

INDIA

MAGAZINE

1169/3-56

Sept. 1956

Story Monthly

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NEW TYPIST GIRL (to the two clerks):— “Now, stop hunting for the letter. It is right under my typewriter!”



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The Editor
India Magazine
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30 Dec 1958

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NEWS

Sir,

Accept my congratulations on producing a Magazine which excels all the existing ones in its contents and get-up. My personal experience in the field of journalism has revealed to me that editing, printing and publishing such a magazine is not a joke. It is sad that I had no opportunity to have the pleasure of going through your maiden and three subsequent numbers.

I only request you to give ample chances to the budding writers of our country and pave a new path in the garden of journalism. When I say this, I am neither laying exaggerated emphasis on the possibilities of the latent talents nor having careless contempt for the already famous few. It is my wish to bring home to you this:

The old order changeth,
yielding place to new.

I wish you every success in your endeavour.

Bangalore. H. N. K. Swamy.

Sir,

I happened to go through—rather carefully perused—your "India Magazine". Really I found it very interesting as it deals with all the aspects, leav-

INDIA MAGAZINE

ing nothing of importance. That is what a good magazine should consist of.

I. A. F.
Jalahalli.

K. S. A. Swamy.

Sir,

I read your Magazine only very recently and have been quite impressed by it.

Poona.

C. Lobo

Sir,

In my opinion, India is fast ceasing to be the land of non-violence. Rajaji said recently the spirits of Gandhi and Tilak are watching from above and silently shedding tears. The riots in Bombay and in Ahmedabad have caused great agony to many of us. But they indicate which way the wind is blowing.

We are on the eve of the general elections. Parties other than the Congress will certainly create confusion and exploit the student population. Unless our Governments are alert, there is bound to be bloodshed, and we can count many broken heads.

We have strayed away from the Gandhian path. That is the bitter truth.

Trivandrum.

Sridharan.

1—Sep. '56

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SEPTEMBER 1956

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The names of characters and places appearing in fictional stories are purely imaginary and any reference to living persons is only coincidental.

INDIA MAGAZINE comes out on the 1st of every month.



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INDIA MAGAZINE

VOL. I No. 7

SEPTEMBER 1956

PRICE AS. 5

BOMBAY SHOWS THE WAY

OF far-reaching significance to the country, is Parliament's decision to usher in a bigger bilingual State for Bombay, comprising Maharashtra, Marathwada, Vidarbha, Gujarat, Bombay City, Kutch and Saurashtra. When the Government of India announced earlier that Bombay would be a Centrally administrated city, parts of Maharashtra were in a state of turmoil. All credit goes to Parliament for finding a national solution to a national problem.

It is natural that interested elements and mischief-makers are opposed to the advent of the new composite State. Some at least must have fondly hoped that Ahmedabad would become the capital of unilingual Gujarat; and Maharashtrais wanted the whole of Bombay City for themselves. But chauvinism has already done infinite harm and linguistic fanaticism is slowly undermining national unity. The first corrective to this dangerous trend, we suppose, is the formation of Bigger Bombay. The best antidote would seem to consist in the creation of five or six composite States for the whole of India.

But our leaders and Parliament owe it to themselves to prepare the proper climate for such a radical change. Freedom has brought more complicated tasks but we have to grapple with them hard to achieve our objective.

The Editor invites short stories, skits, articles and cartoons for consideration. All matter must be written legibly on one side of the paper or preferably typed. Sufficient postage must be enclosed for return of the Mss., if desired.

Current Comments

BEGGAR PROBLEM

We invite our readers' attention to an interesting article about the beggars of Mexico, published on another page. The problem that confronts us is almost identical, though we have a bigger population of vagrants and vagabonds. Not long ago, if we remember aright, Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer stressed the urgent necessity for solving the beggar problem. He said India's prestige abroad was being affected; the first question that foreigners asked Indians was whether there were beggars still in India.

Nine years have passed since India achieved independence. But it is sad to record that there has been an increase in the beggar population. The Centre has at last taken the initiative with proposals for starting beggar homes in cities and municipal towns. Each home is not likely to accommodate more than 100 beggars. But the problem must be tackled more vigorously and on a far larger scale. Diseased beggars—especially those who are suffering from leprosy and are a potent source of infection—must have a separate home in each town and city. It is something that a beginning is to be made after all.

RISING PRICES

In the Lok Sabha, it was

revealed the other day, a sum of Rs. 80 crores is to be spent on imports of foodgrains to arrest the upward trend in the price movement. Shri Asoka Mehta deplored the need for such huge expenditure on reserve food stocks. We have often been told that under the First Five-Year Plan the target of food self-sufficiency has been exceeded. How then are we to account for this phenomenon of food scarcity? Shri Mehta attributed the present rise in prices to deficit financing. Experts have been warning repeatedly against the dangers of inflation. Will the Centre check it in time—before the nation goes far ahead with the Second Plan?

PARTY ALLIANCES

After the effective denunciation of the Stalin cult by the present Russian leaders, Communists in India have lost face. Their influence has lately rapidly declined. So they have taken to new tactics. They are silently infiltrating into other parties, like the Congress. And Shri J. P. Narayan has come to their rescue. He has recommended an alliance between the Praja Socialist Party and the Communists. But the former is chary and seems disinclined to woo the latter. The poser is: can the lamb and the wolf get together? Let us wait and see.

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THE ATONEMENT

By R. SUNDARAM

A PARTY was arranged by the clerks employed in the Jansie Bank Ltd., in honour of Ram Manohar Lal, the Managing Director, who was deputed by the Board of Directors to tour through the United Kingdom and U. S. A. to study co-operative and banking systems in those countries. The hosts who were waiting for the arrival of the chief guest, were standing in little groups and talking shop. Sekhar, the junior clerk alone, was sad and melancholy. He felt that his presence in the gathering was meaningless. He had been insulted by the Managing Director, but his colleagues in the Bank did not seem to realise that it was an insult at all. A strange world this! People are so self-centred that they recognise an injury as an injury only when they themselves suffer it and not otherwise! Sekhar had come to attend the function merely for form's sake.

It was about six months since he had come to the Head Office. He had put in six years' service in the Calcutta Branch and was a senior clerk there. He was said to be an expert in accounts and was recommended to the Head Office. The transfer was generally considered a special honour, for, only veterans from the Branches were

given the chance to serve in the Head Office. Sekhar also thought that it was a great honour and was proud of the recognition he was getting. But on coming over to Bombay, he was disappointed to find that the transfer meant a lowering of his position though he got a higher salary thereby—the senior clerk of the Branch was now a 'junior clerk' and to the grey beards in the office, he was only a green-horn. This was not what worried him now. His grief had a direct bearing on the Managing Director's foreign tour.

A Short Story

THE trouble began this way. The Board of Directors agreed that a clerk must travel with Mr. Manohar Lal and that it would be profitable to send a junior clerk since he could make use of his knowledge and experience for a long time for the benefit of the Bank. The Board allowed the Managing Director the discretion to select one among the clerks who were graduates and who were less than thirty-five years in age. It so happened that among the forty clerks employed there, Sekhar and Prabhu were the only people who satisfied the conditions. The Director had some difficulty in making the choice. Of the two, Sekhar had

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Apology to Lalitha

a fuller knowledge of bank business and he was an all-rounder. But he was short, swarthy and pock-mark-faced while the other man had an attractive build and presence.

IF Mr. Manohar Lal had quietly chosen Prabhu, Sekhar would not have felt it as an insult. But he took the indiscreet step of discussing the matter with the office manager who committed the greater indiscretion of telling Prabhu that he was the likely candidate. That 'peacock' went about strutting and broadcasting this 'confidential' news. People congratulated him pointing out the advantages he was going to get from this tour with the Director. By virtue of his additional knowledge he would have quick promotion. Sekhar had to bear in silence the humiliation of being told that his homely features were his greatest disqualification.

Punctually at five O'clock the

chief guest arrived. Sekhar was interested neither in seeing nor in greeting him. He kept himself aloof with an averted face. But now someone near him whispered, "The Director's newly wedded wife.....a charming woman!" Sekhar instinctively turned in the direction and saw the lady. His heart skipped a beat at the sight. He felt the world whirling round him and he supported himself

by leaning against a wall. He wiped his eyes and looked again at the young woman. There was no mistaking it. It was the same Lalitha who had blackened his name at college.

At the very sight of her, the greatest shame of his life stood out before him. His past which he thought was a forgotten affair was haunting him like a bad dream. He felt a strong impulse to run away from there. But that physical action required strength of limb. Now his knees were knocking against each other!

WHEN all people sat at table, Sekhar also sat. Suddenly it occurred to him that Lalitha might not have noticed him and he might escape. To take stock of the situation, he bent his head and stole a glance at the young woman. The Managing Director was just then pointing at him and whispering something in her ear. She knit

her brows on hearing his words and leaned towards him to tell him something. Sekhar could stand it no more. He stole out of the place and hiring a cab reached his room. There he bumped into the bed, covered his face with both his hands and sobbed convulsively like a beaten school girl. He had not the least doubt that Lalitha would report to her husband what she had no hesitation in reporting to the Principal. It would surely end in immediate dismissal. His heart sank within himself when he thought of the horrors of unemployment he had once suffered and which he seemed destined to suffer again. His thoughts wandered to the days when he was at college.

HE was then in the senior B.A. class. He was the first boy in all subjects and all the students of the college knew him. He was something of an orator and sportsman also. His name was often mentioned in the girl-students' hostel in connection with some prize or distinction. He was aware of that and felt happy that Nature had more than compensated for the homeliness of his features....

A mock-parliament was in session in the college. A front benchman was moving a sensational Bill for delimiting woman's education: "Whereas it is generally felt and experienced by all men in this country that an educated woman tyrannises in the family and hinders the husband in all his actions, thus spoiling the happiness of the family....". Now Sekhar, who was the leader of the opposition shot up like a newly

tapped spring and said, "I am afraid that our Minister is generalising on his own special, individual and unfortunate experience.....". There was a roar of laughter, followed by rounds of applause. "Well said," remarked a shrill voice from the girls' section and turning that way Sekhar quickly found out that it was Lalitha who was then in the Senior Intermediate class.

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FROM that day onwards, Sekhar paid much attention to that girl and felt an irresistible longing to talk to her. It did not take him long to discover that he was in love with her. Not getting an opportunity of meeting her alone, he decided upon writing to her. The letter wherein he had expressed all his impetuous passion, annoyed Lalitha. In deference to his learning, however, she decided to ignore it. But soon another epistle came to her by post. The other girls came to know about it and began discussing it. Lalitha got a strong feeling of revulsion and in order to vindicate herself, took the letter to the Principal. And that gentleman who would have suspended any other boy in such circumstances, not desiring to ruin a bright one summoned Sekhar and wanted him to apologize to the girl in his presence. Sekhar would have welcomed dismissal in preference to this disgrace. But when the Principal was by, there was no alternative and he apologized. From that day he and Lalitha were equally eager to avoid each other and they very nearly succeeded in that. When the year came to a close,

he came out of the college and thought that he had got out of a terrible nightmare.....

Now, after all these years, he was sought out. He felt bitter. Was there no atonement for his juvenile folly? Was there no expiation for his 'crime'? Why should Fate hunt him down and crush him like this? He felt desperate at the thought of the inevitable dismissal.

HE made an attempt to judge himself impartially. Was he really bad or wicked? Was his conduct so heinous as to justify the ruin of his life? Were there not many youths—and grown-ups too—who did worse crimes and went scot-free. He felt a strong feeling of hatred against Lalitha who seemed to be nursing revenge like the proverbial elephant. He would never again dream of committing such an indiscretion. But the girl wouldn't allow him to live his renovated life.....

He did not know how long he had remained in that state of brooding. He came to himself on hearing a loud knock at his door. He rose out of his bed and switching on the light, found it was eight O'clock in the evening. Opening the door, he found the Bank peon with an urgent summons from the Director to meet him at his house. There was the car waiting outside. Was he so eager to chuck him that very evening? When the outcome was so definite, why should he meet his boss and face the humiliation? He reflected for a while, then went in, wrote out

his resignation and brought it to the servant. "Here, take it to your master!" He waved the note in the servant's face defiantly.

"Sir, Master wants you in person and that, very urgently. It won't be proper to take a written reply to him. But, if you insist.....", the servant stopped, seeing the wild look of Sekhar.

Strong resentment welled up in Sekhar's bosom. After all, he had decided to resign. Why not then summon the daring of his early youth for once and tell the unimaginative magnate to his face that he was a fool to fuss about a long forgotten youthful indiscretion? He was resolved, dressed himself in a trice, and got ready.

When the car reached Mr. Manohar Lal's residence, Sekhar realised that his limbs were shaking. All his determination had vapourised. Hesitantly he entered the boss's room.

"Well, Mr. Sekhar," began Manohar Lal, "you are a graduate of the Calcutta University?"

THE storm was beginning. But how cool Manohar Lal was! On his part, Sekhar was afraid his legs would give way. He looked up sheepishly and nodded in response to the question.

The Director went on coldly. "My wife was telling me about you. Were you her contemporary at college?"

Words got stuck up in Sekhar's throat and, too dazed to look upon his boss, he cast his eyes down.

"Oh, yes," continued Manohar Lal, "she must be right. You were too well known at college. Such things are not easily forgotten." Sekhar realised his annihilation was complete. His hand reached for the letter of resignation inside his pocket. What a vengeful woman Lalitha must be to persecute him like this after all these years!

Sekhar pricked up his ears; Manohar Lal was speaking again. "We are starting next week. Get ready."

Tears started into Sekhar's eyes as he heard these words. What a wonder! Lalitha had chosen to keep the incident from her husband!

The Director was speaking again: "Sekhar, are you so overjoyed? It is, after all, your due, man! I am sorry I didn't know you before. My wife is right in calling it atonement. It is really an atonement for the past neglect! Right! Get home."

SEKHAR stammered out a word of thanks and started out. As he was going home, he was lost in admiration of the nobility and good sense of Lalitha. How cleverly she had made her husband favour him and at the same time made Sekhar understand that she was doing an atonement! While she could have blighted his career with a single word, she chose to make a really generous gesture. It was not atonement; it was angelic forgiveness! * *

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In lighter vein :

AUTOGRAPH HUNTERS!

AUTOGRAPH collecting is really an interesting hobby. There are so many aspects to this hobby. The "hunters" are of different kinds. Some of them are interested only in sports, some in national leaders, others in cine-stars and quite a few in anyone who has a name and a fame. Some of the hobbyists are bold and others are timid. The former push their way ahead to obtain the autograph while the latter stand back, holding their pen and autograph book in their hands nervously and hoping that they would somehow get a chance to fulfil their wish. Some of the "hunters" have small, plain books; others big, glittering books. Some of them are lucky in achieving their end while others greedily peer into the books of these lucky ones and pass remarks about the autograph.

For his success as "hunter" one must be very shrewd, because a lot depends on the moods of the "giver," the people around the "giver" and other circumstances at that moment, and the "hunter" will have to use his brains to tackle the situation successfully.

Our Prime Minister Nehru is especially a man of moods. He is at home amongst children.

If a child is somehow managed to advance into his presence with your autograph book and pen, you can be sure of success. The place and time are also of great importance. If there is a busy programme without breathing space, instead of giving you the autograph he may throw your book into the air. Once he did so, when a "hunter" broke through the police cordon and rushed to him for his autograph at an aerodrome. Once I managed to go up to within a yard of him after he addressed a public meeting, but just when I was about to approach him the hand of the law in the shape of the I. G. of police, who stood there, obstructed me from my task. And the next moment Pandit Nehru's jeep moved away!

THEN there are other people who give autographs on specific conditions. One of our leaders insists on the autograph-collector being a khadi wearer. When a hobbyist approached him once with his pen and book, he stared at his "mill-made cloth," slack-shirt and asked, "Is it Khadi?" Obviously it was not, and so he proceeded ahead without giving the autograph. In a twinkling the "hunter" gave his pen and book to his

By **G. KAMESWARA RAO**

Khadi-wearing friend by his side, who approached the leader and obtained the autograph in the same book!

Sometimes it so happens that the distinguished person asks someone "responsible" to collect and bring the autograph books to the residence to be signed at leisure. Such an arrangement proves dangerous at times because a valuable book may be lost or misplaced. For such occasions I give a blank autograph book to the "responsible" person, with only my name and address in it and when I get back the book with the autograph I paste that page in my main book. If at all the book given to the "responsible" person is lost, I will be the loser of only a blank book of the value of less than a rupee!

MAHATMA Gandhi used to put a price for his autograph and the amount thus collected went to the Harijan Fund. The great British author G. B. S. too used to sell his autograph. And Vinobaji gives his autograph only to those who buy the book, "Gita Pravachan," published by the Bhoodan committee. He signs on the title page of this book in the script of the language in which that copy of the book is. That means he can sign in more than a dozen scripts because during his

Bhoodan tour he covers the whole country and this book is published in all the regional languages!

ALL this "conditioning" for giving autographs appears ridiculous. Why are they approached for autographs? It is because they are distinguished personalities nationally and even internationally and their autograph would be a memento of having seen and met them.

After all, everyone is not an autograph collector. If one can give autographs to Khadi-wearers or to those who buy one's publications, one can also give to others who are not in large number. If one can sign on one's publication, one can also sign in the autograph book given along with it. If one is totally against giving autographs, it is a different matter. But I fail to appreciate the principle behind putting such conditions. If it is only a question of "crowd," then, as some



....a crowded scene....

others do, they can give autographs to such of those who are near and leave off the others.

SOME "givers" turn back the pages in the book and see whose autographs have been collected. One leader in our country, while doing so, found that it was full of cine-stars' signatures. He flung the book away as he thought it, probably, to be below his dignity to sign along with them! A few others scribble some advice or quotation and sign underneath.

Some people have a principle not to give autographs at all. One political leader on an election tour refused autographs to all. As he appealed for funds for the election campaign, I thought of buying his autograph with a contribution for the fund. When I approached him he accepted the contribution but refused the autograph! The joke was on me!

My autograph hobby stood me in good stead once in a viva voce. My examiner asked me to identify a parti-

cular slide under the microscope. I told him it was the Diphtheria Bacillus. He asked me to explain my reasons. I explained all of them and finally ended up by saying that the organisms were arranged like Chinese letters, which is a description given in text books.

The next question was: "How are Chinese letters arranged?"

"Just as these bacilli are arranged here, sir."

"Have you seen Chinese letters?"

"Yes, sir."

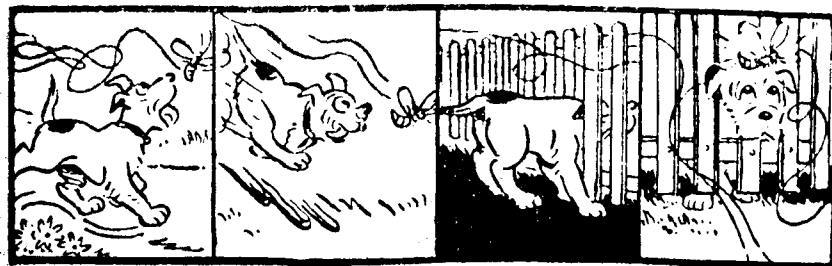
"Where?"

"I took autographs from the Chinese cultural delegation that toured our country recently, sir."

The examiner laughed at this.

THE next day I showed my autograph book to him and also took his own autograph as he was one of my beloved teachers.

That is the end of this match between the autograph hunters and givers. * *



Doggie Chases Bee!

Ghosts I Have Met

By SEETHALAKSHMI

RECLINING comfortably in my easy chair, and inhaling the delicious flavour of his "Three Castles" Virginia Cigarettes, Rajan began his story:—

I used to turn a deaf ear to the Poltergeist stories so prevalent and so much talked of in my area. The fantastic tales of vessels disappearing, cow-dung found in cooking utensils, tables taking somersaults, beddings leaping up, through the agency of some unearthly beings were quite common. Though I gave little or no credit at all to such concoctions, I was quite unaware then of the surprises in store for me later on, which converted me into a staunch believer in ghosts and apparitions.

I can well vouch for the authenticity of the events I am about to relate. They are open to verification. It is left to the validity and veracity of my statements.

While a college student, I had to shift to uncle's home in the city. It was rumoured the house was haunted, but my uncle who used to be continuously inebriated, had not the remotest chance to meet any of the hoodlums of hell haunting our house, and even if he had ever met any, he would have simply invited them to have a peg each.

I remember the day vividly, as it was on that particular occasion that I was "Baptised" to believe in ghosts.

It was 10.30 p. m. I had gone to bed just after the daily routine of studies and was about to put out my light. I heard distinctly my name being called from outside the room. Two seconds later, somebody knocked at my door, repeating my name and asking me in a gruff voice, why I had not put out the light. Thinking it would be my uncle, I went and opened the

A Ghost Story

door. Suddenly an icy gust of wind swept past me and put out the light. In the darkened room I was alone. The eerie sensation I felt, I could not shake off. I heard my old cot creak and the smothered sound of repressed laughter. I was thoroughly flabbergasted. I heard my uncle's cough from his upstairs room and knew for sure he did not call me. Being a little courageous by nature, I did not run away or faint but re-lighted the lamp. My cot was empty. I could not find any apparition. I closed my bed-room door and decided to sleep with the lights on.

I LAY on the cot. The unbelievable thoughts of an unearthly existence were on the top-most layer of my imagination. Suddenly I heard the rap-rap sound

near the semi-dark corner of my room. To my utter astonishment and horror, I found the sneering face of an old man staring at me. I lay petrified with an overwhelming awe. I could neither move nor utter any word. The form moved towards me with hands raised as if to strike me. With the courage born out of fear, I stood up, closed my eyes and lashed right and left with my fists.

WHEN I woke up it was early morning. The lamp was still shedding its feeble rays but the old man had gone. Maybe, the sunlight peeping through the windows was too much for the darkened soul which had found refuge in eternal darkness.



A gush of wind blew....

The next day at the club, from my friends I gathered that an old man had committed suicide in our house.

According to my horoscope, I was born at such an inauspicious hour that it seemed normal for me to see ghosts and experience such expositions of supernatural arts. I cannot understand why ghosts left me alone when I was in my teens, and came to seek my acquaintance when I stepped on to the threshold of adolescence. Perhaps they were not much interested in minors and hence the pass over!

YEARS elapsed since my first experience, ere I had another one quite unexpected and at a place where nobody ever survived a shock.

Those who are familiar with Delhi can very well recall the remnants of Prithviraj's fort just outside the city area en route to Delhi Cantonment. The lonely road running from Delhi to Delhi Cantonment passes on through a gap in the old walls of the ancient fort. The surrounding areas are covered with dense thorn bushes usually infested with small game, and innumerable peacocks.

Mr. Kay and myself were biking back to our barracks after the second show at Odeon. We were making very slow progress as the journey was quite tiresome and we had a long way to go. The mellow light of the full moon trickled through the thick foliage of the trees standing on both sides of the metalled road, and dappled the area with light and shadow. We were about to cross the gap in the fort wall, when on the left ramparts of the wall quite near the road, we saw three lovely maidens in earnest conversation together, in whispers. We could even hear the swish of their silken shawls. The presence of those three lovelies there on the ramparts at such an unholy hour was in itself surprising, which was enhanced when we found there were no male chaperons with them. So thinking we could make the best use of the opportunity, we got down from our bikes and stealthily moved towards the steps of the ramparts.

WE were mounting the steps. Then it happened—an unearthly piercing yell—just a scream resembling a cross between the neigh of a horse and the bray of an ass at full pitch. Our hearts missed a beat each. Something came rushing down and pushed us aside. We stood transfixed to the spot. In a trice it dawned on us that something quite beyond our comprehension and understanding powers had happened. We ran back to our bikes and rode as fast as we could.

The next day's investigation of that particular part revealed to us the impossibility of anybody ascending to the ramparts as the steps had tumbled down and no human beings existed within the radius of a mile. An old man told us that the place was haunted from time immemorial even before Prithviraj had built that wall, and also those who had had the vision of the three graces never survived. How far this is true, only the damsels can tell.

THE strangest of all experiences I had, happened while I was at Imphal. Our Company was camping in the suburbs of Imphal, and all were on the alert as it was brought to our notice, the Japs were likely to launch an attack on us there.

It was about seven in the evening. I was lying alone in my tent, fondling my sten-gun—my guardian angel and self-protector in those days. Though I had closed my eyes, I was quite on the alert and I could hear the slightest noise outside. I heard the crunch of gravel outside my tent and knew somebody was approaching. I was up and my sten-gun automatically came into position.

“Rajan, let me have some water please. I am parched.” I heard the voice of Captain Harnam Singh, who had been away on conducting duty.

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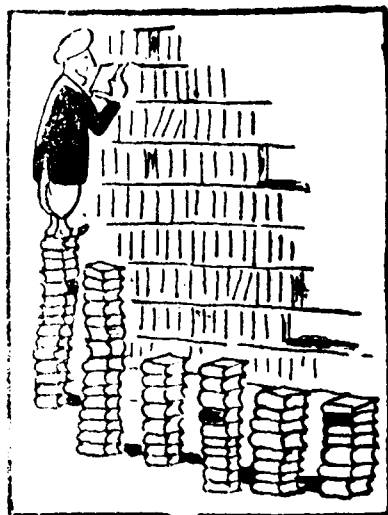
"ZAMA" Madras.

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"JUST coming, Sir." I sought my water bottle, and opened the flap of my tent. Captain Harnam Singh was standing a few yards away and I hastened to him. Before I reached him, he waved his hands and told me, "Wait, I will come back later on," and flounced away. I was surprised as he seemed so much in need of water. I returned to my tent, but Captain Harnam Singh never came back for the water he so much needed. After a few days I heard the sad and shocking news that he had passed away in action a month prior to my meeting his ghost.

Well, I have had plenty of experiences like the ones I have just narrated but it is time to go now....

Rajan looked at his watch and got up. * *



Too Absorbing!

INDIA MAGAZINE

A Short Story

The Jasmine Princess

The myth is not my own

I had it from my mother.

—EURIPIDES

IN days gone by there was a King ruling a big kingdom in India. He had a daughter by name Charu. She was born by the boon of Lord Siva. When she grew up, she was full of accomplishments, endowed with all virtues and excelled in beauty. Her ivory frame, gazelle eyes, her swan neck, supple limbs, long dark tresses, captivated all neighbouring kings who vied with one another to wed her. So tender and lovely was she that she used to sleep on a bed of jasmine flowers. These flowers never faded in the morning by her touch but put on freshness and more fragrance.

One day the handsome Prince of a neighbouring Kingdom by name Jayasimha, while riding along the royal road, glanced at the bewitching Princess standing on the seventh floor of the Palace, bathing in the golden sunshine, drying her long wavy tresses after an aromatic bath. Pairs of eyes met, they pierced each other like darts; as a result the Prince and the Princess fell in love with each other.

Thus captivated by the alluring Princess, the Prince persuaded his mother to importune the father of the Princess for his marriage. And, as luck would have it, the errand was successful and the two graceful royal children were married with all pomp and pageantry in the Palace.

The time came when the Prince had to go for hunt to the forests and then he parted with these words to his wife, "My dear Charu, I loathe to move away from you even for a moment. But I'm to go for the sake of my people. Be comforted. I'll soon return."

DAYS, months and years passed but the Prince did not return, nor did the messengers announce his approach. The Princess was plunged in grief at such a long separation and shed tears every night on the jasmine bed. One morning when she rose from the jasmine bed she was surprised to find that all the white flowers had faded and her peerless body lost its rosy hue and became even ugly. On the succeeding night while

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she lay on the jasmine bed as usual, she gazed at the burning lamp in the overhanging chandelier. The lotus-like flame burst into sudden laughter. She became aghast, and asked, "O Lamp, what made you laugh? Do you laugh at me?" Like an Oracle the Lamp replied, "It is painful. You're going to suffer a lot. I feel for you. But you'll be ultimately happy." This troubled the innocent heart of Charu.

IT was midnight, and sepulchral silence reigned all round. Suddenly a gale swept the princess' chamber and wholly lifted up the golden cot with the Princess, carried it off in the open air and finally dropped it on the nearby rock overlooking a river in which she fell unconscious.

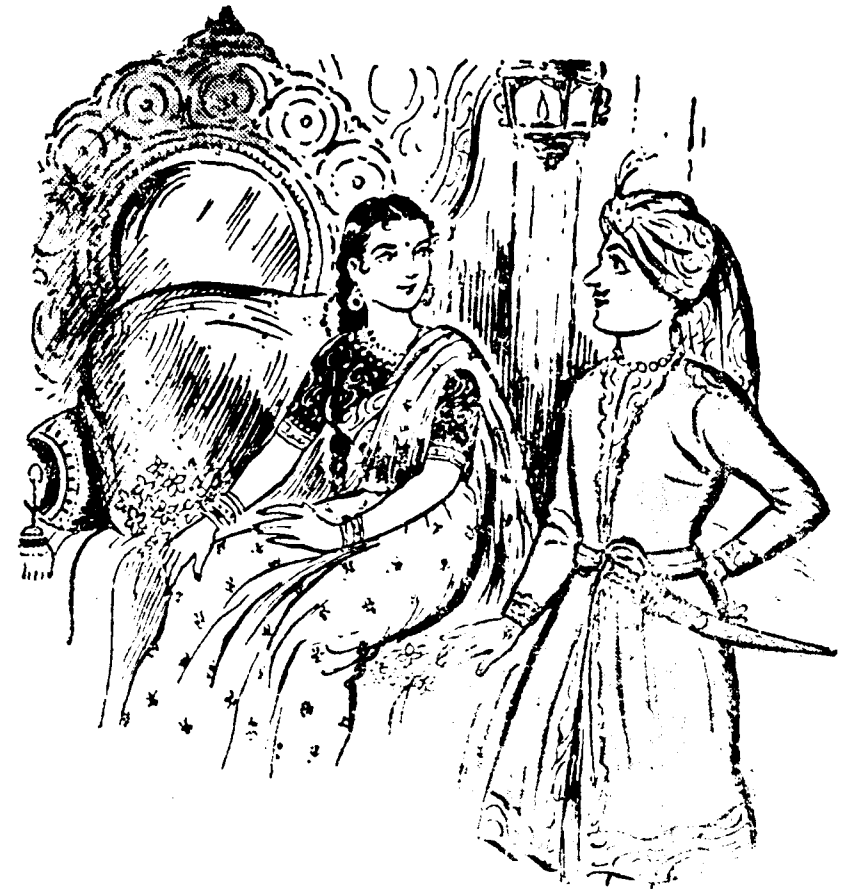
At this place there was a fisherman's hamlet, and the chief of the men was a pious and sturdy fellow, with a large family of brothers and sisters and their tiny children. At dawn, the fishermen, on their toil on the river, pulled out the heavy net and to their wonder, saw a beautiful maiden, like an angel, entrapped as if by magic. They carried her in her unconscious state to their chieftain. After a while she regained her consciousness. When she was questioned, she was quite mute except saying again and again that she was a God-forsaken child. The chieftain took pity and realised that she should be a royal member somewhere and he at once ordered that she should be treated as one among his household. Thus Charu lived

with them and in their pleasant company; but nothing could relieve her heart-ache. She only bided her time and fondly hoped that her husband would one day meet her and take her with him back to her home.

WHEN all women of the house went out to fetch water from a distant well every day, the Princess was left at home to look after the tiny children. On one such occasion, the children began to cry, quite unusually, and became inconsolable. The Princess tried all ways and means to please them, but in vain. She finally saw the figure of a gay peacock inscribed on the wall. To amuse the children she spoke to the image. "O lovely peacock, why don't you come down and strut before these children and stop their crying? If you do that, I will give you a pearl necklace." Instantly to her amazement, the bird flew down in reality, danced gaily with fluttered feathers. The children stopped crying and began to play. The bird then demanded of Charu the pearl necklace which she had promised. What could she do then? When she asked for time, the bird pecked at all the jewels on the bodies of the children, swallowed them off, got back to the wall and transformed itself into a picture as before. The Princess became terrified and was mortally afraid of her fate. "How could I convince them of the truth?" she sobbed. While the children were laughing and playing, she was bitterly crying. The ladies of the household returned home and the

husbands too after their toil and to their amazement noticed that the children were bereft of jewels on their person. There was no other reason and they suspected the Princess and in anger scolded her, beat her and finally threw her into a dark cell in their compound to do hard labour. Alas, the poor creature of the royal house moaned over her fate and then remembered the laugh of the lamp and the prophetic words. She cursed her destiny.

THE Prince, Jayasimha, who had been on hunt, returned home with his spoils to array before his beloved, but he was grieved to see the Palace void and his wife missing. He got no reply about her whereabouts, for none knew indeed of her disappearance sometime ago. In the garb of a mendicant he started on his journey in search of his spouse. It chanced that he came to the fishermen's hamlet. Being exhausted he sat on the pail of the house facing



....the handsome pair....

the room in which the forlorn Princess was thrown doing the hard labour of pounding paddy. He did not recognise her, for who could in that torn attire on her body! But he saw her marvellous beauty, pitied her condition and asked her quietly who she was. She would not answer for fear of chastisement. But on his repeated requests she told him of her tragic life, when suddenly he burst into tears recognising that she was his wife. But how could he tell about himself? He did not wish to identify himself to her till she proved her conduct before the fishermen who gave her protection in time of her need. He felt miserable. He asked her, "Lady, could you vindicate yourself, if you were tried?" She swore in reply that she would prove her integrity.

JAYASIMHA then went into the Chief's house as if he was a traveller for rest, and after a few words of exchange, ascertained the cause of the sufferings of the lady in the cell whom he had just seen. He then suggested that she should



DOCTOR (to patient): "Take one pill before going to bed and another if you wake up!"

be put on trial before the image to prove her veracity. The Chief agreed and when the Princess was put on trial she addressed the image in a suppliant manner, pointing to the tiny children, "peacock, if I am really chaste and you revere truth, prove to these people that you have swallowed the jewels worn by these children and save my honour and life." The assembly of fishermen were wondering what would happen. Instantly the image vibrated and the peacock flew down from its place, danced in front of the audience as it did before the children and coughed back all the pearls and flew back to its resting place to the surprise of all inclusive of the Prince.

"What!" cried the Chief in wonder. All the others cried out, "Are these real? Who is this noble angel in our house? We are blessed. Let us pray her forgiveness and let us make her our Queen." The Chief in shame admonished his people for the wrongs done to her. The Prince then before all revealed to the Princess that he was her husband by exhibiting the wedding ring he had on his person. Charu in utmost joy embraced her husband with her tattered attire and both began to shed tears over their fate of separation and misery. Then they, as if newly wed, moved off to their far-off home to live in happiness thereafter.

AS she entered the Palace and her bedroom, the Lamp automatically lit and began to dance and bless the Prince and the Princess.—R. B. PINGLAY. **

INDIA MAGAZINE

THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

(By P. RAMAN)

Since the attainment of Independence in August 1947 India was confronted with two acute problems viz, food scarcity and unemployment. The First Five-Year Plan aimed at the elimination of food shortage. This was achieved by improved methods of agriculture and increased use of fertilisers. Besides, new agricultural implements have been imported from the U.S.A. and other countries. Hence India is more or less self-sufficient in food.

The next problem which is sought to be solved is that of unemployment. At present, this problem is of paramount importance. The unemployed

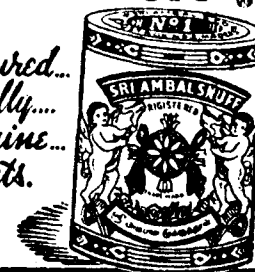
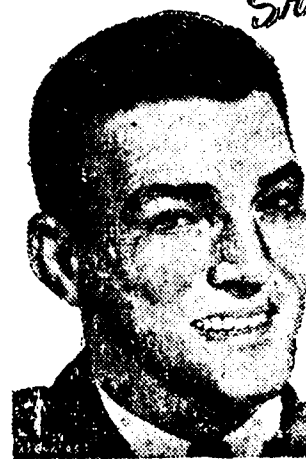
people in the country can be brought under two heads viz. the educated unemployed and the uneducated unemployed. A lot of people in India have no other go but to seek some employment for sustaining a livelihood. So the families depending on them also are subjected to serious difficulties and privations.

The uneducated are inclined to do any kind of work. But the educated feel it beneath their dignity to do any manual work. So it seems highly necessary that dignity of labour must be inculcated in the minds of the youngsters. It is with this sole motive that organi-

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bations like Social Service League, Bharat Sevak Samaj, have been started in educational institutions.

The content and nature of education imparted by Universities are not very helpful in this direction. The Universities are turning out graduates in large numbers, thereby always adding to the number of the unemployed. This must be checked effectively, either by restricting admissions to colleges or by making the courses of study more stringent. It is highly depressing to note that those who are fresh from the colleges are unfit to do any practical work. This is because students in colleges confine themselves mainly to the reading of books and no part of their education is devoted to extra curricular activities. Hence invariably they are failures in practical life. The curriculum of university education should include a course of practical training combined with manual labour.

It is by means of industrialisation and the development of cottage industries that the Government of India intend to eliminate unemployment. Negotiations are being made with technically advanced countries, like Russia and the U. S. A., for financial as well as technical aid. With the help of their collaboration three new Steel Plants are being installed, which, when completed, will satisfy the requirements of steel in India. Similarly other industries are also being provided for in the Second Five-Year

Plan. This industrialisation alone will not suffice. The development of cottage industries also is essential to solve the unemployment problem. Hence this aspect has been given due importance in the Second Five-Year Plan. For this purpose an enquiry committee has been appointed by the India Government. The committee's suggestion is to train the educated men according to their aptitudes and thus manufacture machines with the use of electricity. The execution of this plan will satisfy all our requirements for machines. Electrification of rural areas is also conducive to the development of cottage industries. Therefore, the State and Central Government must explore all possibilities of extending the benefits of electricity to rural areas. Facilities have also to be provided for women to engage themselves in handicrafts, which will strengthen their family budget.

Though several such schemes are drawn up, unemployment in the country will not be completely eliminated. Statistics show that nearly sixty-six lakhs of people in India are without employment. By the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan it is expected to provide jobs for only fifty lakhs. The rest will yet remain unemployed. It is clear from this that the solution to this problem has not yet taken a definite shape. Some other measures seem to be necessary.

The capitalists and those in the private sector must invest their wealth in some kind of

—Please See Page 28

ROMANCE OF THE SUEZ CANAL

By LOVETTE EDWARDS

WHAT is the Canal like today? Entering Port Said, the first thing to catch one's eye is the enormous statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps, visionary and enthusiast. His vision, however, was justified, and his ambition attained. The right hand of the statue, seemingly almost casual, points towards his creation, the Suez Canal.

In the harbour hundreds of vessels, flying every maritime ensign in the world except one (that of Israel), lie waiting to complete harbour formalities and to take on board the first of the three canal pilots.

Just beyond the anchorage are the four-mile long, low stone breakwaters leading into the canal itself. High above them stretch a long line of light towers, seemingly endless, in military precision. They mark the entrance to the canal proper. By night they form a long vista of arc lights; by day their spare steel frames look like nothing so much as a line of Martian soldiers waiting silently to take part in some war of the worlds.

Impressive Sight

Port Said is only one of five towns that have been created by the canal. Before it was cut there was nothing here but the marshes of Lake Menzaleh, which even now crowd upon the city's outskirts. From the

streets one can frequently see on the one side the white upperworks and black funnels of a P. and O. Mail liner making its way down the canal, and upon the other the white sails of Egyptian sailing boats, mostly carrying salt, as they did in the days of the Pharaohs.

Beyond the impressive entry stretches the long channel of the canal itself, uniform and somewhat monotonous, known irreverently to the British soldiers of the canal zone as the 'ditch.' It stretches for almost exactly 101 miles, practically straight all the way—there are only five gentle curves—to Port Tewfik and the Red Sea.

Twice the monotony is broken by lakes incorporated into the canal system, Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes.

Frenchman's Project

The construction of the Suez Canal of today was due to the energy and vision of one man, Ferdinand de Lesseps. Every possible difficulty was put in his way. Political rivalries for the trade to the East were very strong. Had it not been for the fact that England and France were in alliance at the time, it might have led to open war. The British Government opposed it with all its force, and even completed an alternative scheme for a railway link across the isthmus. But

de Lesseps had powerful commercial support in France and in the City of London.

At last the canal was completed and the British Government of the time had the grace to congratulate him and thereby to apologise for their former pig-headed obstinacy. Queen Victoria granted de Lesseps the Grand Cross of the Order of the Star of India, and the City of London made him a freeman.

Though intended as an international undertaking, the canal was built by a Frenchman and largely by French initiative and backing. A large block of the shares was, however, held by the Khedive of Egypt. He was probably the most spendthrift of a people always given to ostentation. His private debts ran to about £7,000,000 a year. Trying to wriggle out of his financial difficulties, he offered his Suez Canal shares first as security for a loan and later for outright sale. The farsighted Disraeli purchased them for the British Government, thus giving England an important share—almost a half—in the company.

The Convention

In 1888 a convention was signed at Constantinople between Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey and the Netherlands for the international control of the canal.

With certain alterations after World War I, to the detriment of the defeated central powers, this convention remains the basis of the canal regulation, save that Great Britain instead of Turkey is named as the

guarantor of the terms of the convention.

Its first article, reads: "The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag." Since World War I this convention had held firm until the Arab-Jewish war.

Enormous Development

The development of air traffic to the East has taken from the canal route some of its most distinguished passengers. In recent years interest in this most essential of communications has been political and commercial rather than social. It is therefore with a certain surprise that one looks at the statistics of canal traffic to see that, since World War II, it has trebled.

In 1869, when the canal was first opened to traffic, only ten vessels passed through; but the number continued to rise rapidly until 1882, when 3,189 transits were recorded.

Thence, save for the war years, the number has increased slowly and steadily, with minor fluctuations, to about 5,000 in 1947. From then onwards the increase has been phenomenal. In 1948 the number of transits had increased to 8,686, in 1949 to 10,420, and in 1950 to 11,751, with a net tonnage of nearly 82 millions.

The reason for this vast increase lies in one word: oil. The enormous development of Middle East oil-fields has swollen the Suez Canal traffic—(E.W.)

INDIA MAGAZINE



DEATH IN THOSE BOTTLES

Go to your medicine chest and see how many old and dangerous drugs may be there, and clean it out!

By HERBERT L. HERSCHENSLHN

LIKE everyone else, you have a medicine chest in your home. But let's peek into it to see if it's a shrine of comfort when you need first aid and relief from simple ailments, or a stage where dramas with tragic endings can take place.

Here is an old prescription bottle with a corroded cork. Throw it away. If you don't, you may repeat the unhappy experience of one Chicago woman. She felt the need for a tonic and remembered the bottle her doctor had prescribed months before. The tonic was old-fashioned and reliable, containing tincture of nux vomica. Although the cork had corroded and fallen out the medicine smelled all right, so the woman swallowed a dose. Suddenly she was seized with a convulsion. Her body became rigid and arched. Her face muscles twisted into a grotesque smile. It was a typical case of strychnine poisoning.

Although the tonic was safe and effective in the prescribed dose, when the cork fell out, the drug became concentrated through evaporation and, because nux vomica contains strychnine, the woman swallowed a potent poison.

Screamed In Pain

Here is a bottle where medicine has dripped over the label, making it illegible. One night a man reached into his medicine chest for a cough mixture and took a long swig. Then he screamed in pain. Instead of cough mixture it was liniment. The medicines looked alike and the bottle labels were faded.

A simple way to prevent such a catastrophe in your home is to seal the liniment bottle cap with adhesive tape, identifying it as a preparation to be used externally only. Labels can be permanently protected by strips of transparent tape, coated with colourless nail polish or lacquer.

INDIA MAGAZINE

Look at this thermometer in its cracked case—a perfect breeding place for germs! During an illness when a thermometer is used frequently, it should be placed in a small tray or glass containing disinfectant. Before being put into the mouth, rinse it in cold water and dry with clean tissue.

Here is a bottle labelled "Cough Expectorant." Almost every medicine chest has its favourite preparation, used by all members of the family. A cough is a warning that something is wrong—anything from simple laryngitis to heaven knows what. One type of cough may require a *sedative* expectorant, another type may call for a *stimulant* expectorant, a third may need an *anodyne*.

Excessive Acidity

There are more than thirty expectorant drugs from which the proper ones are combined to make a custom-tailored medicine for a particular cough. That is why medicine which was so good for Johnny is making Sally's cough worse.

Many medicine cabinets contain baking soda—a common remedy for sour stomach. Soda does give temporary relief, but it is not a cure for acidity. Excessive acidity can be safely absorbed by a little food—the basis of treatment for peptic ulcers. The diet should consist chiefly of proteins: eggs, milk, well-cooked meat and fish.

If you want your medicine chest to be up-to-date, then get rid of that box of boric acid. Medical journals constantly warn that such solutions

are too weak to be of value externally but are dangerous if accidentally swallowed. Boric acid is of use only when incorporated in a powder for "athlete's foot".

For Burns

What kind of burn ointment is this? It looks like the one a woman used after a folder of matches had ignited in her face. She ran to the medicine chest and applied ointment. The burn eventually healed but her skin was permanently stained an ugly yellow.

Recent experience revealed that vaseline is an excellent burn ointment. For the medicine chest a tube is preferred to the jar, to avoid contamination from fingers or stray substances. Ointment should not be applied by smearing the wound but with a sterile piece of gauze, which is then placed gently over the burn. A box of gauze squares, sealed and sterile, should be in every home cabinet for emergency use.

Why this package of sulfa tablets in your chest? Left over from an old prescription? Apparently lots of people become so sentimentally attached to old bottles and boxes that drugs of all kinds accumulate on cabinet shelves. Yet progress in medicine is so rapid that a drug highly recommended a year ago may be obsolete today. Besides, sulfa should never be taken without medical guidance.

Terrible Mistake

A college girl with a cold decided she needed sulfa

tablets. Unable to get them without a prescription, she bemoaned her fate to her landlady. The sympathetic woman handed over a box of the tablets which her doctor once had prescribed for a foot infection. Soon the girl was seized with excruciating pain. Because of improper dosage, the drug became crystallised in the kidneys like bits of broken glass.

Sedatives of various kinds are so easily obtained that they find their way into almost every medicine chest. No wonder people die every day from "an overdose of sleeping tablets." Get rid of the sedatives in your home before someone gets in trouble. Unless prescribed by a physician there is no excuse for taking them; they are merely a mask for faulty habits of living or thinking.

Danger Of Physic

Physics, too, are not only habit-forming but potentially perilous. Almost always, when an appendix ruptures, the tragedy is precipitated by a powerful physic taken for "stomach-ache." Physics upset digestion, rob the body of nutrition and create a nation of hypochondriacs. The temporary trouble is almost always at the terminal end of the colon and can be corrected with a glycerine suppository, or with a normal salt-solution irrigation—add a teaspoonful of kitchen salt to a quart of water—without disturbing the remaining thirty-odd feet of digestive tract.

It is fashionable to women to take benzedrine sulfate to kill appetites and thus help them to reduce. But benzedrine sulphate is a powerful drug and unless given under a physician's direction it can cause palpitation of the heart, insomnia, muscular pains, dizziness, nervousness and headaches. Thyroid tablets are just as dangerous when they are used promiscuously for reducing.

Useful Tip

Now that you've cleaned out your medicine chest, it's time to restock with these items:

Gauze squares in sterile envelopes.

Roller bandages of various sizes.

Waterproof adhesive tape in an airtight container.

Elastic bandage for sprains.

Antiseptic with glass applicator (mild tincture of iodine is excellent).

Pint of rubbing alcohol.

Tube of vaseline for burns and abrasions.

Adhesive type of dressing, preferably with strips of elastic adhesive.

Small bottle of flexible collodion to protect hangnails.

Small bottle of syrup of ipecac to empty the stomach in the event of poisoning.

Bottle of glycerine suppositories.

Smelling salts.

Small scissors.

When you get rid of old medicine, don't throw them into ash

cans or trash barrels. If found by curious children they can lead to tragedy. The safest method is to wash them down the sink. Then they're out of your medicine cabinet—and no longer a potential danger to your life.—(M.D.)

WHY TIRED FEELING?

Fatigue and lack of energy often "do not represent disease of organs so much as they represent an emotional disorder involving the entire personality structure," Drs. H. E. Harms and T. L. L. Soniat write in the "Medical Clinics of North America." "In ordinary life, normal people are hardly liable to genuine exhaustion, since recovery from physical fatigue is rapid. However, some persons are truly exhausted in the physical sense because of a neurosis."

CHEERFUL WAITING

Waiting in a doctor's office ought to be pleasant, Dr. Robert Bell of Denver felt. He installed magazine racks of really current reading matter—comics for children, magazines for women, magazines for men. And put in a typewriter and paper and envelopes so busy people could write notes of letters. Then an art gallery—a bulletin board for display of drawings or paintings by his patients. The gallery is an especial hit, says GP, magazine of the American Academy of General Practice.

MOUTH-NOT SO CLEAN!

"I like to think of how wisely man fails to be moved by the logic of so-called compelling facts," writes Dr. Iago Galdston

in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association. "Consider kissing—surely one of life's rare delights. Now all the compelling facts of science, hygiene, and of bacteriology frown upon, if not condemn outright, the act of kissing.

"The mouth is one of the least clean of the body's orifices—that is, from his viewpoint—and he has not been backward in stating it—kissing is an insani-tary practice and should be avoided.

"Fortunately, or the world would be even more drab, this is not the average man's point of view. He is not moved by the compelling knowledge or logic of the scientist. He is moved by his loves—and, of course, also by his hatreds—so, he kisses."

(Continued from page 22)

industry or other so that a lot of people can be provided with employment.

Despite difficulties, they must, in co-operation with the Government, start new industries.

Another suggestion is to maximise professional colleges and to minimise other colleges. Then alone more technicians will be available who may contribute to the industrial development. In short, every attempt should be made to keep all engaged in some work which fetches their livelihood and thus augment the national wealth.

In fine, only when the problem of unemployment is completely solved will our country be on the royal road to prosperity and peace.



ACTIVE MINISTER

The sudden descent upon Cossipore-Dum Dum Registration Office by West Bengal's new Judicial Minister was heartening to read about. He had received complaints, went incognito with one of his officials, promptly caught a deed-writer taking a bribe from a pleader, and must have shaken up the whole office in a manner much needed by many establishments, but unfortunately rare. Public criticism of Ministers and higher officials is often misapprehended. If the wheels of administration turn slowly or inefficiently, this is not often because they are not working; most of them work very hard indeed. The trouble is that their multifarious duties too often leave them chair-borne, whence slothful, incompetent or even dishonest subordinates are encouraged to believe that retribution is remote. More people in authority might indeed learn from the armed forces, in which frequent inspections, whether formal or inpromptu, are right-

ly regarded as a prime duty of any officer.

But if Mr S. P. Mitra is as active as he seems, the people of Calcutta might also be grateful for his personal attention to another problem, for which he now shares responsibility with the Home Ministry: the condition of summary jurisdiction in the city, particularly as dispensed by honorary magistrates. Some courts are so overcrowded that it is difficult to see how justice can be done at all. In others, litigants may wait hours for the magistrate to turn up. Production of police witnesses in criminal cases is often grossly delayed. Cases have been known of the clerk of the court bargaining with an accused to arrive at a sum for which he will consent to plead guilty. Though no doubt a small minority of the profession, there are pleaders who hang about the premises and have none too savoury a reputation. Confidential talk with a few experienced lawyers would almost certainly reveal abuses;

tackling them might not be so easy; but it would come high on the list of reforms really worth while.—*The Statesman*.

KASHMIR

Not all the anti-Indian propaganda concerning Kashmir emanates from Pakistan. The Kashmir Government have come out with a refutation of the tendentious, grossly misleading and totally unfounded allegations which Miss Mridula Sarabhai has been issuing from time to time and which serve as grist for Pakistan's propaganda mills. It can hardly carry any conviction when she charges that there is no proper financial administration in the State or that both the Kashmir Government and the Government of India are engaged in blacking out the situation there, for visitors to Kashmir can study for themselves the falsity of the charges, but it is positively mischievous when she gives currency to an allegation that over 150 persons were arrested in the State early this month and that repression is rife when there is no truth to it. That she has been indulging in such statements may be an index of the freedom of expression which all in the country enjoy, but in her campaign of misrepresentation she is rendering no service to anyone but Pakistan. The Kashmir Premier, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, has in his Press conference in Delhi scotched the rumour lately circulated that Sheikh Abdullah's release is imminent, but if he has said that he would be held in detention "as long as necessary" he has also added

that it would be for "not a moment longer."

Kashmir's new constitution is expected to come into being before the end of the year, and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed has announced that general elections will take place next year, possibly along with general elections in the rest of the country. While free and fair elections are promised, he has made it clear that no one will be allowed to create any communal conflagration or threaten the integrity or stability of the State. Kashmir's accession to India endorsed by the Constituent Assembly that is now drafting the constitution is not to be questioned. For Kashmir it is a matter of supreme concern that the development plans should be pushed through, and with the drafting of the constitution and the holding of general elections the Government should be able to settle down to the task of economic recovery and betterment. It is not a little significant, as Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed has stressed, that while the Kashmir Government have scheduled general election, in the areas held by Pakistan elections are ruled out by the Pakistan Government who keep the people under an iron hand. The conditions there can only strengthen the determination of the Kashmiris who have thrown in their lot with India.

—*Hindustan Times*.

NEED FOR RE-THINKING

The Prime Minister's latest exposition in Lok Sabha of the Government of India's Goa policy is nothing but a reitera-

tion of the negative attitude it adopted in the wake of last year's *satyagraha* campaign from across the border of this Portuguese-held territory. The numerous questions and supplementaries asked by members from all sections of the House reflect the anxious concern felt throughout the country over the deteriorating situation in Goa. The ruthless suppression, torture and exceptionally brutal treatment of the freedom-fighters by the Portuguese authorities underline, as the Prime Minister pointed out, the rising tide of nationalist and anti-Portuguese feeling developing inside the colonial possession.

—*A. B. Patrika*.

SANSKRIT AND CULTURE

President Rajendra Prasad stressed the obvious when he said at Hyderabad recently Sanskrit had provided the most important focal point from which emanated India's cultural and political unity.

It is but natural that in our attempt to re-establish that consciousness of unity, most needed at the present juncture, we should strive to gather the broken threads of the past, cut adrift as we are from our ancient traditions as a result of centuries of foreign domination.

Study of Sanskrit, which has been the main vehicle of those traditions, should enable us to see ourselves in the proper perspective, a nation deriving its religious teaching and cultural heritage from a common source.

—*Sunday Standard*.

ATTACK ON CASTE

The next general elections in India will be of special interest to social reformers if, as seems probable, opinion in the Indian National Congress against the caste system gathers strength. At its meeting in New Delhi, the Working Committee, endorsing a resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee, has suggested that steps be taken to discourage the use of caste suffixes to names in official records and in the registers of schools and colleges. It remains to be seen whether the Congress manifesto, now being drafted, will advocate the abolition of caste and omission of caste names from lists of voters. Some of the Congress organisations have appealed to the High Command to see that elections are not influenced by considerations of caste or community. The recent All-India Convention of the Youth Congress in Hyderabad, for example, passed a resolution stating that "in some cases candidates for election are selected on a communal basis" and that "Congress should immediately get rid of this weakness, which is creating a bad impression on the minds of the people, who doubt our sincerity about eliminating casteism and religion from politics."—*The Mail*.

RAIN, RAIN!

Many in Bombay might be tempted to recite the familiar nursery rhyme "Rain, rain, go away, come again another day." They would be justified in doing so for it has been raining cats and dogs for days together. The main topics of

conversation in Bombay now are rain and the weather. No doubt the plentiful rains have dislocated normal life and caused considerable inconvenience and hardship but in blaming the much-maligned weather, we are taking an uncharitable view.

As a rule, we mortals are a complaining lot. When it is hot, we want it cool, and when it is cool we want it hot, always wanting what is not. We seem to think that nature has ordained things for our convenience forgetting everything in nature acts in conformity with its own law. To make matters worse many have a chronic anxiety about the weather. Furthermore many view rain with mixed feelings and it has been said "vexed sailors curse the rain for which poor shepherds pray in vain."

Coming back to rain, let us not forget that after the rain cometh the fair weather. Let us take the rough with the smooth and not be unduly upset by the so-called vagaries of the weather.

—*Bombay Chronicle.*

A DANGEROUS SYMPTOM

India has invincible faith in non-violence and peaceful methods in the solution of national and international problems. Even in the face of aggressive colour war launched by the South African Whites against Africans and Indians, her advice has always been in favour of employing

non-violent and peaceful methods to have the wrongs righted. But the provocative White attitude has created the spirit of anger and indignation among certain sections of Africans; and some of them occasionally go to the extent of attacking the Whites. According to a Johannesburg report, a clash between two African factions was a signal for rioting in the town; and later this rioting took the shape of anti-White incidents. The trouble is symptomatic of a deep-seated malady which has its origin in *apartheid* which is being ruthlessly applied by the South African authorities against the non-Whites. A South African newspaper, the "Star", has while commenting on the incidents, declared that "fundamentally the problem is something more than a matter of strong police action". "We must", it says, "seek for the root cause in a combination of social conditions that could produce similar evils in any racial situation." Force cannot suppress the spirit or the aspirations of any people; and though for the time being the White Government may succeed in having its way, it is laying the foundations of a racial conflict which will eventually overwhelm it. In its blinding madness it has refused to realise the dire consequences of its iniquitous actions. But it cannot continue to play with fire without itself being engulfed by it some day.

—*The Tribune.*

INDIA MAGAZINE

GLEANINGS FROM RABINDRANATH

Civility is beauty of behaviour.

A relationship of pure utility humiliates man.

The true goodness is not the negotiation of badness, it is in the mastery of it.

Goodness is the miracle which turns the tumult of chaos into a dance of beauty.

Faith is the spectator in us which finds the meaning of the drama from the unity of the performance; but logic lures us into the greenroom where there is stagecraft but no drama at all, and then logic nods its head and wearily talks of disillusionment.

Nationalism is the training of a whole people for a narrow ideal.

The truth of our life depends upon our attitude of mind towards it—an attitude which is formed by our habit of dealing with it according to the special circumstance of our surroundings and temperaments.

Society suffers from a profound feeling of unhappiness, not so much when it is in material poverty as when its members are deprived of a large part of their humanity.

Beauty is no phantasy, it has the everlasting meaning of reality.

Peace is true and not conflict, Love is true and not hatred; and Truth is the One, not the disjointed multitude.

—C. M. G

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FORBIDDEN

A Short Story:

CAPE Comorin looked lovely and inviting. The wild splendour of the sea entranced the two friends—Chandru and Swamy. Chandru was lying on the sand, very near the water. Whenever the wind was strong, the waves swept past him and he was almost drenched. But, to all these things, Chandru was indifferent. He was buried in thought. His heart was identical with the wild sea. Everything about him was restless. So was everything within him. His thoughts were wandering. They centred round Madras City. They circled round his friend Swamy. He was now sceptical; he was then pessimistic. At last—he would be optimistic!

Swamy watched him from a distance. He could not understand his friend. He wondered what actually was wrong with him. Chandru had written to him from Madras, saying he would come for a holiday—to go round Nature's Shrine in Cape Comorin. And Swamy was glad. He welcomed his friend. Chandru came the previous evening. He talked little. He was much troubled. Swamy had no difficulty in discovering his friend's condition. Chandru was undergoing a severe mental conflict. Of that Swamy was aware. But what act-

ually was the affair—well, Swamy was no psychiatrist to probe and find out.

The temple bell sounded—resounded from the depths of the blue waters. Swamy yawned. He looked at Chandru. The whole of his body had been soaked. In spite of it, Chandru was still.

"Chandru."

Now, he moved. He shot a



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FRUIT

By H. N. K. SWAMY

glance at his watch. He put his palms behind his head and tilted it slightly backwards. The bones cracked. In despair, he slowly got up.

SWAMY had not questioned him. He was confident that Chandru would talk—if not today, at least on the morrow, or even the day after. So he was silent.

"The temple bell has rung. Shall we move into the temple?"

Chandru did not speak. He nodded his head in the affirmative. And they slowly moved towards the Kanya Kumari temple.

"THE goddess in this temple is an eternal virgin. Through-

out the Indian soil, you can find Lord Shiva and Parvathi together, in the temples. That is to suggest the bliss and happiness of a married life. But here we have the virgin goddess. She suggests that young men and women must control their passions and youthful stirrings and be masters of their selves. People, restless and sickly like you, must find some consolation, here, in this temple. That's why I brought you here," Swamy was telling.

Chandru turned away his head as if he didn't like to hear this.



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They left their *chappals* outside.

There was not much sculptural grandeur inside the temple. The Shrine was simple—calm and soothing. Something attractive and something healing to the distressed soul was there. Amidst the silence and sanctity, the goddess was standing. An alluring smile curved her lips. On her forehead was shining a big ruby. It was red and inviting.

Chandru's eyes rested on it. He was rooted to the spot.

FOR a minute, his mind and heart were blank. Neat as a paper.

He turned towards Swamy.

"The greatness about this temple is this Ruby, I believe."

"Yes. This is a spiritual ruby."

Something stirred in Chandru's heart.

They were now walking along the main road. A passenger bus came. It was going to Nagercoil. They boarded it and reached Swamy's house. Supper was served. They ate it and sat down in open air. The White Lady of the skies was on her usual stroll. She was clothed in white and was simple. Perhaps, she had strewn round her all the jewels. They were sparkling and twinkling.

Chandru was staring up. All these thoughts passed behind his brain. The moon and the stars were not comforting him. His thoughts raced round Shalini. Swamy was now talking:

"Love must be entirely in literature. Out of it, the whole thing is a fraud; something superfluous. Only when it is fictitious, we can cherish and relish it. When love triumphs in a marriage, it is interesting. But when it ends in failure, nothing is more fatal and cruel. You must be knowing this saying of a great thinker. 'Love after marriage is eternal; love before it is lust'."

"You are wrong. Love is a disease which attacks a person without his knowing. If you cannot overcome it by defeating it, then be sure that it will kill you!"

"Do you mean to say that the transitory feelings in your heart now are the outcome of love?"

Swamy, Chandru thought, was jesting. He was silent for a while, and then he said:

"You are my friend and I don't propose to hide my feelings. I will tell you everything. Perhaps, you will sympathise with my case."

Swamy sat alert. He was interested. After all, Chandru had consented to talk.

YOU must have seen my uncle's daughter, Shalini (he began). And I think you know her mother too. After the death of my uncle, the burden of bringing up the young girl fell on my aunt's shoulders. Uncle had left a small house and an acre of land. The two managed to live on the little income from the land. You know very well how much I

was attached to this family. Shalini and I were childhood friends. We played together and for many days ate together. We had become one soul in two bodies. My aunt was often saying that we would make a good pair. I was old enough to understand the implications in her words. Shalini was still young and she had no idea of what marriage was. She used to throw an innocent laugh at her mother.

SHE would be playing mother. I was the father, and a small doll was our child. Tiny mud vessels were our household utensils. The doll would sleep in a small palmleaf cradle. Shalini would get rice and dhal. She would cook the food. She was a thorough housewife. I used to go out to my office. And when I came back, Shalini would be fretting and fuming. When I used to ask her the reason, she would say, 'Our baby is having fever' and I am very much worried', and then insist on my getting a doctor. Then, Aunt would come as a doctor, administer some medicine and go back.

Oh, Swamy! Those days were the happiest in my life. They are unforgettable. How I wish I had become a small boy and Shalini a small girl, so that we could play on the shores of Cape Comorin!

Days passed by. I had written my final year examination. I went back to my native place to spend the summer vacation.

Later I went to Shalini's house. She was seated in the verandah, knitting a pullover.

I smiled. She stood up; without a word and without a smile, she darted in.

I was troubled. This was the first time that Shalini was so cold. My Shalini had changed. The change was startling. It was unexpected.

I went to the kitchen. Auntie was there, cooking. She saw me. She gave an ordinary smile and bade me sit down. Her manners were strange. It was not my old aunt, who would jump at me with eagerness and joy. Had any feud arisen between our families?

I asked her.

"Shalini is engaged," Aunt told me.

I was shocked. The whole world was whirling round me with force. I lost my stability.

"The bridegroom is a pandit in a school. He is aged fifty. He has no children by his first three wives."

"Auntie! Are you mad? Do you want your young daughter to marry an old man?" I was thundering.

"You can't expect a young man to marry a girl from such a poor family as ours! We cannot pay huge dowry to young officers!"

"DON'T talk rot, Auntie. Shalini's beauty will bring thousands of officers to her feet. But why? Where have I gone? Was not Shalini destined to be my wife! Auntie, you used to tell me so in those days! Why at all did you change your mind? Tell me, Auntie." I was yelling

and I wept. I was actually crying. Auntie was moved. Tears were rolling down her cheeks.

It seemed my father had insulted her, when she went to ask him his opinion about the match between Shalini and me. The aristocratic pride of my father had irritated my aunt. In despair, she had arranged the marriage of the old man with Shalini.

That was more than what I could tolerate. I was filled with sorrow and fury. I went home. I pleaded. I wept. I threatened. I went on a fast. My father's heart was stubborn. He was adamant.

I WAS broken-hearted. Shalini was now dead to me. She was torn away from me. I was paralysed. The earth had become an empty thing. I went back to Madras.

Shalini haunted me. She came in my dreams. She appeared in all the women whom I met.

To forget her was a great task. The more I tried to forget, the more I remembered her. In a month I had become a walking skeleton.

Slowly, studies absorbed me. I was studying for my M. A. degree. I was forcibly pushing aside all thoughts of Shalini. Days rolled by.

The postman delivered to me, that day, an invitation. It announced the wedding of Shalini. The hidden thoughts came out with extraordinary force. In great anger, I tore away the card. The pieces were carried away by the wind. My heart had long back been torn away

into such pieces. The drama was over. I did not care to go to the wedding. I did not send greetings, either.

I passed my M. A. exam. I got a lecturer's job. I moved to a flat on the first floor of a house. By this time my father had expired. I was left alone in the world. I took no notice of the surroundings. There was no harmony within my heart; I could find nothing of it without.

My friend, Ramu, came to my room that evening.

"Chandru! Do you know? Some family has moved into the downstairs portion lately," he said.

I said I didn't.

"The man is a retired pandit and about fifty-one years old. It seems he has married for the fourth time a very young and beautiful girl!"

That startled me. I was doubtful. I was reminded of Shalini.

"DO you know the girl's name?" I was about to ask when I heard a voice from below.

"Shalini! I have been calling you for the past half an hour! What are you doing?"

I was puzzled. My heart thumped. Sweat was trickling down my forehead. Was it my Shalini? I caught hold of my friend's hand and pulled him downstairs. I caught a glimpse of the girl. Oh! It was—It was my dear Shalini!

That night, believe it or not, I spent in great mental agony.

I rolled in the bed and Shalini's face was before me, all the time. I could not bear it, Swamy. It was too much. My Shalini, living with an old fellow right in front of my eyes!

IN the dead of the night, I resolved. I came to a conclusion and waited for the sun to rise.

The old man had gone out. Slowly, with beating heart, I came down.

Shalini was seated near the window. Her back was turned towards me.

"Shalini...." I gently called.

She swung round. Her eyes fluttered. She stood up.

"Chandru!..." she exclaimed. Joy and sorrow were clear in her face.

"How are you, Shalini?" I enquired.

"How am I? Don't you see? I am a moving machine, without life! Oh! I am lost, I'm lost!..." she was crying.

"Was it for this that your mother gave you in marriage to this old man?" I jeered.

"She did it and is no more! Why talk of the dead?" Shalini said, wiping her eyes.

"You must have fought your mother! You had no guts!"

"As if you had it! You could not fight your father! How could I, a woman, fight for my rights?"

"You were hasty! You could have waited. Now I'm a full bird. I could have married you. If you were now a...."

"Why talk about the past? Go and mind your job. I have work to do!"

Shalini moved in. I pondered over many things.

Next morning, I approached her. I told her everything.

"Shali! Two years back, I had no courage. I had failed to do my duty. Now I have the courage. Please come away with me. We shall start a new life."

Shalini was startled.

"It is my fate, Chandru. Why should you earn a bad name?"

"No, Shalu, I am here to change your fate. You must separate from this old man! Your life must be fused with mine!"

"I am destined to live with this old man. Society has accepted this union!"

"Your mother had previously thought of me as son-in-law. In haste and a momentary fit of temper she ruined your life. She will only be too pleased at our reunion."

SHE was silent. She was undergoing a mental conflict. She then said, "Give me time. I will tell you tomorrow morning."

The morning came. I was waiting. But Shalini herself came up.

"I thought over the matter! I agree to your proposal. When do you make your plans, tell me!"

I was floating high up in the skies.

My plan was this. We should on a particular night get out of the house and go away to Cape Comorin. We should live with you, Swamy, and after some time get back to Madras. She agreed and I told her that, after fixing up with you, I would return to Madras and get her to this place.

Now, I am here. You must help me!

Swamy heaved a sigh.

"I do understand your love for Shalini, Chandru, but I can never appreciate your running away with another man's wife. Please think again and tell me in the morning."

Chandru was worried. He just nodded his head and then slept.

CHANDRU found himself in the temple of Kanya Kumari. He was shivering due to the fear embedded in his heart. He stealthily walked towards the idol. He saw the red ruby shining like the tail light of a motor car. He thought, 'After all, the ruby is being wasted. If it was with a man like me it would have some material value! Why not remove it and take it along?'

Chandru with some struggle got out the ruby and ran out of the temple. He ran fast and after coming far from the temple, stopped to look at the ruby.

New thoughts overpowered him.

IT was all right that he stole the ruby. But, then, he could not have it in the public. Even though the idol would not take revenge on him, the society, the government and the law could act! When he could not use it or place it in the public, what was the benefit he would derive? Nothing!

Chandru was in a dilemma. And he threw the ruby with all force away—far away—from him. The ruby went rolling and alas, it turned into Shalini!

"Chandru, you promised me a better life. You said that you could appreciate my beauty and brought me from the old man! But now you are hurling me down, because you cannot take me as your wife in the face of the society. I am lost either way. I cannot go back to the old man; I cannot live with you! Oh, you have ruined me, Chandru!" Shalini was crying aloud.

Chandru was in a maze. He was shocked. He cried, "I am undone!" and he awoke from the sleep. The dreadful dream was over.

Without answering the stream of questions from Swamy, Chandru hurried to Madras.

Shalini tried to speak to him in the evening. She could not. And early in the morning she went upstairs with great expectations.

The room of Chandru was locked!

TWO days later she got a letter. She tore open the envelope and read the contents:

"My dear Shalini,

"The secret of a happy life is in loving the possession and not possessing the loved one! This is not only the principle of a happy life, but also of a calm life. Follow this principle and find a new path in your married life.

"Our Indian women are famous for their patience and sacrifice. Look at the young widows of our land, who sacrifice their lives for the sake of our glorious culture and tradition! Comparing your life with theirs, I am sure, yours is a better one. I have only one thing to tell you. Tread the path that has been cut out by the society for you and your husband. You will find therein a true pleasure and satisfaction. Our meeting ended in heart-ache and we were about to commit a grave mistake. Thank the Almighty. He gave me enlightenment in a right moment. To avoid any more complications, I have decided not to meet you at all. Hence I am going far—far away, never to return. May the great Kanya Kumari live by you and guide you.—Chandru."

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WHEN LOVE FACES FIRE

THE sweating horses had galloped neck to neck, but now the gray fell behind. Though his rider struck the spurs deep and shouted encouragement, his pace still slackened. Even the horror that drove the rabbits past them in hordes was powerless to hasten him. The poor brute groaned with something of human agony in the sound.

One of the men drew rein. The other turned over his shoulder an ashen face, and cried, "Faster, faster!"

If he saw the woman's hopeless gesture, he did not heed it. Setting his face to the east, he rode on.

"He's right," the woman said. "There's no use sacrificing three lives instead of one." Her eyes met those of her companion without flinching. "Good-bye, Jim!"

"Get up behind me!" said the man roughly.

For a moment her voice rose shrill in protest.

"Your horse can't carry double. He's most winded now. For God's sake, ride on, Jim!"

"You're wasting time," said the man.

He pulled up his horse and folded his arms; and with a cry she yielded.

Under his double load the

black galloped gallantly ahead. Suddenly he stumbled, throwing both his riders. The woman sprang lightly to her feet; the man rose heavily, his face contracting with pain; but the black horse did not rise.

"Put his foot into a rabbit-hole, poor fellow," said the man. "His leg's broken." He cast a glance over his shoulder, and drew his revolver. The merciful bullet did its work, and the man turned stoically to his companion. "We'll go over to Williamson's clearing, Mary. Not that it makes much difference!"

For some time she walked at his side in silence, turning occasionally to look back at the wall of mingled smoke and flame, pursuing like an avenger. Suddenly she became aware that her companion's right foot dragged.

"Are you hurt, Jim?" she cried anxiously.

A grimace, suggestive of a smile, crossed the man's set face.

"Yes, I'm a little lame; but by nightfall it won't matter."

"You're dying for me!" the woman wailed.

"YOU hush!" He took her hand and held it. "This is better luck than I ever hoped for—to die for you and with you, and him galloping out of the way at last!"

The woman said nothing; but

for a moment her face relaxed, and she seemed forgetful of the doom drawing nearer moment by moment.

"You know how it's been with me, Mary. Ever since I was a boy I've loved you, but I never hoped for anything as good as the right to tell you so. With death a half-hour away, there's no use making a secret of it any longer."

The woman broke in with sudden passion.

"Why didn't you tell me so long ago, when we were boy and girl, before—"

He rested his disengaged hand on her shoulder. "Mary, you know how it was. I had my mother and the younger children to look after. It didn't seem fair to ask a girl to wait."

"It isn't fair not to give a girl the chance to wait if she wants to," the woman cried. Their eyes met, and hers were aflame. He blinked like a man dazzled. "Jim," she went on, "we don't know much about the next world, but I reckon it's a big place, and maybe we might have hard work to find each other over there; so, for fear I shouldn't see you again, I'm going to tell you that I've loved you all these years." She drew a tiny object from the bosom of her dress. "It's the only thing I tried to save," she said.

The man examined it curiously. It was a cherry-stone cut into the shape of a basket, with the letter "M" scratched on one side.

"You don't remember," she reproached him. "You made

it for me. I was twelve years old then, and you were fourteen."

"Looks like it and been burned," said the man with awkward tenderness.

"I threw it in the fire the night before I married Ed, and then I snatched it out again. Don't you remember how my hand was blistered?"

SHE drew a breath that was between a laugh and a sob. The imminent peril was for the moment as nothing beside the tender memory; but as the man's arm slipped about her waist, and his face bent to hers, she drew back.

"No, Jim! I told you this because we're the same as dead; but I won't kiss you. If we find each other over there, you know there'll be nothing to keep us apart."

They had reached the clearing. The plough standing in the furrow showed the effort the owner had made to protect his home, before he surrendered hope. The door of the house stood wide open. Within, all was confusion. Chairs were overturned. Articles strewn about the floor suggested a hasty selection of the most prized possession.

The man went into the abandoned house, and reappeared with several blankets in his arms.

"Come to the spring, Mary, we'll soak these with water, and wrap'em around us."

"What's the use, Jim?" she objected gently. "We've got

to die in the end, it's better to have it come sooner than later."

"If there's a chance, I'm not going to throw it away." He turned his gaze towards the ominous wall of flame and smoke, leaping over the miles between it and them. His eyes measured the strip of ploughed land about the farmhouse. "If there's a chance," he repeated, "we'll take it!"

In the hour that followed little was said. The air thickened, grew black and suffocating. A terrible heat, as from a furnace, was about them. Blazing firebrands fell, hissing, into the water beside them. Gasping, choking, crouching low over the water to take breath, her lips cracking with the heat, the woman envied the dead brute they had left on the prairie. Once or twice she moaned to her companion. "Oh, let me die, Jim! This doesn't pay!"

Through the dull roar of the flames she heard his answer, "We won't give up while there's a chance."

At last they were looking at each other like two dead creatures, creeping out of their graves to meet, their faces blackened, their hair singed, their eyes bloodshot. All around them was desolation, while to the east the billows of flame still swept on. The man stood up, grimly, triumphant.

"We took our chance," he said. "That ploughing that Williamson did this morning

saved us. Are your hands burned much, Mary?"

"I don't mind the hurt much," the woman answered.

She had the air of one dazed. As she tried to move, she staggered, and he sprang to her help.

"Pretty well used up, ain't you, Mary?" His rough voice softened into a whisper like a caress. "It's enough to lay out a man, let alone a woman. I reckon you hardly feel sure yet that you're alive; but it's all true, Mary. We're here, and we're young, and life's ahead of us!"

The woman shuddered. She drew away from him, and looked to the east. "How soon do you think we can get to Singing water?"

"Singing Water? Do you want to go there?"

"Ed's there."

"Oh, yes, Ed's there. The last we saw of him, he was headed in that direction, and at a good hard gallop. It's safe to say he got there; and, to my mind, that's a good reason for our keeping away."

"He's my husband," said the woman.

"MARY!" The word was a cry of rage, but the man controlled himself with an effort. "Mary, Ed's not a man. He's not even a hound. There's not a name fit for him that's fit for your ears to hear. A thing that would gallop off to save his own life, and leave you to such a death!" He choked,

and cleared his voice by an oath. "And then to talk as if he could have a claim upon a woman."

"He's my husband," the woman repeated monotonously.

Again Jim fought for self-control.

"There's two sides to that. The man who won't protect his wife loses his right to her. When he left you to me out there...." his grimy hand pointed to the charred waste, "—he the same as gave you to me. We've been through death together, and you're mine!"

THE woman stood erect as he strode towards her. Every sign of weakness and weariness had vanished. Her voice rang clear.

"Jim Townley, I've been mistaken in you. I've been thinking of you all these years as a man a woman could trust, and loving you for it. There's a weak spot in most women, and I showed mine today when I told you what your livid ears ought never to have heard. It seemed to me that we were the same as two spirits, as we stood there with death chasing us." She took from her bosom the grotesque trinket she had treasured from her childhood, and stamped it under her heel. "I'm going back to my husband. If he's a coward, I'll be brave for two. If he shirks, I'll do double duty. Now, what have you to say?"

"Nothing, Mary." He stared at the blackened, tattered woman, the passion dying out of his eyes, and worship taking its

place. "Nothing, except that we've got to wait till the ground cools. And, Mary, you can trust me still."

"Thank you, Jim," she said steadily. "I've been through enough today, without losing faith in you."

When they walked into Long Tom Fowler's cabin, days after, that old Indian fighter screamed like a woman. When assured that they were flesh and blood, instead of apparitions, he attempted by a frenzied hospitality to atone for his churlish welcome.

"Have you seen Ed?" was Mary's first question.

"Seen Ed? Yes, indeed. He came into Singing Water the day of the fire. Good horse, that horse of Ed's."

"He's safe, then!"

The woman leaned back in her chair and shut her eyes. A deadly exhaustion showed itself in her face. Long Tom brought out his supplies, apologizing for their scantiness, and the hungry pair ate and drank in silence. As Jim finished his meal, he was aware that Tom was standing at the cabin door, making mysterious gestures. Jim joined him, and the old man drew him out of hearing.

"LOOK here," he whispered. "There's bad news for her. I don't know how to tell her."

"What do ye mean? Wasn't that straight about Ed's getting to town safely?"

"Oh, he got there, all right. He said that when he got home he found his wife gone, and

made up his mind that she'd started for town without him. He did seem dreadful worked up at not finding her here ahead of him; but of course it was too late to go back. The poor devil started in to drink right away, and nobody wondered. Well, he's been drinking ever since, and last night, in Beard's saloon, all at once he let out a screech like somebody's knifed him. Somebody asked him what ailed him:

"It's that Mary," says he. 'She follows me everywhere. When I wake up at night, she's sitting on the edge of the bed, looking at me, same as if I'd killed her. She's in the corner now,' he says, pointing, and I tell you it gives a man a chill to hear him. 'I can't stand it any longer, and that's all there is to it,' says he. And with that he whipped out his revolver, turned it on himself, and was dead before they could get across the room to him."

THERE was a long silence. Twice Jim took an irresolute step towards the cabin door. Twice he stopped and looked away.

"Somebody else has to tell her," he said at last. "I can't!"

CARELESS WORDS

MORE people agree about things that matter than one might suppose. We misunderstand one another largely because we don't use words with sufficient care.

Arguments arise because people use different words to express the same idea, and don't trouble to define exactly what they mean. Careless language means careless thought; careless thought means bad argument; bad argument means misunderstanding and quarrels. It's as simple as that.

—ROFFE THOMPSON.



NEW TYPIST (to boss): "I didn't catch what you said after 'Dear Sir'. Will you please repeat it?"

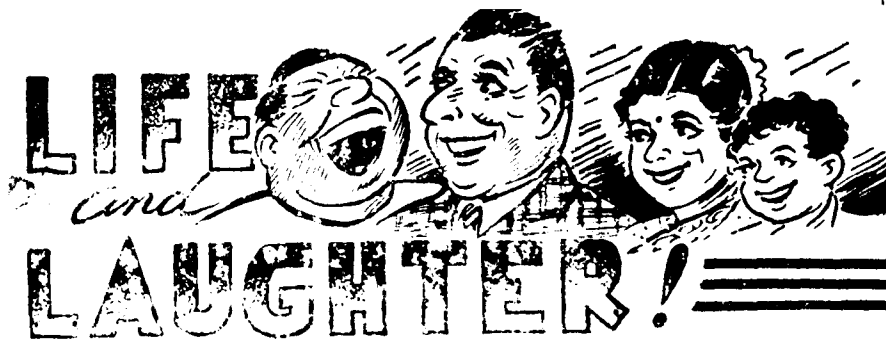
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"IS your husband doing anything to cure his deafness?"

"No. He has decided to wait until the children have finished taking music lessons."

ALL THE SAME!

A fellow took a very dilapidated car to a garage for repair.

"How much did you pay for this car?" asked the mechanic.

"As a matter of fact," replied the owner, "a friend gave it to me for nothing."

The garage man shook his head. "You have been swindled," he said.

BUSY-SLEEPING!

"May I speak to Mr. Smith, please?"

"I am sorry but he is very busy just now. He said that unless it was very urgent I was not to wake him."

NOT THE RIGHT ONE

The Japanese have 200 ways of cooking rice."

"So has my wife, and not one the right one!"

INDIA MAGAZINE

PRISON Visitor: "Don't you feel lonely here?"

Convict: "No."

Prison Visitor: "Don't you miss your friends and relatives?"

Convict: "Why should I? They are all here with me."

HOW LONG?

History Teacher: "How long have you been away?"

Pupil: "Since Tippu Sultan's death!"

KEEPING HIM QUIET

"And has your baby learned to talk yet?"

"My, yes! We're teaching him to keep quiet now."

SEVEN TO SUPPORT

"I would like to marry your daughter."

"One word first. Can you support a family?"

"Certainly, sir."

"Very good. I must tell you there are seven of us."

DEAF man: "How much do I owe you, doctor?"

"Five guineas."

"Nine guineas?"

"No, ten guineas!"

MOTHER'S TRICK

Visitor: "Do you like singing, dear?"

Child: "Oh, no. I hate it, really. But Mummy only makes me do it when she wants people to go."

HOW COULD SHE?

"How could you let your French master kiss you?"

"Mother, I am not to blame. You can't expect that after three lessons I knew enough French to be able to stop him."

GOOD EXCUSE

Cop: "Why are you racing through town at this rate?"

Speeder: "My brakes are out of order and I wanted to get home before there is an accident!"



"He is so jealous that he never trusts her out of sight. Hence the knot!"

"DID the editor use anything from your manuscript?"

"Yes."

"Congratulations! What?"

"The return postage."

PLAIN TRUTH

"You don't seem to be a lover of music although you have four musical daughters."

"If you had four musical daughters, you would not be a lover of Music."

NOT GREEDY

"Spare a copper for a poor out-of-work."

"Here is a shilling—call my shop tomorrow and I will find you work."

"No, sir, the shilling will be enough—I am not greedy."

NEAREST THE DOOR!

Master: "If the National Gallery were on fire, which five pictures would you attempt to rescue?"

Pupil: "The five nearest the door."

WRONG COUNTING

"Mrs. Murphy, you sent me one egg this morning and I lent you two."

"I am very sorry—I must have counted wrongly!"

SELF CONTROL!

"Before we were married you used to call me your angel."

"Yes, I remember."

"Now you call me nothing."

HUSBAND: "I can't eat this stuff."

Young Bride: "Never mind, dear. I have some lovely recipes for making up left-overs."

Husband: "In that case I'll eat it now."

NO PART

Judge: "Did you take part in this fight or were you just a witness?"

Man with Black Eye: "I was only an eye witness."

MAID'S JUBILEE

"Come round on Monday. We're celebrating our maid's jubilee," said Weeks.

"But she couldn't have been with you fifty years," put in his friend. "Why, you've only been married five years! What do you mean?"

"No; she is the fiftieth we have had since we were married," Weeks explained.

BETTER THAT WAY!

Traveller: "How dare you throw me out? I represent a wholesale firm."

Doorkeeper: "I beg your pardon, sir. Come in and I will throw you out of the main entrance."

DOESN'T WANT THEM?

"What is the matter with that baby that he always cries?"

"He is getting his teeth."

"Doesn't he want to have them?"

APPRENTICE: "You want me to clean the office? You said you had a man for rough work."

Chief: "So we have. He collects the debts."

WRONG IMPRESSION

Young Poet: "How do you like my poems?"

Critic: "Excellent. There are poems there that Shakespeare or Shelley could not have written."

Poet: "It is kind of you to say so."

Critic: "One is about the films and the other about wireless."

THE OTHER SIDE

"Freddie!" exclaimed his mother, seeing his bruised eye, "you've been fighting again. Didn't I tell you to count a hundred?"

"Well, I started—only the other boy's mother told him to count fifty."

COMB TOO

Customer: "Do you give a guarantee with this hair-restorer?"

Barber: "Guarantee, sir? Why, we give a comb!"

NO FUTURE

Father: "Now I'm giving you a good job in my mill. I want you to work your way up."

Son: "But, father, there's no future in it. I want to work in some place where I can marry the owner's daughter."

A CORPULENT teacher was giving a lesson to a class of small children on a canary.

Teacher! "Can any boy tell me what a canary can do and I can't?"

Sharp Boy: "Please, miss, have a bath in a saucer?"

WHICH PART?

Editor: "The article is not bad, but you must write so that any fool can understand you."

Author: "Which part is not clear to you?"

THE SECRET

"What is the secret of success in life?"

"I don't really know, but I fear it is connected with work."

QUESTION!

Henpeck (beaming): "Hurrah! I have won £10,000 in a lottery."

Mrs. Henpeck: "Where did you get the money to buy the ticket?"

SO SHY

"Why didn't you scream when Jack kissed you in the garden?"

"He is so shy—if I had, he would have run away."

FAR EASIER

"When I was twenty I made up my mind to get rich."

"But you never became rich."

"No, I decided it was a lot easier to change my mind."

BORING Guest: "That is a strange clock you have in the hall."

Host: "Yes, we call it 'The Guest.'"

Guest: "Why is that?"

Host: "It won't go."

HUBBY'S REMEDY

Wife: "I simply must have a new hat. The whole town knows I have worn this one for two years."

Husband: "Then there is nothing for it but to move to another town."

DOGS & PRICES

"How much for this big dog?"

"£5."

"For this smaller one?"

"£10."

"For this tiny one?"

"£15."

"Heavens! How much will it cost if I don't buy a dog at all?"

BETTER USE

Sandy (watching his son hurrying down the street): "Jock, where are you going?"

Jock: "To the pictures."

Sandy: "Are those your best shoes you have on?"

Jock: "Yes, father."

Sandy: "Well, I thought I told you to take bigger strides!"

SHORT STORY:

By KERMIT SHELBY

GIRL AND HER CHOICE

WHEN mama announced at the dinner table that night Sweet Thing was coming next day to be our new hired girl, dad's moustache began to twitch. He looked down, stirring his coffee.

My oldest brother Jack shoved away his molasses pie, although he had just taken the first big bite. Al, who is three years younger than Jack and will soon be 19, began to grin foolishly at the tablecloth. Manly Steadman, our hired man with the muscles, kept on chewing but his eyes held a numb look, like when your foot has gone to sleep.

I was the only one who said a word. "Gee whiz, ma." My tone held awe. Even I could see how Sweet Thing's coming would change everything. It would be like having seven Sundays every week.

I didn't know then that Manly had courted Sweet Thing nearly all last winter before she got herself engaged to Virgil Stauffer. To make conversation, I asked, "Is she going to wear her pink stockings?"

There seemed no possible way to prevent it. With two stubborn young people, some competition, jealousy, a spark from almost any direction—you're bound to have some kind of an explosion.

Al's molasses pie seemed to backfire. Mama ran to beat him on the back. I wondered why Manly's face turned red.

After she brought Al a glass of water mama said to me, "Some day, Ted, you'll grow up. Meanwhile, you can mind your manners. It's not nice to make fun of others."

"Make fun?" I said, astonished. "Why, Sweet Thing's got the prettiest legs of any girl in this country."

Dad coughed and grabbed his napkin. Mama looked shocked.

I quickly added, "At least, that's what Virgil told her Sunday at the church steps. But you know how Virgil is to brag."

MAMA went to the kitchen and brought more hot rolls. When she spoke she sounded like someone who has counted 10. "And another thing. None of you are to call her Sweet Thing. Her name's Elberta Rush. She's coming here primarily to work herself out some fine wedding clothes," mama went on, "and I can

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use the help. But I'm afraid she's blinded by Virgil's money, poor child. There's a lot of good in Elberta. But the good is like yeast dough. It takes time to rise to the top."

AFTER dinner, although I was too little to be counted in, I watched Jack and Al and Manly pitch pennies at a crack in the granary floor to see who would get to go after Sweet Thing. Jack won. Then he sold his chance to Al for a dollar and Al's new red necktie. But Manly bought the chance away from Al by offering to finish ploughing that stumpy new-ground pasture Al hated.

"Sure, Manly," Al agreed. "Only I didn't know you cared that much."

Manly's eyes went like dark marbles. "I care," he said.

Next morning before Manly got the gray horses hitched to the buggy we heard a great chugging as Virgil Stauffer's new Maxwell sailed past the grapevine fence in our lane. Sweet Thing jumped out, blew Virgil a kiss, and said, "See you tonight, Sweetie Pie."

I left Manly with the horses and ran to look at Virgil's new Maxwell. I had seen it Sunday at church but every time I looked I saw new gadgets.

The car departed in a cloud of dust. Mama coughed and said, "Elberta, are those all the clothes you brought?"

Elberta twirled the rolled-up dress gaily from the belt tied around it. In her other hand she carried high-heeled patent-lea-

ther slippers. She wore a large black hat with a blue bow, scuffed high-button shoes and no stockings. Her dress was faded. But you forgot all that when she walked. She moved happy and lively, like wind in a treetop.

Elberta said happily, "Pa said I could work out my wedding clothes if I'd give the girls all my old ones. Leta and Evelyn tore my green organdy straight down the middle, arguing who would have which. I figure if I fly in and knock myself out doing for you, come Saturday you'll let me buy myself something pretty and put it on your store account?" She squeezed mama's arm affectionately.

Mama led the way inside. "The parlour will be your room, Elberta. Just make yourself at home."

"GEE, an organ!" Elberta smiled breathlessly. She felt the Nottingham lace curtains, glided her feet on the rug like a skater, and sank down into the nearest rocking chair, letting the bundle trail. "This is living!" She rocked luxuriously, closing her eyes and rolling her head on the cushion. "A whole room to myself and no Leta or Evelyn to steal the cover."

"Ted, go, water the gander," mama said.

"I watered him already," I stated defensively. "I fed Myrtle, too."

Elberta's eyes flew open. "Did somebody say Myrtle?"

"Myrtle's my pet pig," I explained. "Dad bought her from Mr. Huff. So I named her

Myrtle. Now Myrtle Huff won't speak to me.

"I BET the pig's got nicer manners than she has." Elberta sounded indignant. "Mrs. Betts, did I ever tell you why I quit school winter before last? Because Myrtle Huff told around she always knew what day of the week it was because on Monday, Wednesday and Friday I wore my good dress but on Tuesday and Thursday I always wore my other one without fail."

"I'm surprised to hear Myrtle would say a thing like that." Mama's tone indicated she wasn't taking sides.

"What made me so mad at her was it was the truth. Pa couldn't afford to buy us more clothes. So that's how come I worked so hard to steal Virgil Stauffer away from her, because she bragged she was going to be the first girl to ride in his new Maxwell."

Well, we're engaged now, and she ain't rode in it yet. I aim to make Myrtle Huff jealous. Every new dress I get will help. But it wasn't till I dashed that engagement ring last Sunday that I finally made her eat crow."

"Eat crow?" mama said, puzzled.

"That's an old Red Indian saying. Pa said the worst thing that could happen to a Red Indian was to eat crow. It meant he was disgraced as a poor hunter and couldn't find anything else to shoot. It's like proving to somebody how wrong he is, then making him swallow it."

"Elberta, that's not Christian," mama objected.

ELBERTA turned big blue eyes upon mama. "Mrs. Betts, have you ever been made fun of for having just two dresses?"

"That's not what I mean at all, Elberta. Spite work



....rich man and poor girl....

belongs to the devil. And it always comes home to roost." Mama glanced at Elberta's left hand, curious. "How come you're not wearing the ring?"

ELBERTA removed it from her bosom. It was pinned to her clothes with a safety pin. "It's just a little bitty old diamond. Virgil's sort of stingy. Besides, I didn't want the shine to wear off before Myrtle got a good look at it." She restored the ring to the safety pin, closed her eyes and rocked some more.

"Do you love Virgil?" Mama sounded as if nobody could love Virgil.

"Virgil's pa owns 4,000 acres of tenant farms, 10,000 head of cattle. Virgil's got a new Maxwell, a town house, and a bank account."

"That's not love, Elberta," mama said impatiently. "That's an inventory."

"If Manly sweeps me off my feet—" Elberta sighed. "I may not marry Virgil. I thought, if Manly doesn't see me wearing the ring..."

"Child, child." Mama shook her head. Then mama sounded like somebody who has decided to rest a while. "How are you as a bread maker?"

Elberta jumped up eagerly. "I make happy cornbread, pa says. But biscuits go sad on me. Rolls, too."

"Wash your hands and I'll show you how." Mama smiled, thoughtful. "Perhaps a touch of yeast would help."

They went towards the kitchen. I could tell by that look in mama's eye that she hadn't given up. Mama was just seeing the good in Elberta was buried a lot deeper than she had expected.

I ran to tell Manly that Sweet Thing was making biscuits for lunch so he could be the first to admire them. I told Manly I thought he still had a chance. Manly gave me a quarter.

The menfolk always washed for lunch in the pump house. My job was to pump water for the horses, so I was always there. That day, before he went in, Manly washed to the waist. Then he plastered his cowlick with water and combed his hair carefully before the broken mirror.

Elberta had fixed herself up, too. She had combed her dark hair and put on stockings. Not the pink ones. These were new stockings mama had given her.

WHEN Manly walked in with his shirt sleeves rolled high to show his muscles, Elberta almost dropped a platter of fried chicken. Elberta spoke first. "Hi, Manly."

"Why, hello, Elberta," Manly sounded polite and formal. He stood against the wall to let Elberta pass. The way he did it made me think of Sir Walter Raleigh spreading his cloak over the mud puddle.

Mama asked the blessing. Dad said if the wind shifted we might have rain before

night. Jack and Al said please and thank you when things were passed their way and their tone was like when we had company. Manly was quiet.

JACK asked Elberta if she was going to the strawberry supper at Oak Grove next Saturday night and if she wanted a ride he'd be driving that way. Elberta said it was so early she hadn't had time to think about it yet.

All Manly said was, "These are mighty fine biscuits." He laid two on his plate.

Elberta dimpled and passed Manly the butter. "Who do you think made these biscuits?"

"You?" Manly said, polite.

When Elberta brought more biscuits she had to squeeze to get through the narrow passage behind Manly's chair, although there was lots of room on the other side of the table.

"I see you're very strong," she said.

Dad laughed. Mama frowned at him. But Manly didn't even notice. Manly said to Elberta, "Remind me some time to show you my wheat trick."

"What trick? What's that?" Elberta asked.

"Come past the granary before I go back to work," Manly said, "and I'll show you."

I said, "I think I'll go look after Myrtle." That way I would be sure to be in on the wheat trick, too.

INDIA MAGAZINE

I had seen Manly's wheat trick no less than a dozen times but to me it was always new. I missed out on the first part. But when I reached the granary Manly was holding a 200-pound sack of wheat in one hand out even with his chin. He held it by one corner. He twirled the sack neatly in a circle about his head, released it, and it fell exactly in line with other wheat sacks on a stack higher than his head. Elberta gasped.

"Gee, Manly! I bet you couldn't lift me that easy."

"You?" Manly said, and lifted her with one arm.

Elberta began to scream but not very loud. And kick, but not very hard. Her long dark hair fell down. Manly tossed her up on top of the wheat sacks as I could have tossed our kitten, Spot. Elberta laughed, pleased, pulling her skirt down.

"Elberta," mama's voice said behind us, making us jump, "I need you at the house to help me wash dishes."

AT supper that night Elberta had fixed her hair a new way. But Manly didn't even comb his hair. Manly looked glum. Elberta acted polite and dignified.

"That shower sure cooled things off," dad said. It seemed to me the shower had cooled Manly, too.

Later, when I carried out the table scraps to my pig Myrtle, mama was talking to Manly out by the granary. Mama lowered her voice when I came near so all I heard was there were ways

and means of reaching a girl's heart other than treating her like a sack of bran.

ELBERTA and Virgil went to church early the following Sunday. Manly was late arriving. So was Myrtle Huff. When they walked in together, Elberta dropped her hymn book.

After Manly and Myrtle got seated, Elberta took a coughing fit. Elberta kept holding her hand with the ring on it up to her neck as if she had a sore throat or something. But Myrtle had seen the ring last Sunday.

Virgil ate dinner with us that Sunday. Manly wasn't there. Mama told us Manly was having dinner with the Huffs.

When Virgil brought Elberta back from a drive in his new Maxwell, Elberta looked blue.

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He did her a fancy good-bye but Elberta just turned away and came into the house. She took off her hat with the big blue bow and fell into the rocking chair like a sack of potatoes. "Mrs. Betts," she said, sounding odd, "we set the date."

"For the wedding?" mama said. "Not too soon, I hope?"

"Next Sunday."

"Sunday!" mama said. "Why, that's hardly time enough for me to make your wedding dress."

Elberta said, not very enthusiastic, "I saw some real pretty red satin at the store yesterday. If it's not all gone....."

"**Y**OU don't want to get married in red, Elberta," mama objected. "Marry in red, you'll wish you were dead."

"I wish I was dead already." Two tears rolled down on the rocking chair head-rest. "Mrs. Betts, when he came walking into church this morning with that....that Myrtle leaning on his arm....."

"It seems to me," mama said, "that you are the one who is eating crow."

Dad grumbled next day when mama told him she wanted Neil and Betsy to drive into town to pick up the dress goods. Neil and Betsy were old and fat and gentle, mama's favourites.

"Why didn't you tell me this morning. Cricket?" dad said, "before I had Manly take them over to the north pasture with the calves? Looks like you'll have to use the grays."

"The grays act up when they meet a machine," mama said. "And machines are getting thick as hops these days."

"Elberta," said dad, "how are you as a driver?"

"Pa says I could drive a preacher to drink, so I reckon surely I can handle two young gray horses."

THE grays stepped pretty when Elberta drove them off towards town with mama beside her in the buggy. Manly, who was heading two stray calves on Rex, his saddle horse, came riding towards mama through the pasture, telling her if she'd wait he would give her the change to pay for his smoking tobacco.

"You can pay me tomorrow, Manly," mama said. But Manly kept riding. At the same time, we heard a chug-chug down the lane and Virgil Stauffer's car came sailing past the grape vines. The horses reared, snorting, and lunged.

Mama screamed as the buggy tipped over. The gray kept running, dragging it, with mama and Elberta caught in the buggy top like fishes in a net.

Dad ran from the potato patch. I ran after him. Manly got there first because Rex was faster. Manly made a flying lunge from the saddle and landed like a cowboy, connecting with the lead gray's bridle rein. He held on, keeping his voice low. "Whoa, boy. Easy now. Easy."

Dad said afterwards it wasn't

Manly's strength so much as his calmness that stopped the horses. They quieted but kept trembling as Manly held their heads. Dad unhooked the traces and ran to mama. Mama had fainted.

Elberta had lost a slipper. Her knee was skinned and bleeding. Virgil came towards her, looking silly, leaping corn rows like a billy goat. Manly helped dad carry mama to the house, then started back for Elberta.

Elberta was sitting on the running board of Virgil's Maxwell. Virgil was kneeling in the dust, tying his white handkerchief over her skinned knee.

"You haven't any sense at all, Virgil," Elberta was saying when Manly and I came up. "Why would Manly want to pay for my wedding dress? I told you Mrs. Betts was letting me put it on her charge account."

Virgil's eyes looked straight at me. "You tell her, Ted," he said softly.

I SWALLOWED hard and my stomach went cold. "Well," I said, scared, "all I said to Virgil was 'I bet you didn't know Manly was buying the wedding dress, did you?' That's all I said."

Manly was watching me. He sounded more curious than angry. "But why would you want to tell a whopper like that, Ted?"

"It wasn't no whopper," I

denied. "Gee whiz. Mama told dad last night—It was after Elberta went to her room." I hesitated, trying hard to remember their exact words. "Mama said, 'So she's going to town to buy the wedding dress,' and dad said, 'Poor Manly.' And then mama said, 'Yes, Manly's the one who's paying.'"

MANLY'S big hand dropped on my shoulder, friendly. Just feeling it there made me stop shaking inside. "Ted didn't tell a whopper," Manly said. "He got the truth twisted. Last week, when Mrs. Betts was lecturing me for showing you my wheat trick, Elberta, she asked me if my intentions were honourable. And I told her I was paying plenty for all I said when we had that fuss that winter."

Elberta's face was smudged. But it looked just like sunshine coming out from behind a cloud. "Why didn't you tell me all this before, Manly?"

"Virgil's rich and I'm poor. that's why. And there's a crazy thing called pride."

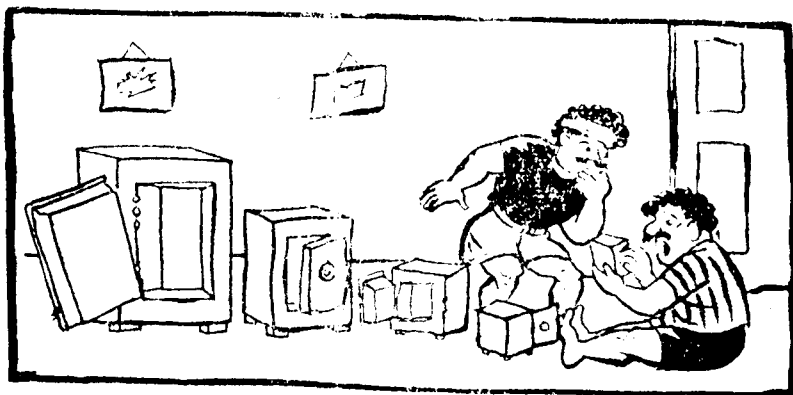
"Well, fan my brow." Quicker than a gnat could blink its eye, Elberta tore that diamond off her finger. "Here, Virgil." She tossed it as if diamonds were a dollar a dozen. "Give it to Myrtle Huff. And tell her for me it hurts me worse than it does her for her to eat crow. It's cheaper to forget her. Good-bye, Virgil."

She looked up at Manly. "Well," she said, "say something."

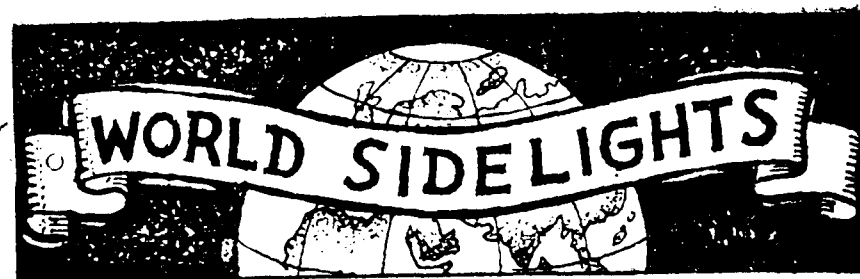
"Let me carry you to the house, Elberta," Manly held out his arms.

ELBERTA locked her arms around Manly's neck, shutting her eyes. She laid her cheek against his. "This is living," Elberta said. "Carry me like a sack of wheat, Manly."

Manly carried her. But he never held a sack of wheat the way he held Elberta.—(Copyright)



"After all the trouble, partner! It has been a foolish venture!"



BEGGING RACKET IN MEXICO

MEXICO City, as all grand metropolises in the world, has a beggar problem. However, without doubt, Mexican beggars have achieved an incredible refinement in the art of mendicancy unequalled anywhere else.

In the past three years the intentionally ragged army of mendicants has tripled, and is steadily growing, with new recruits coming from the ranks of disappointed *braceros* (migratory workers) deported by the thousands from the United States, the unemployed, the crippled and incurable and clever professionals out to make an easy peso.

There are no accurate statistics, but a high official of the Department of Health placed the number of beggars, conservatively, at over 125,000 strong. Alms paid out to the needy and beggar racketeers totals more than 750 million pesos (£27,000,000) annually, writes Emil Zubryn in an Australian periodical.

Enormous Legion

In the Federal District alone, embracing the capital and suburban area, there are at least

15,000 adult beggars whose "take" is estimated at half of the national amount.

The enormous legion of alms seekers in the republic is broken down into three main classifications: those who have adopted begging as a *well-paying* profession; those who do not choose to work and last (and the smallest percentage) the truly needy.

Soft-Hearted

So profitable have the streets of the Mexican capital been for the fraternity of mendicants that there has been an invasion of "foreign specialists". Recently a pair of American twins were taken into custody by the Department of State and deported. Loud were their protestations that they were "tourists" and that their papers were in order. Federal police found this so, but they also found assets of over 100,000 pesos deposited in various banks, plus 30,000 pesos in cash in a humble, pest-infested 10-peso-a-day room occupied by the twins. Their speciality had been working on the sympathies of tourists.

When a State Department

police official mildly told the twins that their tourist card did not give them the right to beg on public streets, the undaunted twins offered a bribe of 10,000 pesos to "forget all about the matter". They would go for a time to Cuernavaca, or maybe Acapulco, to ply their profitable profession, the twins argued. Instead, they were handed over to waiting F. B. I. officials at the border.

Tourists are not "suckers" alone in generously giving to street beggars. Mexicans are noted for soft touches, especially when confronted with such contrived scenes as an "abandoned mother" suckling an infant, with another undernourished tot or two pressing to her ragged body.

League Behind

These women, found at strategic sites throughout the city, present a picture designed to soften the most hard-hearted of passers-by. They have never read a book on psychology, but the racketeers for whom they work most certainly have. And the starved, frightened looking youngsters who sprawl on the sidewalk have been beaten until they understand their roles to add "window dressing" to the picture of destitution.

There is a "beggars' syndicate" in Mexico, run by underworld figures who remain cautiously in the background. All beggars, real or simulated, must kick in their daily dues which range from a pittance of a peso or two up to 50 or 60 pesos.

A conservative calculation by officials, who have made

unavailing efforts to stamp out begging throughout the republic, indicate that the average income runs approximately 15 pesos (10s. approx.). However, there are several thousand "preferred" locations that bring in 250 and more pesos a day. And the aristocrats of the mendicant world consider a thousand pesos (£36) a day poor one. It is only the truly needy, unintelligent ones, despised by the union, who earn the minimum pittance.

Daily expenditures of beggars are kept to a minimum for essentials such as food, and a roof overhead. The rest of the "earnings" are usually spent on a variety of vices — marijuana, drink, women. The high money makers live in a grand manner, even in luxurious penthouses, and frequent night spots in the company of predominantly fat-hipped synthetic Mexican blondes.

Transformation!

One notorious "deformed cripple", who navigates around in the busy midtown section with contorted body and face so that it is difficult to discern if the apparition is truly human, undergoes a truly phenomenal metamorphosis in the evening hours when his work is done. Tall, darkly good-looking and more like a movie star than those who actually work in front of the cameras, he presents a dashing appearance in a "smoking" or evening jacket.

There are hundreds of paralytics, blind, cripples and victims of St. Vitus Dance whose nightly "transformation" takes place

after they have collected a sufficient supply of pesos to finance a round of Mexico's gay night spots from midnight to dawn. Invariably these pseudo-beggars are good spenders, true disciples of the "easy come, easy go" philosophy.

Thriving Industry

Mendicity is a thriving industry in Mexico today. The invalid minus an arm or leg, or both, is not what he seems. Some are contortion artists clever in doubling themselves up to play a role for the six to ten hours they require to obtain funds to maintain themselves in the style they favour.

Uglier, but active part of begging in the Republic, are the true cripples. Many of these have been "manufactured" by the syndicate for exploitation: arms and legs are professionally broken, sometimes in youth and other horrors committed so that these "lost souls" of the profession can give an "authentic touch" to their alms seeking. These are the ones who usually are left with just enough to get by on, with the rest of their earnings turned over intact to syndicate runners.

Caste System!

There is a caste system in the league of beggars, ranging from the poor Red Indian devil who does not know what else to do to sustain life, to the elite whose acting and acrobatic ability makes it possible for them to work on the sympathies of citizens who walk the city's streets.

Federal authorities have at-

tempted to eliminate the "wave of beggars" time and time again, but to no avail. There has been one campaign after another in Mexico City, yet the beggars still patrol the streets as strong as ever, even though the situation has become so bad that tourists are starting to complain.

One cannot walk the tourist-frequented midtown streets without encountering one type of beggar after the other: the blind, deaf-mutes, the crippled, the ague-like, the destitute and a thousand — and — one variations. Passers-by are accosted by the apparently honest labourer with three children who tells a tale of stranded woe — his pitch being he wants to return to Monterrey, or Oaxaca, or Puebla or some other distant or near point. This variation, and many similar ones, have been heartily adapted from the States.

That Anguished Whine!

But it is not only the streets that offer a peril from the beggar tide. They also invade restaurants, theatre lobbies, certain night clubs, bus terminals, sports arenas, etc. And always the anguished whine of "socorro por el amor de pios" (help me for the love of God). These Mexican equivalents of "brother can you spare a dime" have been known to fluently curse a pitying citizen who pressed less than a peso into the outstretched hand.

As if the beggars were not enough, there is a plague of petty racketeers who, dressed in priests' vestments or in nun's robes, go from store to store

asking money for the sick, or for orphans, or for charity, or some other plausible-sounding lie designed to draw money from a long-suffering, duped public. And what success they meet!

Tackling The Problem

The Women's Council of Mexico has put pressure on Federal authorities to do away with begging on a national scale. The Council advocates the forming of a special regulatory body to make a rapid investigation of each case. Obvious phonies would be imprisoned while the truly needy would all receive aid including job placement and hospitalisation.

The vast plan of action recommended is the first realistic approach to the problem of mendicancy in Mexico. Mrs. Formoso de Obregón Santacilla stated that "we are not motivated by prosecution of beggars but by a social action, adequate and comprehensive, to aid the needy, punish racketeering elements."

Barrack dormitories for those without financial resources, work centres for men and women, hospitals, homes for children, clinics, and similar projects are in the blueprint stages.

Educational Campaign

Naturally, this will require a great deal of money, but, it is pointed out that if the public would only donate what it gives to sundry beggars (real or fake) in a year, this would go a long way towards making the plan a

reality. An educational campaign will be aimed at the public, telling them not to give charity to individuals but to a rehabilitation centre, first to be established in the Federal District and then throughout the Republic, to solve the problem of beggars and begging once and for all.

Most alarming of all is the fact that Mexico's army of youthful ragamuffins is growing. There are no nation-wide statistics but in the capital alone there are said to be over 40,000 youngsters of various ages abandoned and exploited shamefully.

Juvenile Brigade

A morning newspaper recently undertook a survey which revealed that approximately 18,000 youngsters, all illegitimate, from a "juvenile beggar brigade". The youngsters, boys and girls, range anywhere from the ages of six to fifteen. Hardened by life, these "forgotten children" sleep in the streets or in ramshackle shantytowns, with the latter considering themselves fortunate.

The balance of 22,000 youngsters are not technically "abandoned" but are exploited from very youthful years by parents or "benefactors". They are forced to work as servants or apprentices in sweat shops, or are introduced into the art of begging.

Social authorities have been appalled at the sexual degeneracy in Mexico. Breeding ground for this fall off in moral values are the conditions under which

the unfortunate youngsters live. The Mexico City press periodically reports sexual crimes without precedent elsewhere in the world.

Boyish Murderer

Juvenile crime is rampant in Mexico. There was, for instance, the "mass murderer" still in his teens, who admitted slaying more than a dozen persons for what they had on them. His loot had come to scarcely 100 pesos and, when arrested, he had been on the verge of purchasing a pistol to branch out into "more lucrative" areas of the city. Shocked police believe that this baby-faced, smiling killer who cynically said, "Names of the victims? I don't know them. I just killed them. Their names were not important to me," may have actually murdered over 40 persons in all. And this is just one example of what is going on in this Beggars' Paradise.

The Women's Council in Mexico, in collaboration with other social agencies, wants not only to do away with the shameful beggar problem but with the incubator of crimes that is part and parcel of the shocking conditions that exist today.

MAN COULD FLY!

As you stand beside the granite boulder, a jet plane flashes across the sky—and in that quick moment, memory spans fifty years. From here, you tell yourself, they all sprang. Lindbergh and the Mollisons. Spitfires and Stukas, Stratocruisers and Comets. From this spot, half a century ago, writes, "Everybody's" of London.

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That lump of granite bears the name of the brothers Wright, and the simple claim that here a machine carried a man off the ground by its own power and travelled 120 feet through the air. The man was Orville, and he remained aloft twelve seconds. To Wilbur, following three more flights during the same morning, fell the distinction of being airborne for a full minute, travelling a distance of 852 feet.

They came from Ohio, but chose these bleak Outer Banks of North Carolina for their experiments after the U. S. Weather Bureau reported that in no other area did the wind blow as strong, or as steadily. As you leave the granite marker and head for the Memorial on top of Kill Devil Hill, (which takes its name from a local brand of rum reputedly potent enough to do just that) the raw, Atlantic breeze whips over the sand dunes and you readily accept the Bureau's word.

Birth Of Human Flight

This setting for the birth of human flight is a weatherbeaten land, quite unlike any other part of the American continent and Sounds of Currituck and Pamlico. The handful of fishing hamlets scattered along the seventy-mile sand spit from Nag's Head to Cape Hatteras seem utterly remote from that world of neon and noise just over the west horizon. And true 'Bankers' still talk in the tongue of their Devon forbears.

On nearby Roanoke Island, even today you can feel the mood of mystery which overshadows the site of Raleigh's

tragic attempt at colonisation. That first English settlement in the New World vanished, leaving a riddle to haunt historians ever since.

Spars of timber revealed by the ever-shifting sands, a mast-head glimpsed at low tide, the lonely tombstone of an unnamed mariner, are melancholy reminders that this, the cradle of the aeroplane, is the graveyard of many ships. Up and down the Banks on stormy nights, unscrupulous villagers would lead an old horse with a lantern around its neck. The bobbing light lured passing vessels to a hellish fate on the shoals—and rich cargoes into greedy hands. Thus goes the most romantic of the stories explaining the name of Nag's Head village.

Spray Of Sand

The Wrights found the Outer Banks all but isolated, which must have been to their liking. Lately, however, an atmosphere of resort commercialism is creeping in from the north, and the upper beach road is flanked with tourist homes, hotels and restaurant. But the season soon dies, the buildings are shuttered and deserted, there is only the dull roar of surf and Atlantic gales, a constant spray of sand brushing the highway and the great dunes of Jockey Ridge and Kill Devil.

Then, although the latter is covered with specially planted grass which 'anchored' it sufficiently for the Wright memorial pylon to be erected, your imagination comes closest to recreating that bitterly cold December scene in 1903.

Orville and Wilbur had assembled the machine in a shed (where now stands the Kitty Hawk parsonage), and spent much of the time repairing the roof, damaged by 70 m.p.h. sleet-storms. Then they were forced to await a break in the weather. On December 17 they hauled the craft—which they named Kitty Hawk—to Kill Devil Hill. A shivering audience of five watched them—three members of the Kitty Hawk Life Saving Station, a man from Reanoke and a boy from Nag's Head. (All these witnesses have since died.)

First Venture

The wind dropped to a brisk 27 m.p.h. Then, propelled by its 4-cylinder 13 horsepower engine, the machine rolled forty feet and rose. The onlookers trotted after it excitedly, and watched it rise again; and again. Following the last and most successful flight, an angry gust fell upon the Kitty Hawk and flung it upside down.

Several days later a newspaper carried the headline, "Mysterious Flying Machine a Success. Easily Defies Contrary Wind Currents." The account began: "Swinging through the air like a great winged creature of the ages of the megalithic age." Not until January 6, 1904, did any factual report appear in the Press. The Wrights themselves had this to say: "The first flight lasted only twelve seconds, a flight very modest compared with the birds..."

As you reach the crest of Kill Devil Hill and enter the Memo-

rial shaft you do not reflect too long upon the later jealousies which tarnished the brothers' achievement. The Kitty Hawk rusted in storage while the August Smithsonian Institute in Washington refused to accept it as the world's first flying machine. And in 1928 it found a place of honour in the South Kensington Science Museum, London. When the Smithsonian issued its long overdue acknowledgment of past error, negotiations were begun, and finally the Kitty Hawk was restored to its homeland—just eleven months after Orville's death. (Typhoid fever had claimed Wilbur back in 1912.)

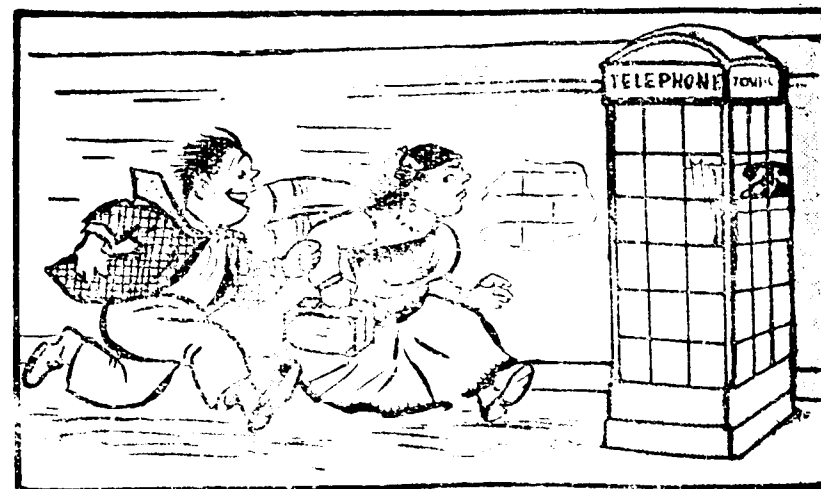
Beyond Their Dreams

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the flight the granite Memorial was dedicated. It houses a big metal map commemorating aerial exploits to that date. The most recent inscription reads: "Kingsford-Smith—Oakland to Brisbane." Studying these pioneer routes,

you are suddenly struck by the fact that the lines across this flat gleaming world represented to the builders of this place a quarter-century of amazing development.

But the wonders which were to come in the *second* twenty-five years would be as far beyond their dreams as the wonders of the first were to the huddled watchers from the Life Saving Station. Or as far as the marvels of the next twenty-five are beyond your dreams as you stand on Kill Devil Hill.

It is dark when you leave. The red beacon flashes from the top of the pylon, the restless dunes of the Outer Banks are once more shared by night and the Atlantic. Leave them to the ghosts of the shipwrecked or the older shades of Elizabethan colonists. Leave too, in the same tradition of adventure and boldness, the younger memory of the brothers Wright and twelve seconds at Kitty Hawk.



The Race!

THE PERFECT WEDDING

~~~~~ by W. T. BUDLONG ~~~~~

**PETE** Caxton walked across the third floor of Dean and Marley's department store, taking a course between evening dresses and negligees. Reaching the entrance to the Bride's Shop, he paused, shuddered briefly, and stepped inside.

Standing in the empty room, he stared gloomily at the long lace veil, tossed down carelessly on a table as if a bride had just passed by. Women certainly could play hob with a sensible institution like marriage, he reflected. A woman ought to become a wife in a quick, efficient manner, without fooling around being a bride.

So of all places, here he was in the Bride's shop, headquarters for white silk lace veils, and general items. With the nice little job of pulling the joint of the red, regardless of his private opinions on brides, well, it had taken a combination of duty and Margo Rand to get him there.

Margo was assistant to the head of the shop, and this connection was the only flaw he had

found in her. The effect he had found in her, the effect she had on him was always the same—a sharp electric shock, internal chaos, ringing in the ears, and a desire to seize her and carry her off on his shoulders to the nearest justice of the peace. If that wasn't love, what was? Unfortunately, the response he got from Margo was likewise always the same—a frosted nod.

"Miss Rand!" he called into the hushed back rooms of the Bride's Shop.

A GRAY curtain at the back of the room swung briskly, and Margo Rand came out. Pete used stern self-control on the electric shock and other familiar symptoms. The business side of his mind noted her poised walk and trim gray dress. The other side of his mind noted her full under lip and the curves under the gray dress.

"May I help you?" she asked Pete, giving him stock smile number one, a pleasant little item, without apparently recognizing him.

Pete felt so much like a fish out of water in the Bride's Shop that he was more than surprised at the way his sales talk on romance and love went over!

"I don't know yet," Pete said, observing her. "Can you?"

HER eyebrows tilted and the pleasant smile dried out a trifle. "You're Mr. Caxton, aren't you?"

"Strange you're not married," Pete remarked. "Here you are dishing out the trousseaux. Don't you catch the fever?"

"No," said Margo. Her voice had iced over, but it was still a nice voice.

"The women who get married aren't coming to this shop for their outfits," he said. "That's why I'm here. Officially."

MARGO nodded. "I was afraid so," she admitted. "Our sales have been falling



..... The finishing touch....

off. And Mr. Bently said we were due for an overhauling."

"Mr. Bentley?" Pete repeated, surprised. Bentley was junior vice-president in charge of sales, and he usually sat behind his desk balancing the chips on his shoulders, leaving all the details of trouble-shooting to Pete.

MARGO said: "I know Mr. Bentley. I mean socially. So we happened to be talking shop."

"Socially?" said Pete, seizing on the important angle.

"You mean you have dates with that dehydrated mummy?"

Margo said with dignity, "He's a great relief, after wading through the slush in the Bride's Shop all day."

The gray curtain twitched, and a woman emerged from the inner regions. She was too tall and too thin and her gray hair was waved too tightly, but she had a strangely childish mouth, a little round surprised mouth.

Margo said: "Miss Farriday is in charge of the Bride's Shop, you know, Mr. Caxton."

Pete nodded silently. And Margo tried again.

"Mr. Caxton is sort of a trouble-shooter, Miss Farriday. You remember, he reorganized millinery, when the sales started slipping badly."

"Oh, dear," said Miss Farriday. "What are you going to do to us?"

"I'm going to put you on the brides' map," said Pete cheerily.

"Every woman in town who gets engaged will jump into a taxi and head for this shop. Jewellery from Tiffany, love from heaven—and clothes from Dean and Marley."

"How are you going to do all this?" Margo inquired.

"Glamour," Pete muttered. "Glamour by the yard. We guarantee to make every bride beautiful."

"Have you seen some of the brides?" Margo asked.

"Don't be difficult," Pete said mildly. "Look, we want all the women coming in here, buying their hope chests, even if they aren't engaged yet."

"Hope chests are out of date," said Margo.

"Revive 'em," Pete said. "A hope chest free, with every \$100 order. We'll get this place redecorated by Monday morning. These gray walls and stuff give me a slow chill. The new advertising campaign will start right away. We'll need a slogan to start us off. How about 'Be Beautiful—for Him.'?"

MARGO shook her dark head. "Sounds like advice to the lovelorn. Or a beauty salon."

Margo co-operated admirably, as far as business was concerned. And at first, this fact encouraged Pete. Working with Margo, reorganizing the Bride's Shop with Margo—that ought to give him a fine chance to interest her in a lifetime partnership.

The only annoying item about the week-end's industry was

Vice-President Bentley. Pete noted moodily. What could she see in that chap anyhow? Of course Bentley wasn't a bad-looking chap, if Margo cared for slicked-down light hair, and pale blue eyes, and a dry measured way of speaking as if emotion ought to be handled with asbestos gloves.

"NATURALLY, a lot of foolish women fall for—for these romantic trappings," Bentley was remarking to Margo at the moment. He glanced around the Bride's Shop with his antiseptic gaze.

"Naturally—" said Margo, smiling warmly.

On Monday morning the new version of the Bride's Shop was open for business. Pete strolled towards it at 9, taking in the changed effect. The papers had carried a new ad, a lush piece of bride-bait under the head, "The Perfect Wedding."

A new door guarded the Shop, setting it mysteriously apart from the rest of the store. A silver-striped door with an opaque glass panel, and through the panel shone a dim rosy light.

Pete went through the door and closed it gently behind him. Then he stood still, to let the new atmosphere do its stuff. Perfume drifted around him faintly. Music was coming softly from somewhere. The pale rose light sifted down from the ceiling, reflected softly in the mirrors that lined the walls.

Pete touched a switch and clear white light sprang up, showing the room all cream and

ivory, with wide white lounges waiting receptively for customers. He turned the rose lights on again, just as Margo Rand entered.

"Hello!" she said. "Well? Does this get you in the proper mood? Can I sell you a half dozen wedding dresses?"

Pete said: "Speaking personally, wedding dresses leave me cold."

"Me too," said Margo. "All this dithering about veils and trains and orange blossoms. I'd rather spend the money on furniture."

Pete beamed at her with approval. On top of the way she made him feel, just by coming into the room, here she was turning out sensible also.

"Marriage is fine," he said. "But no fixings."

"I intend to get married in a tweed suit," Margo went on.

"You have the figure for it," said Pete.

"Never mind the figure," Margo told him.

Pete said, "I can't go that far, but I can reserve comment."

AT this point several other people arrived. Miss Farriday came through the rear doorway with a nervous bounce. Four girls entered through the glass panelled door, all four in the same gray dresses, but otherwise well assorted.

Pete hastily got executive. "Well, now we have the department together. Miss Farriday,

will you receive the customers when they flood in? Keep them happy and don't let them get out of here till we've made a sale. Miss Rand, you will close the sales. Get a signature on every order. Now you girls—have you got the idea? We work on one customer at a time, and let any others who happen along watch the fashion show. Miss Rand is going to work out the complete outfit which each bride will need, covering the honeymoon as well as the wedding, bridesmaids' clothes and all that. In other words, we will sell a packaged wedding."

**T**HE four girls were enthusiastic. Pete looked them over. The dark one with the outsized eyelashes was Helene, and the redhead was Lida. The other two were both blonde, one silver and one honey, and he couldn't remember their names. From the way they had hovered around him all weekend while the shop was being done over, he had privately named them Drip and Droop.

"You'll model the clothes, Helene. Lida, you keep the accessories coming. And you two girls—you have to chase all over the store, and bring back the things Miss Rand wants to show the customers. Take 'em out on approval, and use those new green slips so we'll have a record."

"We'll need roller-skates," said the silver blonde.

Pete dismissed them with a wave of the hand, and suggested to Miss Farriday that she look over the morning's mail.

"Any problems that come along," he told Margo, "just bring them back to me in the office and we'll talk them over. Team work, you and me."

The glass-panelled door opened and a girl came in. She was plump in the right places and plump in the wrong places, and she wore a large red hat, a red coat and a hopeful smile. In her hand she held a newspaper clipping, the Dean and Marley ad of The Perfect Wedding.

"You advertised—about making a bride beautiful—" she said.

Margo gulped and moved forward. Pete ducked hastily through the rear doorway.

But he found sitting around waiting for Margo to bring him a problem was not working out efficiently. The thing to do was for him to drift out to the salor and tell Margo he wanted to talk to her in the office.

He went down the corridor and through the curtain. Under the rosy lights, Helene was modelling a dinner dress. The customer was sitting on a lounge, with Miss Farriday and Margo in attendance. Lida in the background, some hazy black stuff over her arm.

**M**ARGO was saying to the customer: "Of course you'll need some sheer black night-gowns, and matching negligees."

"Are they both supposed to be black?" asked the customer dubiously.

"Oh, yes," said Margo, disregarding Miss Farriday's expression. "Always, for a honeymoon. But if you don't want to be sophisticated, you'd rather have white—"

"No," said the customer. "guess if they're going to be sheer, black would help a little."

**P**ETE faded back through the curtains, and returned to the dreary little office. If business did pick up, he reflected, it wasn't going to be so easy to get Margo off for quiet little talks. Maybe it would be better to take her to lunch.

The pace stepped up in the shop, as more customers came in. Margo appeared suddenly in the office, and Pete jumped up, with glad relief.

"Thought you were never coming," he explained. "Sit down. There are some things for us to hash over..."

"Can't. Customer waiting," said Margo tersely. "Brought you these."

She thrust some papers into his hand, and hurried out. She was graceful even when she hurried, Pete reflected.

Droop came in, the silver blonde one, and sat down in the chair he had waiting for Margo. "It's wonderful, what you've done to this place, Mr. Caxton," she told him in wide-eyed admiration.

"Mustn't relax," said Pete briskly, waving her out of the chair. "Keep the pace up."

"Miss Rand didn't need me for a minute..." she began.

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"Got a job for you," Pete said, rapidly manufacturing one. "Go and get 25 little bottles. Get somebody to make some silver labels, with 'Wedding Night' hand-lettered on 'em. Fill 'em up with perfume. Any kind of perfume will do."

Three strange girls came in then from departments outside the Bride's Shop, to see what all the excitement was about. They stood in the doorway, peering in at Pete.

"Isn't it perfect?" whispered the girl loudly. "A man in the Bride Shop."

Pete swung towards the doorway, and now there were five girls looking at him over each other's shoulders. "What are all you girls doing?" he demanded.

They scattered like a cloud of pigeons with a pebble tossed in their midst. They wheeled and returned like the pigeons investigating the pebble.

"We'd all like to be transferred to the Bride's Shop," said the boldest girl.

"Go away," said Pete with simple brevity.

**T**HEN it was noon, when customers mercifully got hungry, and Margo walked into the office. She was a nice cool drink after too many pancakes and syrup. Funny business, this falling in love.

As the sparkplug of the new sales campaign, she had discarded the Dean and Marley gray dress, and wore a tailored green suit that made her eyes

green and her tanned skin a deeper amber.

"Has anyone told you recently how attractive you are?" Pete ventured.

"You can scrape the cobwebs off that remark," Margo said. "What's the matter?" Has the romantic atmosphere got you down, pal?"

THEY went out to lunch, but the only benefit Pete got from it was food, and the privilege of watching Margo eat. She insisted on talking shop.

"What do you do after business hours?" asked Pete.

"I try to forget about trousseaux, weddings and honeymoons," Margo told him. "I go on platonic dates with platonic men."

"I doubt it," Pete said politely. "Seriously now, how about going dancing with me to-night?"

"Thanks," she said. "But I'm going to a concert with Mr. Bentley."

Pete grunted. "Is Bentley one of the platonic men?"

"Not precisely. But he doesn't rave on about slush. He talks practical commonsense."

"There comes a time, in any woman's life, when a little romance comes in handy," he told her gently.

"Not after you've been working in the Bride's Shop," returned Margo.

"A reasonable amount of romance," he suggested. "After all, if a person's in love..."

"Why don't you use that line for one of your ads?" Margo asked him.

Pete paid the cheque, registering temporary defeat.

Promptly at closing time V.P. Bentley showed up in a gray flannel suit with a knife-edge press.

"How's the battle, Pete?" he asked cheerily.

"Customers flooding in," said Pete.

Bentley blinked those pale blue eyes of his. "You'll need plenty of customers, to justify the expense of all these changes."

"We'll get the customers," Pete said, hoping he was right.

Margo walked into the salon, touching off the usual electric shock and ear-ringing apparatus in Pete. She had her hat on, ready to leave. She was looking at Bentley and nobody else.

"All ready?" Bentley asked her. "Let's get out of this sickly pink light."

"As fast as possible," agreed Margo with enthusiasm.

NEXT afternoon he asked Margo about a date for the evening.

"I have a date," she said. "With Mr. Bentley," she added unnecessarily.

"Why don't you call him Charles?" said Pete irritably. "For a girl who is only interested in man platonically, you go out a lot. Don't you know

that dates frequently lead to marriage?"

"Are we talking about marriage again?" said Margo. "How did that happen?"

"It's on my mind," Pete explained. "Marriage with you, I mean. You can't have missed the fact that I'm in love with you, Margo."

"I'm sorry, Pete. But it wouldn't be fair to marry a man who was in love with me. I'd give him a rotten deal. Because after all these years, seeing the women come in here, seeing how silly they are, I just can't fall in love, Pete."

"You could try," murmured Pete. He said more forcefully. "You don't intend to get married at all, Margo?"

"Well—" she said, slowly, "it would be all right to get married sensibly, practically, like a partnership."

"I've talked that way myself," Pete said. "But I always included some love in on the deal."

Margo shook her head again. A little dark curl shook down on her forehead, and Pete wanted to smooth it back again, and knew he was far gone indeed.

"It is perfectly possible to marry when the two people are just good friends," she said. "That way, you can appreciate what you're doing. You're not moonstruck."

"Did Bentley sell you that idea?" Pete demanded.

"Why not?" Margo answered defensively. "It's the perfect solution for me."

"Bentley? I won't let you do it," Pete said furiously. "Of all the insane ways to ruin your life! And besides, I'm in love with you myself."

Margo got up and stood very straight. "This is all none of your business," she said, and the frost was back again.

Turning back to his work finally, Pete found cause for worry there, too. After the first-day response to the new advertising, the customers were thinning out. Women were coming in, of course, and the reputation of the shop was spreading. But things were going too slowly. If he didn't have a good financial total by Friday, when he turned in his weekly report, his whole plan might get thrown out.

What he needed was a big-time customer, a woman who would buy the works. He could use her as an example of his packaged wedding idea, showing all the items that should be included as part of a perfect wedding outfit. He could feature a bride like that, with photographs that would lure in a flock of other brides.

SO early Wednesday morning, he tackled Margo again. This time, he assured her his mind was on business.

"Catch me a juicy customer," he begged Margo. "We haven't had a bride yet who bought the works. You've done a fine job, selling extra stuff. But find me a gal who will really go to town." And he explained about the photographs.

"I'll try my best," Margo said. "We've got to put this shop over, Pete."

Thursday arrived and slipped by, and still Pete had no perfect customer and no date with Margo.

And then came Friday—and the Beautiful Doll.

**RUMOURS** came to Pete in the office about the new customer. She was lovely—she was interested in the perfect wedding outfit. He hurried to take a look from the curtained doorway, and excitement ran through him. The girl was made to order. Slim and dark, with big eyes and photogenic cheek-bones.

"The beautiful doll," he murmured blissfully. "Phone the photographer. Tell Margo to pour it on. We're made, girls, we're made."

This fervour lasted until Margo came back to the office. "Pete—I'm stuck—"

"What's the matter?"

"Her fiancé," said Margo. "The customer brought him along with her, because she wants to be sure he likes everything she buys. And all the fiancé is interested in, is negligees. Would you talk to him? A man's psychology might help."

Pete winced slowly. He got to his feet.

"I'll try everything once," he said. "Lead on."

He and Margo went out to the salon, where the Beautiful

Doll waited on a white lounge, and her fiancé waited on the same lounge. He seemed a mild young man, deeply in love.

"I just want to get married," said the young man plaintively. "We can buy clothes."

Helene came out, modelling a long black satin dinner dress. Lida came in and out with hats, bags, scarves, jewellery and a marabou jacket.

"Not that," said the young man, pointing at the jacket. "Feathers get in your nose at the wrong time."

Miss Farriday kept Lohengrin playing steadily in the back ground, and Droop did a little discreet perfume spraying. Margo talked steadily. But the mild young man didn't give the nod of approval, and Pete in desperation began to talk.

**HE** concentrated on the way he felt about Margo, and he let the words fall out.

"When you love a girl, you want to marry her," said Pete. "When you get married, you want everything to click smoothly. Well, the girl feels the same way, only, being a woman, she thinks about clothes. So she wants to have beautiful clothes, to be right for the man she loves."

He paused, shocked at what he was saying. He saw Margo with a startled look on her face, and the mild young man with his jaw slightly dropped. Then he plunged on.

"There's no use trying to skip the trimming on a wedding.

There's no use sneering at trousseau and romance. When you really fall in love, you're sure romantic. The more you fight it, the more romantic you feel. And all the old stuff is shined off as new as a spring morning. Because when two people really love each other, everything is new for them."

**HE** stopped again, appalled at the truths that had poured out of him. And before he could recover, a cold voice spoke behind him.

"Never mind the sales talk on love and romance, Pete," said V. P. Bentley.

Bentley concentrated on the mild young man. "The situation has been explained to me," he said. "It's very simple. We hope your fiancée takes this whole wedding and honeymoon outfit. Because we'd like to photograph her in the various costumes. One of the good picture magazines will run a four-page spread of the pictures."

The mild young man blinked up at Bentley. "Why didn't somebody say so?" he inquired. "Fine idea. I'll send a copy of the magazine to my mother."

"You approve of the whole outfit?" Margo asked quickly.

"Everything but the feather jacket," said the young man, nodding.

"Oh, darling," said the Beautiful Doll, proving she could talk.

Pete managed somehow to get back to the office. He sat down by the desk and lowered his

head in his hands. He had made a fool of himself, spouting all that talk in front of Bentley. He had said just the kind of stuff that Margo loathed.

The office door clicked and Margo came in. She closed the door firmly.

"Pete, all those things you said. Why didn't you ever talk like that before?" demanded Margo, astoundingly. "You're right. I was fighting being in love. And it's true what you said, about the old things being shined off new. You were really talking to me in there, weren't you?"

"I certainly was," said Pete. "Margo, you wouldn't kid me? What happened—so fast?"

"You pulled your punches all week, Pete," she said. "But just now you told the truth in front of all those people. You said that when two people love each other everything is new for them. And I knew you were right, Pete."

**PETE** wrapped Margo up firmly and held on to her, and tried to understand. He had started to sell the mild young man—and ended up selling Margo.

"He kissed her, and said, Well?"

"Oh—yes—" said Margo.

"Justice of the peace?" he asked. "No trousseau, my darling?"

Margo grinned. "Well, maybe just one black negligee," she said. —(Copyright.)



## SAD MEMORIES OF HOLLYWOOD

**T**HIS is the story of an unknown girl who was taken to Hollywood on a seven-year contract. She was to star in her first film. And, when she arrived in California, other top studios—M.G.M. and Warners—began clamouring for her, offering role after role, writes Ernie Player in "Picturegoer."

Every young hopeful's dream come fabulously true? But... this girl's Hollywood career did not, after all, begin.

### Story Of Heartbreak

Not because of illness. Not because of inability, lack of talent, absence of what it takes. Just through the fickleness of the Fate of show business. And because of Rita Hayworth.

The girl? She is French actress Barbara Laage. You saw her in the Paris scenes of "Act Of Love" with Kirk Douglas.

"She has poise, attack, excitement," wrote Dick Richards at the time. The film in which

she had her first big role, *Lady P...* Respectueuse, based on Jean-Paul Sartre's story, opened in London recently.

She told me the story of her Hollywood heartbreak when she came to London to appear in "By Whose Hand," a suspense story—which also stars John Justin and Stephen Murray.

"Orson Welles signed me to the contract," she began. "I had not appeared on the screen then, but he had seen my photograph in a top magazine. I went to Hollywood to star in his 'Lady From Shanghai'."

"Welles was to make the film for the Columbia studio, which wanted Rita Hayworth—the studio's biggest moneymaker then—to star. Rita who had quarrelled with Welles, turned down the role."

### Rita Spoiled Chance

"Then, at the last moment, there was a reconciliation bet-

ween Rita and Orson. She made the film.

"I? I did nothing—nothing for a whole year. Other studios offered me ten, twelve films. But Welles would not release me."

"I cried many times during that year. Yet, after all, I am grateful to Welles. He is a wonderful fellow. And he did sign me when I was completely unknown. I am very grateful."

Maybe it isn't surprising that Barbara did not come to like Hollywood overmuch. By the time she had managed to get a release from her Welles contract—after a year—she had had enough.

She asked the advice of good friends about other contracts that had been offered. Rene Clair, the director, was one. "Do not sign," he said.

### Home At Last

Charles Boyer had a very different opinion. "Go on," he urged, "I think you could be one of the biggest stars in Hollywood."

When Metro wanted her under contract, she agreed to make only one picture. This, her first film anywhere, was "Polly Fulton," with Barbara Stanwyck—a sweet, wonderful person."

Then she returned home to Europe. Since those days, the petite, alert blonde with the anxious off-screen air has carved a successful career without Hollywood.

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She likes to travel, makes pictures in Spain, Germany, Italy—and now, with the "By Whose Hand" film, in England—a bi-lingual affair, this: French and English versions were shot together.

Will Barbara ever return to Hollywood? "For a good film I would go, yes," she said.

But there were sad memories in her eyes. She added quietly: "I would not like to stay there long."

## SCREEN-MAD YOUTHS!

From all the corners of India hundreds of star-aspirants come to Bombay, the Hollywood of India, every year. Most of the aspirants run away from home to take up films as their career against the will and wishes of their parents. Aspirants coming from rich families usually bring enough money with them.

There is not the least hesitation that the minds of these youths are infected with film-germs which incite them to become film hero or heroine and are, generally speaking, the hunt for Shri Four-Twenties, Shri Awaras and Dadas of Bombay. These Four-Twenties, Awaras and Dadas are connected with some film-studio personality either production-manager or extra-supplier in some way or other. They can be recognised by their very person, movements and behaviour. Their field of action is mostly the railway stations viz. 'Victoria Terminus', 'Bombay Central' and 'Dadar'. They can smell with

greater accuracy such heroes and heroines stepping down the foot-boards of the train on to the platform and as the wolf smelling the incoming prey moves cautiously for his attack, they close up on these newcomers. They attract and impress them and thereby taking them into stern confidence and reliance relieve them quietly of their belongings and even take lump sum of money from them and then leave them quite lonely amidst the vast population of Bombay. The result is that the poor fellows wander in the streets of the silver screen town helpless, homeless and penniless. When the unbearable hunger unrests, they try to secure some job and even are willing to accept the job of a hotel-boy or office peon but alas! they had to get disappointed and disillusioned at every step. The life then comes into its true colour and teases them with its harsh realities. These heroes thus might one day be found on the footpaths of Bombay as shoeshiners and the heroines sitting on the balcony in a red light district to sell the wine of their youth for



MADHUBALA

a few pieces of silver merely to fill their bellies and to satisfy the fire of hunger.

### Pathan's Challenge

If one happens to escape these Sarvashri 420s, Awaras and Dadas and manages to reach to a studio gate, the Pathani gate-keeper at once challenges, "Kidhar jata? Andap, ko jane nahi sakta." The pinched fellow feels as if some one has slapped straight into his face, writes, Surendra Nath Dey in "Cine Advance".

Yeh! he had not to get desperate here only. There are certain studio employees to ease out this situation too and they come with open hearts and warm welcome to help such a lotus-eater. He is then taken around the studio premises and made acquainted with the film studio workings viz. shooting, recording and editing etc. After that he is refreshed in the Studio Canteen. If the aspirant is a big prey luncheons and dinners are arranged in his honour and he is introduced to actors and actresses and other studio personalities big or small and impressed of their importance,

popularity and strong holds on directors and producers. He thus becomes fully confident that he is fortunate enough to come in contact with such a person and now he will certainly be able to acquire some role in a film. Thus being over-confident on his new partner and finding a genuine helper in a quite alien town takes him into his faith and reliance. He in turn brings the guest in his room called 'Kholi' and tries to please him in all the best possible way.

Few weeks, a month or two, they together eat, drink and enjoy the life in the film town of the East in a lordly manner and in this way the poor fellow spends all that he had brought with him. Then the same friendly host turns out to be rude and with least obligation shows him the way to Victoria Terminus, the way leading to his home town.

### OLD FAVOURITES

#### AGAIN

In Bombay re-makes of old Hindi films have become a regular feature. Some of these films are in the making with new star cast. The latest one is "Mirza Saheban" which was made about 10 years ago with Nurjehan, the singing star at present in Pakistan and Tilok Kapoor in the title roles. Now it is being made with Ajit and Shyama in the lead supported by Ramsingh, Kum Kum, Madan Puri, Randhir, Sunder, Chand Burq and Indira. It is being directed by K. D. Mehra from a story written by Rajinder Singh Bedi. Produced by Bhagwat

INDIA MAGAZINE

Kwatra, the music is by Sardul Kwatra, reads a Bombay report.

Rani Productions' mythological "Astik" is the latest in the series due to hit the screen very soon. Written and directed by S. P. Kalla, the film presents Sahu Modak, Meenaxi, Paro and B. M. Vyas in important roles. Musical score by Narayan is a major attraction of the film.

Another of the re-makes which is in the making is by producer-director Nanubhai Vakil who has proved quite successful at re-making tried old subjects, once again steps out with a newer version of "Yahudi-ki-Beti". Some two decades ago "Yahudi-ki-Ladki" was made by New Theatres. The new version which does not make tall claims has Anita, Guha, Daljit, Al Nasir in the lead. Krishna Kumari Tabassum, Tiwari and Maruti are in the featured roles. The music for this film is given by Kamal Mitra.

### CRIME IN FILMS

Only a few may know about the Film Reform Committee and fewer still may have any regard for the self-constituted guardian of the morality of our screen. It is the general idea that the Reform Committee might say anything, but it cannot stop the passing on of the film caravan, says a Calcutta report.

But recently this body, under the chairmanship of Mr. I. D. Jalan, Minister, Local Self-Government, West Bengal, talked loudly and effectively. Actually Mr. K. C. Das Gupta, a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, drew



BOY (to the batsman out first ball):  
"Are you going to throw the bat?  
Or will you please sell it to me for a  
cheap price, Sir?"

the attention of the Committee in a letter to the urgent necessity of banning the exhibition of films portraying crimes and immoral or unrestrained sexual behaviour. The Committee agreed with this view and added their own criticism against creating class hatred and contempt against particular communities through the films. Mr. Jalan told the gathering of the discussions he had had with Mr. Keskar in this connection and expressed the hope that sooner than later the Film Reforms Committee might make its influence felt on the pictures to be produced and shown in the country.

Let them enjoy their coming success as much as they like, but the purist must not interfere with the pleasures of the people. Otherwise, the reformers, I am afraid, may end by being reformed, he says.

## FIRST PUPPET FILM

Plans for the production of India's first puppet film are now expected to be finalised soon as a result of negotiations between a leading Bombay producer and the Czechoslovak State Film.

The Indian film maker and his technical crew will visit Czechoslovakia this year for shooting the proposed film.

A well-known Indian story will be taken as the subject for the picture.

Should the first project prove a success, it is understood that regular assistance in the production of puppet films will be given to the Indian film industry by Czechoslovakia.

Jiri Traka, producer and director of puppet and cartoon films in Czechoslovakia, will guide the training of Indian technicians in the Cartoon Film Studios in Prague, it is reliably learned.

### "MA LAKSHMI"

Shree Lakshmi Pictures' first offering, "Ma Lakshmi" is fast progressing at Indrapuri Studio under the direction of Hari Bhanja. The film drama presents a socio-religious type of story set against a mythological background.

The big cast includes Chhab Biswas, Pahari Sanyal, Dhira Bhattacharya, Ajit Banerjee Sandhyarani and Shikharani. Kamal Das Gupta wrote the musical scores and Pronob Roy the lyrics. Dialogues are by Birendra Kishor Bhadra.

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