

445.

THE MODERN COCHIN ENGLISH READERS.

READER III

1318

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NOTE.

These Readers are designed to meet the requirements of the pupils of the Lower Secondary classes. The lessons are so graded that, on the basis of vocabulary the pupils have acquired in the Primary classes, a more living and extensive system is sought to be built up. One chief difficulty of our pupils lies in finding suitable expressions to clothe common thoughts on current and common subjects. It is hoped that the wide range of topics dealt with in the Readers, in a simple and lucid style, will obviate this difficulty to a considerable extent.

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1. THE BETTER LAND.

"I hear thee speak of the Better Land,
Thou call'st its children a happy band;
Mother, oh! where is that radiant shore?
Shall we not seek it, and weep no more?
Is it where the flower of the orange blows,
And the fire-flies glance through the myrtle boughs?"
"Not there, not there, my child!"

"Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise,
And the date grows ripe under sunny skies?
Or 'midst the green islands on glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
And strange bright birds, on their starry wings,
Bear the rich hues of all glorious things?"
"Not there, not there, my child!"

"Is it far away in some region old,
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold,

Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand;
Is it there, sweet mother, that Better Land?"
"Not there, not there, my child!—

"Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy;
Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy;
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair:
Sorrow and death may not enter there;
Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom;
For beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb—
It is there, it is there, my child!"

MRS. HEMANS.

Radiant, bright.
Feathery, with leaves like feathers.
Secret, hidden.
Coral strand, shore of a coral island.
Picture, call up in fancy.
Time doth not breathe, Time does not leave its mark.

Which are the better lands according to the boy?
What is the mother's idea of the better land?

2. THE BLIND BOY.

1. Oh! say, what is that thing called light,
Which I must ne'er enjoy?
What are the benefits of sight?
Oh! tell a poor blind boy!

2. You talk of wondrous things you see—
You say the sun shines bright;
I feel him warm, but how can he
Or make it day or night?

3. My day or night myself I make,
Whene'er I sleep or play;
And could I always keep awake,
With me 'twere always day.

4. With heavy sighs, I often hear
You mourn my helpless woe;
But sure with patience I can bear
A loss I ne'er can know.

5. Then let not what I cannot have
My peace of mind destroy;

While thus I sing, I am a king,
Although a poor blind boy.

GIBBER.

[1] **Or**, either. **It were**, it would be.

Why did the boy consider himself a king though blind and poor?

3. THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

1. "Will you walk into my parlour?"
Said the spider to the fly.
"'Tis the prettiest little parlour
That ever you did spy;

The way into my parlour
Is up a winding stair,
And I've many curious things
To show when you're there."

"Oh, no, no!" said the little fly,
"To ask me is in vain,
For who goes up your winding stair
Can ne'er come down again."

2. "I 'm sure you must be weary, dear,
With soaring up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?"
Said the spider to the fly.

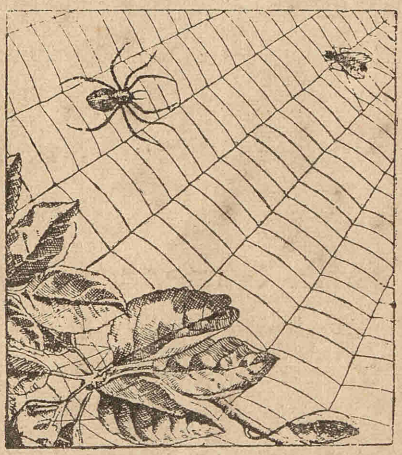
"There are pretty curtains drawn around;
The sheets are fine and thin,
And if you like to rest awhile,
I'll snugly tuck you in!"

"Oh, no, no!" said the little fly;
"For I've often heard it said,
They never, never wake again,
Who sleep upon your bed!"

3. Said the cunning spider to the fly:
"Dear friend, what can I do
To prove the warm affection
I've always felt for you?

I have within my pantry
Good store of all that's nice;
I'm sure you're very welcome—
Will you please to take a slice?"

"Oh, no, no!" said the little fly,
"Kind sir, that cannot be;
I've heard what's in your pantry,
And I do not wish to see!"



4. "Sweet creature!" said the spider,
"You're witty and you're wise;
How handsome are your gauzy wings,
How brilliant are your eyes!

I have a little looking glass
Upon my parlour shelf,
If you'll step in one moment, dear,
You shall behold yourself."

"I thank you, gentle sir," she said,
"For what you're pleased to say,
And bidding you good-morning now
I'll call another day."

5. The spider turned him round about,
And went into his den,
For well he knew the silly fly
Would soon come back again;

So he wove a subtle web,
In a little corner sly,
And set his table ready,
To dine upon the fly,

Then he came out to his door again,
And merrily did sing:
"Come hither, hither, pretty fly,
With the pearl and silver wing;

Your robes are green and purple—
There's a crest upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright,
But mine are dull as lead!"

6. Alas, alas! how very soon
This silly little fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words,
Came slowly flitting by,

With buzzing wings she hung aloft,
Then nearer and nearer drew,
Thinking only of her brilliant eyes,
And green and purple hue—

Thinking only of her crested head—
Poor, foolish thing! At last
Up jumped the cunning spider,
And fiercely held her fast.

He dragged her up his winding stair,
Into his dismal den,
Within his little parlour—
But she ne'er came out again!

7. And now, dear little children,
Who may this story read,
To idle, silly, flattering words,
I pray you, ne'er give heed;

Unto an evil counsellor
Close heart and ear and eye,
And take a lesson from this tale
Of the Spider and the Fly.

MARY HOWITT.

Moral: Flattery is the food of fools.

Parlour, sitting room.
Spy, see.
Snugly tuck you in, cover you up comfortably.
Pantry, store room.
Gauzy, thin transparent.
Call, come.
Crest, tuft.
Heed, attention.

Tell the story in your own words.
Describe how cunning the spider was.

4. CASABIANCA.

The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but he had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though childlike form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud: 'Say, father, say
If yet my task is done?'
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

'Speak, father!' once again he cried,
'If I may yet be gone!'
—And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair;
And looked from that lone post of death,
In still, yet brave despair.

And shouted but once more aloud,
'My father! must I stay?'
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child,
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound—
The boy—oh! where was he?
—Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strewed the sea!—

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part;
But the noblest thing which perish'd there
Was that young faithful heart.

FELICIA HEMANS.

Whence, from where.
Booming, thundering.
Wreathing, furiously coming round.
Streamed, waved in the wind.
Banners, flags.
Fragments, small pieces.
Pennon, a long narrow flag.

Why did Casabianca remain alone on the deck?
Give the story in your own words.

5. MILLER OF THE DEE.

There dwelt a miller hale and bold,
Beside the river Dee;
He work'd and sang from morn to night,
No lark more blithe than he;
And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be,—
"I envy nobody: no, not I,
And nobody envies me!"

"Thou'rt wrong, my friend!" said old King Hal,
"Thou'rt wrong as wrong can be;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I'd gladly change with thee.
And tell me now what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I'm the King,
Beside the river Dee?"

The miller smiled and doff'd his cap:
"I earn my bread," quoth he;
"I love my wife, I love my friend,
I love my children three;

I owe no penny I cannot pay;
I thank the river Dee,
That turns the mill that grinds the corn,
To feed my babes and me."

"Good friend!" said Hal, and sighed the while,
"Farewell! and happy be;
But say no more if thou 'dst be true,
That no one envies thee.
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,—
Thy mill, my kingdom's fee!
Such men as thou are England's boast,
O miller of the Dee."

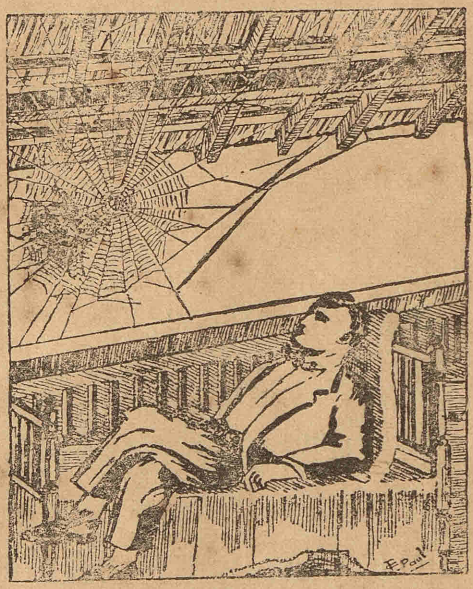
Blithe, gay.
Doff'd, took off.
Mealy cap, cap covered with flour.

What makes the miller sing so pleasantly?

6. BRUCE AND THE SPIDER.

King Bruce of Scotland flung himself down
In a lonely mood to think;
'Tis true he was a monarch, and wore a crown,
But his heart was beginning to sink.

For he had been trying to do a great deed,
To make his people glad ;
He had tried and tried, but couldn't succeed,
And so he became quite sad.



He flung himself down in low despair,
As grieved as man could be;
And after a while, he pondered there,
" I'll give it all up ", said he.

Now just at the moment a spider dropped,
With its silken cobweb clew,
And the king in the midst of his thinking stopped
To see what the spider would do.

'Twas a long way up to the ceiling done,
And it hung by a rope so fine,
That how it would get to its cobweb home
King Bruce could not divine.

It soon began to cling and crawl
Straight up with strong endeavour;
But down it came with a slipping sprawl,
As near to the ground as ever.

Up, up it ran, nor a second did stay,
To utter the least complaint,
Till it fell still lower; and there it lay,
A little dizzy and faint.

Its head grew steady—again it went,
And travelled a half yard higher;
'Twas a delicate thread it had to tread,
And a road where its feet would tire.

Again it fell, and swung below;
But up it quickly mounted,
Till up and down, now fast, now slow
Six brave attempts were counted.

"Sure," said the king, "that foolish thing
Will strive no more to climb,
When it toils so hard to reach and cling,
And tumbles every time."

But up the insect went once more,—
Ah me! 'tis an anxious minute;
He's only a foot from his cobweb door,—
Oh, say, will he lose or win it?

Steadily, steadily, inch by inch,
Higher and higher he got,
And a bold little run at the very last pinch
Put him into his native cot.

"Bravo! bravo!" the king cried out;
"All honour to those who try!
The spider up there defied despair;
He conquered, and why shouldn't I?"

And Bruce of Scotland braced his mind,
And gossips tell the tale,
That he tried once more, as he tried before,
And that time he did not fail.

Pay goodly heed, all ye who read,
And beware of saying "I can't;"
'Tis a cowardly word, and apt to lead
To idleness, folly, and want.

Whenever you find your heart despair
Of doing some goodly thing,
Con over this strain, try bravely again,
And remember the spider and king.

E. Cook.

Moral: Heaven helps those who help themselves.

Clew, thread.
Ceiling dome, inner part of roof.
Divine, guess.
Last pinch, end of his climbing.
Braced, strengthened.
Con, read.

Why did king Bruce fling himself down in a lonely mood?
What did he learn from the spider?
Write the story in your own words.
What lesson do you learn from this story.

7. LUCY GRAY.

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And when I cross'd the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew:
She dwelt on a wild moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

'To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.'

'That, Father! will I gladly do :
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!'

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapp'd a faggot-band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe;
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet dispersed the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time
She wander'd up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb
But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on a hill they stood
That overlook'd the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward cried
'In heaven we all shall meet!'
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall:

And then an open field they cross'd:
The marks were still the same;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came:

They follow'd from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!



—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

W. WORDSWORTH

Oft, often.
Break of day, early morning
Solitary, lonely.
Moor, open waste ground.
Minster clock, church clock.
Blither, more gay.
Tracked, pursued.
Maintain, assert as true.

Why did Lucy Gray's father ask her to go to the town?
What happened to her?
Give the story in your own words.

8. ONLY A SOLDIER.

Unarmed and unattended walks the Czar
Through Moscow's busy street one winter day.
The crowd uncover as his face they see;
'God greet the Czar!' they say.

Along his path there moved a funeral,
Grave spectacle of poverty and woe--
A wretched sledge, dragged by one weary man
Slowly across the snow.

And on the sledge, blown by the winter wind,
Lay a poor coffin, very rude and bare;
And he who drew it bent before his load
With dull and sullen air.

The emperor stopped, and beckoned to the man
'Who is't thou bearest to the grave?'
he said.



'Only a soldier, sire!' the short reply,—
'Only a soldier, dead.'

'Only a soldier!' musing, said the Czar:
'Only a Russian, who was poor and brave.
Move on, I follow. Such an one goes not
Unhonoured to his grave.'

He bent his head and silent raised his cap;
The Czar of all the Russians, pacing slow,
Followed the coffin as again it went
Slowly across the snow.

The passers of the street, all wondering,
Looked on that sight, then followed silently;
Peasant and prince, and artisan and clerk,
All in one company.

Still as they went, the crowd grew ever more
Till thousands stood around the friendless grave,

Led by that princely heart, who, royal, true,
Honoured the poor and brave.

Moscow, the old capital city of Russia.
Grave spectacle, mournful sight.
Sledge, a wheelless cart used in Russia and other places where the snow lies thick.
Artisan, mechanic.

Why did the *Czar* follow the poor soldier's coffin?
Briefly describe how the poor soldier was honoured.

9. LLEWELYN AND HIS DOG.

The spearman heard the bugle sound,
And cheerily smiled the morn;
And many a brach and many a hound
Obeyed Llewelyn's horn.

And still he blew a louder blast,
And gave a louder cheer,—
"Come, Gelert! why art thou the last
Llewelyn's horn to hear?

"Oh, where does faithful Gelert roam?
The flower of all his race!
So true, so brave!—a lamb at home,
A lion in the chase!"



That day Llewelyn little loved
The chase of hart or hare,
And scant and small the booty proved,—
For Gelert was not there.

Unpleased Llewelyn homeward hied;
When near the portal seat,
His truant Gelert he espied,
Bounding his lord to greet.

But when he gained the castle door,
Aghast the chieftain stood:
The hound was smeared with drops of gore,—
His lips and fangs ran blood

Llewelyn gazed with wild surprise,
Unused such looks to meet,
His favourite checked his joyful guise,
And crouched and licked his feet.

Onward in haste Llewelyn passed,
(And on went Gelert too,)
And still, where'er his eyes were cast,
Fresh blood-drops shocked his view!

O'erturned his infant's bed he found!
With the blood-stained cover rent,
And all around the walls and ground
With recent blood besprent!

He called his child—no voice replied!
He searched, with terror wild;
Blood! blood he found on every side!
But nowhere found the child!

"Monster! by thee my child's devoured!"
The frantic father cried;
And to the hilt his vengeful sword
He plunged in Gelert's side!

His suppliant looks, as to earth he fell,
No pity could impart;
But still his Gelert's dying yell
Passed heavy o'er his heart.

Aroused by Gelert's dying yell,
Some slumberer wakened nigh;—
What words the parent's joy can tell
To hear his infant cry!

Concealed beneath a mangled heap
His hurried search had missed;
All glowing from his rosy sleep,
His cherub boy he kissed.

Nor scratch had he, nor harm, nor dread;
But the same couch beneath
Lay a great wolf, all torn and dead,—
Tremendous still in death!

Ah, what was then Llewelyn's pain!
For now the truth was clear:
The gallant hound the wolf had slain,
To save Llewelyn's heir.

Vain, vain was all Llewelyn's woe:—
Best of thy kind, adieu!
The frantic deed which laid thee low
This heart shall ever rue!

And now a gallant tomb they raise,
With costly sculpture decked;
And marbles, storied with his praise,
Poor Gelert's bones protect.

Here never could the spearman pass,
Or forester, unmoved ;
Here oft the tear-besprinkled grass
Llewelyn's sorrow proved.

And here he hung his horn and spear ;
And oft, as evening fell,
In fancy's piercing sound would hear
Poor Gelert's dying yell.

SPENCER.

Moral: " One angry moment often does
What we repent for years ;
It works the wrong we ne'er made right
By sorrow or by tears."

Brach, female hound.
Flower, best.
A lamb at home, as gentle as a lamb.
A lion in the chase, as fierce as a lion in the hunt.
Hied, went.
Truant, runaway.
Gore, blood.
Ran blood, blood was dripping.
Besprent, sprinkled.
Vengeful, punishing.
Mangled, torn and cut.
Cherub, angelic.
Tremendous still in death, terrible even when dead.
Rue, repent.
Storied, monuments inscribed.

What did the master find when Gelert welcomed him ?
Why was Gelert run through ?
How was the truth known in the end ?

1. A FATHER'S LOVE.

One beautiful summer evening the Emperor Baber was pacing to and fro in the garden of his palace in Agra. The sun was just sinking in the west. The river Jumna lay like a broad sheet of many colours. Everything was calm and quiet.

In the midst of this tranquil scene the Emperor alone was agitated. Often did he turn round and look anxiously across the river. His eldest son and heir, Humayun, who was at Sambhal was very ill. Baber had ordered him to be brought to Agra forthwith. The journey was to be made by water so that it might be as smooth and comfortable as possible to the patient.

At last the barge was sighted. It came nearer and nearer until it drew up alongside the river gate of the palace. The prince was

removed to the royal apartments in a state of delirium; and the anxious father silently followed his son.

The best physicians in the land had already been summoned. They gathered round the prince's bed and tried one remedy after another. For two days they remained in constant attendance on their patient; but all their efforts were of no avail. Humayun showed no signs of improvement. On the third day the physicians informed the Emperor that the disease had taken a turn for the worse and that the prince's life was in great danger.

It was then that the pious Abul Baka came forward. He told the stricken parent that Allah might perhaps be pleased to accept some costly offering in exchange for his son's life. Some suggested that the great diamond, which was taken at Agra and which was one of the richest spoils of

Baber's conquest, should be offered. For it was then supposed to be the largest and most precious jewel in the world. Others counselled that there should be erected in the capital a splendid mosque outshining all other places of worship. But the Emperor said: "My life is dearer to me than all these. To Humayun it is as precious as his own; and I will willingly lay it down if in return the Lord is pleased to grant my son his full span of life."

Then, to take the disease upon himself, he walked round the sick bed three times and prayed aloud: "O Lord! if it pleases Thee to accept one life in exchange for another, then grant that my life may be taken instead of my son's."

Strange to say, the Emperor began to ail from that day and his health gradually declined. Humayun, on the other hand, steadily gained strength and grew better.

By and by the young prince began to attend to the duties of the State. Then one day when the Emperor felt that his end was drawing near, he called all his nobles round him. In their presence he formally declared Humayun his successor. "Be you as loyal and devoted to my son," he said, "as you have been to me; and I hope to God," he added, "that Humayun will prove himself worthy of your love and esteem." The eyes of all present were filled with tears, but the Emperor was happy. He blessed his son and exhorted him to be good and noble.

Three days later Baber's sacrifice was accepted and he died. He had willingly laid down his life for the sake of his beloved son in the fulness of his power and prosperity. He had resigned hopes of long years of rule over the kingdom he had newly won after much toil and bloodshed.

Needless to say, Humayun proved worthy of his father's sacrifice; and he in

turn left a son and successor whose like our land has not yet produced.

pacing, walking slowly.
tranquil, peaceful.
patient, sick person.
barge, a flat-bottomed boat.
delirium, disordered state of mind.
physicians, doctors.
summoned, called.
avail, use.
declined, grew worse.
esteem, respect.
exhorted, urged.

Why was Baber agitated ?
What did he do to cure his son ?
How did Baber prove his love for his son ?

---

2. PERSEVERANCE.

"Have you finished your lesson, Ramu?" said Mr. Gopinath to his son, who had laid aside his book, and was busily engaged in flying his balloon.

"No, father," replied Ramu, hanging down his head.

"Why not, my son?"

"Because it is so difficult, father. I am sure that I shall never learn it. Besides, I could not remember it after I have learned it, my memory is so bad.

"My dear boy, you are deceiving yourself. You can learn as well as any one, if you will only try."

"But have I not tried, father?" again urged Ramu.

"Well, try again. Be in earnest, and you will soon master it. To show you that it only requires perseverance, I will tell you a story :—

"More than thirty years ago, one of the dullest boys at a village school got up from his seat to repeat his lesson one morning, and, as usual, did not know it 'Sit down!' said the teacher angrily. 'If you don't pay more attention to your lessons you will never be fit for anything.'

"The poor boy resumed his seat, and bent his eyes again upon his lesson.

"'It is of no use; I cannot learn,' he said in a whisper to a companion who sat near him.

"'You must try hard,' replied the kind-hearted boy.

"'I have tried, but it is of no use; I may just as well give it up at once.'

"'Try again, Gopu!' whispered his companion.

"These two little words gave him fresh spirit, and he bent his mind again to his task. He began to find the sentences lingering in his memory; and soon, to his surprise and pleasure, the whole lesson was mastered! He then rose from his seat once more.

"'What do you want now?' asked the teacher.

"'To say my lesson, sir.'

" 'Did you not try half an hour ago?'

" 'Yes; but I can say it now, sir,' said the boy.

" 'Go on, then.'

"Gopu commenced and repeated the whole lesson without missing a single word! The master gave him a look of pleasure as he resumed his seat.

"From that day," continued Mr. Gopinath, "there was no boy in the school who learned more rapidly than Gopu. From that day till the present hour he has been a student; and he now urges his son Ramu to 'try again', as he tried."

"And was it indeed you, father?" asked his son, eagerly looking up into the face of his kind parent.

"Yes, my son. That dull boy was your own father in his early years."

"Then I will try again," said Ramu, in a decided tone; and, flinging aside his pet balloon, he re-entered the house, and was soon busy with his lesson.

"Well, what success, Ramu?" asked Mr. Gopinath, as the family gathered for their evening meal.

"I learned the lesson, father!" replied the boy. "I can say every word of it."

"Did you find it hard work?"

"Not so very hard, after I had once made up my mind that I would learn it. Indeed I never stopped to think, as I usually do, but went right on until I had mastered every sentence."

"May you never forget this lesson, my son!" said Mr. Gopinath. "You now possess the secret of success. It lies in never stopping to think about a task being

difficult or tiresome, but in going steadily on bit by bit."

perseverence, steadfast pursuit of an aim.
deceiving, mistaken.
in earnest, serious.
spirit, energy.
mastered, learned.
flinging, throwing.
made up (one's) mind, decided.
tiresome, weary.

What did Mr. Gopinath do when Ramu told him that he had not learnt the lesson?

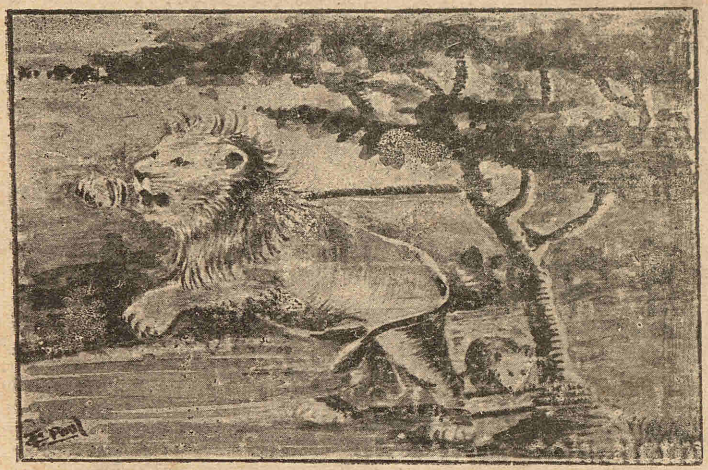
Give the story of Mr. Gopinath in your own words.

What is the secret of success, according to this story?

3. THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

It was a hot noon. The king of the forest, faint with heat and weary with hunting, lay down to rest in the shade of a thick tree, and fell fast asleep. It then happened that a company of mice began to amuse themselves by running over him. They played at hide and seek within his mane,

scrambled up his nose and peeped into his ears. At last they awoke the lion. He started up with a roar and clapped his paw upon one little mouse that could not get away with the rest.



The lion was just about to kill the little thing, when it implored his mercy in a very touching manner. "My dear lord," it pleaded, "do not stain thy noble character with the blood of so small and despicable a creature". The lion considered the matter

and thought it was only proper to do as he was desired. He, therefore, lifted his paw and released his trembling prisoner.

The mouse was extremely grateful; and, as it took leave of the lion, it said: "Noble master! I trust I may one day be able to repay your kindness to me." The lion smiled a little scornfully at the thought of the poor mouse ever being of use to him.

Not long after, as the lion was roaming through the forest in pursuit of his prey, he chanced to run into a strong net of ropes spread for him by some hunters. He struggled in vain to free himself; and, in his terror and rage, set up a most hideous and loud roar.

The little mouse heard this and immediately ran to the place. Seeing the lion struggling in the net, it said: "Have no fear, my lord, for I am your friend." At once it set to work with its sharp little teeth,

gnawed through the ropes of the net and set the lion at liberty.

scrambled, crawled.
implored, begged.
mercy, kindness.
pleaded, begged.
stain, sully.
character, nature.
despicable, contemptible.
scornfully, contemptibly.
pursuit, follow with intent to capture.
hideous, frightful.
gnawed, cut.

How were the mice disturbing the sleep of the lion?
How was the mouse useful to the lion?
What do you learn from this story.

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4. THE OSTRICH.

As the elephant is the largest of quadrupeds, so the ostrich is the largest of birds. A full grown ostrich is often taller than a man and attains a height ranging from six to eight feet. Sometimes it reaches even ten feet in height. A full grown bird weighs about three hundred pounds.

The ostrich is a native of Africa, Arabia and South America. It dwells in sandy

deserts, and makes its nest by digging a hole in the sand.

The ostrich differs from other birds in one respect. Its wings are so small that it cannot fly. However, they serve as paddles, and the bird can run at a tremendous speed by spreading them out and flapping them in the air. The ostrich has only two toes to each foot, but the legs are extraordinarily thick and strong. It is therefore no wonder that the bird often attains a speed of sixty miles an hour. Not even the fleetest of horses can keep up with it.

This bird has got a terrible appetite. It eats almost anything that comes in its way, including iron screws and nails and glass pieces. It is said to eat even live coal.

The ostrich can live for long without water like the camel ; and because its home also is in the desert like the camel's, it is sometimes called the camel-bird.



There are two methods adopted in hunting the ostrich. The first is by chasing it on horse back. The hunters know that the bird always runs in a zig.zag course, and they are able to overtake it only because of this peculiarity. It soon outdistances its pursuers and goes winding and doubling about, but the hunters push forward in a straight line. The chase continues in this manner and it sometimes lasts for two or three days till the poor bird is tired out. When escape seems impossible, it often buries its head in the sand; but when it is taken, it attacks the hunters furiously till it is overpowered.

The second method is a curious one followed by the wild Bushmen of Africa. A native covers himself with the skin and feathers of an ostrich. He then approaches a flock of these birds, imitating them by pecking on the ground and shaking his feathers. Thus he trots and walks along

until he gets within bow-shot. A poisoned arrow is then aimed at one of the flock. The hunt is generally successful.

The young ostrich is often caught and tamed by the natives. The tame bird serves as a good mount and can carry a rider with the fleetness of a race horse.

The beautiful white feathers found on the wings and tails of the male birds are highly prized as an ornament for head-dress. The eggs of the ostrich also are valued as food. These eggs are very large, and various dishes are prepared with them. The egg-shells are strong and made into cups and ornaments.

quadrupeds, four-footed animals.
paddles, propellors.
tremendous great.
fleetest, swiftest.
keep up, run at equal pace.
zig-zag, not straight.
peculiarity, strange quality.
outdistances, leaves far behind.
doubling, turning sharply back.
overpowered, subdued.
mount, anything used for riding.
prized, valued.
dishes, particular kinds of food.

How is the ostrich hunted ?
In what ways is the ostrich useful to man ?

5. THE CALIPH AND THE PERSIAN SATRAP.

More than a thousand years ago the Arabs over-ran all western Asia. They conquered Turkey, Asia Minor, Palestine, Syria and Babylon, and compelled the people of these territories to embrace the Moslem faith. They next turned to Persia and one province after another of that Empire fell.

Harmosan was the Satrap or governor of one of these Persian provinces. He resisted the Moslem invaders with great determination. He fought long and hard, and the enemies were forced to draw back with heavy losses. However, they returned in greater numbers, and the Persians were once more fighting for their liberty. Again the Arabs were routed, but again they came back determined to win in the effort. The last and fatal conflict for the Persian throne was over, and the brave defendants were at last vanquished.

Harmosan was taken captive and brought before the Caliph as he sat enthroned on the field of battle in the midst of his vast army. The Persian knew well that he would be put to death, for he had kept the Moslems at bay for such a long time. A sea of naked swords surrounded him. The Caliph was stern and relentless. Harmosan himself was worn out with fighting and faint with hunger and thirst, and he cried out: "Lo, I am dying of my thirst. Give me but one drink of water and then let the worst take place."

At the Caliph's order a goblet of water was brought and given to the Persian. He took the goblet in his hand and raised it to his lips. Then he hesitated and looked doubtfully at the enemy as if he feared a secret blow from them. The Caliph marked his hesitation and was amused. "Nay, fear not, friend," he laughed; "for, as I live,

thou shalt not die before thou hast drunk that cup of water."

Quick as thought, Harmosan threw the goblet down, spilling that water on the parched sands, and exclaimed: "Thou hast said, O Caliph! that my life is mine till I have drained that cup. Bid the servants then gather that water before they deal the blow."

The Caliph was furious for a moment, but he checked himself soon and said: "It shall never be said that the Caliph broke his own word. A monarch's word must ever remain sacred. Bring another cup and let the Persian go free when he has quenched his thirst."

draw back, withdraw.
routed, defeated.
defendants, defenders.
vanquished, defeated.
stern and relentless, strict and merciless.
goblet, a large drinking cup.
spilling, allowing to fall.
parched, dry.
quenched, allayed.

How was Harmosan captured?
How did he save himself from death?

6. THE HONEY BEE—Part I.

For ages past, men have obtained honey from the store of wild bees which build their combs on the sides of steep mountains or on very tall trees. Till about the 16th century, honey was the only sweetening agent known to man; for sugar was not made till then, though sugarcane had been discovered as early as the first century A. D. One general of Alexander the Great is said to have found a wonderful "honey-bearing reed," which must surely have been the sugarcane; but it was not till many centuries after that, that sugar was made. Even after that, sugar was so costly for a long time, that only the rich could afford it while the poor still used honey.

Besides honey, the ancients got wax from the bees to make candles, when they had neither gas nor electricity. Even now bees-wax is used for a variety of purposes. So

men have taken great interest in studying bees and bee-keeping from very early times.

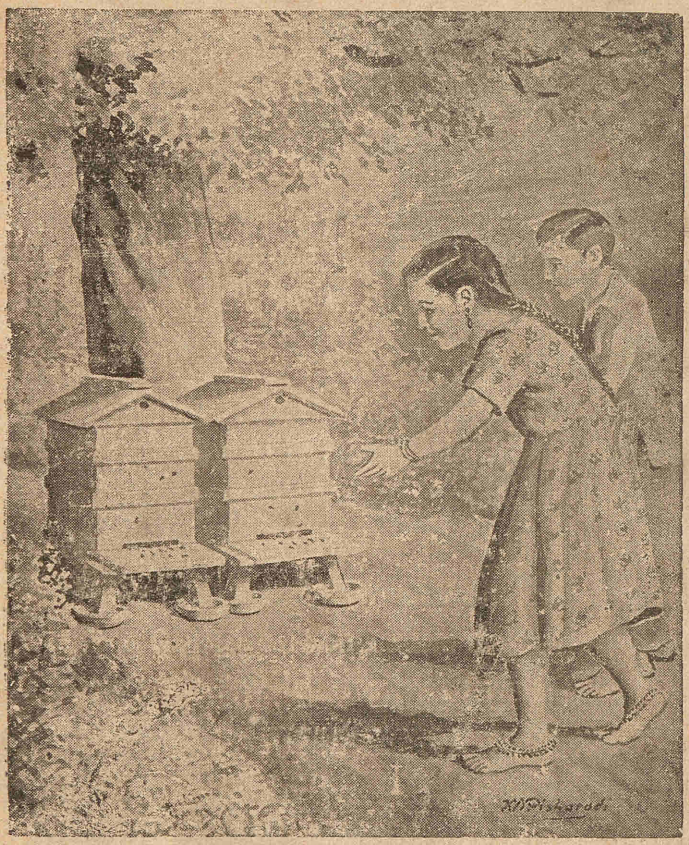
For a very long time, people had very false and curious ideas about bees. Bees were believed to be born in flowers. Virgil, the learned Italian, who lived long ago in Parthenope or modern Naples, describes a very funny method of producing bees. A two-year old bull-calf with twisted horns should be chosen. It must be killed by its nose holes being stopped and then it must be buried in a pit with leaves and flowers thrown over it. After some time, the heat of the earth will soften the bones, and a swarm of bees will come out. But great men have spent their life-time in studying bees, and we have come to know that these are all fables.

In a colony of bees, whether it is in Nature or in a man-made hive, there are three kinds of bees: the queen, the workers and the drones. There is only one queen,

and her sole duty is to lay eggs, and she does this day in and day out, laying as many as two thousand eggs a day, or more if there is plenty of honey. She never goes out of the colony or hive, and the worker-bees take great care of her. She is the mother of all the bees there and it would be correct to call her the queen-mother.

The worker bees have many duties to perform. There are the water carriers to supply the hive with water, the nurse bees to look after the young ones, the queen and the drones; the foragers who fly out and gather nectar and pollen all day long; the builders, who produce wax and make new combs; scavengers, chemists, and soldiers. Each bee does one particular job; each one knows how to do it and seems to be doing it always. There is no quarrel as to who shall fly out for nectar or pollen or water, or who shall mount guard at the entrance and protect the colony and its honey from

marauders. Everything seems to be arranged in perfect order by some divine law.



The third kind of bee is the drone. Drones are very idle and do no work at all

inside the hive, nor do they go out and gather pollen or honey. They live a life of ease, flying out only in the evening to enjoy themselves. Each drone eats up in a day as much food as four workers can gather in a day. But these idlers are always under the power of the workers; for, besides honey, the workers give them a thing called "chyle food" without which the drones would die even if they get plenty of honey. The drones are carefully fed and looked after, when there is plenty of honey to be got outside. But when flowers begin to be few and honeyflow becomes less, the drones have no place in the hive. It is not by starvation that they die, but they are mercilessly killed.

First the workers destroy the drone cells in combs and drag out drone eggs and grubs and throw them away. The foolish old drones seem to take no notice of this but go on eating and enjoying. At last, the

order is given, and the workers chase the drones and drive them out of the colony. They are completely at the mercy of the workers and cannot fight with them. If a drone is caught, his wings are bitten off and he is thrown out. The hunted drones run about here and there with loud cries, but no mercy is shown to them. If they escape from the workers by flying away, they soon die of cold and hunger, for they do not know how to gather honey. If they dare to return, the guards at the gate fall upon them and kill them; but they rarely return, preferring to die outside. The bodies of the drones killed and disabled inside the colony are carried by the undertakers far away from the place. Again with the return of summer, when there is plenty of honey, the workers will make drone cells and the queen mother would lay drone eggs in them and the nurse bees would take care of them as long as the honey season lasts.

sweetening agent, thing that gives sweet taste.

ancients, those who lived in remote days.

day in and day out, during the whole day.

nectar, sweet fluid or honey produced by plants.

marauders, plunderers.

pollen, fine powdery substance discharged from anther of flower.

mount guard, to go on guard-duty.

mercilessly, unkindly.

grubs, caterpillars.

undertakers, those who manage funerals.

How many kinds of bees are there in a hive ?
Describe the work done by each of these kinds.
When are the drones found in a colony and when are they not found ?

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7. THE HONEY BEE—Part II.

We have seen how there are three kinds of bees in a colony, namely the Queen, the Worker and the Drone. Of these, the drones alone are male in sex, while the queen and all the workers are female; but it is only the queen that lays the eggs, which hatch into larvae and later on become either drones

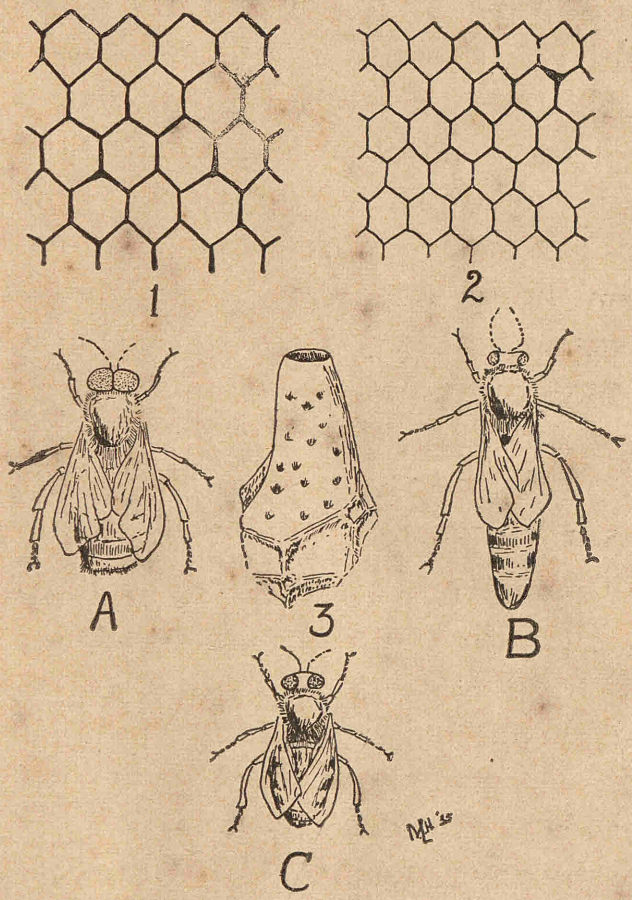
or workers. The queen has the wonderful power of laying either a worker or a drone egg at will.

These worker eggs and drone eggs are not laid by the queen indiscriminately according to her convenience. The workers settle this for her by making worker cells or drone cells as they think fit. The drone cell is slightly bigger than that of the worker and when the queen comes there, she drops a drone egg. All the work in the colony is done by the workers, while the drones do no work at all. So more workers are needed, and hence they make drone cells only at certain times, and those only in very small numbers.

There is no such difference as queen egg and worker egg. After the egg hatches, the bees can turn the grub to grow up into either a queen or a worker. This they do by feeding it in a particular way. All larvae or

grubs are fed alike for the first three days of their life with a kind of food called 'Royal Jelly,' a sort of liquid that comes out of the head of worker bees. From the fourth day onwards, the worker and drone grubs are fed with 'Bee-bread,' a mixture of pollen, honey and water; but the queen is fed with royal jelly during all the four or five days of her larva stage and for the three years of her life after she becomes an adult bee. This is why she is longer than the worker bees and is capable of laying eggs.

New-born workers give out more royal jelly than the older ones, and hence we may see a large number of them in attendance upon the queen, feeding her every now and then, when she goes about from one cell to another to lay eggs. Other young workers may be seen feeding the young larvae in the cells. For this reason, these young workers are called 'Nurse Bees.' The nurse bees in their turn are fed by the older



THE HONEY BEE.

1. Drone Cells. 2. Worker Cells, 3. Queen Cell.
A. Drone, B. Queen, C. Worker.

workers who have not gone out that day to gather honey or pollen.

All the bees, queen, worker and drone, have four stages of life; first as eggs for three days, then as larvae for five to six days and after that they remain shut up in the cells for a number of days, and the entrance to the cells is covered by the workers with a thin sheet of wax. This is the third stage called the 'Pupa' stage, when the grubs go to sleep and take no food. During this period they change colour and get wings, legs and a head like those of the bees that we see outside. At the end of the pupa stage, the bee inside the cell breaks open the wax cap that covers the entrance and comes out as a winged insect. This is the fourth or adult stage.

Sometimes the bees want to have a new queen. The previous queen may be lost by accident or sudden death, or she may be

too old to lay eggs. Then a new queen is reared in a specially made queen cell at the margin of the comb and it is like a jasmine bud in shape. The bees take care to have a healthy queen long before the existing one becomes old; for without a queen the colony becomes extinct in a very short time. The life of the worker bee, in seasons of heavy work, is only about six weeks to two months, and, besides this, thousands fall a prey to numerous enemies. If there is no queen to lay eggs and make up for the loss, we can understand how, after a few days, there will be few bees left in the colony.

In an apiary where bees are kept in hives, the beekeeper gives a new queen to the unfortunate colony by cutting out a queen cell from another colony and fixing it on the edge of a comb in the queenless hive. This is called 'Re-queening.' Sometimes when a queen cell cannot be had conveniently, he unites the bees in the two

hives in a clever way. He sprays peppermint solution on the combs and bees in both hives and with the good combs of the queenless hive he replaces the poor combs in the other.

Each hive has its own particular smell, and a stranger from another hive will never be tolerated. In every colony there are thousands of bees, and so many are born and so many die every day, that it is almost impossible for one bee to know all the other inmates of her home; and the 'great work of the hive' keeps her so busy all day long, that she has little leisure or energy to cultivate the acquaintance of all. So it is only by their smell that bees know whether other bees are inmates or strangers. When the beekeeper sprays peppermint on the bees of both colonies, they lose their previous peculiar smell and have one in common; so they unite peacefully, and thus the queenless bees get a happy home once

more. What is done by bees in Nature when their queen is lost, is not known to us; but we may be sure that the 'Great Bee-keeper' must have some way of his own to help them.

adult, grown up.
reared, brought up.
sprays, sprinkles.
tolerated, permitted.
acquaintance, friendship.
Great Bee-keeper, God.

How do bees rear a new queen ?
How many stages are there in the life of a bee and what are they ?
What are 'royal jelly' and 'bee-bread' ?

8. THE FAKENHAM GHOST.

In the village of Fakenham there lived an old woman with her aged husband. One evening, when it was growing dark, she was returning home from the market which was three miles away. Her way home led through a wood and she was afraid to go

alone. So she walked as briskly as she could, hoping to reach her cottage before it was quite dark.

When she approached the wood, it was darker there and her fears increased. All at once she thought she heard footsteps behind her. For a moment she stopped and turned back, but saw nothing. She said her prayers aloud and walked fast. Again she heard the footsteps close behind her. She doubled her speed, but so did her pursuer.

At last she summoned up all her courage and turned back once more, when, lo! there stood face to face with her the dark form of a four-legged monster. She uttered one wild shriek and sped homeward, expecting every moment to fall into the clutches of the demon that followed.

Panting, she reached her cottage gate, but the goblin was now close behind her. In her great haste to open the gate and get in,

she pushed it violently. It flew open and the woman fell forward in a death-like swoon.

Hearing the sound, her aged husband came out with a lantern. He saw his wife lying unconscious on the ground; and standing quietly by her side was an ass's foal.

When the old woman recovered from her swoon, she told her husband the story of the goblin that had pursued her. Great was her surprise to learn that the goblin was but a poor foal. She kept the animal and it became a great pet of the family.

ghost, the spirit of a man.
briskly, quickly.
doubled, increased.
clutches, tight grip.
panting, breathing heavily.
goblin, ugly demon.
swoon, unconsciousness.
foal, the young of a she-ass.

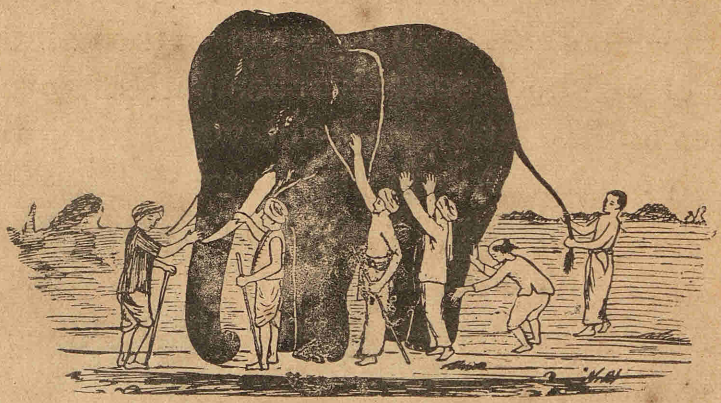
What was the ghost that followed the old woman ?
Give the story in your own words.

9. THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

Once there was a dispute among certain blind men about the appearance of the elephant. All the disputants were born blind. They had, therefore, never seen an elephant. One said that the elephant was a tall and lean animal. Another maintained that it was short and stout. A third asserted that it was a long reptile. Yet others expressed other views. At last the dispute became so hot that they resolved to verify the description given by each by means of personal observation.

They then approached the mahout of a very tame elephant, and explained to him the object of their visit. The mahout wanted to see the end of this joke and decided to humour them. He therefore allowed them to go near the animal and feel it as they pleased.

One of the blind men felt the broad and sturdy side of the animal, and exclaimed, "God bless me! this elephant is just like a huge wall!"



Another happened to feel one of the animal's tusks. "Oh! what have you got here?" he cried; "a spear to be sure! It is so smooth and sharp and round! I am now certain that the elephant is just like a spear and nothing else!"

A third one happened to get hold of the elephant's swinging tail as he felt for the

animal. "It is now clear to me," he said with conviction, "that the elephant is like a rope."

As the fourth blind man came forward groping with both hands, he came in contact with one of the monstrous legs of the animal. "And so," he exclaimed, "the elephant is after all like a tree!"

The next chanced to feel one of the gigantic ears as he groped his way. He had no more doubts about the elephant's appearance and proclaimed aloud; "The elephant resembles a huge fan whatever others say!"

The last man in his turn felt the wriggling trunk of the beast. "After all, this is what an elephant is like!" he exclaimed; "it is very much like a monstrous snake!"

So these blind men continued to dispute vehemently. Each believed that his observation alone was correct; but we know that,

though each of them was partly in the right, all were in the wrong.

dispute, quarrel.
disputants, those who took part in the dispute.
maintained, held.
reptile, crawling creature.
mahout, keeper of an elephant.
humour, gratify.
groping, search by feeling.
monstrous, huge.
gigantic, huge.
wriggling, twisting to and fro.
vehemently, violently.

What were the opinions held by the blind men about the appearance of an elephant?

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10. MERCURY AND THE WOODCUTTER.

A woodcutter, while cutting down a tree on the bank of a river, dropped his axe into the flood below. The water was so deep and the current so swift that the poor man dared not venture into the river. So he prayed to the god Mercury to help him to regain his axe.

The god heard his prayer and came down to help him. He dived for the axe and brought up a golden one; but the man said that it was not his. Mercury dived a second time and came up with a silver axe. Again the woodcutter said that it was not his. A third time the god dived and brought up an axe with a wooden handle. "Aye, aye, that is the one I lost," cried the woodcutter in great glee. "Well," said the god very much pleased with the integrity of his suppliant, "thou art so honest that I will make thee a present of all the three axes."

The story of the woodcutter's good luck reached the ears of his neighbours; and a greedy fellow made up his mind to try the same experiment.

Accordingly, he went to the same spot on the river bank and began hewing down a tree; but the axe would not slip out of his hands. Thereupon he deliberately threw

it into the river. Then he wept and prayed to the god Mercury to help him.

The god, who was near at hand, heard his lamentations and appeared before him. On being told the cause of his grief, Mercury dived for the lost axe and brought up a golden axe as on the previous occasion. He then asked the man if it was his. The man eagerly replied that it was just the one he had lost. "You villain!" cried Mercury, "do you hope to deceive me who can see into your heart?" The god then vanished with the golden axe and the man returned home, sadder but wiser.

dared not venture, was not bold enough to hazard.
regain, get back.
glee, joy.
integrity, truthfulness.
suppliant, humble petitioner.
experiment, test.
deliberately, wantonly.
lamentations, weeping.
villain, rogue.

Why did Mercury present the three axes to the first wood-cutter ?

Why did the second wood-cutter return home sadder ?

11. MAN AND HIS DWELLINGS.

After food and clothing, man requires shelter. A home is essential to us for many reasons. Besides giving us protection from the wind and storm, it affords a quiet retreat after the day's hard work and a safe place for the varied activities of the young and the old alike. Where the primitive man thought of safety and strength alone in building a house, his modern descendant cares more for convenience and beauty. How simple were his wants when compared with ours! He was, therefore, much happier than we are in spite of our modern comforts and conveniences.

The primitive man lived in caves or holes dug in the ground which he covered over with leaves and twigs. His home, indeed, did not look nice but it protected him from the wild beasts, and that was what he cared for. As time went on, when new

tools and instruments came into use, improved houses came into existence as a result. Huts were made of canes and reeds daubed with mud. These were replaced by mud walls. The materials used for roofing were at first either bamboo or grass. Gradually timber came to be used in building houses and tents made of skins were not altogether uncommon.

With further progress man discovered materials of greater strength He made bricks of clay and carved stones out of quarries which he used to build walls. Burnt lime stone mixed with sand and water came to be used in masonry. Later on cement which is lime and clay burnt and ground together began to be used for the same purpose. For roofing he made use of slates, tiles and sometimes corrugated iron sheets. The latest fashion is to build houses of reinforced concrete with asbestos sheetings for the roof.

As man's attention turned from safety and strength to beauty and comfort, there was a steady decline in his health. Diseases began to multiply and quite naturally he began to enquire into their causes. Soon he learnt that over-crowding, lack of fresh air and unclean surroundings were at the root of the evil. The air we breathe out is different from the air we take in, in that it has lost the life-supporting element. Sleeping in closed rooms very often results in headache, weakness and diseases of the lungs. Thus ventilation which is of prime importance for health is now receiving due attention in houses of recent date. It is not, however, enough if we provide our houses with a number of windows. They are no good unless they are kept open at nights, whether the nights are hot or cold.

The house we live in may be convenient, well ventilated and beautiful too, but if the surroundings are not kept perfectly neat,

we shall not escape the diseases brought on by insanitary conditions. Refuse and dirt should not be allowed to accumulate in the compound. Water should not be left to stagnate in pits and pools. For, they breed mosquitoes, the dangerous enemies of man. They carry disease germs which they inject into our bodies. The advice contained in the *Silpasastra* regarding the selection of the house site should not be neglected. We should choose a site for good soil and water, fresh air, free sunlight and beauty of surroundings.

A story is told of the founding of a city by a Chola King which shows the importance of site which is often ignored. The King was riding through the forest one day when, to his surprise, his elephant was attacked by a cock of remarkable strength. He was so much struck by the incident that he looked round and saw that all the creatures of the place were thriving very well. The soil

was good, the tanks were full of lotuses, the trees bore rich fruits and the birds and animals alike were quite healthy. On grounds of health he resolved to build a city there and lived long enough to see his dream fulfilled.

primitive, ancient.
daubed, painted roughly.
quarries, stone pits.
masonry, stone-work.
corrugated, wrinkled.
reinforced concrete, cement with steel embedded in it to strengthen it.
ventilation, supply of pure air.
prime, chief.
accumulate, collect.
stagnate, become motionless.
inject, make to pass.
thriving, flourishing.

How should we keep our houses quite sanitary ?
Describe the different stages in the development of the dwelling of man.

12. A SON'S SACRIFICE.

Long, long ago, there was a king called Santanu. He was descended from the famous Lunar race of Kings and ruled over

the mighty empire of Bharatavarsha. His queen was the beautiful Ganga, and Santanu had a noble son by her.

To Santanu's grief, he lost his beloved queen soon after the birth of his son; and the father and son were left to be the sole comfort of each other. However, their mutual love was so great that gradually they recovered from their great sorrow.

In course of time Satya Vratha—for that was the prince's name—was proclaimed heir to the throne of the Lunar Kings. The young prince received a sound education befitting his high rank. He soon learned the duties of his office; and he was so wise and good that all men hoped he would become an ideal ruler of his people.

Unfortunately the hopes of his subjects were not to be fulfilled. One day king Santanu went hunting into the wood near the Jumna. There he saw a young girl of

surpassing loveliness named Satyavathi plying the little ferry boat across the river. He was so much struck with the beauty of the maiden that he yearned to marry her. Santanu sent messengers to find out the girl's parentage. On being told that her father was the chief of the fishermen, the king went to him, and asked the girl to be given in marriage to him.

Now Satyavathi's father was a shrewd man. He saw the difference in rank between his daughter and the monarch. So he said: "Indeed, your Majesty loves this humble girl now; but if some highborn maiden were to ensnare your royal fancy later on, then my daughter will be in a very sad plight. One thing alone can make her future secure."

"And what may that be?" asked Santanu.

Then slowly the old chieftain answered: "If you marry Satyavathi, then she must be

your queen in all respects and her children must inherit your throne. If you promise this, my liege, then Satyavathi shall be yours."

The king was bitterly disappointed with this answer. Prince Satya Vratha was his only son and he loved him more than his own life. He was the rightful heir to the throne. How could he give away that which was Satya Vratha's by right? He would never do such a grievous wrong to his son. At the same time, he was too just a monarch to take Satyavathi from her father by force. So he took leave of the old chieftain and returned with a broken heart.

Santanu was unable to hide his sorrow. The image of Satyavathi haunted him day and night, and he pined visibly. Satya Vratha observed the change in his father with deep concern, and made anxious enquiries regarding its cause. He could learn nothing

from his father, but was able to wean the truth from the men who had accompanied Santanu when he went to the old chieftain. Satya Vratha was the most devoted of sons, and he forthwith resolved to sacrifice all his rights in order to ensure his father's happiness.

He now summoned the nobles of the kingdom and went with them to Satyavathi's father. Meeting the old chieftain, he addressed him thus: "We all know, old man, that my father the king loves your daughter. I have come to take her to him on your own terms. I understand your feelings and respect them." Then he turned to the nobles and said: "Bear witness to what I say, ye lords of Santanu's kingdom. I have been my father's rightful heir till now, but I am so no longer. Here, in your presence, I renounce all my claims to the throne. If Satyavathi marries my father, her sons shall be the future kings of this land."

Those who heard the prince were amazed at his sacrifice and the filial love which prompted it. However, Satyavathi's father still hesitated. "What more can you want?" the prince asked. The old chief replied: "You have renounced the throne, O noble prince! but will your own sons stick to this promise?"

Satya Vratha at once decided to complete his sacrifice. Without hesitation he said: "I solemnly swear that, as long as there is life in me, I shall remain single. There shall never be child of mine to oust the sons of Satyavathi from my father's throne. So help me, God!"

The son's sacrifice was now complete and Satya Vratha henceforth came to be known as Bhishma. His father married Satyavathi and they had sons who succeeded Santanu on the throne. Bhishma survived these sons and lived for many years, but he remained true to his vow to the very last.

proclaimed, announced officially.
befitting, suitable to.
ideal, perfect.
surpassing, exceeding.
plying, rowing.
yearned, desired.
shrewd, cunning.
ensnare, entangle.
plight, condition.
liege, lord.
haunted, appeared to.
pined, wasted away under pain.
deep concern, great uneasiness.
renounce, disown.
filial, parental.
prompted, incited.
oust, expel.
survived, outlived.

What made Satya Vratha take a vow that he will not marry?
How did he prove his filial love?

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13. SIVAJI—Part I.

Sivaji Bhonslae, the great founder of the Mahratta Empire of the 17th century, was born in April, 1627 A. D., in the mountain fortress of Shivneri about 50 miles north of Poona. His father was Shaji Bhonslae, a *jaghirdar* of the Poona district. Shaji was a brave and enterprising soldier

who distinguished himself first in the service of the Sultan of Ahmadnagar and later under the Sultan of Bijapore.

Soon after Sivaji's birth, Shaji deserted his wife Jija Bai; and so Sivaji had his early training under the care of his mother. Jija Bai was a woman of strong character and deep piety and her healthy influence left a deep mark on her son. Sivaji loved to listen to her songs and stories of ancient heroes, saints and sages. The deeds of the heroes of Mahabharatha and Ramayana fired the boy's imagination. The mother urged him to follow the example of these heroes. She also taught him to believe in God and worship Him at all times. The family deity of the Bhonslaes was the goddess Bhavani and Sivaji's devotion to the goddess knew no bounds.

When Sivaji was ten years old, he was placed under the care of an able Brahman tutor, Dadaji by name. Next to Jija Bai, it

was Dadaji that shaped Sivaji's career. He was devoted to his pupil; and under his supervision Sivaji received that sound training which fitted him for the great work before him.

It was not the three Rs. that Dadaji taught his pupil. A literary education was of little use to a Mahratta noble of those days. Sivaji learned from his tutor the use of the sword, the spear and the bow, and was soon proficient in all military exercises. His tutor took him on horse-back wherever he went, and Sivaji became an excellent horseman at an early age.

As he grew up, Sivaji revealed all the qualities of a born hero and leader of men. He became popular among the youths of his own age. The men of his father's *jaghire* also looked upon him as their leader. Thus he soon became the head of a band of brave and loyal men.

By this time Sivaji had formed his plans for the future. He did not want to be a vassal of Ahmadnagar or Bijapore; but his ambition was to be an independent ruler himself. The Mahrattas were to be united into a great nation and Sivaji was to be the head of the Mahratta Empire.

In order to accomplish this object Sivaji had to overcome the Mohammedan rulers who held sway in northern and central India. For this he wanted both men and money. With the help of the brave followers who had already gathered round him Sivaji began to attack the mountain fortresses in the country surrounding Poona. From his frequent wanderings in this region he had acquired an intimate knowledge of this country. It was, therefore, easy for him to lead his men against the forts and capture them. He collected much booty from his defeated enemies. With this he equipped an army and established himself

as an independent chieftain of the Deccan with a large territory and many hill forts in his possession.

jaghirdar, holder of a tract of land with power to administer.
enterprising, adventurous.
fired, animated.
three Rs. reading, writing and arithmetic.
proficient, well-skilled.
revealed, showed.
vassal, dependant.
accomplish, fulfil.
sway, power.

What training was given to Sivaji in his early days ?
What were Sivaji's plans for the future ?

14. LONDON TO AUSTRALIA BY AIR.

The first attempt at this daring enterprise was undertaken by the two young Australian brothers, Captain Ross Smith and Lieutenant Keith Smith. On the twelfth of November 1919, a year after the conclusion of the Great War, these young aviators took off from London in a big aeroplane and crossing the English Channel came

over France where a dense mass of snow clouds compelled them to rise up much higher in the air and there they were almost frozen to death by the intense cold.

Alighting at Lyons in France after a flight of over 450 miles, they continued their flight and soon reached Rome in Italy. Leaving Italy they proceeded over the Mediterranean sea and were caught in a terrific and blinding rain storm. With infinite difficulty they reached Cairo in safety. Thence they flew over Palestine to Damascus and Baghdad and along the river Euphrates to the Persian gulf and passing through Karachi they reached Delhi, where they stayed for a complete day. Next day they flew along the Jumna to Allahabad at the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges and from there via Calcutta they crossed the Bay of Bengal and landed in Rangoon. There the difficulties of the intrepid aviators increased. They had to

cross a high mountain on their way from Rangoon to Bangkok, and the mountain tops were hidden by thick clouds and every moment they had to fear being dashed against a peak. They had to make a forced landing at Singora for petrol and, as there was no aerodrome, many labourers had to be called in to cut a rough running course before the machine could take off again.

Their next landing was at Singapore, where the brother of the king of Siam entertained them very hospitably. The flight from there lay over a densely wooded forest, which extended over hundreds of miles, and a forced landing anywhere there, would surely have wrecked their machine. Fortune, however, enabled them to effect a safe landing at Batavia. The Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies helped them in all possible ways, and without any further mishap they reached Timor, whence, as the crow flies, it is only 450

miles to the nearest Australian port, Darwin. On the tenth of December 1919 the brothers completed the last spell of their adventurous flight and landed in Darwin on Australian soil. Thousands of people had gathered on the cliffs eagerly watching the sky for their arrival. At last a low droning was heard and a tiny speck appeared over the blue sea, which soon proved to be the huge aeroplane and in a few minutes, amidst the thundering cheers of an enthusiastic crowd, the Smith Brothers made a graceful landing. On their way from Darwin they touched at some of the important towns and reached Adelaide where a much grander reception awaited them.

The Smith Brothers covered a distance of 11,294 miles and the actual flying time was 124 hours. Since then, various other attempts have been made by others and successfully too. In 1926 Sir A. Cobham

flew from England to Australia and back, covering a distance of 28,000 miles in 250 flying hours. In 1930, Miss Amy Johnson, who afterwards married the famous aviator Mollison, performed the same flight in the course of nineteen days. The most notable of these was the flight of Scott and Black, who competed in the London to Melbourne Air Race. Starting from London on the 20th of October 1934 and speeding without sleep over 11,323 miles in 70 hours 54 minutes, they reached Melbourne first and won the Mac Robertson Trophy.

daring enterprise, bold adventure.
conclusion, end.
aviators, those who fly in aeroplanes and air-ships.
took off, started.
confluence, meeting place.
via, by way of.
intrepid, brave.
aerodrome, station for aeroplanes.
wrecked, shattered.
mishap, accident.
as the crow flies, in a straight line.
spell, phase.
droning, humming sound.

What difficulties were experienced by the Smith Brothers in the Mediterranean sea and the East Indies?

Describe the route by which the Smith Brothers flew from London to Australia, mentioning the important places they visited.

Name some other air-flights.

15. SIVAJI.—Part II.

The Mohammedan ruler who suffered most from Sivaji's career of conquests was the Sultan of Bijapore. He viewed Sivaji's growing power with great alarm, for Sivaji was gradually building up an independent Mahratta kingdom at the expense of Bijapore. The Sultan, therefore, made every effort to curb his power and keep him under control.

These efforts were successful for a time, because Shaji Bhonslae was still in the service of Bijapore; and Sivaji was compelled to surrender to the Sultan some of the forts he had captured, when his father was tortured and was about to be buried alive.

Sivaji, however, did not keep quiet for long. So the Sultan now sent an army against him with his general Afzul Khan at its head. Afzul Khan was cunning, and he



planned to kill Sivaji by treachery at a friendly interview. Sivaji was, however, more than his match. While Afzul Khan was holding Sivaji in a loving embrace, he struck his enemy with his sword, but the steel armour which Sivaji was wearing beneath his dress saved him. Before the Khan could strike a second time, Sivaji plunged his dagger into his bowels and killed him outright. Later the Bijapore army was defeated, and the Sultan made peace with Sivaji. He had nothing to fear from Bijapore thereafter.

With the Sultan's defeat Sivaji became more powerful than before. The Moghul Emperor now became uneasy and wanted to keep Sivaji in check. Aurangzeb, therefore, sent Shayista Khan, the Moghul viceroy of the Deccan, at the head of a large army against him. Sivaji knew it would be impossible to defeat this huge army in open battle. So he did not oppose Shayista Khan,

when the latter entered Poona and took up his residence in Sivaji's own house. At dead of night, he stealthily entered the house with a few brave followers. He went to the room where Shayista Khan was sleeping and attacked him. The Khan escaped by jumping out of the window, but not before Sivaji had cut off some of his fingers. In the struggle that ensued, Shayista Khan's son was killed and the Moghuls lost heavily.

Aurangzeb next sent his general Raja Jai Singh against the Mahratta chief. He was more successful than Shayista Khan. Sivaji thereupon made peace with him and became a friend of the Moghul Empire.

To cement this friendship, Raja Jai Singh invited Sivaji to the Moghul court; but when he reached there, he was slighted by Aurangzeb. Soon he found himself a virtual prisoner in the Moghul court. Sivaji

was, however, too cunning to be caught. He managed to escape by concealing himself in a basket of sweets which was being taken out of the palace. After undergoing many hardships, he managed to reach home in disguise.

Sivaji soon resumed his campaigns and recaptured many of the forts he had surrendered to Raja Jai Singh. He held sway over a large territory and was so powerful that he boldly defied the Moghul Emperor. Aurangzeb found it impossible to subdue him and soon made peace with him.

Sivaji's early ambition was now fulfilled. Under him the Mahratta states were united into a kingdom, and he was at its head. In June 1674, he was crowned as the Emperor of Maharashtra. The event was celebrated on a grand scale. Large sums of money were given away to the poor. His nobles

and army officers also received handsome presents.

Sivaji was as successful a ruler as he was as a general. He established peace and order in his kingdom, and dealt out impartial justice to all. His subjects had no room to live in constant fear of enemies. They prospered and were happy.

The last days of Sivaji were clouded with sorrows and anxiety, because his son Sambaji quarrelled with him. Sambaji had little of his father's greatness and Sivaji feared that the empire he had built up might go to pieces under his son. These cares told heavily on Sivaji's health and he died at the early age of fifty-three.

Most of the virtues of an ideal Hindu ruler of ancient times were seen in Sivaji's character. As a soldier there was none braver than he. As a general he had few equals. As a ruler he was able, wise and

just. He was so good that his subjects regarded him as their father. He was liberal in his charities. Above all, he was pious and god-fearing. Like a true Hindu he upheld his own religion with great zeal, but never showed any intolerance for other faiths. He had great respect for their scriptures and places of worship.

It is no wonder that Sivaji's name is still revered as that of a great hero of Hindusthan.

curb, check.
surrender, hand over.
tortured, subjected to severe physical pain.
treachery, cheating.
match, equal.
embrace, clasp.
plunged, thrust.
dagger, a stabbing weapon with short pointed and edged blade.
ambition, aspiration.
impartial, fair.
prospered, throve.
clouded, darkened.
virtue, moral excellence.

Describe Sivaji's campaigns against Bijapore and the Moghul emperor.

How did Sivaji escape from prison?

Why were the last days of Sivaji clouded?

Give a brief character sketch of Sivaji.

16. VOLCANOES AND EARTHQUAKES.

Scientists tell us that thousands and thousands of years ago, the earth was a molten body giving out light and heat, as the sun and the stars do. Gradually its heat was so much spent, that it cooled and shrank and a hard outer crust was formed. The hard outer crust of the earth prevents the inside heat from being lost easily, so that the inside is even now very hot. The heat of the water in the hot springs of Iceland in the Arctic ocean is near the boiling point which shows that even in such cold places near the poles, the inside of the earth is still very hot.

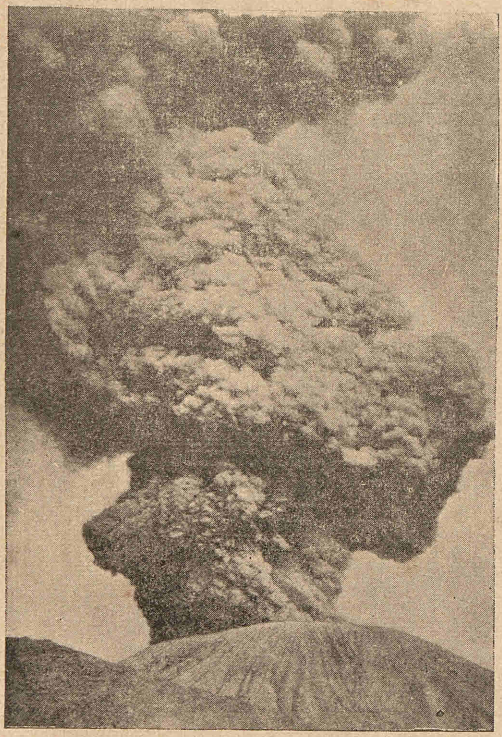
This heat can melt even rocks. The water in the seas and lakes and rivers sinks into the earth and reaches the regions of intense heat. There it is changed into steam, which on being further heated becomes superheated steam. Steam takes

much more space than water and in trying to get more space it presses the surface of the earth upwards. So long as the pressure due to the earth above is greater than that of the steam, nothing happens. But more water gets in and more steam is formed, until the pressure is so great, that it breaks through the outer crust in a place where it is weakest and vast quantities of steam and other hot things are thrown out, and thus a volcano is formed.

Some define volcanoes as 'burning mountains,' and the Malayalam word 'Agniparvatham' seems to denote the same thing. This is altogether wrong; for there is no burning going on in a volcano nor need a volcano be a mountain at all. A volcano is a hole or a crack in the earth's surface through which various materials in a very hot state are thrown out from the interior. These ejected materials fall around

the hole and in course of time. a cone-shaped hill is formed with a pipe or hole in the centre, reaching down far into the earth. The top of the cone has usually a cup-shaped depression, called the crater.

When a volcanic eruption takes place, various materials are thrown out as solids, liquids and gases. The chief gaseous substance is steam, and the chief liquid is 'lava' or molten rock. This lava comes out of the hole and flows on all sides. Sometimes large masses of lava are shot high up in the air by the rushing steam. They whirl round and round in the air and get rounded, as water does, when we throw a handful up in the air. These lumps of lava are called bombs. The clouds of steam coming out of the volcano look like flames and the white-hot molten rock or lava is luminous. These things probably have made people call volcanoes 'burning mountains.' The



steam clouds soon condense and torrents of hot rain fall containing the particles of volcanic dust. In 1883 the eruption of Karkatva in the East Indies was so great, that its dust was carried as far off as England and this gave to European countries beautiful sunsets for some days.

Volcanoes are, as a rule, found near the sea, though there are some which occur far away in the middle of the continents. There is a regular line of volcanoes on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean, one along the west coast of North, Central and South Americas, and another from Japan to the East Indies, from where a line proceeds towards New Zealand. There seems to be a line also in the Mediterranean Sea, of which Stromboli, Etna and Vesuvius are the most important.

Volcanoes occur not only on land, but under the sea also. Sometimes these submarine volcanoes form islands in course of

time. Other forms of volcanic activity result in the formation of mud volcanoes or geysers which are fountains of hot water thrown out from time to time. Such geysers are found in large numbers in Iceland and Yellowstone National Park of the United States of America.

Earthquakes are believed to be due to volcanic activity. Whatever the cause, earthquakes occur frequently and often cause very serious damage to life and property. Sometimes earthquakes happen near or under the sea and give rise to huge waves. Ships are then in very great danger and often these waves are so high that they rush mountain high on the land sweeping everything before them and killing thousands of people and animals.

Slight earthquakes or earth tremors, as they are called, happen everywhere; but the more violent ones happen only in

certain particular areas. When there is an earthquake, the tallest buildings like steeples of churches, chimneys of factories and the like are the first to be affected. For this reason, in Japan, where earthquakes are very frequent, the houses are constructed of paper and bamboos. If a house falls it does not kill a man; nor does it cost much to build another in its place. Moreover, bamboos are pliable and withstand the movements caused by earthquakes much better than heavier and harder materials.

The place inside the earth wherefrom the earthquake starts, is called the Seismic centre, and the place on the surface of the earth exactly over this spot is called the Epicentre. From here the shock travels in circles like waves, its intensity growing less and less as it goes wider and wider. An earthquake is almost always followed by smaller quakes called 'after-shocks'. Information about the way in which the

earthquake moves the surface of the earth up and down, is gained by means of an instrument called the 'Seismograph'. The Seismograph has a pen which traces a line on a sheet of paper in contact with the ground. This line, called the Seismogram, is straight when there is no disturbance, but is wavy when the earth is shaken. The The Bihar Earthquake was so violent that the pen in the Seismograph jumped quite beyond the paper provided for it.

scientists, those who study science.
molten, liquid.
shrank, contracted.
crust, covering.
regions, places.
intense, vehement.
superheated, heated to temperature higher than that of boiling water.
ejected, expelled.
depression, sinking.
eruption, outbreak.
luminous, shining.
condense, compress.
particles, atoms.
constructed, built.
intensity, force.

What is a volcano? Write a short description of how a volcano is formed.

What substances are given out by an active volcano?

What is an earthquake? What happens when there is an earthquake near the sea?

How is information got regarding the intensity of the earthquake ?

Write brief notes on the following :— submarine volcano, geysers, earth tremors, after-shocks, seismogram.

17. THE BAG OF MONEY—Part I.

In a village in the Panjab there lived two neighbours called Ranjit and Duleep. Ranjit was frank and honest and ready to trust every man he met; but Duleep loved money more than his honour.

One day Ranjit went to Duleep and said: "Neighbour Duleep, my uncle is very ill and I am about to go on a journey to see him. I have one thousand rupees in silver and I do not want to take this money with me. What shall I do with it?"

Duleep's eyes brightened, and he replied: "I have a strong iron box in which I keep my money. Thieves cannot open it and

fire cannot harm it. You cannot do better than put your money into my box."

"I am much obliged to you, neighbour Duleep, for your kind offer to take care of my money. Here it is;"—and producing a bag, he emptied the contents on the floor.

Ranjit counted the money before Duleep and his wife. He then put it back into the bag and tied the mouth of it. He also called their attention to the written label on the bag bearing his name and showing the amount. He then delivered the bag to Duleep and said: "Good-bye, kind neighbours. I shall be away only a few weeks, I think."

"What a careless man!" said Duleep's wife as soon as Ranjit had gone. "He has gone off without taking our receipt for the money.

"Our neighbour Ranjit trusts our honour," replied Duleep, "we must not

forget it." Duleep had not yet begun to feel the force of temptation.

Ranjit returned home only after many months. The day after his return he called on Duleep and said, "Neighbour Duleep, may I trouble you for the money I entrusted to you?"

Duleep looked surprised. "Ranjit, you seem to have a poor memory," replied he. "It is true you talked of leaving your money with me; but I did not take it from you, because I was afraid of the risk of having it stolen."

"And do *you* also say the same?" asked Ranjit, looking at Duleep's wife.

"Yes," replied she, blushing. Do you suppose my husband would utter a falsehood?

"Well, neighbours," said Ranjit, "I suppose I must lose my money, because I neglected to take your receipt for it; but

you will find that money got by dishonest means will not do you much good. I am sorry more for your sake than for mine." So saying, Ranjit left the house.

Mrs. Duleep then said to her husband: "Call him back, and tell him we were only joking. Ranjit is right, husband,—the money will be a curse to us."

"O no! 'tis good shining silver," said Duleep; 'besides, our neighbour is much richer than we are. He can afford to lose it."

frank, candid.
obliged, indebted.
delivered, handed over.
temptation, attraction.
memory, remembrance.
joking, jesting.
afford, manage to spare.

Why did Ranjit entrust the money to Duleep ?
What did Duleep say when Ranjit asked for his money ?

18. PEARL FISHERY.

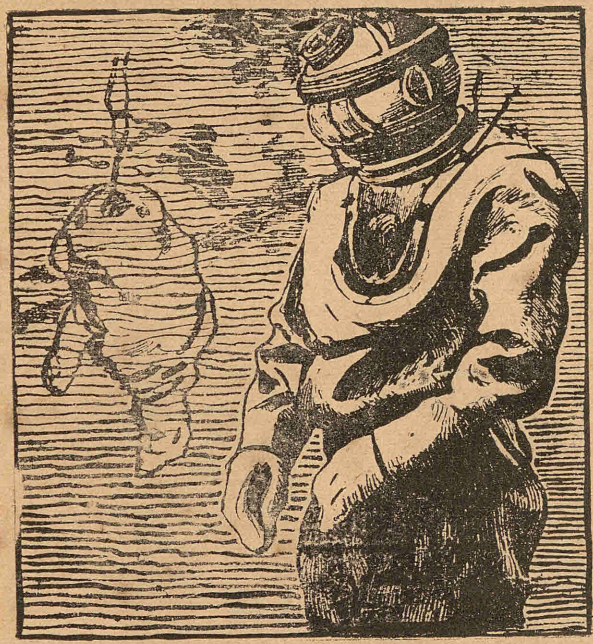
The depths of oceans hold many rich treasures. Who can, for instance, gauge the value of the vast wealth of pearls lying scattered about on the ocean floor ?

The pearl is produced by certain varieties of shell fish, chiefly the oyster. There are pearls of different colours. They may be black, gray, blue, yellow, pink, purple or white. The finest pearl is white and has a silvery lustre. The size also varies, and there are pearls as small as a grain of sand or as large as a dove's egg.

Like diamonds and other precious stones, pearls are costly gems used for ornaments. The cost depends on the size and quality of the gem. The most beautiful and famous pearls are known to have cost fabulous prices. Thus the Shah of Persia once paid £ 1,80,000 for a single pearl.

Pearls are obtained from many places. The chief grounds for pearl fishing are the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Seas to the north and west of Australia. There are productive pearl fishing grounds round Ceylon; and this trade on a small scale is carried on at Tuticorin in South India.

Though pearl fishing is a very profitable pursuit, it involves very great risks. The oysters yielding pearls are found at great depths. Those engaged in the work have to go down to these depths and grope about on the floor of the ocean for long hours together, collecting the pearls. There are trained divers who alone are competent to do the work. They wear a special kind of dress, called a diving suit, made of water-proof materials like rubber. The dress covers them from head to foot, no part of the body being exposed. There are special arrangements in the dress, by which they



are able to see and to breathe. A life-line is attached to the diving suit and the diver is lowered from the ship to the ocean-bed with the help of this line. When he wants to come up to surface, he is hauled up by the same means.

The pearl diver is exposed to very great dangers. As he remains at great depths for long hours together, he falls a prey to various diseases. Many divers die suddenly of paralysis, while many more are killed by the sharks and octopuses that infest the ocean depths. These monsters attack the helpless diver; and before he is hauled up, they cut through the life-line. The unhappy man thus meets with the most horrible death. Again there is the danger of cyclones overtaking the pearling ships. In the year 1908, as many as 45 pearling vessels were lost in one cyclone and more than 300 men were drowned.

In spite of these dangers, pearl fishing is as popular as ever, and thousands are still plying this trade, because of the huge profit it brings. The earnings of many of the divers are enormous. They are often able to make as much as ten thousand pounds after only twelve month's work.

treasures, riches.
guage, estimate.
lustre, brightness.
fabulous, amazing.
productive, fertile.
pursuit, occupation.
involves, overwhelms.
yielding, producing.
grope, search blindly.
competent, fit.
hauled, pulled.
paralysis, a disease—loss of the power of motion.
sharks, voracious fishes with large sharp teeth on the jaws.
octopuses, devil fishes with eight arms.
infest, swarm about.
cyclones, a circular storm.
plying, carrying on.

Where are pearls found in large quantities ?
How is pearl fishing carried on ?
What are the dangers in pearl fishing ?

19. THE BAG OF MONEY—Part II.

Ranjit went to a Magistrate, and told him the story. "And did you take a receipt for the money?" asked the Magistrate.

"No," replied Ranjit; "I supposed neighbour Duleep was honest; and then, his wife also was present, and she saw me give him the money."

"Well, Mr. Ranjit," said the Magistrate, "step into that room and wait, while I send for Mr. Duleep and question him." Ranjit obeyed and the Magistrate sent a Police officer to ask Duleep to call at the Magistrate's office without delay.

As soon as Duleep arrived, the Magistrate said to him: "I learn that you some time ago received a large sum of money to take care of for your friend Ranjit, and that you now refuse to return it to him. What do you say to the charge?"

"I deny it wholly," replied Duleep.

"Well," said the Magistrate. "Let us suppose you are innocent; but, in order to convince me, write to your wife the letter I am about to dictate to you. She is said to have been a witness to the transaction, and if what you say is true it can be easily shown. Now, sir, write these words."

Duleep feared his deceit would be exposed and replied: "May it please Your Honour, why not let me go home, and bring my wife before you? That would be the easiest way of learning what she has to say."

"Allow me to choose my own way," said the Magistrate. "Here are pen, ink, and paper. Write!"

With great reluctance Duleep wrote these words, at the dictation of the Magistrate:

"My dear Wife,—Give the bearer the bag of money belonging to Ranjit. I am about to restore it to him."

The Magistrate carefully examined the letter, to see that it contained these words and nothing more. Duleep rose to go, hoping he might reach his home in time to explain matters to his wife; but the Magistrate in a loud, stern voice, exclaimed, "Sit down, sir, and wait for the return of my messenger."

Trembling at the thought of exposure, Duleep sank down on a seat. One of the officers received the letter from the Magistrate and departed. In less than half an hour the officer returned with a bag. He gave it to the Magistrate who read the label and then counted the money, and found that it amounted to just one thousand rupees.

The wretched Duleep prostrated himself before the Magistrate, confessed his

crime and begged to be forgiven. The Magistrate threw open a door, and, pointing to Ranjit, said to Duleep, "Here is the man to whom you must sue for pardon."

"I think, Your Honour," said Ranjit, 'that his own conscience will punish him enough."

"I am not sure of that," replied the Magistrate, "but if you refuse to appear against this man, I must release him."

"I refuse to appear against him," said Ranjit; "for I hope he will reform himself."

The Magistrate then allowed them both to depart.

charge, accusation.
wholly, completely.
innocent, not guilty.
convince, satisfy as to truth.
transaction, affair.
deceit, cheating.
exposed, brought to light.
reluctance, unwillingness.
restore, give back.
messenger, bearer of the message.
prostrated, fell down.
sue, beg.
conscience, scrupulousness.

What did the Magistrate do to prove the guilt of Duleep?

20. FOOD AND THE HUMAN BODY.

Man requires food for the growth and sustenance of his body. A new-born infant has a very puny body weighing but a few pounds. It grows bigger from day to day, and becomes a full-grown man in the course of about two decades. The body of this man is many times bigger and heavier than that of the infant. The large increase in size and weight is due to the nourishing matter absorbed by the body from the food it has consumed.

Moreover, the living body is constantly wearing away. There is a continuous waste of matter in the different parts of the body. This waste matter is discharged through the lungs, skin and kidneys. If the body is to be maintained in proper working condition, the lost matter should be replaced by means of fresh supplies. These supplies are derived from food.

For this reason, man must have his food at regular intervals. If he starves for a day or two, he feels tired and weak. If he continues to starve for some days more, his body steadily loses weight and grows lean. His weakness increases till he cannot stand or even sit up. His speech and sight begin to fail. His ailing body causes him great pain; and at last, by slow degrees, the miserable man dies in extreme agony. His body has now ceased to function. This is because the continuous loss of matter during the whole period of starvation was not replaced by means of fresh supplies.

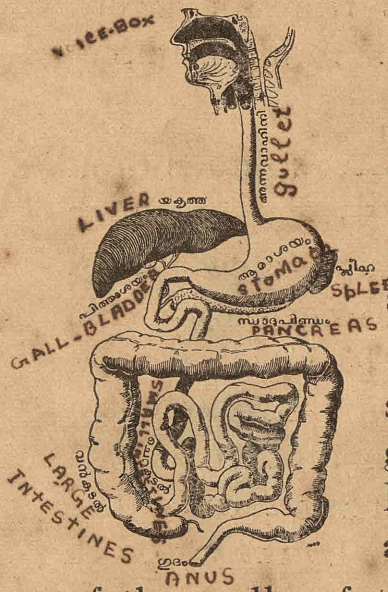
It is therefore clear that food is as essential for the existence of man as air and water. Whenever the human body is in need of a fresh supply of nourishing materials, it gives a signal and the owner of the body feels a craving for food. In other words, he feels hungry; and his craving must be satisfied with food containing

the nourishing elements which the body is in need of.

Each morsel of food entering the mouth is just heginning a long and wonderful journey in the course of which it undergoes a series of changes. The body-building elements contained in the food are then extracted and absorbed. This process is called digestion. The useless portion of the food, which cannot be extracted or absorbed is thrown out as refuse.

It will be very interesting and instructive to trace the course of a mouthful of food bound on its strange journey through the interior of the human body. The mouth first receives a morsel of food. If it is a hard lump, the teeth break it up. Injurious or useless portions like pieces of bones in meat dishes and the hard rind or stones in fruits are ejected from the mouth. Then the teeth begin to grind or chew what remains. During this process the food gets

thoroughly mixed with a juice called saliva produced in the mouth, and is turned into a soft mass.



In this form it is swallowed. It then passes through a long tunnel called the gullet. This passage takes it to a wide bag-like chamber called the stomach.

The food remains in the stomach for some time, gently moving to and fro. Here it gets mixed with another juice flowing out of the walls of the stomach. This is the gastric juice. As a result of its action, the food undergoes further changes in form and becomes a much softer mass than before.

It then continues its journey and passes through an intricate tunnel which is more

than twenty-five feet in length! This tunnel is called the intestines. Here too other juices, namely, the pancreatic juice from the pancreas and the bile from the liver, act on the food, and reduce it into simple substances.

It is now that the process of absorbtion takes place. Standing out from the wall of the tunnel there are innumerable finger-like projections. These are interwoven with a network of the tiniest of blood vessels called capillaries. They absorb all the nourishing elements in the food as it flows past them. The body-building parts of the food are thus carried away by the blood to feed the hungry cells which are waiting all over the body to receive fresh supplies.

The refuse that is left behind is not allowed to remain in the intestines for a long time. Otherwise it will decay and form poisons which will pass into the blood

and dislocate the work of the physical organs. Accordingly this refuse is slowly pushed further down until it ultimately passes out of the body.

sustenance, maintenance.
puny, weak.
decades, ten years.
nourishing, supporting.
absorbed, assimilated.
consumed, taken in.
constantly, always.
discharged, released.
maintained, kept.
derived, got.
starves, does not take food.
extreme agony, intense pain.
function, work.
essential, important.
signal, sign.
craving, longing.
elements, matter.
morsel, mouthful.
extracted, drawn forth.
process, course.
interior, inside.
injurious, harmful.
rind, covering.
ejected, thrown out.
intricate, entangled.
projections, juttings.
decay, impair.
dislocate, discontinue.
organs, parts of body.
ultimately, finally.

Describe the different processes that the food undergoes in the human body?

21. PRAHLADA.

Long, long ago there was a mighty king called Hiranyakasipu. He belonged to the race of Rakshasas who were the enemies of gods and who delighted in doing evil. Hiranyakasipu was so wicked and so powerful that he waged war with all the devas and defeated them. He conquered the whole world and banished all goodness and virtue from it.

Hiranyakasipu's subjects became very unhappy under his rule. They were not allowed to worship their gods or say their prayers. They had to worship Hiranyakasipu instead. The wicked king compelled them to give him all the offerings which were due to their gods. If any one mentioned the name of God or did a good deed, he was immediately put to death. The people groaned under his tyranny and cursed him heartily.

In course of time a son was born to the king. He was named Prahlada. Hiranyakasipu was anxious that Prahlada should follow in his own footsteps and wage war against virtue, but he was doomed to disappointment.

When the prince was five years old, Hiranyakasipu selected an able tutor for him. The king ordered that Prahlada should be taught all the evil ways of rakshasas. The tutor tried hard to carry out the king's commands, but he did not succeed, because Prahlada's character proved to be the very opposite of his father's. The young prince was the very soul of all goodness, being kind, gentle and pious. He was as much a devotee of God Vishnu, as his father was an enemy. He had infinite faith in this God, and he chanted hymns and offered prayers to Vishnu at all times.

In despair, Prahlada's tutor approached

the king and said: "Almighty Lord! I grieve to report that thy son Prahlada is wilful and disobedient. He is a devotee of thy worst enemy Vishnu, and he always repeats His name."

Hiranyakasipu felt disappointed. He summoned his son, and said, "My son! why do I see you defying my authority, and worshipping my worst enemy? Am I not your king and father, and do you not owe absolute obedience to me?"

Prahlada answered meekly, "Sire! you are indeed my father and my king, and I owe you obedience. There is, however, One above you. He is the Lord and Father of all. We must all obey and worship Him."

The king could not brook such disobedience. He ordered his son to be put to the most cruel death, but his men found it impossible to take the life of this little

devotee of Vishnu. They hurled him from the top of the highest tower, but he alighted on his feet when he reached the pavement below, and did not sustain the least injury. He was then tied to a huge piece of rock and cast into the sea ; but the rock floated like a boat and carried him safe to the shore. Next they gave him poisoned food, but it had no effect on him. In his presence even the most venomous serpent lowered its hood and glided gently by ; and even the most ferocious of animals crouched before him and licked his feet. Indeed Prahlada seemed to bear a charmed life.

Hiranyakasipu was now wild with rage. "Wretch!" he exclaimed to his son, "Where is this accursed Vishnu who protects you?"

"Father!" replied Prahlada with great humility, "God Vishnu is not accursed, but He is the source of all blessings and



goodness. He protects all those who have faith in Him and He is present everywhere."

"What! is He to be found in this pillar also?" interrupted the king in great wrath, pointing to a pillar near by.

"Yes, of course," answered the prince with great confidence.

Hiranyakasipu gave expression to his supreme contempt for the lord by kicking the pillar down. Out of the broken pillar there sprang a strange Being with the head of a lion and the body of a man. It flew at the throat of the wicked king and tore him to pieces. Vishnu then threw off His disguise and appeared in His own form of beauty and splendour. He blessed His devotee and made him king in his father's stead. Prahlada proved to be a wise and virtuous king and ruled over his people for many long years.

conquered, captured.
banished, drove out.
compelled, forced.
groaned, mourned in distress.
tyranny, oppression.
doomed, fated.
disappointment, defeat of hopes.
devotee, worshipper.
chanted, sang.
hymns, songs of prayer.
grieve, am sorry,
wilful, obstinate.
summoned, called.
defying, resisting openly.
authority, power.
brook, endure.
hurled, threw down.
alighted, got down.
pavement, paved floor.
sustain, suffer.
venomous, poisonous.
ferocious, fierce.
charmed, influenced by magic.
accursed, wretched.
confidence, faith.
supreme contempt, great scorn.

What ail did Hiranyakasipu do to make Prahlada obey him?

What was the end of Hiranyakasipu ?

22. THE QUEEN OF THE ARABIAN SEA.

Cochin is known as "the Queen of the Arabian Sea." It is the only port of any considerable size between Bombay, 580 miles to the north, and Colombo, 307 miles, to the south. It has two incontestable claims to distinction, and both have helped to make it famous throughout the world.

In the first place, Cochin is the earliest European settlement in India. So long ago as 1500 A. D., Portuguese vessels sailed into, and cast anchor in, its fine natural harbour. Two years later, a treaty of commerce was concluded and a Portuguese settlement began to prosper. This settlement was the official residence of the Viceroy of the Indies until Goa was built. Cochin was thus a busy centre of trade and commerce long before the English established their sway in India.

Secondly, Cochin is the only sheltered port on the west coast of the Madras Presidency. Before its development, all vessels shipped or unshipped their cargoes about three miles out at sea. This was a most difficult and hazardous operation, especially during the monsoons. In fact, vessels had often to wait for a week or two out at sea before the lighters from the port could cross the sandy bars and get alongside. But today, although all the works in connection with the complete development of the harbour are not over, it has been sufficiently developed to permit of any ship that can pass through the Suez Canal entering it even in the roughest weather.

The story behind this development is one of remarkable interest. For over fifty years, it was reported to be "impossible" to convert Cochin into an economic deep seaport. But persistent demands were made to undertake the work by various parties

interested in the question and there was a changed attitude on the part of the authorities some twenty years ago. This has resulted not only in Cochin being developed into a first class harbour, but also in its being declared a "major port" by the Government of India with effect from 1st August, 1936.

The great problem that had to be tackled before the conversion of Cochin into a deep seaport was the digging of a channel, three miles long, through a wide bar of sand out at sea which effectively blocked the entrance to the port for any but vessels of shallow draft. This work was successfully carried out by the dredger, Lord Willingdon, specially built in 1925 for the purpose. There were no doubt several difficulties in the way, but all these were surmounted, and the task of excavating a channel 11,000 feet long by 400 feet wide, with an average depth of 32½ feet, was

accomplished by 1928. With the spoils of the dredging an island was formed, known as the "Willingdon Island," and this island will be a great business centre when the port is fully developed.

The harbour is connected with the interior by rail, road and many miles of navigable backwaters and canals. The railway facilities are being improved, and recently the Shoranur-Cochin Railway has been converted from metre to broad guage so as to connect the port with the main Indian railway system.

Seventy to eighty vessels, including three or four passenger steamers, call at the port now every month. The principal imports through the port are rice and paddy, other grains, seeds, flour and bran, piece-goods, hardware, oilman stores, sugar, cement, kerosene oil, petrol and other fuel oils, metals, and European manufactured

goods. The value of the imports was Rs. 6,80,24,005 in 1934-35. Among the principal articles of export are coir yarn, mats and matting, coir fibre, coir rope, coconut oil, tea, rubber, spices, pepper, oilcake, ginger, teak and rosewood. In 1934-35 the total value of the exports amounted to Rs. 5,71,21,751.

The last stage of the works in relation to the harbour is now in progress, and it is expected that it will be completed by about 1940. These works include the construction of a combined road and rail bridge connecting the Willingdon Island with the Ernakulam mainland, as well as a road bridge between the Willingdon Island and Mattancheri, besides the erection of jetties, wharves, etc., on the Willingdon Island.

The Government of Cochin receive about twenty lakhs of rupees every year by

way of their share in the customs revenue collected at the port.

considerable, to be taken into account.
incontestable, indisputable.
distinction, fame.
vessels, ships.
cast anchor, stopped.
prosper, flourish.
sway, power.
sheltered, protected.
shipped, took in.
unshipped, landed.
hazardous operation, risky work.
monsoons, rainy seasons.
lighters, pattamars.
persistent, continuous.
tackled, solved.
effectively, successfully.
blocked, hindered.
draft, depth in which a vessel sinks in water.
surmounted, overcome.
excavating, digging.
accomplished, done.
spoils, remains.
navigable, fit for sailing.
facilities, conveniences.
call, arrive.
principal, chief.

What are the different stages in the development of Cochin as a first class harbour.

Why is Cochin called "the Queen of the Arabian sea ?"

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