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CONTENTS

PAGE

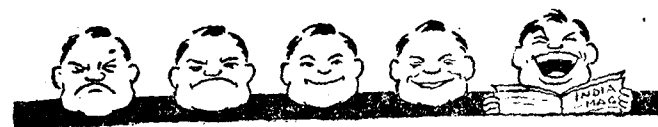
THE PLEDGE	...	4
WEDDING IN PROSPECT	...	10
HER PARTNER	...	13
SECRETS THROUGH WINDOWS (SKIT)	...	16
SWEETHEART EVER	...	17
FOR A NIGHT OF FREEDOM	...	30
A SAREE FOR SARLA	...	33
THE CRISIS AT HOME	...	49
THE VISITOR	...	53
THEFT OR ROMANCE ?	...	57
LOVE ON THE PILLION	...	65

Regular Features

A TIMELY HINT (EDITORIAL)	...	3
WOMEN'S CORNER (EYES : WOMAN'S BEST ASSETS)	...	26
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	...	28
FILMS AND FILM STARS	...	38
LAUGHS FROM MANY LANDS !	...	47
PLANETS AND YOUR FORTUNE	...	69
ASTROLOGICAL FORECASTS FOR MAY 1959	...	79
HEALTH (IN CASE OF BURNS)	...	79

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INDIA MAGAZINE COMES OUT ON THE 1ST. OF EVERY MONTH



THE PLEDGE

By SUDHAMA

[Her husband was always on tour—here today and gone tomorrow. Thus she wasted her sweetness for ten years until she met her cousin...]

SWARNA and her neighbour Roopa were chatting over the compound wall when the postman delivered a letter to Swarna.

"Hema, here is a letter for you from your husband," cried the mother. "Come down and get it."

A young woman of twenty-seven, slender and fair-complexioned, looked over the balcony of the bungalow. She had just then got up from a nap and still appeared sleepy.

"I am coming down in a minute, mother," she shouted. "Whom is it from? Grandfather or one of my friends?"

"Your husband!" she exclaimed.

ed in vexation. "I can't find out wherefrom he has despatched this letter. The postal mark is not clear. Come and see for yourself. How long do you mean to rely on me like this?"

The daughter smilingly withdrew into her room to wash her face.

Roopa, the neighbour, coughed to attract Swarna's attention. "Swarna, you and your father have enough money to support five more generations. But I pity your daughter Hema. She is such a beautiful creature, wasting her sweetness alone. It is more than nine years since she married but I am yet to see her set up home and live with that husband of hers—Anand. What is his job anyway?"

Swarna sighed and turned her eyes to heaven as if in prayer. "Oh, Roopa, it is a long and wretched story. That Anand never spends more than a fortnight with my daughter here in a year. He is a touring agent—here today and gone tomorrow. Several times I hinted to him to give up his job and stay with us and help my father in supervising our estates. And I even suggested a salary."

"That is a nice idea," Roopa approved. "Any decent man should have accepted the offer. But what made him turn it down?"

"Nothing else but pride and vanity. My daughter actually went on bended knees and begged of him to stay. In the alternative, she said, they could set up home elsewhere. But he asserted he couldn't think of a home without savings. For nine years he has been saying the same thing and that fool of a daughter tends to believe him."

ROOPA bent her head low to whisper a secret. "Swarna, you know at the age of twenty-seven—I mean your daughter's age—I had borne three daughters and two sons. There is a saying that a woman who does not become a mother in the first ten years of her marriage will be a sterile woman all the rest of her life."

Swarna was startled at this observation of her friend. "I

think I have heard that remark from other people too. Even a lady doctor said some such thing in the hospital when Banu's daughter was consulting her. That indeed is a problem. What shall I do? Here comes my pet. Hema, open this cover."

THE young woman looked fresh as a rose and frowned as she opened the letter. "Same story, mother," she said. "He is in Calcutta today and expects to come here and stay with us for two days at the week-end. He then proceeds to Poona, Bombay and then on to Delhi."

"The careless, heartless fellow!" interjected the mother. "Are you sure," queried Roopa, "that he has no other woman in his life? Under the pretext of going on tour he may be actually running after some useless wench."

"Who knows?" commented Swarna. "My daughter is a bit dull in that respect. She has too much faith in that good-for-nothing fellow. Well, Roopa, we shall meet in the evening after tea. Come on, Hema. Your cousin Hari is expected here with his mother. You know, she is to see a heart specialist in the city at the week-end. They have not come here all these years. So give them a hearty welcome, and make their stay as comfortable as possible."

She went into the kitchen while her daughter went upstairs to her room. She had overheard the entire conversation between Mother and the neighbour. That set her thinking—of the years that had been wasted, of the moments of happiness that she could have snatched with her husband, of the children that would have brightened up her life and her mother's. Neither money nor education had brought her the happiness she had been hoping for. Anand suddenly came from nowhere and Grandfather was considerably impressed with his dash and debonair ways. But in less than a year she was bored. Her husband had his head in the clouds. He talked of business tours, canvassing, making huge fortunes and having two or three cars at their disposal. But she was disillusioned soon. He went on travelling from place to place, exhausting his meagre pay and allowance. He sent her neither money nor gifts.

BUT whenever he came to stay with her he talked only in terms of lakhs and big investments. She often thought of other things while pretending to listen to him. Once she was so disgusted that she stopped her ears with plugs of cotton wool.

As Hema lay back against her cushions, she smiled to herself and snapped her fingers.

When Hari and his mother came that night she was very affectionate in her greetings. The

young man himself was pleasantly surprised at this welcome change in her attitude. When he came on the previous occasion to attend her marriage, she was cold and aloof. She shied away from him, forgetting all their friendly associations of the past.

FOR nearly a year prior to her marriage Hari had stayed in her bungalow. Her grandfather, Lalji, was laid up with rheumatism and he needed the assistance of a young man. Hari, being a poor relation, had readily accepted his invitation to come and help him. He studied in one of the city colleges for the last year of the degree course and made himself most useful to Lalji. Swarna found his company very cheerful. As for Hema, she was very grateful to her poor cousin for all the service he was doing. He even helped her over the lessons whenever she wanted his guidance. They were often found chatting and laughing and Swarna deliberately encouraged them to get together. She had already worked out a plan for them. They should marry and live with her and be a source of solace both to herself and her old father. Hari with modesty and polished manners would be like an adopted son and help to look after the household. If Hema married a highly educated man he would at once take her away and leave her a forlorn, broken-hearted woman. Hadn't they enough money and to spare?

With this plan taking concrete shape in her mind, Swarna encouraged her daughter to make love to Hari so that she could at the opportune moment make a suggestion to the old man and win his consent.

True, in course of time, things were turning out as they had planned. One night Swarna had gone to see a friend of hers at the other end of the city. Hema had tied up a kerchief round her head and lay on the couch in the central hall. When Hari anxiously stepped up and asked her what was the trouble she complained of a splitting headache and asked Hari to feel her pulse. In fact, she had neither headache nor fever. It was love that was burning her body and when Hari was feeling her pulse she drew down his head with her other hand and kissed him passionately on the lips.

THAT was the beginning of their love affair until her grandfather chose Anand as her future bridegroom. Swarna had been pleading with her for a decision in favour of Hari but he shook his head. He was too poor, he sneered. He saw in Anand great promise of a bright and glorious career that would enhance the reputation of the family. She argued and argued but the old man turned a deaf ear to all her appeals. He was nothing if not obstinate. The die had been cast.

Hari was feeling miserable. Hema, after the matrimonial

choice for her had been fixed, began to keep aloof from her cousin. She was eaten with her new hero who she had thought would make her more happy.

HARI and Hema were now very friendly. In the evenings they went out on long walks, saw pictures together and ate and talked and laughed together. Swarna was happy to see her daughter smiling and still thought what a fine pair they would have made if only they had been married. She saw nothing wrong in their remaining together.

The only person who would have frowned on their association and forbidden it was Hema's grandfather who was far away in Mussoorie. But both of them refrained from making love deliberately because both were married. Hari's marriage had taken place only two years ago. She was a pretty girl—a perfect housewife who was absolutely devoted to Hari and would not care to look at another man. Hari had nothing to worry about her. Unlike Hema, she would wait for her husband even for twenty years. Indeed she was the traditional wife with all the homely virtues which we associate with our great heroines. Hari was equally devoted to his wife Vatsal. There was no secret between them. He had told her about his previous association with Hema. She did not flinch nor did she utter a word of complaint. But she begged of him to give her a promise—not to stray away from

the straight path again. He gave the pledge in the most solemn manner before the picture of their family deity.

Now Vatsal had gone to her parents' home to have her first baby. They were very excited and looking forward to the happy event. The only fly in the ointment was the illness of Hari's mother. She had been having repeated heart attacks which brought on crisis after crisis every time. The local doctors advised the young man to take his mother to the city for special treatment.

And here he was with Hema, romping and laughing but at the back of his mind was the promise he had given to his wife, not to associate with any other woman. But Hema was his cousin and there was no harm in talking or going out with her. After all, he was due to leave for his town with his mother in less than 48 hours. The specialist had prescribed pills and powders and stressed the necessity for complete relaxation. Her condition was nothing very serious, he assured Hari.

That night, after the meal, Hema and Hari played carrom and though he was very clever at the game, he let her score over him and praised her ability and acumen. It was past midnight when he rose yawning and suggested that it was time to think of sleeping. They had had a busy day. And then as he stood at the threshold of her room he told her that he was leaving by the evening Express

on the next day. "Come on, shake hands, Hema. Let us continue to be friends for life. Write to me whenever you want my services."

"Oh! Hari! Don't forget me. And here is a parting gift." She suddenly ran up to him and gave him a fierce kiss and buried her face on his shoulder. He had been anxious to avoid this scene. But now he was helpless in the woman's soft but strong arms. He smelt the perfume of her hair as he in turn buried his nose in it. The emotions of her love-starved heart came like a flood and swept both herself and the young man off their feet. Forgotten was the pledge that he had given to his fond wife....

At 5 a. m. Swarna knocked at Hema's door. "Hema! Anand has come just now and he wants to see you. I have told him you are sick and he can see you only after some time. Are you awake?"

"Yes, mother," she said in alarm as she looked at Hari sleeping by her side.

"Fool, wake him at once and ask him to come down by the back staircase. And keep to your bed until Anand comes."

But Anand was not fooled. He understood what was going on. That very day he sent his letter of resignation to Headquarters and stayed with his wife, at her bungalow. It took him ten years to become jealous!

SHORT STORY

Wedding In Prospect

[Prabha gave up the man whom her parents had chosen for her and sought out her dream boy. And the result was almost comic !]

THERE were only five more days to go before Prabha would be married. The young maiden was wiping her moist eyes with a kerchief. Should her life come to this abrupt end? She thought that marriage would blast her hopes and seal her life.

already writing down possible answers to probable questions by future employers during imaginary interviews, and getting them by heart.

But her parents were unimaginative and orthodox. They had

BY

V. Vasant Kumar

She was sitting at her table wearily staring at the books neatly arranged. She had just then finished her college. The examination was over and she had come home with high hopes of getting distinction. She could pursue her post-graduate studies if she wanted or secure a nice job. She was attractive and few would refuse her application if she interviewed them. Her friends Sumati and Rekha were

already fixed the bridegroom and speeded up the arrangements for her wedding even before she returned. She told in a tearful voice to her mother that she didn't want to marry...at least for some years—and wanted to take up some job. Her mother simply laughed at her suggestion

A job! Oh, no! Why should she work when they had money? It was not with that view that they had sent her to college. Education would impart more refinement to her and she could be wiser. The bridegroom-to-be was very intelligent and he had a business of his own. He was earning lots.

THE only thing that Prabha might not like (continued her mother) was the age of the bridegroom. He was thirty-five—a widower with two sons by his late first wife. What if he was a widower and had two sons? There were a hundred parents besieging his house and offering their daughters. But his choice fell upon Prabha. He just cast one glance at her photo and agreed to marry her. He was graceful enough to wait till her examination was over and now the marriage was just five days off.

Prabha was shocked into silence. In her own room she wept a whole night. Her dream of an ideal man was totally different. He must be her own age. She would not mind his being younger than herself by a year or two. He must be tall, splendid physically and smart in appearance. Of course, she presumed he must have plenty of money to buy whatever thing she wanted and indulge all her whims and fancies.

She pulled out a drawer and took out a photo—the snapshot of the man who was to marry

her. He was a bit stout though he had a smiling face. His coat slightly bulged about the waist and she knew he had a paunch. Mother had hinted, in answer to her questions, that one of his sons as aged as herself. Imagine it! As soon as the marital knot was tied she would become a mother—yes, a step-mother. Was it not monstrous?

She rose and looked through the window of her room. It was dark. The street lights had not yet been switched on. Her parents had gone out to invite some of their close relations and friends to the wedding. They had planned to go to the different parts of the city, to do some shopping and return home about midnight.

This provided the only chance of her escape. Kishen, her lover, would be waiting for her in the park. They had often met secretly while she was studying. To the left side of the Women's College Hostel there was a park which was their rendezvous. He was studying in another college and she would spend an hour or two with him away from prying eyes in one of the shady corners of the park.

KISHEN came very near to her ideal of the handsome hero. But he was not very intelligent but his manners were winsome. He had always an engaging smile in reserve for her. She had, however, good reasons to suspect that other girls were as

crazy about him as she was. Once or twice from her hostel room she had seen him talking earnestly to her friends. But she had not given much thought to his sense of loyalty because he always waited for her in the park as if she was the only girl in his life. Was that not enough?

As soon as she returned home, she wrote to him a long letter about her forthcoming marriage. She begged him to wait for her in the park so that they could run away somewhere. She was prepared to face anything except this life of slavery under a man who was far from handsome and who had a son as old as herself.

She did not expect any reply from him but she knew he would be waiting faithfully for her in the park. She crammed a cloth bag with two spare sarees and a blouse, and locked the door of her house and walked out. She boarded a bus and gazed round in fear as if she expected to see her parents there. Luckily there was none who could recognize her.

Half an hour later she got down near her college and entered the park. There he was, looking happy and excited. He had a suit-case by his side, deposited on the park bench. They were speechless for a time until he gathered her in his arms and kissed her. She did not like it. This was the first time she had permitted this liberty. But

in view of the fact that shad he chosen him as her man of destiny, she did not mind.

"Well, where shall we go first?" She asked. "What are your plans?"

He was silent for a minute. "Prabha dear! The truth is we can run off to any place and be happy. But at the present moment I am stranded. My parents haven't sent me any money. They are struggling. I suppose you have got some gold jewels which we can sell away at once and with that money we can leave the city."

A90

She felt her throat. That day before her bath she had removed all her jewels and left them in her box. She rose suddenly, "Wait, Kishen, until I go home and come back with my jewels." He said he would wait but asked her to hurry up.

As she left him a wave of disgust swept over her. If she had run off with this half-starved wretch, she would have to beg soon in the streets and her parents would not take her back.

SHE walked through the bazaar in the direction of the bus stand. She was gazing at the shop windows glittering with jewels when a familiar voice accosted her. "Why, Prabha, you didn't tell us you were coming out. We could have taken you. Did you go to your hostel?"

Imagine it! It was her mother. Prabha was shocked but recovered her composure.

"Yes, mother!" she lied. "I went to the hostel to claim some of my clothes which I had left behind. So this is the taxi you have engaged? Shall I come with you or go by bus?"

"Get in, darling! What a question!" exclaimed her mother. "Here is your father. Prabha came to her hostel to take back some of her clothes."

At the wedding Prabha's prejudices disappeared and a smile played about her lips as the bridegroom snapped on a small gold watch on her wrist. Forgotten was the young man whom

she had asked to wait in the park five days ago.

Indeed it was a day of days. She kept on glancing at her husband as he led her by the hand and introduced her to his numerous friends. She told herself that he was not so bad-looking after all. The photo had done him a clear injustice. He was young for his age and showed her a kindness and courtesy that overcame all her prejudices and even conquered her heart. And when he took her to his home her head swam. His parents and sisters gave her a royal welcome. And when two small handsome boys greeted her respectfully as their new mother she felt proud and happy. ‡‡

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SHORT STORY

HER PARTNER

By GOPI BHARGAVA

[It was their last show together and their last day of partnership and intimate association. But Rani had her own suspicions...and secret plans.]

HER silver anklets gleamed in the light as she danced.

The Krishna-Gopi scene was over to the accompaniment of thunderous cheers and applause from the audience. And now began the cobra scene. Her young supple body suggested the sinuous movements of the reptile, sleek, glossy and slithery as she bent and twisted herself.

She portrayed the emotions of the cobra—first prodded into furious action out of its basket. Deliberately starved of food for days, it raised its hood to its full majesty and confronted the snake-charmer with its eyes glinting and its tongue shooting. For long the snake-charmer played on his weird flute, entrancing the cobra. He then made it dance, stepping to this side and that, darting forward

and suddenly retreating backward.

Rani played the cobra to perfection. The role of snake-charmer was played by her lover and partner, Markand. The cobra scene was always the highlight of their programme. The supple grace of the woman and the alertness of her movements sent shivers of joy through the males among the audience. There were many who delighted in the curves of her body and there were several others who revelled in her facial expressions which flashed like lightning. The female fans were simply crazy about Markand. The power and glitter of his fascinating eyes were terrific and any woman would love to gaze at them for hours. He was a splendid he-man born to control woman and beast.

With all its fury roused, the cobra suddenly springs into action and strikes the snake-charmer who has been torturing it endlessly. There is a limit to one's endurance. If even a worm can turn, will not a cobra, which is far superior to the worm? The fang bites into the skin and injects its deadly venom. But the snake-charmer is inured to all this. He produces a herb—some root—which he rubs into the wound and binds it with a piece of cloth. The cobra with its fangs intact felt powerful a moment ago but now feeling that the snake-charmer is immune to poison, humbles itself to the dust. Its hood shrinks and the reptile quietly slithers back into the basket, powerless and submissive. The snake-charmer now goes around to his patrons and begs for gifts. After all, he is a poor man. The appreciative audience throws at him coins of all denominations, one woman flings her gold ring and another her bangle.

Thus did the two partners represent the cobra and the snake-charmer. She looked thoughtful and sad and forgot to fold her palms and bow her head until Markand turned a sharp glance towards her.

She was sad because it was their last evening together. The partnership was at an end. For five years they had gone on tours, danced before Ministers and Princes, and won plaudits.

They were living together though they were not married.

Only a month ago he gently broke the news. He was going to marry shortly and settle down in a quiet village. He was tired of the hectic life in the cities, the glaring footlights and the continuous din and dust of traffic. At first she was inclined to believe him but she had never dreamt that he would prefer another woman. Her rage and disappointment were beyond description. Then she learnt the real truth. He was going to kick her out and taking a new partner who had caught his fancy. But she had never gone on the stage before. It seemed clear that he was infatuated with her.

All this was so sudden. She had no money of her own and never asked him for her share. She had given herself to him and now she found herself betrayed.

As they came out of the theatre after their last appearance together, Markand called to her. "So, dear, farewell to you. I will never, never forget all that you have done for me," he stammered, not daring to look her in the face.

She only echoed his sentiment as she was detaching from her fingers the long artificial nails with which she had struck him as a cobra in the final scene.

"Today you have almost torn out my skin with those nails. They drew blood and it is giving me considerable pain. I am sorry you were so careless," he said in rebuke, holding up his bandaged arm.

"What do you expect a cobra to do?" she laughed and got into her car.

As the car sped by she threw the artificial nails out of the window and sank back on the cushioned seat. Tears coursed down her cheeks but she made no effort to wipe them out. She must plan her future anew and support her brothers and aged parents.

As she entered the hall, an old man stood up and greeted her. She beckoned to him and drew him into a corner. "Do you think they will have the desired effect?"

"Sure," said the old man. "The nails were greased with a poison that will make him ill for a long time. Of course, it will not kill him. But he won't be fit enough to marry. If within three months he shows change of heart and wants you back, I can cure him in a week. But you keep seeing him and report

his progress. I know some indigenous medicines that will eliminate any poison."

She gave the physician some money and came with him to the gate. She knew the poison was already taking its effect and he would send for her in another day. Not for nothing was she called a cobra maiden.

NO GOOD!

A vacuum-cleaner salesman was illustrating his sales talk by repeatedly sprinkling sand on a piece of carpet and removing the sand with his powerful vacuum-cleaner.

"Now, madam," he wound up, turning to one woman in the crowd around him, "can I interest you in buying one of our vacuum-cleaners?"

"It seems all right," she said, "but it's no good to us. We never sprinkle sand on our carpet."

PUZZLED

A pretty young lady presented a cheque at a bank for cashing. The clerk examined it quickly and asked: "Can you identify yourself?"

Looking puzzled, the girl dipped into her handbag and pulled out a small mirror. She glanced in it for a moment, and then said, "Yes, it's me all right."

SECRETS THROUGH WINDOWS !

BY S. B. KULKARNI

IN comparison with wine and women, windows seem to have received less attention from writers so far. But they help them depict the most romantic game of exchanging silent and speechless messages.

I am always romantic about windows. They symbolise an urge for strangeness and curiosity. That is why even the grown-up men and women vie with each other to get a seat at the window of the train or the bus. Are not many of us curious about the "secrets" passing through the post-office windows? Are not windows a paradise for young lovers? Windows only and nothing else can give them a chance to observe unobserved the partners of their heart's desire.

My love of windows has a practical approach too. Windows to me are bringers of good health. It is through these casements that the sunlight rushes into the room in order to drive away the wretched darkness. Is it ever possible to have a sweet, cool moon-lit bed without the help of these windows?

Whenever I make myself seated hours together against one of the many windows of my block, I turn to be a philosopher. I observe through them the

whole scene of humanity struggling towards an unknown destiny. I begin to muse over the great souls, whose works in the jails will provide the generations to come with a stock of unlimited inspiration. The gifted figures of John Bunyan and Lokmanya Tilak stand before my misty eyes. I salute those celestial books—"Pilgrim's Progress" and "Gita Rahasya," the epic-products of the Bedford and Mandalay Jails respectively. The bars of windows let loose a beam of hope into my mind. They assure me of some trifle writing to be penned by me in the future.

However, the changes in the shape of windows through the past many centuries, appeal to the historian in me. Can we not study and trace the story of civilization with reference to the changes in the shape of windows? From the little, squarely "Gawakshas" of the olden times to the big beautiful and rectangular windows of today, we can say with certainty that the narrow and limited outlook of the past has given place to the broad and universal viewpoint of today.

But I am most happy when I take a poet's approach to the windows and those famous lines of Keats begin to hum into my ears:

"Charmed magic casements
opening on the foam
Of perilous seas,
In faery lands forlorn."

SWEETHEART EVER

By VISHNU SAHAY

THIS is my tenth day in jail. I don't know how long I will be remanded into custody like this. None of the studio people or friends has so far come forward to arrange for my release on bail. "Mr. Nagesh," asks the Inspector of Police, who is in charge of investigations of this case, "don't you know anyone who

back to her bungalow. Ah! I forgot. I must have first mentioned who she is. She is Umasini, rising star of the screen, who has acted in twenty pictures and who has contracts with four film production companies at the same time. She is reputed to be very gorgeously beautiful, graceful and lively.

He rescued her from a bad scrape but she fell into another after a time. He felt that his heart had been surrendered until he made a discovery and a bold decision...

can execute a bond for you?" I didn't even care to answer that question and simply shrugged my shoulders.

You wonder what is the charge against me. I shall use plain language shorn of legal obscurities. I stabbed the woman I loved but she did not die. At the moment, I am told, she is recovering and has just gone

Where was she ten years ago? She was an ill-starved, ill-dressed girl, selling fruits on the pavement in the day and fighting with ruffians in the night. I was an unattached bachelor living in a room upstairs. Down below was a cloth godown and my room overlooked the street. Whenever I wanted fruits I would go down and get the best of the lot from her. She would

waive her profit and sell them to me cheap. Now and then I obliged her with small sums to invest in her trade and would refuse to take them back.

BUT in spite of her good looks she was rather thoughtless and silly and lost more than she gained from fruit-vending. She would let a customer get away with large amounts but higgled and haggle over a pie or quarter anna. It would sometimes end in the exchange of hot words and blows. She was very temperamental. I myself had occasionally intervened and pacified the customers but that displeased her not a little. She wanted to hound them out with her threats and abuse until a policeman came along or the counter-threats and blows proved overwhelming.

With all that she was good at heart and never forgot the little kindnesses that I did for her. Sometimes she would starve and come to me for money to buy food. I often used to advise her not to lose her temper under any circumstances but she would only smile.

Late one night I was about to switch off the light and go to bed when there was a gentle knock on the door. I opened it hesitantly but I was surprised to see Umasi—it was her original name—standing with a face that was pale as death. Previously she had never visited me at that hour—it was 1 a.m. then—and to say that I was confused, sur-

prised and shocked would be a mild description. The usual smile had deserted her face and she was agitated and frightened. Her whole body was trembling like a leaf in high wind.

Without any ceremony she got into my room and begged of me with moist eyes to bolt the door on the inside. Then she sank on the floor lest somebody should see her through the window from the road below.

"Master, a police constable is looking for me," she gasped. "I had refused him fruit on credit in the afternoon and he is determined to put me in the lock-up for the night on some charge—disorderly behaviour or something. Please allow me to stay here till morning. The lock-up is the worst place for a woman to stay in."

"Sir where you are," I said, reassuringly. "Don't move until I ask you to." I quickly closed all the windows to shut off the light. My room opened into another which was very small and was reserved for the use of the godown manager. It was in my charge and whenever the merchant wanted to spend some time in it he would take the key from me, which was very seldom.

So I opened the door and motioned to Umasi to get into that room. I locked the door on the outside, when there was

the crunch of boots on the staircase and a loud knock. Luckily I had switched off the lights and I shouted as if I had just been rudely awakened from sleep.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"Open the door, sir. I am the constable going round on this beat," said a gruff voice.

"Wait a minute, please," I replied. I switched on the lights again and opened the door after satisfying myself that there was no trace of Umasi.

The constable was shocked at seeing me. He at once recognized me to be the close friend of Inspector Prasad who was in charge of that division. "Sorry to disturb you, sir. I apologize. I thought I saw a suspected thief running upstairs. Excuse me, sir. I never knew you are residing here. Please, sir," he paused and grinned, "don't mention this to our Inspector Sahib. Good-night, sir."

"It is all right, constable," I told him. "I am safe enough and nobody can easily enter this room. You have done your duty and there is nothing wrong about it."

I locked the door again and sat on my bed for quite a long time wondering what to do with the unexpected burden on my hand. Then I opened the inner

room and peered in. She attempted to rise but staggered and was all of a heap. I knew she was exhausted and hungry. I took some water in a glass and held it to her lips. She drank it and raised her grateful eyes to me. I took some biscuits from a tin and asked her to eat them. After some hesitation she took them. Then she rose.

"Now, let me out, master. The fellow must have gone by this time. I shall not embarrass you," she remarked.

"Fool!" I hissed. "That constable came after you and not after a man. Better stay here until early morning. When it is still dark I shall wake you up and show you down. Don't be foolish to venture out now."

"That rascal has an eye on me and I am terribly afraid of him," she began to sob.

I patted her on the shoulder. "Don't weep and sleep calmly. I shall tell the Inspector and ask him to speak to the constable. I will lie to him that you are my woman."

My hand was still resting on her shoulder and she gripped it in both her hands and raised it to her lips. She nestled close to me and pressed her warm body against mine. Her lips found mine in a long kiss. All this happened so suddenly that I was startled and ashamed at the thought that

I should be making love to a woman whom I was supposed to be protecting. But it was clear that we had been attracted to each other for quite a long time and it had only been a subconscious realisation.

FROM that day we lived as man and wife though on the sly. She continued to sell fruits as before but with my money she dressed herself better and looked beautiful.

One day I received a telegram from my home town that my father was involved in a car accident and that I should take the next available train. I was in a state of agony and suspense and was all the time sending up prayers to God that nothing serious or untoward should happen. I contacted a friend by trunk phone and was assured to learn that only a fracture of the leg was suspected but he had not spoken since the accident. Perhaps lockjaw was suspected.

This was alarming news. I had seen several cases of lockjaw ending fatally. So I locked the door and hurriedly left for the station. Only when I was well settled in my seat in the railway compartment did I bite my lips. I had committed a stupid mistake in forgetting Uma. She had been such a part and parcel of my life that I had taken her for granted. But what could I do? I could not ask her to accompany me to my home town. That would create a first class scandal. In the strata of society

Uma occupied, by accident of birth, the lowest place. She had nothing by way of accomplishment to recommend her for parity with a middle-class man like myself.

But I was daring and unconventional. Several times my parents had paraded girls for my inspection with a view to matrimony but I rejected them all, one by one, with a ruthless mind. I ignored Mother's tearful pleas. Since I was their only son, they let me have my way. But they were hoping that one day I would choose my own girl and they had only to approve of my choice.

BUT what a choice! They would have died of shock if only they got an inkling as to Uma, the pavement girl. And then there was another secret which my sweetheart quietly revealed to me one day. She had been married, of course not in the strict sense, to a hefty man whose main job was to burgle into lonely bungalows. Her revelation at dead of the night was so terrifying that I sat up in the bed and looked around to see if her husband was hiding somewhere in that room. All the same, I did not speak. I knew I could not get on without the woman who held such a secret fascination for me. Then she told me how he was hiding in the city for a while and took to his heels when police hunting became too persistent.

While travelling that night I fell into a profound sleep. I forgot all about my father's condition for a while and began to dream pleasantly about the woman with whom I was so much in love. As my train was speeding towards a junction which was full of passenger trains, passengers and hawkers making all sorts of fantastic noises, and goods wagons and engines banging and whistling, I sat up terrified.

WHILE dreaming I landed on an unpleasant truth which hit my brain like a hammer on a gong. I had pieced together some facts and drew an inference. The policeman must have been hunting for Umasi in order to torture her for information about her husband. The police always go by the assumption that a criminal's hide-out and movement are best known to his sweetheart or wife. So Umasi must have lied to me that the constable was amorously inclined towards her. I pondered furiously about her tendency to mix truth with falsehood and got vexed.

But I forgot all about this when I reached home. My father was very glad to see me. That very day he made an effort to speak though he was incoherent. But gradually his condition began to improve. And in a month he was able to walk.

Only then did Mother allow me to go back to the city. My

first concern was to enquire for Umasi. As I had guessed, she was in jail—remanded into custody—pending investigations into her husband's case. I immediately called on Inspector Prasad before whom I laid bare all the facts about Umasi and my relations with her. He was surprised that so respectable a man like myself should be intimate with such a woman. He asked me to wait and spoke to his chief, the Deputy Commissioner of Crimes, who at once ordered her unconditional release. I took her to my room and we were happy once more. The next day we moved to a suburb.

I took up a small house and bought furniture and utensils. She gave up fruit-vending and took charge of the kitchen. She knew very little about cooking and I put her in the way. In spare hours I taught her to read and write and in less than two years' time I groomed her into a proud beauty, smart and sophisticated. And I called her Umasini.

I ALSO taught her to speak in a polished manner and give up her slangish style. I engaged a tutor to teach her music and in a short time her progress was phenomenal. She had a low, soft voice that suited her very well, and any song that she sang was rich with emotion and acquired a new meaning.

The tutor himself—Keshav was his name—was amazed and

praised Umasini as a gifted woman. He requested my permission to let her give a music concert on the occasion of the anniversary of his music school. I jumped at the idea but she shied like an unbroken mare. It required a lot of persuasion on my part to make her agree. At the concert she was very nervous at first but the tutor and myself sitting behind her encouraged her with signs and cues. After a few minutes she became quite her normal self and sang without effort. The very audience was hypnotised. Cheers and continuous clapping of hands punctuated her performance that day.

"Umasini is really gifted," said her teacher enthusiastically.

"She sings like one inspired," remarked another musician, an old man, who had been specially invited to attend the concert.

I MYSELF could hardly believe that Uma could rise to such great heights. I spent more money to give her a thorough training under leading musicians. In a short while she earned a name as the most accomplished songstress of the day. Her concerts were attended by many music fans and she was paid tidy amounts. Now it was her turn to receive pupils who considered it a privilege to learn music at her feet.

We would have remained perfectly happy and contented if she had concentrated on

music. A gramophone company which recorded her songs was responsible for giving her the widest publicity. Her records sold like hot cakes, her photo appeared over the advertisements of the company in all newspapers and magazines. The result was that film producers began to besiege our door. We had meanwhile moved to a bungalow and owned a brand-new Fiat. Uma had presented me with a bonny daughter who was just two years old and on whom we lavished all our affection.

I sternly resisted all offers from cinema companies to engage Uma. They begged of me to let her sing a few songs in a featured role. One of them, Dhyanesh, was more persistent than others and would not take a "No" for an answer. Every morning he would park his car and wait for hours to have a glimpse of Uma and talk with me. He said I had only to name a figure and he would at once sign the cheque.

I agreed at last but told him that Uma could only be a play-back. In light music she even went one better and her songs were the rage of the day. Slowly and step by step she served as play-back for several companies and wherever you went, whether it was to the bazaar or to any hotel, you could not escape hearing Uma's melodious voice.

YOUNG men and women, college boys and girls sang her

songs and wrote heaps of letters to her, praising her to the skies, declaring their love for her, and asking for her photographs. We used to sit together in bed with heads close together, reading the letters one by one, line by line and enjoying them immensely. We would then decide upon the nature of the reply, never omitting to thank any fan, high or low, and deeply appreciating their sentiments.

I CANNOT easily explain how Uma came to star in a full-length spectacular musical but one clever producer, Vasuram, actually pushed her into it, swearing that Uma had given her whole-hearted promise. She herself couldn't coherently account for it but she said she remembered having given the pledge in a weak moment. That was the beginning of a misunderstanding which slowly smouldered. I agreed that she must honour the undertaking though I was against her entry into feature films. I never argued with her but I made it plain in so many words that it must be the first and last of her contracts. She seemed to obey my words and whenever I was sullen would burst into tears.

Every night for nearly three months I had to take her to the studio twenty miles away and we were able to return only in the small hours of the morning. One week there was a terrible spell of monsoonish weather what with heavy gales and lashing rains. I had caught a cold which

developed into high fever and double pneumonia. I was bed-ridden and two doctors were called in attendance. But the shooting went on and Uma went to the studio every night.

THE amazing thing was that Uma could have postponed her engagement and attended to me. Instead she became restless and often looked out to see through the window whether the studio car was coming to pick her up. She was in an agony of suspense whenever the car was late. I never asked her to stay at home and watch over me. She was clearly bored in my presence.

This was a new turn in our life. We had five lakhs salted away in the banks. There certainly was no need for her to work in the nights especially when I was so gravely ill. The doctors were cheering me up every time but I could see from their faces that they were not free from anxiety. They advised Uma to engage a nurse at once. She forgot their instruction and went to the studio.

A very close friend of mine, Shankar by name, was in constant attendance upon me and he would not even think of taking rest. When the doctors had gone and Uma had left for the studio, I drew him aside. I wanted him to shadow Uma and find out whether she was romantically interested in any man in the studio. Shankar at first thought I must be raving and

EYES: WOMAN'S BEST ASSETS

HOW are you doing by your eyes? Remember that they are one of the most important parts of your beauty stock-in-trade. They not only can give forth glamour but they are the mirror of your personality. Therefore, like all mirrors, they must always be bright and sparkling, never dull.

First and foremost, to have this sparkle they must be healthy. Eye-shadow and mascara cannot camouflage signs of eye fatigue and strain. As a matter of fact, cosmetics are apt to accentuate an unhealthy eye condition by calling attention to this part of your face.

So be sure to give daily care to those orbs of yours if you want them to add to the charm you aim to present to the world. Bathe them morning and night and during the day if they have been subjected to strain, dust or too much sunlight.

Eye Wash

If you work in an office keep handy a bottle of whatever eye wash or drops you prefer. If you

make a practice of giving yourself a facial several times a week and relax with cream on your face, lay eye pads over closed lids and let them get in their good work while the cream works on your face.

You either can use specially prepared eye pads or soak pads of cotton in your favourite eye wash. A refreshing home-made eye wash can be made with a half-and-half mixture of boric acid solution and camphor water.

Leave the eye make-up job as the finale when making up your face. Be sure excess face powder has been removed from lids, eyebrows and lashes and then proceed with eyeshadow, eyebrow pencil and mascara, in that order.

You don't have to use all three of these items. Many of you have naturally attractive eyebrows and dark long lashes. But most women find that eye-shadow dramatises the eyes if used correctly.

First comes the eyeshadow-the colour you may want to experiment with. In general, blue, gray or violet is good for the blue eyes; gray or gray-blue for gray eyes; brown and green for brown and hazel eyes, and green for green eyes. Black can be used by very dark-eyed individuals if it is applied delicately.

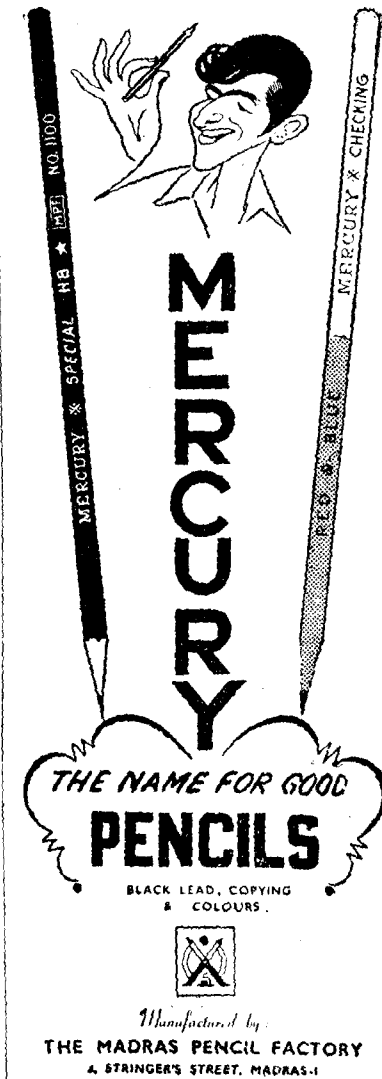
Pencil And Curler

To help blend the eyeshadow put a tiny bit of eye cream or vaseline on your eye-lids first. Then blend the shadow well with the fingertips. To make the eyes look farther apart, use the shadow more heavily towards the outer ends of the lids. If your eyes are naturally far apart use the shadow more heavily towards the inner corners. If your eyes are exceptionally prominent concentrate the shadow at the centre of the lids.

If you use an eyebrow pencil follow the natural line of your brows, and apply with light strokes.

Mascara is the last touch. The shade will depend upon the colour of your eyes and skin.

Before applying the mascara use an eye-lash curler to train your lashes to sweep upward. This also stimulates growth of the lashes if you put an eye cream on them when using the curler. Hold the curler on the lashes for about half a minute. If you don't use mascara put a little cream on the lashes anyway and brush them well. ‡‡



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Questions & Answers

All types of questions from our readers are welcome. Answers may be diverting, informative or instructive as the case may be but under no circumstances is any offence meant to anyone.

R. Venkataraman, Tambaram.

Q.—If another world war breaks out will India take part in it?

A.—Only if India happens to be attacked, not otherwise.

Radheysyam Kalwar, Bombay.

Q.—Give an *exact* definition of beauty, will you?

A.—The exact opposite of ugliness!

Nawal Malhotra, Delhi.

Q.—What use are Five-Year-Plans if they cannot remove poverty and unemployment?

A.—They will lead to more daring plans like Communist Co-operatives and nationalisation of all things under the sun!

Ch. Sivakumar, Guntur.

Q.—Of what material is God made?

A.—Of the light of Heaven.

Q.—Do you believe in the effect of mantra?

A.—There are more things in heaven and earth than we dream of, brother. Pity the ignorance of those who scoff at mantras.

Ganapathy Nayak, Mangalore.

Q.—In a certain magazine I have seen a writer of Questions and Answers proudly styling himself a great columnist and mentioning that fact five or six times. What do you think of that?

A.—If we remember aright, there is no column on that tiny page but he still calls himself a columnist to impress the readers!

M. Sundara Prasad, Tambaram.

Q.—Why do some people consider boxing and marriage similar?

A.—Because both are games and you have to struggle and wrestle for the results!

Shyam Lal Kajaria, Calcutta.

Q.—How best, do you think the Second Five Year Plan will solve the economic entanglement of India?

A.—By asking foreign nations for more short-term and long-term loans!

R. Atmaram, Madras.

Q.—Your Annual provides very readable stories. Especially, the long complete story, "In The Wicked City," is very enjoyable. But compared with other magazine specials, your Annual is priced rather high at one rupee. Why only 112 pages?

A.—Thanks for the compliment. But other magazines provide less matter than ours. More than half the space is taken up by advertisements. The reading matter is not much. So don't measure a magazine's worth by its size!

This month's prize of five rupees for the best question has been awarded to: R. Atmaram, Madras.

ready to start. But how can I afford to lose a night on you? Only this afternoon I borrowed some money to run the house," he stammered.

"What do you do with all the money you are earning through us?" asked Kanta with some heat.

"You are not even giving us our daily share for the past one month," emphasized Usha.

"Why one month? It is two months and a half," corrected Prema.

Chenchi smelt trouble and was anxious to avoid it. "Girls! Girls! Be a little steady. I shall think over what you have said and examine your accounts."

He then turned to Usha. "My dear honey! Will you take that ledger book and that suspense book and follow me? When I have finished with this business we shall consider where we can go."

He stepped into the inner room, with Usha following him with his account books. He bolted the door and then the two girls heard the key click.

Kanta and Prema stared at each other in amazement and horror.

"Do you hear what he says? He accuses her of starting all this trouble."

They heard her scream as he took out his leather belt (his normal weapon) and strike her on the back, on the shoulder, on

the face, on her breast...

"Soon it will be our turn, one by one. What shall we do?" Prema wrung her hands.

Kanta stood up and signed to her to keep quiet. "Usha has the stamina to bear this and more. She is a tigress when angry. See, it is now his turn to call for help. She is biting him and scratching his face with her nails. And now he is crying and making all sorts of promises. They will make it up with hugs and kisses."

Kanta quietly bolted the door of Chenchi's room on the outside. Then she ran into the room opposite, brought a lock and fastened it on the padlock of Chenchi's door.

The two women then ransacked Chenchi's box, took out some bundles of ten-rupee notes which he kept under the false bottom. They counted some thousand rupees, divided it between themselves and hid the money in their little hand-bags. They then locked the outer door of the house and walked nonchalantly towards the station.

"Prema dear!" said Kanta, excitedly. "We are breathing the air of freedom after many months. Most probably he will catch us and beat us or we may escape back to our villages. But this night, dear, is a night of freedom and I will enjoy it to the utmost. No man shall come near me."

The street lights glittered as the two women daintily and jauntily walked out. ‡

A Saree For Sarla

[Ram introduced his lovely sister to Deepak as his future bride. In fact her beauty exceeded his expectations, and no young man had such a delightful experience.]

THE taxi came to a slow stop in front of the college hostel. A tall and handsome man stepped out and looked around with a glint of a smile in his eyes. He was still paying the taxiwala when the hostel chaprasi was beside him.

"Whom are you looking for, babuji?" he enquired of the stranger.

"Does Deepak live here?" the stranger asked with an air of superiority about him.

"Yes, sahib, in Room No. 37," the chaprasi said meekly.

"Show me the way," the stranger seemed to order.

Deepak belonged to a rich family and often tipped the chaprasi and other employees of the hostel. For this reason they were always ready to oblige him in whatever small way they could. This stranger looked

BY

PREM P. BHALLA

like one of his rich relatives, perhaps an elder brother, the chaprasi thought. And he hastened to lead him to Room No. 37.

The door was locked. Deepak had probably gone to college,

but he would be back soon. The chaprasi asked the stranger to wait in the hostel office, but he would not agree.

"Don't bother. I'll come again after some time," he said as he slipped a shining four-anna coin into the chaprasi's palm.

DEEPAK returned from college for lunch. The chaprasi, happy at the unexpected money he had made in the morning, was already impatiently waiting to break the news to Deepak. He rushed to meet him at the gate.

"Sahib, your brother had come to meet you," he said in excitement.

"My brother!" Deepak said in a shocked tone. "But I have no brother!"

The chaprasi was sorry about his mistake. "I don't exactly know who it was," he continued however, "but he wanted to meet you. He was tall and fair, and..."

"Where is he now?" Deepak cut him short.

"He came here sometime back. I asked him to wait, but he said he would come again later. He'll be here soon, I think."

Deepak couldn't guess who it could be. At least he wasn't expecting anyone. He went to

the mess and had his lunch. Then he went directly to his room still wondering who had come to call on him.

The stranger returned in an hour's time and went directly to Deepak's room. One glance at him made Deepak sure that the visitor was a stranger to him also. However, the look of bewilderment on his face only made the confident stranger smile.

"You don't know me, I think," the stranger said, still smiling.

"I don't seem to have seen you before, but..." Deepak said hesitantly looking at the handsome smiling face.

"You're not really to blame," the stranger said seating himself on a chair, "I'm Ram Singh. My friends call me Ramu. My sister and I were coming this way, so your father said we must call on you. You see, your father has agreed to your marriage with Sarla."

"Sarla? Who's she?" Deepak was shocked.

"OH? Don't you know about her? She's my sister. Did your father not write to you about her?"

Deepak was totally taken aback by this sudden revelation. Sarla? Marriage? What exactly was going on in his house? It

was all right if his parents wanted to select a girl for him, but what was the hurry? And why was he not consulted? After all, the times had changed. Maybe all the boys still did not select their own brides, but they were definitely consulted, and the final decision rested upon them.

HE felt confused. The subject of marriage for any college student was confusing. But when he looked up at the handsome face of Ramu sitting opposite him, he remembered what his mother had once said to him. Pretty! She had said she would get him a nice and pretty wife. And seeing how handsome and smart Ramu was, Deepak felt his sister must be pretty too.

"It's a pleasure meeting you," Deepak said at last, "Make yourself comfortable."

"Let's not have any formality," Ramu tried to ease the situation.

"Of course! Of course!" Deepak added, more at ease now.

Deepak took a liking to Ramu almost immediately. He was his version of a modern man—handsome, smart, and a ready conversationalist. He had not really seen his sister, or heard about her from his parents, but he was not ready to admit it.

He wanted to impress Ramu well.

The afternoon passed on to evening, and Deepak entertained his guest to a hearty tea. The students normally got only two biscuits with their evening tea, but this was certainly not sufficient for this important-looking man. It was true that his parents had been rather inconsiderate in choosing a girl for him all by themselves; however he believed she must be pretty. To him there were no two ways about it. This seemed to please him.

"What's your programme now?" Ramu asked after tea.

"Nothing in particular," Deepak said.

"I'll have to be moving now. My sister will be waiting for me. Why don't you join us for the evening?"

"It'll be a pleasure," Deepak said courteously. This was just what he was waiting for.

SARLA met them outside a restaurant. One glance told Deepak what his mother had meant by the word 'pretty,' when she had spoken about selecting a wife for him. Why, she was exquisite! His parents sure knew how to choose. When Sarla saw Deepak she just blushed and looked down. However, Ramu with his easy conversation

made the situation more comfortable.

FOR Deepak it was a solemn occasion. He wanted to form a good impression on both Sarla and Ramu. That evening he entertained them to a cinema show. He had reserved a box for that—nothing less seemed to be enough. The show was followed by a sumptuous dinner at a swanky restaurant.

"It's been real fun meeting you," Ramu said when they were going to part late that night.

"I've enjoyed myself too," Deepak said, pleased with life.

"I don't suppose you will be able to meet us tomorrow," Sarla spoke up slowly.

"Of course I'll meet you tomorrow. How about 10 a.m.?" he said with some finality, and then took leave.

The next day Deepak missed college. He dressed early and went to join Sarla and Ramu. They were already waiting for him.

"Hello there," Deepak called out from far.

"Hello," Sarla said in her soft and melodious voice. She looked beautiful in her yellow saree.

"Where do we go now?" Deepak enquired.

"You mind if we look into the shops?" Sarla said rather coquettishly.

"Oh, no! Sure. Go ahead. It'll be a pleasure," Deepak did not want to displease her.

They went from one shop to another, looking at this and looking at that. Nothing seemed to suit Sarla's taste. Deepak was amazed. At last a saree seemed to attract her attention.

"Only ninety-five rupees," the salesman explained, "it's pure silk. The best of its kind."

"I know. I know. I've many of this sort," Sarla tried to show off.

"THE latest design, lady," the salesman continued, "just arrived yesterday."

"It's nice, but....," Sarla said non-committally looking at Deepak.

"Take it if you like," Deepak was waiting for this chance. "Let it be a present from me."

"Oh, no! I couldn't take such an expensive present," she replied quietly.

"Pack it, please," Deepak said to the salesman. He didn't have the money then, but he was known there and he could pay later.

"Thank you," Sarla said. "It wasn't necessary at all."

The day went by quickly—shopping, lunch, a matinee show, tea and then again more shopping until dinner. Deepak had bought a saree and a pair of bracelets for Sarla, and both she and Ramu were most pleased with him. Besides he had entertained them lavishly with pictures and teas and dinners. At the end of the day when the time came to part Deepak felt sorry, and a sudden loneliness welled up within him. He would not be able to meet Sarla and Ramu soon as they were leaving early the next day. However, in one way he felt relieved. His generous allowance for the month was finished. Besides he had already got into debt for the saree and the bracelets.

DEEPAK again got busy with college. Only he couldn't keep his mind away from thinking of Sarla. Even in the short period of two days she had cast a permanent spell on him. Her pretty face and the gentle voice haunted him all the while. However, what annoyed him more than Sarla's absence was the constant silence on the matter by his father in his letters. Then finally he got a letter which read :

Dear Deepa,

I have yet to come across a more irresponsible and good-for-nothing lad than you are.

What exactly do you mean by getting married secretly? And then you have the cheek of not even informing us. If it was not for your mother, I would disown a son like you. Even she is most upset over the whole dirty affair. Your brother-in-law Ram Singh called on us yesterday, and told us everything. He said you wanted some money. I was in no mind to send you any, but when your mother insisted that I overlook this dirty business, I have sent Rs. 200 through Ram Singh, which you must have received. You must write to me immediately and explain your strange behaviour.

—Your Dad.

Deepak read the letter, and finally understood what the match-maker was really up to!

A BLANK!

A clever young woman was asked to attend a public function. She was given a place between a bishop and a rabbi. It was her chance to break into high company, and she meant to use it.

"I feel as if I were a leaf between the Old and New Testaments," she said with a giggle.

"That page, madam," replied the rabbi, "is usually a blank!"

NEW STARS AND GLAMOUR

DIANA DORS is probably the most-photographed girl in British films. I doubt if she could even count the number of times she has posed for pin-ups. But the very film that was originally intended to give Diana her first big break was never seen, writes John K. Newnham in "Tit-Bits."

In fact, it was never even completed. The picture was "Streets Paved With Water." The water was apparently too much for it: the whole production was sunk without trace.

And the stills photographer who took some of the very earliest glamour pictures of Diana admits, ruefully, that this was one of his biggest disappointments. He has been hoping ever since for the chance to photograph Di Dors again, but seems to be fated to miss being on her films.

You have seen plenty of other glamour stills taken by Norman

Hargood, however. He is one of the leading photographers in the British studios, and the many big films he has worked on include "Christopher Columbus," "The Mudlark," "Richard III" and "Storm Over the Nile."

He had been a photographer ever since leaving school. He was a photographer in the R.A.F. And he ran his own photographic studio, with film and stage celebrities as his subjects, before joining Gaumont-British at the Shepherd's Bush Studios. He has been in films ever since.

Pose and Smile

Tracking down British stills-men in my search for the stories behind the pin-ups, I found that Norman Hargood gave first place to the pictures he took of Yvonne de Carlo when she was making "Captain's Paradise."

"Because," he admitted, "I learned quite a lot from her. It made a change from having to

explain in detail just what I wanted. Yvonne took matters entirely into her own hands. There wasn't a thing I could teach her.

"For instance, I found just the pose I wanted and asked her to smile. But she corrected me. 'This pose doesn't go with a smile,' she told me. And I discovered that she had worked out in detail just the sort of expression that matched every pose."

Grand Sport

Norman's most memorable stills session—ten glamorous days in a romantic old mill in Devonshire with Britain's newest star, Virginia Maskell. She had just signed a contract with British Lion and she was being given the publicity "works."

"Of course," the happily married Norman pointed out, rather hurriedly, "I wasn't alone with her! Stills sessions are quite production affairs, with make-up, hairdressing and wardrobe all represented, and in this case the publicity man as well."

The mill at Welcombe Bay was taken over completely by the stills unit, and used as a base for excursions to beauty spots in the area. Ginny Maskell often rode horseback to these locations, and some of the best of these outdoor pin-ups were taken of her with the horse.

grand sport," Norman exclaimed, enthusiastically. She had to climb hills, clamber over rocks, and get herself thoroughly messed up on the farm. It was as much as we could do to keep up with her.

"She was wonderful with animals, which was fine for me. No photographer can go far wrong with a combination of a beautiful girl and an animal! I liked, in particular, some of those I took of her with dogs.

"I felt a bit guilty when I told her I wanted some pictures of her in the sea. Although it was early summer, the water was freezing. But she went in, and managed to smile although her teeth were chattering most of the time. She didn't complain, though."

Memorable

Another memorable set of stills named by Norman among his favourites are those he took of Elsa Martinelli when "Manuela" was being filmed.

The picture was shot on and off the south-east coast of Spain, and there was a lot of night filming at sea. The setting was supposed to be tropical, but the atmosphere was often icy. The Italian star would much rather have cloaked herself in a heavy fur coat than pose for provocative, bare-legged pin-ups—especially in the cold sea.

Norman managed to get her to smile happily, however, and

"She turned out to be a

returned to the studios with one especially attractive set of stills taken during a whole day session at San Juan beach, with its marvellous stretches of sand. They had the beach almost to themselves because it was out of season.

Norman has become a glamour expert... a genius who can make quite ordinary-looking girls appear as though nature has provided them with every possible tribute.

But he is much happier when his subjects really are as amorous as they seem on the screen. Kay Kendall has one of the most interesting faces he has ever photographed.

"She's temperamental," he agrees, "but I found her to be completely co-operative, and I think I must have set up a new record with the number of stills I managed to take during one session."

Typical Beauty

Claire Bloom is another of his favourites. "A typical English beauty," he says.

Shirley Eatort is also an outstanding example of British beauty. Norman was lucky enough to work with her when she was more enthusiastic about pin-up posing than she is now. He got some delightful pictures of her during the filming of "Charley Moon," in which she appeared with Max Bygraves.

He had the distinction during this production, too, of taking the only pin-up stills for which Patricia Driscoll has ever posed. This, of course, was before Pat became the new Maid Marian in the TV "Robin Hood" pictures.

She protested: "But I'm not a pin-up type."

Norman told her not to worry. They would get over that difficulty. And, clothed in tight-fitting black jersey and tights, the tall and attractive Pat emerged from the pin-up session with nothing whatever to feel ashamed about.

On Her Toes!

One trick: although already tall, she added to her height by posing on her toes, keeping her shoulders back.

"Happy is the Bride" provided Norman Hargood with some interesting stills sessions. It was this film, probably more than any other, that turned Janette Scott from a typical teenager into a sophisticated young woman, and the still photographs of her showed this transformation to a striking degree.

Norman has nice words to say, too, about Sylvia Syms, whom he photographed when she was making "The Birthday Present." She was reputed to be standoffish, but there were certainly no signs of this when she went into the stills studio.

Just recently, Norman has had the sort of task every studio photographer enjoys--taking the earliest pictures of a new star. It's nice to be able to look back and say: "I remember her when..."

Real Stunners

The film he has been working on is "The Bridal Path." The new-comer is Patricia Bredin, the girl from "Free As Air." Much of the production took place in Scotland, but Pat was also lured into the stills studio for pin-ups.

Yet some of the photographs he took of her had to show her looking quite unglamorous in a dirty old mac. She still looked glamorous, so it isn't always the clothes that make the girl.

Since then, Pat has won the lead opposite Ian Carmichael in "Right, Left and Centre" and has just been awarded a contract by Launder and Gilliat.

And she is not the only girl in "The Bridal Path" who may soon be better known. Norman Hargood had quite a bunch of beautiful Scots lasses to photograph while on location. They're stunners, too!

STATE AWARD WINNERS

The State Awards for the best films in 1958 have been made to the following films:

Feature Films

Sagar Sangame: (Bengali)--President's Gold Medal; President's silver medal and a cash prize of Rs. 25,000.

Jalshagar (Bengali): All-India Certificate of merit; regional certificate of merit and a cash prize of Rs. 12,500.

School Master (Kannada): All India certificate of merit; and President's silver medal.

Madhumati (Hindi): *Ronga Police* (Assamese) and *Pellinati Pramanalu* (Telugu) have won the President's silver medals.

Lajwanti, *Karigar* (Hindi), *Dhakti Jao* (Marathi), *Dak Harkara* (Bengali), *Thanga Padumai*, *Annayin Aanai* (Tamil) *Mangalya Balam* and *Randidhangan-gazhi* (Malayalam) have won regional cash certificates of merit.

Documentaries

Radhakrishna: President's gold medal and a cash prize of Rs. 5,000.

The Story of Dr. Karve: All-India certificate of merit and a cash prize of Rs. 2,500.

The Call of the Mountains: All-India certificate of merit.

Children's Films

The film "Virsa and Magic

Doll" in English wins an All-India certificate of merit. No film in this category was found suitable for the Prime Minister's gold medal.

It is curious to know here that since the inception of State Awards in the year 1954 made for the bests of 1953, three Bengali films have won the coveted President's gold medal and they are "Pathar Panchali" "Kabuliwala" and "Sagar Sangame." And this time the second place again goes to Bengal. A creditable record indeed!

For the first time, a Kannada film wins an All-India certificate of merit and no doubt it is a compliment to the Kannada film industry.

FILM QUIZ

1. Do you remember the year in which Premnath and Bina Rai were married?
2. What is the real name of dancer Roopmala?
3. Name the film in which Bharat Bhushan made his debut
4. Do you know the name of Meena Kumari's husband?
5. Which was the last picture of late Amiya Chakravarty?

(Turn to page 46 for answers.)

STARS AT LEISURE

Very rarely film stars get leisure and when they do get it, many go either to races or spend their leisure in clubs or cafes.

Some stars really utilise it in the way it should be done. Given below are some of the ways in which our popular stars utilise the leisure they get.

Balraj Sahni, the tweed coat peasant, whenever he gets leisure on the sets begins reading some book or the other, which he usually carries in his pocket.

The up and coming star Nutan also utilises her leisure in reading books.

Meena Kumari utilises her leisure in reading Urdu poetry. Or in the alternative she writes poetry. You know, she is a poetess in her own humble way.

Quite contrary is the way in which Dev spends his leisure. Whenever Dev Anand gets some time, he takes a nap and forgets the movie world during that short period of resting.

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

Hrishikesh Mukherjee entered films as an editor. Now he is a director too. His first directorial venture "Musafir" won a certificate of merit. His latest is "Anari."

Bimal Roy was a cinematographer in New Theatres, before he became a successful director and he has many hits to his credit.

Lata Mangeshkar doesn't even remember the number of films

for which she has lent her voice.

Raj Kapoor had his earlier training in historicities in the Prithvi Theatres and he made his debut in the film "Neel Kamal."

Calcutta, which was the first picture to be made in Bengal.

1918: The Cinematograph Act came into force this year. The Act provided for the censoring of films, exhibition etc.

* * *

LEST WE FORGET

Who has not seen "Kangan," "Bandhan" and other films of Bombay Talkies and enjoyed them? In those days Bombay Talkies represented clean entertainment in the Movies.

The person responsible for the achievement of Bombay Talkies was none other than the late Himansu Rai, founder of that concern.

The entire film industry was shocked to hear of the sudden death of Himansu Rai, nineteen years ago on 19th May 1940. He was only 48 when he died.

Outstanding Work

Hailing from Bengal, after his early education, Rai proceeded to England and passed out as a Bar-at-law. For some time he worked at the India office. His passion for art made him enter the amateur stage and very soon he entered the movies. In association with the U. F. A. of Berlin, he produced some outstanding films like "Light of Asia," "Throw of the Dice," "Shiraz" and "Karma" which starred his wife Devika Rani, the

BEHIND THE SCENES

The stork visited again the home of Dev Anands recently and they are now the proud parents of a daughter. Their first born is a boy who is named as Suneel. Both the parents wanted a daughter and they had already named her as Devina, even before her birth.

Dev Anand's sister is reported to have wired him in this fashion: "Congratulations for two Awards." (One Award referred to Filmfare Award and the other to his daughter.)

MOVIE-MILESTONES

1912-13: Birth of Indian film industry; Dadasaheb Phalke produced the first silent movie "Raja Harishchandra."

1914-18: Phalke made 23 films, which included "Krishnaleela" Mandakini, Phalke's daughter, made her debut in the above film.

G. F. Madan of Bombay produced "Nala Damayanti" at

first lady of the Indian screen. It may be mentioned here that he acted as Gautam in "Light of Asia" and the world premiere of his film "Karma" was held in London 1933. In all the above films he acted as a hero besides producing them.

In the year 1934, the Bombay Talkies was founded by him and the concern produced its first picture "Jawani-Ki-Hawa" in the year 1935. After the death of Rai for sometime Bombay Talkies was managed by Mrs. Devika Rani.

Mr. Rai worked for Bombay Talkies incessantly and this was what late Rai Bahadur Chunilal said about him. "I have never met a sturdier leader, a more loyal friend, a steadier organiser, a more sincere worker and a more just man...It may be truly said that Mr. Rai laid down his life in the cause of a great ideal which he always entertained for the motion picture in India." This in short sums up what Himansu Rai had stood for.

Many of the top-notchers of today owe their gratitude to Rai and Bombay Talkies, but for them their existence in film-dom would have been a nightmare.

ABOUT MOVIES, MEN AND MATTERS

The Sangeet Natak Akadami Awards for the year 1958-59

were given away at a special ceremony held at Delhi recently by Vice-President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

The film personalities who received the honour this time were Satyajit Roy (Film Direction) Ashok Kumar (Film Acting) and Sombhu Mitra (Drama Direction).

Ashok Kumar, the ever green hero of the Indian screen, having served the industry for such a long time deserves the honour. Now an enterprising producer Ashok Kumar is sure to reach fresh heights after this signal honour.

The name of Satyajit Roy is well known throughout the movie world. A commercial artist turned director, he made his debut as a director in that popular award winning film, "Pathar Panchali." He won name and fame in such a short period that no other director can think of achieving in his entire lifetime.

The other personality who got the honour was Sombhu Mitra, who was one of the directors of R. K. Films' "Jagte Raho" which won an international award. He with Amita Mitra, it may be mentioned, wrote the story of "Jagte Raho."

Silver Jubilee

The silver jubilee of B. R.

Films' "Sadhna" was celebrated at Bombay very recently. This is the third picture of B. R. Films, which is celebrating the silver jubilee, the first two being "Ek-hi-Rasta" and "Naya Daur." The proud privilege of producing jubilee hits in succession goes to producer-director B. R. Chopra. Film-journalist-turned-director B. R. Chopra has been successful in giving purpose to films, and it is hoped that he will keep his banner flying in his forthcoming films.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

An interesting incident happened during the preview of Shekar's "Akhri Dao."

Johnny Walker plays an important role in that film. A friend of him (a bus conductor) came to see the picture. Johnny was very glad to see his friend. He asked Shekar to get two tickets of the lowest class so that they could sit together and enjoy the film. Instead he got him two balcony tickets. Both saw the film in the same fashion as they used to see the films in those days when they were both working as bus conductors.

Though Johnny has climbed the ladder of success, he has not forgotten his past and that tells a lot about his character.

FILM REVIEW :

ANARI

L. B. Films' "Anari" does not boast of a new type of story. But the story presented here, though familiar, is absorbingly told and that is the main point to its credit.

A poor youth (Anari) is in search of a job. Due to his integrity he loses his jobs as soon as he gets them. He falls in love with a girl who poses as a maid servant, finally to find her to be a rich girl. Disillusioned he returns to his apartment. The owner of the apartment is a widowed mother who though harsh-tongued is by nature a very kind woman. She helps him in his adversities, treating him as her own son and what is more she bequeaths her property to him. The uncle of the girl, a rich man, comes in the way of the love affair of his niece. As things would have it, a packet of poison is mixed with the flu medicine manufactured by the concern of the rich man. Fearing terrible consequences he sees that the matter is hushed up. The widow Mrs. D'sa gets flu and the medicine is administered. To her ill-luck that proved to be the poison mixed with the packages of flu medicine by mistake.

Brilliant Heights

When Anari tells the rich man, who was also his boss that he

would expose the entire thing, he threatens him. A case is launched against him for being the murderer of Mrs. D'sa. The story reaches its climax. The girl whom he loved comes to his rescue and states in the court that she was responsible for the murder of that widow. But soon her uncle opens his eyes and confesses his guilt. The lovers are united. This in short is the story of "Anari."

Raj Kapoor and Nutan give very convincing performances. So also Motilal and Lalita Pawar as a mother who finds her lost son in "Anari" reaches brilliant heights in portraying the character. It is easily one of her best performances. In one word it can be said that the entire cast of the film has striven hard to reach the required heights in histrionics.

Production values are of a high standard. The story and dialogues are from the pen of Inder Raj Anand and they are quite fine. Lyrics by Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri are turned by Shankar Jaikishen and their music is good without being extraordinary.

The credit should go to Hrishikesh Mukherjee who has done a fine job as the editor and director of this film. He has shown more promise than some of the veteran directors. He promises to reach the peak soon and it will not be a wonder if that happens.

Welcome Departure

The director has not forgotten the popular box-office requirements, nor has he taken his job of handling the theme and the artistes lightly. Everything has been given its importance. In this film the role of character artistes has not become a side show, it has assumed an importance which is not usually found in our films where hero and the heroine take much of the celluloid. This is a welcome departure.

In short with its good music, fine production values, good acting, slick editing and imaginative direction, "Anari" impresses the cinegoers.

Answers to Film Quiz :

1. 1952.
2. Mumtaz Banu.
3. Bhakta Kabir.
4. Writer-Producer Kamal Amrohi.
5. Katuputli.

—By N. Rajashekhar

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LAUGHS FROM MANY LANDS!

VOICE OVER PHONE

The telephone rang in the office of a theatrical agent,

"Hullo," said a voice. "I want a job. I can sing, dance, and juggle."

"So can a thousand other people...and they're all out of work," snapped the agent.

"Just a minute...don't hand up. I can play the piano, walk the tight-rope and recite *Paradise Lost* backwards."

"So can all the others. Your'e wasting my time. Good-bye."

"Just a minute," pleaded the voice. "There's one other thing. I'm a dog."

SENSATIONAL

"So you want a job as a headline writer," said the daily newspaper editor. "Well, here's a story about the Army needing more space for training. What would you call that?"

"Blimps' Biggest Land Grab," said the applicant readily.

"Good. And here's a statement by a War Office spokesman

saying deserters will be brought to justice even if they have not been living on the Black Market."

"Army Gestapo Threaten Crimeless Deserters."

"And here's story about the War Office opening a canteen."

"Whitehall Chairborne Gorge Luxury Food in Requisitioned Flats."

"O.K. Start tomorrow."

SHILLING DECIDES

A group of Shakespearian actors of doubtful financial standing were lounging in the bar of a small village inn. The manager entered and addressed the leading actor: "Don't forget we're playing *Romeo and Juliet* tonight."

"*Romeo and Juliet*, eh?" replied the leading man. "I can't possibly play *Romeo* with three days' growth. Give me a bob for a shave!"

The manager was staggered. "A bob! Cut it out. We'll play *Macbeth*."

LIGHT FOR TEACHER

The shortsighted schoolmaster was rapidly losing his temper:

"You at the back of the class. What was the date of the signing of Magna Carta?"

"I don't know!"

"Well, then, can you tell me what the Gordon Riots were?"

"I don't know!"

"I taught that last Friday. What were you doing last night?"

"I was out drinking with some friends."

The schoolmaster gasped and his face went almost purple. "You have the audacity to stand there and tell me that! How do you expect to pass your examination?"

"Well, I don't. You see, I just came in to fix the electric light."

* * *

NO COMMISSION

Mac's wife was ill, and Mac was running for the undertaker.

"But," remonstrated a friend who met him, "it's no undertaker you want. It's a doctor."

"Nay, nay," was Mac's reply, "I canna afford to deal wi' middle-men."

* * *

HOW MANY STROKES?

It was a hot, sultry session in the courts, and the judge was thinking other than judicial thoughts.

Finally the lawyer said: "He claims his wife was intractable, your honour, so he beat her into subjection with a golf club."

"How many strokes?" asked the judge absently.

* * *

DONE

The employee approached the boss, stammering: "Couldn't I...couldn't I have...after twenty years of service...have a small rise?"

"But," smiled the boss, "that has already been done. Your last wage pack contained 20 per cent more than usual." "Oh, excuse me," murmured the little man, "my wife told me nothing about this."

* * *

TO WAKE HIM UP!

The house was entered by burglars, who made a good haul while the large watchdog slept. The owner reported the dog's dereliction of duty to the dealer. "Well, what you need now," said the pet shop man, "is a little dog to wake up the big dog."

SHORT STORY

THE CRISIS AT HOME

By MURALI MANOHAR

PRABHAVATI was the very picture of sorrow and misery as she counted the sixty rupees which the postal clerk had handed to her over the counter. All that remained in the Savings Bank was a sum of two rupees. On behalf of her ailing father she had withdrawn all the amount but the minimum.

Prabhavati's mother had passed away two months before

Prabhavati had to attend on her ailing father and run the household. But a greater crisis was brewing. Between her heart and head there was a continual struggle...

It represented the balance of five thousand rupees which he had deposited with the Post office five years ago.

Her father, Srivatsa, had then received this provident fund when he retired as a railway clerk. He was suffering from anaemia and was hardly able to

Srivatsa retired. It would be hard to find a more unfortunate woman than Prabhavati. A greater tragedy awaited her. Within two weeks after her mother's death, her husband was drowned while swimming in the river.

Under these staggering blows

transform her into a strong determined woman who had the courage of her convictions. She went to another doctor and got a prescription from him for her father. It was rather strange that the new medicine appeared to tone up her father. Dr. Sahadev was a quack, said Srivatsa. He must have been making experiments on him with new and dangerous drugs.

But all their money had evaporated with Prabhavati's last withdrawal of sixty rupees from the postal Savings Account. She was naturally very depressed as she walked away from the counter. Somebody clapped hands but she went on heedless. As she stepped into the road she stopped and turned round in surprise. An old lady had accosted her again. She had a hand-bag and umbrella; her face, smiling and bright, had an air of distinction.

"Young woman," she said to Prabhavati, "I wonder how you can afford to be so absent-minded in your age. You left this pass-book on the counter and also dropped two one-rupee notes on the floor when you were counting. Here they are."

"THANK you, madam. It is very kind of you. I am being stupid and absent-minded these days. My father is so ill and I can't afford to lose even a paisa," she answered, smiling.

The old lady scrutinised the

name on the pass book. "J. Srivatsa—that is your father's name, I suppose?"

"Yes, madam."

"Say!" the old lady brightened up as if she had a sudden flash of recollection. "Was he not serving as a booking clerk at the local railway station seven years ago? Rather stout and slightly bald with thick glasses. Isn't he your father?"

"You couldn't be more accurate, madam. I am astonished at your memory," she gasped.

"WELL," said the old lady.

"How can I afford to forget him? I have been wanting to see him all these years but the railway office couldn't give any information about his whereabouts. You see, I had bought a first-class ticket for the hill station but absent-mindedly left my purse containing Rs. 2000 on the counter. He followed me by the Express train and personally restored to me that purse after travelling fifty miles. And he wouldn't accept anything from me. How is he getting on?"

Prabhavati told her about her father's misery and prolonged illness. Rama Devi, the Headmistress of the Girls' School—for she it was—accompanied the girl to her home and talked with the old man for a long time. She began to visit him regularly

—Please see page 56

SHORT STORY

THE VISITOR

[He was a heart-broken young man brooding over the loss of his sweetheart. At least he wanted to see her and apologize to her. . .]

THERE was a gentle knock on the main door of my little house when I was still rolling in the bed trying reluctantly to get up. The ever disturbing wall-clock in the sitting room struck seven times putting brakes to my early thoughts.

"Today is Monday, Darling. Are you not going to office?" asked my devoted wife, Sujata.

After a few seconds, I found my wife standing beside my bed trembling and trying to tell me something. What I could make out was, "There is a police officer wanting to see you. His name is Kameswara Rao. I have shown him the way into the sitting room."

"A police officer? In my house, and that too so early in the morning. What nonsense are

you talking?" I jumped from my cot and straightaway went in to see the fellow.

I was taken aback when I saw really an officer in uniform sitting quietly glancing at the day's newspaper. Who the devil could it be, unless he was well

BY

VOARKE

known to me, that could sit so homely.

With a little effort I could only say, "Can I be of any assistance to you?" and then came the reply, "Raju, how nice! I am able to see you after five long years...Can't recognise me? Oh, my! No wonder, you can't...I am Kamu. We used to be classmates in school."

the old man's condition worsened and he never got up from his bed. His daughter was his only nurse and companion. He needed more money for treatment and diet but he had to raid his reserves in the post office. He had thought of leaving his small house to his daughter intact but he was compelled to mortgage it. Prabhavati had studied up to High School; she knew short-hand and typewriting as well. She could have taken up a job but she had to look after her father and cook for him.

Though bed-ridden, Srivatsa pulled up his daughter against her giddy and flighty ways and cautioned her against indiscriminate associations with men. He forbade her to go out after evening. She should not be free with her smiles and must not speak with men—young men in particular. To her credit it must be said that she was a very obedient girl. She knew that any scandal or disgrace would ruin her future and her father's reputation.

THE only male visitor to the house was Dr. Sahadev who was nearly thirty years old. He was a gay bachelor, serving as an honorary physician in the General Hospital. He was tall and thin, almost bony, you would say, but he always dressed smartly and you wouldn't find a speck of dirt in his flawless white suit. And the glasses he wore gave him an imperious air.

For a nominal sum he visited Srivatsa's house on alternate days and he supplied medicines and mixtures free. He got his supplies from the hospital and Prabhavati went to his private dispensary to take them for her father.

OFTEN she had to wait till closing time. Even after the compounder had left, she would sit patiently in the outer room and then only could see the doctor. Sahadev was of course very courteous and apologetic and engage her in a pleasant chat while he prepared the mixture for her father. Then if it was very late he would give her a lift in his car and drop her near her house.

Both had fallen violently in love with each other. Late every evening she went to his dispensary under some pretext or other. Father was running a slight temperature. He vomited twice. He was breathing hard, and so on. And every time he would ply her with questions and pretend to think hard what medicine to prescribe. One night long after the compounder had gone, when they were talking interestedly, the lights had been extinguished. In fear and timidity she drew near to him and placed her hand on his shoulder. She did not resist when he gathered her in his arms and kissed her fiercely on the lips.

That night she gave herself to him and every other night. In

love she looked more attractive, and he became infatuated with his. He gave her money to buy voiles and silks and she wore them to please him. Her father had become too blurred in vision to notice the change in his daughter's appearance. But the neighbours were quick to find out the truth and the old women and the jealous young men were whispering scandal. Prabhavati was the ninth mistress of the doctor, they said openly, and the young woman heard their remark. With moist eyes she reported this to the doctor who laughed it off and embraced her. "I promise, Prabha dear," he said, kissing off her tears, "I shall marry you as soon as my income steadies itself. Supposing I make this offer to your father won't he be pleased?"

"I AM sure he will. It will be a solace to him in the evening of his life. Why not you give him that promise tomorrow?" she asked.

"Let us wait for a month," he said.

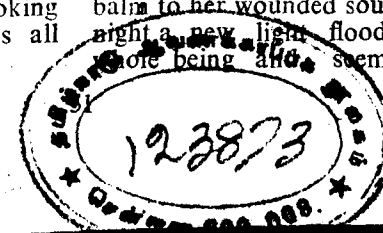
But the gossip-mongers proved to be prophets. Sahadev had stopped his visits. He had suddenly and unaccountably transferred his affections to some rich woman who was visiting him every evening. When Prabhavati deliberately went late one night to the dispensary she saw him kissing a fat plain-looking woman who wore diamonds all over.

He almost snarled at Prabhavati when she entered the inner room as usual. What could she mean by calling at this late hour when the compounder had gone home? It was better that those who couldn't pay saw him in the hospital. How long could these poor, wretched people tap his charity and make him pauperish?

AND the woman endorsed all that he said and was more vehement in her attack on Prabhavati. Her good looks and silk sari excited her jealousy. "Why not this girl sell herself and bring you money? Why should she exploit you? Beware of such hussies visiting you at this late hour" she shouted. "They are out to snare you!"

Her eyes blinded with tears, the young woman dropped her bottle into a dust-bin and ran home. Throwing herself on the bed, she wept for hours and even forgot to attend on her father for nearly a whole day. The old man somehow sensed the sort of trouble that her daughter was facing and asked her to pray and find mental peace. God would forgive even the worst sinners, he said. If his daughter placed her full faith in Him, He would never let her down even after he (her father) had passed away.

Her father's words were like balm to her wounded soul. That night a new light flooded her mind and she seemed to



"Brother! what a surprise! No wonder I can't recognise you with that fearful moustache of yours and the uniform. By the by, where are you working now? How are your parents?...Excuse me....Sujata, where is the morning coffee, please?"

"Raju, you must be very proud of your wife. She is just divine," he said.

"You think so? She is very difficult at times to handle."

Sujata entered the room with the tray and must have overheard the conversation as she gave a nasty look at me.

"Darling, this is my little old friend Kamu. He is going to stay with us for a couple of days. Please arrange for his luggage to be shifted into the right-hand corner room."

"Yes, Your Highness. Anything else?" she grinned and slipped off, and we both burst into laughter.

"Kamu, if you will excuse me I had better get ready to go to my office. Tomorrow I will stay off from my duties. Are you coming with me as well?" Without waiting for his reply I went inside.

It was about ten when we both came out and after walking for five minutes in silence I broke it and said, "Kamu, let me hear from you the story

behind your uniform. I think you belong to the Air Force, and not to the Police Force as my wife thought."

"Never mind about all that, Raju. It is a long drawn story which will not interest you at all."

WHEN I still insisted Kamu began, "As you know, Raju, I joined the college after our go-happy school-days and during the four years' course in the college I was somehow attracted to one Ragini and we loved each other. We had plans to marry but our luck did not hold. At the time of leaving the college for good, Ragini gave me her address and I promised her that I would write to her about my parents' decision on our marriage plans. Unfortunately however I was bed-ridden for a year and could not write to her. The letters I wrote to her subsequently were returned to me with the D.L.O's stamp "Addressee not known." I cursed myself for having betrayed Ragini and, believe me, I lost all interest in life. At times I feel like putting an end to my wretched life but then again, you know, I feel that one day I shall be able to see my Ragini at least to apologize to her. So far of course my last wish in my life hasn't materialised and I don't know whether I would be lucky to see her again. Although my father protested against my joining the Air Force I finally decided out of sheer desperation

to accept the job and after training for a couple of years I am now permanently employed as a Pilot. Out of the money I get I have been sending a couple of hundreds to my parents and in this way at least I feel somewhat satisfied.

"My present base is Bombay but I have been transferred to this place. I must report for duty this Friday. That's all, Raju. Feeling bored? Not my fault. I have told you before but you still insisted."

"Oh, no! Not at all. I am absorbed in your account, specially the romantic part of it. It is exciting."

"Yes, it is. But it is painful too."

THAT night myself and my wife were talking to the guest. "Are you married?" Sujata darted a query straight at Kamu. The question seemed to be uncalled for, irrelevant and jolted both of us. I really became wild at my darling wife and replied "No, he is not. Why? Have you any knowledge of a matrimonial bureau?" My reprimand although strong as it seemed to me proved effective as I observed Sujata smiling at me. I thought Kamu must have felt insulted by this conversation and to pacify him I suggested we should go to a picture. After the tragic picture was over I was thinking to myself "Did the producer

present Kamu's life to the audience?" The picture must have been like adding fuel to the fire for Kamu, I told myself.

THE next day we were having lengthy but interesting discussions about our school life when my wife came in to say that the lunch was ready.

"We are going out for today's dinner to my late uncle's place," Sujata released the news bulletin during the lunch.

"Excuse me, Raju, I had better stay off from the dinner engagement as I am not feeling well. I will see you all tomorrow morning," Kamu excused himself not without hesitation.

"Shall I call for the Doctor, if you are really not feeling well, Mr. Rao? I really can't understand what is holding you up from coming to dinner with us. You can't escape," Sujata harangued.

"Well, Kamu, those are orders. If you disobey, disciplinary action will be taken against you," I added, and all of us burst into laughter.

It was nine at night when we three got into a cab and as usual Sujata directed the taxi driver to a big bungalow and we got down there. We were then led into a spacious dining hall where there were four chairs. I was wondering who could be

our generous hostess. Sujata went in and not knowing what to do we were looking at each other anxiously waiting for the hostess to join us at the dinner table.

Sujata came back and introduced me to our hostess. I saw Kamu had lost his nerve and was looking into the eyes of my hostess straight. I thought he was hypnotised.

DINNER was over and Sujata began: "Darling—I'm sorry I did not introduce our hostess to you earlier. She is my cousin. It is superfluous to introduce her to your friend Mr. Rao. Let me come straight on to the point. When I was removing Mr. Rao's luggage into the corner room a photograph slipped out of his brief-case and picking it up I found something very interesting. About the rest your friend Mr. Rao will enlighten you. Will you kindly oblige us?" Mr. Rao asked my wife.

"Raju, I am very grateful, indeed, to you and your wife, especially for the last wish of my life has been fulfilled."

"She is Ragini," murmured my wife.

"So it is the hostess!" I shouted.

"Darling," continued my wife. "She is still unmarried, only waiting to get married to your friend." Sujata was talking

to me as Kamu and Ragini quietly walked out into the open garden and I whispered to my wife "Luck holds."

"Does it?" queried my better half.

"Oh, yes. It does, at least in the case of Kamu." I replied. ‡

The Crisis At Home

—Continued from page 52

and cheered him up with her pleasant chat and jokes. Before long she appointed Prabhavati as a clerk in the Girls' School and had the old man admitted to a clinic which was run by her brother, Jivaraj, a noted doctor.

"I have found a friend in need," said Srivatsa in gratitude to Rama Devi.

"And I have found two," remarked the old woman, "a long-lost brother in you and a new daughter in Prabhavati. So don't you be thinking that you alone are obliged to me. With Prabhavati looking after me and my household, I am more indebted to you."

"And Prabhavati, I am glad to say," observed the old man, "has found a new mother in you." ‡‡

Theft Or Romance

By MAJOR-GENERAL C. ROSS

[It was a distress phone call from a young woman. But when the constable visited her house she denied having rung up. It certainly was an intriguing situation...]

"YES," said Barcher reminiscently, "it was a queer case and I very much doubt whether I was within my rights in dealing with it in the way I did. But I have always considered that it is no part of a police officer's duty to rake up trouble for the mere sake of it."

"I was at the station late one night," he began, "when the telephone bell rang. Picking up the instrument, I answered. 'Is that the police?' came an agitated feminine voice. 'It is,' I replied. 'Then will you send here at once, there's a thief in—.'"

"The voice terminated in a gurgle and all was silence.

"I was about to call up the exchange when another woman's voice, hardly less agitated than the first, broke in. 'Exchange speaking,' she said; 'that was the Grange called you up, Miss Rumbold, I was listening in.'"

Barcher smiled. "Smart young lady, that telephone operator, wasn't she?" he asked me.

"Very," I replied.

"I hurried off there and then," Barcher resumed, "and reached the Grange within ten minutes. I knew this Miss Rumbold, who had only just come to live there, by sight. A handsome girl of twenty or so. The house was in complete darkness, and I rang and knocked at the front door without result. Fearing a

* Each detective story in this series is complete and separate by itself.

tragedy, I made no bones about it, but without even wasting time by running round the house to see if a window on the ground floor was open, smashed the one by the front door, threw it open and so forced an entrance. Lighting the gas, I found myself in the dining-room. I made my way into the hall and shouted 'Anyone in?'; and again and again I called 'Anyone in?'

"Then, at last, a frightened voice upstairs answered, 'Who's there?'

"The police,' I replied.

"The police!" came the exclamation with a gasp of consternation; and I heard rapping at a door and the voice called urgently. 'Oh, Miss, there's a policeman here!'

"There came a muffled reply. I heard a door open and a second voice joined in, a controlled voice with, however, a quiver in it. 'The police?' it said, 'What can they possibly want at this time of night?'

"I don't know, Ma'am,' the first voice replied.

"Then go down and see,' said the second voice.

"Oh! Miss!' the first voice, evidently that of the maid, exclaimed in agitation.

"You're surely not afraid of a policeman, are you, Lilly?"

Miss Rumbold asked, a hint of amusement in her voice. 'All right,' she said, 'I'll go down myself.'

"Then a light appeared and I saw a pretty head looking down over the banisters, that of Miss Rumbold, I guessed. She called to me. "Are you there, Constable? What d'you want?"

"To say that I was dumb-founded is to put it mildly. My first idea, was, of course, that the telephone operator had made a mistake and given me the wrong house; and, on that hasty assumption, I replied: 'The police station was rung up a quarter of an hour ago to say there was a burglar in this house.'

"I was about to add that the telephone operator had given me the house when Miss Rumbold broke in. 'Oh, I never—' she began excitedly; then hesitated and continued more calmly, 'I never rang up the police station—the police station was not rung up from this house—you didn't ring up the police, did you, Lilly?'

"There came a vehement disclaimer from the maid.

"You see,' said Miss Rumbold, 'there must be some mistake.'

"I had, in the meantime, lit the gas in the hall and was stand-

ing in the full light of it so that they could see my uniform. 'Would you, madam,' I asked, 'allow me to use your telephone?' It was the operator who gave me your house as the origin of the call to the police. She might have made a mistake, and it is urgent to get the right house without delay.'

"Oh!' said Miss Rumbold; she hesitated again and added, 'Yes, by all means; but the call did not come from this house; both the maid and I have been in bed for an hour or more.'

"Thanking her, I went over to the telephone which was on a table in the corner of the hall, and which I had already seen. I had already noticed, moreover, that, though the receiver was in place, hanging on the instrument, yet that the table was in disarray, the cloth pulled over the edge, two or three books toppled on to the floor, and otherwise showing signs of a struggle at this spot. Without remarking on this fact, I rang up the exchange, asking the operator to verify the house she had given me. She was quite confident that the call had come from the Grange.

"I began to smell a rat, the more so as I observed on the new linoleum with which the floor was carpeted, the marks of rubber-soled shoes, a man's size. My suspicions were more or less confirmed an instant later. For Miss Rumbold, her curiosity getting the better of her

discretion, had come down the stairs to listen to my conversation over the telephone. From where I stood, the receiver to my ear, glancing up the staircase, I was able to observe her as she descended slowly step by step. She was wearing a dressing gown, opening in a V shape at the neck, which reached down to her feet, the latter encased in bedroom slippers. That was all right. Evidently she had hastily donned dressing gown and slippers on being roused from her slumbers. Why, then, was she also wearing silk stockings? The gleam of the gas on them was unmistakable. Do ladies usually go to bed in their stockings? Then did the rest of Miss Rumbold's attire, hidden by the dressing gown, conform to the silk stockings or the bedroom slippers? I could see no hint of the flimsy white material of a nightdress or of the striped material of pyjama legs. Here was one point which required elucidation; because it looked as though Miss Rumbold had lied and that she had not been to bed at all. In which case she must have heard my knocking and ringing at the front door to say nothing of the smashing of the dining room window which was, I judged, immediately underneath that of her bedroom. Then why had she not answered the door, or come to her window to make enquiries, or roused her maid—the natural thing for any woman to do in the circumstances?

"Well?" she enquired.

"The telephone operator, Madam," I replied, "is quite convinced that the call came from this house."

"Then the telephone operator must be mistaken," she answered back sharply.

"That can hardly be," I argued, "because the number from which a call originates is automatically registered."

"Miss Rumbold's hand went to her throat in a way women have when they are troubled. 'Anyway,' she said, 'it's a matter of no importance. There must be some mistake. We didn't ring you up. So now, if you are satisfied and will go away, my maid and I can go back to bed.... We're losing our beauty sleep, remember,' she added with a little laugh."

"Very good, Madam," said I, laughing in my turn, "but I'm afraid I must ask you to lock the door behind me."

"Certainly," she said, and came on down the stairs with alacrity, so that I was able again to note the silk stocking. Turning her head as she descended she called to her maid. "You can go back to bed again, Lilly."

"Very good, Miss," the maid answered without, however, making any move to obey.

"Then go to bed, Lilly," the mistress commanded sharply, and the maid's head vanished from the spot whence she had been peering over the banisters.

"I walked towards the front door, but turned to face Miss Rumbold as she reached the ball. 'There's one thing I must mention,' I said. 'Fearing there might be a tragedy in the house and getting no answer to my repeated knocking and ringing, I was obliged to force an entrance by breaking one of the dining-room windows.'"

"Oh, that'll be all right," she exclaimed impatiently, "only go!—I'm tired!"

"Now a householder, unnecessarily aroused in the middle of the night by the police who break in by smashing a window, would not be easily appeased but would, in every case, insist on the damage being made good. Miss Rumbold's attitude was therefore unnatural. But, in addition, while we had been speaking, I had been narrowly observing her face by the bright light of the hall gas. And there, on the left cheek, clearly to be seen, were two smudges, which might well have been caused by the fingers of a dirty hand placed over her mouth. I had, however, one more test to make. Leaning forward, I pointed. 'Is that a spider on your neck just inside your dressing gown?' I asked."

"With a little half shriek, Miss Rumbold pulled back the dressing gown from her neck with one hand and scrabbled and blushed nervously with the other at the spot at which I pointed."

"Ah, it's gone now," said I, having seen what I wanted. She was fully dressed, wearing a low-cut evening costume, under her dressing gown. My case was complete."

"So instead of leaving, I stood where I was, still pointing at her and nodding my head significantly."

"Why don't you go?" she asked with a falter in her voice."

"Because, Madam," I replied, "there are one or two things I want to know first. I want to know who the man is who broke into your house and what you have done with him."

"Again her hand fluttered up to her throat while horror dawned in her eyes, so that I knew for certain that she had him hidden somewhere and that her great fear was lest he be caught."

Staring at me thoughtfully, he continued: "I was quite convinced in my own mind that someone had broken into this lady's house, that she, coming upon him suddenly, had run to the telephone from which she had been dragged. That then

they had recognized each other, and, thinking that the police would be ignorant of the house from which the call had emanated, decided to do nothing. When, however, I arrived unexpectedly, she had hastily hidden him, pretended to be in bed, and denied that she had rung up the police. You see, I scented a romance."

"Now this is the law. If a person breaks into another person's house with felonious intent, he commits a felony; and any person screening him, whatever the motive, compounds a felony and is an accessory. So that if I did my duty, I would find and arrest, not only the thief, but the lady as well."

Barcher stopped and tapped the table with his fingers.

"So now," he commanded, "tell me what you would have done."

"Well," said I hesitatingly, "it seems to me that if it was my duty to arrest them I should have done it."

"What!" Barcher objected, "and ruined what might turn out to be a promising romance?"

"You must be a callous-hearted beggar," he added with a laugh."

"Then," said I, "I suppose I should have accepted the lady's word and gone away."

"What!" Barcher exclaimed, "and left the riddle unsolved?"

I hummed and hawed. "Well, I suppose," I began; stopped, and added, frankly, "I don't know what I should have done."

"You would," said Barcher confidently, "have done the easiest thing—have cleared out and said no more about it. That is just what I was inclined to do. Because, you see, supposing I had found and arrested the man, I could never have proved my case against him, I could not have proved the felonious intent, supposing they had chosen to commit perjury. Miss Rumbold might, for instance, have sworn that she let him in, that then they had a little tiff and that in a fit of temper she had run to the telephone.

"So that I saw no object in arresting them.

"On the other hand, there was my curiosity to be gratified. I was determined to ascertain if my theory was correct. It was also my bounden duty to see this man for myself in case he was an old hand at this game. But I had to be careful. Because, if the maid got an inkling of the true state of affairs, it would assuredly give rise to a horrible scandal.

"Now then," I whispered to Miss Rumbold, "you must obey me to the letter if you don't want a scandal. I will pretend to go away. Then you must lock and bolt the front door, turn out the gas in the dining-room and the hall, go upstairs and see that Lilly has gone to bed, then bring your burglar to me in the dining-room—quietly mind—do you understand?"

"She grasped the idea instantly, nodding to me with a relieved smile.

"So then I went to the front door, opened it, pretended to go out, and, remarking 'good-night, Madam,' in a loud voice, stepped back into the hall and signalled to her to carry on."

Barcher stopped to laugh. "That young woman," he continued, "had all her wits about her. She locked and bolted the door noisily, turned out the lights and ran away upstairs. I heard her talking to the maid, laughing and saying good-night. Then I heard another door upstairs open and shut and all was silent.

"All was silent for so long that I began to wonder whether she intended to disobey me, and just leave me standing there like a fool. Perhaps, during all this time, her young man had bolted; in which case, what was I to do next?"

"I began, in fact, to feel a consummate ass when to my relief, I heard a board creak, and, an instant later, could distinguish two shadowy figures creeping out of the back premises. On they came and passed into the dining-room, where I followed them, closing the door softly behind me. Then, suddenly I flashed my torch on them. They were standing together, a nice, but half-starved looking man of about twenty-five, dressed in well-cut but shabby clothes, his arm linked in that of Miss Rumbold. He bore my scrutiny without a waver, standing stock-still; and I was quickly satisfied that, so far as I knew, he was not 'wanted' and was not an old hand at this sort of game.

"I must ask your name and address," I said to the man.

"Basil Goodson," he replied instantly.

"And your address?"

"He hesitated for so long that I repeated my question.

"I haven't got one," he replied, "I'm on my uppers; I'm a tramp."

"It was as I had half-expected; he had broken in, in search of food.

"For the moment I was non-plussed. What was I to do

now? I ought. I knew, to take him into custody there and then. But I was determined to do nothing of the sort. So I turned to Miss Rumbold. 'Have you,' I asked her, 'any charge to bring against this man?'

"None whatsoever," she replied. 'We're going to be married.'

"Then," said I, "this gentleman had better come along with me and explain."

"You're not going to arrest him, are you?" the girl asked with a catch in her breath.

"But Goodson broke in. 'That'll be best, Kitty,' he whispered. 'I'll go along with the Constable and make a clean breast of it. Then, if it's his duty to arrest me, he must just do it.'

"I liked this young fellow.

"But the girl, for she was little more, clutching him by the arm, said, 'oh, Jim, I can't bear it!'

"She was so evidently on the verge of tears that, hastily reassuring her, I led the way to the window; and as I climbed out, Goodson joined me, we crept quietly down the drive to the road, I wheeling my bike. As we walked along back towards the police station, he told me his story. He and Miss

Rumbold, became engaged to be married. But her father, a wealthy man, objected on the grounds that young Goodson's means were insufficient; and the engagement was accordingly broken off. Thereupon the boy speculated wildly and lost every penny he possessed.

"In the meantime old Rumbold died, the girl became her own mistress, sold the large house in which they had been living, purchased, and came to live at, the Grange. That had all occurred some three months before. Meanwhile, young Goodson, on his beam ends, tramping the country in search of work, had vanished. Miss Rumbold had advertised for him without success.

"Then it was that Fortune, or, as I prefer to think, Destiny, took a hand. Goodson, as an alternative to the workhouse, broke into the Grange in search of food, without the foggiest idea of who was living there. The rest you know."

Barcher rose, knocked out his pipe in the fireplace and deposited it on the mantelpiece.

"So, then, you let him go?" I enquired as I also rose.

"Yes," said Barcher, "I let him go, though I fear it was a gross dereliction of duty—worse, it was compounding a felony. 'I understand, then,' I said to him as we were ap-

proaching the police station and he was beginning to show distinct signs of nervousness, "that I am to congratulate you on your renewed engagement to Miss Rumbold?"

" 'Yes,' he said, 'we're to be married at once—to-day week by special licence.'

" 'And,' said I, 'where do you propose to spend the remainder of the night?' (It was about two a. m.)

" 'Under a hedge,' he replied.

" 'You wouldn't care,' I suggested, 'for a lodging in the police station?'

" 'God forbid!' he exclaimed; and, with that, he turned in his tracks and hurried away, throwing a 'good-night, Constable' at me over his shoulder." ‡‡

AMPLE PROOF!

"You seem very quiet to-night, dear," commented a pretty girl. "Are—are you sure you love me?"

"Love you!" Roland exclaimed. "Good heavens, darling, when we were saying good-bye at the gate last night your dog bit a piece out of my leg, and I didn't even notice it until I got home."

SHORT STORY

Love On The Pillion

By PRATAP GHOSH

[Her husband mercilessly beat her and drove her out. But she made merry with her lover, riding with him on his new motor-bike.]

VINOD growled at his wife as she entered the front room of the house.

"So you had to stay there until 9 p.m., I suppose?" queried Vinod, folding his arms.

"Veni, just have a good look at the wall clock," he said.

"Why, it was 9-20 when the office closed down, and Leela and the new girl Subadhra and myself engaged a taxi and they dropped me just now," she explained, placing her hand-bag on the table.

The young woman blushed furiously as she looked furtively at her husband. There was no need for her to consult the clock. It was striking ten.

He came menacingly towards her. "That is a lie," he shouted angrily. He suddenly dragged her by her long pig-tail with his left hand and slapped her cheek with his right. More than half a dozen slaps in quick succession made her face blood-

"What could I do?" she pleaded, wiping her face with a kerchief. "They detained the clerks at the office. All accounts were to be closed by to-day as the official year begins tomorrow."

red and the tears burst from her eyes as water from a dam. She screamed at the top of her voice and called for help. "Oh! you are murdering me! Stop it! Stop it!"

HE knocked her down on the floor and she huddled in a corner, trembling at the prospect of some kicks as he raised his leg. When he heard some cotenants coughing loudly he desisted from further violence.

"Listen, you faithless woman," he hissed, bending low over her. "I specially called at your office at 8 p.m. and the watchman there told me that all had left at 6 p.m. as usual and not a soul remained inside except himself. Tell me the truth. Where had you been?"

She stopped sobbing and averted her face. "True, I was not in office, I admit," she said in a low voice. "Leela, Subadhra and myself went to the evening show at the Greenway Talkies. And we came straight."

"Don't lie, you false woman. I saw that blackguard Chander walking with you and he was resting his right arm on your shoulder in front of Modern Hotel. There and then I would have beaten you and kicked you into a ditch but I was afraid of a scandal. Is it true or not? I should have beaten that rascal first instead of you. Speak out, wretch."

But she did not reply and quaked all over.

"Tell me how long you have been carrying on with this Chander," he demanded.

"Your charge is not true. I agree he shouldn't have taken that liberty. I have told him several times," she said, and then bit her lips for having made such an indiscreet remark.

Her husband gave her a vigorous kick and clouted her head. "So, on your own admission, he has been flirting with you. Are you going to stop right now and keep at home? Make up your mind."

"I tell you, I was not flirting. It was more a brotherly greeting than a sign of love. Have you not boasted of your affairs with that Anglo-Indian girl Enid and that young widow, Vimala? Now you presume to preach me."

"HERE is my ultimatum, Veni. From tomorrow you are not going to work. You shall remain here as my wife or go back to your mother. She came and asked for you an hour ago. It was not for your monthly income as assistant secretary in that leather goods office that I chose you as my wife. It was your winsome figure and seeming good character that decided it. Within six months you have shown your clay foot and low breeding."

"What would you want me to do? Don't you love me as you swore several times before your marriage?" she asked, getting up.

"Yes, I do love you even now. It doesn't give me pleasure to chastise you. It breaks my heart to see you weep. But duty is duty and you have failed miserably to do it. Don't you know I have estranged my doting parents in marrying you? They have such contempt for you. Listen, Veni. I have money enough to run this household and I don't want your salary. Make up your mind right now. Either go back to your mother in the next street and carry on with your job and love affairs. Or remain here and be faithful to me."

She rose up, wiping a smear of blood from a cut in her lip. "I know you will kill me some day if I remain with you any longer. You are such a senseless beast. Get away and come back in two hours. I will have gone before you return. It is a promise."

HE stood staring at her for a minute as if he couldn't repress a longing to hug her in his arms and kiss her. But she had given her decision and he must respect it. He quietly went out of the house and disappeared round the bend of the street on the left.

It was five minutes past one when he returned home. He

was hoping against hope that she would stay and make him happy. He wanted to hold her supple body and kiss her smiling face as he had done hundreds of times before. But she had left for her mother's dark dungeon of a home. Sleep had deserted him for hours until six in the morning. He was working in the Health Department and was drawing high pay. He decided to take long leave and go to his parents' village. But his mind was in a turmoil. He was not sure of the kind of reception awaiting him at his parents' home. Anyway, he proposed to go on leave even if he had to remain alone in the city.

VENI's mother shrieked at the sight of her daughter's swollen face and blood-stained lips and cursed her son-in-law with a flood of invective. She urged her to give him up and continue her career with greater devotion. "If ever that scoundrel comes here," she threatened, "I will beat him with a broomstick in the presence of all the neighbours. He is a monkey to crush the rose petal of my daughter."

Veni was making love to Chander and encouraging him openly at all hours. And one day when he came on his newly-bought motor-bike which glittered like gleaming silver she was simply mad about the gadget and more so about the owner. In the evenings she seated herself on the pillion and went on long rides with him all over the

broad smooth trunk roads of the city. And several times she saw her husband staring at her as she sped along with Chander. There was a pang in her heart whenever she saw him but she soon got over that feeling.

OTHER men began to admire the grace and the prettiness of her appearance as she dashed past with her lover. To Vinod it had become perfectly clear that Chander had hypnotised her with his glamorous ways and new gadget. That night he was packing up his trunk and took out his hold-all when there was a loud knock at the door.

He got the shock of his life when he saw a Sub-Inspector of Police accompanied by two constables.

"Am I addressing Mr. R. S. Vinod of the Health Department?" he asked in a low tone.

"Yes, what can I do for you? Please come in. I am about to leave by the 10-30 train for my village..."

The Sub-Inspector sadly shook his head. "Mr. Vinod, I am afraid there is bad news for you. Your wife Veni was involved in an accident an hour ago on the Grand Trunk Road. You see, she was riding with her office colleague on a motor-bike. She was sitting on the pillion seat with Chander driving. Near the Iron Bridge, it

appears, Chander lost control of the vehicle and it dashed against a lamp-post. That man was killed on the spot..."

"My wife?" he gasped.

"I should say she was lucky. Of course, she sustained some injuries, and she has been taken in an ambulance to the hospital in an unconscious state. If you are ready, we will take you to the hospital."

Vinod was in a dazed state when he raced to the hospital. It took two weeks for her to regain her consciousness. When she opened her eyes for the first time she saw her husband's face. When he held her hand in his, her fears were dissipated and she smiled at him.

"What does the doctor say?" she asked in a faint voice.

"You will be all right, so he has assured me. When you come home, my parents are there to receive you. Your mother also is being looked after well. But ...but" he stammered, "don't you want to come back?"

"Kiss me," she said. "Never mind if others are looking on. It should be a kiss of forgiveness for your wife."

Vinod willingly obliged. ††

PLANETS & YOUR FORTUNE

The following predictions are based on the movement of the Nine Planets in the 12 Rasis according to Gochara. The positions of the planets from Janma Rasi (Moon's Place) are taken into account in forecasting the effects. Those running a favourable Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a lesser degree and those running malefic Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a greater measure.

[Astrological Forecasts for May 1959]

By T. V. RAMAN

MARS TRANSITS TO GEMINI

The powerful planet, Mars, in Scorpio. People belonging to these two zodiacal signs Cancer and Scorpio should avoid journeys, cycle riding and the like since there is risk through accident and small financial losses.

Those who are born with Kanya as Moon sign, Sun sign or ascendant will reap very good results in the direction of improvement in profession or business, while those with Leo as Sun sign, Moon Sign or ascendant will come across unexpected gains.

This transit of Mars is adverse for people with cancer as Moon sign, ascendant on Sun sign; neither is it good for those born with Moon or Sun or ascendant

Persons born in Mesha and Makara (with Sun or Moon or ascendant) in these two signs will get financial gains.

The next transit of Mars from Gemini to Cancer will have disastrous effects on many since Cancer is debilitated House for Mars. Please be well guarded against the impending evil effects of the transit of Mars to Cancer, which will be explained in our future issues.

MESHA

(Aswini 4, Bharani 4, Krithigai 1.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is hidden in the 3rd house and is aspected by Saturn by the 7th sight. Hence your health will undergo a set-back. Rahu in the 6th house will, however, put up resistance. You are therefore advised to take great care of your health. On the other hand, the position of Mars is good from the point of view of financial gains. Further, Mars being Lord of 8th house remaining in the 3rd house constitutes 'Vibaridha Raja Yoga.' The effect will be in the direction of getting unexpected gains.

Venus, Lord of family, wealth and wife (2nd and 7th Lordship) is combined with Mars in the 3rd house. 2nd and 7th Lord is a malefic and hence the position of Venus in the 3rd house cannot and will not do harm to you. Still 2nd Lord in the 3rd house will considerably affect your income and will temporarily seal up some of your gains during this month.

Mercury, Lord of 3rd and 6th houses, who is no doubt a malefic has since transited from Meena, its Neecha House, to Mesha. It is combined with Sun which forms "Budhathya Yoga." The effect will be in the direction of improvement in status, dignity and gains. This conjunction will help some to pass even tough examinations.

Sun, Lord of the 5th house, is exalted in the Lagna Kendra in conjunction with Mercury giving rise to a Raja Yoga. So you will come into limelight. Some may get high posts. Some others will get promoted.

The presence of retrograde Jupiter in the 8th house, which was hitherto causing evil to you will cease to do so up to May 15th since he is inactive during the Retrograde period. While no improvement can be predicted due to Jupiter's Retrograde movement, it is certain no evil will be caused.

Rahu in the 6th house indicates unexpected gains and a life free from inimical influences. It will also help you to keep your health free from diseases.

The position of the 8th, 10th and 11th Lord, Saturn, in the 9th house, is a desirable thing from the point of view of improvement in business or profession, change of careers and appointments.

Lucky Days : 9th, 18th and 27th.

Household women will not find this prosperous since the 2nd and 7th Lord Venus is hidden in the 3rd house. Their health will also be not good. While no major calamities can happen it is advisable to devote your spare time to prayers and meditation. Avoid journeys. Take care of your children's health.

Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married.

Women in jobs and those studying will fare well. This month is good for passing examinations. Film actresses will make surprising progress. Politicians and social workers will find the month remarkable.

Lucky Days : 7th, 16th, and 23rd.

VRISHABHA

(Krithigai 3, Rohini 4, Mrigasirsha 2.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, occupies the 2nd house. No doubt this is a good sign. But, unfortunately, he is combined with Mars, Lord of 7th and 12th houses. This apart, retrograde Jupiter aspects the Lagna by the 7th sight, which will cause evil. Your health will be gravely affected. Take great care of your health. Your popularity will be affected and very often you will be held to blame for no fault of yours.

The finances no doubt will be good due to the position of Mars and Mercury in the 2nd house, which constitutes a Dhana Yoga, and Ketu in the 11th house. But there will be corresponding evil effects on account of Saturn in the 8th house.

Jupiter though in the 7th house cannot do much good to you on account of its retrogression.

This month is not good for those in services. Remain calm and collected. This month is good neither for speculators nor for businessmen. Businessmen should avoid new investments and expansion activities. This month is neither good for film actors nor politicians. Lucky Days : There are no lucky dates during the month.

Household women belonging to this rasi will find the month very miserable due to two reasons. One is the aspect of 8th Saturn to the 2nd house and the other is the aspect of retrograde Jupiter to the Lagna. The finances will be poor. Your children's health will cause anxiety to you. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Unmarried women will have to wait till the end of May for getting married. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through despite difficulties. This month is not good for those women, who are engaged in politics, social service or film acting.

Lucky Days : 7th and 13th.

MITHUNA

(Mrigasirsha 2, Arudra 4, Punarvasu 3)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna, is now free from debilitation and is well posted with Sun in the 11th house. This conjunction forms Raja Yoga. Your health will be good and popularity will be on the increase. Still

you cannot be over-optimistic for Mars is in Janma and Saturn aspects the Lagna. Avoid cycle riding and journeys since there are dangers through accidents.

Those in jobs will manage well due to the presence of Kethu in the 10th house.

This month is not good for businessmen. It is to be feared that businessmen will be put to loss. Avoid new investments. This month is not good for speculations.

Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will find the month very bad. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Lucky Days : 7th and 18th.

Household women belonging to this rasi will reap very bad results due to the presence of Rahu in the 4th house. Their finances will be poor on account of retrograde Jupiter in the 6th house.

Avoid journeys. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation. Women in jobs or those studying will pull through.

This month is not good for film actresses, politicians or social workers.

Lucky Days : 2nd and 21st.

KATAKA

(Punarvasu 1, Pushya 4, Aslesha 4.)

People belonging to this rasi will be prosperous in general during this month. The evil planet is Mars only.

There will be increase in wealth due to the exalted position of Sun in Aries. Rahu in the 3rd house will give unexpected gains. Further it will throw open new opportunities for betterment.

Jupiter in the 5th house, though in retrogression will keep you dignified. Saturn in the 6th house indicates great gains. The conjunction of Sun and Mercury in the 10th house indicates promotions in jobs and professional success.

This month is good for businessmen. They will meet with substantial profit. This month is good for those engaged in speculations.

Politicians, social workers and those engaged in film acting will reap good results. Avoid journeys and cycle riding on account of Mars in the 12th house.

Lucky Days : 3rd, 13th and 27th.

Household women will find the month splendid. Their health will be robust. The finances will be good. There will be auspicious functions at home. The household will be full of mirth and joy.

Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers.

Women in jobs and those studying will find the month very good. This month is equally good for those engaged in politics, social service and film acting.

Lucky Days : 2nd, 22nd and 25th.

SIMHA

(Makara 4, Pooram 4, Uthira 1.)

Sun, Lord of the Lagna, is exalted in the 9th house in conjunction with Mercury constituting a Raja Yoga. The effect will be in the direction of good health, increased popularity and a remarkable element of good luck. Jupiter is retrograde in the 4th house while Kethu is in the 8th house. The two planets will definitely cause evil to you. Avoid cycle riding and journeys.

The presence of Rahu in the 2nd house indicates a disturbed state of affairs in the household. Have restraint over your tongue since there are indications of trouble.

Saturn in the 5th house indicates a disturbed state of mental condition. Further the health of your child may cause anxiety to you. The presence of Mars and Venus in the 11th house indicates some unexpected gains.

This month is not good for

businessmen, not for speculations as there are no planets which indicate remarkable gains. Politicians, social workers and film actors will manage well.

Lucky Days : 2nd, 18th and 23rd.

Household women will find the month not very good due to the presence of 4th house Jupiter which is in retrogression. The exalted position of Sun, Lord of Lagna, will offer resistance. The finances will be ordinary.

The month is not good in general. Take care of your children's health.

Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married. Women in jobs and those studying will manage well. Women engaged in politics, social service or film acting will reap good results. Avoid journeys and cycle riding.

Lucky Days : 7th and 18th.

KANYA

(Uthira 3, Hastha 4, Chitra 2.)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna, is hidden in the 8th house. This apart, Rahu is in Janma. The position of Jupiter in the 3rd house and Saturn in the 4th house will also cause evil effects. Kethu in the 7th house indicates a futile journey. The beneficial planets are Venus and Mars in the 10th house.

Thus evil planets are more effective. You should be well guarded in all directions during this month lest you meet with adverse effects in all directions. Avoid journeys and cycle riding.

Businessmen will meet with heavy loss. They should not invest during this time. They should seal up their expansion activities.

This month is not good for those engaged in politics, social service or film acting. Avoid speculations. Lucky Days: There are no lucky days during this month.

Household women will find this month very miserable. The health will not be good. The finances will be poor. You will be held to blame. There will be sad news. Your children's health will cause anxiety. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through despite difficulties.

This month is not good for those engaged in politics, social service or film acting. Avoid journeys and cycle riding.

Lucky Days: 8th, 12th and 18th.

THULA

(Chitra 2, Swathi 4, Visaka 3.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, is

powerfully placed in the 9th Trikona. This is a good sign. Your health will be good, Your popularity will be on the increase. Jupiter in the 2nd house though in retrogression will do immense good to you in the direction of keeping your finances steady and your family in good stead.

Saturn in the 3rd house indicates gains, courage and will throw open new avenues for betterment, likewise Kethu in the 6th house indicates great gains. You will now regain your health if you have been sickly.

The conjunction of exalted Sun and Mercury in the 7th house indicates a Raja Yoga more especially through wife. You may undertake a profitable journey. The combination of Mars and Venus in the 9th house indicates great luck. The only adverse planet is Rahu in the 12th house. Avoid cycle riding and the like.

This month is excellent for businessmen and speculators. This is just the time to reap very good profits. Politicians, social workers and film actors will thrive well.

Lucky Days: All days of the month.

Household women will find the month splendid due to the presence of Jupiter in the 2nd house. There will be auspicious functions at home. The household will be full of mirth and joy. The

finances will be very good. The health will be robust.

Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers. Women in jobs and those studying will find the month very lucky.

Women engaged in politics or social service will earn name and fame. Film actresses will make a debut.

Avoid cycle riding and the like since Rahu in the 12th house may cause risks through accidents.

Lucky Days: 7th, 19th, 25th, and 27th.

VRISCHIKA

(Visaka 1, Anuradha 4, Jyeshtha 4.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 8th house, which will cause evil effects. Further Jupiter is in retrogression in Janma. Hence you will not be having robust health. You should take care of your health. You should be cautious in all directions. There are risks through accidents. Hence avoid journeys and cycle riding as far as possible.

Saturn in the 2nd house indicates that you will not be happy at home. Kethu in the 5th house will keep you worried. It may be that some of you may suffer bereavement.

The position of Sun and Mercury in the 6th house indicates some unexpected gains. Rahu in the 11th house indicates unexpected gains. This month is not good for businessmen due to 7½ years' Saturn and Jupiter in Janma. It may be that they may incur loss. However, Rahu in the 11th house will put up resistance.

Those in jobs will pull through. The finances will be ordinary.

Lucky Days: 8th, 18th, and 27th.

Household women will find the month very miserable due to the presence of Jupiter in retrogression in Janma and due to the unspent balance of 7½ years' Saturn. Your health will not be good. Your finances will be poor. There will be sad news. Your child's health may cause anxiety to you.

Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married. Married women cannot become mothers during this year since there is no Puthra Bagya on account of Jupiter in Janma.

Women in jobs and those studying will manage despite difficulties. The month is not good for film actresses or social workers or those engaged in politics. Avoid journeys and cycle riding.

Lucky Days: 11th, 23rd, and 25th.

DHANUS

(Moola 4, Poorada 4, Utharada 1.)

Saturn is in Janma rasi while Jupiter, Lord of the Lagna, is in retrogression in the 12th house. Hence your health will not be good. Your popularity and prestige will be affected. There are risks through accidents. You may lose your belongings or money. Avoid journeys and cycle riding as far as possible.

Kethu in the 4th house indicates unpleasantness at home. The exalted position of Sun who is Lord of 9th house placed in the 5th means Raja Yoga and this will put up strong resistance to the evil effects of Saturn and Jupiter. Even then the evil effects are stronger than good effects.

Rahu in the 10th house will keep you well in your office or business. Avoid speculations and new investment. The month is not good for those engaged in politics, social service or film acting.

Lucky Days : 8th and 17th.

Household women will find the month miserable due to Janma rasi and 12th house Jupiter. Further Kethu in the 4th house indicates unpleasantness in the household. The finances will be poor. The health will not be good. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Women in jobs and those studying will be very much handicapped. Avoid journeys and cycle riding, etc. All others will find this month unlucky.

Lucky Days : 8th, 18th and 27th.

MAKARA

(Utharada 3, Sravana 4, Dhanishta 2.)

You are undergoing the evil effects of the 7½ years' Saturn. Jupiter in the 11th house becomes free from retrogression by about the middle of the month and thus offers resistance. However, don't be over-optimistic. The position of Kethu in the 3rd house indicates gains and that of Mars and Venus in the 6th house promises unexpected gains. The exalted position of Sun in the 4th house promises comforts in the household and auspicious functions. Some may purchase cars or cycles.

This month is not good for businessmen. They should be over-cautious till the end of 7½ years' Saturn. Those in services will have a tough time. They will have to reconcile themselves to exertions and blames and pin-pricks from superiors.

This month is not good for speculations. Those who are engaged in politics, social service or film acting will not find the month good.

Lucky Days : 8th, 18th and 19th.

Household women will reap

good result due to the presence of Jupiter in the 11th house. The household will be happy, there will be auspicious functions at home. Yet your health and finances will not be good due to 7½ years' Saturn. Devote your spare time to prayer and meditation.

Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers. The month is good for women in jobs and studying. Film actresses, politicians and social workers will not have a nice time.

Lucky Days : 9th, 19th and 21st.

KUMBHA

(Dhanishta 2, Sathabhisha 4, Poorattadhi 3.)

Saturn, Lord of the Lagna, is powerfully placed in the 11th house. This indicates that your health will be good. Your popularity will be on the increase. There will be financial gains due to the 11th house Saturn. Kethu in the 2nd house indicates unpleasantness on the home front. Have restraint on your tongue lest you stand to lose.

The combination of exalted Sun and Mercury indicates unexpected gain. But Rahu in the 8th house will cause wasteful expenditure and risks through accidents. Avoid cycle riding and journeys.

This month is not good for

businessmen on account of Rahu in the 8th house and Jupiter in the 10th house. The position of Mars and Venus in the 10th house indicates slight rise in status or position.

Lucky Days : 9th, 18th and 23rd.

Household women will find the month miserable due to Jupiter in the 10th house and Kethu in the 2nd house. The finances will be poor. There will be misunderstandings at home. There will be sad news also.

Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married. Married women will have to wait the whole of the year for becoming mothers.

Women in jobs and those studying will pull through despite difficulties. Avoid cycle riding, journeys and the like. The month is not good for those engaged in politics, social workers and film acting.

Lucky Days : 11th, 13th and 17th.

MEENA

(Poorattadhi-1, Uthirattadhi 4, Revathi 4.)

Jupiter, Lord of the Lagna, is powerfully placed in the 9th Trikona. Your health will be robust. Your popularity will be on the increase. You will be promoted if you are employed

Keeping Clean

With small burns the healing is easy. The new skin grows on quite steadily, and it is just a question of keeping it clean. This is very important, because, if the burned part catches infection from the germs that could be on a dirty bandage, for example, pus will prevent the new skin from growing. If that happens, the burn must be cleaned and dressed with antiseptics, and the whole process of healing must begin again.

In the case of bigger or deeper burns, we sometimes use skin grafts. These come from the person's own body and may be tiny, pin-head sized "patches" placed close together, or bigger bits. It is rather wonderful the way these will "take," and grow on till they cover the entire burned area. They are usually taken from arm or thigh, and the whole thickness of the skin is not usually taken, so that the "donor" site, as we call it can grow again and be as good as new.

Many cures have resulted from treating people in baths of warm salt water. This seems to have a good effect in preventing the body fluids from getting lost; the burn is kept moist and so the body need not expend moisture which it needs for other things. This is a method of treatment that can be applied only in hospital, however.

You may be interested to know that the histamine, this powerful stuff which gets made on the spot by damaged tissues, is released in other conditions as well. We think it is partly responsible for the weals in nettle rash, and it is one of the villains of the piece in the story of hay fever. We have now a variety of drugs which can be taken by mouth, and have some success against histamine. They are not the whole story, but they do help.

Of course penicillin has been tremendously important in the improvement of burn treatment. Burns just needn't get infected if they are protected with this or with the sulphonamide group of drugs. And if they are not infected they have a very good chance of healing well. Burns seem to be among the things that Nature is well able to deal with, given a chance.

As a practical hint in the home, for a small burn: eggwhite is said to be excellent. It soothes the pain, stops the body-fluids from escaping too freely and forms a sort of "skin" over the part which keeps out germs and protects it. Now that eggs are not so scarce as they were some years ago I venture to offer this suggestion. One word of warning—the eggs must be fresh! As an alternative, there are many antiseptic and soothing burn ointments available from the chemist. Why not get some—just in case? †

READERS' FORUM

MEDIUM IN COLLEGES

Sir,

Nobody wants English to stay longer than necessary. But our Governments are too hasty. They want to win the votes of the masses by driving out that language and making all equally frightened or ignorant. The Madras University has decided to replace English by Tamil as the medium of instruction in colleges. But I know there are no proper text-books, no translations of importance, and no periodicals that help to keep the stream of knowledge flowing.

I would say to them, "First of all prepare a number of books suitable for the student world in easy Tamil. Start some periodicals that will help to enrich literature and serve the students for purposes of reference. When that is done, change over to Tamil."

Such a process will take fifty years at least.

K. S. Radhakrishnan,
Madras.

BEGGARS HAVE INCREASED

Sir,

The beggar problem has become more acute. Many foreigners who visit our country are amazed at the enormity of the problem. All tourist and

pilgrim centres are crowded with beggars and they pester one and all.

In cities their presence is felt everywhere. They occupy almost all public places, bus shelters, pavements and infect them. Many of them are suffering from incurable diseases and present a great menace to public health.

The best thing to solve the problem is to levy a cess of one paise on every citizen and thus raise a fund to house all diseased beggars. They must be segregated first. Since the attainment of Independence there has been a great increase in their number.

Anu Biswas,
Patna.

MORE HOUSES, PLEASE!

Sir,

As soon as the war was over it was thought that new houses would be built by the million and that every family would soon have a roof over its shelter. But twelve years after Independence the housing situation has become worse. Many decent people in the cities sleep on the pavements. There was a scheme for turning out pre-fabricated houses but that proved to be a myth. Why not give it a trial on a more solid, practical basis?

Dwarakanath Vidyarthi,
Poona.



Cleanses Bright
Clothes, Floors
& Utensils
Lifts Dirt out
Wash Everyday
Product