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390

ANNUAL
MAGAZINE

205
**THIS ISSUE CONTAINS
ARTICLES & STORIES**

BY

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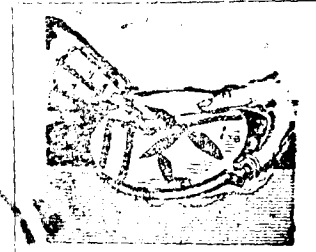
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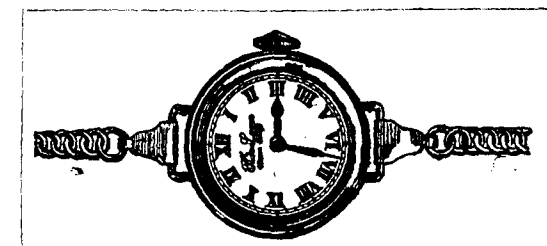


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The
MERRY
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Madras, April 18, '36

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FINE STORIES

AND
ARTICLES

by

Diana Don

★

Yen Kay

★

A. A. Roland

★

Embusque

Etc. Etc.



SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

In the House of Commons, Mr. Neville Chamberlain stated that nobody ever suggested that Britain should give up any of her colonies.

It is clear therefore that Germany must take whatever she can!

Referring to the Ethiopian war, Mr. Attlee the Opposition leader said that it was not a question of whether Sgr. Mussolini would beat the Negus, but whether the aggressor would beat the League of Nations.

That is the euphemistical name for Britain, with Germany and Italy out, and France kindly disposed to the aggressor!

Dr. Rudolf Demel, Mr. Subhas Bose's Vienna doctor has issued a press statement pointing out that Mr. Bose should be "very careful about his diet, regular hours of work, rest, avoidance of worry and excitement."

It was very thoughtful of the Government to have provided him with all these amenities from the moment of his arrival in this country!

Head-lines in a local contemporary: "Use of Poison Gas by Italy: Severe Attack in the Commons."

It is fortunate that no casualties are reported!

An official communique from Addis Ababa contradicts the report that the Emperor has asked his followers to pray for him.

We too would like to think that his case is really not so bad as all that!

In the course of his farewell-speech in the Assembly, His Excellency the Viceroy said that he was indeed sorry to leave the country.

How we wish we could reciprocate his feeling!

He is further reported to have referred to the detenus, and said: "No one regrets more than I do the necessity which forces us to deprive a large number of young men of their liberty."

Apparently their case is much worse than that of the accused in the 'Coimbatore Extortion Case'!

Sir Henry Craik complained that Congressmen were immune from the attacks of Terrorists.

We cannot but deplore this instance of official incitement to violence!

Answering Mr. Satyamurti as to what steps the Government proposed to take in connection with agricultural depression, Sir James Grigg is said to have replied that to refrain from doing a lot of idiotic things is itself a pretty good contribution.

Let us hope he felt better after this confession of his capacities!

In due course, let us hope further, the Finance Member will learn not to say a lot of idiotic things as his contribution to the debates!

The fishermen of Cochin have passed a vote of confidence in Sir R. K. Shunmugam Chetti.

We wonder what they are angling for! Or, is there a catch in it somewhere?

Reuter says that the Sapru Report on Unemployment is being studied at Geneva.

It is sure to provide valuable material to the league of notions!

Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao, the acting Governor of C. P. is said to be the first khaddar-clad and khaddar-capped Governor of an Indian province.

In spite of it, however, we shall stick to Khaddar!

Herr Geigenthaler, a German tourist, interviewed said: "Hitler is always just and fair, and is not at all thirsting for a conflagration."

Still, it cannot be denied that he is given to occasional fire-eating!

Answering a correspondent as to how the name of the new Viceroy is to be pronounced, our contemporary, the *Madras Mail* says: "It is to be pronounced Lin-Lith-Go, with the second syllable most prominently accented."

It is too early for us to say whether we are to be glad that the accent is *not* on the third syllable!

The End of an Era?

The week has witnessed a double change in the external life of this country. Babu Rajendra Prasad has made way for Jawaharlal, and Willingdon for Linlithgow. Lord Willingdon tasted the sweets of office almost for as long as Jawaharlal had to languish in prison. The one was essentially an egotist, while the other is perhaps the finest example among Indian politicians of the impersonal type. Lord Willingdon loved the limelight; the other shuns it with a certain ostentatious brusqueness. Lord Willingdon leaves the shores of India with the flattering notion that he has reconquered India for the Empire; Jawaharlal is faced with the problem of giving a fresh impetus to the country's revolutionary fervour which would take it nearer the promised land of freedom and independence. The new dispensation that impends is a red herring, and known to be such, though for different reasons, by both parties to the struggle. Lord Willingdon drew a roseate picture of Federated India with John Bull sprawling over this prostrate continent like a latter-day Colossus. It is as pretty as a fairy tale, and as unreal. Long and weary is the road that lies in front of the country. We dare not hope for any radical change of policy with the change in the Viceroyalty. The initiative is with the country; how long the present stalemate will continue, no one can predict. Of one comfort, we may reasonably be assured; the next phase of national progress will be helped by a greater sense of unity and solidarity in the country.

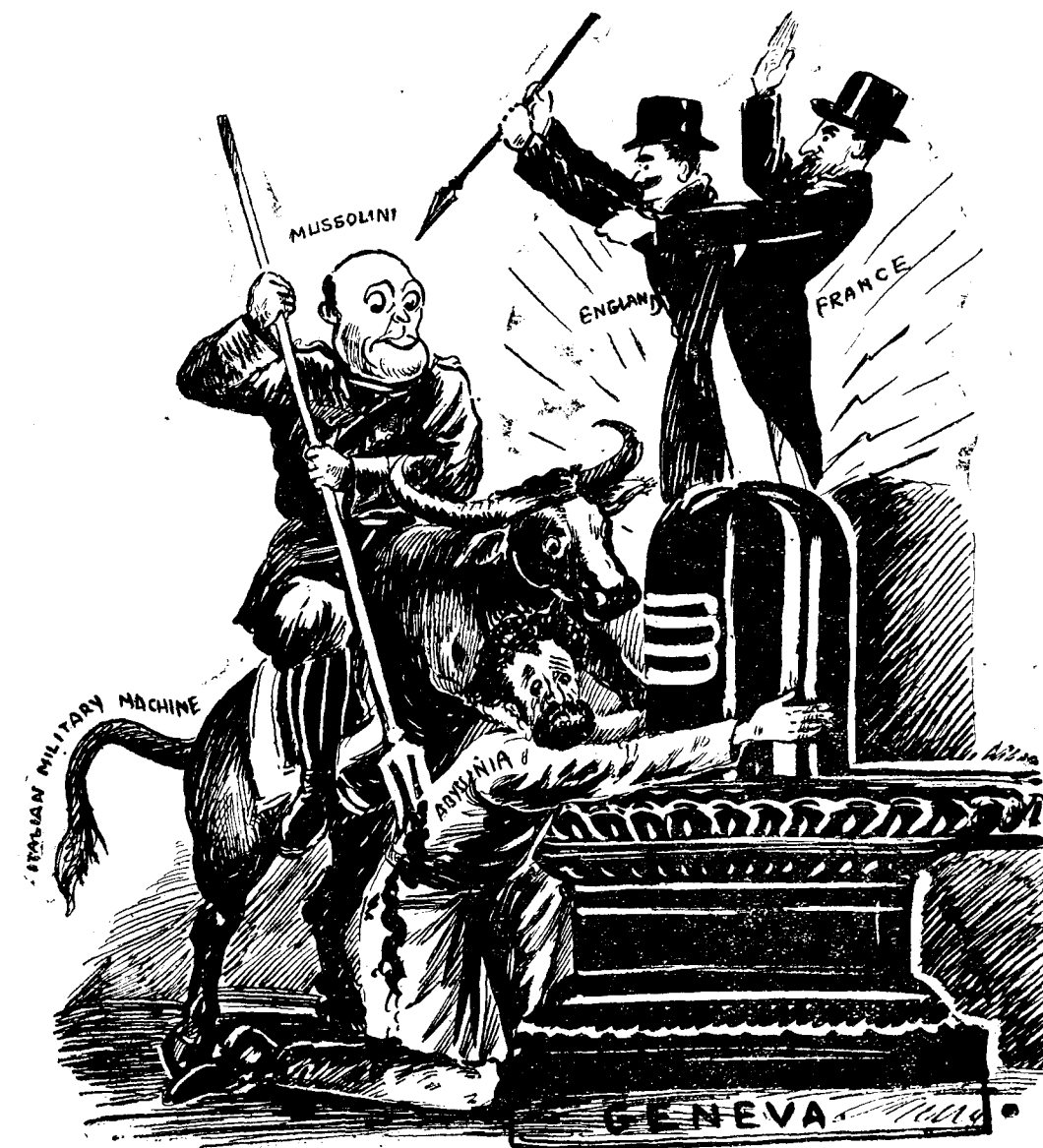
The position is equally indeterminate in Europe. The end of Abyssinia as an independent power seems a question of weeks, if not of days. Germany's action in tearing up the Locarno Treaty has, as expected, driven a wedge through Anglo-French friendship which is still screened from public view. British alarm at the successes of Italy in Ethiopia has driven Mr. Eden to a petulant demand for the cessation of hostilities. The Italian adventure implied from the very beginning an ultimate

reckoning between Britain and Italy. European statesmanship furnishes parallel examples of cowardice. France provided the brake to swift action against Italy; Britain reciprocates by hastening slowly against Germany. Whether it is German militarism or Hitler's madness, there is method behind it, and the pace of Europe's march to the shambles will be set by it. As Mr. Churchill truly observed, British diplomacy has succeeded in alienating Italy without helping Ethiopia, and we may add, is not hindering Germany without breaking away from France. This kind of political tight-rope dancing becomes tedious, and cannot be prolonged. We are now witnessing a manoeuvre for positions; but England has not exactly covered itself with glory by her hesitant attitudes.

The Congress in Session:

This year's Presidential Address is what we have been led to expect of the author of 'Glimpses of World-History'. It has both acuteness of observation and amplitude of utterance. We wonder how many of our publicists have the enviable mastery of the English language which is shown by Jawaharlal. He has given us a resume of contemporary events looked at from a retrospect of at least a generation ahead of us. It is a land-mark that the Indian National Congress should have identified itself with Socialism, thus bringing the problems of this country into line with those of others in the West. On the immediate issue of office-acceptance, the decision of the Congress is very much what we anticipated. The break between the moderate and extreme sections is merely postponed; not averted. For our own part, we do not consider it either derogatory to the Congress, or tragic for its future if the break should come later. This year's Presidential Address is in the nature of an intimation. Its dynamic ideas will spread, and in time germinate in lines of militant activity. The great thing is that the national consciousness is not only strengthened, but broadened and deepened by the appeal made to it by the President.

Markandeya—(The Modern Version)



France: Wait, wait my friend—don't hustle me.

The March

by The Man

King Edward VIII's marriage is being talked about. Of course the dear old press is heartily co-operating with all the patriotic elements that are shaping the things to come. During the past few weeks gossips have married the King to various European princesses. Across the Big Pond at least one Yankee paper sees in the Royal wedding a publicity value which is so dear to the American heart. America is rather keen on the idea of marrying King Edward to one of its own delightful girls. That is, if we are to take this paper as representative of American public opinion.

Parodying Jawaharlal, I say, "What about us?" I suggest respectfully to the parties concerned not to lose sight of this ancient land. There are girls amidst us, as beautiful as any queen now reigning or will be reigning. Regal beauties there are amidst us in India, I say, who would grace any extant throne in the world, as if to the manner born. Think of the political consequences to the Empire and, in a larger sense, to the world of such a union as I envisage. All this talk of severing of British connection by us which is giving indignation to the poor Englishmen here and abroad would not be heard of again. The King need not necessarily marry a royal princess. He can marry a commoner, he can marry a spinster, he can marry a widow. (God bless the widows!) Only he cannot marry a Catholic. I offer the Catholics my sympathy.

So there it is, gentlemen. My only idea in offering this sug-

gestion of making His Majesty King Edward VIII India's son-in-law is to see the two countries happy.

★

The other day, Dr. Pattabhi, Member, Congress Working Committee, addressed a mass meeting at Lyallpur. A report of that fighting speech appears thus in a South Indian Paper. ".....He denounced the age of machinery which, according to him, had led to the starvation of the masses and *improvement* of India as a whole." (As usual the Italics are ours.)

Mahatma Gandhi did wonderful things to his physique by redundant starvation. Little wonder then that, reduced to a state of starvation, our masses should show improvement. So the obvious moral is, if you want to improve, starve your tummy. Oh yes, as a hole, I see a frightful amount of improvement in India.

★

In his farewell address to the Central Legislature, Lord Willingdon said, vindicating that part of his stewardship which bad men called 'repression':

"...I would ask you to compare India as she was in 1931 and 1932 and India as she is today. I claim that India is more peaceful and, as a result of the greater tranquillity, more prosperous and happy than she has been for many years."

No truer word was said these few years past than His Excellency's words hereinabove quoted. In 1931-32 what did you hear? *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai! Inquilab Zindabad!* and such meaningless yells of the smelly mob. I never could get a wink of sleep in those noisy days, all because of these howls. In 1931-32 what did you see? Khaki-clad Reserve Police brandishing lathis anywhere and everywhere, giving you a definitely uncomfortable feeling somewhere in the region between your spleen and liver.

What do you hear and see in India today? It is peace, peace, peace and tranquillity everywhere, the sort of peace in which Buddha might have loved to meditate on the mystery of Life and Death. And all this is wrought by the Governor-General who has just left us. India will cherish, I doubt not, his Viceroyalty, in an ever-green loving memory.

★

"In Nature's infinite book of secrecy, a little I can read," said Lord Willingdon, a little further down his valedictory address. How I wish I could do a little reading in that line myself!

I could know, for instance, when my next baby is arriving and I could be prepared with a nice name to call it by. I could.....but why labour the obvious?

★

The diplomatic correspondent of *L'Oeuvre* says that if there is continuance of the Anglo-French differences at Geneva, most observers agree, the days of the League are numbered.

of Events

On The Move

I don't see why the credit for saying this should go to the diplomatic correspondent or the observers. I am not an observer, as a rule; but I came to the same conclusion that these clever observers have agreed on. In the event of these Anglo-French differences continuing, the interesting question pops up, what is to become of the furniture with which the palatial buildings of the League are furnished? I suggest that the furniture be sold at rock-bottom prices to the Indian National Congress. As a man who was once a second-hand furniture dealer, I always disapproved of the idea of the Congress Committees not using comfortable chairs (or even uncomfortable chairs) when in session. That is the reason why I have not joined the Congress. If I am sure of my commission, I'll start a campaign in the press for the use of furniture by Congress. League circles may therefore get in touch with me in anticipation of the proviso mentioned by the observers happening.

★

News comes from Natrampalli, a village in North Arcot district, that during a festival the *archakas* broke coconuts on the heads of a few select devotees. This is great news! I always objected to breaking the coconuts in the heartless fashion that we are wont to. If you say that we should respect tradition, I say, "Damn tradition!"

I had occasion once to say in these pages that we ought to do

something about stopping this ill-usage of the lovely nut, called the coconut. I am glad that the *archakas* of far-away Natrampalli have seen the wisdom of my humanitarian remarks and initiated an orientation in the coconut-breaking technique. I cannot

think of a better place to smash coconuts intended for any god or goddess than the clean-shaven pates of plucky devotees. I expect to see this idea permeating in every town and village where there is a temple and where the presiding deities are fond of coconuts.



"Boy, which is the shortest way to the railway station?"

"Just crawl through that hole."

Fun For All

At the Undertakers' Annual Dinner, the Chairman stood up and said:

"Business has been so good this year that if anyone was to die at the moment, we could bury him free."
A Scotsman at the table shot himself.

* * * *

On one occasion, an Irish judge, who had a nodding habit, was shaking his head as Mr. Curran was elaborating one of his points to the jury.

"I see," said Mr. Curran, "the motion of his lordship's head. You might imagine that it implied a difference of opinion, but it is merely accidental. Believe me, gentlemen, if you remain here many days, you will yourselves perceive that when his lordship shakes his head, there is *nothing in it!*"

* * * *

Cannibal Chief: Have you anything to say before we eat you?

Victim (A public speaker): May I be permitted to say a few words on the advantages of vegetarianism?

* * * *

Neighbour: Why are you painting one side of your car red and the other blue?

Speed Fiend: It's a fine idea. You should just hear the witnesses contradicting one another!

* * * *

Some Scotsman wouldn't even lend you their ear to hear a good story.

* * * *

Beggar: Have you got enough money for a cup of coffee?

Student: Oh, I'll manage somehow, thank you.

* * * *

Barber: Was your tie red when you came here, sir?

Shaven: No, it wasn't!

Barber: Gosh, I must have cut your throat!



Psych. Prof.: What is the most wonderful thing in the world?

Student: Mae West.

Prof.: No. The most wonderful thing in the world is sleep.

Student: Yes, professor, next to Mae West.

* * * *

"I am sorry, my poor man, but I have no change on me to-day."

"Very good, madame, you may owe it to me."

* * * *

A young woman, who seemed to be having her first experience in a bank, approached the counter and gave the cashier a cheque for a large amount which she wanted cashed.

"How do you wish the money?" he inquired.

"Oh," replied the young woman, in some confusion. "I'll just hold out my hand and you can put the money in it."

* * * *

A public school boy secreted a barrel of beer in his study and made good use of it.

At last the house-master heard of it and sent for him.

The student's defence was that his doctor had ordered him beer each day as a tonic.

"Indeed," said the master with sarcasm, "and may I inquire if it has improved your condition?"

"It has," replied the student. "When I first had the barrel I could scarcely lift it; now I can carry it with the greatest of ease!"

Lord Linlithgow

Looks Ahead!

["Beneficent change could be made swiftly, yet without revolution, within the ambit of our evergrowing Constitution and ancient ways."—
Speech of Lord Linlithgow at the London Provision Exchange Dinner.]
—Morning Paper.

"Can political democracy
Survive economic change?" they ask.
"Is it 'hasten slow' or hesitancy?"
There it stands—"My Difficult Task."

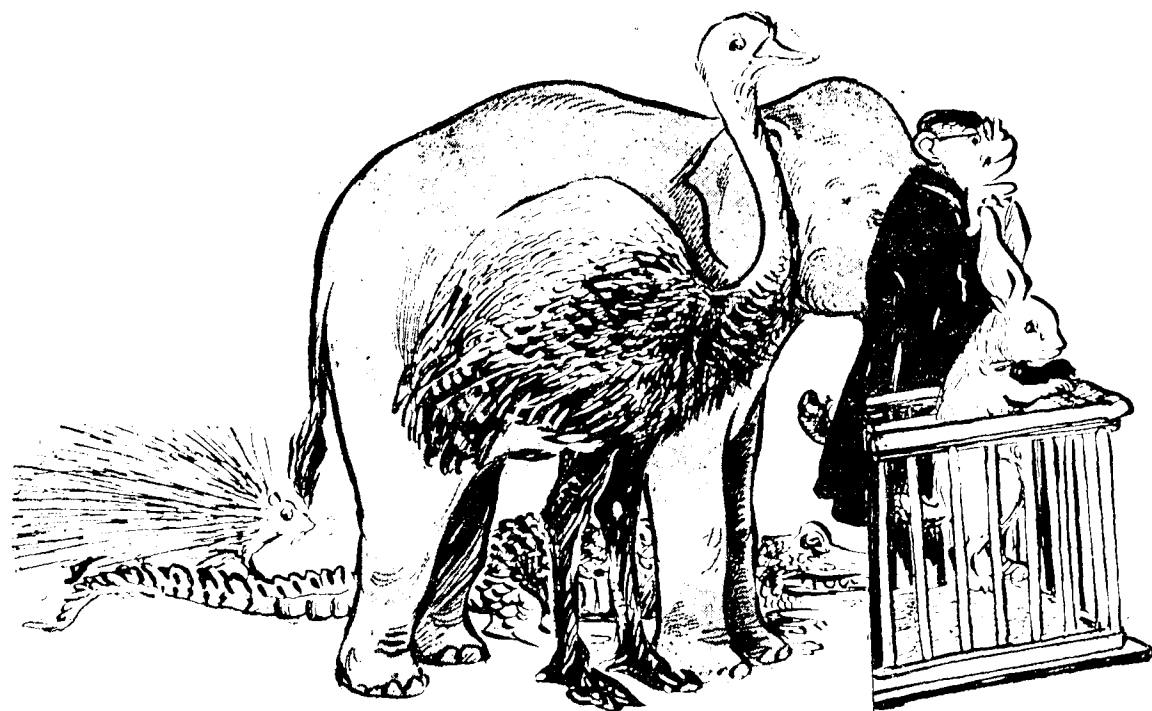
"The lessons we learnt in political field:
Tolerance; Courage; Compromise;
Indicate, Sirs, a bumper yield,
If the Statesman-Farmer with Sympathy tries!"

"Beneficent changes could be made
Swiftly, yet without revolution.
Our "Liberal Tradition's" ample shade
Will foster and nourish our Constitution.

"Let impatient Nations cast aside
Their chart, and sail down stormy days;
British Commonwealth, our abiding pride;
Let's cherish and keep our ancient ways."

—G. K. Pillai





The Ostrich and

[There is a ring of grim allegory in this simple great story. The theme touches the present-day lunatic welter of European political hatreds, astonishingly close.—Editor.]

ONE day, Mr. Rabbit went to pay a call on his old friend, Mrs. Ostrich. It happened that the good lady had left her nest for a few moments, to go down to the river for a drink.

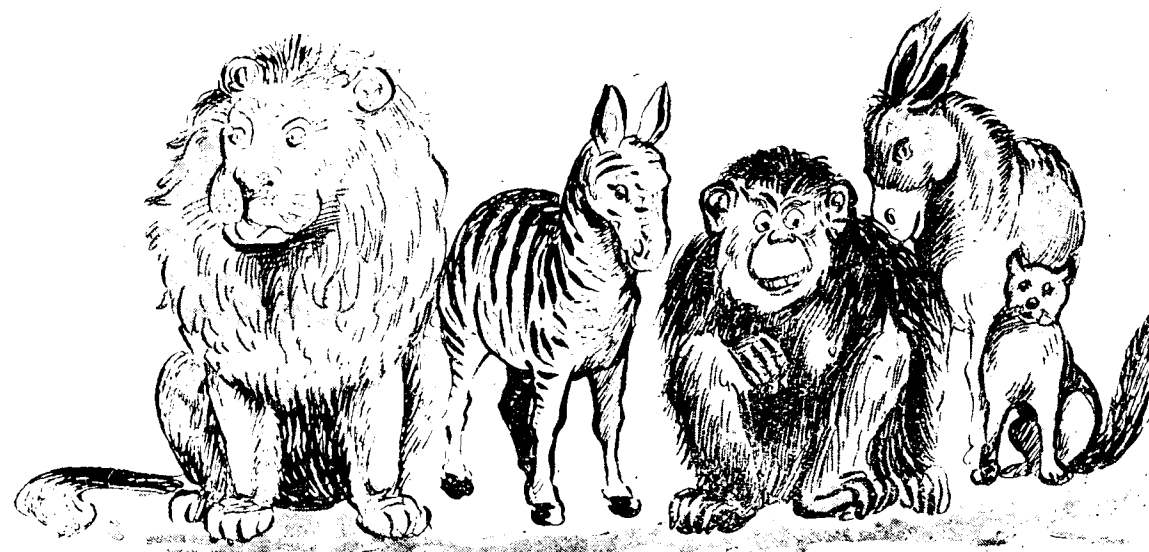
"Dear me!" said Mr. Rabbit, when he found the nest deserted. "What a careless mother! Suppose the eggs got cold? It is indeed fortunate that I belong to the Boy Scouts. I shall sit on the eggs until she returns, and thus perform my daily good deed."

There were only two eggs in the nest; but they were so large that Mr. Rabbit was unable to sit on

both of them. At last he took one egg from the nest, and clasped it to his bosom, while sitting on the other.

No sooner had he achieved this somewhat difficult position, than Mr. Rabbit was startled by a dreadful sound. Mr. Elephant was blowing his trumpet in loud, urgent blasts.

"The war-trumpet!" squeaked Mr. Rabbit. "A terrible danger is threatening us." Forgetting his daily good deed, Mr. Rabbit began to perform his war-dance. His sturdy little tail thumped rhythmically, and his sharp little feet stamped up and down.



The Rabbit—

Reading Time
About 8 Minutes

by Diana Don

Of course, Mrs. Ostrich's egg was unable to withstand these assaults. There was a horrible cracking sound, and the valorous little rabbit descended sharply. In his dismay, he dropped the other egg. It fell on a sharp stone, and there was a dismal squelching sound.

"Oh, dear!" moaned Mr. Rabbit, agitatedly removing the sticky yellow mess from his fur. He had forgotten about the war-trumpet. Rabbits can think of only one thing at a time.

Before Mr. Rabbit could complete his toilet, he was startled afresh. Mrs. Ostrich, who had returned

from the river, bore down on him with a murderous squawk.

"Don't hit me!" squealed Mr. Rabbit, dodging the flying kicks of the infuriated mother. "I'm sorry! It was an accident!"

"My eggs!" howled Mrs. Ostrich. "Both my beautiful eggs! I have been sitting on them for three whole weeks!"

"Any reparation I can make—" groaned the rabbit.

"Nothing can make reparation," shrieked the bereaved biped. "You wouldn't believe the trouble



I've had about those eggs. My husband is a good-for-nothing; never about when he is wanted. And now it has all been of no avail. I will have the law on you!"

"That's right, madam," came a voice from a neighbouring tree. "Have the law on him!"

"Eh? What?" cried Mrs. Ostrich.

"Permit me to introduce myself," continued the voice. "I am Mr. Attorney Monkey, at your service. Go to law with him, my good madam. I will get you the verdict, and heavy damages into the bargain."

"What about the fees?" demanded Mrs. Ostrich, in accents of doubt.

"For preliminary expenses, a mere bag of nuts," said the monkey, persuasively.

So the case of Ostrich vs. Rabbit came up for hearing before Mr. Justice Lion and a full bench.

"How did you happen to break the eggs?" enquired the King of Beasts, when the defendant was arraigned.

"May it please your lordship, I was sitting on the eggs, to do Mrs. Ostrich a good turn, when I heard the elephant blowing his trumpet. I thought that danger threatened, so I danced my war-dance, and cracked the eggs."

"Defendant attributes the mishap to a false alarm sounded by Mr. Elephant," muttered the judge, making a note. "Let Mr. Elephant be produced in court."



It took a lot of pushing and heaving to get the pachyderm into the box, but at last this was

achieved. "Now, sir," said the judge, "why did you blow your trumpet, and cause Mr. Rabbit to dance his war-dance, and break the eggs of Mrs. Ostrich?"

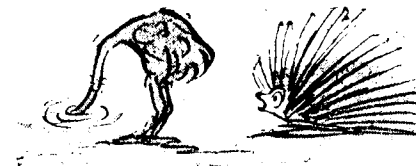
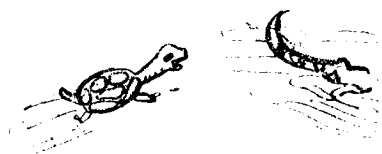
"It was not my fault, your lordship," grumbled the elephant. "I was walking peacefully by the river, when Mr. Crocodile suddenly came rushing downstream, with his armour on; so I concluded there was war afoot and I blew my trumpet."

"Is there no Locarno in this jungle?" cried the judge, pettishly. "Bring Mr. Crocodile before me."

After a while, the court usher came tiptoeing in. He whispered to the judge, and gesticulated in the direction of the witness-box, shrugging his shoulders. "Very well," grumbled the judge. "We will adjourn for lunch. Meanwhile, the evidence of Mr. Crocodile can be taken on commission."

After lunch, the court proceeded with the deposition of Mr. Crocodile. "On the day in question," said the watery document, "I was going on my lawful business towards the upper river, when I encountered Mr. Turtle. His manner betrayed alarm, and he was carrying his shield on his back. Believing that some enemy was at hand, I put on my armour, and hastened downstream. I did not intend to startle Mr. Elephant. I was merely setting myself in a state of defence as a precautionary measure."

Mr. Justice Lion, ruffled his beard in impatience. "A curse on all these precautionary measures!" he said. "Go and get a statement from Mr. Turtle."



It took a long time to procure Mr. Turtle's statement. He was finally discovered under a stone, which bore a notice to the effect that Mr. Turtle was adopting a policy of watchful neutrality. "While I was taking my morning bath," he related, "I was surprised to observe Mr. Porcupine running through the bushes. His quills were all raised and rustling. Deducing that hostilities were imminent, I put on my shield, and retired to a place of security. I had no intention of disturbing the harmony of the jungle."

The judge swished his tail in exasperation. "Very well," he said, wearily. "Fetch Mr. Porcupine."

"You quarrelsome fellow!" cried Mr. Justice Lion, when the witness appeared. "Why did you run through the jungle with your quills upraised?"

"May it please your lordship," quavered the porcupine, "since the breakdown of the system of collective security, I have adopted a policy of defensive re-armament. Though I am bristling with spears, I assure you they are weapons of a strictly non-aggressive character."

"Then why, on this particular morning, were your spears raised so aggressively?"

"My lord, I was going down quietly to the river to nibble some nice green shoots, when I saw Mrs. Ostrich with her head buried in the sand. Knowing that this portended the presence of danger, I raised my spears in self-defence, and effected a strategic movement to the rear."

The King of Beasts turned to the plaintiff. "So, madam, it all comes back to you!" he shouted. "Who was this dangerous enemy, from whom you hid your head?"

Mrs. Ostrich blinked at the court in stunned surprise.

"Speak, woman!" roared the judge.

Mr. Attorney Monkey jumped to his feet. "May it please the court, perhaps I can clear up this portion of the evidence. When Mrs. Ostrich came down to the river, I happened to be sitting on a tree close by."

"You just happened to be there?" remarked the judge, in a nasty voice.

"Yes, my lord. When Mrs. Ostrich bent her neck to drink, she saw her own reflection in the water. She was so startled at the apparition, that she buried her head in the sand."

There were loud murmurs in the court.

"Madam," said Mr. Justice Lion, addressing the plaintiff, "I find that you have no case. You were frightened of your own shadow. You alarmed the porcupine, who startled the turtle, who shocked the crocodile, who scared the elephant, who caused Mr. Rabbit to dance his war-dance; and thus your eggs were broken."

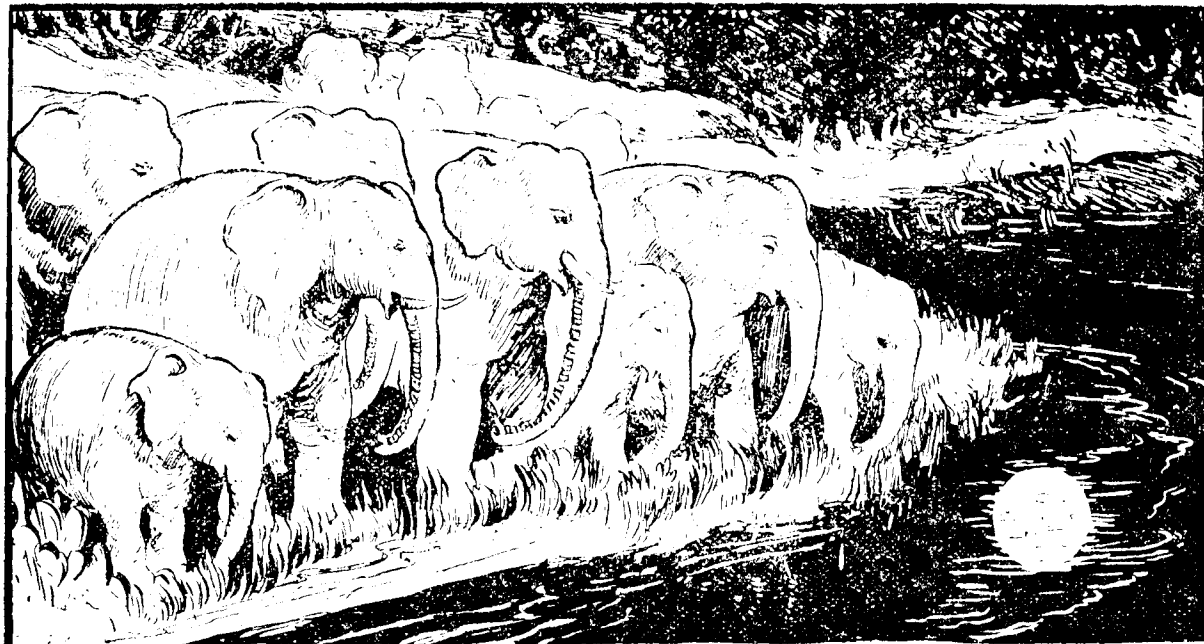
There was a murmur of agreement from the assembly.

"This case," continued the learned judge, "is a striking illustration of what happens when everybody piles up armaments in the name of security. Fortunately, actual hostilities were averted; but a similar series of accidents might easily plunge the jungle into a ghastly war. As it is, this case has caused great anxiety and financial loss to all who were involved in it."

"Is that so?" chuckled the monkey; and he added another bag of nuts to the total of his terrific bill of costs.

THE END





Admonitory Tales

(The Timorous Elephants)

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 3 Minutes

THERE was once a troop of elephants that lived in the thick forest at the foot of the Nilgiris. As you know, elephants are very fond of bathing, and for this purpose they had a well-shaded pool in the depths of the forest.

One hot, dry summer, the pool dried up, and the elephants had nowhere to bathe. All they could do was to enter the dried-up pool and blow dust over themselves. This made them very miserable. At last the big bull who led the herd gathered his comrades together, and said: "I can stand this no longer. Let us travel in search of another pool."

This is generally the reason why elephants leave their native section of jungle.

The herd went along like a group of moving mountains, travelling by night and resting by day. Elephants are very timorous beasts, and the herd moved with every precaution. The young tuskers went ahead to scout the way, and the big bull stayed with the females, anxiously keeping them close together, and flapping his ears to catch any warning sound from the scouts. At last, one night the herd came to a big, smooth river.

Now there was a care-free baby elephant who gambolled along at his mother's side. When he saw the river, he gave a little squeal of joy. "Hurrah! Water!" he cried. "Now we can all have a lovely bathe!"

But the big bull, his father, smote him with a reproving blow from his trunk. "Keep back, you little fool!" he said.

"Why?" squeaked the baby elephant, in an injured tone.

"Cannot you see that the water belongs to Lady Moon?" said the big bull.

"It is the same kind of water as in our old pool," protested the baby elephant.

"Not at all," replied his father. "Our pool is always dark-looking, being surrounded by trees. But this water is open, and Lady Moon bathes in it every night. If we dared to disturb her, she would be very angry, and eat us up. See, there she is now, floating on the surface of the water."

(Continued on page 16)

Riza Shah —

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

by V. Vyasa Rao

EVERYTHING that happened to us since the fateful second decade of this century was and is being attributed to the World War. True, the affiliation of the major happenings of the world to the War does impart to world events a sort of Saville Row charm and a distinctive 'smell. But this trick has been made to bow before the curtain for so many encores that it has come to look a little silly. Here is an apt illustration of the homely saying—Familiarity breeds contempt.

Consonant with the prevailing mode, the momentous happenings in Iran in the years immediately following the War have been attributed to the War. Even divested of its wartime odour, the rise of Riza Shah Pehelvi to fame and power, and eventually to the Peacock Throne is one of the grandest events in Asiatic history.

Near Isphahan, to incredibly poor parents, in the year 1878, was born Riza. Little Riza was not put to school. His parents were too poor to indulge that luxury. He tended the little flock of sheep that his father owned and lent a ready helping hand to his mother in her household duties and also to his father in the hills and fields wherefrom they eked out a miserable living. But Riza's heart was not in his



Insurance Man:—It is a shame to let your husband's policy lapse, madam.

Lady:—Go away! I have paid regularly for 15 years and nothing happened.

work around him. His ambitious soul was too large to confine itself to the sordid bucolic poverty into which he was born. He dreamed of palaces, of cities, of the larger world around.

There is a legend that when Riza was born, a bright star made its appearance in the eastern sky and shed a brilliant ray into the poor hut in which the baby lay squealing. That is the way of the world. The world always shoots up its heroes in a hallow borrowed from the stars. However that may be, a time came when Riza's mother shaved his head, per tradition, and sent him into the wide world to seek his fortune with the blessing: "May you be a king among men."

The poor young lad went to the Metropolis of Iran—Isphahan. He tramped patiently from one noble house to another knocking at each door for a job. His successive disappointments ran the usual traditional gamut.

At last one day Riza saw a nobleman coming out of his palace. A horse richly caparisoned was waiting at the gate. The nobleman got into the saddle. While in the process of getting on to the horse's back, the riding cane which he carried slipped from his hand and fell to the ground. Riza pounced upon the cane and handed it reverently to the *rais*. Here

was luck at last! The nobleman gave Riza a job in his household.

In this household Riza came in daily contact with the best culture of the land. He went about with wide-open eyes and ears, observing, learning. He was a faithful servant. His master recognised his worth, and promoted him from favour to favour.

Somewhat prior to this time the intrigues of ex-Shah Mohamed Ali to come back proved a dud. Foreign powers taking advantage of the internal dissensions of Iran created for themselves spheres of influence. The Russians controlled the north. The English controlled the south. The dwindling power of the Shah of the land was hedged in tight between these two spheres of influence.

Riza migrated to the north. He had military ambitions. There he enrolled himself in a regiment of Persian Cossacks commanded by Russian officers. Riza's rise in the army was spectacular. Presently the Russians had to relinquish their influence in the north. And Riza was left in sole command of an army of two thousand Cossacks. Against the ill-knit military force of Iran, this ordered, disciplined army of Riza was a potent factor in the affairs of the land. In time Riza manoeuvred into the limelight as the Commander-in-Chief of Persia, and bye and bye in 1921 as

THE END

THE TIMOROUS ELEPHANTS—(Continued from page 14)

And, sure enough, there was Lady Moon, bathing in the river. This is why you never see elephants bathing by moonlight.

As it happened, one of the young tuskers was standing doubtfully at the river's edge, looking with frightened little eyes at Lady Moon in her bath. The bank was muddy and slippery, and all of a sudden the young tusker fell in with a dreadful splash. At once the moon stopped bathing, and began to tremble and rush round and round, as if she were dreadfully angry. All the other elephants rushed to help their friend out of the water, before Lady Moon ate him up.

During the commotion, the baby elephant sneaked away, and entered the river a little farther up. He was a bit fearful of Lady Moon; but she did not seem to mind. At first she was slightly upset, but when he got right into the water and gently sprayed his back, Lady Moon resumed her bath in the middle of the river, and took no further notice.

By the time the baby elephant was missed, he was already returning.

"Where have you been?" bellowed his father.

Minister of War, retaining command of the Army.

Shah Sultan Ahmed, the ruling Prince, was a weak-kneed, weak-minded, pleasure-loving debauchee. Corruption raised its ugly head everywhere. He swayed helplessly with every puff of foreign or domestic intrigue.

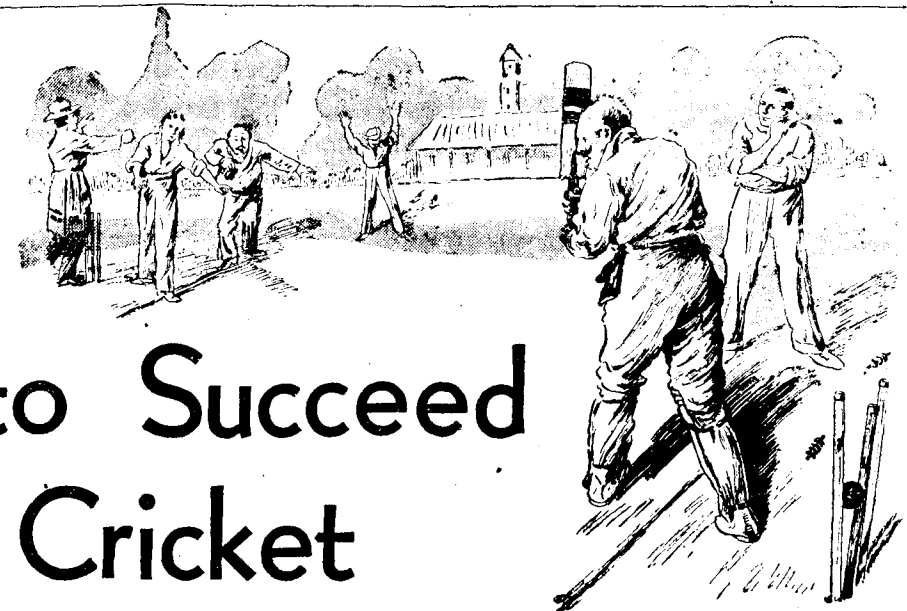
In 1924 Shah Ahmed Sultan left Iran on a round of pleasure at the hot spots of Continental pleasure resorts. He cast anchor in Paris and had a good time. He went on having a good time. That was the last Persia saw of him.

Riza was elected head of the administration.

Riza lifted his countrymen to a high sense of their national consciousness as no ruler of Iran ever did. The nation groaned under the corrupt rule of the late Shah. Under the inspiring lead of Riza, Persia attained the proud position on the map of the world that it enjoys today.

In 1925 the Irani Assembly elected Riza as their King. Thus, in a blaze of glory, the poor shepherd boy became the Shah of Persia under the title, Riza Shah Pehelvi. Amidst scenes of great rejoicing, the historic crown of Darius was placed on the brow of Riza. He stepped on to the famous Peacock Throne which fills so many unhappy pages of Indian history and there he now sits with infinite grace.

THE END



How to Succeed at Cricket

by P. P. Samuel

[Our cricket ambassadors are on the high seas. We expect them to do big things. If you have any cricket ambitions, you cannot do better than read this. If, on the other hand, you think, as we do, that cricket is a silly game, read it still. You will find points of contact between you and Samuel.—Ed.]

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

CRICKETERS (unlike poets and politicians) are not born but made.

That epigram, I hope, will be comfort enough to any 'moron' who happens to read these few hints on the game that won the battle of Waterloo. He may not be able to reach the crazy heights attained by the Iron Duke, but he has a jolly good chance of becoming a celebrity like Jack Hobbs and retiring into comparatively easy money. The world is seldom unappreciative of the men who wield the willow, though it often ignores its poets, politicians, sweet-tasters and similar 'born' folk.

And rightly too, I should say, because.....But hush! let's get on with the course.

First things first, as schoolmasters say. Whether you like it or not, dress is of paramount importance in cricket. The cut of the trousers of Martindale of West Indies created such a furore in England in 1933 that nearly 49,000 words were printed about him in the British press in the space of 8 weeks. Mr. E. V. Lucas, I think, has said somewhere that he could always visualize 'Ranji' at Lord's, his silk shirt

rippling away to infinity in the evening breeze. The point to remember is that it was the poetry of his shirt that dazzled one much more than the scintillation of his ready bat. And Dr. Grace, I am told, would never have been "W. G." if he hadn't worn a beard below his notable cap.

A modish cap lends an air of distinction to a player, no doubt, but if you happen to wear your hair long, you will be well-advised to use a turban instead. To keep a cricket cap in position over a tuft needs a frightful lot of will power. And, even with proper care, terrible things may happen. If the umpire gives, for instance, an l. b. w. decision against you just when you have dug yourself in to play a captain's innings (whatever it means) your cap may suddenly try to perform the Rope Trick.

Having devoted the necessary care to making yourself respectable and *distingue*, it is time to think of Stance. This is perhaps as important in cricket as in golf. Don't neglect it unless your supreme ambition in life is to be invited to play in the Married vs. Single. Dispose your nether limbs in such a manner

that they are readily available for brisk foot-work and hip-work. Then hold your bat so that it protects as much of the wicket as possible and bend your body at a suitable angle. The angle is the thing. One of the foremost coaches of the day suggests that if you try to remember your schoolmaster bending you over the arm of his chair to get at the most fleshy part of your anatomy, your stance can't be far wrong.

At this stage, if you aren't hopelessly foolish, you will definitely give up your boyish ambition to become an all-rounder and decide between the willow and the leather (as hard-working journalists facetiously put it). But remember, my boy, when you make the big decision, that batsmen get more fan-letters, offers of marriage and 'untouched photographs' than bowlers do. And the men in the press gallery too, are more indulgent to the batsman than to the bowler. If a bowler goes through the whole field like a bullet through butter, the pressmen just shake their heads and remark that something is wrong somewhere, while if a batsman makes fifty runs, marred by half-a-dozen chances, they give him quite a sizable headline and spill a lot of ink over the strokes in his repertoire.

That brings us to the various strokes of the game—orthodox and heterodox. Miles and miles of gup have been written and spoken on this subject, but it would be quite a safe and workable plan to play each ball on its merits and stare reproachfully at the bat if there is a catastrophe. That is done in the best circles. Having had your whack you may then safely leave it to the reporters to interpret your strokes as drives, chest-expanders, volleys, Ranjis, cuts, snicks, nibbles, glances, Bradmans and what-not. Do not look puzzled if the ball goes to leg when you attempt a big hit to the feet of the almond-eyed girl on the pavilion steps. That would ruin your reputation beyond redemption. The thing to do is to turn your head briskly in the direction of the ball and try to look as if you meant to place it just there. The men in the press gallery will go home, lick their pencils and write paragraphs about your anticipation, control and (generally speaking) wizardry.

If you analyse what the press sophisticatedly calls 'wizardry' you will find that it is mostly a matter of foot-work, wrist-work and hip-work. Proper foot-work enables you to throw the weight of your body about like a professional boxer and hurtle the leather clean over the ropes. A six! A most glorious six—and applause from the eight-anna gallery!

Wrist-work isn't so easy as all that unless your wrists are elastic like your neighbour's conscience.

But fortunately it is possible to develop India-rubber joints without a postal course in physical culture. All that you need do is to tap a couple of rubber trees (*Elastica Americana*) and use the latter instead of condensed milk in your morning cup.

Of course, one needs to be hawk-eyed in order to derive the maximum advantage from foot, wrists and hip. It is practically impossible in a five-minute course to deal at length with the cultivation of the hawk-eye, but you can do worse than pay an occasional visit to the zoo and study the bird at first-hand. And if you can get a journalist of repute to call you a 'Hawk-eyed Colt' your reputation is as good as made, and you can begin to devote your attention to your average.

Averages have come to be of such vital importance nowadays that one might well be excused for playing with an eye on them. It is quite possible, with a little care, to shoot up to the very top of the table of averages and be slapped on the back by sporting Maharajahs. Well, I achieved it last year. Going in at number seven, my average last season was:

Innings.	Runs.	Times Not Out.	Average.
35	103	33	51.5

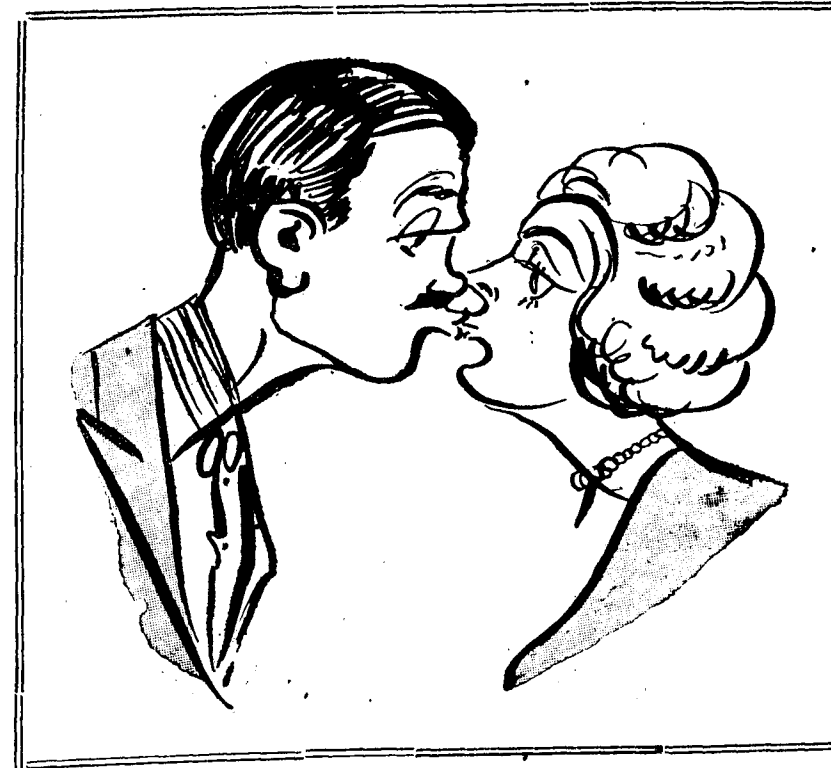
And in first-class (Communal and Provincial) cricket too. If the Selectors ignore my average and shelve me when they decide the personnel of the next Text Team, my friends 'Fairplay' and 'Agamemnon' will give them what-for in the evening newspapers.

From a test-player to a free-lance isn't a far leap. Almost every British cricketer hopes (sooner or later) to retire from cricket and begin to rake in the editor's guineas. Here in India the scope for profitable free-lancing is rather limited due to the presence of British, West Indian, South African and Australian old-timers; but, I hope, the day is not distant when more journals would get swadeshi-minded and give the local lads a fair chance.

You needn't fear that it is going to be a whale of a job to knock together a readable cricket article. Bung in heaps of those stock terms—mostly meaningless, but dear to the editorial heart. Captain's innings—Useful ten—Bowl like a Trojan—Hurtle the leather—Wield the willow—Springboks and Aussies—Cricketing map—May the best side.....etc., are sturdy every-day phrases that can stand any amount of journalistic wear and tear.

Well then, have a stab at it, Mr. Moron. And good luck to you, say I.

[And to you, too—Ed.]



On Glue—

by John A. Henry

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

“OH Glue, oh Gum, you make sad memories come!”

As the reader will see, from the iambic pentameter above, if the reader knows anything about pentameters and quintuplets, I began writing a poem to glue! But my poetry is always a failure, although I have written dozens of odes and things to such objects as fleas, hens, bugs etc. As a modern Homer, as dozens of rejection slips from various Editors have told me, I am about as much good as a pencil without a handy sharpener when the point of the pencil is broken.

And so, forgetting my ode or poem or whatever it was going to be, let us try and look at the value of glue (unintentional rhyme!) from a prose and entirely sane point of view.

Glue, so the experts tell us, was not invented till A. D. 2, (or 3). Dainty Gloy Paste and other types

of this handy home commodity are very recent variations of the first model. But the glue of old was stickier, better and ten times more adhesive than that of the 20th century.

The value of glue as tooth paste was disproved by a man in A. D. 6 (or 7). He was a scientist who stopped at nothing in his advances into the scientific world. He just went forward all the time, not being fitted with any reverse gear. After many intricate experiments, he found that dirt, when dropped onto glue, stuck to the glue. So, he reasoned in truly scientific manner, would the film on human teeth stick to glue if the latter was used as tooth-paste? If, as he hoped, the experiment proved successful, it would entirely revolutionise current dentifacial treatment.

And so he tried it out. But, so powerful was the glue of those days, that not only the ugly film from his human teeth stuck to the tooth-paste, but his teeth

as well, they being extracted quite efficiently. And so he was the first man to invent false teeth, his first set consisting of the teeth taken from the beak of a pterodactyl.

Glue in those days was used for many purposes, not the least of which was sticking to something else. Schoolboys nowadays know that much at least. And schoolmasters—whose tailors specialise in repairs to trouser-seats.

Nowadays, glue is used to a certain extent on Government postage stamps, but the majority of stamps have to be treated at home in order to safeguard letters from being excessed at the other end.

We read of 'Lovers' lips being glued together'. This is a type of glueing that is somewhat different to any other. Difficulty is experienced by lovers in pulling their lips apart after they have been glued, but it *can* be done. Lip rouge is merely a scientific variation of glue in its most powerful form.

We also read of the man 'whose eyes were glued to the newspaper' or to 'his wife's face in horror'. If glue had never been invented in A. D. 2 (or 3), how sadly deficient our vocabulary of description would be to-day!

'Glued to his seat' is another very old saying from which the value of glue can well be realised. If we weren't (c. f. words at beginning of para)—what a strange world this would be! But pneumatic cushion-mongers would at least see the rosy side of it financially.

On my table at this moment is a bottle of glue. I use it for sticking the sheets of my manuscripts

together. The bearer uses it for smearing my table-top every time he comes round here to dust the table. My nephew uses it for sticking his fingers together and for having a square meal out of meal times. And various other members of my family use it when I'm not looking, its cost being rupees 2- Rs. a bottle.

An invention of mine was turned down by the Police Department not so long ago. It was meant to safeguard the public from pickpockets. Why the Police turned it down I don't know, because anything more simple and efficacious than glueing one's pockets up before going out into the street I cannot visualise. The Commissioner hinted vaguely that my invention was good but that pickpockets would get their fingers sticky and might not like that. Imagine a Commissioner of Police thinking of the comfort of a dirty lot of pickpockets!

Feminine sex appeal and glue are closely allied—so closely, in fact, that one cannot see daylight between them. We males get entangled by that glue-like quality of females, and it is really hard to steam ourselves away from them. The same female quality has a marvellous capacity for getting gifts of all sorts and descriptions stuck to it.

"Glue, women, and gum-boils," once remarked a very wise man, "are synonymous

in effect. They stick to one."

And:

"Glue," says many a schoolboy in essays, "is something that sticks when you don't want it to and won't stick when you do want it to."

Between the remarks of these sages can be drawn a subtle connection.

THE END



Eye glued to the newspaper



Seek And You Shall Find

by E. L. Shipman

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

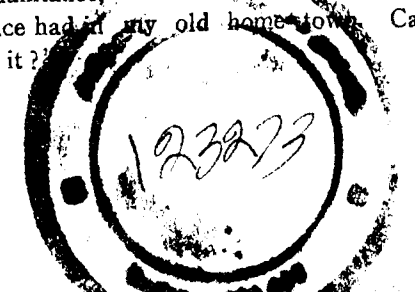
THE night mail appeared to be more or less crowded, and I considered myself fortunate in having secured a lower berth. The traveller who would later woo slumber on the berth above me was at present seated opposite. Seemingly, he had, prior to my entrance, already endeavoured to get into conversation with the other occupants of the railway carriage, but, although, even yet, he now and then flung a stray item of gossip or of opinion in the direction of one or the other of them, the response was seldom more than a grunt, or, at best, a mere monosyllabic acquiescence in the truth of his remark. He appeared to welcome my arrival with some relief, and, after allowing me a brief time in which to settle down to my surroundings, entirely gave up his attempts at entertaining the remainder of the passengers, and turned his attention to me.

"I don't know how you feel about it," he remarked, "but I, for one, can never read after nightfall in these beastly trains. The light's too bad."

This being a view of matters wherein I wholly and heartily acquiesced, I denoted my agreement in an appropriate manner. The cordiality of my reply providing the necessary encouragement, we were soon on conversationally excellent terms.

Subject after subject being run through, and each, in its turn, discarded, a casual remark of mine eventually brought us to the matter of buried treasure.

"I say," thereupon suddenly remarked my new-found acquaintance, "that reminds me of a treasure-hunt we once had in my old home town. Care to hear about it?"



"If you think it would be likely to interest me."

"Well," he said, "there is a Maternity hospital in the town which is run entirely on voluntary subscriptions. At the time of which I speak, the financial affairs of this hospital were in a perilous condition and a meeting of the governors, together with some of the town's more prominent citizens, was convened with a view to discovering some remedy for this state of affairs."

"Not being one of the elite," he continued, after a short pause to allow his preceding sentence to sink well into my understanding, "I was, of course, not present at the meeting, and the first intimation I received ament both the hospital's economic instability and the steps proposed in amelioration, was conveyed to me *via* the columns of the local paper. The general public, including, as I said, myself, were therein informed that, with the consent and with the active co-operation of all the local authorities, it was proposed to hold a hunt for hidden treasure. All would-be competitors were required to submit their names, together with a minimum cash entrance fee—to be increased at the option of, and, it was sincerely hoped, with the goodwill of the competitor—and a date would thereafter be announced on which the treasure hunt would take place. The hospital governors, rightly or wrongly considering that, as a Maternity hospital, anything connected with its affairs would be the most likely to interest married folks rather than those living in single blessedness, in their preliminary announcement also stated that the actual hunt for the hidden treasure would be confined to married couples still sufficiently youthful to render their future dependence on the hospital's professional ministrations a possibility, if not a likelihood, though all and sundry of the general public were, of course, cordially invited to subscribe their little mite to so worthy a cause."

The speaker now rose from his seat, crossed over to his baggage, and therefrom drew a flask. From this latter he helped himself to a sip or two of a concealed beverage. Having thus refreshed himself, he resumed his seat, and again took up his tale:

"To cut the cackle and come to the hosses," he said, "the wife and I decided to have a shot at this treasure finding, since even the smallest intplement to our income would have been very welcome. On the appointed date, therefore, we turned up in the hospital grounds, whence the competition was to start, and awaited the commencement of the fun."

"The novelty of the contest, allied, perhaps, also to the ardent previous canvassing of a bevy of beautiful damsels, had brought a goodly crowd of married couples to the rendezvous, and the start was fairly prompt. Each pair of us was handed a slip of paper setting out the first clue, which read as follows:

"'Turn left, turn right, then straight ahead;
The clue, it seems, has gone.'

"After much scratching of heads, and other individual gestures peculiar to the stimulation of thought, quite a few of the intending competitors gave it up and faded quietly away. The rest of us were not so easily daunted, and we remained in an attitude of contemplative hopefulness, awaiting but a lead."

Again the narrator stayed his tale, to make a second visit to his flask. His huskiness again dispersed:

"Parenthetically," he continued, "I would mention that all competitors were on their honour bound not to destroy or remove any of the clues they came across, so that all might have an equal chance."

"Well, to carry on regarding the actual hunt. One of the brighter minds amongst us after a while conceived the idea of taking the clue literally. Obviously, then, a turn to the left, followed by a turn to the right, would be a mutual cancellation of either movement. There remained the 'straight ahead', and, as far as any of us could see, the only object at all prominent ahead of us, barring the hospital building itself (we had previously been assured that this, for the sake of its inmates' peace and quietness, had not been included in the itinerary), seemed to be a flower-bed filled with cannas. After a further moment or two's contemplation of this flower-bed, and of concentration of his intellect, our self-elected leader gave vent to a satisfied ejaculation, turned on his heel, and set off at a smart pace, dragging his poor consort along behind him by the arm, and closely followed by the rest of us."

"Our leader's surmise turned out to have been correct, for, when we arrived, some time later, at the fish-curing and canning factory, a further clue awaited us. This, in its turn, read:

"'Here fish are caught, and fish are cured;
But the clue you want's 'tween wall immured.'

"This was, of course, comparatively simple and the majority of us now broke away from our companion pairs, deeming ourselves perfectly capable of correctly interpreting all the clues that might follow. Of what happened to the rest of the couples, therefore, I know nothing, save from hearsay. The wife and I promptly

took a short cut to the local police station, where as we had correctly assumed, a fresh clue was forthcoming. This third clue puzzled us for a while, since it said:

"'One end of each doth two points provide;
'Tis strange to find them side by side.'

"The wife's intuition succeeded where my own superior intelligence failed, and, in due course, we made our way to the 'God and Compasses' Inn, where, finding that we were first in the field, we sat down to a little refreshment, while considering the fresh directions given us."

The remaining occupants of the railway carriage now commenced ostentatiously to spread their bedding and otherwise to manifest their impatience with my companion's narrative. The latter duly remarked on this fact:

"Those chaps," he said, with a scornful sniff in their general direction, "can't appreciate a good yarn when they hear one. However, as they've also, presumably, paid for their tickets, I suppose they are entitled to some consideration, so we'll have to cut the story short."

"There were," he went on, "about a dozen other clues, some of which were perfect twisters. Had things been different," this with a baleful glance at the other passengers, "I should have been only too happy to have regaled your mind with them. As it is—

"Anyway," he continued, swallowing his ire, "the succession of clues led us first to one end of the town and then to the other. Sometimes a piece of paper containing a clue would be found in some bush by the roadside, and sometimes it had to be handed out, on request, by the owner of some private house or the landlord of a hotel. In all, I judge that we must have covered at least a dozen miles ere our efforts received their due reward."

"The wife and I, it appears, were still well ahead of our nearest pair of rivals, although, at the time, we were not, of course, aware of the fact, and our

apprehensions of being forestalled had, throughout this contest, and particularly in its final stages, led us to pass from point to point with all celerity. It can be imagined, therefore, that, long ere the end, we were both of us hot, flushed and nearly breathless. However, at the penultimate clue we received sufficient encouragement to spur us on to renewed exertions, since the clue itself ended with the two lines:

"'Hot you are, and
you'll be hotter still;
One step more then
on and your coffers fill.'"

The narrator stopped to caress his throat, then, for the third time, and had recourse to his flask. Resuming:

"Naturally," he said, "as we at last approached our goal, we became terribly excited. Had others been before us? Were we fated to succeed or to fail?

"Our destination eventually hove in sight. Eagerly, yet withal somewhat hesitant to confirm our

worst fears, we pressed forward. The treasure was understood to lie in a large earthenware jar, covered with a wooden lid. I lifted the lid, and there, on the interior bottom of the jar, reposed a medium-sized biscuit tin. Obviously not actual money, unless in notes. Then what? A cheque? A draft? A valuable gem?

"I tore open the box. Within lay still another box, this time a cardboard one, and to this latter was attached a note."

"'Your treasure,' ran the note, 'lies, or ought to lie, at home. Give it this, filled with a mixture suitable to its age.'

"I opened the cardboard box, and what do you think I found? Why, a baby's blessed feeding bottle!"

My entertainer now rose to his feet, stretched his arms for a moment above his head, the while he indulged in a yawn, then, with an agile spring, a strange physical feat in one of his age, he gained his upper berth, and, almost immediately, judging from the snores that arose, entered into the land of Nod.

THE END





Lying In State

by Ram Saran

Reading Time • About 2 Minutes

I am lying in state.

Newspapers publish the news in head-lines. Telegraph wires hum all the world over. The printing-machines are smoking, because of the hot news being printed. And the poor 'subs' are diligently pouring over musty volumes to publish a life-sketch of mine.

Two of my friends have committed suicide. One has gone to the remote mountains. Three have run away from homes and six have asked for police-protection.

Why?

Because the news-hounds pester them mercilessly for any anecdotes about my past. And mind you, my past—and you have my guarantee for it—is absolutely unblemished, without any blighted spot on the bright firmament. No pink letters, no elopements, no house-breakings, not even a prosecution.

The whole nation is plunged in mourning and the mourners sit together and gloomily play Bridge-Contract or Auction, as they please.

Shops are closed and the shop-keepers are all absolutely morose, because their business is suffering.

College-boys have got a holiday and they are making the best of it by writing love-letters to those who care to receive them—most of them film-stars, and singing and gossiping about me and my career.

Public meetings all over the country are full of weeping men and hysteric women. Ambulances are being kept in readiness and the nurses are working over-time.

Eloquent speakers pay glowing tributes to me and, carried away by their emotions, break down under the weight of sorrow.

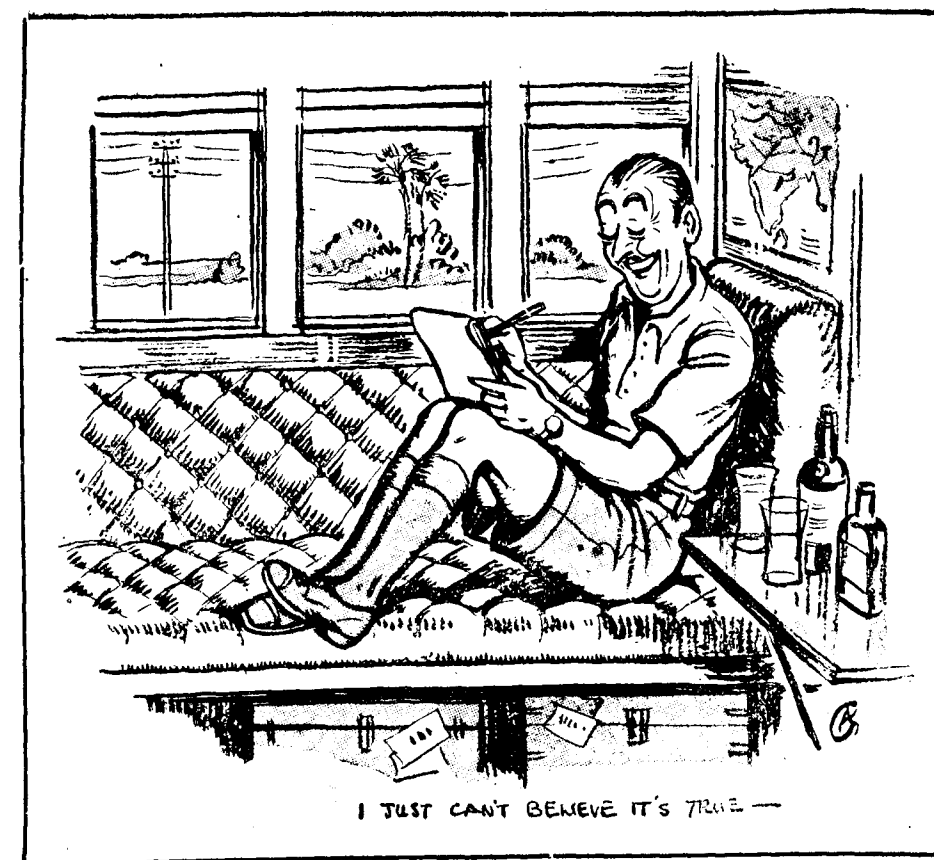
And the Editor, poor chap! He is inconsolable in his grief. The baize on the table before him is drenched with tears.

"How," he wails, "oh, how am I to publish *The Merry* now that this has happened. What a writer that man was!"

A fresh flood of tears rain down his cheeks and he kicks the mass of MSS before him in disgust.

And all the while me, poor me—I tell you honestly—is *lying* in state.

THE END



So That Was Calcutta!

(A Bombay Benedict Looks At The City of Palaces)

Words and Pictures by Albert A. Roland

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

I

My own darling wife—

AS promised, I'm writing from the train, so you'll know as early as possible that your devoted hubby has safely completed half his journey.

Please don't misunderstand about my untidy handwriting, darling. Since leaving Bombay, I've only had two *very* small ones from that brandy flask you thoughtfully packed in case of illness.

(No, I've not been ill, dear; only terribly homesick.)

It's the rocking of the *train* that makes it impossible for me to write my usual hand. I tried using the typewriter; but kept striking the wrong keys, or missing them altogether.

Just think, love! During all our eleven years of marriage, we've never once been parted—not counting those trips I made to the Poona Races (and got stranded up there), and those holidays you had with your mother (following those little lovers' quarrels).

I just *can't* believe it's true that at last we're going to be separated for three whole months! I don't know how on earth I'm going to get on without you. That roast chicken you put in for me was delicious.

Well, here's a station approaching, darling. Shall post this there. All my love and kisses.

Ever your devoted,

Henry.
xxx

P. S. Give my fondest love to your mother. "Distance lends enchantment," etc., but she's not such a bad old egg.

II

My own darling wife,

Well, here I am at last in the City of Palaces—the Second City in the Empire!

Johnson met me as arranged, and took me to my digs. I'm staying 'south of Park Street' (significant phrase, as I'll explain later) in a posh 'Private Hotel'. (Only very common people call them 'Boarding Houses'.)

My first impression of Calcutta was depressing. Howrah locality's indescribably dirty. And as for the Howrah Bridge, I can appreciate the agitation for a new one! This antediluvian contraption is full of bumps, strewn with wood-bark at the dangerous, butt-end joints. Calcutta people, I'm told, are so used to hearing that 'plans and estimates' for the new bridge have been approved, that when actual construction commences, it's feared that they (or their descendants) will die in great numbers of shock.

But a few minutes later, we'd left Howrah behind and were driving through the business quarter. Tall, imposing buildings, abound. We went by Dalhousie Square, with its beautiful lake, dominated by the stately G. P. O. Down by Council House Road. Past Government House.

And then the famous Maidan, with Chowringhee facade and the Victoria Memorial in the distance, burst into view.

By this time, I'd fully realised why Calcutta's called The City of Palaces. I don't want to be disloyal to good old Bombay, where we've spent so many years together. But Calcutta puts it completely in the shade.

Am greatly impressed with the bigness and beauty and bustle of the place. When I've had time for a

good look-round, will send you further reactions. And some efforts in the snap-shot line.

Darling, Johnson's waiting to take me for a round of golf. And he's dining me at Firpo's to-night. So shall have lots to write about to-morrow.

With all my love and kisses.

Ever your devoted,

Henry.
xxx

III

My darling wife,

Love and many thanks for your letters. Forgive my not writing earlier, but I've been unbelievably busy—business, of course.

Delighted to hear you and your mother are keeping well: also that you've put on three pounds apiece since I left home. I'm going up too. So play lots of golf, and never touch beer.

Guess whom I bumped into the other day? Old Bob Brown from Bombay. He's transferred here, and certainly knows a thing or two about this burg! You never cared for him much, did you, love? But he's not a bad sort, really. And he takes me out quite a bit. By the way, he says to tell you he's absolutely teetotal now, and has no time for the girls since his second divorce!

I enclose a batch of snapshots—all my own work, except a couple in which I'm starred, taken by Brown. Have embodied my impressions of Calcutta in the descriptive notes on what our Babu would call the 'backsides' of the snaps. So won't write more now.

Calcutta would appeal to me very much, were it not for the one fly in the ointment—your absence, darling. If business warrants, I'll send for you. But this probably won't be until towards the end of my stay.

Meanwhile, here's hoping. All my love.

Your devoted,

Hubby.
xx

Descriptive notes on photographs:—

1. Howrah Bridge with Howrah Station in distance.

The Bengali gentleman figuring so prominently in the foreground cuts off most of the subject. But you haven't missed much! Note the nasty bulges and joints—in the bridge, I mean, not the Bengali.

2. The Victoria Memorial. I had to do it! Seen so many pictures of this, I know it by heart. Yet I had to do it—everybody does! Unfortunately, Brown took the previous snap, and forgot to turn the winding key. So that phantom in golfing kit astride the maindome is me. Sort of Colonel Bogey, eh?

3. A Calcutta Taxi. All cast in the same ugly mould: black-and-red colour scheme. Front left door missing—a Police rule no one seems to know the significance of; anyway, it makes things very refreshing for the front-seat passenger when it rains. Calcutta taxi-drivers are famed for two things: accidents, and giving bad coins for change.

4. Steamers in the Hoogly. Snapped from the Strand, near Fort William. Must try a night view of this. Very pretty, and quite a romantic drive (so I'm told.)

5. The Lakes. Another romantic spot, I'm given to understand. Also the scene of quite a few suicides. If ever we live permanently in Calcutta, I think we should settle down near the Lakes.

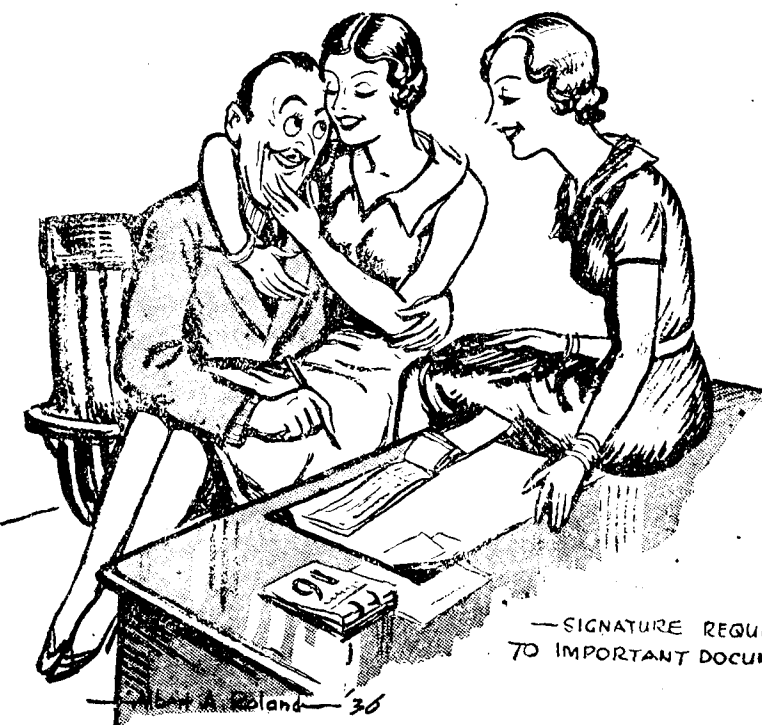
6. The G. P. O. Tried to get some artistic reflections in the Dalhousie Square Lake, but failed. Realise now there must have been a breeze. This seems apparent from the girl's skirt at left. Complete stranger to me, of course. Maybe she rather spoils the composition; but adds a touch of beauty to the scene, perhaps?

7. Business Premises in Bentinck Street. Typical of the fine buildings in Calcutta. Note the Tower Building—nine storeys high (though I've only managed to get in seven). Don't be alarmed at the way it's leaning over: I never could understand that air-bubble gadget on my camera.

8. View in Park Street. The hairdressing saloon on left is where I had to pay 12 annas, plus tip, for a shave! You must live 'south of Park Street,' by the way, if you wish to be known as a Somebody or a 'Heaven-born'. No snob ever dreams of living north of Park Street.

9. Your Hubby at the Zoo. Don't say it! Don't ask which is hubby, and which is chimpanzee! Otherwise I'll send you one of the hippo whose name happens to be—but why be nasty? (She's a lady.)

10. Football Crowds on the Maidan. Taken from the top of the Ochterlony Monument. Almost put a Wembley cup-tie crowd in the shade. Calcutta takes its football very seriously. Vide ambulance statistics, unofficial death-rate



The dome's said to be cracked—I'm referring, of course, to the G. P. O.'s.

of grandmothers, and number of chota-pegs sold in Scotch footer clubs.

11. **Newmarket.** Paradise of the fair sex. Said to be one of the finest markets in the world. Anything from hardware to underwear. From maize to stays. From pins to gins. From flowers to cauliflowers. From aspirin to bed-pans. From bananas to Havanas. From motorists' wants to nudists' needs. In fact, everything except wild animals and prayer-books. Where the world and his wife meet. Where the wife spends, and the husband's bankruptcy begins. You'd love Newmarket, dear!

12. **Night Club Cabaret.** Afraid this is rather under-exposed. But as the girls are over-exposed, that makes it quits. Notice the gentleman crying pitifully on the right. He's a Jute-Wallah in the second, or maudlin stage. I had to leave this show before he reached the third stage—or fight a duel with soda-water bottles. I don't really care for these places, but Johnson insisted on bringing me—or was it Brown? I can't remember.

IV

My dear wife,

I've received all your letters, for which many thanks. I have been so occupied with business the last week that writing has been out of the question. I can't understand your anxiety just because my letters are fewer these days.

I am rather concerned to learn that your mother is proposing to give you the money to come up here very soon. Not because I don't want you here—I'd like nothing better. But the fact is for so short a period, it would be a very great and needless expense. It would simply run away with the few profits I've managed to make so far. I know your mother is offering to put up the money, but I won't hear of accepting such charity.

And anyway, I shall be leaving any day now, so it's quite absurd your thinking of making the journey at this stage.

I'm in a hurry to get back to the office (we're working overtime again to-night), so close in haste. Shall write you at greater length in a day or two.

THE END

Ever your own,

Henry.

P. S. The weather is very unpleasant at present; you'd never stick it with your rheumatism, dear.

V-N.

(Telegrams)

YOUR TELEGRAM RECEIVED PLEASE CANCEL YOUR BERTH ON CALCUTTA MAIL AS I AM LEAVING HERE IN COUPLE DAYS STOP YOUR MOTHER'S FEARS RIDICULOUS STOP RUMOURS YOU'VE HEARD BASELESS AND DEFAMATORY STOP INTEND TAKING ACTION WHEN I RETURN STOP LOVE—HUBBY.

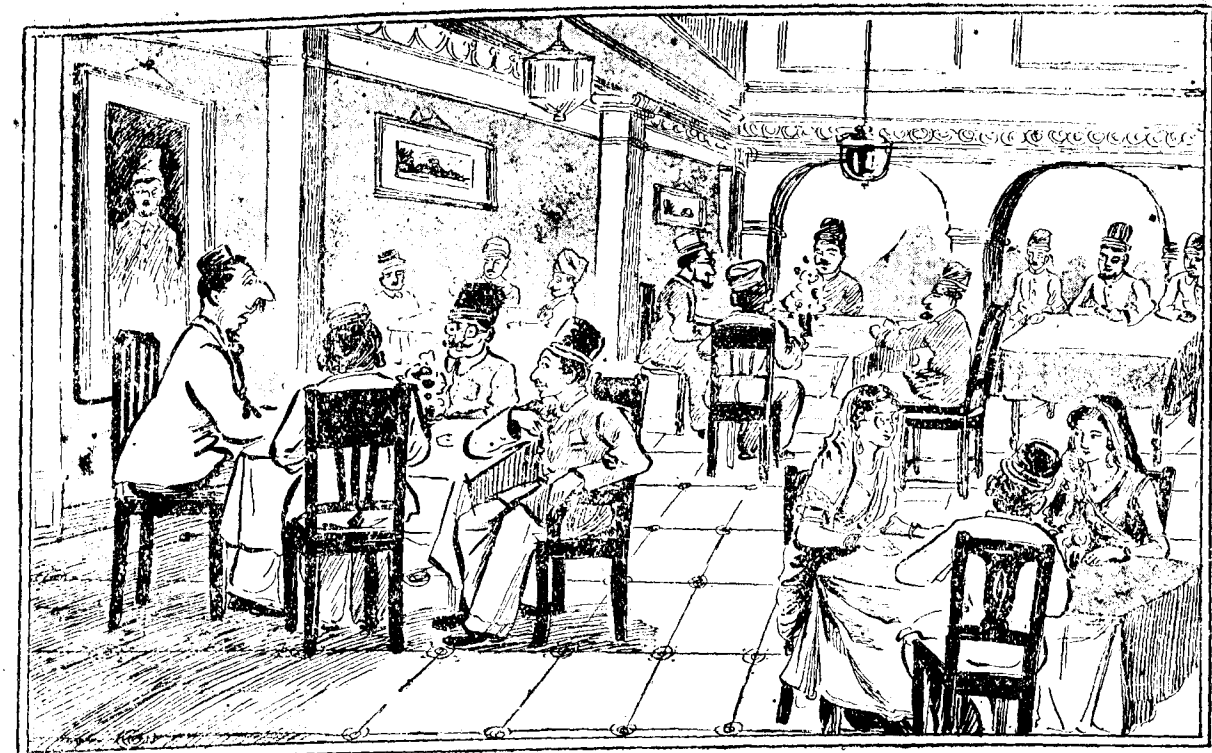
UNAVOIDABLY DETAINED FORTY-EIGHT HOURS LEAVING TUESDAY LOVE—HUBBY.

BIG DEAL LIKELY BUT NECESSITATES FURTHER THREE DAYS STAY STOP LEAVING DEFINITELY SATURDAY STOP LOVE—HUBBY.

CANNOT LEAVE TILL MONDAY STOP SIGNATURE REQUIRED TO IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS STOP LOVE—HUBBY.

IN REPLY YOUR WIRE PLEASE DON'T COME STOP BOOKED BERTH ON THURSDAYS MAIL PLEASE MEET ME BOMBAY SATURDAY STOP TREAT THIS AS FINAL—HUBBY.

WIRING THIS FROM NAGPUR EN ROUTE IN CASE YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE ME STOP SOON BE HOME AGAIN STOP LOVE TO YOU BOTH STOP TRIP FINANCIALLY UNSUCCESSFUL AND HAVE LOTS TO TELL YOU ABOUT THAT WRETCHED PLACE CALLED CALCUTTA STOP ALL MY LOVE—HUBBYKINS.



My Past —

by Sheikh Iftekhhar Rasool

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

AS soon as we returned from our trip abroad, my wife decided to give a party to the family. Personally, I thought this a mistake. A family can be trusted to pop along and see what the couple are doing and to advise them not to do it without a specific invitation. That was asking for trouble. But my wife was adamant.

Wouldn't it be nicer, she asked, to ask all the relatives at once and get the business over? If we had one party for my relatives, and one for hers, the guests would be able to amuse themselves. This sounded quite plausible at the time.

We should not, she argued, have to talk about the Australians to A, Rural Reconstruction to B, and Herr Hitler's arrogant attitude towards India to C. The family would have plenty to talk about. We shouldn't have to rack our brains to keep the conversation going.

On the contrary, I objected, we should have to rack our brains to keep the conversation from going too far. If we didn't, the family skeleton would be dragged out of its cupboard. My wife retorted that she would like to see the family skeleton, and as she was now one of the family, she intended to be present at the next family inquest.

I raised no further objections. The invitations to all my relatives were written and posted. I looked forward to the party with gloom, but my wife was positively cheerful about it. She was quite sure some interesting topic would crop up.

It did. The family decided to discuss my past. All of it. They held a sort of 'remembering' competition and tried to see how far back they could penetrate into my career. My wife listened wide-eyed. She heard things about me which—well, I had nothing to conceal. Please understand that. But some details

are too slight and too intimate, if you see what I mean, to be bandied about before a family gathering.

"I remember the little chap (meaning me) having measles," declared one my aunts. "That was in '03."

"No," corrected the other. "That was mumps. It was measles he caught in '05. Believe me or believe me not..."

"We don't," asserted the elder one.

The younger swept on like a juggernaut.

"That little fellow caught everything. Everything. You couldn't name a disease that he didn't have. I said to his mother: 'You'll never rear that child!'"

"Well, we know better now," sighed the elder one. "We know you were wrong. And you always were wrong with your warnings."

"Not so wrong, neither," panted the younger, bridling. "Time will prove. He's not so strong as he looks. Mind you, I hope I am wrong; I shouldn't like to see the little wife in widow's weeds, but I must speak my mind if I was to hang the next minute. He's not long for this world. Mark my words."

I passed her the scones, and several remarkable warnings were nipped in the bud. But this only gave my Uncle his opportunity.

"I remember the day when he was expelled from school for showing his tongue to the poor old drawing-master and for blowing raspberries at others. Very naughty he was then. I wonder if he still clings to his old habits."

He looked for confirmation to my wife. I hastily pressed the scones to him.

"Don't you go raking up such things," said my elder aunt, waving a tea-spoon in admonition. "I have always said and always shall say, whatever has happened since, that in those days he was a terrible little shrimp."

"They do say," said the elder aunt again, "that these childish traits crop up in later years. They're

only dormant. And when the opportunity comes—thank you. Your scones are delicious, baby....."

"I hope not," rejoined my dear old Uncle. "We've had trouble in the family once before. Once is quite enough. If there is any trouble, you needn't come to me to hush it up. Things must take their course. If this little girl had come to me before wedding, I'd have told her what she ought to have been told. But least said the better now."

"What is all this talk about the lad?" shrilled my grandpa sitting some distance away. "Nobody tells me anything, just because I'm a bit deaf. You leave the lad alone. Never did you any harm. He was a good boy, if he'd only left the girls alone. I never knew such a ladies' man, and they just nicknamed him 'Flapper-hunter'. That was his only weakness, and everyone has it in his youthful days. What was the name of that school-girl you used to meet after school hours? Leila?"

"Leila was his third," corrected my elder aunt. "You are thinking of Sheila."

"You're both wrong," decided the younger. "I remember it as if it was yesterday. Her name was Ramona."

Several other members of the family hastened to give evidence. The inquest on my past lasted three hours. Reluctantly our guests tore themselves away, declaring they had enjoyed every minute of their stay. Next time they must stay longer and have a really good chat.

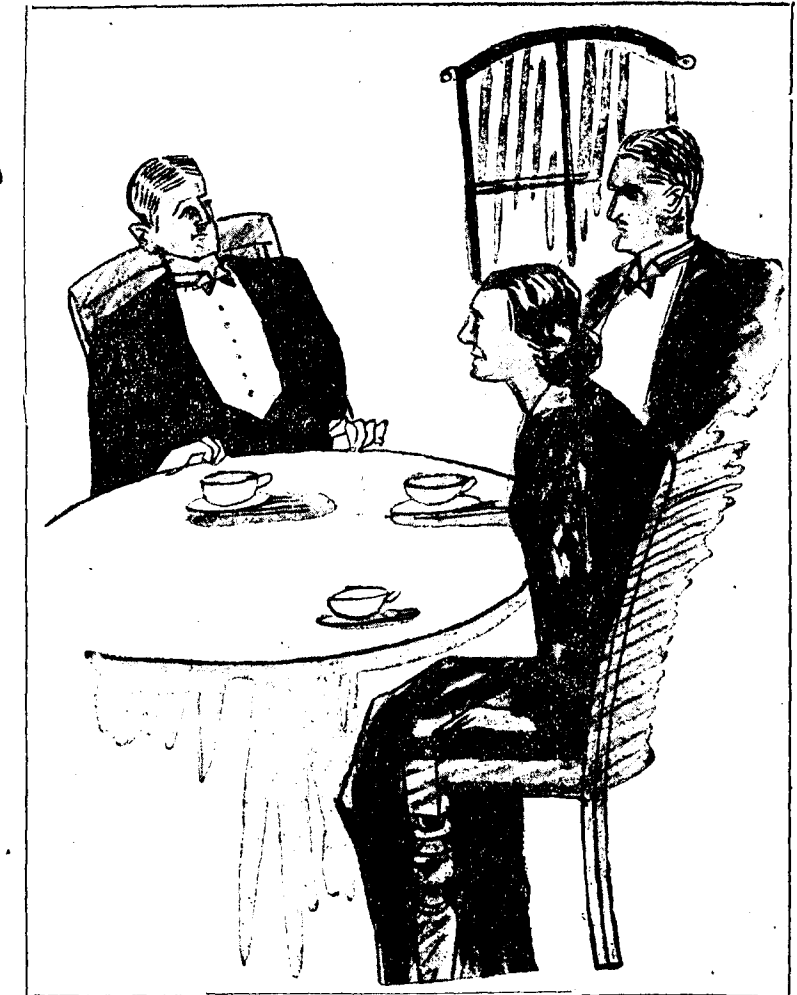
It was the turn of my wife next after seeing them off at the gate when the remains of my past were to be exhumed, but I fled and took a refuge in the club. I have not seen her since, and I am wondering how to face her.

THE END

A Game of Chance

by T. A. S.

Reading Time
About 5 Minutes



THE only guest at the dinner was Harrow. Both Brandon and Harrow had come to India by the same boat, and were, for the few years of their life in Madras, intimate friends, working as assistants in the same company.

But, as the butler noiselessly removed the final course and left the table clear, an odd light kindled in Brandon's eyes and he was conscious of a growing excitement. It required all his will power to keep his head clear and his hands from trembling. He had waited for the moment and it had come at last!

Across the table, Mrs. Brandon was listening to something young Harrow was telling her, her lips slightly parted in a smile and her light blue eyes fixed intently upon him. Brandon winced as his eyes fell upon her and the lines about his mouth tightened. Yesterday, he would have overlooked her expression; but, since then, the letter had fallen into his hands, and what had been written there had awakened him.

Perhaps, these two had laughed together at his unquestioning faith.

As young Harrow's narrative came to an end, the butler came with coffee, and Mrs. Brandon leaned back with a faint sigh of regret. She shook her head gracefully as the servant extended his tray, and Brandon watching her did not wonder that Harrow had given her his first devotion. Harrow helped himself to a cup of coffee and a cigarette; Brandon, in his turn, followed his guest's lead and then, with a nod dismissed the butler. He struck a match and offered it to Harrow.

"Thank you," said Harrow, accepting it. Brandon lighted his own cigarette, and then faced them.

"I should like," he said, "to tell a story, please. And I think I can interest you, because my story is founded on fact. And it concerns us all somewhat."

"This morning," he continued, "when my mail was handed me, I got a letter of my wife's by some error of the servant's. My mail was lying upon the tray with the address-side turned down, and I had opened the particular letter before I knew it was not intended for me. I should not have attempted to overstep the laws of strict good breeding, but for a word that caught my eye as I was putting the letter away. It was the third word in the first line of the letter. I wonder if you could guess what it was?"

"It was a word of four letters," continued Brandon. "A little word, though enough to shatter a man's happiness and probably wreck three lives. The word was 'LOVE'."

Young Harrow drew in his breath convulsively; Mrs. Brandon frowned, her wide eyes running from the face of her husband to that of Harrow's.

"In past generations," went on Brandon, "a man would have attempted to settle the matter at the point of the pistols. The flaw, however, is that the better man is not always the better shot. Moreover, this manner of settling such affairs has fallen into disrepute, and duels are forbidden in this country. You can sue a man for alienating his affections, but this is a very unsatisfactory settlement. I think that Chance is the only method of determining that."

He drew a letter from his pocket and spread it out on the table. Harrow turned white, and was breathing violently.

"When I had read this letter," said Brandon quietly, "I realised that the odds were against me. Ruth, look at me, please."

"You know, I think," he went on, "that I have loved you, that I still love you, with all the sincerity and with all the strength in me."

"Harrow," added Brandon, gently, "loves you, too. I want you to look into my eyes, Ruth, and tell me frankly if, in your heart, you have come to prefer him to me."

The woman neither raised her eyes nor replied, but sat motionless; her bosom heaving violently. Brandon turned with a slight nod to Harrow.

"I provided another method of settlement," he said, "in case my wife should refuse to choose. In the coffee that stands before you, or in the coffee that stands before me, I have mixed a dose of prussic acid. Whichever one of us drinks of that cup will die at once."

"One of us," he continued, "will die. The one who is fortunate enough to select the other cup wins the lady. We have each a fair chance. I swear upon my honour that I do not know into which cup I poured the poison."

"And," he went on, "if you are not content to drinking the coffee you yourself selected from the butler's tray, I will change with you, but drink one cup you must. I will drink the other."

"And if I refuse?" cried Harrow, grimly.

"Then," said Brandon, "I will deal with you as one of my ancestors would have dealt with one of your kind, and I would rather kill you than give my wife to a coward."

Harrow stood up. "You have sworn upon your honour that you do not know which cup contains the poison?" he asked.

Brandon nodded.

"Then," said Harrow, "I shall trust you, and I shall drink this." He raised the cup he had with a steady hand to his lips. Brandon raised his too, but as he was about to set his lips to the brim, his wife leapt to her feet and threw her arms toward him.

"Don't," she cried. "I love you!"

He stared straight into her eyes for a moment, set down the cup and caught her as she tottered.

Harrow set down his empty cup.

"Drink," he said quietly.

Brandon shrugged his shoulders, and a faint smile crept into his eyes.

"It does not matter," he said wearily. "The matter adjusted itself, you see. There was no poison in either cup."



"I desire no remuneration for the poem," said the poetaster. "I merely submit it as a compliment."

"Then, my dear sir, allow me to return the compliment," replied the Editor with true journalistic courtesy.

—Hardware World.

A case was called in Court. Mr. Smith, Counsel for the defence, begged the judge to postpone the case.

"I have been speaking all day in another Court, and am rather exhausted," he said.

"Next case," said the judge.

The Counsel in this case, too, rose and begged to be excused. "I," said he, "have been listening all day to Mr. Smith."

—Christian Science Monitor.

Detective: Got away, has he? Did you guard all the exits?

Constable: Yes, but we think he must have left by one of the entrances.

—Chelsea Record.

Officer: I say, sergeant, where have all these silly asses in our company gone?

Sergeant: I don't know, sir. I think we're the only two left.

—Pearson's Weekly.

Speaking of people, it may take all kinds, but some kinds are hard to take.

—Saturday Evening Post.

"Have you been fighting again, Jack?"

"Honest, mum, I wasn't fightin'—Tommy called me a liar and then hit me on the fist with his teeth!"

—Everybody's Weekly.

Angry House-holder (To Chinese Laundryman): You are a careless lot! First you lose Manchuria and then you lose two of my best handkerchiefs.

—Berliner Schalmes.

Professor: If there are any dumb-bells in the room, please stand up.

A long pause and then a lone freshman stands up.

"What, do you consider yourself a dumb-bell?"

"Well, not exactly, sir, but I hate to see you standing all alone."

—Cornell Widow.

First Aviation Student: Quick, what do I do now, instructor?

Second ditto: Hell's Bells! Aren't you the instructor?

—Missouri Showmen.

Found: ROLL of Five-dollar bills. Will the owner please form a line at the north entrance to the main building?

—Ohioan.



The Mark—

by Thirupathi

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

GUNDAPPA, bald at the top, fifty-five and stout, sat on the verandah of his fine bungalow. It was rather early in the morning. The garden lay before him, bathed in the young sun. Gundappa breathed deep the scent-laden air and smiled contentedly to himself. He had the look of a man who had no care in the world.

Some tall tales of his affluence were bandied from mouth to mouth. Gundappa was rich. His investments in gilt-edged securities alone, people said, were something like fifty lakhs of rupees. He made all his money, gossip said again, in what is euphemistically called 'cotton' and 'jute', two legendary terms which cover a multitude of sins against a background of hectic gambling.

The telephone bell rang somewhere inside the house. His servant answered the call and approached his master.

"Somebody wants to know if he could see you between nine and ten this morning, sir," said the servant.

"What do you mean, somebody?" said Gundappa. "Find out his name, man."

The servant made the necessary enquiry into the 'phone and asked the man at the other end to hold the line.

"He says, sir," said the servant to Gundappa, "that you do not know him. He wants me to tell you that he was once a friend of Ranchodlal in Bombay."

When Gundappa heard that name—Ranchodlal—a peculiar look, never seen in his face, darkened his brow. "Very well, tell the man I will see him between nine and ten. When he comes, show him to my office-room."

Gundappa retired to his office-room and sank into a chair. Ranchodlal! "So the dead past is invading

the peace of my life," thought Gundappa. Thirty years rolled back. He saw himself a young man pacing restlessly the Chowpattisands on a dark night. He was expecting Ranchodlal, who was in those days his partner in *satta* gambling. That day they had cleaned up a couple of thousand rupees in a shady transaction. They dared not meet either in the tea-houses or other public places to divide their gains. The police were just then cleaning up all gambling houses and keeping a sharp look-out for delinquents. At last Ranchodlal came. They spoke in whispers. The whispers grew hoarse and hot and angry. They fell out over the division of their takings of the day. Gundappa was for fifty-fifty. Ranchodlal was for sixty-forty, the sixty being his, because, he said, he was the brains behind the coup. They did not agree. They fought with fists. In an uncontrolled moment Gundappa picked up a stone and hit his friend on his head. He collapsed, bleeding profusely. Gundappa was in a panic. He tried to revive his friend. He failed. The wounded man breathed fitfully and moaned. Gundappa took to his heels and did not stir out of his room for a week. He read in the papers next day about a Gujarati murdered in the Chowpatti sea-front. The description tallied with that of Ranchodlal. However, the police could not trace the crime to its source.

Gundappa left Bombay and betook himself to Calcutta. There he laid the foundation of his vast wealth.....

The hall clock chimed the half-hour after nine. An elderly Gujarati, with face horribly pock-marked and dressed slovenly, was ushered in. Each looked at the other keenly for a few seconds.

"Well?" said Gundappa.

"My name is Jeevanlal," said the stranger. "I have come to talk to you about Ranchodlal."

"I don't know anybody of that name," said Gundappa with a brave smile.

"You killed him on the Chowpatti sands thirty years ago."

"Oh," said Gundappa, still putting up a brave show, "and how do you happen to know that I killed him?"

"On that night I followed Ranchodlal unknown to him to Chowpatti. He owed me some money. He was always putting me off with some excuse or other. I knew that day he was carrying a considerable sum of money on his person. I saw you, from behind a pile of seashells, striking him. In the melee you dropped a handkerchief and a bit of paper. The paper contained memoranda compromising you. Here they are."

Jeevanlal produced the exhibits. Gundappa recognised them. "So, it is blackmail, Jeevanlal?" he asked. "Well, what is your price for the bit of paper and handkerchief?"

"Twenty-five thousand rupees."

Gundappa stood up and approached Jeevanlal. He patted Jeevanlal's back lovingly and burst out laughing. "Come, come, you old rascal, Ranchodlal! You need not have told me that shocking lie. Thank God, I had not killed you!"

"How...how...did you guess my identity?" blurted out Ranchodlal alias Jeevanlal. "With my face so horribly disfigured by small-pox, even my mother would not recognise me."

"Hold up your right hand, old Ranchod," said Gundappa. "There, look at that dark oval birth-mark on your wrist with a hair sticking out of it. I knew it of old. When you held up that hand just now to show me that evidence of my alleged guilt, your coat-sleeve slid back. I spotted the birth-mark immediately."

Gundappa pressed Ranchodlal to stay with him for a month. When the time for Ranchodlal's departure came, Gundappa placed in his friend's pocket a cheque for two lakhs. "There, old Ranchod, your appearance in my ken has lifted a terrible load off my mind. God bless you! Go in peace!"

THE END.

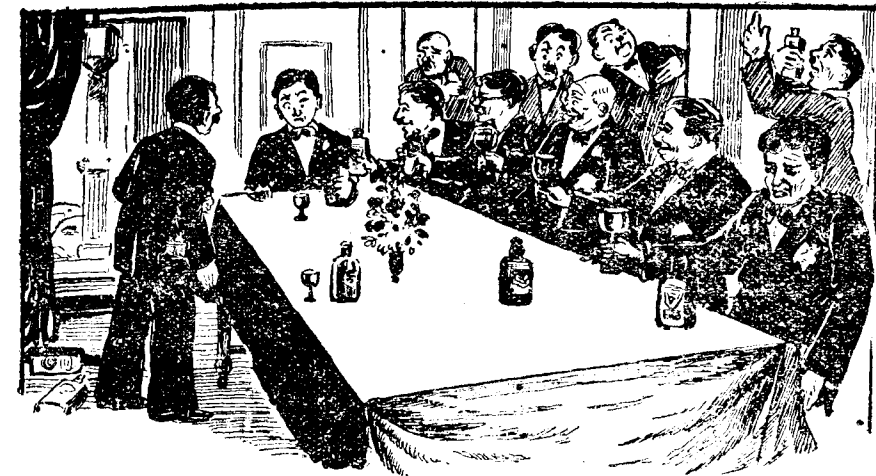


Old Relations!



Private : She is my sister, Sergeant.

Sergeant : Oh, alright. She used to be mine once.



When Knights Were Sold

by Artiji

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

PERCIVAL Augustus was a Knight. Not a knight of the chain-mail and armour variety but a more useful and less conventional species. Public opinion ranked him the best-dressed Knight in London. His chin was romantic. His shoes were perfection. His crease was superb. His taste in champagne was considered a divine edict and his smile a consistent favourite with dental advertisers.

At the time that this story begins, Sir Percival was engaged in the eminently knightly process of emptying a wine bottle to the shades of his illustrious ancestors. His face wore an intoxicated look and his diction was not so precise as it might have been under normal circumstances. A motley assembly pressed around him urging the advantages of just another glass. Sir Percival, by no means averse to further potations had just entered upon another epoch in his admittedly bibulous career when the door opened to admit a panting, foot-sore, and wild-eyed employee.

After the commotion had died down and the messenger boy had been thoroughly soused in a bucket of brandy, the cause of his intrusion came to light. Sir Percival's wife had, it appeared, been captured by a bold, scheming villain, on the wrong side of the ancestral fence. The criminal had proceeded along the Great North Road in a black 26 h. p. Sedan. The lady screamed twice for her vanishing cream and then

was silent. Her cheeks were red, her hair was flying, and her powder puff was left behind.

Overwhelmed by this delightful information, Sir Percival gave vent to a loud and exultant hurrah. This shocked even his sophisticated audience. They argued, cajoled, pleaded, begged him to give up the salubrious task of drinking and return for a moment to the sterner demands of justice. The butler went off into a treatise on Knighthood and the ancestral poet composed an ode to Honour. Sir Percival was unimpressed. Nothing could shake his God-given conviction that the disappearance of his wife was a material advantage to the progress of the earth.

However, the discovery that the villain had decamped with the major portion of the family fortune, brought about a decisive change. Sir Percival took a farewell quaff at his bottle and with a loud 'hic' he called for his stallion. Rather unsteadily he swung himself across it, stroked its neck, breathed a befuddled prayer, and with a final wave to the platinum blonde in the shadow of the gate-post, galloped forth into the darkness of the night.

At four o'clock Sir Percival was still galloping into the blackness of the night. At dawn he could be dimly observed making a big hole in the opposite horizon. The horse was moving smoothly and steadily although its joints were a trifle rusty from lack of lubrication.

Foam broke from the exhaust and steam hissed madly at the radiator. But the spirit of the old steed was strong, though its flesh and cylinders were weak. After all, it was racing to save a woman, and lady Percival, as you should have guessed, was a natural brunette.

At 10 o'clock Sir Percival supped on a diet of chocolate and raisins.

At 11 he took out an enlargement of his favourite actress, fixed it on the saddle bow and began to dream.

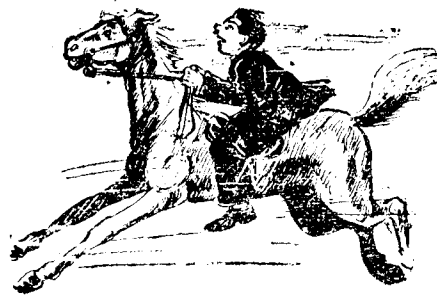
At 12 he was pulled up by a policeman for running on the wrong side of the road.

At 1 he kissed the horse instead of the photo.

At 2 he decided to recover the fortune and leave his wife to the mercies of the villain. In any case she would be dead before he reached her. Sir Percival meditated on the possibilities his wife's dissolution evoked and rubbed his hands in obvious enjoyment.

At 3 he rode straight into a funeral procession. To his horror he perceived that it was the body of the villain which was to be buried. He conducted a hurried inquiry and despite his alcoholic condition gleaned appalling and unlooked for results.

The sources of the tragedy were extremely simple. The villain had a nice car and a nice profile. But he overlooked one factor—Lady Percival's predilection for make-up. Once she discovered that her powder puff was left behind, nothing, not even a villain's convenience could induce her to submit. She had more or less decided to elope with her captor, but this event changed her whole attitude towards him. Being tolerant by nature she gave him a chance. She asked him to go back and recover the puff. He refused in the fulness of juvenile folly. Thereupon she promptly smashed his skull with the starting handle, using a round arm action she had learnt throwing china dishes at her husband. Immediately afterwards she drove off to the nearest fashion display.



Sir Percival, rather disconcerted to find his wife alive, revived his fainting spirits with a long draught of whiskey. He thought of the villain and a tear fell from his eyes. He remembered the blonde at the gate-post and shed another. Slowly and sorrowfully he looked at the enlargement of his favourite actress, then with a last long sigh he cast that too aside.

Lady Percival was alive. Life held nothing for him hereafter. Only the old oaths, the screams, the crashes, the cataract of falling saucers, the jangle of broken saucepans, dressmakers' bills, forbidden parties, rolling pin, and above all the tumult and chaos, his wife's strong arm descending.....

Wearily, listlessly, he mounted his horse and set forth upon his onward way....

He found her at last beneath a shady oak, her arms coiled lovingly round the nearest policeman. Her face was calm and set, her eyelids laden with mascara, her teeth displayed to the universe in general. A bottle of perfume lay at her feet, a cigarette between her fingers. Immediately below, parked on the kerb and guarded by an admiring youth, was the fatal Sedan. And on the red ringlets streaming down her face was a strange and exotic structure, a shapeless, formless, appalling structure which conformed to no principle and pandered to no design. It was a hat, modernised, misconceived and mutilated, but none the less a hat. It reared itself in gaudy defiance, its lone goose feather standing triumphant in a vast waste of seal-skin and morocco leather. And in its ragged, decadent, monstrosity was crystallised the fruits of centuries of

labour, the toil of generations, the courage, the glory, the bloodshed, the anguish, the glamour of fortunes wrested beneath the sun, the age-old saga of deathless ambition, peril, anger, defiance, the eternal spirit of eternal man—in short the ancestral inheritance.

Sir Percival sat down on the grass and bitterly cursed the extravagance of woman.



THE END



A dear niece wants to know if I ever saw a ghost. We journalists, my dears, knock our heads against all sorts of queer things, such as Cabinet Ministers, corpses, co-respondents, ghosts, poets and what not. Once when I was on the *London Lyre*, ghosts came into fashion. In salons, clubs, aristocratic drawing-rooms, public conveniences, Fleet Street, everywhere the talk was about ghosts. Naturally the newspapers lived up to the prevailing mode. The Editor commissioned me one day to go about the country and collect stories about ghosts and wire him the 'copy' immediately a ghost story came my way. He placed at my disposal a battered old two-seater which was the ghost of its former self. The Ed. had a fine sense of values.

I knocked all over England and Scotland interviewing the 'oldest inhabitants' with an offering of free beer. At last I came to Wales where ghosts grow on every tree. It was a lovely spring afternoon. I was driving along a fine stretch of road. Purple hills to my left and also in the distance ahead. A virgin wood in all its primal charm to my right. A beautiful old castle came into view to my left. I stopped my car with the hand-brake. A gardener in quaint old corduroys was standing at the gate. He had a silly face.

"Hoi, my good fellow, who is the master of this castle?" I asked him.

"Sir Loveden Llewellyn, mum," grunted the man. I went up to the castle and handed my card to an old lackey who was basking in the evening sun. I was shown into a spacious room furnished in early Elizabethan style. In a few minutes the silly gardener came into the room.

"What can I do for you?" asked the fellow.

"I want to see Sir Loveden," I said.

"I am Sir Loveden," said the old man, and as I started a string of apologies he held up his hand. "Pray, not another word. It was a good joke, ha! ha!"

"You see, Sir Loveden," I said, "I am on the *London Lyre*. I am touring the country collecting ghost stories. I wonder if you could help me with....."

"Help you!" quoth Sir Loveden. "I should say I could. Stories! I shall confront you with a fact. You shall see ghosts. Will you please accept my poor hospitality and stay the night?"

I was delighted and told him as much. It was funny but there were only three people in that vast old pile—his lordship, the old retainer and an old woman.

After a simple old-world supper, I sang a comic song at his lordship's request. We retired early. I was shown into a bed-room with rich appointments. His lordship told me that the bed-room was the scene of a ghastly murder in the reign of Henry VIII. "Don't be afraid," said Sir Loveden. "The ghosts here are harmless."

I slept soundly in the luxurious warmth of the eider-down bed. I woke up early in the morning.

I was lying in a ditch with a singing pain in my head. My poor little bus sprawled by my side with its wheels in the air. I stared about me.

A car came along. The man at the wheel saw me and pulled up. He helped me to my feet.

"Where is Sir Loveden?" I asked the man.

"Sir Who?"

"Why, Sir Loveden Llewellyn, my host in yonder castle."

"Oh, you mean him," said the man looking queerly at me. "That old chap was murdered along with his two servants, let me see, over three hundred and fifty years ago."

The Editor handed me, my dears, a cheque for £ 100.—for that yarn.

College Boy (Mambalam): "What do the letters O. H. M. S. mean?"

Nine times out of ten, they mean trouble, my dear.

Misogynist (Tuticorin): "What do those fellows mean when they say—she is a shining example?"

Well, dear boy, she most probably has a shining nose.

Sad Susila (Srisailam): "I asked my husband (the brute!) to buy me a car. And do you know what he did? He brought me a diamond ring!"

I don't blame him, dear Susila. There are no imitation cars.

Ambitious (Nellore): "I want to make a hit on the stage. Please give me a few tips, Auntie."

One tip is enough, dear boy. Clamber up to the stage when the hero is making love to the heroine and hit him on the nose.

Seetha (Nandyal): "My teacher called me a stupid goose. Shall I tell mother?"

Don't let that worry you, little girl. All geese are stupid.

Master Awful (Fort William): "Give me a smart definition of 'fortification'."

A fortification, my dear, is exactly two twentifications.

Old-timer (Mysore): "I am sure, madam, the radio will never take the place of the newspaper."

That's right. We can't wrap up fish and vegetables in a radio-set.

Varada Lakshmi (Bezawada): "I love to mess about my garden with clippers and things. But I am afraid my hands would become rough. What shall I do?"

Marry a chap who is keen on gardening, or better still marry a gardener. He would cost you about ten rupees a month.

Distressed (Madras): "What do you suggest as a preliminary step towards relief of the unemployed in India?"

Counting the unemployed.

Carnatic Music (Salem): "These Americans do use strange expressions! What do they mean by 'hot music'?"

Only a singing kettle.

Distressed Husband (Byculla): "Hell! I am nearly broke! How to stop my wife's bills fluttering about my head?"

How about using a paper-weight, poor man?

Industrious (Waltair): "I don't hold with all this sloth. Has anything been

achieved by sitting still?"

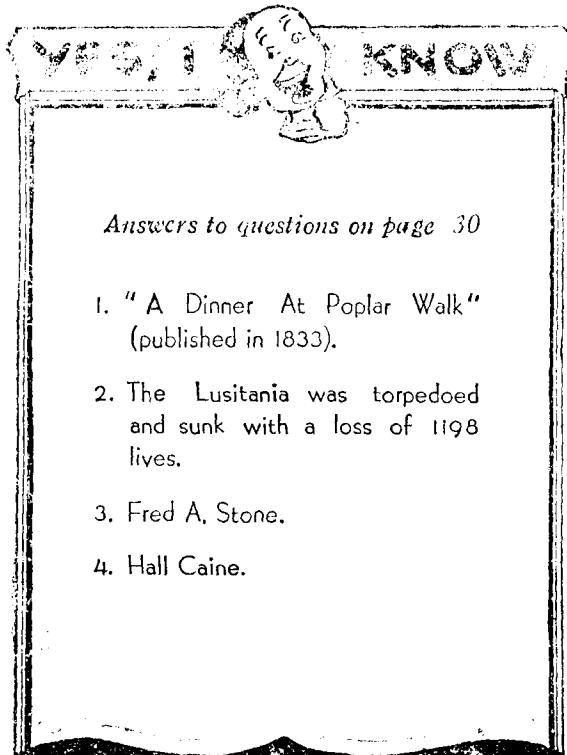
Nothing. Except chickens.

Brella Merchant (China Bazaar): "Is it a fact that bear's fur is waterproof?"

Of course, dear sir. Have you ever seen a bear carrying an umbrella?

Reminiscent (Visweswarapuram): "Time was, Madam, when wives darned their husbands' socks; what a sad change I see around me today!"

It is very sad indeed. These days the wives sock their darned husbands.



Merry's Filmfolio

ANARKALI (Hindi)

An 'Imperial' Picture

Showing At: The Select Talkies, Madras

Reviewed By K. A. P.

The 'silent' *Anarkali* was a lovely creation: a beautiful baby not yet endowed with speech. That was eight years ago. Now, as a talking picture, it emerges a masterpiece.

A leaf torn from the pages of History, this dramatic story brings to life again the romantic episode in the life of Prince Salim, the most colourful and romantic of the Moghuls, which had a tragic sequel. This paints a vivid picture of two young hearts throbbing with tender love, not as animal passion, but as an event of virtue, torn asunder by the disparity of birth, ending chaotically.

'The third day comes a frost, a killing frost.'

Nadira, the flower that has blossomed in the life of a caravan chief, is the heroine of this thrilling story, later immortalised by Akbar the Great as *Anarkali*. There is no sham about this grim, relentless tale of love and life. Nadira's caravan is raided by a gang of marauders. Then starts the chain of tragedy that stalks the heels of Nadira. Her father is killed in the affray—She wanders aimlessly with her mother who too joins her departed husband—Nadira herself is molested by highwaymen but Salim, passing by, comes to her rescue and puts her under the care of a Dargah-keeper. This is the time when Prince Salim is undergoing the pangs of unrequited love towards Meher-ul-Nissar who had married Sher Afghan. He is trying to forget his woes and is seeking solace in solitude. Then, to his tired heart, comes the soothing and healing love of this simple flower-girl, who adores him, worships him and idolizes him in her heart. The seed of love is sown in his heart too, to be but an unpromising affair, as he is already married to a Rajput princess, Ambur Kumari.

Akbar, when improvising, sees Nadira, under a pomegranate tree, which gives him the needed inspiration. He names her *Anarkali* and makes her Ambur Kumari's maid.

Salim neglects his duties. Akbar scents the source of his distraction. He warns *Anarkali* and commands

Salim to proceed to Lahore on military work. Each swears before the Emperor not to see the other.

A little later, *Anarkali* is told that Salim is wounded. She becomes desperate and, trying to reach Salim, is arrested on her way and jailed. Realising the hopelessness of her love, she takes a potion which she thinks is poison but which is really a narcotic and becomes unconscious. She is mistaken to be dead and is buried. Salim comes to her side, too late. A tomb is built to immortalise her name.

There is a strong sense of reality about this tale's swift, exciting movement. The story has been made to relate as closely as possible to the actual historic events of the period which it recalls. This is also an effort made earnestly to keep the historical and descriptive details of the story as true as possible to facts without spoiling the exciting love-story in it.

To provide the correct background for this story, the producers have spared no expense. Due to good casting, intelligent directing and clever retouching, this old vehicle moves on with astonishing smoothness and interest. I went to the show expecting to be pretty bored with the familiar plot, but remained until I saw 'The End'. It is one of the really great pictures of the year. The part of *Anarkali* is admirably played by the 'It' girl Sulo-chana and that of Prince Salim by D. Billimoria who is quickly becoming recognised as one of our most accomplished actors. Akbar, in his regal decorum and dignity, is wonderfully depicted and is worth seeing. I don't think that the much publicised foreign stars have done similar roles better—.

The elephant fight scene, the gypsy love songs and dances, the caravan camps—all these thrilled me with the attention paid to their detail. The story interest, above all, is never lost in the 2½ hours the picture runs. Added to these are the superb acting, excellent singing, gorgeous settings and the expert photography, all of which go to make up this harmonious picture-poem.

Usha - Kalyanam (Tamil)

Producers : Murugan Talkie Film Co., Madura
Showing At : West End Talkies, Madras

S. D. Subbulakshmi

Curiosity very nearly did to me what it did to that cat. I had already seen Usha in Hindi, but I couldn't help going to see the Tamil, (or the South-Indian-set) edition of it for the part of the heroine is played by the first choice of filmfans, S. D. Subbulakshmi to wit. She has a dual role in it. I am not saying that Subbulakshmi is playing a 'Jekyll and Hyde' part or that she is playing also a masculine role. Far from it. She plays the heroine's part and that with commendable efficiency, justifying her selection for the place No. 1. She has remarkable talent for acting and her features, are thoroughly suited to the screen. She has the film-face. Her voice

seems as though made for the talking film and her movements...well, well, I am digressing. She is playing a lone hand wherever Usha and her lover Anirudha appear and have to act together. To do justice to her part in itself is no mean task; but to imagine the emotions of her leading man, who does not seem to take any intelligent interest in the proceedings at all, and then react to the situation, repeat the process and go on like that till the end of the story is a Herculean affair. And, in fairness to her, I must admit that she comes off in flying colours. Had the sound-recording been perfect, I should not be experiencing this sympathy towards this picture. All the players do everything they are instructed to do to their best, but unfortunately the motions they go through do not make for a good picture. I am obliged to be comparing this with the Hindi *Usha* and finding this wanting.

To begin with, this story, (which is here treated to a definitely South Indian flavour) is one of those



S. D. Subbulakshmi

things which make good reading but tough screen material. The added disadvantage is that the story interest is sacrificed in favour of farce. That is why we find the persecution of Vaishnavites by Banasura being interpreted by a *Vaishnavite-purohit* 'dodging the new foreman' with a big *Namam* in his chest underneath a shawl (to satisfy his Vaishnavite conscience) and *Vibhoothi* on his forehead to satisfy Banasura. Banasura is a clever person and not such a gullible nitwit.

To relieve the drab goings on, the *purohita* make efforts to inject a bit of fun and nonsense. But their efforts are so amateurish they appear to be in such a good humour as to be ready to laugh at anything or to be in such a hurry that they don't care a hoot.

Nobody is drawn particularly badly but the general effect might have given the impression of some standard if the performers had been given a good chance.

At the beginning of the picture, Banasura is praying at the foot of a gigantic waterfall. Glaciers are shown behind Banasura's place. The picture continues long after the marriage, which I think is the last—the very limit.

Narada is a diminutive person here with a fine sense of humour.

Banasura is excellent and indifferent by turns.

In spite of all these, the heroine's part is the most important and you see Subbulakshmi doing her best and that is what matters.

All I can say is these three—Narada, Usha and Banasura—actors ought to be put together in another picture where there will be an expert make-up man and a fair chance for them.

—K. A. P.



Amrutanjan

FOR ALL ACHES & PAINS

Around The Studios

Shalini Cinetone :

Asheer-i-Havis

In the editing room : will be ready for release shortly.

Indian Shylock.

Usury in rural India. A powerful theme handled cleverly by Vishnupant Oundhakar. Baburao Painter is in charge of the megaphone. Shooting has begun. This is in Marathi.

Pratibha.

Sets and rehearsals are going on. Pandit Anand-kumar is doing the dialogues in Hindi.

Marathi Picture at Wadia's and Navbharat :

Wadia Brothers' are making arrangements for a Marathi picture which ought to be news to readers.

The picture will feature Bapu Pendharkar and is to be called *Choka Mela*. The production will begin immediately after *Frontier Mail*.

Navbharat also has decided to make Marathi pictures. Bal Gandharva will be the star and the first film to be made will be based on his famous Marathi play *Ekach Pyala*. There will be two versions, one Marathi and the other Hindi. Gohar Karnataki will be the leading lady.

Ranjit :

They have now begun exhibiting their full colour copy of the *Sweet Heart*, while Mr. Chandulal, having settled the story for a new picture, is going ahead with the cast.

Imperial :

The technicolor camera that has been ordered for is now coming. Preparations for the first technicolor are afoot.

Prakash :

Inspired by the success of *Snehata* Mr. Balwant Bhatt has begun his next picture *Topka Kola* featuring a new star. *Revenge* is complete and is waiting for the censor.

(Continued on next page)

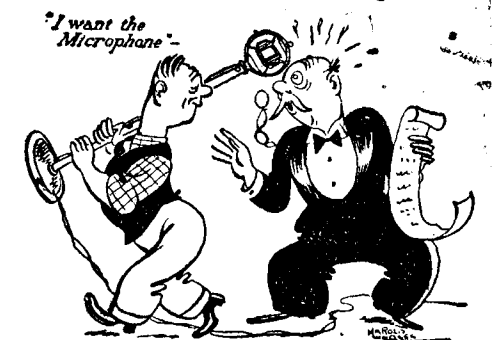
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Wellington

Laddie

Producers: R. K. O. Radio

Featuring John Beal, Gloria Stuart, Virginia Wiedler, and Charlotte Henry.

Around The Studios—(Continued from previous page)

Prabhat:

After completing some of the shots of the next social of Master Shantaram, the group has gone back to Poona and the indoors are being hurried up as the picture is urgently wanted. The choice of Mr. V. Pagnis, late of Marathi stage, has been confirmed for *Tukaram*, the next Marathi picture to be directed by Fatehlal and Damle.

Sagar:

Gay Birds in two languages, has been completed by Mr. Luhar and is now in the editing room. It is fixed that the Gujarati version will be secured first. Mr. Badami is handling two pictures *Jeevanlata* and the *Village Girl*. In the first named one Sabita Devi appears as a dancer along with Moti.

Sangeet:

Juddan Bai has completed her picture. It is a fashion picture. She has made her name in her first *Search for Truth* and the music in the picture will pull well.

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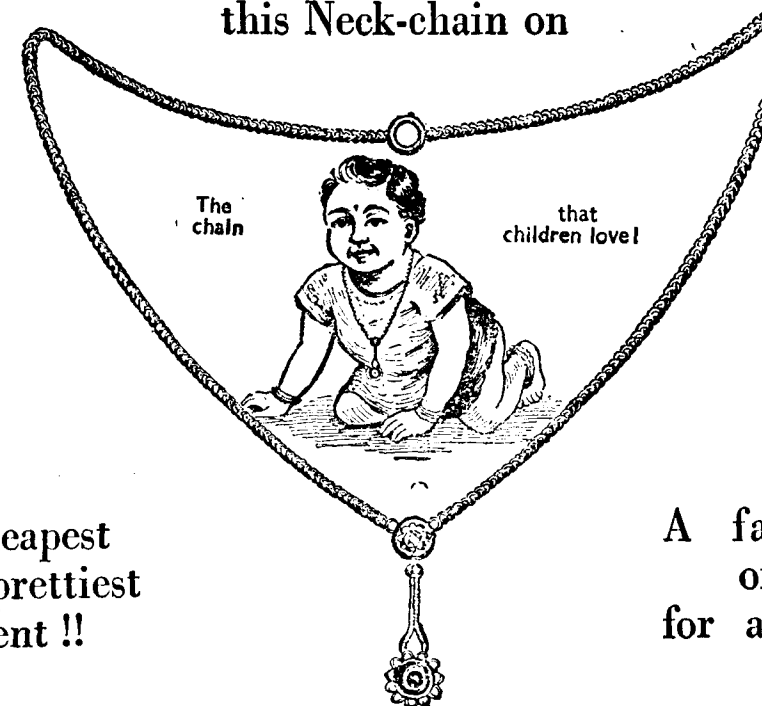
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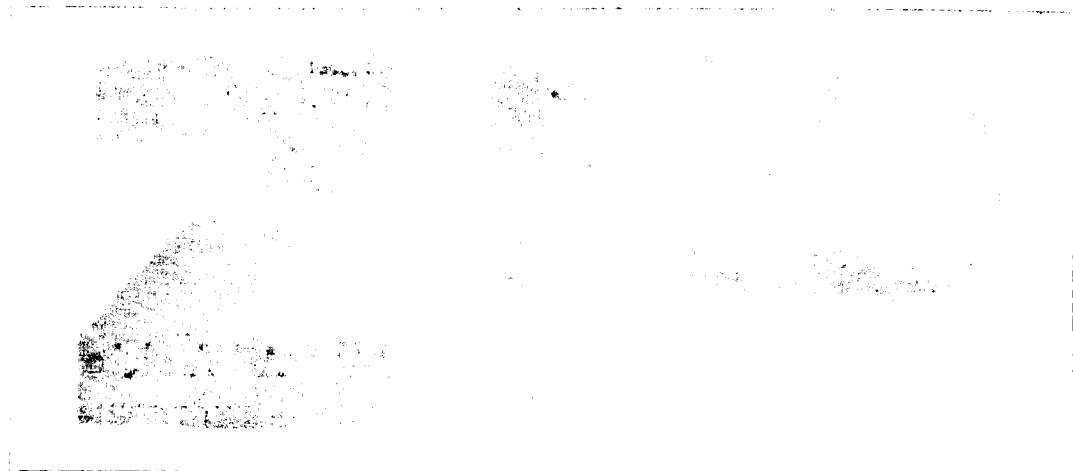
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