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MERRY

MAGAZINE

JYESHTA

2065

: ARTIJI :

DIANA DON

LOUISA DYER

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: OMEGA :

: RASOOL :

Vol. IV No. 24

13th June 1936

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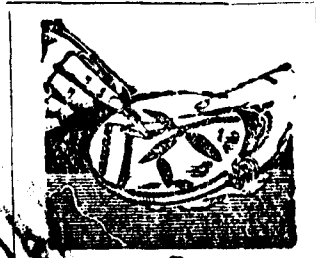
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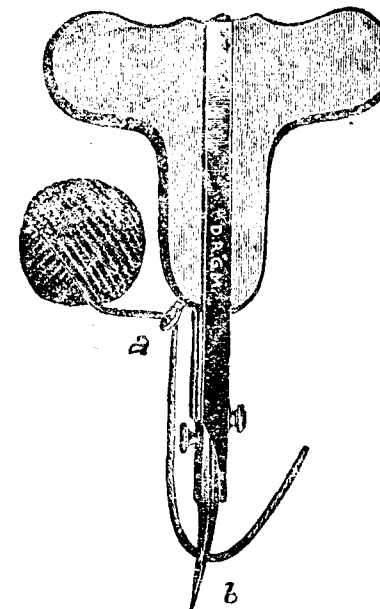
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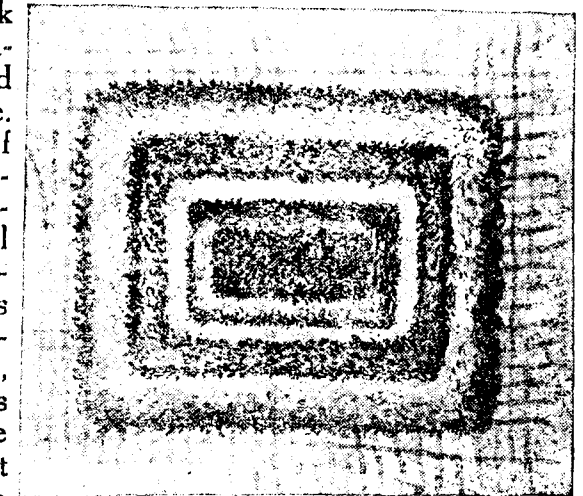
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The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



Madras, June 13, '36

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Dewan Bahadur
K. S. R. Sastri

★

Diana Don

★

Embusque

★

A. A. Roland

★

A. T. M.

Thomas

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Commenting on the verdict of the Judicial Tribunal which inquired into the circumstances of the leakage of the Budget proposals, Mr. J. H. Thomas reiterated: "My conscience is clear."

But unfortunately for him, so is the verdict!

* * *

He further added that he had received thousands of letters of sympathy from the public, and that his loving wife and family would enable him to bear up in the face of the verdict.

Presumably, in his new home!

* * *

Sir John Simon has tabled a resolution for the forthcoming conference of National Liberals saying that they can best serve the nation and their own interest by remaining in the National Government.

There should be general agreement with one-half of what the resolution says!

* * *

In the course of a lecture on Papacy, Mr. Ruthnaswamy is reported to have said: "The end and aim of the Holy See was spiritual service wherever opportunities for it presented themselves."

It is this elasticity of aim that accounts for the world-wide influence of Catholicism!

* * *

Reuter reports that in her maiden voyage, the *Queen Mary* failed to break the record.

The mention of it sounds like creating one!

A committee appointed by the Mysore Government to suggest reforms in the legislature recommends the safe-guarding of freedom of speech as in British Indian legislatures.

Another example of distance lending enchantment to view!

* * *

A Punjab scheme contemplates the provision of farms for graduates with gardens and tennis.

The idea seems to be to familiarise them with agriculture as a hobby!

* * *

It is now confirmed that C. S. Nayudu is to go to England to strengthen the Indian bowling.

At least, that is the intention!

* * *

The last cricket match between All-India and Cambridge was drawn owing to rain.

We ourselves are beginning to wonder if Rain is not our strongest ally in the present tour!

* * *

When a resolution of condolence on the demise of Dr. Ansari was proposed to be moved in the Simla Municipality, the Chairman, a Mr. Kennedy asked: "Who was Dr. Ansari?"

This has naturally made Mr. Kennedy public without making him known!

"Warner Bros. having found it impossible to find a suitable story for Bettie Davis have sent her on a nine-weeks' holiday."

Sure, they have not yet heard of our South Indian Producers!

* * *

From an account of this year's Derby: "When the Agha Khan came out, he took off his hat, wiped his brow, and beamed on everybody. His wife came along. To all and sundry, he introduced her saying: "This is my wife!"

Lest there be any doubt about it, we must repeat that it was Mahmoud who won the Derby!

* * *

To a question whether he was going to write a book on India, Mr. Jeffrey Farnol, the writer, is reported to have replied that it would be ridiculous to do so as he knew nothing of the country except what he had seen so far.

Still it might be enough for a ludicrous article!

* * *

With a view to rouse the West against Japan, Mr. Cholu of Chungshan University intends to interview both Hitler and Mussolini.

China has good reason to hope for nothing from Britain!

* * *

"Further Shooting in Palestine"—says a head-line.

One result will no doubt be more news-reels!

The Exit of Mr. Thomas

The resignation of Mr. Thomas from the Cabinet has provided the British public with a minor sensation, and the British Press with a major opportunity for patting itself on the back with a naivete which must surely disarm the most determined Anglo-phobe. This is the more remarkable as Mr. Thomas's rise to fame was as unexpected as his present eclipse. It is plain that little or no sympathy is available for Mr. Thomas. But the occasion of his fall has been utilised by almost every newspaper to point to the incorruptibility of the British judiciary, and the fundamental honesty and decency of British public and political life. This claim may readily be granted; but within certain limits. British politics are not tainted to the same extent with the intrigues of cliques as those of some Continental countries. But it is possible, even in England, for side-tracking the course of justice, or to prevent the emergence of truth, if it suited long-established, vested interests. In such cases, a policy of procrastination or circumlocution is devised; a number of committees help to cloud the main issue, and an innocuous report is published long after public interest in that particular subject has died out. A recent instance of such tactics in England was provided by the Government's response to the public demand for an enquiry into the 'Arms Scandal.' A judicial enquiry was evaded; some sort of a commission was set up, and its report has not yet seen the light of day. And then, we in this country are familiar with the cruel fate that overtook the late Sir Sankaran Nair's attempt to obtain justice in a British court of law as against an Englishman. The late Justice Macardie's pronouncement in the Dyer Case was a political manifesto, not an impersonal, detached judgement. Poor Mr. Thomas! If he fell a

victim, he was not the first; but he was sacrificed to enable the smug, middle class Briton to enjoy a 'moral' holiday!

Saul Among the Prophets

One would have thought it an embarrassing job to be an ardent Congressman, to be the head of its provincial organisation, and also at the same time to utilise every public occasion for declaiming against Socialism as a compound of all the ills to which the body politic may be exposed. But Mr. Satyamurti performs this feat without turning a hair so to speak. Really, there is little to choose between him and the ignorant baronet from Bombay so far as their tirade against Socialism is concerned. Mr. Satyamurti asserts that Socialism means the wholesale expropriation of private rights. This is apparently intended to make our flesh creep; but is unfortunately very far from the truth. There is hardly any government functioning at the present moment which is not committed to Socialistic principles in some way or other. Leaving aside our opponents, we think that Congress politicians should organise study circles, understand what Socialism is, and what it is not, before they unthinkingly rush into the arms of their natural enemies. Somebody must do this work of clarification. Jawaharlal has himself set an admirable example. We do hope it will be followed up all over the country. Such propaganda will clear the air, and prepare the mind of the country at large. It is undeniable that the ideas of Socialism are too potent to be abused and misrepresented into extinction. They hold the future, more emphatically in this country than in any other; and to fight against them would be as unavailing and foolish as the attempt of King Canute, or the more classic (and apocryphal) attempt of Mrs. Partington who sought to mop up the Atlantic!

The Craze For Expansion



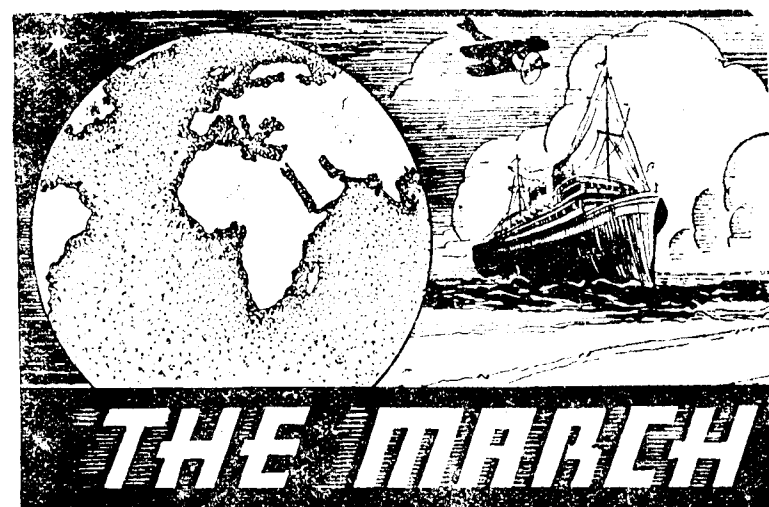
John, the Bull: Take care me lads, you might end in a bust up!



Reuter cables that the Duce welcomed Marshal Badoglio with a kiss when the latter arrived in Rome from Ethiopia. It is not known whether the great Marshal returned the kiss. If not he owes every student of world affairs an explanation. I would also like to kiss Marshal Badoglio for the Homeric valour he displayed in the Abyssinian campaign. Unfortunately, I and fellow-admirers of old Badoglio cannot get at him in the flesh (his flesh I mean). I kissed a press photograph of the Marshal yesterday. I am sorry to record that I didn't get any pleasure of that papery kiss. I am wondering if I could kiss the brave old soldier by proxy. And who would be a better proxy than the Italian Consul General in India? If his Excellency the Consul General is agreeable, I shall fly to Calcutta and satisfy my yearning soul. On my word of honour, I promise His Excellency that I will not eat raw onions on that happy day.



Mr. V. Ramadas Pantulu was saying a few words the other day to the ryots of East Godavari. He told them *inter alia* that he regretted that he could not agree with Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru's suggestion for the socio-economic reconstruction of India. I was sounding comrade Jawaharlal about the regret of Mr. V. Rama-



BY THE MAN

das Pantulu. He said: "My dear chap, I really regret that I am unable to regret the regret of Mr. Ramadas Pantulu." To be on the safe side, I regret both the regrets!



A visitor to Delhi protests against the inept names bestowed on some of its streets. He points out that a particularly smelly street in the Imperial Capital was coupled with a great character in Indian history. He accuses the concerned municipality with deplorable lack of a proper sense of values.

The same charge holds good in almost every city in India. There is a street in a certain town not far from Madras which the municipality makes its citizens call 'Covered Drain Street'. Was the drain in the street a covered one? No, sir. The said drain is as open as God's open sky. Whenever you go into that street, the open drain smiles at you in a frank manner. It stinks,

of course. But show me a municipal drain that doesn't stink. Then there is another street I know which is called 'Typhoon-Sher Khan Street'. One is entitled to expect in a street so named, at least one strong breeze once in a year. In utter fact, nothing ever happens in that aggressive-sounding street. Extending the analogy further I would take you further afield. The other day I ate a special sweet in a certain fashionable restaurant. The sweet was called 'Delhi Dilara'. Naturally I expected a kick out of such a grandiose-sounding dish. All I got out of it was disgust. It was nothing but a camouflaged 'Mysore Pak'. What is in a name? Damned little, I should say.



Professor Haldane says via *The Times* that the Duce is going to dump a quarter of a million Italian peasant families in his newly acquired empire. Naturally,



ON THE MOVE

says the Professor, the Italian peasants will interbreed with the Ethiopians. The consequences of this interbreeding, opines Professor Haldane, would not be negligible for the future of Europe. To this a humorist replied via the *Morning Post*. He says that even the Italians in Soho suffer from nostalgia. That the New York Italian dreams of the day when he can return to his native Italy. So to these quarter of a million Italian boys and girls, Mussolini's little scheme of colonisation is going to be a dud, a penal settlement in fact. "What," asks this humorist, "will the poor fellows do in Abyssinia *sans* wine, *sans* song, *sans* macaroni, *sans* everything?"

What a silly question! The Italians can make wine in Abyssinia, can't they? They can sing in Abyssinia, can't they? Unless they have sore throats! As for macaroni, what are Italian steamers for if not to carry cargoes of macaroni from the home

country to Italian Somaliland? Whatever happens, the Duce has my moral support.



Says the *Justice*: "Cheating under false pretence is a crime in law, but in Congress politics it seems to be a way of gathering support for the party." I assure my American friends, particularly Clark Gable and Mae West, that the *Justice* is not referring to their glorious institution. It is pointing a finger of scorn, I mean a finger of scorn at that sink of iniquity called the Indian National Congress. The Congress has made itself a force in British Imperial policy by chicanery. It has hoodwinked a recent Viceroy by sending a half-naked emissary to bargain for a pinch of salt. It sends its members to prison on the flimsiest of reasons to prey on public revenues. Yes indeed, we all owe a debt of gratitude to the



Justice for hollering against the Congress.



What the hell is Communism, anyhow? That is the question every silly man in the street is asking these days every other silly man in the street. *The Whip* of Calcutta carried recently a series of remarkably penetrating articles about this ticklish social doctrine. In one of the articles, Communism has been disposed of like this:

Communism spells destruction, despair, death. Communism means the routing of all religion. Communism entails the complete elimination of culture. Communism robs the people of their land, their jewellery, their money and all their earthly possessions. Communism turns boys into thieves and murderers; it makes prostitutes of the nation's girlhood. The Great Mughal caused to be inscribed on a marble tablet in his *Diwan-i-khas*: 'If there is a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here'. Of very truth, it may be written of Communism that—'If there is a hell on earth, it is here, it is here.'—

There is the whole damned thing for you, set in distinctive types. How I wish I had a *Whip* in my hand now!

It's Ever Thus !

Come, and step it merrily, like a little fairy dancing
Around a sleeping dew-drop ; above, a moon-ray glancing !
The theme—be it anything, it does not matter a bit ;
Elephants that sway, or butterflies that flit.

Or ' rainbows along the sky ' ; or a flower on a school-girl's head ;
Or a pretty little pussy, by that school-girl fed !
Or a cock that calls the dawn ; his hen that struts along ;
A baby that smiles in sleep : all theme for a poet's song !

In rhythmic ease, the muse swims in her native stream.
For ' the slings and arrows of Fortune ' , her shelter is a dream !
For her the sea will ' moan ' ; the sky the stars will ' blister ' ;
And the sandal-tree breeze will ' scorch ' a drooping love-sick ' sister '

Harp ! come, tune to please ! never mind the strumming finger !
O he envies none, let unheeded go the ' singer ' !
Homer begged in Athens—Milton starved : that's all !
And Kamban, once hunger-lashed, had to sweat to patch up a wall !

—G. K. Pillai



The Reason

" I say, why did you move from the old hostel where you had been living for the last two years ? "

" Yesterday I accidentally found out that it had no bathroom. "



★



Complimentary !

Mrs. Newlywed : Well, how do you like today's coffee ?

Mr. Newlywed : Dearest, it is just like the coffee father used to say was not like his mother used to make.

★

Choosing A Wife

Reading Time • About 3 Minutes

think that at least one of the great advantages of the cinema is that it enables a man to know a girl thoroughly before he marries her.

As I have been thinking of getting married for some time, I have made extensive researches into this method of testing a prospective bride. So far, the method has never proved a failure. It has, in fact, saved me from several awkward entanglements. I feel it is only right, therefore, to describe it for the benefit of others similarly placed.

The first thing, of course, is to persuade your father-in-law-to-be to permit his daughter to go with you to the pictures. If he is old fashioned and refuses, you

must assert your rights, you being a modern young man. It does not matter much if the gentleman and his daughter happen to be quite strangers to you as the cinema tests will quickly show whether you have made a mistake.

All that you need is a small note-book in which you must enter the various qualities to be avoided in a wife; and a well sharpened pencil (this is preferable to a pen when writing in the dark) with which to tick off the results of your investigations.

Having put on a neat collar you invite your girl to go to the picture. Near the theatre, just as you are alighting from the jutka or riksha, you remark as



In The Cinema

by A. C. Srikantiah

casually as possible: "Well, I think we might go to the Rs. 1-2-0 class." If she agrees, you at once place a tick in your exercise book against the heading 'Extravagant'.

For the next test it is necessary to choose two seats from one of which the view is bad. You place your girl in the seat with the obstructed view and yourself occupy the other. With a well simulated cry of concern, you then exclaim: "Darling, you cannot see the screen at all. My own view is perfect. Let us exchange places." Should she accept your offer, tick off the heading 'Selfish'.

During the interval ask her whether she would like to have some sweets or chocolates. She will probably reply in the affirmative, in which case tick 'Greedy'. (Two ticks should be made if she wants both.)

When the picture has commenced once again, permit your hand to stray idly in the space between your seats. Three entries depend upon this test. Should she fail to notice, a mark should be made against 'Ungrateful'. If she merely places her hand in yours, register 'Cold'. Should her response be too quick, tick 'Forward' or 'Unladylike'.

When the picture is over and you are getting ready to leave the theatre, you push your girl violently into the seat. No girl would, probably, be able to withstand this. If she retorts, tick 'Ill-tempered'. If she is dumbfounded and begins to cry, tick 'Meek' or 'Cowardly'.

The object of the fifth test is to ascertain her views about men. It is conducted by means of a series of questions about film stars. By her answers you will be able to tell whether she is 'Morbid', 'Silly', 'Ignorant' etc. For example, if she says that she liked the hero of the picture, you will have to tick 'Bad Taste' or 'Unromantic', because you know

perfectly well that you have got an astonishing resemblance to Ramon Novarro, which the hero of the picture hadn't.

To discover the result of your examination is simplicity itself. All you need do is to add up the ticks. If they number more than four, the girl would not be the right wife for you.



THE END



The Wages of Sin

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

by V. V. Narayanan

SARASA called on Yasoda for no particular reason. The former was wearing a *sari*, which was not so much a *sari* as a dream. That was perhaps reason enough.

"What a lovely *sari*!" said Yasoda in frank admiration. "It must have cost a small fortune. Sarasa dear, you have ever been a lucky girl. I envy you!"

"Yes, isn't it a lovely *sari*!" cooed Sarasa. She smiled slyly, and rather guiltily. "This *sari*, Yasoda darling, is more or less the wages of sin."

Yasoda's eyes popped out in horror. "Whatever do you mean, wicked girl? Wages of sin!"

"Yes, this *sari* represents the wages of sin," persisted Sarasa brazenly. "But not my sin. It is my uncle's sin."

Yasoda sighed a prodigious sigh of relief. She said, "I still don't understand."

"No, you won't. You were never famous for your brains at school.....Wait, don't call me names for a little while. First hear the story behind this *sari*."

"All right, you cat, proceed," said Yasoda good humouredly.

"Yesterday was penultimate Saturday..." began Sarasa.

"What a silly start for a story!" teased Yasoda.

"Not at all," retorted Sarasa. "The whole story hangs on the merciful fact that yesterday was penultimate Saturday. If it were not penultimate Saturday, uncle would not be at home. If uncle were not at home, he would not have had his midday nap. If he did not have a nap, he would not have spoken compromising words in his sleep. And if he didn't say anything in his sleep, this *sari* would not have seen the light of day..."

"Or rather the feel of your skin," corrected Yasoda, who never had any great respect for fine figures of speech.

"Or rather the feel of my skin. While he was dreaming, I kissed him on his bald patch. But I am anticipating. Let me begin at the beginning."

"What, you haven't begun yet?" asked Yasoda not unreasonably.

"No. The day before yesterday I saw this *sari* displayed at Surajram's. I decided to have it."

"That is, if your uncle gave you the money?" said Yasoda.

"Precisely. You needn't rub in the fact that I am dependent on my uncle. He is a darling, you horrid woman."

They laughed pleasantly and hugged each other.

I buttonholed my uncle yesterday morning, (resumed Sarasa) and tactfully congratulated him on his healthy, youthful looks. His reply was a grunt. He is a hard man to please. I patted the pillows on his easy chair, held a light to his cigar, set the fan at the proper speed, and sat at his feet looking devotedly at him. Uncle was all the while eyeing my little attentions suspiciously. The brute said bluntly: "What is the game, Sarasa? You appear to have grown very fond of me."

"Oh, uncle, I am always fond of you! And you know it, you bad man. By the way, uncle, what colour do you like best in a Benares *sari*?"

"I don't think I wear *saris*," he said in what he thought was cold sarcasm.

"But I do, uncle," I said. "I like purple best. Uncle, there is a dream *sari* going dirt cheap at Surajram's. Can I have it?"

"Most certainly not," he said hastily. "You have cart-loads of *saris* already. Not one *sari* more till next Pongal."

At this stage I thought that I would treat him to a little of my water-works. I sniffed, whimpered and coaxed a couple of tears into my eyes. My sniffing was so pathetic that it would have melted the heart of the oldest bronze statue in Madras. Uncle was adamant.

"Don't dream of dream *saris*, girl," said uncle with a note of finality. "I am not a gold mine."

I flared up. "If you don't buy me that *sari*, you old miser, don't ever dare to call me Sarasa."

"Very well," said the brute coolly, "I shan't."

I left him like an insulted queen. But I did not give up hope. At midday I went into uncle's room again. I heard the sound of his peaceful breathing, but I did not know that he was sleeping, much less that he was dreaming. I tiptoed to him and opened the question again with a gentle kiss on the bald patch at the back of his head. He did not open his eyes as I expected he would. He smiled seraphically. I kissed the patch again. He smiled still more seraphically. The old sinner, you see, was asleep and dreaming. That seraphic smile meant that my kiss dovetailed into his dream in some way. For at the second kiss he said: "Darling Subbu, kiss me on the lips."

I held my breath and opened my eyes as wide as they would go. My name was not Subbu. My aunt's name was certainly not Subbu. There is only one explanation.

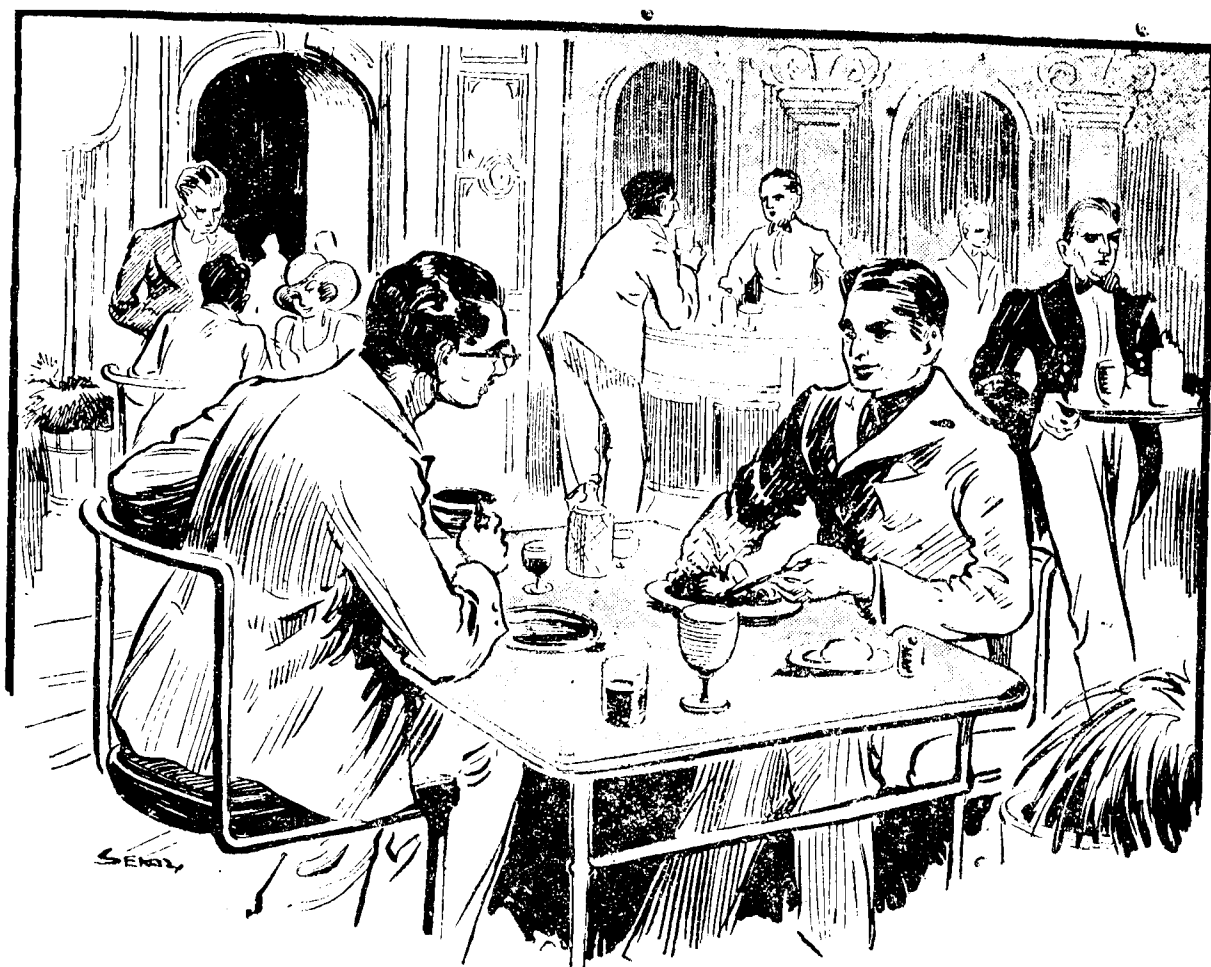
The two girls looked at each other steadily and burst into a sly laugh.

I said (continued Sarasa), "Uncle, I am not Subbu. I am Sarasa."

Uncle woke up with a dazed, frantic look. "What was I saying?" he asked.

"Nothing, uncle," I smiled sweetly at him. "You only said 'Darling Subbu, kiss me on the lips'."

(Continued on page 16)



His Highness!

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

by Jyeshta

It was a quiet corner of a restaurant in a quiet lane in a quiet quarter of Bombay. In that corner sat a quiet man, alone at a table. He was in the early forties. He was staring in front of him, but his eyes did not see anything. Every little while he lifted his cup of tea and sipped at it, mechanically. By the wry face he made at every sip, it was evident that the cup that cheers was not living up to its reputation.

The man was tall of stature and generously built, with an indefinable air of distinction about him that somehow created the impression in the onlooker that the man was at least a zamindar, if not an out and out Rajah. His accent was cultured, his diction superb, his smile a rare treat to behold. It was a dis-

arming and conquering smile. His clothes were prim and in the latest style. He carried them about his person as if he were melted in a crucible and poured into them and cooled down into shape. Such was the unstudied grace with which he carried his clothes.

His name was Jeevanlal Dumasia. That was the name which his father had given him. As he grew wiser, he gave himself about twelve more names, and used each as occasion arose. He oozed money of course. But he had no ostensible means of livelihood. He was the cleverest trickster in Western India. His associates called him 'Your Highness'. He was particularly good at impersonating rajahs and zamindars, and did a lucrative trade in cheating.

He sighed listlessly as he sipped his tea for the fifth time. His gaze wandered to the clock on the wall. It was nine in the morning. As the last stroke of the clock went off, a stranger appeared in the doorway of the restaurant. He too had a distinguished appearance. He bore himself like a soldier. His name was Ramlal, known to his cronies as 'The Major'. He was Jeevanlal's most trusted confederate. The newcomer's gaze roved around the room and settled on Jeevanlal. He came over to him and smiled his greetings.

"Your Highness seems to be in the blues today," said the Major banteringly. "Affairs of state worrying your exalted nibs?"

"Highness be damned!" hissed the other, but without rancour. "I was thinking that perhaps I might give myself a rest and turn honest for a change. Our last affair was a close shave."

"You turning honest, Your Highness! What is the world coming to! Cut out all that nonsense, my dear Jeevan. I have arranged that Calcutta affair. There are some fat fish staying at the Hotel Indian. I am starting tonight to Calcutta to fix up the preliminaries. You are following me exactly four days later."

His Highness sighed with resignation. "Must I," he said, "involve myself in this wicked scheme, you rascally tempter?"

"Of course, Your Highness. Do you know, sometimes, when I look at you, I almost believe that I am contemplating royalty?"

"Tut, tut," said Jeevanlal modestly.

Thereafter they conversed in undertones for an hour, and separated.

Two days later Major Ramlal was having an early drink in the lounge of the Hotel Indian in Calcutta. The manager of the Hotel passed that way. When he saw the Major, he ducked his head in superlative respect. The Major smiled one of his rare smiles and beckoned to him to come and have a drink with him. As the two were engaged in inconsequential talk, an

Express Telegram was delivered to the Major. He tore open the cover methodically, as if express telegrams occupied a large part of his life, and ran his eyes over the message. He said, "Ah!" He read the message again, and said to himself, "I see."

"Nothing unpleasant I hope, Major sahib," said the Hotel Manager, solicitously.

"Oh, no. Not at all. The fact is...." He looked keenly at the Manager. "Can I count on your discretion?"

"Certainly, sahib," said the Manager. "People in our trade are discretion personified."

"Very well. Look here, His Highness of Karanpur is coming to Calcutta in the evening and he is staying for a week. He asks me whether he could stay here in peace."

"Major sahib," whined the Manager, "His Highness's slightest wish shall be taken as a command and carried out accordingly. His Highness may rest assured...."

"That is all right," cut in the Major with condescension. "I shall wire to His Highness to come along. Reserve that suite overlooking the park at the back for His Highness. And mind, his identity must be kept a close secret."

Three days later His Highness of Karanpur alias the rogue Jeevanlal alighted at the Hotel Indian unostentatiously with a number of costly suit-cases and prodigious trunks. The Manager almost licked his feet. The Major received him with the deference due to his great rank.

That evening the Major and the Rajah of Karanpur met in a corner of the Hotel garden and conversed in whispers. They decided to burgle the suite adjoining the one occupied by Jeevanlal. Every detail was discussed and settled. As they came out of the clump of flower bushes behind which they were talking, a disagreeable-looking fellow walked into them clumsily. He apologised profusely and passed on.

"Who can that fellow be?" asked His Highness of the Major. "I have an idea that the fellow blew into us purposely."

"Don't be silly. You ought to have more trust in human nature, Your Highness," laughed the Major.

It was one o'clock at night. The Hotel was as silent as a tomb. His Highness appeared in the carpeted corridor on the second floor and stopped at the door which led into the suite of Lady Feroze. He was about to pick the lock when he heard a discreet muffled cough ahead in the corridor. He looked up. The man who walked into them in the garden was coming his way. "Excuse me, sir," he said. "Are you looking for your suite?"

"Well, er, as a matter of fact, I was wondering if this was my suite," said His Highness.

"No, sir, that is Lady Feroze's room. May I have the honour of conducting you to your rooms?"

"Thanks, my dear man," said His Highness condescendingly.

Next night His Highness started operation on another suite of the Hotel. At the psychological moment, the same unpleasant fellow appeared from nowhere and conducted His Highness to his suite with great courtesy. The third night the fiasco was repeated.

At the third failure, His Highness and the Major were frightened. They cancelled their booking, packed their trunks and prepared to go. They sent for the Manager and paid his bill. With the Manager came the unpleasant fellow.

"I hope Your Highness was comfortable and every wish of yours was attended to," fawned the Manager. "To make assurance doubly sure that Your Highness's Royal person does not come to any harm, I took a small liberty. Unknown to his Your Highness and the Major sahib, I drafted into service this gentleman." He indicated the unpleasant fellow. "He is detective Narayan Singh. You see Your Highness, so long as Your Highness stayed amidst us, the responsibility for Your Highness's safety is mine."

The Manager smiled ingratiatingly. The detective who guarded His Highness also smiled, or at least tried to. The poor fellow was the father of nine children. He rarely smiled.

The Major and His Highness looked at each other and smiled rather sorrowfully. They registered their thanks for the great solicitude shown by the management and went away greatly satisfied. The detective followed them to the station. As the train was about to move off, the detective looked so woe-begone at the non-receipt of the princely tip which he expected, that His Highness, good fellow that he was, extracted a thick wad of notes from his wallet and slipped them into the grateful detective's pocket. "Thank you ever so much, my dear fellow," said His Highness. "I hope to see you again very soon."

The train moved. The Major and His Highness looked at each other and both of them burst into laughter simultaneously.

They were rogues no doubt, but they had a sense of humour.

THE END

The Wages of Sin—(Continued from page 13)

Oh, Yasoda, you should have seen my uncle's face. I thought he was going to have a fit. Presently he mastered his emotion and tried to laugh. "Ha, ha! You girls must not give heed to all the nonsense people say in their sleep. Ha, ha!" That was the silliest laugh I ever heard.

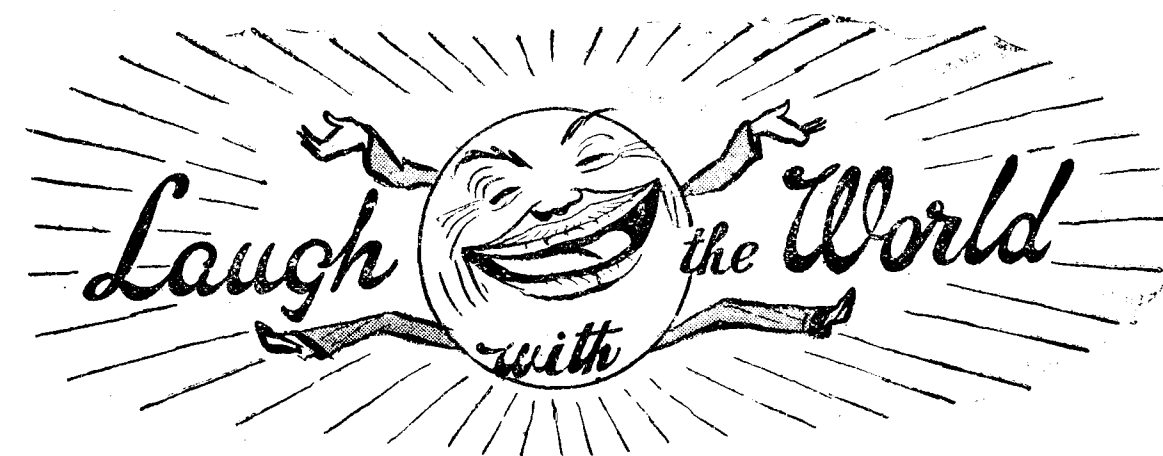
I looked at him as blackmailers do in novels, and said with a meaning smile: "Of course I don't attach any importance to what people say in their sleep. But you know aunt. She..."

"Here!" hissed uncle in a panic. "Don't yell like that. Your aunt may hear you. I suppose an old man can say anything he likes in his sleep. Damn the women! They read unauthorised meanings into By the way, Sarasa, you were asking me for a Benares sari this morning. What is the price?"

"Three hundred rupees, uncle," I replied humbly.

Poor uncle gulped, looked helplessly at me, and quietly handed me the money.

THE END



"Nurse," said the patient, "I'm in love with you! I don't want to get better."

"Don't worry; you won't! The doctor's in love with me too, and he saw you kiss me this morning."

—Barrie Examiner

Policeman: What are you doing there?

Suspicious Character: A fortnight ago I picked up a front-door key and now I am trying to find out which house it fits so that I can give it back to the owner.

—Der Lustige Sachse

A passenger came struggling into the train with two very large bags. After a lot of trouble he managed to heave them on to the luggage rack while the other passengers edged away, expecting them to come crashing down at any time.

"Ere—I say!" cried the fellow in the corner seat, as he eyed the bags, nervously. "Do you think they are safe up there?"

"Oh, yes," replied the owner, cheerfully, "they are both locked."

—Montreal Star

"Nature," said the philosopher, "always makes compensations. If one eye loses sight the other becomes stronger. If one loses the hearing of one ear, the other becomes more acute."

"I believe you're right," said an Irish man. "I've always noticed that when a man has one short leg the other is longer."

—Vancouver Province

"You must like coffee," said the waiter to the man who had just had his cup refilled for the seventh time.

"Yes," he answered, "or I wouldn't be drinking so much water to get a little."

—Arizona Tanker

The blacksmith was instructing a novice how to treat a horse shoe.

"I'll bring the shoe from the fire and lay it on the anvil. When I nod my head, you hit it with this hammer."

The apprentice did exactly as he was told and there is no blacksmith to tell him what to do next!

—Dublin Opinion

Porter: Miss, your train is.....

Precise Passenger: My man, why do you say 'your train' when you know it belongs to the railway company?

Porter: Dunno, Miss. Why do you say 'My man', when you know I belong to my wife?

—Everybody's Weekly

Conceited Young Man: Have you an opening for an intelligent young man, well-connected and with an University Education?

Business Man: Yes. And don't slam it as you go out!

—Pearson's Weekly

The rich farmer was paying a visit to his son at the University, and thought it might be a good idea if they had their photograph taken.

The photographer suggested that the son should stand with his hand on his father's shoulder. The farmer objected.

"It would be much more lifelike," he said coldly, "if he stood with his hand in my pocket."

—Answers



Auntie J.J.

Last week I said that I would be answering certain interesting questions posed by a dear niece from Penang. Here they are.

1. What is the meaning of the following words: *Hantu*; *Pintu*; *Gantang*; *Bintang*; *Lari* and *Mari*?

Of course I know the meaning of all these words, and many more Malay words besides. Just now I have mislaid my Malay dictionary. The dear niece has got to wait till I lay my hands on the truant dictionary.

2. Is God an Asiatic or a foreigner?

The Almighty is indubitably an Asiatic. No representative of God ever appeared west of Jericho. Of course various gods appeared at various times in Greece and Norseland, but they were saw-dust affairs, small fry in fact. God being an Asiatic, He naturally has a sneaking affection for us Asiatics. That is why he has made things extraordinarily easy for us by

calling into service White people to look after our health, our finances, our political liberties and all such irksome responsibilities, so that we may have more time at our disposal to devote to him.

3. Where do you think God put Kipling's soul?

In the most comfortable part of heaven, of course, where every White Man who bore his burden cheerfully will ultimately go. There is a corner in heaven something analogous to the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. These dead poets foregather in that corner and praise one another's work. Occasionally there is also a flow of incisive wit, when Byron and Bob Southey go at each other.

4. Do you really have an Indian name? Don't bluff us. Do you wear a *sari* or a *sarong*?

Of course I have an Indian name. I am an Indian out and out, with what Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru would call a world outlook. When I had that dream

in which Goddess Lakshmi appeared, I went into my kitchen-garden and buried my past. Generally I wear a *sari*, during day time, that is. During nights, I wear pyjamas with blue and green stripes. Sometimes I go about in trousers in imitation of Marlene Dietrich. On these occasions, an admiring crowd follows me about. The Home Member kindly sends a policeman along to see that no rioting takes place. I don't wear *sarongs*; but if the dear niece sends me one, I shall certainly wear it, and write to her how it feels.

5. What do you eat for breakfast — *dosai*, *iddlis*, *uppu-mav*, *appam* or *pulttu*?

My breakfast is a very simple affair, my dears. I take a cup of tea and a couple of sad thoughts at the vileness of beastly Man.

And the dear niece winds up this questionnaire with a request: "Won't you send me your wedding photo, dear Auntie?"

How many times am I to tell you, girls, that I am not married? I shan't marry unless the right man comes along. My idea of a right man is Gandhi, Nehru, Clark Gable, Charlie Chaplin and the Government of India rolled into a strong, silent man. When such a man falls at my feet I shall marry him and send a photograph of him to every dear niece. Trust your Auntie for it.

★

Barkis II (Salem): "Suppose I sent you a hundred-rupee note. What would you do?"

I would have a fit, my dear chap.

Fifth Form (Lalgudi): "What exactly is a budding genius? Can I call myself a budding genius? I got a prize for high jump, you know."

No, dear boy, you cannot call yourself a budding genius. If you are keen on calling yourself a budding genius, plant a few shrubs and

watch the buds come up. When they do, you're *ipso facto* a budding genius.

* * * *

Canvasser (Lyallpur): "I am holding a definite offer from a big local house to travel in buckets. There is money in it, don't you think?"

Certainly there is money in buckets. But I am afraid it is a little uncomfortable to travel in buckets. Send me your hip measurement. I may offer you better advice.

* * *

First Love (Nowshera):

So, you want to make an impression on your girl whom you hope to marry one of these days? And you want to know how best you can make that impression. Well, dear chap, there are two kinds of impressions. One is a permanent impression and the other is a temporary one. If you want to make a temporary impression, all you have to do is to pinch a rubber stamp from your office, and thump

your girl's back with it. To produce a permanent impression is a bit of a job, and it requires iron determination. In fact, you need iron. In other words, it is a hot-poker job.

* * * *

Jayalakshmi (Narayanavaram): "What is your favourite air, Auntie?"

Fresh air, dear.

* * *

Anti-feminist (Kumbakonam): "What will the modern girl be twenty years from now?"

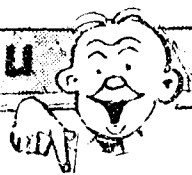
About twenty-five.

* * *

Private Awful (Fort St. George): "Prithee, fair Auntie, do you believe in the hereafter?"

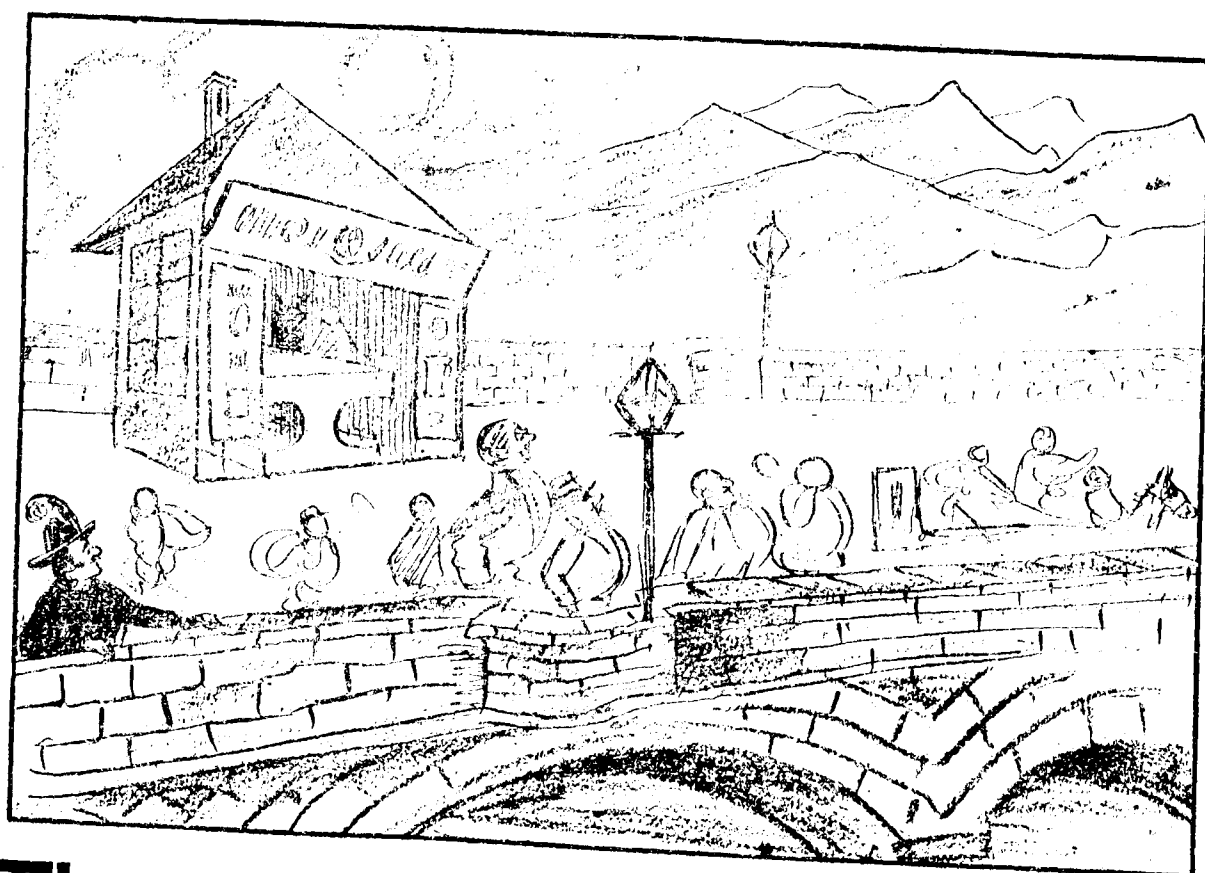
Zounds, I do, old bean! Don't ask me silly questions hereafter.

DO YOU KNOW?



1. Why do Swiss yodel?
2. Do quiet fishermen catch more fish than noisy ones?
3. Which three letters appear in alphabetical order on the keyboards of typewriters?
4. To what use were pen-knives originally put?

Answers on page 21



The Secret Service of Louis XIV

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

ONE evening, a gentleman named Chaumilly was summoned to the Ministry of War in Paris. Monsieur Chaumilly was quite unconnected with military or official life; he was selected from the police register as a respectable person of loyalty and discretion.

"You are conscripted into the service of His Majesty," said the Minister of War. "Start this evening for Basle, in Switzerland. The journey will take four days. On the fifth day, punctually at two o'clock, station yourself on the bridge over the Rhine at Basle. Watch everything that takes place, and make a memorandum of every particular, however

small. Continue doing this for two hours. Have your carriage and post-horses awaiting you. At four o'clock precisely, take the return road, and travel day and night until you regain Paris. On the instant of your arrival, hasten to me with your notes. Here are funds for your journey. Remember, this is the service of the King. Obey all the instructions exactly; and do not fail."

These instructions greatly puzzled the worthy gentleman; but he carried them out to the letter. At Basle, at the day and hour appointed, he took up a position on the bridge. A farm-cart passed by. The observer noted the colour of the horse, the appearance

of the driver, and the nature of the load; and entered the particulars in his note-book. Next came an old gentleman in a blue top-coat, jogging along on a grey mare. Then a market-woman passed over, bearing a basket of apples.

So it went on till the cathedral clock struck the hour of three. Just then, a tall fellow in yellow coat and breeches sauntered up. He stopped in the middle of the bridge, looked at the water, stepped back and thoughtfully tapped at the parapet three times with his staff. Then he made off. After him went an urchin, trundling a hoop. Down went every detail in the record of Monsieur Chaumilly. At last the cathedral clock chimed the hour of four. The Frenchman put away his note-book, jumped into his carriage, and drove post-haste back to Paris.

After two days of ceaseless travel, Monsieur, Chaumilly arrived at the Ministry of War. It was mid-night; but the Minister received him at once. "You made your record unperceived?" enquired the Minister.

"Yes, Monsieur. I sat at a table outside the little cafe on the bridge, and appeared to be writing letters. But, alas, there is nothing in my report except a few trifles."

"Tell me everything," replied the Minister. "Do not omit the smallest detail."

When Monsieur Chaumilly came to the mention of the man in yellow clothes, a gleam of joy lightened the Minister's eye. "Excellent!" he cried. "You are not only the first of my envoys to return; and you have brought the message I was hoping for!"

"Were there other watchers on the bridge?" stuttered Monsieur Chaumilly.

"There were three altogether. I always triplicate my channels of information. You may now go. Your service is finished. His Majesty will reward you." And Monsieur Chaumilly departed, wondering how his trivial errand merited the Royal gratitude.

The War Minister hastened to the palace, and roused the King from bed. "Sire, the news has come. The magistrates of Strasburg have agreed to open their gates to your troops," he cried. "The army must march at once."

The Sun-King was commencing a campaign on the German border, and here was success almost guaranteed in advance.

In negotiating the coup, the main difficulty had been that of secret communication between the disloyal

German magistrates and the crafty French minister. The final agreement was signified at the rendezvous on the bridge at Basle. The beauty of the arrangement was that neither Monsieur Chaumilly, nor the man in yellow, nor the duplicate and triplicate messengers, had any notion of the motive or the significance of their acts.

The passports issued by Louis' Ministry of Foreign Affairs were devised on a similar principle: that is, they conveyed information to the right quarter, without giving rise to suspicion in the bearer.

Should a foreigner desire to travel in France, he received a card, worded somewhat as follows:

JOHN JONES,
recommended to
the Comte de Vergennes,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
by
the Marquis Desboeufs,
Ambassador to the Court of Saint James.

The card told more than the words written on it. The colour indicated the nationality of the stranger. The person's age was expressed by the shape of the card. Two lines beneath his name, ornamented and scrolled, told his build, appearance, character, and whether he was a bachelor, married, or a widower! Dots gave information about his position and fortune. The style of the spelling and punctuation betrayed his religion, his habits, and his business in France.

(Continued on page 24)

YES, I KNOW

Answers to questions on page 19

1. The Swiss are said to yodel because of the natural environment; steep mountain sides of a valley produce echoes that tempt the singer to experiment.
2. No, according to scientists, who maintain that fish hear poorly, if at all, although disturbances in the water affect them.
3. J. K. L.
4. To cut and keep quill pens in good writing condition.

The Curse—

(A Fairy Tale)

by Artiji

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

ONCE upon a time in the city of Passablusets, Wa., there lived a hale and hearty young American. Well might he have been called a Grandson of the Gods, for he was handsome, stately and tall. His chin was romantic. His tie was superb. He moved with an easy pantherish grace and in his green eyes there shone the fires of deathless ambition.

Now it came to pass in the fullness of time that a party was thrown to celebrate the young man's birthday. And it was duly observed by all who happened to be observant that amidst this concourse of sentiment and affection, the seventh aunt was conspicuous by her absence. For, behold she was fat and unattractive and plump around the torso. And her manner was as gross as her figure was appalling. And her predilection for mascara was beyond the limits of social propriety.

However, the party was none the worse for the seventh aunt's absence, and the great God Bacchus took a remarkable interest in local proceedings. And in the course of events, the Blessed of Divinity was installed upon a sofa with a wine-glass before his lips and a gold-digger's arms around him. Under her benevolent and careful supervision the alcohol exercised its full effect. His pupils shone. His mouth dilated. His embraces became more ardent and less decorous, and as the advancing floods of intoxication descended, he lost interest in terrestrial proceedings.

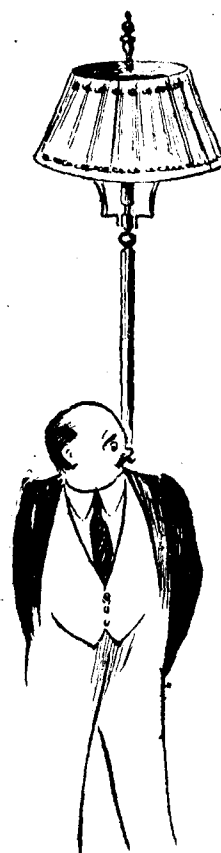
Thereupon the young lady who was only twenty-four inches around the waist seized the opportunity to convince him that she was the only girl who mattered. God's favourite responded with alacrity to this hypothesis, and under the mellowing influence of his soul-mate's caresses, extended a podgy hand towards his pocket. And it happened, by one of those dark and mysterious turns of fate, that when the hand emerged, it held a hundred dollar bill between its fingers. And in accordance with the decrees of destiny, the bill passed to the lady beside him. And the

lady's commercial soul expanded. And her eyes shone with an enticing lustre. And her heavily-painted mouth relaxed. And the young man's arms slid around her waist. For, behold, it was 24" and extremely convenient.

At this critical stage in the evening's proceedings, a large fur coat was seen approaching. To those of the assembly who were not unacquainted with the mysteries of deduction, it became obvious that there was a woman inside it. The more educated among the audience suspected the complicity of the seventh aunt in this phenomenon. As is usually the case in stories of this variety, their intuitions were deplorably correct.

The female apparition advanced deliberately up the carpet, and, with a final wiggle of her over-developed torso, screeched out her message to the universe in general. A languid and slightly expectant silence prevailed. Hardened newspapermen dropped their expression of bored nonchalance and took a more substantial interest in local proceedings. Bacchus retired to the culinary department. Cigarettes were dropped and whiskey abandoned. Gods' protege eased his six foot three out of an adjacent sofa and his companion surveyed an emerald pendant with a faintly commercial devotion.

Number seven's treatise was terse, sarcastic and offensive. It lasted two hours, with ten minutes off for light refreshments. Opinions differ as to the



merits of the performance but its redeeming virtues are beyond dispute. There was a certain amount of personal emotion but the general nature of the speech was violently aggressive. The language was unconventional but compelling. The delivery was practised, the exposition superb. The curse, read out at a quarter to eleven to an accompaniment of dropping cigars, stated quite briefly that the young man's romantic intentions to his secretary held little hope of ultimate fulfilment.

The American Angel appeared to be unduly affected by this decision and gave vent to a long and alcoholic groan. For, behold, his stenographer was fresh and youthful as a flower. And though she knew no typing, her blonde hair shone like tomatoes in the moonlight. And her face had the sweet charm of dew-drenched gardenias. And her grey eyes were oceans of allurements. And her waist was only 23"—and stupendously convenient. (Say, stick to one measurement! You said just now it was 24".—Ed.)

His current romantic opposite still on the look-out for financial acquirements, made a pathetic attempt at

consolation. And, in accordance with the principles of science, her long arms twined around him. But the veil had dropped from the young man's eyes and his conduct was strictly platonic. And the young lady's face seemed laden with mascara. And her make-up was appalling in its profusion. And his arms slid not around her waistline. For behold it was 24"—and extremely inconvenient.

At this stage the ninth mother-in-law, who is generally reserved for such occasions, appeared in a slit shirt of blue and orange and modified the decision under Section 45 of the Curse Annulment Act. There would, she asserted, be a certain degree of inconvenience. That was inevitable and could not be avoided. But the marriage would take place, take place with befitting splendour, and in accordance with the decrees and attributes of civilized society, on that day and at that instant when the secretary's eyes had changed their colour and a new and more natural glory spread over her platinum hair. The amendment was received in an atmosphere of silence with a smattering of perfunctory applause.



And in the fullness of time the Blessed of Divinity went forth in the track of worldly ambition. The great God Mammon smiled upon him, for bank bills strewn his delirious career. He passed from a small office to a pretentious flat, from suburb to metropolis, from disaster to success, from triumph to triumph, from organized perfection to speculative glory. He had the world at his command, humanity at his feet and a hundred whiskey bottles beside his elbow. He ate far more than was good for his prodigal body and loved far more than was good for his prodigal self. And the blonde hair of his secretary shone like tomatoes in the moonlight. But nothing could change the colour of her eyes.

All that money could give was given. All that talent could accomplish was performed. The sum total of a thousand intelligences, the net result of a hundred reputations, the creative faculties of a continent, the cultural resources of a nation, all these and more were thrown into the balance. But nothing was attained. They moulded and remoulded the secretary's figure. They rubbed her with scented oils from oriental harems. They looked from the right, and they looked from the left; they murmured and mumbled and retorted; they propounded strange problems in mathematics and wrote ridiculous odes about the stars. They made her into a thing of

thinness, and, in their eyes, a thing of beauty. They gave her a new back and a new complexion. They changed her waist and modified her outlook; moulded her hips and sterilized her mind. They brought her a cigarette, a motor car, a conscience and a religion. They raised her from the realms of commonplace humanity and stamped her with the hallmark of a retrograde elect. They laughed at science and derided convention. They made her hair shine like potatoes in the moonlight. But they could not affect the colour of her eyes.

And in accordance with the decrees of human nature, the young man fled to more lucrative fields. And he kissed another cheek, in another apartment in another city beyond the seas. And the fact came to the notice of his stenographer whose blonde hair shone like potatoes in the moonlight. And the stenographer's conscience revolted. And her spirit heaved with the tumult of conflicting emotion. And behold the green monster of jealousy cast its dark shadow on her lidded eyes.

So the two married in a majestic church with all the pomp befitting their position. And in the fullness of time they were divorced. But that is another tale and a different story, and it proves that fat aunts can understand society and that sometimes a blessing shares honours with a curse.

The Secret Service of Louis XIV—(Continued from page 21)

Finally, the design of the border gave instructions as to the treatment and surveillance the visitor was to undergo!

At one glance, any agent who examined the passport would have all necessary information about the stranger. Anyone travelling with a false passport would be instantly detected.

Such devices were possible only when the information to be conveyed was of a limited and preconcerted nature. Ordinarily, cyphers had to be used for secret dispatches. The cypher department of Louis XIV was of extraordinary efficiency.

From the days of Julius Caesar, cyphers had been employed by diplomats and military commanders; but they were very elementary in nature. Caesar used a simple method of transposing letters. Most other systems depended on the uses of cryptic signs instead of letters. A solver had merely to identify letters or symbols employed.

Modern cryptology dates from the reign of Louis XIV. His cypher-bureau could break down any code. At the time, Spain was using a code of fifty cabalistic signs, and for many years Louis enjoyed the advantage of being able to read all the Spanish diplomatic messages.

In Germany, a professor invented a cypher which he claimed was impenetrable. It depended on an extremely complicated formula for changing letters into figures, which were then multiplied and added in a very recondite manner. The French secured a message in this cypher, and the bureau read the riddle in eight days. It was an astonishing feat. Even with the rules and key before him, an ordinary person would find this particular code unintelligible. It seems incredible that such a farrango was reduced to clarity without the help of any clue. Eventually, Prussia abandoned the code because it was too difficult to employ.

For their own messages, Louis' agents used a system which is still the foundation of the best cyphers. This was the sliding alphabet—a sheet containing the alphabet repeated twenty-six times in columns in varying order. Without the key-word, it is extremely difficult to read a message in this cypher. Most solutionists depend upon the table of frequency of letters in a language, as used by Edgar Allan Poe in his detective-stories, but in this system the order of frequency is destroyed.

THE END

Fun For All



The Scientist: Wireless will one day be used to exterminate germs.

The Other: The only difficulty is to get the little beggars to listen.

* * * * *

"Women without husbands sometimes spend a lot of time looking for one," says a writer.

And women with husbands often have to do the same.

* * * * *

Doctors recommend a bath before retiring; it soothes the nerves, they say.

But what about the fellow who's not due to retire for a decade?

* * * * *

Sandy: The cheek of that conductor! He glared at me as if I hadn't paid my fare!

Mac: And what did you do?

Sandy: I glared right back as if I had.

* * * * *

"I'm afraid I must give you notice, ma'am," said the maid. "You don't seem to trust me."

"Don't trust you!" cried the astonished mistress. "But I gave you the keys of the cellar, jewel-case, and the master's desk!"

"Yes, ma'am, I know. But none of them fits."

* * * * *

Poet: After my death the world will realise what I have done.

Editor: Oh, well, you don't need to worry; you'll be out of danger then.

* * * * *

Doctor: I can do nothing for your complaint. It is hereditary.

Patient: Then send the bill to my father.

4-13-6-36

* * * * *

"What caused the fire in your village last night?" "I suspect it was a large insurance policy."

* * * * *

Sandy paced thoughtfully up and down the room. Suddenly an idea came to him.

Quickly he picked up the telephone receiver.

"Hallo!" he called to the operator. "Give me Ringum 5800, please."

There was a slight pause.

"But that is your own number, sir," announced the operator.

"Ah, yes, I know it's me own number!" said Sandy. "But I've had this 'phone installed for about six months, and never once have I received a call, so I'm going to talk to myself. I can't waste me money like that."

* * * * *

The nearly famous dramatist was in earnest conversation with the famous newspaper critic.

"Of course," he said, "my latest work is nothing but a masterpiece."

"You think so?" murmured the critic, lightly enough.

"I certainly think so," replied the dramatist warmly; "and to prove my words I would inform you that I have a lot of imitators."

The critic stuck out his jaw aggressively.

"I can quite believe that," he said, "especially the ones beforehand."

A Plain & Simple Story

by Yen Kay

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

MINE is a plain and simple story, but you shall not see me in sack-cloth and ashes, because, though plain and simple, it bears the seal of truth on every side of it and is yet stranger than fiction. In fact, I don't believe in fiction at all, holding that it is but the shadow of fact. And so when a story-teller begins to tell his 'lies' with a triumphant air of self-satisfaction I only pity him, thinking how readily some of us deceive and think ourselves wonderful. I would not interpose any more observations between my story and your time lest I should be taken to be setting myself up as a second Solomon, though, I can tell that it is no crime to open the doors of one's mind to noble aspirations.

Well, I am at the threshold of the story. As a matter of fact, it was a noble thought that put me and my family to flight. The price of goodness is suffering: that of greatness, enmity.

There was a dog, which was the cause of it all, a dear little charming creature instinct with life and sense. It belonged to a neighbour, but we belonged to the dog. It had the entire run of not only our house but our affections as well. It slept under my couch and sat on my lap, looking into my eyes with all its adoring little soul. It followed my children about like a guardian deity and waited on my mother reverently, like a perfect daughter-in-law. There were no two opinions in the family about the excellence of its behaviour, and so in honour of its exceptional qualities we hung a pair of silver-bells on its neck. You should have been there to see how it looked in the first flush of the decoration! And oft at dead of night, it would stir under my couch and quietly slip out on to the courtyard to sprinkle its silver vigil-

ance on the dreaming stillness and come back to its place well assured that the household was safe. But you know glory is brief, and the dog was seized with a painful illness and died. And we buried it with the bells. Love is blind and cannot see before it. So it happened that the dear little thing did not die completely, but persisted in the bells. So at dead of nights, whenever it was dark and everything still, our courtyard would awake with showers of the silver-sound. However sweet in theory the reappearance of the dead might be, as a rule, we do not like the thing actually to come to pass. Indeed, it gave us a great scare, and we came to the conclusion that it was not in the fitness of things that we should live in a house haunted by the ghost of a dog, however dear while it lived it might have been. But even then we should not have moved as hastily as we did, had it not been for another dog.

We lived in the full faith that charity must begin at home, though ours began and ended there. One dog went, and another came, with hardly any interval between. It was a street-puppy. We found it in a desperate plight, on the verge of death, and we took it home directly. Well, there in my family it stalled itself. We lavished our love on it, and it gave us much work in organising defensive measures for it against a formidable array of street-dogs determined at all costs to compass its destruction. But I am ashamed to say that it soon proved a scamp. It mocked at my mother: it laughed at my wife; it bit off a fraction of our calf's ear; it ran away when I called; and it rifled the kitchen when nobody was looking. One day it dragged down a costly cloth we had put out to dry, and when we saw it, ran off with



it round the corner and up the dusty road and across the paddy-fields! And, on the next day, (O shame and ingratitude!) it vigorously chased my little boy, causing him to come a cropper at the price of his finest teeth.

It was this incurable rogue that hastened our flight. The good dog died and the bad dog lived to set us going.

We decamped one night. We had the dog chained up in a neighbour's house before we departed, with instructions that it must not be set free before the mid-day following.

The new house was two miles and a half from the old, and we rejoiced to think how cleverly we had given the slip to the little devil of mischief and perversity. But, good heavens! it appeared the next morning, the very first thing we saw, as if from nowhere. My mother fell before the rising sun; my wife screamed; and my little boy armed himself with an axe, almost as heavy as himself. All the same, the creature is still with us, and, if anything, looks more prosperous than before. And we had to insert an emergency law in the domestic code, namely, that those who have teeth must keep them also.

But I have not come yet to the crux of my story. Because we had a queer assortment of dependants in the old home.

So, on the morning after, there were fresh arrivals, two cats, whose eerie caterwauling had once sent us to the temple with an offering to the deity in order that we might be saved from the night-time artillery.

And on the fourth day arrived four crows! Till they came we had not espied a single crow in our new surroundings.

There had never been an end to my foolishness. And in the old house I used to feed the crows with a ball or two of rice after my noon-day meal, every day. It was not long before I discovered that there always were only four crows to partake of the fare and not much longer before I made the further discovery that the four crows were always the same!

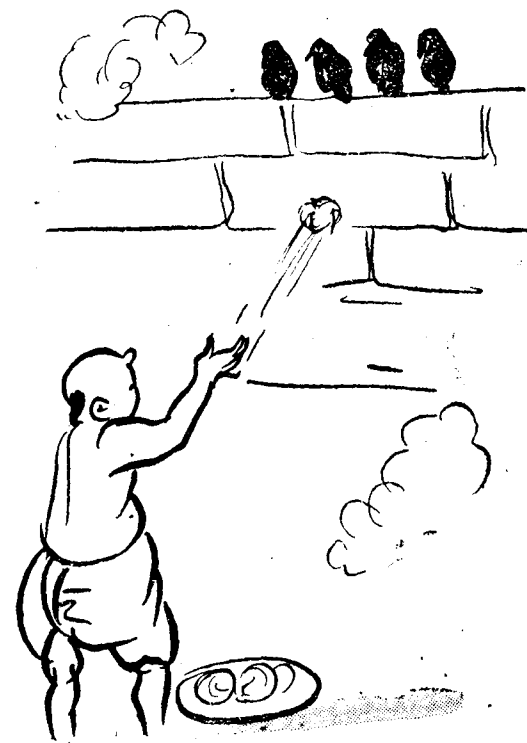
You may not believe it but I saw it with mine own eyes, that if a new crow came, the four always closed their ranks and put the intruder to swift and ignominious flight!

Have you not heard that among birds the crow is the shrewdest? among animals the elephant is the wisest? among insects the bug is the most cunning?

Well, on the fourth day, they came, the four flying like one and crowing like a hundred, underneath the sky, across the air, above the trees and over the house. And then they alighted on the kitchen-wall, looking at us through the

corners of their eyes and crowing angrily for all they were worth as if they meant to throw us all into boiling oil for coming away from the old house without notifying them duly about it. I gave them an additional ball of rice that noon, while that son of a gun, the dog, looked at me with eyes of terrible disapproval. The extra hospitality put the irate birds in their wonted frame of mind again.

What happened next let me not say, since the story comes to an end with the homecoming of the crows and since, besides, I cannot offer any explanation for that which did happen!



THE END

Traveller's Tales

by Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

I am a great traveller. I see that you look surprised. But why should you be? Am I the first man whose acts exceed his looks? Nor is this the first occasion when I perform that I promise. I was supposed to be a clever boy and all that in my college days. You know what it means. It is the nearest and best way to permanent unemployment. I never thought much about academic distinctions. They just came—that is all. As for employment, I never thought about it at all. I was just a raw, gawky lad who liked exercising his body and brains. I wrote an awful quantity of poetry—full, I dare say, of bad metres and worse rhymes and lifted sentiments. Lifted—mark my words—not lofty. I had no idea of marching off with other men's ideas like a Red Indian Warrior adorning himself with scalps. But I was so magnetic that the beautiful thoughts and words of others came after me like the vanquished in a Roman triumph. I beg your pardon. I set out to write about traveller's tales and in an unaccountable way became autobiographical. I am not a circus chap who can ride two or more horses at one and the same time. I must ride my horses (I mean hobby horses) one after another.

To take up the thread of my essay, I wish to tell my readers about my travels. What travels shall I tell about? In what style? Shall it be the style of Baron Munchausen or Captain Cook or Mungo Park or Lord Curzon or Miss Mayo? I think that the style is of little importance. All traveller's tales contain two ingredients in diverse proportions. They are self-glorification and other-vilification. Munchausen specialised in the former and Miss Mayo in the latter. Others had a tepid, tasteless admixture of both. Why should I work other people's mines? I shall tell about my travels in my own way. I shall tell my experiences just as I experienced them. I shall not set down aught in malice nor shall I extenuate aught to any extent.

Don't you think that I am getting too serious? I feel perfectly jolly at home. There I laugh and grow fat. The moment I start out on a travel I begin to pull a long face and to grow thin. With most people it is just the other way. They find home depressing and travel a source of exhilaration. They shed

crocodile tears (or at least pretend to do so) in the presence of their wives as if travel is a kind of solitary confinement, but begin to frisk and dance as soon as the train moves and feel and behave like school boys when term-days are happily over and the holidays arrive. Here again why should I compare myself with others? I shall be myself and myself alone.

If I describe all my travels, I shall not be able to hide my new defect of long-winded garrulity. I shall therefore describe now only my earliest and latest travels and shall describe my intermediate travels another day if you do not tire of me in the meanwhile.

My earliest travel was to Trivandrum. I went in a bullock *bandy* from Tinnevely to Trivandrum. We had a jolly driver who went on singing all the way. I am sure that the bulls also enjoyed the songs. They looked sleek and happy and did not appear tired at all. We were told that at any corner robbers may appear and make our possessions less. So we did not sleep at all. Nor could we sleep even if we would. So we played cards and hoped that as we had clubs and spades in addition to kings and queens and especially knaves, the robbers would think twice and wisely keep away. And so they did. On our way we saw a huge lake, and the rolling waves that made it look like a sea are still dashing and shining in my memory. We stopped when we found a choultry near a lake or a tank or a river and made our temporary home there and prepared and ate clean and pure and homely food. Wherever we found a temple on the way we went in and worshipped. The result was that we were at home and yet travelling and that we were on earth and yet in heaven.

I am getting sentimental and idealistic, am I not? Probably distance lends enchantment to the view. I shall shift the scene. The other day I went to Bombay. It is the Gate of India and all that—don't you know? I wonder if that means the gate by which India went out once and for all or the gate by which we enter into India's home. I went by the Express. No songs by the driver and no chiming answer from the tinkling bells round the necks of bulls greeted my ears. I picked up what food I could get

amidst a mass of half-hidden uncleanness. The modern civilised man wants clean service and is indifferent to clean preparation. He looks rather at the head-dress of the servitor than at the hand that dresses the food. A clean napkin covereth a multitude of sins against the laws of health. As for a bath, he is content with rubbing his skin with a sponge in the lavatory. It is enough if he can have a shave and can comb himself and make himself presentable. Take care of your looks, and health will take care of itself—is the new gospel. But is that gospel true?

At a wayside station my friend Mr. Nesan bumped in. He brought many boxes of all sorts and conditions. Some were of leather, some of rattan, and some of steel. He had brought many clothes and more papers. At every bookstall he went on buying comic papers and illustrated magazines. One of these was, of course, the *Merry Magazine*. I met it at all the bookstalls. He dived into it and what met his eyes fairly took his breath away. He looked from it to me and from me to it. He turned blue and black and green and white. He became a veritable chameleon. As for me I never changed colour and in fact never could. I am of that steady, sturdy variety of black that poets generally associate with the rain-filled cloud.

Mr. Nesan is the New Traveller as surely as I am the Old Traveller. I had one box and one bed but he had a perplexing number of suit-cases and a huge hold-all. He opened all the suit-cases and rearranged their contents all the way. He consumed about two hundred cigarettes during the process. One suit-case—the best of all—was devoted to the shaving set and cosmetics. Another had allopathic and homeopathic and hydropathic and chromopathic medicines in bottles of many colours. Three suit-cases carried his immense wardrobe. One suit-case carried his writing materials. He had brought also a portable typewriter. I do not know if he had a radio set as well. His hold-all was a universe by itself. His luggage was, in fact, the porter's paradise.

It was on a fine summer morning that the 'Deccan Queen' took Mr. Nesan and me and many other travellers into Bombay. Bombay is India in a nutshell—the India of bewildering variety and subtle charm. We felt like Alice in Wonderland. We formed a queer and ill-assorted group and so we harmonised with the scheme of Bombay—nay, the scheme of India. If you take all the incomprehensibles and irreconcilables of the world and tie them up in a super-Gordian knot which not even Alexander can untie, that is India.

THE END



Doctor: Did your husband talk anything this morning?

Wife: Yes, doctor. It was a great relief to me when he shouted: 'Move aside, you silly woman! Don't obstruct the breeze!'



Good Wives

by Omega

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes



A good wife is a rare commodity. Every married man aspires for it, but how many are lucky enough to get one! The Greek dramatist, Euripides, said:

Good wives, like flowers, bloom here and there;
Bad wives, like weeds, grow everywhere.

And yet what a difference it makes to a man's life! The presence of a good wife makes your home 'the best likeness of heaven', a bad one converts it into a veritable hell. If all young men were assured that they were getting life-partners to their entire satisfaction, the number of bachelors would dwindle into insignificance. I can imagine women saying that good husbands, too, are a desirable commodity and there is as much dearth of the one as of the other. I accept the validity of this charge and I shall revert to it sometime later but, in the course of this article, I presume to give some advice to my friends among womenfolk.

It was Oscar Wilde who said that nothing was so dangerous as good advice. But I shall take risks, for whosoever dabbles with the subject of women takes plentiful of risks. In the first place, let me tell all young men that in the choice of their wives they should not be carried away *merely* by external appearances. This would sound rather heretical. It is opposed to all canons of art and taste. Who can resist the charms of beauty? It is that mysterious thing which casts a powerful spell. "All orators are dumb when beauty pleadeth," said Shakespeare, and, in the words of the same poet, the locks of a woman entmesh human hearts faster than guats in cobwebs.

So I don't want, nor do I expect, mere men to resist the graces and loveliness associated with youth and beauty.

My point, however, is that *it should not be all*. All that glitters is not gold. I know of a man who had a beautiful wife—young, charming, good-looking and all that. But his life was miserable and he wanted a divorce. His friends told him that he was a fool to part with a treasure. But that cool-headed man gave a homely illustration. Pointing to a new pair of shoes, he said, "is it not new and good-looking and up-to-date? But can anybody tell me where it pinches me?" So that is that. You can't say where anybody's wife, howsoever beautiful and smart, may be pinching him.

Beauty is but skin-deep. It is the internal substance that counts. I am getting hopelessly involved. I wanted to address myself to women but so far I have been beating about the bush. I have not told them a word.

Yes, let me come back to my subject. It is such a delicate one. I know a woman would never accept any counsel from a man and so I must bring one of her own sex to give some useful tips. Here is a prescription of six doses, prepared by one Mrs. Drake, a Railwayman's wife, and I heartily commend it for the use of every married woman.

Dose No. 1. "Avoid being superior. A husband likes to think he is the head of the house."

Good advice, this. Women like to dominate over men. They are anxious to establish their petticoat

government. What with snubs and chidings and nagging, they make the life of their partners miserable. They expect husbands to dance to their tune. Women should not forget that man is the breadwinner. He toils hard and brings the money that runs the machinery of the household. He who pays the piper must call the tune. In most matters husbands will willingly yield to the wishes of their wives but it is not good to humiliate them, ever and anon.

Dose No. 2. "Take as much pains on your personal appearance as you did before you were married." This does not give women a free charter to spend as much as they like on jewels and finery. Nor does Mrs. Drake suggest that women should always go about bedecked like 'painted jays'. There are limits to everything. Many women are apt to grow careless about their personal appearance after they have hooked a husband. They forget that good looks

always enchant men and a shabby appearance is ever repulsive.

Dose No. 3. "Look after the inner man. A well-cooked meal is a fine magnet to draw a man to his fireside." There is another way of saying the same thing—"Walk over your husband's belly." Good meals, well-cooked and well-served, make an irresistible appeal to men. Clever women know that men are most tolerant when they are well-fed.

These are only three of the doses. There are three more. I wonder if the daughter of Eve will have the patience to drink all. For many, I am afraid, even these three might have proved bitter and nauseating. And I have not the courage to play the role of an unsolicited adviser any further. I have made myself abundantly unpopular. Daughters of Eve! Don't pour forth the vials of your wrath on poor 'Omega'. He is a well-meaning fellow.

THE END



Indigent Suitor :— I may be poor, but there was a time when I rode in a carriage.
Heartless Angel :— I know, your mother pushed it.

Last Words—

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

by Diana Don

PEOPLE die as they have lived. No great revelation or change of heart precedes the moment of dissolution. The profane man dies swearing; the victim of vanity postures on his death-bed. Generally, the story of the great figures of history is epitomised in their final words.

Napoleon died in delirium. He was friendless, powerless, and a prisoner. Yet Europe dare not breathe freely while he lived. Well might the Powers fear that implacable man. His dying utterance was, "I am the Head of the Army!"

Keats, lover of the countryside, and poet of the beauties of Nature, smiled as his young life ebbed away. "I feel the daisies growing over me," he said, happily.

Burns, the sturdy poet of the people, the irreligious rebel, cast a distasteful eye on the ecclesiastics who attended his death-bed. "Don't let that awkward-squad fire over my grave!" was his final direction.

Sir Walter Scott, the conscientious optimist, the bard whose life was one long fight against misfortune, was bravely hopeful to the end. He had paid his creditors. He contemplated restoring his family to affluence. "I feel I am going to become myself again," he whispered, reassuringly; and died.

Byron, with the egoism that always characterised him, turned his back on the anxious friends who attended his last moments. "I must sleep now," he announced. It was a long sleep.

Hobbes, the philosopher, was in his last moments engrossed with the philosophic mystery of death. "I am taking a great leap into the dark," he said.

Perhaps the most characteristic of all death-bed utterances was that of Lord Chesterfield, the exemplar of the perfection of gentlemanly manners. Observing one of the bystanders to be without the seat due to his rank, the well-bred nobleman passed out of life with the words, "Give Dayrolles a chair."

Everyone has heard of the final cry of Goethe. It is usually quoted as, "More light!" with a metaphysical implication. A stricter translation would be, "Let the light enter." The philosopher was merely protesting at the gloomy, closed curtains, considered appropriate to a chamber of death.

State executions have produced many striking valedictory remarks. Sir Walter Raleigh, the embodiment of chivalrous philosophy, was pitied even by his executioner, who advised the victim to place his head

so that the axe would give a clean, merciful stroke. "It matters little how the head lieth," replied Sir Walter. The unnerved headsman had to deliver six strokes before the condemned man died.

Sir Thomas Moore, the venerable saint and scholar, was executed on a frosty day. The scaffold was covered with ice, and the infirm old man could not mount the steps. "I pray you, see me safe up," he apologised to his guards. "As for my coming down, I will manage for myself."

Anne Boleyn, the vain, faithless wife of Henry VIII, gave the executioner a dazzling smile. "See, you have easy work," she said, baring her pretty neck. "It is small, very small indeed."

Queen Elizabeth was imperious to the end. A soothsayer had prophesied she would die in bed; so she insisted on having a straw pallet on the floor. There she lay, unwashed, neglected, raving; yet still feared by her courtiers. A woman who had never compromised with life, she was loath to die. "All my possessions for a moment of time!" were her last words.

Charles II, the Merry Monarch, is famous for his apology to his courtiers for being so long a-dying. His last words were, "Let not poor Nelly starve." Nelly was one of his mistresses. The two remarks epitomise the enigmatic character of a licentious and cynical king who steered his country safely through very troublous times.

Roman Emperors generally perished by assassination, and their last words make a fine collection of terms of reproach and outraged majesty. Julius Caesar cried: "And you, Brutus?" Nero, addressing his pampered Praetorian Guard, screamed: "Is this your fidelity?"

Cardinal Beaufort, a wordly prelate, had no welcome for the clergy who came to administer the last rites. "What, is there no bribing death?" he demanded, pettishly.

Haller, the famous physician, carefully watched the processes of his own dissolution. "The artery is ceasing to beat," he observed, feeling his pulse; and died.

Burbage, the well-known Shakesperian actor, bowed his head at the approach of death, and said: "Exit." In similar vein, Dekker the author said: "Finis."

These instances could be multiplied indefinitely. Indeed, men die as they have lived.

THE END

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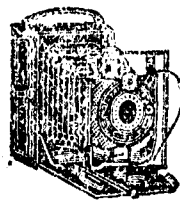
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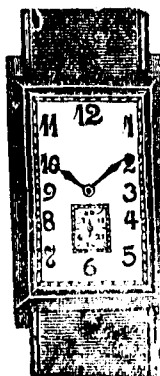


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I list as thy heart and ascending aorta
Their volumes of valvular harmony pour;
And my soul from the muscular music has caught a
New life 'mid this dull anatomical lore.

Oh, rare is the sound when thy ventricles throb
In a systolic symphony measured and slow.
When the auricles answer with rhythmical sob
They murmur a melody wondrous and low!

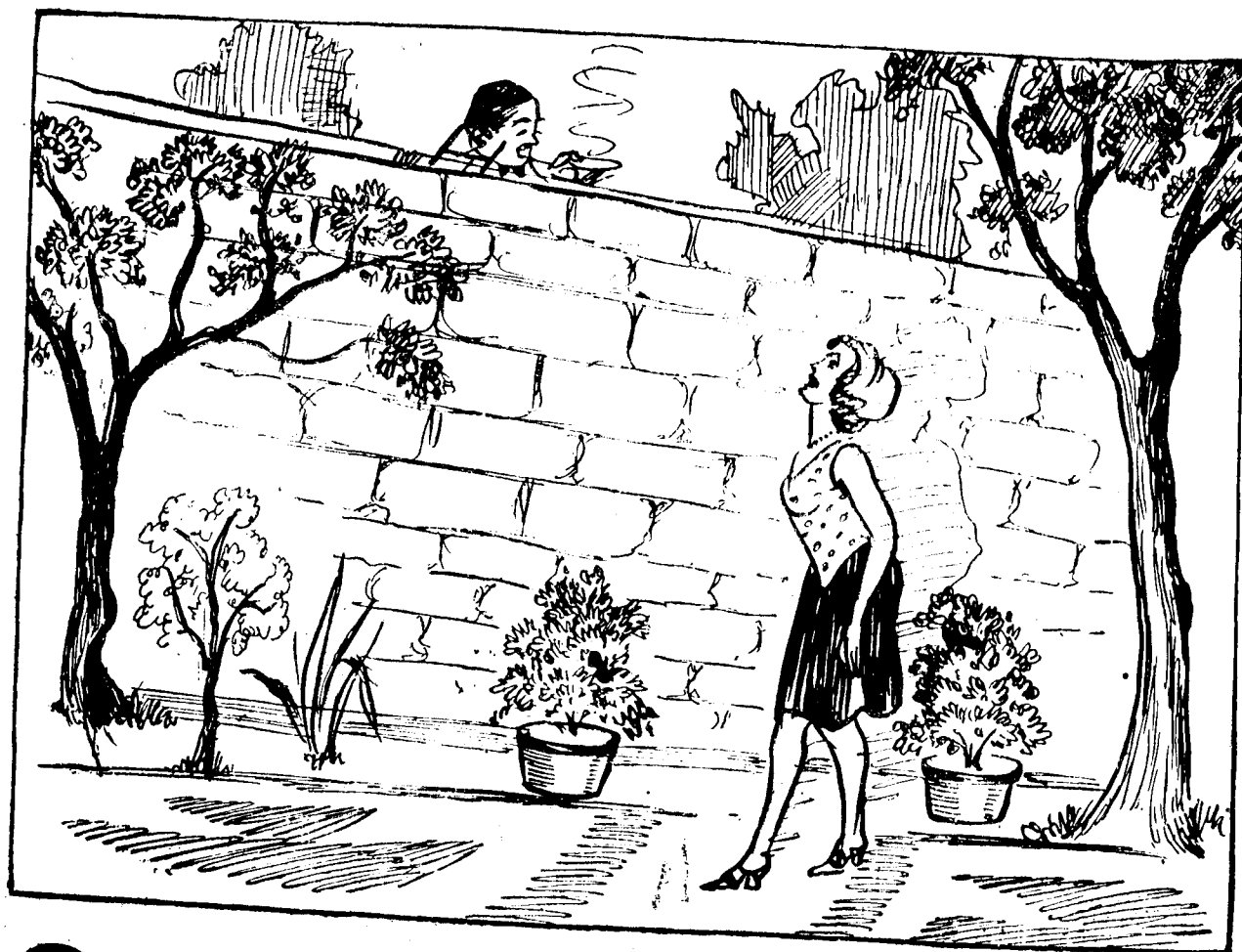
Oh, sweet is thy voice as it sighingly swells
From thy daintily quivering chordæ vocales,
Or rings in clear tones through the echoing cells
Of thy antrum, thy ethmoid, and sinus frontales!

Thy cornea, love, has the radiant light
Of the sparkle that laughs in the icicle's sheen;
And thy crystalline lens, like a diamond bright,
Through the quivering frame of thine iris is seen!

And thy retina, spreading its lustre of pearl,
Like a far-away nebula, distantly gleams
From the depths of dark cellular mirrors that hurl
At hexagonal angles their silvery beams.

Ah! The flash of those orbs is enslaving me still,
As they roll 'neath the palpebrae, dimly translucent,
Obeying in silence the magical will
Of thy oculo-motor—mysterious—abducent!





Such is Life—

by Sheikh Iftekhhar Rasool

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

"T't, t't, t't!" said my wife, who was looking out of the windows, "some birds!"

Now as we have a canary, I am naturally interested in aviculture, so I trotted to the window and peeped over her shoulder.

"Where?" I demanded.

"Next door," she said.

I followed the direction of her eyes, but I couldn't see any bird; in fact I couldn't see anything except a jolly pretty girl.

"You—you don't mean that pretty little thing, do you?" I faltered.

"Do I? My dear! Did you ever see anything like that?"

Well, frankly, as man to man, I hadn't seen anything like it for a long time; but I couldn't admit that to the wife, because women are so funny about these things, and my wife especially is anything but kind.

A most attractive girl she was. Dressed in a chic thingummy, dark brown eyes.....you know. And an affectionate nature. Even though the garden-wall intervened, I was quite sure about her affectionate nature, for she was standing at the foot of a tall tree, making little trilling noises up at the branches.

"Oh, she's not so bad—for a woman," I murmured. "She's young, and very pretty, but she's not so bad. What's she doing—whistling to the birds?"

"Goodness knows. Trying to tame them, or something foolish, I expect; there's a late nest in the tree."

"She makes a pretty picture, doesn't she?" I said. "Who is she?"

"Sheila's sister. A little monkey, I believe. She's only eighteen and has been engaged three times. So her people have sent her down here for the summer, as a punishment."

"Punishment!" I said. "How is it a punishment?"

"Because there aren't any young men in the neighbourhood, silly; she'll be bored to death."

I threw back my shoulders, and straightened out the protuberance of my waist-coat. It was certainly true there were no mere boys living in the immediate vicinity, but there were some quite youngish men.

"Tkkk!" said my wife.

"What amuses you?" I demanded with dignity.

"You do, perking up like that. You always throw your shoulders back at the sight of a pretty girl. You have always been a flapper-hunter, and it has not yet gone out of you."

"Can't help it, can I?" I answered. "A habit becomes a second nature, you know."

"That's too bad," said my wife, looking deep into my eyes.

"Well, well, well," I continued briskly. "Standing here won't do any good, will it? Buzz off, old bean, there's the world's work to be done."

So my wife went off, and I sat down on my typewriter.

But it's really very hard to concentrate one's thoughts when someone next door is chanting: "Tweet, tweet, tweet."

I strolled to the window. She certainly made a very attractive picture and reminded me of several bright young things I was friendly with during my long stay in England.

I wished I knew her people better, and then I might have dropped in with a bunch of roses, and stayed to tea and tennis.

And then the sweet little thing, growing tired of wooing unresponsive birds, turned away and saw.

She gave me a speculative glance, half a smile, and turned away to smell a rose.

"Heigho," I sighed to myself. "I would I were a rose." Not that I meant it, but when one is an author, one is sometimes in danger of allowing one's imagination to run away with one.

Then I too turned away, to bang at my beastly typewriter.

I had just got my thoughts off the girl next door sufficiently to decide that the heroine of my story should have almond eyes and long luxurious black hair, when terrific squawks drew me to my feet.

I rushed to the window, and there were the two parent birds of the nestling flying round the tree, cawing violently. I had no need to look for the furry figure crouched on one of the branches, to realise it was Fluffy, our cat, out hunting.

I dashed out of the room. "Baba!" I yelled. "Quick! That confounded cat!"

"She has gone out to the Cantonment, sir," said the maid.

"Blow," I said. "Give me a saucer and some milk, quick!" With a saucer in one hand, and a jug of milk in the other, I tore out into the garden, tinkling them together, and crying: "Puss, puss, puss."

I placed a ladder against the wall, and mounting it, continued my outcries.

"Is it your cat?" cried a soft voice below me.

I glanced down into a pair of dark-brown eyes, and wobbled violently on the ladder.

"Oh, do take care," she pleaded; "mind you don't fall."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "if I came into your garden I should be safer. D'you mind holding the milk?" So I handed the jug down to her, and then jumped from the wall.

"Poor little birds!" cooed the girl. "I do think cats are cruel, don't you?"

"M'yes," I said, "though I expect worms think birds are much more savage. A lot depends on one's point of view. Now that rose you've just picked probably has the unkindest feeling towards you."

"Oh, no," she murmured, smelling it. "It's an understanding rose; it knows I picked it because I loved it. Would you like it?"

"I don't mind," I said. And while she was fixing it in my buttonhole, I happened to glance towards my verandah, and saw my wife regarding us.

I tinkled my saucer hastily and glanced up at the tree. But the confounded cat had gone. Even the birds were quiet.

Ten minutes later, not only half the whiskers from my face had gone, but I was left with a couple of broken ribs, a black eye and a dislocated jaw.

Such is life!

THE END.

What Is News?

Reading Time • About 10 Minutes

by Mie

ONE will find it difficult to give a definition of 'news', as one finds difficulty in defining many familiar things. More so in this case. What is news? What is the essence, the life, the lowest common denominator of the columns of stuff which millions of people every day turn to with avidity?

Hearst defined news as something which gentlemen would like to keep out of publication. This is true of many a class of journals but not all. Papers like *The Times*, and *The Manchester Guardian* are the quintessence of respectability and decorum, whereas some of the 'yellow' or 'tabloid' journals, the sensation-mongers, will cause a shudder to pass through the uninitiated because of their daring, lack of restraint and excitement.

Some of the modern newspapers are obsessed with sex. They bring in a woman into things like a political conference or naval manoeuvres. They are not sure that their readers want the proceedings of a political conference or a description of naval practice to be softened by the inclusion of the woman motif but they are jolly well going to make their readers like it. So when an international conference is going on with such vital issues as the limitation of armament or a trade pact, the front page of certain newspapers will show photographs of one or more pretty girls, who may have no earthly connexion with the conference except as one of the millions affected by a change of government policy consequent on the conference, but who have been slung in to provide colour and interest. Not many now-a-days are patient with conferences but not many will turn away without glancing at a dimpled face or a neat pair of legs.

If we believe all the newspapers, our brains will not survive the shock. The *Daily Star* special correspondent in Rome says Mussolini's power will not last long, that the country is impoverished, that there are murmurs, and a Left wing or a Right wing is asserting itself.

The *Daily Roarer's* special correspondent in Rome on the other hand is of opinion that Mussolini had never before so much power and backing, the nation is one with him and that with the conquest of Abyssinia, Imperial Italy will march forward to new pastures, hunting grounds etc. Which are we to believe? Both special correspondents! Both honourable men!

Again, according to the pro-Italians, Abyssinia will be occupied in a week; according to pro-Ethiopians, they will fight to the last man, never capitulate, never compromise, will drive the white invaders away, because God and right are on their side. Really, these Special Correspondents are humbugs. They are the 'yes men' of the Editor or proprietor of the newspapers. They are not intellectually honest. They dare not say "So and so is a scoundrel. He made a mess of the Conference"; or "The League of Nations is bunkum." Their proprietors chalk a line of policy and they have to keep to it.

But the special correspondents are important persons. Partly they are made to look important. It wouldn't do for the Editor to refer to him slightly. He is cited as an authority and this imposed importance grows in him until he firmly believes he is really an important man. He can walk into the drawing rooms of the great, rub noses—I mean shoulders—with the *distingue* and move generally on decorated floors and behind round tables. Shrewd politicians treat them rightly. They pat them on the back and give them as much false information as they want.

These special reporters have preconceived notions of things and people. Germany—"Terror"; "Leading to a Catastrophe"; "Financial ruin" are phrases which it would be wise to keep going. Japan—Yellow peril, Menace, Industrial Competition, and then go on to speak of Australasia, Naval Parity, Marshall Islands, Singapore Naval base, the Pacific threat, the Russian Question, Vladivostok and Aerial bombardment. Finally say: "Watch Japan."

About France one has to be guarded. The French are so touchy. But such phrases as "France-British goodwill"; "Britain's pledge to stand by the French"; "the obvious honesty of the French" are useful. A special correspondent can say anything about Spain, Greece, the Austria-Hungary States, India and Africa. About the United States he has to be careful. The people are already angry over the debt question.

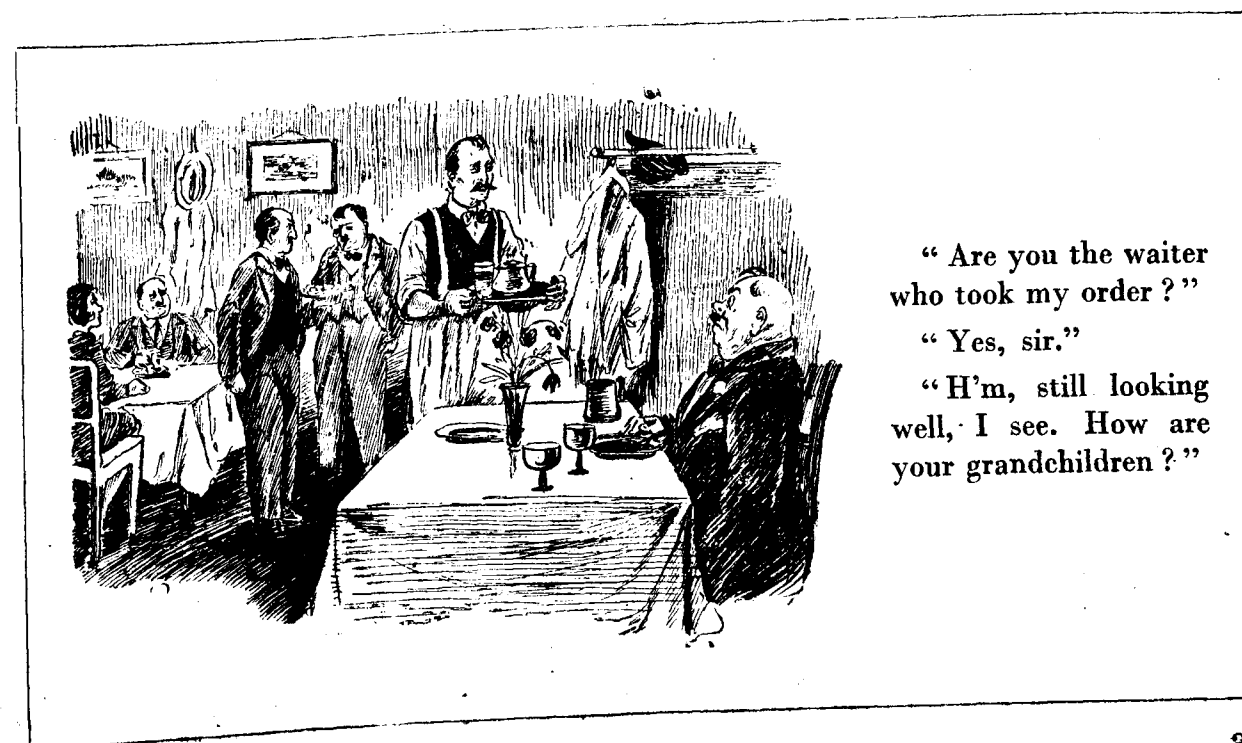
A special correspondent can let himself go on India. He can land in India and go to Delhi and Bombay, Calcutta and Madras (if he cares to) and go back in six weeks (which is more than most journalists take) and write stuff beginning with: "Outside Lancashire and the India Office how many people in England are interested in India? Few, I am afraid. It is so vital that they should..." etc. Then the correspondent will speak about that band of under-paid, loyal, stout-hearted workers, the civilians and those heroic unknown individuals who, more than even the army, help to keep British Rule (synonymous with peace and prosperity and plenty) in India—THE POLICE.

India is news in England only from the official point of view. Indian politicians' attempts to secure more liberties to the people in the repeal of the repressive laws, removal of unjust taxation are not of interest to the English newspapers. Everybody complains that the British people do not take enough

interest in Indian affairs. But then how few newspapers take the trouble of imparting to the readers an impartial account of happenings in India! At best Indian affairs get a paragraph in British newspapers. This paragraph will describe the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly as irresponsible, their tactics as wrecking, their leaders as revolutionaries and end up with a paean of praise on the restraint and logic of a Government Member who would have mouthed some trite, meaningless, illogical, irrelevant and hackneyed sentence as: "There is a greater danger in pushing this Indianisation of the Army to the length the Hon. Members desire it than can ever arise out of watchfulness and method."

The one important source of news in India is conferences. We are a nation who like to confer with one another, and when that is not possible, with ourselves. In the former case there will be reporters present and they will see to having our speeches printed. When we confer with ourselves we write to the Editor and tell him what we have decided on a certain issue.

In India a public man is not over-modest. When he has made a speech and he finds there is no reporter to cover it, or when he remembers any occasion with which his name could be associated, he very considerably writes to the Editors of newspapers



"Are you the waiter who took my order?"

"Yes, sir."

"H'm, still looking well, I see. How are your grandchildren?"

about it. So in your newspaper, if you find an item prefaced with 'From a correspondent' as likely as not you can take it that the correspondent is no other than the individual who is the hero of the news item.

But we were talking about conferences. Every community in India, every profession, every party organises conferences. There are Village conferences, Taluq conferences, District, Presidency and finally All-India conferences. They proceed step by step. One of the resolutions at a Village conference will be to hold a Taluq conference and so on. A newspaper which does not publish accounts of these can never be popular. Its circulation will drop.

These conferences are methodical but follow the same plan. First of all an association or a party, say the Tamilian Poster Stickers' Union, at a general meeting decides to hold a conference "to ventilate their grievances, to get them redressed and to do propaganda work so that their union might be strengthened and an organisation formed on an All-India basis." This meeting elects a reception committee and working committee.

The working committee invites other Poster Stickers' unions to send delegates to the conference. A date is fixed and a president elected.

On the appointed day the president elect arrives. He is received at the Railway station, garlanded (an important item), and taken in procession to the conference pandal "amidst music and band and shouts of....." (to quote a newspaper report). On arrival there is again garlanding and applause.

The President of the reception committee then welcomes the chairman and delegates, and mentions *inter alia* some of the Poster Stickers' grievances.

The Secretary of the reception committee also makes a speech and proposes the chairman to the chair. This motion is seconded and "amidst applause the chairman takes his seat on the platform."

The secretary of the association then reads the annual report which of course shows progress. He also mentions some grievances, thanks a few people

for their interest in the union and "stresses on the necessity to organise themselves" etc.

The president then makes his speech. If the union hopes to get some small favours from the Government the President thanks Government, and the Minister especially, for 'his generosity and great interest, in the midst of his multifarious duties, in the union.' If the union has tried and not succeeded in getting anything from the Government, the latter is attacked.

Then some important local personage makes a speech and this is a signal for wild orgies of speech-making. Everybody speaks, there are one or two interruptions and a violent attack is launched on their enemies.

When order is restored and everybody is tired, the conference adjourns. The next day, freshened after rest and a hearty meal, they meet again and pass resolutions.

If the union (as I said) hopes to get something out of the Government, the first resolution will be that of "humble loyalty to H. M. the King." On the contrary, if Government have snubbed them, they pass a resolution protesting against the action of the Government in.....etc.

Then the Poster Stickers' grievances are set forth in resolutions and, as a forlorn hope, Government is again requested to redress them, adding a rider to please the Left Wing that in any case they do not hope much out of the Imperialistic Government.

The Poster Stickers also express sympathy with Abyssinia, denounce Mussolini, the League, Anthony Eden and everybody else they can lay hands on and express the hope that a Communistic form of Government will soon be introduced in India.

Finally the conference resolves to hold a bigger conference.

And when you realise how many parties, unions, communities, sub-castes, tribes, professions and associations there are in India, you will find there will never be dearth of 'news' here.



Merry's Film Folio

The Stars Resolve!

On the arrival of 1936, Hollywood made its New Year Resolutions. They are the indices to the character of the various stars, their ambitions, regrets for omissions and commissions, serious and amusing. The middle of a year is the right time to take stock.

Here they are for your edification and checking up!

Jean Harlow: The end of the day invariably finds me with loads of things to be done. So I have resolved to turn over a new leaf in 1936. Every morning I'll enter my program for the following day in a little date book, and I shan't go to bed until every item is crossed off, indicating that I've written the letter I should write, telephoned the people, I should telephone—and forgotten nothing.

William Powell: I resolve to continue worrying; life would be dull and vapid and uninteresting to me—Hollywood's best worrier—if I thought everything would be all right tomorrow or next week. I even expect to adopt a few extra worries in the coming year!

Joan Crawford: I resolve not to talk about my marriage, in any way, for any purpose. I shan't neither analyze it nor make prophecies for it. And that's a resolution I will not break!

Janet Gaynor: I resolve to keep my fingers crossed and avoid accidents. (She has had too many in the past year). And I resolve to take that long-planned trip around the world.

John Boles: I.....to get all messed up in every picture. I'm fed up with looking like an illustration of what the well-dressed man will wear next season in role after role. (He has kept his word. See him in *A Message to Garcia*.)

Victor McLaglen: Somebody get me a cup of coffee! No, wait a minute. That's my New Year's Resolution. I'm not drinking more than six cups a day now—and I've had that many already today!

Dick Powell: I'm going to fool everybody who thinks I'll be taking a personal interest in the Wedding March 1936. (Not me! What do we hear about your announcement to wed Joan Blondell in June?) My fancy is free and my heart is



Merle Oberon

on ice. And I've resolved that the end of 1936 will still find me a hard-working bachelor.

Bette Davis:to continue to lead my own life—to be independent in spirit and do my own thinking, no matter what the opinions of others might be. For the sake of herself as a person, a motion picture actress can't serve too many masters. She must set a definite programme for herself and follow it. I resolve to do that in 1936.

Merle Oberon: My household has made my New Year's Resolution

for me. I've been given notice that in 1936 I can't buy more than six dogs. I have four now—and they have started me already on the road to the Poorhouse. Have you ever seen full-grown Dalmatians eat?

Joel McCrea: My 1936 resolution is a notice to all real-estate salesmen that I'm not a prospect. I have promised myself and Frances (Frances Dee, my wife) that I won't buy another foot of ground until my ranch is completely cultivated and stocked. And what's more—I promise and resolve not to get the bug for race-horses. (Many of Hollywood's elite have gone in for racing stables.)

Maureen O'Sullivan: For seven months now I've lived in my skin and a few rags for the latest edition of *Tarzan*. I don't even know what the new styles are like. The moment the last scene is shot, I've resolved to go out and buy myself an extravagantly complete wardrobe. I expect to lean towards the Mid-Victorian. I'm awfully tired of being a self-reliant child of nature. I want dozens of long, clinging dresses, so that I'll have an excuse for being very, very feminine.

Shirley Temple (after having 'resolutions' explained to her): I don't know if this is a 'resolution' like Mr. Boles made. Anyway, I've made up my mind to make Mommie increase my allowance. I get four and a half dollars a week—and I have to buy food for my rabbits out of that—and almost every day I have more of them. And I have to buy soda-pop for me and my stand-in, and buy presents, and oh, just lots and lots of things. And don't you think Mommie ought to give me five dollars a week? That's my resolution—but Mommie will have to help me keep it!



Dick Powell

HOT FROM HOLLYWOOD

Basil Rathbone, about whom there has never been so much as a whisper of scandal or misconduct, is still trying to square himself after the spot Director (George Cukor, in a playful mood, put him on the other day.

A feminine writer was interviewing Basil on the set. Ouida Rathbone (Mrs. Basil) was sitting alongside. Cukor came up and in apparent dead seriousness said: "Just a minute, Basil. I wanted to warn you the mother of Miss X (the writer) is on the set too and is watching you like a hawk."

Of the three—Basil, Mrs. Basil and the writer—it was hard to say who looked or was the most startled.

The Gagsters!

All practical jokers naturally live to a hundred and only die when someone pulls a chair from under them; while unfortunately the jokes themselves die young and often. Recently those four, foul filberts, the Marxes, perpetrated a meanness on a good friend.

The callous panjandrums, knowing the friend to be a Timid Soul, hailed him on the phone and in disguised voice, said:

"This is Water Department Mr. So-and-so, we are about to turn off the water in order to fix the water mains. So would you kindly draw enough water to last you for a day?"

Mr. Timid Soul gratefully replied, of course, he would. Thanks, so much, Water Department!

Obediently, Mr. Timid Soul, the victim, drew water. He drew it and drew it till he had filled everything—every available tub, vessel and jug. Still he drew and drew until he had drawn out his aching back tooth. Then, he sat back to enjoy a smoke and a drink.

"If The Drought Comes Water Isn't Far Behind!"

As he was so enjoying himself and singing, the door-bell rang. And in strode the Marxes. They uttered not a word but they all calmly and grimly stripped themselves off their clothes.

Mr. Timid Soul was looking a dumb-bell, in panic. The Marxes, the heartless fellows, climbed into the various bath-tubs, wash-tubs, basins etc. he had filled in and took their baths! Mr. So-and-so died a hundred times during this Cuckoo performance.

They then dressed, bade him a fond farewell with a warm embrace each and made their escape!

Paul Robeson is a great Negro actor and singer.

His ambition, immediately he has done *Show Boat*, is to found a Negro theatre in London where the culture of the Negro races, spread the world over, can be revealed to the white races. According to Robeson, nearly every Negro actor in America has migrated to Hollywood, yet the demand exceeds the supply. There seems to be a role for a Negro in every film in Hollywood. Warners

are making *Green Pastures*, the Negro biblical film and Lubitsch is planning an all-Negro musical film. His future film plans are *King Solomon's Mines* and *Zinga*, a negro story.

Do you know who is the 'Gloomy Dean' of the pictures? It is Ned Sparks. If he had not been asked to leave college in his early life, he would not have taken to acting. He was intended to be a clergyman and was enrolled at an ecclesiastical college. Soon after, he was asked to write a treatise on Christianity. He obliged, but what he wrote made a Satan out of a Christian. Now he is famous as a dead-pan comedian. He does not smoke in real life, nor does he drink. But on the screen you will see him always chewing a cigar and quaffing drink after drink!



The Four Marxes

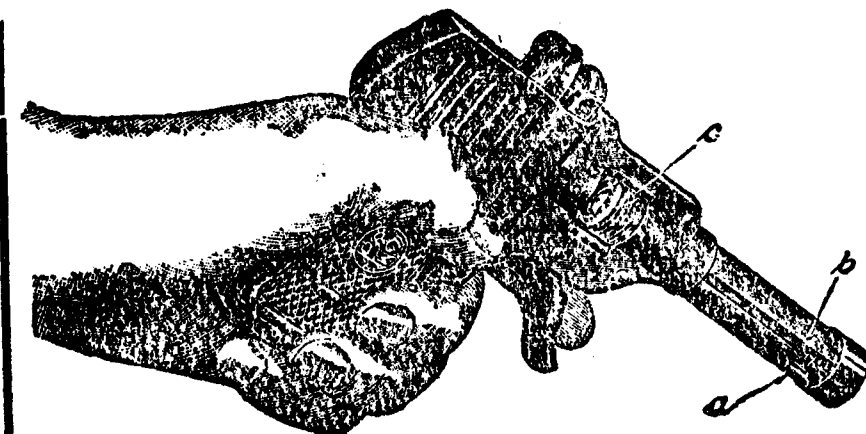
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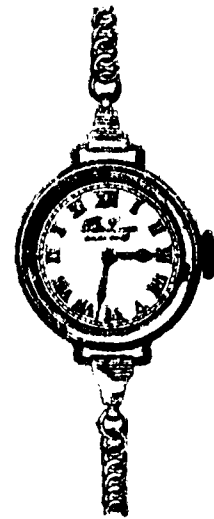
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