom extracted one of its occupants, which, assuring us that it was the identical bee my departed uncle had bequeathed to me, he immured in his cardboard box. Being, by this time, considerably fed up with the whole business, and impatient to catch a return train home, I hastily grabbed the box, and, forgetting even to tip the old man, rushed off stationwards.

In due course, I arrived home with my bee in its box.

"What on earth is that?" exclaimed the wife, with a suspicious glance at my parcel. "Is that all the old skinflint left you?"

"Yes, dear," I replied, "and, if you want to know, it's a champion queen bee, by the name of 'Sheba'."

"A WHAT?"

"A bee, dear, a queen bee," and I placed the box on a small table nearby.

"But, what's the idea," she cried somewhat hysterically, "of bringing bees home with you? Haven't I got enough work to do already?"

"But, dear, this is uncle's legacy."

"I'd legacy him if I could get hold of him, the old miser. Take the thing away and drown it."

"My dear," I remonstrated, "it *was* a legacy, and we can't treat the wishes of the dead with such disrespect. Besides, the bee may be valuable."

"Bother the wishes of the dead," was the sole reply. "If it's valuable, go and sell it. Anyway, take it out of here."

Precisely at this moment, however, the cat saw fit to jump on to the edge of the table on which I had deposited the temporary home of the bee. The table, overbalanced by the weight, toppled over, and the box was flung violently against the corner of a chair.

The box disintegrated, and the champion queen bee crawled forth, spread its wings reflectively for a moment, and then flew off to the ceiling.

More or less getting over her first grievous disappointment at the nature of my uncle's legacy, the wife was now apparently coming round to my view that there might be money in the bee. At any rate, she now proved as keen as myself to prevent the escape of the insect, and to recapture it for market. Hastily shutting the door and windows, we held a consultation.

"I'll get a broom and knock it down," suggested my better half.

"Don't do that," said I. "You'll only kill it, and that bee must be kept alive at all costs."

Tired of its inactivity, the bee now commenced to wander round the room. Snatching a light cover off one of the cushions, I waited until it came within range, and then made a dab at it with this weapon. The bee dodged, and I got a valuable vase instead.

"Heavens!" ejaculated the wife, "what will mother say? That vase has been in the family for generations!"

"May be we can stick the pieces together again," I remarked off-handedly. "Anyway, we haven't time to think of that while this bee is still at large."

Again I made a dab as the bee got once more within range, and again some bric-a-brac went west. Our cat now began to enter into the spirit of the game, and, despite her wonted lightness of foot, her breakages were worse than my own had hitherto been, while mine were now greatly increased by the addition to my labours, since, besides endeavouring to secure the bee, I had also to protect its life from this feline enemy. Ere long, a Dresden Shepherdess lay in pieces cheek by jowl with bits of a marble clock, the remains of the glass case that had previously housed the stuffed owl—the owl itself, minus its base, lying ignominiously on the floor alongside—and almost all the remaining moveable and breakable objects hitherto reposing in serene security in various corners of the room. Even the remainder of the furnishings had not come off scatheless. The window curtains were in shreds, chairs had been overturned and some of them broken, and the arena was strewn with many other fragments.

All this damage had been caused in a much briefer time than the relation of it had taken. As one article after another fell, the wife's anguish got worse and worse, until, finally, her condition approached the

undescribable. Her hair streaming in a tangled mass behind her, she now grabbed me by the arm.

"Stop it! Stop it at once!" she wildly shrieked. "The Smiths and Robinsons are coming to tea at four o'clock, and it's nearly that now. Stop it, I say!"

"Well, well," said I, calming down, and at the same time restraining pussy with a well-aimed cushion, "we'll have to try some other way of catching that bee."

"Oh, let the brute go, for goodness' sake!"

"What! after losing all this money? Not on your life, I won't."

After a minute's thought, the while I mopped my sweating brow:

"I know," I exclaimed, "we'll use a mosquito net."

With one eye on the bee's movements, I carefully opened the door, and, driving the cat before us, we cautiously left the room, closing and locking the door behind us.

A brief halt for much needed refreshments, while a servant went to our bedroom for the mosquito net. Then, bearing the latest weapon in this conflict, and accompanied by the servant, we returned to the room where 'Sheba' temporarily reigned, and circumspectly entered.

Having fastened one side of the net, its top to the curtain pole of the door, and its bottom by a piece of tape and some tacks to the floor, I directed the wife and servant to hold the net open, while, with a soft broom, I gently chivvied the bee, until, after prolonged endeavour and much profanity, I had it entrapped in the net. Yelling to the wife and servant to drop the net, I took up my stance on the side farthest from the door, and, gathering the net into my hands, proceeded to constrict Sheba's movements until I had it penned into one small hand-hold of the net. I shouted for a box, and—

The door burst open, carrying me and the net with it, while the children rushed precipitously into the room. With a rending sound, the mosquito net came away from the door, leaving the better part of one of its sides behind it. The champion queen bee 'Sheba' thereupon sailed majestically out from the rent in the net, through the now open door, and so, via the also wide open front door, to pastures green beyond, leaving in its rear a whole household struggling and fighting together in the meshes of our one and only, though now utterly ruined, mosquito net.

THE END

Readers' Forum

In Defence of Yen Kay

Dear Mr. Editor,

Your reference to Yen Kay as a sad case, because he flees from music, set me thinking. Of course I see that you said that in jest. You don't think that all this crowing is music, do you? If, as I expect, your answer is a lemon, I will send you a coconut. Honest. This high-minded and long-sighted attempt on the part of our aesthetic friends, musicians and metricians, has met with a remarkable degree of success. But where is it leading us? Let me tell you a yarn. Don't stop me if you have heard this one.

Once upon a time there was a school-master who carried his enthusiasm for versifying the world a little too far and drew down on his devoted head (though he had not bargained for it) the consequence.

He passed a rule one day that the pupils in his class should no longer speak but only sing whenever they had to say anything. He took the lead, setting all his teaching to music. At first there were constant breaches, which he took care to handle with due regard to the proprieties of the occasion, that is to say, he never employed coercive measures to suppress such unlawful precipitations of prose but only sang more songs himself in order to show the more convincingly the enchanted advantage of distilled voice and

parabolic sound over the pricking nature of plain speech. An earnest example being more than half the process of educating the young, this happy class soon came to behave like a fountain of music radiating showers of songs.

One day, after the class had become accustomed to and begun to appreciate this cent per cent singing education, a terrible thing happened. The teacher's house caught fire. The pupils saw the gathering flames and heavy tresses of smoke through the window, but the teacher himself, absorbed in his instruction, was nothing wiser for what was happening. So the pupils got themselves into a ballet-like configuration

and began telling the teacher, in song, of his misfortune.

They began, putting each syllable and word to recurring measure, ringing the changes of tone and pitch through all the gamut, so that, before the song was completed and the teacher had understood his house was on fire, that ill-fated habitation had become a heap of ashes, despite all the efforts of half-a-dozen unmusical people who lived within seeing-distance of it. You see the moral is obvious. I would any day choose a bucket to Vizianagaram Munuswami or Salem Kudappa. So here's to Yen Kay and Aurangzeb.

O. KAY



Really, Rudyard!

[British Cabaret girl turns Muslim to marry rich Turkish youth]—*Indian Daily Paper.*

(And so, you are off?—to North, or South?
Just sip this cup and wipe your mouth.)

"East is East and West is West,
The twain shall never meet."!—
Didn't one Miss May Whitley put this to test,
In love's refining heat?

Turkish Ahmed Abdulla Bey
(I guess a little brown)
Went to see a cabaret play
"In the famous London town."

Cupid and Chloe, unknown to him,
Were sitting on either side.
Ahmed's eyes suddenly went dim;
Was there his future bride?

Miss Whitley played the leading role.
"What a brilliant star on this night!"
Slowly slipping was Ahmed's soul;
Love, at very first sight!

Crescent and Cross, with a silken knot,
By Hymen and Cupid were tied.
Religion winked at this unrehearsed plot;
She greeted the groom and bride.

(So you see, the Old Blind Boy hits hard!
Good bye, good bye, good old Rudyard!)

—G. K. Pillai

Say It With Parrots

Reading Time
About 10 Minutes.

by A. T. MacNaughton Thomas

A young man, rather negligently dressed for the occasion, entered the Sunset Club. He looked as if he had stepped out of a Greek tragedy. He had evidently come with the intention of chasing his worries in the society of a bottle of Black and White, for, he looked haggard and distraught. Some friends of his recognized him and threw out an invitation to him to join them. Nodding his head in a distraught manner, the young man vanished from the scene as if he was pursued by ghouls.

"Poor old Kiki!" murmured a Whisky-and-Soda.

"Kiki?" enquired a Gin-and-Cognac.

"Why, Kiki Framroze. The chap who is in the Pomfret Export Syndicate."

"Poor chap! He has something on his mind. I think, he couldn't bite the ear of his uncle or aunt or somebody."

"No such thing. I guess he's all broken up about his wife."

"So, he's married?"

"Yes."

"Bless my soul!" said the Gin-and-Cognac, as he gulped down a neat quantity of molten lava.

It doesn't need a postal tuition to inform you that Kiki Framroze was distraught and worried. He had something on his mind. As a Whisky-and-Soda put it, it was due to his wife.

Ever since Kiki Framroze married Bannubai Batliwala, their marri-

ed life went on all six-cylinders. They felt that by a numerical progression they were in the seventh heaven. That was what they asserted. This blissful, dreamy state of married life went phut.

Hardly had they built their love-nest and lived a settled, dreamy life in it, when one morning Bannu, before her husband left for his office, sailed up to him winsomely and cooed into his ears whether he could give her a parrot. It seemed she felt so lonesome and so dejected in her husband's absence, that, if she had a parrot, she would amuse herself with it. A parrot was such a nice, lovable creature. According to Bannu, a parrot, wouldn't snap at the postman like a dog or lap up the milk like a cat or gobble up the chicks like a mungoose or screech like a myna or hop all over the shop like a grasshopper, etc. In fact, as Bannu concluded, if one took the pets by and large, a parrot always won hands down.

Kiki, who could have given his beloved wife anything from a battle-cruiser to a hairpin, was too pleased for words. A parrot! Tchacha! He would

get her the most beautiful and the most accomplished parrot that Creation ever saw.

Within two days a parrot was installed. Bannu cottoned to it. We cannot say whether it was the most beautiful or the most accomplished bird, but garrulous it was to the degree of talking a horse's hind leg off. Bannu was transported with joy, as she had a bird that talked to perfection.



For a month or so, everything went on oiled castors. One morning, Kiki, after breakfast, was chatting pleasantly with his wife. He knocked the ash from his cigarette on to the carpet as was his wont, and as he was about to have another puff, a voice in liquid Gujarathi said: "Don't drop the ash on the carpet." Kiki's cigarette dropped from his lips. His eyes goggled. There was the bally bird, cocking a roguish eye at him, and was loath to leave its former injunction without an encore. Bannu, all the while, looked adoringly at Soko—to give the bird its name—and then harangued her husband on the high intelligence of the parrot.

Kiki looked at the bird in an awe-stricken manner and declared that Soko was the brainiest bird that he ever saw and was glad that his darling Bannu was the proud owner of a phoenix.

No man, however fervent an admirer he may be of a phoenix, will continue in that state of admiration, when the phoenix comes down on him and lets into him repeatedly. That was exactly what had happened to Kiki. For a week or two, he was firmly persuaded that Soko was a clipper. But when it delivered week after week fresh injunctions of a complimentary nature, such as: 'Don't spill the tea, you ass'; 'It's already six. Get up, you lazy slug-a-bed'; 'Kiki, why do you behave like a cuckoo?'; 'Kiki, my prince of block-heads, why do you come late?' etc., etc. Kiki felt that his feelings towards the bird were one of aversion. He writhed under the parrot's words just as a whale might under the harpoon.

It was on a morning at breakfast time, when the bird said something about Kiki's teeth being as yellow as those of a horse that he flamed up and lost all control of himself.

"I'll wring that bird's neck," he choked, suiting the action to the word but not wringing its neck, so as not to o'erstep the modesty of nature.

"You want to kill my darling Soko because she talks so intelligently," moaned Baunu, in a flood of tears.

When Kiki perceived that his wife was crying away like a monsoon shower, he thought he had wounded her and so he went up to her, implored her forgiveness, and promised for her sake that he would never as much as open his mouth in reproof of Soko, even though it uttered defamatory statements. Peace once more reigned in that house.

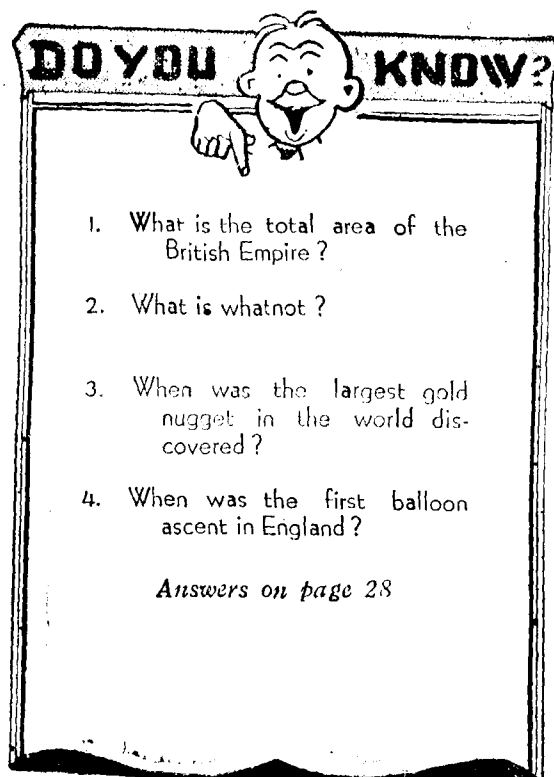
But not happiness. Kiki realized that the blighted parrot was causing a dickens of a rumpus and what was worse, it was estranging Bannu from him. He had no wish to cut up rough, for that would only pain his wife. Like a man, he bravely put up with all the bird said of him. It was this that made him look worried, distraught and distracted. It was in this distracted sort of manner that he entered the Sunset Club to seek solace, when a Whisky-and-Soda remarked that there was something wonky with his domestic life. But the Whisky-and-Soda never knew that a parrot was

the root-cause of Kiki's miseries.

When Kiki disappeared from the Sunset Club, he barged into his old friend, Dinshaw, whom he had not seen of late. Dinshaw, being a married man himself and subject to similar domestic troubles, though not from a parrot, knew in a jiffy that something was gnawing Kiki's soul and that, very shortly, he would go to pieces. Under the gentle influence of a *Flor de Havana*, which Dinshaw offered, Kiki unbosomed his feelings. Dinshaw sympathetically listened for a while and when he heard how the parrot tyrannized, his astonishment knew no bounds.

"Kiki, old chap, yours is a strange case. It only shows in Neon lighting, as it were, the deep cunning and subtlety of woman."

"I don't understand."



"That's exactly the trouble with you. My dear cough-drop, don't you see that your wife is controlling you through her parrot?"

"Nonsense! Bannu is above such things, my dear Dinshaw."

"Ah, my freshwater sailor, you don't know anything about women. Their subtlety is unbelievable. Women simply love to control their husbands. If your wife directly orders you not to do a certain thing, you will put your foot down. The very fact that the blasted bird utters week after week a new injunction, shows that the bird is being assiduously trained. The truth is, your wife rules you *via* her parrot."

"What must I do to counteract this baleful—"

"Well, say it with parrots."

"You mean, give her another parrot?"

"No, you muff! Lend us your ear."

Dinshaw whispered something in his friend's ear. The suggestion must have been revolutionary, for Kiki reeled with astonishment and joy.

* * *

A week later, another parrot was a lodger and boarder in the house of Kiki. Bannu secretly thought she could now fling double-edged shafts at her husband. One morning, when they were breakfasting, Soko ordered Kiki not to spill his tea. Boko, from his corner, informed in a radio voice to all those who cared to listen that the tea tasted like logwood. It was Bannu's turn to spill the tea and look agape at Boko. It gave her the jim-jams. Bannu expressed a vehement desire to kill her hubby's bird, but Boko, cool as dammit, came next with the statement that Bannu's pudding would give anyone dyspepsia of a month's duration. Kiki warned his wife that if Boko caught even a slight cold, he would suspect her and kill her Soko outright. Kiki, whenever he returned from his office, took his bird out for an airing and patiently taught it several words, which, when linked

together, were highly damaging to his wife's reputation as a cook.

The two birds, thus being regularly trained to fire off uncomplimentary statements, were always at full-cock and it only needed the pulling of a hair-trigger to set them going. For instance, if Soko ordered Kiki not to drop the ash on the carpet, Boko would counter by informing that there was hair in the soup and would round it off with a fiendish cackle. Thenceforward, Soko and Boko would take up the gauntlets on behalf of their masters and the debate that ensued was naturally of a high order, in which many home-truths came to light. Many of the girl-friends of Bannu, who dropped in of an evening for a chat, were entertained to a pleasant cross-talk, and they learnt

many things about Bannu's cookery, which information they couldn't have obtained even from professional gossip-mongers.

When people began to talk of Bannu's cookery, she considered whether it was not time she got rid of the parrots by first cottoning up to her husband. She accordingly told Kiki, distilling large crystal tears

during the talk, that if he didn't give away Boko, she would go and throw herself into the Back Bay. Kiki told her that he wouldn't part with his Boko for all the wealth of Croesus unless she parted first with her Soko. To this condition, Bannu readily submitted. Kiki drew his wife into his arms and between and sobs on one side and kisses and sighs on the other, they both mutually agreed that they had had a devil of a time with those cursed parrots.

Next day the parrots winged their way into the blue sky, for, Kiki set them free, as he had no intention to present them to any human being, since the birds were likely to bring about domestic estrangement, wherever they went.

(Continued on page 23)

Sex Metamorphosis

Reading Time
About 5 Minutes

Written and Illustrated
by Bhaskar D. Vizagwallah

Whenever I am in doubt, I go to the Grand Hotel. I am not trying to be funny. There is a chap there, a waiter, who was, till four months ago, an unemployed Literature Honoursman. I call him Jimmy. His real name is Jinarajadasa. But he and I have leanings towards Leningrad, so we call each other by endearing names.

I went to the Grand Hotel yesterday and sat down at my favourite table. I winked at Jimmy, and he came along. I ordered a pot of coffee and sighed like a furnace.

"What's the matter, comrade?" said Jimmy.

"I wish I had a college education."

"What for?"

"What for! Why, to know the meaning of all the tall words in the lexicon. See at that hungry-looking chap going out? He is very learned."

"Learned my foot!" said Jimmy. "He is a corporation bill-collector."

"What! I thought he was a professor."

"Professor my aunt! Chap hangs around here for free meals. What was he telling you?"

"I asked him the meaning of 'metamorphosis'. He said it was a treatise on roses. I didn't know that."

"Roses my—"

"Nose," I helped him.

"Thanks, comrade. Roses my nose!" snorted Jimmy. "'Metamorphosis' is a book of love lyrics addressed by Julius Caesar to Claudette Colbert. It also means 'change'."

"What change?"

"Any change. Suppose you give me a fiver—"

"I won't."

"I said, suppose, comrade," said Jimmy, reproachfully.

I apologised.

"Suppose," Jimmy continued, "you gave me a fiver and I gave you three rupee coins and thirty-two fine anna pieces. That's change."

All the foregoing has nothing to do with what I am going to say. The Editor said: "One thousand words or go and hang yourself." And this is the only way that occurred to me to hoodwink him.

Metamorphosis, then, is change of form, if Jimmy was not pulling my leg. If you want to know why I am humming on this word, like a bee on a rose, it is because I am very much exercised over a case of metamorphosis which happened in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

A kid called Miss Zdenka Koubkova, aged twenty-one, has become a man called Mr. Zdene Koubek, aged twenty-one. This has a deeper, profounder meaning than is apparent on the surface. She has

not gone and changed her name out of cussedness. Oh, no. I'll elaborate it in my own lucid way.

The other day I was testing my little nephew's general knowledge. I asked him: "What is the difference between a man and a woman?" He said: "A man is—er—a man. A woman is a man with a few knobs on. And there is no hair on the face." If you ask me, that is a bright definition.

So Miss Zdenka Koubkova of Prague got rid of all adventitious knobs and became a man. Sex-metamorphosis! This has caused a tremendous furore on both sides of the North Sea as far as the eye can see—on a wall-map of Europe.

Quite a few sex-metamorphoses have happened in India. We didn't kick up a furore. Why? We are believers in *Karma* and *Kismet*. Indian sex-metamorphoses haven't received any respectful attention in Europe, because we haven't got *Purna Swaraj*. Therefore I want the forthcoming Lucknow Congress to ratify the Karachi resolution on our political goal.

To go back to Miss Zdenka—I beg his pardon—Mr. Koubek, he says that when he was a she, he felt a strange new sensation last spring. But what sensation? Unfortunately he does not define it. We can only guess.

I guess that all the fulsome adulation she received when she was a she, setting up records in running and things, made her put down men as a silly lot. She perhaps wanted to show the boys, how to behave as boys. Or perhaps her boy-friend or friends got on her athletic nerves. Finding no way out of her boy-friend's or friends' asinine love-making, she

practised a bit of hot auto-suggestion which ultimately changed her sex. Of course all this is only, what you might call, a wild surmise. So there is no question of libel involved, which everybody please note.

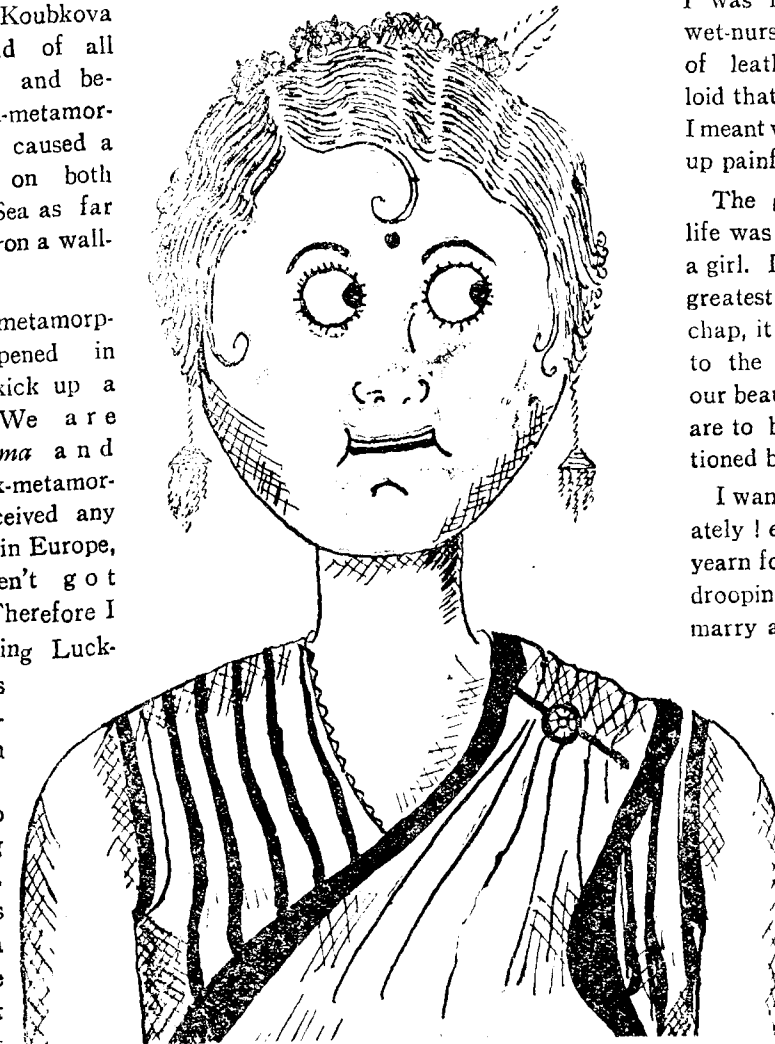
This Koubkova-Koubek affair opened an old wound in me. No, I didn't get that old wound in the World War. I am using the term in its metaphorical sense. As a matter of fact, in those War-time days

I was living mostly on my wet-nurse and any stray bits of leather, iron and celluloid that came my way. What I meant was, Mr. Koubek raked up painful memories in me.

The greatest regret of my life was that I was not born a girl. It is also my brother's greatest regret, because, good chap, it cuts his aesthetic soul to the quick to think that our beautiful ancestral lands are to be cut up and partitioned between him and me.

I wanted, oh how passionately! every young chap to yearn for a slant look from my drooping eyes. I wanted to marry a man who was always in the papers like the Rt. Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, the Honourable the Rajah of Bobbili, Rajendra Prasad or Dr. Ambedkar. It may look like an idiotic wish. I just shrug my shoulders in contempt and say: "You can't account for people's tastes."

So this Czechoslovakian metamorphosis has fed the dying fires of my life's dream. I—Holy Snakes! I am feeling a strange new sensation on my trousers seat, right now! Is my life's dream to take corporal shape after all? My, it is growing! Wait a minute! I must rush to my bed-room to examine myself. If the fates treat me kindly, and I become a girl, I will look like this. See picture on this page.



Mr. Vizagwallah after metamorphosis

THE END

Noise Nuisance—

Reading Time
About 6 Minutes

by P. P. Samuel

LAST night I suddenly woke up with the feeling that the sky was raining kerosene tins. Hundreds and hundreds of them, filling this earth of ours with the din that is civilization. But when I had rubbed sleep out of my eyes the happy truth dawned on me that it was all a dream.

A dream, uncle? Yes, my boy, a dream; it was in fact the professor next-door oscillating his Six-valve Super-set.

Why the professor should go on oscillating into the small hours of the morning is more than I can fancy. Perhaps it is because he is a widower and there is none at home to remind him to go to bed. Or again, he might be trying to get the Java Signal or whatever it is that folks try to get on the radio when hardworking citizens are tossing in bed.

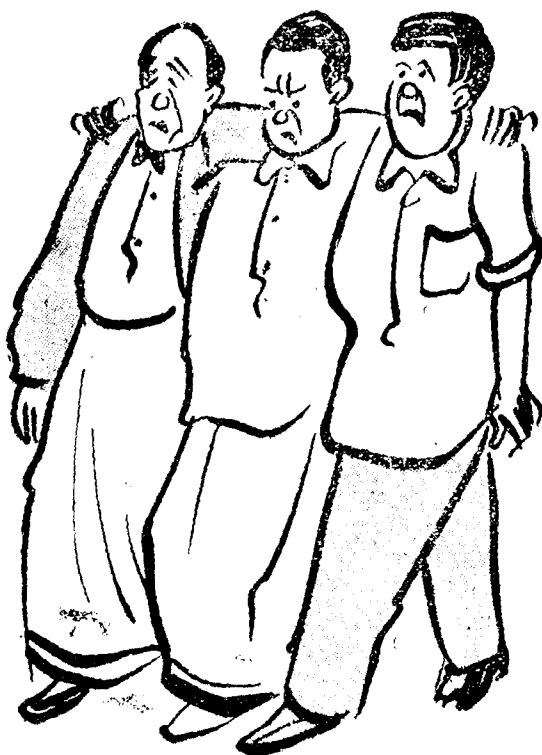
Why 'tossing', uncle? Well, my boy, what with the radios and gramophones and gears and all those appendages of civilization, the average bread-winner is dashed lucky if he could snatch a couple of hours from the noise-fiends who make whoopee all over the place.

The result? His nerves are shredded by day and the skin shrivelled by night. He may go to bed with cold-creams and skin-foods plastered about his features, but when the mask is washed off in the morning there are more tell-tale lines than ever before. Maddening!

If a list were prepared of the noises that cause the public acute discomfort and drive them to frenzy, it would probably cover two sheets of foolscap and take

about ten minutes to read through. But some of the most preposterous noises are perhaps perpetrated by the following:—

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Motor horns | (7) Trams |
| (2) Motor cycles | (8) Motor buses (New type) |
| (3) Motor exhausts | (9) Aeroplanes |
| (4) Motor gears | (10) Lorries |
| (5) Radios | (11) Jutkas |
| (6) Gramophones | (12) Motor buses (Old type) |
| | (13) Bullock carts |
| | (14) Rickshaws |
| | (15) Women |
| | (16) Street music |
| | (17) Curd-wallahs |
| | (18) Kerosene vendors |
| | (19) Holy beggars |
| | (20) Children |



Kismet.....Just our luck

And what (the intelligent reader asks) are we to do about it? Can't we really reduce this noise nuisance if we try? Aren't most of these noises preventable—at any rate reducible? Can't we insist on all indigenous vehicles being rubber-tyred?

Of course, of course. But the trouble is that we, as a people, delight in going about with acid faces, muttering: "Kismet.....Just our luck... This Government!" rather

than do something positive. Moreover, if we are thoroughly honest about it we are bound to confess that after all we do like the noises we ourselves make. At least, we don't mind them very much.

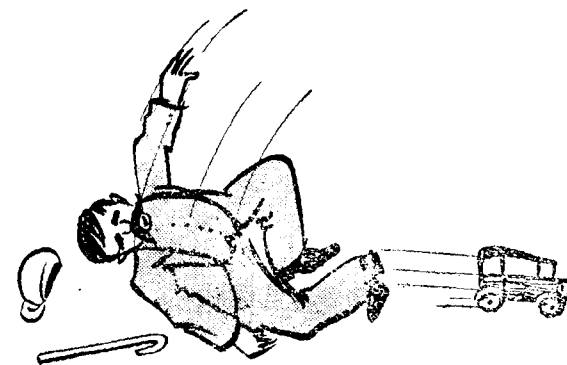
So it is heartening news that we have from Bombay that silence zones have been proposed for the city. Sounding motor horns, it appears, is to be prohibited in certain localities between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. Something attempted, something done (let us hope)

may earn many a night's repose for the harassed city fathers of Bombay.

Anyway, the doyens of Bombay have very shrewdly gone to the heart of the noise menace—the motor vehicle. It is this monstrosity that cracks the ear-drums and frays the nerves of man and beast from Pekin to Peyta and Moscow to Melbourne. Perhaps the internal combustion engine plays an important part in civilizing the world (as it is said to be doing now in backward Abyssinia) but the price we pay for it is far out of proportion to its usefulness. It raises clouds of pestilential dust, fills the air with horrid stinks, murders hundreds of men, women and children of the world and gives the inhabitants of cities the hunted look that had vanished from the faces of human beings with the disappearance of the mammoth and the mastodon.

But, uncle, it helps to save time, doesn't it? It does; but to what purpose? I know a man who tears

past Round Tanna every evening in his 40 H. P. Sports car as if a second is more valuable to him than to the Anthony Eden. Consumed with curiosity I tracked him to his lair one evening and found him getting down from the bus and burying himself in the depths of a comfortable easy chair. Then, of course, he blew careful rings of cigarette-smoke at the ceiling for an hour or so until, suddenly, like a pup that has dreamt of yesterday's bone, he shot away again in a pandemonium of horn, gear and exhaust. On further investigation I learned that he had had the silencer of his Super Din removed so that it might roar away like nobody's business on the crowded thoroughfares.



Big Game

Perhaps the most abominable thing on our roads is the Baby car fitted with a musical electric horn, a radio set and a loose mud-guard ('wing', if you prefer it). Babies of all makes and shapes, as we have often been at pains to point out, are expensive little nuisances. They scuttle about drunkenly on the roads, scattering peaceful pedestrians as they go.

And what surprises one most is how lightly these homicidal hogs get off when they are caught at last. The punishment for knocking a man or woman out of shape is something like a couple of hundred rupees, unless the motorist happens to take a fancy for big game like a Rao Sahib or Pucca Sahib. If only our Magistrates have the courage to jug the road-hogs for a minimum period of six years, the motor-car would very soon cease to be a source of danger to the pedestrian.

And the noise nuisance too would be reduced considerably, I think. Doesn't everyone know that it is the rash driver

who keeps his elbow on the button of his musical electric horn most of the time?

Gosh! Is that an old lorry laden with kerosene tins? Or a New Type bus going like the delivery of a ton of assorted building material? No, it is only the professor monkeying with his radio! One of these days I would buy a hundredweight of Chinese crackers and let it rip by his window when he has gone to sleep. That, I suppose, would open his ears. But then, there is always the danger of his mistaking it for some ether-born message. He might perhaps jump out of bed with beady eyes, shouting: "JAVA BY JOVE!" and go on oscillating like fun till day-break.

SAY IT WITH PARROTS—(Continued from page 19)

"Darling, why not we have a bulbul? It won't talk. It will only whistle."

"No, Bannu dear. Who knows that a bulbul of yours may not whistle derisively when I knock the ash on the carpet."

"What! Do you suggest—"

"Bannu sweetheart, I don't suggest anything. I only say it may be a possibility."

"Then you'll even object if I have a cockroach," a trifle sarcastically.

"Yes, honeybunch. Goodness knows whether the cockroach may not chirp mockingly when I spill coffee. If at all we have pets, they must be mute. Absolutely mute."

"Shall I buy a pound of bird-seeds for the two stuffed owls that you are going to bring me to-morrow?"

"You needn't be sarcastic, my love. I shall get you pets that shall be as beautiful as they are mute. As lovable as they are harmless."

The Framarozes now have goldfish.

THE END

Horse Nonsense—

by S. I. Rasool

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

TO confess that you are totally ignorant about the horse, is social suicide: you will be despised by everybody, especially the horse. In decent society you will be spurned, or even spurred, aside as a *pariah*.

It has always been so. The best people have always been obsequiously horse-conscious. For example, Archaeologists declare that the pre-historic Man-About-The-Downs actually worshipped the horse. The ancient Romans were horse-bitten, too. Whom did Julius Caesar elect (after consulting the auspices) to throw across your old friend the River Flumen?

Again, what is Polo? It is the species of horse-croquet invented by the lofty Maharajas of India, or possibly by the Chinese during the P'ing P'ong Dynasty—we don't know—but the point is, Polo has always been the only exclusively aristocratic pastime, limited to the best people (pukka sahibs and all those) and played most exclusively at the other end of the ground, so that the common people shall never comprehend it.

The best people have always ridden the horses. The Knights of Old England, Caballeros of Old Spain, Sheiks of Araby, Ironsides and Cavaliers, Highwaymen and Hunting Squires, Jockeys and all. To acquire this art, no sacrifice, obviously, can be too great; and remember, if you want to

keep your place in the Cavalcade, you must talk about the horse; not in a simple footslogging sort of way—that would never do—but using such a wealth of equine terminology that your conversation becomes just one long horse-word puzzle.

Besides a good repertoire of points and colours you must have also at your wits end plenty of different kinds of horses to talk about. It is not very knowing just to mention 'my horse', it is much nobler to talk about my mare, filly, spalding and so on.

These terms are easy. All horses are born foals, the female adolescents being called 'fillies', and the males 'sillies'. A mare, so long as she is young and unmarried, is called 'A Heifer' (pronounced heffer); and a grown-up male is either (pronounced eether) 'A Spalding' or else 'A Bullion'—the latter being the very dangerous kind with a ring in its nose.

But these are not enough; you must learn as well to discuss Breed and Blood; and the first thing to note is that the most famous and noble breed of horse is the English Thorough-bred, which is notable for its long thin legs, mane, tail pedigree.

Next in nobility comes the pure-bred Arab or 'Steed', which is chiefly useful for poetry and other romantic writings. The Arab resembles the thoroughbred, except that the nose or muzzle is rather sharper (for which

reason an Arab is sometimes referred to as 'Barb'), and the best kind of Arab is usually a fleabitten Grey; and the worst, undoubtedly, a fly-blown Bey with greasy socks, seedy-toes, etc.

In addition to these normal breeds there are a number of abnormal or special breeds such as Circus Horses, and Film Horses which can climb rocks, roofs and rope-ladders, muzzle heroes, muzzle villains, and apparently have four leg brakes since they can stop dead when cantering at approximately 100 miles an hour; and a few more.

When purchasing the animal, you must take good care that it is 'sound' in the leg, or steady on its thorough-pins as horsemen say, and also 'sound in wind', by which horsemen mean that its breathing should make no noticeable sound at all, as a horse which 'whistles' is rather irritating, particularly if, as so often is the case, it always whistles the same tune.

The other most important thing in a horse is its manners. Remember, if you do not buy with great caution, you may find that after associating for some weeks with your horse, you have become incurably addicted to, say, scraping aside the bedding (your wife will be furious), or eating it; tearing the clothes or bandages with the teeth (awkward if you ever go into hospital), cow-kicking (for which you will be viciously prosecuted by the R.S.P.C.A.), or crib-biting, or even 'biting the groom while being rubbed down', which causes endless trouble in a Turkish Bath.

After having bought the animal, your next duty is to 'dress' it properly, which means scraping the dirt off him and then sharpening and stropping and polishing all the various points of the horse. And there is nothing romantic about it except that it is also called 'grooming' after Lord Grougham who invented the art.

In grooming, no labour-saving devices are allowed—the idea being to make grooming, like riding, as difficult as possible—and the only authorised tools are the body-brush with which it is difficult to get the mud-scruf out of the horse's fur; the curry-comb, with which it is almost impossible to get the mud, scruf out of the body-brush; the dandy-brush, which is comparatively useful and therefore discouraged; and

the wisp, a complicated straw sausage made with great difficulty and used for drying damp horses because straw is so absorbent.

All this done, you must be very careful in feeding the brute. The food varies in different countries, for it is said that the Norwegian horses eat fish, the French ones eat cakes and puddings and drink wine, the Indian eat moth, but on the whole they are more particular about what they eat than about what they drink.

All horses are addicted to the low-bred or cocktail habit of drinking just before meals, though it is only fair to say that since the introduction of the teetotalisator race-horses at least, drink practically nothing but water.

It must not be forgotten that like human-beings horses also enjoy ill-health in so many different ways.

Some of these diseases are not catching, but others, such as the common cranial disease known as Osteoporosis (swollen condition of the head), are definitely contagious. In case your horse suffers from one, you must at once send for a 'Vet' who specialises in horses. The Vet is the most remarkable kind of doctor in existence because, although a genuine surgeon, he never operates,

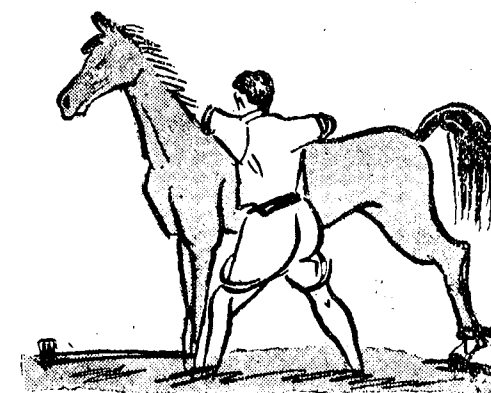
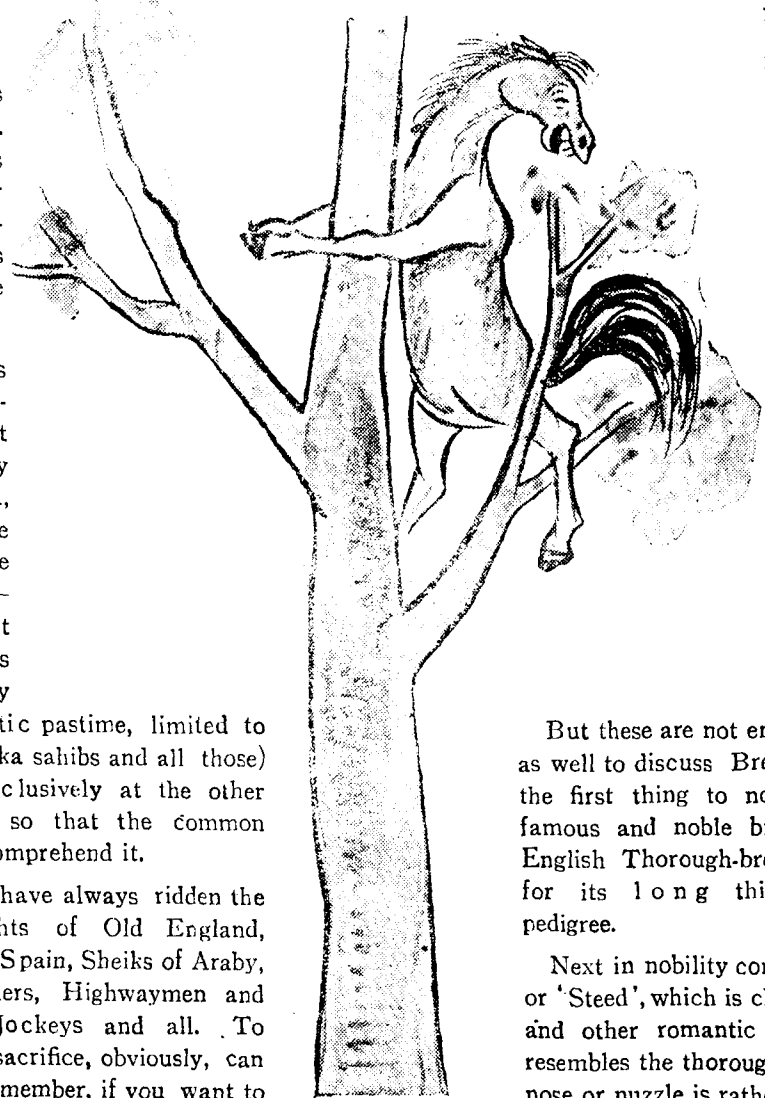
and because he is always right, he is able to diagnose a colic, infallibly, every time.

The only cure he knows is a huge pill or 'horse-ball' (or mare nostrum) which is pushed down the horse's throat by hand, or blown down it by means of a large tube, held between your teeth. When using the tube method, remember that the horse can blow too; it is therefore up to you to blow first.

With horses as with humans, stamping the feet, rubbing the legs and kicking at inoffensive objects are a sign of some form of irritation or pain, often due, in the case of horses, to symbolic mange, but in humans, not frightfully often.

The most dreadful of these diseases is undoubtedly the Thrush. When the horse gets this it becomes subject to an uncontrollable impulse to rush up trees and burst into song. You can't stop it, and it is catching, and there is only one cure. It's shooting.

THE END



The Young Man

A Terrifying Experience in a Railway Waiting-Room

Reading Time • About 10 Minutes

FEW ordinary persons (and certainly none who belong to the journalist 'tribe') could have gazed on The Young Man With The Grey Hair, without a thrill of surprised curiosity.

It was but natural, then, that I should feel that thrill the moment my eyes encountered him.

He was amazingly youthful, apparently no more than twenty. And amazingly grey. There did not appear to be a single coloured strand in that startling silver thatch above his schoolboy-complexioned face.

Instinctively, my journalist-mind had asked itself the question: "What is the *reason*?" Only to be answered rather regretfully: "Whatever the reason, one can't very well go poking impertinent noses into private histories."

And there, thought I, the matter would have to rest.

But fortune favoured me.....

We happened to occupy the same compartment in the Frontier Mail, and later, in the dining car, to seat ourselves at the same table. As we thundered on towards the North, we were drawn into casual conversation. One topic led to another, and before we had retired to sleep that night (whether due to any dexterous manoeuvring on my part or not I cannot recall), I had obtained this remarkable story.

You've probably heard (he said) of persons suddenly turning grey because of some great suffering or appalling shock?

And you're probably just as sceptical of such a thing being possible as I used to be until (he smiled ruefully)—well, until I demonstrated pretty conclusively that such a thing *is* possible!

Three months ago, my poll was much the same colour as yours; maybe a couple of shades lighter. And I can guarantee it didn't contain any grey hairs. At twenty they're usually absent, aren't they, even if early greying is hereditary—which isn't the case in our family.

On the night of November the 8th., I got out of the Poona Express at a small station called Vadgaon.

I had planned to go buck shooting amongst the surrounding hills in the early morning with my old friend Robinson, who was coming in from Bombay by the midnight train. It had been arranged that we spend the night in the poky little "1st and 2nd Class Waiting-Room," which was all that Vadgaon could boast of in the way of amenities.

I had already dined at Poona, and decided to turn in early and get as much sleep as possible. I knew I had a tiring day before me, and Robinson's train wouldn't be in for another four hours.

I obtained the key of the waiting-room from the Station Master, a mild-mannered Hindu who apparently also did duty as clerk, ticket-issuer and collector in that one-eyed little station.

My servant (and gun-boy), Mahmood Khan, laid out my bedding on one of the two benches that the waiting-room provided, after which he made himself comfortable in his own blankets on the platform just outside the room.

There were no more trains till midnight, and by nine o'clock not only Mahmood and I, but the Station Master (whose room adjoined mine) and the whole of the neighbouring village, appeared to be wrapped in soundless slumber.

It must have been about half past eleven that some instinct suddenly awakened me.

I lay without moving, listening intently, and let my eyes rove round the room. There was a weakish oil lamp on the platform not far from the door of the waiting-room, and the light from this showed me that I was alone.

But some strange sixth-sense warned me of danger.

I was about to call out to Mahmood and ask him—well, to reassure myself that all was well; when I saw something that sent a prickly sensation scudding up and down my spine.

A fairly well-dressed Indian was creeping stealthily into the room. As he came slowly through the open door, the platform light glinted on a knife he gripped in his right hand!

With The Grey Hair

Words & Picture by Albert A. Roland

For one instant, I thought it was our friend the Station Master, and then I saw that this man was differently dressed, much taller and more powerfully built. I also noticed that in his left hand he grasped a canvas bag, not unlike the kind that the mails are carried in, but rather smaller.

When he was within ten feet of me, crouching against the further wall of the room, I thought it was about time that I took a hand in the little drama!

I sprang from the bench and in a twinkling had my gun out from its case. At the same time I ordered the intruder in a stern voice, which I did my best to keep steady, to remain where he was.

To my surprise, he neither took to his heels nor attempted to attack me, but straightened up calmly, without any sign of confusion, and deliberately pocketed his knife. Then he placed the bag on the floor, and addressed me in unhurried and quite good English.

"I am sorry if I startled you, sir. I thought at first you were one of my enemies, but I see I was mistaken. You are clean-shaven."

I said sternly, still holding the gun handy: "You'll have to explain this to the police. You can't come creeping in on people and stabbing them, enemies or no enemies."

"Very well, I'll explain, sir, if you insist; but not



"Stop!" I cried, jumping to my feet and raising my gun,

necessarily to the police. Hear what I have to say first. And now, do you mind if I light the lamp? It's rather dark in here."

I curtly told him to go ahead. I sat down on the edge of my bench while he lighted the lamp, after which he seated himself in a chair near the lamp, and I was able to get a good view of his features.

He was a handsome, intelligent-looking Hindu of about thirty-five, well-dressed, and the last sort of person you'd expect to stick a knife into you. He smiled pleasantly while he spoke, but there was a pronounced glitter in his black eyes, and it didn't take me long to discover that he was far from normal.

"Yes, sir! We can leave the police out of this. It's a personal matter. And in any case, there are only two and a half policemen in Vadgaon. A nice lonely place, sir,...and plenty of men who are *not* clean-shaven! It's fortunate for you, indeed, that *you* happen to be clean-shaven! I cannot *tolerate* a moustache, and as for bearded men—they send me *quite* crazy!"

I tightened my grip on the gun, and rather ostentatiously cocked one trigger. The man was a monomaniac, and his *bete noire* was bewhiskered men!

"That knife you saw me put away," he went on calmly, "sharp as a razor, and I know *exactly* how to use it. I don't stab. I *cut off their heads*. I know *exactly* where to cut, neatly and between the vertebra. And I carry special towels and adhesive plaster to prevent the blood making a mess. I hate a mess. Like to keep *e* everything clean—including my knife. Oh yes, sir! You're distinctly lucky to be clean-shaven!"

I glanced at my wrist-watch. A few minutes off twelve. Before long, the train would be coming in, and any moment now the Station Master would put in his appearance. He had promised to rouse Mahmood for me.

The cabin-man, whose hut was some distance down the line, must already have dropped the signal, which was done before the train left the previous station. There did not appear to be any passengers on the platform, but this wasn't anything unusual in a sleepy little place like Vadgaon. I wondered when on earth the Station Master would show up...

Suddenly my vis-a-vis slung a question at me in a changed voice. There was venomous anger in it, and his eyes blazed as he leaned forward and looked into my face.

"Have you lied to me, sir?" he hissed. "There *is* hair on your lip! Very fair, but hair nevertheless. Now you shall die!"

He rose and tugged at his knife.

"Stop!" I cried, jumping to my feet, and raising the gun. "I'll shoot you if you move an inch!"

"You cannot shoot me!" he snarled, grinning cunningly. "Your gun's not loaded. No one leaves loaded guns lying about."

"I'll brain you!" I promised, gripping my gun now by the barrel and swinging it above my head.

He stood his ground, smiling maliciously and slowly withdrawing his knife. And then I think my nerve broke slightly. I began yelling at the top of my voice for Mahmood, advising him at the same time to be careful how he came in. I yelled at him to call the Station Master, and any others—as big a crowd as he could muster.

My visitor began laughing. He had withdrawn the knife, and it shone brightly in the lamp-light. He had also taken from his pocket a snuff box. I thought half hysterically: "This madman's going to pretend to offer me some snuff, and knife me while my attention's distracted..."

But he didn't offer me any. Instead, with a sudden movement, he flung the contents of the box in my face,

I fell back, blinded and chocking...and at that blessed moment I heard the whistle of the approaching train.

My senses were reeling, and I felt the gun slipping from my hands. But my one thought was: "Thank God, the *train*..."

And it was the train that saved me, the train and nothing else. As it drew into the platform, my assailant changed his mind, and rushed from the room.

I learnt later from Robinson, who happened to be looking out from a window, that the man ran down the platform, yelling and brandishing the knife, and then into the station-yard.

Almost before the train had come to a standstill Robinson was out and after him. And a few minutes later the platform was alive with people. They caught the madman just outside the station grounds. Robinson knocked him silly with a blow from his gun but not until he had put up a nasty fight with the knife.

It subsequently transpired that he had escaped that night from a lunatic asylum at Poona, and must have somehow smuggled himself into Vadgaon by an early train.

The Young Man With The Grey Hair paused at this point, and I thought the moment appropriate to put in a remark.

"My God!" I said, "what an experience. Another few seconds, and your number would have been up! Enough to turn anyone's hair grey."

He looked at me abstractedly.

"No. That wasn't what turned me grey. As a matter of fact, I happened to catch sight of myself in a mirror in the room, when I was recovering from the effects of the snuff. And I noticed nothing unusual about myself, except that I was as white as a ghost."

"Oh?" I said politely and with a world of enquiry in that monosyllable.

"It was a few seconds later that it must have happened," he said, after a long pause. "A hell of a hubbub was going on outside on the platform, and in my slightly dazed condition I thought I heard shouts and cries of 'Murder!' It was just then that I happened to pick up the madman's canvas bag and turn out its contents on the waiting-room floor..."

The Young Man With The Grey Hair looked very pale indeed as he added:

"It was the bearded and neatly severed heads of Mahmood and the Station Master."

THE END



"Ugh! Some drain-pipe in the house must have burst!"
"No, it is the pipe-tobacco you sent me as a present."

Do You Want Respect?

by John A. Henry

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

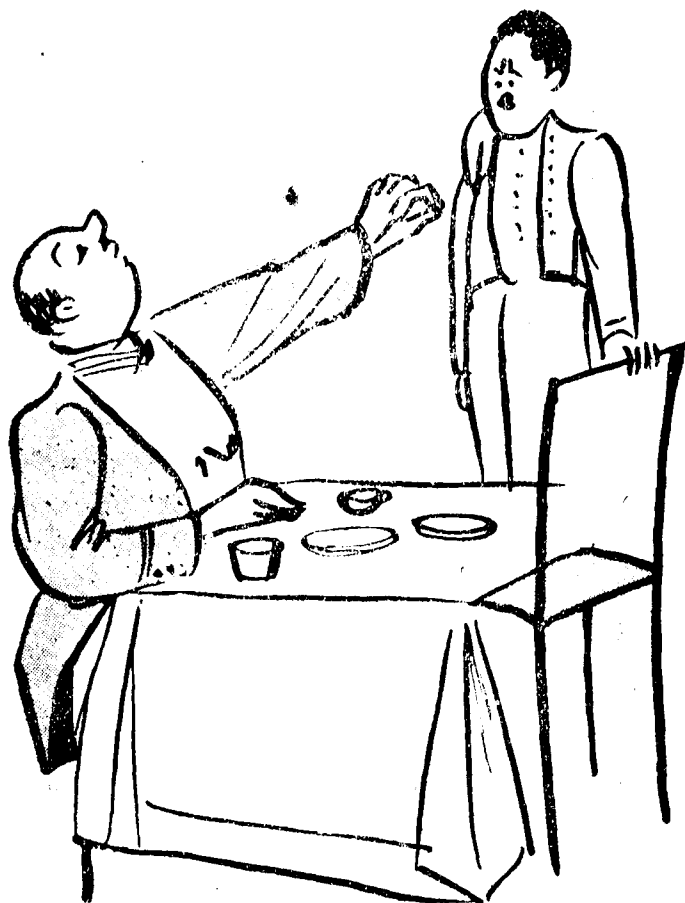
RESPECT is one thing which we all like to receive. When we get it, we feel positively regal and fit to consume caviare with kings, macaroni with Mussolini, hot dogs with Haile Selassie, and jerry-built sausages with the Japanese Emperor.

When we don't get it, all we feel fit for is swearing at those who don't give it us, because, in our opinion, the blighters don't realise who we really are.

I was chased off the garden seat of a public garden at twelve o'clock the other night by a *chowkidar*, and my girl was chased along with me. The *chowkidar* said it would be all right if I gave him some *baksheesh* or even a cigarette or cigar. As I had no *baksheesh* myself, nobody being in the habit of giving me any, I refused to give him *baksheesh*. And, because I don't smoke, I and my girl and our feelings weren't respected. Now, what I mean is this—that *chowkidar* didn't know who we were. We might have been the King and Queen of England for all he knew. Of course, we weren't, but it all goes to show, doesn't it?

Respect can be commanded in many ways, and the chief thing to remember is this—when in Rome do as Rome does. And when on a seat in a public garden with your girl, do as the *chowkidar* wants you to do,

otherwise he'll worry you at all sorts of weird and inconvenient times and you won't be able to discuss cabbages and kings and things like that.



Yes, tipping and respect are two things which go hand in hand. Tip the apple cart up and you'll get as much respect as there is in a Bologna sausage. Hence the term "Boloney to you!" But tip the man who owns the apple cart and you'll be *salamed* and know-towed to, till you get slightly bored with your tremendous popularity and dynamically attractive personality.

When your wife tips the scales at two hundred and fifty pounds, you respect her. And when you tip them at a hundred, you don't respect yourself. Neither does your wife. Women don't respect men anyway, so it really

doesn't matter what you tip the scales at as long as you tip your wife with plenty of adoration and pretty things to wear, etc, etc.

Tip a waiter and you get your soup soon. Don't tip him, and you get your soup down your neck. Report the waiter to the manager, tip the manager, and he will promise you that he'll choke the waiter off and that such an outrageous thing will never happen again. Don't tip the manager and—well, you'd better have all your meals at home, otherwise your neck and

backbone will be getting worn away by the erosive qualities of soup and apple sauce.

And how we do tip! I've often given my last anna to a waiter with a most grandiloquent gesture and expression—for fear he may look sadly at me and murmur "Tut! Tut!"

There is a well-known game, to my young readers at least, which is called Tip-Cat. Little as most people know, this game has a romantic and respectful origin. In the dim and dusty past a young man once wanted to command the respect and love of the maiden of his dreams, who did not really think very much of him. But she had one weak point, like many females, and that was—a cat. When the young man tipped her cat with the backbone of a pomfret, she fell into his arms and kissed the tip of his nose. She eventually knocked the tip off the same nose and off his bank balance as well. But that is neither here nor there. She respected him until death—or rather, she respected his remains after he had died, and the remains of his money.

"Tit for tat," is an illegitimate confusion of "Tip for tap," which, in the olden days, meant "Tip and get a tap on the back." The opposite of this nowadays is "An eye for an eye" which is a corruption of the olden day "An O for an O" meaning "Give nothing, get nothing." Or "Cipher, cipher"—in other words, you sighed for a cipher and cried for the moon unless you were a good and cheerful tipper.

Speaking of tippers, Scotchmen used, at one time, to be very generous and all good tippers. But they soon saw what an expensive game this respect-hunting was, and so they changed their names from tippers to toppers and cracked funny jokes about themselves

purposely in order to put wives, waiters and other tip-hunters off the scent.

I once absent-mindedly tipped a shabby looking street beggar with my gold cigarette case, and the beggar fell all over me and said he would respect me all his life. That man is now the boss of the firm I work in. My gold cigarette case—or rather its proceeds—gave him a fresh lease on life. And the last tip he gave me was that if I continued to be so careless with my work, I could sling my hook, or, politely interpreted by me, do a fast fox-trot away from the wage list of the firm. It all just goes to

show you what a funny thing respect is after all.

The tips we garner from life, so the common or uncommon belief goes, serve us in good or bad stead as the case may be when we die and our souls leave our bodies—for better or for worse regions. If the tips we've garnered are good tips, then we play harps and sing hymns and nursery rhymes while we're seated on billowing white clouds amidst crystal gates etc., etc. Bad tips imbibed in life entitle us to a respectable position near a gentle-

man called Mephistopheles in a region known as Hades, where we sit and play Jews' harps and sing hot rhythms and peppy snatches from hot-cha melodies. I know jolly well where I'm going to be respected most, and, I suppose, so do you. I think you know better than I do.

Yes, respect can be gained in many ways. But, if you never want to be respected, don't be respectable. Respectability usually attracts respect like a duck's back attracts water.

And that's my tip to you!

THE END

Star Snaps

Comedians Crowned

When Charles Chaplin completes a picture, it is news of world importance. So also is a feature cartoon by Walter Elias Disney.

These two Hollywood luminaries are in the news now for both these kings have been crowned,—in different ways. Walt Disney, at 34, is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, France, for the latest cartoon of his Mickey Mouse and Silly Symphonies in technicolour.

Last June he was awarded a special medal by the International Film Committee of the League of Nations for the "Best Animated Cartoons ever created." At the recent Venice Exhibitions, too, he received a similar award, the subject which won him the honour being *The Band Concert*, the first Mickey cartoon in technicolour. This is happy news to Mickey Mouse and Disney fans.

Charlie Chaplin, Disney's ideal man, actor and ideal everything, on the other hand, has been declared to be spreading communism through his films and, funnier still, the purity of Chaplin's 'Aryan Ancestry' questioned. The best part of this joke is that his latest picture, *Modern Times*, the only one since *City Lights* in 1931, has been banned in Nazi Germany. This picture is different from the usual Chaplin comedies in that this talks and sings. Paulette Goddard, his wife, is the leading lady.

Twenty-four years ago, Chaplin stepped into Los Angeles Railway Station, on a salary of 150 dollars a week. His heart was then, as he says it is even now, 'full of that sinking feeling' which one experiences when embarking on a new enterprise that may profoundly affect one's entire life.

From the primitive knockabout farce which was then the staple light fare of the screen, he gradually developed into something greater, richer and more satisfying. Followed a series of pictures that rocked the world from China to Peru with uncontrollable

laughter—*A Dog's Life*, *Shoulder Arms*, *Pay Day*, *The Immigrant*, *The Pilgrim*, *The Kid*, *The Gold Rush*, *City Lights*. And now *Modern Times*, another example of his superb genius. This occupied him two years in the making. The reason for the delay is that for this picture, Charlie was the 'Whole Works'. He was in other words, scenario writer, director, producer, star, musical director and composer, set designer, editor and business manager. It does not mean he has few people to assist him. They are, in fact, a legion and once employed on the Chaplin set, never discharged. He strives after perfection in all departments and therefore, works out the whole thing himself. It is a pity that he is unable to work the camera which records his own acting; if he could, he would be cameraman as well!

Modern Times, which is a 'burlesque' as Chaplin himself is reported to have admitted in an interview, upon the mechanisation of industry, is found guilty of communistic tendencies. Therefore, this, and all the other Chaplin pictures, have vamoosed from the Nazi-land.

It is a wonder that Nazi 'purity purge' has not found means to prohibit film-producers 'thinking' in non-Aryan, or more appropriately, non-Nazi lines. The latest Hollywood news (I can't vouch for the veracity of this) goes that special Nazi pictures are being produced in Berlin, with Hitler as the sole censor, to propagate Nazism, beginning and ending with the Nazi Salute, Swastika and cries of 'Heil Hitler'. The report adds that these will form the entire programme on the screen in the 'Fatherland' from April next. These must be entrancing pictures, sending the audience into trances—of sleep.

The New Trio

Thelma Todd's place is being taken by Pert Kelton. Pert will team with Patsy Kelly, and where a trio riot of fun is necessary, Zasu Pitts will join for a series of comedies. Thelma Todd, by the way, has left one dollar for her ex-husband, a New Yorker. The rest of her estate, over 80,000 dollars, has been left to her mother.



The Hot Favourite—

V. Vyasa Rao

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

VILLAGE headman Kuppanna sat on the pial of his house, the only decent house in the village, fondling his tremendous paunch. The great respect shown to him not only in his village but in the surrounding villages as well was not a little due to his gargantuan tummy. No wonder therefore that he was proud of his outspreading belly.

A dozen children were playing noisily in the open space before the house, besmearing their none too clean bodies with dirt and mud. Mr. Kuppanna watched the little ones at play, chiding one, encouraging another. By and by he sighed happily, yet with a tinge of regret in it. He went inside.

He sat on his cot and stared at the wall. The playing children had started a train of thought in him. He was rudely awakened by somebody closing his eyes from behind, as children do at the game of bo-peep.

"What is the matter with you, woman?" growled Kuppanna, not unkindly.

The woman giggled and took away her hands. She was Mrs. Kuppanna, known to intimate friends and her husband as Achamma or Achchi.

There is an idea current in our midst that marital romance does not survive beyond the first few years of wedlock. That is what the realists say. The truth of that belief was falsified by Mrs. Kuppanna. She was forty-five. Her husband was fifty-five. And they were married thirty years ago. The romance which dawned in her when her husband pinched her cheek on the nuptial night thirty years ago spread into a cloudless glory as the years progressed. Thirty years of married life had not dimmed the outline of her romantic horizon a bit. Her romance grew. So

did her body. Her stoutness matched that of her husband's.

The same was true of Mr. Kuppanna, only in a slightly lesser degree. He loved his wife and had the greatest respect for her sound commonsense.

Theirs was a happy life—with a little 'but' in it.

They were childless. Mrs. Kuppanna tempted the pick of the Hindu gods and goddesses with heavy bribes to give her one little baby. She did not give up hope till her forty-third year. Unhappily no

baby came along in spite of the hot fact that she and her husband never heard of Mrs. Margaret Sanger. They resigned themselves cheerfully a childless death. Death, however, was quite a little distance away.

"Did you hear the talk in the village?" asked Mrs. Kuppanna of her husband. She sat down and tickled him in the sides.

"Here, leave my skin alone," laughed Mr. Kuppanna. "What talk?"

"They are saying that any one can go anywhere

on the railway for twelve rupees. Is it a fact?"

"Yes, Achchi."

"Then let us go."

"Where?"

"Anywhere. Rameswaram, Kumbakonam, Conjeevaram, Madras. You never took me to any place"

The couple started on a couple of Go-As-You-Please M. S. M. tickets. They wandered in South India at their pleasure. Eventually they arrived in Madras.

Moore Market in Madras is the Mecca of every visitor from the districts. Mr. and Mrs. Kuppanna went to the Moore Market. They were cheated by a few enterprising hawkers. They wandered along the

booths admiring every article displayed. Finally they stopped before a litter of puppies which was being offered for sale.

The motherhood cribbed and cabined in Mrs. Kuppanna came bubbling out in revolt. She gathered two little pups and pressed them to her ample bosom. They purchased one pup and bore him triumphantly home.

They called him Sircar, for no reason save that people bestow on their dogs startling names. Sircar grew up. The country air, lots of wholesome food, unchecked liberty, made him into a little giant.

He developed revolutionary tastes. When his first birthday came round not one in the village except Mrs. Kuppanna gave Sircar a blessing.

He teased the other dogs. He bit stray sheep playfully, and sometimes not so playfully. He was particularly fond of matronly hens. He used to bring home quite often a generous part of their plumage as mementoes.

One day he played with a large prize-hen which belonged to the next-door farmer. The important hen not seeing any fun in it bit him savagely in his eye. Sircar lost his temper momentarily. He returned the bite. The hen died.

The hen's owner was something of a noise. He kicked up a row and threatened to take the matter to court. Mr. Kuppanna paid ample compensation and cast for the first time an angry eye on Sircar. They discussed the dog's future that night while at supper. Mr. Kuppanna was for giving away the dog to any wandering beggar that chanced into their village. Mrs. Kuppanna would not hear of it. Mr. Kuppanna insisted. His wife compromised. It was decided to send the dog away to Mrs. Kuppanna's sister who was wanting a dog for a long time; not because she was childless, but because the pigs that strayed into her house were becoming a nuisance.

Sircar sat on his haunches at a respectful distance while his fate was being decided. Perhaps he understood, for all the while he listened to the conversation with head cocked.

They secured him in the ground floor room with a chain and retired to their bedroom on the first floor.

Towards midnight Mrs. Kuppanna nudged her husband.

"What now?" he asked.

"Hear that," she said.

Mr. Kuppanna heard. It was the dog Sircar scratching and moaning at the bedroom door. They hastened to the door and opened it. The dog leapt at them and began to lick their bodies frantically. It was the month of December. They were surprised as

a hot blast of wind swept past them. Mrs. Kuppanna peeped out. Round the stairs a blue flame leapt into view.

"Oh God, the house is on fire!" wailed the good woman.

Headman Kuppanna ran to the window and heaved a sigh of relief. There was a hay rick just six feet under the window. He commanded his wife to jump down. She giggled in spite of the tragedy of their situation. It was a long long time since she had done any romping. Mr. Kuppanna helped her to the window-sill.

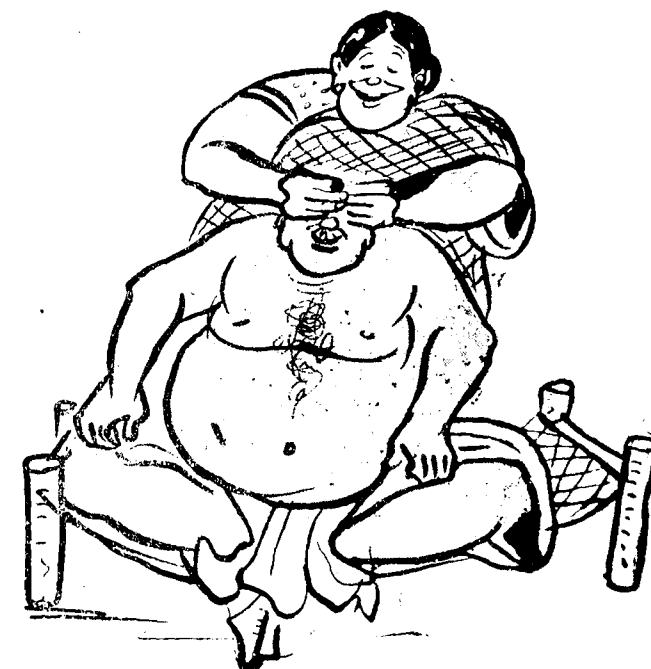
She hesitated but for a second. Down she went, landed on the hay and rolled down beautifully, unhurt save for a few bumps gathered *en route*. Mr. Kuppanna followed, holding his stomach. Lastly, like the captain of a sinking ship, Sircar leapt clear off the hay rick, barking joyously.

Meanwhile the whole village woke up and gathered at the burning house. By the glare of the conflagration Mrs. Kuppanna looked at her dog, and wept. Nearly half of Sircar's tail was burnt off. His body was like a battle field.

The village realised the dog's great sacrifice. Seeing the fire the dog broke loose. But instead of running away from the fire and danger it waded through flames to reach his mistress's room to save her.

Sircar passed through heat and became thenceforward a hot favourite with all the village.

THE END



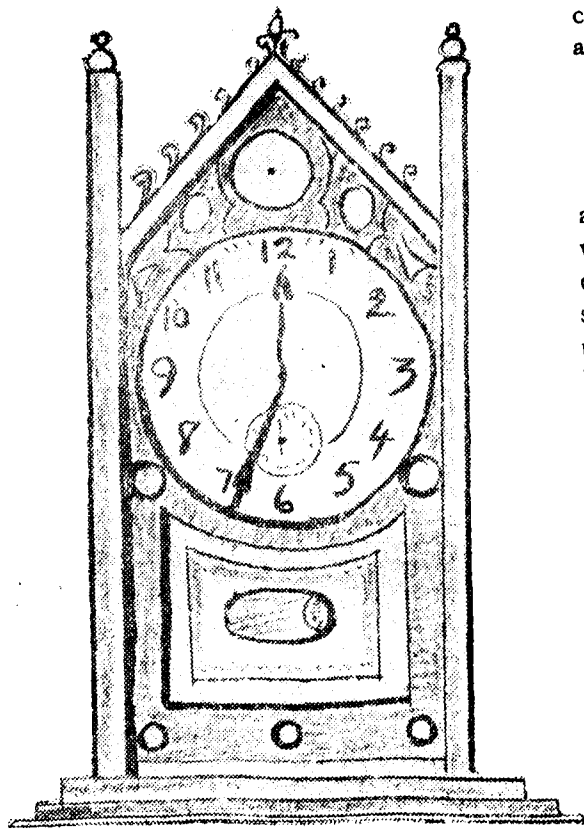
My Time-Keepers

by R. B.

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

I don't refer to those chaps in the employ of Railway companies, doing odd jobs at odd intervals. I mean by time-keepers actual time-keepers, clocks, watches and things of that sort.

My first time-keeper was a legacy. It came from my grand-father. And a regular grand-father clock it was, pious in its looks and subject to moods. In appearance it looked like a miniature church. It worked while it chose and stopped when it liked. I ceased winding it and it answered by remaining idle—sleeping all its hours, minutes and seconds. And so it would have remained but for a contingency which came in the shape of a clock-doctor. He looked at it queerly and tapped it this way and that, just as doctors do when you go to them. He next perpetrated a horrible yawn and said: "There is nothing wrong with the machine. Some cleaning and she will work for another hundred years." I reminded him in his own grammatical language that the machine had already celebrated her first centenary. "She will pass through her second," he prophesied and put a quarter ton of conviction into his looks. The result was I parted with the clock and a rupee. The rupee stuck to him but the clock came back with some oil inside it, some polish outside it and some promise about it. I fixed it on a stout old nail. A new era in the history of the clock commenced. It was no more a question of working or stopping: it was definitely hereafter a question of gaining or losing time. For some days it would go on con-



siderably losing, do what I might. Then as though suddenly ashamed of its sloth it would begin to gain, and would go on gaining, again do what I might. But then it had acquired one virtue. It knew day from night and night from day, and the fact that it knew was made known to me every minute of every hour of every night. For after sunset the clock's ticks, normal by day, would assume the sound and strength and fury of hammer strokes. All my attempts to bring sense into the head of the clock proved absolutely futile. Nor was this all. Fancy it beating time according to its whims and fancies! When it was four it would be very liberal in its strokes and beat twelve. But when it was eleven it would become stingy and be content with just one or two strokes. In sheer disgust I removed the clock to a safe corner in a not-much-frequented old room. And there it still lies in the company of lizards, mice and ants.

Age does not cloy her
Nor custom stale her infinite variety.

My next time-keeper was a watch. I bought it. It was an error, for I bought only trouble. I bought it second hand. It was an error upon error, a two-fold error. Before I went in for the watch I was under the honest impression that a watch was so very different from a clock and knew how to behave. I was sadly disillusioned. Ever since the watch came to me the poor thing was always wanting help and assistance. I tried one after another all the watch-engineers of the locality. Each agreed only in denouncing the chap who handled it before and in

breaking a wheel or knocking out a screw. For my part, I went on smashing glass after glass. As among themselves, the component parts of the watch practised a vigorous policy of non-co-operation. My watch considered its short or hour hand simply superfluous, clogging as it were the smooth working of the mechanism. The result: I was always sure of the minutes but never of the hour to which they belonged. To cut the story short, within the space of a few days, all life oozed out of my watch. Only the nickel cover was intact. An uncle of mine addicted to the betel-chewing habit wanted it for keeping his chunam. Rāju, my friend, seriously suggested that I might make a startling innovation by offering it to Pillayar. Can insult go further, I ask? So it became a receptacle of chunam for uncle.

An entry in my diary of that period reads as follows:—

Have resolved:

1. Never to inherit a time-keeper
2. Never to buy a time-keeper second hand.
3. Never to see the face of a watch repairer.

But the time-sense grew strong in me once again. I bought a cheap time-piece. A cheap time-piece, I said to myself, need not be repaired. If it went out of order I might throw it aside and buy another. But the wonder was it did not go out of order for many months. And when it did I just tried a few shakes and a few thumps and put some kerosene oil inside it. The cure was marvellous. But as for showing time, my cheap time-piece was remarkably accurate to an hour. And what else can you expect?

Well, I would have gone on this way had it not been for an unfortunate incident. I got married, and my father-in-law, to show his importance, presented me with a wrist-watch. Twenty times twenty a day he would ask me (to remind me of the present) what the time was. And twenty times twenty a day I was obliged to look into it and answer. A sort of queasy, quailing sensation took possession of me and made me quake in my very shoes. Is it one of the duties of the son-in-law, I asked myself, to answer time to his

father-in-law, wherever and whenever he may take a fancy to interrogate? No, sir. I thought of a plan to avoid all future trouble. I presented the watch to my wife saying that it was a lady's wrist-watch and would suit her more than me. She said 'No' as befitting a woman, and then accepted it.

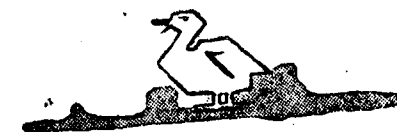
Now I am without a time-keeper. I have tried all varieties and have found them wanting. Nature, Dame Nature, a

Mother kind to all alike, has promised to give me as correct an idea of time as my brains could make out. Why go in for man's mechanism? The sun needs no key, nor the moon, nor the stars. They need no repairs. They don't have to be oiled. Their polish remains undimmed even after the lapse of millenniums and millenniums.

And after all what does it matter if you do a thing a few minutes early or a few minutes late?

Does Man live for seconds—for minutes—for hours?

[No, sir—Ed.]



Auntie Awful



WHAT do you think, my dears? A correspondent has written to Auntie, asking for her signed photograph, as if she were a film-star! Auntie is particularly anxious to oblige this valued correspondent, so she came to an arrangement with the man who does the photogravures for the Museum of Natural Curiosities. It is no good all you nephews and nieces sending in for copies. Auntie's rugged features broke the plate after only one print had been made.

When Auntie worked on the *London Lyre*, the police sometimes sought the assistance of the paper's art-department. There were over half a million negatives in the reference-room, all indexed for immediate use.

Connected with this department was a section called the Graveyard. As soon as a man became prominent, somebody compiled an obituary notice for him, with suitable photographs from the file. If any one was reported to be ill, his notice and photographs were set up all ready to go on the press the moment the invalid drew his last breath.

The man in charge of these gruesome researches was called the Ghoul. He knew more about the health of our prominent citizens than all the insurance companies put together. His favourite pastime was to drink hot rum-and-water and tell sad stories of the deaths of kings.

One day, a certain famous politician visited the office, and paid a call to the Graveyard. He asked to see his own obituary notice. The Ghoul, proud of the efficiency of his section, had a proof struck off in a couple of minutes. The great minister read the galley-sheet with close attention. "H'm," he said, in not very pleased tones. "Do you mind if I amend this?"

"Go ahead," growled the Ghoul.

The politician re-wrote the proof, and made it longer and much more laudatory. "There," he said,

in high good humour, when he had finished. "Not many people have the privilege of composing their own obituary notice, have they?" And he went away savouring the rolling phrases in which he had enshrined his own memory.

The Ghoul did not like this tampering with the necrophilic integrity of his section. He scrapped the original and the revised notices, and compiled the shortest and most savage obituary that ever graced the departure of a national figure. It duly appeared in the paper some years later.

"There!" said the Ghoul, looking over a copy as it came from the press. "It's a beautiful piece of dirty work, isn't it? That will teach him to muck about in my graveyard!"

Another eminent public man came into the office one day, and complained about an unflattering portrait of himself that had appeared in the paper. He was referred to the art department, who switched him on to the Ghoul. The angry man slapped a copy of the paper on the desk, pointed an accusing finger at the offending illustration, and sternly demanded: "Who is responsible for that?"

The Ghoul gravely examined the photograph, and compared it with the features of the eminent gentleman.

"God," he replied.

Auntie was telling you how the police sometimes made use of the art department. On one occasion, a certain man was wanted for murder, and the police sent to the newspapers to see if they happened to have a photograph of him. It chanced that the wanted man had once been a judge at a bathing-beauty contest, and he appeared from different angles in six of

the photographs recording this long-forgotten event. The process-room soon blocked out the required figure in each negative, and sent the result to Scotland Yard. Within a few hours, every police-station in the kingdom had six photographs of the suspect.

Next morning, the Chief Constable of a small country town sent a message to Scotland Yard.

"Urgent priority," began the wire. "Reference photographs received yesterday. We have arrested five of the criminals, and are hot on the trail of the sixth." * * *

Critic (Kurnool). "Of course, your stuff is very laughable, but you must admit that none of your writings will live." Possibly not, dear sir; but when it is a question of which shall live, herself or her writings, Auntie never hesitates.

Modern Marvel (Madras). "There is a certain lady who was going on a visit to Rangoon, and she missed the steamer. Determined not to be thwarted, she went to Meenambakkam and hired an aeroplane. When they were over the steamer, she made a parachute-jump and landed safely on the deck. You may think this is a tall story, but it really happened." Of course it really happened, dear boy. Auntie was the lady who did it!

Hindustan Bakery (Lahore). "We had a remarkable experience the other day. A man came to our premises, and said he wanted three dozen loaves at wholesale rates. When I asked why, he said he belonged to the circus, and the kangaroo had kicked the elephant. What an extraordinary reason!" It is quite plausible, dear boy. They wanted to make a bread-poultice for the elephant.

Lothario (Gulbarga). "I was alone with a girl the other night, and I kissed her, but she said she had scruples." Don't worry, dear boy. They are not catching.

Scribbling Guy (Sayanur). "Reference the enclosed, do you think I should put fire into this story?" My dear boy, quite the reverse!

Constant Reader (Pakala). "Noticing your amusing definitions, will you please tell me what 'Velocity' is." Velocity, dear boy, is what you drop a hot coal with.

Dress Agency (Calcutta). "In soliciting your patronage, I beg to announce that I have cast off clothing of all kinds." Thank you for your circular, dear madam; but Auntie is inclined to think it is a

mistake to refer to your nudist activities in a business communication. Uncle Ghastly found it most misleading.

Amateur Carpenter (Khandesh). "How can I drive in a nail without hitting my fingers?" There are two methods, dear sir. The first is to persuade your wife to hold the nail. The second is to grasp the hammer in both hands, and chance to luck.

Feminist (Allahabad). "How can we women show that the weaker sex is the stronger sex?" The traditional way, my dear, is to play on the weakness that the stronger sex has for the weaker sex.

War News (Renigunta). "Dear Auntie, what are diplomatic relations?" There are no such people, dear boy.

Hopeful (Mylapore). "I am a young man who hopes to leave footprints on the sands of time." In that case, dear sir, be careful not to sit down.

Despairing (Park Town). "Why is life so full of misery?" What, again, dear boy? One explanation is that life is miserable when you are young and broke, and equally miserable when you are old and bent. Avoid these two conditions. If you don't feel equal to it, blow your brains out, and cry: "There goes nothing!"

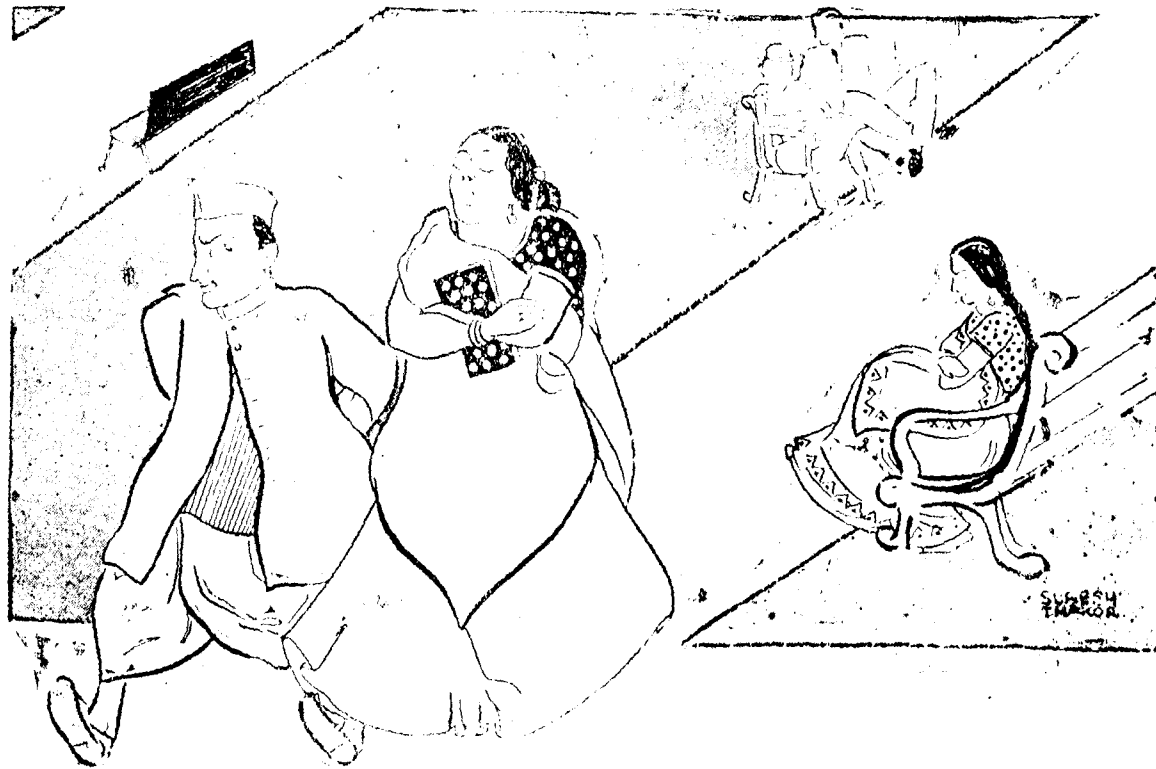
Prominent Man (Madras). "Such is fame! I went to a place of amusement, and they refused me a complimentary ticket until I said who I was." Indeed, dear sir; and who did you say you were?

Hospitality (Cuddapah). "My wife's mother has been on a visit to us. She is not the usual kind; in fact she is very cheerful, and enormously fat. We have quite enjoyed her stay in our little home. Please tell me a suitable way of expressing my good-will when she leaves." A good thing to say, dear boy, is that the house will be quite empty without her.

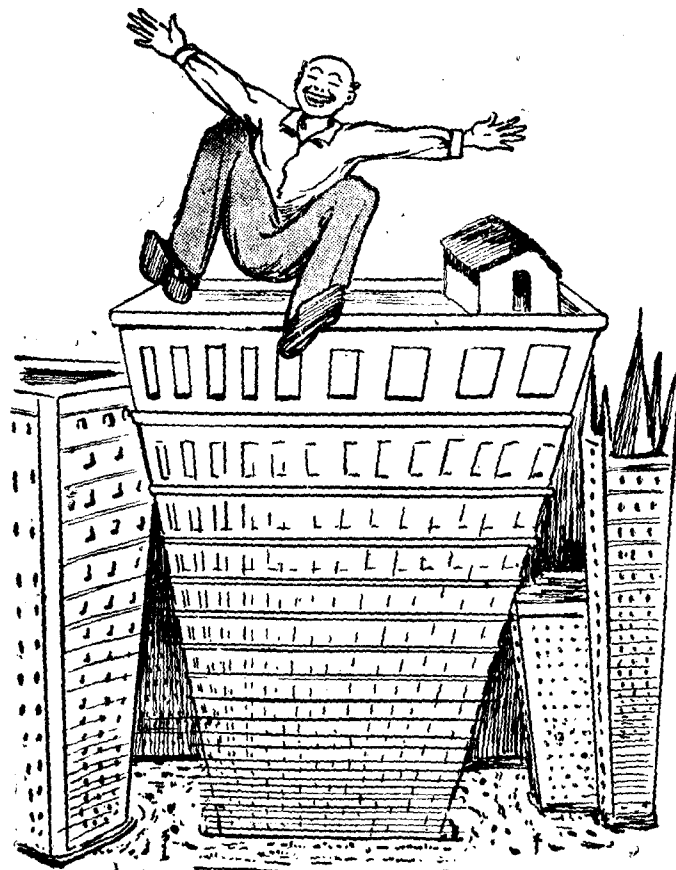
Little Wife (Saidapet). "Should I encourage my husband to sit in an easy chair in the evening, with his feet up on the mantelpiece?" By all means, dear girl. After he has gone to bed, you will often find a handful of small change on the seat of the chair.

Chemistry Master (Ahmedabad). "What do you think is the most noteworthy contribution that chemistry has made to modern life?" Blondes, dear sir.

Wanderer (Bassein). "I am going on a world tour to look for a wife." Congratulations, dear boy. The first half of your scheme is quite a good idea.



"Hope I didn't see you smiling at that girl!"
 "I hope you didn't, dear!"



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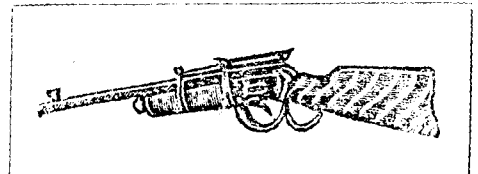
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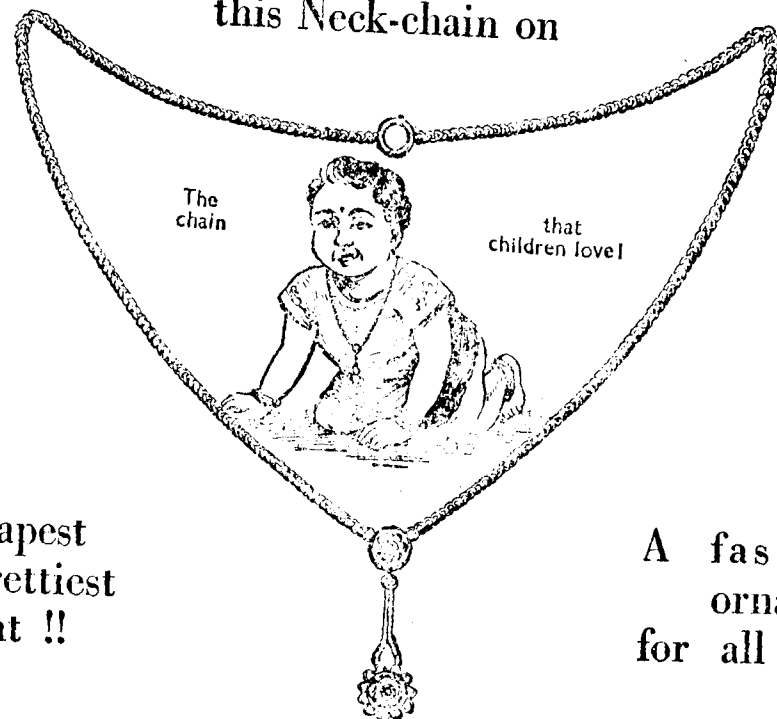
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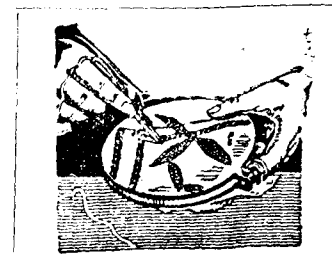
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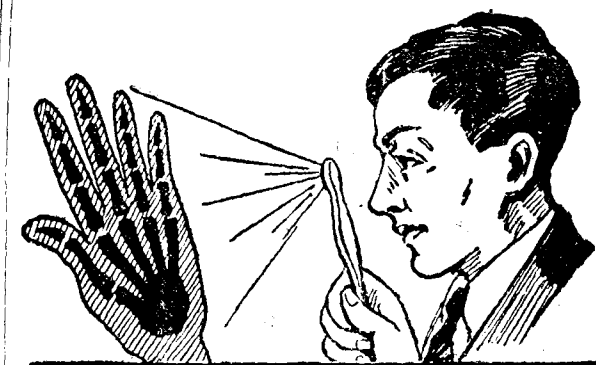
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