

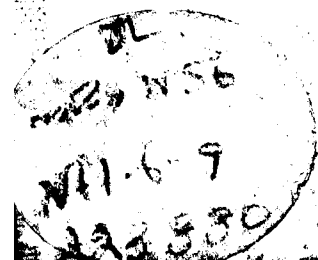


India Magazine

Nov 1961



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INDIA MAGAZINE

6th Year of Publication

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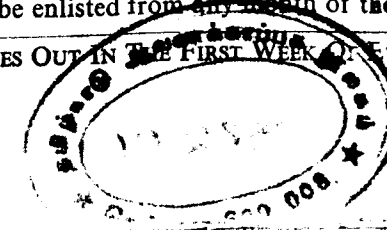
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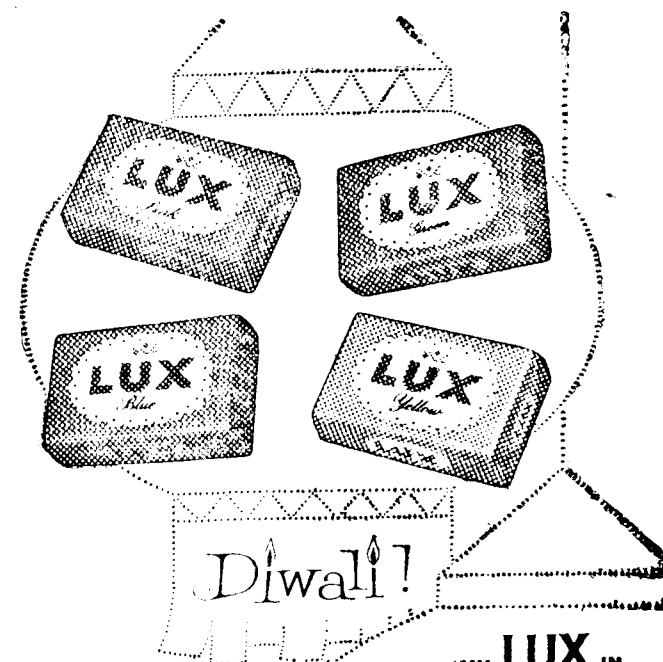
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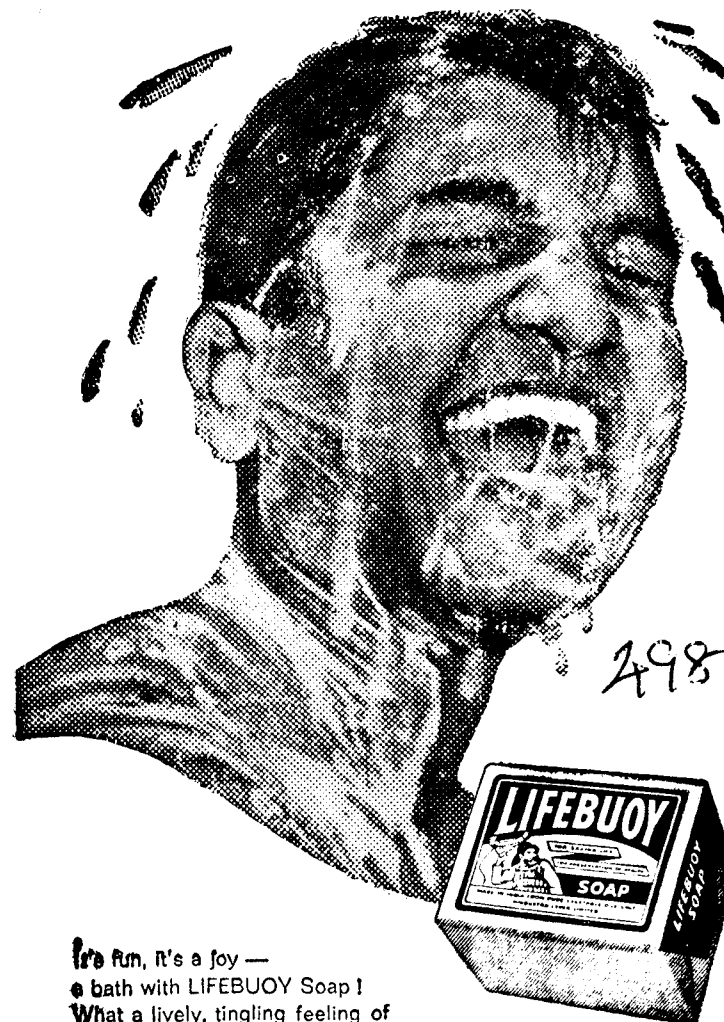
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INDIA MAGAZINE

LEADING MONTHLY FOR HOME AND FAMILY

6th Year of Publication

Vol. 6

NOVEMBER 1961

No. 9

KHRUSHCHEV'S ADMISSION

AT the 22nd Soviet Communist Party Congress in Moscow, Mr. Khrushchev delivered a remarkable speech. It was remarkable because it was full of contradictions. He made repeated assertions that Russia desired peace and that he would constantly work towards that goal. He rebuked China for holding the view that co-existence was impossible and that war with the capitalist countries was unavoidable. Mr. Khrushchev asserted that Communist States could live in peace with nations opposed to them in ideology. He accused the West of preparing for war and told his listeners that Russia was building for peace. But how was she building for peace? The Soviet Army was being equipped with nuclear rocket weapons. "The imperialists cannot now with impunity intimidate the peaceful countries by threat of war. Atomic and hydrogen weapons in the hands of the Soviet people, the builders of Communism, do reliable service to the cause of peace."

Can a State which goes on piling up horror weapons really have the desire for peace? It is Russia that has started again a series of test explosions which are only poisoning the atmosphere even though leaders of thought the world over have asked her to desist from this mad course.

On the Berlin and German issues Mr. Khrushchev thought that the West was showing a readiness to come to a settlement. That was the only graceful admission which he made about the "war-mongers".

Coming nearer home, he referred to the fall in agricultural production, the shortage of consumer goods, the inferior quality of the commodities on sale and promised to outdo the Western countries. This seemed to be another indirect admission that the Western Capitalist nations were superior at least in one respect. They produced better goods and their peoples were better fed.

THE BARD OF SHANTINIKETAN

I confess that it is a colossal task to write about the personality of such a great man like Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). He is known to the outside world only as an extremely prolific writer. But in fact, there is something more interesting and sublime in Tagore. He was a first class patriot as all the Indians knew and the services rendered by him to the world are those which can be put down on paper with pen. Tagore was a mixture of poetry and patriotism which is a rare and superb contribution. Indeed, Tagore was a great soul and he was the spokesman of the moral and religious genius of India.

Since the dawn of our own ancient history, always there was something that we should learn from our ancestors and there is much more to be learnt by the present day citizen of India from the life of Rabindranath Tagore. His life span began in the year 1861, which is of the utmost importance to any

Indian Historian. Then a great current of the religious revolution under the leadership of Rajarshi Raja Rammohan Roy was carried on. The atmosphere in which Tagore stepped into this world was fertile with those revolutionary ideas. This great reformer tried his best to reduce the brutal traditions that prevailed over the Hindu society of that day.

This had its own effect on Tagore and the glory and splendour of the minute of Tagore's birth, was inculcated in him from the very beginning. If you happen to see the portrait of Tagore whose life was a dedicated life, you will be able to recognise an air of dignity about him. His calm and impassive eyes throw a flood of light on us as to convey a great message to the world and it is a miracle, indeed, why we will not be able even to turn our eyes for a few minutes. He presents an idea of our old *rishis* through his magnetic and mesmeric personality.

Tagore dealt with different aspects of Indian life in his essays and stories. He wanted the youngsters to take a leaf from their own glorious past. What India lacked then, was the enthusiasm and zeal to stir up a fresh vigour in the national views. The task of the young generation was to lay a strong foundation to the future on India. India is immortal. "Men may come and men may go," but India goes on for ever, air the background of the glorious performances of its children. Tagore thought that the youth should not take pride in boasting of their past but they must try to reconstruct the humanity with the aid of the past experience. They should not feel that they are separate from their ancestors and this feeling of separateness would prove fatal to the cultural background of India. Tagore puts it, "The contemptuous spirit of separateness was hurting us and causing great damage to our own world of culture."

As I said earlier, Tagore influenced the lives of people on this globe much through his powerful pen. All his writings are filled with an universal appeal in their subject matter and proceedings. Take the short story of Tagore, "The Home-Coming." It is a tragedy of a teenager and it is as pathetic as it is simple. It has a greater appeal to humanity than many other stories written by other authors. In this Tagore gives us a description of the peculiar mentality of a boy of

PROBLEMS!

A worried merchant sought the aid of a psychiatrist, explaining, "All day long I eat grapes". "So what?" scoffed the analyst "everybody eats grapes." The merchant gasped, "What? Off the wallpaper?"

Another patient's complaint was that he found himself slowly going mad over beautiful women. "Doc," he begged, "isn't there some way of speeding up the process?"

fourteen. This is something very exact and fitting anywhere in this world. Tagore wrote his first novel at the age of nineteen and it was itself indicative of Tagore's genius as an author. Between the years he wrote his first novel and set on his stupendous masterpiece, Gitanjali. Tagore passed through several experiences and all of them left an indelible impression on his mind and on his works. His life was complete and well furnished. As a youth he was very much interested in music and so he kept that rhythm in his poetry as ably as any other English poet.

Tagore was struck strongly with sorrow, when he was in his thirties and that was the time when the most lovable poetry came out of his pen. As he grew older and older, his thoughts be-

came more philosophical, more genuine and more progressive. Indeed, time and age had their own effect on him. His hymns were full of human aspiration. He painted pictures with his fine words. Tagore in his later years wrote his most stupendous and prodigious poetry.

Tagore's family was a cradle of great people, who made themselves memorable Indians. This famous family produced great philosophers, poets, artists, musicians and politicians. Rabindranath's father, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore was a great philosopher. Abanindranath Tagore was a famous artist. Dwijendranath Tagore was the brother of Rabindranath Tagore and he was also a philosopher. But Rabindranath Tagore headed them all with his glory which spread all over the world.

As an eminent educationalist, Tagore outshone others and he himself was a teacher. He was the poet-founder of a university, which offers teaching in many arts and crafts and serves as an educational and cultural centre. It attracted the attention of many scholars from east to west, all over the world. Fidelity to the time-table of a student of this institution created in him regularity to his duties which will last for his life. Fraternity served as the guiding principle. Many people came to this great institution to acquire good tact and delicacy and the inestimable gift of getting on with people of different temperaments and diverse characters. Shantiniketan

stands for ever as an unique institution, Mahatma Gandhi describes it in his "My Experiments with Truth" as "a handsome combination of simplicity, love and tenacity."

Tagore rendered signal service in the cause of peace and tranquility. He never hated any Englishman and he wanted combination of the civilizations of the East and the West. In this respect, Tagore differs from Mahatma Gandhi. The latter considered town people as a small minority of westernized intellect and always upheld his ideals of simplicity and absence of grandeur in our daily life. His first preference goes only to the Swadeshi movement. Tagore did not like the attitude of Gandhi. At the same time, they were very good friends and the combination of both their views can be compared to the mingling of the truth and the beauty of the world. Tagore dreamed of the mutual understanding of the East and the West. In all his works he presented to the world lively and vivid characters which can attract the mind of any people on this globe. He placed before the world new ideals and taught a lesson to his generation not to suppress the morality of humanity. As an apostle of beauty and universal brotherhood, his life and in fact, every minute of it offers the most fitting medicine for the ancient and modern ills.

All the men and women created by Tagore are of noble and sublime character. His dexte-

(Contd. on page 16)

SHORT STORY

By N. M. Mitra

WOMAN WITH A PAST

The little girl often reminded her of a shady and sordid past, and she melted in sorrow.

THE house was ringing with the laughter and merriment of children. There were four of them—three boys and a little girl—Madhav, Keshav, Govind and Anu, romping in the garden, running up the staircase and chasing one another round and round. The mother, Radha, was proudly gazing at them and feeling radiant and happy.

When little Anu who was only four years old fell at her mother's feet, exhausted and screaming because her brothers had teased her very much that day, Radha picked her up in her strong arms, covered her cheeks with her affectionate kisses and made her cheerful.

"Mother, I am not going to speak to any of my brothers hereafter—tomorrow, next day and yesterday. Never! Never!"

Her confusion of 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday' made her mother laugh gently. "Yes, darling; you need never speak to your brothers. But suppose Govind gives you peppermint will you accept it or no?"

"I will take it but I won't talk. Will you get angry with me, too if don't speak to him?"

At this time a tall handsome man in suit and hat entered the room and hearing the little one's prattle, he burst out laughing. "Father," burst out Anu, gleefully, "I am not going to speak to you."

"So shall I give this sweet packet to your brothers?" he said, producing a nice packet that contained chocolates.

Anu ran from her mother's knee into her father's arms and kissed him.

"You see, Radha, how clever she is. She kisses me before I kiss her because she knows that she can expect a gift. She is not only the spit image of her mother but also in habit and manners she is exactly like her!"

There was a beetroot blush on Radha's cheeks. "Better doff your coat. I shall get you some toast and tea, dear. Don't let Anu down. She is afraid of her brothers' teasing."

"You needn't worry about that. Till this packet is emptied, she won't get down from my lap."

Both Mother and Father laughed as Anu went on munching the sweets to her heart's content. After finishing half the sweets, she suddenly felt tired, yawned and went to sleep. Radha gently took the precious burden in her arms and laid it on a special bed.

She then fed her sons and they too dropped off to sleep one by one. After the night meal her husband had gone into his study and was buried in some book on archaeology. It was his special study and he did special research in it and had gained considerable distinction.

Radha put out all the lights in the main hall, kitchen and the drawing room and retired to bed. She was lying close to Anu because she needed her comforting arms at times. She would suddenly sit up and cry aloud for her mother or would roll off the bed and lie on the chill, cold floor. Then she would get a nasty cold and even get fever. So Radha made it a point to watch over her darling at all hours.

She could not go to sleep immediately. She recalled her husband's remark that Anu was the spit image of herself. How true it was! But it reminded her of a tragedy in her early life when she was eighteen. The bitter memory of that incident brought tears to her eyes. And

for a long time she did not get any sleep and the pillow was almost wet with her tears.

It was thirteen years ago. Radha was a bright and lively lass then full of vigour and wonderful beauty. She was an orphan and an old aunt (her mother's elder sister) brought her up. She was always going about with girls of her age and sometimes ate in their houses. Her aunt did not mind her free movements. She knew that in the company of other girls she would be quite safe.

Radha however used to meet the brother of Ninoo, a girl friend of hers, and both of them liked each other immensely. Radha often dined in their house and spent several hours there. When a young girl and a young man fall desperately in love they would create opportunities somehow, somewhere to promote their object. Radha and Prakash—that was his name—went to the pictures, took drinks in snack bars and then she would be escorted to her residence.

One night Radha told her aunt that she would stay in Ninoo's house for the night as her friend was not well. Her aunt did not object but she never knew that it was a lie. That night she went to Ninoo's house all right but she slept in a separate room where she was secretly visited by Prakash. They ate of the forbidden fruit that night and several other nights until Radha discovered to her horror that she at newsprnga.

When Prakash learnt of this truth he got frightened of the consequences of his folly and ran off to some unknown place.

Before her aunt made the discovery, Radha went off to the distant city and had herself admitted to a maternity hospital. When a girl was born she transferred her affection to it and she lavished all her love.

Outside the hospital—after her discharge—she wandered about and worked as a flour grinder in an eating house run by a burly woman. After six months that woman drove her out in the course of a quarrel. In sheer vexation Radha threw her baby—Anu—into the well and herself also fell down into it with the hope of ending her life and misery. An alarm was raised and the police rescued her from the well. She was badly hurt and admitted to the hospital. But the child was dead.

For several days she was off her head. She did not know that the chief doctor of the ward

and his friend were daily watching over her with considerable sympathy and concern. When she recovered fully the police were preparing to remove her to the jail on a charge of murdering her child and attempting to commit suicide. She wept on hearing the charge-sheet read to her. It was at this time that the friend of the doctor intervened. He promised to marry the young woman and take every possible care of her.

The Magistrate who tried the case took a lenient view and allowed him to marry her and make her happy.

Thus it was that Radha was married and given a chance to make good her life. When a girl was born to her she named her as Anu—the same name that had been given to the child born out of wedlock.

Her husband knew of all this but he was indulgent and raised no objection. He found her devoted and loving and that was enough for him.

DRAWBACK

Fame has also this great drawback, that if we pursue it we must direct our lives in such a way as to please the fancy of men, avoiding what they dislike and seeking what is pleasing to them.

—Spinoza.

SHORT STORY

By R. Vaidya

The New Advent

The two women forgot and forgave their quarrels and misunderstandings. And pledges of affection and devotion were renewed.

PUSHPA nodded welcome to her sister as she came in with her box and bedding. Tears choked her voice and she was genuinely distressed and grief-stricken. Sheila put down her luggage and went forward towards her sister. They threw their arms around each other and sat cheek to cheek on the bed.

"I am extremely sorry to see you in this condition," wept Sheila. Her fair slender body was convulsed with sobs.

"I know I have been cruel and heartless towards you," blabbered Pushpa. "I stopped talking to you five years ago because I was too proud and haughty. I was inordinately vain because I had got a very handsome husband. But I did not show you the respect due to you as an elder sister. Aren't you older than myself by three years?"

"Stop talking in this strain," said Sheila in a chiding tone. "In any family there are bound to be

occasional quarrels and misunderstandings. Ours is no exception. You were the pet of our parents and naturally you were a bit imperious. I willingly let you dominate the household. Take it from me, my love for you is not a whit less."

"But where is your husband?" she timidly asked.

"You see, I took tea and some bun at the junction early this morning. So don't call in the cook. In another hour I shall begin tidying things up and setting the house in order. What a mess!" she sniffed.

"I wanted to restore some order before your arrival. But, Sheila, how could I do it?" My husband—yes, he has gone to office and will be back by evening. He said he would go to the station and fetch you. But I told him that you were shrewd and widely travelled and that you would find your way to our house. You see, he has exhausted all his casual and privilege leave."

Sheila smiled. "You did right in asking him to go to office. You know, when you were involved in the railway accident, mother suddenly died of a heart attack one night. We did not choose to break the news at once to you for fear it might worsen your condition. But poor father! He was like a tree without roots. He did not even survive her for three months. One morning he suddenly sank towards the floor. He shouted for hot milk or water. I was in the kitchen. It took me five minutes to get some hot milk ready. But when I came to the hall, his eyes were staring upwards. I screamed and ran to the front door for help. Someone brought in a doctor who pronounced life extinct. Thus both our parents left us. My grief is still intense. Both of them left us suddenly without a word of message or blessings.

"Then I thought that the news of the death of our parents must be communicated to you somehow. You had a right to learn of their passing whatever your condition was. So I sent you a registered letter making sure that it would reach you. I locked the house and left our town with our old neighbour Sabitri on a pilgrimage.

"When I returned after six months, Sabitri's son gave me some letters that had come from you and some sympathetic relations who wrote to express their sorrow in our bereavement. You had invited me to rush to your place at once. And there you find me at last. You would be

silly to refer again to those slight misunderstandings and quarrels between us.

"You know, my husband is somewhere in Kenya. But I have had no further news about him. One bird whispered that he has married a widow there and they have two children. So I have given up all hope of any happiness in that direction. He is as good as dead to me."

Pushpa was evidently distressed to hear all that she had to say. "My husband and I decided that you should stay with us and cheer us up with your company. You must be our main prop. You know, they amputated my right leg up to the knee and I even wanted to commit suicide for very shame. I feared my husband would begin to dislike me after the loss of such a vital limb. I deliberately threw myself down the staircase and lost all consciousness. I was injured in the back but the doctors cured me. But I was too ill for nearly six months. My husband used to weep at my sight.

"Luckily you have come. I shall transfer all my burden to your worthy shoulders, sister. Remember, this is your home."

Pushpa's husband was mighty glad to see Sheila. The next day being Sunday, he stayed at home, showed her the various parts of the house, the utensils, the boxes, told her about the kind of meals to be cooked in the morning for himself and for her sister. He assisted her at every turn and soon the house was made

spick and span. It was indeed neat and bright as a pin. They worked far into the night and were happy at what they had achieved.

Pushpa, as the days passed on, knew full well that her husband was making love to Sheila. The poor woman had probably succumbed to his spell for he was handsome and dashing. She was not, however, jealous. In the peculiar set-up such a development perhaps was unavoidable.

One night, she saw them making love in the kitchen.

It would be best for her to end her life and clear the path for them. But Fate had decided otherwise. One day Sheila found her vomiting and helped her back to bed. "Sister, are you aware, you are having morning sickness?"

Pushpa said meekly, "I hope the child to be born will not be lame."

The baby boy when he was born after seven months was perfect in limb and quite bonny.

(Contd. from page 10)

rous handling of his men is inimitable. His immense vitality and originality compensate for a tendency to caricature and to lapse occasionally into sentimentality. Tagore was also a very good essayist. His essays were logical and reflective. His style was persuasive. He insisted always on the creative activity of men.

The vicissitudes of Tagore's spiritual odyssey strained his poetry to a very great extent. He was a man of great experience and immense suffering. In spite of the many obstacles that barred his way, he never lost sight of his specific aim, i. e. a deep understanding of life. He comforted himself when he was in

distress and tedium. He experienced misery, sorrow and ache. He felt pain in his soul. But he remained to be an incorrigible optimist. He felt the sweetness of life in his miseries. He never expressed himself as a pessimist. In fact, these difficulties doubled his courage and obdurate will. In his voice, the joy of life sounded with the greatest activity.

Tagore was one of the Indian reservoirs of literature. We must all treasure the works of this literary giant. We recently celebrated the centenary of this great Indian throughout the world. The sweet memories of Tagore are still fresh in our minds and I am sure that they will continue to be fresh in the minds of all the Indians.

A Seven—Part Serial Story

INSTALMENT SIX

The Bride's Visitation

By "Revtahi"

How curious all the five deaths were. Sridhar dying in the nuptial chamber of cyanide poisoning—Narayan falling down from the parapet wall from the second floor—Dr. Arun's suicide. The grim accident which crushed Kailas the circus star—The mistake that led to Ekambaram's death.

SUB-Inspector Rajarathinam muttered within himself.

"I am going to meet her at last. What would she say? How would she explain away the five deaths? Would she make a clean breast of it? I wonder."

The Doctor had just sent word to him that the actress who was almost choked to death by film actor Ekambaram was out of danger and that the Sub-Inspector could talk to her.

Rajarathinam felt as if he was standing at the top of a precipice gazing at the unfathomable depths below. He had a feeling that he was at the brink of a discovery.

Here was the chance he had longed for—the mystery of the Snake Club would be solved. The

mysterious woman whom he suspected to hold the clue to the mystery was awaiting his arrival at the hospital.

How curious all the five deaths were. Sridhar dying in the nuptial chamber of cyanide poisoning. Narayan falling down from the parapet wall from the second floor. Dr. Arun's suicide. The grim accident which crushed Kailas the circus star. The mistake that led to Ekambaram's death.

A woman was concerned in all the five deaths. Could it be possible for the same woman to have willed these deaths?

Who was this woman Sumath whom Ekambaram pitched upon as a substitute for Sukanya for acting in the role of Desdemona?

Why should Ekambaram attempt to murder her? Or was it just the result of a piece of realistic acting when Ekambaram forgot himself and used more violence than was necessary for the scene?

Again, who tampered with the knife and made it a mortal weapon when the unsuspecting actor buried it in his heart? Had Sumathi anything to do with it? Was it possible that she would have tampered with the knife?

A thousand and one questions, doubts and misgivings arose in the futile mind of Rajarathinam. He was sure that the girl at the hospital held the answer to most of the questions.

A crowd had already collected at the hospital wishing to see the actress.

The Sub-Inspector edged his way to the Special Ward. A nurse led him.

Rajarathinam saw a fragile figure on the cot, her face half concealed in the sheets.

On hearing the sound of footsteps, the girl on the bed got up throwing down the sheets. Rajarathinam could see her face.

Her face was familiar.

Rajarathinam remembered the oil painting he saw at the entrance of the Swarga Theatre.

A tall stalwart man suffocating the life out of a pretty girl? The man in the painting was film actor Ekambaram.

The pretty girl was Sukanya who co-starred with Ekambaram in many films.

The face that greeted him was the face of Sukanya. Sumathi, dressed like a Parsi girl whom he expected to meet was not there.

"What is this? Where is Sumathi?" he thundered.

"Sumathi! You mean the girl who took my place? So you expected to meet her and not me here. How disappointed you look!"

Sukanya chuckled. Rajarathinam was in no mood for jokes.

"How did this happen? Why this transformation?" he asked, his heart beating fast with excitement.

"Quite simple. When poor Ekambaram wanted me to come to Bangalore for acting in the drama, I could not take his offer as I was down with 'flu. But then when I heard that another girl was to take my place, I got a bit jealous. By the time the drama was to be staged, I got better. I rushed here. The drama was in progress. I met Sumathi. What a nice girl she was! I said that I would take the role during the next half of the drama. She readily consented and gave me her costume. I did not see her afterwards. The spectators did not notice the transformation. You see, Sumathi was of the same build and complexion. Even Ekambaram did not notice the change. I noticed that he was moody and irritable like the man whose role

he was living. At the suffocating scene when his grip around my neck tightened, I sensed that he had taken me for Sumathi and fighting for life, I told him that I was Sukanya and not Sumathi. He looked doubtful and was then surprised. But his grip loosened. My presence of mind had saved me. Poor Ekambaram, he would not even think of harming me!"

Tears rolled down from her white cheeks like pearls. The girl was in genuine grief.

It was some time before Rajarathinam could realise the full import of her words. Sumathi had vanished. Taking the providential opportunity that offered itself, the woman had escaped.

That meant that the case was as it started, as mysterious as ever.

"Can you give me a description of her appearance? Did she tell you where she was going?"

Sukanya's white forehead was frowned in thought. "How can I describe her, she was in make-up. She told me that her mission was over and that she did not know what to do afterwards. I thought she was referring to the Drama. But I now think that she meant something else. I can tell you this much, she is no Parsi girl as people thought. She is a South Indian girl."

With a sudden movement, Sukanya got up and took a handbag from the table. "I wonder whether this will help. You see, in her haste, she left this handbag along with the costume."

With a suddenness which surprised Sukanya, he snatched the handbag from the woman and emptied the contents. Besides certain toilet things and make-up materials, Rajarathinam found a calico-bound diary. He thumbed the pages. The frontpage contained Sridhar's photograph. It was Sridhar's diary.

He closed the diary and rose. "Thank you, Sukanya, you have done me a great help. I shall meet you later," he said and rushed to the Police Station in his jeep.

Circle Inspector Manohar was waiting for his arrival. Rajarathinam entered and collapsed in the sofa opposite the Inspector unceremoniously.

Manohar took the flask and poured a steaming cup of coffee and offered it to the Sub-Inspector who swallowed it in a gulp.

It was some time before Rajarathinam could speak. He was beside himself with excitement.

Manohar said, "From your manner, I think you have solved the mystery."

"I cannot say that much. But we are nearer the solution. This is the diary of Sridhar the first victim and the first member of the Snake Club!"

At a nod from Manohar, Rajarathinam read on scraps from the diary.

"My God! Why did I start this hell of a club? I started it with a good intention with a view to indulge in innocent adventures,

to help damsels in distress. But Dr. Arun, damn him, had converted it into hellish blackmailing, nefarious and criminal gang. How unscrupulous the man is. When a Doctor turns criminal, he is dangerously powerful. He has managed to get several love letters and is using them for shameful purposes in the name of the club. When I pleaded at the club meeting for Sudha and accused Dr. Arun of turning her insane, he gave me a look full of hatred.....

The Sub-Inspector turned on the pages and read:

"I love Kamala with all my heart and soul. But a member of the Snake Club could marry only at the cost of his life. He can take any lot of secret pleasures but marriage is forbidden. Why did I ever think of starting this club? Arun says if a member marries, he will let out the secret to his wife and the club would be in danger. The other night, when I pleaded for my freedom, Narayan said that I would be done away with on the wedding night and the other three clapped their hands and welcomed the decision.....

I cannot bear this. I want to lead a decent married life with

Kamala. I am going to marry her, come what may. Poor girl, she thinks that I am just an aristocratic idler. She does not know that I am a member of a club responsible for many murders, rapes and kidnappings. How shocked she would be if she hears an account of the doings of the club? Would she believe me, if I say that I had no hand in the affairs of the club and that I continue to be a member because I could leave the club only at my peril.

I had resolved to get married and communicated my decision to the club. The other four drew lots in my presence to murder me. The lot fell on Dr. Arun—a suitable person. He first smiled and said with a sidelong glance at me that he would carry out the resolution of the club. He would not hesitate to murder me. He had toyed with the idea for several days.....

What should I do? Should I inform the police? In that case I would also be arrested before my marriage. All right, I shall keep quiet and leave for Bombay, the day after marriage.

Rajarathinam stopped reading. There were beads of perspiration in his face.

Less and Less

Life is the apprenticeship to progressive renunciation, to the steady diminution of our claims, of our hopes, of our powers, of our liberty.

— Amiel

INDIA MAGAZINE

ARTICLE

By R. M. Thompson

THE WORLD BEYOND?

Fact or Fiction?

Where do we go from here? Is there a world beyond? These questions relate to a mystery which has not yet been solved. Dr. R. M. Thompson, who has made a special study of metaphysical topics, treats the issue from a new angle.

A YOUNG widow, out of the depths of her agony, having lost quite suddenly the only man she ever loved, her husband, turned to me and with pathetic wistfulness cried: "Where is he now? Where has he gone? He simply couldn't die."

She was but expressing the haunting cry which has baffled the ages—what happens after death—a cry which is being repeated a million times in our life-time.

The question of life after death is not a distant one, such as whether or not Mars is inhabited; it is something which touches deep and tender places in the heart—something that all of us at some time or another are brought up against.

True it is that the thought of any future life is often completely eclipsed by the thought of "this" life. We have to live in "this" world, and we have pre-

cious little time to ponder on a life that is distant and speculative.

Idea of Immortality

Yet, the idea of survival after death in some form or other, is a strangely indestructible one, and the idea of immortality in this and every age seems instinctive in man. After all, however real this world may be, it is only a passing world for all of us. Indeed, the one certain thing about life is death.

It is well to be reminded at the outset of our exploration into this fascinating realm, that belief in life after death is universal. One of the most astonishing things about man is that he has never been able to believe in his own extinction, not even in his humble moods. The idea of immortality, even among the most primitive tribes, has always been widespread. The Pyramids were erected, not simply to guard

the dust of kings but to witness to an ancient people's belief in immortality; the bodies of the Pharaohs were embalmed because one day the soul would require the body again. If we took a vote of all human beings on: "Does death end all?" there would be an overwhelming majority that would answer, "No." This is a significant thing, and entitled to great respect though, of course, it is not "proof." Why should the whole human race cherish such a belief if it does not witness to something valid and true?

The Greatest Wonder

Another thing that needs emphasising in these days is that the greatest thing in the universe is man. The mind of man has unlocked the door of some of the greatest secrets of the universe; the eighth wonder of the world is always Man, not the discovery and release of atomic energy, but Man who discovered and harnessed it. Surely such a wonderful piece of work as man, with all his tragic blundering, is destined for something more than a few brief spells on this planet?

This may sound pure egotism, but if we believe that God is a Father caring for all His Children in the cosmic process, He could not leave His Children to pass out into cosmic nothingness. If God is a Father, then it seems an outrage that His Children, when their characters are at their noblest and best, and their experiences at their richest, should

be scavenged on the scrap heap of death.

But, say the sceptics, when the brain dies, we die. Sir Arthur Keith used the illustration of the candle and said that when a candle is done the flame goes out, and when the body is done the soul is extinguished. But Sir Arthur did not go far enough with his analogy. Sir Oliver Lodge pointed out that Sir Arthur limited himself to the material particles of the candle, when actually the candle is emanating light which goes away into space and will go on for ever. Therefore, Sir Arthur Keith's analogy suggests rather than negates the immortality of the soul. Surely that pulpy mass we call "brain" is not the whole story of man? When you say "I", you don't mean your brain only, but the whole personality which is indestructible. The brain itself does not produce poems and symphonies, literature, art and love. We can never identify brain with the mind.

Precious Things

Either this world was made by a fool or a Father—which? If, behind this universe is just blind, purposeless power, when there are such things as human friendship, the laughter of children, and the selfless devotion of a mother for her child, then life is just a leering mockery, and I, for one, refuse to believe it. Surely such precious things as human love and heroic deeds do not just pass out of existence entirely?

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AN UNFORGETTABLE PAGE FROM THE HISTORY OF RAJASTHAN

They Fought for Honour

By Mahindra Nihal

WITH the very coming of the name of Rajasthan on our lips we bow our head with respect and esteem. This is because of the fact that thousands of such instances are attached with the history of Rajasthan, in which brave Rajputs fought to their last, so that they might save their honour and dignity. The history of Rajasthan is full of such instances i.e. the oath of Maharana Partap not to sleep on bed until he recovered 'Chitor' from the enemy, the sacrifice of Padmini and the adventures of Alash and Udai—whose names and adventures still dominate our folk songs.

Apart from these prominent figures, even the tiny figure and the most minor event of Rajasthan's history possesses the huge dignity and honour, which the Rajput name otherwise deserves. What else can we find in those petty instances in which the whole group of a Rajput community sacrifices itself, so that the honour of the bangles of a Rajput

woman could be saved from molestation. Then there are many such instances in which a king invaded the territory of another king (who was otherwise a tyrant and was misusing his powers in crushing the poor and the weak) so that the wretched king may be deprived of his filthy life and the common men be given an atmosphere of peace and prosperity.

Among those countless 'unforgettables'—"patriot" though is an insignificant event, but if we look into the feelings, which worked behind it, we are but bound to praise it.

This event belongs to that time when the Rajput dignity was at its peak. But, even though their power was convincingly dominant, still they were divided in small boundaries at that time. The present broader map of Rajasthan was conspicuous by its absence and rather abounded with small dots.

There were many small states, which were usually at daggers drawn with each other. Historians and political thinkers have ceaselessly criticized this routine of Rajput existence. But still, one thing is quite clear! If such were not the prevailing conditions of Rajasthan at those times, perhaps we would have been deprived of those heroic examples, which we at present adore and which still raise our head with pride and dignity.

Now let us come to the event. There were two states by the name of Devgarh and Boondi. These names are occasionally heard in the "fifty two garhs" or "fortresses" of legendary Rajasthan. 'The brave persons have never lived in peace', is an old saying. As this feeling of bravery was always ripe in the bosoms of Rajputs, so naturally, the kings of the two 'garhs' were not on good terms with each other. Rather, just for the sake of dragging the other down, each of them used to apply any available and possible high handed formulae for the satisfaction of their self aggrandisement.

But the king of Boondi was somewhat more a self-understood man. He would always take his own course, without considering whither that course will drift him. So for the sake of showing his superior powers to Devgarh he maltreated its businessman, Jas Karan and threw him behind the bars.

When the news of this insult reached Devgarh, its citizens clenched their fists with wrath.

Immediately a deputation of councillors went to the king to ask him to take the necessary steps, so that the stigma of insult could be removed from the forehead of Devgarh.

When the councillors went to the 'Maharaj' he was about to take lunch. The zeal of Rajputs has never cared for the opportune or the inopportune moment. So the king was informed by the 'Darban' that councillors wanted to see the king for an urgent and unavoidable talk. Rajputs have (also) always sacrificed everything, when called upon for any duty. So the Maharaja withdrew his hand from the 'saucer' before he could take the first morsel—and went straight to the councillors.

And whatever the councillors poured into the ears of the king—was sufficient to make him red with anger. How could he tolerate that some other king should dare insult his subject and throw him behind the bars?

So the Rajput king at once took the oath, "I solemnly take the oath, that unless and until I take the revenge of this insult, I will not touch food."

Councillors had the least idea that the king will be taking such a drastic step. But now Maharaj had taken the oath, even without providing a chance for a second thought to the councillors.

So another worry was haunting the councillors at that time. The place of taking the revenge - i.e., Boondi was sixty miles away from Devgarh. Therefore to

take revenge immediately was out of question. Moreover it was not a child's game. One state should collide with another—is the very thought, which terrorizes the imagination of the bravest of the braves. Facts were also before them, for this work, if not months and weeks, at least few days were required. But the king had taken the oath that he would not eat any thing unless and until he had taken the revenge! So this matter was more serious because it could endanger the life of the king, if the arrangements were not made immediately for the fulfilment of his oath.

At that time the king's mother was also present there. When the king had left the first morsel of the meal back on the thali, she had visualized that something unprecedented was about to happen. And now, when she heard her son taking the oath and showing obstinacy over maintaining it, she was greatly shocked. But in the very next moment she came to her own. After all, she too was a Rajputni and the instances of Padmini and other great Rajput women were before her. So how could she ask her son that he should take his words back?

But still she was a mother. And a mother can not bear that her beloved son should be kept away from the food, when there is plenty to eat and drink. Therefore she was more worried than the councillors.

For some time she remained embarrassed with the above men-

tioned problem. But all of a sudden her eyes brightened—as if she had found something in that darkness. And then whatever she said was not less than magic.

"I have thought of a plan"—said she with a good deal of excitement—"with this plan the snake will die its own death and there will be no need of using any rod."

It was natural that everybody was startled. Maharaj advanced towards his mother and asked as if surprised—

"What sort of plan, mother?"
"This is that your oath could be fulfilled just now."

"But mother! how possibly can this be done?"

"Yes it is possible" mother pressed on her words—"you will soon take your meal after taking the desired revenge."

The king and the councillors could not understand her, therefore 'Rajmata' did not think it proper to puzzle them any more. So with a mixed feeling of surprise and happiness she continued in the same tone—

"What you cherish for is the revenge from Boondi for the insult inflicted upon Devgarh! That we can take in a beautiful way—order for the erection of a fort on the model of the enemy's fort—and then hurt the feelings of the enemy by bringing that fort down. This will surely give satisfaction to you and you will

be able to take your meal. Moreover, if you are very much serious about taking the actual revenge—that can be done afterwards. What is the use of starving yourself?”

Hearing this golden advice, everybody was relieved from the earlier anxiety, though the king showed some hesitation in the first instance. In that very moment order for the erection of the artificial fort was given. Hundreds of artisans were employed to work ceaselessly. And in this way the fort was ready on the next dawn. The king had already ordered that the whole population of Devgarh be informed through the beatings of drums that the king will bring the artificial fort down on the next day.

So before the sun could raise its shining head from the far off horizon on that day, the columns of forces—on foot, horse, and elephant—were marching with conventional dignity towards the sight where the king was dreaming of fulfilling his word. With the beatings of drums a sort of war atmosphere was created, though actually there was no action to be seen.

When this caravan of conventional troops reached besides the artificial fort, then all of a sudden a youth jumped out of the spectators, and coming forward before the army he challenged the king—“I am the son of Boondi. In my presence nobody should dare insult the map of my motherland” he roared.

People thought him to be insane and tried their most to persuade and prevent him from challenging the king, saying—“This fort is only artificial and has been built only to save the life of the king. This should not hurt your feeling and you should not take it to heart.”

But hearing this the spirited youth got further infuriated and went on saying loudly—“The people of Devgarh can tolerate insults. But we—the sons of Boondi can not tolerate any blot on the sacred name of our mother-land. The honour of Boondi and every thing attached with it is more sacred to us than our lives.”

This was what the king could hardly listen. So flaring up in rage he ordered his man—“Do away with the rascal, who dares talk in such a way before me.”

But before the order of the king could be fulfilled, the youth at once turned towards the spectators and asked with a forceful voice.

“Is there any other son of Boondi, who will sacrifice his life with me—in defence of the honour of the motherland?”

On his words some other youthful men jumped out of the gathering with a lightning speed—swords in their hands and furious cries on their lips. It was clear that the artificial battlefield was to be turned into a real one.

(Contd. on page 29)

Short Story

NO ALTERNATIVE

She was stranded in the streets and he picked her up with a kind heart.

BY KRISHNA SUDHAMA

MANTHA looked at her three children sleeping peacefully on the mattresses on the floor. She was sitting on the cot with dishevelled hair and a woe-begone expression on her face. Her melancholy attitude imparted an unusual beauty to her face. She might be past thirty but there was not a streak of grey on her head. Her hair was glossy black and the curls that kissed her neck would tempt even a man much younger than herself.

But still the facts that Mantha had to face conveyed a disastrous blow and tragedy. As she stared at her darling little girls—Choodi, Bina and Banu—her grief was intense. And she was convulsed with sobs.

Sundar, the father of her children, had definitely left her. Six years of blissful life with him had come to this bitter end. She had imagined that the quarrel that Sundar had kicked up was only usual and that he would come back to her when his temper cooled down. But as she reviewed the last scene in the light of

some disclosures made by a friend of his, she understood Sundar had broken with her once and for all...

Sundar had met her on the street one night six years ago. She was twenty four then and had an attractive figure. But she was clad in tatters almost and was shivering with cold. The rags however could hardly disguise her youth and beauty and Sundar gazed at her in fascination.

Hunger was gnawing at her stomach and she could hardly keep standing. She was standing behind a lamp-post in a deserted street and looked up at him with a pathetic plea in her eyes. Sundar sized her up and understood the situation. She must have run away from home and taken to the oldest profession. How long she had been wandering on the streets, exposing her charms, he did not know. His heart went out to her and he decided to give a helping hand.

At that time thoughts of love did not enter his mind. Being

unconventional in his outlook, he decided to reform her if possible and find a job for her. He asked her in a low tone to follow him at a respectful distance to his own little home half a mile away. He brought some buns and fruits and gave them to her, so she could eat on the way and satisfy her hunger.

She thought he would do to her as other men had used to do—spend some time making love and drive her out before dawn. But it was not so. His old mother opened the door in response to his knock and then retired to her room. She knew her son's habits and never criticised him or asked an unnecessary question. He was her only child, she had lost seven children previously. So she was extremely fond of him and showed a jealous possessive nature. Though he did not marry, she gave him full liberty to seek the sweetheart of his choice. He dropped his girls one after another. He never asked any of them to marry him and the moment they insisted on his marrying he left them severely alone. His mother would do anything for him but she would not entertain the idea of his marrying. She set her face against it.

When Sundar was satisfied that his mother was sleeping, he signed to the girl waiting at the door-step to come in without making any noise and step upstairs. But Mantha couldn't close her eyes for sheer excitement. She was expecting him. When he came up she was ready

to receive him in her arms and make love to him. But he simply stood with a bundle. "Here", he said, "is a bundle of old sarees and blouses that my mother used. Throw away your rags and wear one of these sarees. I shall introduce you to my mother tomorrow morning. But be careful not to tell her who you are and what you have been. If she wants to know anything about you she will only ask me for information and not you. And if you can assist her in the household duties help her. I will pay you for all that work and you can remain with us so long as you keep silent and don't go out."

She was astonished at his proposal and touched at his sincere regard for her. She burst into tears as she gratefully accepted the bundle. "You have saved me from a life of worse disgrace and degradation. You won't find a more grateful dog than myself."

He hastily withdrew to his room after locking all the doors. The next day his mother welcomed her in a few words and asked her to take things easy and remain as her long-lost "daughter." She became bright and lively in a few days and was the picture of perfect grace and charm. For two months they did not have occasion to speak much. Then one day the old woman suddenly departed for Meerut where her elder brother was reported to be dying. A telegram hastened her departure.

(Contd. on page 32)

(Contd. from page 26)

Within the twinkling of an eye, the peaceful atmosphere, there, was dominated with the collision of swords and shields. And when it stopped, the whole of the mainland was red with blood.

Those spirited youths of Boondi were few in number and could be counted on fingers. But they fought bravely and fought to their last. The example which they have left be-

hind is not only sublime but it is also an example of its own type. To do every thing possible for the safety and defence of one's country—is a feeling which is to be found everywhere in small or great degrees. But to sacrifice one's life—so that the map of their country may not be molested. There is hardly any other instance in the world's history which can be placed against this example. ★

[Contd. from Page 22]

As Lord Balfour said: "If there is no other life than this the world is a stupid joke—and whose joke?"

But you can't 'prove' life after death you say. Well, different classes of facts have different kinds of proof. If we say that immortality cannot be proved, it is just about as sensible as saying that since you can measure a yard but not a scent, the sense of touch is proved but not that of smell. To every class of facts there is its own proof, there are real things in this world that cannot be proved by the senses at all.

There is, however, the evidence of psychical research I do not belittle the so-called "evidence" that pours into the files of the psychical Research Society every day, and which is claimed to be from "The Other Side." "There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Another Realm

It may easily be said that we are on the verge of as big dis-

coveries in the spiritual realm as scientists are in the physical realm. It may easily be said that in the future, that strange land "from which no traveller returns" will come nearer to us.

Where do we go from here? I don't know; I've never been. But I would give my last farthing in support of the belief that there is another realm, call it Heaven if you will, where, being translated into a new environment, all the earth-bound limitations that hampered us, all the contradictions that confused us, will be resolved finally.

Death is not departure, it is arrival; not sleep, but waking. As the sun sets in the West it rises new splendour in the East, and the whole round of life is completed by immortality.

Without the hope of immortality life is "a tale told by an idiot." Mary Webb put it beautifully: "Death is a gateway on the horizon."

Yes, surely death is "an awfully big adventure."

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**SHORT STORY**  
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THE GLAMOUR GIRL

The love life of some of the stars would seem to resemble their parts in films. Nothing is certain.....

By G. Rangaraj

"SUGUNA, take it from me that you look most wonderful," said Film Director Vasudev. His remark made Suguna blush and she hid her embarrassment with a big glass of tumbler of pineapple juice which the waiter had just then placed.

It was a party held in honour of the latest sensation of the screen, Indra. Within five years she had shot up to the dizzy heights of fame. Producers vied with one another for capturing her for their pictures and her rates went up every time. She demanded two lakhs of rupees for a picture and stipulated that it must be finished (so far as her part was concerned) within four weeks.

Suguna had no such luck. She had minor roles at the beginning and had to struggle hard for recognition. She was a chorus girl once shaking her hips and stooping low to give a suggestion of her symmetrical figure. During a rehearsal a reprobate of an actor actually patted her on the rump. Her eyes blazed in scorn and anger and she raised her hand to strike at the rascal when Vasudev suddenly intervened and stopped the quarrel. He quietly marched off the grinning Romeo and then pacified the weeping girl and asked her to meet him after the rehearsal.

That day he took serious notice of her and he knew that she had the makings of a good star. She had restraint and dignity and there was nothing of the stage about her. She was of slight build and medium height while her curvaceous bosom emphasised the beauty of her figure. She had a constant smile flitting about her lips and it revealed one of her most charming aspects of her personality.

Vasudev greedily drank in all these details and could not help falling in love with her. But he was cautious in his moves, seeing how sensitive she was.

That night, at the end of the rehearsals when she waited for him in his office, he was very courteous and kind to her, and apologised to her for the rude conduct of that profligate actor.

He learnt from her about her parents and her younger brother, Ramesh. Her father was almost

blind and helpless and her mother was infirm and sick. Ramesh was studying hard in a technological institute. But in the morning and evening he did most of the household chores and attended on his parents. He worked hard and vigorously; he was a scholarship student and stood first in the class and all examinations.

Suguna took to films and accepted minor parts that brought a paltry amount every month. It did not help the family much but it staved off starvation. Her parents were afraid that the temptations in the screen world were too strong and their daughter might not be able to resist them. True, many fellows in the studio gave her a chase now and then. While returning home one night the make-up man roughly pulled her behind a tree and before she could recover her surprise he had kissed her twice on the lips.

She wrested herself free from his arms, drew up to her full height and then fell upon him like a fierce tigress, tearing at his cheeks with her finger-nails. His face burned as if somebody had poured some acid and suppressing a howl of pain ran off into the deep shadows. He thought she did not know that he had attacked her. But he didn't show himself in the studio for ten days as the bruises on his face were tell-tale. She however instinctively knew his unforgivable offence but fear of losing the job made her keep quiet.

It was in such a sense of frustration and humiliation that Suguna met Vasudev. He heard her story with great and sympathetic interest and was moved by her tale of suffering and persecution. He at once ordered the make-up man to appear before Suguna and asked him to apologise to her for his improper behaviour. From that day she was known as Vasudev's protegee and everyone kept respectfully aloof from her.

Within a week he raised her pay and enrolled her as a permanent artiste of the studio. He sent his car to pick her up from her house and when it was late in the night he drove her himself and left her at a safe corner of the street.

Soon he enabled her to move into a comfortable home with her parents and paid the rent himself. Suguna got more important parts and focussed the limelight of publicity on her. It was no wonder that she became famous in a short time. The press and the public began to rave about her beauty and histrionic talents.

Naturally Suguna was gushing with gratitude to Vasudev and when he was insidious with his persistence she quietly became his mistress. She spent part of the night with him in his bungalow and then returned home.

A mysterious illness however disabled her for a time from

acting. She was absent from the scree for nearly a year. It was a terrible pain in the back that almost crippled her light and nimble movement and she became less supple. But she had enough money that helped her to tide over the crisis. Meanwhile her brother had become an engineer and was drawing higher pay. So the question of money ceased to bother her.

What troubled her was the mounting indifference of Vasudev. He had fallen for another glamour girl and was gradually losing interest in Suguna. The latter was giving way to gloom. Seeing her condition, her brother asked her to give up films altogether and come with him to the Punjab where he was transferred.

It was hard going at first—this departure from the film land which had been so familiar to her and from the man she had loved from the bottom of her heart.

For five years she rested in the cool climate at the foot of the Himalayas and her health had returned and with it the glow to her cheeks. At the party she met Vasudev who was astonished at her beauty and declared his love. Within a month they were married and he swore never to leave her.

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When Sunder came late that night she greeted him with new warmth and an ingratiating smile. He too smiled back as she gave him the last glass of milk and told him about his mother's hurried departure.

That night she slowly drifted into his arms and made him her own after a tempestuous shower of hot kisses. His only regret was that he had lost two months by keeping away.

Soon he took her to a separate small house and furnished it. They had a glorious wonderful romance together and swore often that they would never be parted.

When the old woman returned after three months and found that Mantha was not to be found she didn't ask her son any question. She inferred that she must have left her son. She was happy that her son was her sole possession and that no other woman could permanently claim him. And she died happy and contented in that thought.

Then Mantha moved into Sundar's house and lived with her lover. She presented him with three girls but he often lost his temper and kicked up rows with her. He had contracted heavy debts and when a distant aunt of his offered him her daughter and good dowry to help him wipe off his liabilities he deserted Mantha and her children. So that was that. Mantha ended as she began. *

ARTICLE

By A. V. Matthew

How Democracy Triumphs

THE history of the world as has been practically demonstrated and proved by successive historical events is full of magnificent achievements that ought not to be underestimated, as well as of mistakes and blunders which cannot escape notice. Many persons are now found to be often perplexed as to the way in which they should apply the laws of justice to their daily lives. Modern man is, at present, under the perplexing dilemma of choosing a proper path from among a multitude of tortuous roads that emanate from divergent paths, and the origin and end of which he cannot see as yet. We are living in an age of change and turmoil. The circumstances of the world and the opinion of men have continually changed, and are still changing gradually. Modern society has still to lay the foundations for an ideal human relationship. Several social evils have not yet been substantially alleviated through social reform. The interest of many

persons is focussed more in emotions than in ideals.

The supremacy of democracy is now a permanent reality. The responsibility of civilization for the preservation and development of democracy is now frankly acknowledged. Many are now inclined to view democracy as a kind of world order the demands of which should be separated from the claims of democratic justice. The majority of men now demand to be treated in a way that would never violate their hour and privileges as democrats, while, at the same, vast issues are focussed in the relation of society to democracy, at the root of which lies a moral basis helping the development of the progressive and cultural tendencies of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Democracy and Communism are not correlative, terms which mean the same thing, produce the same sentiments, or designate a single reality. The primary terms of democracy can never be trans-

lated into terms of Communist inference. The possibilities of realizing the claims of democracy through Communist theories and practices, are very remote. In the task of constructing a constructive social philosophy, the temper of its materialism and the consequences of its historical identification with revolution, anarchy, class war, totalitarianism and atheism, poorly equip Communism for fruitful collaboration with democracy, under the aegis of the ideals of which there has been an astounding and rapid growth to cultural maturity. Democracy and Communism, which is not a complement to or extension of democracy can never be united in a firm alliance; on the other, hand, it is quite clear that conflicts will easily arise if democracy and Communism attempt together to realize their different ideals, rights and claims.

Communism does not furnish men with the most meaningful and helpful frameworks for the progress of civilization. The pretension of Communism to its being able to heal all social ills, to persuade and compel men to do what is right, and to help mankind to save itself by the progressive approximation and by passive obedience to its ideals, and practices, is now showing itself in all malevolence and brutal power. It would be fantastic to surmise that the limitations of imperfect human knowledge can be supplemented and perfected by the doctrines of Communism, or that the survival of our civilization depends upon the early establishment of a monopoly

control of Communism, or that the project for a supreme World Communist Government is much the best solution. And it cannot be freely conceded that the human intelligence, while capable of arriving at general moral truths, will unhesitatingly deduce all its acceptable social, political and economic principles and conclusions, and keep the spirit of democracy alive, from the questionable theories of Communism, the frustrations of which now confront us.

In spite of all the flur of history, it is very unfortunate that there are still men who import into their conviction the necessity of war, and who attempt, though without success to build an impressive case for its wholly retrograde character. It is inconceivable that war should exist interminably side by side with peace, social security and social discipline, all of which are to be attempted to be established in this world where all civilized men and women attribute a kind of infallibility and exclusiveness to their fraternal perspectives, and find that the incidence of such perspectives is culturally and democratically significant and relevant at several significant points. No one of the reasons adduced in support of war can provide highly valuable data for the civilized mankind in its understanding of the ideal of fraternity, especially since war can never help the world to find Communism of heart and mind in mankind, or the goodness of the process of actualizing human brotherhood. For the progress of international

harmony and one-world theory, war can never be sustained by a reasonable hope.

In a real sense, the whole chequered history of mankind is a continual dispensation of God. But there is still room left for the progress of religious and moral ideals and practices in the world. Man faced by natural forces which he seemingly cannot control, or by social conditions which he finds it difficult to alter cannot but seek the aid of religion as an efficacious and natural medium for absorbing the cultural outlook. There are tendencies in religion that ought never to be overlooked. Every man is expected to respond to religious and moral tendencies, the power of which is actual and considerably ahead of all materialistic sentiments, the orbit of the influence of which in social affairs is retrograde. It would be dangerous for humanity to discard the emotional appeal of all great religions, which, lies precisely in its deeper involvement in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The national life in India must hold itself under the civilizing influence of religion and democracy. On the plain of our democratic national life, the virtues of

His Real Loss!

Claims Clerk: "Sir, here's another farmer suing us on account of cows."

Indian Railway Official: "One of our trains killed them, I suppose?"

Clerk: "No, sir. He claims that our trains on this line run so slowly that passengers lean out of the windows and milk his cows as they go by."

religion and morality are to govern all our social, political and economic activities, in a permanent, organic form. As a nation, we must be able to think about and assert the needs of a national apparatus of religious, moral and democratic concepts, and thus assume and develop a sound national character, instead of attempting to find solutions for our problems by intricate theorizing, uncontrolled by religious and democratic inspiration. All ethical forces which would normalize and reorientate our country and establish justice in our society are to move Indians to national action.

LIKE CLOCKS

Laws and institutions are constantly tending to gravitate. Like clocks, they must be occasionally cleansed, and wound up and set to true time.

— H. W. Beecher

New Mystery Serial

Instalment Sixteen

By Lindsay Hamilton

THE BLACK ASP

THE STORY SO FAR:

Lady Muriel Waine is eloping with Nat Bingham when their car is attacked by three masked men, and the leader, "The Black Asp," takes Lady Muriel back to town—to her friend Mrs. Arkwright. Muriel fully realises from what she has been saved. But who is the Black Asp? And how does he come to know her movements and intentions so thoroughly?

Tony Wilmot (Mrs. Arkwright's nephew) finds life "doosed fatiguing". Major Grier, of the Intelligence department, is his friend. The Major is puzzled by the queer behaviour of Bingham, who, since the attack by the Black Asp, is a nervous wreck. Grier believes they may be on the brink of solving the mystery of a series of abominable crimes. One thread of the tangle is blackmail—by a creature known as The Flail.

Jack Parnell—known as Gentleman Jack—has just been released from prison. He comes out to find his daughter Susie missing. He is nearly frantic with anxiety, when he receives a note, "Ask Bingham".....

Sonia Deane is Bingham's ward. She is attacked by two ruffians, but is rescued by a masked man calling himself "The Black Asp," who tells her he loves her and intends marrying her. Sonia has no idea who this man can be. That night she sees him enter the house from the balcony. In the morning Bingham is found murdered. But Sonia cannot believe that her splendid laughing cavalier can be a brutal murderer.

Mrs. Arkwright invites Sonia to stay with her until things are straightened out.

On Bingham's body is found a note of warning from The Black Asp, and a letter from Parnell, also a list of twelve names. Major Grier points out that these are all names of women who have died

by their own hand in circumstances that point to blackmail by The Flail.

Are The Black Asp and The Flail one and the same person?

And has Parnell or The Black Asp murdered Bingham?

Lady Muriel receives a mysterious message from The Black Asp suggesting she calls on Sir Andrew Gale, the Surgeon.

Tony makes lazy love to Sonia, and takes her rebuff with the same nonchalance.

The Black Asp suddenly appears in the garden and makes love to Sonia. Although he refuses to reveal his identity, and he has never seen him unmasked, Sonia realises she loves this mysterious stranger.

She sends Tony to warn The Black Asp against any possible trap. The Black Asp escapes but Tony is too drunk to give any clear account of his meeting to Sonia...

Lady Muriel Waine suddenly meets Major Grier and shows him a letter that she has received from The Flail. She is stunned when Grier reveals that the Black Asp is not the Flail! They must be two different persons.

Now read on:

"The Black Asp, of course."

"I wish I could lay hands on him," said Grier.

"Why?" from Sonia sharply.

Grier smiled at her reassuringly.

"Because he is a man I should like to know. I owe him an apology. However, we'll get on with the story, First Bingham and the sort of man he was."

"A scoundrel!"

"A blackguard!"

"A cold, calculating fiend!"

"All that," said Grier, "But primarily, a libertine. That, I think, is the key to his character: sensuous to a degree; utterly lost to any feelings but his own, And oddly enough, that callousness; allied to a certain suavity of manner, was his strongest weapon. Perhaps the one quality women admire most in a man is strength, or rather, a suggestion of strength. It seems to lead them on, fascinated, to probe further for the roots of it that seem always deeper down. Nothing gives such a false impression of strength as callous insensibility. He was that sort of man."

"It was not till after the death of Sonia's father whom he had plucked pretty successfully, that he took to making capital of his love affairs and from then on it became a consuming passion. Even so he still indulged himself for pleasure alone. Parnell's daughter was an example. There can be no doubt but that he grew tired of her and packed her off to some remote corner of the globe with a promise to follow as soon as he could. One need not be surprised that she has not been traced, poor girl.

"His scheme of blackmail seems to have been simplicity itself: to provide his victims with a past, and then, as The Flail, threaten to blast their future at the very moment when happiness seemed most assured. Some of them were driven to suicide by his increasingly impossible demands. He guarded his secret well. Five years ago he bought the Old Grange under the assumed name of Otto Beutz. It suited his purpose down to the ground. He could go and come without being seen. To prevent accidental discovery by any stray intruder, he screwed up doors and windows and perfected an ingenious way of entry by means of a ropeladder, which could be drawn up out of sight under the eaves, whether he was away or actually working out his evil schemes.

"It seems likely that his detective agency was of considerable use to him. He was in close touch with the underworld. He

may have dabbled in other forms of crime as in the case of the bullion robbery, when he found it a simple matter to organise a gang of ruffians to do the work.

"He was making a good thing out of it. We were completely baffled. The identity of The Flail looked like becoming one of the many unsolved problems. And then, in the midst of his security, came the Black Asp. His closely guarded secret was shared by one man, and that man was a deadly enemy, who now began to hunt him with uncanny stealth. There was no shaking him off and every day it must have become clearer to Bingham that some terrible fate was drawing nearer and nearer. The campaign of terror culminated in a date, Friday, May 13th.

"And now I propose to show just how Bingham reacted to the threat: the awful means he employed to escape for ever from his pursuer. He must be found dead. It was the only way. Until he had hit upon his plan, he was a man distraught. Sonia may remember the sudden change in him. He seemed himself again. He had found a way."

"I do," said Sonia in a low voice. "He wanted me to go away with him. I remember his words. 'I can't, I won't go through with it alone.'"

There were other things she remembered but could not speak of: the way he had looked at her, the shame she had felt. He had meant to take her even against

her will. The attack in Fardale Wood had been his doing. It failed and he was then only concerned to know whether she would remain at The Hollows. It meant that he would return to the attack as Otto Beutz. She shuddered as she remembered how nearly he had succeeded.

"Well, to get back to the murder," went on Grier. "His problem was to arrange things in such a way that a strong motive for the murder of Nathaniel Bingham should fairly hit one in the eye; that the case against the imaginary murderer should be so obvious as to draw off all attention from the question of the murdered man's identity. Gentleman Jack was the very man. He was of the same build, as a man with a criminal record he would be watched; no one would doubt his guilt.

"How well his plan succeeded we have already seen. We are all too hot on the scent of Parnell to bother about Bingham. No one doubted it was Bingham lying there. James at once took it for his master. He had nothing more to go by than the clothes. Sonia too accepted it as Bingham. Why should we doubt it?"

"One thing that puzzles me," said Sonia, "Is the ring, I noticed that particularly. It was too tight a fit to get off his finger, yet there it was fitting tightly on the finger of the other man."

"I think if we had examined it more closely we should have found it had been sawn through,"

said Grier. "He would force it over the dead man's finger and tighten it on with a pair of pliers. There was another point: the deformed finger. To produce that impression he bent up the finger and rigor mortis did the rest. It was by such attention to detail that he succeeded in hoodwinking both yourself and James. We didn't matter, for if you accepted him, we should have to.

"Come to the night of the murder. Parnell arrived in a dangerous mood bringing with him the anonymous letter. He was there to demand an explanation. But Bingham, having written that letter himself, was ready for him. He soothed him down, assured him Susie was all right, and refused to talk until his visitor behaved less violently. He offered him a drink and turned to pour one out, but the glass of wine he handed to Parnell had been there waiting, already poisoned. That of course can only be a hypothesis, but it seems a reasonable one. It may be wondered why he poisoned the man at all. Yet, when you consider it, it was the obvious method. He wanted no sound of violent fighting, no revolver shots; again, it was necessary to change every stitch of clothes with him before he could begin the horrible task of defacing his features. It needed the nerve of a friend. One can well imagine the impression the deed left on his mind. It's a marvel to me he didn't crack up sooner.

"The evidence against Parnell was complete even to the

finger prints on the haft of the hammer. He took good care to leave none himself. No doubt he wore gloves. He stole his own car, and left it in an old mews at Brixton. He was seen entering Parnell's lodgings and from that moment entirely disappeared.

"Now we shall see how he tried to bring The Black Asp into it. He deliberately left on the body some of the threats relating to that very date. The inference would be obvious; that The Black Asp had instigated Parnell to murder Bingham the anonymous letter would be credited to The Black Asp; that the threatened man had attempted to fly too late. One thing he did not allow for the chance that we should recognise in that letter the work of The Flail. Though he never intended it so, it was actually that that did more to put us off the trail than anything else.

"What about the wine-glass?" asked Tony.

"I should say he remembered that at the last minute. It was not likely to give him away, but rather than run the risk he buried it hastily. He was watched, I firmly believe, by none other than The Black Asp. It was he who sent us the wine-glass; it was he who gave us the tip to search the Old Grange. But not knowing all he knew, every fresh disclosure unfortunately made the case more baffling. To preserve some sort of consistency we worked out the wildest theories. It seemed a hopeless tangle,

All our efforts were concentrated on tracing Parnell and laying The Black Asp by the heels. And meanwhile Bingham was in hiding at the detective agency. He grew a beard, bleached his hair, and made ready to re-enter society as Otto Beutz, owner of the Grange and purchaser of Bingham's detective Agency. In spite of his disguise, some resemblance to Bingham might be noticed. To account for that he invented the relationship of cousin."

"Yes, I noticed the likeness, especially in the eyes," said Sonia quickly. "But naturally I thought nothing of it."

"He was coming back with one big purpose: to track down and revenge himself on The Black Asp. He wanted to snare Sonia too, either by fair means or foul. Let us forget that. He wanted money. He had drawn out all he had, but that was not likely to last long. The price of Gant's silence must have been a heavy one. It was while he was living in enforced hiding that he conceived the stupendous idea of the bullion robbery. The way it was carried out was a tribute to his remarkable organising ability, his cold calculating gift for detail. The scheme had a double purpose. It would make him wealthy, and it would provide a means of setting the whole country about the ears of his unknown enemy. It was Gant who posed as The Black Asp boasting of his intention to rob a bullion train. Bingham badly wanted some clue to his enemy's identity. Where he himself mi-

ght fail, there was a chance of Scotland Yard bringing one to light.

"But again he was frustrated. Imagine his feelings on re-entering the world to find he had not escaped the attentions of The Black Asp. Terror began to stalk him again. His secret, now a hundred-fold more terrible, was known. He began to believe he was up against something more than human. Even without that, the hideous memory of that night in the library haunted him. His strength was undermined. He was slowly breaking up. The rest you all know. He died a raving madman and, by a strange twist of fate, a hammer was the cause of his death."

Major Grier paused for a moment.

"The only man who can confirm my story and bridge the gaps is the man who hunted him so terribly to his death. Why he kept his knowledge to himself seems a mystery. Perhaps it was a private grudge. I don't know. We may never know."

"Don't be too sure, Major," Tony drawled. "You forget I promised my valuable assistance."

There was a general laugh.

"I agree with Tony," said Mrs. Arkwright calmly. "Don't be too sure, my dear man."

Before they could recover from their surprise she went on.

"That scallywag of a black fellow has sent me one of his ridiculous notes. He has the impertinence to announce that he proposes to entertain at my house, if you please, at eight O'clock to-night."

She was bombarded at once with a hurricane of excited questions. Sonia's fingers pressed the little note she had received. Lady Muriel began to laugh at a secret all her own.

"Not content with that," went on Mrs. Arkwright, "he names the guests who shall be present. Humph! I have fallen in with his commands. I want to meet the scoundrel and give him a piece of my mind."

"By Gad! So do I," said Grier with enthusiasm.

Tony yawned.

"So that's that. I need not wear the jolly old brain-box out prematurely after."

It was a few minutes to eight and dessert was on the table. Mrs. Arkwright had timed things well. As if by common consent conversation ceased altogether. Only Tony seemed proof against the prevailing excitement. But now he roused himself with an effort and looked at his watch.

"The chappie's late," he announced. "I'll trot along and see if there's any sign of him coming."

No one passed any remark as Tony sauntered out. All sat tensely waiting. Sonia could hardly restrain herself. She

wanted to cry out her wonderful secret to the world.

Suddenly there was the deep drone of a high-powered car. It was coming up the drive. The drone grew to a roar. It seemed as if the car must charge at full speed into the house. Mrs. Arkwright's guests leapt to their feet. The roar neared abruptly. There was a violent grinding and swishing of gravel and then silence. In the room there was not even a breath to be heard.

The sound of quick, firm steps along the hall. All eyes were rivetted on the door. It swung open gently and The Black Asp stood there smiling. He swept them a low bow.

"Allow me to present Aristophanes and Jehu."

He made a light gesture to one side. A gasp of astonishment went up. While their attention had been fixed upon the door, the giant and his companion had entered by the windows.

And now Sonia came running forward with arms outstretched, her head proudly erect, radiant happiness on her face.

"My Black Knight," she cried softly.

His arm encircled her shoulders, and together they faced the company. Grier was smiling and nodding to himself understandingly.

"Young baggage!"

Mrs. Arkwright's eyes, nevertheless, were twinkling like stars.

The Black Asp addressed himself to her in particular.

"I have the honour to claim Sonia." He looked down at her and added very tenderly. "My future wife."

Then, before anyone could recover breath, his mouth twisted into a whimsical smile and his voice rose in pitch as he drawled delightfully:

"Aunt K. usually gets her own way."

For a moment there was dead silence. Then clamour broke forth.

"Tony!"—"My Heavens!"—"My brother!"

But Mrs. Arkwright sat there twinkling more than ever.

"Tony, oh Tony," breathed Sonia in his ear, "What a lot I have to pay you out for. When I think of the lily-pond—"

"And a whole lifetime to do it in," he whispered back. "Wonderful to think of!"

Lady Muriel came rushing to him impulsively and kissed him in front of them all.

"Thanks, Tony," she said simply. "I owe you that and a lot more—more than I can say."

And now it was Major Grier's turn. He stood there working Tony's arms like a pump handle, for the moment quite unable to speak.

"What about that fiver, old boy?" grinned Tony.

The Major found his tongue at last.

"You blessed swindler," he gasped delightedly.

"I'll let you off, Major, if you forgive me the little prank I played on you at the old greenhouse. But I wouldn't have missed it for worlds."

"You—you—oh, hang it all, there aren't words enough to curse you with."

Mrs. Arkwright's composure suddenly struck Lady Muriel as remarkable.

"You knew all the time," she accused.

"My dear," answered that little lady dryly. "I've known Tony all his life. Do you think he could deceive me? Do you think I could have patiently borne such disgusting laziness if it had been real?"

"Aunt K. has been a regular trump."

Tony looked at her affectionately. His mask was off and he stood revealed as a new Tony. Gone was the slouching air of lazy good-humour. His eyes were bright, finely alive with vitality and brimming with laughter. He stood poised lightly, the perfect figure of a finely-built athlete trained to the last ounce; a picture of splendid, clean virility.

Lady Muriel was talking to her gigantic friend Jehu. She laughed up at him tormentingly.

"The dear, big innocent. What a shame to spoil his little joke!"

Sir Andrew Gale removed his mask not one whit put out and smiled at her with supreme content.

"Glad to get rid of the thing. So you saw through the cunning device, little lady?"

"You acted awfully well at first, my dear. But oh, how soon you gave yourself away. You aren't a born fibber like Tony."

Aristophanes, who had watched the scene with quiet enjoyment, now came forward. As though a happy thought had occurred to him, he stopped and drew from his pocket a monocle.

"Thank heaven I can dispense with that instrument of torture," he said with genuine relief and flung it through the open window.

"Good heavens! It's Raggie," cried Beatrice. "Oh help, I am dreaming."

He took his place beside her and whispered in her ear. No one but Beatrice knew what it was, but she blushed.

"And now," said Tony, when something like calm had been restored. "You must hear our justification. But first let me congratulate you, Major, on a wonderfully accurate piece of deduction."

"Don't," said Grier dryly. "Deductions have played the deuce with me. I think I'll have to follow your example and retire, or else get back to the office and leave someone else to do the work."

"Rot," said Tony. "If I'd told you straight out I was The Black Asp you wouldn't have believed me. We've known each other for years. You were looking for a criminal of the worst sort, and the more I tried to help, the more I seemed to put my foot in it. You nearly landed me once though."

"You mean at the greenhouse?"

"Aunt K. twigged and I was warned in time. By the way, it was Reggie who threw in that rude little note."

"You infernal jackanape!" laughed Grier, "I could have sworn you were blind drunk."

"Well, as a matter of fact, I very nearly was. Living up to the part, so to speak."

"Look here, Tony," said Grier suddenly. "Why didn't you content yourself with handing Bingham over to justice?"

Tony's face went hard.

"Justice! What punishment could justice mete out to a man like that? Imprisonment, that's all. Have you thought of his victims? Have you thought what it must be to find happiness only to lose it as they did? Have you thought what it means for a young girl to be driven to seek release in death? What punishment could fit such crimes? This and only this: that he should suffer as they had suffered, see death in life as they had seen it; die as they had died, broken and out of mind."

The bitter fierceness of Tony's words held them spellbound.

"Our methods were not the methods of the lay-abiding," he went on more quietly, "and proofs were not easily forthcoming. We began in secret and we had to carry on in secret. The Black Asp was a wanted man you must remember."

"But what set you on the track of The Flail?" asked Grier curiously.

"I would rather not go into it. There was a little girl, known and liked by all three of us. She came to us one night at Reggie's flat in the last extremity. But it was too late. There and then we took a solemn oath to hound the fiend to death. It would take too long to tell you all the slogging work put in before we hit the right trail. Reggie became chief of the staff, organised communications, and did all the secret service work. He roped in two of your men at the Yard—I won't give you their names. Young Sid at Bingham's agency was suborned and a bright youngster he is, too. Elsie, the maid, is no maid at all, but an uncommonly clever little actress who was out of a job. She played on Bingham's fears with hysterical stories of apparitions both at The Hollows and The Old Grange. Reggie, you may say, was the brains. Andrew there was the brawn. To see him in a scrap is a sight for sore eyes."

"Our weapon was fear, the deadliest in the world. The plan was to drive Bingham to run for it, let him think he had escaped, and then start all over again. A focal point was necessary. We

fixed on Friday, May 13th. But the result was not what we expected. We knew he was preparing for flight, knew also of Sonia's danger. It was only to protect her that I was in the house that night. The murder was committed before I could prevent it. The rest of the story Major Grier has told you with amazing accuracy."

"There's one thing I should like to know," said Grier. "Just what went on at the Grange last night? Quite apart from the spectre and the luminous paint there was something uncanny in the way Bingham was driven from pillar to post."

"It was simple enough," said Tony, "we worked to a pre-arranged plan. Bingham thought he was alone in the house, but Elsie was hidden away in her own bedroom. I slipped into the house soon after Sonia was brought in, and, for safety, locked the door on her and pocketed the key. Andrew lay in wait for Gant. Reggie stationed himself in the engine-house outside. I phoned for you, and after seeing you safely in position, slipped in by the back door and locked it. Bingham heard Gant coming in the car and went upstairs. I then locked the front door and slipped up after him in the darkness. He was already scared at finding the bedroom door locked, and when I let out that screech it finished him off. He couldn't get out except through the sitting-room window, and Elsie was waiting ready for that in the room above. As it hap-

Technicolour

"Your story is too highly coloured," said the editor to the budding author. "In the very first chapter you make the old turn purple with rage, the villain turns green with envy, the hero turns white with anger, the heroine turns red with blushes and the detective blue with cold."

pened the tapping coincided with his attempt to open the window. You can guess how it was done—just a piece of lead let down on a string. Meanwhile I was back outside the door holding on to the handle. The hammer blows were Reggie's cue—off went the main switch. You saw the rest, and while you were busy with Bingham I replaced the two keys when I was supposed to be searching the house. The Black Bentley, by the way, was waiting in the garage at The Hollows and Andrew and Reggie made off in it.

"Now, I think, you know all there is to know. It was an experience I should not care to repeat. Only the memory of those ruined lives kept us strong in the determination to go through with it. I don't regret it, though it was more terrible than I ever imagined it would be. And by all that's worth living for, he met his just reward."

There was a long silence, and then Lady Muriel demanded that

her curiosity on one point should be satisfied.

"But why call yourselves Black Asps? You might have chosen something less slimey. You weren't a bit snakey really."

Tony laughed teasingly.

"You didn't take my hint," he accused. "When you asked me what an asp was I suggested an encyclopedia. If you had looked you would have seen that an asp, as well as being a vicious little reptile, was the Egyptian symbol for that divinity which protects the hearth and home."

"Bless the boy!" put in Mrs. Arkwright. "One doesn't look for romance in fusty old books."

The talk became general and Reggie, now that his opportunity had come, turned to Beatrice with a look of smiling determination and took her by the shoulders.

"For the first and last time, Bee, will you—?"

But Beatrice stopped him hastily.

"Not here," she whispered.

Perhaps she was anxious to delay the decision, but that would hardly seem to explain her sudden departure, much less the fact that she turned in the door-

way to see if Reggie was following.

And Sonia and Tony were not long in emulating their example. Time slipped away all too quickly. Sonia sighed. She would not see Tony again for quite a number of hours.

"I have a confession to make—an awful confession, Tony," she told him.

Her eyes were sparkling mischievously and Tony was not deceived.

"What is it, my wicked one?"

"I haven't been true to you. I almost fell in love with another man—but he was far too lazy to realise it."

Tony laughed exultantly. He lifted her aloft and shook her very gently.

"Yov little Mormoness! You'll have to marry us both."

"But you've cheated," she cried with childlike glee. "You've stolen a double share. What a lot you'll have to love me to make up for it! Are you sure you won't find it doosed fatiguing?"

Tony grinned delightedly.

"No too awfully, darling," he whispered.

(Concluded)

AN ILLUSION

The misuse of great Powers is no argument against their right use. To go back is impossible; the attempt is always, indeed, an illusion.

Sri Aurobindo.

INDIA MAGAZINE

SHORT STORY

The Fall

BY I. G. WASSIFF

He had great hopes of marrying her but something had gone wrong and disappointment was in store for both.

I WAS flabbergasted at the narration. Why? I don't know. Hearing such narrations was nothing new to me for, my legal business always led me to come in contact with varrious types of human beings. Providence has created Rai Sahib of Bhakti Tahsil was no stranger to me nor his daughter was new to me. But what made Mrs. Jaykunwar Aroon murder her husband was a conundrum to me. "I am responsible for this murder, Vakil Sahib," Rai Sahib began. "Oh! Curse the day I forced her to marry Aroon against her will. How cruel I am! I did injustice and oppressed Dilip for his no fault." Rai Sahib's eyes were brimming with tears, his voice was choked up and he was helpless.

Mrs. Jaykunwar Aroon was arrested and prosecuted under Section 302 of the Indian Penal

Code for the murder of her husband. The case had come up for trial before the Sessions Court and I was to conduct the case as a defence counsel of Mrs. Jaykunwar Aroon.

I still remember well that Jaykunwar was studying with me in a senior B.A. class. She was tall, slim and had seductive personality. She had artistic long fingers and her brown locks had entangled numerous young hearts. Her eyes were appealing and her voice was crooning. She was an excellent badminton player and was always alluded to as a Helen of our college. Upcoming college poets had composed lyrics, ballads and sonnets of immeasurable length on her beauty, eyes, hair and practically on her every action. Some talented artists had painted her image on benches and some had in their hearts. But she never

encouraged those college Romeos and kept them at arm's length.

But she could not avoid Dilip Pathak, a son of a farmer whose father was cultivating Rai Sahib's land in a nearby village. Dilip was sturdy, handsome, and was good at cricket. He had won many prizes in Inter-Collegiate Elocution Competitions. She met him for the first time in college garden and they were head over ears in love. He was smitten by her charms and she was all praise for his intellectual faculty and stylish cricket. Days passed into weeks and weeks turned into months but their love for each other was making rapid progress.

One day when the B.A. examination was over they both met near the city lake, a desolate place surrounded by Nature. The sun was setting in the west and its colourful tender rays were playing joyfully with the lake water. There was serenity in the air and at a distance a flute player was emitting smooth tunes mellifluous and rich. Jaykunwar was looking very attractive in her white silken saree—a paragon of beauty. She was looking quietly at the setting sun. "Dilip," she asked, "What do you propose to do after B.A.?"

"I don't know but I may take some job," Dilip replied and continued, "You know Jaya, my old father by dint of hard work had gathered a few chips for my education and the stock is now

exhausted." "Dilip," she began, "you are a brilliant student, and if you come out with flying colours in this exam you will be awarded a lucrative scholarship to enable you to continue your further studies. I have a long cherished desire to see you a great man."

"Are you telling the truth, Jaya?"

"Yes, Dilip. I shall never tell you a lie. No! Not till the last moment of my life." Taking her hand into his own and caressing softly he added, "Then it is impossible without you." She cast a shy glance at him and after a pause said, "Why don't you talk to my daddy?"

"How am I? You are a wealthy father's daughter and I am a pauper's son. One can crave for the twinkling stars but cannot grab it. How are we to expect everything to come to pass as per our desire! Inscrutable are the ways of Providence!"

"Don't talk like a philosopher, naughty boy," Jaykunwar said, "My daddy is not a hard-hearted man. You know I am his only daughter and he will sacrifice everything for me. Outwardly though he appears stern within his heart he is gentle and lively. Come to tea to-morrow evening at my house and I will introduce you to daddy." The moon was now shining in the clear blue sky and the two lovers departed.

Next day Dilip was received with kindness and courtesy by

Rai Sahib and was introduced by Jaykunwar to her daddy.

"Dilip," Rai Sahib began. "My daughter has a very high opinion about you and I am told that you are a scholar. I am indeed pleased to see you. Since you both love each other why an old fogey like me should come in your way. See me again when your examination result is out so as to join you both in wedlock." Dilip returned with great rapture.

Next morning Dilip went to his village to unfold the happy tidings to his father. The old man was overjoyed to hear that Rai Sahib had consented to marry his daughter to his son. Both father and son offered their prayers to Lord Shankar and began to chalk out plans for necessary marriage arrangements.

Time and tide wait for no man. Two months of the vacation passed away swiftly. Dilip's examination result was out and he had topped the list. On the same day he received a letter from Jaykunwar urging him to see her that evening near the city lake for some urgent matter which she was unable to disclose in it.

Dilip found Jaykunwar in a deplorable state. She was agrieved and pale. At the sight of Dilip a flood of tears rolled down from her cheeks. She explained to him that her father had fixed up her marriage against her will with his friend's son who was also a zamindar. Rai Sahib's friend Premchand had helped

Rai Sahib in his days of adversity. A month back Premchand had visited Rai Sahib's house with his son Aroon. And Aroon was so enamoured of the charms of Jaykunwar that Premchand obliged Rai Sahib to fix up their early marriage. Rai Sahib had but to accept the latter's proposal for his obligations. Jaykunwar protested but Rai Sahib threatened her that if she would not honour his word Dilip would be removed from this world. Dilip pacified her and went straight to Rai Sahib's house.

The marriage preparations were in progress at Rai Sahib's house and the old man was supervising everything personally. At the entry of Dilip he raised his eye-brows and demanded in a harsh tone the work he had come for. Dilip reminded him of his promise and the old man replied in negative having given any promise to Dilip about his marriage with his daughter. Dilip begged him earnestly to reconsider his decision but the old man frowned at him and bade him leave his house instantly if he ever cared for his life dear. He was reluctant to marry his daughter to a pauper's son. He remonstrated with him that marriages were always made with equals and not with those who were lower in rank. Dilip tried to say something but immediately Rai Sahib clapped and two servants stood behind Dilip. At the sign of Rai Sahib they dragged him out, gave him a sound beating and threw him on the floor. He was badly injured and blood was gushing out from his

forehead and nose. He got up to go home but at some distance he saw a man coming running towards him. Bhola, he was his father's friend. Bhola informed him that his house was burnt down by some unknown persons and that his father died of the shock. Dilip went home and found the unbelievable happened. He lit the funeral pyre of his father and left the village. Nobody knew where he went. The following day Jaykunwar was married to Aroon.

Fifteen years have passed but the whole story is still fresh in my memory. I comforted Rai Sahib and assured him to do my utmost in this case.

I met Jaykunwar in the prison. She was pale and melancholy. She admitted that since her marriage her life had become miserable and wretched. Dilip's memory haunted her day and night and she had no peace at home too. Her husband never gave her fair treatment. He was a rogue and a rascal. He had beaten her on several occasions for no fault of hers and she was sustaining all like dumb cattle. He seldom went home at night and had taken to drinking. His notorious friends always misled him and he regarded them as his sympathisers. Jaykunwar remonstrated with him for his misdemeanor but it was of no avail.

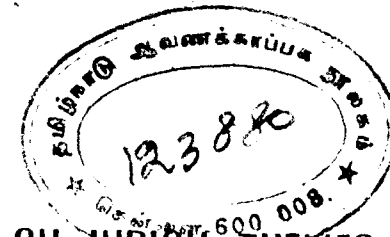
It was a stormy evening. The sky was overcast with dark clouds and bright lightning flashes were frequently visible. Those were the symptoms of

some unpremeditated disaster to follow soon. Jaykunwar was alone in the house feeling very uneasy. She was all the while attempting to engage herself in some sort of household work but she could not succeed. She took out from her bookshelf Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* and was going through the pages when a photograph slipped through the book and fell down. As she picked up to have a look at the photograph Aroon snatched it away from her. He was furious when he saw Dilip's photograph. He called her a slut and a bitch and advanced towards her with a revolver in his hand. She tried to explain him but he did not listen. He tried to tear the photograph but she snatched away the revolver and demanded of him to clear away from the room. He became red hot with anger and pressed her throat but before anything could happen the revolver went off and he fell dead on the floor. This was her miserable story which I heard patiently. I left the prison and hurried to attend a farewell party our Bar had arranged in honour of the outgoing District and Sessions Judge.

Next day I attended the Sessions Court and was astonished to find the newly come Sessions Judge. I was surprised and couldn't believe my eyes. The same face I had seen fifteen years back, but it was looking self-possessed. He took his seat on the bench and stared at me. He paused for a moment and smiled at me. I recognized and nodded

(Contd. on page 62)

Fourth in a series of
Six Articles on....



BRITISH WRITERS ON INDIAN THEMES

19th Century Poets

By Francis Watson

I shall begin by quoting a few lines which make no mention of India, and which come from two great English poets who probably seldom gave India much thought. The first quotation comes from Shelley's *Adonais*, the beautiful poem composed in 1821 in memory of his fellow-poet John Keats.

The One remains, the many
change and pass;

Heaven's light forever shines,
Earth's shadows fly;

Life, like a dome of many-
coloured glass,

Stains the white radiance of
Eternity,

Until Death tramples it to
fragments.

And now, some lines written by Wordsworth fifteen or more years earlier:

Our birth is but a sleep and
a forgetting;

The Soul that rises with us,
our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its
setting,

And cometh from afar.

I think that poetry like this — and much more that might be quoted from either of these poets — would be recognised and appreciated by a Vedantist. But neither Shelley nor Wordsworth had gone to the Vedanta for their ideas, although the Upanishads were at this time just beginning to be dimly known in Europe. The source of this new note of what came to be called "transcendentalism", so different from the Christian metaphysics of the 17th century of the rationalism of the 18th, was largely early Greek.

Yet in seeing the ideas to which English poets and their readers were receptive we can catch sight of the mysterious flow between East and West that

later became more conscious. And Shelley did on one occasion intentionally choose an Indian theme. I do not know whether he had by some means heard an actual piece of Indian music when he wrote the verses called *Lines to an Indian Air*. They are musical, sensuous, romantic, but not specifically Indian until we reach the lines.

The champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a
dream.

Other poets of the early nineteenth century provide brief, scattered references to India, based on their reading. Keats gives us a few. Blake is sometimes quoted as thinking of India—this was in 1794—in his well-known verses beginning

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night!

But that tiger was seen neither in the Indian jungle nor in a zoo but in the world of the imagination inhabited by the sublime madman William Blake. The orientalism of Byron, like that of many English poets down to Browning and beyond him, was the orientalism of Islam and the Near East. Coleridge, who combined a gift for inspired but intermittent poetic dreaming with an extraordinary appetite for strange books and out-of-the-way facts, found his fancies wandering now and then to India. His most famous oriental vision, *Kubla Khan*, was in very fact a dream-poem, compact of many things of which he had

been reading and thinking. And the "caves of ice" which occur in that poem entered his mind from reading of that cave in Kashmir—at Amarnath—where the Shiva-Lingam of ice is an object of pilgrimage.

These are fleeting but intriguing glimpses. The really ambitious poetry of the Romantic Revival on Indian themes came from inferior poets—Southey, for example, and Thomas Moore. Robert Southey, who became Poet Laureate, wrote more prose and verse (said Byron) than anybody knows. Among his works, and as unread today as the rest of them, was a long poem called *The Curse of Kehama*, an intricate story of violence and revenge in an Indian setting, with a background of Hindu mythology patiently studied from the pioneering works of Sir William Jones and others. Unlike the great Jones, however, Southey was repelled by what he knew, or thought he knew, of Hinduism. His poem is not only tedious to a modern reader, it is also unsympathetic to its subject. Yet it may at the same time have added to the public interest in Indian themes. And this interest was sufficient for the publisher Longman in 1814 to offer to another poet, the Irishman Thomas Moore, the altogether amazing sum of £3,000 for a metrical romance on an eastern subject—and this before seeing a line of the work. Moore produced the poem—who wouldn't? It was called *Lalla Rookh* and it carried a large and fascinated audience through romantic

adventures in the Punjab, in Kashmir and on the banks of the Ganges. Its attitudes are western and not eastern, it is full of inaccuracies, but again we can say that it increased the Englishman's Indian vocabulary.

And then after the mid-century, watching the dying embers of the Romantic Revival, we reach that turning-point when India passed to the crown, the crown itself gleamed with new power, new responsibilities, and literature reflected an attitude to empire not unworthy in itself, even if it is now out-dated. Both Tennyson and Swinburne, as well as lesser poets, wrote verses imbued with the unquestioning and almost unquestioned imperial idea. For the *feel* of life in India, and the Englishman's picture of it, we should probably have to search among the mass of fugitive verses produced by serving officials, businessmen, journalists, and sometimes by their wives. Much of it is doggerel, some of it is amusing, some of it even touching. But the strongest emotion it reveals is as often as not the longing for home and England.

An exception worth mentioning was a very popular volume by an Englishman in India, William Waterfield, who among his "Indian Ballads" could write a hymn of praise to India, a note

hardly heard with real grace since Sir William Jones had addressed the deities of Hinduism in late 18th-century verse. Sir Alfred Lyall left a few lines that are still quoted among a quantity of verse inspired by his knowledge of India as an official. The sincerity is recognisable, but there is distance in his view. It is sympathy for India, but it is not love or admiration. It is not what Sir Edwin Arnold felt. Arnold spent only four years in India, as a young college principal at Poona. But what he took back with him was genuine affection as well as a vivid memory of the ways of Indian life and a respect for Indian ideas and philosophy. He was not a great poet, but much later in life, when the ideal subject came to him, he rose to the occasion and made an immense impression with the first and still the influential English rendering of the life and some of the teachings of the Buddha — *The Light of Asia*. But Arnold also translated into verse—and found readers for—several other Indian texts. Among them was a rendering of the *Bhagavad Gita* which, though it might not satisfy the scholars, gave Mahatma Gandhi himself his very first experience of that supreme religious poem.

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RIGHT APPROACH

I have no doubt that the approach of affection and love in international dealings brings out affection and love from the other country.

— Jawaharlal Nehru

GRANNY'S TRIUMPH

By P. VENKATESAN

Girishan's heart was beating with new hope and joy. His sweetheart had asked him to meet her near a temple. But there was no sign of her there... And finally they met with longing in their hearts.

HE swiftly walked down the Grove Street, turned to the left; threaded his way through the temple lane and cut across the Maidan Road.

The darkness became dense. The road was almost deserted, Srimati's father lived in South Avenue, which consisted of about fifty neat bungalows, with a concentration of police officials. It might easily be called the Police Quarters but it was not. The trunk road to Kambam passed a few yards adjacent to these houses.

Girishan nervously walked up the short drive leading to Srimati's house. A policeman in uniform cried to him to stop, and came running towards him. Girishan first thought that he was just frightening the donkey that was standing near the gutter, patiently watching its dim shadow cast by the street lamp. But no, the policeman came straight up to him and said, "Whom do you want?"

Girishan replied in a tone in which overdone carelessness was a trifle obvious: "One need not want any one to walk up this way?"

The policeman at once became astonishingly subdued.

"Hey N3" There was a call now from inside and the policeman had to run instantly.

There had been nothing exciting either in the birth or the upbringing of No. 9333 (or N3 as he was called always, 9333 being too long a name for any one to call). On the contrary, every second chapter of his life had been an ignoble one.

In some remote corner of a remote village he had been born, the son of the village headman. His schooling had ended when he was hardly fifteen. If he passed his examination (which he really did once) it was entirely because of his teacher's dread of his father's fierce countenance and manners. In a word he was a mighty good-for-nothing.

His father, the devil's uncle as he was nick-named, ruled over the village unquestioned. And the son had gone on from one wild act to another; the missing mangoes in the grove, the empty toddy-pots under the palm fronds and many more such acts were his handiwork. The villagers knew about them but kept discreetly silent. When his father's purse itself missed its contents many a time, others were not worth mentioning. And the comely young maidens of the village dreaded to cross his path and even before daybreak they fetched water from the river. Else, like a street mongrel he would run after them all.

Then came Ugranarayan, the new Police Superintendent to Molnad, and he promptly rounded up all the miscreants around and about the town. The villagers heaved a sigh of relief, as quiet descended on them.

No. N3 was the first to be produced before the official "BOY!" That was a misnomer for the sturdy young giant that stood before him.

"Do you ever utter lies?" the official head asked.

"Never, Sir."

"Been in any fight?"

"No, Sir."

"You're uttering lies," thundered the Police Superintendent.

"Yes, Sir," the boy promptly confessed the truth.

"Broken any heads?"

No answer.

"Despite his denials, he can do and has done every single thing I mentioned," the official explained aloud to his subordinates.

"Perhaps many more too," the eager villagers waiting for redress echoed their long pent up grievances.

The young convict had stood silently suppressing his rage. The four hefty orderlies behind the official had induced in him an unaccustomed meekness.

The Police Superintendent may have spoken disparagingly then, but had kept the boy in his mind all right, "Such fellows would really turn out to be good policemen." Within a month orders had arrived for the boy to join the office of the Police Superintendent.

It was some twenty years now since all that had happened. The village headman had died years ago. There had been customary squabbles, family and legal, over the division of property. The young giant, our No. N3 had got as his share some two acres of wet land and a well. And he had married and reared a family. Seven boys and two girls. Yet another was in the offing in another four months.

He had worked in many circles, many divisions and many were the towns he had worked in. But he had to remain under

one "Head" only that was Ugrarayan, who took him wherever he went. He had also remained essentially unimproved in status, while many under him had gone over and beyond him. It was in fact almost akin to prison life he had led and was still leading. The only difference was he had a little more liberty and was paid well.

How he wished he had been thrown out of his job! The limitations to the life of a policeman of his kind—always on guard at the same place day in and day out—were distasteful to him. Was the gate-post of the Superintendent's house his life's anchorage? The drive was the only highway he could wander about?

Ah! How he secretly envied the red caps that strutted proudly on the four streets! They could stop and get in any bus or cart that passed the road. Their sway spread everywhere. Such bitter thoughts rankled in his mind often. Yet he was happy, perhaps happier than they, in one respect, financially.

Nobody could see the Superintendent without his express permission. And in his pockets always jingled tens of rupees, his toll of the day's collection—the *mamul*, as they called it—from the visitors.

Now Girishan's frequent appearances in the South Avenue created a suspicion in No. N3's mind. During all the years he was on duty, in that place he had not remembered to have seen him. Only after that night's

encounter he was seeing him frequently in that place.

As they had once spoken and become familiar, No. N3 made once again bold to talk to Girishan. Somehow this night it suggested to him as a favourable one. Perhaps he could help him in his nocturnal rounds and help himself too, he thought.

"Master, I believe you live at the East end, while this is the South end of the town," No. N3 ventured to remark to Girishan joining him in his walk, in a respectful tone.

Girishan also felt delighted to be a friend of No. N3. And this was the question exactly he had been waiting to be asked, all along, and he said, "I like this place. Wonder why this is called South Avenue. Just because it happened to be south of the town?"

"Yes,—years ago it was named like that simply..." No. N3 hazarded the guess, not to be behind hand.

"Oh!"

"At least the name 'Police Quarters' would have been more apt."

"Yes, yes—but there are all sorts of people here."

"Oh! Any particular important person?"

"None that I can think of."

It was on Girishan's lips at this point, finding himself unable to carry on the conversation diplomatically any further, to ask who lived in the house.

No. N3 himself of his own accord gave an elaborate account of his boss' family and of what had happened the evening of the previous day.

The little mistress had really no wish to go to Swastik Cinema. In fact, she was dressed up and was on the point of going elsewhere. She also had informed her mother that perhaps she may be late in returning that night and so nobody need worry on that score. It was some pressing Samaj work she was hastening to attend.....

But suddenly her father came on from nowhere and urged them to get ready to go to Swastik Cinema. The little mistress expressed her blunt unwillingness to accompany him. But the master put on his uniform and looked at her with a frown: "Do you then want to miss 'The Ten Commandments'?" he asked.

"Not exactly, father..."

"Then what?"

She could not but yield to his eleventh commandment.

This was just the bit of news Girishan was hankering to hear all along and he felt that God was revealing Himself.

Now that his doubts about his beloved's fidelity were set at rest, he duly relieved himself of a rupee, promising more the next day and made good his exit.

Next afternoon, a little while after Father had left, Srimati was surprised to see No. N3

prowling near her room. She had never noticed this before. So she asked him what he was doing there.

The policeman replied in a low voice that he had brought a message.

"From whom.....?" This time somehow No. N3 could not bring himself to produce a satisfactory answer but hastily handed her a large thick envelope, addressed to her. Srimati at once recognised by the handwriting from whom it had come. She soon became astonishingly amiable and taking him inside asked: "How do you know him?" To which he narrated in detail his meeting of Girishan in the previous night.

Srimati felt too confused as to what she should do now and so thanking the policeman asked him to come later when she would call him.

Exit No. N3.

Srimati's heart beat fast as she stole to her bed-room, shut the door and tore open the envelope.

Girishan had given her the whole story of his mental struggle since he had seen her last, keeping nothing back. "Darling, how long are you going to keep slipping away like this?" This last Srimati knew it by heart at the first perusal and it made her bosom swell with happiness, but that did not keep her from reading it again and again.

"Darling, how long....."

That was all it said, but that was enough. It kept on humming in her mind like a mystic song. The dream she had been in had taken wings at last!

At 6 O'clock that evening her lover expected her to meet him, unless she was suddenly seized by death, she would not disappoint him this time.

It was past two. Soon it would be six, and she'd be in the Shiva temple and her lover would be telling her again that he loved her and she would listen to him with rapture.

More than once, in those couple of seconds she listlessly watched the tardy movement of the hands of the clock.

That evening even after a full half-hour of the appointment, Girishan did not turn up. This cost him heavily in feeling and involved him in sharp struggle. Yet he wanted to teach Srimati a lesson.

But as soon as he heard her anklet-sound at the portal of the shrine where she was eagerly waiting for him, all his anger vanished and he ran up to her with a wild cry of joy.

Srimathi, with a radiant smile of happiness, accosting him at the bend said, "I'm so sorry. Still angry with me?"

"Angry" he cried at the top of his voice.

"What has come over you? What will anyone seeing us think?"

"Who's there to see and think?" he asked haughtily. "As if a big crowd were milling about to witness our Swayamvara!" he said, putting into his expression all the bitterness he felt at yesterday's disappointment. But more than his tone of bitterness, his last word visibly affected Srimati. She felt too shy to stand before him.

"I am going to punish you this evening" Girishan said with mock severity.

Srimati kept silent, her head still bent.

"Do you know what punishment I am going to give you?"

Still Srimati kept mum: Now Girishan holding her by the wrist said, "Why this silence—feeling guilty?"

"I don't know" was the answer.

Then he led her ceremoniously to a smooth boulder and asked her to sit and recline with ease against the tablet.

She obeyed him.

Girishan too sat at a little distance by her side.

Darkness fell.

It was an hour when they two were curtained off from the rest of the world: between them there was no occasion for bashfulness. None but themselves could see the enchantment of their trysting—trysting of two young lovers—well it had almost the flavour of a fresh lyric, new-composed and still a little warm!

Silence all around.

The earth gave forth its freshness. There was something strange in the tremulous night, and something they knew not what, seemed to be clamouring inside making the external silence pregnant with meaning significant. Girishan had a queer feeling in his heart. It seemed very full, it seemed to melt.

As he beheld his beloved's figure through the thin tapestry of the lightly falling twilight, it roused wild emotions in him. He could very well feel her alluring breasts moving under her drapery of a purple-blue Dacca-muslin Sari: and almost before she realised what was happening to her lover, he threw himself on her, crying, "Darling.....Oh my own darling....."

It was an act without any premeditation, and it (this sudden impulse) nearly overwhelmed her. But he gave her no chance to struggle or free herself. He held her in an iron embrace in his madness. Srimathi writhed and wriggled in his grasp but could not get herself free. At the same time she seemed to respond to his caresses.

A moon beam fell upon her mischievous face through a gap

in the branches overhead, and Girishan peering intently into her eyes which were shining like a constellation of stars, beheld therein, his own image reflected. He softly stroked her braid that laid its pleasant weight on his chest. Her cheeks smelt of pomegranate. He kissed the pit of her throat. He revelled in the scent of champak that her braid exuded. "You are an angel," he said. "How well you look? And this scent!"

"Yes, I always wear these flowers. I know you like it very much," she said.

"Beloved, I'll be your slave. I'll do anything to make you happy."

Suddenly he felt that any more speech at this moment would be sacrilege. He rested his head on her soft bosom and remained silent. Srimati too said never a word. He drew her towards him, closer. She gave him her lips, they were warm and full and sweet; he lingered a little, they were like a flower, dripping nectar; then, he knew not how without meaning it, he again flung his arms round her. This time she yielded quite silently. Her body was firm and strong and he felt her loving heart beat against his.

MAN'S STRENGTH

"A man, be the heavens praised, is sufficient for himself, yet were ten men, united in love, capable of being and doing what ten thousand singly would fail in."

—Carlyle

ARTICLE

SOME ASPECTS OF SPENSER'S POETRY

BY BALAIDAS GHOSH

AS I go through the Faerie Queene the outstanding features of Spenser as a poet which impress me are his high moral purpose, his wonderful fertility of imagination, his incomparable power of pictorial description and the music of his versification.

Spencer regarded himself, like Wordsworth, as a dedicated spirit and a poet with a mission, aiming at the creation of character "flowering from and rooted in a strong surrounding of fact". His whole theory of life rests not on the superficial coating of worldly culture but on the hidden and inner principle that pervaded and actuated the whole man. This is clear from his letter to Raleigh in which he explains the poem Faerie as "a dark conceit and a continued allegory," devoted to the fashioning of a gentleman or a noble person in all virtuous and gentle discipline. But Spenser chose to wrap his moral in a historical or plausible form, as he did not wish to be detected preaching.

We thus, find, from the plan of the poem that the twelve books of the Faerie Queene were intended to relate the story of twelve knights representing twelve ethical virtues. These knights start from the court of Gloriana, Queen of Fairy-land; their warfare is directed against the vices and errors which opposed those virtues. Arthur typifies magnificence—"the perfection of all virtues"—and he was at last to unite himself in marriage with the Fairy Queen, the divine glory of God to which all human act and thought aspired". Six books of this plan were finished and a part of the seventh book was written. Of the twelve virtues, only seven—Holiness, Temperance, Chastity, Friendship, Justice, Courtesy and Constancy—form the subject of the seven books of the poem as extent. Side by side with the spiritual allegory runs a historical one in which Elizabeth is Gloriana, and other characters like Mary, Queen of Scots, Philip II, Sidney, Leicester, and others appear under various guises.

"In the midst, other allegories slip in, referring to events of the day, and Elizabeth becomes Belphebe and Britomart, and Mary is Radegund, and Sidney is Calidore, and Alencon is Braggadochio. At least, these are considered probable attributions". In the first time books of the Faerie Queene Spenser's aim of edification is adequately fulfilled and the moral is constantly to the fore, but in the later books both are obscured and "romance is dominant". In these later books Spenser roams at his own sweet will giving full play to his "fertile imagination and sometimes perilous gift of fluency," introducing scene after scene with little or no connection with the real plot.

Nevertheless, in the Faerie Queene we have not only allegory but also romance, history, Elizabethan politics, "religion and social feeling". This "richness and jungle-like fertility of ideas" is born of Spenser's unequalled imagination and makes the Faerie Queen a very important document for the correct appreciation of that period of Elizabethan England, "England is Solution before it became developed into self-consciousness and the latter Puritan England."

A certain writer has expressed the view that in the number of subjects he offers to the painter, Spenser is supreme beyond all poets, ancient and modern. His Faerie Queene, says Cazamian, is essentially a picture gallery. In many stanzas as of the

Faerie Queene there are descriptions of tapestries. Spenser represents events and objects with an intensity that makes them visible and tangible. He is almost always inspired by the painter's method—he is enthralled by externals and the detail tries his patience or escapes his observation. "He describes to the eye and communicates to the airy conceptions of allegory, the splendour and vivacity of visible objects". He excels not only in descriptions of absolute beauty, but also in grotesque and monstrous description. The horrible Dragen who is slain by the Red Cross Knight is no less a masterpiece than the nymph Belphebe.

Spenser blends, light and shade with wonderful success, and he excels in reproducing "the rippling surface" or "the changing colour". Spenser points with admirable success, not only static pictures—"pictures in a state of arrested motion" but also pageants or processions of gorgeous characters of which the Elizabethans were extremely fond. His description of the Seven deadly Sins or his processions of the Seasons and the Months, is a master-piece of painting. The Faerie Queene is an unending gallery of vivid pictures such as those of the cave of despair, the cave of Mammon, the Bower of Bliss, the Garden of Adonis. How beautiful is the picture of Furry with eye that flashed growing his bloody beard or of Mammon in his armour of rusted iron and of gold, counting his

hoard of coins and tempting Sir Guyon with the sight of his Subterranean riches or of Bower of Bliss where the golden haired girls were bathing.

Prof. Thompson has observed that "none of our poets is more exquisitely and uniformly musical than Spenser. Indeed the sweetness and fluency of his verse are sometimes carried so far as to become cloying and enervating". With Milton every word counts, with Shakespeare a phrase, and with Chaucer a time, but with Spenser it is a whole stanza or a whole page. Spenser has achieved a marvel of melody with his stanza. He is the creator of the metre after his own name as the Spenserian stanza. In fact there is no stanza so appropriate for the expression of emotion.

There are three sets of rhymes; the first line rhymes with the third; the second with the fourth, fifth and seventh; and the sixth, eighth and the ninth rhyme together. So large a block is in danger of falling apart, to prevent which an ingenious rhyming system is introduced, so that the same sound is repeated over and over again, two of the repetitions, falling at critical points, the middle and the end of the stanza. The summing up to a culminating close is aided by this repetition, but gains its supreme impressiveness through the simple device of the extra syllables pause, summarising the stanza, and at the same time supplying a link to bind stanza to stanza. "Spenser was undoubtedly a supreme inventor of harmonies. Though the

Spenserian stanza is complex in structure, there is sufficient variety in its stately swing to render it suitable for lengthy or short compositions and to make it a favourite form with most of the English poets". ★

(Contd. from page 50)

gently. This was the man before whom I had to appear as Jaykunwar's defence counsel and he was no other than my old friend Dilip. What a coincidence! Jaykunwar attended the dock with cast down eyes. The charge sheet was read out to her. The court questioned her, "Do you plead guilty? or want to be tried?" Time had not taken away her memory from her. It was all fresh in her mind. She instantly recognised the voice, the promise she had given near the lake never to speak a lie till the last moment of her life. She remembered all. She looked at Dilip and he was pale. She paused for a moment and spoke, "Your Honour, I plead guilty." I was stupefied and the court staggered. There was a hush all over the packed court-room and Jaykunwar withdrew calmly from the dock.

In the evening the court read out the judgment in a shivering tone. She was sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering her husband. A tear rolled down from the cheek of Sessions Judge and fell on the judgment paper.

The same evening a note from Dilip had been enfolded to me that he had relinquished his service and was going far far away from this world.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

By G. V. K.

COCONUTS AND POLITICS!

A FRIEND from Kerala known for his genial wit and humour pointed at the coconut trees: "If those universal trees are a criterion, I need hardly tell them that India belongs to Kerala even as it is vice versa." I laughed and retorted. "It is our good fortune that coconut trees and coconuts are keeping themselves clear of politics.

In these hot, sweltering days the coconut is a delicious name to conjure with. Especially the juice of the tender green coconut is a most welcome thirst-quencher when the sun is mercilessly blazing right over your head and the plains and the fields are getting baked like biscuits over the oven. When even the running water in the river is almost at boiling point at that time it is a wonder how the juice of the coconut remains refreshingly cool, will our scientists find out what principle of Nature's frigidaire is working here.

When Khrushchev and Bulganin visited South India they forgot the hectic excitement of politics and even their own country for a while and expressed a longing to spend the rest of their lives on a farm. The main attraction for them was the coconut tree and they watched a villager chimbing it with the skill of a squirrel. They did not bat an eyelid until he came down safe and sound. The next thrill of their lives consisted in sipping juice direct from the green coconut with a hole bored in the top. And they pronounced it most excellent with a loud smack of their lips.

The coconut shorn of fibre has symbolised many a holy and happy occasion. At any inaugural function what the beer bottle is to the Westerner who smashes it on the ship about to be launched on the waters, the coconut which is broken marks a turning point for the better in our fortunes. It

is dedicated to Lord Vigneshwara Who is said to prefer it in the form of pudding with a generous mixture of jaggery or honey.

The breaking of the coconut represents a break in the devotee's life, his difficulties are being removed and hereafter everything is bound to be sweet and pleasing as the kernal in the coconut is. So, our elders insist, the coconut must be broken properly. There are experts who break the coconut into two exact halves. Recently one of our leaders tried in vain to break a coconut and gave up the attempt after three times. He was amazed when a colleague of his broke it at one stroke.

True, a coconut is sometimes used to crack a head as during a fight or a melee. But it will stagger the readers to know that during car festivals in great shrines devotees from the villages invite their relatives or friends to break coconuts on their heads. They will shout the name of the Lord and pray on bended knees

before the huge car when someone smashes a coconut on the head. The coconut is broken but the devotee is none the worse for his experience. His head is sometimes examined by sceptics. The latter are left wondering that there is not even the slightest suggestion of scratch or abrasion on the head. In Srirangam, Lord Ranganatha's shrine, during the car festival in the month of April breaking of coconuts on the heads of devotees is quite common. And here is a story the truth of which the writer can vouch for. Thirty years ago a great holy man gave a coconut (shorn of fibre) to a baktha of his and asked him to offer it worship with the mantra into which he initiated him. Today that baktha is a rich and happy man and continues to worship the coconut as a divine symbol. The wonder of wonders is that the coconut has not gone rotten even after thirty years. It must be remembered in this connection that an ordinary coconut will keep good for four weeks at the most!

RIGHT THINKING

From now, guard your thoughts; for if it is true that yesterday's wrong thought gives birth to the trials of today, it is equally certain that today's right thinking will generate joy for the morrow.

—HOPE LA GALLIENNE.

SHORT STORY

By U. R. Prabhuram

THE TWO SONS

She was being weighed down by an oppressive secret but her sons did not bother to ask her about it...

KALAVATI was known for her heartiest laughter and breezy manners. She was quite care-free and well-to-do. Nobody had seen her husband but she was not unhappy on that score. She was the proud mother of two sons who were earning high salaries and sending a good part of their earnings to their mother. She was most devoted to her sons and they in their turn were affectionate towards their mother. To them her word was law. They led their own life, they were irregular in their habits and ways and changed their sweethearts quite often. In a city all this was quite possible. Madan, the elder son, began to smoke on the sly even in his fifteenth year. Sudharsan followed suit when he was sixteen.

Their mother would see cigarette butts on the floor of their room or would smell acid tobacco smoke invading the kitchen.

She knew that her sons were making experiments but pretended to be quite unaware of what they were doing. The sons too knew guiltily that their mother had noticed their weakness. But in her magnanimity she was keeping silent.

Whatever their faults and irresponsible behaviour they always remembered this. They owed everything to their mother—their education, their rise to a decent position in life, their freedom and their happiness. They had never seen their father. They had often questioned their mother about his whereabouts but her continued silence over their enquiries mystified them. Only once she got irritated to the point of intolerance and raised her hand to strike them. But she never delivered the blow and the boys who shrank away from her anger never bothered her afterwards with any further queries. One

look from her would sometimes freeze them.

The boys, however, squirmed and writhed when their school-mates and the lads of the street contemptuously referred to them as fellows who didn't know who their father was. Their jibes and taunts stung them into tears which they, however, managed to hide from their mother.

Kalavati knew how her sons suffered. She overheard their conversation about what the other boys had said in jest. Especially when one of the little neighbours Purshottam mocked at them from the street, she rushed into the street and wanted to give him blows right and left and to teach him a lesson. But seeing some hefty fellows standing by and watching the scene, she scurried back into the house and bolted the door.

That night she did not sleep for a long time. She looked at her two sons sleeping in all innocence. She thought she saw traces of tears on their cheeks. They must have wept over their miserable plight. Poor little things! What terrible agony and humiliation they must have endured silently. She had an impulse to wake them up, shake off their sleep and tell them the truth about herself. She refrained from taking such a rash step on second thoughts. Such a truth would shock them and injure their mind and even shatter their illusions about their mother. It would be best not to tell them; it would be sensible of her to let

them find out the facts as and when they could gather.

Sitting on the bed, she recollected her past with mixed emotions and tears flooded her eyes. Her husband, Kamalkant, had married her after a whirlwind romance and carried her off her feet. He persuaded her to defy her parents and marry him. They had resented this upstart fellow making love to a maiden from the higher strata of society. They banned their meeting and forbade Kalavati to meet or talk to Kamalkant. But he was a chap who had magnetic charm: his very eyes had a hypnotic power which compelled a girl to surrender her all willingly to him.

When her parents came to know that she was carrying on a clandestine affair with him, they got wild with fury. They beat her with a cane and locked her up in a room in the backyard. They gave her only saltless food for two days. On the night of the third day she heard a scratching sound at the door. She thought it must be a rat or bandicoot but soon the door noiselessly opened. A young man with a flash light on entered it and seized her hand. In a trice she understood that her Kamal had come to take her away. And she ran away with him to live a life of sin.

She had quite a number of jewels on her person when she eloped. After some months when Kamal had exhausted all the money he had brought, she gave him those jewels. He got a job as a clerk in a factory but his salary was

pretty low. He often came back and wept with her over their wretched condition. Her parents, when they were able to track her down with her lover, proved too stern and would not take her back. She was pregnant at that time and fear of ostracism drove them back. They sent her some money now and then and enabled her to pull through life as well as she could.

In due course, Madan and Sudharshan were born. But the romance did not last long. One night Kamal did not return home. They said that an elderly widow with means had become infatuated with him. She had persuaded him to run away with her and give up his wretched job.

For a whole week Kalavati was frantic. She wanted to throw her little sons into a well and drown herself. That would cut short her life of sorrow and poverty. But Destiny had decided otherwise. The foreman in the factory gave her enough money on the tacit understanding that she was to become his mistress. After a year it so happened that the proprietor of the factory, Vyas, fell madly in love with her. He transferred the foreman to a branch in the countryside fifty miles away and made a full bombardment on her heart. He offered to keep her in comfort in a separate house and educate her

COMPLEMENT

Going the rounds of an office, an efficiency expert came across a room with more desks, telephones and typewriters than it had workers. He thought something needed tightening up, so he asked one of the girls: 'What is the normal complement of this office?'

The girl looked puzzled. 'Well' she said hesitantly. 'I reckon the most usual compliment is "How's my beautiful today?"'

boys on condition that she would be mistress of no other man. She had to yield for starvation and prostitution were the only alternatives. So enamoured was he that he willed away half his property to her. He was a widower and had no children and looked upon Kalavati's sons as his own.

Within two years, however, he died of pneumonia. Kalavati found herself incredibly rich and she became the owner of two factories. She sold them and raised a substantial amount to give the best education to her sons. When they grew up they seemed to know all about this though they never breathed a word about it to anyone.

SELF-PITY

Self-pity gets you nowhere. One must have the adventurous daring to accept oneself as a bundle of possibilities.

H. E. Fosdick

SHORT STORY

MOHAN'S REVENGE

She was playing a double game
and her lover found her out.
There was hell to pay.

By H. R. NADKARNI

ULHAS had just taken his tea in a restaurant and felt a new strength and glow within him. For more than twelve hours he had worked in the sugar mill. As a top mechanic he was earning a decent salary but he was over-spending his income. The reason was not far to seek. He married Sarala, a society belle. She was extremely pretty and dainty and she went in for expensive dresses, jewels and cosmetics. She was better educated than her husband and could talk engagingly to any one. In conversation she sparkled like a diamond. She was so witty and bright.

But Sarala was a domineering and imperious woman. She wanted a husband who would not intimidate her or go against her wishes. He must be a fellow whom she could twist round her thumb. Before her marriage she had quite a number of admirers who always milled about her and were lavish with their compliments. She had a fancy for

several of them but was careful to shower her favours on a few. Of them Dayal was one. He was quite a handsome young man with debonair and glamorous ways. He always wore an elegant suit after the latest Parisian style and his hat was always perched at a rakish angle. He imitated Hollywood stars like Frederic March and Clark Gable and give himself airs. He was quite a grand figure when he was smoking his pipe in a stylish manner. It was no wonder that Sarala became charmed with his swagger and pose.

She often dreamt of him and imagined how glorious it would be to find herself in his arms and be kissed by him. She knew her mother did not approve of all this and wanted her to marry her cousin Mohan. Sarala had lost her father when she was ten years. She had no brother nor sisters. They had died in their infancy. So it was natural for mother to indulge her to an undue extent and give her all she

wanted. Her word was law in the house and even if the mother felt that the daughter was wrong or wicked she was afraid of protesting and wounding the darling's feelings. So she turned a blind eye to whatever was happening.

When Sarala came in with a male companion she would bring some cakes and refreshments and leave them on the table. The daughter would quietly bolt the door inside and would remain talking with her friend. Not a word would escape from the lips of the mother even when she suspected something fishy. She would remain either in the kitchen washing the utensils or would go by the backdoor to some friend's house nearby or visit the Durga temple at the street corner.

At first Sarala liked Mohan very much and her fondness grew into the intensity of love. Being a cousin he had more privileges than the other male friends of Sarala. He would come with her into the house and sit with her for hours. This kind of billing and cooing delighted Sarala's mother for she thought nothing wrong in it and she expected the marriage to materialise soon. But she herself was unaware of one aspect of her daughter's character. She was always undecided though she did not object to Mohan taking advantage of her in her room. He was an aggressive fellow and behaved like a savage beast. But she knew that he loved her more than his own life. For a time

YET ANOTHER!

"Yes," the teacher explained, "quite a number of plants and flowers have the prefix 'dog'. For instance, the dog-rose and the dog-violet are wellknown. Can you name another?"

There was silence, then a happy look illuminated the face of a boy at the end of the class.

"Please, Miss," he called out, proud of his knowledge, "collie-flowers."

she was even prepared to marry him and set up home. He had been urging her to this end and her mother also was dropping hints about the desirability of such an alliance on which she had set her heart.

But after six months Sarala changed her mind. She cooled off towards Mohan and began to evade him. Her new heart-throb was Dayal and she was eager for his fiery kisses and tight embraces. She created the opportunity when she lured him into her room late one night when her mother was asleep, thinking it was Mohan as usual who had accompanied her. Both were impetuous and flew into each other's arms. His mouth was on her neck and then he kissed her with all the ardour and warmth that he could command. She yielded like clay and consented to be his sweetheart.

Every night Sarala's mother was thinking that Sarala was with Mohan and she was busy planning the details of the marriage. After a long absence Mohan came to her house one evening and enquired where Sarala had gone. "You must know better," the mother said with a significant smile, "for you remain here till 2 a. m. Didn't you fix the programme for today with her?"

Mohan was shocked but he didn't tell about his suspicions to the mother. He decided that night to wait and watch. He stationed himself near a lamp-post and was watching the window of Sarala's room upstairs. His heart skipped a beat when he saw Dayal creeping out of Sarala's house at 1 a. m. with his head muffled. Poor Mohan! His dreams and hopes were shattered and he felt that he had been deceived and betrayed by the woman whom he had loved with all his heart. He boiled with indignation and was itching to fly up the staircase, confront the woman with her treachery and kill her then and there.

But he had second thoughts and bent his footsteps homeward. From that night sleep had deserted his eyes. He was thinking and planning a thousand little things by which he could punish the woman who had let him down.

Every night for a week he watched with utter helplessness and

hopelessness the figure of Dayal scurrying out of Sarala's house. Unable to contain himself, he slowly went up behind him and turned a dark corner and plunged a long sharp dagger into his back. Then he ran blindly back home. Throwing his dagger into a well in the street, he washed the stains on his hands and dress.

The police found Dayal's body but thought he must have been murdered for his money. There was no purse in his pocket. They did not suspect the triangle behind the murder. But Sarala was rattled by the murder. She knew that Mohan must have committed the foul deed and shuddered at the idea of having to face him.

Within a week she went off to Bombay with her mother and lived quietly for some months avoiding all male company until Ulhas met her. He had come to the city on a holiday and was delighted to meet her and fell in love with her. When he begged of her to marry him, she laid down a condition that he was not to question her about her past. That was a closed book. It suited him too for he had loved two women and lost them to other men. He promised solemnly to respect her wishes and after marriage took her to his little town where the mill was situated. Sarala had now learnt to give her heart to one man and be happy in her obedience to him.

SHORT STORY

THE ESCORT

Hers was a face that he could hardly forget. Even his promise to his mother availed him not.

By G. Harikrishan

WHEN Chalpath met Raji outside the film studio on the river side he fell in love with her at once. He tried to forget her face in several ways. He had just come to the city on transfer and he had not many friends. He worked in the company office all day and went out in the evening in search of recreation. Before leaving for the city his mother and sisters had warned him against the various distractions and temptations that beset a man there. He must walk warily and he should keep his weather eye open. His mother exhorted him to remember that a family friend's daughter was to be betrothed to him. So he must not run after any other girl. When she shed tears in reinforcement of her eloquent plea, Chalpath's eyes too turned moist. He

gave a solemn promise to his mother to return in good time on a month's leave, fulfil her wish by marrying the girl of her choice and make them all happy. He gave affectionate pats on the cheeks of his sisters—Muktha and Madhu—and took his departure.

Now his problem was how to forget this studio girl. She was a disturbing influence and he could not help seeing her every evening. His room faced a maidan and across the maidan stood the studio glittering with lights. Every evening she came opposite his room and took the short cut across the maidan to her studio. He stared at her with open mouth—her curvaceous figure, her firm bosom and her transparent dress emphasised her liveliness and beauty. She might be

slightly older than himself but she radiated mature charm and grace as she walked with an old man who was invariably her escort.

He had learnt that her name was Raji. The old man called her by her name whenever he was not able to keep pace with her. He used a walking-stick but he was feeble and panted at times to regain his breath. He understood that he was her uncle and she relied upon him to escort her to the studio and back home. But sometimes he was too exhausted to move.

Chalpath was occupying a room on the first floor of a wheat godown. The clerk working there would close at 4 p. m. and would leave for his home. He was the only man in that building. There was a verandah downstairs where he would bring at wicker chair and sit in it and watch the shadows flitting across. He was an interested spectator of the stream of people moving into the film studio and out of it. Sometimes he would feel enthralled by the lilting tunes of music floating on the air. He often pictured in his mind that Raji must be rehearsing those songs and his love for her increased by leaps and bounds.

One evening—it was nearing seven—Raji was walking fast through the gate of the maidan towards the studio. She consulted her wrist watch against the street lamp and her face clearly reflected her impatience. She was evidently delayed on the way and she was late for studio

work. So she ignored the bleating calls of her uncle who was walking slowly and hastened towards the studio building.

The old man tottered and sank on the ground. He was too weary and exhausted to catch up with his niece. Chalpath out of pity helped the old man up and asked him to occupy his chair. He went up to his room and brought him a tumbler of fruit juice that he had in a bottle. That refreshing drink revived the old man and he heartily thanked Chalpath for his kind help.

Then he told her that Raji was his late sister's daughter. She was an orphan and both his wife and himself, having no child, brought her up. His own wife had died six months ago. He was getting a pension of about forty rupees and he permitted his niece to take up a career. In the studio she was earning about eighty rupees a month. But she was an up-and-coming artiste and the director had promised to give her a substantial increment. She had a good voice and she had every chance of becoming a play-back. Everybody appreciated her voice.

The old man—his name was Tripathi—went on to reveal that it was a difficult task for him to escort Raji and back. He was becoming very weak in mind and body but what could be done? There were Romeos in the studio—bad fellows who wanted to grab hold of her—and his presence kept them off.

After a time Chalpath accompanied the old man up to

the studio and left him there. The next evening Tripathi introduced his niece to Chalpath who switched her best smile on him in gratitude. He folded his palms and told her how he happened to live alone upstairs, and sometimes sat in the verandah reading in the evenings.

Thus their friendship grew day by day and every evening they exchanged hearty greetings. But for nearly four to five days he missed them. He wished to call at their residence but he had forgotten to note down their address. He felt helpless and concerned. As he lay thinking of Raji's cuddlesome figure in his bed at 9.30 p. m. he had the surprise of his life when she suddenly entered his room without ceremony and said: "Quick, Mr. Chalpath, a drunkard is giving me chase. Put out the light at once and bolt the door and barricade it. For God's sake!" she hoarsely whispered, her body trembling.

Chalpath obeyed at once and the room was plunged into darkness. He wanted to talk but she held her forefinger against his mouth forbidding him to talk.

She huddled under his cot for nearly two hours. She could hear the scoundrel moving up and down the maidan, shouting her name. Only when she was satisfied that he was gone did she talk to him. "He is an old actor and a rake and he would lay hands on every woman who catches his fancy. You see," she said to Chalpath, in a low voice, "my uncle is bedridden and I am helpless." With her consent he switched on the light but kept the windows and doors closed.

"I can see a way out, Raji," he grinned.

"What is that?" she asked blushing, as if sensing his thought-current.

"If...if you can marry me I will escort you to the studio if you still want the job. Above all else, I am madly in love with you."

She bent her head down and when he gathered her in his arms for a passionate kiss she readily yielded her lips and strained him close to her body.

TRUTH AND BEAUTY

Through our sense of truth we realise law in creation, and through our sense of beauty, we realise harmony in the universe. When we recognise the law in nature, we extend our mastery over physical forces and become powerful; when we recognise the law in our moral nature, we attain mastery over self and become free. In like manner the more we comprehend the harmony in the physical world, the more our life shares the gladness of creation, and our expression of beauty becomes truly catholic,

— RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

PLANS FOR A WELFARE STATE

ONCE the famous American President Lincoln had said, "If we could know where are we now, and where we ought to go, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it." Rightly, the Government of free India, at the very beginning, studied well the deteriorated condition of India and launched a Five Year Plan for the attainment of a 'Welfare State.' The Government through its Plans tried its level best to accomplish its goal, but could succeed only a little, because it was not backed wholeheartedly by its people for whom the Government want to establish the cherished state of 'Ramrajya'—a state full of prosperity, security and happiness. Apart from non-availability of people's co-operation the rapidly increasing population of India has also been one of the main factors which have been restricting the speed of development and progress of the country to a great extent. Now once again the time reminds us of Lincoln's words.

Let us first see the rate of growing population of India. The population of India before the partition was about 40 crores. According to the census of 1951

it was about 35.6 crores, which has risen to about 44 crores, according to the latest census, conducted only a few months back. Obviously, the Indian population is increasing at the rate of 40-50 lakhs per year.

In spite of the great efforts of the government to solve the food problem of the country it could not be done so because of the rapid growth of the population. In 1951 the requirement of food grains was 4.4 crore tons, while we were able to produce only 4 crore tons of the requirement. This year India requires 790 lakh tons while, at the most, the total production is expected to be 750 lakh tons. This is ample proof that we have done a lot to increase the rate of production of food materials, still food-grain shortage remains as such as it was ten years back. At the end of Third Plan the country would be in need of, at least, 811 lakh tons of food grains to feed its huge population which is expected to be 49 crores in 1966. It reminds us of the dangers to come if the rate of the population growth is not checked soon.

Now let us consider the housing problem. In the year 1951 there was a housing shortage of

about 2.5 million, taking into consideration that every family should have a separate house. The fact lies like this. In 1951 urban families numbered 12.8 million, had only 10.3 million houses. During First Plan period about 1.3 million additional houses were built. The building construction continued and at the end of Second Plan 126,000 houses under various schemes had been completed. It is expected that in course of the Third Plan 8.9 lakhs houses might be constructed. But there would still be great shortage of houses to provide shelter to many of our families.

As regards unemployment problem, it is becoming acute day by day. In 1956 the number of unemployed was about 53 lakhs which has now risen high upto about 78.30 lakhs. According to the Indian Planning Minister Sri G. L. Nanda this figure of unemployed in India is expected to be 12 million by the end of the Third Plan. The rate of unemployment is, thus, increasing faster even when the Government is trying its best to solve this problem through many liberal employment opportunities.

Why should we forget the fact that agricultural land never increases with the increase in population, instead it may decrease, for the very land is also utilised for additional houses, roads, rail and many other social purposes like additional schools, colleges, factories and Mills etc. For example, in 1881 the average number of houses per sq. mile

was 31.7, in 1931 it was about 39.3 and in 1951 it was 50.8.

Of course, the uncontrolled procreation has very adversely affected the Indian economy and has outstripped food supply, which is not only insufficient in quantity but also deficient in quality. Mal-and-under nutrition has retarded physical and mental development of our young children and is responsible for causing deficiency diseases among the adults, causing ill-health of parents which in turn affects their productivity and causes heavy death rate among the infants.

After going deep into the problems being faced by India we are bound to say that the Five Year Plans and any other effort for the development of the country would be meaningless if the rate of growth of population remains unrestrained and unchecked. If India has to go up and thinks of her prosperity, the people should follow wholeheartedly the slogan of 'Planned Parenthood', which alone can help, to a great extent, in planning for a self-sufficient, happy and prosperous nation, for according to the Royal Commission's Report on population "Control by men and women over the number of their children is one of the first conditions of their own and communities' welfare..." Therefore, if we desire to see a Welfare State established in Indian soil, parents in India should have fewer children according to their means, for

(Contd. on page 78)

Short Story

Stranger in the House

By K. N. Prasanna Kumar

He gave his detective friend an account of his mistress who had run away. The information the detective gave was startling!

PRIVATE Detective Mukund Lal welcomed his old class-mate and friend, Gupta. "Come in, my good fellow. I can hardly recognize you. You seem to have grown pre-maturely old. How else could you explain your snow-white hair? And you are hardly thirty-eight. When I saw you last you had just then entered railway service. You were very jolly then and cracked jokes all round. You said you were never going to marry and you would pass all your savings and fortune to some charity trust. I hope you are still remaining true to that ideal.

"How stupid of me. I should have first treated you to refreshments. You are so jaded and exhausted. First you take a bath and then come up for a bite."

He almost pushed his friend down towards the bath-room. Gupta took off his coat and shirt and dumped down his suit-case and took up two towels. After

twenty minutes he emerged from the bathroom fresh and energetic though the sad expression on his face persisted. The inviting sweets and cakes revived him and made him more energetic. When Gupta offered him a costly cigarette and a match-box he looked pleased and smiled at his friend.

"I am glad to find such a loyal and devoted pal as yourself, Mukund. That wretched old blighter—Sukumar—met me the other day as I was crossing the Main Trunk Road. I opened my mouth to call him but then shut it like a trap, seeing how arrogant and snobbish he was. You know, he is drawing only Rs. 200 a month—a hundred less than myself and he is heavily in debt. But seeing my loose and baggy trousers and neglected appearance, he must have thought I was down on my luck and if he entered into conversation with me, I might touch his pocket.

"I am happy to be here and feel quite at home. I would have

enjoyed the company of friends like you and felt a zest for life. Alas! I am miserable and feel an oppressive weight on my heart."

Mukund held up his hand. "I know, Gupta, you have combined in this visit business with pleasure. When you wrote to the Secret Bureau of Investigation for my address, I sensed that you wanted my services as a detective and that some grief was eating into you. Normally the Bureau will not disclose the name of any member of the staff or his address. They had put your letter in the file to be destroyed in due course, but luckily for me it caught my attention, though three months had gone by since its receipt. At once I wrote an express letter to you inviting you to go over here.

"Well, you can remain here as long as you like. Remember this is your second home. My youngest brother is here and he can look after your convenience and go about on your errands. If you have anything to tell me and wish to make use of my services in any capacity, I am completely at your disposal. Come on, don't hesitate."

Gupta did not speak for nearly five minutes. Then he coughed and cleared his throat. "Mukund, this is a matter that concerns my heart. You have guessed correctly. It is not to have a fine holiday that I have come to you. I am seeking you as a private detective. I make no apologies for not keeping to my ideal.

"When my parents pressed me to marry and hinted I was exceeding the age limit for an early marriage I said firmly I was not interested and I would devote my time to work and bury myself in it. Some of my relatives sneered and predicted that I would fall a victim sooner or later to the wiles of some woman. Marriage alone, they declared, would steady a man and help him fulfil his obligations to society.

"I firmly shook my head and went my way without caring to reply to them.

"Five years ago,—you see by then I had lost my parents—I was poring over a book by the table lamp one night when someone knocked at my door. It was past ten and the night being very chilly there were no stragglers near the station. You know my house was just opposite to it. I cautiously opened the door and, imagine my surprise, when I found a young woman waiting outside.

"Quick, please" she gasped. "Let me in for God's sake and protect my honour. I was chased by two ruffians over the railway line. I hid behind a big peepul tree to elude them. They went in a wrong direction and have not come again. But they may well dash up this way again and if they catch hold of me they may do anything. Please, master, let me in and close the door. You will have earned a load of *punya* if you do me that favour. By tomorrow morning, I promise, I will leave this house."

"Her appeal melted my heart and I at once invited her in. She was a lovely creature, I assure you, and had fine clothes and some jewels on. So I understood that she could not be a thief. So I asked her to go in and let her sleep in a small room.

"I went on reading but I wouldn't concentrate on the book. The presence of a pretty stranger in my house was disturbing. And when she began to cough suddenly and went on coughing for several minutes I was a bit upset and even concerned.

"I took a tumbler of hot water, switched the light of her room and asked her to drink the water. She gratefully took it and then asked me whether I had tincture and some cotton in the house. She showed a deep bruise on her right foot which was bleeding. I had the things she wanted and gave them to her, directing to her how to make use of them after washing her foot. She explained that she had stumbled while running on the railway track and hurt herself.

"The next day her foot had swollen and she couldn't move. I really felt sorry for her and attended to her foot. I took leave and applied penicillin ointment which I specially bought for her. So, my dear fellow, one thing led to another. I took a new interest in her and pressed her to stay on till she was all right. One night I suddenly lost control of myself and my decency and gentlemanly behaviour and... well... I seduced her if I must tell you the honest truth.

"She wept for a while and then seemed reconciled. She chose to stay with me and set my house in order. I was never so happy in my life. Her name, I forgot to say, was Shanta. We lived like this for four years—as man and wife. Then one day she ran off with a man who, I learnt later, had been visiting her secretly for some months. She not only ran away with that man but also took my mother's jewels and all my cash. For shame, I have not lodged a complaint with the police but here is her photograph, Mukund."

Mukund scrutinised the photograph of the woman. "Gupta, give up all hopes of seeing that woman. She was the mistress of a ring leader of the city's worst rowdies. She lost her life in a brawl if I remember aright."

(Contd. from page 75)

this would help them love their children most, feed and educate their children well and ultimately create a better generation.

The Third National Plan of India has emphasised greatly the need of Family Planning in India and has allotted a good sum for its implementation. The job of parents has been simplified by the government which has made provisions of Family Planning clinics to provide necessary help to the parents so that they can easily control the number of their children by having children only by choice and not by chance and, thus, live a life worth living. ★

WOMAN'S PAGE

How To Glamorize Your Eyes

By S. Evasuk

LOOKING back over the last half-century you realise that changes have occurred notably in dress and figure fashions but in beauty trends, too. Take the eyes, for example. Today's trend towards a more natural line in eyebrows and emphasis on the eyes by applying mascara so lashes will not look beaded is a far cry from the days of 1915 when Theda Bara slunk across the silent screen with her darkly circled, heavily pencilled eyes and thick eyebrows—then the height of glamour.

Delving a little more into the past, you find a change taking place in 1925 when Clara Bow, another charmer, had begun to thin out her brows. This trend continued until Marlene Dietrich caused eyebrows to do everything short of disappearing about 1933. Gradually the pendulum started to swing back to natural beauty until today the artificial eye-beauty is past and you find today's glamour gal looking like the well-scrubbed girl next door.

With the present trend on naturalness, you are lucky if your eyebrows are heavy for it is this heavier line which helps emphasize a woman's pretty eyes. Shaggy eyebrows, however, are not desirable, but cleaning up

stray hairs and slight plucking of eyebrows into shape are not difficult beauty chores.

If you don't feel you have enough eyebrows to properly emphasize your eyes, or your eyebrows are light, then use a pencil. Unless eyebrows are black, a brown pencil is usually suggested for a more natural effect.

Pencil for Emphasis

Use of both a brown and a black pencil, however, is recommended by one make-up expert who says that eyebrows are not solidly one colour.

For natural effect he suggests stroking in the eyebrow line with two shades. He also advises that you sharpen the eyebrow pencil in wedge shape which offers a thin but blunt point that makes more natural-looking strokes.

Light feathery strokes applied outward along the brow line should be worked in carefully, then the other hairs of the eyebrow might be brushed over the pencilled line for that natural effect. Use the pencil lightly to emphasize the curve leading from the inner part of the eyebrow to the top where there is a break in the natural arch of hairs leading from this inner curve. The brow may need to be leng-

thened at the end. Use the pencil to pull the line of the brow downward to a point slightly above the outside tip of the eye.

Hairs over the bridge of the nose are never a pretty sight. You should pluck them with care to avoid infection. To make this easier, place a warm wrung-out wet cloth over the eyebrows to soften the skin. Then pull the hair with tweezers while you hold the skin taut with the other hand; pull in the direction the hair is growing to prevent it breaking off short. When you are through, sponge the skin with hazel or toilet water.

You can use your eyebrow pencil to make the eyes look larger by drawing a line from the upper lid out toward the temple. But don't make this too long. To make this line appear more natural, you can blend the colour a bit into the skin.

Your Glasses

Women who wear glasses should make the most of their eye beauty with make-up, too. Rather than masking out the eyes, glasses will call attention to them, making them a prominent feature. Brows should extend a little above your glasses, without leaving an open space between glasses and brows. You can mascara your lenses to break lashtips. If your lashes are very long, make sure your glasses are far enough away from your eyes to permit freedom of movement. Otherwise, a crowded effect is the result.

Outlining the eyes with eye liner will make them look larger,

but this beauty tip is not for everybody, since some lenses magnify the eyes. But if your type lens reduces the appearance of your eye size, eyeliner could be used to offset this.

For Facial Flattery

The shape of your glasses is important as far as facial flattery goes. You can select the shape that is right for your facial contours by studying your features with a view towards balancing them and overcoming any irregularities. This little help, glasses give to facial proportion, is why so many girls look more attractive with their glasses on and off.

Rounded lenses tend to make a long thin face seem shorter and fuller. The full round-shaped face gets needed lengthening with glasses that are broad on top and taper to a narrower base.

Eyeglasses can enhance your eyes by the colour of the frames. Brunettes will find their beauty heightened by red, amber or light blonde frames. But blue and some shades of green are becoming to girls with dark hair and blue eyes. Blondes look well in pastel shades like pale pink, light blue and gray. Or they might find the contrast of dark blue or black frames more to their liking, colours which are also flattering to the silvery-haired woman. Greens, golds, bronze, copper tones and black offer the redhead a variety of colours. The important thing to remember is that glasses should be a gay accessory, not a grim necessity.

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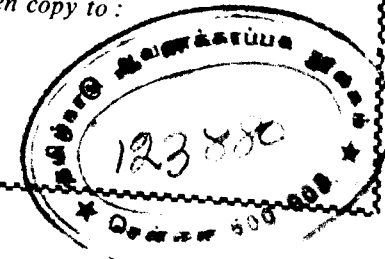
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