

MERRY MAGAZINE

2667
: JYESHTA :
(Mr. SUBBALAKSHMI)

: ARTIJI :
(MAROONED)

EMBUSQUE
(MONEY FOR NOTHING)

: ROLAND :
(SUDDEN WEALTH)

NARAYANAN
(THE GODDESS IN EDEN)

Vol IV No. 22

30th May 1936

ANNAS TWO

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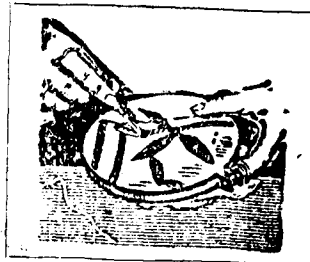
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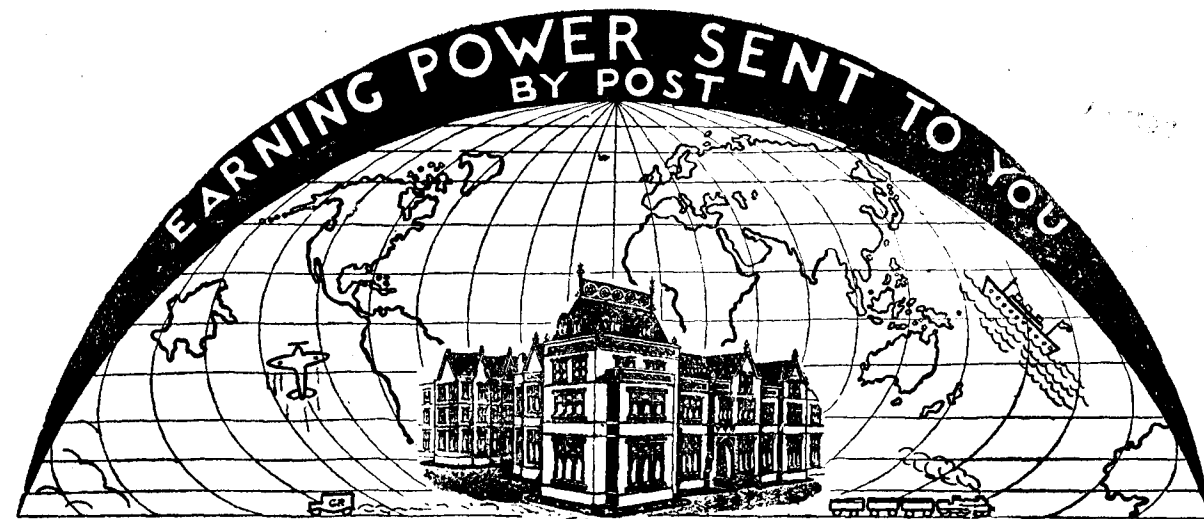
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OPEN LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Sir or Madam,—When your children first arrived they brought with them a wonderful lot of sunshine. Later, you became proud of the intelligence they displayed, but, still later, you became anxious as to what would become of them in the future. Perhaps you were anxious when you visualised them as grown men and women. Even with plenty of money it is not always easy to select the right career, and a parent is sometimes inclined to ask advice of some relative, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred that relative knows nothing at all about the possibilities of employment. Why not let me relieve you of some of your anxieties? In fact, why not let me be their Father? We do not profess to act as an employment agency, but the nature of our business compels us to keep an eye upon the class of men and women that are wanted and who wants them. There are some people who manufacture an article, and put it on the market to sell. We do not do that, we work in exactly the opposite direction. We find out what employers want and we train our students to fill those jobs. We have to be experts in the matter of employment, progress and prosperity. If you have any anxieties at all as to what your sons or daughters should be, write to me, or better still, let them write to me personally—Fatherly Advice Department—and tell me their likes and dislikes, and I will give sound practical advice as to the possibilities of a vocation and how to succeed in it.

Yours sincerely,

J. Bennett

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The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



Madras, May 30, '36

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Diana Don

★

Embusque

★

P. P. Samuel

★

G. K. Pillai

★

All Usual Features

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

A Reuter message from Addis Ababa states that there have been some executions of those found guilty of brigandage.

We hasten to assure the public that Marshal Badoglio is still safe.

Answering a question in the House of Commons, Mr. Baldwin declared that any attempt at interference in the affairs of Egypt by any power would be regarded as an unfriendly act to be repelled by all the means at their command.

So far, this has caused some uneasiness only in—Egypt!

Let us hope, in such a contingency, that Britain will act through the League of Nations.

Referring to the conversion of the Depressed Classes to Christianity, a missionary, speaking in London said that prayers offered for India for a century were being answered.

Mainly, we think, in the negative!

Sir Thomas Inskip announces the appointment of Sir T. Beveridge as chairman of a sub-committee to investigate the question of food in war-time.

It is practically certain that the report will also deal with Beveridge!

Mr. Churchill declares that he is not satisfied with the activities

of the Board presided over by Sir Thomas Inskip.

It remains to be seen how much longer Mr. Baldwin resists the pressure to include him in the Cabinet.

Mr. J. H. Thomas has resigned from the Cabinet, because his name has been 'bandied about' in the course of the budget leakage enquiry.

It is not yet quite clear where the unfortunate 'aitch' occurred!

Accepting his letter of resignation, the Premier is reported to have written to him, saying: 'I should have done the same thing in your place.'

This is regrettably ambiguous: but we can only hope he didn't mean to refer to the negotiations for writing his autobiography!

It is now explained that Dum-Dum bullets were exported to Abyssinia before 1913 for big game hunting, and not for military purposes.

After all, the Italians must admit that they are not small fry!

It is revealed that there was a 50% increase in the export of Japanese cotton yarn to England in 1935.

At this rate, it looks as if Japan might even carry coal to Newcastle!

Italian newspapers assert that Italy will not yield an inch.

Specially, after having gone through an 'ell'!

In the course of a speech at a reception in his honour, Lord Willingdon assured his audience that the reforms will be worked.

At any rate, the assurance has been highly over-worked.

Mr. Shroff of Bombay claims that Bombay merchants have done a lot for the Congress.

But he doesn't mention how much they have done out of the Congress.

Rao Bahadur Sambanda Mudaliar says that Madras films are the worst in the world.

We shall no more hesitate to say that the film version of *Manohara* is just bad!

He further said that it would take a long time for them to attain equal status with North Indian films.

But, unfortunately, he didn't say whether it was worth while!

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has written to the Congress President saying that he cannot usefully join the newly formed 'Civil Liberties Union.'

Apparently, he prefers to remain uselessly out!

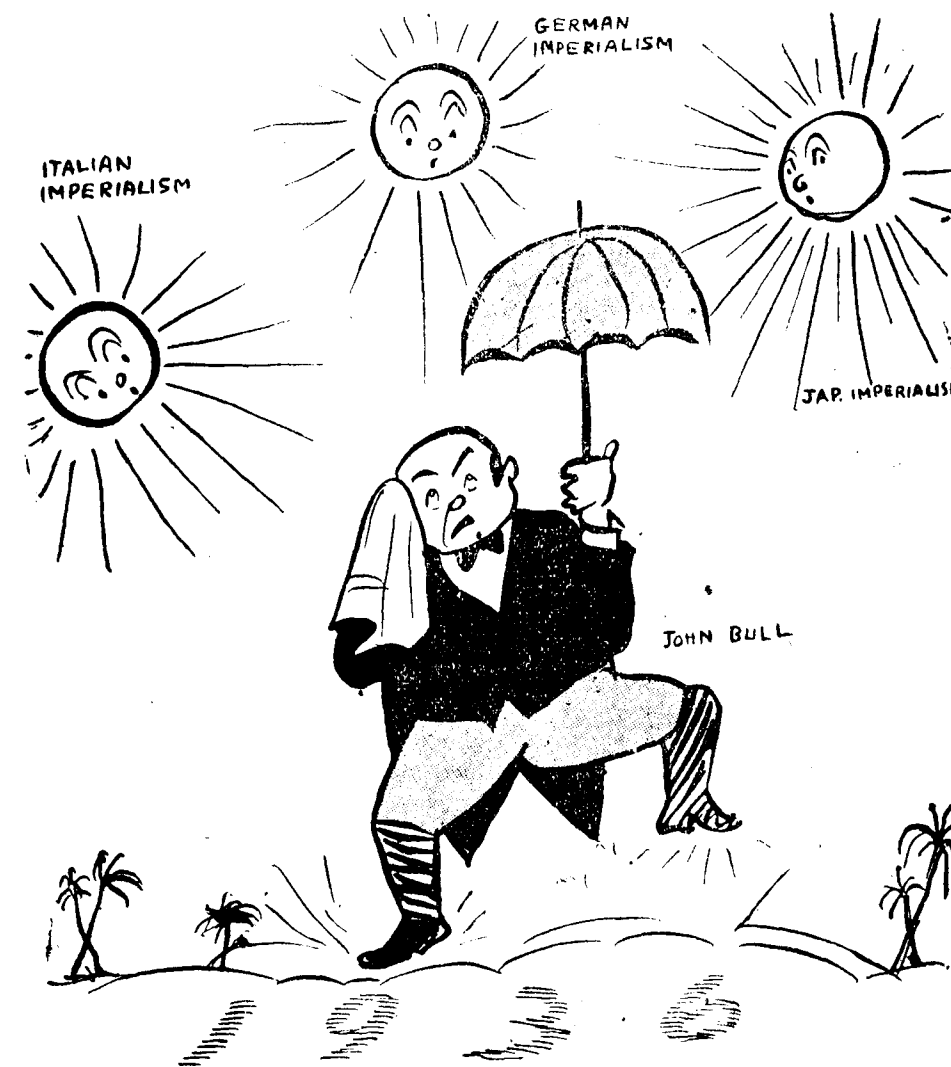
The Wagging of the Tail

The British Premier has given the world a striking example of the truth of the remark that 'circumstances alter cases'. It will be remembered that Britain used the League of Nations as an effective support for her own inaction during the Ethiopian War, and professed her unalterable determination to act only through the League, and not alone. Now she has issued a warning to the world that the British lion has only been simulating sleep, and that it is ready to spring up again, League or no League, to preserve its own possessions. The simplicity of Mr. Baldwin's declaration is disarming to a degree. Britain will protect Egypt against the upstart, imperialistic designs of Italy. 'Collective Security' was the slogan when the victim was any one else, including the European powers. But Britain against the rest of the world, if British interests are affected. This throws a revealing light on the British attitude to the League of Nations. It is vitiated by mental reservations that will sooner or later be nakedly manifest to the world at large. This championing of Egypt's independence would have carried a little more conviction if Egyptian national leaders had given expression to it. Unfortunately for Europe, and fortunately for Britain, international jealousies are so potent that Britain can continue to reap the full advantage of both her proximity to the continent and her splendid isolation from it. Meanwhile, the situation created by the Italian adventure is still obscure. Ethiopia is still the scene of a struggle, which has now entered the diplomatic phase, and two empires are now grappling in secret.

The Civil Liberties Union

Pessimists might have predicted that any move calling for union among Indian political parties was foredoomed to failure. We are not so much surprised at the *non-possumus* attitude adopted by the Liberals as by the degree of success which has attended Jawaharlal's efforts. It is a good thing that prominent Muslims have blessed the movement, in spite of their dissociation from the Congress. It was left to the Hindu moderates to give an exhibition of melancholy meanness of spirit. Political differences are not more pronounced elsewhere than in England: and yet it is possible in that country for Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists to stand on the same platform on a number of non-political issues. The Liberal leaders, headed by Sir T. B. Sapru have given a signal proof of their illiberal outlook, in not only declining support, but in going out of the way to indulge in irrelevant strictures on the President's political views. We dare say there is much glee in bureaucratic circles over this spirit of non-co-operation among the Liberals. For our part, we do not think their refusal is a calamity. Indeed, we feel that these disappointed egoists seized upon the opportunity afforded by the President's invitation to vent their spleen, and to give themselves the luxury of a temporary publicity. Jawaharlal has rightly said that the Fascist mind sets no store by liberty; and notwithstanding all that has been said against Russia, it is undeniable that there is greater affinity between Socialism and freedom, than between Fascism and freedom. The newly formed Union, if it does nothing else, will at least familiarise the Indian mind with the first requisite of ordered political growth, and how much it is hindered by the government established by law in the land!

1936—A trying time for John!



John Bull: Godzooks! It's passing hot.

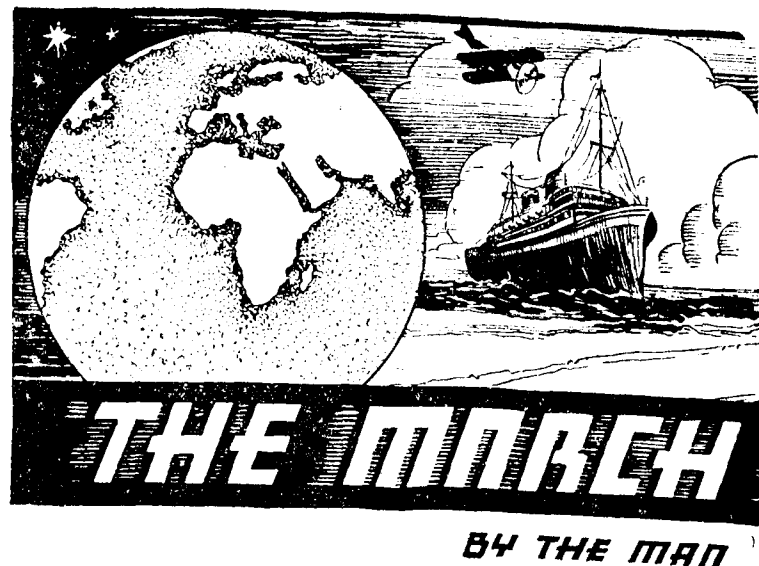
In his autobiography, extracts from which appear in the *Hindustan Times*, Jawaharlal has something to say about the late Motilal Ghosh, who edited the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* so brilliantly. Jawaharlal and Gandhiji visited the venerable Editor who was lying on his death-bed. "Motilal Babu blessed Gandhiji and his movement, and he added that, as for himself, he was going away to other regions, and wherever these might be, he had one great satisfaction. He would be somewhere where the British Empire did not exist. At last he would be beyond the reach of the Empire."

I wonder why Motilal Ghosh was so bitter about this Empire of ours. To begin with, it looks imposing on the map of the world. Wherever you go in the Empire you have got Sun, because the Sun Never Sets On The British Empire. Every race in the world is represented in it. Every produce with commercial possibilities is found in it. It is the only place in the whole world where jails are built like millionaires' palaces. (Vide Sir Henry Craik's impressions of the Andamans recently broadcast.)

That death-bed wish of Motilal Ghosh was futile anyhow. He will have met the same chaps in the astral plane with whom he came into sharp contact in the Empire down below.

"Srimathi Balasaraswathi came, saw and conquered Bombay by a wonderful display of the nautch," says a correspondent. Miss Leila Row, the great tennis star was so much impressed by the performance of the South Indian danseuse that she shook hands with her and invited Srimathi Balasaraswathi to give her some lessons in "Tillana" steps.

As it is, we are all crazy about Miss Leila Row's prowess on the tennis court. Imagine her weirding her racket accompanied by the



soul-lifting movements prescribed by Kathakali and Bharatha Natya. She will take India and the world by storm. I am looking forward to the day when this shall be a *fait accompli*.

Jawaharlal's advocacy of Socialism as the only solvent of our ills is giving the business bosses of Bombay a definite pain in the neck. Some twenty of these oofy gentlemen gathered together and released what they are pleased to call a 'manifesto', purporting to show that Socialism is unsuited to Indian conditions. The darling hypocrites! Are there any sort of conditions anywhere in the wide world which these dear millionaires are prepared to recommend as suited to a Socialist programme? But the point is not that. The *Madras Mail*, backing up the Bombay Boys, says at the end of a beautiful editorial: "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

So, a Socialist means a fellow without a soul? I don't know exactly how many chaps are living in Russia. They must be in any case more than the population of Madras. All these

gents have lost their souls. A staggering spectacle! I wonder if God gives duplicate souls, like the insurance companies, who replace your lost policy for a small fee. As for myself, anybody is welcome for my soul, which is not a bad-looking thing as souls go. I don't need the whole world. A small part of it will do, say ten thousand square miles of arable land, with a couple of lakes for boating in and half-a-dozen velvet hills to gladden my rustic heart.

If the Nazarene were alive to-day, these people would not be quoting Him so bravely as they are doing now.

Rosita Forbes says that in the jute mills of Calcutta she has seen women working seventeen hours a day. On the other hand, says this widely travelled lady, in Central Asia no woman works more than seven hours.

The contrast suggested is unkind to the bosses of Bengal jute. The fact is that long working hours don't suit the climate of Central Asia. The climate is rotten for one thing; and there are unlovely smells hanging about. Whereas here in Calcutta, the climate is remarkably salubrious, the jute



mills are lovely to look at, and above all there is a heavenly smell about jute in the raw. You'd simply hug a bale of jute if you see one. It is a wonder how the women in these jute mills tear themselves away from their work. Once I went inside a jute mill. I was so entranced at the healthy smells inside, at the sheer beauty of the place, that I refused to come out. The management gently dragged me away with a steam roller.

The South Indian Chamber of Commerce sent some good suggestions to the Government for the improvement and better maintenance of the Buckingham Canal. The Chamber say that the banks of the Canal might be strengthened by stone rivetment. They also say that a uniform depth of water should be maintained in the Canal. Good suggestions both. But what about the great smell of the Canal? I admit, of course, that the smell of the Buckingham Canal is one of the landmarks of the City of Madras. It lends a distinctive charm to the City. Many a visitor to the City has carried away pleasant memories of this unduplicatable smell. Nobody would be more sorry than I to see this smell liquidated, if I may borrow a word

from our Socialist friends. Unfortunately the majority think otherwise. They don't like the smell. In this democratic age, the will of the majority prevails. If they are thinking of deodorising the Buckingham Canal, I beg the Government on behalf of the voiceless minority to fence away a small part of the Canal near Triplicane and guard it against the inroads of modernism. If the budgetary position of the Province does not allow of any such luxury, they may at least preserve in the Museum a generous quantity of the nice green water of the Buckingham Canal which I and my friends love like a brother.

The Hindu Reformer chaps appear to be labouring under a considerable misapprehension about how the Harijans came into being. To show to these misguided reformers in particular and to the world in general that the Harijans have no right to enter Hindu temples, Mr. P. R. Tirumala Ayyangar, Secretary, All India Brahmana Mahasabha, wrote a beautiful article in the *Dharmarajya*, which throws a flood of blinding light on this dark question of Harijans and Temple Entry.

Mr. Ayyangar says:

"All *shastras* show the existence of four castes...each caste must marry within itself ...The offspring of the marriage of a higher caste male with a female of a lower caste, go by the name of *Anuloma*. The lower caste male was not permitted to marry a female of the higher caste. The offspring of such a marriage are known by the name of *Pratilomas*. The term 'chandala' refers to the offspring of a *Sudra* born to a Brahmin woman."

So, gentlemen, is the whole blamed question in a nutshell (though it is rather a big nut) for you. Get this straight—a chap born of a union between a high female and a low male is called a *chandala*, an *untouchable* and, latterly, a Harijan. And serve him right, too.

However, a reformer friend says that he can't help feeling that there is something fishy about this reasoning. Now (he said) let us argue it from a homely angle, which need not necessarily be an Eternal Triangle.

Now take one tola of 24 carat gold, says he, and call it a high female. It costs about Rs. 35. Of course he means the tola, not the female. Take a tola of copper and call it a low man. This costs about three pies or, to put it spectacularly, about 1/1344 the cost of gold, weight for weight. Melt the gold and copper and hold the alloy. Don't hold it, though, before it has cooled off. Now this alloy, says my friend, is not pure gold. Neither is it base copper. It is hundreds of times better than copper. Similarly, concludes this chap, a boy born to a high female and low male, is not a high man, admitted; but he is much higher than the low man from whom he came, so why call him bad names? "What do you think of it?" he beamed.

I thought it was damn silly, but didn't tell him so. What do you think?



The giraffe, we are told, has larger, softer and more lustrous eyes than the famed gazelle. Still when writing ballads to a lady's eyebrows and contiguous scenery, it's safer to stick to the gazelle.

—Arkansas Gazette

Plumber (arriving late): How is it?

Happy Husband: Not so bad. While we were waiting for you to arrive, I taught my wife how to swim.

—Penn. Punch Bowl

"My wife writes me that she's all unstrung. What shall I do?"

"Send her a wire."

—Maine Stem

She: And why do you want me to take violin lessons, kind sir?

He: Forsooth, to give thy chin a rest, garrulous maid!

—Ohio Miss You Tonight

"To what do you attribute your remarkable health?" asked the interviewer.

"Well," replied the G. O. M. of the village, "I reckon I got a good start on most people by bein' born before germs were discovered, thereby havin' less to worry about."

Vancouver Province

Into the court they marched a man who had all the ear-marks of a professional tough guy. This chap was as desperate-looking as any gorilla you've ever seen.

The magistrate looked down at the surly prisoner. "Well," he asked, "guilty or not guilty?"

The prisoner scowled.

"Figure it out yourself," he snarled. "That's what yer gettin' paid for!"

—New York American

A farmer who was witness in a pig-stealing case seemed to be stretching a point or two in favour of the accused.

"Do you know the nature of an oath?" the prosecuting attorney roared.

"Sure."

"Do you know you are not to bear false witness against your neighbour?"

"I'm not bearin' false witness against him. I'm bearin' false witness for him."

—Wall Street Journal

"Mary, why didn't you wash that window?" demanded the lady of the house.

Mary: "Sure and I did wash it on the inside, madam, so that we could look out, but I thought I wouldn't wash the outside so those curious people next door couldn't look in."

—Cash Year

"Gimme dose keys!"

"Vot keys?"

"Dose whiskies!"

—Iowa Dollar

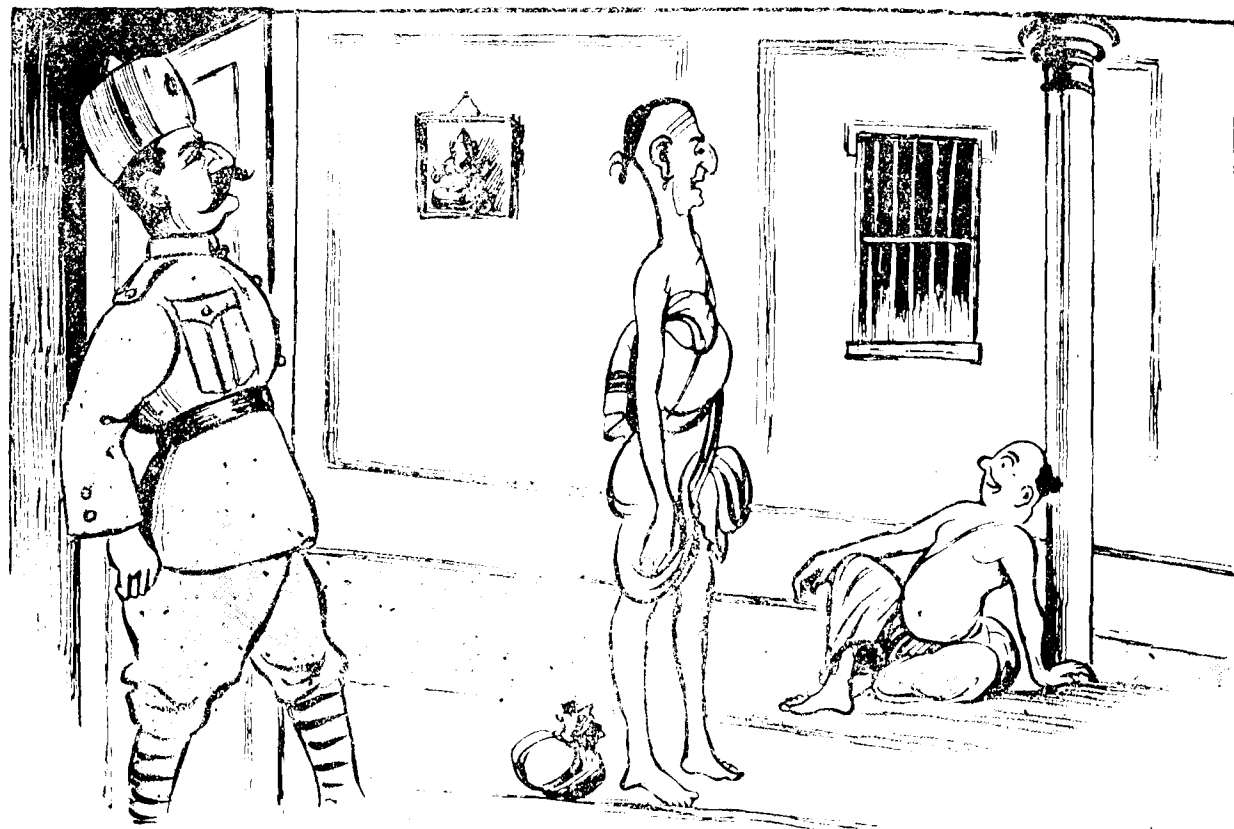
Suitor: Where can I get hold of your sister?

Little Bob: I dunno—she's ticklish!

—Dartmouth Wash



"Wherever I go my face is my fortune."



Mr. Subbalakshmi

by Jyeshta

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

PROGRESS is the law of life. Ramapuram progressed westward. One fine thing about Ramapuram Extensions was, it conformed rigidly to modern ideas of town-planning. So that no one house leaned on its adjacent neighbour for love or support. The buildings were well-spaced. Each house sported a garden, or an apology for one.

In a small bungalow in this Extensions lived Mrs. Subbalakshmi and her husband. I have given Mrs. Subbalakshmi the place of honour and thereby committed a solecism in the proprieties advisedly. By dint of industry and an indomitable will, Mrs. Subbalakshmi ruled the house and her husband, with the cool cheek of any three dictators of Europe. She was so much in the foreground and her husband was so much in the background that a great joke was born of it. The Extensions bestowed the name of Mr. Subbalakshmi Ayyar on Mrs. Subbalakshmi's husband. The

name ran the daily rounds so tenaciously that people nearly forgot the original name of Mr. Ayyar. Let it therefore suffice for the purposes of this story that we call the hero (for such was Mr. Subbalakshmi Ayyar) by the name by which he was popularly known.

Mrs. and Mr. Subbalakshmi were away in the south attending a wedding, so their bungalow was locked up.

It was midsummer. What was worse, it was mid-day. A tall man with a gentle face sat under a small mango tree which was in full bloom, in Mrs. Subbalakshmi's compound. He was looking sadly alternately at the deserted street and the strong padlock with which the front door of the bungalow was secured.

Presently a small man, so meek in appearance that a passing goat checked its progress and looked at him in great astonishment, approached the mango tree,

He said: "Excuse me, sir," to the big man. Having said which he sat by his side in an apologetic manner. The large man looked keenly at the new arrival through drooping eyes. He was evidently satisfied with the scrutiny, for he sighed happily, though the sad expression did not leave his face.

"Very hot, sir," said the little man.

"Yes, dammit, very hot...Blast that woman!"

The small man looked this way and that for the woman whom the tall man wanted to blast. Not finding any woman within sight, he asked: "What woman, sir?"

"What woman? My wife, of course. Forgot to give me the keys of the house. Here I am, sitting in this horrid sun, and damn me if I know how to get inside, except by breaking the door."

"This house belongs to you, sir?" asked the small fellow.

"Of course." The tall one looked rather suspiciously at his questioner. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing, sir. I thought a lady called Mrs. Subbalakshmi lived here."

"Of course, Mrs. Subbalakshmi lives in this house." Once again the tall fellow looked keenly at the small chap. "I am her husband."

"Oh!" said the small man.

"What do you mean by 'Oh'?" demanded the tall man rather rattled.

"Nothing, sir, nothing," said the small man meekly.

"Idiotic habit, saying things you don't mean," growled the big man.

The two sat on in silence, the big one in a pet and the small one in a meek attitude and very much ill at ease.

"Look here, you!" snapped the tall man, suddenly. "Why are you hanging around here?"

"I walked some distance, sir. I am only resting under the shade. Shall I go away?"

"Oh no. You are welcome...Ah, woman!" The big man glared at his locked bungalow.

"You mean Mrs. Subbalakshmi, sir?" asked the meek man.

"Yes. And don't ask me any stupid questions."

"Sir, I..." began the little fellow.

"What now?"

"I have got a bunch of keys with me. I don't think any of them would fit that lock, but may I try them for you?"

"Ah, why didn't you tell me you had a bunch of keys? Do try them."

They both went to the door. The small man produced a bunch of assorted keys from his pocket and began to try one after another on the padlock. Not one of them worked the lock. Only one remained to be tried. The big man was cursing. The small man was perspiring. He applied the last key and, after considerable fumbling, got it inside the hole. He turned it gingerly. Ah, something was happening at last! The lock came undid.

The tall man flung the door open. "Thank you, stranger," he said kindly. "You don't know what a kind deed you did today!"

"Please don't mention it, sir," protested the small man. "It is nothing. Good-bye, sir."

"Won't you come in and rest for a while?" asked the big man, holding the door open, invitingly.

"Thank you very much, sir. But I must be going." The small man smiled his meek smile and went his way.

Left alone, the big man's gentle face turned into a grim face. He opened room after room venting his spleen on his absent spouse by breaking open drawers, prising up trunks and boxes and so forth. Half an hour later, he returned to the hall bearing a small collection of sundry silver vessels and odd pieces of jewellery, neatly rolled up in a large towel. He advanced to the middle of the hall. Arrived there, he had a funny sensation that he was not alone in the hall. He turned to the right. There was nobody that way. He turned to the left. There was somebody sitting on a mat, leaning against the wall. It was the small man who did that kind deed for the big man. He was grinning meekly.

"You!" said the tall man.

"Yes, sir, I," he smiled still more meekly.

"Who the devil are you?" There was a scared look in the big man's face.

"I—er—I—" stuttered the little fellow apologetically.

A discreet cough came from the direction of the door leading into the front garden. The tall man hove round like a beast at bay. A large policeman smiled benignly at him.

"There is the burglar, policeman!" said the little man. "The fellow was telling me that my wife was his wife. The rascal! I came away from the wedding a day in advance of my wife."

THE END



Auntie J.J.

Gabitha Gumboil In India

(Concluded)

What you have read so far: My friend Gabitha who marries a Scotchman, wants to have a peep at India which she owns jointly with the rest of the population in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Whenever she evinces a desire to give India a look, her husband has a fit. Poor Gabitha wrings her hands and exclaims: "Oh, why must I go and marry a Scot!" I console her by saying, "Oh, Gabitha darling, there is always a silver lining." The silver lining materialises in the quiet death of Mr. Gumboil. Gabitha comes to India in her widow's weeds. She mistakes the Taj Mahal Hotel for the Taj of Agra. Later she kisses one of the bulls presented by Lord Linlithgow to the Delhi Pinrapole. The bull appreciates the gesture and licks Gabitha's unpowdered nose.

Now Read on:

The other bull looked disappointed, naturally. Which bull would not? It looked reproachfully at Gabitha. Gabitha blushed, and made amends. She kissed the other bull too. The other bull smiled happily.

"How about lunch, Auntie?" said Gabitha. "Take me to a posh restaurant, will you dear?"

I took her to the Mugwump Restaurant, famed far and wide for its *pilav*. Dear Gabitha enjoyed every morsel of her *pilav*. At last the waiter brought the bill. Gabitha glanced at the total and gasped. We only ate the *pilav*, and the bill contained two more items which we did not eat. The bill was for Rs. 15.

"But this is brigandage!" said Gabitha to me.

"Oh, no. That is how they run restaurants here," I explained.

"Do, they? Very well. Auntie, have you heard the joke about the Jew and his wife?"

"No. Was it a good one?"

"You wait and watch, my dear."

She asked the waiter to tell the manager of the restaurant to step up to our table. The Manager came and smiled respectfully.

"Look here," said Gabitha icily. "You have overcharged us. We didn't touch the other dishes at all."

"But, memsahib, they are there for you to eat." The manager smiled deprecatingly.

"Oh, in that case, here you are," said Gabitha handing him seven rupees.

"Memsahib will please notice that the bill is for Rs. 15," said the manager.

"I know it. That eight rupees is for kissing Auntie, you know," Gabitha smiled sweetly.

I blushed, of course.

"But, memsahib, I—er—did not kiss Auntie!" protested the poor fellow.

"It is not my fault, is it? She is here, isn't she?" Gabitha sailed out of the restaurant and I followed her.

★

Kandasami (Park Town): "I am told that crows recognise one another even if there is a distance of two furlongs between each. They must have a very fine sight."

It is not exactly their sight, Kandasami. Crows don't borrow money from one another.

* * *

Sarojini (Vizagapatam): "How old are the stars, exactly?"

Well, my dear, I'll get into trouble with the Hollywood colony if I answer that question. Ask me another.

* * *

Champakavalli (Kumbakonam): "Can you give me an example of the term 'contempt of court'?"

Certainly, dear. Blow your nose on a tennis court. Or make faces at the umpire when a match is in progress.

Upright (Udayagiri): "Whatever happens we must not stray from the straight and narrow path."

Yes, particularly if we are walking on a tight rope.

* * *

Honest (Ratnagiri): So you always call a spade a spade. That is a brave thing to do. But take a tip. When you speak of a red-headed girl, call the red 'auburn'.

* * *

Nalini (Dacca): "My husband says that he is familiar with all the major questions awaiting solution in the world."

Great! But does he know all the answers, too?

* * *

Lover (Saidapet): "Miss XY kissed me and I kissed her back. Golly, was it a kiss!"

That was execrable taste, kissing her back. Why didn't you kiss her lips?

* * *

Businessman (Broadway): "What can be the reason for these frequent traffic jams?"

Traffic, of course.

* * *

Economist (Presidency College): "If a fellow has only Rs. 5-2-11, it is obvious he cannot spend Rs. 7-8-0."

Oh yes, he can, by borrowing the difference.

* * *

Democrat (Allahabad): "What happens if a Dictator dies?"

They either bury him or burn him up.

* * *

Proud Mother (Almora): "What becomes of the home without children?"

It becomes clean and tidy and restful.

* * *

Ramasami (Mambalam): "They call me an old fool at the club."

You are not as young as you were, you know.

* * *

Disgusted (Bombay): "All the employees in my office are either knaves or fools."

I am sorry to hear it, dear sir. Which are you, by the way?

The Goddess In Eden

by V. V. Narayanan

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

1st May 1936.

Dear Ram,

So you have done well in your final examinations and have added "B.A. (Hons)" to your name? And pray what are you going to do after that? Paint 'B.A. (Hons)' on your poker face and strut the streets? You and your idiotic pacific views! When I offered to get you into the Army four years ago, you said that your idea of a good life was not poking people with bayonets and making holes in them with machine-gun fire. But your confounded pacifism has not hesitated to pick holes in my pocket.

I wonder why my sainted sister ever produced such a nincompoop as you! Ram, I am proud of you. You are the first in the family to have had a college education and come out of it with flying colours. How I wish your poor mother and father were alive!

You want a couple of hundred rupees, do you? Not another pie, you varlet. I have spent thousands on you already. What do you think I am, a pagoda tree?

But young man, why are you dodging your old uncle? You did not come home for the Christmas holidays. Dammit, I did everything to you, except suckle you. Show yourself here soon, boy. You are the only consolation left to me in this world. Here is a cheque for Rs. 200. Come home soon.

Love,
UNCLE.

Harding Hostel,
Madras.
4th May 1936.

Dear Uncle,

You are my—now, what the heck is its name? Oh yes, *kamadhenu*. *Kamadhenu*, if I have understood the *puranas* aright, is a cow. Naturally it is feminine gender. Therefore you may resent my comparison of you with a woman, I mean with a cow. But look at the beauty of the metaphor, uncle! You will find me in Hyderabad exactly this day week. The

tennis tournaments are going hot. I am all worked up over them. I don't know what I shall do, now that my schooling is over. But I am not worrying. What are uncles for if they don't look after their nephews, especially if the nephews are orphans? There is one job awaiting every young man for the mere asking. With your permission, old sir, I think I shall become a husband. I am told that husbanding a woman is an exacting and exciting job.

Meet me next week at the station with the best band in Hyderabad and flowers and things. I suppose you can't manage to persuade the municipality to present me with an address.

Cheerio.

Ramarao.

Hyderabad,
9th May 1936.

Dear Ram,

Your trunks and things have arrived. Don't come to Hyderabad. I have changed my mind. We are spending the summer in Bhimlipatam. You know I have been negotiating the purchase of a bungalow there. The property was duly conveyed to me last month. It is a small red brick bungalow commanding a glorious view of the sea. It is called "Eden". I have sent the cook and your things to Bhimlipatam. Go straight there. I shall be joining you in a week, or earlier.

Love,
UNCLE.

"Eden" (? * !)
9th May 1936.

Dear Uncle,

I thought old men like you had a more sober outlook on life. I blush at your ill-timed levity.

Where is the cook? And my things? I am living here like Robinson Crusoe, only less comfortably, and there is no Friday either.

So you call this "Eden" eh! I will tell you what it is. It is hell! It is a small red brick thing all right, but most of the bricks are gone to Valhalla.

There is not much of a roof. It looks as if this property of yours had stood an aerial bombardment.

I am sleeping on the mouldy floor. I am not lonely, thank you. About five hundred bats are keeping me company in the nights.

There is a beautiful bungalow opposite with a fine garden. It is occupied by a retired deputy collector, a Mr. Subbayya Nayudu. His one and only daughter Susila (unmarried, and uncle, what a girl!) took pity on me. She is sneaking eatables from the kitchen for me, when her mamma is not looking. But what I want to know is how long am I going to subsist on contraband food! I have not got any money, not a pie. Do come soon.

Ram.

Three days later uncle stepped out of a taxi outside the dilapidated bungalow. His nephew who saw the taxi from a shutterless window ran out shouting: "Thank God! Here you are at last!"

Uncle looked the young man up and down for full two minutes.

"What are you doing in this horrid hole?" he asked none too cordially.

"That is rich," gasped Ramarao. "This is your blessed "Eden"! Commands a glorious view of the sea!"

The old man did not notice the sarcasm. "But you priceless ass, this is not "Eden"! It is half a mile higher up the road," roared Uncle.

"What! Not "Eden"!"

"Certainly not. Who was pulling your leg? You are a fine B. A. (Hons.), aren't you?"

But the nephew was not hearkening to his uncle. He was watching grimly a beautiful girl who was mooning about in the garden opposite. Brushing aside his uncle, Ramarao went to her. The girl's mother and father were sitting on the veranda, watching the young man amusedly.

"Hi, look here, girl," said Ramarao. "Why did you tell me that confounded hole was "Eden"?"

The girl met his gaze boldly. "Why did you say when you wanted to be directed to "Eden" that I was a 'sylvan goddess?' A man who believes that thing to be "Eden" will believe anything."

If that girl were a man, Ramarao would have hit him on the nose. The girl being a girl, he hugged her and kissed her on the lips, before she

knew what had happened.

Meanwhile the girl's parents and uncle come on the scene. "That is right, go ahead," said uncle.

"Go ahead?"

"Yes," explained uncle, "that is your future wife. I fixed up the match last month. All the three were having a joke on you. Serve you right!"

THE END



Fun For All



The minister met a game-keeper.

"Come, my good fellow, why is it I never see you at church?"

"Well, sir, I don't want to make your congregation smaller."

"How is it?"

"Well, sir, you see, if I came to church, the rest of the parish would go poaching!"

Mother:—Why are you making faces at that bulldog?

Small Child:—He started it.

"Excuse me," said the bright young man, opening the door of the crowded railway carriage, "but is the ark full?"

"It is," replied a passenger, "all but the ass. Come in!"

Merchant:—Leave your sample-case at the door.

Traveller:—Why?

Merchant:—Otherwise I shall have to throw it out as well!

"I'm going to give you this pig."

"Thank ye, sir. Sure, it's just like you."

"Before you married me, you said I was beautiful!"

"Yes, and the funny thing is I meant it!"

Bob: Wanna play croquet?

Blois: How dare you! You know it's wicket!

Countryman: Single return, please.

Booking Clerk: Where to?

Countryman: Why, here, of course! Where else could I return to?

City Fellow (pointing to haystack): What kind of a house is that?

Country Yokel: That ain't house, that's hay.

City Fellow: Go on! You can't fool me; hay doesn't grow in a lump like that.

He was holding the party spellbound with tales of his travels.

"The real thrill was when I made sixty cannibals run!" he said.

"How did you do that?" inquired a listener anxiously.

"I ran, and they all ran after me!"

An Irish ostler was sent to the stable to bring out a traveller's horse. Not knowing which of the two strange horses in the stalls belonged to the traveller, and wishing to avoid the appearance of ignorance in his business, he saddled both the animals, and brought them to the door. The traveller pointed out his own horse, saying, "That's my horse."

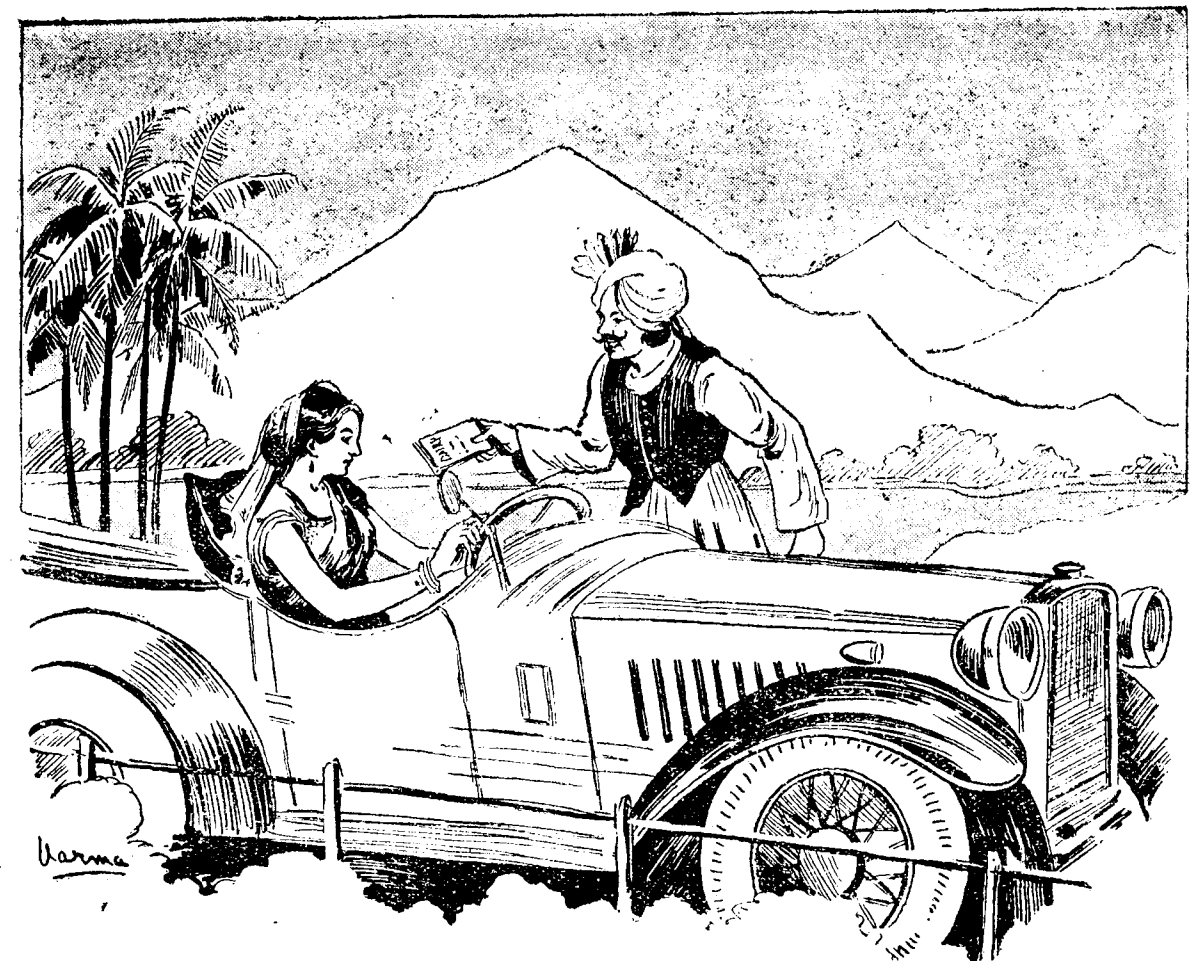
"Certainly, yer honour, I know that, but I didn't know which one of them was the other gentleman's."

American (to Englishman): At home we grow parsnips so big that we have to pull them up with a steam crane.

Englishman: That's nothing. We once grew some carrots so high that we couldn't see the tops, and one day they died.

American: Overgrown their strength, I suppose?

Englishman: Oh no. We had a wireless message from Australia to say that the rabbits were nibbling the roots!



Lakshmi's Passenger

Diana Don

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

66 IT is rather late to be starting down the hill, my dear," said mother-in-law, dubiously.

"Nonsense, mother," replied Lakshmi. "I am able to look after myself."

"But you are a girl, dear. I do not like to think of you driving a car unattended. Why won't you take Dhundu?"

"What, and leave you alone in the house? There have been several robberies here in Solon lately. No, mother; I came up by myself, and I can go back by myself. I shall reach Ambala within four hours."

"You are so reckless, my dear," sighed mother-in-law. "You speak of robbers. Have there not been robbers on the road of late?"

"I shan't stop for any robbers," said Lakshmi.

"Don't give anyone a lift," counselled mother-in-law. "Last week, poor Mr. Menon gave a lift to a stranger, and was found later with a wound in the head, and his car stolen."

"You are trying to give me the shivers, mother dear. I must be off, or it will be dark before I start."

The pretty young thing completed the formalities of farewell, and sent her car gliding off through the crowded bazaars of Solon. Presently she was swooping smoothly round the switch-back bends of the hill-road, confident in the reserves of power under the bonnet of her sleek car.

Night came down as she was climbing the long gradient above Kumarhatti. The road was gloomy—a tunnel twisting through upflung jungle. There was no traffic. Lakshmi switched on the headlights, and pressed her dainty foot a little harder on the throttle. She wanted to get to the other side of the range, where the slopes were free from this threatening, overhanging forest.

Robbers. A horrid thought. Really, she was miles from anywhere. The sombre hill-road wound up and up. Ah, here was the top of the pass, with its friendly, homely, way-side farm-house.

Lakshmi skimmed down the farther side, going rather too fast. "I shall not stop for anybody!" she thought.

As she rounded a severe bend, two figures came within range of the headlights. Two men, hulking-looking brutes. They were standing in the road, sticks upraised. Lakshmi's heart gave a leap. Robbers! The car bounded forward. The men threw themselves out of the way, just in time.

"I said it was not a lorry, brother," mildly remarked one of the men, after the car had passed.

"Pig of a driver!" observed the other, fondling a bruised shin. The two were honest but belated agriculturalists.

Meanwhile, Lakshmi was careering down the mountain as if pursued by all the fiends in Hell. "Robbers, robbers, robbers!" hummed the engine. The car swung lurchingly round the bends.

Presently, the road straightened out, and went through a hamlet. The car hurtled onwards.

Just beyond the hamlet, a sinister hooded figure stepped into the road. God! Another robber! He stood club in hand, signalling an imperious order to halt.

Lakshmi had now recovered from her panic. "You are going to get out of the way, my good robber!" she muttered grimly, and kept straight on.

With a startled cry, the hooded figure leapt aside. Only at the last moment did Lakshmi observe, under the hood, the turban of a police-constable.

"Anyhow, I was going too fast for him to take my number," she reflected, comfortingly. She had entirely recovered from her fright. She even slackened speed.

It was well that the pace was reduced, for the next bend brought her to a long line of red lamps. The road was under repair. The car-crawled along the narrow fair-way left by the road-repairers.

There was a slight lurch. The near-side front door opened. Instinctively, Lakshmi stopped the car. A man was standing on the running-board.

"Mister, can you give me a lift?" said a husky voice.

"Get off!" said Lakshmi.

"Why, it is a girl!" exclaimed the man with the husky voice. Without more ado, he stepped into the car, took the seat beside Lakshmi, and shut the door.

"How dare you!" cried the girl.

"Surely you don't mind giving the gentleman a lift?" said the man, sardonically.

Lakshmi considered. The man was certainly a robber. If she resisted now, it would provoke him to violence. He was asking only for a lift. Let him come with her. All the time, she would be getting nearer to assistance.

Disdaining useless argument, the girl re-started the car. The man sat motionless beside her. At intervals she examined him out of the corner of her eye. He was not a bad-looking man. What were his intentions? How soon would they reach help? Surely he would not let her go ahead to the nearest police-station?

But, come to think of it, there was no evidence that the man was a criminal. Perhaps he was harmlessly eccentric. Lakshmi drove mechanically, a prey to varied fears and conflicting emotions.

"Look out!" cried the passenger.

The road-barrier was closed. Lakshmi applied the brakes, and drew up close to the bar. A police-sergeant and two constables stepped forward.

Good. Now she would get rid of the fellow. She was just about to hail her deliverers, when the sergeant stamped up and thrust his head under the hood.

"Here, you, come out!" he said. "You are under arrest."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Lakshmi.

"Why, it is a girl," remarked the sergeant, nonplussed. "Yet this must be the car. Where is that 'phone message? He fumbled in his pocket. 'Arrest driver of unidentified car, passed Post 13 at 20.15 hours, charges of exceeding speed limit, refusing to stop, and endangering life of constable'."

"Are you suggesting that the message refers to me?" asked Lakshmi, icily.

"It must do," barked the sergeant. "They closed the road at Kumarhatti after you went through, and no other car has come down."

"There is some mistake," protested Lakshmi. "You cannot arrest me." But she was trembling. There would be a terrible scandal if she fell into the hands of the police.

The sergeant wavered. "This message instructs me to arrest you," he said.

"To arrest the driver of an unidentified car," corrected Lakshmi.

"I didn't imagine it would be a woman," mumbled the sergeant. "I've nowhere I could lock you up. Yet this is the car all right. Here, give me your particulars."

With sinking heart, Lakshmi saw her name, address, car-number, and license-particulars go into the sergeant's note-book. Now at least there would be a court-case, with resultant scandal and restrictions.

"These jaw-breaking names!" grumbled the sergeant, laboriously transcribing at Lakshmi's dictation. "What do you people want with names that nobody can pronounce or remember? And who is this fellow?" he demanded, going to the near side of the car, and peering at the passenger.

"He is my servant," said Lakshmi, hastily.

"Name?"

"Dhundu," replied Lakshmi.

"All right," said the sergeant, putting away his note-book. "You can go now."

The barrier was raised, and Lakshmi drove on. For a few miles there was silence in the car. Then the passenger spoke.

"Why did you describe me as your servant?" he enquired.

"Don't be a fool," said Lakshmi. "I was in a jam—probably charged with attempted manslaughter. Do you think the sergeant would have let me go, if I confessed I was carrying a highway robber?"

"So you think I am a robber?"

"Yes."

"Well, you are not wrong."

Lakshmi's spirit quailed. She was now utterly at the mercy of a self-confessed criminal. At last, she could bear the silence no longer.

"What are you going to do?" she muttered.

"I shall be leaving you in a few minutes," replied the man.

"That is all?"

"Yes. Even a robber can show gratitude. It would have been bad for me if I had been detained at the barrier."

"You are really a robber?"

"Well, the police describe me as a gentlemanly pick-pocket. I made a good haul yesterday at Solon Fair. Here we are. I am getting off now. I am taking a bridle-path for the last few miles."

Lakshmi stopped the car. "Oh," she sighed, "I am almost sorry you are going. Those dreadful police! I shall get into fearful trouble."

"I don't think you will be troubled further," said the pick-pocket.

"But the sergeant has my name, and car-number, and everything."

"Has he? Do you think he will remember them?" chuckled the man with the husky voice. "Here, I have a parting gift for you."

The passenger thrust something into her hand, and turned away down the *khud*-side.

Lakshmi was left staring at the pick-pocket's parting gift. It was the police-sergeant's note-book.



Sudden Wealth

Written & Illustrated by Albert A. Roland

Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

I

FROM his seat in the double-decker tram, Vishwanath looked broodingly down on the stream of motor traffic flowing by. The erstwhile cotton-broker's thoughts were bitter and grey...

Wasn't so long ago that he'd sported his own car...Used to feel so hellishly superior whenever he happened to look up at—and yet down on—these poor devils who could afford only trams.

Now...God! Even this tram ride was a wicked indulgence. He hadn't the right to squander his last nickel in this way, when Radha...

Poor Radha. So uncomplaining always, and staunch and brave. She'd be waiting for him now, with that hope still alive. That hope which no calamity or failure had seemed able to quench. This last nickel would have meant a cup of milk for Radha. Or bread.

But he was so dog-weary. And damnably ill. God knew, he could never have accomplished that two-mile walk home...

"Where to, sir?" the conductor was enquiring.

"What does it matter," Vishwanath muttered tonelessly.

"Beg pardon, sir?"

"Oh, anywhere...to hell, if the tram will take me there..."

This wouldn't do. He mustn't lose his grip. The conductor was staring. There was surprise on the faces of other passengers who had overheard his remarks. What was it he must say? Radha...

He whispered: "Radha."

"Sir? Where to, sir?"

The confounded conductor had no imagination! Couldn't he see Vishwanath was desperately ill? Couldn't he appreciate that his head was swimming horribly? What was it he must say to the conductor? Radha...waiting for him in Parel...in Parel...that was it!

"Parel," he murmured to the conductor. He remembered now, with sickening clarity. Radha was waiting for him in a dreadful tenement dwelling, not far from Parel station.

A dreadful tenement dwelling. Living cheek-by-jowl with poverty-stricken out-of-works. And not so long ago, he and Radha had had a bungalow on Malabar Hill.

All that was irretrievably lost now. And something else. Something vital and beyond evaluation. What was it? He couldn't, just for the instant, recall it. But it was something he'd possessed a little while ago. Only a few moments...Yes!—the nickel! Gone...reposing in that stolid conductor's bag...and it represented milk and bread for Radha.

He felt intolerably dejected at its loss. Now there were only three possessions left to him on this side of the grave. No, two. For of the three, one could materialize only when he had crossed the Stygian Ferry. Because he would never be able to go on paying those premia...

His Insurance Policy. He had paid the last premium before the crash. It was a very substantial premium. But because it was only the second, he had not been able to borrow anything on the policy. In a way, that was comforting. It meant that Radha would get the whole sum of thirty thousand rupees, should anything happen to him.

His Ticket in the Derby. This, he admitted, was only a potential asset. Unlikely to prove of more value than the paper it was printed on. Still, it vouchsafed him a certain amount of hope. The Derby would be run in a few days' time. The unexpected had a habit of happening. To-morrow, the drawings would be out. Would he sell the major portion of his ticket, if he drew the favourite? Or would he gamble on his chances again, and hold on? Gamble! He mustn't even use that word...

And his wife. Radha was neither a potential asset, nor one that was sequent to that Stygian crossing. Radha was real. He thanked God, again and again,

for Radha. But for her, he should have been finished long ago...finished!

But wasn't he finished now? "While there was life..." That was how Radha encouraged him daily. "While there was life..."

But what was the use of his life? What a miserable mess he'd made of it!

Better placed for success than many, he had frittered away his opportunities, dissipated the fortune left him by a doting but happily deceased parent. The transition from Malabar Hill to Parel had been gradual, but certain...He had brought much suffering to himself. But how much more to Radha. Yet she still had faith in him. It was the profoundest mystery to him, how Radha still had faith...

He would always be the same. He was aware of his weaknesses, his wastrel character.

Oh God, he suddenly found himself praying, send him death...now...now!

II

As the gigantic runaway petrol-lorry crashed amid-ships into the double-decker tram, Vishwanath finished his prayer.

An instant later, pandemonium broke loose in the street.

The double-decker heeled over, poised itself for a moment on its near-side wheels, then went crashing to destruction. Simultaneously, it seemed, the petrol-lorry burst into flames.

A stridor of crashing timbers and clanging metal. An inferno of roaring flames. A crescendo of frenzied shrieks and wails from passengers and lookers-on. Vishwanath received these multisonorous horrors into his consciousness for unending moments. Then oblivion claimed him in mercy.

III

Vishwanath came to himself in hospital.

He was confined by a swathe of bandages. His slightest movement brought agonies of pain

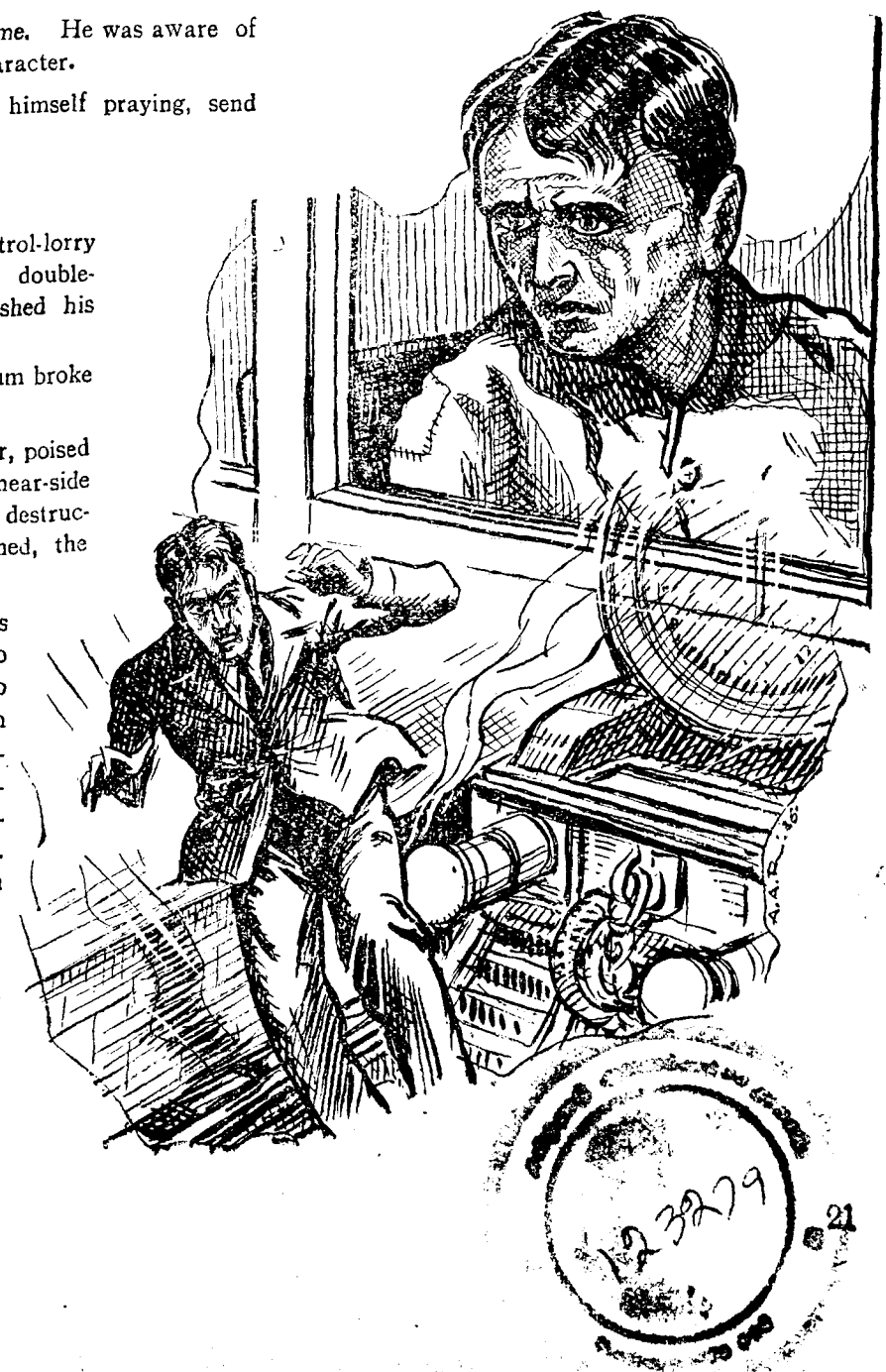
that threatened to sweep him back to unconsciousness.

Through a complexity of suffering, both of body and mind, he emerged to intervals of lucidity, to an awareness of Radha's presence...

And finally, one day, to a profound discovery.

He was rich. He and Radha...

She told him long afterwards: "I knew inside me it would work out this way one day. Remember how often I prophesied your bad luck must come to a glorious end? But I feared for you and our dreams. I thought I would lose you, but thank God, you were



spared to me. And now you are well and strong again."

She kissed him.

"And I feared for our happy ending. When news was brought, on the sixth day of your illness, of your luck in the draw, I praised Heaven...but when you utterly refused to sell—determined against all my pleadings—I lost hope and faith. Do you remember—"

"No, Radha," lied Vishwanath. "I must have been delirious. Why, only a few seconds before the accident, I had sworn to sell most of the ticket if—if it were lucky. God! I little dreamed—"

"It's all right now, dear. We've got back all we've lost, full measure and flowing over. We've resumed our place in the order of things. But no more speculation. No more gambling. No more drink. Providence won't repeat this miracle for us. It owes us absolutely nothing now."

"No more gambling," agreed Viswanath. "But we must repurchase those oil shares we—"

"Sami! They took the greater part of our money."

"I know, little woman. But they're rising now, and—"

"Oh, Sami, Sami!"

"Radha trust me to take no risks—"

V

Bitter and grey were Viswanath's thoughts as he emerged from his seven-seater limousine outside the railway station. Slamming the door to with a hand that trembled violently, he curtly instructed the driver to take the car back to the *memsahib*.

Radha! That was just a habit of speech. Back to the *memsahib*...He had forgotten for a moment. His head was so full of other terrible things.

Radha was not waiting for him at home. He had driven her from it. The woman who waited for him painted and loudly dressed, was not Radha. He had driven Radha away. He and this woman.

And then...there was *Rajanan*!

Vishwanath's face was ashen as he entered the railway station and purchased a ticket to Delhi.

Rajanan The man he had killed an hour previously. The man who had stood between him and the painted woman.

She didn't know—yet. Nobody knew. But they would find Rajanan in the morning. Nobody would

connect him with Vishwanath—nobody except the painted woman. And she knew better than to speak. Besides, she loved him. She must. He had done this thing for her. He had done so much else. He had sacrificed Radha...

Poor Radha. So uncomplaining always, and staunch and brave. But that hope was no longer alive in her, that hope which no calamity or failure had seemed able to quench. She had utilised all her resources to save him, to keep that hope unquenched.

But he had quenched it, finally.

She had borne with all the ugly manifestations of his wastrel character. Until the advent of his latest impudicity—the flouting of his woman in her home.

Poor Radha. Was it too late to make amends?

The workings of a belated consciousness overwhelmed Vishwanath suddenly, as he stood on the platform waiting for his train. Poor Radha. What a swine he had been to her. What a reward for the past he made her. Couldn't he bring it back? Recently, she had prayed that their sudden wealth be removed. To it, she attributed her sufferings, the shipwreck of their happiness.

But he was still rich, as men count riches. He had squandered much, but there was still much—

And then again he remembered, despairingly.

Rajanan! He was now even a murderer!

As the sound of an approaching train came to him, he made up his mind to commit the second murder. The murder of Vishwanath. This train which was thundering closer was a Through Parcels Express that preceded the Delhi mail by a few minutes.

When the engine was within a dozen feet of him, he flung himself soundlessly before it...

VI

Vishwanath, all this while, was conscious of a stridor of crashing timbers and clanging metal, a crescendo of frenzied shrieks and wails from *tram-car* passengers and lookers-on, an inferno of eagerly consuming flames. He received these multisonous horrors into his consciousness for unending moments.

He had had time to visualise Rajanan and the painted woman. He had had time to think of Radha, and of the insurance policy of thirty thousand rupees...gratefully.

Before oblivion claimed him...in mercy.

THE END

Babuisms—

by A Teacher of English

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

[Why this canker in the 'body politic' of letters is called Babuism and not Avargalism, Garuism, Punditism, Maungism or any other 'ism' is not clear. This 'ism' is perpetrated all over India and Burma—Ed.]

IN spite of the gibes and flings that have been hurled on that peculiar dialect known as the babu-English, it shows no signs of dying. The little pranks which half-educated people play with the English language often provide great merriment but also occasionally grave provocation. "The hand that rocked the cradle has now kicked the bucket" is a classic example of the Babu's unpardonable partiality for idiom irrespective of its propriety. One can forgive the Indian's ignorance of the subtle niceties of the English language which is, after all, a foreign dialect, but ridiculous solecisms and a vain fondness for the unusual and grotesque in expression are serious offences. The late Babu Motilal Ghose was once criticised by an English paper over some 'fastidious points' of the English language, and he came out with the defence that if the English people had a right to ruin his country, he could not be prevented from playing the devil with their language. But that was another matter. Babu Motilal Ghose was, on the whole, such an accurate writer that it was no good taste to cavil at his infrequent lapses.

If you wish to look at the real gems of Babu-English you should turn to the writings of some Bengali clerks. In his excellent book, *A Vision of India*, Sidney Low mentions the story of a Bengali ticket-collector who, offended by the conduct of a female milk-vendor, sat down and composed the following letter to her employer.

"Horned Sir,—I beg you will remove your hand-
maiden of milk, as she is not good fellow, and we cannot stand her cheeks."

It was again a Bengali doctor who tried to console in the following words his two lady patients on the absence of their husbands who were out of station on duty. "I am very sorry to see that you are a couple of abandoned women." Such monstrous outrage on any language is likely to result in disastrous conse-

quences. But what can anybody say to this advertisement which once appeared in the columns of an Indian paper?

"Mahomedsmen, hair cutter and clean shave. Gentleman's throats cut with very sharp razors, with great care and skill. No irritating feeling afterwards. A trial solicited."

Here are some more pearls.

"How many children have you got, baboo?" queried the sahib of his office clerk. "Well, sir," was the reply, "there are five in all. Three boys and two girls. There is also one under construction."

Look at this one. A firm were introducing a new brand of patent medicines and the Customs had withheld the shipping documents until such time as the importers furnished a description of the goods to enable them to assess duty. The shipping clerk who had to answer this query expressed himself thus: "X-Lager is a laxative medicine that will enable you to pass the documents."

Some priceless jewels of babu-English, albeit invented, are to be found in F. Anstey's popular book—*Babu Jabberjee*, B. A. Here are a few intro-extracts from the 'introductory letter' addressed by the writer to the Editor of the *Punch*.

"To the Hon'ble—Punch
Venerable and Ludicrous Sir,

Permit me most respectfully to bring beneath your notice a proposal which I serenely anticipate will turn up trumps under the strutting sun-shine of your esteemed approbation.

Sir, I am an able B. A. of a respectable Indian University now in this country for purposes of being crammed through Inns of Court and Law examinations, and rendering myself a completely fledged pleader or Barrister in the native Bar of the High court.....

Remember that the slightest act of volition on your part can exalt my pecuniary status to the skies, as well as confer distinguished and unparalleled ennoblement upon your cacothetic scribbles.

I remain,
Respectable sir,
Your most obsequious servant
Hurry Bungsho Jabberjee, B.A."

Some of the testimonials prominently published by firms in the advertisement columns of Indian newspapers make very interesting reading. Here is a typical one which has also been quoted by Aldous Huxley in his *Jesting Pilate*: "Several of my friends and myself have been using your.....for over four months for Influenza, Lumbago, Dyspepsia, Syphilis, Rheumatism and Nervous Debility with complete success. There has not been a case in which it failed. I will call it an Ambrosia." Mark the classical allusion!

In a recent article published in the *Nash's Magazine*, Aldous Huxley quoted *in extenso* a letter he received from a Travancore gentleman who had thought out an ingenious scheme of collecting a few books free of charge. Read the elegant epistle.

"My dear Brother Mr. Aldous Leonard Huxley, B. A., as you are among the foremost novelists of this day, I am rather terribly stricken with great foreboding thoughts why your masterpieces have not crossed the waters and gave a thrill to the Indian book-lover. I am too glad to tender you personal obligation, if you will kindly mail to my address each a copy of your mighty novels besides other books with

photo of self. With great willingness, goodwill and sublime friendship, I shall take entire burden of business on my shoulders and get for you copious orders from all parts of India, Burma and Ceylon. In order to promulgate rapid business success I shall gladly take trouble of calling on various Schools, Colleges, Libraries, and Reading Rooms, also other institutions and Ladies and Gentleman of rank and fashion all over India, and see that you are patroned with huge orders. Circulars with your photo will be distributed gigantically. Please do the needful at an early date. Your very cordial.—P. S. Please insist on sending tomes only registered."

It is impossible to attain a complete mastery over a foreign language, but one can certainly avoid the deplorable tendency of larding one's common speech or expression with obsolete phrases, big and bumptious words, mixed metaphors and unsuitable idioms. It will be wrong to suppose that all Indian writers are tarred with the same brush, nor will it be fair to shut one's eyes completely to the existence of this vicious tendency in certain quarters. The value of a clear and lucid expression must be emphasised in Indian schools and colleges and all attempts at affectation or meretricious adornment ought to be mercilessly denounced. Speaking at the Lucknow University Convocation, Sir William Marris, the then Governor of United Provinces, said: "If I were to teach writing in an Indian school I would insist *ad nauseum* on the value of simplicity." No teacher of English in India should forget these memorable words.



Doctor: Yours is a case which will enrich medical science.
Patient: Have mercy on me, doctor! I am a poor man.



Yet another novelty from Mother Nature. Rhodesia has shipped to the London Zoo, per aeroplane, a swarm of bees. They resemble ants. There is no sting in them. And, of course, they produce honey. For this unstinging virtue the Rhodesians fondly call these bees "Grandmothers of the Grass".

A New Jersey man was milking his cow. As soon as he finished twiddling the cow's teats, he missed his watch and its chain from his vest pocket. Later he sold the cow to a butcher. When the cow was slaughtered the watch and chain, which the original owner of the cow lost, were found in its wind-pipe. And what is more, the watch was still running!

The man stood before the magistrate.
"What is your name?" asked the guardian of the Law.
"Mickey Mouse, your honour."
"Ah! You have been given the name of a film celebrity?"
"Not at all, your honour. That has been my name for more than fifty years."

Do You Know?

That walking the streets with your shoe laces untied is punishable with a fine in Maine.

That it is against the law to smoke a cigarette where food is served in the State of Nebraska.

For something he did, Andrew Coulter of Muskogee, was sentenced to prison. They opened the prison gates hastily on the twentieth day and let out Andrew Coulter. They released him, not because he had served his time, but because he was eating too much. The authorities said that they found it was costing too much to feed him, and so they released him.

Tommy Steiner, after coming out victorious in a boxing match in Chicago demonstrated to an admiring circle of friends some of the tricks he employed in knocking out his opponent. He hit himself on the jaw and knocked out a tooth!

The get-rich-quick idea, to say the least, is glamorous. Mr. Andrea Battelli, an Italian, thought out a lovely get-rich-quick scheme. He sent thousands and thousands of circulars to his compatriots with this advice:

"Do away with ink and pens, but write the correspondence just the same. Write for instructions to Andrea Battelli, and enclose 8d. in postage stamp."

There are thousands of people who have always recented the dictatorship of pen and ink. Many of them sent Mr. Andrea 8d. and awaited with interest, the promised advice. And all of them received this letter:

"Use pencil instead, you fool!"

That is a clever and quick way of garnering grain. But the police didn't think it clever at all, the unreasonable fellows. Mr. Andrea is now a guest of the State, in a nice little cell.

Marooned

by Artiji

(A tale of the salty deep—To be taken with plenty of salt)

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes



THERE was very little doubt about it. I was shipwrecked upon the island. At any rate I had come to that interesting conclusion after lying on the sand in a manner befitting my station and attempting to recollect the positively horrifying experiences of the previous night—chief among which was the loss of my pocket handkerchief.

At present I was engaged in the delectable occupation of stretching my body in the golden brown of the sunlight to the accompaniment of a buzzing mosquito. My reflection in a pool of ditch water was eminently suggestive. There was a lithe, unconscious grace about my sun-tanned figure, redolent of long days in the open. An easy confidence in my carriage that bespoke my aristocratic upbringing. A touch of humour in those lazy blue eyes, enigmatic and yet compelling. Determination in the outward set of the jaw, poise, beauty, alertness, and above all an intangible impression of strength and ruggedness mixed with an almost elemental defiance.....

As I said before I was stretching my body. I hardly felt inclined to do anything else. At eleven o'clock I was still in the same position. At three I decided not to change it. At five an over-inquisitive ant out-galvanised me into the faintest semblance of action.

The sun was sinking to the west in a mingled glory of beetroot and tomato. Darkness was stealing

like a spook across the endless sea. A sense of irrepressible loneliness came upon me. I realized I was afraid—deathly afraid. There was something here intangible and tremendous. Something which gripped and paralysed the imagination. Something which would make the heart of the stoutest centipede quail in its half a million boots.

I ran to the nearest cliff and shrieked for mercy. I clutched at my Derby hat with shaking fingers. I tried to flee; I could not. I tried to run; I could not. I tried to crawl; I could not. I would have thrown myself into the sea but that meant a wet suit and premature pneumonia. I thought of home and the tears came to my eyes. I sobbed with the glad remembrance of days long since gone by. I screamed, I bit, I yelled, I swore, I filed my nails and gnashed my teeth. Then my magnificent intellect rallied to the occasion and I realized that it was time for dinner.

Turning with a stately precision, I stood silhouetted against the moonlight like the last sentinel in a dirty overcoat. Then I stalked like Napoleon to my repast. At the same time a slow, powerful feeling crept upon me, the instinctive scenting of foreign presence in the land which I had deemed my own.

Aided and abetted by my remarkable eye-sight, I discerned a strange being whose distance from my dinner was more dangerous than reassuring. The apparition's arms were extended and in its eyes was the strange haunted look of one who has just discovered her soul-mate in the Sahara. With a sudden flash of intuition I inferred that she was hungry. At the



same time I felt a sinking sensation in the pit of my over-developed stomach and reached the surprising conclusion that I too was in need of solid refreshment. Acting on one of those strokes of inspiration that



come only to the supremely great, I put one handsome leg in front of the other, stared in the direction of a neighbouring bush and informed the universe in general that the mastication of the cactus pie was my sole and exclusive right.

The strange presence looked around and revealed herself be a lady whose hair was an exotic combination of perfume and sea water.

"But I am hungry!" she exclaimed in the sweet soprano of an imitation English accent.

"Very obvious, madam, very obvious. And if I may be permitted to say so, you are not the only person to enjoy the distinction."

"Charles, stop being ridiculous—"

"If madam will refrain from being over-familiar, I shall proceed to the digestion of my rightful inheritance."

"But I'm going to eat it myself."

"Madam is obviously labouring under a misapprehension."

"As a matter of common courtesy—"

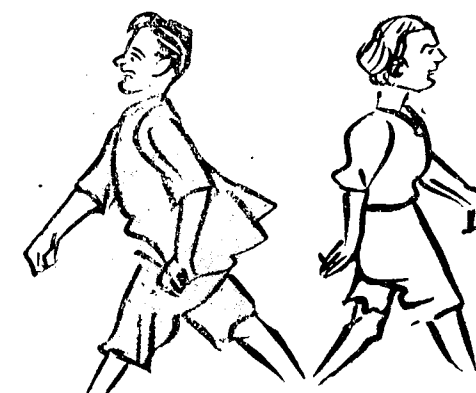
"Courtesy has no place in desert islands, madam. Your sense of proportion is extremely inept," and with this superbly cutting retort I laid my hands upon the

pie. You know the type. Long, thin, artistic—backed up by a forearm of the brutish variety.

At that moment something remotely resembling a kick took me on my beautiful jaw. I later learned that it was 'la dame' employing an uppercut that would have done credit to a prize-fighter and assisted by a poker which bore a remarkable resemblance to a decapitated battle-axe. When I awoke (stretching my superbly muscular form in the moonlight) the pie was gone and a very complacent smile on the face of the lady dispelled all doubts as to its eventual destination.

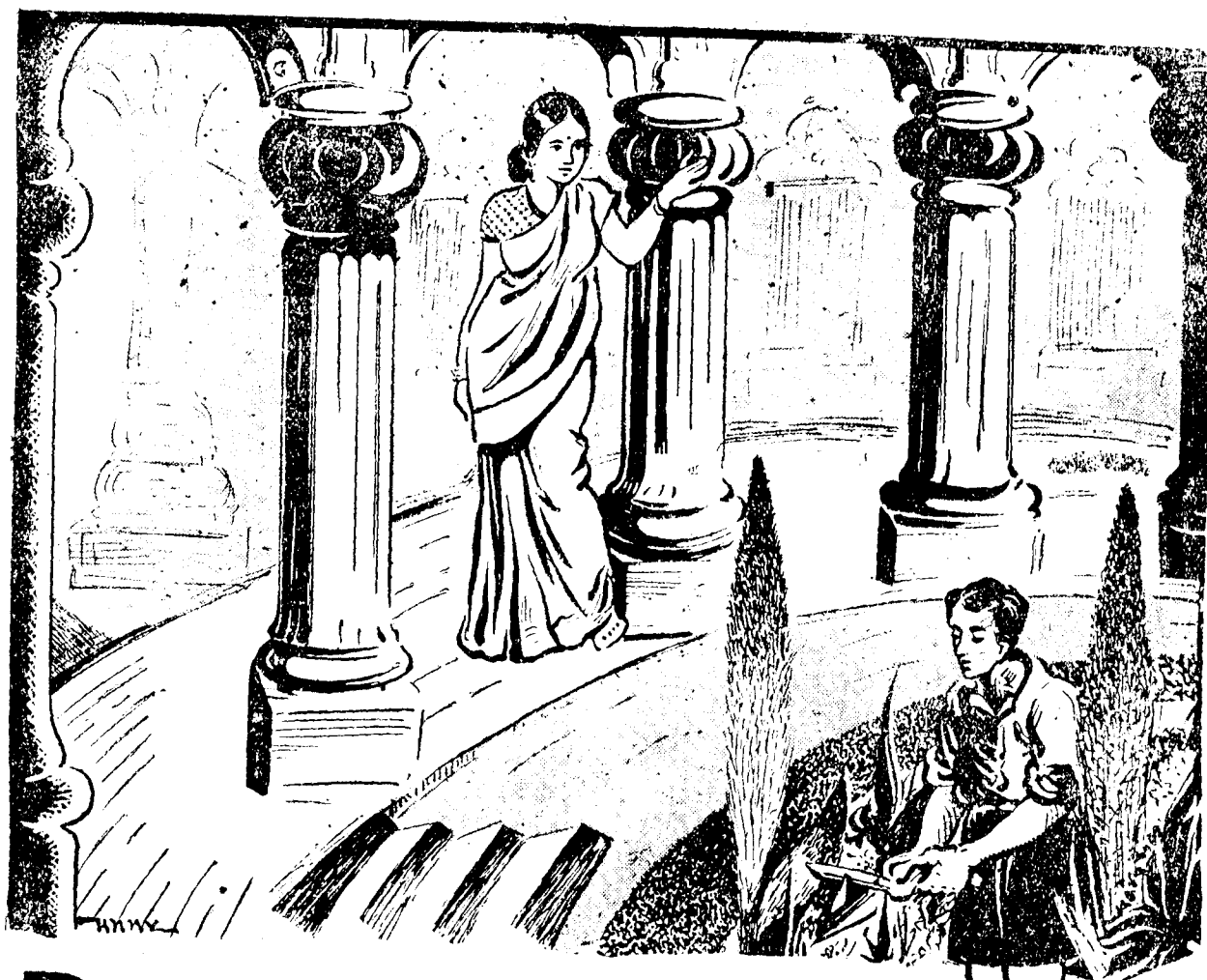
The next few moments endowed me with a profound contempt for the realistic school of writers. I came to some eminently scathing conclusions regarding the caveman theory and decided that my immediate aim was to effect a reconciliation. So I manoeuvred my superb physique from a horizontal to a perpendicular position and set about the execution of a task that would have done no disgrace to Abraham Lincoln. Thanks to my Grecian nose (and the exotic fires within my eye) I succeeded. We drank sherry (or was it champagne?) together. Her reflection in a pool of ditch water was eminently attractive. There was a lithe unconscious grace about her sun-tanned figure, redolent of long days spent in the open.....

Fortunately for the romanticists there was a full moon the succeeding night. She was young and beautiful. I was strong, blue-eyed and tall. You ought to know what happened. If you don't, consult a scenario writer. For, in the fulness of events, Jean



Shaddock turned towards me. And her eminently attractive figure beamed more attractive in the moonlight. And the stars in her eyes were not born of astronomical researches.

(Continued on page 29)



Rural Reconstruction

by Sheikh Iftekhhar Rasool

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

SINCE my broadcast talk on 'uplift' by means of self help and organisation, my wife seems to have gone absolutely for it.

So much so that when I dropped on the couch yesterday to snatch a few winks she came round, pulled my whiskers and asked me to weed the garden before it was too late in the season.

It was quite like her. Any wife with an ounce of sympathy would have seen that I was not built for weeding gardens. I am the wrong shape.

However, I obeyed. I took a cautious peek out of the window and groaned. The garden had expanded beyond all recognition. It seemed almost as large as any public garden in the city or roundabouts.

"I don't feel so well, dear," I said. "I.....I think I have got a touch of that sleepy sickness."

"You always have," she retorted callously. "Don't be lazy. The weeds are overrunning the house, and besides, you must create an example of what you want others to do."

I hate people who exaggerate. Weeds don't crawl about like caterpillars, and even if they did I would not be interested enough to chase them. It was the *mali's* job to see that they were kept in order.

I could think of at least a dozen perfectly good reasons why I should not weed that garden, but as perfectly good reasons are wasted on a perfectly unreasonable wife, I left them unsaid.

For the first time I realised what an unrivalled collection of weeds we had. I did not know the horticultural name of them all, but I classed them roughly together and gave them a name I had just thought of. If they could have heard it they would have shrivelled where they stood.

I started on the roses first. The weeds seemed bigger there. Some of the roots appeared to extend for miles underground. I had a suspicion that they originated in our neighbour's garden, and he had trained them to shoot up in mine.

It was a back-breaking business. All the creeping, crawling things of the earth came out to watch me, and they brought their friends and relations with them.

While pulling up a brute of a weed I slipped and clutched at the wheelbarrow. The barrow tipped up and hit me on the back of the head. My cigarette was knocked out of my mouth. I reached for it and my hat fell off. I bent for my hat and nose-dived into a heap of clammy soil, to the accompaniment of the sound of tearing cloth.

In the midst of my laudations I heard the woman next door screaming to her children to come inside, and enjoining her husband to run upstairs and close all the windows.

Ours is a neighbourly neighbourhood.

I sat up and hoped for a few drops of rain so that I would have an excuse for going indoors. Only the previous day, because I wanted to play tennis, it had rained bucketsful of wet, drenching rain, and now because I needed it, not even the vestige of a cloud could be seen.

Stoically I continued with my task, pulling the tops off all the weeds and stamping the roots down into the ground.

I do not know how many bones the biologists say there are in the human body, but I think I have more than that; and every bone had its own distinctive ache.

When I had finished, I had to admit that the garden looked a lot better. A beautiful yellow flowery plant, which had been hidden by the weeds before, now covered the ground like a wonderful yellow carpet.

I called the wife and showed her.

"Woman," I groaned, "you have gained a garden and lost a husband. When you bury me, plant a few of yonder blooms over my grave."

"Blooms?" she scoffed. "You—you idiot. You've pulled up every blessed plant in the garden except the chick-weed."

THE END

MAROONED—(Continued from page 27)

"Charles," she whispered, in a sweet, warm contralto. "So you love me!"

I rubbed my chin where the poker had intercepted and murmured about the meeting of twin souls.....

Unhampered by the bounds of society, convention, etc., etc., our romance developed into a torrent, a vital sweeping crescendo of elemental passions. (If the whiskey wasn't exhausted by the twenty-first, there might have been something more to write about.) I had to get rid of my beard (the usual concession to femininity) but I suppose the results were an adequate atonement. We lived on the edge of the rolling surf with a grand and stirring sincerity. We shared our heart-breaks, sorrows and the gin deficiency together. Our romance blossomed to a thing of astonishment, a beautiful cupola flowering in the wilderness. With the soft erotic charms of moonlight above us, we drank the nectar known as happiness.....

The rescue ship arrived on the twenty-sixth of February. Nine days afterwards we walked up a little church aisle in Middle America and a benevolent priest declared us man and wife. Six weeks later we strolled up a New York lawyer's apartment and were duly and ceremoniously divorced. And now I spend the major part of a highly promising existence trying to live up to alimony assignments. For that is the way of desert islands—and desert island romances.

THE END



The City Lawyer

Juniors and Seniors.

ONE way is to group them into juniors and seniors. It is wrong to conceive seniors as those who take all the fees and juniors as those who do all the work. Money-making juniors and time-wasting seniors are not unknown phenomena. Nor has seniorhood much to do with age. There are *de jure* juniors who shoot into *defacto* seniorhood while there are real seniors who are content to live in a state of juniordom for life. The real distinction between a senior and a junior must be sought elsewhere. An ideal senior is a gentleman who grows a legend about him. The bigger the senior the bigger is the legend.

Urbanites and Mofussilites.

The chief distinction of an urban lawyer is his butterfly quality. He drinks the honey of income from many a flower of fortune. His mind is large; indeed so large as to be without dimensions. His heart is deep, almost bottomless. When he is imported into a mofussil court for some odd work or other, mostly arranged on so-much-a-diem scale, it is part of his duty there and then to look big, talk freely, and

Lawyers

by R. Bangaruswami

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

crack bad jokes. In this business of being big and free, his fat brief bag, his stout books, his newly-polished wrist-watch, his client at his back, his 'boy' at his beck—all these contribute their quota. When he does not go professionally peregrinating, he is busy doing secretarial work in connection with the Society for the Eradication of Prickly Pears.

The mofussil lawyer, on the other hand, is a monotonous monogamist wedded to a single court for life with perhaps a few occasional lapses by way of variety and change. He knows that his mind is enclosed in his body, and knows also his mind's potential possibilities and possible potentialities. But within the casket of blood and bone and flesh, the mofussil lawyer's brain works like a steam roller, intense and boisterous. His imagination finds uncharted seas of freedom only when it is vigorously exercised on the pleasing prospects of a local election that is brewing. His woes are worthy of his worries and his philosophy is worthy of both. The mofussil breeds brave hearts but not brilliant intellects. The mofussil lawyer is scrupulously careful about foundations but is not fastidious about the edifice. During times when he finds himself temporarily exported he does not assume the God or affect the nod but simply watches, learns, and—wonders.

Suit-wallas and Long-coat-wallas.

When the first lawyer was born the long-coat also was born with him, so much so that a lawyer came to be called as a gentleman of the long robe. Suits, on the other hand, are modern innovations which have mously crept into the domain of law, introducing with them the hall-marks of cosmopolitanism and indistinguishability. A gentleman with a suit may be anybody from a butler to a baronet; he may be a Brahman, a Boer or a Bolshevik. But a gentleman with a long coat and a turban is invariably found to be a lawyer. How and when long coats first went hand in hand with lace turbans and pocket-watches, one can't say. But one notes that the days of long coats should be numbered. Generally speaking the Bar is becoming more and more a convert to the suit-crop-wrist-watch creed.

Lawyers Civil and Criminal.

A Civil lawyer may be an impolite gentleman while a Criminal lawyer may be the very pink of honesty. The words are meant to go with courts rather than with persons. Criminal lawyers as a rule belong to the suit variety. They move in world of dash and spirit, of energy and action. Civil lawyers are a sort of book-wormy things with their heads steeped in figures and facts and decisions and their tongues sugar-coated with logic and reasoning, and living in a world of dissenting voices, distinguishing notes, divergent theories, dissident interests and discordant views. In one word, subtlety is their life-breath. If the Criminal lawyer dangles with the threads of life, the Civil lawyer dallies with the threads of wealth. A lawyer who is both Civil and Criminal is a hybrid of mediocrity in both.

The Brief and The Briefless.

While the Briefless are like the sea, the number of the Briefs are like the ships that float thereon. The Briefs are the lucky few, the Briefless are the luckless many. As in many things in life some are born with briefs, some achieve them, while some have briefs thrust upon them. From Brieflessness to Briefdom is a pretty long road, strewn with brambles and overrun with ruts of every description, sure to tax the limits of human powers of endurance. While the Briefless sit and brood, the Briefs are busy and make money. While the Briefs bombard and bombinate, the Briefless watch them and criticise and cogitate. While the myriad voices of the Briefless are beating against the shores of Time, shufflings and reshufflings slowly pass by, making a Brief here Briefless and a Briefless there a full-fledged Brief. It is also the briefless Void, immense and immeasurable, that keeps supplying the junior posts in the Judiciary.

Men and Women Lawyers.

Women have not flooded the Bar. But fifty years hence—well, anything might happen. Whether women will be good lawyers or not I can't say. That they are mighty good lawyers in their own cause every son of his mother who has married knows and knows full well. If legally uneducated she can plead her cause so effectively, much more so should she after going through a course of forensic education and experience. Anyway, the atmosphere of Courts should gain in value by the advent of Portias. It is sometimes said that Law is a battlefield. What if? Is it not an insult to them to say that women are wanting in martial spirit?

Experts and Non-Experts.

This is my last classification. Knowledge is such a stupendous thing that the scope for experts is simply unlimited. But mention may be made of some. There is for example the Adjournment Expert who can knock out adjournments even from the most stony judge. He knows how to play upon a Judge's weakness; how to suitably set forth an apt excuse; when to be mum and when to be garrulous; how to show that he is willing to express but is afraid to speak; when to expostulate, when to cajole, when to nod and how to nod. A flood of wrath, he checks with a smile; a sneer with a regret; and a dogged determination



The Mofussil Lawyer

with a little personal magnetism. The Adjournment Expert is usually a success in the profession. Next comes the Devilling Expert. He devils for juniors, he devils for seniors. He devils for raw juniors, he devils for ripe seniors. He devils at three hours' notice, he devils at three minutes' notice, he devils at three seconds' notice. He begins to understand the case while beginning to stand to argue it, he begins to better understand the case while beginning to open his mouth to argue it, and goes on understanding the case while actually arguing it. He can be all ears and attention when required. He grasps things as quickly as he forgets them. He is a wonder in his own way. Still another expert is the Confusion Expert. Keeping his thoughts and ideas crystal clear he has the astonishing knack of confusing others when he finds they are in his path. Some slight manipulation he works and the Judge looks disconcerted. The Confusion Expert is a master craftsman and a major tactician.

The classification is imperfect. Maybe it conforms more to the principle of monotony than of decotomy. Anyway there I leave it.

THE END

The Lawyer's Ode to Spring

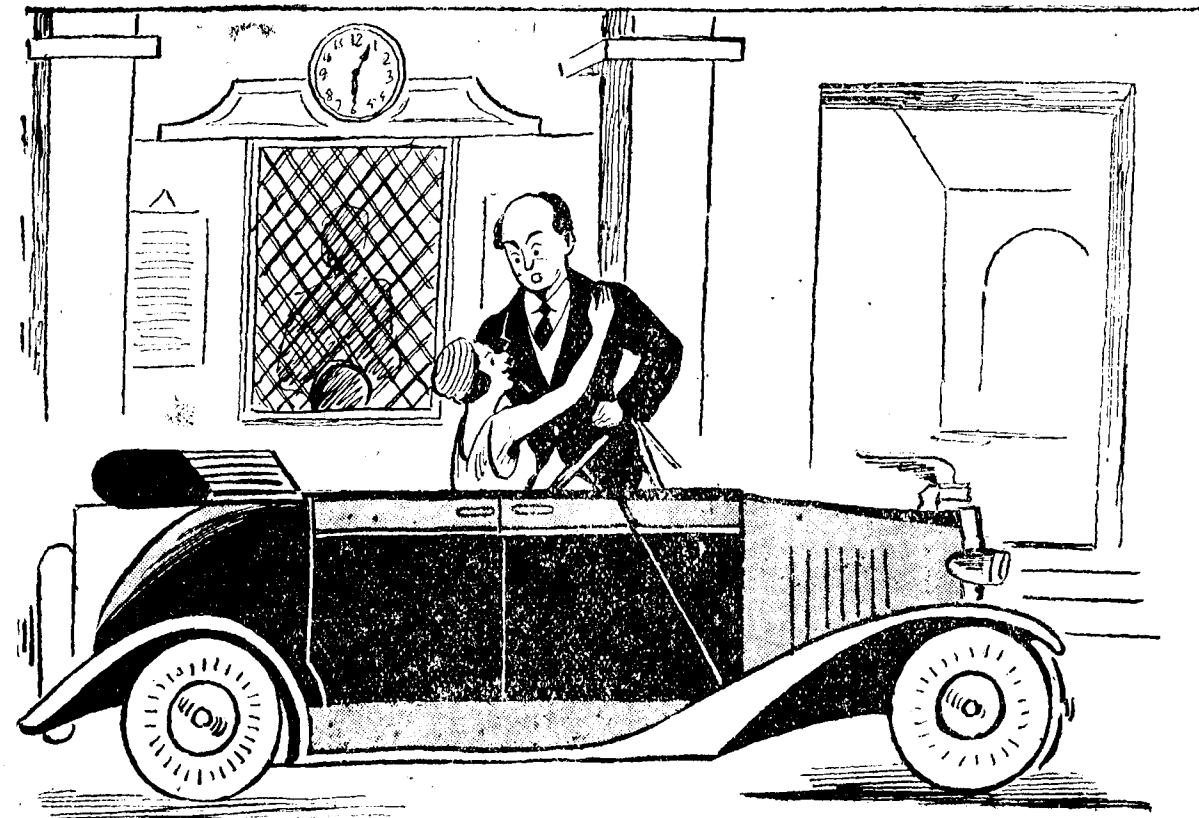
Whereas, in sundry brakes and braes,
Now divers birds are heard to sing,
And sundry flow'rs their heads upraise—
Know by these presents, it is Spring.

The birds aforesaid, happy pairs,
As squatters occupy the vines;
Both for themselves, and for their heirs,
Administrators, and assigns.

The song of these said birds inclines
Our thoughts to joyous youthful hours
When we were green, like to the vines,
And fresh, as the aforesaid flowers.

O busiest term of Cupid's court!
Where tender plaintiffs actions bring
Of trespass and collusive tort.
Hail! As aforesaid, it is Spring.

—Louisa Dyer



Conscription—

by F. F. H.

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

A bright autumnal morn saw Estelle reclining before her open window. The girl possessed a peculiar charm; she was not beautiful, but nevertheless there was that touch of personal magnetism in her which drew people towards her. But alas her many good qualities were eclipsed by the fact that she was a cripple.

She often envied girls of her age who were more fortunate and who were able to enjoy life to its fullest extent. She had few friends, and her father was everything to her.

Estelle often found herself gazing through this window. Below her was a clump of trees whose foliage was being fast fleeced by autumn gales. Beyond this she could catch occasional glimpses of a crystal-

line stream, which the sun turned to a silvery hue. Birds sang in the tree-tops and an azure sky lay overhead. Their peaceful cottage, situated on a gentle westward slope, was the last in those latitudes to parley with the horizontal rays of a setting sun.

Estelle admired Nature's garbs, yet was unable to withhold the tears which persistently crept into her eyes. Why was she weeping? Was it on account of her bodily ailments? No! There before her, was a vivid picture of her mother's funeral; she could clearly visualize each detail of that pathetic ceremony. A month had elapsed from the day of her mother's death, a younger brother had died a trifle earlier. Now, father and daughter were all that remained of a once happy little family.

Estelle was awakened from her reverie by the hurried entrance of her father.

"Good morning, father," she said, looking up at him. She caught a glum look on his face. "What is the matter, father?" she spoke with an effort.

"I have bad news, Estelle dear," he said, withdrawing a letter from his pocket. "I have—"

"What is it? Tell me, is it serious?"

"It concerns you and I. Our separation is inevitable, perhaps only for a while, perhaps for ever."

"Is it inevitable?"

"Yes, darling, a number of men have already been conscripted from the neighbourhood. Now my turn has come. This letter is a summons from Army Headquarters. I have to be there to-morrow. In all probability I shall be packed off to the Front, from where I may never return to see my Estelle."

"Oh, father, stay with me. I could never live without you," she sobbed, looking up into his eyes.

The following morning father and daughter embraced on the door-step. It was a lasting embrace. The girl wept bitterly. Estelle then limped hurriedly to her window to see her father (perhaps for the last time) ere a bulge of the hill hid him from view.

On arrival at Headquarters, Wilkinson was found to be totally deaf. The doctor, a short, stumpy, nasty-tempered man, scolded the new recruit for not replying to his questions and used the most obscene language in the expression of his views. This was a deliberate test for the recruit. They wanted to ascertain whether he was deaf in reality; but the trap was futile.

That night a man with a loaded revolver crept stealthily to Wilkinson's bedside; he fired a blank cartridge close to the supposed sleeping man's ear. This test too failed to have the desired results.

A few days later a person visited the recruit. He had come, he said, to break the sad news of his little daughter's sudden death. Wilkinson remained unperturbed; he evidently heard nothing.

Eventually, after the failure of various tests, they were convinced that the man was genuinely deaf and discharged him as medically unfit for active service.

THE END

Wilkinson now retraced his steps homeward, in exuberant spirits, elated by the success of his scheme. He must have been near midway between the station and Headquarters, when a large, spacious car glided past him and stopped a few yards ahead. A lady's head protruded from the side: "Are you going to the station? May I give you a lift?" she asked.

"Thank you," said he, as he entered the car. "You are extremely kind." The car lurched forward.

There was silence for a time. Wilkinson and the young lady were its two, only occupants. The discharged recruit stole a glance at his benefactor, a young lady with large irresistible eyes of a soft limpid turquoise blue, golden hair and of a slight figure.

"Where are you coming from?" she presently asked him.

"Army Headquarters; they have just discharged me, and I am hurrying home to my helpless daughter."

"Why helpless? Has she nobody to take care of her?"

"No one. I am her only relative and yet these brutal fellows endeavoured to snatch me away from her. But I deceived them."

"How were you able to mislead these horrible people?" she asked.

"I pretended to be deaf. They tested me in diverse ways, but all was of no avail. They then discharged me. I was treated reasonably well on the whole, except for that doctor, who will yet suffer for his misdoings."

The car sped on. A brief but eloquent spell of silence prevailed between its two occupants. This, however, was eventually broken by the man.

"You are my first confidante. I'm sure I can trust one so good?"

"You will see for yourself," she said nonchalantly. They were silent once more.

Finally they drew up in the station porch. Wilkinson thanked the young lady profusely before alighting.

"It has been a pleasure for me," she replied, "to help a man in your circumstances. Go to your poor daughter. But since we may never meet again, I must take this opportunity and beg forgiveness for my husband, the doctor. I was the final test."



Money For Nothing

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

THOMAS McTavish walked along the Strand, in London. It was a fine day, and the Scot stepped out briskly, appreciating the bustle and grandeur of the Metropolis. He was enjoying a few days' vacation.

Just ahead strode a tall, bronzed, soldierly-looking man. The man had the appearance of a well-to-do stranger. He put his hand into his pocket, and withdrew a handkerchief. A fat, rich-looking wallet fell on the pavement. The tall gentleman walked on, unconscious of his loss.

"Hi, sir, your wallet!" cried Mr. McTavish.

As the Scot bent to recover the article, somebody cannoned into him from behind. The tall stranger turned back, and all three men came together on the pavement.

"I am greatly obliged to you, sir," said the tall stranger, accepting the wallet. "Besides a consider-

able amount of money, there is something in this pocket-book I would be terribly sorry to lose—the portrait of my dear dead mother."

The man from behind was obviously interested in the dramatic little encounter. "Allow me to congratulate you, sir," he said, addressing McTavish. "As a stranger to London, it gives me great pleasure to witness such an honest act."

"Mphum," said the Scot, non-committally.

"Allow me to present my card," continued the onlooker. "I am John D. Quick, banker, of Little Rock, Virginia. Say, if you are ever near my hometown, I'll be honoured to show you some real American hospitality."

The tall, bronzed gentleman looked at the banker in amazement. "Not *Snootsy* Quick, of the class of '09?" he cried.

The banker surveyed the tall stranger with equal eagerness. "Lands sakes! It is Buster Beeton!" he exclaimed, extending a fraternal hand.

"Colonel Beeton, nowadays," smiled the stranger. "Gee, what a coincidence! Boys, this calls for a celebration. It is not often that two class-mates meet in the streets of London, thousands of miles from home, after a lapse of twenty-five years."

"You will be excusing me," muttered McTavish, about to take his departure.

The Colonel detained him. "Not a bit of it, sir. You must join us. I will be happy if you and my old friend Quick take lunch with me. I have a suite at the Savoy-Carlton."

"The Savoy-Carlton? Say, that is a millionaires' hotel," remarked John D. Quick.

"The fact is, I have rather more money than I know what to do with," laughed the Colonel, making a wry face of comical apology.

"Aweel, a person from Aberdeen has never been known to refuse free entertainment," said McTavish, humorously.

The three sat down to a sumptuous repast. They grew merrily convivial. The class-mates recalled old times, and retailed to McTavish the laughable exploits of their college-days. They were 'Snootsy', 'Buster', and 'Mac' to each other. At least, the two Americans used these familiar forms of address. The Scot maintained a canny reserve.

"Come on, boys," cried the Colonel, when the last toast had been drunk. "Let's go out and paint this town red. The treat is on me."

The hours passed in lavish entertainment. Money was nothing to the Colonel. At last, in the early hours of the morning, McTavish protested he must take his departure.

"You can't do that, Mac!" cried the Colonel. "Don't break up the party. You are my guest, and we Americans tolerate no half-measures in entertaining our friends. You are coming back to Savoy-Carlton with us. You shall occupy the Royal suite at my expense."

The Colonel would take no refusal; so McTavish was housed in regal splendour. The next day, the round of sumptuous hospitality continued. McTavish lived like a king.

That evening, as the three cronies sat over their after-dinner cigars, the Colonel grew serious for the first time. "I am glad to have met you two boys," he said. "The fact is, I am a lonely man, weighed down with a heavy responsibility."

"Aw, Buster, quit your kidding," said the banker.

"I am in earnest," retorted the Colonel. "I have an obligation to fulfil; and until I had the good fortune to encounter you fellows, I hadn't a friend in the world."

"Well, if you want to borrow money—" began the banker, jokingly.

"It is much more serious than that. I want to give money away."

"Oh, yes?" laughed John D. Quick.

"I am serious," persisted the Colonel. "The story is a strange one. My dear old mother was the daughter of Corne Carne, the cereal king. She died worth five million dollars."

"And you inherited the money, and it is worrying you?" suggested the banker, grinning.

"No, old man. I have my father's fortune; more than enough. My mother left her money to me in trust, with directions that it should be distributed in charity."

"Well, there are plenty of deserving charities."

"My dear mother distrusted organised charities. She did not want to leave her money to a pack of professional directors and administrators, living in luxury on their 'causes'. In her will, she ordered the money to be placed in the hands of myself, and two substantial citizens nominated by me, for charitable disposal by each, at his absolute discretion."

"Gosh!" muttered John D. Quick.

"Imagine my position," continued the Colonel. "I've spent most of my life soldiering in the Phillipines. I have no friends. If the terms of my dear mother's will became known, I would be besieged by scoundrels. When can I find two men, rich, and of such sterling character, that they could be trusted with three hundred thousand pounds apiece?"

"Well, old-timer," said John D. Quick, soberly. "You can trust me."

The Colonel looked searchingly at his class-mate. "Snootsy, I know you were always one of the best—" He paused.

"I understand, Buster," replied the banker. "Three hundred thousand pounds is a lot of money. With that sum to hand over, you want very sound evidence of character and financial position. Don't apologise; it is your duty to treat me like any unknown candidate for trusteeship. Look: here is my formal recommendation from the American Banking Corporation. That will testify to my probity and good character. As for my financial standing, I'll prove it in the only practical way. I'll hand you my cheque for ten thousand dollars, to show that I am disinterested."

"No, no, Snootsy. I have every confidence in you."

"I insist. My cheque will give you even greater confidence, old boy. There you are—ten thousand dollars. Send it round to the bank first thing in the morning, and you will find it O.K. If you are going to give me three hundred thousand pounds, you want to be certain that I am not a man of straw."

"Thanks, old chap," muttered the Colonel, gratefully. "Tomorrow I will cash the cheque. As soon as the cheque goes through, I will see my lawyers, and make you a nominee under the will. Old man, for the sake of our old friendship, you will promise to distribute the three hundred thousand pounds wisely?"

"Of course, dear old chap."

"But there is still another nominee to be found," mourned the Colonel.

"Why, Buster, he won't take any finding at all!" cried the banker. "Here he is—dear old Mac. I'd trust him with all the money in the world."

"That is a great idea!" cried the Colonel. "Of course, Mac is a man of substance, and I'd trust him with a king's ransom. Look how he gave me back my pocket-book."

"Sure. But this is business, old-timer. As a gentleman, I think Mac ought to make the same demonstration of confidence as I have done. After all, you are going to hand him three hundred thousand pounds, to be used entirely as he thinks fit."

The Colonel pondered. "Perhaps you are right, Snootsy," he meditated. "Of course, it is a mere matter of form. Mac has only to write a cheque.

When the cheque is honoured, I can take that as sufficient proof of his *bona fides*."

The two Americans looked expectantly at Mac Tavish. The canny Scot rose to his feet.

"You poor feckless loons!" he said. "Would you play the confidence-trick on a man from Aberdeen? You'll be getting no cheque from me. I knew you for what you were, the moment I set eyes on you. Dropping a wallet full of money. Telling a tale of being old college-chums. Old prison-pals, more likely!"

"Sir, are you crazy?" cried the Colonel.

"No. I'm just having the laugh of you. Aye, and my wife Maggie will have her laugh too, when I tell her how I lived on the fat of the land for two days, at the expense of a couple of crooks. Aye, you'll get no cheques from me. My wife Maggie keeps the banking-account, and *she* signs the cheques."

"Well, I always heard that Scotsmen were mean—" said the banker.

"No, man, we are not mean—only canny. If you keep out of jail long enough, may be you'll get to Aberdeen, and I'll surely repay your hospitality. Here is my address—Thomas MacTavish, 5 Riverside Drive, Aberdeen. Good-evening to you, gentlemen."

The following day, Thomas MacTavish returned to the bosom of his family. He related to his wife the comical story of how he lived at the Savoy-Carlton, at the expense of a pair of confidence-tricksters.

"Aye, Thomas, it was very smart of you," said Maggie, proudly; "but why did you want the two thousand pounds so quickly?"

"Are you mad, woman?" cried McTavish. "I wanted no two thousand pounds."

"But I sent the money this morning!" exclaimed Maggie. "Here is the telegram."

She produced a slip of buff paper.

M. MacTavish, 5 Riverside Drive, Aberdeen—Completed important deal. Wire two thousand pounds immediately to Beeton, Suite Two, Ritz-Carlton, London—Thomas.



The Discarding of Ramsay

by Taurus

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

I. The Prologue.

THIS is the first time, I believe, that the remarkable inner history of the circumstances which made Sam Sam—I mean, not Ramsay—is unfolded to the public. Sam, as you so shrewdly have guessed from the overt hints I have been strewing over these chronicles, was not always Sam, but was once upon a time Ramsay. Now, as you know, it is a pet abomination of his.

Sam is fond of calling this his first and only failure. I do not think it can be called that. No doubt he lost that on which he staked his name, but he won the case.

II. The Clue of the Collar-stud.

Sam looked at the table, above it and below and drew a complete blank. It was nowhere at all. This man, the master of a thousand mysteries, the hero of a thousand losses—or it may be a thousand and one—was now the subject of this dread mystery, the victim of this severe loss. Sam who went after mysteries here had one presented to him, all gratis.

And there was no clue—none at all.

"Where did you leave it?" I asked.

"On the table, two fingers off the edge in a north-easterly direction," he snapped. Such detail, such precision! And all for nothing! It was lost! Lost!

"What is it?" I ventured.

"That which I value most, that without which I do not know what to do." My heart bled without spilling a drop. Here was Sam confessing that a loss put him at a loss, this man to whom losses of other peoples' meant gains.

"My collar-stud!"

I clutched the air.

"You don't say!" I cried. "That nice enamel one. You don't say you have lost that, your collar-stud!"

"I say it and you have been saying it the last four and a quarter minutes," said this man with the giant intellect with such asperity that I had to take an aspirin to cool off.

The enormity of the loss struck me like a correctly-aimed anything. One never knows with Sam! He might actually sally out on a startled world studless or even shirt-less in the extremity of his emotion. After all, these are dog days.

"Now, what to do?" I mildly put in.

The man literally pounced upon it.

"Yes, that is the question!" he bellowed. "What to do or what not to do."

I was in a way sorry for this extraordinary man. I even now remember the remarkable way in which he solved the mystery of the Missing Diamond-pin. Lord Nitwit rushed to him frantically with the case and the loss and in one query—"Are you sure, my lord, you are not now wearing it?"—Sam solved the case and pocketed the cheque. What made it all worse was that this happened in Lady Babani's mansion where we were staying. We had arrived there on an urgent summons and were waiting for her ladyship's call.

Suddenly Sam shouted; "Alright, give me yours." A simple and a neat solution. The man's brain-wave!

An ordinary Kremetz stud—what was a collar-stud between friends? I parted with mine ungrudgingly.

He took it up tenderly, studied it gingerly and placed it upon the table.

"Why, are you not wearing it?" I gasped.

"No, my dear Watson," he assured me gravely. "That will be useless. The man or woman whom we are here to hunt or the burglary or the murder or whatever it may be we are here to solve is, take it from me, intimately mixed up with the missing collar-stud. The collar-stud will lead us to the solution."

I was amazed! This man who did not even know what for he had been summoned was coolly reckoning his clues—but of course there was no knowing with such a brilliant man!

III. The Case.

There was a knock. "Sir," said the footman, "Lady Babani will be pleased to see you now."

"Ah, in time this call; the mystery clears up," murmured Sam as we followed the footman.

Lady Babani, pale but composed, received us courteously.

"Thank you, gentlemen," she said, "for responding to my call so quickly. I hope you are quite comfortable here. I want you to stop really till my poor boy is found."

I was horror-stricken.

"Your boy is lost, madam?" Sam asked.

"I am afraid he has been kidnapped," she replied plaintively.

"Madam," consoled Sam. "Compose yourself. Kidnappers nap—early or late." How true! How profoundly true!

"What tortures my poor boy is suffering, heaven only knows!" she moaned.

"Not 'only', madam," corrected Sam. "He does and so do they. Never mind, madam, I have already hit upon a clue and I am following it up diligently. He left yesterday morning?"

"Yes, I have noted the time in that pad." She pushed a pad towards us.

"I see," said Sam, scrutinising it. "Departure 7-29 A.M., arrival not known yet. Yes, I see."

As we ascended the steps Sam took me into his confidence.

"Big Boy Bang is in in this."

"Big Boy Bang! How...how do you know?" I stuttered.

"How do I know!" he thundered. "He has not been in two stories up to now. So he is in in this, you half wit." The genius of this man!

"Now, gently, gently," he whispered to me, as we neared the door. He sprang upon the door and threw it open. We were aghast! The room was empty. What was more, the collar-stud was there, where we had left it!

Sam grew tomatoes in the cheeks with suppressing his wrath.

"This man," he snapped, "is cleverer than I took him to be. So he has not taken this, eh?"

Even as he spoke, a gust of wind blew off the stud.



He: When I marry I shall marry a beautiful girl and a wonderful cook.
She: Heavens! That would be bigamy!

IV. The Pursuit.

"I'll chase it, come what may!" bellowed Sam as he leapt out of the window in hot pursuit.

A scream rent the air, without tearing it though. Sam had descended on a mongrel dog peacefully munching away below. It scuttled off in true champion style, moaning and whining.

"Ah!" cried Sam, that deep student of human and other-human nature. "None runs but has guilt in him." He tumbled after it, I making a weak third. We ran out of the gate, tore along the road and turned the corner. Bang! Bang into Bang! We had bumped into Big Boy Bang himself!

Sam shook him by the shoulder and in a voice which quavered demanded:

"Bang, where is this boy?"

"Boy! Skulls and skeletons! You meddling idiot! Inferno..."

Sam waited to hear no more. He jumped into a passing taxi and pulled me in.

"Drive!" he shouted. "To Montford Road."

This man's incredible mental agility! What has he discovered now and how! I was breathless! Who could keep pace with this man's lightning thought-process and be breathful! After all I had run a goodish bit of distance.

"Inferno," mused Sam. "If he is not in the Fern, my name is not Ramsay."

Then it burst upon me. The cunning Bang had come a cropper this time. From his own mouth this great detective had extracted the clue. Even the legendary Holmes, I believe, cannot claim such a triumph.

V. The Solution.

We soon alighted at the 'Fern Hotel'.

"Sir," asked Sam addressing the clerk. "Is young Babani here?"

"Why, no," he replied. "Not at the moment."

Sam's knees sagged. He collapsed. Into a chair. The man was a picture of misery. After all this pother, only to find that the bird had flown!

Sam whimpered. "Alright, alright—no, no, all wrong, all wrong. Ah, Ramsay, did I not say that my

name was not Ramsay if he was not here. Faithfully have you served me, Ramsay, but now goodbye and also adieu. Never more after this discomfiture, this ignominy. And let it be Sam henceforth. Come on, Sam, what can you give me..." A thought must have stung him, at least a bug. He sprang out of the chair: "What a fool I was. In Fern No. Clearly to say, the boy was NOT in the Fern," he whispered and suddenly turning to the startled clerk:

"Can you tell me where he has gone?"

"Why," he answered, "at the moment, he is next door in our bar."

With a cry of joy Sam bounded out.

We collared the boy as he was gulping a neat brandy in the 'Skulls and Skeletons'.

"Ah, skulls and skeletons!" Fool I was not to take a pointer from what Bang said.

"Is there anything better than a sip of brandy?" the boy asked.

"Yes, two sips," replied Sam as he quenched his thirst.

We got him out finally and into a taxi.

"Did you suffer much?" solicitously inquired Sam.

"Suffer! Gosh! Torture it was."

Sam swore a great oath and slapped my thigh. "I shall punish these blackguardly kidnappers," he swore.

The boy's eyes grew bigger. "Kidnappers! What kidnappers? There were none."

"None! Did you say 'none'? You did, I hear you did."

"Sir," whined the boy. "Don't take me to mother. I can't face her. I want to drown myself, at least my sorrows. I have been in hiding since yesterday."

"I see, yes. That is because..."

"Don't remind me, sir," he begged. "You know everything. I have failed. The results of the examination came out yesterday morning early..."

VI. Epilogue

Now, reader, honestly, do you think Sam was justified in discarding the faithful 'Ramsay'. But he was always a man of his word, and ever more.

THE END

Merry's Filmfolio

Maha Bharatham (Tamil)

Producers: The Tamil Nadu Talkies

Showing At: The Broadway Talkies, Madras

Reviewed by K. A. P.

The most widely-discussed talkie topic at the moment is the miserable condition of the Tamil talking pictures. An author-director-screen-stage-star has come down with his 'Twelve Points' to 'show' that the Tamil Talkies are the 'worst' in India. Yet another South Indian-film-critic, a director-producer, has expressed his bewilderment at the 'Failures of the South Indian Pictures.' And he has written, subsequently, a series of 'instructive' articles on 'directing' and 'screen adaptation.' A few more of such crusades, and the Tamil Talking picture will be still born or become a thing of the dead and buried past. And yet one must ask what either this five-in-one or the two-in-one has done for putting the Tamil Talkie on its feet!

'Example' said Dr. Johnson, 'is always more efficacious than precept.' Each of these has been responsible for at least one Tamil Talking picture which is one of the reasons for a change of attitude on the part of the 'Third-class passengers of the Theatres.' While the two-in-one has interpreted the word 'entertainment' to mean mere amusement, the five-in-one has totally ignored both. Meanwhile, an outsider's disinterested observations might appropriately be recorded. No doubt some pretty raw numbers have been produced with an undue emphasis on sex. But it seems to me, after viewing a fair cross-section of the out-put, that there has been less salaciousness than stupidity. Some of them seem ridiculous, preposterous and unreal. They have less relation to actual life than Grimm's Fairy Tales. This state is not helped by the fourth-rate acting of a six-foot star who is every inch a ham. And no one has come forward with a Tamil talkie having a modern plot that was a box-office hit.

To all these, the producers have a stock but adequate reply: 'We're giving the public what it wants.' But they will realise their mistake too suddenly one

day. In the teeth of such raging controversy comes *Mahabharatham* another complete *Puranam*.

Maha-Bharatham is a crusade. To do justice to it as a spectacle, it takes a Cecil B. De Mille, the 'Bath-tub King' of Hollywood. Or to produce it as an intelligent, moving story, we must have one D. W. Griffith. This show demonstrates how both of them are conspicuous by their absence—a real need to Tamil Nad.

The various episodes in the Mahabharatha have been patched together and wound up with a mock-war spectacle in which an attempt is made to produce the crowd effect. This looked to me like the *Fete Champetre* which thrilled the Madras crowds in the S. I. A. A. grounds in 1920, produced by a Frenchman—a long festival-like procession. If the crowd had not been so very static, it might have been a success.

Among the actors and actresses who take part in *Maha Bharatham*, Dharma Putra is very good and Miss Janakam, as Panchali, is very promising. She has an excellent voice and, with better make-up and a little more weight, she will do well. Dharma Putra and Sri Krishna sing beautifully, but I couldn't bear to look at Krishna's mouth. Some of the sets are good but the set designer has lost sight of one of the most important features in his work. Wherever there is a palace in the back-ground, the frontage bears the appearance of a ruin. A few gray stones, a few wooden pillars and blocks by themselves piled in the background cannot create the impression of a lovely palace! There must be life even in a palace!

The story is being drawn out of the lips of the various characters in a sort of cross-index fashion. It runs more by retrospect.

But all told, the picture goes well as puranic pictures go.

The Week's Pictures In The City

The Paragon.

Ah, Wilderness

Producers: M. G. M.

Directed by Clarence Brown.

Stars: Lionel Barrymore, Wallace Beery, and Aime MacMohan. Love romance set in Eastern America in a hick town of the 'eighties.

The Roxy.

Magnificent Obsession.

Producers: Universal.

Directed by John M. Stahl.

Stars: Irene Dunne, Robert Taylor and Charles Butterworth. Story of Lloyd C. Douglas' best-seller, giving Irene Dunne a highly sympathetic role.

The Wellington.

The Milky Way.

Producers: The Paramount.

Directed by Leo McCarey.

Stars: Harold Lloyd, Adolphe Menjou, Veree Teasdale, Helen Mack, William Gargan and Dorothy Wilson. A hilarious comedy, telling the story of a milkman who became world middle-champion by ducking at the right time.

The Elphinstone.

The Little Colonel.

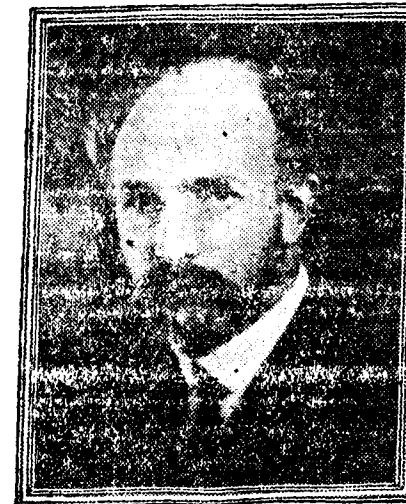
Producers: Fox.

Directed by David Butler.

Starring Shirley Temple, Lionel Barrymore, Evelyn Venable, John Lodge and Bill Robinson.



A Comic Scene from Tamil Nadu Talkies
Maha Bharatham.



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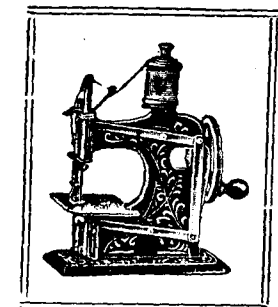
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AROUND THE STUDIOS

Imperial: Director Chowdhary is making rapid progress with *Pride of India* starring Sulochana and Billimoria.

Harischandra Art Production: They are progressing fast with *Hot Blood* or *Bharat-Ka-Lal*. S. Nawaz of Hyderabad plays the villain's role.

Diamond Pictures: Their *Resurrection* is well nigh finished but a few scenes are left to bring Tolstoy's immortal story to the screen.

Hun Pictures: Pressing offers are forwarded by agents for their maiden hit *Holy Crime*. The cast includes Vinayak, Baburao Pendharkar, Indira Wedkar and Leela.

Sagar Studio: They proclaim the happy news of the commencement of two new pictures; one being a social heavy type subject handled by the director Mr. Mehboob and the other the mythological subject *Veer Abhimanyu* in Telugu, directed by Mr. Amin.

Mr. Badami is busy with the editing of *Jivanlata* and the shooting of *Village Girl* a social subject.

Mr. Luhar is trying to give energy to flutter his *Gay Birds* and the private trial of this comedy promises a splendid screen entertainment, being an adaptation from Mr. Munshi's classic.

Mr. Yakub is very keen to avail himself of every first opportunity to shoot his stunt production *Lion of Sagar*.

Rajputana Films, Ltd.: Director Mohan Singh has achieved such a huge subject as *Romantic India* so soon. The picture is all ready and will be presented shortly to its anxious patrons. This picture is hoped to be something out of the common. Humour—the real refreshment desired by the audience after a hard day's

job, a few sobs, situations fleeing from climax to climax—suspense that will throb—romance which grips and smacks—everything entertaining.

Prakash Pictures: They have taken in hand their next which is titled *The Bomb* alias *Top Ka Gola*.

Metro Movietone: Their Masterpiece social hit *Lahore Ki Larki* or *Matwali Jogan* has been completed and a private show was given to press. It is hoped the picture will be released shortly.

Wadia Movietone: Homi Wadia's *Frontier Mail* is fast progressing with Nadia.

Golden Eagle Movietone: *Piya-ki-Jogan* has been passed by the Board of Censors and in a trade show the other day, where all the well-known distributors of Bombay were present and it is reported that *Piya-ki-Jogan* is a first-rate picture with universal appeal.

A social subject is directed by Mr. Jagirdar and is called *The Times of India*. The cast is headed by Master Modak, Miss Mehar Sultana, Miss Rojankari, Mr. Jagirdar (the Director), Mrs. Leelavathi Misra (A society lady), Mr. Powar, Raja Pandit, Master Eric and the new child prodigy Baby Leela.

Shree Vishnu Cinetone Co.: Director Kanjibhai Rathod's *Punjab-ke-Sinh* is almost completed and is expected to be ready for exhibition within a couple of weeks.

Lahore: Punjab Film Co., has gone into liquidation which has upset the programmes of the producers shooting their pictures in the Co's studio.

Indus Film Corporation: The *Berozgor* is released in Karachi. Mr. Rajhan has started shooting of *Prem Lata*.

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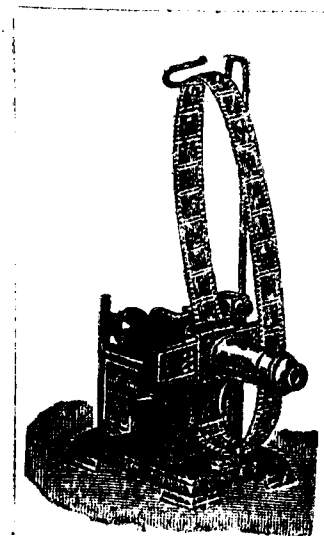
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