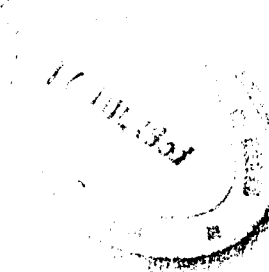


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360

MERRY

MAGAZINE



Emb usque

(A Florentine Tale)

★

J y e s h t a

(Ordeal by Fire)

★

A. A. Roland

(Hair Today --And Gone Tomorrow)

All Usual Features

Vol. IV No. 29

18th July 1936

ANNAS TWO

MERRY MAGAZINE

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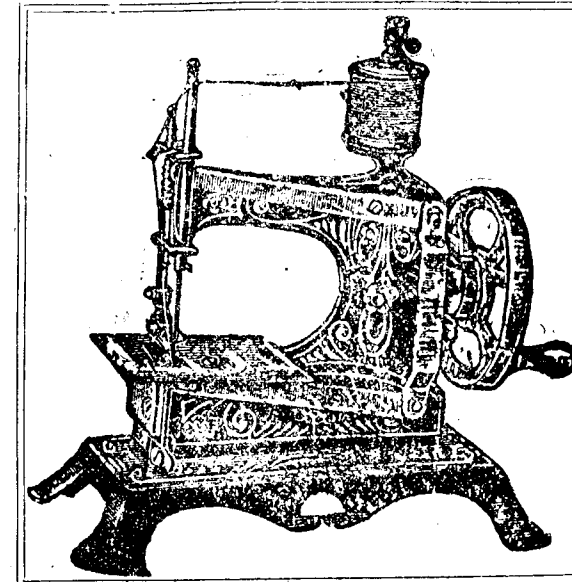
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The
MERRY
MAGAZINE



Madras, July 18, '36

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Embusque

★

Albert
A. Roland

★

Emkay

★

John A. Henry

★

A.T.M. Thomas

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Reuter reports that in consequence of the menace of Ethiopian bandits, there is a move to enlist these men under Italian colours.

Thus effecting a change in their name, though not in their occupation!

Speaking on the third reading of the Budget, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Chancellor, is said to have remarked that it was received by the country with resignation if not with enthusiasm.

While the Cabinet goes on without enthusiasm and without resignation!

It is announced that the British fleet in the Mediterranean is to be reduced to normal strength so as to grant over-due leave.

This proves that the British Navy has played its greatest part—to depart!

Answering a question in the House of Commons, Mr. Eden declared that no more requests for a reply will be made to Germany.

This means that Herr Hitler will be forced to tell no more fibs—for the present!

It is considered likely in diplomatic circles that Britain will soon find an alternative route to her Empire.

Another theory is that she may have to find an alternative Empire for her roots!

Discussing the prospects of the depressed classes being converted to Christianity, the Rev. W. Paton, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, writes: "I hold that we are on the edge of what may prove to be the greatest ingathering of people into the Christian fold."

Meanwhile, we rather think he is standing on precarious ground.

Referring to the large number of Indian students going abroad for higher studies, the Secretary to the High Commissioner for India says that an appreciable portion of them ought never to leave the country.

We should like to see such a rule extended so as to include some of our 'politicians' also.

Our Education Minister, Mr. Kumaraswamy Reddiar, complains that when he appoints a person to an office, he makes "one doubtful friend, and a number of certain enemies."

We hope he will soon be relieved of such unpleasant responsibilities!

Addressing the members of the Trichur Merchants' Association, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetti is reported to have said that Cochin businessmen should, like their confreres in British India, evince greater interest in public life.

If they had, the dewanship might, perhaps, not have gone to an outsider!

Mr. F. E. James writes to the papers contradicting the report that he referred to Pundit Jawaharlal, in the course of a speech, as "in every inch a perfect Englishman."

We ourselves think the disclaimer superfluous; for no one believes in the existence of a perfect Englishman.

Mr. John de Rockefeller who has completed ninety-seven, is reported to have said: "I know I shall live to be a hundred, just as I said several years ago."

Still, he must say it for three more years before we can readily believe him!

'Sir Raza Ali Ill. Indian Agent in South Africa Said to be Suffering from Heart-attack.'—Says a head-line.

Apparently his recent marriage has not cured him!

The A. P. I. reports that as soon as Amarnath arrived, he was spirited away from the dock.

This confirms our own view that he should never have been put there.

In the U. P. Council, the Education Minister stated that the attitude of the Government in regard to the suppression of immoral traffic was one of neutrality.

After this, it will be very difficult to prove that they are anxious to eradicate it!

Replying to an invitation to pay a visit to Kashmir, the Congress President says that it is a land where the people ought to enjoy the real wealth of the soil, its mineral and water-power.

And we sincerely hope that they will begin with last, first!

A Bengali lady who claims to have lived for fifty years without food ascribes it to the fact that she only takes plenty of water with some salt in it.

We must however take it with plenty of salt!

An American anthropologist opines that, as we grow older, although some features remain the same, the ears generally grow larger.

It may be recalled that a similar discovery was made much earlier by—Bottom!

The Election Campaign

Though it is too early to generalise on the prospects of the coming elections, there are enough indications to show that the country as a whole will not take a more than languid interest in it. This applies as much to the Congress as to the forces that are seeking to organise themselves in opposition to it. The only province where one may claim success for dyarchy—the Punjab—and where provincial politics were sought to be organised on an ambitious scale, has lost the services of a masterful personality in the death of Sir Fazli Hussain. From Bengal comes the complaint of official interference, too previously as we think. In our own province, we have the heartening spectacle of the official Justice Party going one way, those like Sir A. P. Patro 'under the gangway' going another, and causing much confusion among the faithful remnant. The Congress meanwhile is much handicapped by the absence of a definite policy in regard to office-acceptance, which is the crux of the whole problem. Public apathy to all these parties is to be explained as due not to distrust of, or disillusionment in Congress, but to an instinctive belief in the fundamental sterility of the new constitution. We have had occasion to refer to the difficulties of an All-India programme which will not cut across provincial jealousies or local needs. The Congress organisation started with a federation in which the parts were submerged in the whole. It has now to retrace its steps to some extent, and divest itself of its national outlook, in order to make it effective in parts. This is not the least of the pernicious effects contemplated by the new Act. But there is no reason why patriotism and common-sense should not rise above the constitution, and give us a chance of rebuilding the parts without forgetting the idea of a whole. This is the work for the Congress right wing; and as the left wing is still at head-quarters, it is

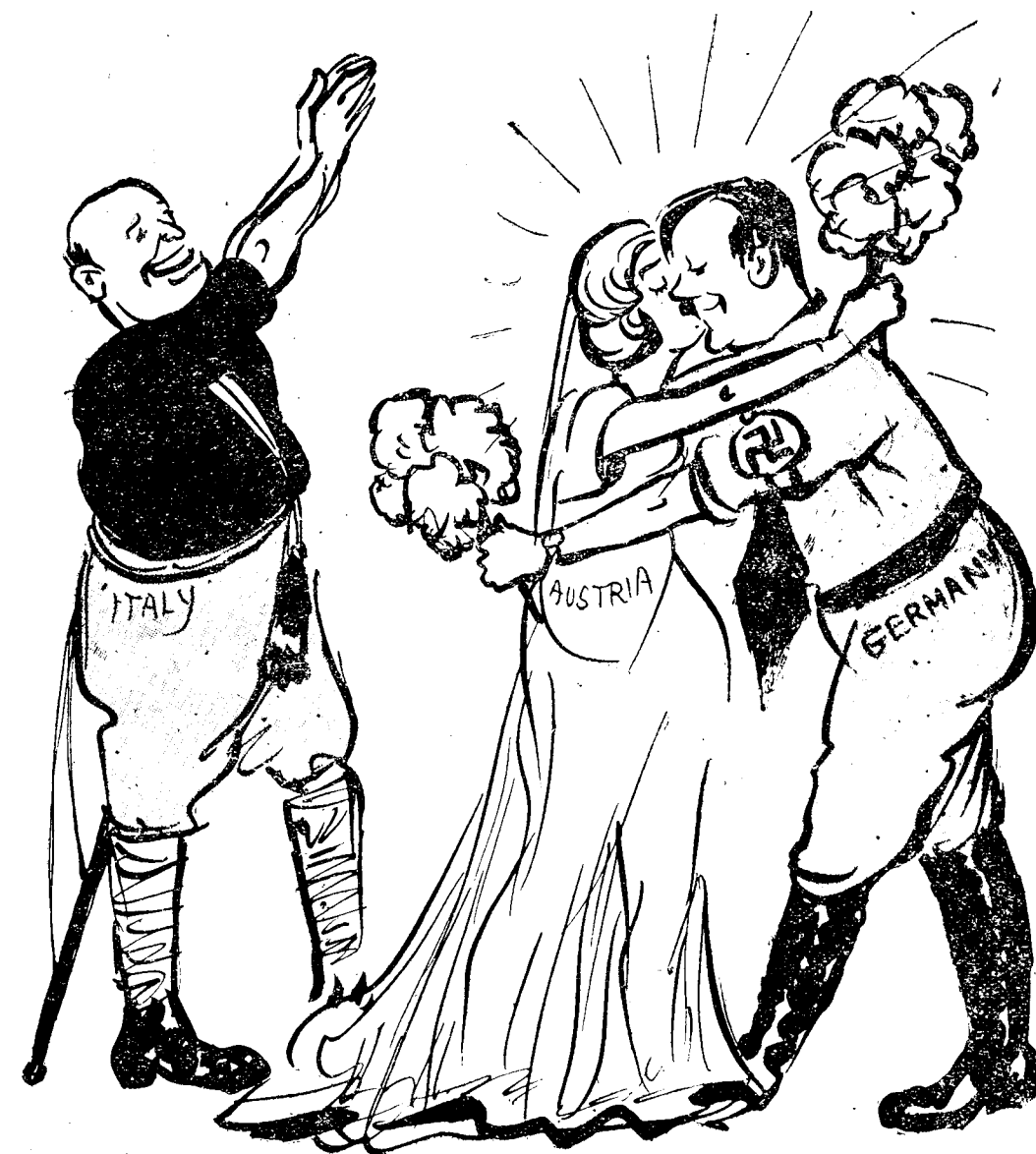
always possible for the Congress to sound the clarion the moment it is felt that the future is unduly mortgaged for the present.

The Dardanelles Conference

This conference now holding its session at that agreeable summer resort in Switzerland—Montreux—is back at the old, delectable game of diplomatic baiting. The main point at issue is the right of Turkey to re-militarise the Dardanelles. It is as elementary as the protection which England secures from her Channel fleet. But Turkey was one of the vanquished in the last war, and she was denied this right, mainly because of the ghastly experience of Britain in the Gallipoli campaign. From a military point of view it was a tragic wash-out, and the defeat of Turkey was brought about by other devices more diplomatic than military. However, all this is now an old story. The alignment of powers in the present case is somewhat different. Britain would like to keep the Straits always demilitarised, and under the supervision of an international commission. This is repugnant to Turkey's sense of its sovereignty, exactly as the demilitarisation of the Rhineland was derogatory to the Germans. England pocketed her pride and allowed Germany to have her way. Turkey is emboldened by Germany's action, and wants justice done to her. Russia who is building a big fleet in the Black Sea, and has a pact with France to come to her aid, yet made the very generous proposal that the Straits should not be allowed to be used by any power not acting under League auspices. This is a step which if agreed to would restore some prestige to that effete body. And yet the objection to this course comes from Britain! Which is an illuminating commentary on British professions of unalterable devotion to the League and its ideals. The conclusion of the present talks will show how the balance of power is to be maintained in the Mediterranean.

The Austro-German Amity

(Wedding in High Nordic Circles)



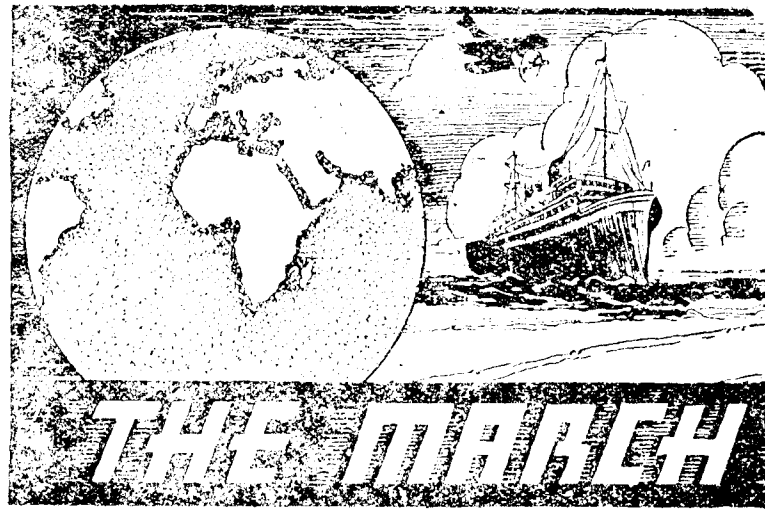
The wedding of Miss Austria and Herr Deutschland was solemnised. Mr. Mussolini gave the bride away. He is expected to hold the babies when they arrive.

Regarding Jawaharlal's Socialist propaganda, it is a well-known fact that many of our friends within the Congress and without it are getting jittery. Getting hold of Jawaharlal somewhere near Wardhagani, a newspaperman asked him, "See here, buddy, what's the perishing idea? I gotta know." Jawaharlal called him four names in four languages—idiot, kybosh, dumb-bell and hot-dog (and who will blame him?) and



said: "Listen you boiling sea gull" (or something like it). "Take birth-control. Is there any resolution on it by Congress? No. Yet, I am at liberty to express my views on birth-control. Similarly, I can express my views on Socialism." He might have added, "Go to red blazes." But he didn't, for Jawaharlal is a gentleman.

That is a juicy analogy—Birth-control and Socialism. What happens if you don't control birth? The most innocent *brahmachari* would say in a jiffy, "A lot of babies." Which is a damned nuisance, especially to the neighbours who have only one baby or no babies at all. Similarly if my neighbour has 10,000 money bags, and I have none at all, or only half a money bag of bun coins, my feelings may be more readily imagined than described. So what Comrade Jawaharlal Nehru means by comparing babies with money bags is just this. Just as too many babies are a nuisance, so are a lot of money bags a nuisance, to the other fellow. There is another important aspect to this



unhappy question, and I don't think it ever occurred to you. If I am a childless woman and yearn for babies, I can at least go to my neighbour Padmavathi and cuddle and kiss her baby. Now switch on to the money bags. Suppose I have no money bags, and my neighbour Krishna Iyengar, has got them. Suppose I go to Krishna Iyengar's house and say, "Please Mr. Krishna Iyengar, will you please let me hold one of your money bags and kiss it? Please, just once." The fellow will only laugh a hollow, mirthless laugh.

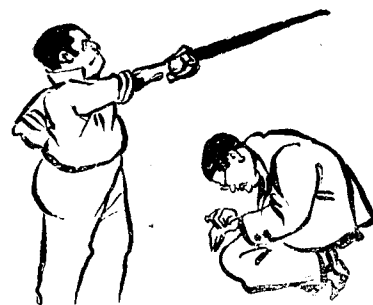
You see what we Socialists are driving at? All this has got to change. And it shall. Boo.



I am extremely sorry that I did not congratulate all the great souls who were honoured with titles on our King's last birthday. The fact was, gentlemen, I was in the doldrums; yes, very much so. If you don't believe me, catch a cold, like the one I did. It was more

a Tartar than a cold. During the doldrums I sneezed so much, that the energy back of that sneezing would very easily drive the *Queen Mary* twice round the world with not an ounce of coal burned and not a drop of crude oil consumed. Happily all that is past now. As it is not possible to write to all my friends (the depression being what it is and the cost of postage prohibitive) I send my felicitations to all concerned, particularly to Sir Srinivasa Sarma (Editor of the *Whip*) and Sir Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagaram (Captain of the Indian Cricket team) through this page, which a kind editor has placed at my disposal.

Apropos the latter, 'Wayfarer' says in *Swarajya*: "The knighthood conferred on Vizzy is a blunder." What a calumny! Why is 'Wayfarer' so sore about the honour conferred on Vizzy? I think he had had some difficulty in finding his tram-fare and had to



wayfare all the way to the *Swarajya* office (poor chap) on the day he wrote that. If and when I become a big, great man, say Dictator of India, with the right to hand out titles, I would make the Maharaj Kumar a Viscount, provided Viscounts don't go out of mode by that time. Indeed I would.



One of the greatest virtues you need cultivating, fair reader, is to take a joke on yourself with a grin. A Yankee girl came here, sniffed at all our gutters and very obligingly took away some of our stink. As you have no doubt guessed, she is not a good girl. Another Yankee girl came to us, and she is undoubtedly a good girl, whatever Father Basenach and Satyamurthi may say. Yes, ladies, you are right. This second Yankee girl is Margaret Sanger. She has cultivated the virtue that I am asking you to cultivate, almost to the point of a fine art. I am *not* referring to babies, of course.

She has cultivated the art of taking a joke against herself. Delivering an address on her Indian experiences at the Union Of The East And West under the auspices (what a bouncing word!) of the World Fellowship of Faiths,

in New York City, she related one of the finest yarns credited to womankind.

"I have just one more story to tell you," concluded Margaret Sanger, "before I finish. I was the guest for a short time at the home of a very cultured family who had three girls, but no sons. My coming had been discussed and the youngest child, who was very precocious, had thought over



what she had heard. Finally she came to her father, and said: 'Daddy, if you had met Margaret Sanger before I was born, would I be here?' And her Daddy took her up in his arms and gave her the answer which I am sure you will all feel every parent should be able to give his

children. He said, 'Joan, dear, if there were a hundred Margaret Sangers, you would still be here, because we wanted you.'"

If only Margaret Sanger was my aunt! When I go home in the evenings dog-tired and, in a bantering mood, greet my aunt, "Hello, Betsy Trotwood!" she looks at me as if I were the leavings of our cat's dinner. There are women and women, don't you think?



A hot-cha critic of our Indian films says: "What have you,"



(meaning the film-producers) "to your credit? Nothing. Eliminate the spectacular part of your shots—camels, palaces, elephants and lakes shimmering in the noontide sun; take away, I say, the glamorous costumes of your stars, and where are you?"

I don't know what would happen if the spectacle part of our films—the camels, elephants, shimmering lakes, etc., are eliminated. I do know (only too well) what will happen if the glamorous costumes of our stars are taken away. They will form a nudist colony, which may or may not improve their health. Alternately the fellow who takes away their costumes will find himself in quod for a nice stretch. Anyhow, don't you think, you bad men, that the idea is too salacious for decent, impartial comment? You...you you...

Vox Populi !

[This is what your fellow-readers say. You too are invited to write to this page.—Ed. V. P.]

Questionable Proxy

Lahore:—During a dinner given by him in honour of Lord Willingdon and his wife, the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagaram is reported to have said: "Lord Willingdon has been our greatest Viceroy of all time.....His breadth of vision and keen insight coupled with his friendly appreciation of the Indian viewpoint endeared him to my countrymen of every class and creed."

As a student of Indian History, particularly that period of Indian History after the advent of the British, let me tell you that Sir Vizzy has accentuated the high-lights with a tall brush. Will you tell Sir Vizzy that from a 'human' point of view the Viceregal gadi has been graced by better men than Willingdon?. I wonder if Sir Vizzy knows the meaning of the phrase 'for all time'. Perhaps the good cheer generated by a large dinner made him a bit reckless.

I am not particularly fond of Lord Willingdon, and I would like to know who asked Sir Vizzy to act for me at that dinner.

—Ganesh Narayan

★

How Big Is Big ?

Tuticorin:—I wonder if you would resolve a doubt for me. I am sorely troubled by an advertisement which appeared a few days ago in a Punjab paper. Here it is:

"Wanted a suitable match for a Gazetted Officer of 25, coming from a high Brahmin family. Provincialism and caste no restriction. Only big men need apply."

I am very pleased at the enlightened catholicity of this young

gazetted officer. But the last sentence is puzzling me no end. What is meant by 'big men'? My daughter (who is 17) is 5 feet 9 inches big. I (am 47) am 5 feet 5 inches big. Do you think we are big enough within the meaning of the above advertisement?

—T. S. Pillay

(I think your daughter is big enough for anybody, let alone gazetted officers. Regarding yourself, I rather think you need a couple of inches more, if you are to look the part of a father-in-law to such an important person as the one under discussion. You ought to wear shoes with heels two and a half inches high.—Ed. V.P.)

★

Fie, Editor !

Ellore:—Everybody is presenting everybody with bulls, for stud purposes. In my innocence I thought stud bulls meant button bulls and wondered wherein lay the connection between a bull and a collar stud. I now learn that 'stud purposes' means something much more lively than a collar button. What are you (as the Editor of the most popular magazine in India) going to do about it? Look at the Editor of the *Times of India*. He has presented some pinjrapole or other with a couple of stud bulls, and earned for himself an honoured place in the bucolic heart of India. Fie, Editor! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Don't be mean. Rush to the nearest cattle market, buy a hefty stud bull and present it to the cows of Madras. The children of your bull would be breathing, walking advertisements for your Magazine.

—K. V. Krishna Rao

What About Good Husbands ?

Penang:—The *Merry Magazine* ought to be edited by a girl like me. What does that man 'Omega' mean—trying to preach to the wives? (Ref. *Merry* dated 13-6-1936, article called 'Good Wives'.) This man begins with: "A good wife is a rare commodity." The enormous cheek of the man! What about the blinking Indian Husbands who have become world famous as great wife-beaters, wife-eaters and wife-burners? If you ask me I'll say that where Indians are concerned, it is you horrid men who need to be preached at, not we women.

—Jane

★

A Tip To The Bosses

Madras:—Yet another 'world' conference is sitting over the Dardanelles affair at Montreux. They are fighting like cats over a bin of juicy fish-heads. If you think they are going to agree among themselves I don't think much of your intelligence. I am thinking that if the tiny stretch of water that connects the Black Sea and the Mediterranean could be widened, say a couple of hundred miles either bank, the selfish motives actuating the Powers would be eliminated. Nature blundered in deciding the width of the Straits of Dardanelles. But man could correct the blunder. The bosses of the world may press into service all the world's unemployed and make them widen the Straits. That would settle the question once for all. What do you say?

—College Student

(I say you are slightly crazy.—Ed. V. P.)

Fun For All



Explorer: And there, as I entered my bungalow, I came face to face with a ferocious ape. What do you think I did?

Bored Listener: Removed the mirror.

* * * *

Teacher: Johnny, can you define nonsense?

Johnny: Yes, teacher—an elephant hanging over a cliff with its tail tied to a daisy!

* * * *

An English tourist travelling in the North of Scotland, far away from anywhere, exclaimed to one of the natives:

"Why, what do you do when any of you are ill? You can never get a doctor!"

"Nae sir," replied Sandy, "we've just to die a natural death."

* * * *

"How do you do, Dr. McGregor?" said Jones, addressing a tall Scot in the local bar.

"You've made a mistake, I am no' Dr. McGregor."

"No? Well then you must have a double."

"Thank you, I will that!" was the reply.

* * * *

"Miss Jones, take a letter."

"Yes sir. Who to?"

"I can't tell you—it's confidential."

* * * *

"When you married me, you promised to obey me."

"Yes, only because I didn't want a row with you while the vicar was there."

2-18-7-36

Bride: You don't know how to kiss me. I will teach you. My teacher taught me, and what a variety!

Newly-wedded Husband: Oh, my God!

* * * *

Mrs. Jones being dead, she was placed in state in the front room for her neighbours to pay their last respects before she was taken to the cemetery.

"How wonderful she looks!" one of them said, sympathetically.

"And why shouldn't she?" demanded Mr. Jones. "She spent all of last winter in Miami."

* * * *

1st Author: Have you heard about my new book dealing with the sex life of the Indians?

2nd Author: No, what is it called?

1st Author: The Lust of the Mohicans.

* * * *

He: How many beers does it take to make you dizzy?

She: Oh, four or five, but don't call me Dizzy.

* * * *

A ricksha-wallah asked a lady, standing on the bus-stand, "Amma! Give me two annas and I will carry you home quickly."

The Lady never replied. Again he asked: "Amma, where do you want to go?"

The Lady, in anger, turned and said, "I want to go to Heaven; are you game?"

"Then, give me four annas, Amma."

A Florentine Tale

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

In the city of Florence, the family of Amiera was at feud with the family of Rondinelli. Ginevra de Amiera was a daughter of the former house. One day, she was walking beside the banks of the Arno, when her eye lighted on a handsome young man. The attraction was mutual. Every day, at the same hour, the two young people met on the promenade beside the river, and exchanged ardent glances. They never spoke, for Ginevra was always accompanied by a chaperone.

One day the young man wrote a note, and placed it in a crevice beside the bridge. Ginevra took the note. It was a declaration of love. She replied encouragingly. The correspondence continued, and soon the lovers were planning an elopement. At this point, Ginevra discovered that the young man was Antonio Rondinelli, the deadly enemy of her father's house.

Ginevra was greatly distressed. She had already been promised in marriage to her cousin, a middle-aged man whom she disliked. If she ran away with Antonio, she would be dealing her father a double injury.

The chaperone had sharp eyes. Ginevra's correspondence with Antonio was detected, and the matter reported to her father. Signior Amiera was furious. He hastened the marriage which had been planned for his daughter. The girl was kept in confinement until the day of the wedding.

It was the year 1400. The plague was coming to Florence. Ginevra was one of the first victims. She was stricken on her wedding-night. In the morning, the horrified groom found his bride stretched stark beside him, a victim of the plague.

The terror of the pestilence brooked no delay. That afternoon, the body of Ginevra was laid to rest in the family vault. Vinegar was sprinkled, and the house purified.

But Ginevra was not dead. She was in a coma, following a mild attack of plague. In the middle of the night she awoke, to find herself stretched on a cold shelf in the charnel-house, clad only in a shroud.

Her feelings may be imagined. Terrified, she raised the slab of the vault, and escaped from the tomb.

Passing through the sleep-wrapped streets, Ginevra sought the home from which she had so lately been borne. Roused from his slumbers by a knocking at the door, the disconsolate widower of a day cautiously opened an upper casement.

A shrouded figure stood below. In the upturned face, he recognised the lineaments of his dead bride.

"Go in peace, blessed spirit!" quavered the unhappy man. He hastily closed the window, and fell to praying and crossing himself.

With sinking heart and slackened step, the repulsed wife made her way to her father's house. The porter was snoring at the gate. Ginevra tapped timidly. The porter awoke, grumbling; then his eyes fell on the ghostly visitor. "Help! Murder! Thieves!" he gibbered. "Out upon you, fiend of hell! O the accursed wine! I vow I will never touch another drop as long as I live!"

Ginevra, in her weak and bewildered state, was daunted by the uproar. She slunk fearfully away, hiding herself from the patrol that came running at the watchman's cries.

When silence fell on the street once more, Ginevra crept forth. Her God-father lived but a short distance away. He would take her in. She found the house, and set the door-bell a-jangling.

After a long interval, there was the sound of heavy steps descending the stairs. Muttering, and rubbing the sleep from his eyes, the God-father opened the door. He stood for a moment, petrified. Then, with a fearful howl, he slammed the door.

"God-father, it is I! I am not dead!" cried the girl.

But from the other side came the gabbling of exorcisms, interspersed with threats that a blunderbus would be fired through the door if the visitor did not depart instantly.

The cool night air, penetrating the thin dress of the hapless wanderer, made her tremble and shiver. It seemed she had wakened to life only to die again in the cruel streets. "In this extremity, my husband and my relations fly from me in terror," she reflected. "Ah, Antonio would never do so."

The thought naturally suggested a last resort. She would see if Antonio's love and courage were equal to the fear of ghostly visitation, and dread of the plague. If he proved like the rest, she would resign herself, and return to the grave.

The way was long, but hope supported the unhappy girl. At last, Ginevra was knocking at Antonio's door. He opened it himself, and although startled by the ghastly apparition, he held his ground, and controlled himself. "Poor troubled spirit," he said, gently, "what can I do to give you peace?"

"O darling, I am no spirit," replied Ginevra. "I am alive." Overcome with joy and exhaustion, she fell senseless on the threshold.

Antonio summoned help, and had the girl carried to his own bed. Restoratives were applied, and every tender care given to the wanderer. In a few days Ginevra had recovered from her sickness and from the shock, and was as beautiful as ever.

Now came the difficulty. Was Ginevra to return to the man who had buried her in haste, and shut his doors against her? Or should she stay with the brave and devoted lover who had saved her from a second death?

Antonio sought an honourable settlement. He lay the matter before the ecclesiastical court. He prayed for a declaration that since Ginevra was officially dead, her marriage was null and void. He begged permission to marry the nameless foundling who had come to his house in grave-clothes in the middle of the night.

The husband intervened in the suit. He asked for a declaration that Ginevra was his wife. He insisted that nothing but her dying in earnest could dissolve the matrimonial bond. He claimed damages against Antonio for harbouring his lawful wife.

The judge was in a quandary. If the case was pressed to a conclusion, the law would be on the



"Go in peace, blessed spirit!"

husband's side; but there was no real precedent. At the end of the first day's hearing, he dropped a hint that if Antonio and Ginevra removed to France, they would be outside the jurisdiction of the court, which would be unable to decide whether Ginevra was a deceased person, a wife, or a nameless foundling. There would be no penalty if Antonio married a nameless foundling in the realm of France.

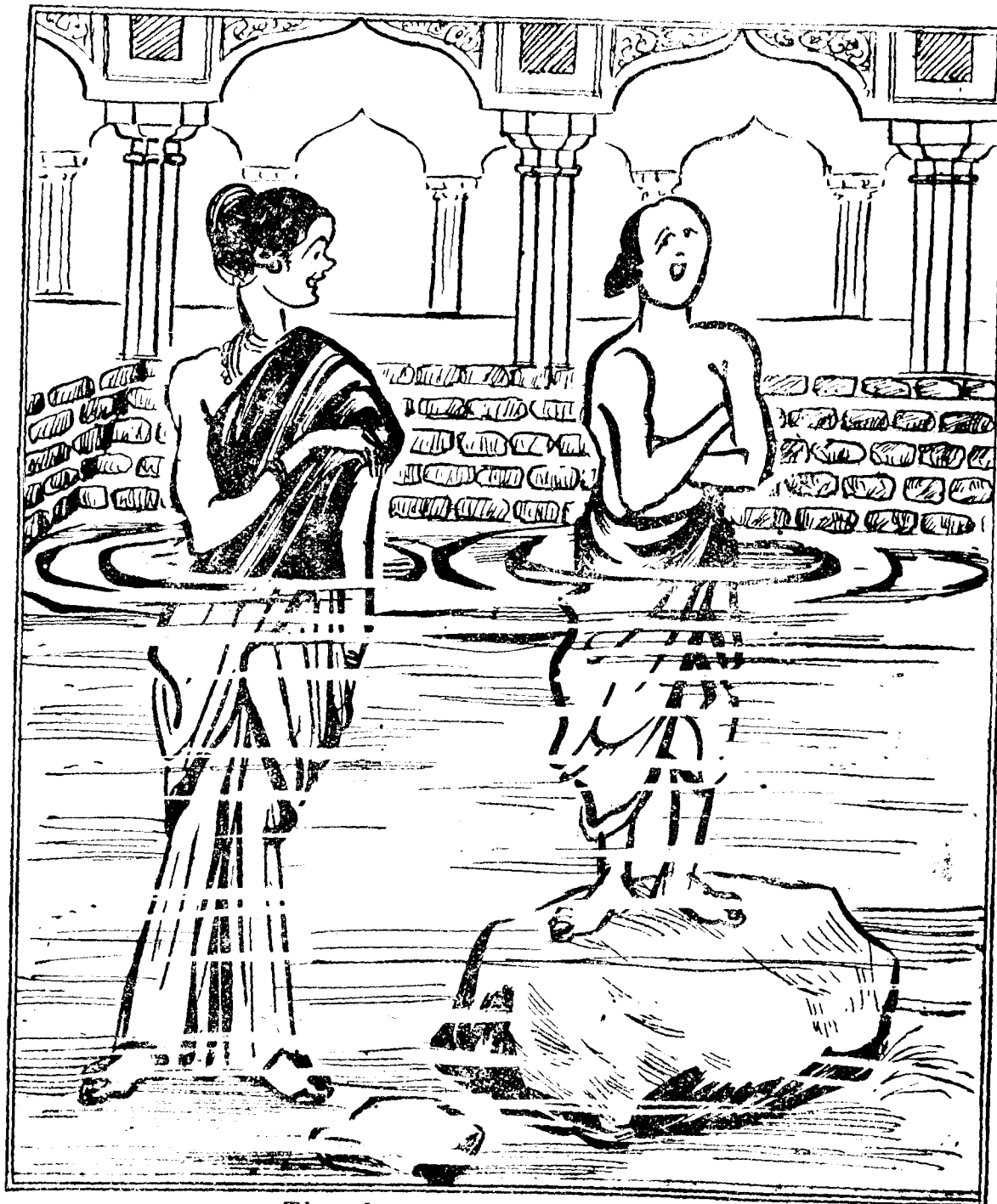
The young couple took the hint, and disappeared. The judge, ignoring the husband's demand for a

verdict, said that in the absence of evidence the case would be adjourned *sine die*.

This historical incident was the beginning of many popular romances that, in various forms, told the story of two lovers belonging to rival families. The apparent death of the beloved was sometimes given a tragic twist; some versions changed the circumstances almost out of recognition.

From one of these versions, Shakespeare evolved the deathless story of *Romeo and Juliet*.

THE END



The short one pulls a tall trick.

Ordeal By Fire !

by Jyeshta

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

THERE lived in a village in the Ganjam District an old and worthy couple. Patro, the old man, made a living by begging. But he did not call it begging. In that sense he was perhaps an unconscious Socialist. He made the round of all the opulent houses in the village and its surrounding hamlets and engaged the elderly ladies in conversation pertaining to the virtues of Sita, the *dharma* of Yuddhistara, the divine trickery of Sri Krishna and so forth. Which housewife could refuse such a pious man a few fistfuls of rice and a bit of vegetable? So when Patro returned to married bliss at home, he always brought enough provisions to last the day. Occasionally a prodigal lady would, unseen by her men-folk, drop into Patro's rice an old quarter-anna coin. Such days were rare though. These coppers Mrs. Patro saved in a small earthen pot which she secreted near the roof of their humble hut.

On Krishnashtami Day, Patro took a bold step and called at the local zamindar's palatial house. Patro generally avoided the zamindar's house, because the zamindar had a very bad habit of leaving his dogs unchained around his house; and these dogs took an unreasonable objection to Patro and his tribe. In spite of these dogs, Patro approached the back-door and commenced an argument with the zamindar's wife about the obscure aspects of Krishna's life where it touched the *gopikas*.

The zamindarini was so delighted at the wicked remarks of Patro that she gave him two annas, one seer of wheat flour, a pound of sugar and, about four spoonfuls of ghee. Laden with these, Patro returned home triumphantly. Mrs. Patro was in the seventh heaven of happiness, because they would be eating grand delicacies that blessed day. She ran to the village tank, performed a rather luxurious bath composed of oil and saffron and returned home in great haste. She started a fire in record time and converted the zamindarini's ghee,

flour and sugar into five lovely chappatis. Having done which, she called out to her husband to get ready for the great feast. Patro in turn ran to the tank, and not even so much as looking at the young women who were bathing by his side (he was really a good fellow) dipped himself thrice into the green water, hurried through his *sandhyavandanam* skipping through portions of it and almost ran back home. Being Krishnashtami Day, he put on his forehead an elaborate *namam* and sat for his meal. Mrs. Patro placed on his leaf two of the chappatis which she had cooked. The old man pinched a small bit from a chappati and was about to put it in his watering mouth when an uncomfortable thought crossed his brain. He looked suspiciously at his wife.

"Look here, woman," he said, "you cooked five chappatis, didn't you?"

"I cooked five chappatis, what then?" asked the dame.

"As the head of the house, I am surely entitled to the major portion. Come, put another chappati on my leaf."

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Patro. "I cooked and slaved and perspired and burnt my hands. So I am entitled to three chappatis."

"You are not!"

"I am."

There was a deadlock. They argued, howled and screamed; but they could not compose their difference.

"Patro," said the old woman, "there is no use arguing. We will never agree. So we will make a bet. Let us lie down, and whoever speaks first will forfeit the chappatis."

Patro considered the scheme and smiled. His wife was a garrulous woman. Sure, she could not shut up for any considerable time. "Very well," agreed Patro.

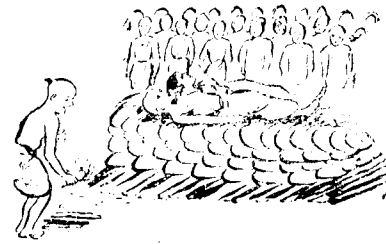


The woman put away the five chappatis in a pot, swept the floor of her one-room hut, and spread an old tattered mat in the coolest corner. On that mat lay the husband and wife. They started their speechless Marathon at two in the afternoon.

The long hours ticked slowly by. Presently it was night. Neither of them slept a wink, lest in his or her sleep the other might talk and go scot-free. Another day dawned. It grew into midday. Both of them stuck to their guns heroically. So far the honours were even.

At about four in the evening, the village noticed a void in its busy life. Where was Patro? asked everybody of everybody. At last it became the 'talk of the day'; everybody wanted to know what became of their popular Patro. The headman of the village got a representative deputation ready and he led the deputation to Patro's little hut. Somebody knocked on the door. It went without result. Another knocked louder. Still nothing happened. The headman himself came forward and banged the door with his stick of authority. The house was as silent as the village common at dead of night.

By this time it was evening, and light was failing. The deputation broke open the door. It was dark inside. Somebody struck a match and lit the tin kerosine lamp over the doorway. The fitful light revealed the poor couple stretched full length on a mat, still and silent as corpses. There was a gasp of horror. Word went round the village, of the strange demise of the poor Patros. Women cried copious tears. They said that Mrs. Patro was a great *pativrata*, otherwise



now could she die at the same time that her husband died!

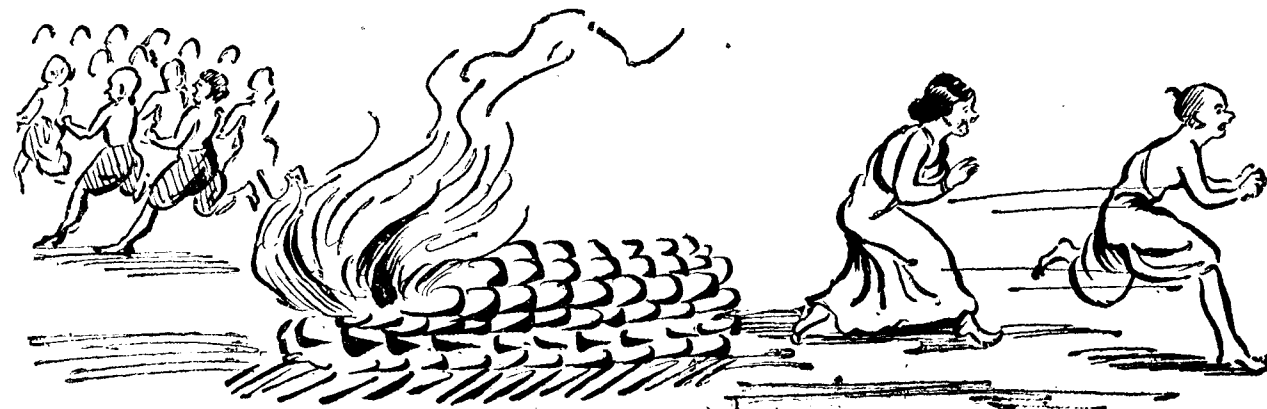
The two corpses were bathed right royally. A beautiful bier of the greenest bamboos was got ready. Flowers were strewn all over it. They placed the two dead bodies on the same bier and carried them reverently to the burning ground. A great funeral pyre was got ready. The bodies were placed on the pyre. The Patros were childless, so the village headman lighted the pyre just under the heads of the corpses. The wood caught the fire and leapt into a merry flame. The congregation retired to a little distance to see dust rendered unto dust.

Meanwhile the funeral flame progressed upwards. Impartially, it burnt a wisp of hair each from the heads of the male and female corpse.

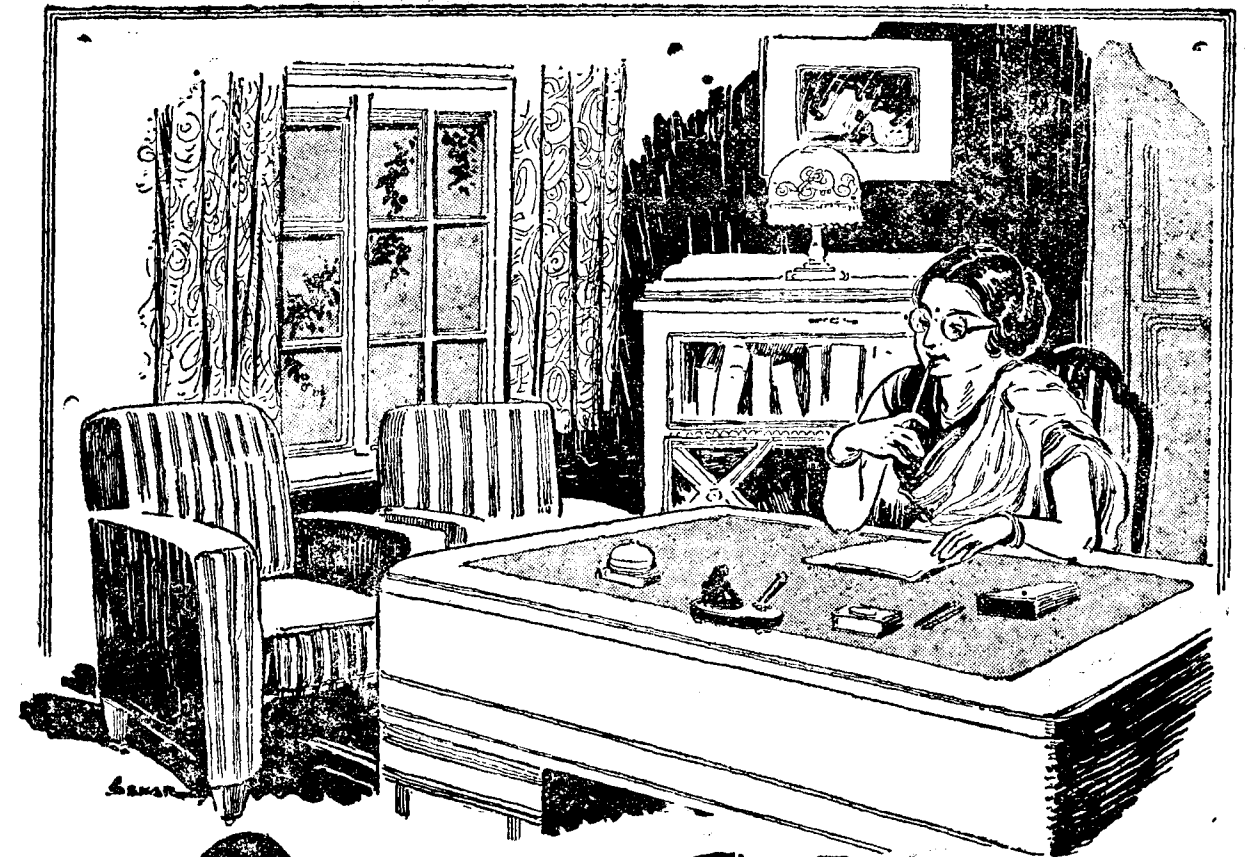
With a loud yell of pain Patro leapt up and, clearing the pyre with great agility, ran homeward. Immediately thereafter, Mrs. Patro leapt up with another yell, a yell of pleasure, and ran after her husband screaming, "I have won the chappatis! I have won the chappatis! Patro, I have won the chappatis!"

The village folk who gathered there got the fright of their lives. Old sceptics who privately did not believe in ghosts forswore their lifelong convictions. In a body all of them ran in the opposite direction to which the corpses took.

And if you want a moral for this story, it is this: Don't bet with women, for you will get burned.



THE END



Auntie J.J.

My nieces, especially the younger ones, appear to be suffering from a self-deprecating complex. A little niece from Malai (a place which the Post Office people forgot to put in their Directory) writes to me: "It is a great pleasure for me to write to you. But it may be a nuisance to you to have to read silly letters such as mine, from your nieces."

One of the secrets of success, my dears, is that you should always go about with your noses in the air, as high as possible. I mean, be aggressively sweet. I know some girls are constitutionally incapable of sweetness. But this grace could be acquired. Eat as much sugar and its innumerable products as you can manage. If you have written anything or said anything that is really silly, pretend that you have done something very clever. These so-called brainy men have landed themselves in such a hopeless mess, that we girls can afford to be silly. In any case, I am a

silly woman myself, but I manage to give an opposite impression. Let Auntie's light be your guide.

Says this niece further: ".....And, Auntie, what about that Children's Page in the *Merry*? You told me sometime ago that you will open it soon."

Patience, my chicks. Let us hurry cautiously. I am now getting trained in the ways of children (under twenty years) and as soon as I get the hang of these little tots, lo! there is the Children's Page for you!

The dear niece concludes her letter with this request: "Won't you publish your photo in the *Merry* instead of becoming the plaything of Mr. Sekar?"

Good Lord! Plaything of Mr. Sekar! What next! Don't say such naughty things, you bad girls. Mrs. Sekar will get jealous, and the poor man will have no peace of mind. Of course Mr. Sekar takes me out to lunch quite often. So does Mr. Varma,

but not quite so often. That is all. There is no funny business at all. I don't let them paw me.

Another niece who signs herself "Naughty Niece" writes apropos the conversion of Mahatma Gandhi's son to Islam: "Really, Auntie, if a man must change his religion, must he become a Muhammadan?" Not necessarily, my dears. He might become a Hottentot or a Zulu or a Seventh Day Adventist or Nazi or even a bandit. Like Mrs. Eddy of old, I am starting a brand new religion. The whole idea is in the formative stage, in my brain. As soon as I have thought out a suitable philosophy and a code of ethics to go with that philosophy, I shall tell you about it. Meanwhile those who want to become evangelists under my guidance may apply to me enclosing a pre-registration fee of five rupees, which shall on no account be refunded. To save trouble, please send me Government of India currency notes. The notes must bear the signature of either Mr. J. B. Taylor or Mr. J. W. Kelly. Otherwise your applications will not be considered.

Retired District Judge (Mannamadura): "Madam, I can always tell a woman's character when I see the way she dresses."

Old, naughty, bad man. Don't you know that women dress in private?

Debutante (Calcutta): "I weigh 240 pounds and am still growing. I have a squint in my left eye."

There is a wart on my nose. Can you suggest a make-up, dear Auntie, to make myself attractive?"

No good, dear girl. Go to your papa and mamma and tell them not to play such jokes like you. Ask them to take you back and do better next time.

IV Form Girl (Mylapore): "Teacher asked me for the word which describes a man who marries two wives. I replied, 'Bigotry'. He looked at me nastily. What is wrong with my answer?"

Absolutely nothing, my dear. And if he asks for the name of the man who marries three wives, tell him that he is called, 'Trigonometry'.

Horseflesh (Multan): "Don't you love to see a noble horse going along the green with dreamy eyes?"

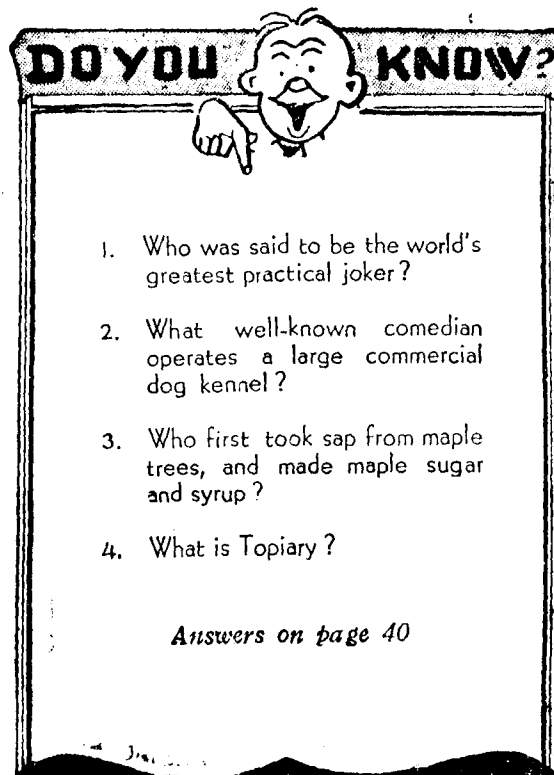
Certainly, dear Horseflesh; but if the horse is the one which I backed, I don't think I will love it.

Equestrian (Ramnad): "Why don't I see horses on the road these days?"

Because there are too many asses on the road.

Nearly Bald (Dacca): "I have tried every advertised hair-restorer, Indian and foreign. I am sorry to say I have been swindled. Can you tell me, madam, how one could avoid falling hair?"

It is really very simple. To avoid falling hair just jump out of the way of a falling hair.



Wedded Words

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

by Diana Don

HAVE you ever thought, dear reader, of the pairs of words in the English language, so firmly wedded together that no writer may prise them asunder? I am not alluding now to journalistic clichés, such as 'pious hope', or 'high dudgeon'; for other things can be pious besides hope, and other emotions high apart from dudgeon. You can even have high hope. Such pairs of words are not lawfully wedded; they merely live together in sin, at the behest of unimaginative reporters.

There are many words that are married, but the marriage is only one of convenience. The association is not inevitable. It is simply that in certain circumstances the parties are required by common decency to get into double harness.

Thus the adjective 'festive' may be applied to many occasions, but the expression 'festive occasion' can refer to nothing but a wedding. And how else can the bride and bridegroom be described than as the 'happy pair'? And, a little later, as the 'proud parents'?

This tendency to morganatic marriage is much aggravated in business. A favour can be nothing but 'esteemed', unless the writer desires to be rude. A self has to be 'good', and a servant is inevitably 'obedient,' even when giving voice to the most subordinate sentiments.

Imagine a state of society in which parents were not automatically 'proud', bliss was not 'connubial', the heathen declined to be 'benighted', and evening-dress failed to be 'immaculate'. The destruction of the Empire would inevitably follow.

A void is always expected to be 'aching', the best kind of silence is 'stony', and no impeachment is entirely satisfactory unless it is 'soft'.

These facts can be of great assistance to the aspiring author. If you desire a reputation for brilliant and original writing, you have only to invert some of these morganatic marriages. You can talk of a 'crashing silence' and a 'cloying void'. If you want to establish yourself as a satirical humorist, you can simply go in for adroit divorce-proceedings. Talk about 'the

joys of connubial strife' and 'the miseries of wedded bliss'.

We have noted that the morganatic type of word-marriage is not inevitable; the words are required to come together only in certain connections. By contrast, there are words in the language that go with a single partner, and none other. Such words cannot be divorced.

'Inspissated' is an example. The only thing you can inspissate is gloom. You can't have inspissated coffee, though the coffee in the local caravanserai often tries to get that way. Similarly, it is no good trying to use 'condign' apart from 'punishment'. 'Bated' is just as hopeless. Nothing can be bated except breath.

Try 'unvarnished'. Though most objects in the world are unvarnished, it is difficult to think of anything that can be unvarnished in literature, except truth. But before blacking was invented, boots could be unvarnished. Dickens speaks of both varnished and unvarnished boots. 'Unvarnished truth'—truth unadorned—probably derived from unvarnished boots.

Most alliances in the language, whether true or morganatic unions, were originally perpetrated by classic authors. About every tenth line in *Hamlet* contains a morganatic marriage that has long since become a cliché. And at every hundredth line you will come across a case of philologic monogamy, devised and consecrated by the immortal bard.

Among the marriages of convenience you will find 'ministering angel', 'single blessedness', 'flattering unction', and 'midsummer madness'. Among the cases of monogamy there is 'witching hour'. An hour is the only thing that can be 'witching'.

Perhaps it is hardly correct to describe the last union as a monogamous one. 'Hour' goes with many things, but 'witching' goes only with 'hour'. It is the adjective that is monogamous. The noun is a thorough rake.

(Continued on page 21)

Hair Today—and



Reading Time • About 9 Minutes

66 "It seems to me," said my friend Sitaram, "that the average illustrated periodical allots most of its advertisement-space to Rejuvenation Products."

"I'll bet you a rupee you're mistaken!" I argued. "Let's glance through the ads. in six different magazines and papers, and count up. I say the score'll clearly favour Bust Developers."

"Done!" said Sitaram, and we got to work.

For the next few minutes, all that could be heard in the library was the sound of pages being turned, and the excited murmur of our voices as we read out and counted up the relevant headlines.

"*'Too Old At Twenty?'*" read Sitaram; and "*'Why Not Be A Man!'*" That's two to me on the very first page!"

"*'Beautiful Bust in 24 Hours,'*" I quoted "*'Ashamed to Wear a Bathing Costume—'*" *'Restores the Shape of Fallen—'* There you are, Sitaram! I lead you three to two already!"

"*'Which Woman Worships a Worm?'*"—Three," counted Sitaram.

"Here's one for me," I said. "*'You, Too, Can Acquire a Perfect Bust.'*"

Gone Tomorrow

Written & Illustrated by Albert A. Roland

"Can you?" sniggered Sitaram. I went on reading. A note of triumph gathered strength in my voice as Bust-Culture headline after headline tumbled out from the next few pages...

"*'Don't Put Up With a Bust Like a Goat's'*" *'She Has What You Can Have in 48 Hours'* *'I Can Give You Those Glorious, Glamorous, Girlish Curves.'* *'Let Me Mould Your Bust.'* *'TWO Good Reasons Why She's Socially Successful—'*

"Stop!" implored Sitaram. "How terrible! That's a humorous magazine! And those can't be bona fide ads.—"

"Oh yes, they are!" I declared, and indicated the advertisers' names with coupons complete. "That makes nine to your three. Ah, here's a couple for you."

"*'From Shadow to Sultan in Six Seconds,'*" quoted the mollified Sitaram. "*'Mere Male or Mighty Man?'*" And here's another—"

To cut a long story short, the final result of our count was, Bust Developers: 32, Youth-Regainers: 21.—A clear-cut victory for the product I had staked my money on. Sitaram handed over the rupee with a strange gleam in his eye.

"And now, Mani," he said, "I'm going to win that money back, with another wager. There's another product, or rather two products, that I maintain are even more advertised than those we've just counted."

"Impossible!" I snorted. "The bet's on! Like to make it two rupees?"

"Two rupees," agreed Sitaram confidently. "I noticed lots of them as we were looking through the ads. It's Hair-Restorers and (curiously enough) Hair-Removers. Either must be eligible for the score. You can take the bet off if you like."

"The bet remains," I said with dignity. And we went through those periodicals again.

And Sitaram was right. There were no less than 65 ads.—big or small—either drawing attention to lotions, pomades and pills capable of restoring luxuri-

ous growths of hair to the bald or semi-bald—or to powders, creams and soaps guaranteed to obliterate any unwelcome foliage on the spot.

"Strange, isn't it?" remarked Sitaram as he pocketed the two rupees, "that such a large volume of business can be done in things like that, while really deserving lines languish for want of support?"

(Sitaram's line, I should mention here, is Japanese cars and radios.)

"Oh, I don't know," I told him. "It's perfectly understandable, when you consider the fundamental vanity of mankind. And I don't know that I agree with you as to cheap cars and radios being any more deserving of patronage than products aimed at beautifying and improving a world which, in all conscience, is sadly in need of improvement."

Sitaram grunted.

"I should much rather," I went on, "see all female forms made divine, all bald heads made to bloom, and old age and superfluous hair eliminated from the scheme of things—than see the World running round in Japanese cars, and His Wife running away from Japanese radios."

Sitaram looked hurt.

"But at least my cars and radios *work*," he said. "They don't make a big noise like—"

"They *do* make a big noise," I put in pointedly.

"They don't make a big noise claiming to do this and that, and failing to do anything. Where did you ever see a man grow *un-bald*? Where do you ever see octogenarians turning into sexagenarians? And have you ever seen a colossal bosom subside into one worthy of the Venus de Milo?"

"I admit I've never witnessed such phenomena—but that's because I've never gone out of my way to do so. I dare say these things do happen—else why should people buy the products, and why should the producers flourish?"

"Because it's a mad world," growled Sitaram. And there the argument rested.

But Sitaram's words had started a train of thought in my mind, and as we left the library it occurred to me to write an article on one of the three subjects we had been discussing.

Which should it be? Rejuvenators, Bust-Beautifiers or Hair-Restorers-and-Removers?

I confess I'm not at all interested in the first. And the second I've already dealt with in an article in these pages, entitled 'A Bold Front'. So it would have to be the third.

I mentioned my intention to Sitaram and asked if he could assist me with any material. He has a gift for epigrams. To me he gives most generously of his help, expecting nothing in return save the satisfaction of seeing his wisecracks reproduced in print.

"Glad to, Mani!" he said. "How about this for a headline: 'Hair Today—and Gone Tomorrow'?"

"Brilliant!" I agreed, and so the present title came into being. He went on with the following suggestions:—

"You could start with a warning: 'Be True to Your Hair, or it will be False to You!' You could bring in the sad story of the wife who sobbed: 'I used to love my husband because of his lovely hair—but it's all off now!' You could tell about the man who was advised to watch out for falling hair, or his wife would divorce him—"

"But Sitaram," I interrupted, "isn't that rather flat? After all, even happily married men have falling hair sometimes."

"I know," he said, "but the falling hairs in this case were blonde, silky and 12 inches long. See?

And then, Mani, you could intrigue the reader by repeating this simple piece of dialogue:

"What's good to put on a bald head?"

"What?"

"A hat."

"I think, Mani, it would be permissible to bring in a little reference to dandruff. For instance, you could say a flapper is like dandruff—always falling on some boy's neck. Or refer to the stenographer who said she must warn her boss about the dandruff on his collar before he went home. 'But cutie,' says her friend, 'the boss is bald-headed.' 'Certainly,' says the steno. 'But I'm not.'"

"You could disprove the popular belief that baldness is caused by excessive brains pushing out the hair-roots, by pointing out that the majority of politicians are bald."

"Regarding Hair-Restorers, you could say the only brand you have any faith in is the one which says in the directions: 'Be careful not to take the cork out with your teeth—or else you'll find yourself with a heavy moustache in the morning.'"

"You might refer to the case of the film star who confided to her doctor: 'Worry over holding my husband is changing the colour of my hair.' 'Not turning grey, are you?' 'No, doctor, platinum.'"

"Here are a few generalisations:—

"Nowadays, a woman's crowning glory seems to be a rich man's scalp."

"When a blonde dyes her hair, she tries to keep it dark."

"There is no water in a permanent wave or in watered stock, but both of them have sunk many a man."



"A Hirsute Mystery: How does a hair get into the soup, when the cook is bald?"

"It doesn't follow because your father had a tremendous moustache that you will. You might take after your ma."

"Give a nudist a wig, and she's got a costume."

"Women believe that the most outstanding contribution chemistry has given to the world is—blondes."

"And Mani, no article on Hair would be complete without a reference to Beards. An amusing anecdote is that about the Irishman and the Jew, both bearded."

"The Irishman said there were more Irish than Jewish Saints. The Jew said that the Saints of Israel outnumbered those of Ireland by several to one. Each agreed to let the other pull one hair from his opponent's beard for every Saint named."

"Moses," began the Jew, and pulled a hair from the Irishman's beard. Pat winced, but smiled good-humouredly and countered with: 'St. Patrick!' He

then took his toll from the Jew's beard. 'Abraham,' continued Ike, and another hair was whipped from Pat. He winced again, and smiled less good-humouredly as he cried: 'St. Columba!' He removed his second hair from Ike's beard somewhat ungently, evoking a yelp of pain.

"However, the astute Jew mustered up an enigmatical smile and, carefully counting twelve hairs in Pat's beard, gave them a hefty tug. 'The Twelve Apostles!' he cried triumphantly, and threw the hairs into the air."

"Pat saw red. Tears of pain trickled down his cheeks. Grabbing at Ike's beard, he violently pulled the whole thing out by the roots, lustily yelling: 'The Irish Fusiliers, God bless 'em!!!'"

"Also, Mani, why not tell the story of the bearded lady who was refused admittance to the nudist colony because—"

"Thanks, Sitaram," I said hastily. "Thanks awfully, but I think you've given me quite enough to go on with."

THE END

WEDDED WORDS—(Continued from page 17)

'Finny' is one of the monogamous adjectives. It must be followed by 'tribe'. Though why a fellow should write 'finny tribe' when he means 'fishes' is a matter for further investigation.

Nouns are seldom faithful to their adjectives. In the examples cited so far, the only monogamous noun is 'dudgeon'. It is always 'high' dudgeon. Here we have a case in which the adjective is promiscuous.

Consider 'ill-gotten'. Conventionally, only gains are ill-gotten. Here is a field for go-ahead writers. There is no reason why we should not speak of 'ill-gotten ideas', or even 'ill-gotten children'. Whoever is the first to do this will get his name into the next edition of the Great Oxford Dictionary, as the originator of a phrase with a new shade of meaning.

'Beetling' is a bigamist. You can have 'beetling brows', and 'beetling cliffs'; but nothing else in nature is permitted to beetle. In the works of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse.

Here is a new pastime for Merry readers. Take the following pairs, and decide whether they represent (a) a misalliance (b) a marriage of convenience (c) a monogamous union, on the part of at least one partner.

Most of the phrases in the list originated in classical works, and further fun may be had in tracking them down to their sometimes surprising beginnings.

Sickening thud.	Eternal triangle.
Filthy lucre.	Crying shame.
Sacred edifice.	Buxom wench.
Auspicious occasion.	Prepossessing appearance.
Yeoman service.	Crass ignorance.
Psychological moment.	Unbridled luxury.
Speaking likeness.	Callow youth.
Burning topic.	Multifarious activities.
Vicious circle.	Howling wilderness.

Finally, you can make a list of your own favourite weddings and misalliances.

THE END



Subbanna's Special

The Professor Outclassed!

by V. V. Narayanan

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

LOOK at India, your own Bharata Mata, through the window of Subbanna's All India Special. See Dwaraka, hallowed by the blessed feet of Infant Krishna, see your capital city, Madras, the city of distances, see the mighty Godavari which Guha crossed with a divine cargo on board his small boat, see Calcutta, the city of palaces, the second greatest city in the Empire, see the Gateway of India, see Nasik from which place Thataka ran away leaving her nose behind, see Meerut, Lucknow, Lahore, Jhansi, still red with gory tales of the great Mutiny, Benares, the holy of holies (See Benares and die if you want to go to Kylas), in short, *see India*. Man, know yourself, by knowing your beloved country.

Remember there is nothing to beat Subbanna's Special for comfort and cuisine. Starting from Waltair on August 1st. The rush for booking has set in.

Book early if you don't want to be left severely behind!

Travel galore! Subbanna's Special for stupendous sight-seeing. It costs you almost nothing. Just Rs. 250. Pay us this pittance and enjoy a Rs. 1,000 trip. Don't miss this chance of a lifetime.

So said the advertisement in my paper, day in and day out for thirty days. Such is the power of suggestion that I would turn to the advertisement immediately I opened the paper every day. After the tenth insertion of this advertisement, I fell into the happy habit of dreaming of places and sights afar, from the Himalayas to the Cape, from Karachi to the Sunderbans.

One day some impulse made me do a very foolish thing. I called my wife and translated for her benefit

this great advertisement. "What do you think of it?" I asked her benignly.

"Do you really mean to say that a private person is running a special train all over India for the benefit of all and sundry?" she asked me, greatly surprised at the generosity of Mr. Subbanna. Poor, ignorant woman!

"That is exactly what I do mean. Is it not great—going all over India just for Rs. 250? Ah, well!" I sighed and turned to my paper.

I may as well set down here that we are not exactly a newly married couple. The honeymoon atmosphere receded into the shadows before the strong smell of castor oil. In short we were arrived at that phase of married bliss where sweet phrases abdicate in favour of daily rows over fuel and ghee shortage, bazaar bills and birth control, conducted in a delightfully informal language.

"Are we going on this special train?" asked my wife.

"Certainly not. Don't get such silly ideas into your head."

"How miserably mean some men are!" she said, addressing my left leg.

I smelt a row. I laid aside my paper, cleared my throat, blew my nose aggressively, and addressed her right fore-arm: "What did you say, woman?"

"I said that some men are miserably mean. They ought to be ashamed of themselves."

"Are you suggesting by any chance that I am one of those men?"

"You educated men—beeyehs!—how clever you are! Yes, you are one of the meanest."

"Oh, really! I know an old rascal who promised his son-in-law fifteen years ago a Rs. 1,116-0-0 dowry. That old reprobate....."

"Leave my father alone!" screamed my wife.

"All right. Leave *me* alone!"

For the succeeding ten minutes she looked truculently at my stomach. I looked at an enlarged photograph on the wall—of myself and my wife, taken long, long ago when my wife stood by my side and blushed her happiness in the saffron trappings of a bride. She followed my gaze and sighed reminiscently.

"Don't you owe it me as your wife and your children's mother to show me the sacred places of our country? After all it costs only Rs. 250 for a person."

I wonder if there is a brute alive who could, if he had the means at his command, say 'no' to an appeal such as this, to the husband, the man and the father in him. If there is one, I am not he.

"But what about leave?" I parried. It is not diplomatic to capitulate all at once. "I have used up all my privilege and casual leave."

"Apply for sick-leave, then," she said with great logic.

I decided to fall sick officially for three months, commencing from August 1st. I booked space in Subbanna's Special for the family—we two and the six children. The wife was in the seventh heaven of happiness. She got so stuck up over the coming trip that our neighbours, the feminine part of them, were quite disgusted with her. She did not stop at that. She canvassed for the Special in whirlwind fashion. She actually persuaded two families to book up in the Special. If Mr. Subbanna had known what a great publicity agent he had in my wife, he would have sent her a floral offering every day.

At last we got started from Waltair. To describe the whole journey would fill up a volume. We wandered all over India and at last came to Calcutta. Among the travellers was a history professor who stuck to me like a leech. The fellow would explain to me all the history attached to places we visited. For instance, he actually showed me a place in Muttra where Sri Krishna was knocked down by a Gopika for making indecent advances to her. It was disgusting the way this old professor kept annoying me with his running commentaries. By the time we came to Calcutta, I was so disgusted with his officious explanations that I nearly jumped into the Hoogly to end my misery.

The professor ambled along the corridor of the train which drew up at a siding in Howrah and beamed upon me. "How about a trip to the Black Hole this afternoon?" he asked me.

"Oh, professor, I have a nasty headache. Please make it tomorrow morning. I shall be delighted."

"Very good, very good." And the professor was gone.

Next morning we took a taxi to the Dalhousie Square and alighted at the General Post Office.

"Look at that historic building!" said the professor, in an awed whisper. "It was once the palace of Suraj-Ud-Dowlah. They have housed the Post Office in it now. What a sacrilege!"

"How thrilling!" I said. I knew of course the history of the Calcutta General Post Office. "Really, professor, your knowledge of India is encyclopaedic!"

The professor smiled a smug smile. "The study of history is a very fascinating occupation. Come along. I shall show you something more thrilling."

He took me to a small open clearing by the side of the Post Office and pointed at a small bit of space fenced off all round with iron railings.

"Have you any idea what it is?" asked the professor, with the air of a conspirator.

I knew what it was, but simulated ignorance. "No idea, professor."

"That is the Black Hole of Calcutta."

An old Hindustani caretaker, who was sitting close by, approached us. "No, sahib," he said, "it is the place where the first English baby was born in Calcutta."

"What!" howled professor. "Look at that tablet, you old, ignorant man!" He pointed out the tablet which described the history of the Black Hole.

"I see it," said the old man. "The Black Hole is on the other side of the building, under repairs. This tablet is put up here temporarily."

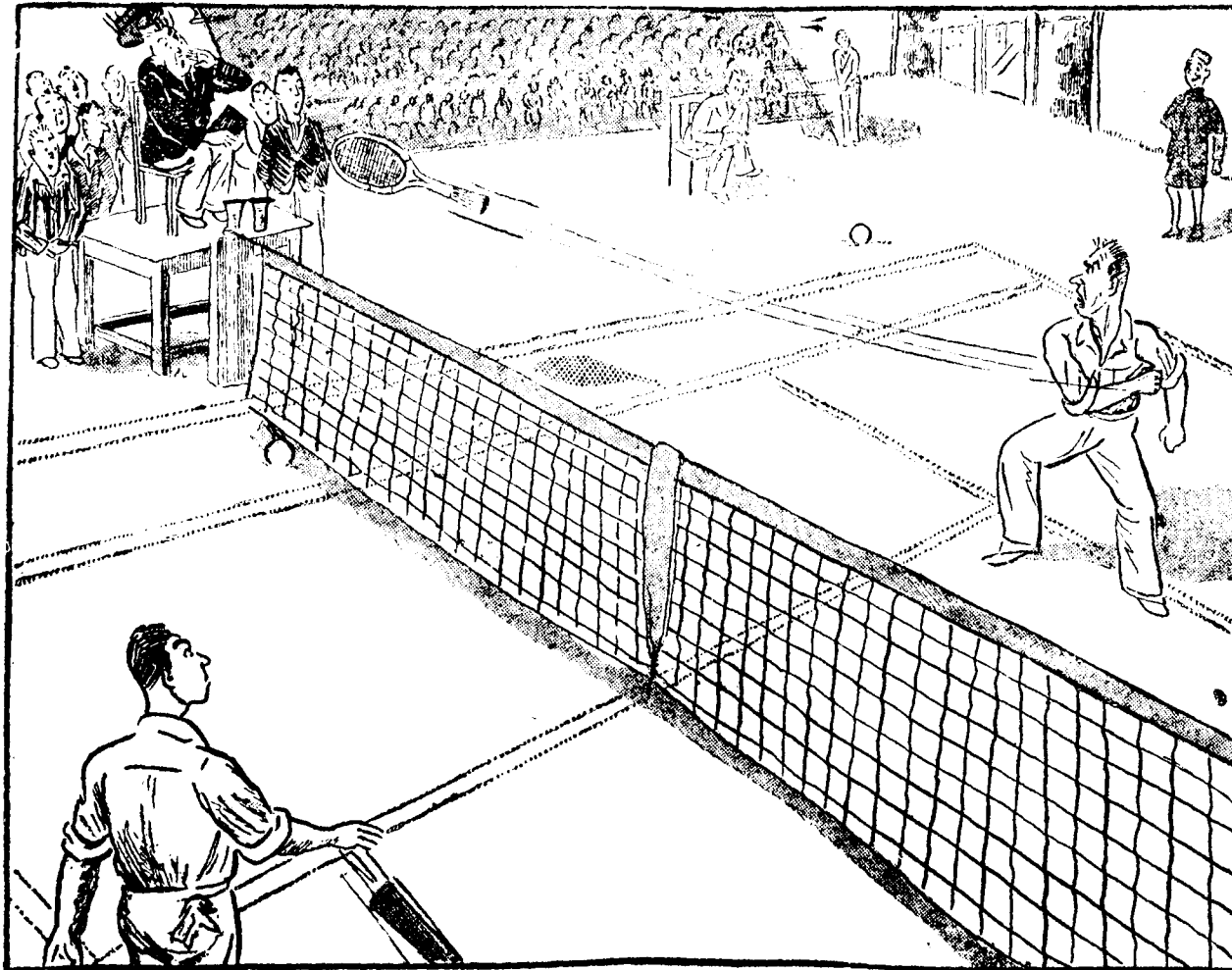
The professor looked at the old man and me alternately and understood how matters stood. He said something about having forgotten something on the Special and left us hurriedly.

I thumped the back of the old Hindustani caretaker, and slipped into his grateful hand two rupees. "Fine, old man! You have got a fine memory. I thought you would forget your part and give the show away."

The old man smiled. "Huzur-ki-Meherbani."

Needless to say that the bumptious professor left me alone for the rest of the trip.

THE END

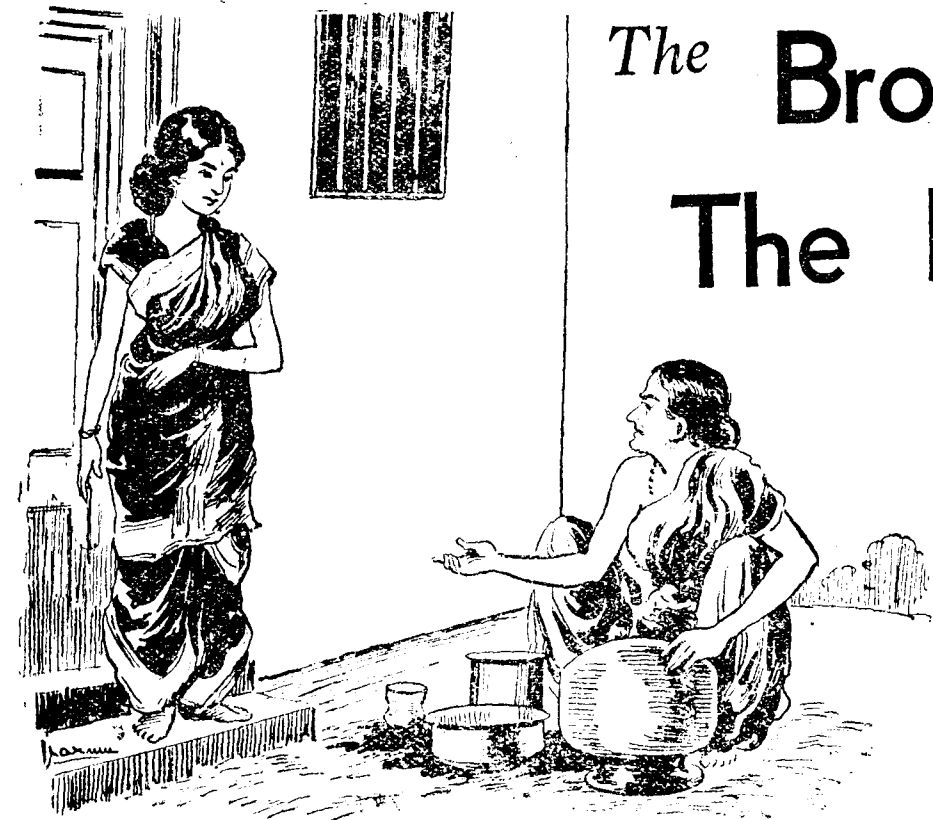


Legal Definitions—"Contempt of Court."

The Broom & The Bucket

by Emkay

Reading Time
About 3 Minutes



WHEN one angles for a theme, it slips like an eel and makes the biographer blink or the thumb-nail sketcher bite his thumb and nail. He blows a whiff of smoke and looks up at the ceiling. Reciprocating, the ceiling looks down on him. He groans and grunts like the philosopher in the moving train "who missed his wife and kissed the porter." So near he seems to have gone but so surely the next moment he has missed it. Obviously the wrong way of approach.

Mine is the right way. I go to bed and dream. The muse appears and presents the theme.

This morning the muse said, "Try 'stars and stripes'."

"Swedeshi goods, I want."

"Then ring and the book?" she said.

"Sounds like a riddle," I groaned.

"Cap and the bell might suit you!"

"They say I already done it," I replied.

"Wake up and look," she said and vanished. I woke up and looked. By the bedside stood in cold reality the broom and the bucket. Presently the housemaid came and seizing them stood ready to wash.

"You were fast asleep, *sami*, and so I didn't want to disturb," she began. Rolling up my bed I murmured my thanks.

"Was the picture nice *sami*?" she hinted. Brainy, I call her. When I wake up late, she goes into the why of it and seeks confirmation. Such is the way with Rangamma.

She is the embodiment in life and form of the lifeless broom and bucket. She represents in flesh and blood, for what they stand. She is a housemaid, one in a thousand. If you know what I mean, she is the bloomiest pick of the bunch. Don't cast that glance. She is past all that age when seeing her in my company is enough for my folks, to make a song about. She is not, as you imagine, the chic housemaid in teens who ogles and smiles at you, when the back of your wife is turned.

She never could smile at you without moving you to tears and making you ask: "Why do you weep, Rangamma?" Much less could she ogle. Who could, with one eye? Stooped like a tennis racket soaked in rain, she carries on her back the weight of long years humped into a hunch. She herself admits she is sixty past. And on her innocent face is stamped in bold

(Continued on page 27)



Dentistry

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

by The Sage

WITH a heart hammering overtime against the ribs, I rang the dentist's bell. And all because, lately, I was trying to get wise.

My 'wisdom' teeth, in trying to make their first bow inside my mouth were waging an unequal conflict with my refractory gums. Like the Abyssinians, the gums had stood the change quite grimly and stoutly; but the teeth had soon made out an opening at the flanks and panned themselves out divergently, like a cow-catcher. The gums had swollen out like a pair of inflated pneumatic cushions and the dentist's attention was clearly indicated.

The fellow, like a famished tigress stalking her prey, pounced on me, wrenched my maxillae apart and waggled my head to and fro in his vice-like grip to get the light and the shade effects. Then I was led into the death chamber.

To me, the dentist's den is a chamber of horrors, and reeks of Frankenstein's laboratory. The sickening hum and whirl of the drill as it eats its way, like canker, into your stumps; the chair in which you are forced to sprawl with your dome savagely clamped between the vicious jaws of what-do-you-call-it, all instill into you the nauseous feeling that probably trickled into the heads of the unfortunate members of those old French aristocracy during the Revolution, before the blade of Madame Guillotine separated their nuts from their trunks.

'Painless' and 'scientific' dentistry is all a myth, like the Rops Trick. Any good factory-trained rivetter has the best qualifications for setting himself up like the chaps who relieve us of our grinders, by sheer brute force.

In China, the native dentists are softer-hearted, since they don't prolong the agony of their victims. The operation is performed in the 'privacy' of the open street; the dentist tears your jaws apart, shoots his pliers in, and simply yanks out even the deepest-rooted molar, believing in getting plenty of follow-through.

I wonder what the brotherhood of dentists will feel like when it scans this:

One Mrs. Hannah Bonsfield of Greenside, Durham, who is just 83, has cut eight new teeth now, and feels that there are more to come:—and this, after having got all her teeth extracted, root and branch, two and a half decades ago. She is dead-heat with Madame Lajovitch of Jugo-slavia, a centenarian, who has started growing her third set of teeth. If the world gets peopled by persons of the above two types, well, the dentists may have to turn into nail-pullers.

Just to make you realise how cunning a dentist may be, have you heard this one? The payment of the bill of one of his lady clients for a 'plate' was long overdue. At last, he penned this note to her:

"Madam, if by tomorrow, you are not going to honour my bill in full, I shall give publicity to your lapses by advertising that a good 'set' is available with you and can be inspected during all hours at your address." By return, came the amount with an apology.

During the famous Desert Revolt, an Arab, who knew that the late Lawrence of Arabia had had his dentures fixed up by a Turkish dentist, smashed up the thing, simply because the Turk was his national foe. Result: the great Lawrence had to subsist on gruel and oatmeal for a long time.

Recently, in London, a man was killed in a dentist's chair, by an explosion in his mouth. The local anaesthesia used being the vapours of ethyl ether, was in some way ignited by the working of the electric drill, resulting in an explosion which knocked him out of existence.

A note of caution to burglars: Give the dentist's apartment the clean miss-in-baulk. In Fifth Avenue, New York, a burglar entered a dentist's room, by mistake. The dentist, ever alert as usual, promptly

strapped him to a chair, and extracted five of his teeth before kicking him out into the cold night.

It may interest you to learn that the full set of teeth, which belonged to George Washington is exhibited for public view at Washington City. The set is insured for £2,000.

This note is not intended in any way to ruffle the feelings of the profession; nothing derogatory to the trade is meant. After all is said and done, what is to become of our teeth if there are no dentists? Three cheers to dentists, say I.

THE END

The Broom & The Bucket—(Continued from page 25)

wrinkles, the experience of sixty not very opulent years. But still she laughs aloud at life and in the face of growing penury says: "I will work out the rest of my life."

"Brave woman," I say to her, "I take a lesson from you."

In three houses she works part-time to earn a living wage. When she cleans the vessels she gets her grub, of course. She has a way of saying things that the best of us could learn from her. Thus when empty vessels are forced on her she says, "Perhaps there were unexpected guests at home who snatched the bread out of Rangamma."

Susila catches the hint and tips her.

A week for Divali and Rangamma grows chatty. She weaves reminiscences and works them out to perfection. She has a subtle knack for flattery which she knows to be the tastiest viand for Susila. "You are a *rajathi*," she begins in the middle of a narration and Susila pretends to protest. "Why do you flatter me?" she asks. "I don't flatter, *rajathi*, I call a spade, a spade; a queen, a queen—that is what Rangamma knows." Susila has succumbed to this soft shaft and Rangamma continues her game.

"I know you have bought a saree for me for Divali, but look at the other woman. I work and work and not a betel-nut to chew, from her," puts in the shrewd woman, all her cunning shining through her remaining eye. She has won. "Take betel and nuts from me," says the proud Susila, "and don't worry about the saree."

Rangamma's saree is assured thus in three houses.

THE END

Radio Music

by A. T. MacNaughton Thomas

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

IN our street, most of us have become radio-minded. Almost all the wireless sets we own are the pre-Depression models. Ours is a '28 affair; and it wouldn't be miles out of agreement with truth when I say that the other residents also own models, *circa* '27 and '28. So, when our neighbour and friend, Dadabadal Naidu, purchased the 1936 model of a Duo-diffusion Autoradiogram—a thing of enormous power and range with umpteen valves and what not—there was such a sensation in our street that the dogs swooned, the cats were thrown into epilepsy, the hens were shocked into a complete non-production of ova, the vermin got the convulsions and, above all, the atmospherics were affected to such an extent as to put out of action all the radio sets in our street for five days.

When we had recovered sufficiently from the sensation, we thought of listening-in to Miss Neelambal of 'gramophone' fame. Or, was it 'audophone' fame? I bet my boots, it wasn't 'telephone' fame, anyway. Definitely. It was when we had switched on to the next item: *Five Hundred Ways of Cooking The Pumpkin: Recipe 73: Slice the pumpkin, previously soaked in Cauvery water*—that our friend Dadabadal Naidu, dropped in for a chat. The radio-activity of his contemptuous look was so intense that our poor wireless set, if it had been a thing of flesh and blood, would have tied itself in knots then and there; but fortunately being a thing of mahogany and wires, it made funny noises in faint protest.

He told us that we were not only giving him a pain in the

thorax but also one in the medulla oblongata when we informed him we could only get Madras.

"Can you *really* call it music, that funny noise?" inquired our friend, derisively.

"That," I informed him loftily, hoping my answer would give me a chance to appear a trifle superior to a jellyfish, "is Ootacamund Oafs Orchestra from Madras. It's a Tamil Orchestra, you know."

Now I realized how a hyena laughs when I heard our friend's cackle.

"I don't know what is wrong with the Tamil music," he said, in a pained sort of way.



"The orchestra is playing in *Javali*," my wife informed him.

"*Javali* or *Harikhamboji*, what do I care? I tell you, our Carnatic music lacks a something. It hasn't got that fire, that swing, that rhythm, that lilt, that—that—"

"That what-do-you-call-it?" I helpfully suggested.

"No, you grasshead. That—that *something*, which one has come to associate with Hindusthani music. It is the goods, the genuine article."

"You see," I hastened to explain, "you can't altogether come the highbrow over the performers. They are O. K. I'm sure the trouble is with the set. It's not in its first youth, and how I wish it would renew

itself periodically like the Psalmist's eagle. Further, it's not the same since my wife overhauled it out of a mistaken expertness in repairing her sewing-machine!"

"I don't think anything has gone wonky with the set," he said definitely. "It's the Tamil—shall we say, Carnatic?—way of playing music. We don't know how to play at all. We haven't yet thrown off our swaddling-clothes. We have yet to learn. Why not you and your missus come round to my house one of these days and hear my set. First-rate Hindusthani music, I assure you."

"It would be a pleasure, indeed," said my wife.

"With your set you can only get Madras Corporation music, whereas with mine—Calcutta, Allahabad, Delhi, Bombay—"

A large gesture in the direction of my aunt's photo ended his enumeration of broadcasting stations.

Two days later, wife and I were invited over to Dadabadal Naidu's for a game of bezique. Before we could sit down to it, he suggested we might listen in to Hindusthani orchestral music for half-an-hour or so.

"One of the advantages in having a long-range set like this," he said, fiddling with it, "is that you can always get something good. It's just a matter of twiddling the knobs. Twiddle this side, you get London. Twiddle that side, you get Berlin. Twiddle the other side, you get Rome—"

He twiddled the knob, and presently, pleasant Hindusthani Music filtered into the room.

"Now do you like it, old lad?" he asked me, sticking out his chest like a pouter pigeon.

(Continued on page 32)



Legal Tripe Straightened Out

by John A. Henry

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

THE layman is sadly in need of information on legal terms and legal advice—cheap and accurate information and expert legal advice, and not the sort that is generously and painfully distributed by lawyers, solicitors, mothers-in-law and Bernard Shaw. Philanthropic to a degree, and with absolutely no other intention or desire—not even that of obtaining a fee for this article—I, John A. Henry, sound in body and in wind, this day set forth a few tips and twists that should help those of my readers who cannot afford lawyers, solicitors, mothers-in-law and Bernard Shaw.

There are so many corners and nooks and crannies of law which are so complicated as to seem impossible of interpretation. Take for example the legal meaning of impersonation. I do not profess to have captured the text accurately, as I have not had anything to do with law for the last fifty-five years, but it runs something like this:

"A person is said to impersonate another person when that person, with criminal intent, makes himself resemble the other person to such a degree that the resemblance makes it difficult to say whether the first person is any other person than such person is."



Impersonating

Now, there you are. But I think, for the benefit of you and I, especially you, that this would be much more simple if it had read thus:

"One person is said to impersonate another person when, with criminal intent, he makes himself, with the aid of such things as false teeth, moustaches, stomachs, beards, apparel, feet or grimaces, resemble the other person to such a degree that the other person, meeting the person impersonating him, cannot say whether this person is that person or whether that person is himself or whether both persons have had one or two over the eight or whether they are both mad."

Now there everything is made as clear as crystal. No hairsplitting about that. Not even any side-splitting. Dry legal phrases, pithy and full of meat—goat's meat.

Now let us take one or two or more legal definitions. These are important if you are ever going to do anything at law or prevent yourself being done by law.

1. "Movable Property," so the lawyers tell us, "includes corporeal property of every description except land and things attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything which is attached to the earth." And "Earth," so they tell us, "when separated from the earth, becomes movable property." Yes, that's fairly well put—I'll grant the lawyers that much. But it *could* have been done better, as the monkey said when it plucked most of the feathers from the ostrich. [sic] "Movable Property includes property of every description except mud before it is dug for the sake of a grave or of finding a worm; and before it is dug for mortar by jerry-builders; and mud when you're not slinging it at somebody. Graveyards and mountains are immovable property. As also are tarmac roads and fat, snorting ladies of 300 lbs. or over in weight who have given at the knees and fallen down under their own pressure. Mules are immova-

ble property but, matches and money come under the movable category, as also do whiskies and sodas, human beings, garters, brassieres, and Feenamint. In



Immovable property

other words, what you can't move is immovable, and what you can move is not there long, especially if you're a burglar. Got that one?

2. Dishonesty. we are told by the men and women who are supposed to know, has the following interpretation: "Whoever does anything with the intention of causing wrongful gain to one person and wrongful loss to another is said to do that thing dishonestly." In other words, and simpler, if you pinch the chewing gum from a person's gullet or bed-post and stick it to your hair, you have indeed acted dishonestly. Now, don't you think my interpretation is easier to understand? Of course



Dishonesty

you do. Nothing in it. And if you swallow the rupee you borrow when you want to toss up for something, you are dishonest within the same meaning of the word. Read the original meaning of dishonesty and you will get me.

3. Reason to Believe. Here we have a much used legal phrase. The lawyers say: "A person is said to have reason to believe a certain thing only if he has sufficient *cause* to believe that thing. Mere suspicion is not sufficient." There you are, divorce fans and Delirium Tremens experts. See?

4. Counterfeit. Another interesting word, with all these bad coins knocking about. "Damn!" is an even better word under the same circumstances when you've been stung. "A person," so legal men tell us



Counterfeit

in their precise way, "is said to counterfeit when he causes one thing to resemble another intending, by means of that resemblance, to practise deception or knowing that deception is likely to be caused." *e. g.*, —I suppose—Young man and sweetheart. Young man kisses another girl and girl kisses him. Sweetheart sees lipstick on young man's cheek. He says red mark is not mark of any other girl's lips but ring-worm which he has contracted from his young brother—"the dirty little devil!" Counterfeit—yes, that's it. Nothing to do with feet, unless the young man gets the order of the boot.

5. Fraudulently. More clear-as-crystal phrasing here. "A person is said to do a thing fraudulently if he does that thing with intent to defraud, but not otherwise." Ah! That's a nice one to interpret. Here we are: You don't *really* covet Rs. 10,000/- which you see in a man's wallet. You take the



Wrongful gain

money, without his seeing you, of course, (otherwise he may object to your philanthropic intentions)—in order to give Re. 5/- to a madhouse and Rs. 2/8 to a burglar's home. You have not defrauded. And you feel that you should keep the change, as the man looks like a criminal and anyway most probably misappropriated the cash he had.

6. **Wrongful Gain and Wrongful Loss.** "Wrongful gain," we are told by legal men, "is the gain by unlawful means of property to which the person losing

it is legally entitled." "Wrongful loss..." well, it's the same thing only the other way round. Not exactly vice versa, of course, but just—well, you can easily work it out for yourselves. *Interpretation:* Jones bites you, during the course of a free fight, in the neck. His false teeth come out and fall down the neck of your shirt. That is wrongful gain to you of a set of false teeth and wrongful loss to Jones of the same set. If one of the teeth is gold you have robbed—and Jones has most probably robbed too—robbed his wife's earrings or her wedding ring or a curtain ring in order to get the tooth made.

Now, laymen, don't lose touch with me. I'll help you along if this Editor will help me along. He's such a good chap at helping along.....so.....helps such a lot of my hard worked articles and things back along to me. Don't go to any of these lawyer chappies. They're only trying to make money. I'm trying to put money in your pockets. Sort of Robin Hood.....robbin' the rich and givin' to the poor. Just to show you what a decent sort I am, I'll give you a clever legal tip free. Rob the Bank of India, don't get caught or put in jail, and you'll be all right. You'll also have a lot of money. And lots of girls hanging on to your coat-tails.

THE END

Radio Music—(Continued from 29)

"Red-hot, old thing," I said.
 "Grand," fluted my wife.
 "You can't get such stuff from Madras?"
 "Not by a jugful," I replied. "By the bye, where is it from?"
 Dadabadal Naidu peered at the indicator.
 "Calcutta," he said. "You couldn't dream of getting such music from Madras, could you? Aces, I tell you."
 He was as pleased as a dog that had three tails and all wagging simultaneously. An ecstatic expression transfigured his face, and I knew he was in *Nirvana*.
 "Is there really anything wonderful about it?" whispered my wife.
 "Can't say. Dadabadal Naidu knows more about music than we do," I whispered back.
 When the music ceased, a voice spoke in Hindusthani.
 "What did he say?" asked Dadabadal Naidu.
 "Of course, you know Hindusthani. You're a whale at it."
 "I know a little Hindusthani, and moreover, I'm not sure whether it was spoken in Hindusthani or in Bengali," I lied heroically.

"Come, come, Mr. Modesty," wheedled my wife, "if there is one accomplishment you've got, it is Hindusthani. If you who have written *Hindusthani Without Tears* and *Hindusthani Self-taught*, and know what is Urdu for valve-tappets, synchromesh and vegeto-alkaloid, can talk in this fashion, what chances others have? Have a heart, dear."

"It's all very good to hide your light under your bushel," said Dadabadal Naidu, cocking a roguish eye at me. "But, don't you know, sometimes the bushel catches fire."

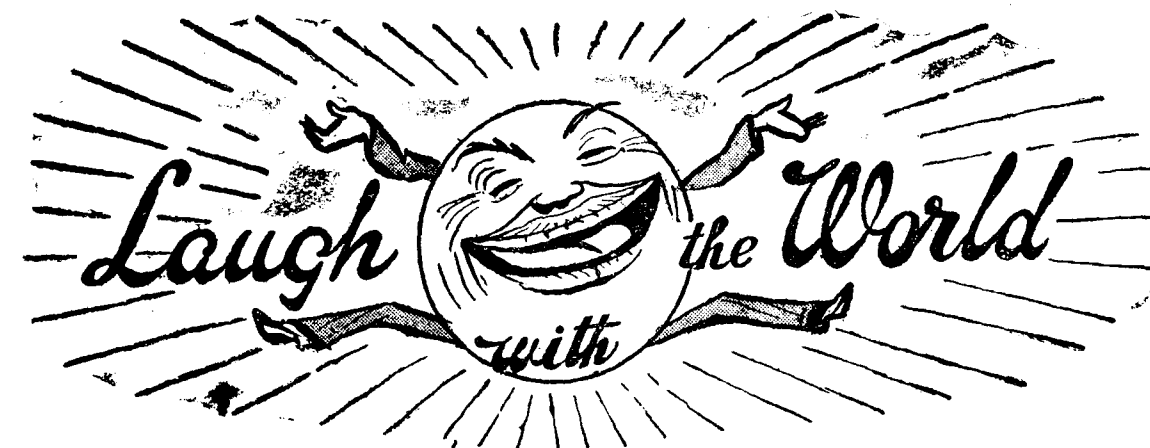
"Well, if you really must—" "Of course, I would like to know," he insisted.
 "Have you got a bottle of smelling-salts about you?" I asked.

"Don't ask foolish questions. What did the Hindusthani announcer say?"

"He said we had been listening to gramophone-records—"

"Gramophone-records?"
 "—Of Tamil instrumental music."

THE END



Sergeant (at Police Station): What! You back again?

Prisoner: Yes, sir. Any letters?

—Michigan Gargoyle

Student: What are your terms for students?

Landlord: I generally call them dead beats and bums.

—V. P. I. Skipper

He (phoning): Is my wife home?

Maid: No. Who shall I say called?

—C. C. N. Y. Mercury

"I don't mind," said the professor, "if I see a student fidget towards the end of the hour. I don't mind seeing him take out his watch and look at it. But when he takes out his watch, stares at it, puts it to his ear, and then shakes it—It gets me!"

—N. Y. V. Medley

Four investigators, a German, a Britisher, a Frenchman and an American, went to Africa to study the elephant. After about five years of research, each returned to his native land and burst into print.

The German wrote a work in five octavo volumes, entitled *Introduction to the Study of the Elephant*.

The Britisher wrote a manuscript of 100,000 words on *Commercial and Imperial Aspects of the Elephant*.

The Frenchman wrote a brochure (80 pages bound in lavender leather with gold hand-tooling), on *Love-Life of the Elephant*.

6-18-7-36

The American wrote an advertising broadside on *Bigger and Better Elephant!!!*

—The Candle

Her Papa: Don't think for a minute you're going to marry my daughter.

Her Caller: Fine—you get me out of this mess and I'm your friend for life.

—College Humor

A clergyman in Scotland told his parishioners that they should never call a man a liar. Instead he advised them to whistle whenever anyone said anything which was untrue.

The next Sunday he preached a sermon on the parable of the loaves and fishes. He was rather at a loss to explain to his simple listeners how two loaves could feed a multitude of five thousand, so he went on to explain that, of course, the loaves were very different from the loaves of today—they were as big as some of the hills of Scotland. He had scarcely said this when he heard a loud whistle. "Who's that ca's me a liar?" he shouted.

"It is I, Macdonald, the baker."

"Weel, Mac, what objection have ye to what I ha told ye."

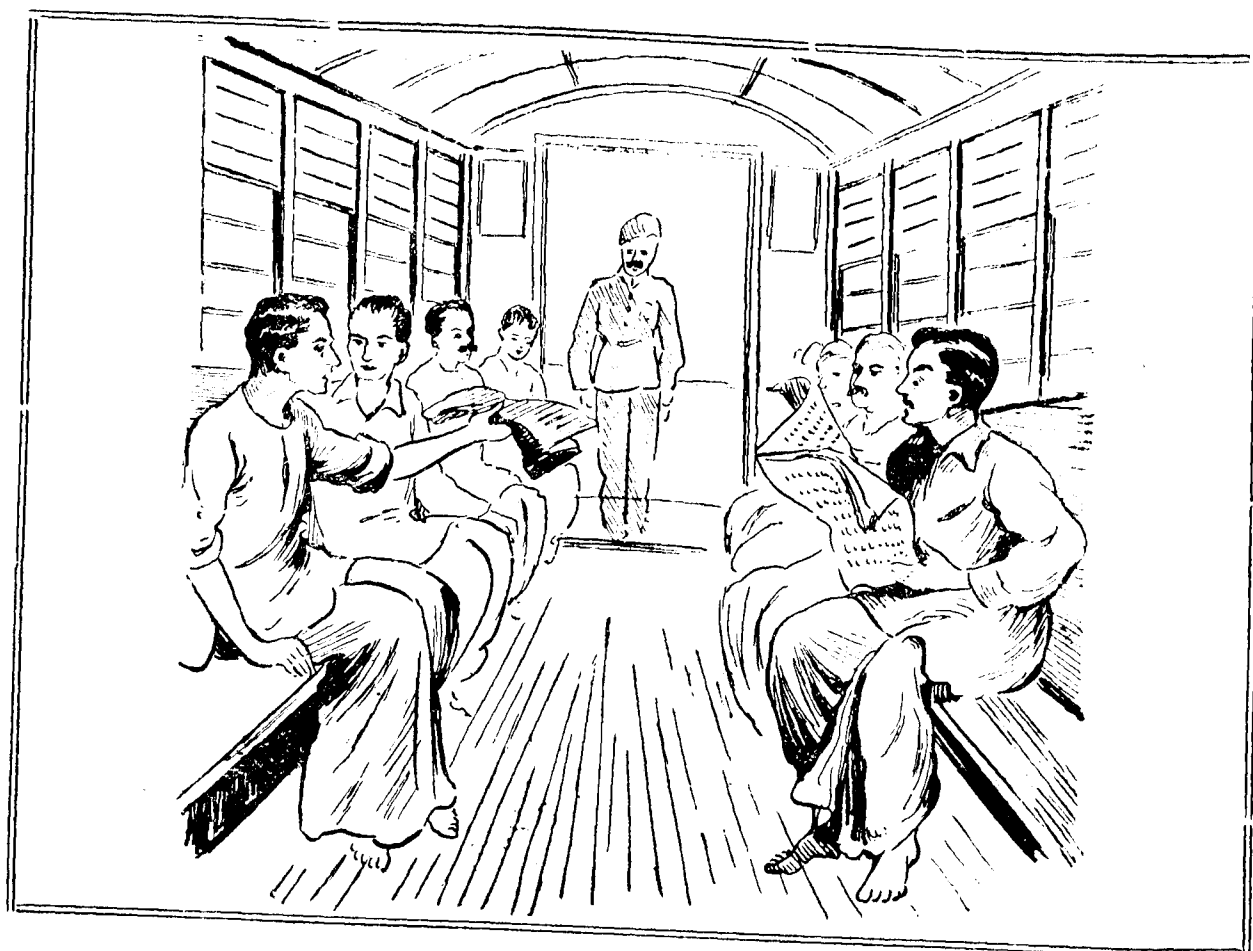
"None, Mess John, only I want to know what sort of ovens they had to bake them loaves in?"

—Everybody's Weekly

"What silly question is he asking now?"

"Oh, he wants to know if you can get a barking cough eating hot dogs."

—Philadelphia Bulletin



Running Commentaries

by Marcel S. Pinto

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

I made myself comfortable in the corner of the tram and stretched my favourite section of the daily paper leisurely across my knees. There was much to interest me in the 'sporting' section of the paper and I was absorbing interestedly into my system the big news of Amar Singh's hurricane hitting against All England and Naidu's hectic innings at the Oval. A business-like nose poked into my line of vision and a pair of hands shot out and grabbed the news sheet from under my hands. Without even so much as a 'by your leave'. I lifted my eyes from the paper and saw that the intrepid intruder was none other than my seven times removed cousin from the country.

"Heard you were full up at your house—so I just dumped my things at Bobbie's place," he informed me

off-handedly. "Thought I would run up to town for a spree—"

I didn't care to inform him that my house was 'full up' because I didn't have any desire for the company of the likes of him. Dumping his things and himself at Bobbie's place was good enough riddance for me considering that Bobbie himself was a country specimen and quite the man to keep this chap's attention centred on himself during the man's spree in the town. Moreover, Bobbie was a nearer relation to the chap than I was.

After satisfactorily concluding my reflections on my seven times removed cousin and mentally consigning him for all time to Bobbie's care (or failing that, to the care of the Devil), I dismissed the matter of

the purloined news sheet from my mind and interested myself once again in the sporting page.

"Manchukuo—what is this Manchukuo?"

The country cousin bellowed the silly question into my ear. I looked up angrily from my paper. Everyone in the tram was furtively laughing at the question and it was up to me to save the silly cousin from disgrace. I explained what Manchukuo was and then buried myself in my paper hoping he would interrupt me no more.

My unwelcome companion laboriously spelt through another paragraph and then got stuck up again.

"Hey, cousin Pinto—what is this? Int—int—er—na—tion—international concord it says! Who conquered whom? And what means inter—na—tional?"

Good Heavens! Couldn't the fellow see he was making an ass of himself? Cousin Pinto indeed! My choler was up; but I didn't like to make a greater ass of myself in front of all those people in the tram by losing my temper over him. Gruffly, I explained things out to his satisfaction. The next half hour was a perfect nightmare to me. The cousin sat diligently hurling his questions at my head and like a darned old fool, I sat there straightening out his difficulties for him. For half an hour I did it and I was as near to suffocation as if somebody were throttling my life out. The nuisance so got on my nerves that many times I was within an ace of bashing the blighter's head in. But I held myself in check by a super-human effort and decided instead to put as long a distance between myself and this persistent cousin as possible the moment the tram came to a halt at the next stopping place.

I slipped into the street as soon as the train came to a halt in front of the Regal Theatre and, casting a last murderous glance on my cousin, dashed straight into the crowd at the theatre-gates, striving to hide myself in the surging mass of humanity about me. The alert box-office attendant gave me a ticket in quick time and I was soon installed in my seat inside the cinema hall, congratulating myself on my getaway. The programme for the day was a sensational romance and I sat expectantly on my seat, impatiently waiting for the show to start.

The lights were dimmed in the theatre and the story unwound itself along magnificent lines. I had five minutes of perfect freedom from molestation, to start with, and was hoping that I could enjoy the whole show in a like manner. My hopes were short-lived,

however. Came a tense, sibilant whisper over my shoulder and from the seat behind mine:

"Is that Tarzan?"

Good Heavens again! Here was Fredric March passionately making overtures to demure, dainty Irene Dunne, and the fellow behind asks if it is Tarzan! I grasped the significant fact that there is only one fellow in the world who could ever ask me that question. And sure enough, it is my seven times removed cousin from the country! Once he will get removed once too often and that is when I dig a grave for him and dump him in.

The fellow sat behind me. How he got there is more than I can explain. He was there and that is all that I can vouch for. And his perpetual questions came rolling over my shoulder like billows on the sea.

"Is that Tarzan?"

No. I told him it was not. Then why was he so muscular? I explained that many people besides Tarzan were muscular. How was the heroine so beautiful? I said I supposed God made her so. "Just to think of it! Just to think of it!" said my friend, "there were people in the village—his own sister Marie, for instance—who were as ugly as sin! Why?" I answered that the Devil must have had a hand in the job.

I was getting unapproachably hot by this time and no wonder! Smothered shouts of "Sch—Schzz!" "Silence—!" were rising up fast around us. The story had reached an interesting climax and the people near us were getting wroth at the perpetual nuisance we kept up. How to smother this darned cousin's insistent queries? I worried. Desperately, I sought for a crushing retort. Unwittingly, it came surging up to my lips at my cousin's next idiotic question:

"Who is that big man—?"

Twice before I had explained painstakingly that the big man was the hero's father. When the same question came up for a third time, I could control myself no longer.

"Who is the big man?" came the question.

"That is the hero's grandmother!" I replied simply. There was no woman on the screen just at that second.

There was a titter from the seats around.

"But—but—" countered my cousin aghast. "It is a man—!"

"The hero's grandmother!" I persisted.

"Grandmother.....! But it is a man!" gasped the cousin.

"No," I said firmly, "that is a woman. If you doubt, go and have a closer look! And the other one you see, it's the heroine's grandmother!"

"But you said before it was the hero!"

"No," I said grandly, "they are grandmothers—both of them! What if they look like males!...."

There was a roar of laughter from the benches and my seven times removed cousin realised at last

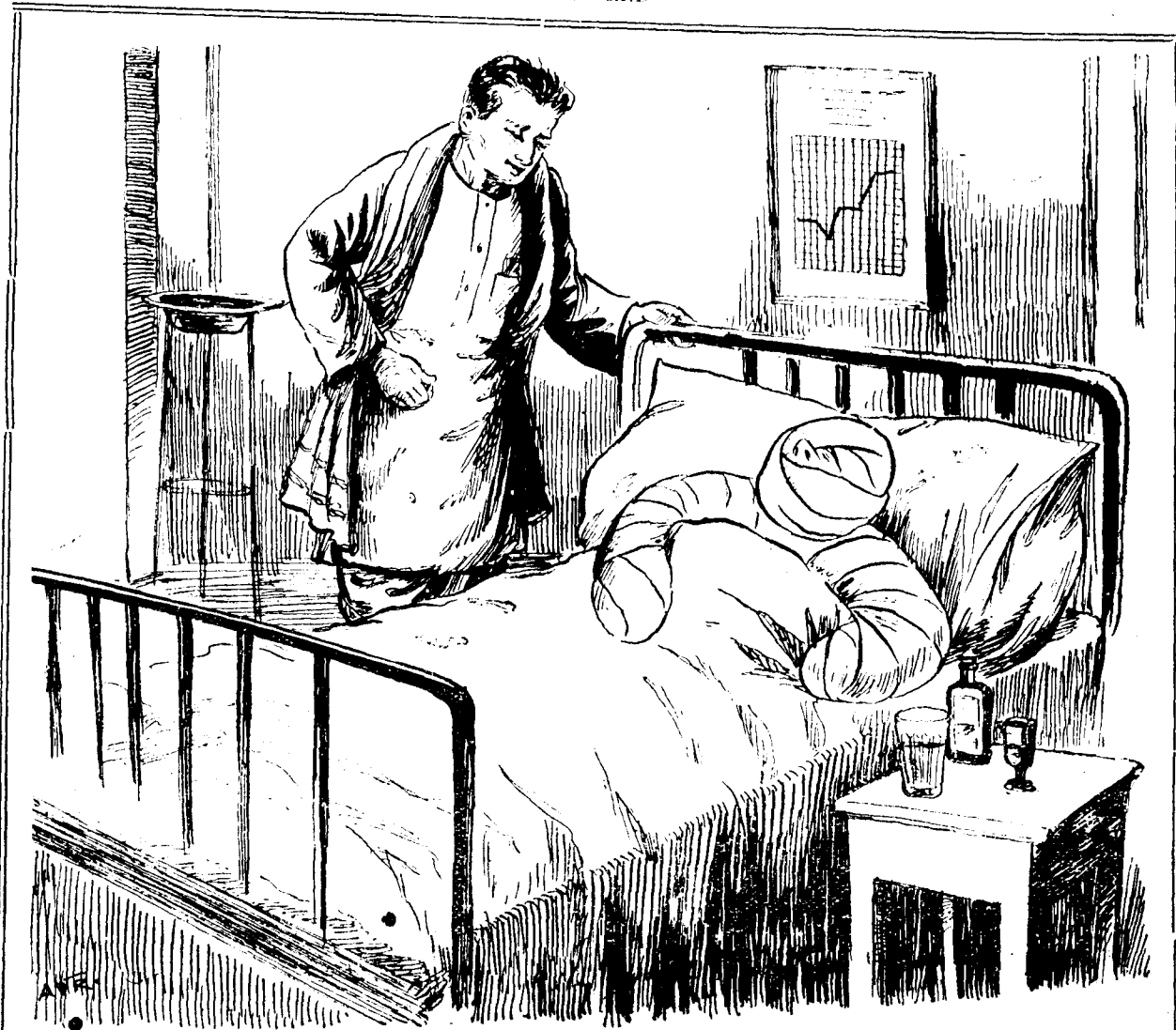
the manner in which I had brought him to shame. Limply, he hung down his head and troubled me no more for the rest of the evening.

"Blast me, sir, blast me—" roared a gent seated by me, suppressing his merriment with difficulty. "I have heard and I have heard ever so many running commentaries—but yours fair beats them into a run! It's the grandest joke of the year, believe me, sir—"

"And effective enough!" I murmured with a sigh of relief and leant back on my chair happily.

And I enjoyed the rest of the show in peace.

THE END



Sympathetic Friend: You must be quite cosy with all those nice bandages on.

MERRY'S FILM FOLIO

'MODERN TIMES'

Showing At: Roxy Theatre, Madras

You've.....

HEARD
TALKED
THOUGHT
DREAMT

About it!

You've.....

WAITED
WRITTEN
WIRED
PHONED
YELLED

For it!

So says an advertisement from Messrs. Globe Theatres Ltd., presenting the immortal Charlie in *Modern Times* at the Roxy Theatre, Madras. Of the nine verbs attributed to you and me, I did no less than seven verbs. And I think I am entitled to give a mild pat to myself on the back. For doing seven verbs out of nine is no picnic, as any school-boy who has just returned from his annual exam will tell you.

I did the first two verbs (Heard and Talked) about *Modern Times* for weeks. I did the fifth verb (Waited) at the box-office, buying a ticket. And it was rather a hot and smelly wait. I did the ninth one (Yelled) during the show, and it did my lungs good. I did the third verb (Thought) after the show, in the tram. I did the fourth verb (Dreamt) that same night. If you are curious to

know what I dreamt, I may tell you unashamedly that it was partly pleasant and partly unpleasant, like Mr. Shaw's 'Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant'. Charlie chased me round gigantic machinery with a spanner in one hand and an oil-can in the other hand. That was definitely unpleasant. Paulette Goddard gave me a banana, which made me propose to her, I don't know why. She smiled her gamin smile and ran away. Which was not unpleasant.

I am now doing the sixth verb (Writing) and there is all the rub.

The show opens with a flock of sheep jostling one another on a pathway none too wide. And as you are expecting a tight, buxom shepherd lass, with hook and all, some magic wand does you in the eye. The sheep are transformed into factory 'hands' rushing to their work at the command of the siren. If that is Charlie's valuation of our machine-ridden, regimented life as it affects the majority epitomised in that tragicomic word—the Proletariat—there are not many who would disagree with him, except, of course, the bosses.

As usual, the theme is handled in the comic-tragedy basis, more or less a fifty-fifty partnership, abounding in emotional hi-jinks and its antithesis. It is a great picture, great not only in the sense that it provides entertainment par excellence, but also because a man who feels for the underdog has played with a fundamental question—'Man vs Machinery, which shall abide?' Yes, that is a pity: he has only played with it.



(Continued on next page)

SHE MARRIED HER BOSS

A Columbia Picture

Showing At: Paragon Talkies, Madras

Well, it is not everybody that marries her boss. If I were a boss and had a secretary like Claudette Colbert, I'd marry her twice over. Yes, I would. In which case the title would read: "The boss married his secretary," which is not as exciting, not by a half.



Claudette Colbert

Claudy comes off the handle, as it were, and hits you on the nut, but ever so pleasantly, in this picture. Unlike Mae who is a volcano in full blast, Claudette is a geyser with inexhaustible supplies of steam inside. She is vital to her finger-tips. No wonder, the boys of the Motion Picture Academy patted her on the back for her performance in *It Happened One Night*.

Here in *She Married Her Boss*, she is an efficient secretary, efficient step-mother (you'll love the way she spanked her husband's rowdy daughter) efficient everything. Only she didn't turn out to be an efficient wife. That is what her boss (as her

husband) thinks. But then everybody (including his little ten year old kid) voted him a dumb-bell. As I viewed the picture, I found myself largely in agreement with this view.

The highlights of the story is where the dumb-bell manages to convert himself into a tough guy and retrieves his bossdom. In this reformation a tall glass of booze (in fact a number of tall glasses) play an important part. Just how important, it is for you to go and find out.

With due respect to the prohibition gentleman, I must say that there is more to this whisky-swilling business than you and I suppose. With the hot thing in your stomach, it is very easy to say 'Scram!' to your mother-in-law or any disagreeable person.

She Married Her Boss is marvellous fun. Go, friends, see it and learn a thing or two.

THE END

MODERN TIMES—(Continued from page 37)

Charlie's latest may be a brilliant satire on machinery. True, the machinery gets all the kicks here. But Man doesn't get the half-pence either. Unfortunately Charlie didn't supply an answer to the question. "Never say die", with which he gathers his gamin friend of the waterfront and goes towards the distant hills, is not an answer. Neither is it logic.

Anyhow it is a right royal corker. Two comic highlights of the film are where Charlie takes his 'morning dip' and where he sings and dances. It's a wow. Go and see it.

THE END

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Raja Desingh (Tamil)

Producers : Rajeswari Talkies, Erode.

Showing At: The Crown Talkies, Madras

As a change from pictures constructed on the straight formula of the melodrama or the Puranic lines, Rajeswari Talkies' *Raja Desingh* is the first Tamil talkie based on History and it has Gingee as its background.

This is the story of the sacrifice, of one for the other, of two great warriors, a great friendship, and most important of all, of an invincible horse *Panchakalyani*.

Prince Desingh and Mahomed Khan return from a hunting party. Desingh sees his mother crying and learns that his father is a prisoner of Shah Alam, Emperor of Delhi, for making a wager to subdue Panchakalyani and failing to achieve it.

Desingh takes the trip to Delhi, with his boon companion Mahomed Khan, and returns home with his father, the horse, and a wife Padmini. However, he is not to see her as an evil planet forbids their union for two years. Shah Alam, absolves Gingee from paying the annual tributes in recognition of Desingh's valour.

But Shah Alam passes away shortly and his successor demands the tributes through the Chief of Arcot, Syedullah Khan. A battle ensues. Mahomed Khan gets the war-news while his marriage is in progress. He leaves abruptly, for the battlefield. He goes first, defeats Dawood Khan of Arcot, but sets him free. When Mahomed Khan is returning triumphantly, Dawood Khan lies in ambush and kills him.

Raja Desingh defeats the Arcot army, and avenges his friend's death on Dawood Khan. He returns to Dawood's grave, tired. "What have I gained if I have won the war and lost Mahomed Khan and my men!" Up goes his sword in the air and when it comes back, he receives it in his heart. Padmini follows her lord in Sati—in self-immolation.

That is the story. *Raja Desingh* might have been made a brilliant hit depicting the patriotic fervour, loyalty and the utter absence of communal ill-feeling between the Hindu and the Muslim in India of the past. This is what might have been—but is not. The scenes of the horse groom singing the praise of Panchakalyani and of his master Desingh are well done and are sincere and convincing. In their simplicity lies beauty. The outdoor scenes and the shots of the Gingee Fort and other places are interesting. We see some cannons in action and there is a semblance of reality more in the pitched battles than in the crowd scenes.

The cast of the principal parts might have been done better. Padmini is a stranger to Tamil and her talking and singing are stranger still. Desingh does not look like the warlike prince he is supposed to be and is given to long emotional outbursts wherever he is faced with mishaps. This is a deplorable tendency. Panchakalyani 'the invincible' is rather a flop. The dialogue is unnatural. Sound-recording and photography are passable.

An additional item of interest is Srimathi Rukmani Devi's Bharata Natyam and the speech of Dr. Arundale.

THE END

HOT FROM HOLLYWOOD

Claire Trevor is a smart girl. In one of the Hollywood movie fogs, made by vaporising mineral oil, the taste was terrible. Brian Donley offered her a stick of gum to help cut the fog taste. Claire had immediately a bright idea, and suggested to the expert to vaporize some peppermint oil along with the mineral oil. They tried it and found it working like a charm.

Myrna Loy and Robert Montgomery caught Reginald Owen sitting by himself and performing some queer things. Reg would pull a face, shake his head negatively, repeating the process over and over, in the most serious manner. What would you think of such a man? An 'escaped' from an Asylum isn't it?

"What on earth are you doing?" Myrna and Bob enquired in deep concern.

"I'm practising for my big scene coming up," Reg answered. Not an illuminating answer.

So, "What scene?" they asked again.

"The one with the bear," he answered, "I have to scare them!"

What Is A Lawyer?

Comedian Ed Wynn's definition of a lawyer is one who gets two other guys to strip for a fight and then takes all their clothes away from them.

Mr. Wynn, by the way, in addition to his role of Texaco "Fire Chief," is now honorary fire chief to so many fire departments throughout the land that his valet has to store his badges and other insignia of office in a large trunk—but never has Ed rushed to a fire even in the capacity of spectator, so pronounced is his dislike for conflagrations of all kinds.

From Fan To Bubble

The next great drama of patents and amusements to follow the Tri-Ergon production is "The Fan," in which William Powell is to play the part himself.

Fox will be one which has even greater entertainment possibilities. It will star Miss Sally Rand, fan dancer extraordinaire, who, not to be outdone by Mr. Fox's performance in the headlines of the press, sent forth an ominous warning through her counsel that she is ready to prosecute any and all infringers of her "Bubble Dance," which she has fully protected under registration at Washington. It's a process by which bubbles of one kind or another thinly veil Sally in the all-together.

Chaplin's Eight Year Schedule

John Moffitt, observes in his motion picture column in the Kansas City *Star* that Mr. Chaplin is on an eight-year schedule that runs something like this:

First Year—Make a picture.

Second Year—Announce that you will portray Napoleon.

Third Year—Fight with Lita Grey Chaplin over the children.

Fourth Year—Announce that you will portray Hamlet.

Fifth Year—Announce that you are going to marry Paulette Goddard.

Sixth Year—Announce that you will portray the Savior.

Seventh Year—Take the children to the movies with an international publicity campaign.

Eighth Year—Begin another picture. Anyway Mr. Chaplin pays his own way.

A Real Joke

Groucho Marx's notion of a highly unusual backstage musical is one in which, to the amazement of the understudy sprains an ankle and the leading actor is to play the part himself.

YES, I KNOW

Answers to Questions on page 16

1. William Horace Devers Cole, an Englishman, who died recently. He is credited with having perpetuated nearly a hundred major hoaxes.
2. Charles Ruggles, who has a kennel of over eighty thoroughbred dogs of various kinds.
3. American Indians; as early as 1492.
4. The work or art of training, cutting and trimming trees or shrubs into odd or ornamental shapes.

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P. B. 119

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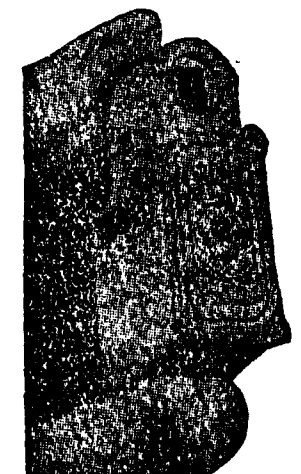
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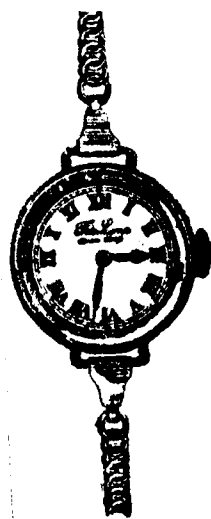
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