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MERRY

M A G A Z I N E

Artiji

The White Goddess

6060 *

Narasimhan

Enadhi, The Untouchable

★

Sithara

Eve Gets Busy

Vol. IV No. 33

15th Aug. 1936

ANNAS TWO

MERRY MAGAZINE

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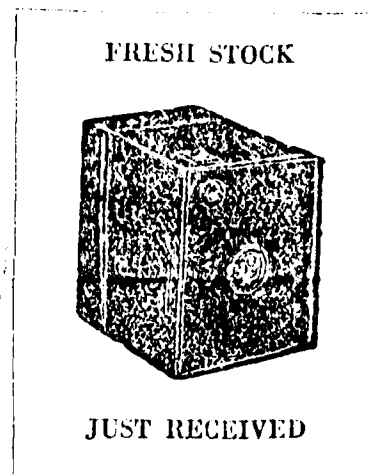
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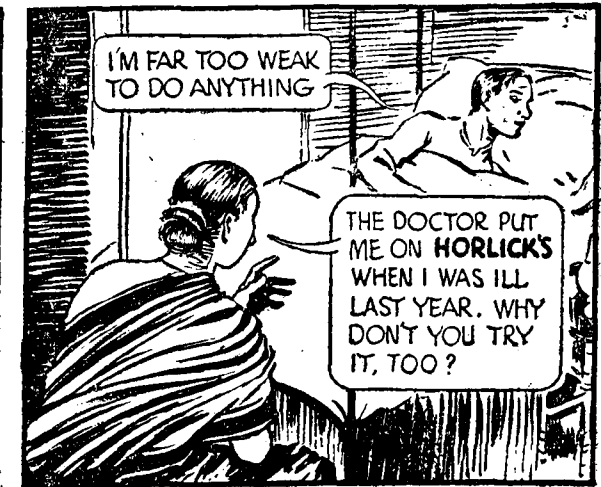
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The
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Madras, August 15, '36

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Gurmit

★

John
A. Henry

★

Embusque

★

Diana Don

SPARKS FROM OUR ANVIL

Giving the cost of the last general elections in Britain, a British official wireless message states that it works out at 7sh. 8d. a vote.

This does not throw any light on the price of a voter.

* * *

In the course of a talk on the League and Abyssinia, the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri is reported to have said that Abyssinia committed a fatal error in trusting to the League to the last.

Would trusting to Britain have saved her?

* * *

Giving an account of her experiences at Geneva, Mrs. Cousins says that many great associations were born there.

But how many of them are still thriving?

* * *

In the course of his chat with villagers near Benares, His Excellency the Viceroy said that if they used some kind of shoes, hookworm would soon be eradicated from their midst.

This promises well—for the shoe trade!

* * *

Mr. Torney, a film-producer from Poona, says that he is trying to cut down music from South-Indian films.

The next step should be to cut down the films also from them—to make them perfect.

Referring to the appointment of Sir Eric Mieville as private secretary to the Duke of York, an English paper points out that Sir Eric was a discovery of Lord Willingdon.

We however hold that he was, like his last appointment, an invention!

* * *

Referring to the Spanish Civil War, the Times says that Europe is a tinder, and any spark of partisanship will set it ablaze.

Resulting in a cinder!

* * *

Replying to the memorial of the Bengal Hindus on the revision of the Communal Award, the Secretary of State says that His Majesty's government would not propose any alteration except with the consent of the communities affected.

No such scruple prevented them from originally imposing the Award!

* * *

Says Sir Raza Ali: "You know what has happened in the last five and a half months? Take it from me that no single act of my predecessors has uplifted you so much as this one."—(his marrying a South African Indian lady).

Surely this must be a very embarrassing charge against his predecessors!

"That the old school tie is a very strong one is the view of a Mr. Marton, Headmaster of Leeds Modern School who is starting on a 30,000 mile trip to see some of his old pupils."—News item.

At any rate, it seems to be a pretty long one.

* * *

Speaking at a recent election meeting, the Hon'ble Mr. Rajan referred to the Raja of Bobbili, and said that his party owed him a deep debt of gratitude which they could never hope to repay.

Probably, the Rajah Saheb knows this—to his cost!

* * *

It is announced that British M. P's are to be provided with first class sleeping berths.

Is this aimed at too vigilant members!

* * *

It is reported from Benares that a relative of the Maharaj-kumar of Vizianagaram is performing *Anushtan* for the success of the Team in the last Test.

So, even his relative does not think much of his captaincy!

* * *

A contemporary advertises itself thus: "Those who can afford to buy read the—"

This means of course that not all who can afford to read buy it!

The Justice Party Campaign

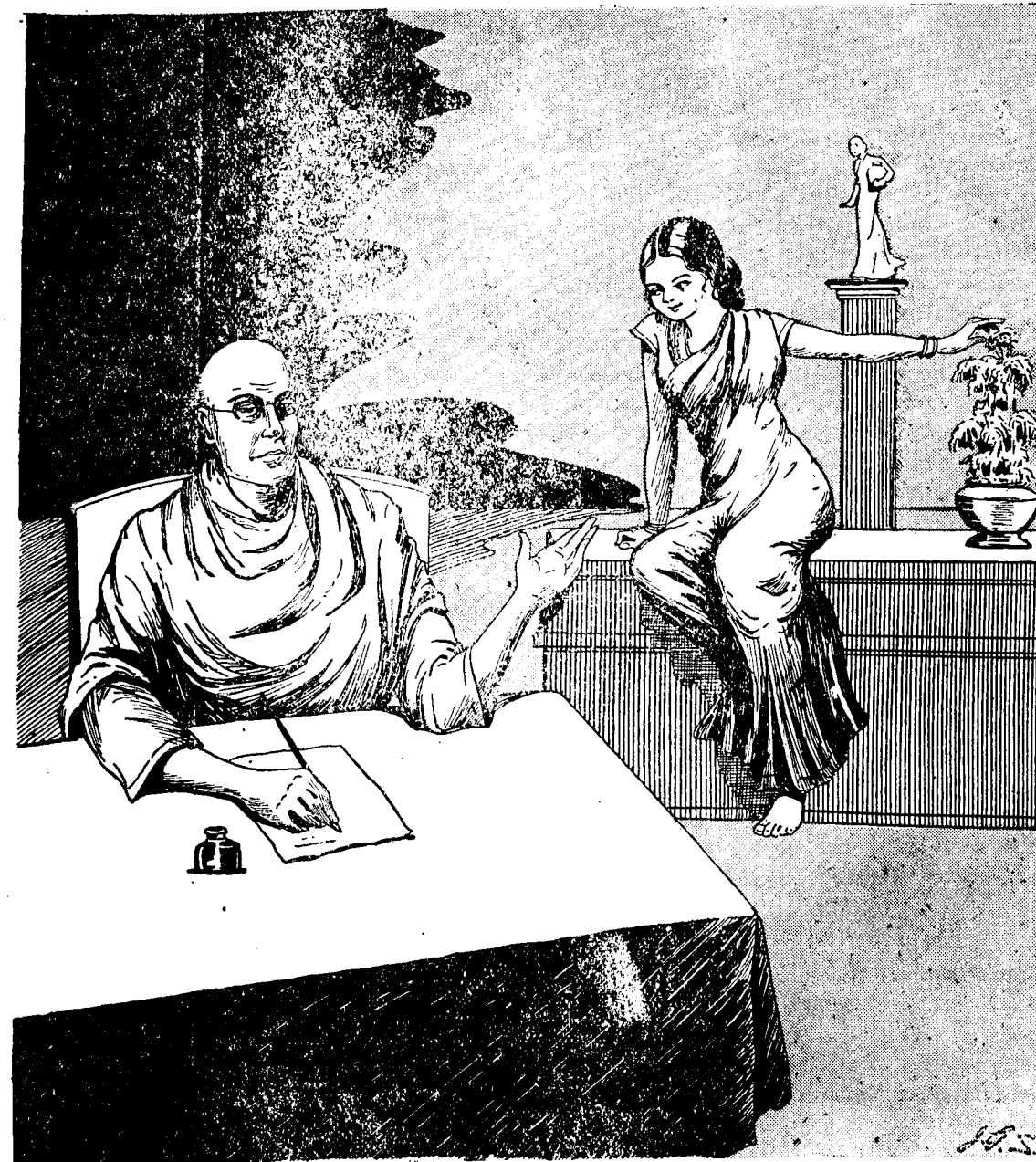
The two Tamil Ministers are just now making a diplomatic tour of their (imagined) strongholds in the South, and making speeches marked by a singular poverty of thought as well as of tactics. Trichy has just gone through its municipal elections, without one single official Justice candidate being set up. Bellary is preparing for a bye-election to the local Council where also the Justice Party nominee is as yet unknown. On the other hand, the speeches of the Ministers themselves are not lacking in assumed self-confidence. They perhaps count on the forgetfulness of the public. But the memories of the last Civil Disobedience campaign are of the kind that make history, and so are unforgettable. The record of the Ministry in connection with it has burnt itself so deeply in the public mind that nothing can offset their callous brutality and subservient cowardice. Yet, the Education Minister has the hardihood to say that they should be judged by their record. We are certain they will be. To claim, as he has done, with irritating monotony that they have worked the reforms is an insult to the intelligence of the electorate. The fly perching giddily on the wheel might with more excuse claim that it makes the machine go. To work the reforms, as the phrase goes, all that was required was a figure-head, and this the Justice Party provided with a profusion which must have been amusing to our real masters, and disheartening even to the moderate elements in the country, unattached to any party. Their record of achievement in the field of education is pilloried in official documents, like the Champion Report; their mismanagement of local self-government finds in Sir A. P. Patro an unanswerable critic. Progress in the Co-operative movement has been brought to a standstill by communalism which is the sole gift of the Ministry to the province. It is true, they have multiplied offices, or rather jobs, not out of any compelling or constructive necessity, but out of a desire for self-preservation. In short, there is not a single instance on record of their having

a mind of their own on questions of high policy, or of asserting it on a single occasion during the last 15 years. This means that they were content to be tied to the chariot wheels of the Reserved Half, all these years, to enjoy the shadow of prestige while the power resided elsewhere. But it is perhaps paying a compliment to our Ministers to take them seriously at all. Their disorganisation is but the expression of their political poverty. There is no necessity to discredit them; they are condemned to death by their own spiritual and moral inanition.

The City Municipal Elections

A revolt in the ranks of Congressmen, in Madras or elsewhere, is not in our opinion, such a tragic occurrence as may be made out by those who are anxious to discredit the Congress. It is very much to be preferred that these quarrels happen before, rather than, after the event. The first requisite of every party is discipline; without it, we go to pieces. We should have thought that the lesson was fully learnt at least by those who suffered in the last campaign, and are still in the field. If tried Congressmen are overlooked, and recent recruits are preferred, it must be for reasons of expediency; and no protest should be allowed to be made on that score. To set up a Board, give it authority to choose candidates, and then turn round against it, because it has ignored X, Y, or Z, is to be guilty of childish petulance. Congressmen of the sturdier type, who have voluntarily undergone unmerited suffering, should be the last to do so. The Board may or may not have been wise; but those who submitted to it in the first instance cannot do otherwise than, by bowing to it, seek to neutralise its mistakes, if any, by their own zealous and loyal co-operation. We do not mind confessing our own aversion for such compacts with new recruits. But we admit, it is an effective way of demonstrating the disinterestedness of the 'old guard'. All we pray for is the continuance of this discipline to the end of the chapter; and the submission of the new-comers to the same discipline.

A Question of Currency



Father: Don't be yearning for Ramanathan. He is penniless.

Daughter: But father, we don't use pennies in our country!

The Doctor's Tale

by Tien Ham

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

MR. Basu and his wife were spending the summer holidays in a quiet village thirty miles from Calcutta, where they had their home. Mr. Basu was a great hiker. Unless the weather was positively vile, he never missed his long evening walk. One evening, as usual, after a cup of tea, Mr. Basu started on his evening walk. He cut across the woods and fields, noting the landmarks en route to guide him back home. He covered at a brisk pace, three miles and rested himself on a fallen tree. It was about 6 P.M. Having rested a while, Mr. Bose started on the homeward hike. He had but covered a hundred yards when he noticed a dull brown speck in the western sky. It was moving towards him at a terrific speed. It was one of those dust-storms common to Northern India at this time of the year. A sharp rise in the velocity of the wind heralded the approach of the storm, and before Mr. Basu covered another hundred yards, the storm burst with a savage fury. Swirling dust playing in the lashing wind spread a dull pall over hill and dale. And before Mr. Basu covered another fifty yards, it was pitch dark. In that unnatural darkness one could not see two yards in front of him. Mr. Basu moved on gingerly, swaying in the dust-charged wind. Once or twice he knocked himself against trees. Visibility was so low.

"Hi! Stay where you are!"

Mr. Basu started and stared hard to his right—the direction from which the command came. He strained his eyes, and just made out the blurred outline of a dilapidated cow-shed. "Don't move," the voice came again, "there is a deep ditch right in front of you. Come in here."

Mr. Basu located the origin of the voice. It came from the cow-shed. He thanked his stars for preserving him from what might easily have been a fatal fall down the ditch. He moved towards the cow-shed, guided by the burning end of a cigarette which the man in the shed was smoking. "That was a close shave!" said the man with the cigarette. "Lucky thing, I saw you. Lost my way in this confounded

storm myself. Tumbled on this old cow-shed. Have a cigarette?"

Mr. Basu accepted the cigarette gratefully and lit it at the flame held for him by the stranger. He sighed his relaxation. "Thank you, stranger," said Mr. Basu. "But for you I might have been finished. It was a miracle."

"Miracle nothing," laughed the stranger. "Just chance."

They smoked in silence for a minute.

"You from town?" asked the stranger.

"Yes."

"Remember the darkness which descended upon Calcutta seven years ago? Something like this?"

"Perfectly," replied Mr. Basu. "I have every reason to remember it. I was—well, I was as near my end during that darkness, as I was just now, when you yelled at me like my guardian angel."

The stranger laughed. "Me, an angel! My eye, just imagine it!.....Touching that darkness which came to Calcutta seven years ago, a very funny thing happened to me. Care to hear about it?"

"Go head," said Mr. Basu heartily. "Is it a ghost story?"

"Not a ghost story, but something much more funny."

Seven years ago (commenced the stranger) almost to a day, a great black storm descended on Calcutta. It was six o'clock in the evening. Six months previous to that I graduated out of the Medical College, and foolishly stuck up a board in Chittaranjan Avenue, announcing to all and sundry that I was a doctor ready to cure them of their distempers. Patients

were few and very far between, and on this dark day I sat in my consulting room brooding on my lot. Over the howling of the wind and the roar of thunder, I thought I heard someone banging my door. I came out reluctantly and opened the door. A vision confronted me. It was a lovely girl of about 18 years, soaked to the skin in the rain. Before I could collect my wits to enquire about her business, she brushed past me into my consulting room. I closed the door and followed her in. She appropriated the most comfy chair in my room and smiled serenely at me. I smiled back, I am afraid, like a sheep. "Doctor," she said, "I came to ask you a.....a rather unusual question. Won't you oblige me?"

I was dashed, of course. I succeeded in gathering enough of myself to ask her: "Well, what is it?"

"Is there really any poison," she asked with an angelic smile, "a drop of which would kill a man or woman instantly?"

I stiffened. "Why do you want to know?"

"Oh, doctor, I am writing a story, in which poison plays a very important part. I want to get my atmosphere correct. I have got to know everything about a potent poison."

I felt relieved. "Yes," I said, "there is such a poison."

"Is there? I am so glad. Have you got it with you?"

"Why, yes," I said indulgently. She was a lovely girl. Who would not indulge such a darling!

"Oh, doctor, can I have a look at it? Just once, please. I'd love to."

I thought rapidly, and smiled. I produced from the special receptacle a small bottle labelled 'Dangerous'. I placed it on the table and stood by watching the girl. She clapped her hands with a sort of unnatural ecstasy and stood up. Suddenly she whipped out a revolver and covered me with it. She said: "I am sorry, doctor, for this. But I want that poison. I am not murdering anybody. Nobody shall come to any harm. But I.....I.....can't explain. I know you will not give me that bottle if I ask you for it. Hence this gun-play. Here is ten thousand rupees, the price of that poison. Don't worry, doctor. Nobody shall come to any harm. And if you value your life, don't try to follow me....."

Still covering me with the gun, she slipped the small bottle into her blouse, placed a thick roll of currency notes on the table, and backed out into the wild night.

I shrugged my shoulders and went to bed. It is now exactly seven years since this happened, and I am yet to hear the end of the story. The ten thousand rupees are in the bank waiting for that lovely girl to claim.

"A rum experience, what?" concluded the stranger with a laugh.

"Not at all," said Mr. Basu. "If you'll oblige me with another of your fine cigarettes, Dr. Ganguly, I'll supply the climax to your yarn."

The doctor started. "How in the name of all that is marvellous, did you know my name!.....But here is the cigarette."

Mr. Basu lit his cigarette. "There is nothing marvellous in my guessing at your name. I did not know it when I came here, though. But when you were half way through your story I knew you were Dr. Ganguly." Mr. Basu puffed at his cigarette. "A young, wealthy man married that girl who visited you in the storm. They were a happy couple. They doted on each other. Within two months of their wedding, the husband fell ill—dangerously ill. The best and most exclusive medical aid that could be had in Calcutta was placed at his disposal. All that was of no avail. One day, the same day that the girl came to you, the doctors said the fatal word. The patient would not survive beyond the midnight. His darling little wife, who all these days kept a ceaseless vigil by her husband's bedside, decided to quit the world at the same time that her husband would leave it. That evening she came to you and got the poison at the point of a pistol. At midnight the doctors waited in the ante-room to witness the end of their patient. The patient's wife locked herself up in her room and, as the clock struck twelve, she swallowed the contents of your bottle. By a miracle, the patient survived the crisis. The girl fell into a protracted stupor. She remained senseless for three days. It was, a clever trick you played, doctor. What she drank was not poison but a powerful opiate which you palmed off on her. Thanks to you, doctor, there are two grateful souls breathing today who will always think of you with a prayer in their hearts. Regarding that ten thousand rupees which the girl left on your table, you have more than earned your fee. It is yours."

Doctor Ganguly laughed. "Damn! What a strange encounter! And so you are....."

"Yes, I am the husband. And the girl who came to you that dark night is my dear wife."

THE END



"Parson," exclaimed Ephraim, "I've got 'ligion, I tell you!"

"That's fine, brother! You are going to lay aside all sin?"

"Yes, suh."

"You're going to church?"

"Yes, suh."

"You're going to care for the widows?"

"Sho' am!"

"Are you going to pay your debts?"

"Suh? Dat ain't 'ligion. Dat's business."

—*Evening Times-Globe*

A particularly sour and plain-looking woman had come to consult the doctor, and was explaining to him her symptoms. "Do you know, doctor," she said, "I'm always thinking that a man is following me. Do you think I suffer from hallucinations?"

The doctor took a quick look at her.

"Absolutely certain you do, madam," came the prompt reply.

—*The Tatler*

A city family had been motoring in the country all day Sunday. They had filled all the available space in the car with wild flowers, tree branches, and other spoil. Being uncertain which road to take, they stopped a farmer and inquired: "Should we take this road back to the city?"

"You might as well while you're at it," replied the farmer. "It looks like you had about everything else we've got."

—*Christian Science Monitor*

Slowly the hands of the clock crept around to the hour, and at the first chime the slow procession commenced to wend its way to the scaffold.

William Smith had just eaten a hearty meal, and his face showed no trace of fear. Upon arrival at the scaffold, everything was placed in position, and the rope was adjusted.

With a last look at his watch to see that the time had really arrived, the man in authority gave the signal, and William Smith and his fellow-bricklayers recommenced work after the dinner hour.

—*Moncton Transcript*

Patient: The doctor I had, did nothing but listen to my heart-beat.

Doctor: Yes, I see your chest has all the earmarks of a dirty quack.

—*Arizona Kitty-Kat*

1st—How'll I cook these sausages?

2nd—Fry 'em like fish.

1st (after ten minutes' work)—There's not much left to them after they're cleaned out.

—*Yale Record*

A university is made up of two kinds of people: city slackers and country fallows.

—*Harvard Lampoon*

Proud Mother—Yes, he's a year old now, and he's been walking since he was eight months old.

Bored Visitor—Really? He must be awfully tired.

—*Lafayette Lyre*

Are Proverbs Reliable?

Being a report of the proceedings of the Society for the Dissemination of Useless Information, recorded by Diana Don.

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

AMID cheers, Sir Goosey Gaggie (Chairman) rose to introduce Professor Pettifogg, the popular Principal of the Faculty of Futility, and the guest of the evening.

Professor Pettifogg, remarked Sir Goosey, was one of those scientists whose untiring labours were devoted to the service of Mankind. The speaker need not remind his hearers of the classic experiment for the determination of the growth of beard among adolescent oysters. Almost everything known about oysters and their beards was due to the untiring researches of their learned guest (applause).

For the past two years, the Professor had engaged in an investigation calculated to add a staggering contribution to the sum-total of human knowledge. Sir Goosey concluded by an artless reference to his own lack of experience in addressing public gatherings. He declared he would not detain the assembly. They would hear from the Professor's own lips the nature and extent of this, one of the great episodes in the saga of scientific research (loud applause).

Professor Pettifogg, expressing pleasure at the ovation he had been accorded, remarked that nothing

was more gratifying to the ears of a simple, selfless scientist, than the acclamations of the ignorant.

With lucid directness, the Professor proceeded to outline his recent researches. Science, he declared, was founded on exact observation. Present-day methods of accurate observation were of recent introduction. Was the scientific method, then, a new thing? Oh no. The human race had been engaged in exact observation throughout its existence. Human beings, it might be said, were a nosey lot. Science was merely organised nosiness. Modern methods had systematised a tendency existing all through the ages.

Unfortunately, the discoveries of our nosey ancestors were not recorded in the manner they would be today. When Mrs. Cavewoman directed a beady eye at the goings-on of her next-door neighbour, she did not record the results of her researches in any permanent form. Nowadays, of course, it would be all set down as a Study in Sexual and Sociological Delinquency, published in Vienna, with an artistic frontispiece.

Were, then, all the researches of our ancestors lost to us? Oh no. The wisdom of the ages was to be

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found, crystallised as it were, in certain philological remains. There was an abundance of traditional proverbs, wise saws, and ancient sayings. These represented an accumulation of early human observation.

The task which the Professor had set himself, was the testing of these ancient saws by modern methods of investigation. Some 1329 proverbs had been the subject of inquisition. As a result, the Professor ventured to affirm that our heritage of proverbial wisdom was in need of overhaul in the light of modern knowledge. He would adduce a few examples.

Rolling Stones Gather No Moss

A bed of moss was cultivated on a large tray, set at an angle of forty-five degrees. When luxuriant growth had been obtained, a number of carefully-selected stones, of varying composition, weight, and texture, were rolled down the tray. The stones were at once submitted to microscopical examination. In every case, particles of moss were found adhering to the superficies of the stones.

At a second trial, the stones were dipped in glue. In this instance, all the stones were heavily covered with moss on reaching the bottom of the tray.

It was concluded that rolling stones do gather moss. This is particularly the case when the stones are previously coated with glue.

You Cannot Teach Your Grandmother to Suck Eggs

A large number of grandmothers was obtained from the Widows' Home, and a selection made at random.

Of the twelve grandmothers picked out, three stated they were not hungry, three declared they were on a diet in anticipation of a forthcoming contest in a pep-magazine for the Body Beautiful, and five refused to participate on grounds of orthodoxy. The remaining

grandmother was instructed in the art of sucking eggs. She readily grasped the essential principle—that the egg must be pierced at both ends—and eagerly consumed the eggs placed before her.

It appears that you can teach your grandmother to suck eggs, provided she is not a vegetarian.

Nine Tailors Make A Man

The nine tailors were chosen by ballot, and enclosed in a hermetically-sealed room. After an interval, the prisoners knocked on the door, and enquired what they had to do. On being informed, one of them asked if his wife could participate. The suggestion was not entertained. After a further interval, the tailors commenced to riot. They characterised their detention as futile, and demanded their release.

It seems to be definitely established that not even nine tailors can make a man.

Still Waters Run Deep

A bowl of distilled water was placed in a sound-proof, dust-free room, in a specially-constructed building designed to exclude external vibration. After a lapse of some hours, the water

was subjected to careful examination with the aid of surveying-instruments, and was found to be perfectly still.

The depth of the water was ascertained by means of an ingenious contrivance composed of a pellet on a piece of string. The average of three readings was 3.195 inches.

This indicates that still waters do not necessarily run deep.

As You Make Your Bed, So You Must Lie On It

The Professor acquired some timber, and constructed a number of beds. The beds, when finished,

presented a variety of design and decrepitude, satisfying the strictest standard of scientific diversity.

Having made the beds, the Professor went to sleep in a hammock, as usual.

The inference is obvious.

Stolen Fruit Is Sweet

A group of urchins were enrolled as laboratory-assistants, and directed to steal fruit from itinerant vendors. Though the vendors displayed a deplorably unscientific attitude, sufficient material was obtained, even allowing for wastage in the hands of the assistant.

The specimens which reached the laboratory were as follows:

(1) A quantity of small green apples. Their sugar-content was nil.

(2) Half-a-dozen decayed bananas. Glucose was undoubtedly present, but not in a palatable form.

(3) Two weather-beaten oranges. After exhaustive tests, it was ascertained that they had been sweet; but were now in a dehydrated condition.

The Professor concluded that stolen fruit is sweet, provided the thief steals sweet fruit.

It Is The Last Straw That Breaks The Camel's Back

A camel was procured from the Zoological gardens, and a supply of straws obtained from a vendor of mineral-waters. The straws were in packets of fifty, which greatly simplified the difficult problem of mathematical computation.

At the end of the first day, only 23,427 straws had been placed on the camel's back. The Professor was forced to desist from exhaustion. The back showed no signs of fracture.

Though suffering severely from muscular strain, the Professor resumed his task in the morning. He was in the act of placing the 31,409th straw on the camel's back, when he was arrested at the

instigation of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

It has not, therefore, been definitely ascertained whether the last straw will break the camel's back....

At this juncture, the main fuse blew out, and somebody dropped a stink-bomb. The proceedings then terminated.

THE END

Eve Gets Busy

by Sithara Thriambak

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

THE annual session of the Sthripetta branch of the 'All Over India Women's Conference', was held yesterday under the benign auspices of Lady Kodalamudichu Vinayakasubba Reddy.

Quite a large number of delegates from outlying districts were in attendance, and as many had brought their youngest borns with them so as to be able to enjoy the Conference to the full, the effect was quite reminiscent of 'Home Sweet Home'. Mrs. Velamalu Kothandarama Iyer did try to be modern and leave Nataraja outside, but he yelled so loudly and persistently for the solace of his mother's ample bosom, that she had to give in.

The local Town Theatre had been cleaned, swept and decorated the previous evening by Thayee, Verayee and Mariayee. A conference was held by them in which it was resolved to protest against the low wages meted out to them, and a resolution was passed to ask for more money and get it. Peon Munuswamy also tried to join, but was unanimously hooted out, his masculinity being sufficient cause.

The day itself was bright and clear, and the number of cars ancient and modern, jutkas, bullock carts and rickshaws bore ample testimony to the emancipation of Indian womanhood. Further proof was afforded by the fact of a quantity of lady's cycles artistically packed in a corner. There was also a motor cycle, but this was found later on to belong to the local Inspector of Police who had kindly consented to control traffic.

At 8 A.M. precisely, Lady Vinayakasubba Reddy arrived, (a glowing proof of the punctuality of modern womanhood) most artistically dressed in a rose pink *saree* embroidered with gold half suns, a blue silk blouse, gold slippers and a coffee complexion. She was warmly received by the Vice-President, Miss Kannamani Kanakambujam, the Treasurer, Mrs. Ammukutty Ramanathan, and the Press Reporters (most unfortunately all men!).

Srimathi Vissamachi came forward with tambura in hand, recited a prayer in Sanskrit composed by (and

understood only by) herself. A group photograph was next taken on the stairs, which for all their width proved too narrow to accommodate the seething mass of ladies. Next day there was great tearing of hair and gnashing of teeth in many homes because so and so's face was not discernible in the group, and many a well-meaning husband got entangled in the hair-tearing process in his attempts to soothe his distracted partner, and had to be taken to the General Hospital.

After the photograph, the delegates adjourned to the seats provided for them in the interior of the Theatre. It had been arranged that at a given signal the elaborately painted curtain of the Theatre should rise and disclose Lady Reddy with the Vice-President and Treasurer on either side, and the papers and proceedings of the past year in front of her. The curtain having risen, Vimala and Nirmala, daughters of Miss Kanakambujam, should rush forward to garland and bouquet her. (Yes, I said *Miss* Kanakambujam. She says her married state was conferred on her before she had any voice in the matter, and this is the only way she can protest till the Bill of Divorce is passed.) Unfortunately the curtain rose two minutes too early and discovered Thayee and Mariayee with chairs on their heads. Verayee had already brought in the table, and left to soothe a refractory husband without an ounce of even cold *conjee* in his stomach. Lady Reddy, with the supreme tact characteristic of all her actions, laughingly declared it didn't matter, shooed Mariayee and Thayee off (they showing a disposition to linger and join in the Conference) and seated herself in the Presidential Chair. Nirmala having got stage fright, Vimala came forward with both bouquet and garland in the approved style prescribed by the St. Mary Convent nuns. The nuns however had made no allowance for Verayee's scrubbing brush, and the *shastanga* pose which Vimala struck was decidedly original and amusing. Both bouquet and garland being of rather stale roses purchased at a reduction rate from Flower Bazaar the previous evening, suffered terribly in the process. Mrs. Ammukutty valiantly

rose to the occasion, declared it was the spirit of the thing not the actual stuff that mattered, and garlanded Lady Reddy herself, with what remained of the wreath (mostly string, tinsel and rose stalks). The bouquet it was decided to throw out of the window (there being no Waste Paper Basket) as Lady Reddy already had, figuratively at least, her hands full.

Lady Reddy now rose amongst much clapping of hands and wailing of babies, and proceeded to read the Presidential Address. She thanked the ladies for the honour they had done her in asking her to preside (which, considering her status, was more or less compulsory) and regretted her inability to make a long speech. She asked them to remember the purpose for which they had met to-day, viz., the 'Emancipation of Indian Womanhood.' She enjoined them not to let anything stand in the way of this goal, but like valiant football players to brush aside everything ruthlessly (minus umpire!). She implored them not to let minor things like oil-bath days, *Amavasais*, *Shrad-dams*, etc., interfere with their regular attendance at the weekly meetings. She then requested Ammukutty to read her report for the year--which being very much on the deficit side was not as warmly received as her address. Selected delegates from the Districts were then requested to make speech and voice their views.

Srimathi Bonda Bai from Mysore rose first and pleaded for the inclusion of at least one woman Cricketer in the Indian Team. She cited herself (only as an example) as an example of skilful bowling, all her life having been spent in throwing *bondas* straight from the pan into the mouths of her seventeen children.

Sow. Appamma from Malabar was the next delegate, and she begged leave to propose that just as Hindi was being adopted as the universal language of India, the Malayalee costume of two *mundus* (towels) be universally adopted. In Europe, scantiness of attire was quite consistent with maidenly modesty, and she did not see why in India, a land which had brought forth Sita and Sakuntala, mere dress should interfere with one's morals.

Mrs. Velamalu Kothandarama Iyer said that the amount women spent on cosmetics was truly devastating and urged a return to turmeric, henna and betel leaf, at least among members.

Srimathi Yellagantharu Avacai from Andhradesa requested that a bill be passed allotting three-fourths

of the ghee supply in each house to the woman, as it was she who was responsible for the production of all the pickles and hot delicacies for her partner's consumption.

A small diversion occurred here, as Nataraja, Velamelu Kothandarama Iyer's sixth born, did something he should really have done in more private surroundings, on his mother's neighbour's lap. Luckily that lady's *saree* was new and in consequence of a very waterproof texture, and she was able to shake off the offence!

Mrs. Shirin Feroze Kurma from Hyderabad urged that purdah be completely abolished, both from women and the household doors and windows. "Let our Moslem sisters take 'no blinds' for their motto," she cried. "Let our homes be open to the eyes of every passer-by!" She was vociferously applauded by the Gossipers section of the Conference.

Mrs. Angelus Hannelo from Chitandripuram remarked that as 'Rumba' records invoked in one a desire to dance, they were decidedly immoral and should be banned, wherever possible.

Meenakshi Patti begged that the Conference pass a resolution to use only her *appalams* (Thali Brand) at all sessions of the Conference in any part of India. It being lunch time now, Lady Reddy suggested a move to the open air lunch tables. Many of the members who had been regaling themselves with only coffee and *uppuma* brought from their houses, welcomed this change of diet. Others who had brought nothing were incoherent with delight. At lunch, the food plus the animated conversation attracted a phenomenal number of crows, and the assistance of the Press had to be called in to remove them.

Lady Reddy left after lunch as she had to open the new Ladies and Children's Club at Pinambakkam. The rest of the afternoon was spent by the members in discussing and settling their personal problems. By evening a cordial enmity had been established between all the delegates and such endearments as *Moonday* and *Sewer Ki Bachee* were beginning to be indulged in (asides of course). Luckily for the Police the meeting terminated at 5 P.M., and the Press were able to give it the usual happy ending.

THE END



The Fortunate Husbandman

by Embusque

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

IN the days of Babar, there was a worthy husbandman named Nasr-ed-Din, who lived in a village a long way from Delhi. Delhi was so far away that the husbandman had never heard of Babar; but he knew of the Nawab who lived at the Provincial capital. On one occasion, Nasr-ed-Din was informed that the Nawab was in camp not many miles away; and a great project came into his mind. He resolved to make a present to this great Lord.

Nasr-ed-Din had a particularly fine plum tree, and the fruit was just ripe. He picked three of the choicest plums, and, placing them on a fine green leaf, carried them to the camp, and offered them for the Nawab's acceptance.

Being in good humour after a successful morning's hawking, the Nawab took the present in good part. He spoke a few words with the artless countryman, and ordered the Treasurer to give him a piece of gold.

When Nasr-ed-Din got back to the village, he was puffed with pride. He told his cronies that he was a

friend of the Nawab, and would get them fine positions at court. He went and sat with the elders under the village tree, and altogether acted as if he was now a notable person.

This conduct displeased the elders of the village. They sent secretly to the tax-gatherer, saying that Nasr-ed-Din had become rich through trafficking with the Nawab's camp. The tax-gatherer came to the village, and threatened to throw Nasr-ed-Din into a dungeon, and have him tortured, if he did not disgorge his wealth.

"I will report you to the Nawab, who is my friend," cried Nasr-ed-Din, trembling.

"Bah, it is the Nawab's taxes I am collecting," replied the official. "Do you think His Lordship would spare such a one as you?"

"I am a poor man," whined Nasr-ed-Din. "I will go to His Highness, and beg to be excused." And the tax-gatherer, being uncertain whether the husbandman might not possess a little influence after all, let him go.

Before setting off on his errand, the husbandman consulted with his cronies. "Last time, His Highness was pleased with a present of three plums," they reasoned, "but this time you are going with a petition. Therefore your present must be more valuable." After a long discussion, they decided that twenty cocoanuts would meet the case.

Nasr-ed-Din went on his way, laden with twenty cocoanuts. When he reached the site of the Nawab's camp, he was dismayed to find it deserted. His Highness had returned to the capital.

Nasr-ed-Din toiled on along the highway, bearing the twenty cocoanuts. At last he came to the suburbs of the capital, and paused at a wayside house of refreshment.

"What do you want, fellow?" said the doorkeeper.

"Could a poor traveller seek the refreshment of a draught of water?" begged the countryman.

A party of city dandies were taking their ease in the front part of the establishment, and they found this dialogue highly amusing. "He comes to a house such as this, and calls for—a drink of water," laughed one of them. "Ho, Mister Water-Bibber, what is it that you are bearing so carefully on your back?"

"It is a present for His Highness the Nawab," replied the husbandman, importantly.

"Of what does the present consist?" asked the dandy, thinking it might be worthwhile to rob the simple fellow.

"It is twenty cocoanuts, no less," replied Nasr-ed-Din.

"Twenty cocoanuts?" cried the dandy. "Figs would be more acceptable, I should think!"

"Oh sir, have I made a mistake?" said the farmer, in dismay. "Should I take figs to the palace?"

"By all means," replied the dandy, solemnly. "His Highness dotes on figs."

Calling down blessings on the grand gentleman, and praising the benevolence with which he deigned to give advice to an ignorant countryman, Nasr-ed-Din went on his way; but with a troubled heart. In cities, he knew, fruit must be bought with money; and he had no money.

He came to the avenue that led to the gate of the capital, and accosted a wayfarer who seemed to have a kindly face. "Good sir," he said, "I am in great trouble. I must procure a tray of figs, and I have no wherewithal."

"What on earth do you want with a tray of figs?" asked the wayfarer.

Nasr-ed-Din was ashamed to relate all the details; but he earnestly assured the wayfarer of his need.

"Well, if you really want some figs, why don't you pick the beastly things?" asked the wayfarer, pointing to the trees at the roadside. Indeed, the avenue was lined with fig-trees, and on account of the abund-

ance of the fruit, figs were held in little esteem by the people of the city.

Nasr-ed-Din praised the providence of God, who provided fig-trees at so convenient a place, so that no petitioner need go empty-handed into the presence of the Ruler. He threw away the cocoanuts, and replaced them with a grand array of figs. He covered the tray with a fine cloth brought for the purpose, and bore it to the palace.

The porter at the outer gate barred the entrance, demanding a fee.

"A fee, fellow?" cried Nasr-ed-Din. "I pay no fee. See the fine present I have brought for my friend, the Nawab." He whipped aside the cloth, and disclosed a tray heaped with figs.

At this surprising disclosure, the porter muttered a verse, and hastily stood aside; for it is not good to thwart those whom God has afflicted with a weakness of the intellect. The word passed from gate to gate that a harmless madman was seeking an interview with the Nawab, and Nasr-ed-Din, bearing his tray of figs, reached the audience-chamber unopposed.

This time, the Ruler was not in a good humour. "What fool is this," he cried, "who mocks me by the gift of a few worthless figs? Throw them at his head, and drive him away!"

Nasr-ed-Din was thrust out into the ante-chamber, where the soldiers of the guard pelted him mercilessly with his own figs. But instead of cursing his ill-luck, the husbandman fell on his knees, praising God for his good fortune.

"This is indeed madness," muttered the soldiers, desisting from their bombardment. "Why, O witless one, do you return thanks for such ignominious treatment?"

"Ignorant time-servers!" replied the agriculturalist. "God is great! I have good reason to give thanks. I was bringing cocoanuts to His Highness, big ones. But God sent an angel, who appeared to me in a house of pleasure by the wayside, and the angel warned me saying, 'Figs will be more acceptable'. So I threw away the cocoanuts, and brought figs; and you have cast them at my head. But the figs are soft, and I am none the worse. Had I brought cocoanuts, I would not be alive to tell the tale."

The guards laughed so loudly that the noise penetrated to the audience-chamber, and His Highness sent to enquire the reason. On being told of what had passed, the Nawab lost his ill-humour, and ordered Nasr-ed-Din to be brought back. The farmer was such a figure of fun, splashed and bedaubed with the pulp of figs, that the Ruler could not contain his mirth. Nasr-ed-Din was compelled to relate the whole story; and when he had finished, the Ruler ordained that the husbandman should have a certificate of exemption from taxes, and a *firman* creating him the head-man of his village.

So Nasr-ed-Din departed, still praising the greatness of God, whose Providence watched over all.

THE END

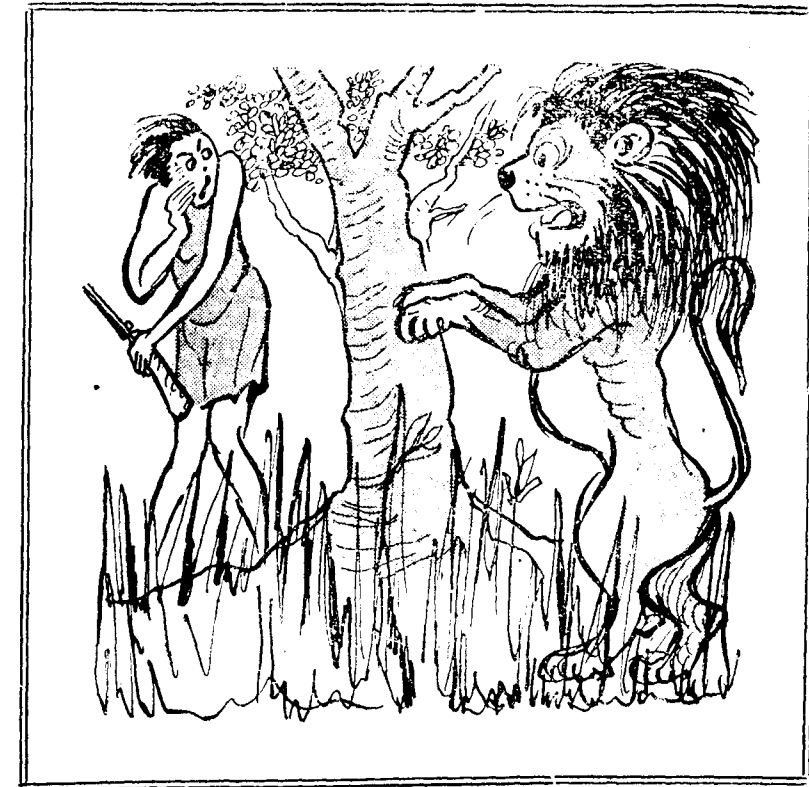
Debit To The Old Account



Dentist: This tooth ought to have been removed years ago.
Husband (newly married): Alright. Remove it and send the bill to her father.

The White Goddess

by Artiji



Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

ONCE upon a time there was a Bright Young Thing, five feet three inches in height, who shot lions in the African jungle with one hand and penned cold cream advertisements with the other. She used Bonds for her complexion and Bux for her physique. And on the whole it could be concluded that she led a sane, happy and reasonably simple existence.

One day the Bright Young Thing, as befits a person whose bloneness is only superior to her lack of intelligence, ventured too far into the depths of the African jungle. And she came face to face with a lion—a roaring, ranking, henpecked, hungry lion—a lion that stood on hind-legs and chortled with expectant delight.

The Bright Young Thing who had never before seen an animal that was not a stuffed studio importation, waved her pop-gun and forgot her advertisements. Then she opened her mouth and gave vent to a long and unmusical yell. The yell was heard by Big Chief Wuga Wug of the Tommy Goos who hailed with joy this new addition to the ranks of *coloratura soprani*. Without a moment's hesitation he plunged into the forest, speared the lion, and rescued the lovely maiden from a premature demise.

Taking her gently by the hand (so as not to injure her excessive brightness), he led her to the heart of his beautiful garden and, in a voice that trembled with emotion, implored her to sing the opening stanzas of Mozart's 'Figaro'. The young lady who had been

informed by those in the know that she possessed a liberal quantity of 'It', cast him a seductive glance beneath her limpid lashes. The Chief who was a rabid Wagnerite, returned her gesture with a stoical and indifferent stare. The lady retaliated with a coy undulation of her middle, learnt offhand from on American journal. The Chief eyed her with disgusted contempt and noting the absence of vocal developments, carefully inserted a drawing pin into her sleek and well-developed posterior.

To quote the words of a member of the local Philharmonic Society, the succeeding events were 'worthy of comment'. "Not since the days of Bughouse Tonk, the well-known soprano, has a high F of such tremendous power been heard in Limpotoo. The White Goddess has a remarkable voice, even, versatile, and with a magnificent chest register. Her high c's I admit are a trifle steely but her mezza voice is exceptional, and she has tremendous dramatic reserve. Given time and a little experience I am convinced she will be a credit to the African operatic tradition."

It is not for the unfortunate writer to dilate on the succeeding events. With the hopeless inevitability which usually characterises such an occasion, the Bright Young Thing was installed as White Goddess No. Eleven—number Ten having been placed on the retired list owing to an acute lumbago attack!

For a long time—despite the absence of cold cream—she was completely and gloriously content. Then solitude began to pall upon her and her blue eyes which had remained inactive itched with commercial

desire. So it is not to be wondered that when she saw the Big Chief handling a comparatively large size in nuggets, her soul expanded with a warm-hearted sympathy that was not in keeping with her excessive brightness.

Using a walk that she had specially developed for the occasion, she slid up to her unfortunate victim and blithely wished him the top of the morning. The

Chief who was holding a nugget and listening to Beethoven's Seventh Symphony in A minor sensed what lay behind those intimate soul-searing caresses. He fingered the nugget in contemplative silence, and the girl, with a sigh unheard of in the annals of emotional surrender, drew closer to his majestic form. Her blue eyes opened and she flashed him a provocative glance in which was concentrated all the intensive experience of six years lion-hunting. He groaned and the nugget dropped from his fingers. She smiled and

bent towards it. Then the succeeding events were lost in darkness as the Big Chief's ham-like fist shot out and placed the astonished form of the Bright Young Thing in a recumbent and inelegant position...

Fortunately for the Bright Young Thing, whatever her other failings were, she was a potential soprano; and Limpotoo is very kind to potential sopranos. On November Seventeenth she made her debut as 'La Tosca' supported by the Bigbush Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Bosambo.

Now the Bright Young Thing, despite her excessive brightness, was deplorably weak in Italian. And in the



absence of a language instructor she decided to fill the bill with a time-honoured expedient.

As the orchestra crashed into the majestic strains of Puccini's overture, she wriggled deliberately up the stage, her blonde hair fluttering in the breeze and began to improvise in a low, husky contralto that would have done no credit to a lunatic with insomnia.

After the first stanza about the blue state of her mother's emotions was over, the audience guessed that there was something wrong. The more aesthetic began to finger tomatoes. The Bright Young Thing who, whatever her defects, was always an optimist, gave her torso a larger degree of freedom and permitted a shy blush to mantle her cheek. Some of the savages, despite their worldly wisdom, were still susceptible to shy blushes on milk-white complexions, and wishing to take a closer view of the colour-scheme afforded, urged their companions into comparative silence. The Bright Young Thing, tasting the first sweet fruits of triumph, displayed two more of her delightful teeth and let her hair fall over her eyelids. The Wagnerian element felt, justifiably enough, that this was taking things a little too far and let fly a dozen tomatoes. Pandemonium broke loose, but the purists were successful. The Bright Young Thing was removed with befitting care (the coy blush still mantling her cheek), provided

with a chewing gum stick and a tiny piano, an solicitously consigned to the nearest asylum. There, on the pension usually assigned to ex-White Goddesses, she lived a dismal and forgotten existence.

Three years afterwards, a film company passing by her window heard the deathless strains of a husky American contralto, and on further investigation, discovered the Bright Young Thing much the worse for her unexpected confinement. Tenderly they carried her back, laid her on a couch, and forced a glass of brandy between her pallid lips. Her body stirred, her blue eyes opened, her hands reached out and clasped a make-up outfit and she relapsed into unconsciousness again.

The next day she allowed a coy blush to mantle her cheek and the director was so impressed that he handed her a contract. And in the fullness of time she starred in a musical. Her voice and milk-white complexion were hailed with delight and she became a figure of well nigh national importance. Now she spends her time signing fan-mail with one hand and writing Bux Soap advertisements with the other. And on the whole it may be concluded that she leads a sane, happy and reasonably simple existence.

And the moral of this story is: Use Wistaria Cold Cream for your complexion.



THE END

Love & A Limpet

by J. H. Acott

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

ALL the world knows what a limpet is. Or it should do. It clings to rocks. It is really marvellous what a lot of clinging goes on in this world, without anyone even trying to put a stop to it. We cling to life, we cling to the wife (against our will sometimes), and we cling to bed on a cold and frosty morning.

But the most remarkable limpet I ever knew was that old and valued friend of mine, Augustus Brown. I say 'old' metaphorically, of course, for Brown is of great value to me. I mean to say, when you want to borrow a fiver, or a shirt or a collar.....

Brown's limpet-like power has always been most in evidence when he has been in love. And he is so absent-minded that his love affairs usually land him into the most terrible warm water.

It was just over a year ago that he staggered in on me in his usual vacant sort of way and told me his latest yarn.

It began, (said Brown), when I saw her face while she was playing tennis at the Ridge Club. I have, as you know, a rotten memory for faces, but hers was a wonderful face, and one that I knew I wouldn't forget again in a hurry! I thanked my lucky stars that I had been divorced by my wife Maisie, or Marjorie—I just forget her name now—ten years ago, after a year's married life.

That woman's face was so wonderful that I just had to follow her to her home. When I had located her charming little cottage on Kingsway, I knew, or something inside told me, that I would shortly be serenading her from the cover of her balcony.

And sure enough, eleven o'clock that night found me warbling 'Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes' under the window. It speaks much for the power of that song, or so I thought at the time, that the girl must have tried to oblige, for, about fifteen seconds after my commencing, a large cascade of water flew downwards and took the parting out of my hair and the creases out of my trousers. She had evidently

found it so fearfully difficult to drink with her eyes that she had thrown the water out of the window in despair. At least, that's how I looked at it.

The next night, sneezing slightly, I tried something else. The soft night air was mellow with the dulcet tones of my voice rendering 'If Those Lips Could Only Speak', my sneezing forming a kind of haunting intermezzo.

"Go away!" she obliged, and I went away, rather shaken in my belief that the water episode had only been a mistake. I had even been willing to think that she was in the habit of watering the garden at eleven o'clock at night.

The next night, almost as a desperate experiment now, I tried 'Sweetheart, I Wait 'Neath Your Window For A Bouquet From You', my sneezing this time sounding something like the gasp of a donkey engine.

When I regained consciousness, I was in a charming little room with dainty ornaments and silk curtains and chic little carpets and things. A soft hand was fluttering round an ice-bag that rested precariously on top of my head.

With a start I realised that I must have taken a short cut into Heaven. Then I thought I'd try a groan, just to see.

"What happened?" My groan didn't sound heavenly, I know. But it brought forth an answer from the angel.

"I threw a vase at you," she murmured, smiling slightly. "You wanted a bouquet!"

"But angels don't throw bouquets!" I argued.

"Sometimes," she contradicted, "when they hate the sound of a man's voice at their pearly gates!"

"But....." I began, and then broke off, the better to take in the serene beauty of her face. She looked the sort who knew her own mind after having had a few of life's hard knocks.

"I hope your head is not paining you very much?" she asked softly.

"Oh, no," I answered, and groaned as I rose from my reclining position on the couch. "Not at all. I feel as if I could fight Dempsey now!"

Silence for a while. Then, heart thumping, I burst out.....

"Will you—er—will you marry me?"

More silence for a while. There was a strangely bewildered expression in her eyes and on her face. I could see that there was a devil of a struggle of some sort going on inside her.

"I once said I would never marry again," she said at last. "I was young then, and sort of bitterly disillusioned. Oh yes, I blamed myself for not knowing my own mind. But this is rather sudden, isn't it? I mean, you've only just—er—just met me."

"Love at first sight is no myth," I said dramatically. "Yours is a face that I could never forget, and if I lost you now, I think it would haunt me for the rest of my life." I paused, and then thought I'd get it all off my chest. "I too once said I would never marry again. And I also aver that men and women should be of the age when they know what they are doing before they get married. So many young marriages end in a disaster that is too great to ever rectify."

"And how did yours?" she asked sympathetically. "I mean, how did yours end in disaster?"

"Well, you see—er—we didn't seem to agree somehow. As far as I can remember, with this accursed absent-mindedness of mine, she was a grand girl. A grand girl! I was to blame for it all. And I resolved that if I ever *did* marry again, tolerance and give and take would be my watchwords."

She smiled slightly again, and her face looked very young behind that smile.

"Yes, we *are* rather foolish when we are young!" she whispered. "But....."

"May I—may I kiss you?" I broke in, and she blushed youthfully.

I kissed her, and there was heaven in that kiss.

"And when," I smiled as Brown finished on a rapturous note, "are you going to be married, you lucky devil?"

He looked very awkward and sheepish:

"In two days' time," he replied when he had finished shuffling his feet, "and Smith—er—er—would you do me the honour—er—best men are so scarce these days!"

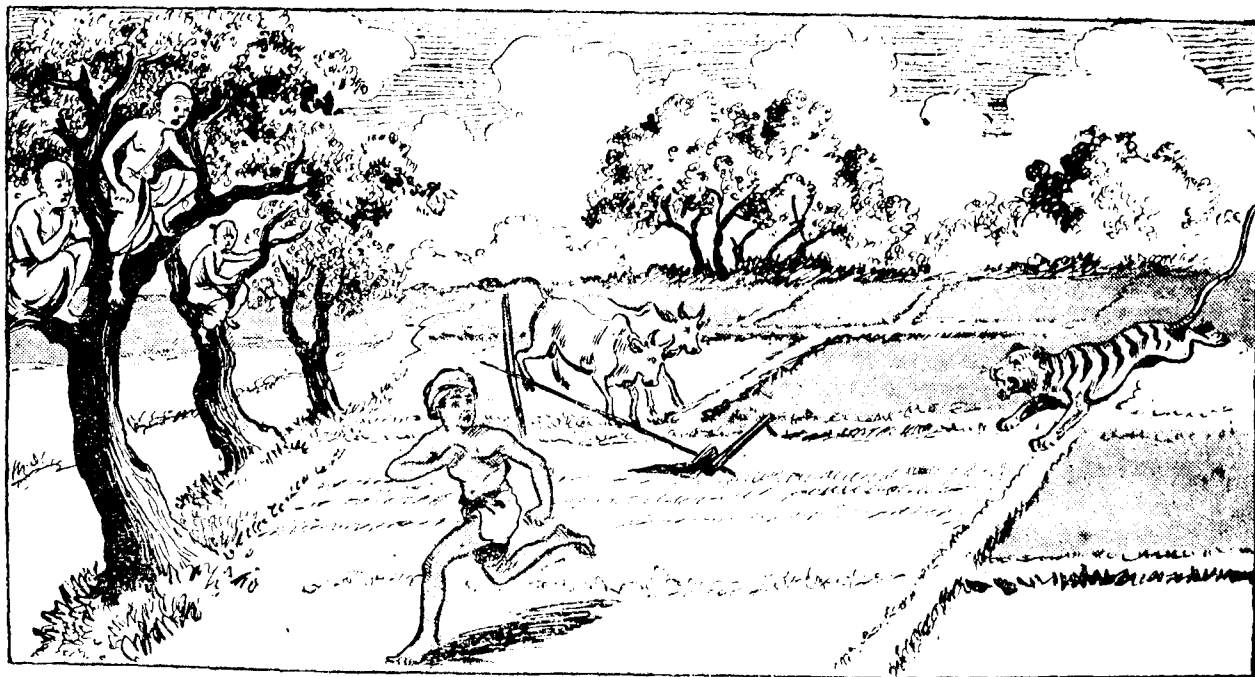
I laughed.

"Of course. But who *is* she?"

Brown began to stutter with embarrassment.

"Er—er—I—my fortunate absent-mindedness you know," he said. "She—she's my former wife, Maisie, or Marjorie—or—oh!—darn this memory of mine!"





Enadhi, The Untouchable

by R. Narasimhan

Reading Time • About 7 Minutes

SINDUR is a village on the main line from Madras to the north. A more God-forsaken village it may not be possible to see. Its importance is indirect. It is on the railway and the places around it are not. Tradition has it that an old rajah living in the interior used it as the landing place and the first halt of his imported dancing girls in their journey to his palace. In due course the rajah went the way such rajahs go, but the dancing girls continue; only they are no longer girls, neither could they dance. Beyond serving these useful purposes it was a blot on God's earth.

In this village, which one would imagine was farthest from God's thoughts, was preserved in all its ancient rigidity, the distinction between the touchables and untouchables. The lepers and other diseased people who flourished in this hot-house had the right

of entry into all private and public places, but the untouchables had not. These untouchables inhabited the outskirts of the village where cheetahs and panthers from the neighbouring forests roamed at large during nights and sometimes during the day too. But then theirs was only panchama flesh and panchama blood which even the regenerated caste-man enjoying his surreptitious bacon and mutton cannot bear within hearing distance.

Into the placid and caste-ridden atmosphere of Sindur, adventure rushed with unprecedented vigour. A huge tiger had chosen the neighbouring fields for its activities and oh! what appalling activities! Beasts galore had endeared the place to its pleased palate and occasional tastes of human blood had only whetted its desire for more. But tiger or no tiger, "men must work and women must weep, for there is

little to earn and many to keep." And who should work in the fields but the panchamas.

Among the tillers of the soil in this village was Enadhi. He was a hardy young man of about twenty-five and was probably the cleanest and best-looking man of the place. The village-folk were sure that such a fine man could never have sprung from panchama stock. To suit this theory some scurrilous gossip delved into the village history and unearthed a good Brahmin on whom could be fixed the responsibility of having brought Enadhi into the world. But whether or no his father was a Brahmin, the villagers were sure Enadhi was a panchama and they never let him forget it. He could not attend any of the schools, for, was it ever heard of that a panchama boy could have his lessons with the blessed offspring of the caste Hindus? And as for any one offering to teach the boy separately—well, they just dared someone to do it.

Enadhi was ploughing a field one fine morning. The field was perilously near the forest where the tiger was known to rest during the day. While his hands were mechanically guiding the plough, there was but one thought in his mind, how near he was to death. And as if it had walked out of his dreams, he saw just then the tiger stealthily stalking out of the woods towards him. He ran for dear life to the road near-by, for he saw men on the road and believed that there was safety in numbers.

As these men saw Enadhi running towards them and the tiger after him, they instinctively shot up the nearest trees so that when he was actually on the road they were all far above, two or three on each tree. Enadhi thought that he too could climb one of these trees and save himself, but what was his alarm when on trying to climb, the people on top shouted at him to go away as he was a panchama and they were caste-men. He tried the next tree but was promptly hounded out again. And so he went from tree to tree while the tiger was drawing dangerously near him.

In that fevered moment, when fear and love of life were gnawing at his heart, he cursed God that he had raised these barriers between man and man, that one man could sit safe and consign a fellow-man to death rather than have his sanctity violated, for he foolishly believed that God willed these distinctions. At last he found a tree that had not been made sacred by having a caste-man on it and he rushed towards it. He had just started to climb when the tiger darted at him and dragged

him down. Strong and muscular, Enadhi was not willing to die without a struggle and he gave the tiger a vigorous battle. But then God does not give men claws and brute paws and Enadhi found himself drenched with blood and knew his end was near. One of the men on the trees kindly threw him a big knife to stick into the tiger. But the knife fell out of reach and Enadhi was fainting into what might have been death, when who should rush in but



Govindan, one of the Brahmins of the village. He got hold of the knife and sticking it into the tiger, killed it. None of the onlookers on the trees would lend him a hand in carrying Enadhi to the hospital. Govindan lifted him and carried him to the hospital, and he was drenched with panchama blood.

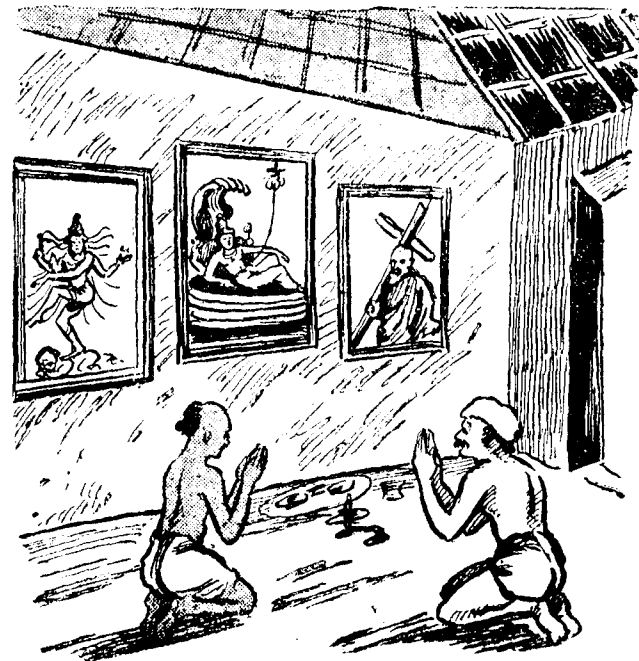
That night the Brahmins of the village assembled at the temple to decide the fate of this impious Brahmin who had brought their community into disgrace by smearing himself with panchama blood. On the council sat Subbu who never relished water but always wanted his drink alcoholic. There was Seshan too, who was a trustee of the temple which was rich by its own rights but found itself too poor to burn a light at night while a number of dancing girls were becoming extremely rich at Seshan's—or the temple's—expense. And there was Kittu who invariably breakfasted on bacon and eggs. This council decided to excommunicate Govindan, as he had fallen from the high traditions of that godly caste.

Govindan was promptly turned out of the *agraham* and he took his abode in a bungalow in the

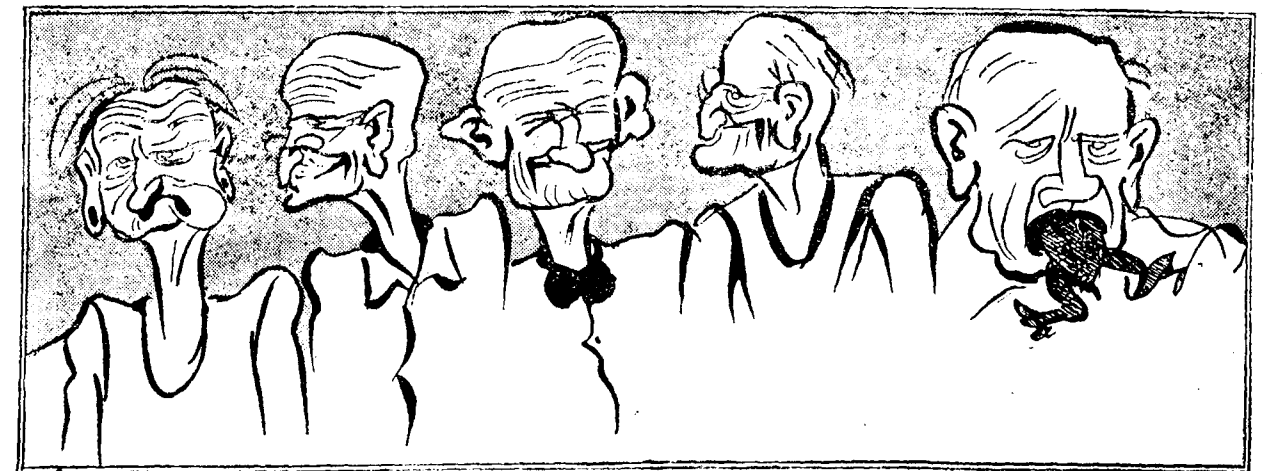
Christian colony. Presently this fallen Brahmin became Vandanam, a pious Christian.

When the temple priest wanted to celebrate the *Utthasam* and approached the villagers for subscriptions, he found none of them willing to open out his purse. It looked as if God must be content with the pride of His devotees being devout caste-men, when an anonymous donor sent fifty rupees to the priest. There was then no end of things for the people to eat in the name of the lord and even when they were full, no one worried to find out whose money had brought those things for them to eat. If they had known, there would probably have been an epidemic of vomiting in the village, for the money had come from the fallen Brahmin, Govindan.

And as days went by, Enadhi recovered, and today he is Emmanuel, the proud son-in-law of Vandanam. In their beautiful little house near the church there is a room where they worship, and there you see images of Vishnu and Siva, Nanda and Christ.



THE END



Will You Live Long?

by Omega

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

I have collected a number of recipes for longevity. But there is such a bewildering inconsistency about them that I defy anybody to evolve a common formula which will meet the acceptance of all centenarians. However, here they are—a chokeful of them, all novel and interesting in their variety.

One thing is certain. There are no bachelors in this picture. And the significant fact is that many of these centenarians are much-married men. They have gone to the wedlock again and again—each new marriage acting as a tonic and adding a few more years to their life. A Turkish centenarian, 136 not out, made the remarkable confession: "My secret is simply this—I have had 78 wives and they have all looked after me." Whether they looked after him simultaneously or in succession is not known, but this is obviously an extreme case. A news-item says that a Turk has married for the 11th time at the age of 153. After burying 27 children and 10 wives he is still going strong. Most Turkish centenarians have married many times, as their wives never seem to live long. Zaro Agha had twelve or thirteen wives but none of them was alive when he died. Coming nearer home, the latest piece of information is that U. Sai, the grand old man of Burma, passed away at the age of 109, leaving his 7th wife who is 85 years, and 36 chil-

dren and grandchildren. It is also said that he led a simple life and abstained from liquor.

Do spare meals and abstinence make for long life? Mr. Bernard Shaw, who will be 80 this month, sticks to this belief. "Eat no meat, drink no stimulants and avoid doctors except as personal friends," is the substance of his advice. The same is the policy of J. D. Rockefeller, the American multi-millionaire. He celebrated his 90th birthday this year and his diet consists merely of toast and water. Dr. Alexander Guinot, who died recently at the age of 103, gives a few prescriptions in his book, *How To Live To Be A Hundred Years Old*. Says he, "Do not eat too much, but eat what you think is good for you. I eat eggs and butter with every meal, and a little meat, vegetable and wine. Most of us eat too much. A young man who dies at eighty-five dies young...The normal age for man is between 100 and 110."

As against these let me introduce to you a few multi-meal champions. Mrs. Andrew Cross, the author of *Red Letter Days* refers to her nurse—a centenarian—who, as she declared, had eaten all her life: "A dewbit and breakfast, a staybit dinner, a moment and crummet and a bit after supper," altogether eight

(Continued on page 28)

The Long And

Reading Time • About 8 Minutes

THE other day I went out with a friend of mine who is something over six feet one. I noticed that as we proceeded, every one looked up at my companion and whispered, and once or twice I caught the words, "Oh, there goes the tall shanks!" I should say I was amused at first and began even to envy my friend his distinguishing height that marked him out in a crowd. But at one corner, I passed an acquaintance of mine, who was standing with a companion by his side, and I just caught him telling the man by his side about me. The third man asked him, "Which of the two?" My acquaintance explained, "That short man." Well, I do not like the idea of being referred to by anyone as a short man. Ever since, whenever I find myself in the company of a man taller than me, I feel somehow always on thorns because I cannot help the feeling that, by contrast, I am losing my prestige in the eyes of the passers-by and being dubbed a 'short man'. I can never get over that self-consciousness.

I know it is not exactly a discredit to be short; I suppose a short man can no more help his shortness than the tall man his tallness. There is no need really for a man to be ashamed because he is short. But in my case, I have to protest that I am not a short man at all. I am of the correct height, neither shorter nor taller. I am just what a man ought to be. I stand just five feet eight and a quarter, no more, no less. Is it Aristotle who said that every man ought to marry at twenty-eight? You know that was because he himself married at that particular age. And Swift, somewhat a different kind of philosopher, asserted that a man who managed to become a married man was not far short of a blithering fool. And he never married, I suppose, not out of choice. Perhaps it is such an innocent self-deception that is at work in my

case, but somehow, I find that anything more than that particular height in man becomes uncouth and glaring, and anything less, depressing and almost contemptible.

Now, in spite of my correct height, of which I am perfectly convinced, I do feel a certain complex in the presence of a man who stands a head over me. I have to literally look up to him when I talk and that is a thing which always goes against my grain. More often than not, I know or I guess that the man is a veritable ass in the matter of intellectual quality and I feel with a proper pride, that I am intellectually ten feet by his side. Still, the sense of being out-classed by him persists. At every available opportunity, somehow I feel tempted to show him unmistakably that I do not care a strawberry for his superior height and that in all other matters, the advantage is all entirely on my side.

I suppose it is this same constant self-consciousness that is responsible for the inordinate vanity and aggressiveness of these short men of the world. A small man of, say, five feet two, goes into a company of five feet eight and a quarters. He is an odd figure there, unnecessarily conspicuous by his shortness, and at crucial times, disconcertingly inconspicuous in the company of men who stand a head over him and shut him out from the light. He is afraid every moment that he will be overlooked and left out if he did not make himself felt. He cannot possibly find any other way

of doing it than by butting in inopportunely into every conversation that may be going on and being unnecessarily vehement and challenging in his arguments. It is as if he feels that he is being bamboozled by a group of long men and being towered out of his position. He suspects that the others are ever talking over his head, because he is so inconspicuous in their



Short Of It

by K. Gopalan

company. Every second he seems to be on thorns to say to the others, "Well, I am here, and despite my height, I am as good as any son of woman among you. Don't you forget me!" Naturally, the short man strikes the men who are of the normal height as a vain and bullying type, who is always wanting to thrust himself to the front, which is certainly very unfair and undeserved.

All physical defects bring about just such a self-consciousness and aggressiveness. Certain peculiarities in the body, a mole at the tip of a man's nose, a squinting eye, a harelip, a twisted ear, cannot but engender an obsession in his mind about these peculiarities, and he suspects that everyone he meets with is unnecessarily and quite offensively gazing at his disfigurement. It may be that try how they will, people's eyes cannot but unconsciously come to rest on the unfamiliar and peculiar point on a man's physiognomy or it may be merely the poor man's obsessed fancy. He is very unhappy over it. When two persons are talking in the presence of a deaf man, in a low or even a normal voice, it is quite natural for him to fancy that he is being discussed, very likely being mocked at because of his deafness. Sometimes it is funny how trivial things offend these defective men. I have often seen dumb men take great offence and become excited whenever any one happens to rub his nose in their presence. I do not know what connection there can possibly be between that most necessary piece of human anatomy and dumbness. Some psycho-analyst may try to explain it as some sort of conditioned reflex in the men or some other mental obsession explained by unintelligible names.

But coming to these short men, it is really hard on them that they come into a world apparently made exclusively for five-feet-eight-and-a-quarters, with a grievance and handicap. They certainly cannot help their shortness, whoever could. I believe Swift was

trying to explain the psychology of the short men when he wrote about Gulliver among the Brobdingnagians. From the moment these poor short men come into this unfair world, they are clouted and snubbed and overlooked, and whenever they make bold to confront the long men, they are looked down with contempt or pity, which is worse. We all know, individually, that there is no known relation between the height of a man and the quality of his grey cells. Socrates the wise man of Greece, we are told, was not exactly a tall man nor even a good-looking man. But collectively, I am bound to say that the majority of long-legs tyrannises over the short-legs and makes

them feel like blooming fish out of water. Personally I do not see why five-feet-two or a little less may not be the approved height in this planet for a man, except the fact that by that standard, I and the majority of the living men would become abnormalities and misfits. It is just the power of numbers, nothing more. Round feet may be the ideal of feminine beauty in China, and necks as long as the giraffe's the height of fashion among some tribes-people in some part of the world, but these are looked upon with unmistakable disapproval in India. Our European sisters who shudder with pity at the sight of the Eastern women with punctures on the ears and nose and bangles and anklets, have agreed to crush their dainty feet

and walk with dignity on miniature stilts. These conventions of the majority are always silly, but always tyrannical.

But these five-feet-tuos can have a consolation. It is not they alone who have to suffer at the hands of the majority in this very conservative and narrow-minded world. The inordinately long men, the men who offend and depart from the majority on the other side, are made to feel as much out of place and out of spirits.



And then, think of him in holy wedlock! In a world of men and women who at best come below his shoulder, he has more often than not to content himself with one of the 'ordinary', and then, they look a very funny couple. By his side, she looks a midget, and she is very unhappy about it. He cannot kiss her on the quiet but he has to bend double, looking clumsy and unprepossessing or he has to raise her in his arms to his lips which is sure to make them as conspicuous as a light-house.

It is rather of an irony that while the short man at every possible opportunity tries to come into the picture and make himself conspicuous, the long man

is ever making frantic efforts to escape attention. It is really amusing to find that a few inches' difference from the accepted height should make the one appear vain, aggressive, vulgar and scrambling to get 'a place in the sun' and the other look humble, submissive, content to be led and keep the train and ever diffident about himself. The one assiduously courts attention which the other as assiduously shuns.

Thus, come to think of it, it is really wonderful how a man's legs have so much to do with his character, and mind. There seems to be more in this matter of legs than meets the eye at the first glance.

THE END

WILL YOU LIVE LONG?—(Continued from page 25)

meals a day. Mr. Arthur Davenport of Lokenba, New South-Wales, who is nearing his 90th birthday, attributes his good health to always having eaten six meals a day.

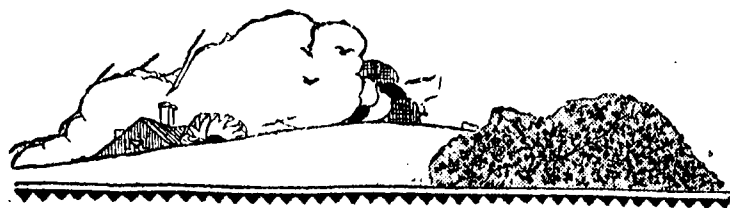
In some countries women are longer lived than men. Of the 110 centenarians who died in 1933 in Great Britain, only 19 were men. There are 124 centenarians in the Nazi Republic, of whom 81 are women. Only one woman has remained a spinster, all others are mothers of large families, the average number of children being six. The Germans claim that the true prescription for long life is marriage and *hard work*. The same is the view of Mrs. Ann Stansall of Mansfield, 104, still going strong.

But a careful compiler quotes figures to show that lazy habits are generally associated with long life. In the village of Bradford Abbas, in Dorsetshire, England, we find a wonderful collection of old people. Five of the villagers are over 90, 12 are over 80, 20 are over 70 and so on. This is one of the laziest little villages in Great Britain. No train stops there and a motor-bus goes there only once a week.

But look at these queer cases. Mr. William Green of Harborough, Leicestershire, attributes his long life to a diet of live frogs! "I swallow them alive," says he, "and I know that while I continue to eat them I shall have no disease. All this talk about living a simple life and going to bed early in order to reach old age is rubbish." A Mexican woman has reached the age of 120 as a result of eating raw onions all her life. Ahmet Bey, a white-bearded Turk, who claims to be the world's oldest man living, is a firm believer in the usefulness of cold water as an aid to longevity. "Water is the thing," he says. "Whenever I went out for a walk I used to make a practice of drinking water from springs. I have never been really ill, but I twice had colds in the head. How did I get over them? By drinking lots of cold water, of course."

So here is a plethora of recipes, to suit all tastes and all pockets, as they say. Make your choice, dear reader, so that you may trespass at least 'three score years and ten'. Speaking for myself, I am not so much in love with this life as to prolong my existence by imposing all varieties of restraints over my diet and habits. "I shall die young but I shall have had a hell of a time."

THE END



Bury Good Manners

by Mrs. Kamala

Reading Time • About 4 Minutes

WHEN I read some days back in one of our local papers an extract from a foreign paper indulging in a piece of plain-speaking on Mussolini (bordering on billingsgate) I was chuckling to my heart's content and calling that extract as wholesome a piece of journalism as ever went into print. I call that good manners, while constitutional invocation of articles, conventions, sections and sub sections of the League, when destructive and inhuman war was going on with poison-gases and shattering bombs, is positively bad manners. Or again to pester the Negus, 'holidaying' from administrative worries, with resolutions of some of the Youths' Leagues of our presidency, condemning his flight, is a piece of cowardice which they want to attribute to the Negus who was as brave as any man in History under the circumstances.

Now to an example from everyday life. A woman with her son aged eight was travelling in an over-crowded tram. I presumed he was a well-bred boy from what followed.

A huge piece of bulky womanhood rolled into the crowded compartment and the tram oscillated for some seconds. (This may be a piece of bad manners, Ed., to refer to human infirmities, but don't you know I am for burying good manners for good.) Every passenger stuck to his seat like a leach and the boy rose up.

"Won't you sit down, ma'am?" She thanked the boy and sat down. The boy acted like a man. He was proud. He began to concentrate, in the moving tram, on the aerial acrobatics with the support-loops

hanging over-head in rows. Only for a short second. The lady was gallanter. She raised the boy with an easy heave and sat him upon her lap before he could know what happened. He was mortified, shocked, ashamed, at such a sudden suppression of manhood. It is needless for me to say here that struggling off from a woman of such dimensions is a Herculean task. He simply murmured an inaudible protest and resigned himself to it.

I imagine he ought to have said something to this effect to his Ma on alighting:

"Ma, if I don't bury this etiquette and good manners, before I take another cup of water in my life, call me an ass."

So putting two and two together what do we arrive at? What are good manners? Is there any borderline between good and bad? What is good for one is bad for the other. Therefore a safe via media will be, blunt-plainspeaking, without all those conventional, hypocritical and sycophantic etiquettes, which the world calls good manners.

Again what are good manners? Do they make the man or do they, as some who admire rough diamonds, think, only make him less of a man? Sometimes one is half-persuaded by the old people who remember wearing fantastic clothes, fantastically worn, that manners have sadly deteriorated since their day, but I fancy that they have merely changed, and that the pattern of good manners is a simpler thing than it used to be, just as our dresses and dressing are simpler and for the same reason.

Manners must adapt themselves to the paraphernalia and tempo of life. There is no time nowadays for prostrating before elders, or for elaborate bows and sweeping flourishes. If you do the first thing at the Round Tanna when you meet your grandfather, you would be run over, or run in for holding up traffic. The most one can do is to wave a hand toward the hand that is waved or show all the thirty-two teeth in a grin of recognition, that is all. Hurry and noise fix the style of our behaviour. Good style, good form, good manners, these are not good unless they fit their surroundings. And so the elaborate, decorative standards of the leisured by-gone centuries have been replaced by a simplicity, a severity, and a brevity befitting a hurried world of dust and crowds

and snorting machines. Motors and aeroplanes, elevators, and telephones have designed our clothes for us and our manners too.

And whether we like the new style or the old is of no consequence. We are helpless. We are not consulted. The great machine rushes on, whirling us up and down, sucking us in and blowing us out of the funnel of life like some enormous vacuum cleaner; and the problem of decent, becoming, agreeable behaviour gets to be a problem more serious than that of the curve of a bow or the pattern of a greeting. Indeed, the question presents itself: Will good manners survive at all in this frenzied modern world? Is it possible to remain serene in the hustle and lend to life by one's gestures, words, and expression of countenance something of the charm that depends upon gentleness?

Again another question, and the young world to-day seems to be asking it: Do manners really matter any more? Is courtesy important? Elegance of demeanour, charm of gesture, grace of phrase, aren't these worn out hypocrisies, unsuitable and worthless relics of an elaborate insincerity that we are glad to be rid of? And the answer of youth seems to be: "No more nonsense of that sort. No more humbug." And the young women say: "*We don't want chivalry; we want equality.*" And the young men say: "We have no time and no use for fine clothes, fine manners, fine phrases. If you want to be treated as men, so much the better. It will save us time. And as most of what they say to one another is said on the telephone, what they do say and the way they say it do not really seem to matter at all.

They understand one another, and that, presumably, is the main thing. They have evolved a sort of shorthand conversation, a telegraphic social style; a technique that, compared with the soft subtleties of the French salon and the French boudoir, resembles the rattling of typewriters and the syncopated beat of drums and cymbals. Culture laughs with derision at the foppish elegance of the 19th century. It condemns affectation.

It is in search of reality. It exalts sincerity, truth, naturalness. It is enamoured of life, real life, life in the raw, life lived at the highest pitch of excitement. And in its pursuit of these things, inevitably, good manners are not considered as of very much value.

THE END



The Toadstools Of India

by John A. Henry

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

THE mushroom paper, periodical, or journal— whichever of these three names you like to call it, instead of by its rightful appellation of 'rag'— still flourishes and blooms in all parts of the world, India especially. In most cases too, 'mushroom' is too gentle a word. One can eat most kinds of mushroom without being poisoned.

Considering the rapid growth of journalism and fiction writing in India, I think, as, I am sure, do many others who wield a pen, amateurish or otherwise, that some very definite and widely exhibited law should be brought into force for the protection of writers who think they have found a gold mine and eventually realise that all is not gold that glitters, as the monkey said when it stole Mrs. Newrich's bracelet.

Some law *may* exist in this direction, but it either seems to be so well hidden in nooks and crannies that in turn are hidden in legal tomes, or so well ignored by many proprietors of publications as to be entirely negligible. In England there are some very useful laws on the subject. An author knows that an Editor cannot publish his work without paying for it unless he, the author, states that he has submitted the work free, gratis and for nothing but the honour of seeing his name in print.

In India, except for three or four well established and honourable publications, one does not know whether one's next article is going to fetch the remarkable remuneration of Rs. 5/-, Rs. 3/-, Rs. 2/-, or merely Rs. 0/-!

"Protect yourself by negotiating with these people first," I was once told by an advocate in Ambala. "Ask them what rate they pay, and not until you have done so should you submit your work. Then you have something in writing to go on should they fail to pay."

I had not thought of the necessity of this, for, with 90% of publications in England, one merely submits a story, without any covering letter and it is accepted or refused and paid for if accepted.

However, I adopted this plan thenceforth. The first 'victims' of our cunning were two papers in Western India. One meticulously and honourably paid for the first two articles of mine which it published. Then came a 3500 word story at the agreed price of 20/- (1) and after that, all began to grow quiet on the Western front.

After a courteous interval, I wrote and asked about payment. I received the reply that the Manager was out of town and would return in a month or so.

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After a month or so I decided that the interval was becoming too courteous. So I sent a registered letter, acknowledgement due, enquiring further. To this I received a reply—that the Manager's stay out of town had been protracted. After that I wrote several times, more out of curiosity than anything else, for one does not usually go to court for a matter of 20/- and it was really marvellous how that Manager disliked his home-town! And now, after almost a year, I think the interval has become so courteous as to be forgotten.

The other publication was a mysterious one which went by a very romantic name. I did not think that a paper with such a romantic name could get up to any monkey tricks. But it just goes to show even romance lets you down sometimes!

The Editor published, at the agreed and wonderful rate of 10/-, a 3000 word, almost heart-rending honey-moonish story of mine. After some weeks I enquired about payment and was sent a receipt to sign, relinquishing all rights in the story for that 10/-! However, as I knew it had been published and in all probability I would not be able to realise anything further from it in other directions, I signed on the dotted line. And, of course, I haven't received the money from that day to this! The wages of trust is a smack in the eye!

Another publication, which owes me 100/-, is a South Indian paper. It is indeed a wonderful feeling being owed money! One somehow feels that there is always something in one's Bank Account to fall back upon on a rainy day. But as this paper has, I believe, followed many of its kind into the ghostly realms of forgotten journals—together, apparently, with its European Editor who 'belonged to several Literary Societies Abroad' (!)—well, I'm hoping to collect my 100/- from that Editor in Heaven—or Hell—the latter preferably, for I have heard one doesn't need money in Heaven.

Incidentally, when the paper first started its activities, I wished to emulate certain well known authors by having a volume of my short stories published in book form. The Editor told me that this could very easily be done. All I had to do was to pay my share of the cost of publication, about 350/-. I could, if I wished to, pay 100/- down, 150/- when the book came out, and the balance of 100/- would cancel all his debts to me!

THE END

Naturally, I shook my head at him. I don't suppose he saw me shake my head, for I was in Delhi at the time. But my written refusal seemed to annoy him and hurt his tender feelings. When, after receiving an eventually dishonoured cheque for Rs. 20/-, I intimated that I could attempt to recover the money by legal means, I was politely threatened with a promise of the being blacklisted!

The most amusing toadstool I had dealings with was another publication which went by a funny name. After the Editor of this hilarious journal published my first story, well over a year ago now, I wrote and asked what rates they paid and when they paid. I was still asking the same question about six months ago, without having received a reply. I sent this magazine something like 23,000 words in short stories and articles, and the total gain to me for the lot wasone acceptance card!

When I intimated that I was taking legal action, I and my advocate were told that the Editor had been under the impression that I had submitted everything for free publication and that if he had only known I expected payment, he would *never* have published a word of mine! This despite the fact that the title page of the Magazine held the alluring information: "*articles will be paid at our usual rates.*" The usual rates, very obviously, were a cipher every time!

The only satisfaction I have is knowing that I sent this paper all the literary tripe that I couldn't place anywhere else!

This Editor got a brilliant idea once—that of offering a prize of 150/- for the best story entered for a Literary 'Competition'. "Results will be announced later," we were told. Many of the best of the lesser known writers competed, supplying the Editor with quite a good annual number. That was in July 1935. But the results of that competition will be announced *much* later! How much later we cannot say. But we are hopefully waiting to receive cheques from the Editor's hand before the Judgement Throne on Doomsday!

This is not a morbid grouse. There is rather a lot of fun in writing in India. It is just an appeal in the hope that *something* may be done to help the really promising Indian Literary profession flourish instead of becoming just another racket.

Fun For All



"Your Honour," said the magistrate's clerk, "your bull pup has chewed up the Bible."

"Make the witness kiss the dog," replied the magistrate. "We can't adjourn to get a new Bible."

The club-house bore was bragging that he could name any brand of spirit. Then a member, taking a flask from his pocket, asked the connoisseur to taste the contents and tell him what it was.

He did so, and promptly spat it out.

"Great heavens!" he cried, "that's petrol!"

"Yes, I know," came the bland reply, "but what brand?"

The telephone bell rang in the charge-room and the police sergeant picked up the receiver.

"Hullo," said a distant voice over the wire. "Ish that the polish station?"

The sergeant answered in the affirmative.

"Good," said the voice. "Ish there a chap named Bill Jones there?"

"No," said the mystified sergeant. "No one of that name."

"Thanksh," said the voice. "Thish room I'm in ish-locked and I thought I was in gaol."

A: Aristotle was *NOT* a liar. Or was he?

B: Aristotle once said: "I never speak the truth." Therefore Aristotle *was* a liar!

But if he didn't speak the truth, he was not speaking the truth when he said. "I never speak the truth."

Therefore he was *not* a liar.

But if he was not a liar, he was telling the truth when he said "I never speak the truth."

Therefore if he *was* a liar?

So if he *was* a liar, he was *not* a liar; and if he was *not* a liar, he *was* a liar, and.....

"Say, Zeke, when you goin' to marry Eliza Jane? You know you been goin' round with her for twenty years!"

"Don't rush me, pappy, I want to make sure she isn't a passing fancy."

The Man: Who was that lady I saw you out wit last night?

The Second Do: And what makes you think I can outwit a lady?

Prof: Can you tell me one of the uses of cowhide?

Fresh: Yes, it keeps the cow together.

Wife (To late-returning husband): Is that you, John?

John: It'd better be.

A junior reporter, frequently reprimanded for relating too many details and warned to be brief, turned in the following:

"A shooting affair occurred last night. Sir Dwight Hopeless, a guest at Lady Panmore's ball, complained of feeling ill, took a drink, his hat, his coat, his departure, no notice of his friends, a taxi, a pistol from his pocket, and finally his life. Nice chap. Regrets and all that!"

The Geisha Girl

by Jyeshta

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

FOR a country which has so thoroughly imbibed the culture of the West, the Geisha Girl strikes a discordant note in the life of Japan. Just as in India, Japan still subscribes to the view that Man is superior to Woman. If the Geisha thrives in Japan it is not because of the apathy of its enlightened women; the prejudices or rather the abuses of an age-old civilisation die but slowly. But so far as the Geisha Girl of Japan is concerned, it looks as if the beginning of the end is yet to be sighted.

Every important function in Japan is enlivened by feasting, with the Geisha supplying the 'tempo'. From these functions, women are excluded: naturally, since no woman, however docile, would care to see her husband made much of by a professional 'joy-stick'. These functions are held in the tea-house. When a party is projected, the person giving the party passes word to the proprietor of the tea-house to get ready the required number of Geisha. For a large party, the entertainers include girls of tender age called *bangyoku* from 13 to 16 years of age; mature girls aged between 16 and 24; and also a few older women.

When all the guests shall have foregathered at the tea-house, the girls enter the room with polite bows. They take their seats, one in front of each guest, and serve him *saki*. The Geisha does not serve food. That is done by maids, the regular employees of the tea-house. At the command of the guests, the Geisha girls play on musical instruments, sing or dance.

The tea-house proprietor, who supplies the girls, charges the host by the hour for the Geisha entertainment provided. For a brief afternoon pleasure, a Geisha costs at least 20 yen.

This is an upper class game in Japan, which the lower orders cannot afford to indulge. An upper class entertainment without the stimulant of the Geisha would be a stiff, hopelessly punctilious affair.

The Geisha doesn't get all the money paid for her. Each Geisha with any pretence to popularity has a patron who pays ungrudgingly for her food, dress and everything which makes her what she is supposed to

be—a thing of beauty and pleasure. While these Japanese pleasure-seekers spend prodigally where their Geisha is concerned, they become tight-fisted where their wives come in. This is not necessarily neglect of the wife. He believes, and tradition supports him, that a wife has no need to show off her charms outside her home.

It so happens, too, that a man who pays for the education and upkeep of a Geisha either eventually marries her, or buys her a house and installs her there as his mistress, in which event the Geisha may not trade her charms to other men. Also with a wealthy patron behind her, a Geisha runs a Geisha establishment herself, providing pleasure for whoever is in search of pleasure.

It is said that it is easier to become a film-star than to become a popular Geisha. The training of a Geisha is extraordinarily precise and covers a long period of time. Indigent parents who have good-looking daughters often maintain themselves by selling their girls to Geisha houses, at a tender age. So that the stigma of human commerce may be avoided, the girls so sold are adopted as daughters of the house. Thus a girl sold to Geisha-hood calls her mistress 'mother' and her older associates 'sisters'. From the very beginning, the girl is taught to observe filial obedience to her elders. Often during the course of training, they are spanked. It is said that this training gives to the Geisha that undefinable distinction always associated with a Japanese courtesan.

A Geisha sits before the man she is to entertain and whispers into his ear a thousand endearing words, but she may not make real love, unless she was so commanded by her mistress.

At the better-known tea-houses, only people well-known in the public life of the country or those with bona fide introductions from persons in high social positions would be acceptable to the mistress of the establishment. Considering the kind of profession these women practise, it may sound strange that they should demand a high measure of respectability from their patrons. But it must be remembered that a mistress of a tea-shop is not a nobody. She is

generally a woman of great political and business ability, and she manages men at the top in the social ladder with great artistry.

Thus while the wife at home confines herself to keeping her home clean and to bearing children, the Geisha is a great force influencing the public life of the country, by love-lore whispered into her patron's avid ear.

These tea-houses are not merely pleasure resorts where a tired man finds a relaxation hallowed by tradition. It is also a place where politicians and big businessmen meet and come to momentous decisions. The stiff elderly aristocrat, the merchant prince, the political prince, enters a tea-house and loses his stiffness before the smiles of his siren. He discusses with her politics, business, art, anything and everything. And the Geisha is equipped to discuss these high matters competently.

A tea-house is not a boisterous business. With the sound of traffic all around, a Geisha tea-house gives an impression of rest and repose. Evidently the Japanese

take their Geisha pleasures with as little noise as possible.

It is computed that there are about 80,000 women in the Geisha profession in Japan. And those at the top of the profession have incomes five or six times those of the women pursuing intellectual professions. Yet there appears to be no case on record where a Geisha became a millionaire. She is expected to spend enormous sums of money on her person not only to keep up her beauty but also her prestige.

The Geisha's bloom wears off much sooner than in the case of other 'honest' women. Irregular eating, smoking, drinking and all the 'fun' of her profession, make her faded much before her time.

However, it is not at all an unusual sight to see a Geisha aged seventy years.

What of the future of this time-honoured institution? That it will not be rosy, is evident. For the neglected wife of Japan is grumbling, and grumbings have a knack of ending up as roars.

THE END



Elderly Visitor: What a pleasant sight it is in these days to see a dear old lady busy with her knitting-needles!

The Grand-daughter: Yes, Sweet, isn't it? But as a matter of fact, she's not knitting—she's spotting winners in tomorrow's races!

The Floral Debt—

Reading Time • About 6 Minutes

by T. Narasimham

THE Calcutta Underwriters Limited was a big insurance company. Among its accounts staff was a ledger-keeper, M. Sanyal, about forty years old, almost bald on the head, and rather shabby in dress. He was a weak-willed man, following the lead of others in the office, content with the small salary which he earned, never making any attempt to get out of the rut which he burrowed for himself. He attended office in the morning punctual to the minute, sat behind his ledger, chased figures till evening, and left office on the stroke of five.

The office had a small army of stenographers—all Anglo-Indian girls, rouged, powdered and giggling. One day the ranks of this lovely army received reinforcements in the shape of a beautiful Bengali girl. Padmini, she was called, just turned eighteen, fresh, beautiful and open as the flower whose name she bore.

From the day she came into the world of The Calcutta Underwriters Limited, there was a change in the ledger-keeper, Mr. Sanyal. He dressed himself a little more neatly than was his wont, and whereas he was never known to smile, he now entered the office with a shy smile playing on his pallid face. On the day following Padmini's advent, Mr. Sanyal was seen entering the imposing portals of his office bearing a bunch of lovely dahlias. He approached the table at which Miss Padmini was dusting her typewriter, and placed the dahlias before her. "Good morning, Miss Padmini," he said. The astonished girl stared at him, and at the gorgeous flowers before her. But her initial emotion gave place almost immediately to one of admiration—not for the wizened Mr. Sanyal but for the flowers. It happened that Miss Padmini's one obsession in life was flowers. In her home in the outskirts of Calcutta, she mothered a small garden, bestowing on it all the care and love that a mother would bestow on her first-born. She gathered the dahlias and hid her face in them. "Oh, Mr. Sanyal, what lovely flowers! Thank you. Do you by any chance grow them yourself?"

Mr. Sanyal's happy smile was vitiated by a large gulp. "Yes, yes, Miss Padmini," he stammered. "I grow them myself. I love flowers. I am happy to see that you share the sentiment with me."

"Oh, I love flowers, Mr. Sanyal, how I love them! Thank you again, sir."

Thus every morning, Mr. Sanyal brought Miss Padmini magnificent flowers. One day it was roses, another day it was chrysanthemums, a third day dahlias and so on. He would offer them to Miss Padmini with a naive gesture of reverence, and she would accept them graciously.

This little floral interlude afforded endless amusement to the rest of the staff. It was a 'welcome break' to them in the arid monotony of office routine.

One day Mr. Sanyal brought a particularly lovely bunch of marigolds. They were a rare species, and whoever produced them must have bestowed on them great care and ingenuity. Miss Padmini looked at them with wide-eyed admiration. "Oh, Mr. Sanyal, they're marvellous! I wonder how you find time to produce such downright darlings. Have you a big garden, Mr. Sanyal? Your wife must be very happy indeed, helping you in your garden and sharing your happiness at the result of your joint efforts."

Mr. Sanyal smiled a bit guiltily. "It is not a big garden, Miss Padmini. And—er—I have no wife."

This was news to the girl. A middle-aged married man making a girl a daily floral offering in the open was all right. But if the devotee happened to be a bachelor, though old enough to be the goddess's father, the offering took a somewhat different complexion. But who cares? thought Miss Padmini. He had not made any improper advances. Mr. Sanyal was an old darling. Let the others in the office laugh, the beasts!

One day Mr. Sanyal stayed away from office. He had a cold. The cold lost itself in ugly complications. Twenty days later, Mr. Sanyal died of pneumonia. Nobody in the office took much notice. The poor fellow was a past-master at the game of self effacement. Miss Padmini applied for a day's leave and obtaining Mr. Sanyal's address from the office, went to his place, to pay him her last respects. The address led her to a squalid quarter of Ballygunj. She knocked at the door of a tumble-downhouse. An old woman, an aunt of the deceased, let her in, and took her to the room where the remains of old Sanyal

lay covered with a white sheet, ready for the ghat. The girl stood at the foot of the bed, and a tear trickled down her cheek. The old woman looked at the girl queerly.

"Can I see Mr. Sanyal's garden?" asked Padmini of the old lady.

"Garden! What garden?"

Padmini bit her lip to suppress a sob. She noticed as she came away that there was only one more room in the house—the kitchen. There was not even a back-yard, let alone a garden. Miss Padmini walked back to the main thoroughfare, at a corner of which she noted a florist's shop. She entered the shop and

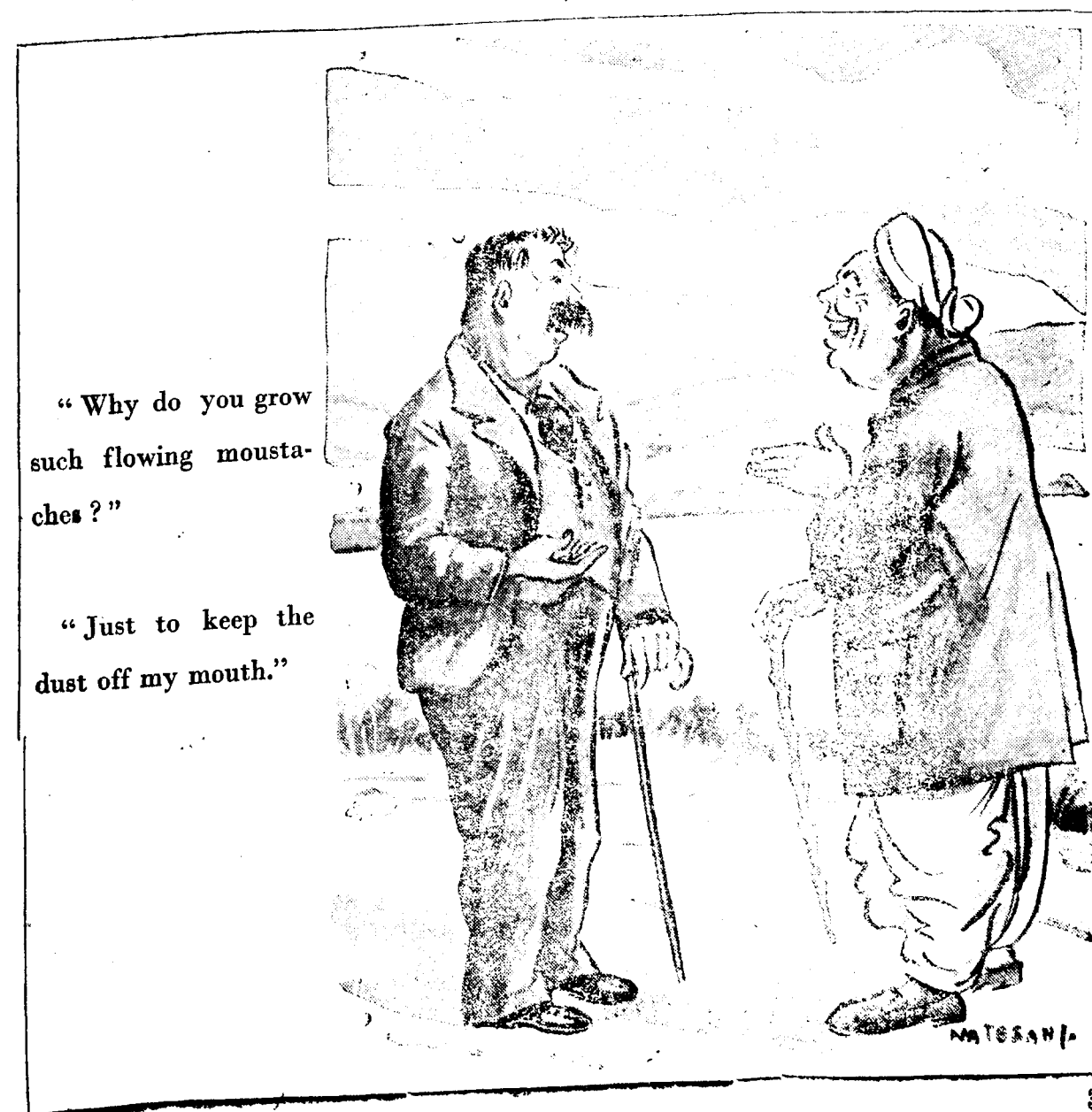
ordered, to the florist's astonishment, a cart-load of lovely flowers to be delivered immediately at the door of one Mr. Sanyal.

"Ah Miss," sighed the florist, "he was a great customer of mine. He used to buy from me every day the best flowers I had."

"I know," said Padmini and walked out with a man bearing the flowers following her. She re-entered the room in which lay Mr. Sanyal, cold and stiff. Over the white pall, she distributed the flowers with a reverent hand. She lifted the sheet that covered the familiar brow and kissed it unafraid, unashamed.

She had paid her floral debt.

THE END



The Olympiad

by V. V. Narayanan

Reading Time • About 5 Minutes

THE papers are now full of the doings of the athletes of the world, gathered at Berlin for participation in the Olympiad. It would be interesting to lift the curtain over the last twenty and odd centuries and see how they played the Olympic games in the country of their origin before the Christian era.

In ancient Greece, where the idea of these games originated, they were conducted primarily to build up and preserve a beautiful manhood. Every temporal activity in Greece as elsewhere was linked up with a god or a row of gods to invest that activity with a divine sanction.

Thus the original Olympic tourney was conducted in honour of Zeus the supreme of the national deities of Greece with his seat on Mount Olympus.

Every town in Greece had a well appointed gymnasium. And almost every important household in the country sent an athlete to Olympus every four years. A young man with his eyes on Olympus would be in training for months before the event came off. At last the day of departure comes. He goes into the ladies' quarters of the house to bid his mother good-bye. The mother blesses him and covers his shoulders with a woollen mantle which she has spun with her own hands. In those days women were denied the privilege of participating in and witnessing the great festival. Thus the leave-taking is a very touching scene.

Then the young man goes to the courtyard of his house and kneels before the altar of Zeus with a prayer invoking the blessing of the all-highest in his Olympic aspirations.

Perhaps accompanied by his father, the young man sallies forth. They pass through thick pine

woods, along purple hill-sides studded with orange groves, by streams alive with life and laughter. From the outlying districts it takes a three days' or four days' journey to reach the venue of the Olympic games. So our young man meets other young men bound on the same high purpose as he. They sleep in the open, eating a diet of figs, olives and cheese. Midway through to their destination, these young athletes who mostly started single, form into happy bands. They progress forward singing and laughing. Traditional enmities are forgotten, for such is the will of God during the time of the festival. Among these bands are others, older and more sedate. They are poets going to Olympus with their latest creations, to recite before the judges and receive their meed.

They reach Elis. There is yet a month to go for the great games to open. During this month, the youths aspiring for Olympic honours put themselves into hard training. Only those who have had a training in this month may participate in the games.

At last the games begin. Nestling in the green hills is the great stadium. On a dais in the centre are the judges. Heralds in picturesque costumes advance into the stadium and, blowing lustily on their trumpets, announce the names of the athletes and the home-town from which they came and the games they are participating in. Then the 'swearing in ceremony'. The participants are made to swear that they would meticulously observe the rules of the games, that they would not transgress the will of the umpires, that they would not try to gain advantage over the other competitors by trickery.

Now all is set for the races.

First the running race. The competing young men, almost bare of clothing, their muscles standing out in glorious bulges, streaking past in the bright sun over the oval of the spacious stadium, are literally a sight for the gods. The name of the winner is announced with a fanfare. Then in succession are gone through contests in jumping, boxing, wrestling etc. The most exciting race is the one in which the entrants run a race wearing full armour. After that the chariot races and finally the horse races.

During the various stages of each race the vast multitude roars its approbation, just as we do these days. The only difference is there was no barracking in those days, at least there is no record of it.

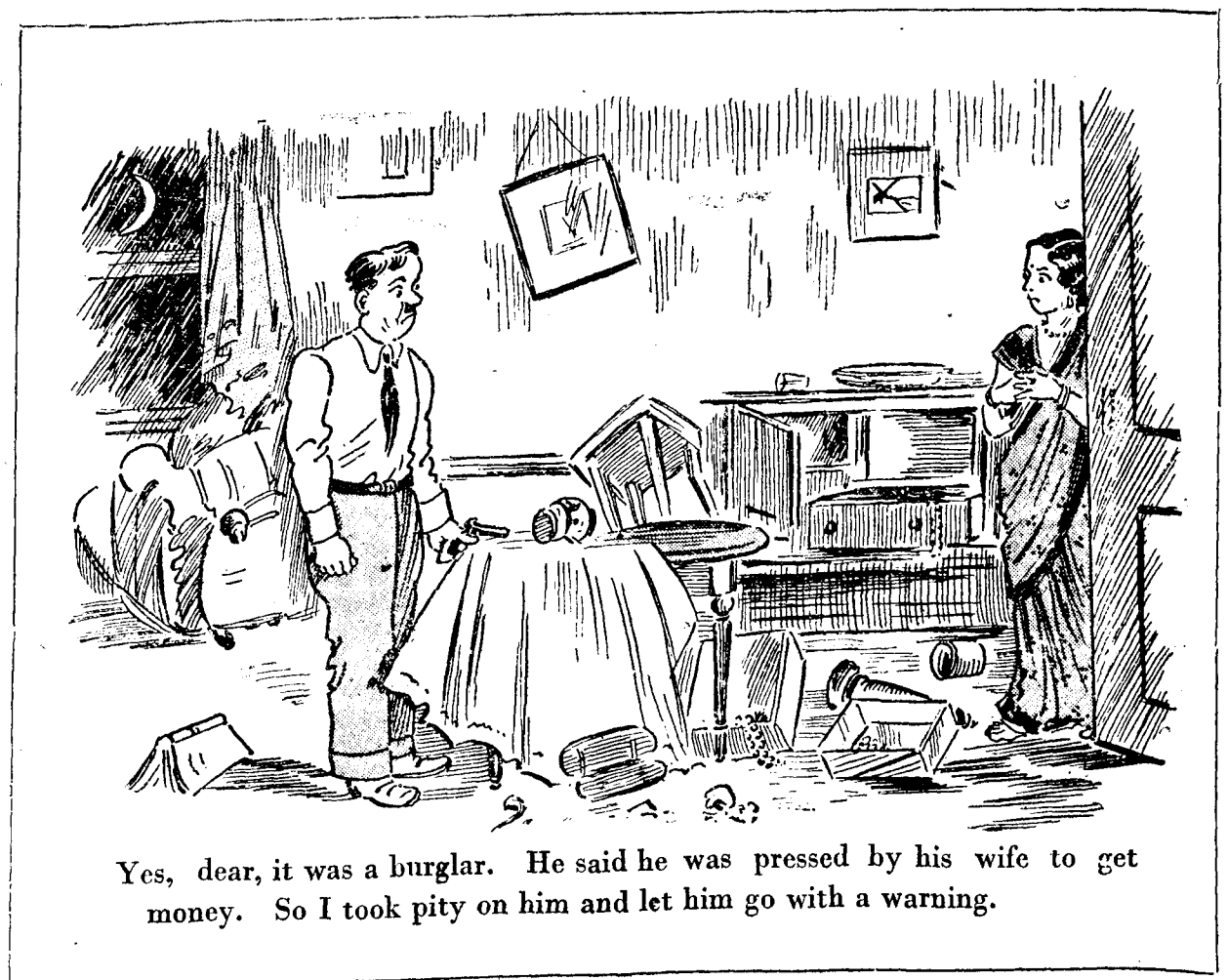
The successful athletes are each presented with a crown of olive leaves by the judges on the dais, the most coveted honour in ancient Greece.

The festival is rounded off with the enactment of plays by the noted playwrights of the day and by recitations by poets of their compositions.

After great merry-making, the exodus home begins. Every athlete is escorted home by his relatives or friends. When they reach their homes, the gates of the city-wall are held unworthy of the entry of the conquering heroes. So they knock down a part of the wall, and, through the breach so created, the heroes enter their town amidst thunderous applause.

They rest on their laurels till the next Olympiad, which is four years off.

THE END



Yes, dear, it was a burglar. He said he was pressed by his wife to get money. So I took pity on him and let him go with a warning.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
A Warner Bros. (Max Reinhardt) Production
Showing At: The ROXY, Madras

Reinhardt's Wonderland

To Warner Brothers goes the credit for one of the most daring cinema experiments. Putting Shakespeare on the screen has been a job shunned for years by the most stout-hearted of producers, but it has been done at last. It is a producers' dream, come true!

Even without such names as James Cagney, Joe E. Brown, Hugu Herbert, Dick Powell, Anita Louise, Mickey Rooney and Olivia De Havilland, Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* ought to be worth seeing. With such a grand cast inside, it is nothing short of sensational. But actually, however, the players are not important.

Produced by Max Reinhardt, the honour of making this picture beautiful is shared by the technical crew, Erich Korngold the musical arranger, the composer and the camera-man. It runs just a little over two hours now, but with the exceptions of one ballet scene towards the end of the first half of the film and the final burlesque show at the very conclusion, the picture is paced perfectly. It has a sweep and gusto in perfect time with the lush phrases and the yokel comedy, a time which Erich Korngold helps to make perfect with his expert arrangement of Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* score.

A triumph for the technical crew and Max Reinhardt, the most beautiful talking picture, *Midsummer Night's Dream* is one of the most important movies ever seen, and Shakespeare as he was written. All the characters concerned in the picture, Oberon, Titania, Hippolyta, Hermia and even Bottom the Weaver go a-courting and find it about the most amusing thing they could do. A lesser genius than Reinhardt or a more unbridled display on the part of the players themselves might have rendered the whole show either a fiasco as a gigantic spectacle or a farcical flop. Happily, the unusual has happened and the result is a natural wonder. We enter into a fairyland, feast our eyes on the goings-on there and return to this prosaic world of ours none the worse for our sojourn in the dreamland.

A good deal of the dialogue is omitted—especially the long passages of language those apparently ineffective on the screen—and the gaps filled with the visual effects invented by the producer Max Reinhardt with his new and elaborate fairyland. One of the most amazing scenic splendours is the end of the magic night when Oberon's cloak flows out like a wave of darkness and the fairy creatures are drawn into a stylized dance, until, as morning comes, they vanish away. Then there is the muslin prettiness of Titania's court.

Puck is played with remarkable zest by the ten-year-old Mickey Rooney. He is a strange admixture of faun and street urchin but his performance has an earthy quality which runs very close to the spirit of Shakespeare. But one may say the film suffers from a little too much of Puck as from similar excess in ornament. It is doubtful whether the daring experiment of casting the too nimble and quick-witted James Cagney as Bottom is quite a success. He is pronouncedly the urban type.

This picture is a lesson in a new film field and is full of details which will interest all students of staging costume and visual design.

THE END

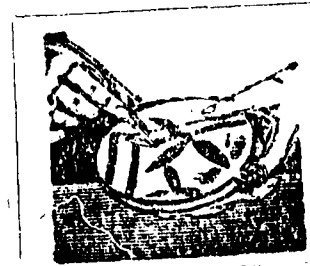
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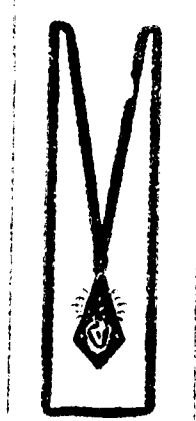
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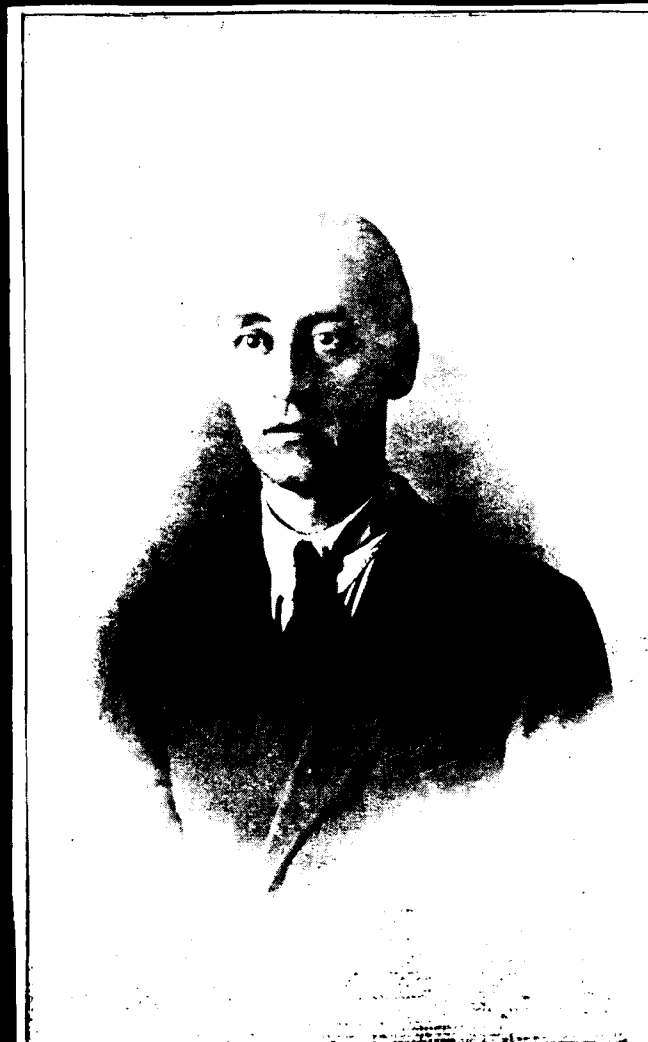


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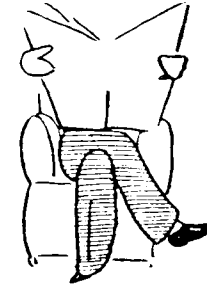
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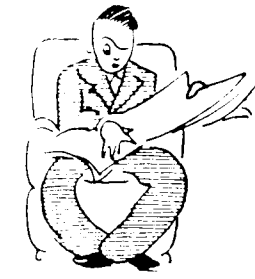
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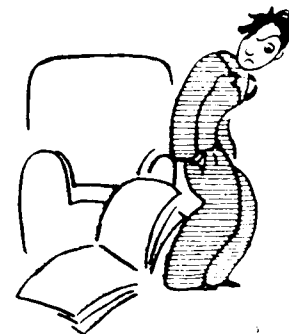
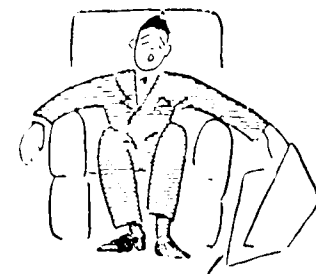
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