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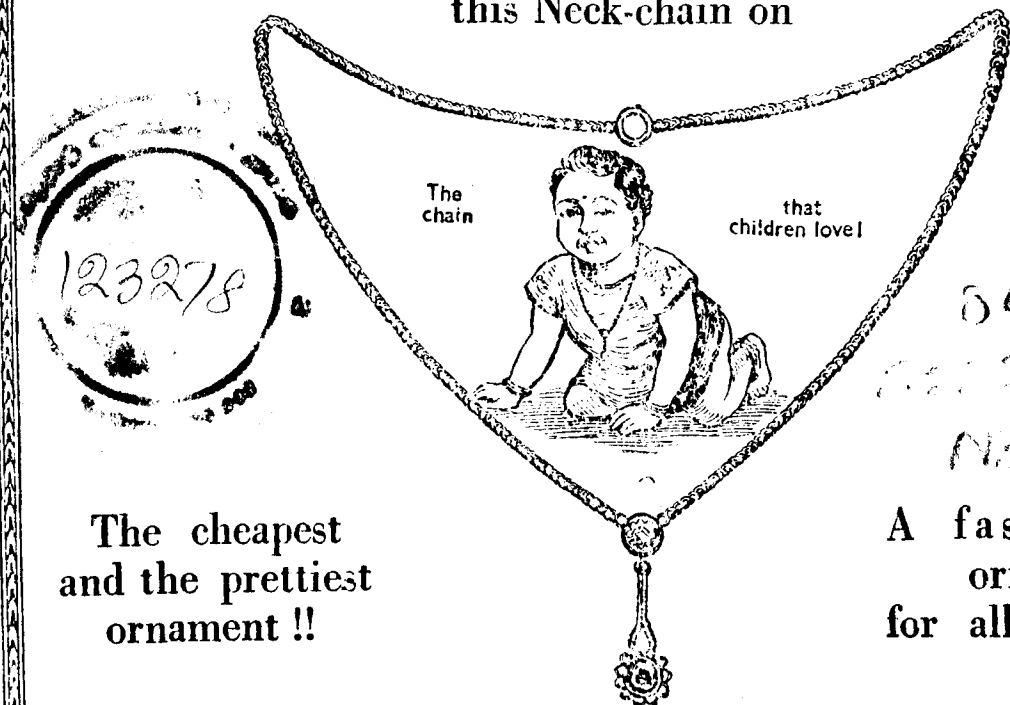
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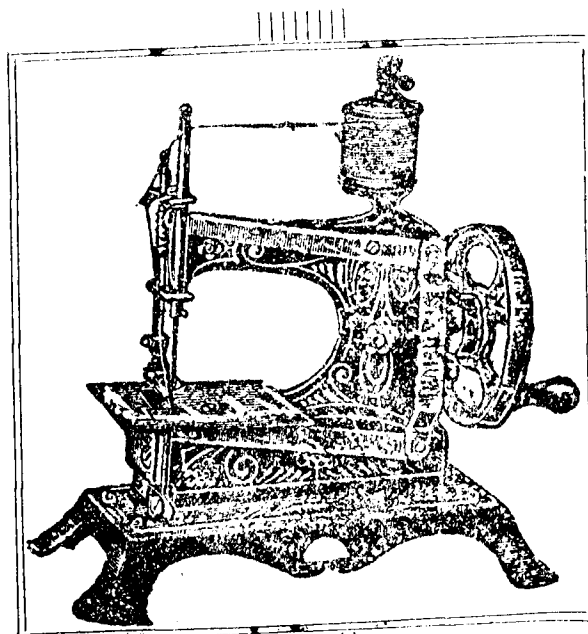
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Madras, May 23, '36

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Artiji

★

Diana Don

★

Embusque

★

Taurus

★

A. A. Roland

★

Louisa Dyer

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Speaking at the opening of the world exhibition of the Catholic press, the Pope is reported to have said that God had blessed it by causing it to coincide with the triumphal joy of a great and good people.

We understand however that, in Divine Circles, this statement has been received with considerable reserve!

* * *

M. Leon Blum, the prospective Socialist Premier of France declares that his aim would be to restore confidence in Europe, and give back cohesion to the League.

It would be more to the purpose if the League was given cohesion to its back!

* * *

Addressing a meeting of women Conservatives, Mr. Baldwin began with the characteristic remark: "I am no dictator: I have to rely on reason."

This has caused much speculation as to whether he meant to spite Mussolini, or—his audience!

* * *

A Rome decree announces the appointment of Marshal Badoglio as the Viceroy of Ethiopia.

It only remains to institute an Italian Civil Service to complete Italy's civilising mission.

* * *

The *London Times* has not yet commented editorially on Italy's annexation of Ethiopia.

This has naturally left a ray of hope to the Negus!

On the other hand, the *Daily Mail* says: "There is every reason why we should recognise the annexation in an ungrudging spirit."

That would be flattering the honest imitator!

* * *

It is pointed out by Italian papers that the Duce will not pay a visit to Ethiopia, as he has made a rule never to visit foreign countries.

This confirms our own view that he will never go to heaven!

* * *

As a result of the continuance of the Sanctions, Italy is said to be seriously thinking of leaving the League.

If they are maintained long enough, she might even have to leave Ethiopia!

* * *

A news-item says that members of the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild have left London for a ten-days tour of Germany.

Obviously to improve their technique by a study of Hitler's followers!

* * *

In the course of a talk to pressmen on his recent visit to the Andamans, the Home Member is reported to have said that the island was the 'Convicts' Paradise'.

But the life led by the convicts is a series of parodies!

He further said: "The cellular jail is like some of the palaces on Malabar Hill near Bombay."

There is no foundation for the report that, in consequence, Sir Cowasji Jehangir is thinking of having a summer residence in the Andamans!

* * *

Referring to the defeat of our cricketers at the hands of Somerset, the Indian skipper is said to have confessed: "I have no excuses to offer."

This was gallant, but not strictly true; for we can readily think of at least eleven!

* * *

The *Berliner Tageblatt* says that as a result of the Italian victory, Africa has moved much nearer to Europe.

Another result is the shortening of the distance between Germany and her colonies!

* * *

It is strongly rumoured that Sir T. B. Sapru is to be raised to the peerage.

It would be the most conclusive proof of his oft-expressed intention to retire from public life.

* * *

Sir Mohammed Usman's nomination to the syndicate of the Madras University is notified.

A distinct promotion to Sir Mohammed; for he had formerly acted only as Chancellor of the University!



The Vellore Mutiny

IN the early days of the British power in India, there was a mutiny of 'native' troops at Vellore, which gave some anxious moments to the adventurous traders who were bludgeoning their way to an Empire. We remember to have read a brief but colourful account of it in our nonage. We have been reminded of it by recent events in that historic city.

The Congress campaign in favour of capturing local bodies as a prelude to the final phase in the national struggle has encountered two classes of opponents. One is composed of the natural enemies of the Congress, the reactionaries who have profited by the existing state of things. The other is made up of the unattached or detached intellectuals who have generally sailed under liberal colours. The latter would be themselves Congressmen, if only it cared less for discipline than for distinction. The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri is a shining example of the type we mean. When the movement was first launched, his was the most reasoned voice against the new policy. He foresaw one of two things. Either civic life would flow into party channels, thus adding to the acerbities of public life and paralysing the smooth working of day-to-day administration, or the Congress would cease to be the embodiment of the highest aspirations of the nation, as a result of its eagerness to wield power. But, the Congress view is that propaganda among the masses must sooner or later be strengthened by actual results; that the capture of the bigger legislatures would be impossible, if the local boards were ignored, and that it is ultimately in the nation's interest that Congress should occupy all places of vantage. Much might be said on both sides, though we don't propose to say it. Events like those which happened at Vellore might justify the opposition view that the Congress strategy is at fault. But there are contributory causes which must be recognised frankly and squarely. From the very beginning, it was evident that the pure wine of the Congress creed was to be diluted with the insipid water of opportunist nationalism. It may savour of

arm-chair politics to confess our own predilection for an indefinite sojourn in the wilderness to a compromise with half-hearted, but locally influential, people with a view to get a majority. After all is said and done, the democratic rule is a silly if simple rule. Counting of heads is no better than breaking of heads, as a test of truth! The Congress in a minority may be politically ineffective, but it would be morally unassailable.

We doubt however if such abstract, and seemingly sterile conclusions appeal themselves to the generality of the members of any party. In spite of the best principles, personalities do creep in somehow or other. The man for whose sake the Congress cause was betrayed at Vellore is not the common type of the political *parvenu* with whom the Reforms era has made us familiar. He is, in fact, like Nicodemus, and follows the Congress,—privately! He went out of his way, some time ago, to administer a gratuitous kick to the Justice Party, by issuing an unprovoked disclaimer of any association with, or sympathy for it. It would have been graceful, if his faith had not been so severely tested as it was sought to be, and he had been allowed to be the president, by a magnanimous majority. But apparently, such a course was out of the question for reasons of policy. There seem to have been also other divisions within the Congress fold itself.

However the mutineers have made handsome reparation by resigning their seats. Their action fulfils the public expectation of a higher standard of rectitude among Congressmen than among others. It is therefore bound to enhance Congress prestige rather than tarnish it. To that extent, the revolt may be considered a blessing in disguise. It is to be fervently hoped that Congress politics will be chastened by this episode; and the limits of compromise more rigorously laid down and scrupulously kept. It should be remembered that there are many who are prepared to use the Congress as a means to their personal ends. If they succeed, it will be at the cost of its unique claim to the nation's undivided allegiance.

The March Of Events

The Man On The Move

Good old Ranga Iyer! In a painstaking article, illumined by bright flashes of logic, contributed specially to the *Justice*, Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer says:

"Comrade Nehru is candid. He wants to strike a fatal blow at England in the next war and hand over our Swaraj to the keeping of the Afghans in the North and the Japs in the South."

Mr. Ranga Iyer seems to be slightly confused in the head. His sense of direction is wrong. The Afghans, if we are to believe the Geography text books, are somewhere in the North-West; and the Japs are in the North-East, or thereabouts. But if Rangaji means by that statement, Northern India to the Afghans and Southern India to the Japs, I tender to him my abject apologies. Like Rangaji I resent this parcelling up of my country, after the British have left. The country must be wholly in the hands of either the Afghans or the Japs.

Jawaharlal owes us an explanation. I am sure we are all duly grateful to Rangaji for showing up the fallacy of the proposed bifurcation of India.

★

Here is a hint from a Cookery Book.

Stockings (To make wear and keep their colour.)

Before wearing black woollen ones stand for ten minutes in boiling water coloured with washing blue.

Thank God, we fellows are not a nation of stocking-wearers. Also thank god that we needn't colour ourselves with washing blue. We are blue anyhow, over the Hindu-Muslim question.

★

Is it a matter of sex only that gives man the zest for kicking the high spots of adventure? Could

women, given man's freedom of finance, convention, clothing, etc., demonstrate the prowess of famous men—explorers, scientists and such birds? Let me tell you at the outset that it is not I who is hankering for an answer. The author of that enquiry is Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins. And she is not asking you either. She is asking herself. But there is no harm in our exploring the question.

Let us brush aside finance, as filthy lucre. Let us also brush aside sex, which has no meaning except as the idea behind babies. Convention? Pah! Women are more unconventional than men. If you don't believe me, sneak up behind a gang of women and, unseen, hear what they say to one another.

Thus the question of dress remains. Without a doubt it is the *sari*, the gown and other silly thingummies that women affect that are keeping them from biting men in the field of high adventuring. I need but give one citation. Look at Miss Leila Row, our lovely tennis star. What do you see? If you say you don't notice anything special, you are an ass. It is the absence of sartorial convention in her that made her the idol of all of us. So, girls, start wearing shorts and gladneck shirts. You will be surprised at the possibilities lying dormant in you.

★

At Rome, speaking at the opening of the world exhibition of the Catholic Press, His Holiness said: "God had visibly blessed the Exhibition by causing it to coincide with the triumphal joy of a great and good people..." His Holiness was, of course, referring to the success of Italy in Ethiopia. It was a timely certificate which the Primate gave to the Duce and his Fascists. We were fast gliding into the conviction that the

Big Italian is a Big Humbug and a Bald Bully. Now that no less a person than the earthly representative of St. Peter has corrected our misapprehension, we gladly own our mistake and promise to be good boys.

And of course God is always on the side of great and good people. Otherwise he would not be much better than my paternal aunt. God is very fond of mustard gas and aerial bombing, too, and whenever He sees a black chap divided into a million pieces He is very pleased indeed, and advertises his approbation by crying, "Wal-Wal!"

By the way, God is also fond of Popes. Me too.

★

In a letter to the *Times* H. G. Wells urges the empanelling of a world consortium—a permanent federal board with powers to direct production and distribute natural and manufactured products in the interest of mankind. This, he says, is the only substitute for the prevailing combative economic controls which only sweep us into war.

Well, I am all for Wells' idea about that consortium. (That last word sounds suspiciously like 'wife'.) We have got to kick monopolism in the pants. Take for instance the ghee-merchants in Madras. Don't take the ghee merchants. Ghee is a smelly commodity. Take, rather, the Nellore Rice merchants. Today they sell Nellore Rice at 5½ measures a rupee. Tomorrow they will knock off the ½; and the day after, the exchange will be something else. If different merchants gave different quantities for a rupee I shouldn't worry, perhaps. But they don't do it. The mean fellows!

And that is what is meant by monopoly. Yes, indeed, we do need a jolly stiff consortium.

Catherine Cozened!

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

by V. Vyasa Rao

AMONG the great lovers of history, Catherine the Great, the Empress of Russia, carried an extremely susceptible heart right up to the end of her life. Her love affairs were legion. While on the one hand her notorious amours scandalised the chancellories of Europe, on the other, they delighted the humbler folk at home and abroad. And she never suffered for want of a lover.

Of her innumerable lovers, Gregory Potemkin was the luckiest dog, holding the Empress's quicksilver love for a long stretch of years in spite of her distressingly plural love affairs all around him. It is something to speculate, why, when other lovers of the Empress were cuddled one day and kicked the other, she cast her anchor in Potemkin, riding the waters over his head. Historians tell us that there was something more than mutual sex attraction between Catherine and Potemkin, a devotion which they are pleased to call unique in history. When historians cast about for reasons to explain unexplainable phenomena, they bluster through, humbugging us, and perhaps themselves too, with swanky phrases. The man Potemkin was a brute in drinking and eating, a debauchee par excellence, if the expression be tolerated.

The amour began, as most of Catherine's amours began, with the physical build of Potemkin. The Empress was fond of tall upstanding men. Potemkin was one of the tallest of the guardsmen at the Imperial Palace; he had a magnificent military bearing. Potemkin was promoted from rank to rank. Presently he became Minister for War. From then on, for more than fifteen years, Potemkin was the director of his imperial mistress's love affairs. In selecting new lovers, the Empress consulted her chief lover, and

treated his views with great respect! He was a great lover of course, but Catherine hated to give the monopoly of her body to one person. At one word from her, Potemkin would place at her feet anything from flowers to forts.

In 1783 Russia annexed Crimea. Potemkin was translated to the Governorship of the annexed province. The country was an arid waste, and Potemkin's job was to whip the country up to some semblance of civilisation.

So at the height of their love, Potemkin left his mistress for the south. It is said that before going, he appointed a successor to the intimate favours which he enjoyed at the hands of Catherine!

Potemkin rolled up his sleeves and fell to his work with a zeal which his early indolent life belied. He planned a number of projects—a naval harbour at Sebastapol, a fleet of war vessels and merchantmen, establishing silk factories, planting vineyards and forests, laying roads—in short every amenity that goes to make a civilised state.

Every little while he proceeded to the Capital and told Catherine extraordinarily tall tales of his doings down South. If Potemkin was a great lover, he was also a great liar. He told his Empress fairy tales of prosperous villages, of fields of golden corn, of smiling peasants, beautiful towns, marvellous roads, all which, he told her, he achieved in the space of four years. He achieved nothing of the sort.

The Empress was in raptures. She decided to see for herself the miracles which her lover had wrought.

Potemkin lied, but he had wit enough to sustain the lie to the last. Almost overnight, he converted the

route through which the Empress was to pass, into a fairy-land of smiling fields, gorgeous gardens, beautiful towns, neat villages, splendid roads, all this peopled by a well-dressed, happy, contented peasantry. He achieved all this colossal stage managing and succeeded in cozening one of the keenest-witted women of the times.

At last the Empress started on her journey southward to see Potemkin's handiwork. The cortege passed through villages and towns which showed no signs of squalor and poverty. Potemkin ordered the villagers to paint their houses; they painted the facades. Tumbling roofs were repaired, not with tiles but with cardboard replicas painted brick-red. At each village, smiling damsels clad in bright festive costumes (all supplied by Potemkin) lined the road curtsying to their Empress. Everywhere she saw happiness and contentment. She was herself happy in the thought that all this was inspired by Potemkin's devotion to her.

The biggest joke was yet to come. The journey on the river Dnieper was a dream picnic to the Empress. From her galley, lying indolently under a shamiana of silk and brocade, Catherine watched the banks of the river with happiness too deep for words. Decorated towns and triumphal arches came to view and flitted past as her boat progressed. Cattle grazed on verdant pastures, imitation forests made of tinsel and cardboard and transplanted trees stood dim and grand in

the far distance, provincial soldiery magnificently uniformed manoeuvred on the greens, and at eventide in the mellow southern light peasant girls sang and danced.

The towns and villages were of course card-board and bright paint, just one row propped up with nothing behind them and inside them. The happy dancers were starved miserable serfs, bullied into their parts. The cattle was brought from long distances. As soon as the Royal cortege passed all this tinsel show, the villages and towns were dismantled and hurried up in fast moving carts to the next stage to be set up again for the Empress's delectation.

On the way, Potemkin even supplied a ready-made volcano which spat out flames all through the night to the great delight of the Empress.

The journey cost Russia 7,000,000 rubles, and, ultimately, Potemkin cost Catherine 50,000,000 rubles.

This monstrous hoax upon a woman, however much a butterfly she might be, does not, as history-writers say, evidence any smell of "spiritual impulses" on Potemkin's side. He was set a hard task by his mistress. He was incapable of putting it through. He lied, that Catherine may not kick him aside, and he proved the lie by a string of other marvellous lies. It must be admitted though, that this is an achievement which no knave in history was ever able to duplicate.

Retribution followed, but that is another story.

THE END



Owner-Driver: Why didn't you tell me we'd been dragging those old tins for the last ten miles?
Friend (who has accepted a lift): I didn't like to. I thought they were part of the car.

"Elegant" Einstein

[Discussion of rightness or wrongness of Einstein's theory calls to mind a story of Einstein's own comment on the subject.]

—Morning Paper.

Einstein was entertained to tea,
(Of Relativity fame)
At Oxford; but who will believe that he
Was good, too, at humour's game?

A learned don's wife, at table asked him:
"Sir, is your theory right?"
Einstein, apparently seized with a whim,
Said, to the party's delight:—

"That, dear madam, I cannot say,
It'll take a long time to decide;
But, strictly in confidence, this I may
Admit, I've no wish to hide.

"Some enterprising man, some day,
May confirm or refute, my "law";
It all depends, on the "Nation's way";
To peer through, and find, the flaw.

"Proved right, I am sure, the Germans may
Own me, at once, with pride;
Proved wrong, why then, the Frenchman gay
"Einstein's a Jew!" will decide!

—G. K. Pillai

Fun For All



Two friends on holiday secured accommodation in a farmhouse. During the first night they were roused by the sound of something flapping about the room.

Striking a match, they discovered a large bat. After a chase, they caught the scared thing, and being unable to open the window, shut it away in the drawer of the dressing-table.

After an interval, there was another bat and another chase. This one too went in the drawer. The same thing happened again, until they had caught and imprisoned ten bats. Then they got a little peace.

In the morning they invited the landlady up to view their "bag". Opening the drawer, they found therein one poor, weary bat; and the landlady laughed.

"I suppose you never thought there was no back to that old drawer?" she remarked.

A Branch railway in a secluded country town was a novel sight to most of the inhabitants.

One morning a man entered the ticket-office and asked how much would be a ticket to a town ten miles distant. On hearing the amount, he told the clerk it was too high, and asked him if he "could lower the price a bit." On being told that it could not be done, he said he would walk.

Leaving the station, he started along the line at a brisk pace. He had gone about a mile when he heard a whistle and, looking back, saw the train coming after him.

Getting in the middle of the track, and waving his arms, he shouted at the approaching train: "You can go back again, for I won't ride by you now. I'll walk!"

Guard (on sleepy country line): Hi, there! Keep your head in. If you damage any of the iron-work on the bridges you'll have to pay for it.

An Irishman getting upon a tramcar found a place vacant, which he occupied,

"Sure," he said, "I came just in time."

"How's that?" asked a fellow companion.

"Why, if I was to come in now, I shouldn't find an empty seat!"

For about an hour, a man from Denver had been boasting to an Englishman about the magnificence of the Rocky Mountains.

"You seem very proud of them," observed the Englishman.

"Sure I am," replied the man from Denver, "And I ought to be, since my ancestors built them."

The other thought this over for a few moments. Then he asked: "Did you ever hear of the Dead Sea?"

"Yes, indeed," replied the man from Denver. "I know all about the Dead Sea."

"Well, did you happen to know that my great-grandfather shot it?"

Wealthy Motorist: I want some petrol, boy—and be quick. You will never get on in this world unless you push. Push is essential. When I was young I pushed, and look at me now; I am worth thousands.

Boy: Well, mister, I reckon you'll have to push again, 'cos we ain't got a drop of petrol in the place.

Tourist (looking over a steep precipice): I suppose people fall down here often, don't they?

Guide: No, once is enough for most of 'em.

The Downfall

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

AMONG the benefits of British rule in India, the railway, the telegraph, the broadening of our intellectual frontiers and a few others are paraded before the youngster at school with almost distressing iteration. There is one major benefit which, strangely enough, is not at all mentioned. The club.

The Englishman is essentially a clubman. He is so deeply saturated with the idea that a humorist once said of them: "If three Englishmen were lost in the unexplored wilds of Central Africa, they won't wring their hands in despair. They will start a club. Having started a club, they will look out for a fourth member. As fourth members don't hang about conveniently in forests, they will catch a monkey and teach him Bridge. The foursome would then go on playing Bridge till deliverance was at hand, or they were dead."

However, the point of this story is not a club. It only serves as a background, so to say.

One fine day in our little town of Melur, which is more a village than a town, twenty of the more dashing bucks among the community foregathered and started a club. The advent of the club invested our town with a certain undeniable importance. There was only one amenity lacking. And that was a coffee hotel.

Look how destiny works!

In far away Kumbakonam Mr. and Mrs. Vembu Ayyar retired to sleep rather early a certain night. But sleep would not come to the worthy couple, at least to Mr. Vembu Ayyar. Nor a breath of air stirred. Mr. Vembu perspired horribly. The static night air released strange smells which assailed the sensitive nostrils of Vembu Ayyar. He snorted in disgust. Mosquitoes kept up a delightful concert. Mr. Vembu was of course fond of music, passionately so; but he had an unreasonable dislike for mosquito music.

On the other hand, Mrs. Kamakshi Vembu Ayyar, good Hindu wife that she was, bore all these multitudinous summer discomforts with a grace and humility that would have done the heart of St. Francis

good to see. She tried to alleviate the discomfort of the man by her side by fanning him with the hem of her sari, by wiping his perspiration, by all those little tricks which wives learn God knows where. To all these little wifely attentions the brute answered by grunting every few minutes in a nasty manner.

At last Mr. Vembu dropped into a fitful sleep. He dreamt a dream. In that dream God appeared to Mr. Vembu in the shape of a stout, prosperous coffee-hotel proprietor and asked him to migrate to Melur and open a coffee hotel there for the benefit of the Melurians.

(By the way, I learnt all this from Mr. Vembu himself later, when we became fast friends.)

Mr. Vembu woke up at cock-crow. He looked with disdain at his young sleeping wife, who was hugging her pillow, evidently thinking that it was her husband. He repaired to the riverside and bathed with extra care, and performed his *Sandhya* with a devotion that surprised his friends. He hastened home.

"Kamakshi!" he bawled.

"Yennanna?" bawled Mrs. Kamakshi. She followed her enquiry and stood before Mr. Vembu with a cup of coffee.

"Kamakshi, we are starting this evening for Melur," said Mr. Vembu.

"What for?" asked the young woman not unreasonably.

"What for! God, look at this woman! To open a coffee hotel. Pack up."

Thus appeared Mr. Vembu Ayyar in our little town with his lares and tenates, and tremendously enhanced the town's reputation by supplying it with a coffee hotel.

A year passed. Mr. Vembu prospered. He garnered a tidy little pile as profit, and brought forth a baby.

How it happened nobody had the least idea. The change was so subtle that when at the end of an year Mr. Vembu became a dictator, none was surprised

Of A Dictator!

by Thirupathi

in the least. He dictated to everybody who ate his *iddlies* and drank his coffee. It must be said in fairness to him that his preparations were marvelous. A customer would walk humbly into his hotel and sit on one of the benches. Mr. Vembu would look at him. He would bring two *iddlies* and a little *uppu-mav* or he would bring one *iddli* and a double quantity of *uppu-mav*. The customer may not question the why of it. He must eat what was placed before him. There were of course a few rebellious spirits; but they were an infinitesimal minority.

At the height of Mr. Vembu's Dictatorship, one day we celebrated the anniversary of the opening of our club. All the twenty members came in full strength. The catering was of course given to Mr. Vembu. He just sent the eatables to the club and asked us to serve ourselves. You can gather how great a dictator he was, by this cavalier treatment.

After the festivities were over, we adjourned in a body to the green lawn at the back of the club-house. As we settled ourselves comfortably in our chairs, a chap said, "I say, has anybody noticed what is happening in Main Street?"

Nobody noticed anything out of the ordinary.

"What is happening?" asked another member.

"They are fitting up Pantulu's house with marble tables, bentwood chairs and things like that."

"What for?"

"Somebody is opening a coffee hotel there."

"What!" said fifteen voices.

"Yes. A man from Madras is coming here. We are going to have a swell hotel, at last. Serve Vembu Ayyar right!"

"This is great news indeed. Somebody ought to break the monopoly of Vembu Ayyar. The horrid Brahmin!"

"He never gives me more than two *iddlies*, the mean fellow."

"How is that?"

"He says my digestion is not good."

Everybody laughed. There was jubilation at the imminent downfall of Vembu, the dictator.

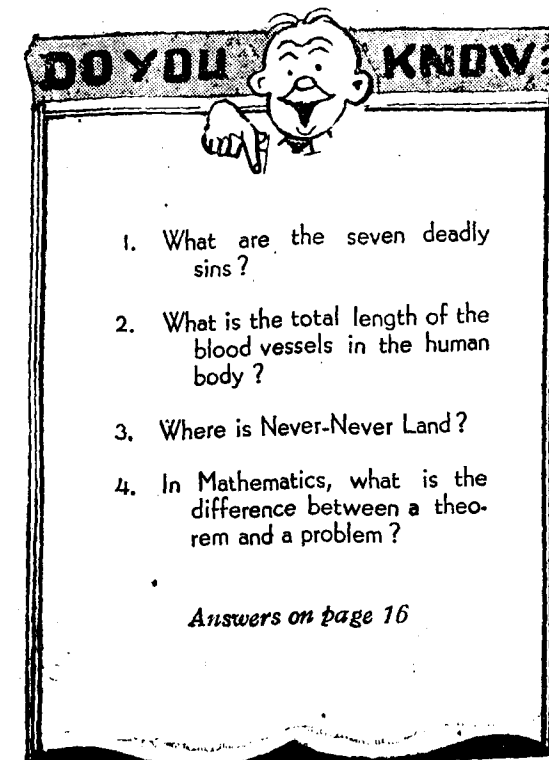
Someone said, "Friends, let us drink to Vembu's discomfiture."

Twenty glasses were filled with cool lemon crush. All stood up in mock solemnity. One member said, "Confound Vembu Ayyar." The others repeated it, excluding myself, and quaffed the drinks.

"You have not spoken anything, sir," asked the town police inspector of me. "Don't you hate that coffee hotel fellow?"

"Certainly, I do," I said. "Only, Vembu Ayyar told me this morning that he is shifting to a more commodious and central place. It is he who is having Pantulu's house fitted up."

THE END



1. What are the seven deadly sins?
2. What is the total length of the blood vessels in the human body?
3. Where is Never-Never Land?
4. In Mathematics, what is the difference between a theorem and a problem?

Answers on page 16

The Ruse—

Words & Pictures by Albert A. Roland

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

A blush suffused May Selwyn's faultless skin. It was a charming blush—and a most comprehensive one. For it did not limit itself to her face, but spread rapidly and audaciously over every inch of her lovely body.

There were doubtless other occasions on which May Selwyn had blushed so prettily and so completely. But not until now had human eyes beheld that breath-taking sight.

For on this occasion her beauty was completely unadorned.

The eyes fortunate enough to witness that blush, however, belonged to no Peeping-Tom or privileged spouse. They belonged to May Selwyn herself and were now regarding her rosy reflection in the long mirror hanging on the bathroom wall.

The mirror also reflected that which had caused her to blush. It was a letter, a short note, written in a masculine hand, and it had just been pushed into the bathroom from underneath the door.

The person responsible for its unconventional delivery had been most stealthy. May Selwyn had heard no footsteps approaching or leaving the door, and the note had been pushed into the room without a sound.

She had chanced to catch sight of it as she was doffing her last dainty garment, preparatory to getting into the bath.

But more embarrassing than the circumstances of its delivery, was the message itself. It said briefly and impudently:

"Darling—will you marry me?—Bert."

Small wonder that May Selwyn blushed. What an impertinence!

What effrontery! To propose to a girl while she was bathing—or about to bathe!

Bad enough if she *knew* who the writer was. But she wasn't even acquainted with this unknown, brazen, cavalier admirer..... But wait!

A tiny furrow puckered her still crimsoned brow.

"Bert," she murmured. "Let me see..... Bert can be short for Bertram, Herbert, Hubert, Albert, Cuthbert, Gilbert—even Robert....."

Why, Good heavens, she knew at least four men with such names! But surely, *surely* none of them would have such a *nerve*.....

Two of those men were staying at this very hotel. But they were both such nice boys. Gentlemen. Most unlikely to behave like that.

There was that nice, reserved, shy young man, Albert Todd. He, if her woman's intuition told her the truth, was in love with her niece Barbara, who was the same age as herself. He, she was prepared to swear, was only waiting until he could muster up sufficient courage to declare his love to that young lady. No, it couldn't be Albert Todd.....



.....the dinner party that night was

The other boy was Hubert Bennet. Handsome, debonair, and full of fun and good spirits. But though he was fond of fun, she was willing to stake her reputation that he would never play a practical joke like this. He was too chivalrous, too much of a gentleman. And besides, there was no reason why he should.....He wasn't in love with her.....her instinct told her that.

And besides, he was—Merciful heavens! How embarrassing! He was dining with her to-night! He was one of the guests at a little party she was giving for Barbara's birthday. However could she face the man, after this?

It was a very perturbed young woman who proceeded with her ablutions.

Only as she was emerging from her bath did a thought strike her that brought some reassurance. The other two men! Bertram Wilson and Herbert Summers. Why shouldn't her suspicions fall on them? Both were frequent visitors at the hotel. Both were the kind of men who would indulge in an exploit of that description.

Cads! She disliked them intensely! The more she thought over the affair, the more certain she felt that one of them was the culprit. And the more she regretted having harboured such unkind thoughts of Albert Todd and Hubert Bennet...

Despite her resolve to think no more of the incident, the dinner party that night was something of an ordeal to May.



something of an ordeal.....

Hubert Bennet sat on her right, and almost facing her across the table were Albert Todd and Barbara. It seemed to May that Albert looked more bashful and reserved than usual—even worried. Whilst Barbara appeared to be in the gayest of spirits.

"You're not your usual bright self to-night," observed Hubert to May. But was that a false ring in his anxious voice? Was that a significant twinkle in his grave blue eyes?

"I'm quite all right, Mr. Bennet," she said, striving to keep any suggestion of coldness from her tone. "I've had rather a headache—probably the result of eating nothing all day."

She instantly regretted the admission. If he *were* the culprit, why give him the satisfaction of knowing he had upset her?

"You've eaten *nothing*, Miss Selwyn? I'm so sorry. I do hope you're not ill?"

May laughed with forced merriment.

"Why, how ridiculous! The fact is, I'm a believer in giving the old system an occasional rest. Once a week, I starve myself all day till dinner—"

Hubert Bennet lent interested ears. The idea was a sound one, he said, provided one didn't overtax one's strength. His mood was unusually serious.

How awful if behind that grave exterior there lurked an imp of ribald insolence! How terrible if that handsome face, that tender manner, belonged to just a humbug!

"But surely," he was saying, "cutting down one's diet, even once a week, was a matter which should concern only women with poor figures? Surely, when one could boast of a divinely perfect form—"

May felt herself blushing all over again. Horrific thought! There was probably a key-hole in that bath-room door! Insufferable possibility! This man, who spoke of her perfect form, had he...?

Somehow, the dinner ended.

Then they found themselves in the dance hall. And later she and Hubert sat out a dance in a secluded part of the moon-lit verandah. A silence settled between them...

A little while later, another couple came out on to the verandah. They sat down

within earshot, out of sight behind some palms, obviously unaware of their presence. For the following low-toned conversation presently ensued:

"Barbara," came the distraught voice of Albert Todd, "a most ghastly thing has happened. This morning I put a note under the door of what I thought was your bedroom, but which I have since discovered is a bathroom. And not only that, but it's the bathroom of your Aunt May's suite."

A giggle emanated from Barbara.

"How marvellous! She hasn't told me about it! What did you write?"

May found it impossible, having heard so much, to make her presence known. Hubert made as if to rise, but she pressed him gently back into his seat, and raised a finger warningly to her lips. She hoped her smile didn't look too sickly.

"It—it was a note," Albert answered, "asking you to marry me."

They heard Barbara gasp.

"Albert! Good gracious, Albert! Do you really want to marry me? You never mentioned the matter before."

"Barbara dear, I simply couldn't pluck up the courage. I've loved you ever since we met. I decided the only way was to write, and this morning—your birthday—I put the note under the door. The wrong door," he ended miserably.

"Don't look so worried, Bert. If the note's addressed to me—"

"That's the terrible part of it. It isn't. I put no name or address on it. Your Aunt'll think it was meant for her."

Barbara giggled again.

"How lovely! And I'm sure Aunt will accept you! She's told me she likes you, already. I think you'd make a very good pair. Will you let me be the bridesmaid, Bert?"

"Don't laugh at me, Barbara! This is most serious. It's not your Aunt I'm in love with. How can I explain it to her? I thought she was looking rather queer at dinner, poor girl."

"Well, what form did your proposal take?"

"I just wrote 'Darling, will you marry me?' And signed it."

"Signed it! Very careless of you, Bert, to commit yourself like that. You'll have to go through with it now. You can't expect Aunt May not to be angry if you try to back out."

"Barbara, don't pull my leg, dear! The situation's desperate."

"Don't I know it? I'm not joking, though there's a funny side to it, too."

"There's *nothing* funny—"

"Yes, there is! Don't you see—you're going to be my *Uncle*, Bert?"

"Barbara, for heaven's sake, help me out of this mess."

"Oh, I wouldn't call it a mess. After all, Aunt May's a perfect dear. And she's got everything a young man could desire. Beauty. The sweetest disposition. Money of her own. She'll make you a wonderful wife. And you'll be my favourite Uncle. I promise you that, Bert."

"Hang it, I don't want to be your favourite uncle. I want to be your husband. Besides, I happen to know that Hubert's in love with your Aunt..."

May Selwyn felt a sudden fluttering in her breast.

"Really, Bert?" asked Barbara.

"Madly in love with her. But in spite of his apparently self-assured exterior, the poor fellow's a thousand times more backward than I am. He hasn't even the courage to *write*."

May Selwyn glanced covertly at Hubert. The moonlight shone on his reddened face. He looked the picture of confusion. But he was not entirely devoid of courage, for his hand closed nervously over hers...

And then came tragedy...

He sneezed suddenly and violently.

"Good lord!" cried Albert Todd. "We're not alone!"

Barbara gave a hysterical little scream. May groaned.

Hubert sneezed again, twice.

At one o'clock in the morning, Albert Todd and Hubert Bennet walked arm in arm to their rooms in the east wing of the hotel. They sang softly and happily as they walked.

Presently Albert Todd, who had the reputation of being the most bashful man in the hotel, stopped singing, and disengaged his arm from Hubert's. The two friends shook hands enthusiastically, not for the first time since the girls had retired.

"How can I thank you, Hubert? It all worked out so wonderfully. Not a hitch! All my life, I'll remember you in my prayers. And afterwards in my will—"

"The gratitude is mutual, old boy!" said Hubert. "Though the letter-in-the-wrong-room was my idea, it was you who thought of making it a double-affair. Did that sneeze sound realistic, Bert?"

"It was your masterpiece, Bert."

"Thanks, Bert. Good-night. And happy dreams."

"Thanks, Bert. Good-night. And the same to you."

THE END



Auntie J.J.

MY Scottish friend, Gabitha Gumboil, has strong views on India. She once wrote to me:

"What is the good of owning a nice dominion like India, if you don't go there at least once and smile at the natives and see the rope trick and the Taj Mahal and say howdedo's to Gandhi's goats and let a prince kiss your hand? Oh, darling, how I wish to be with you again, if only for a week. But you know my husband! He is so close that he is even economical with the air he breathes. Consequently he is now having asthma. Whenever I mention a trip to India he has a fit. Oh, why must I go and marry a Scot!"

To this I replied, "Gabitha, darling, don't despair. A strong-willed woman like you must not give way to what the local politicians call a 'defeatist mentality'. There is not a dark cloud but has a silver-lining. I have a hunch that I am welcoming you at Ballard Pier very soon."

Presently, Mr. Gumboil himself supplied the silver-lining. He died of his asthma helped on by a cold. One fine day Gabitha landed in Bombay. I sent her boxes to the Taj Mahal Hotel and we followed them on foot. Gabitha wished to see the sights en route. I showed her points of interest, which included a Marwadi money-lander, and brought her to the Hotel. "There is the Taj!" I said.

Gabitha looked at the beautiful facade of the building with a rapt expression. "Poor Queen!" she sighed. "She must have been a very popular woman in her day. Look! How many men are going in to pay their respects to her memory. What a lovely tomb!"

"What Queen, and what are you talking about?" I asked puzzled.

"Why, I am speaking of Nur Jehan whose remains are resting inside there."

"Nur Jehan, indeed! This is our hotel. It is called the Taj Mahal Hotel." I conducted her inside



Shakespeare The Second

by Diana Don

Reading Time • About 10 Minutes

WILLIAM Ireland was born in London in the year 1777. His father was Samuel Ireland, a citizen of dull and respectable life. Samuel Ireland was the author of illustrated books of England scenery. His outstanding characteristic—one that brought him in contact with the great—was his passionate adoration of William Shakespeare. The elder Ireland was a credulous collector of curios and antiques. He possessed many Shakespearian relics.

At the age of sixteen, young William Ireland was apprenticed to a legal conveyancer. A year later, the youth accompanied his father on a holiday. Samuel Ireland was preparing a book on *Picturesque Views of the Avon*. Father and son put up at Stratford-on-Avon. When the senior Ireland was not at work on his book, he took his son on visits to the spots hallowed by association with the immortal Bard.

During these visits, Mr. Ireland followed his usual habit of collecting relics of the great poet. One relic was a piece of Shakespeare's mulberry-tree. The younger Ireland observed that the vendor had enough pieces in stock to make a dozen trees.

Another memento was a knitted bag, claimed to be the work of Anne Hathaway, and presented by her to Shakespeare as a love-token. The greatest prize was a ruinous arm-chair, said to be the one in which Shakespeare sat when he went a-courting at Shrottery.

While lingering in Stratford, Mr. Ireland unearthed one really important record. It showed that, after Shakespeare's death, the poet's papers were removed to Clopton House, a mile away.

The two Irelands hastened to Clopton House, and interviewed the illiterate tenant. Were there any old papers stored in the house?

"Ar!" said the tenant. "You must mean the chest which has been in the attic for donkey's years. My grandfather used to say how *his* grandfather told him those papers must be kept safe. They were supposed to be valuable, the old man said. But how could dirty old papers be valuable?"

"Let me see the papers," cried Mr. Ireland, trembling. Surely he was on the verge of one of the greatest discoveries in history!

"Ar," said the tenant. "If you had come last year, you could have had the papers with pleasure. But I wanted a nesting-box for my birds, so I turned out the papers and burned them. There is the box."

He pointed to the fowl-shed, where there was an ancient chest doing duty as a nesting-box. On the lid was cut, in scarred ancient letters, "W.S."

The tenant refused to sell the chest—he wanted it for his chickens. Samuel Ireland departed, mourning an irreparable loss. "Think what was in that chest," he said to his son. "The unpublished plays the immortal poet wrote in the last five years of his life. His letters and business-papers. Perhaps even his diary. Had I recovered them, we would be rich and famous now."

His father's excitement made a great impression on young William Ireland. The young man returned to the law-conveyancing office in London. His master was abroad on protracted business, and William had almost nothing to do. He began to amuse himself by making imitations of ancient documents, such as might have been in the chest at Clopton House.

The imitations were so good that young Ireland thought he would try a serious forgery. His father had facsimiles of Shakespeare's two known signatures. In the office were genuine deeds of conveyance dating back to Elizabeth's reign. The deeds were sometimes written on one half of a double foolscap sheet, leaving a sheet of unused paper of genuine Shakespearian period. The only thing lacking was the ink. After several experiments, young Ireland succeeded in mixing a fluid that would pass scrutiny.

His first forgery was almost undetectable. The young man copied the language of a genuine deed on a piece of genuine paper, and forged the signature of Shakespeare and an imaginary client. There was even a stock of old seals in the office, one of which

represented a hand grasping a javelin. What could this be but the seal of 'William Shake-Spear'?

The boy handed the document to his father, saying he was unable to reveal how he obtained it. Samuel Ireland was overjoyed. He showed the deed to eminent Shakespearians, who agreed that it was undoubtedly genuine, and immensely valuable. From time to time, young William brought home further relics of the Bard, and soon the Ireland house became the resort of excited patrons.

As long as William confined himself to legal documents, there was little fear of exposure. Emboldened by success, he tried a new departure. He composed a confession of faith, purporting to be entirely written in Shakespeare's own hand. The religious views of the poet had always been a matter of keen controversy. The forgery revealed Shakespeare as a simple Protestant, to the great joy of the divines of the Church of England.

Young Ireland had little idea of Elizabethan spelling. He simply gave the orthography an ancient appearance by doubling consonants and adding e's. Experts were puzzled by this unique method of spelling; quite different from that of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Perhaps it was an instance of the individuality of genius?

The appearance of Shakespeare's confession of faith created such a stir, that young Ireland was compelled to give an account of how he came by the document. He said it came from a very high-placed gentleman, who for reasons of State could not reveal his identity. This gentleman possessed a chest containing Shakespeare's papers from 1611 to 1616; and further material would be forthcoming as research proceeded.

In conformity with this promise, young Ireland produced, in quick succession, a collection of astonishing documents. These should never have deceived a child; but they were eagerly accepted by connoisseurs. Queen Elizabeth, the Earl of Southampton, and various notables of the day, were represented as writing letters to Shakespeare, all in the same extraordinary spelling as the Bard himself appeared to affect. The masterpiece of the series was a love-letter from Shakespeare to Anne Hathaway, containing a hitherto-unknown poem, and a lock of the poet's hair!

When these palpable frauds were enthusiastically accepted by the literary world, young Ireland went a step farther. He produced pages of the original

manuscripts of plays like *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. The text made departures from the generally accepted ones. Ireland, a youth of seventeen, boldly 'improved' on the language of Shakespeare! And the critics raved about the superiority of the new text, in comparison with the corrupted versions hitherto extant!

All was now ready for the final enormity. The young man set to work to compose an entirely new play 'by Shakespeare'; and he wrote it in two months.

Vortigern was the name of the play. It was done in bombastic blank verse, not inferior to the worst of Shakespeare, but on the whole far below the standard of accepted Shakespearian works. Amid tremendous enthusiasm, it was arranged for the piece to be produced at Drury Lane, with the greatest players of the day in the cast.

It was the players who raised the first strong note of suspicion. Mrs. Siddons retired from rehearsals, under plea of a 'severe cold'. Mrs. Palmer openly refused to continue. Kemble had his own opinion, which he kept to himself. Only the generous-hearted Mrs. Jordan took the play seriously.

Such a unique event as the production of a new play by Shakespeare, attracted the most crowded, excited house that the theatre had ever known. The play had a fairly favourable reception; after all, it was not bad. It might have enjoyed the measure of success due to a lesser Shakespearian masterpiece. However, in the last act, Kemble killed the play for ever.

Kemble, as King Vortigern, addressed a soliloquy to Death:

"O sovereign Death!
...When thou wouldst be merry, thou doth choose
The gaudy chamber of a dying king.....
AND WHEN THIS SOLEMN MOCKERY IS
ENDED..."

The great Kemble paused. He had recited the line in a tone of such sepulchral meaning that the whole audience jumped to its feet, suddenly enlightened. A great howl of rage shook the theatre, and then there was a deadly silence. As everything hung in the balance, someone laughed. The merriment spread.

THE END

The building rang with roar on roar of Homeric laughter. The play faltered on to its end, but the irrepressible mirth never ceased. At the fall of the curtain, the patrons staggered forth with streaming eyes, still gasping, "*Vortigern*, by William Shakespeare! Ha, ha, ha!"

Since *Vortigern* was obviously not the work of William Shakespeare, who wrote it? The undoubted answer seemed to be, Samuel Ireland, senior.

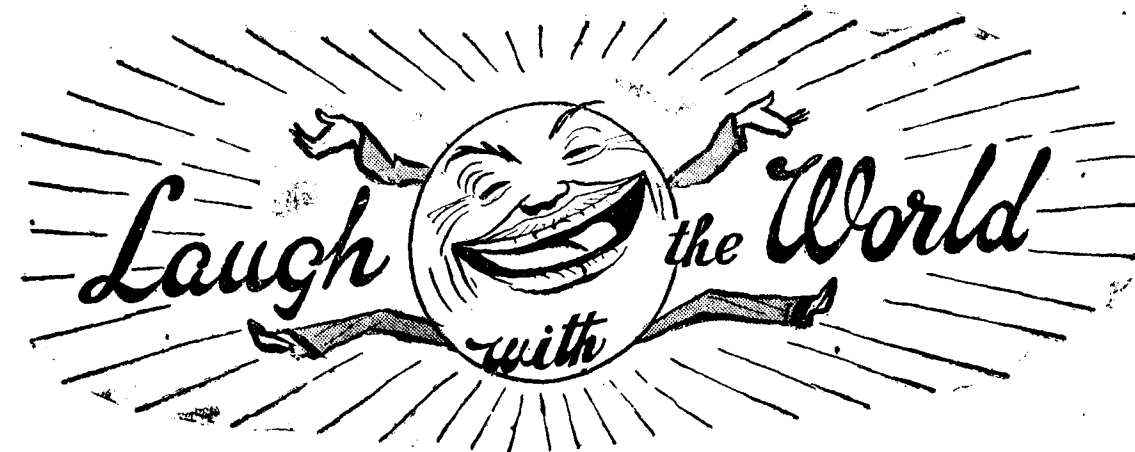
The poor father was subjected to every kind of persecution. The 'relics' he had parted with became the subject of lawsuits. In vain he protested his innocence. In vain he said that the Shakespearian documents originated with an eminent person unknown to him, whose identity could not be revealed. Samuel Ireland was branded as a fraudulent criminal.

Seeing the ruin and distress of his parent, young Ireland wrote a full and convincing confession, and sent it to the newspapers. But though the confession was easily verifiable, it was not believed. The critics said it was impossible for a youth of eighteen to write a play like *Vortigern*, and impossible for young Ireland to have forged all those documents. It could only have been done by a skilled antiquary like old Samuel Ireland. However, several literary men, including Sheridan, Dr. Johnson, and Boswell, still maintained that the majority of the documents were genuine.

To the end of his life, old Samuel Ireland suffered the opprobrium of having written the famous forgeries. Young Ireland was received and admired in literary circles, despite his constant assertion that he alone perpetrated the frauds.

In middle life, the younger Ireland grew prosperous, and started a bookshop in Kensington, where he sold copies of the forgeries, including a new unpublished play 'by William Shakespeare,' entitled *Henry the Second*. The venture was successful, and the reissue of the frauds merely drew an indulgent comment that "Good Mr. William Ireland was now forging his father's forgeries."

And so, in spite of himself, 'good Mr. William Ireland' lived on in the odour of sanctity. He died at the ripe age of 71, respected by all who knew him!



A firm advertised for a typist, and next morning was overwhelmed with applicants. The office-boy was told to admit no more.

Shortly after this an aggressive lady arrived and, pushing her way past the others, demanded to see the boss. By this time the office-boy had grown deaf to all protestations, and had but one answer.

"Not to-day, madam," he said.

"But I'm his wife!"

"Not to-day, madam," was the inexorable answer.

—Boston Transcript

A bald-headed man who has heard that the hairs of our heads are numbered, wants to know if there is not some place where he can get the back numbers.

—Regina Leader-Post

A famous globe-trotter says his chief difficulty is finding new, unexplored regions to traverse. He should try motoring on Sunday afternoon with a friend who knows all the short cuts.

—Judge

A woman appeared at a village school the other day and asked to see Miss Brown, one of the teachers. This young lady saw the woman alone in the corridor.

"Are you Miss Brown?" the woman asked the teacher, who had observed a large hammer hidden behind the woman's back.

"Yes-s, yes-s," stammered the nervous teacher.

"Well," said the woman, "I've come to knock that nail down on the form where my Tommy sits. It's tearin' holes in his trousers!"

—The Tatler

Ban: My father said if I gave up all my bad habits he'd present me with ten thousand dollars.

She: And you didn't do it?

Ban: Of course not. With no bad habits, what would I do with the money?

—Annapolis Log

We like to know little intimate details about great men—but when the *New York Times Book Review* prints an article entitled *Tolstoy as His Wife Saw Him*, we think that is going a little too far.

—West Point Pointer

An old maid who lived in a London suburb was shocked at the language used by the men repairing the telephone wires near her house.

She wrote to the company about it, and the foreman was asked to report.

This he did in the following way:—

"Me and Bill Fairweather were on this job. I was up the telephone pole, and accidentally let the hot lead fall upon Bill. It went down his neck. Then he said; 'You really must be more careful, Harry'."

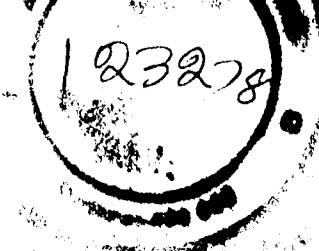
—The Outlook

A young Yorkshireman had been in the witness-box a long while, bearing as best he could with the nagging and prodding of a flippant barrister, who aimed shafts of wit mercilessly at the unfortunate youth.

"So," exclaimed the barrister sarcastically, "you really do not believe that you could rout an army of Philistines with the jawbone of an ass?"

"Well," replied the exasperated countryman, "I might have tried with the mallet when you've done with it."

—Legion Weekly



The Bashful Maiden

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

THERE was once a maiden who was so shy in the presence of gentlemen, that she ceased going into society. This diffidence perturbed her fond mamma, who wished to see the girl married to some rich man.

"I do not care if I never marry a rich man," said the bashful maiden. "People with plenty of money are often miserable."

"At least, my dear, people with plenty of money can enjoy their misery in comfort," retorted mamma.

Although the maiden was bashful, she had a romantic mind. She dreamed of a great lover who would overcome her shyness and carry away her heart.

One day, it occurred to her that although conversation with gentlemen was so embarrassing, correspondence with them could be conducted without difficulty. On the impulse of the moment, she sent a fee to a pen-friend organisation. By return of post came a list of members and a copy of the rules.

To her surprise, all the gentlemen in the list were singularly well-endowed with beauty, talent, and worldly goods. It seemed strange that such favourites of fortune were advertising for anonymous companionship.

Her eyes lighted on an entry that seemed a heart-cry addressed specially to herself. She read the

announcement a second time. Her pulse quickened. The person described was the very man of her dreams.

This was Fate.

After long thought, and several false starts, she penned a letter, and directed it to the box-number at the club. At the end, tardily seized by modest caution, she signed herself 'Shrinking Violet'; and added the name and address of her kitchen-maid.

Almost two months later, the kitchen-maid brought a grubby envelope to the bashful maiden. "Here you are, Miss," said the minion. "I expect this is the letter you have been waiting for. I had to pay double, on account of it being unstamped."

Dear Lady, wrote the soul-mate of the

maiden. I am olrite. Are you olrite. Have you got any postage stamps. Also I want a dosen best English handkerchiefs. Please send me one pound sterling quick and I will prey for you every nite. Your true lover Sammy Tsambo. P. S.—Ten shilling will be enuf.

The bashful maiden consulted the envelope. It was post marked 'Lagos'. She read the letter again, and went all hot and cold. How fortunate that she had not signed her own name!

She tried to dismiss the unfortunate episode from her mind. But, only a week later, the kitchen-maid brought her another letter from Lagos.



The bashful maiden fled.....

Dear Madam—In investigating charges of false pretences against one S. Tsambo alias Creeping Sammy, your name has been found in a list of addresses in possession of the accused. I would be glad if you would furnish particulars of your dealings with him—Yours faithfully, John Smith, Deputy Assistant Superintendent.

Really, reflected the bashful maiden, this was appalling. She—or at least her kitchen-maid—was mixed up in a sordid police-court case. What would the investigating officer think of 'Shrinking Violet'? He would imagine she was a dreadful hussy.

So the bashful maiden wrote a letter to Mr. Smith. It was very carefully composed. It was designed to show that the writer was no hussy, but a young lady led away by a foolish impulse. It was signed, 'Shrinking Violet'.

In due course, the kitchen-maid brought two replies to her mistress. One was a curt official acknowledgment of her communication. The other was a personal letter from Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith was very sympathetic. He commiserated with 'Shrinking Violet' on the pain he must have caused her in his official capacity. He expressed the deepest admiration of her personality, as betrayed in her beautiful letter.

The bashful maiden eagerly replied, to Mr. Smith's private address. She signed the name of her kitchen-maid—she could do nothing else.

In a little while, letters were streaming to and from Lagos. The tone of Mr. Smith's communications grew devoted, even ardent. The bashful maiden responded in the same strain. In daily life she was coy and retiring, but with the pen she could express the depths of her soul.

She passed her days in joyous happiness. Everything was coloured with thoughts of the tender and admiring phrases addressed to her by Mr. Smith.

And then the dream was shattered. Mr. Smith wrote to say he was coming on leave. He begged permission to visit the bashful maiden, in her beautiful home at Paradise Row.

"Alas!" reflected the maiden, weeping into an expensive handkerchief. "I shall never be able to face him. I am a tongue-tied idiot. I would die of

shame. Oh, to think of all the intimate things I have written to him! I cannot meet him."

Worse than that; the friendship must be broken completely. Unless she put him off, John Smith would insist on seeking for her in Paradise Lane—the slum where the kitchen-maid lived.

So the bashful maiden wrote a cruel letter to Mr. Smith, saying she had only been passing the time, and certainly did not wish to meet him. Then she went and shut herself in her bedroom, and wept for two days.

Some months later, the father of the bashful maiden gave a dinner-party. "I want you to entertain one of the guests, my dear," said her parent. "I must say, your social manners have improved of late. You used to act like a duck in a thunderstorm when introduced to a man; nowadays you are quite rational."

One of the ironies of life, reflected the bashful maiden, bitterly. Now her heart was broken, she was no longer shy.

That evening, her father introduced her to her dinner-companion. "Mr. Smith," he said, briefly. "My daughter."

The maiden's heart had ceased to be disturbed by the name Smith. There were so many Smiths. She merely looked curiously at this particular Smith. He was a nice-looking man—the kind she liked, as far as a broken-hearted girl could like a man.

The maiden was not yet very ready-witted in conversation, but she had discovered a course of conduct better than any mere verbal brilliance. If a girl just uttered a platitude or so, and listened to her companion's long speeches with an air of delighted attention, she passed as a very charming and intelligent person.

Mr. Smith evidently found her so. He monopolised her all the evening. He took an opportunity to accept an invitation to lunch on the following day. He became a constant visitor, always in attendance on the bashful maiden.

"Who is he, mamma?" she asked, one day.

"Your father knows, my dear," replied mamma.

"Mr. Smith has some government post. He would make a very suitable match. Do you like him?"

The bashful maiden hung her head. Her soul still ached for the Mr. Smith of Lagos. No other man could ever take his place. Still, this Mr. Smith was very nice.

"Tell me," she said to him, that evening. "Have you ever had a close friendship with a girl?" This was the sort of artful question that would keep a man talking for hours, without any great contribution from the listener.

Mr. Smith seemed ill-at-ease. "I—once used to write to a girl," he confessed.

The bashful maiden felt a guilty pang. "Did—did you become fond of her?" she asked.

"Very," said Mr. Smith. "I was a fool, I suppose. I got in touch with her while I was on the police at Lagos—what is the matter?"

"N—nothing. It—it is hot in here. W—what was the name of this girl?"

"She called herself Shrinking Violet," replied Mr. Smith. "I thought I loved her, but she cured me of the infatuation before I committed myself irrevocably. She revealed herself as a silly common creature, probably very ugly."

"Ugly?" cried the bashful maiden, indignantly.

"It was simple deduction," continued Mr. Smith. "She carefully avoided sending any photograph of

herself, and she used a false address. When I announced I was coming here, she wrote a panic-stricken letter, saying I must never meet her. Obviously, she was some middle-aged hag playing with the affections of a lonely exile."

"Oh!" gasped the bashful maiden.

"It was a mistake," said Mr. Smith.

"Yes?" cried the bashful maiden, with ill-concealed fury.

"But I haven't made a mistake this time," continued Mr. Smith, surprisingly. "You are all the things I imagined that person to be. Darling, will you marry me?"

With an inarticulate exclamation, the bashful maiden fled to the privacy of her room, leaving Mr. Smith bewildered. She vowed to herself that she would never forgive the horrid wretch.

In consequence, as the intelligent reader will surmise, the next afternoon found her in the arms of the horrid wretch. "I don't suppose you ever wrote letters to a man, did you, darling?" he murmured, fondly.

"Never!" firmly replied the bashful maiden, the bride-to-be of Mr. Smith.

And the moral of this story is, it does not matter whether a girl is bashful or not.

THE END

Conjugal Quarrels

by Omega

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes



"I...get them round his throat."

"CONJUGAL Quarrels," says an eminent writer, "are as old as the hills. Even the gods of mythology quarrelled with their consorts. The animal ancestors of man showed the same propensity, and the males often fought with the females in mating." This is all right, so far as it goes. But the present is obviously an age of Amazons. The Eve in the West is dominating over her consort and her sister in the East is likely to copy. Here is a danger. If you don't believe it, read on and decide for yourself.

A man recently asked the North London magistrate for a summons against his wife for persistent cruelty. He said he had been 29 weeks out of work, and because he could not satisfy his wife's demands for money she struck him. She had been striking him continually for a long period. Poor man, my heart goes out in sympathy with him. A systematic dose of lathi charges at home for a period of over seven months is too much to bear. You know even a worm does turn.

In another case a woman was charged with assaulting a rate collector when he called at her house. When asked by the magistrate why she did it, she replied: "Well, he shouldn't have called after it was dark. I thought it was my husband!" So the poor husband is admittedly the best target for nocturnal assaults by woman. I was much amused by the defence of the accused.

"I want a collar for my husband," said the large woman impatiently.

"Er, yes, madam," quaked the assistant, "what size does he take?"

"Size?" she echoed. "H'm, I've forgotten that." Then she added: "I think I can find it out soon enough." Quickly, she peeled off her gloves and held out two large hands. "Here, measure these," she snapped. "I can just manage to get them round his throat."

By all evidence man has fallen on evil days. How can he escape the clutches of these husband-beating wives!

As an Indian and a Hindu at that, I snapped my fingers in triumphant glee when I read these accounts. Happily our wives in the East have not yet attempted assaulting their life-partners in a systematic manner or on such a large scale. Thanks to the injunctions of Manu and other Hindu seers, husband-worship is enjoined on every Hindu wife as a sacred duty. I do not mean to say that there are no conjugal squabbles in Hindu homes. Wives often nag their husbands and, what is more indefensible, husbands give their better halves a rough side of their tongue. Both pull long faces for days and days together, and in extreme cases husbands are guilty of persecuting their wives. But I have not yet heard of a regular fusillade of charges.

It often occurs to my mind if it is not possible to evolve a satisfactory formula which will remove this problem of conjugal quarrels for good. The experience of humanity, all over the globe, is opposed to it.

(Continued on page 32)



Rug & Rag

by T. A. S.

Reading Time
About 5 Minutes

"Miserable door-mat!" he cried.

THE rich Ameer of Nostan once went to the bazaar to purchase a rug. He spent some time in the selection of one that pleased his fancy, and, on the way homeward, cordially congratulated himself on his taste. It was, therefore, somewhat of a surprise to him when the rug began to thank him humbly for his condescension in having purchased it.

"My whole life shall be one continual effort to show you, who had the choice of many rugs, how warmly I appreciate your selection of poor little me; and, believe me, I ask from life no greater boon than constantly to love and serve you."

"I can't quite decide where to place you, beautiful one," said the Ameer, in his turn, thoughtfully. "You are a desirable article, of course, for my taste in such matters is unexcelled. I think you might fitly adorn my inner court."

"Oh, no, master!" deprecated the rug. "The faultlessness of your taste, I admit; still, I am not much of a rug—only a poor little thing—though your own. Do not, I implore you, place me in the inner court. Let me, instead, lie in the outer where you may wipe your feet on me. There I shall be content."

"Perhaps," remarked the Ameer, looking reflectively at his new purchase, "that is, after all, the best use to make of you."

Thereafter, the Ameer daily dusted his feet upon the rug, and daily the rug cooed to him, and called down blessings on his head, until at last he harshly bade her cease. "Miserable door-mat!" he cried, "venture no longer to speak to me. As to the terms of endearment by which you have been addressing me, they are the height of presumption. One word more, and I shall have you beaten until scarce one shred of you shall remain."

Then, the rug wept bitterly by day and by night. "Alas!" she cried, "mine is the lot of all loving rugs. We give all and get nothing. I have lived with but one thought—his happiness, and I am first ignored and then scorned."

And her grief, coupled with the fact that the daily wiping of his feet by the Ameer was becoming more thorough and heavy upon her to express his disgust at her intolerable presumption, quite wore her off and she gave up the ghost.

Within a short time after her demise, the Ameer of Nostan decided that it would be well for him to secure another door-mat; and so he again betook himself to the bazaar. As he was rather in a hurry, he purchased the first rug that his eyes lighted upon without any special examination of it,

Soon after it had been sent to his dwelling, he heard a loud outcry and hastened to discover the cause. To his surprise, his servants stood cowed and trembling about the new rug which was haranguing them in a loud tone. "Insolent dogs!" it cried. "Wild asses shall dance on the graves of your grandmothers, and you shall know the torments of all the hells! Ameer, are you crazed that you should allow your servants to place me in your outer courts as a door-mat?"

The Ameer looked amazed. "I had not thought you much in the bazaar," he stammered; "it seemed to me there that your colours are not harmonious enough for the inner courts."

"My colours inharmonious!" shrieked the rug. "Blind fool! What do your uncultivated eyes know of colour? My blues are the soul of mystery, my reds the heart of wine and my yellows the essence of sunlight. Altogether, I am pure passionate symbolism."

Now, the Ameer was a stubborn man and he continued falteringly: "But the keeper of the bazaar put no great price on you."

"The keeper of the bazaar is but in his first incarnation since he was an ape. What can he know of the chromatics of colour?"

"And your texture is rough," added the Ameer.

"In truth, you are possessed of an evil spirit," said the rug impatiently. "There are in me 60,000 stitches to the square inch, but why waste talk. Count and satisfy yourself."

"Nay," said the Ameer hastily, "I will take your word, and now, as I look at you closely, I perceive that you are amazingly beautiful. Your colours shine like rare jewels, and as I touch thy surface, I feel that silk seems harsher compared to it. Assuredly, you shall be the ornament of my inner court."

So, she was tenderly carried within and spread in the State apartment and she professed herself pleased.

A few days later, he hastened to her, full of solicitude. "Is all well?" he cried anxiously.

"Nay," she answered peevishly. "In this, your State apartment, I am as a ruby in a dust-heap. I must have a temple built for me."

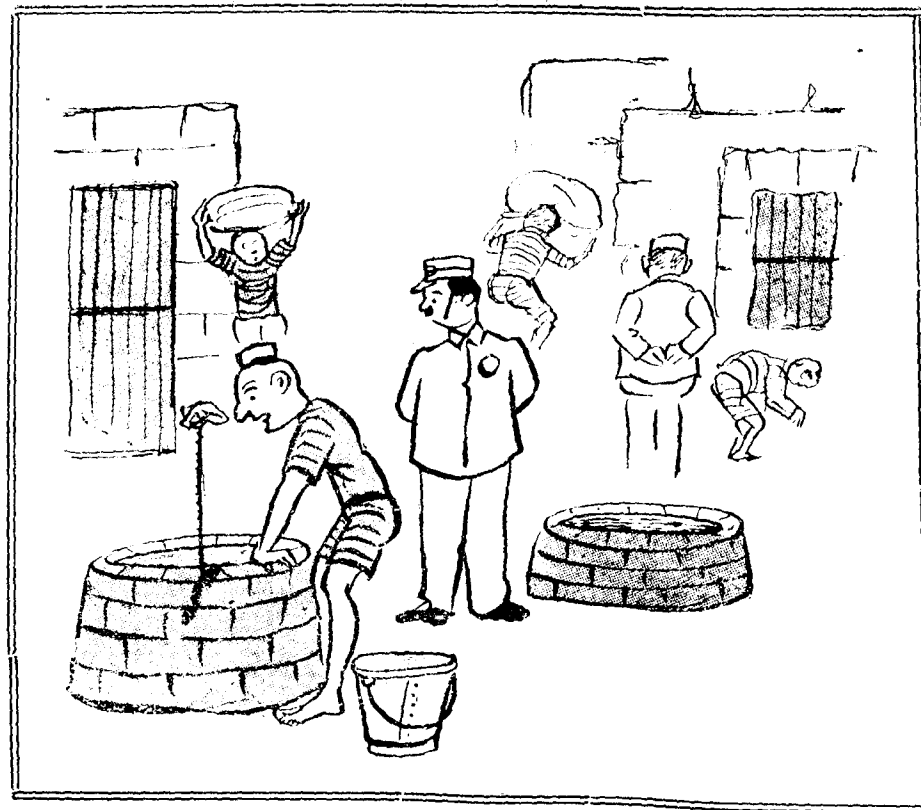
"Oh, fair one!" cried the Ameer, in wondering admiration; "how true your words are. This insult of a wretched apartment for you shall be at once removed."

Then, he gave half of his kingdom to the building of a shrine of fairest marble, and within it was hung the rug, with a gold curtain before it and encrusted with costly jewels. And there, the Ameer thanked the Prophet (peace be on him!) morning, noon and night, that one so humble as himself had been chosen to be the possessor of the Desire of the World.

Moral—Nil.



THE END



The Jail Bird Gets A Job

by A. M. Menon

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

GANGADHARAN was not by nature a criminal. The relentless force of circumstances had made him one.

After all, he had only been convicted of petty theft. And he had now almost served out his sentence in the Doravada Jail. He was a much wiser man now. Once let him get out, and be free of the incubus of this paralysing jail-discipline, and—well, won't he turn over a new leaf!

New leaf—yes! In every sense.

This jail-discipline, for instance. What an irksome and fatuous business! Gangadharan was tired of it all. Every day with scores of others he had to sweat from morning to evening, doing the most heartless, pointless and futile drudgery. Just imagine! Scores of men driven like galley-slaves to a deep well, from which they had to draw water. For why? To go

and put it into *another* well. Daily, hour to hour, drawing water in large buckets, which seemed to strain your very backbone, and then go and throw the water into the pitiless depths of another well! It was not so much the work, but the inhuman idea underlying it. The fruitlessness of it! The mockery, the vain, prolonged agony of unproductive effort. The hours, the days, the weeks, the months of profitless effort. Drawing water from one well—and throwing it again into another. Why? Discipline. Yes...Bah! Reformation of the culprit. It was demoralising.

Gangadharan marked another day 'off' with his nails. His finger-nails were almost worn out marking days 'off' on his wall. But each day thus marked gave tangible relief to his soul.

Now there remained six more days. After that no more of those offending jail-uniforms, no more getting

up with the dawn, eating dry, monotonous food, and being locked up ignominiously like an animal.

After six days, no more will Gangadharan have to talk in a whisper to his comrades, or have others addressing him in the same repressed, frightened undertones.

After six days—what a delicious thought!—no more drawing of water and flinging it down into another well! Heavens! Great God! What would he not give, thought Gangadharan passionately, to be rid of that sickening business of drawing-water-and-throwing-it-into-another-well once for all!

In short, a small span of six days separated him from bliss, from freedom, from his future glorious days. But those half-a-dozen days proved the longest.

Every minute was an eternity. Every meal was an abomination. And every bucket of water drawn and thrown down, was like hundred-weights, like tons of murderous weights.

But Number 604 stuck it. By God, he stuck it! And he won't be 'Number 604' any more—not after those few days!

Two days went by.

On the third day Gangadharan came face to face with sudden fear—and almost within an inch of a catastrophe!

He had been drawing water, as usual, and dumping it, in company of other prisoners, into the other well. They were working, a silent, passive group, when one man—Number 316—remarked under his breath: "What stupid, atrocious work!" Gangadharan happened to hear it. He smiled, less at the grim joke, than from his general happy disposition caused by his approaching release. Indeed, very few smiles there were, in Doravada Jail.

A warder noticed the smile.

"By my whiskers!" quoth the warder. "I'd have you reported, Number 604! What were you grinning for?"

Number 604 winced.

"Nothing, sir. I'm sorry."

And Gangadharan went on with his 'work.'

That was a close shave. During the last few days one has to be extra careful. Those warders—demons of a demoniac disciplinary machine—would stop at nothing to discredit a prisoner in the eyes of the Governor. And if a prisoner, about to be released, gets reported—! Good God! A narrow go, that one.

"Because you have been a very well-behaved prisoner, Number 604," explained the warder in the evening, "I let you off. H'm!"

Gangadharan thankfully accepted the favour, and retreated to his cell, and his dreams.

Another and another day were off.

It was now the day previous to his discharge.

"I say, mate," whispered a comrade, "I might as well give you a tip, now that you're off tomorrow."

"Yes!" whispered back our friend, suspiciously.

"I can give you an address," was the reply, in subdued tones. "Here—quick! Listen! No. 14, Baski Street, Bombay—they're making Talkies over there—and mention my name. I am sure they'll help you. I came here because I tried to help my Manager against some rowdies, you know. Knocked out a couple of them with my knife—quite a long story. It doesn't matter."

"Thanks," whispered Gangadharan. "No. 14, Baski Street, eh?"

"H'm. Yes."

The wonderful day came. The Governor liked Gangadharan. A rather decent chap.

So with a few useful rupees, and a clean dress, Gangadharan, late Number 604, set out to begin life again, from the portals of Doravada Jail.

The rupees, Gangadharan knew, would not last him a week. He might as well try the address given him by his jail comrade. He believed the fellow.

No. 14, Baski Street, Bombay, proved to be all that he had been told, and a very good Talkie-Producing Company, too, from its prosperous, neat exterior.

The Manager was very kind. He promised Gangadharan something really good.

"In the meanwhile," said the Manager, "we'll take you on as an extra in our new picture."

Gangadharan was overjoyed. The future must take care of itself. For the present, he was not left destitute.

The pay, he understood, was Rs. 20 a week. Not bad at all, not at all bad! And to think that only two days ago he was drawing water—pooh! Forget it!

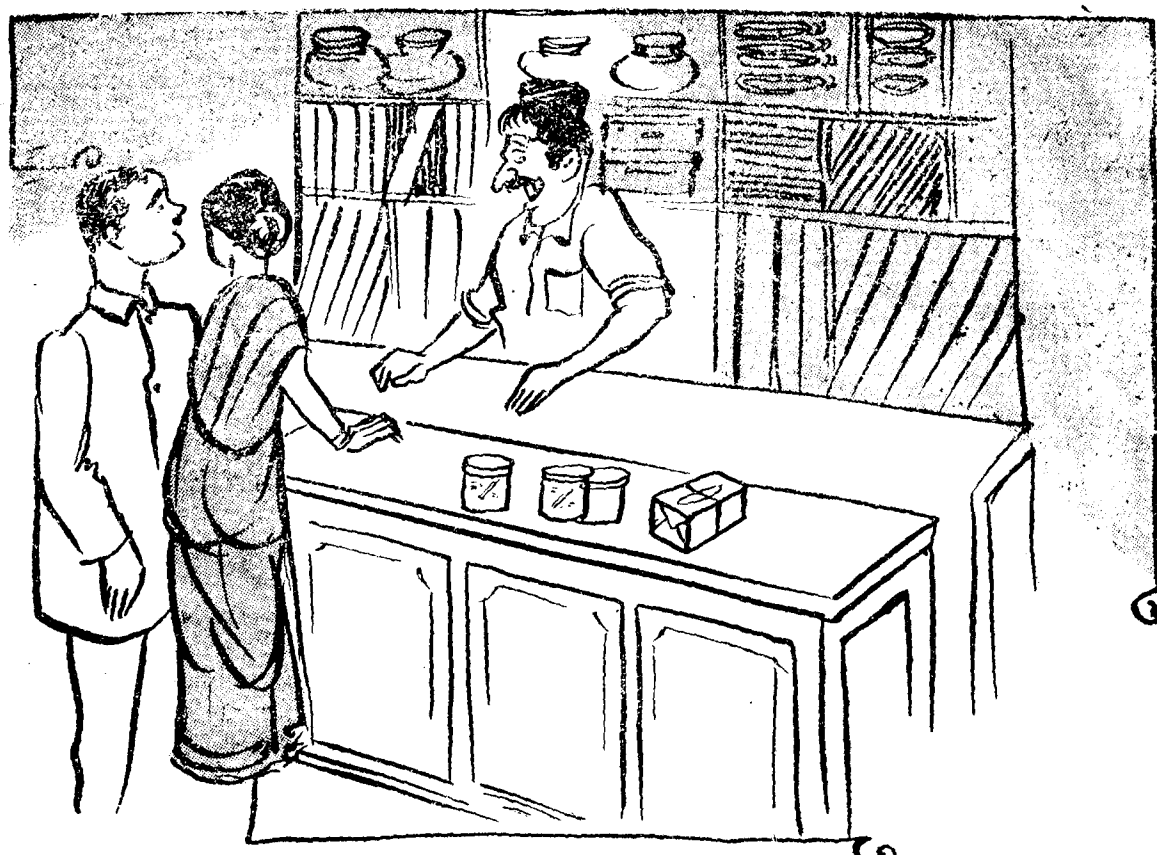
"Here!" cried the Scene Director next day, motioning to Gangadharan. "You're one of the extras, aren't you? Come on, put on this dress!"

Gangadharan 'put on this dress'.

"Why, it's like prison dress!" he exclaimed, in a sort of daze.

"Well," remarked the Director, "this is a prison picture, and you are supposed to be a prisoner...Now you go along," continued he, in business-like tones, "and join those others. You are to draw water from that well, and pour it back again into that other well, understand?"

THE END



Sheep Comes Home Shorn

by A. T. MacNaughton Thomas

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

IT was all Mimi's fault. I plumped for Darjeeling as the best place to honeymoon at; my dear wife, being a newly-wed and therefore, wishing to have her own way, pitched upon Jugglepur, an out-of-the-way town, lying embosomed in the Garo Hills.

Hardly had we enjoyed a crescent honeymoon when a Hindu-Muslim fracas broke out, having for its epicentre, the usual music before the mosque. We thought it would lightly pass off, but regrettably, the unfortunate affair day by day assumed uglier dimen-

sions. When it graded off into a tense communal warfare, when insurgents lay by the hundred in hospitals, and when each community proceeded to loot the shops of the other with a fiendish delight, the police decreed that no shop in Jugglepur, until further orders, should be kept open after 8 p.m.—the infringement thereof being two years in quod. By this enactment, the looting propensities of the Jugglepurians were checked to a great extent, whose depredations till then compelled the reluctant admiration of the Chinese banditti.

When tranquillity apparently reigned once again, I took Mimi out for a walk. When we were returning home, I made the horrible discovery that I had whiffed away my cigarettes. There is only one shop at Jugglepur that sells my favourite brand and where, you can buy anything from six-vaive superhot to a darning-needle. As I couldn't possibly exist till morning, I hurriedly repaired to the shop. When I arrived at the shop, it was two minutes past eight by my watch. I found the proprietor-manager-salesman-cashier closing his shop.

"I know it is a little after time," I whispered into his ears, "but could you oblige me with a tin of *Empire Express* cigarettes?"

The Four-in-One recoiled in horror. He swept me up and down with a suspicious glance.

"Are you a Mussalman?" he ventured to ask.

"No," I assured him.

"Are you aware that you are asking me to break the law enacted by our beloved Police Superintendent?"

"Just one tin," I entreated him.

"Who knows you may not be a policeman in disguise? A sort of *agent provocateur*? How am I to know that if I oblige you I shall not be juggled? Think, what it is to do time for two years in a cold cell without even the cold comfort of butter-milk! What about my wife, my six children and my three step-children? Shall I send for my youngest child, a look into the innocent depths of whose babe eyes, is sufficient to make you pause in your unmoral attempt to tempt me to a dark deed?"

"On my grandmother's three extant teeth!" I swore, "which I value more than my honour, I am neither a policeman nor a Mussalman nor a deep sea diver."

The Four-in-One weighed the ethics of the situation—not in an Avery balance, mind you.

"I cannot reconcile my act with my conscience for one tin of cigarettes. The irreducible minimum is four tins. That is the smallest mess for which I am prepared to sell my birth-right."

"Have your own way," I told him.

"Lest there should be any policeman mousing about the place, when you step out of my shop," he said, tipping me a wink, "take two pounds of Gorgonzola cheese to establish an alibi."

"Sorry," I told him, "I boycott all things Italian save Dante."

"Ha! In that case, take Stilton cheese. Shall we say three pounds?"

"Why alibi? If it is illegal to buy cigarettes, it is also the same for cheese."

"As well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb," the fellow said, laconically as he wrapped the cheese. "Don't you think a toy-engine is an acceptable gift for your son? We have the 1936 model"

"I haven't got a son."

"Haven't got a son? Then you must be having a daughter."

"No."

The Four-in-One watched me quizzically with arms akimbo, just as a dyspeptic cobra might watch a frog, whether to have a go at it, or, for the sake of its dyspepsia, to let it go.

"Then, who are you? With whom are you put up?"

"We are tourists. We are staying with a friend of ours."

"We?"

"My wife and I," said I, nodding towards Mimi.

"Say so. Take two pounds of vanilla chocolates for *memsahib*. The prices have come down. After all, a pound costs only one rupee and nine annas! Why not take the *Day-dream Assorted*? It costs just a rupee more."

"Yes, darling," whispered Mimi, "*Day-dream Assorted* is so nice."

I had to nod assent.

"Won't it look nice, for instance, if you take a toy-cinema for your friend's son. Something to remind the kid of your pleasant visit. Has your friend any son?"

"As a matter of fact, he has two sons and a girl but....."

"And to prevent arousing jealousy, you had better take two toy-cinemas for the boys and a golliwog for the girl."

"All right," I said, bottling up my feelings.

"What is the use of a toy-cinema without a roll of film? Shall we say two rolls of film, a Teddy Bear as a companion-toy to the golliwog, and a chain with collar for their dog?"

"No, they haven't got a dog. But they *have* a cat and a....." burst out Mimi and paused suddenly.

"And a *what, memsahib?*" the oily rogue inquired wheedlingly.

".....and a myna."

"You would be then delighting the cockles of your friend's heart as you would be doing a great service to the dumb creatures if you took a two-pound tin of Spratt's Cat Food, a pound of birdseed and a pound of groundsel. It all comes to only five rupees. Remember, sir, I am putting myself out of the way for you. And it is only fair that you should purchase Roy's *What To See In Jugglepur*. The book is ridiculously priced at two rupees."

I wanted the *Empire Express* cigarettes so badly that I allowed a tidy sum to be wheedled out of me.

"*Memsahib* has a velvety voice," whispered the fellow, when we were taking our departure.

"Shoo! For Heaven's sake, reserve your appreciation to yourself," I whispered back. "If my wife hears about it, she will demand a velvet dress to match her voice."

When we had sheered off, the Four-in-One, realizing that he had failed to tack some four yards of velvet on us, shouted after us, "*Memsahib*, please come some other time. Your velvety....."

By this time, I managed to engage her attention in something else, and fortunately, she didn't hear the Four-in-One's voice trailing after us. I told Mimi seriously whether I shouldn't also write a guide-book entitled: 'Juggled out in Jugglepur', for, I felt an awful double-distilled fool as I walked up the street, carrying four tins of *Empire Express*, three pounds of Stilton, two ditto of chocolates, ditto ditto of Cat Food, one ditto of birdseed, ditto ditto of groundsel, two toy-cinemas, ditto rolls of film, a golliwog, a Teddy Bear and a guide-book. Milked to the last drop—that exactly summed up my position. Hardly had we covered a hundred yards, I had an illusion that all the street-lamps were blown out, when I glanced up at the municipal clock-tower.

It was still three minutes to eight.

THE END

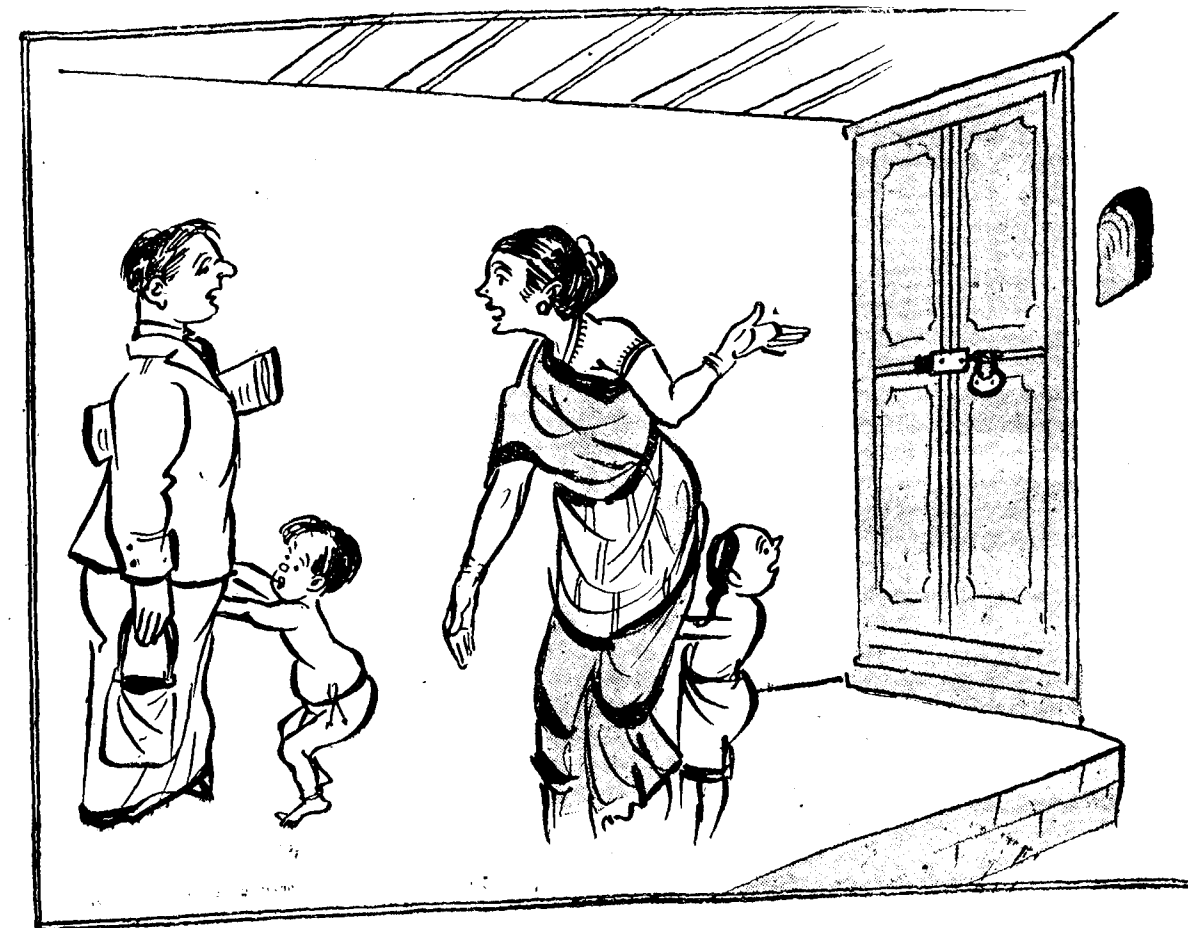
CONJUGAL QUARRELS—(Continued from page 25)

We are told that husbands and wives must quarrel in spite of the best efforts of peacemakers and psychologists. Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle—both admirable persons in themselves—were never reconciled to each other. In the case of the Carlyle couple, it was an uncommonly sad experience of incompatibles thrust into the bag of destiny. Lord Houghton tried to reconcile them, but nothing came out of it except a clever remark from Browning that Lord Houghton was an optimist qualified to start a Heaven and Hell Amalgamation Society.

I do not favour storms in conjugal waters but I do certainly like occasional ripples. A little hissing on either side would do a lot of good and might prevent any mischief from growing. And thereby hangs a tale. There was once a vicious serpent who used to bite people without provocation. Narada converted him to the cult of non-violence. As a result the serpent gave up his wickedness and became as meek as a lamb. The street urchins emboldened by his gentle-

ness began to pelt stones at him, but the serpent would not retaliate. After some time Narada came that way and found him in a sorry plight. His whole body was covered with wounds. "What is the matter?" he asked. The serpent told the whole story. The great sage cried, "You fool, why did you not hiss? Did I forbid you to do so?" Evidently occasional 'hissing' in the home is a healthy sign. It shows that either side has not resigned itself to its lot. And it is not at all strange for Narada to give this advice. Is it not one of his hobbies to enjoy other people's quarrels? The story goes that once his attention was drawn to the perfect peace and amity that prevailed between Shiva and Parvati. A master of machiavellian skill, he managed matters in such a way that the next day they were furiously fighting between themselves. If even Shiva and Parvati can indulge in the pastime of conjugal quarrels, where is the surprise if poor human mortals display that weakness? But let us guard against too frequent outbursts, for otherwise they might convert the home into a battle-ground.

THE END



Pitching The Keys

by R. Jagannathan

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

AS soon as I returned home, Padma greeted me with a confession, a very rare thing with her. "I've done a foolish thing today," she said.

"I'm glad to hear it," said I.

"What d'you mean?" she turned round on me.

"I just mean to say," I explained, "that I'm very pleased to hear you confess having done a foolish thing. You know what a relief it is to me, especially when you were never tired of pointing out day in and day out the alleged folly of everything I did, and failed to do. Now for once....."

"But this is really a serious matter," she rebuked.

"I'm yet to hear what is the matter," I retorted, with an air of justified superiority.

"Go in and find out yourself," Padma bade me.

I went in and found my room locked. Went further in and found Padma's room locked. Further in and found the store-room locked. Why prolong the tale? Every bally room in the house was locked.

"What's the joke?" I asked Padma, as I came back to her.

"It's no joke," she replied.

"Then why have you locked all the rooms?" I asked.

"I can't find the keys," she replied.

"Oh," I commented, "you locked the rooms because you couldn't find the keys?"

"What a dull brain you've got!" said Padma and began explaining. "Of course, I locked the rooms with the keys; you see, I went to Pattu's house during the day, for her sister-in-law sent word to me to go there for playing bagatelle. I locked all the rooms and asked the *mundu* (servant boy) to stay in the drawing-room and watch the house. I put the children into the pram and distinctly remember having kept the bunch of keys also in it. I don't think I took the keys out while I was in Pattu's house, but Roji says I did. Fact is, I can't find the wretched keys now."

"Is this all the folly you've committed?" I wondered.

"Isn't it enough?" Padma answered. "I can't open a single room and for the last half an hour the children are bothering me to get this thing out and that....."

"Wait a minute," I stopped her. "I've kept a duplicate set of keys inside the clock."

"I know it," replied Padma. "I took it out and kept it in *your* room for safety's sake....."

"No doubt, they are thoroughly safe there," I commented.

"You can never be serious," commented Padma. "I've tried all available keys, borrowed Savitri's bunch of keys, and Saraswati's also. They wouldn't work..."

"They shouldn't," I told Padma. "Don't you know that quality is the essence of our locks?"

I felt like breaking forth in their praise:

"All my rooms are barred with locks,
And open but to Aligarh keys."

"But what am I to do *now*?" asked Padma, in evident distress.

"Don't bother," I consoled her. "Wait till Pattu's husband returns home. He'll fetch the keys."

"But you've told me that he is a late sitter in office and won't return before 7 o'clock."

"It doesn't matter," I assured Padma. "We're not in a frightful hurry. Thank God, the drawing-room at least is open. Keep the *mundu* here and we shall go out for a walk."

"That means you've to forego your coffee this evening."

"Has it come to this?" I asked her, as the realisation dawned upon me. Coffee was (and is) my weak point and Padma, adroit female that she is, touched me at the tenderest spot.

"No, no," I hastened. "We've got to do something about the keys *here and now*."

"In that case," replied Padma, "there's only one thing to be done. You had better go to Pattu's house; you know it's hardly a mile from here. I'm not, however, *quite* sure that the keys are there, but since Roji says they are, you may just try....."

"Why didn't you go yourself?" I asked her. "It would have saved so much trouble."

"I?" she retorted. "I can't move a step now; I'm dead tired."

"Look here, Padma," I explained, "what's the good of my going? Pattu's husband is away in office and there won't be a single male soul near about Pattu's house now. How indeed do you expect me to explain this business of the keys to Pattu and make a thorough search there?"

"Why should you feel so nervous?" Padma chided me. "Go boldly and knock at the door. Either Pattu or her sis-in-law will come....."

"But do you want me to speak to them?" I interrupted.

"Just listen to me," Padma explained. "You need not speak to them at all. You need not even look at them: indeed you shouldn't, otherwise they might mistake. As soon as they come, turn your face to the wall or the road, or the tree or the lawn or *anything*, and then say what you've come for. They'll make the search and give you the keys."

In the name of coffee, I undertook this delicate enterprise. I strictly followed Padma's instructions and refrained from looking at Pattu's face (or was it her sis-in-law's?). But the result was negative. The

keys were not there. Pattu (or her sis-in-law) said she was quite sure that she saw Padma putting the keys in the pram.

I trudged my weary way back home, piously hoping all the time that somehow the missing keys would have been found before I returned.

But no, they were not. I reported to Padma about my futile mission. She felt depressed at my failure, and doubly so was I, now that my coffee seemed to recede into the distant background.

Suddenly there was a gleam of light on my brain and I confronted Padma with a patronising smile.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"Surely," said I, "the keys must be here. I know they're here. Have you looked for it at the free end of your *saree*? In Sam-path's innocent hands? In Roji's pocket? It is in a very easy and simple spot while all the time you and I are fretting about....."

"Stop!" she cried. "I've looked for it in all possible places. It's *not* here."

"I tell you it is here!" I emphasized. "It must be here. That's how the lads in humorous magazines do it. There's no other way in which this incident can have a finale and a happy ending....."

"Don't talk rubbish," Padma interrupted. "I tell you the keys aren't here."

My hopes were dashed. My coffee was indefinitely postponed.

Then with all the fury of an animal caught at bay, I broke loose and ran amok. With murder in my eyes, I set about my business and demolished all the locks.

"Now, Padma," I called out to her, "the deed is done and I want my coffee in ten minutes."

Coffee was brought and I felt glad and expansive. Sipping a bracing cup, I was at peace with the whole world, of course, after great toil.

But Padma was the very picture of remorse.

"Do you know what you've done?" she said. "You've demolished all those locks, all Aligarh locks, good and true."

"Waste no pity on them," I told her. "Let the dead past bury its dead."



"I'm not referring to the past," Padma said. "I'm more concerned about our Simla house."

"What about it?" I asked, failing to see her point.

"You know," she reminded me, "that this missing bunch contains also the keys of our Simla house, for which there are no duplicates."

"Don't worry," I assured her. "In less time than it takes you to say knife, I'll demolish the Simla locks, too, as I've demolished these."

Poor thing, Padma was not assured.

"Do you know what it means?" she asked, and sighed. "A net loss of.....just let me count.....ten Aligarh locks at the rate of.....well, whatever it is, it is a great amount.....Oh, who is to foot the bill?"

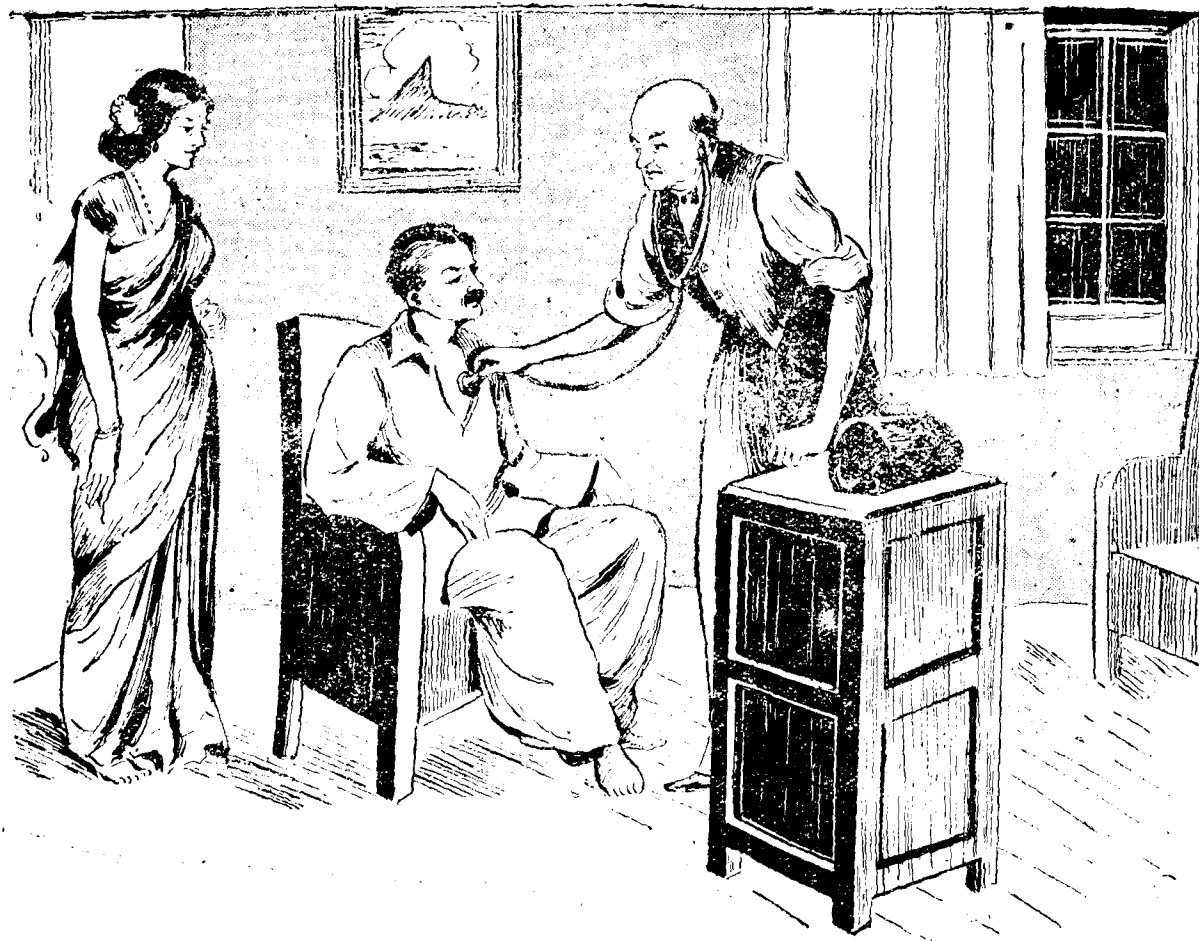
This aspect of the case didn't strike me before. Now that it was put to me, I, too, grew dismal and felt my heroism withering away. But not quite. An idea struck me and I felt like one inspired.

"The bill?" I poo-pooed her worries. "Put it to *The Merry*. Put the whole darned thing to *The Merry*."

"Really?" asked Padma.

"Why not?" I replied, and was as good as my word—as you've seen.

THE END



Susila Is Jealous

by N. S. Pillieux

Reading Time • About 12 Minutes

WHEN Dr. Raj (he is my cousin-in-law) came down to spend the week-end with us the other day, I knew instinctively, that his visit was going to cost me a pretty penny. Almost the first words, that he spat out, as he barged unceremoniously into my house one evening, deposited his 'bag' on the table and sank into my cosy easy chair, only confirmed my worst suspicions.

"Oh, my! You are still anaemic."

"Very!" chimed in Susila, who had suddenly materialised from nowhere, and was now standing be-

hind my chair, as if she were a nurse in attendance and I, a chronic invalid.

"But," I protested, after I had recovered from the shock of his arrival, "anaemic or no anaemic, I feel quite fit, as the proverbial fiddle."

"Well, let me see." With that, he rose clumsily from his chair and waddled towards me. He everted my lower eye-lids, peered into the inside of my mouth and scrutinized the colour of my nails. Not satisfied with this cursory examination, he opened his 'bag' with a flourish, took out his stethoscope and 'heard' my heart from various points.

"H'm," he grunted. "Very anaemic, indeed!"

"Look here, Raj," I thought it time and I gave him a bit of my mind, "I have been imbibing your tonics, elixirs and what not, regularly for the past eight months or more. In fact, I have consumed ten bottles of—"

"I know," he cut in. "But there is a limit to what mere drugs can do to the human system."

"Perfectly true," I agreed. "And I presume, I have reached that limit." I was glad that I would have no more nauseating decoctions to consume nor the ever-recurring chemists' bill to foot.

"Yes. What you now require, and badly too, is a change of place."

"Eh?"

"Change of place," he repeated with emphasis, "change of climate, change of air, change of altitude and change of environment."

"But—"

"But me no 'buts' please," Dr. Raj was in dead earnest. "Take my advice, *Athan* and move to a convenient health resort. I, for one, would recommend B—as the ideal place for you. Stay there for at least three months on end, and see how rapidly your health improves. It will make a new man of you, I am sure."

I closed my eyes and set the old top a-spinning; and presto! I was rewarded. In a flash I saw light. For some months past, Susila had been worrying me in season and out of season to take her to B—for a change. But, every time I had succeeded in putting it off on some pretext or other. And now she was playing her trump card and had purposely invited Dr. Raj, her cousin, who, acting in collusion with her and taking mean advantage of his position as my medical attendant, had stooped to play a dirty trick on me. It was in fact a hit below the belt; and verily, I was smarting under it.

After a hurried tea, I went in search of Seshu. Seshu is an old chum of mine; and, whenever I am in doubt or in danger, I invariably turn to him for help and guidance. And, to give even the devil his due, he has never let me down. He is a brainy, resourceful chap, is Seshu, and his head is full of original ideas. I ferretted him out and poured forth into his willing ears the tale of my woe. We remained closetted for an

hour; and, when at last I returned home, I felt as if a heavy load had been lifted off my mind.

* * * * *

Our trip to B—was uneventful. Thanks to the generous help which one of my friends up there rendered to me. I had no difficulty in securing a decent, comfortable house. And I rented it for the minimum period of one month.

Susila was in the seventh heaven of delight and was enjoying every minute of her stay.

"Dear," Susila was telling me almost the next day after our exodus, "what a fine salubrious climate! What a cool, bracing air! It is really a heaven on earth. I have no doubt that our three months' stay here will do you immense good and help to bring the flush of health back to your cheeks."

"Yes," I agreed. "Dr. Raj was right. The climate has certainly a lot to do in the matter of improving one's health. It may cost us a pretty penny—our stay here, I mean—but so long as you are comfortable and like the place, dear, money is no matter."

"You are a dear, I know," she cooed.

One day, about a week later, we were returning home after an evening stroll when suddenly Susila remarked: "Dear, the house opposite ours, which was vacant till yesterday, is now occupied. See the light burning inside. I don't know who our neighbour is."

"Why are you so curious? What do we care—" Just then my servant, who was standing at my gate presumably awaiting our arrival; handed me a chit. I glanced at the contents and beamed upon her.

"Susie, do you know, we are extremely lucky to have as our neighbour none else than my old and intimate friend Subhadrammal."

"Which Subhadrammal?"

"Oh! I am afraid you haven't had the pleasure of her acquaintance. Subhadra's father was an old family friend of ours and, even as children, we were rather thick. And later on, when she married, her hubby also happened to be a close friend of mine. Her husband died last year. Poor girl! It appears, she has come up here on medical advice, same as I. She is feeling herself very lonely, having no friends in this part of the world. How she found out that I am

staying here, I don't know. At any rate she has sent me a formal note asking me to call on her. It is, indeed, a happy coincidence that my sojourn here should synchronise with hers."

One look at her countenance was enough to convince me that she had contracted an instantaneous dislike for the young widow. One might ask, why? Well, I don't know. The ways of these women are inscrutable indeed!

"Shall we call on her?" I asked after a pause.

"For my part, I am not interested in young widows. If you are, you may go and pay homage to her." With that, she threw her head back and marched off into the house.

"Righto!" I said and straightaway went and knocked at the house opposite.

Thereafter everyday either Subhadra would send for me, or I would go to her of my own accord, on some pre-text or other and remain there for hours together. Soon it was evident that Susila was viewing with considerable alarm my frequent visits to, and my growing intimacy with, the young Subhadra. And, as days wore on, she actually began to complain about my protracted absence from home, but all to no purpose.

Before another week was over, matters had reached a climax. One day, it was close on midnight, when I turned in, after a prolonged stay at Subhadra's. Susila, as befits the dutiful wife that she is, had been patiently sitting up for me all through the long hours of the night and could easily discern, that the poor girl had been weeping her eyes out. But, she controlled herself admirably, when she heard me coming.

"Dear," Susila's voice had a ring of finality in it, "I am

afraid we shall have to cut short our stay here and return home."

"Return home? Why, it is barely a fortnight since we came here and Dr. Raj, you remember, advised me a full three months' stay."

"But I have changed my mind. It is imperative that I should return home at once. I want to see mother."

"But, what about my health? We are staying here for reasons of health, aren't we?"

"True, but you seem to be in the pink of health already. Nevertheless," she continued after a pause, "if you do want to stay on, for private reasons of your own, you are at perfect liberty to do so. At any rate, I am going, that much is certain. And, I dare say," she stopped short, fixed me with her tear-bedimmed eyes, and then added, "you won't miss me at all. You have got that hussy, Subhadra, to keep you company; and I wish you a jolly good time with her."

"Sh! Don't cast aspersions against respectable people. If you don't want to stay here we shall pack our things and return home."

And we did.

* * *

A few days later, I was having my usual nap in the afternoon, when Susila woke me up.

"That hussy has come down here!" Susila almost shrieked.

"Which hussy do you mean, my dear?"

"That disreputable widow—our Subhadra, who else? She has tracked you here all the way from B—It is really scandalous the way you are carrying on under my very nose. I thought you had better sense—"

(Continued on page 40)



A Newly-Wed Story

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

by M. V. Mathew

NEWLY-WEDS, I tell you, often do things queerly. At least, Spring—she is my bride—has been making things quite silly for me.

We have been married three months if an hour; and are happily spending our honeymoon. I think, Spring (she was a Miss Blemmey at college. Happen to know her?) is in her bath singing too happily, even for a newly-wed. The reason is, we have come to a point this morning; and her wardrobe has been enriched by another silkie-saree. And as I can spare some time (Spring takes a long time to come out of her bath-tub) and I hope you can, too, I shall begin with: "Yesterday it just happened to be a Sunday."

Now, I respect my own self enough to be careful to have a new suit on a Sunday. For one thing, you begin your week with your collar spotlessly clean. On that Sunday—i.e., yesterday—today being Monday—I just thought that a new tie would do no harm to me or my wife. So, when as I ransacked the chests of drawers and other pieces of furniture, I found not even the shadow of a good tie, you could guess why I grunted and even swore (Spring wasn't with me). But bless you, there it was—I mean, there it wasn't.

I looked at the drawers and other wood-pieces with a disparaging look, the fruit of expecting too much of them, poor creatures, and sighed. With it, I remembered the tie that I wore with pride on the day of my Committing It (marriage, in King's English). That

was, I mused, a goner of a tie. But where the deuce and where the vantage-striker and where the game and set was it now? Ah, in my trousseau—er, in that big old trunk! Which I opened with a flourish and a sigh reminiscent of the Goode olde Daye. Then I flung and tossed away one by one, knickers, bockers, blazers, garters, over-alls, Palm Beaches, pull-overs and pyjamas—all old ones, mind you. But no tie. With reinforced patience and dogged determination that Wellington would surely have envied, I went on untiringly ransacking the Big Trunk.

At last! It was perhaps my high "Eureka!" that brought Spring's "What's it, dear?" from the bedroom. But I had greater shocks waiting for me—worse things to come. I rescued my tie; but with an astonishment that you would not find in an earnest bridegroom, I pulled out from the bottom of the trunk—what do you think?—a blazing brand-new silkie-saree!

Now, that may not be at all queer to you. But I shall explain. Like all wives and unlike all brides that I have seen, soon after our marriage Spring began to coax, command and threaten me for sarees. Sarees and sarces. And I, the well-meaning bridegroom, served her with the Real Things—straight from Benares and such holy places. Even on the day preceding that Sunday, when I dug out my wedding-tie, she sat on my lap and on my cheek did slap, and asked so sweetly for a new silk saree. She had no other really good saree, she said, for the



Sabbath day coming. So I let myself brood over the problem for many a minute—This being the state of affairs, would you call me an unkind husband, if I grunted and flared up and hid the folded saree, vowing to chastise her?

I must tell you, here, that my wife is no nagging tigress or even a cat. She is just a 'dutiful wife', given a little to the Ways of the West. So there! Don't you smile, as I describe the scene of that Sunday Morning Breakfast. (We break fast twice: at Nine P.M. and at Three P.M.)

I produced the saree with dramatic suddenness; and showered on the surprised girl a torrent of weighty words, dilating upon the fact that money did not grow on palm trees or even mango trees, for that matter.

She took the saree from me slowly, after the effect of the first shock had worn off; and with a calmness



that would have perturbed a monk, replied in these measured words:

"Don't you mind this, Rosie; and don't you lose your head over me? I don't exactly know if the origin of cheques has been traced back to mango trees by Darwin. But I know that girls like to remember their wedding days. I know that English girls put away their wedding gowns in lavender, and confetti in cedar and sandalwood boxes. I know, too, that Mr. Rosinold Mathewine has carefully put away his wedding tie among his jolly old, jolly good things, and his wedding-stockings under the spring-mattress—"

I interrupted Spring with a spring from the chair. I walked up to her, and leaning forward, touched her cheek with my lips. Mr. Rosinold Mathewine then walked out of the room slowly, whistling the tune of "Don't you yearn for Spring to come—?"

THE END

SUSILA IS JEALOUS—(Continued from page 38)

"Tch! She might overhear you. But, how do you know that she is Subhadra?"

"Oh! I had seen her at B—once or twice."

"Did you speak to her to day?"

"Certainly not. No decent person would have anything to do with her."

"Come, come, this will never do. We shall go outside and I shall introduce you to her. It would be bad manners, you know, if I don't introduce you to her, after she has paid us a visit. Bare civility demands that much. Please don't say 'no', dearest," I pleaded.

After a good deal of coaxing and cajoling, she at last consented; and we both went outside. The formal introduction was soon over and it was Subhadra, who first broke the ice with a "How do you do?"

Susila started at the sound of her voice. She scratched her head and again scrutinized the face of her visitor and then—she laughed—laughed uproariously. The next instant Subhadra and I had joined her and all the three of us were soon convulsed with laughter.

"Oh! It is only your friend Mr. Seshadiri Iyer, after all," Susila managed to say at last. "The make-up is perfect. What a fool I was not to have seen through your deception even at B—!"

Merry's Filmfolio

Dhruva Vijayam & Sati Anasuya (Telugu)

Producers: East India Film Co., Calcutta

Showing At: The Minerva Talkies, Madras



Master Narasimhaswamy as Dhruva.



Miss Krishnavani as Anasuya

Minerva Talkies make their long-heralded bow to the public with this double attraction in Telugu. There is, in addition, a pictorial view of the Holy Benares which runs for about ten minutes. This gives glimpses of the Ganges, the various ghats—bathing and burning—and other places of interest to the visitor, including an enchanting garden.

This programme affords a delightfully novel experience to a palate jaded by an unrelieved monotony of films with Police Inspectors in cowboy-hats; boys who can't handle a peashooter decently, parading as gangsters and gunmen sporting ammunition belts with strings of cartridges. It is a great

relief that in this twin production there is no interpolation of any love-making scene in the exotic, Hollywood fashion. There is love in this show, however; but it is of an ennobling character.

These have, further, none of the ordinary trappings of film entertainment but have been made with artistry and skill and have been photographed and soundrecorded creditably.

Pullayya is a unique director. He showed his dexterity for wielding the director's wand in his very first talkie venture. His second attempt was crowned with unqualified success. Now comes this 'two-in-one'

attraction which proves conclusively that his capacity has not been over-rated.

Result: A pair of as fine pictures as have ever been made in Telugu. Neither is solemn, nor 'educating'. For Bharatavarsha, Anasuya is as great an ideal for wifely chastity as Dhruva is for his penance and achievement.

Short and sweet, the whole show has a sweep and gusto which is breath-taking and there is not the slightest trace of burlesque, nor a dull moment.

And for the first time in our pictures, a *Javali* composed by Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar, the greatest exponent of Karnatic music in the Tamil Nad, is sung by a dancer and in the most appropriate situation too!

The lilting music of Dhruva's *Bhajana-ghoshti* is soul-stirring. This alone should draw our religious-minded brethren in their thousands. In fact, I longed to be one among them. I'm not depraved: but it is the call it inspires.

So this is a 'must' show for everyone. If you want to get your money's worth, I give you a tip as to how to enjoy this best.

When you have succeeded in planting yourself on a 'Not-so-comfortable' seat after the brisk rigger at the ticket-window, relax. You will see Benares. Take in all the details for future guidance if you intend pilgrimaging. Then close your eyes—just for a minute—and imagine yourself sojourning the heavenly domains in the company of Narada, the master of ceremonies for both the pictures. Then open your eyes.

Dhruva and Uttama are in the midst of boys of their own age, in a *Bhajana*. Suruchi, Uttanapadha's second wife, dismisses them with an imperious command, clouts Dhruva on the head and pinches his ears for making her son Uttama one of his *Bhaja-ghoshti*. Dhruva goes to his father for solace. When he approaches him to share the caresses bestowed upon Uttama, Suruchi flares up. "You must be born again and as my son, to leap up to the laps of my lord!" says she tauntingly. His pride wounded, he looks up to his father to interfere. But the hen-pecked king remains irresolute.

"Dhruva," says Suruchi again, adding insult to injury, "my lord loves Sunithi no more! Go pray to, your' Lord Narayan to give you birth as my son."

Disconsolately, Dhruva leaves the palace. To his wailing mother Sunithi, he says, "Don't worry, mother. I shall pray and become king as *your* son." Out into the streets and thence to the woods he goes. Here Narada meets this wild child-Rajput and initiates him for the great penance.

Dhruva's *Tapas* is governed by extreme asceticism, all his wordly wants being shed one by one. After six months, on the prayer of the sufferers of the heavenly domains, Lord Narayan grants Dhruva his Darshan in all his glory.

"Dhruva," says Lord Narayan, "you shall be the highest among those celestials where as a standing monument of devotion, you will shine for ever!"

But Lord Narayan says this, unfortunately, in song!

The story of *Sati Anasuya* is much more intriguing. Ganga is visited by the sins of mortals who bathe in her. She is unable to free herself from their pursuit. She applies to Parvathi, Lakshmi and Saraswathi in turn for help but they all fail. They all go to Anasuya, the power of whose chastity immolates 'the sins' at her approach.

Miss Krishnaveni as Anasuya and Master Narasimhaswamy as Dhruva share the honours.

A distinctive feature of these two films is that a large number of youngsters act in *Dhruva* while *Sati Anasuya* is enacted entirely by boys and girls.

There is yet another reason why you should not miss this treat. You will see it in the middle *Sati Anasuya*—where comes the only *Natyan* scene.

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Pandit N. AMIRTANANDA
M. 2.29. North Mada St., Mylapore, MADRAS

Noor - E - Vatan (Hindi)

Producers: Ranjit Movietone Co.

Showing at: The Select Takies, Madras

This is a brave experiment on *Bengal Lancer* lines, and happily, a successful one. I saw this picture twice. The first time, I discovered how deceptive and misleading a judgment would be, which is based on the 'trailer' of a picture. I had made out the whole picture in my imagination after seeing its trailer earlier—as a sloppy, stunt-laden rigmarole. But actually, this is a swell story bubbling over with amusing situations and sparkling dialogue, with just enough fast action sandwiched in to make a well-rounded entertainment.

In these two hours of mingled drama, music, humour and spectacle, Ranjit Movietone have reached a peak of entertainment magnificence and intelligent handling of a subject that could have been vulgar and too lavish.

One of the best pictures in Hindi, and worth every minute of your time and admission price, this is a direct appeal to your intelligence, so engagingly refreshing that even the most sophisticated audience will titter with delight. It combines naive simplicity with clear, chiselled wisdom and is poignant without being sloppy.

The director has left nothing to the imagination. His artistic creation of impression gives this picture charm and originality.

The story, roughly, is about a ruler Tej Bahadur Singh who has been unjustly dethroned and imprisoned by Sujan Singh the Minister of the State and Virmal the Army Commander. His son Vijaykumar, the very specimen of idiocy, is enthroned and made to don the crown—dunce's crown so to speak. Mohan Singh is a subject who has lost his estate and his quest for it leads him, by a coincidence, to Malti, the daughter of Sujan Singh. He encounters Virmal, who has robbed him of his estate, and Sujan Singh who could have saved him. By another coincidence, the young man falls in love with Malti and most of the picture

focusses on Mohan's agony over the conflicting loyalties that torture his heart. He joins a loyalist party, whose leader has been executed, and leads them on to the final denouement. Virmal is executed as a traitor; Tej Bahadur Singh is restored to the throne and penitent Sujan Singh makes amends and Malti and Mohan Singh find their long-denied happiness.

There are a great many fine things about *Noor-E-Vatan* but it is memorable to me chiefly for the extraordinary performances given by E. Billimoria as the dethroned ruler's son and as Mohan Singh. It is a dual-role which requires tremendous emotional range and E. Billimoria accomplishes it perfectly, without strain, almost without raising his voice. He is the unremitting lover. Miss Madhuri is appealing as the 'striking' beauty, Malti, his love. Ishwerlal as Virmal is menacing and Ghory who acts as 'secretary' plays it with what looked like perplexity—another El Brendel.

Charlie portrays the henpecked Bahadur Singh, Mohan's brother, in an exceptionally realistic manner. He supplies the requisite comedy-relief.

Keki Bava as Sujan Singh maintains a high level of acting.

While on this 'Select' entertainment, a word about the theatres. Times out of number in other cinemas, I have trodden on people's feet—once on a small boy's feet as I later discovered painfully,—and actually sat on the lap of a lady, with, as you know, disastrous consequences. This is not only absurd but embarrassing.

Select is an honourable exception in this respect and the seats and stalls are attended to at the end of every show. If one cinema can have plenty of light and good sound, and excellent seating accommodation in neat and clean surroundings, why not others? Such attention elsewhere will undoubtedly aid the managements to swell the number of their patrons.

HOT FROM HOLLYWOOD

by Yankee

Leslie Howard Is Thro' With Hollywood

With the completion of *Romeo and Juliet*, Leslie Howard will leave Hollywood for New York where he will star in his own, long-awaited production of *Hamlet*. The stage cast is already chosen and the sets designed. These are not so much news as his decision to sail for home and England with his family, following the run of his stage-play. With his departure from New York, the British actor will be bidding a definite farewell to his Hollywood career. This will come as a disappointment to the fans of one of the finest and most respected actors the Hollywood screen has ever reflected.

"I am quitting," he says, "because I have never enjoyed acting and now I believe the time has come when I can leave it for other fields—for writing, particularly."

Faddist stars have had their day and waned into obscurity as box-office bets have flared and died on the screen. But that an artist of Leslie Howard's exceptional prestige to desert a career which his fine talent has dignified for so many years, strikes me as Shaw announcing to stop writing plays.

The only obstacle to his plans is Warners holding a contract on his services calling for several more pictures.

But why is he so casually dismissing a career which he himself has chosen? Here is what he says:

"I do not like motion picture acting; I cannot stand by it as it is successfully done and don't propose to do so either. *In short I do not like acting! It is a bore!* There is no scope for the creative artist in the camera actor. But, on the stage, once the curtain is lifted, the play is entirely in the hands of the performer. He may act freely, interpreting it in his own manner. But in Hollywood, the director is the creative artist, plans every scene, maps every move and directs every gesture. The actor becomes a mere puppet within chalked



Leslie Howard

camera lines. Now, about my biography, since I did not have the necessary time to prepare for play writing, I took a job in the theatre where I thought I might gain first-hand knowledge of play-construction. Unfortunately for me, I became an acclaimed actor by mistake before I could get out of it! And here I am!"

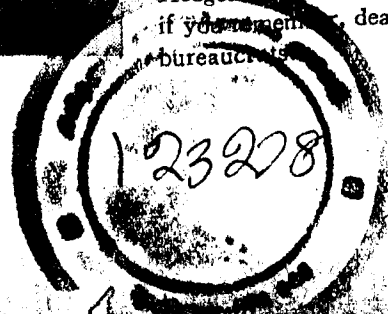
Shaf, Secretary To A Mouse!

That's what everyone in Hollywood calls Carloyn Kay Shafer, the world's only secretary to a mouse. Quite a task, personally answering Mr. Mickey Mouse's mail, for, by actual count, he received 30,000 letters in one month. Also autographs each picture of her boss. In her spare timeshe is confidential secretary to Walt Disney. When she started to work for Mickey she was the only girl in the organization. Did everything but sweep out. Although many now work under her she says, "Sometimes I almost wish we had stayed a small family." Born in Evansville, Ind., 27 years ago. Loves her family, her black dog, Skippy, and a black cat named Tommy Quarts. Never throws away anything she ever has liked. Likes to lie on the sand but can't swim much because of a "bumpy" heart. Dislikes dressing up and going to big parties. Claims that "If I had plenty of money I'd be well dressed in plain clothes." Has a mania for hand bags—owns more than a hundred but carries the same one for months at a time. Married to Frank E. Churchill, Walt Disney's musical supervisor, the young man who recently made *The Big Bad Wolf* and *The Three Little Pigs* famous. Their common interest is Mickey Mouse and any good music. They want to go to Europe some day so he can study and she can hunt hand bags.



Shaf

Now Russia has adopted Mickey Mouse, calling him something unpronounceable, which means Mickey Hedgehog. Mickey's first adventure, if you remember, dealt with foreign bureaucrats.



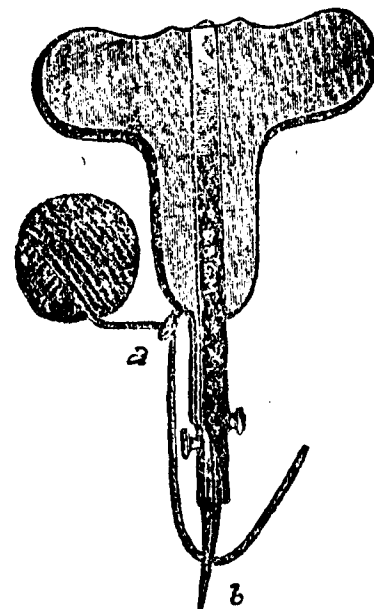
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This latest invention—The Carpet Fairy will help him do it!

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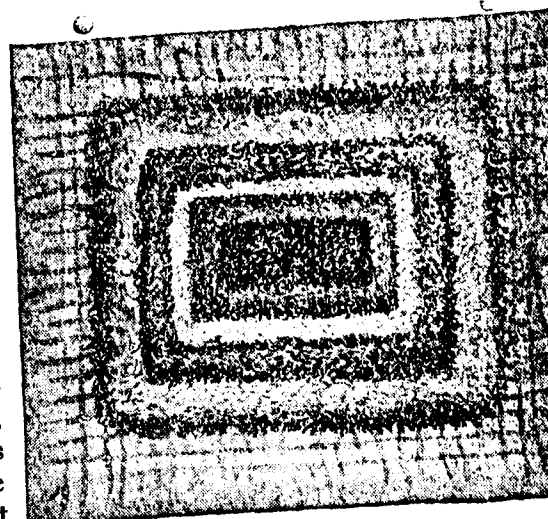
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