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APRIL 1957

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Leading National Monthly

JME II }

APRIL 1957

{ No. 2

THE KASHMIR ISSUE

he Rajya Sabha, the other day, the Prime Minister categorically declared that on the issue of Kashmir India had not broken any international commitment. The mists of misunderstanding and misrepresentation abroad are slowly lifting, and the Western countries are now beginning to appreciate India's stand. If Pakistan is prepared to discuss the issue across the table, she must first admit that she committed aggression and that she is ready to hand over that part of Kashmir which she is occupying by force.

No negotiations will be possible so long as Pakistan does not accept the fact of her aggression. This has already been made clear to Mr. Jarring by Mr. Krishna Menon during the memorable debate at the Security Council, and by our President in his address to both Houses of Parliament.

For the first time India has shown herself to be tough and stern with her quarrelsome neighbour. Lately there has been sharp criticism of our ineffective publicity campaign abroad. There is no lack of money for foreign propaganda but the pity is that very few nations in the West have understood our aims and principles. The recent Security Council debates spotlighted this defect of our propaganda machine.

The Westerners are usually busy people and have little time to spare for matters beyond their ken. Our publicists abroad must have been able to present our case in as succinct and telling a manner as possible. Verbosity and length should have been avoided.

Current Comments

SURPRISES

The second general elections have come and gone. It was a renewed experiment of gigantic proportions for a young democracy, and the rest of the world watched it with bated breath. For more than a month the nation was swept off its feet by excitement. The raucous blare of propaganda assailed the citizen's ears day in and day out, and gave him no peace. Luckily for all, there was not much of violence. Incidents there were; some of them were ugly enough because passions ran high in certain States. But the overall picture is encouraging. With greater precautions on the part of the custodians of law and order, we hope, the next general elections will even be more smooth.

In some States, Congress has sustained serious reverses and is now licking its wounds. Kerala has turned red. Orissa has shown rightist leanings. At the time of going to the press, the Leftists are mustering strong in West Bengal. In Madras a strategic alliance with the Dravida Kazhagam has brought the Congress back to power. The Andhra Ministry continues. So will that of Mysore, though with slight changes.

In Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh there is no problem to worry the Congress. Even the

Punjab has toed the line. But in Bombay and elsewhere, many veteran Congress leaders and Ministers have been unseated. The High Command will certainly ponder the question whether Congress hold on the masses is strong enough. A drastic change of policy is called for.

INDIA MAGAZINE

With its March issue, "India Magazine" has entered upon its second year. Our pages have borne ample testimony to its ever increasing popularity, and every week we continue to receive scores of congratulatory letters from our readers, praising its features and wishing the Magazine a long life of useful service and greater success. We manage to print a few of them in every issue, and we take this opportunity to thank all our friends for their good wishes and tributes. It is their own Magazine. The present (April) issue is brought out as an anniversary number. It contains more stories of absorbing interest than before. It is priced at 36 naye paise; its equivalent is five annas and nine pies. From this issue onwards "India Magazine" will sell at this price: 36 naye paise or 5 annas nine pies. Please remember this!

Will readers watch for our next issue, which will also be a Short Story Number—at the same price. Thank you all.

INDIA MAGAZINE

Too Quick for Words

By Sundari

WHEN Rukmini entered the bedroom she was surprised to find her husband still sleeping. It was eight a. m. already but Padmanabhan apparently went on dreaming. A hot sun was streaming into the room. One-year-old Raghu, their first-born, was lying awake in the cradle in the centre of the room, quietly sucking his right big toe. At the sight of his mother he gave a low grunt of satisfaction and held out his arms. The young woman bent over her little darling and gave him one of her inimitable smiles. "Are you awake, darling?" she cooed. "But I am not going to take you in my arms and spend the morning with you. How can I cook Father's meal if I am to play with you? Close your eyes, my precious, and sleep on till Father leaves for office, won't you, honey?"

Her little boy seemed to understand her, and laughed and chuckled in reply. He quickly composed himself to sleep as she rocked the cradle. The diamonds in her earrings and nose-screws flashed a brilliant blue as the sunlight fell on them and she looked the very picture of health and

INDIA MAGAZINE

beauty. There was a sparkle, too, in her eyes as she gazed at her husband sleeping peacefully on the bed.

She tiptoed to his side and brushed her soft, rosy lips against his forehead. But he did not stir as usual. At any other time a gentle touch of her limb would have roused him from the deepest slumber. A shadow of concern crossed her lovely face but she shrugged her shoulders in the very next instant. She closed the window, looked at her sleeping baby and slipped out of the room to attend to her work in the kitchen.

As soon as she turned her back, Padmanabhan opened his eyes. It was clear indication that he had been wide awake. He was aware that Rukmini had been to his room and tried to make him get-up. He sat on the bed and leaned against the cushions. He stared at the cradle and heaved a deep sigh. "Baby does not seem to be lucky. This must be the last day for him and his mother here," he muttered to himself.

HE closed his eyes again with both the palms, and his body shook as if in a shiver. Strangely enough, two hot

tears escaped between his fingers and raced down the back of his left hand. For a strong man with a stout heart such an overpowering emotion was unbecoming. He told so to himself as the recent past flashed before his mental eye...

ONLY four years back he had graduated with distinction. He did not have to search for a job for long. He became accountant in a big chemists and druggists store. He showed himself to be so competent and equal to any occasion that his boss, a Bengali, was pleased to promote him Manager of the branch. Sarat Babu left him in complete charge of the business in Madras and went to Calcutta to attend to his other interests there. So great was his confidence in Padmanabhan that he never bothered about any aspect of the management. To the credit of the young man it must be said that he was scrupulously honest. He was getting a handsome salary of Rs. 300/- and happiness was well within his grasp when he married Rukmini. Her father and his father had been close friends for years, and the suggestion for an alliance came from both sides at the same moment.

Though Rukmini's father, Satagopan, offered plenty of cash as dowry, the bridegroom's father, Srinivas, re-

fused it. Could their friendship be measured in terms of money, he argued. It was enough if his beloved daughter-in-law came to his home with just the jewels on her person. The bride's father demurred but had to respect his friend's sentiments.

The year that followed upon marriage was one of sweet and unalloyed happiness. Rukmini and Padmanabhan were very much in love. The young husband took her round in the evenings—to concerts and pictures—and they would not be parted even for a day.

If ever Rukmini went to her parents' home in Chingleput, he would hurry from his office at six in the evening, take the next available train and knock at her door late in the night. He always basked in the sunshine of her smiles; she never grudged him her unstinted devotion.

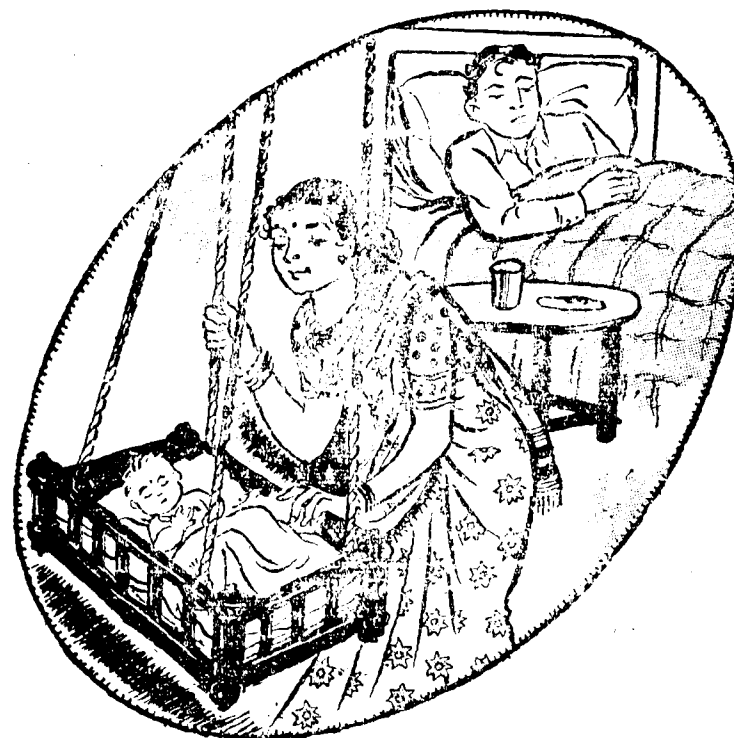
BUT nobody rests on the peak of happiness for long. Padmanabhan's father (who was a widower) mysteriously fell ill. He ran high temperature in the evenings and suffered from considerable weakness and exhaustion. Padmanabhan brought in doctor after doctor to diagnose his condition. But soon the grim fact became clear. Srinivas was suffering from tuberculosis. Padmanabha was stunned. It was like a bolt from the blue. His hope

of keeping his father in ease and comfort in his retirement were now shattered. It was an agony to stand by the patient and watch him cough and gasp.

HE spent a good part of his salary on medicines, tonics, and special diets. By vir-

nabhan feared that she might contract this dangerous disease and gave hints that she might go to her parents' home and stay there for a while.

There was, however, one compelling reason why she had to leave her husband's



tue of his position as manager of the pharmaceutical firm, he paid a nominal price for the drugs but he needed a good lot of money for other items and fees for the doctors. Rukmini was in constant attendance on her father-in-law. Both Srinivas and Padma-

home. She was far gone in pregnancy and was expecting to have her first baby in a month or so. She wept bitter tears at having to leave her father-in-law's bedside. It was indeed a very touching scene as the old man gave her his blessings and

expressed his hope of seeing her first-born before breathing his last. But even the few words that he spoke exhausted him. He sank back and panted for breath. Padmanabhan, too, was in a very sad mood at having to part with his wife.

THE very next day Srinivas was, on the advice of the family doctor, removed to the sanatorium. He even seemed to rally round but suddenly passed away early one morning. It was strange that half an hour after his death little Raghu was born. Padmanabhan was overwhelmed with grief at the death of his father whom he had loved and respected. He felt there was a void in his life which no one could fill. The world of his dreams had collapsed.

He did not feel happy at the birth of his son though some friends hinted at the traditional belief that the old man was now re-born as the first offspring. He was too confused to think about all this. He performed the obsequies like an automaton. His father-in-law hurried to him late in the evening and offered his sincere condolences. He mourned the loss of his friend and relative with considerable feeling, and was himself very disconsolate. After supervising the rest of the funeral ceremonies, he went back to his home in Chingleput.

He invited Padmanabhan to take a month's leave and stay in his house and forget his sorrow. But the son-in-law declined the invitation on the plea of urgent business awaiting his attention at the firm. He looked very worried. He had good reason to be. He had helped himself to Rs. 5,000 from the office cash to meet the heavy bills in respect of his father's illness. At first his conscience had rebelled against him. He spent some sleepless nights after he had misappropriated the first five hundred rupees.

But then he silenced the inner voice as demands for money became more and more insistent. Whenever he took a little he comforted himself with the thought that he would as quietly replace the amounts as he had put them in his pocket. But they slowly and inevitably aggregated to the formidable figure of Rs. 5,000.

SARAT Babu came just once to Madras but never suspected that there was anything wrong. Padmanabhan strove hard to make good the amount. From three friends of his he had borrowed a thousand rupees each and slipped them into the cash box.

But a complication that he did not foresee had arisen. Sarat Babu's brother, Ram Babu, a very morose and sus-

icious individual, had come to Madras all of a sudden with an auditor. The latter was going through the accounts and would complete them today. He wondered how he had been so stupid as to touch another man's money. He felt that his father, had he been alive, would have seen the first to condemn his dishonourable deed. But what was he to do now? Ram Babu would even hand him over to the police. Ah, for want of Rs. 2,000 his family reputation would be torn to shreds in a few hours, his own career would be ruined, and his own dearest wife and that darling child..?

He shuddered to think of it all. He had a sudden brainstorm. Why not ask his father-in-law for a loan? But he was on a visit to Madurai where his elder daughter was residing. He was racing against time. In a few hours his fate would be sealed.

"May I come in, Padmanabhan?" asked Venkat, standing at the threshold. "I see, you haven't yet got up."

Padmanabhan's heart missed a beat as he saw the visitor. It was his colleague at the firm; Venkat was both accountant and cashier.

"Come in, Venkat," greeted Padmanabhan, "and sit on my bed. But please close the door. That is kind of you. Well, what is the latest news?"

Venkat, a lean man with a pale face and sunken eyes, did not look pleased. He did not sit on the bed, either. He went straight to the topic. "For God's sake, Padmanabhan, bring two thousand rupees when you come to office. Save yourself and save myself from disgrace and a possible prison life. Of course, I owe my position in the firm to your generosity. How do you want it? Suppose you don't bring Rs. 2,000 to the office, shall I say you took the amount or shall I take the blame?"

"Even if you hide the truth, Venkat, I will make a clean breast of it all and take the consequences. Don't you think I am so cowardly. I may tell you frankly that I have some ten rupees or so which I can call my own. So I will tell Ram Babu about the misappropriation and prepare myself for the inevitable."

VENKAT left the room without a word. For a long time Padmanabhan was buried in thought. When the clock struck nine he awoke to his surroundings. Baby began to bawl and he angrily called for his wife. With a smile, she hurried up, bringing him a hot cup of coffee.

"Where had you been, Rukmini? I shouted for you thrice and Baby is crying his head off. Nurse him first," he said angrily.

"I was talking to our neighbour, Kaushalya Devi, in the backyard over the wall," she replied, gathering Raghu into her arms. "I took a tip or two from her about *chapathi* preparation. You know, I teach her in turn about South Indian dishes. She relished the tamarind rice 'bath' I gave her yesterday."

"DON'T you imbibe her miserly ways, I warn you. And another thing, Rukmini. I want you to take the 11.30 passenger train and go to Chingleput with Raghu. I shall come there in the night."

She was silent, looking hard at the curly head of her little one. He detected tears glistening in her eyes. "You have heard me, haven't you, and why don't you reply?" he snarled.

"You seem to be a bit testy today, dear," she replied without raising her head. "I am here to obey, not to defy, you. I will certainly take the 11.30 train as you desire."

She took the baby down. He hurried into the bath-room and emerged from it after a quick wash.

He put on his dress and complained that he had no appetite. He said he would order his meal from the hotel and was preparing to leave when she came and snuggled close to him.

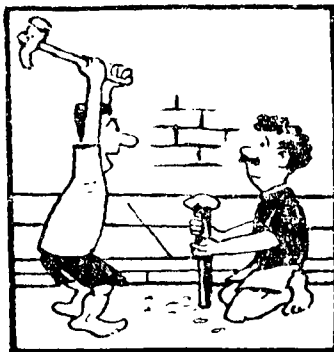
"Darling!" she whispered. "You seem to be cross with me. What is wrong?"

He hugged her and kissed her warmly on the lips. "Angels should not bother their heads with their husbands' troubles in the office. Take care of Raghu," he remarked significantly. And he gave her another kiss.

"Suppose I offer you something in return for your kiss, will you accept it?" she asked, enigmatically.

"ALL right, have I ever refused your kiss at any time?" he asked, bewildered.

"It is not a kiss, dear," she said. "Here is an envelope which I want you to open on reaching office. It is a communication."



"And, now, I am asking you for the last time, will you let me marry your sister or not?"

"Are you divorcing me, woman?" he laughed. "What is the communication about? Bosh! I will open it right now."

He tore open the envelope in impatience and she ran and hid herself in the kitchen. What was his amazement when he counted twenty-five one-hundred-rupee notes?

He pursued her into the kitchen and hugged her with all his warmth. Then she said, "Hurry up to office, dear, and pay off the amount. Let us keep Rs. 500 for ourselves. The story is simple. I overheard the conversation between yourself and Mr. Venkat and acted quickly. You know, Kaushalya Bai's husband is a private banker though you may sneer at him as a miser and usurer. I briefly told her about my urgent need for Rs. 2,500 and offered to pledge my jewels. She took the jewels in, then came back and gave me the money. Then she again called me and gave back the jewels, too. What is friendship worth if I cannot trust a good woman like you? she says. This is not my husband's money. It is mine. Return it when you can. That is Kaushalya Bai all over..."

THAT evening he came back beaming. "I slipped in the cash, Rukmini, and the auditor did not notice any discrepancy," he said.

She merely held her mouth invitingly for him to kiss. **

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THE sun was still young and the day was getting warm. The huge factories and barracks of the industrial areas of Calcutta had started emitting thick smoke and dust with the start of the day's work. The trams moved steadily and as one rolled over the Howrah bridge, it made that nauseant noise which the hollow air below echoed in a continuous melody. A long train moved off from the Howrah station and the shrill cry from its nostrils filled the air to vanish and die off as it went.

The Madras Mail stopped at the platform with a violent

him to the college.

Of course, for a bright fellow like Narayanan it was not difficult to get a job in Madras. Any good firm would have easily given him a clerk's post, and he had a lot of friends to commend him to any place. But Narayanan disliked to remain in Madras. If he could not remain there as a student he preferred to get out; a change of atmosphere might do him immense good, he thought.

So Narayanan arrived at Calcutta to seek a living. It did not take long in Calcutta to get a job either. He got

KAMALA'S CHOICE

By G. KOTTURAN

jerk and the passengers rushed out with a noisy commotion. A youth of moderate height and good build stepped down leisurely as if he had nowhere to go. He looked around interestedly and continued to walk to the exit with no particular haste.

A month ago it was the same young man; Narayanan was his name. He was a star student of one of the well-known colleges in Madras. But kismet was not kind to him. A fire in the suburbs left him homeless and a family helpless. It became clear that Narayanan's father could no longer afford to send

employed as an assistant in a book-shop. He was happy with his work. "I can be near books," he said to his employer, "if not as student who derived scholarship from its pages."

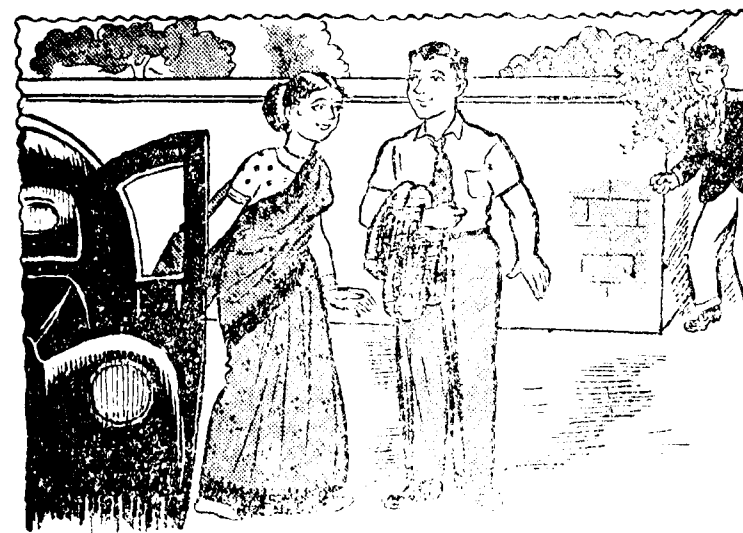
IN no time Narayanan became familiar with the titles and authors of a variety of books. Further, what was to play a significant part in his life, he got acquainted with all the customers of the old book-seller. They admired this young man from the south. "He has the names of authors on his fingers' tips and knows about every book," they murmured to each

other.

There was however one particular customer who attracted Narayanan's special attention. She was a student of some college in the city; further she was very fond of books. Her name was Kamala. Everyday she had to pass Narayanan's book-shop to get to her college. It was often that she had a good look into the book-stall to see whe-

everything. Consequently she extended her interest to art and philosophy in which, Kamala found out, he was well versed. It soon became her daily practice to spend some time with him speaking about books or often just speaking.

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ONE day Kamala asked Narayanan "This evening there is a function at my place. Will you come?"



ther any new consignment had arrived. Now and then she asked Narayanan's opinion about the author of a book. He was very good to her and keen to help and she liked him.

AS days passed Kamala asked him more and more about books and authors for she liked his voice, his talk and the way he went through

"What function?" asked Narayanan.

"Dance," she giggled.

"What dance?"

"My father is a dancing teacher. He is the president of Banga Natya Nilayam," Kamala explained with pleasure.

"You know dancing."

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Narayanan smiled patronizingly.

"Yes, will you come?" She pleaded.

"Sure, I will come," Narayanan agreed. He wanted to know more. But she was only waiting to hear his consent.

"At seven it starts," she cried out happily as she hurried away from his shop.

NARAYANAN felt a little awkward as he entered her house, a fine building with plenty of room. But soon he was put at his ease by her father, a jovial gentleman who commented on his perfect physique and regular features. "Those eyes of yours," he told Narayanan "would be an invaluable asset to any dancer."

It was not a function in the real sense. There was no big gathering; just the family members and some friends who watched, criticized and took part in the proceedings. There were a few friends of Kamala also who huddled together in one corner and giggled occasionally with satisfaction.

Kamala was the principal dancer. She danced to the music played by her father and the visitors sat around. She danced well, in fact so well that Narayanan was surprised. As she danced her body turned and twisted with remarkable flexibility, show-

ing the youthfulness of her charm and the elegance of her beauty. Her hair was neatly parted in the middle and blended in two plaits played around. Kiss curls artistically adorned her shapely forehead. Her face was round and radiant and as her eyes moved in dancing motions their loveliness increased. Narayanan thought that she looked more like a nymph than a girl whom he knew. A sort of boyish arrogance made her soft lips lustrous and inviting. Her breasts round and supple bounced at the slightest step with incredible charm.

Late at night when the function was over Kamala's father accompanied Narayanan to the door and made him promise to come again. The good old man even offered to teach him dancing for he said, "You can be made an excellent dancer."

Narayanan declined the offer with thanks.

BUT Narayanan changed his mind afterwards and it became a practice with him to accompany Kamala to her home after the shop was closed to attend the dancing classes. As Kamala's father so well put it, he had the makings of a dancer and Narayanan was a success. He soon became one of Calcutta's noted exponents of Barata Natyam.

He gave up his job in the book-shop for his art brought him enough money and fur-

ther as he himself explained to the old book-seller, "I am too busy with my art." His circle of friends increased and as an artist of unusual merit he established a position for himself in society.

YET Narayanan was not happy. Kamala had changed; she had become inconsiderate and ill-tempered and he even thought that she hated him. "You have now become a great man. Why do you love me?" That is how she behaved with him. But Narayanan still loved her and was unable to trace the reason for this coolness.

One evening he was aimlessly wandering about when he came near the old book-shop. Everything there was just the same except that instead of him another man worked as the shop-assistant. She made him an artist. "But now what has happened to her?" he could not understand.

Just then Kamala herself came that way. She was going back home after her lessons. Narayanan came forward to meet her. She was not pleased to see him, but she was gentle by nature and was incapable of objecting when he started to walk by her side.

On the way she entered a jeweller's shop. Narayanan waited outside till she came out. She remained for a full half an hour inside. When she did come out she was

cheerful. "You are waiting still," she said when she saw Narayanan outside.

"I thought I would take you home," Narayanan said apologetically. "All right," she agreed with no particular force.

They came near the maidan. "Kamala," he called affectionately, "let us go to the maidan for some time. We won't be late, please, Kamala."

Kamala found it hard to refuse for she was soft by temperament. They sat in some lonely spot in the maidan neither talking nor smiling. After a time Narayanan ventured to ask, "Kamala, what were you doing in that shop?"

"Nothing" Kamala replied with no embarrassment.

"You can't spend half an hour doing nothing, Kamala," Narayanan said cautiously.

"He knows a way to improve my dancing."

"Why, Kamala you are good already."

"You are making fun of me," Kamala replied a little affectedly.

"No, Kamala, you are good."

"You are a great artist. Why do you worry? We poor people also should live," Kamala was sarcastic.

This came as a shock to Narayanan. He always

thought that Kamala was happy at his success. "Human beings are strange," he could not help thinking. "How can this jeweller help?" he again tried to probe into the situation.

"HE has connections," she replied with animation. Evidently she enjoyed telling him how she would one day beat him in his art.

"How does it help?"

"There is a holy man in a temple near about who would make me the best dancer in the world."

"When does he take you there?" Narayanan asked impatiently.

"Tomorrow, that is what we were talking about," she concluded.

Kamala, "What is to happen to her?" Anyway he decided to set aside the next day for her.

The next day from early morning he stayed round about the jewellers' shop. He was afraid, he was alone. What could he do if anything happened? He knew an artist friend who had a revolver. A weapon might prove helpful, he said to himself.

He hired a taxi and got the revolver safely hidden in his person. He was back just in time; he saw Kamala getting into a car with the jeweller. The time had come to act, Narayanan decided. He followed them in his taxi. They

were heading towards the suburbs and Narayanan kept pace carefully giving them no clue to doubt that they were being followed.

At last they stopped in front of a lovely cottage; it was no temple as Kamala was given to understand. The door was jammed when both went inside. Narayanan stayed behind excited, listening to what was going on inside. He could guess that things were not all right for Kamala; there were cries and entreaties. Narayanan thanked God for bringing him here. He was confident.

He knocked at the door, but no reply came. He understood that they had started fighting. Kamala realized that she was trapped and she hated his advances. He was bent on molesting her. She found no escape and she cried aloud in hysterics.

NARAYANAN banged against the door and the door broke open. Revolver in hand, he advanced to the great surprise of the jeweller. He retreated; his plan had been spoiled. Kamala came forward weeping and embraced him.

Now Narayanan and Kamala are man and wife. The husband at times teases her, "Women are silly creatures," reminding her of this incident.

But oh! Young Eve as usual had her last word. "But men are more silly to go after them!"

INDIA MAGAZINE

THREE MEN IN

"RAVINDRAN"

Love

THAT evening it was very cold and chilly. The clouds were dark and menacing and held promise of heavy rain. In the premises of the social club there was very little activity. The badminton and tennis courts were vacant and inside the hall the attendance was thin. In one corner, four men were playing poker. Two old men were going through the slick bright-jacketed magazines placed in orderly rows on the long table.



on a stool outside the room if he was not wanted.

Raj was a handsome man on the wrong side of forty. He had snow-white hair though his Hitler moustache was black. He had sparkling eyes though there was a touch of melancholy in them. His other two companions looked slightly younger and more smartly dressed. But they were not so distinguished in appearance as Raj.

In a small room adjoining the verandah three middle-aged men, Ram, Raj and Ranga were having a quiet smoke and helping themselves to hot, steaming cups of tea. A servant boy was attending on them whenever they rang for him, and perched himself

Ranga was puffing at a long pipe while Ram's glowing cigarette was projecting from a fine glittering holder. But Raj had his fag almost hanging from his moist lips.

It was Ranga who broke the silence. "I read a good

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novel last night," he said. "It was all about the love affairs of a young woman who ends up by marrying a stupid admirer and making herself more respectable."

His companions laughed.

"By reading these novels one would think that life was full of romance and adventure," remarked Ram. "When I was studying in the B. A. class I wrote the silliest love letter to Saradha, my junior, telling her that she was my dream girl, that I worshipped the very ground she walked on, and that I would commit suicide if she didn't reciprocate my love and so on."

The other two grinned. "Were you on talking terms with her before?" asked Ranga with the air of a detective.

"SHE wouldn't even cast her eyes in my direction," admitted Ram. "I used to admire her graceful gait as she went to college and back. It was a heavenly sight, I may tell you, what with her slender figure, her straight back and proud and haughty bearing. I lost my heart and my wits as well."

"I wrote to her half a dozen letters and was silly enough to post them to her class address. I knew she collected them all and secreted them between the pages of her books."

"Nothing came of it, I suppose?" asked Ranga, hardly able to repress his curiosity.

"Wait," said Ram, holding up his hand. "You probably thought that the principal was seized of the matter, sent for me, accused me of improper conduct and rusticated me from the college. Nothing of the kind."

"I WAS walking alone on the river bank one evening when two young men accosted me, asked me if I wasn't the fellow who wrote such insulting letters to Saradha. I told them to mind their own business but before I had my say they punched my face, pummelled my head and back and would have thrown me down into the river which was in floods had they not seen the headlights of a car."

"They must have left me senseless on the road and run off. When I opened my eyes I found myself in the hospital. It took three weeks before my wounds could heal and the doctors pronounced me out of danger."

"What was the outcome?" enquired Raj eagerly.

"It was a shameful conclusion really," Ram revealed. "My parents, my relatives, my college and class mates came to know of my stupid adventure. They came to my house, one by one, to commiserate on my

wretched lot. You know, my parents were well-to-do and very fond of me. They thought the world of me and were deeply hurt at the humiliation I had to face. They thought marriage would bring me the much-needed balm and secretly hastened the preparations. I was totally unprepared for it until the guests began arriving. You see, I had been to my uncle's home in another town for convalescence and knew about my wedding only 48 hours before the scheduled date. What was my surprise when I saw the invitation card? It was... Saradha who was to be my life-partner."

HIS other two companions gasped in amazement. "What a lucky fellow you are! And your adventure sounds more romantic than any novel of the East or of the West. Well... well."

Ram blew out the smoke through his nostrils. "Truth to tell, I didn't feel any thrill or rapture at this realisation, for my dream had been shattered long ago. I was full of resentment and hatred for this girl who had set two young men upon me. Were they her admirers? Was she flirtatious? Could such an innocent-looking girl be so cunning and scheming? The publicity she had given to my letters brought disgrace to my family."

"Soon the facts came to light. My father contacted

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MADRAS - 30.

Saradha's father through a mutual friend. The girl's father was an advocate, who had a large family to support. He didn't make much money and was running into heavy debt. At first he was very rude and arrogant when my father approached him. He threatened to place all the letters before the principal of the college and move for action to expel me and ruin my career. The man relented ultimately when my father paid him ten thousand rupees to clear off his debts and give his consent to our marriage but father kept mum about all this and even made out that Saradha's father had taken the initiative.

"MOTHER alone took me aside and with tears in her eyes told me all the details of the negotiations with a solemn declaration that they were prompted solely by considerations of my future happiness. Well, my friends, the marriage came off. I could not get over my feeling of inferiority complex at this distorted end of the romance. I was far from elated."

"I suppose," interposed Ranga, "the reformation, rather, the transformation took place overnight? And all the misunderstanding disappeared like the mist of the morning."

Raj heartily laughed at this joke.

"No, friends, I kept my distance and cold-shouldered my

wife until she fell at my feet and apologized for the wrong done to me. The two men who attacked me were her cousin brothers to whom her father had made the revelations about my letters. But they had attacked me without her father's knowledge, she assured me. I relented and forgave her. We were a couple of happy birds, you might say, but the truth is I couldn't love her with the same warmth as I had been used to before the marriage. Could you explain it?"

Ranga laughed loud at this remark. "Don't be silly, Ram. I could explain this lack of warmth if you could tell me... But, I would rather not say anything at all except that you are the father of eleven children. Gosh! What would have happened if you had greater love and warmth..."

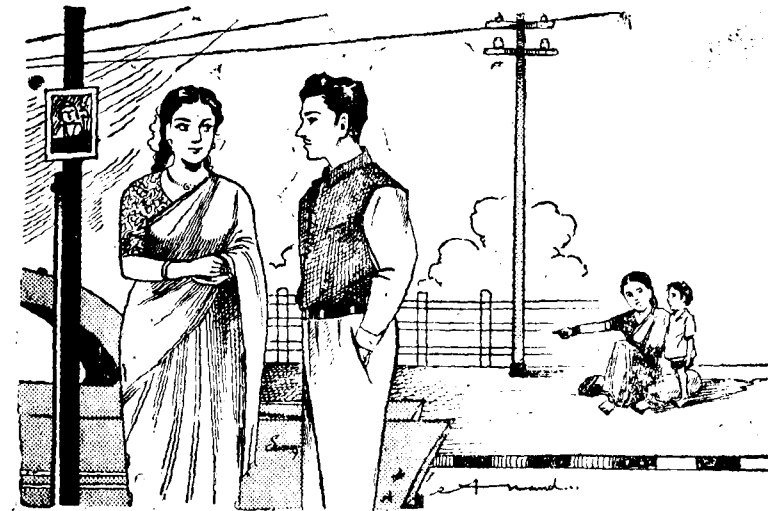
At this, all the three companions indulged in a loud guffaw. Ranga got the smoke into his lungs and coughed until the tears came into his eyes. The two men stood up and patted him on the head and the back, and the servant boy rushed in with more cups of tea, and quiet prevailed again.

AFTER a time, Ram turned to Ranga. "Now, Ranga, we would like to hear about your own escapades. You are always a shy and reserved fellow but we three should not have secrets from one an-

other. Come on, out with our story."

RANGA grunted. "Perhaps you forget that I am slightly lame of one leg. This physical handicap should have made me more cautious but my parents still imagined that I was handsome, and married me off to a very pretty girl. The less said about it all the better. That

and this I don't grudge. By God's grace, I am making enough and more to spare. But you know life is full of misalliances. There is a widow of my age who looks after me. But she is jealous, and after my money, though she serves me like a dog. Sometimes I get up in the dead of the night and wonder whether this kind of life is worth living but then you have



girl, I would not even mention her name, refused to come over from her parental home and live with me. She asked me to set right my foot like all other men before aiming my rights.

"I know she is a miserable woman today and is eager to come back. But I have set my face against such a move. She writes to me for money

got to recognize your shortcomings. How can you get on, physically handicapped as you are, without the ministrations of a woman? You have to make some adjustment to the circumstances and the environments, though you have to come up against social ostracism. It is no ideal life, it is no flower-bed of romance, but what else can I do except to go in for the services

of a woman whose past you don't know—it is probably shady—but you are sure of the maternal solicitude with which she attends on you....”

There was an understanding silence. Ranga's companions seemed to sympathise with him but they said nothing. Ram then turned to Raj. “Well, Raj, it is your turn now. Your story must certainly be more interesting than the preceding two. Peon, get us some more tea and bring some biscuits and bananas.”

RAJ lit a cigarette and gave some thoughtful puffs. “My dear friends, you know, my father was a zamindar though I may be a pauper to-day but for the meagre salary I am drawing. We had our country mansion in the midst of our farm. I was studying in college then. Everyday I used to travel fifteen miles by car to the college and back. My elder brother died of typhoid in the city where he was residing in the hostel and so my parents didn't want to keep me out of their sight and made this arrangement. They engaged two tutors—one to coach me in English and another in mathematics. But you know, I hate books and have no head for figures. There was plenty of money to waste and being their only (surviving) son, my parents never locked their safe and I could help myself to any amount I wanted.

“Well, it so happened that Thaili, the daughter of our senior servant, would come to my room early every morning, to sweep the floor and keep my things in order. Not being a reader of fiction, I don't know how to put it. One thing led to another. I drew her into a conversation every now and then, gave her money to buy clothes, and myself got fancy things for her. She was a young, simple-minded and innocent and was very comely, I should say. We fell in love with each other and met secretly every night.

“Father had to leave for Hyderabad one night and he wanted to take leave of me. He opened the door of my room and surprised us both. He hastily went back to his own room. He was a stern man, known for his quick decisions. The next day he got my transfer certificate and sent me to a college, a hundred miles off. I took up residence in the hostel attached to it.

“I WAS often hungering for the affection of Thaili and was worrying myself sick about her. But I couldn't write to anybody for information. When I went back to the country mansion what was my surprise when I learnt that Thaili and her parents were forced to leave the village? They had gone to some unknown destination. My heart ached and I blamed myself for their wretched lot.

But my enquiries elicited no further information.

“TIME heals wounds. I soon learnt to forget all about Thaili. My parents arranged for my betrothal to a very beautiful, cultured girl, Aravinda by name. She was the daughter of one of the richest men in the city. Being educated, her parents saw no objection to our moving together, and going out in our car to places. We were deeply in love with each other. Four years had gone by since Thaili had gone out of my life. Aravinda herself would drive the car and we would enjoy the ride.

“One evening in the city we saw a matinee show and came out on the broad pavement, gulping a mouthful of the fresh sea breeze that blew gently against our faces. Lovingly did she place her hand on my arm and pointed to the red clouds on the horizon.

“We stood entranced w. someone came near and coughed. I turned round to see Thaili holding a male child on her waist. ‘How are you, master? We are living on this pavement. Father is working as a cooly in the harbour. Mother too is earning a little. See your little Somu, your own darling. Isn't he looking like you in every detail?’

“Aravinda turned pale as death. She left me at once, plunged into her car and drove off, leaving me high and dry.

“THAT unsophisticated girl did not know the significance of the words that she was uttering. Well, the romance was at an end. Who do you think are living with me now? My parents died suddenly. They were bankrupt.

“You can guess. Thaili and Somu. Well, I have married Thaili and given her a respectable status.”—(Copyright.)

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GIRL IN THE LIBRARY

ON a Sunday evening in the month of October, when the parting sun was bathing the horizon in liquid gold, Sunil and Remesh were jostling through the milling crowds of the Marine Drive. The crowd was unusually large, partly because it was a Sunday, partly because it was the time of Dussera vacation. Walking on the sands of the beach—the Chowpatty Sands—the two sat down at a place where the crowd was comparatively sparse. The sun had set now; and in his crimson twilight they all looked like gods and goddesses.

Sunil and Remesh had not known each other for more than three months: it was the tennis club that brought them together. Temperamentally they were poles apart, but yet a pair of friends more attached to each other could hardly be found: Remesh was to Sunil what Jonathan was to David.

On similar occasions as this they were wont to discuss diverse topics—books, politics, unemployment, the appalling fall in the standard of education, superstitions and false traditions which still clung on to the Indian society. But today Remesh was more reticent than usual; he seemed to be staring at the horizon, into vacuity, and commune with some invisible being. Sunil was rather surprised at this.

"Remesh," Sunil broke in, "why in heaven's name are you sitting like a statue? I hope Cupid has not played any trick with you."

"Yes, Sunil," he muttered.

SUNIL looked straight into his face. There was sadness in his eyes: they spoke of a mind crushed down under some tormenting thought. Sunil when he noticed this change was a bit sorry for trying to be humorous.

"Sunil", Remesh said, "true, I have not told you something yet. Today was my birthday; but I was not aware of it till now—till I saw the parting sun. Unknowingly I was looking back upon the entire vista of my past life... Yet another day, yet another year. Oh! the distance still lying ahead of me; the weary way I have to walk alone—all alone. Time was when life was dear to me: I was ambitious and in my dreams I found life's glorious avenues unfolding themselves before me. But today a darkness envelops my mind; the light that was burning there is put out, the star that was shining in the firmament of my thought is no more there".

"But, my dear chap, you are beating about the bush," Sunil butted in.

"LAST year while I was at the Lucknow University doing research there," Remesh continued, "I took a fancy to a girl student, a year junior to me. Sunil, it happened one day while I was requisitioning a book from the library a bevy of women students walked into the hall. They came to the counter and one of them thrust in a slip to the clerk. 'Sorry, Miss Mukerjee, I have issued it just now,' he said. Hearing



By KOSHY VAIDHYAN

this I looked at her. Suddenly my eyes met a pair of eyes glittering like jewels, twinkling like stars. 'You may have it, if you like', I told her. For, that was the same book she had asked for. Without waiting for her answer I pushed the book to her side, asked the clerk to issue it in her favour. She hesitated, but accepted the book. In another minute I left the hall and rode to my uncle's house where I had been staying. In the evening I was still musing over the day's incident; her image was still before me. I had not seen her before; yet it seemed to me that I had been seeing her all my life.

"THAT day rolled on, and several days followed. But that simple incident, insignificant as it was, bound us two in a close friendship. We met often since then and used to discuss various topics relating to our course of study. We being both of a serious turn of mind, we could confabulate without any inhibition. Gradually our mutual regard grew into an admiration and that in turn into an attachment—perhaps love.

"We began to yearn more and more for each other's company; and we met oftener. Nevertheless we never discussed anything of our personal affairs. But Sunil, as for me, the attachment grew into a love, so intense so unfathomable, so sublime that I

began to stagger under its sheer weight. I had kept the citadel of my love against all sieges and incursions till now; but who is this queen who comes and commands me, and whose behest I obey like a slave, I wondered. Sunil, her voice was music to me, her smile was food to me; she was the very being from whom I drew my life-breath—but only a short time. How beautiful is the rainbow but how evanescent."

Sunil was smoking his sixth cigarette since we sat down.

"Days grew into months. Yet I had not expressed my sentiments to her; my tribulation was inexorable. At last a time had come when I thought that if I did not give vent to my feelings my heart would break under the pressure of my surging emotions.

"I MET her the following day; she was sitting alone at one corner of the library. Her face was lit with joy when she saw me. I walked up to her and sat beside her. After a desultory chat for a while I said: 'I have been wanting to tell you something, but I could not summon enough courage to do it. I have been loving you ever since we met—loving more than my life'. 'Remesh, no,' she uttered in a doleful voice, 'I am no more mine'. She could not continue; her words died on her lips; her face spoke of anguish, and, struggle. Remesh had no need to speak

of his feelings. The same thought had been gnawing at her vitals day and night; only, she bore it like a martyr: a woman must suffer like one. The world was swimming before my eyes. 'Forgive me, sister', I stammered. And with faltering steps I walked out of the room without another word.

"COULD I be indignant, vindictive and say: Woman is fire—beautiful to look at, useful for life, but never to be loved, never to be touched? Could she not have been the mute victim of some social traditions? Could she not have been refraining from creating a revolution in her domestic domain? Could she not have yielded to the call of duty in its struggle against love? It could be any or all of these together that compelled her to say 'no.' Yet of what avail were they to me? My life was torn into shreds. It was unthinkable for me to dare look at her face any more; it could have been worse than death.

"That day I bade goodbye to the university; the following day I left Lucknow. I spent some days travelling, hoping that travel would alleviate, if not

annihilate, my sorrow. And the rest of the time till I joined the Ferguson College staff here I shut myself up in my room reading and meditating. Thus, Sunil, what you see before you is only the wreck, the fragment, the shadow of the man that I once was."

Sunil was coming to the end of the last cigarette in his packet. It was half-past-ten when Ramesh ended his narration.

"REMESH," Sunil said "your story is indeed very touching. But no man can escape this ordeal; at one time or another of his life, he has to face it. Stop brooding over it and bear it like a man; Do not be mawkish. You would be all right soon. Look, you will take tea with me tomorrow. Mathaji has been keen on seeing you. Besides, my wife has come down for the vacation. She would be delighted to see you."



CLERK (to new typist girl): "Let us chat on for some more time. The manager bloke does not usually turn up before twelve."

Sunil drove Ramesh to Central Y. M. C. A., where he was staying, before he went to his own flat. Ramesh, however, was looking forward to a happy evening. Mrs. Sunil Dutt must be a

kind lady, he was contemplating.

ON Monday evening exactly at half-past-four Ramesh rode to Sunil's flat. Sunil was already awaiting him at the stair case; of Ramesh's punctuality Sunil knew only too well. Soon Ramesh was conducted into the drawing room.

"Nirmala, Mr. Ramesh Verma," Sunil introduced him to her. Ramesh stood for a moment as through struck by thunder. The very earth was giving way under his feet. Before he betrayed his feeling, he greeted her and quickly sat down.

Tea was served, Sunil was as talkative today as Ramesh was taciturn. Only Ramesh and Nirmala (Mukerjee) knew how fast their hearts beat. No sooner did they finish tea than Ramesh got up and said, "Sunil, a crony of mine has come down from Catcutta this afternoon. May you give me leave to go now."

Ramesh thanked them all and left his hosts at 5 o'clock. It was slightly drizzling then.

Yet another sun had risen, yet another day had come in its glory and magnificence. Sunil was reading the paper over a cup of coffee. Suddenly his eyes fell upon an item on the front page of the leading daily: Motorcycle-truck collision, rider killed.

"Nirmala, Mathaji," Sunil cried out, "Ramesh has been

killed in an accident". A funereal silence fell over them all.

On the following evening when the sun was once again soaking the earth in beams of blood Nirmala and Sunil were standing at the dying pyre. In another minute the sun would have set; in another minute the fire would have died too. Sunil and Nirmala were still staring into the smouldering embers—all that was left of that mortal called Ramesh.

LOOKING at the fire, who knew what might have been the current of thoughts sweeping through the two minds? Yet one thought must have been common to them. That is this. Ah! this is the end of all—the mighty and the fallen, the noble and the mean, the rich and the poor, the wise and the fool. Today or tomorrow I will follow you where you have only preceded me. Vanity, Vanity, everything under the sun is Vanity.

The sun had set. The fire had died out.

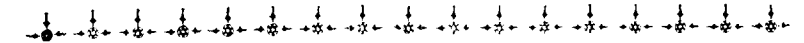
"Nirmala, let us go," Sunil said.

But nobody saw—not even Sunil—that before they left, hot tears fell from her eyes and mingled with the ashes below. The world did not know it, and it never will. *

INDIA MAGAZINE

THE ECLIPSE

By G. N. GIDWANI



IMAMBUX was a young teacher of romantic inclinations. His pupil Hashim was a very handsome boy. Naturally, therefore, he thought that the boy's mother would be good-looking, too. He was not wrong in his conjecture. Dilara was a woman of striking beauty and charm.

Women in the village were in purdah. Direct approach was not possible, at any rate not easy. An intermediary was necessary. Finding an intermediary for such a purpose is at all times a difficult and delicate problem. Days of thinking had not brought a solution. Imambux cut the Gordian knot by approaching Hashim.

It was Ramzan Id that day. Imambux was in a gay mood. As it was he had a good personality. The new Id clothes and particularly a sharp upward twist to both the ends of his black glistening moustache had heightened the effect. Strutting about the village grounds, he saw Hashim in the merry crowd of boys. Suddenly a desire caused him to approach Hashim immediately. He, therefore, called Hashim and putting his arm

caressingly round him, took him a little distance away. "Hashim," he said very tenderly, "give my love to your mother".

The meaning of this message was not entirely lost on the boy. He was an intelligent and sensitive boy. He was not happy about the task entrusted to him. He did not know what to do. For some time he kept on evading Imambux on one pretext or the other but sooner or later the day of reckoning must come. On that inevitable day, when he could no longer put off Imambux for fear of punishment, his mother guessed from his appearance that he had something weighing on his mind.

DILARA, therefore, persuaded her son to confess what was eating him up. It was not easy for Hashim. He broke down under the weight of emotion. Tears rushed down his fair cheeks and he faltered out the message.

Dilara laughed. There was mischief in her eyes. Silly kid. What was there to cry about? Wiping out the tears of her son affectionately, she instructed him to go and give

this reply to his teacher: "Mother also sends her love to you and she will be delighted to see you in her courtyard tomorrow afternoon when father will be away." This was a strange reaction, the kid thought. He did not understand. He was just dazed.



WIFE (to husband): "See dear, Baby is walking for the first time!"

Dilara's homely way, however, put him at ease. Her encouraging smile rallied him round. Soon enough he was telling the story of his passion. Couplets from all sorts of poets flowed in his conversation.

Imambux was in his form. Dilara appeared impressed with his fluency and learning. He was feeling more sure and happy now. "Open your game-bag and put the partridge in". That is how he felt about Dilara.

Just then there was a knock on the door. In a thick rugged voice the knocker called Dilara to open the door. Dilara whispered, "It is my husband. I wonder why he has come so early." Then suddenly pointing to the grinding stone and the tin of corn, she said in a low hushed voice, "Grind that corn. I shall tell him there is another woman at home, so that he might come back later." Dilara answered the call: "I wasn't expecting you. There is Bibi Fatma grinding the corn. You cannot come in now."

DESTINY had taken a bad turn, Imambux mused. He went on grinding the corn. Beads of perspiration had already gathered on his fore-

head. Soon enough he went out of breath and the grinding stone was whirling slower and slower until he decided to abandon it and resume the pleasant conversation so unfortunately interrupted.

DILARA was an interesting talker. Imambux soon forgot his fatigue. One can endure much for such a beauty. While things were resuming their pleasant level again, the husband returned. Imambux flew to his grinding stone and Dilara again asked her husband to go back and return

after a while. He grumbled and cursed a bit and went away.

WHEN he returned again, he banged at the door impatiently and shouted, "How long are you going to keep me out? Isn't the corn ground yet?"

Dilara looked, at Imambux in a puzzled sort of way. "There is no more corn", she whispered. Imambux fretfully retorted, "Why corn, woman, I have ground my very muscles. What now?" Dilara caught him by the arm and rushed him to the corner of the courtyard where usually the donkey was tied. Quickly and in a hushed voice



she said, "Get down on your fours, please. I will spread that black blanket over you as I do over the donkey. When my husband goes inside the hut you slip out of the open door."

IMAMBUX fell in the donkey's pose and Dilara rushed to the door to let her husband in. Before the husband crossed the threshold he cursed the donkey. He went on angrily, "That blasted donkey of ours. God only knows where the cursed animal has strayed. I have searched every field and every possible pasture around. My feet are sore. I promise you, Dilars, if ever I set my eyes on that blooming donkey not one of its ribs is going to remain intact. Every blasted bone in its body I will crack. You just wait and see." Then suddenly turning round he asked "What is there in that corner?" And Dilara mirthfully replied, "That is your donkey."

Muttering a few hasty oaths he rushed to the corner with his stout stick. One whack and the whole structure under the blanket tumbled down. Imambux was flat. But he did not wait for the promise to be fulfilled. He got up in a flash and made for the door. Before he was out, however, he had another juicy one on his fleshy thighs. One for the road, as they say.

UNCONSCIOUS of pain and fatigue he ran like a scared antelope. Round the corner near the school he tripped over a sleepy mangy dog and nearly fell down. He looked back.

There was nobody pursuing him. So he slackened his pace and trudged along to his house behind the school.

A calendar had fallen from the wall in his room. He picked it up and looked at it vacantly. Gosh! Ramzan Id this year had coincided with the eclipse.

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SHORT STORY

WHENEVER he remembered about that strange little story, regarding his own wife, told by that little servant girl a few months ago, his mind strolled off the balance. His heart would beat faster and heavy darkness sneaked into the eyes. No matter what all methods he tried to pull his mind from dreaming that thought—the strange little story tormented him and it became for him impossible to throw it out of mind. He tried to disbelieve that episode, but all the presumptive evidences were there to prove the validity of the story. He had to digest all the stuff, because she was not known to him before the marriage proposal and to add to that, the greatest folly he felt, was the wide disparity of their ages. He was too old for her, he tragically speculated. He was fifteen long years older than herself.

She was hardly twenty when married—just fresh from college. She could not even complete her B.A.—since the marriage proposal came all of a sudden and he had readily admitted the same also. He did not want to bargain on the question, since he had long before felt the pressing necessity of a loving mate. Moreover, when he first saw her, he had thought: I'm lucky, she's a peach and she really has an intelligent look! That was how the marriage took place so quickly.

Afterwards she had to give up the college career abruptly, and embrace the married life. But that incident now poured more oil into his suspiciously flaming mind. That little servant girl had to tell the story only on forced provocation from him. She was the one who had been brought up in his wife's house, from her childhood. She knew all about her little mistress—by all, it meant everything of her mistress's nature, likes and dislikes, tastes and hates, routines and even the secrets. She was very young, yet the secret mysteries; her mistress kept, were also shared

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by her. In fact she herself had some bit of a part in the same ones.

Once the little girl, foolishly enough, uttered something in a meticulous manner, which got trapped in his ears. That made him inquisitive, till one day he forced and even threatened her to tell the whole thing. His wife was not in the house at that time. At last the little girl had to get it out :

"There was a male friend of her mistress—they were moving together. They were very friendly—Oh, I know I can't say how it was. He was really good-looking—a very handsome person with curly hair and black eyes. He was studying in the same college with my mistress. That's all—I won't say further".

HE did not show any embarrassment, but calmly coaxed the little girl till she added: "You know why she stopped her studies? One day her father,—Oh, terrible man he is, really happened to see that man in her room. They both never expected him that time of the evening. Frankly, even before they both used to meet together in her room whenever her father would be away. But that day unfortunately she was caught—Oh my! that day the mistress was terribly beaten and tormented. That man escaped running

away. I remember my poor mistress, she didn't eat anything for two days because of her grief."

THIS was the story, that gnawed away at that poor husband's heart inexhaustibly and caused a burning sore in the mind. Even though the luxurious distractions of the city really did some healing to the same, he could never totally forget it. He even wishes that he had not listened to the story. Never had he enough courage to formulate a frank discussion on the matter with her. It would be still worse, if she readily admitted it. It always scared him whenever he saw his face in the mirror. The stray grey hairs and those long drawn faint wrinkles on his big square face—gave him a horrible hint that he was old for her. But all the time she was close to him, he felt a thrill of romance and pleasure. She was all the more a perfect wife, endowed with charming manners and a very superb ability in the housewife's job. She had really understood and efficiently met all the wants and needs of the husband, which he could not but acknowledge with high esteem and love. Motorcycle riding was his favourite pastime, and whenever his pretty young wife shared the ride, charmingly clinging to the rear seat, he used to feel as the proudest and happiest man in the



world. It was his pride and joy.

BUT underneath all the endless pleasures of their married life's surface, there lay the sharp frigid stone, hidden most cruelly, which caused ripples inside. The haunting strange little story: that disturbed that poor husband.

On that day both of them

designed the evening for a film show and as usual got into the comfortable cool seats of the very best theatre. He always cared for the comforts of the place, rather than the stuff they screened. In fact that was the best theatre he always loved to go to in Madras. Even though she never seemed to appreciate the foreign films

they showed, it gave her sensuous pleasure to visit that small excellent place, riding with her husband, in the motor-cycle. She would feel some sort of profound ecstasy, especially when hugging against her husband in a very charming manner, from the rear seat of the cycle.

INSIDE the theatre it was a very pleasant evening. The tormenting heat of bright summer, outside no more existed there. Even all the audience appeared to be devoid of all worries, just like both of them. Impulsively he gave her a searching glance. To his surprise, she looked extraordinarily charming and delighted. Her beautiful eyes were sparkling in the dim lights, with ravishing charm. But seldom did she look at him. He imagined that she was absorbed for that moment in the ecstasy of aesthetic contemplation — something pleasant, in her mind, was illuminating her beauty. He had never seen her as excitingly bewitching, any time before. He wondered what would be the delightful subject, she was thinking of—which kindled her charms to such a doubled up state, as never before. The film show had actually not commenced, but the couple very elegantly kept dignified silence, until at last, he slowly whispered into her ears, "What are you thinking of so much?"

She did not reply, but the very exquisite way she curved her lips and winked the eyes was explanatory enough.

DURING the interval, when the lights came back, he casually turned back and cast a glance over the audience in the rear. The sight of a particular person arrested his flying glance,—somebody sitting just in back seat. A man with very handsome features and curly hair! He turned again and looked at that man once again, just in the back row, close to them. In a split second, he couldn't exactly recollect that man's face, but it did not take much to connect that man's appearance to the strange little story. He vaguely suspected that man might be the person behind the story—he answered to the description furnished by the little girl. Once again he wanted to look back, but before that the lights went off and the film had begun. Complete darkness seemed to encircle him and he experienced sweating heat. His mind was in such a turmoil. He could not enjoy the film show and seldom even understood what was going on. But she was still sitting close by—magnificently enveloped in silence and with a beaming face, whereas he was pounding himself with disturbed thoughts which he himself could not distinguish. The show seemed to drag on and at last when finished, they hurried

out, and headed towards the motorcycle. On the way, he did not dare to cast any more searching looks for that man. He never wanted to see that face again, to torment himself.

They were riding slowly, which he always liked. The shimmering bright neon and mercury lights were flying back in rows. She felt the pleasant air of the night, beating against her cheeks and body.

"How do you like the film?" She asked loudly, the breeze shattering her tender voice.

"I can't say. I liked it—but did you enjoy it?" He asked turning his head, but looking straight ahead at the shining moving lights on the street. Even though it was nine in evening, the traffic on the road, especially near the central station area, was as busy as ever.

"Oh! after all" she said "it is the same Hollywood stuff. But I like the theatre."

SHE was placing one of her hands on his shoulder—he liked it, and that gentle touch always induced proper care and keen control over the speeding of his cycle. Whenever she would be with him,

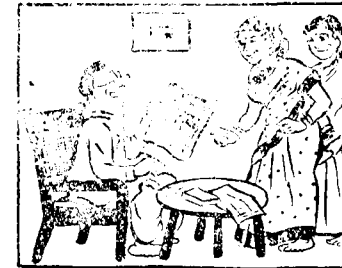
he was always careful and never overspeeded.

SOON they reached the central station junction—there the traffic light pulled them to a halt, it turned red. But he was fortunate enough to be in the front of the line of cars and cycles behind. The engine of his cycle slowly and rhythmically purred, awaiting further pull. Just after a few seconds, another motorcycle was heard roaring and dying, behind his. The head-light also beamed on them

brightly and went off. He did not look back purposely, because she was in the back, and he never wanted to look back over her shoulders.

Moreover he thought that he would be come cheap by such silly looks. But the rear-view-mirror did the trick. When the head-light went off, the mercury light over the street revealed the identity of the person on the cycle. He peered into that small round convex mirror. Yes! It was that man—the man with curly hair. The same man who was sitting just in the back seat. He very well made out.

Suddenly the emotions crowded into his mind—but



"Ten years ago my ambition was to save a lakh. I have now reduced it to two hundred!"

this time in a subdued manner. He could have asked a single question—one word enough—of his wife. "Do you know that person?" But he couldn't. He could not even look back at her, to ascertain what she was doing—where she was looking? Is that man making signs at her? No! - cannot be, he thought, he could not make out any thing in detail, from that tiny reflector. Diligently he turned back and looked at that man. To his surprise that man suddenly turned his head and was looking elsewhere.

LUCKILY, the traffic light changed into green, and he realized that he could escape from such a scene. He started his cycle with a kick and it roared forward straight into Poonamallee High Road.

She was not speaking any thing, but hugged closely to him manificently. The dark blue sky was there above them steady with stars twinkling watchfully and motionless while all the lights below on the streets frantically approached them, brightened and passed out. The headlights of the vehicles, coming opposite, occasionally added more dazzle to that wonderful passing parade of lights.

He still heard the thudding noise of the other cycle and found in the mirror, as that

man speeding to reach close to him. The headlight of that cycle reflected powerfully into his eyes, from the mirror. He instinctively pounded on the accelerator-grip and screwed it, to his brute delight, when that 3.5 motor-bike bounced forward. They passed the tram shed, Egmore station, where the tall walls on the sidewalks echoed the roaring noise of the two motorcycles to a thundering pitch. Whenever the cycles passed over the old glittering tram-rails, they slipped and skidded uncontrollably.

She got nervous of the maddening speed race. She had never endured such a speedy way, splitting the cool night air and bouncing heavily. She caught hold of his strong shoulders and shouted: "Good Heavens! stop this!" She then shook his shoulders and frantically pulled his right arm off from the winding grip of the accelerator.

There it went! The handlebar spinned - the motorcycle bounced forward slantingly and zoomed out of control.

IN that dwarfed split of time, and in that slippery unmanoeuvrable space-the cycle crashed against a light post, on the centre of the road. She lay finally, across the street, her body arching a way from the

base of the lamp post. And there was the sudden, shocking exposure of her flesh, the gorgeous nylon saree torn away from the leg as if pushed aside by the blood welling from her thigh. He was groaning beside her. He was sandwiched between the motorcycle and the ground. Its back wheel was still spinning on the rhythm of the dying engine.

THE man in the back had to take a sweeping U-turn for clutching his cycle to a stop at that tragic spot. He jumped out of his cycle, throwing it away, and ran to the bloody scene.

Briskly he lifted that heavy fallen machine from the meaning body, which lay in a pool of dripping oil. Flesh from his throat was torn away and the blood had just started to gush out. Then he hurried to the lady - lifted her head in his arm. Those eyes were found staring into his face - black innocent eyes! Her body and cool pale face were motionless and speechless!

That beautiful pair of desperate looking eyes! He was seeing her for the first time!

—GEORGE LEWIS

INDIA MAGAZINE

1900

1957

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The

INTERVIEW



CHINNI had half a mind to run back to his flat. He was a bundle of nerves. He straightened his tie, adjusted his spectacles and wiped the perspiration on his forehead with his scented kerchief. Should he knock at the door or slink away? He had almost made up his mind to retrace his steps, when the door suddenly flew open and an old gentleman caught hold of his hands.

"So you are Mr. Chinni who so kindly answered my advertisement for a bridegroom?" he shouted. "Come on in, my dear sir. You are most welcome."

Chinni forgot to smile but managed to mumble, "Yes, sir," he said to the old man's query, and allowed himself to be dragged in. An old woman and two young girls who were chatting rose to greet Chinni.

"Meena," said the old man, turning to the old woman, "this young gentleman has come in response to the advertisement. Get some refreshments ready. Where is Rajeswari? Oh, I forgot. She is sleeping in her room after the recital. She must be very tired indeed. Bring her down when she wakes up.

Now, Mr. Chinni, please do take a chair." He coughed a little and cleared his throat. "It is better that you should know us all even before we negotiate. Meena is my wife, and these two—Sulochi and Bhavani—are my second and third daughters, respectively. My eldest is Rajeswari and I have been eating my heart out in my search for a bridegroom for that girl. And, . . . er, my name is Ganapathi, you know."

Story By LALITA DEVI

BY this time, Chinni had got over his shyness and become his normal self. He smiled at the ladies and joined his palms, wishing "namaste" to them. As the mother and her daughters receded into the inner room, the old man egged on the visitor towards a sofa and began to ply him with questions.

"So you are working as a clerk in that tobacco firm, Mr. Chinni? I am glad you mentioned this detail in your first letter. What is your pay there?"

"Not much, sir. Basic pay Rs. 75, allowance Rs. 50. But . . ."

"THAT is enough. In fact, I wouldn't bother at all even if you were out of job. What matters is character—sterling character—and your honest face reflects it. By the way, may I know your age?"

"Ah, h'm, thirty-three years last June, sir. I have a horoscope of mine to give you. I am sorry there is no other proof."

"That is not necessary, Mr. Chinni. But the female folk would like to be reassured on the point, you see. I suppose you have some college or school certificate or book or some such thing which must contain a reference to your date of birth?"

"Well, sir, I shall be frank with you. I ran away from school when I was detained in the fourth form. I got the present job when I was talking to some friend about the various brands of *bidis*, cigars and cigarettes. A middle-aged gentleman who was listening to my description introduced himself as the boss of a tobacco firm and offered me a clerical post."

"And you have your parents living with you, I presume?"

"Unfortunately, they are dead and gone, sir. They died broken-hearted when I left school and ran away."

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"Any relations, grandmother, sister or . . .?"

"None, sir, except a very old uncle—my mother's elder brother—who went to Burma years ago but who is not likely to return. Nor do I expect him."

"That suits me fine, Mr. Chinni. I was indeed looking for an ideal man like you. Supposing you marry my daughter, will you agree not to interfere with her career?"

Chinni sat up, startled. Nibbling at the cake on the dish, laid before him by Sulochi, he stared hard at Ganapathi in surprise. "Excuse me, sir," he remarked, "it seems to be my turn now to put a few questions."

"GO ahead, Mr. Chinni," said the old man, smiling. "I shall give you all the information you may require."

"Please, sir, what is the nature of the career that your daughter has chosen? Is she a stenographer or nurse or . . ."

"She is an artiste—well versed in Carnatic music, Mr. Chinni. She gives excellent recitals before 'Gana Sabhas,' at weddings, and frequently she goes on the air. She is already very popular and is much sought after. She has won gold medals on several occasions."

"I am sorry I have never interested myself in music, classical or modern or light."

But from what you say I infer that your daughter must be making a lot."

"That is true, Mr. Chinni. She earns nearly three hundred rupees per month. You see, I am already sixty-six and retired long ago but since I was not in Government service there is no pension now to carry me through. So, as you can very well understand, Rajaeswari is the bread-winner of the family."

"I follow what you say and sympathise with you. And I believe you want a son-in-law who would add his income to your daughter's and make himself happy. Am I right?"

THE old man took off his spectacles, rubbed his bleary eyes with his right palm and put them on again. He felt very embarrassed at this question. Mr. Chinni," he almost stammered, "I think you have thoroughly grasped my point of view. It is not exactly that I want your pay for supporting my family. What I am anxious to ensure is that my daughter, even when married, must be able to pursue her career. She has every chance of becoming a top artiste in a year or two."

"What prevents her from continuing her career, and why are you anxious that she should marry now?"

"You are a shrewd man, Mr. Chinni, and your intelli-

gence strengthens my resolve to make of you my beloved son-in-law. The plain truth is that it is high time she was married. Our relatives are asking why she continues to remain single when any young man would be ready to fall for her and her voice. But our choice has been rendered difficult because no young man would agree to make this his home and accompany her."

"I made it plain, sir, that I have no ear for music. And now you are imposing a condition that I must accompany her. How can I when I don't know the A B C of it all?"

"No, no, Mr. Chinni. That is not what I meant. Oh, my God, you have thoroughly misunderstood me! When my daughter marries I want her husband to accompany her, rather, escort her to those places where she gives music recitals and take her back home."

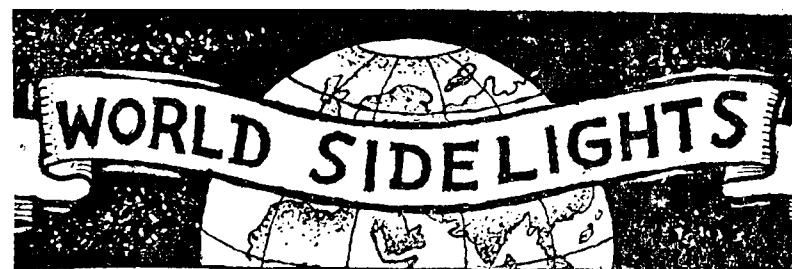
"So it implies...."

"Mr. Chinni I am afraid you jump to conclusions. There will be perfect freedom for my future son-in-law to pursue his own career and I promise perfect domestic harmony."

"MY dear sir, as I see it, your future son-in-law must be an extraordinary lucky man. In our community, a girl on marriage enters her

—Please See Page 61

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BABOONS TALK LIKE MEN!

THE amazing story of George Donlan, the man who could talk baboon language, began on a South African farm 30 years ago. Several mounted policemen were called to a garden where a group of 150 baboons were pulling up vegetables, writes Van Jan Der Hus in an American periodical.

Frightened by the police and their gun-fire, the baboons ran helter-skelter back into the surrounding forests—but one of the animals, too slow to keep up with his mates, was captured. Giving their captive a closer examination, the police found it wasn't an animal at all, but a native wild boy, estimated at 15 years of age.

His hair was thickly matted. He had a wild look in his eyes, and his only speech was in the strange guttural gibberish of grunting baboons. A check of police files revealed that as a baby he had been kidnapped from his mother

by the animals. Incredibly, this boy had lived with the baboons in the jungles for 14 years!

Plenty Of Data

The "Baboon Boy", as he became known, was adopted by a farmer named Alfred Donlan, who undertook to civilise him.

After several years, he finally learned to say "George Donlan," the name given to him, and later he was able to utter some basic English words necessary for everyday living purposes. But the boy continued to speak in the weird language of the baboons and often would slip away into the jungles to talk with them as he'd done in the past.

Eventually, the youth's fame as "the boy who could talk to baboons" brought experts in zoology to the Donlan farm.

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The "Baboon Boy" provided them with plenty of data. He even outlined basic words used by baboons in their jungle life, some of which are as follows:

Baboo. This is the word for food, which, of course, is the starting point of all baboon sounds.

Chewi. This is the word for water, or any kind of liquid.

Oo-ey. When a young male baboon wants to mate, he murmurs this word to a female baboon.

Oomph-kagg. This is same as O.K. in everyday language of civilised people.

Into The Forest

One afternoon, the "Baboon Boy" led a group of visiting zoology professors into the forests to demonstrate his strange conversational ability. They found a troop of about 85 baboons perched on a high rocky incline, a favourite place of habitation for the species.

At first, the animals scampered out of sight into caves and crevices when the humans approached, but they slowly reappeared as the "Baboon Boy" called to them in soothing reassuring tones which said:

"*Hoa-zoom!* *Hao-zoom!* *Hoa-zoom!*" (This means roughly "don't be afraid, everything is all right.")

While the professors rapidly took notes, Donlan conversed with the baboons who answered, and from time to time paused to scratch their armpits or rub their noses, indicating an interest in what was being said.

Dark clouds began to gather overhead, and Donlan pointed to the sky saying: "*Oooze-jop!* *Oooze-jop!*" (Which means "rain is coming.")

Baboon Bedrooms!

The baboons responded by running in and out of their crevices, grunting "*Ooomph Kagg!* *Ooomph Kagg!*" (Which was to say "O.K., O.K., we know it.")

On the following day, Donlan led the professors into the forest after sundown to observe the manner in which the baboons bedded down for the night. Near the rocky incline where the animals lived were a series of tall trees, which, it soon became evident, were "baboon bedrooms".

Females with their babies slept in the topmost branches of a tree, while adult males rested on those limbs directly

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underneath. Near the bottom of the tree, a sentry was posted, to warn of the approach of leopards, snakes or humans.

If the sentry baboon sensed danger he grunted "*Oom-oom-zool!* *Oom-oom-zool!*" (Which means "Beware, danger!")

At this signal, high in the trees a loud rustling of branches would indicate the baboons were preparing to meet whatever menace was coming their way. When the danger cleared away, the sentry would call the reassuring "*Oomp-kagg!*" (O.K., O.K.) and things would settle down again peacefully for the night.

Donlan, who today is a 45-year-old farmer in South Africa, told his visitors that an explorer once came out of the jungle and described a community singing conducted by a troop of baboons in the Transvaal section. The explorer, a New Zealander named Austin L. Lemson, told Donlan that baboons "old group singing under the direction of leaders who stand before the others much in the manner of glee club directors."

Strange Scene

Donlan produced a letter from Lemson relating how he accidentally stumbled upon these singing baboons while

returning to his jungle camp one evening.

"I saw a large group of baboons sitting motionlessly on a rocky hillside," Lemson said. "They were very quiet, but down below I saw a lone baboon with arms upraised. He was looking upwards to those perched on the rocks, calling to them in low guttural tones."

"In the twilight I unsheathed my revolvers and saw the baboons upon the rocks intently watching the one below who seemed to be a leader. Then the leader raised his voice."

Almost Human

"Almost in immediate unison with him the other animals gave out with a weird droning, droning sound that must have been heard on no other planet in the world, and sent cool shivers running up and down my spine."

"I also noticed a most unusual thing. Some of the baboons sang somewhat slower than the others, some sang faster, while others maintained a moderate tempo. This seemed to give the droning notes a variety of keys, as if the baboons were singing in harmony."

The entire subject of baboon and monkey languages has been treated in essays and books by several different experts in the field. R. M.

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Yerkes, in his book, "Almost Human", states that "all baboons and apes have elaborate vocal mechanisms which can produce varied sounds varying widely in pitch, quality and volume."

The gibbon is regarded as having the best singing voice among the apes, according to Richard L. Garner, who made a special study of monkey language by recording their sounds on phonograph records at zoos throughout the United States.

Garner contended, for instance, that the speech of the chimpanzee has no more than 25 or 30 words, and he wrote: "I again assert that the sounds uttered by these apes have the characteristics of human speech."

The ancient Egyptians regarded the baboon as a sacred animal. Among the best known was the Arabian baboon which was represented on Egyptian monuments and worshipped by the ancients.

Mummies of baboons are often found in Nile Valley tombs and the

species is abundant from the Sudan to Southern Arabia.

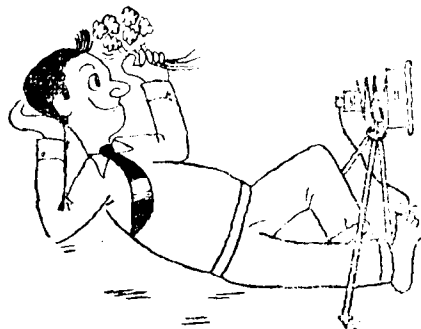
NO MATA HARI!

Women spies are seldom beautiful and they are often inefficient. Women make bad spies but they are excellent messengers. This is not only a vital part of espionage but often more exciting than collecting information.

One woman conveying information had the message printed on her bare back in invisible ink. Another, whose trick took two years to discover, secreted messages in a hollowed out chocolate box which can now be seen at the Imperial War Museum.

A male agent had a message tattooed on his shaven skull and then let his hair grow. And there was the man who could write 1,000 words under two postage stamps.

There is no place in espionage for false wigs and whiskers. The most dangerous spy is the person no one ever looks at twice.



Taking his own snap!

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YOU are in the midst of a very happy dream when an unsympathetic time-pieceeters forth unmusical sounds. Half-awake, you manage to get your hand out of the comforting blanket, and press the faintly button on the time-piece. There must be something wrong with the time-piece; for, through the glass pane of the window, you find it has not yet dawned. The looming darkness outside gives no indication of the possibility of the sun ever coming out of his bed at all—so, why should you bother? You recede into the cushy folds of the bed, silencing your questioning conscience with the resolution that you would get up in another fifteen minutes.

You are thoroughly awake. It is 9 o'clock. Outside, the world has come to life again, and unlucky mortals are already on their way to... ah yes, the office. That reminds you. You have to bathe, finish a hurried breakfast and be at your office by ten. By ten... Barely an hour more.

Cursing your lethargy, you throw away the enticing blanket, and fold it up in see-

thing fury. But for its encircling warmth, you might have already done with most of your morning duties. You snatch a towel from the peg, and race to the bathroom.... Yes, there is a long queue outside. Half the fellows look at you with a sly smile—is it a hint at your getting up late? Dirty fellows! What business have they to pitch upon this time for their baths? Irresponsible cads, you curse them under your breath.

— Skit —

By R. PATTABIRAMAN

THE shiveriest part of the whole day is when you march back from the bathroom with a wet towel on your shoulders and all the time—faster perhaps your teeth are working than the fastest typewriter. To get rid of the towel and get into a full-sleeved sweater and a shirt seems to be a very difficult thing to perform. Somehow, you survive the ordeal and with a gnawing stomach, you step into the dining

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room of the Hotel. Fate is playing its dirty trick here also. Almost all the seats are occupied. You wait here also, and when your turn comes, you get some *iddlies* and a hot (though not so good) cup of coffee. Quaffing the same sort of nerves you up. A casual look at the left hand terrifies you. It is 9-45 already. And you are still to dress up and wait for the bus.



IT is not on record as to who invented the habit of wearing neck-ties. Perhaps, it is fortunate for the fellow, whoever he may be, that his name has not been handed down to posterity. If only you knew his name, what curses would you have left uncursed when a simple double-knot would simply refuse to be tied? After five minutes of wriggling and juggling (incidentally emptying your phraseology of abuses over the tailor who

made the collar ends unmeasurable) you achieve the great act of having some sort of knot—then the coat is easily worn and you are ready to step out of the room.

YOU have locked the door and have stepped on to the stairs, when you feel that your gait is not as smart as it ought to be. The reason—ah yes, you have not put on your shoes!

Back to the room and now the fumbling for the key of the door. Is it in this pocket or that of the coat? No, ... it must surely be in the pants-pocket ... not there either—how could you have misplaced it within such a short time? What a fool! It is in your left hand! Now, now, do not curse yourself. Better people have forgotten themselves.

The socks are very dirty. Now, did the *dhobi* bring a clean pair last time or not?

Can't say? Of course, you can. You can check it up from the *dhobi* register—where the hell has that gone? Come, come, dear boy, no blasphemy. Why not put up with the old pair just for one more day? After all, they are not so very dirty, are they?

YOU do not have the time to think of the state of your shoes. Polish or no, you cannot bother with them just now. You hastily pull your shoes over your feet, in your hurry pull the lace a bit tighter than you ought to, it gives way, and you improvise the lace with a knot which should not be there. At last, you are ready and after a final check-up of your wallet and its contents, you start for the bus-stand.

Oh, the waiting queue at the bus-stand! The innocent looking line of humanity, as you know only too well, will disintegrate and become a mass of men devoid of decency or chivalry or queue-consciousness as soon as the bus comes. Can you rely on them? How can you?

The auto-rickshawallah, must be, among other things, an expert psychologist. For, no sooner did you arrive at the bus-stop and cast an un-appreciating look over the waiting people, than he understood the conflict in your mind, and with a circling turn which might evoke all the envy of the best athlete of that of a vulture,

comes and stops near you. You are strongly tempted to get into it though it might cost you exactly double the bus-fare. Even Adam, if only for Eve's sake, fell a victim to temptation. Why should you try to fight against it? You get into the vehicle, and he shouts for one more office-goer.

This day is indeed different. There has been no accident on the way, and the incessant jolts. You reach office safe in limb though not stout in heart. The moment you enter, all your colleagues direct their glances at you. 'Manager in his worst mood' is the very simple message which you decipher from their faces.

ONLY so far has the day been different towards you. The clock as though its familiarity has not already done injustice enough to you, strikes eleven times, in a manner audible to all within the room, more so to the manager. He speaks out his mind as usual and you cannot, much as you want to, give him back thick and square. You cannot even do, as Lamb pointed out to his India Office superior, as to how early he left office to make up for his usually coming late! It is not at all different in regard to these. It is exactly like yesterday or the day before that. If you wouldn't mistake me, it will be the same tomorrow also. ***

THERE is such a thing as western hospitality and we Kinallys have it. We also have three red-headed children and a guest ranch not more than 25 miles from Tucson, and with all the conveniences of a New York apartment hotel—inside bathrooms, hot and cold running water, electric lights and even a couple of specially tooled saddles with padded seats for our more sensitive guests.

Nancy, our 22-year-old daughter, has the reddest, prettiest hair, the softest, darkest-blue eyes and the

owners have a very pretty daughter. This means a lot of our guests are aspiring young men who would like to marry a ranch, which in turn means we have to be mighty discriminating.

"Jane," I tell my red-haired wife, who is no less pretty than our redhaired daughter, "if Nancy doesn't meet any objectionable characters, she won't marry one!"

"That stands to reason, Hank," Jane answers approvingly. She has a sheaf of letters in her hand from pros-

The Handsome Twosome!

By FLORENCE CHRISTIAN

creamiest, unfreckled skin of any redhead in the county. The two boys do all right, too, handsome chaps both of them, but they're still in their teens. They aren't much of a problem yet, red hair notwithstanding.

The only trouble with us Kinallys is that we don't pay enough attention to detail. We let things slip in one ear and out the other. We should try to hang on to some of the information which comes our way, like who's who and maybe even why.

Word has spread around that the Kinally Guest Ranch

pective visitors and their friends and she shuffles through for a particular letter.

"Just had a letter from Mary Bohanon," Jane says. "You remember Mary, don't you? Well, she's sending a young man named George Hesselcamp out for a visit. He certainly sounds good to me and Mary recommends him highly—good family, good connections."

JANE finds the letter and smooths it out. We read it with our red heads pressed together. George Hesselcamp is a big six-footer. He has black hair and eyes. His

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family belongs to the industrial Hesselcamp outfit, all brains, vigour and business acumen.

"Well, anyhow, he won't be after our two bits," I say.

"EXCELLENT social contacts," Jane reads aloud, "eligible beachelor, fine horseman, active in all kinds of sports," Jane's eyes go dreamy.

"It's nice when we have a guest Nancy can have fun with."

"If Nancy didn't have such high-falutin' expectations," I remind Jane drily, "life

about Hesselcamp is fresh in my mind, and the minute I open the door I know him—six feet tall, black hair, dark eyes. Good suit, but not fancy. Nice luggage, "I am Mr. George."

I rush at him, my hand outstretched in a typical warm western greeting, "Howdy there, George!" I boom. "Come right on in. The folks are waiting supper for you!" That is an exaggeration. We don't expect him until Saturday. I pound him energetically on the back, pick up a couple of his bags and shove him into the house.

Nancy didn't know it, but dad had already picked this young man for his son-in-law. All he could hope now was that Nancy would make the same selection.

wouldn't be so lonesome. You take Harry Kennedy, for instance, or Benson Saunders."

"Take them yourself!" Jane says crisply. "They're awful, both of them."

Jane puts the good letters in one pile and some others she tosses into the waste basket. "What's the matter with those?" I ask.

"Just people wanting to sell us something," she answers.

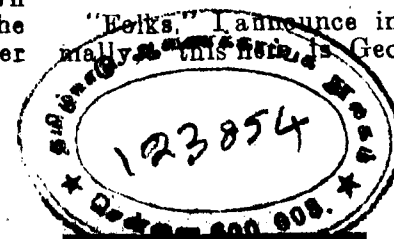
Jane and I aren't expecting George Hesselcamp until the end of the week, but as we are getting ready to sit down to supper on Monday the doorbell rings. The letter

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Funny how shy and backward this big boy is. Usually the sons of important industrialists push their way in and out mighty freely, but not George Hesselcamp. His eyes are big and startled looking.

THE folks are just sitting down to table and the first thing I know Nancy and George Hesselcamp are standing across from each other eye to eye looking like dazed bees loaded with honeysuckle nectar. Never have I seen a more gone look on two such surprised faces.

"Folks," I announce informally, "this here is George."





He's going to be with us a while."

EVERYBODY at the table, owners as well as dude guests, shouts a greeting in true western style. We push George into a chair and everybody sits down to a big ranch meal. I note with some satisfaction that George has a hearty appetite, even if he doesn't seem to thaw out very

fast, except when he looks at Nancy. He is calling her Nancy already and she is calling him George, which is part of our open-hearted tradition.

After supper is over, I take George up to his room. There is an odd expression on his face and for a moment I think he isn't satisfied with our accommodations.



"Anything you want, George, you just name it and it's yours," I say jovially, although if he gets too demanding, Hesselcamp, I'll throw him out on his ear.

GEORGE is looking at me with those big dark eyes. There is something funny about the way he is looking at me.

I swat him one on the back. "Just call me Hank," I boom. I am wearing blue jeans, and

a bright red, black and yellow plaid shirt.

I SAY good-night to our guest and repair to our private apartment.

"You know what," I say to Jane. "I think this George Hesselcamp is a fine chap. I also think he and Nancy liked what they saw when they first saw each other."

"Nancy Hesselcamp!" Jane muses. "I don't think

she's going to like that name at all!"

"She hasn't heard it yet, has she?" I ask, harking back to my informal introduction of the Hesselcamp scion.

"I don't think so," Jane answers.

"Well, the way those two looked at each other," I comment, "in a day or two she won't care if his name is Pretzelgarten."

THE next morning I watch George approach the spirited mount I stake out for him because of his reputation as horseman. Nancy is riding with George, of course, her cheeks as pink as roses and her blue eyes sparkling like sunlight. George gets over on the wrong side of the horse, puts his right foot in the stirrup and flings himself into the saddle. This is a very irregular way for a fine horseman to mount, I think, but possibly the boy is right-footed and can only swing with his left. Anyhow a Hesselcamp of the Automotive—Equipment Hesselcamps has a right to crawl on a horse any way he likes. I laugh merrily as the two canter off, George bouncing like the proverbial baby boy.

They are gone several hours, but when they come back George is still in the saddle as any fine horseman should be. However, his torn breeches and dusty saddle bear grim

evidence that he has not remained in the saddle with fixed regularity.

I stroll out to meet them, and smile on my face.

"I was thrown," George states with simple dignity.

"It happens to the best of us," I soothe, "and Pico is a very tricky horse."

"It wasn't Pico's fault," George states gallantly, and I like him for this. Nancy looks on George with adoring eyes, and I think to myself it is already too late for her to object to such an unmusical name as Hesselcamp.

GEORGE helps Nancy dismount with great tenderness and courtesy and his dark eyes on her are no less adoring than her blue eyes on him. Love is nice, and even though we have only known George these past two days, Mary Bohanon has known him longer and anyhow I can size a man up just like that.

After assisting my pretty redhaired daughter (who by the way needs no assistance) to dismount, George hobbles away from the corral like an old bulldog.

"Could be the poor boy has been cooped up in the Hesselcamp Automotive Equipment factories for so long he has forgotten how to ride a horse," I say to myself, and think nothing further of it.

George stays in his room all afternoon. He goes to sleep, because once I walk down the hall I hear him snoring.

Nancy hangs around the living-room, her eyes on the hall, and I corner her. "How does George like the west?" I ask.

"Just fine!" Nancy answers enthusiastically. "only his first name isn't really George. It's Bruce."

"Bruce!" I say. "That's a good name. Wonder why he goes by the name of George? Mary Bohanon called him George in her letter."

"What else did Mary say?" Nancy asks eagerly.

I tell her everything but the name of Hesselcamp. Nancy doesn't know it but I have already picked this young man for my son-in-law and I believe if I just sit tight and let nature take its course, Nancy will make the same selection.

NANCY is looking vaguely troubled. "Mary Bohanon must have been a little confused about his riding," she says. "He couldn't stick to a cocklebur, but I don't care. There are a lot more important things than knowing how to ride a horse. I think he's just super!"

I am sunning in the patio next morning when George

appears. "Mr. Kinally," he says.

"Hank!" I correct.

"Hank", he repeats sort of dubiously, "when Nancy and I were riding yesterday I noticed that some of your fence is in bad shape. Why don't you place an order with me for some of our new durable lightweight plastic fencing which wear a lifetime, cut down storm damage and also add a certain picturesque charm to your holdings?"

IT is a canned talk if ever I have heard any, but not bad. What the heck plastic fencing has to do with the Hesselcamp Automotive Equipment factories I can't quite make out. "You working for your dad, George?" I ask.

"Good heavens, no!" he exclaims. "I'm with Newags Plastics out of El Paso."

"Come to think of it," I state. "I do need new fencing. Let's put our heads together and get some facts and figures lined up."

GEORGE lines up the facts and figures while I listen, and it isn't a bad deal. Anyhow, I am all warmed up to the Hesselcamp heir who is strictly on his own and asking no favours from anyone. I give him a big order and beam on him like a fond father as he rushes to the phone and calls it in collect to his El Paso warehouse.

"This means a lot to me, Hank," he says. "This means the company is going to open their Arizona branch and put me in charge. The big boss just told me so over the phone."

HE hurries off to tell Nancy and the last I see of them they are cantering off over a lupin-blued hilltop, only this time George is riding a very gentle nag named Hortense.

For the next several days Nancy and George explore the countryside, and Jane and I can see the boy is really taking to ranch life. We can see it won't be hard to convert him into the ideal son-in-law what with his independent spirit and all.

It is late Saturday afternoon when the doorbell rings three times before I can reach it. When I get there all out of breath an insolent, sleek-haired, dark-eyed young man is waiting, his expression full of arrogant impatience. "I'm George Hesselcamp," he says. "I believe you are expecting me!"

"Expecting you?" I gasp. "You can't be George Hesselcamp? George is out riding with Nancy?"

"I assure you I am George Hesselcamp!" the fellow says coldly, dragging out his identification papers, "and if any imposter is posing here under my name let me tell

you something will be done about it!"

Jane has been drawn by the heated conversation and we stand looking at each other in open-mouthed consternation. "If—if this is George Hesselcamp," Jane says, turning ghastly pale, "who is riding with Nancy?"

Nancy and our strange guest ride up just then, laughing merrily.

"Get off that horse, you fortune hunter!" I bawl, glaring at the imposter.

"I beg your pardon!" he says, looking extremely startled.

THE real George Hesselcamp takes five or six strides away from our door, grabs the imposter and yanks him off his mount. Luckily Hortense is very docile and doesn't kick anyone's ribs in. What happens next is anyone's wild guess.

Hesselcamp and the imposter mix it up so you can't tell who's who. When the turbulence is over, the imposter is sitting on George Hesselcamp.

"You are not George Hesselcamp!" George Hesselcamp sputters, his face pushed into the dust of the corral.

"Danged right I'm not!" the imposter yells back, rub-

bing Hesselcamp's nose deeper into the dust.

"Who are you then?" I demand.

"You know full well who I am!" the imposter shouts angrily. "I'm Bruce George! I wrote and told you I was coming out. I told you why!"

"Bruce George who?" I shout back.

"Just Bruce George!" he bawls, his brows in a dark fury. "What's going on around here?"

JUST Bruce George! I chew on that a while and suddenly remember the letters Jane destroyed. Undoubtedly this chap's was among them. "You mean your last name is George?" I ask. "That's all the name you have?"

The chap further extends his jaw. "My father's name was Thomas C. George. My name is Bruce George. If anyone wants to make anything out of it, I invite him to try!"

"Oh," I say weakly as Nancy, my pretty redhaired daughter, goes over and puts her little hand on Bruce George's shoulder. "I—I guess there's been a little mistake!"

What kind of little mistake?" Bruce George asks ominously, but he doesn't brush Nancy's soft hand away. Instead he reaches up and pats it.

"M-mine, I guess," I admit sheepishly. "That first night you came here I remember now you said you were Mr. George, only I—well, I was expecting this fellow Hesselcamp, first name of George, and—"

"Oh, papa, how could you make such an awful mistake?" Nancy cries, looking at the dusty-faced George Hesselcamp with repugnance and contempt. Bruce George lets George Hesselcamp up.

"What did you mean, sir," he demands, "by that crack about fortune hunters?"

"Well," I stumble around, "we—we Kinally's aren't exactly poverty stricken and there have been a well-, a few young fellows trying to—marry the Kinally ranch holdings."

"Well, Mr. Kinally," Bruce George states violently, "you can put me down on your list as one who is not interested!"

NANCY gives a hurt little gasp and starts to run away, but Bruce George reaches out a big paw and pulls Nancy up along-side of him, holding her there.

"I can't ask Nancy to marry me right this minute because I haven't enough money to support her," Bruce George announces, "but with the company opening the new south-western branch immediately I'll have the money

and I'll have it soon! When the time is ripe, I'm coming back for your daughter, Mr. Kinally, and nobody is going to stop me! Understand? Now I'm going to get my suitcase and clear out of here!"

The minute he disappears through the door, George Hesselcamp tosses himself back into a red sport model car. "I wouldn't stay overnight in this hovel for all the diamonds in Africa!" he announces, and is gone like a red streak in a big cloud of dust.

BRUCE George comes out with his suitcase, glares fiercely at Jane and me, puts his suitcases down, kisses Nancy's tears away right in front of us and murmurs tender words of love and encouragement to our red-haired daughter.

He is going to have to wait for the bus on the highway, and Nancy walks away with him so close to his side they only make one shadow.

"Oh, Hank," Jane says, "I—like that boy. I don't want him to go away thinking—"

I stop Jane from running after them. "What is the quickest way to make two young people in love find a way to get happily married?" I ask.

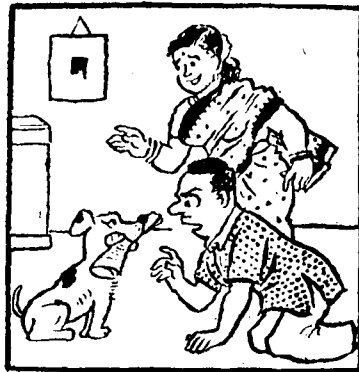
"Why, try to stop them, I suppose, like—well, like papa tried to stop us!"

"Right!" I agree, putting my arms around her lovingly. "And all the time he was trying to get rid of you, too. I never could quite figure you father out!"

WE watch the bus stop far away on the highway and we watch our last guest named George board it with determination. "He's going to make us a fine son-in-law!" I mention proudly.

"How is it you can't understand my father when you're doing the same thing yourself to Nancy?" Jane asks.

I think her comment over and before I am through I read just my whole opinion of Jane's father. He picked me out just like I am picking out Bruce George!



Wife (to husband): You have trained Doggie to bring the newspaper but you have not taught him to let go of it!"



DOES WORRY CAUSE CANCER?

IT is estimated that between 2,000,000 and 4,000,000 people in Britain have ulcers. At least 10 per cent. of all the people in Britain will develop them some time in their lives.

Men are the chief victims. The stomach ulcer is four times as common and the duodenal ulcer ten times as common in men as it is in women.

Doctors still do not understand why this is so. It is because men are exposed to more strenuous tensions.

There is no single cause of ulcers. The one thing that all medical men agree on is that hydrochloric acid in the stomach is the cause of its chronic effects. They also believe that there is an emotional factor involved. A third factor is the inherited constitution.

Hydrochloric acid is manufactured by the wall of the

stomach to digest protein foods. About one in ten people do not have hydrochloric acid and such people do not develop ulcers at any time.

A Small Sore

An ulcer starts with an abrasion in the stomach; a small sore rather similar to a cold sore on the lip. Sometimes this abrasion is caused by rough food, strong drink or drugs which are too irritating.

Most times such an ulcer will heal spontaneously and quickly. But in people who are subject to nervous tension it can easily become chronic. People who develop duodenal ulcers usually have more acid than the normal person.

Can people really worry themselves into ulcers? Yes. Doctors agree that worry, frustration, anxiety will produce an increased amount of acid in the stomach. In these

people, if there is a slight abrasion, it will fail to heal.

Many people believe that there is an ulcer personality. They speak of the Cassius type—an ambitious, driving personality. But that doesn't always hold true. Many people with ulcers have entirely different personality traits. One thing they probably have in common is a lack of nervous calmness or inner peacefulness.

Healing It

It is this overactivity—overnervous activity—which sends impulses down the vagus nerves to cause stomach acid. This vagus nerve wanders down from the brain to the heart, lungs, stomach and the various other organs, and controls to a large extent the secretions of these organs.

The man under pressure—the hard-driving business man—is more likely to set off this acid-producing chain and have an ulcer. In the case of women, you will find more ulcers among ambitious career women than among housewives.

Each patient with an ulcer is a separate problem and must be treated individually. Probably he will have to revise his scheme of living. An antacid may be used to neutralise the acid in the stomach. There should also be frequent feeding of milk and

cream—and small meals to combine with the acid. Anything which will combine with the acid or neutralise it will help the majority of patients to heal an ulcer.

Doctors are also working on a drug which they hope will conquer chronic ulcers by paralysing the ends of the vagus nerve and so preventing it from stimulating stomach acid. This can also be accomplished by surgery.

Dangerous

Ulcer victims all seem to have some pet remedy. Many of these can be harmful and even dangerous. For instance, the most common of these household remedies, the taking of baking soda, can be harmful because it produces alkalosis. The body reactions tend to become more alkaline, and the patient may even go into a coma.

There is a seasonal variation in ulcers. There are fewer ulcers in the warm months of the year and doctors believe that cold infection may have something to do with the development of ulcers.

Most stomach specialists stop patients with an active ulcer from smoking and take them off alcohol and caffeine beverages. This does not mean that these things cause ulcers. But caffeine is a very strong stimulant to the formation of acids. Spicy foods are also irritating to the

stomach and should be avoided by the person who has an ulcer.

Food is not a cause of ulcers. While the diet may be important in the acute ulcer and in the healing of an acute ulcer, it isn't of great significance in the later periods.

Moderation

The ulcer victim, if he learns moderation in all things, can get along as well as normal individuals.

Hope lies in the combination of finding some new drug or hormone or material to help the ulcer patient, plus teaching those patients to live with less nervous tension.

The doctor who treats the ulcer can give advice to the patient about modifying his way of life, his attitude towards frustrations, and in general advising him in specific instances how he can change his philosophy.

Often a patient can do better work taking it easy, without waste motion, without harmful thinking and without doing a lot of unnecessary work that produces tensions.

The secret of avoiding ulcers is moderation in everything: in your emotional life as well as in your eating, work, drinking and smoking.

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INTERVIEW

—Continued from Page 42

husband's, or his father's, home. On the contrary, the man who marries your daughter enters your home and makes it his own. And if he has a job of his own he will realise the futility of holding it off. All that he may have to do is to carry behind a flask of coffee and hand her the cup when her throat is dry after a spell of singing. Perhaps, having no parents and no relations, I come nearer to your conception of the ideal son-in-law, but I don't deserve such good luck, Mr. Ganapathi. I see, you are making signs to your wife to bring in your first daughter before me. Please spare yourself that trouble. I owe you an apology. I ought to have told you that I am Manager of that tobacco firm, and my salary is Rs. 500/-. And I have seen your daughter's photo in the papers. She is a lovely creature, I assure you. But I value my personal freedom beyond everything and I want a wife who will not take orders from her father or who will reduce her husband to the position of a waiter. Don't stare at me so, Mr. Ganapathi. Good-bye and better luck elsewhere!"

The man, who had been so shy and nervous on entering the house, strode out with a stiff neck and a firm step! **

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THE BROKEN HEART

A Short Story By JER M. BILLIMORIA

"Yet half a beast is the great
god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man :
The true gods sigh for the
cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows
nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the
river."—E. B. BROWNING.

ABOUT forty years ago Dadar was only a small village, sprinkled with tiny cottages surrounded by palm trees and wild flowers. Here and there tiny multicoloured butterflies fluttered in the warm silent air. In fact it was so quiet that you could hear the sound of newspaper pages being turned over by a man who sat reading intently on the veranda of those lovely yet lonely cottages. Suddenly the man got up and looked towards the bright sky. His lips moved as if in silent prayer; from the earnest look on his noble white countenance it was evident that he had asked for some request from his Maker,

He was tall but thin; with a firm steady footstep he walked out of the house.

Not far away from Dadar there was a maternity hospital where this anxious-looking man went. He hesitated, stood on the doorstep, then inquired, "What is it, a boy or a girl?" A hospital nurse was seen coming out with a tiny baby in her arms. She advanced towards the man and said, "Mr. D... It is the most beautiful female species I have ever seen." But Mr. D's face fell; disappointment at the news was clearly written across his face; for to him it was a third daughter in succession, and how he had prayed and longed for a son.

HE did not even glance at the beautiful species in the nurse's arms, but politely inquired after his wife's health and left the hospital. The nurse held the sleeping baby closely to her heart and fired out a prophecy which she little knew would come true.

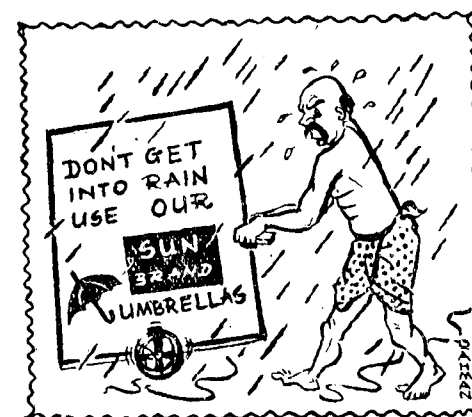
"Oh Mr. D. but she has blessed the womb that she has left, your next offspring will be a son!" Hardly had a year passed and Mr. D. was again seen on the hospital doorstep. This time the young nurse was not there, and an older sister came out empty-handed and said to the anxious-looking man. "Yes, Mr. D. it was a son, a lovely eleven lbs baby boy, but still-born". Hearing this Mr. D's face flushed red, then went ash pale. The elderly sister lingered on; she was on the verge of offering him some words of comfort, but before she could speak Mr. D. spoke, "How could the child die, it must be due to some carelessness on the part of the hospital staff?"

THE sister assured him that it was a very difficult case and they had done their best. "Then it must be my wife's fault." Again the sister shook her head. "Your wife is physically very weak, it is a wonder that she survived this strain. Then who is to blame?" "Fate", she said quickly. Yes, Fate, the man looked up at the burning skies, then he bowed his head and dejectedly left the hospital.

Five years afterwards this same man was seated on an easy chair; he was saying

his prayers, most probably still praying to the Heaven for the gift of a son. Somewhere behind the door was hidden that beautiful female species who was now five years old. Yes, the face was very beautiful, but the child was thin and very sad. She sat in a corner and through the crack in the door gazed at her father's noble face. Though she did not understand, she loved to hear his deep melodious voice chanting prayers.

EVERY Sunday morning this child was nowhere to be found, for she would go and hide behind the door to listen to her father. Only one person in the house knew of her secret and that was her dog. It so happened that the dog on that particular morning was in a very playful mood but his mistress wasn't. The loud bark of the dog attracted the father's attention. He rose and look-



ed behind the door and discovered his trembling daughter. To her surprise he said nothing but took her by the hand and made her sit on his lap. Ever since that day the man, his daughter and the dog formed a strange congregation every Sunday morning. It was the beginning of a strong love and friendship that the man felt for his daughter. The girl rapidly grew up admiring and following closely in the footsteps of her father. She was sent to a good school and was well educated, but it was found that she preferred to run wild among Nature chasing butterflies, or climbing trees while her dog barked away because he could not do so. The mother complained bitterly, for the little girl's clothes and shoes got quickly torn and worn out; nevertheless she was the delight of her father who said, "Good Lord! Every inch a boy, yet a girl!"

AT the age of twenty-one she had finished her college education and was now a charming maiden with dark eyes and tresses of long black hair. There was strange depth in those unfathomable eyes whose dropping eyelids nearly always concealed them. It was soon discovered that this girl had the gift of writing poems. During the day this girl sat for hours alone and scribbled something on the paper. Her mother thought it was such a waste of precious time, but the lone-

ly girl derived much pleasure from writing poetry. Little was she aware of the greatness of her genius. Nobody ever saw her work except her dog who slept at her feet when she wrote. At night too she would sit on the veranda and gaze at the starry sky. Neither the darkness of the night nor the hooting of an owl frightened her. In fact when she heard the screech of an owl she felt fascinated; she wondered why in India the owl was looked upon as a bird of ill-omen.

SOON after her father died and the family was getting poorer. Her mother suggested to her that she should sell or publish her poems. At first she was most reluctant as those poems were part of herself wherein she had poured forth her very soul, but "necessity has no law" so one day she took her poems to another man whom she trusted. He promised to look through them and publish them for her. Weeks, months and years passed away; still he did not publish them. Suddenly this man went abroad. As soon as he returned she went to him to inquire about her poems. The man shook his head and returned the poems to her. "They are no good," he said, "You soar too high; you are almost in the clouds; very few will comprehend your poems; in order to reach the masses, you must come down to their

level. Don't you see you are a century ahead of your times?"

SHE stared blankly at him, then almost murmured to herself, "I am made that way. I can't put the clock back; on the contrary, if you ask me to rise, I could soar still higher. Yes, I could, though I look physically weak, there is some hidden force in me." The man almost shivered uncomfortably in his chair when he saw a strange light in those dark fiery eyes which held out a challenge to him. He almost drew a breath of relief when quietly she took the bundle of poems and went home a sad girl. She still wrote poems but nobody ever saw them.

Not far away from her cottage where she dwelt there was a tank in which water snakes abound. However, on the surface one saw countless lotus flowers. Truly there could not be a better emblem chosen for India than the glorious lotus. How majestic they looked! Specially under the rays of the setting sun. Here the maiden used to come and sit on the soft green grass which grew at the edge of the tank. One day she sat and gazed intently at a Roman Catholic Church, built about the time of the East India Company.

Even to this day it stands like an ancient monument overlooking the filled-up tank. A new book of poems which her friend had given her lay on her lap. She carelessly picked it up and turned its pages. Suddenly she began to tremble from head to foot, for it was her own poems published under another name, and the book was a great success. The book had been published abroad. She was cheated. Her heart broke and she lay down on the green grass never to rise again. Passers-by rushed a doctor to the spot. The doctor examined her and said that she was suffering from a heart attack. The maiden was gently carried home and nursed carefully by her old mother and neighbours. The girl never recovered consciousness but peacefully died in her sleep. She was buried behind the tiny church, and on her grave was written her favourite verse:

"The pangs of a broken heart Lord
who can understand?"

DAYS after her death a single mourner lingered near her lonely grave. This mourner was a dog. One of the most faithful creatures God has ever created. He kept silent vigil at the grave and after

some time he dropped down and died. People said he died of starvation but few knew that he too died of a broken heart.

DADAR is no longer what it used to be, but the skies are bright and the tall palms still grow there. Sometimes when the sun is setting, people see the shadow of a young maiden with long flowing hair gazing at the filled up tank where the lotus has ceased to bloom; at night you can still hear the hooting of the owl but the beautiful maiden whom it thrilled is no longer there.

Thus passed away one of Eve's strangest and rarest daughters; she was unwell come at her birth, she died unnoticed in her death. Years afterwards her old mother opened her dead daughter's desk and found many neatly written folded papers lying there. She casually showed them to a distant relation of hers who happened to be a professor and a man of letters.

He at once recognized the hand of genius and told the

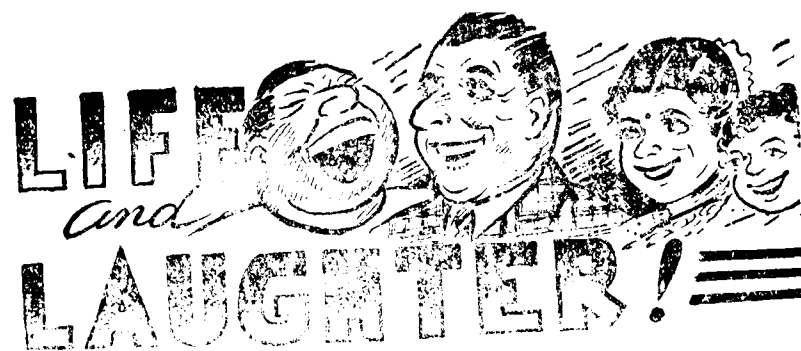
old mother that if these poems were published, she would gain a fortune, and also the world would be all the richer through their publication. The old lady nodded her consent and the professor true to his word published the whole series of poems. When the poems first appeared in print the world was struck by their unique simplicity, beauty and depth. Truly,

this was a work of perfect art. It took the whole of Bharat by storm and people demanded to see the hand that wrote them. All they saw was a tiny mould of grass in the tiny churchyard. The bolder ones hid behind palm trees to see her ghost which still

haunted the dried-up tank, but even in this they were disappointed for the ghost had deserted the waterless tank and no more appeared. Strange are the ways of men, but stranger still are the ways of Omnipotence Who rules over the world and the destinies of men. * * *



DIRECTOR: "The fellow you sent me to play the part of a thief has disappeared with my gold watch!"



"WHAT'S the use of time-tables if your trains are always late?" grumbled a discontented passenger.

The porter replied: "What's the use of waiting-rooms if they're not?"

SINGS & SOUNDS

"That woman sings with a great deal of feeling."

"Well, I hope she isn't feeling as ill as she sounds!"

NOTICE!

"Was the doctor busy?" asked one patient of another.

"Yes. He had a notice hung in the surgery: 'Have your symptoms ready, please.'" was the hurried reply.

BETWEEN THEM

"Between you and me, David, I think marriage is rather foolish."

"Between you and me it certainly would be."

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A YOUNG doctor and a young oculist shared the services of the same typist, and both fell in love with her.

The oculist had to go away on business, so he sent for the typist and said: "I am going away for ten days. You'll find a little present in your room."

She went in and found ten apples on her desk!

BETTER SETTING

"What happened to that gem of a maid you had?"

"She left us for a better setting."

IMPOSSIBLE

"Madam, your dog has bitten a piece out of my leg."

"Impossible! The little darling simply hates meat."

DEFINITION!

The weaker sex is the stronger sex because of the weakness of the stronger sex for the weaker sex!

"DOES your husband understand horse-racing?"

"Rather! The day before a race he always knows which horse is certain to win, and the day after he knows exactly why it didn't."

INVITE HER!

Mrs. Perry took her husband to a mannequin show. An evening gown, worn by a pretty girl, attracted her attention.

"That would look nice at our party next week," she said, hoping her husband would buy the dress.

"Yes," agreed Mr. Perry. "Why not invite her?"

KEEN SENSE

Two friends were discussing a new neighbour.

"I believe Mrs. Green is a great gossip," remarked one.

"Yes," replied the other, "she has a keen sense of rumour."

AMOUNT

The amount of sleep required by the average person is about five minutes more!

MISTAKEN

"Haven't I shaved you before, sir?" inquired the barber.

"No," replied the new customer. "That's a war wound."

"YOUR young man is very forgetful, isn't he?" said a pretty girl.

"Why?" asked her friend.

"At the party last night I had to keep reminding him that it was you he was engaged to, not me!"

KNOCKED OUT!

"What did your wife say when you got home from the club dinner last night?" a man asked his friend.

"Not a word. I was going to have my front teeth out, anyway."

TRUTH!

A Hollywood film star had had five wives, each of whom had promptly divorced him. He was now declaring his love for the prospective sixth.

"I've heard some queer stories about you," said the girl.

"Don't worry about them," said the star. "They're only old wives' tales."

SPLENDID

"Do you believe in free speech?"

"I most decidedly do."

"Splendid. May I use your telephone?"

A JEWELLER'S assistant, an abbevent-minded fellow, was being married. He was presenting the bride with the ring when he hesitated.

"With this ring," prompted the minister.

"With this ring," said the bridegroom, "we give a written guarantee reminding the customer that the price will be refunded if it is not as represented."

FLOORED!

"A baby's troublesome," admitted the father, "but remember, the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."

"Well," replied the wife, "suppose you assumed world domination for a couple of hours, while I'm at the pictures."

SO MUCH

"My son went abroad ten years ago to make his fortune."

"And what is he worth now?"

"I don't know for sure. But the New York police are offering twenty thousand dollars for information about him."

SHE had been holidaying on the coast for some time, and on her return home she saw her husband on the station platform surrounded by expensive flowers. Rushing off the train, she kissed him enthusiastically and said: "It's awfully sweet of you, Henry, to greet me with all these lovely flowers."

"Never mind the sentiment," replied Henry. "Hurry up and get your coat off and help sell them!"

NEW CAR

A man, obviously distressed, rushed into the bar of his club and ordered and drained two double whiskies. Asked what troubled him, he replied: "My wife's just eloped in my car with my best friend."

"Good Heavens!" said a fellowmember. "Not your new car?"



CONTEMPORARY OPINION

ARMY COMMAND

Since 1947 the Indian Army has come to be a purely defence force. In the top echelons the Indianization of the Army has not been without its immediate problems, for though the Commands vacated by British officers could all be filled up by qualified Indians it has necessarily been a question of time to ensure progressive promotions in the higher ranks without the hitch of being prematurely retired for lack of scope. Since the highest ranks are held only for a definite period, there has also been the question of utilizing the services of the Army officers who are still comparatively young at the time of retirement. Gen. Shrinagesh who has handed over the post of Chief of the Army Staff to Gen. Thimayya is not to end his active career now, for he has been called upon to head the new Institute of business administration and industrial management in Hyderabad. He cannot be considered entirely new to the task, for he has had ample experience in the Army of human and organizational problems which should stand him in good stead in his new assignment.

Gen. Thimayya, like Gen. Shrinagesh, has spoken of the

high qualities of the Indian Army which it is his task now to maintain and foster. The Indian Army's record on the field of battle has been all along notable. Now that it is purely a defence force its activities have been marked in the defence of Kashmir and in dealing with the trouble in the north-east frontier, and in both areas it has sustained the confidence of the nation. In the war in Kashmir it was Gen. Thimayya, who, in carrying out the plan prepared by Gen. Shrinagesh, distinguished himself by his conduct of operations, which included taking armoured vehicles up mountain steep slopes when it was generally considered to be an almost impossible achievement. Gen. Thimayya's elevation to the command of the Indian Army has come at a time when threats of resumed hostilities in Kashmir have been staple Pakistani propaganda, but the Pakistan leaders with bitter experience of the past should see in Gen. Thimayya a commander not to be trifled with. The new Chief of the Army Staff, like his predecessor, has a marked urbanity which in no way conceals a firmness of disposition when it comes to tackling Army problems.—*Hindustan Times*.

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DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

At a press conference in New Delhi Mr. Julius Brauntal, former General Secretary of the Socialist International, posed the question: "After Nehru who?" And his answer was Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan. Mr. Brauntal thought that Mr. Narayan was the only tall personality who would be a substitute to Mr. Nehru. He went so far as to say that the Congress had no future after Mr. Nehru.

Few in India will agree with Mr. Brauntal's reading of the Indian political scene. Mr. Nehru's association with the Congress extends over two score years. Congress work has taken him to the remotest parts of the country and brought him into touch with millions of men and women. While he has done much to strengthen the Congress he himself derives much of his strength from the Congress. To say that the Congress has no future after Mr. Nehru is just to say that the great work that Mr. Nehru has done for the Congress and the country will perish with him. That can never be.—*A. B. Patrika*.

SMALLPOX

The report by the Director of Public Health of Madras that there has been an increase in the number of cases of smallpox notified, is another reminder that this is a disease which is control-

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lable, and in fact can largely be prevented by vaccination, which, under the law of the land, is compulsory, but which law is honoured as often in the breach as in the observance. That this is so is shown by the terrible outbreak of the disease which has occurred in Calcutta, where the death rate has been rising steadily over the last few weeks. These facts also once again demonstrate the imperative need there is for the fullest application of the regulations which govern vaccination, and the need there is for the most complete follow-up. Neglect can mean so much suffering and hardship. The case for is overwhelming.—*The Mail*.

STATE OF THE STATUES

Of late much has been said and written about the state of the statues in the capital. Some have raised political, and others aesthetic, objections to the many statues, mostly of foreigners, strewn all over the city. Indeed, one political party, the Jan Sangh, included the subject among its election issues and promised the electorate that if they returned the party to power, it would cart away the statues from public places to a museum. When discussing the monuments in a hoary historic city like Delhi, where lie buried the ruins of seven empires, one has to bring to bear a broad, historical perspective on the subject. Delhi is verily cluttered up with

archaeological and historical monuments. The names of great men who have left their imprint on the pages of the country's long and variegated history, have been perpetuated in architectural structures and, later, in statues and road names.

Indeed, to drive through our capital is to go along the corridor of the country's history, which many a foreign visitor has found a fascinating experience. Here you meet in the shape of road names, not only all the great Hindu and Mughal Emperors and statesmen but also famous foreigners like Alexander the Great, who invaded India in 326 B.C., (the road named after the Portuguese General Albuquerque was renamed only a couple of years ago as "Tees January Mary" to commemorate the date of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi (who at the time lived at Birla house, situated on the road,) the French General Dupleix and a profusion of British generals and viceroys, who in addition to lending their names to roads and public institutions, have also achieved three-dimensional immortality in the shape of statues, some highly artistic and deserved, others with no excuse or justification whatsoever. — *Times of India*.

WELCOME TO GHANA

To Ghana, the first nation south of the Sahara to emerge

from colonial status to sovereign nationhood, welcome. The bloody riots of Accra are forgotten; the differences among the Northern Territories, Ashanti and the Gold Coast Colony are smoothed out, despite some efforts by divisive forces to accentuate them; and this historic African region, dominated for nearly five hundred years in turn by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, is today born anew, shaking off its shackles and exciting the hopes of every African for self-determination and freedom.

Ghana will be a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Conceivably this link will be of some help, especially in the first halting years of freedom. But it will take all the cleverness, patience and diplomacy of its liberal and wise Premier, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, to align Ghana's sights in such a fashion that with the end of political servitude, economic subservience to Britain also comes to an end. Some of the large investments made by British interests in the Volta river project and in the plantations may well lead to new tensions and crises, of which today there is no trace, they being temporarily buried under the ceremony of freedom. Caution and vigilance remain essential. — *Bombay Chronicle*.

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THREE women were walking along a railway line. The location of the railway line is irrelevant to the story.

One was a beggar. She was clothed in dirty rags. Layers of dust had settled on her face, her hair was unkempt, her feet were bleeding and the rough stones had cut into the soles.

One was a young girl of sweet eighteen or thereabouts. She had a sparkle in her eyes, youth in the firm curve of her bosom and a trace of reckless abandon in her walk. She had slim ankles.

One was a proud mother who carried her week-old baby in her arms. Again and again her fond eyes would rest on the little red face that peeped out of a bundle of rags.

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The three women walked on in silence. Then they looked up as their ears caught the distant rumble of an approaching train. A blue streak of smoke was visible in the distance where the parallel lines, tapering into a thin elongated finger, merged into the horizon.

"In two minutes that train will be here," muttered the beggar woman.

THE other two sensed a dangerous significance in these words. Together they cried, almost in alarm, "What? What do you mean?"

"You know exactly what I mean," the beggar woman replied. Her gaze was still fixed on the horizon as she watched, fascinatedly, the little black dot that was the engine, grow visibly bigger. "You know that this train can solve all our problems."

"But I don't want to die," sulkily replied the youthful maiden. "I am young and must taste more of life".

"AND of what use is this youth of yours? To be the plaything of an unscrupulous male who will throw you off like a discarded garment the moment his purpose is served?"

"No. No. Don't say anything against him. He did love me, but he couldn't disobey his parents".

"So you still believe in love, that illusive word invented by man to ensnare woman! As for your youth it might help you to earn a few coppers for a year or two by selling your body and then.... and then....." the beggar woman's eyes shone with passionate anger. "You will soon be an old hag and even charity will be denied to you".

"But it is good to live while one is young even if it is such life," feebly argued the youthful maiden but already her optimism seemed to wither before the flaming words of the beggar.

It was now the turn of the mother to be questioned. "Come now, what do you say?" challenged the beggar. "Are you also afraid to die?"

"Don't say that," shrieked the mother as she gathered her baby close to her bosom. "I don't want to die. I must live for the sake of my child."

"Ah, that piece of flesh!" contemptuously retorted the beggar woman. "That ugly reminder of your weakness and your degradation, of the monstrous injustice and cruelty of this world".

"I know. I know only too well. But all the same it is mine, my child, flesh of my flesh....."

"I assure you I don't mind dying myself. Perhaps I deserve it. And anyway it would end the misery of this life. But what would happen to this poor creature? Who would look after it if I die?"

"Let him die with you; it will mean one beggar less in the world. What kind of a future has he that you should be so keen on keeping him alive?"

THE mother protested again and pleaded for her child, but the beggar had made up her mind. The engine which was but a speck in the distance a moment ago was now a huge monster coming nearer and nearer with a thunderous roar.

"Well, at least I am going to die," declared the beggar woman, "as I have nothing to live for."

"You are mad!" cried the other two together.

"Ha, ha!" the beggar woman was now laughing hysterically. "So you think I am

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THE NEW HEART-THROB!

"WHEN I started in films I knew what I was offering was body and not much soul. Nobody credited me with much brain. Now that I have arrived I wish men would study me from the chin upwards."

This cry from the heart came recently from Miss Anita Ekberg, the twenty-five-year-old blonde film-star from Malmo, Sweden, who has hurtled from anonymity to world fame in just under a year; hurtled, some cynics have added, without having appeared in a film at all, writes David Stone in "World Digest."

This is not quite true. Before Anita Ekberg began to make world head-lines, she had taken small parts in three Hollywood films: *Blood Alley*, *The Golden Blade*, and *Artists and Models*.

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The costume that she wore in *Artists and Models* was so revealing that a producer bought her contract immediately, and proceeded to publicize her on the strength of her measurements: 39½-22-37.

Miss Iceberg!

The public, always eager for a new personality, was deluged with stories of Anita Ekberg as "Miss Iceberg," the "Garbo of the 1950s."

This intensive promotion helped to win her a coveted role in the film version of *War and Peace*.

Within months, Anita Ekberg had arrived. Thousands of pin-ups, emphasizing her stimulating proportions, appeared in the Press. Today, every major film studio in the world wants her to make pictures for them, at £35,000 a

time; all of which must be a great satisfaction to the girl Hollywood turned down cold four years ago.

That was in 1952, when she first visited the United States as part of her prize for having won the 1951 Miss Sweden competition.

Caused Sensation

A model by profession, Anita was brought up in Malmö, where her father works in a wholesale coal office. Her parents weren't too keen on their daughter being a model, but with seven other children to think of, they didn't oppose her strongly. One day, as Anita was walking along a Malmö street, a man approached her and asked her to take part in a Miss Malmö competition, a regional eliminating round for that year's Miss Sweden title. She thought this was a line at first, but he persisted, and she finally agreed. She not only won that title, but she went on to become Miss Sweden.

As part of her American trip she was taken to a Miss America contest at Atlantic City, the famous parading ground of bathing beauties. She went as a guest, but her striking good looks made her the sensation of the show, and an invitation to Hollywood quickly followed.

Her whirl there was short and sharp: apart from three small parts she soon became

just another would-be star, and went back to Sweden.

Shape Of The Year

It was shortly after this that "Miss Iceberg" was born. Anita Ekberg became one of the most sought-after women in the world. In Morocco, Arabs rioted at the sight of her; New York students voted her Dream Girl of the Year; Romans dubbed her The Earthquake; in Britain she was The Shape of the Year. When a Stockholm newspaper printed her photograph and telephone number, thousands of eager callers jammed the city's telephone system. Unhappily, the number turned out to be that of the Ministry of Education!

One evening last February she went to a London premiere. Her escort couldn't make it, and a film company executive suggested a certain English actor instead. "Another stuffy Englishman, I suppose," said Anita, reluctantly accepting. The escort's name was ...Anthony Steel.

Her Romance

Her romance with this thirty-seven-year-old ex-Grenadier Guards colour sergeant filled many a column of newspaper space in the early months of last year. The "quiet wedding" she and Steel planned in Italy turned out to be a Florentine riot.

What is she like, this warm, voluptuous beauty from a

country where the girls are usually cold? She is blue-eyed, 5 ft. 7 in. tall. Her tastes include chocolate bars, American cigarettes, vodka, and beer. Going for a walk interests her more than plushy nightclubs.

She designs her own dresses, rides, swims, and drives her Jaguar sports car fast. She hates cooking, adores chunky, real-gold jewelry. And she has a swimming pool now, part of her fabulous California home.

She firmly believes that marriage has improved her. "I was obnoxious, selfish, spoiled, and stubborn when I was a bachelor girl," she says. "Tony has made me a nice person."

Now, of course, she wants to act. Whether she can or not the public will judge from films like *Back from Eternity*, *Zarak*, and *War and Peace*, her latest pictures.

ROW OVER FILM!

The B.B.C. televised a part of a film showing the actual birth of a baby—and touched off a furious controversy.

Arguments for and against bristled in newspaper columns:

"Revolted." "The Worst Display of Taste Ever." "Tasteless." "Farmyard Level." "Extremely Objectionable."

So fulminated objectors to the 40-second sequence, in which the emergence of the child was seen and the smiling mother extended her hands to touch the groping fingers of the baby and aid the final seconds of its journey into the world.

Women writers said they found the scenes "extremely touching" and "inoffensive." A poll of viewers found that most of those questioned had watched the sequence in their family circles without embarrassment. Several mothers-to-be found the film reassuring.

Natural System

The public, normally quick to voice complaints, received the broadcast—which was an item in a magazine programme—calmly. Only four people telephoned complaints.

The film was made in South Africa by Dr. Grantly Dick Read, pioneer of the "natural" method of childbirth. The mother, a European, remained anonymous but sanctioned its exhibition anywhere abroad.

The doctor answered criticisms by a London hospital obstetrician who said the method was "admirable but for a selected few. There is no prejudice, but the profession feels Dr. Read's claims are incapable of substantiation. I should not like any patient of mine to be seen groping around to try to bring

her own baby into the world," the obstetrician commented.

Dr. Read claimed that the average number of successes—women who preferred consciousness to unconsciousness during child-birth under his "natural" system—was 96 per cent.

Another childbirth film—"The Birth of a Baby"—a re-edited version of the documentary first shown in 1940—is being publicly shown again at cinemas.

When first made, so many people were said to have fainted through tension that special first-aid teams were put on duty at cinemas. Today's audiences are tougher; or perhaps sex education has made the public less easily disturbed; but there have been no calls for stretchers or smelling salts at any of the scores of cinemas which have been showing the film.

JAYASHREE RETURNS TO THE SCREEN

Jayashree is back in motion pictures. She is playing the female lead in Pushpa Pictures' *Mahendi* to be directed by S. M. Yusuf. The muhurat of this picture was performed recently. Ajit is cast opposite her.

Jayashree made her debut about twenty years ago when she appeared as Radha in *Nandkumar* produced and directed by K. Dhaibar who had

just then left Prabhat and started an independent concern. She also played the lead in a Marathi historical film *Chandra Rao More* which was produced by Shiraz Ali Hakim; reads a "Cine Advance" report.

Later she appeared in *My Beloved* in 1938-39 produced by Dada Saheb Torney at Poona. It was after seeing this picture that Shantaram signed her for the Marathi version of *Padosi*. During the shooting of the picture Jayashree and Shantaram fell in love and later got married.

It was, however, her performance in the title role in *Shakuntala* that made Jayashree famous. Since then, she has appeared in *Dr. Kotnis*, *Dahez*, *Parchhain* and *Subha Ka Tara* which was her last picture.

Recently she was in the news because of the court cases. Now that she has obtained the divorce from Mr. Shantaram, she seems to have decided to pursue her film career again as is evident from her signing the contract for *Mahendi*. It is said that she is signing two or three more contracts soon.

"BABRU VAHAN"

Reminiscent of Matthew Arnold's "Sohrab and Rostum" (the theme of which is a father fighting his own son without knowing their relationship) is a mythological



Sakila & Kishore Kumar in "Paisa hi Paisa."

story from the Mahabharata "Babru Vahan," soon to be brought to the screen by the Bharathi Productions.

The veteran Andhra Director, poet and author, Samudrala Raghavachari has completed the script.

It tells the story of a fight between Arjuna and his son Babru Vahan and the defeat of the great Pandava archer.

NEW STAR!

A new star is joining Indian films, the heaviest and biggest of them all—Ramchandra, the elephant who will feature in the Technicolor film to be

produced and directed by Shantaram.

Ramchandra had to begin his film career the hard way. Unlike other stars who travel first-class, Ramchandra had to make his way for part of the way from Trivandrum to Bombay by foot.

This was necessary, only because his size and weight would have been too much for the metregauge railway between Trivandrum and Ernakulam. Poor Ramchandra had to walk nearly 125 miles before he was loaded on to a freight train.

HERE & THERE

A series of "shorts" on

Community Development projects will be made soon, according to a scheme of the Union Government.

Commentaries in English, Hindi and regional languages will be added to these films, each of which will be 1000 feet in length.

Arrangements are being made to shoot these films on the sites of different projects and final touches will be given in film studios in Bombay and Calcutta.

Colourful dance and music will be an added attraction of these "shorts," which will be exhibited free of charge in different villages through mobile film units.

* * *

Leading Japanese cameramen and colour photography consultants are to be engaged by Narasu Studios of Madras for colour films to be launched this year.

K. Venkatesan, an official of the company, will leave for Japan in April to book the technicians and buy studio equipment.

WOMEN ON THE TRACK

—Continued from Page 74

mad. Let me tell you what I think of you - you two are cowards trying to hide your cowardice behind an illusion of youth and motherhood! If anyone is mad it is you. Farewell to you.

"But you know we can't live without you. If you die we too must die," the maiden and the mother cried, trying desperately to hold their companion back.

The train was now a few yards away. The engine gave a shriek as the beggar woman flung herself on the lines. The driver pulled hard at the brake. But it was too late.

The panting monster jerked itself to a stop. The engine crew dragged the mass of human flesh and bone from under the wheels. Quickly, a crowd of excited passengers collected. Someone said, "It was only a beggar woman".

Another remarked, "It was a young girl, poor thing. And quite pretty too!"

A third passenger muttered, "Alas it was a mother with child."

"One woman has been killed," summed up the man in the crowd explaining the situation to someone who had just arrived on the scene.

But a philosopher who happened to be present and whose eyes saw more than any one else, corrected him, "No, Not one woman but three women."

PADMANABHAN

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