

RISING STARS

Pleise Reed Thiss

by Adib R Pasha

YOU'VE probably started reading this article with a look of distaste etched over your countenance, thinking the title is yet another example of those ridiculous, confounded spelling mistakes that seem to appear everywhere. It is not the first time one has been appalled by spelling errors. In the past, we have been beseeched to 'cust' our precious 'voats' for some party during the elections and 'well-come'd into 'jawellery' shops. Everyone reading this article must have, at one time or the other, been frustrated beyond sanity by these silly, pathetic spelling mistakes.

spellings. Others have laughed drily at the comedy of errors — the ambiguity of these misspelled words — a mockery of all spelling and grammatical rules.

I was at a 'jewellery' shop last week; we had purchased a 'rub' stone and a 'diamond' ring. The jeweller, a rather distinguished looking man at that too, did not care to know the names of the stones that earned him all that money. Can things possibly get worse? Well, yes they can!

On the first page of their diary books, school-goers have their school 'routin'. Famous, national sporting personalities have advertised their 'favort' socks and shoes. 'I love the football', proclaimed one proud, soccer loving graffiti artist. And we all know of the wonderful 'restaurents' and 'confectionary' shops all over our city. What next?

A friend's recommendation

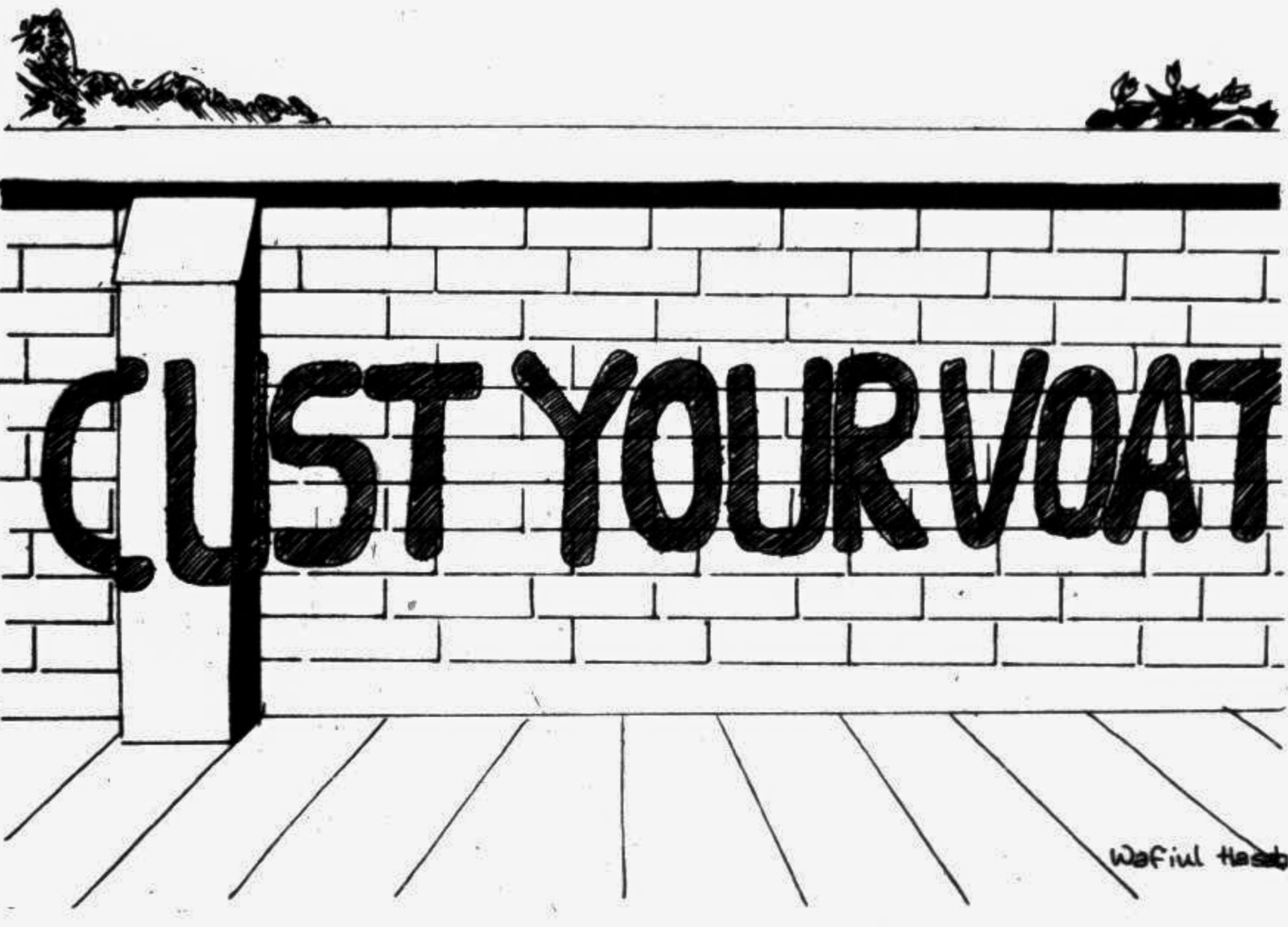
from the Principal of her Bengali-medium school claimed that she was a 'goodly' girl who was 'very excellent' academically.

An advertisement in a newspaper stated a person wanted to teach 'English' and was 'abroad-trained'.

"I so much love Nadia", was etched into a tree by some particularly passionate, starry-eyed lover who was obviously too pre-occupied to be bothered by conventional writing forms.

The list could be continued indefinitely. But where is this perversion of spellings taking us to? Shouldn't a language as universal as English deserve more attention, shouldn't someone, or some organisation, attempt to put an 'end' to all these mis-spellings? If not the general standard of English in our country will decline even further.

As if that was possible!



An Apology

by Michael Serroul

IN the papers there are pictures of contorted forms and naked bodies. The papers list useless numbers with a chilling accuracy. We put on Our masks of deference and assume the proper paternalistic attitude. We take Our corpulent wallets from our back pockets with a carefully practiced fatherly sigh. We claim to understand and furrow our brows to prove it.

We create multinational relief organizations and relief funds, but they are more for Our relief than Yours. We need them to prove to Ourselves that We are not the Bourgeoisie that We are. To show We are not cold and insensitive capitalists. We keep our true feelings in the backs of our minds; there in the darkness. We are thinking of ways to exploit your country's resources, your people, your world. But when asked, We deny that we have any such thoughts.

Some call us smug plutocrats, indifferent nabobs. We just smile and pour the syrup of sincerity on Our words. We shrug these insults off and say that Our concern is undimmed. Then someone tells Us Bourgeoisie. Our carefully donned raiment crumbles to the ground. This insult cuts

through the tough shell of calow ambition and strikes at our hearts. And Our consciences. We deny the allegation with such an intensity that You would think Our lives were at stake. We not Our lives that We fight for but Our status.

It is Our shame to be Bourgeoisie. It is My shame. Our Ancestors would scowl and mock Us if they were alive. I know Mine would. My people who, like You, were farmers, victims of the environment struggling solely to survive and to see Their Children survive. My people like You, were placed under another Man's rule. Unlike You, My People have in us, you I'm one of Them. My Ancestors would laugh at My comfort and all My extravagant redundancies. They would call Me soft and dissonant. They would call Me bourgeois.

So I apologize for all of Us. I apologize for the way We abuse your pain and anguish, the way We capitalize and misdirect and for Our shallowness and indifference. I apologize, in a vain attempt, to try and divert You from the path that You are on. The path which will ultimately make You like the Destroyers of the World. We who are the Rapers of the Land. We the Bourgeois.

SCHOOL AND OTHER USELESS ACTIVITIES

Naheed Kamal

I went to a boarding school for two years and spent almost every minute hating it. That is only normal. The very word, "school" builds up images of horror: cruel teachers, dull classrooms and even worse classes to endure. If that was not bad enough you had to wear uniforms and be just like every one else. You have to learn Math, History, and Physics, Chemistry, too. Shakespeare is ofcourse there to make our life a misery.

Youth it is said, is squandered on the Young. The fault does not lie with us but with school. It has been four months since I said goodbye to my school days and it is now that I miss them most. If regular school is bad then boarding school is a horror. You are stuck in the presence of those awful educationists all the time. They look upon you with penetrating eyes all day long. You have to endure ten and half months give or take a few days, under their beady little gaze and it can drive you mad!

To make things worse the dormitories look like cells in disguise (bars on the windows and massive locks on the doors), the beds are uncomfortable and the bathrooms are unmentionable. Ofcourse, the

food is not possibly edible and you can spend hours trying to chew what is supposed to be meat (but you don't dare ask what its origins are). Such is boarding school. There is no escape either. You have to endure much in a boarding school because there are some thirty one other kids in your dorm alone and each with their own taste in clothes, food, music, and so on. They each have to deal with and this is without counting the four hundred others. The hardest part is learning to cope on one's own and making compromises with each other, especially your room-mate. Your "roomie" will be either your best friend or your worst enemy (in which case you have to endure his or her presence till the next semester). There has to be a lot of adjusting to each other and a lot of give and take (not everybody goes to sleep at the same time and not everybody is a late sleeper or an early riser). Life can be one long stretch of a jail sentence and there is no end to your misery. The teachers think you have too much spare time and so your workload gets heavier and heavier, until you need three people to help you carry all your assignments back to

the dorm and all you do is wallow in the mire. But ofcourse to add colour to your dull, drab days you get extremely creative and down right innovative. You conjure up amazing ways to torture that stupid girl who thinks she is God's gift to Earth and you experiment on the poor underclassmen and then congratulate yourselves at your ingenuity.

Ofcourse it is not just work and no play. You get to see so much and learn so much more than you can learn from books alone. Books and teachers are not our only means of learning. We learn from our class-mates and friends and all the people we see and meet. Boarding school allows you the pleasure of coming into contact with a million different cultures and a million different people with a million different ideas and thoughts. There are Hindus and Sikhs, Muslims and Christians, Zoroastrians and Buddhists and so much more. All sorts of differences arise and are usually solved without any serious problems, since we must live together we try to make it easy as possible on each other.

Life in a boarding school has its drawbacks and advantages,

like every thing else in life. It is a world of its own created by so many different people coming together from the far corners of the Earth to create a world of their own. The thoughts and ideas are all peculiar to it and alien to those outside. It is a home away from home (and if you've been there long enough your concept of which is home and which is not can get slightly muddled).

A good part of it is that you learn to appreciate "home" for what it is and the small things in life can mean so much more to you. Things like a good but small meal, the peace and privacy, the freedom, and most of all family and friendships mean so much more, because you know it will only last for so long and after that you each go your own way, so you make the most of what you get.

"Don't let school interfere with your education", said Samuel Clemens, alias, Mark Twain and it doesn't necessarily have to interfere with your education because after you only go to school once (even if its for some sixteen or seventeen years), so you might as well enjoy it while it lasts.

Bet You Didn't Know

When was the auto-da-fe?

The auto-da-fe (act of faith) was the name of the public ceremony which followed the secret trials of the Spanish Inquisition established in 1478 during the reign of King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile.

These two Christian monarchs, having united most of Spain by their marriage, were about to complete the age-old battle to free the country from the "infidels" by the conquest of Granada from the Moors. The time was ripe for them to seek to encourage national unity and strengthen the authority both of themselves and of the church.

So it was a mixture of motives that led Ferdinand and Isabella to persuade Pope Sixtus the Fourth, to set up the Spanish Inquisition, with the declared purpose of disciplining the flourishing and influential Jewish community, whose wealth aroused envy and whose presence seemed to offer the greatest obstacle to unity. Soon the powers of the Inquisition (from the Latin in-quitro, to inquire into) were directed not only against Moors, but Christian Protestants and even Catholics whose behaviour was deemed to threaten the solidarity of the church on which the royal authority also rested.

After secret interrogations, sometimes aided by torture, the auto-da-fe was celebrated. First came a procession of priests, officials and accused persons who had confessed their guilt and declared themselves penitent. This was followed by a solemn mass, an oath of obedience to the Inquisition and the reading of sentences, whether of punishment or acquittal. Those condemned to death were handed over to the civil power to emphasize the fact that the church did not itself shed blood.

SHE moaned out aloud in spite of herself as the pressure of his probing fingers increased. It was almost unbearably painful! Her mind wandered aimlessly while the madness of his touch continued. It was just about all she could take, when he suddenly withdrew.

"I'm sorry, Jackie, but my diagnosis was correct. Your tonsils have inflamed. I'm sure you know what that means." She knew only too well what that meant. It meant that her career as a singer was coming to a graceless end. Of all the stupid reasons for retirement! She had joined the music industry to become a legend: another Madonna if you wish. Now after three years of work and only one major hit, she was on the way to sitting back and recalling her (not so) dazzling career as a recording artist. Yes, that was a good term, for all she ever did was record songs on her Portastudio (portable studio) and try and get a contract signed.

The patiently waiting doctor was forgotten while she had lapsed into thought. Coming out of it she saw him peering at her over the glasses he wore on the extreme edge of his nose. "Tonsillitis?" She questioned, still unable to believe what he had said. Before he could offer any consolatory advice like "Don't feel so bad" blah blah, she added, "It's pretty obvious what that means doc, and if I didn't know better I'd say you're pretty much gloating over the fact that I won't be able to sing anymore." She stared at the dumb-founded man, challenging him to say something. He kept silent. She'd get over this. It wasn't the first time he'd had to put up with something like it.

Jackie got up to leave as soon as he'd handed her the necessary information such as which doctor would perform the operation, where, when, etc. And went outside to pay her fee. He charged me to tell me I can now call myself Jack but sound a bit like a Jackie, she thought, walking out into the sunny street. She shook her first angrily at the perfect

The Career Move

Judith G De Costa

day, bitterly recalling it was raining cats and dogs the day she got her first contract signed. It was on the terms that her first single had to sell over 10,000 copies in the homeland alone. Otherwise, they were finished — thank you very much, madam, it's been a pleasure doing business with you. Her first big break and she was taken for a ride.

At the time she had consoled herself with the fact that it happened to newcomers. Now she saw it as the fault of no one else but herself. She should have known better.

Taken from the journal of Ms Jackie Abrahams: They put me out before they did things to my throat. In a way I was grateful to them because removing the tonsils would ease the pain and I'd once more look myself, not like a crude caricature of someone gobbling her chin! Yes, in a way I was very grateful. In every other way I hated them: The operation was a financial murder and there was no one to look after my house or feed my cat. The only thing I knew about tonsillitis was that your throat swelled up, you got the culprit plucked out and then sat and gorged yourself on ice-cream. I was enlightened further on the whole business when I found out there is only so much ice-cream you can eat and all that rest can be eat

hazardous to your health! I was kept in the hospital for what by the calendar was three days, but to me seemed three months. I was laid up (literally) for broken bones instead of a sore throat. And boy, was it sore!

Worst of all, I had no visitors! Not even the guy who started the whole mess. He'd been around when I was still knocked out. I was told later, "So why didn't he come back? I dunno. May be he didn't like me."

Jackie's fears and cynical retrospect was just a waste of mental energy, she soon discovered, for she sounded better than ever after the surgery. Her voice had a throatiness which it lacked before and was perfect for the voice required to sing the songs she wrote. Now perhaps she could even record an album. Jackie always felt as if some vital ingredient was missing in the making of an album by herself but could never quite put her finger on what it was. She was happy that the cursed operation (instead of ruining her had given her the chance for a new beginning. She couldn't sit and mope any longer. There was work to be done. She would go out there and make the new start the very same day day! Even get a new Portastudio. The future looked bright for Jackie. She was happy for the first time in a very long time.

Time Off

Compiled by Judith G DeCosta

It was a typical family evening: Father sat in his favourite chair reading the paper; the baby sat at his feet playing with a toy and Mother sat in her favourite chair knitting. Father happened to glance down at the baby. "Baby's nose is running," he said.

Mother dropped the knitting in disgust onto her lap. "Don't you ever think of anything but horse racing?"

A fellow complained to the health department. "I've got six brothers," he said. "We all live in one room. They have too many pets. One has 12 monkeys and another has 12 dogs. There's no air in the room and it's terrible! You've got to do something."

"Have you tried opening the windows?" the health-department worker asked. "What?" yelled the man. "And lose all my pigeons?"

Arriving several hours late, a plumber apologetically inquired, "How have you managed, ma'am?"

"Not badly," the woman replied. "While we were waiting for you to turn up, I taught my children how to swim!"

A badly bruised knight returned to his castle after a hard battle. He was a mess! His armour was dented, his helmet was askew, his face was bloody and his horse was limping. The lord of the castle saw him coming and went out to meet him, asking, "What hath befallen you, Sir Knight?"

Straightening himself out as best as he could, he replied, "Oh, sire, I have been labouring dutifully in your service, pillaging all your enemies to the west."

"You've been what?" cried the startled nobleman. But I haven't any enemies in the west."

"Oh," said the knight and

then after a pause, "Well you do now!"

A store manager heard his clerk tell a customer, "No ma'am, I'm afraid we haven't had any for quite a while, and it doesn't look like we'll be getting any soon."

Horrified, the manager came running over to the customer and said, "Of course we'll have some soon. We placed an order last week." Then the manager drew the clerk aside.

"Never," he snarled, "never, never, never say we're out of anything — say we got it on order and it's coming. Now, what was it she wanted?"

"Rain," said the clerk.

A great big guy who would weigh around 250 pounds went into the supermarket and said to the clerk at the counter, "Gimme half a head of cabbage."

All we have are half head, said the clerk.

"I don't want a whole head," the customer demanded. "Just half D: I get it or not?"

"I'll ask the manager," said the clerk nervously.

He went in at the back where the manager was stamping prices on goods. "There's a big stupid looking buffalo out front who wants half a head of cabbage. Shall I tell the idiot to

"He noticed the manager giving his full attention over his shoulder, as if he was listening to someone else, rather than the clerk speaking to him. Turning, the clerk saw the gigantic guy standing behind him. He had followed the clerk inside and heard every word said. Quickly, the clerk turned back to the manager. "And this gentleman," he squeaked, "wants to buy the other half."

A little boy came home with a five dollar bill and said he found it. "Are you sure it was lost?" asked his mother.

"Sure I'm sure," said the boy. "I saw the man looking for it!"

Puzzles

- NOTHING TO IT**: Study this paragraph and all things in it. What is wrong with it? Actually nothing it is wrong, but you must admit it is most unusual. Don't just zip through it quickly, but study it scrupulously. With luck you should spot what is so particular about it and all words found in it. Can you say what it is? Tax your brains and try again. Don't miss a word or a symbol. It isn't all that difficult...
- RIDDLES**: Why is a crossword puzzle like a quarrel?

 - Why are riddles that cannot be answered like a man disappointed by his visitors?
 - Why is a bad cold like a great humiliation?
 - What occurs once in a minute, twice in a moment, but not once in a hundred years?

- Here are the names of 12 countries and regions in anagram form. Can you unscramble them?

- Chain
- Enemy
- Erect
- Leity
- Panel
- Unsad
- Testudinate
- Malagueta
- Englander
- Regalia
- Uranism
- Serail

Test Your 'Word Bank'

- Do you know the meaning of the following words? Circle the correct answer and test your vocabulary. Answers will be given next week.
- Transition: A. circuit; B. a change; C. breach of law; D. site.
 - Gruesome: A. rude; B. painful; C. dark; D. repulsive.
 - Reprimand: A. talk to; B. scold; C. dictate; D. retrieve.
 - Auditory: A. tentative; B. of hearing; C. regulated; D. musical.
 - Sever: A. manipulate; B. cut-off; C. twist; D. hard.
 - Complex: A. question; B. a truth; C. root; D. complicated whole.
 - Evolution: A. gradual development; B. involvement; C. exaggeration; D. pollution.
 - Criticize: A. praise; B. find fault with; C. beat; D. blend.
 - Chastise: A. remove; B. bring back; C. punish; D. relieve.
 - Auspicious: A. suspicious; B. problematic; C. irritable; D. prosperous.



GHOST POLICE

Mohammed Asifur Rahim

QUIZ CLUB

- Due to lack of space we could not print the questions of Quiz Club last week. The answers to the Quiz questions on September 20th are:
- Indu
 - Babar
 - Tibetan Spiritual leader
 - Lhasa, Tibet
 - Mexico
 - George B. Shaw
 - Florida
 - Nepal
 - Donald Bradman
 - Lord Mountbatten.
- This week's brain teasers are:
- What is the chemical name for popular fool's gold?
 - Who wrote 'The Three Musketeers'?
 - When did the French Revolution break out?
 - For what book was Rabindranath Tagore awarded the Nobel Prize?
 - How many moons does Jupiter have?
 - What is the disease formerly common among sailors, that is caused by lack of fresh fruits and vegetables?
 - Which Country is called 'The Emerald Isle'?
 - Which country is called 'The Land of the White Elephant'?
 - How many players form a team for Rugby Union?
 - Who was the king of Spain at the time of the Armada?
- Answers will be given two weeks from now. Please send your answers before then.



Sabah Majeen