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WAYSIDE TALES

AND CARTOONS MAGAZINE

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WAYSIDE TALES AND CARTOONS MAGAZINE

Edited by H. H. WINDSOR

Volume 20 Contents for OCTOBER, 1921 Number 4

SHORT STORIES

CONTENTS—Continued

SERIAL

NOVELETTE

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75 PAGES OF HUMOR

Cartoons, Humorous Drawings, and Jokes

Yearly subscription, postpaid, in United States, and its possessions, Cuba, Mexico, and Canada, $3.00; in all other countries in the Postal Union, $3.50. Published monthly at 6 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

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J. N. Darling (Ding) whose timely cartoons appear daily in scores of newspapers.

Famous Artists Constitute the Federal Staff

A FEW years ago J. N. Darling (Ding) was a reporter on the Sioux City Journal. He had a talent for drawing and occasionally made sketches for his paper. Darling's ambition was to become a successful newspaper cartoonist. So he came to Minneapolis where he received his first suggestions on successful drawing for newspaper reproduction from Bart, now dean of the Federal School.

Today Darling is one of the country's best known cartoonists. His highly individual cartoons on political and current events have brought him a handsome income. Darling is a director in one of the leading banks in his city and, in addition, owns stock in his own newspaper. Though still residing in the city where he made his initial success, Darling's cartoons distributed through the New York Tribune Syndicate have brought him fame the country over.

Using his own experience as a basis, Darling tells you through the Federal Course about those short cuts, secrets and methods that have made him successful. He explains in the course the "Sketchpad School," a unique adaptation of drawing to caricature for cartoon purposes. Hundreds of students have found this one lesson alone of immense value to them.

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"THE CLEAN PLATTER"

"IT WON'T WORK"

Samples of the style of cartoons that have made Darling famous the country over.
From the Des Moines Register. Courtesy New York Tribune Syndicate.

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Now is the time for you to act—dream no longer of success. Be One! Opportunity is calling you. Answer that call by filling out and mailing the coupon at the bottom of this page. You will receive by return mail our valuable book, "A Road to Bigger Things," telling you in detail about the Federal Course. Read how many famous artists made the start that won them fame and fortune. Get this book of valuable information. Read of opportunities in the art world and how you can qualify by developing your drawing talent. Send for your free copy of this book today.

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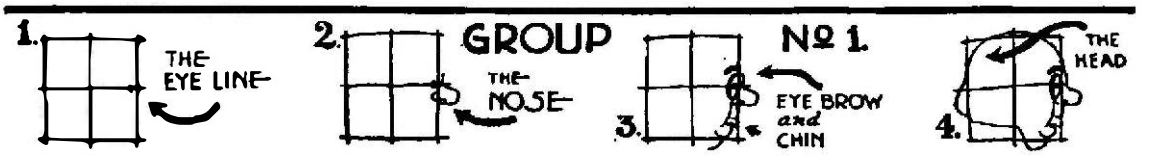
Please Mention Wayside Tales and Cartoons Magazine

Landon Course of



Just a few of the long list of daily newspapers in which the work of Landon students appears regularly.

"NEW YORK Herald"
"CHICAGO Tribune"
"PHILADELPHIA Ledger"
"BOSTON Herald"
"DETROIT Times"
"CLEVELAND Plain Dealer"
"CINCINNATI Post"
"ST. LOUIS Times"
"SAN FRANCISCO Call"
"DENVER Rocky Mountain News"
"ROCHESTER Democrat & Chronicle"
"ST. PAUL News"
"PORTLAND (ORE.) Telegram"
"SEATTLE Times"
"LOS ANGELES Express"

What One of America's Greatest Cartoonists Thinks About the Landon Course

Feb. 10, 1921.

Mr. C. N. Landon,
The Landon School,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

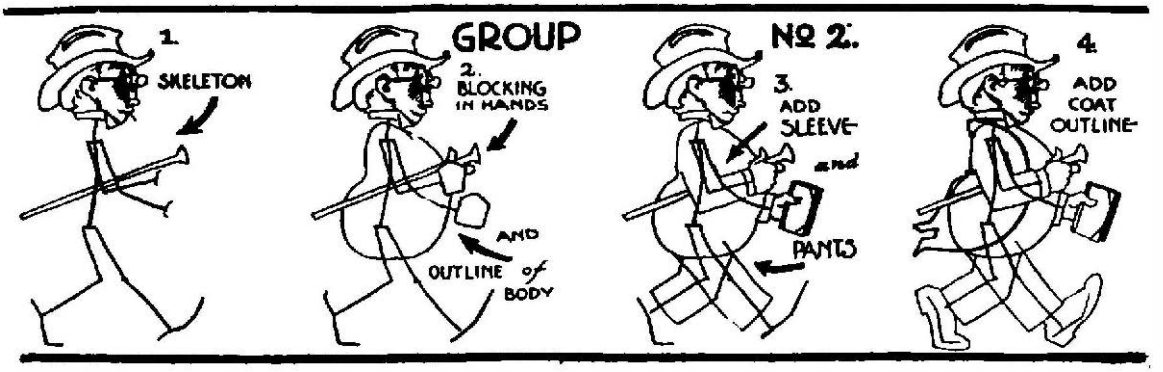
I have just been looking over your cartoon course, and I am writing to congratulate you personally on the work you have done.

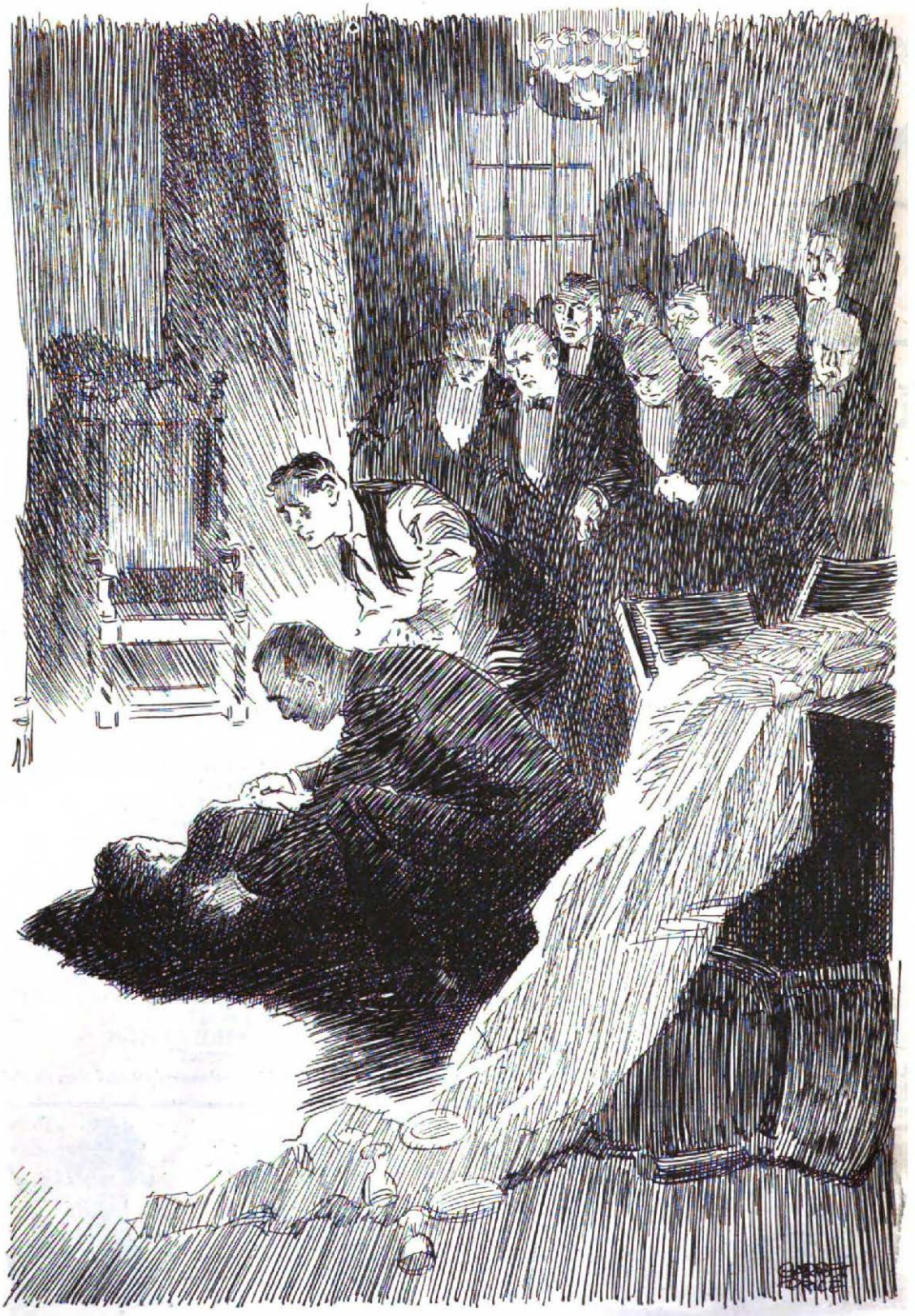
To be able to draw and the ability to teach others successfully are two very different things. Your course of lessons shows clearly that you can do both.

It must have required a great deal of study and analysis of the needs of the beginner to prepare a course of instruction which so completely explains the fundamentals of cartooning. Your method of teaching drawing by means of "Picture Charts" is, in my opinion, not only practical but greatly superior to the methods of teaching used by other schools. I am not surprised that your course of instruction has developed so many more successful cartoonists and comic artists than any other.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. DONAHEY,
Cartoonist, "The Cleveland Plain Dealer."





"Cattermole lay on his side upon the floor, unconscious, blood streaming from his left eye."
(See page 522.)

WAYSIDE TALES
AND CARTOONS MAGAZINE
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Volume 20 OCTOBER, 1921 Number 4

The Four Dumb Men

A Two-Part Mystery Story

By H. M. Egbert

Author of "Jacqueline of Golden River"

Charles Sands, the banker, who was seated at his mahogany desk in the splendidly equipped offices which he occupied in the heart of the financial district, glanced up and nodded as Charles Cattermole entered. The gesture indicated just that amount of informality and friendly welcome that a man extends toward an old business associate. Cattermole, who was watching Sands more closely than he permitted to appear, could discern no shade of secret antipathy.

He seated himself with more nervousness than was habitual with him, and the two men sized each other up for a moment or two without exchanging words. Both were prominent financiers, and had come into some notoriety about eighteen months before as the chief participants in the great cotton pool, which, after effecting a considerable redistribution of money, or, in other words, gathering in the seasonal crop of wool from the shorn lambs, had broken to pieces, as pools have a way of doing.

Sands was a man of about fifty-five—heavy-faced, and with a longish, grizzling moustache drooping over and concealing a pair of weak, flaccid lips. Cattermole, about fifteen years his junior, was much more the typical financier, alert, keen, with a trim, black moustache and square, aggressive jaws. Just now, however, it was Cattermole who appeared the less at ease.

The dimming light of the afternoon, coming through the large window, was still strong enough to show up every detail of Cattermole's face. The chair

which the visitor occupied had, in fact been placed in just such a position for that particular purpose, while Sands was in the shadow of the massive filing cabinet beside him and between his desk and the light.

Cattermole put his hand in his pocket and drew out an envelope with fingers that visibly trembled. He handed it to Sands.

"I don't know if this is news to you," he said. "I guess I'm not the only one who's been favored. I thought Bronson had had one, from the look on his face this morning, but naturally I didn't ask him.

"Had to go to some one besides the police, though, and so I picked on you, Sands, as my most intimate business friend."

There was the shade of contempt in the last words. Nevertheless, Cattermole scrutinized Sand's impassive face closely, then grinnned wryly and drew the enclosure from the envelope. It was written on plain stationery, and at the bottom, in place of a signature, a little disk of grey was lightly pasted, looking like the reverse side of a bit of carbon paper. Upon the disk, formed in ink, was the Greek letter omega.

"Yes, I got one," said Sands, handing back the letter and envelope, with an appearance of indifference. "So Doctor Omega's tipping the grey spot all round, is he?"

"What d'you make of it?" Cattermole demanded.

"Some crank filling in his spare time," answered Sands. "The Omega gang was smashed to pieces. Most of them are in the penitentiary."

"But they didn't get Doctor Omega," said Cattermole. He leaned forward, and spoke in an excited voice, yet softly, as if he were afraid that some one might overhear him. "I took the first letter to the police, of course," he said. "They think it's the real goods. They're keeping this absolutely dark. I know two or three others who've had one, and I suspect Bronson's among them. The police think it's the Doc."

SANDS looked thoughtful. The depredations of this gang of crooks, under the leadership of the mysterious "Doctor Omega," were fresh in the public memory. They had operated principally in the Southwestern States, blackmailing prominent men and women by means of information which they had collected about their antecedents. They had spread terror everywhere, and they had not hesitated at murder. Their schemes had been carried out with an effrontery and daring that had paralysed the police forces of many cities over a period of months. They had invariably carried out their threats.

Even when the chase had grown too hot, and the gang was dispersed, their leader escaped without his indentity being discovered, although the ingenious scientific methods used by him had led to the belief that he really was a physician, and of high standing.

"The grey spot was the sign-mark of Doctor Omega's gang," Cattermole went on. "And it looks like their handiwork." He read from the letter:

> "In order to prevent misunderstanding, which unfortunately could not be rectified, you are again instructed with reference to my orders of last week. One thousand twenty-dollar bills, unmarked, will be wrapped in a plain parcel and posted in the mail-box on the southwest corner of Broadway and Twenty-fifth Street at exactly 6:50 P. M. on Thursday, the day on which you will receive this communication.
>
> "The parcel will be addressed to Mr. Thomas Burt, Routledge Building, Fifth Avenue. Having posted it in person, unaccompanied, you will immediately leave the spot. These instructions must be carried out exactly as they are given you, under penalty of worse than death. Should they be disregarded, or a police trap be set, your mouth will be closed permanently."

Cattermole folded up the letter and placed it in his pocket. "What do you make of it, Sands?" he asked, in a voice

that betrayed his agitation. "'Worse than death,' and 'Your mouth will be closed permanently.' What can be worse than death?"

"Forget it, Cattermole," answered Sands tersely. "I tell you there's nothing to it. Some crank trying to throw a scare into the town."

"What are you going to do?"

Sands laughed. "I turned the first letter over to the police," he answered. "Thought it was some bug who'd been let out of Bellevue too soon, and they agreed with me. They looked up Thomas Burt. Of course there's no such person known at the Routledge Building."

"Very well. Either the communicator is a plain crank, as the police think, or else a fake postman is going to open that mail-box and take out the parcel. The first postman who appears on the scene gets taken in, and the game's ended. It's ingenious in a way, but crude. Quite unworthy of Doctor Omega, Cattermole. So the police told you a different story?"

Cattermole nodded dismally. "Of course I'm going to fight," he answered. "I've never paid blackmail, I haven't any enemies, and my life's open to all the world. But I hate the worry of it, Sands. And once it gets into the papers my wife will never have a minute's peace. She's the nervous type, you know."

SANDS surveyed the man before him with a glance of cool contempt. He had known, from his association with him, that Cattermole was a weakling, despite his aggressive air, but his shielding himself behind his wife filled him with disgust. Besides, he was perfectly aware that Mrs. Cattermole was visiting her sister in the South and might never return.

"Well, the police told you a different story from what they told me," he answered. "Maybe they've seen reason to change their minds, or else they're not sure themselves. But there's nothing to it, in my opinion. The Omega gang had too hot a time before. What are you going to do?"

"Why, the police told me to make up a dummy parcel and mail it in person, following his instructions exactly," answered Cattermole uneasily. "Aren't you doing that?"

"Nothing doing," Sands laughed. "One parcel's enough, and I guess you got to Headquarters before any of the rest of us. So you were wondering whether it mightn't be better to pay up and look pleasant?"

Cattermole flushed uneasily. "No!" he declared, with an oath. "I'm a fighter, Sands. I shall make up a dummy parcel, as the police advised. I shall drop that parcel in the mail-box at precisely 6:50, and I shall take the street car from the scene for a block or two, get off, and watch developments."

Sands clapped him on the shoulder. "That's the stuff, Cattermole!" he said, encouragingly. "I knew you wouldn't fall for that game. And if there is anything in it the police will put the kibosh on it just as soon as that fake postman comes to make the clearance."

"I'm glad you think there's nothing to worry about," said Cattermole.

"Absolutely nothing!" laughed Sands. "And"—he pounded his fist on his desk—"I'll tell you, Cattermole, if there were, I'd see myself in hell before I'd pay a single cent to a gang of cowardly blackmailers."

"You're right, Sands," answered the other. "Of course, a married man mustn't take the same chances as a widower like you. Your death wouldn't mean the same to your daughter as mine would to my wife. I'll mail that package, and maybe tonight we'll learn how many of the other guests have been stung."

"Sure! See you tonight, Cattermole!" Sands laughed, and turned back to his affairs.

CATTERMOLE, after a questioning glance at Sands, went back to his office, two or three blocks away. As he entered, his stenographer handed him a letter.

"What's this?" he asked.

"It came five minutes ago, Mr. Cattermole," she answered.

Cattermole took up the envelope with a sudden sense of dread. It was unstamped, the address typewritten, and in one corner, also typed, was "Strictly Personal."

Cattermole went into his private room and tore it open. As he scanned it his face blanched, his jaw dropped; he let the missive flutter from his hand to the floor. At the bottom of the enclosure in place of a signature, was another of the little disks of grey.

Controlling his agitation with an intense effort, Cattermole picked up the missive, and read:

> "Having reason to believe that, despite my warning, you are contemplating treachery, I am sending you this eleventh-hour notification. If you disregard your instructions in any way, or carry out that impulse to defraud me, your mouth will be closed and never opened again."

"Miss Regan!"

Cattermole's shrill cry startled the stenographer in the next office. She came quickly to the door.

"Yes, Mr. Cattermole?"

"Who brought this?" Cattermole demanded.

"A boy, Mr. Cattermole—a messenger."

"In uniform?"

Miss Regan hesitated.

"Why, he had a sort of uniform Mr. Cattermole," she said, "but it didn't seem quite the regular thing, somehow. I—I didn't notice it very closely. Was there anything the matter?"

"No," muttered Cattermole. "It's all right, Miss Regan."

WHEN the girl had withdrawn Cattermole sank down in his chair almost in panic. It appeared, from the warnings, as if the blackmailer were intimately acquainted with his plans.

But gradually his spirits began to revive. After all, it was probable, as Sands had said, that this was the work of a crank. Dr. Omega's gang had operated in the Southwestern States; it was hardly likely that, having been driven out from that region, they would renew their activities in New York itself, where they would have to match their wits against the shrewdest men that any police system has devoloped. Anyway, he reflected, that evening would see the end of them, when the police trap snapped.

Cattermole's courage came back to him. That evening he was to be a guest at a banquet in a private room at Moschenhoff's, given to a number of prominent men by Vincent Blake. Sands was to be there as well.

Vincent Blake was one of those enigmas that appear periodically in New York and take its social life by storm. He had come out of the West, plunged recklessly on the Street, and established a reputation almost overnight as a daring, skillful gambler. Despite his origin, he was more of a European type—a man of culture, a connoisseur of gems, pictures, and women; a strange figure flashing across the financial heavens, and a consistently successful one.

He was a member of the most exclusive clubs. Unmarried, he was sought after in vain by hordes of match-making mothers.

Cattermole began anticipating the evening. Blake's dinners were always successful. His spirits rose still more. What a fool he had been to allow himself to be alarmed! Sands had been right.

Cattermole despised Sands as the clever, crafty man despises one who is, in comparison with himself, an honest man and a simpleton; but Sand's doggedness, and a certain sure financial sense, had proved a valuable aid to Cattermole. The two had been associated intermittently in various deals or years, until the cotton pool catastrophe had left Sands for a time upon the verge of insolvency.

Since then Sands had improved his position; he was again at least a minor power in Wall Street, a force to be reckoned with.

CATTERMOLE remained in his office until twenty-five minutes after six. Then, unlocking a drawer of his desk, he took out a small parcel addressed to the mythical Thomas Burt, and making his way out of the suite, which was now empty, he proceeded by street car up Broadway as far as Madison Square.

Descending here, he walked at a slow gait as far as Twenty-fifth Street. He passed and repassed the two mail-boxes on the southwest corner several times, looking carefully about him. Nobody appeared to evince any interest in his movements, however, and there was nobody near whom he could classify as a possible detective. One or two people stopped to mail letters in the smaller box, and passed on their way.

At the precise moment, Cattermole deposited his parcel in the larger box, jumped on a passing street car, and rode a little distance uptown. He got off at Twenty-eighth Street, and made his way slowly back toward the mail-box, taking the opposite side of the road.

Loitering there, as if aimlessly, he saw a postman come briskly around the corner of Twenty-fifth Street. The man stopped at the larger of the two boxes, and, inserting his key, opened it and placed the contents inside his bag. He closed the box, and was about to open the smaller one when two men in plain clothes stepped quickly toward him. In another moment the postman, protesting violently, was placed under arrest.

Cattermole smiled and turned away. The sight interested him no longer. The trap had been sprung, and he felt that he had nothing more to fear. He made his way home to his apartment.

AN HOUR AND A HALF later Cattermole was greeting Vincent Blake in the vestibule of Moschenhoff's. There were a score of guests, among them Sands and Bronson, two or three art experts, a fashionable physician, Dr. Ira Grey, and one or two representatives of the Knickerbocker families. It was one of those informal dinners that Blake gave periodically, at which he was sure to spring something unexpected upon his guests. Blake's tall figure radiated magnetism.

"Well, Mr. Moschenhoff, I think we're all here!"

Blake laughed softly, and stepped aside while the proprietor marshalled the guests into the large private room adjoining the public dining-rooms. As Cattermole and he were brought face to face he turned toward his guest and said lightly:

"I suppose, Cattermole, you were not one of the favored few who received a communication from our friend, Doctor Omega?"

Cattermole started; the mention of the name brought the memory of his fears.

"Did you get one?" he stammered.

"I did," laughed Blake. "Bronson's another. He thought you had one from your manner. Between ourselves, I shouldn't be surprised if most of us had."

"What did you do?" asked Cattermole, with blanching lips.

"Put mine in the waste-basket. Police? No, thanks! I can take care of myself, Cattermole."

They went inside, where a long table was spread for nearly a score of guests. Champagne—all private stock—reposed chastely in ice-buckets. Adolph, the head waiter, bowed to them with a welcoming smile.

Any dinner presided over by Vincent Blake was a success, but on this occasion Blake's was easily the dominating figure. Cattermole watched the faces light up as the flow of talk and repartee began. Blake seemed to possess the knack of making each man feel at his best, and show himself in his best light. Yet Cattermole felt somehow detached from the spontaneity of the gathering, he found himself merely an onlooker.

WHEN the table had been cleared, and the cigars were lit, Blake rose at the head, and instantly the hum of conversation died away. All eyes were turned upon his tall, commanding figure.

He held up his hand. "Gentlemen," he began, "our previous gatherings have been in the nature of an informal club meeting, at which we discussed topics of the day in light and frank fashion. I have invited you here tonight to discuss something which I believe will come home to nearly every one. Have not the most of us been the recipients of a certain communication from a person signing himself 'Doctor Omega'?"

There followed a dead and uneasy silence; all kept their eyes fixed on the speaker's.

"Gentlemen, although we are not politicians, we have tried to uphold a certain public spirit," continued Blake. "We stand, so far as we stand at all, for good government." He let his fist fall. "Where I come from," he declaimed, "men do not yield to blackmailers. Together we can present a united front against this gang that menaces the public weal. Together we can bring the assailant of our social life to justice. Let us agree to refuse tribute to this outlaw, gentlemen!"

At that the whole company rose to their feet, holding up their glasses.

"I drink to that!" shouted Bronson. "Not a red cent, by George!"

"You've hit the nail square, Blake!" shouted another.

Blake smiled at them. "We seem to be pretty unanimous," he remarked. He held his glass up. "I'll give you the toast," he cried.

"Here's hell to Doctor Omega!"

They shouted it and put their glasses to their lips.

ON THE MOMENT the lights went out, leaving the after-visions of the scene dancing on the black background. A champagne glass fell smashing upon the table. Some one shouted an oath.

There was no light in the room, except the faint illumination that filtered in at the edges of the drawn window shades. The door opened; the vestibule was dark. A form, vaguely defined, stood shadowy against the exterior darkness.

"Who is it?" shouted Cattermole in a hysterical throat cry.

"Fuse burned out, sir," came the head waiter's voice. "We'll have her right in a minute. Keep your seats, gentlemen!"

"Keep your seats, gentlemen, please!" came Blake's commanding voice out of the dark.

But as he spoke somebody stumbled and shouted loudly. Confusion arose. The table-cloth was dragged to the floor, bringing with it the ornaments, an epergne, and ash-trays. An instant later a terrific, unhuman scream broke from Cattermole.

Thoroughly unnerved, the guests struggled toward the door. The vestibule was now packed with the crowd that had come pouring out of the public dining-room, a flood of frightened faces illuminated in ghastly chiaroscuro by the reflected light from the street.

"What is it? Did you hear that?" everybody was asking. There was an intense tension in the air, an unnatural fear that held all in its grip.

Blake pushed forward. "Where's Cattermole?" he shouted.

All looked into the private room, but, so strong was the universal panic, for a moment none would venture into it. Then the engineer came pushing through the crowd, carrying a large oil lantern, which he held at arm's length. With him was Moschenhoff, pale with anxiety. "Somebody's cut the wires!" the proprietor was stammering.

They pressed forward into the dining-room, followed by the crowd. Cattermole lay on his side upon the floor, unconscious, blood streaming from his left eye. When they raised him they found that he was breathing, but apparently badly hurt.

They carried him out and laid him on a lounge in the vestibule. Two patrolmen and a sergeant were already upon the scene, and were bundling the crowd into the road. One man in evening dress turned back, however, and the police, recognizing him, permitted him to make

his way to the lounge. He introduced himself.

"My name is Lawrence Shore," he said. "I am a police physician."

"I am in attendance, sir," retorted Doctor Grey, who, with Blake and Moschenhoff, was bending over the unconscious man.

Shore bowed formally. As he lingered there, watching Doctor Grey's examination, Moschenhoff asked:

"He isn't badly hurt, is he?"

Doctor Grey looked up impatiently. "So far as I can see," he answered, "he has received a violent blow in the left eye. His assailant seems to have been wearing a ring, which has cut the skin a little. No, I dont think it is very serious."

The police sergeant came up. "How did he hurt himself?" he asked. "Who saw the accident?"

"It was no accident," answered Blake. "It was—"

"Doctor Omega!" screamed some one among the little group of waiters standing at the door.

The name electrified them all. There followed an instant of silence; each man turned a white face upon his neighbor's. Then, stiffly, automatically, Cattermole began sitting up. He burst into a torrent of impassioned cries.

But the sounds that came from Cattermole's lips had no resemblance to any human speech. They were the merest gibberish, such as might have been uttered by a raving madman.

CHAPTER II

ON THE THIRD MORNING afterward Lawrence Shore sat in his office, reading his fifth newspaper. At his cabinet, polishing various instruments, kneeled an undersized, bandy-legged hunchback of a young man.

It was the consulting hour for doctors —that is to say, it was that period between the hours of ten and twelve when ante-rooms are supposed to be packed with visitors turning over the pages of months-old magazines, and five-dollar bills are accumulating on doctors' desks.

But Shore, who still lacked a year or two of his thirties, had only been in practice eight or nine months, and clients were still few, and very far between.

Some times, in fact, Lawrence Shore felt extremely like taking up his stand on the steps of his house and trying to pull in passing pedestrians a la Baxter Street. He had been exceedingly grateful for the "pull" which had secured him his position as police surgeon to the N'th precinct.

That brought in the bread and butter and kept him in tires and gasoline. Hope did the rest.

He had read five newspapers, and now sat knitting his brows and puzzling over the problem which had become the sensation of the day. George Cattermole was now a patient in a private sanitarium owned by Doctor Grey; he was said to be recovering physically, but to be hopelessly insane.

THE return of "Dr. Omega" was featured in all the newspapers. The story of the ineffective trap had become public property, and the police were being severely criticised for having bungled the matter. It had become evident that the real postman, who had been arrested, was to have been held up by the actual criminals on his way to the post-office, and robbed of his bags. There were stories of a mysterious motor-car which had been drawn up to the sidewalk just round the corner and was reported to have driven off swiftly as soon as the arrest was made.

It was currently reported that half a score of wealthy men had paid fortunes in blackmail rather than undergo the fate of Cattermole.

Only two men had had the courage to defy the gang openly. Sands had intimated to the press that "when Dr. Omega wanted him, he knew where to find him." And Vincent Blake, who was reported to be engaged to Sand's daughter, Marianne, had offered a reward of twenty-five thou-

sand dollars for the discovery and arrest of the master criminal.

There was as yet, however, not the slightest clue to Cattermole's mysterious assailant. It was supposed that he had entered from the vestibule of Moschenhoff's after cutting the electric wires, but no one had perceived him.

Shore threw down the fifth newspaper. "Andy, what do you make of this Cattermole business?" he asked.

The hunchback, without moving the position of his legs, swung his crooked body around, as if upon a pivot.

"I guess it's Doctor Omega sure enough, Mr. Larry," he answered. "An' all the dicks in New York won't never catch him."

"Why not?" asked Lawrence.

"Because you got to set a doc to catch a doc, boss. Now, if they was to set you on his trial, maybe there'd be something doing."

Lawrence Shore, who was still young enough to feel the glamor of a detective's career, felt an absurd pleasure at the words. Six months before he had picked Andy Meggs out of the gutter and made him factotum of his bachelor establishment. Andy was as devoted to him as a mother to her child.

"Now I shouldn't be surprised if there wasn't something in that, Andy," answered Lawrence; and just then the telephone rang.

He took down the receiver. It was a call from Police Headquarters, asking if he could come over immediately. The speaker was Inspector Clambarn, through whose influence Lawrence had secured his post. Clambarn's father and his had been old friends.

"I'll be with you right away," Shore answered, and, instructing Andy to do his best to detain any visitors who might come, he left the office.

FIFTEEN MINUTES later Shore was shown into Clambarn's room, and found him closeted with Doctor Grey, who, as if to make up for his curtness on the night of the accident, rose and gave Lawrence his hand.

"Sit down, Lawrence," said Clambarn. "Heard the latest news?"

"About Cattermole?"

Clambarn gave a short laugh. "You're a back number, Shore. An early hour this morning Eli Bronson was found lying insensible in an unused hallway near his apartment house, in exactly the same condition as Cattermole."

Lawrence whistled. Clambarn looked at Grey, who turned in his chair.

"It's this way Shore," he said. "Bronson, who hadn't been home all night, must have been attacked on his way back from his club, where he had spent the evening. His doctor, Parmelee, called me in to consult. I found that the left orbit was surrounded by a ring of extravasation—the worst black eye I've ever seen, in fact. The assailant wore a projecting ring, which had cut the artery at the inner angle of the eye and nose. When I saw Bronson he had recovered consciousness, and seemed to recognize his wife, but he was spouting absolute gibberish. Furthermore, he couldn't understand a word that was said to him.

"I happen to know," Clambarn interposed, "that Bronson, like Cattermole, had refused to pay blackmail. Will you give Shore the opinion that you gave me, Doctor Grey?"

DOCTOR GREY leaned forward and spoke deliberately, yet with apparent reluctance, as one who has a reputation to maintain, and is afraid of losing it.

"My opinion," he said, "is that this Doctor Omega, as he call himself, was personally responsible for the attack in each of these cases. The attack on Cattermole in the dark indicates a surgeon's knowledge of anatomy. The method appears to be to deliver a violent blow on the orbit, sufficient to paralyze the nervous centres and enable him to inject some poison, perhaps by a ring. I should say that the ring may have been used after the blow was delivered."

"Why the blow in the eye?" asked Lawrence.

"Because the nervous system can, of course, be thrown out of commission more quickly, or at least more surely, by paralyzing the orbital nerves, than by a punch in the solar plexus, let us say, when this is protected by clothing."

"That poison ring stuff sounds rotten from my point of view," said Clambarn. "We're pretty sore over the line the press has taken, Lawrence, and we don't want to have to hand the papers anything like that unless we're sure. We want to be sure. You understand?"

"Poisons are out of my line," said Doctor Grey. "I remembered, Shore, when the Inspector spoke of you, that you were toxicologist at Williams."

"The fact is, Lawrence," said Clambarn, "we want you to go up to Bronson's apartment house and make an examination of him, and see whether you think there may be anything in this poison ring idea."

"Even if there is, it would be impossible to discover traces of poison," Shore answered.

"Well, anyway, you may pick up some sort of clue based on that idea. You think so? . . . That's the stuff, Lawrence. You can help us if any one can. You look as if you had an idea already."

Shore hesitated. "No—not exactly," he admitted. "I noticed, however, that it was the left eye in each case. I suppose that's coincidence."

"Which puts you out of the running as a suspect, Lawrence," Clambarn laughed, "for I see you're reaching out your left hand for your hat. No, it wasn't coincidence, but that's more in my line than yours.

"You see, Lawrence, assuming, as we should, that the assailant is right-handed, he would use his right to deliver a punch with that force and calculated precision. Now a right-hand punch would be aimed at the left eye, because, if it were aimed at the right, it would either be intercepted by the bridge of the nose, or else it would strike the eye a glancing blow, instead of jamming the nervous centres. I've been into that with Doctor Grey."

He laughed in his short way. "Never mind the theories, Lawrence," he said. "Just consider yourself attached to Headquarters *pro tem.*, and go up and have a look at Bronson, and let me have your report."

Shore left Headquarters feeling that his detective ambition had suddenly been realized. The paper which he bought on his way to the Subway contained nothing about the assault on Bronson. Evidently the police had succeeded in keeping it dark, which must mean that they attached extraordinary importance to it, and were straining every effort to find the assailant.

BRONSON occupied an apartment in an expensive building uptown. Mrs. Bronson herself, a pretty woman in middle life, opened the door. A few words of explanation gained Lawrence admittance. It was with difficulty, however, that he obtained permission to see Bronson.

"Doctor Parmelee just left," Mrs. Bronson declared hysterically, "and there's been one person after another here all the morning. My husband's asleep, and I won't have him wakened."

As soon as he reached the bedside, Shore saw that Bronson's sleep partook more of the nature of a coma. Without arousing the injured man, he raised the bandages and examined the wound.

There was, however, little to be learned from it, and it was not likely Bronson would recover consciousness for hours, so that the chief part of the examination, the testing of the speech powers and nervous reactions, must be postponed. The eye was badly injured, and surrounded by an enormous ring of black. Above the upper lid, at the corner of the nose, was a small wound, which had bled profusely.

"Tell me, is there any chance for him?" pleaded Mrs. Bronson in the hall. "Oh, to think he should have come to this, when he hadn't an enemy in the world, save one!"

"You mean Doctor Omega—?" Lawrence began, but she cut him short with a contemptuous gesture.

"I'll tell you who Doctor Omega is!" she cried. "And you can tell whoever sent you. It's Charles Sands!"

Lawrence looked at her in stupefaction.

"Yes, the time's come to speak, and I will speak!" she went on wildly. "It's a year or two ago now that they were all up to their necks in it—I mean their cotton pool. Sands was deepest in, and he wanted the rest to go down to ruin with him.

"But Eli had me to consider, and I knew all about it, and I was after him day and night to sell out, without letting any one know. George Cattermole was after him as well as me. They call a man hard names when he goes behind his partner, but I don't believe in honor among thieves, and that's what finance is—just plain thievery!

"George Cattermole and I persuaded Eli to sell and break the pool. Charles Sands was ruined. He took his medicine. . . . Oh, I'm not saying he squealed. That's what worried poor Eli. Sands never said a word, never let any one know whom he suspected, but ever since then my husband has been mortally afraid of him.

"Sometimes I've thought I'd rather have had Eli stand by him, and have had us all go down together than have this going on, month after month, Eli seeing Sands nearly every day, and never knowing whether he suspected him. It's been a long hell. And now George Cattermole's gone, and pool Eli—Oh, God in heaven, that man shall pay!"

Lawrence Shore made his way back to Headquarters and wrote a report at Clambarn's request. He declined to commit himself to the poison ring theory, stating that in his opinion the violence of the blow might have been sufficient to have caused the aphasia. He added that, not having examined the patient, he was unable to pronounce upon the extent of the injury.

THE report was necessarily of the most formal nature, and Clambarn was not unreasonably dissatisfied.

"I suppose that's all you can do, Lawrence, but I want you to stick to this case." he said. "Go up and see Bronson again when he has recovered consciousness. What's that? Sure! Follow it up any way you please. I've a hunch that Bronson won't be the last of them, and God knows we're up against it!"

"I suppose Sands has been warned?" asked Lawrence.

"Sands? Well, we've phoned the police at Longfield, and I guess they'll keep him closely guarded," answered Clambarn irritably. "But of course that's out of our jurisdiction, and we've got no men to spare to send out there."

Lawrence, with the impulsiveness of youth, had decided to take a longer line than Clambarn expected. He meant to avail himself to the fullest extent of the Inspector's permission to follow up the case.

He had decided, on the way downtown, to say nothing to Clambarn about Mrs. Bronson's outburst. That was not a part of his job, strictly speaking. If he did so, and she denied her statements, he would look uncommonly foolish; if she decided to stand by them, she would doubtless communicate them to the authorities herself.

It seemed to Lawrence quite possible that Clambarn was already in possession of them.

By this time Shore felt the detective instinct thoroughly aroused in him. He had resolved to go out to Sand's place at Longfield and follow up the clue. He had very little idea what he was going to do there, but his excuse might very well be the danger which menaced the financier, as the most recalcitrant of New York's wealthy men.

ANDY MEGGS, who had gathered the purport of his master's telephone conversation with Headquarters, suspected that he was bound on the same

errand, when Shore told him that he might not be back until late that night.

"Say, boss, won't you take me with you?" he pleaded, as Lawrence was getting ready to leave the house.

"Why, where do you think I'm going?" his master demanded.

Andy favored him with a wink.

"I guess you'll need me, Mr. Larry," he urged. "Honest, your life ain't safe with that Omega gang around. I guess my job's with you."

"Your job," said Shore, "will be to wait in this house for me, and, if any patients come, to tell them that I've been called out of town on an important case, and may be back any moment. Also to take their names and telephone numbers."

Andy sighed. "All right, Mr. Larry," he said, in affected resignation.

But no sooner had Lawrence left the house than the hunchback slipped out of the door and began trailing him along the street. Andy had no intention of permitting his master to meet the fate of Cattermole if he could prevent it.

He followed him unobtrusively into the Pennsylvania Terminal, and, while Lawrence was at the window of the ticket office, succeeded in edging close to him without being detected. He could not hear the name of the place that Lawrence gave as his destination, but the instant his master had left the window Andy darted from behind the stout party who had been unwittingly screening him.

"Gimme me one to the same place!" he commanded.

He followed Lawrence down the stairs and took up his position at the further end of the platform.

Meanwhile Shore, ignorant of his follower's disobedience of orders, took a late afternoon train out to Longfield, a suburban station a few miles beyond Jamaica. On the way out he made his plans. He meant to discuss the attack on Bronson with Sands, meanwhile observing him, drawing him out, his ostensible reason for the visit being to warn him of his own danger.

SANDS'S house was an imposing looking place about a mile from the station. It stood in two or three acres of ground on a steep hill, and there were no other houses in the immediate vicinity. A complete circle of gravelled drive enclosed the lawn and garden, the two roads diverging at the gate and meeting in front of the house.

In spite of the warning that had been sent to the local police, Shore met no one once he had left the immediate environs of the station. It was almost dark when he arrived. Not a light showed in the house. It looked as if Sands had gone out of town, either to avoid the attentions of the gang, or to divert suspicion from himself, if he were really guilty. That, too, explained the absence of the police.

Making his way up the gravelled drive, Shore ascended the long flight of concrete steps that led up to the front door, and rang the bell. After waiting a minute or two, he rang again, and finally, becoming impatient, beat a loud tattoo with the knocker.

Still there was no response from within. Shore was now convinced that the house was empty, but he decided to make a circuit of the building in order to ascertain the fact beyond a doubt. The shades were down at all the windows in the front and on the right wing. The kitchen door in the rear was locked, and there was a pile of unwashed dishes against the little window above the sink.

There was no sign of occupation. The shades were down at all the windows of the left wing as well, and all the windows were closed. But of a sudden Shore fancied that he saw a faint glimmer of light at a large window on the second floor.

SHORE stepped back, looked up, and then convinced himself of this. The light seemed to come from a small bulb, and was almost completely obscured by the heavy curtains which were drawn before the window.

Somebody must be in the house, then, or had been there within the past half-

hour, unless the bulb had been turned on all day.

Of course, the light might have been left burning in a large closet, but Shore was certain that some one was in that room, and did not wish for visitors at the moment.

The window-sill was not more than fifteen feet overhead. The wall was overgrown with a very old creeper, now bare of leaves, growing close to it. Lawrence saw that the main trunk ran upward close beside the window. It must have been planted years before, and was almost as thick as a sapling, standing out several inches from the wall, from which, in the course of its growth, it had broken away.

In another moment, rather against his judgment, Shore had begun to scramble up the vine. He reached the level of the sill, hesitated a moment, and then, reaching out, placed his hands on the broad ledge, swung himself off, and pulled up until he was resting there upon his hands and knees.

He could see that the window was closed, but not bolted. The curtains behind it were so closely drawn, and of so heavy a material, that it was impossible to see anything except the faint glow of what now appeared to be an oil lamp, set on a table.

Lawrence crouched there in the darkness for fully two minutes. He could not make up his mind what to do. To effect burglarious entrance was impossible; there might be a sick person within. Nevertheless, he was conscious of an unreasoning instinct to throw up that window and enter.

At last, as judgment began to conquer instinct, Shore reluctantly let his feet drop from the sill and began feeling for the trunk of the vine at the side. He had just found it and gripped it with his calves, when a prolonged single shriek broke from the interior of the house, apparently from the room which he had been on the point of entering.

Following it came the faint sound of a window being thrown up—then a silence that was almost more nerve-racking than the scream, whose echoes still went ringing through Lawrence's head in innumerable blending undertones.

For just an instant, so sudden and fearful had the cry been, Shore felt totally unnerved. Then he had scrambled up to the window-sill again, and was digging his finger-tips underneath the sash of the window.

He managed to throw it up. Pushing back the heavy curtains, he vaulted into the room. A gust of wind sent the oil lamp upon the window flaring into the chimney. Before Shore had freed himself of the entanglement of the curtains, it had gone out.

. . .

SHORE listened a moment in the darkness, alert for the slightest sound, but none came, and, very softly, he put his hand in his pocket, drew out a box of matches, extracted one, and lit it.

By the tiny light he could see Charles Sands seated in a large chair beside a bookcase, his head drooping upon his breast, and a little trickle of blood running down from a corner of his left eye.

There was no one else in the room, which was evidently the library, and extended the whole width of the house, and there was an open window on the opposite side, which Shore was positive had been closed when he had made the circuit of the building.

At the same time there came the sudden firing of a car engine some distance away, and the swift rush of a car into the darkness. It was clear that the assailant had made his get-away.

Shore struck another match, snapped an electric light button upon the wall with no result, and lit the lamp. He was shaken by the discovery, and the realization that he might have been in time to save Sands, if he had not let his judgment overcome his instinct. And the presence of the injured man appeared to be the positive refutal of Mrs. Bronson's charge, which had brought him to Longfield.

Having relit the lamp, Shore turned to

Sands and began to make an examination. Sands was completely unconscious. He had probably been attacked while dozing in his armchair.

The financier had been assailed exactly in the same way as Bronson and Cattermole. The extravasated blood was already beginning to ring the left orbit with a circle of reddish black. Over the upper eyelid, near the angle of the nose, was what looked like nothing more than a small puncture, from which the blood had already ceased to flow.

Shore felt the supra-orbital ridge. His first impression was that it might be broken, that a fragment of bone was perhaps pressing inward upon the nerve centers. But this was not the case.

SHORE became more and more bewildered as he continued his examination. He could not understand why in Sands's case, as in Cattermole's, a blow in the eye, however violent, followed or accompanied by a slight puncture, should produce more than momentary unconsciousness. He knew there was no poison in the world that could act so instantaneously.

Upon the table was a thin, flexible paper-cutter. Lighting another match, Shore sterilized the point in the flame, and used it to probe the wound. To his surprise, he found the puncture much deeper than he had expected. The force of the blow had pierced the frontal bone, without fracturing it; it had been gauged to a nicety.

And suddenly the devilish scheme of the assailant became clear. At this point above the eyelid only a thin lamina of bone protected the most highly organized center of the brain—the convolution of Broca, in which are situated the speech, reading and writing centers—all those that are associated with the higher development of man and differentiate him from the ape.

Broca's convolution is situated in the left frontal hemisphere of the brain. The choice of the left eye had been deliberate. A similar injury to the right orbital region, though it pierced the frontal lobe of the brain equally, would have produced no such effects—because that part of the brain hemisphere is a mere duplicate of the left side, and contains no organized centers at all.

The assailant, having an exact knowledge of the anatomy of these parts, had put into effect the most awful concept that could have crossed the mind of any human being. He had deliberately disintegrated this portion of the brain substance in each of his victims, thereby effectively cutting him off from all communication with the external world forever. It was the plan of a human monster. It was the most diabolical conception possible, the product of a fiend's mind.

And, in the horror of this discovery, there came to Shore, as if by inspiration, the knowledge of the precise means by which he would be enabled to circumvent the devil who had conceived these crimes. It was as if Providence, and not Inspector Clambarn, had been at the Headquarters and of the telephone that morning.

As Shore stepped back for a moment and surveyed the unconscious man, he was startled by the sound of a motor-car. It stopped before the house. Before he could make up his mind whether to remain or to escape by the way he had come, he heard quick footsteps on the stairs, the door opened, and a girl stood in the entrance.

CHAPTER III

SHE was a dainty, pretty, dark-haired girl of twenty-three or four. At the sight of Shore she started backward, and her eyes grew wide with fear. Then her glance fell upon the man in the chair, and she uttered a loud cry and ran forward, flinging herself upon her knees beside him.

"Daddy! Daddy, it isn't true! You—you're only pretending!"

She sprang to her feet, confronting Shore. "What is it? Who are you?

"Sands did not nod his head; he only stared at Shore with the same look of pathetic helplessness."

What has happened to my father?" she panted.

Shore took her by the arms and forced her, as gently as possible, into another chair.

"You must try to keep calm, Miss Sands. I am a physician," he said. "You cannot help him if you allow yourself to lose your self-control."

But he was compelled to restrain her forcibly.

"It's all useless!" she cried hysterically. "It's all for nothing! Let me go! Let me go to him!"

Shore was still struggling with her when there sounded the heavier steps of someone running along the hall. A man came stumbling into the room, came to a standstill in the middle, and uttered an amazed cry.

THE newcomer was a man servant, about fifty years of age, and dressed in evening clothes. The smoothly shaven face was surmounted by thin wisps of yellow-gray hair. There was something repulsive in the oleaginous face, with the thick nose and drooping mouth, and hard blue eyes beneath heavy eyelids which blinked into his.

"Miss Marianne! What is it?" mumbled the butler, blinking from one to the other, and at the injured man.

Shore released the girl, who at once sprang to her father's side.

"Come here!" he called. "Take your master by the feet! I'll hold his shoulders. We want to get him on this lounge. That's right! Easy, now, and don't jolt him! So!"

When Sands was in his new position Shore turned to Marianne.

"I'm a surgeon attached to New York police headquarters," he said. "I heard your father cry for help when I was outside the house, and, as the front door was closed and no one answered, I came in through that window. He had just been struck down. The man who did it got away in a car. I was too late."

The girl broke into a frenzy of weeping. "You were too late!" she sobbed. "We've been afraid of this, we've been expecting it every hour, but Daddy wouldn't believe he was in danger. I'll never forgive myself for having left him for the day. But I had to. It was for his sake—I had to!"

SHORE turned to the butler. "What were you doing while this was going on?" he demanded. "That's what seems to me to need the most immediate explanation."

The butler turned a scared, yellow face upon Lawrence. "I—I was at the bottom of the grounds, sir," he faltered. "All the lights had gone out—in the house and along the drive. Mr. Sands had only just got home. He called me and said he thought something must have happened at the power station, and he sent me down with a lantern to meet Miss Marianne, who had taken the car into town this morning and was expected back any minute."

"Where are the rest of the servants?" asked Lawrence.

"The cook and the maids left yesterday, after they'd read in the papers that Mr. Sands's life was threatened. He offered them a lot more money if they'd stay, but they were too scared. There's nobody left but me."

"And how long have you been employed by Mr. Sands?"

"About four months. You can't put nothing on me."

"I'm not trying to—at present. Where's the telephone?"

"Downstairs in the hall," muttered the other.

Shore turned to Marianne Sands. "I'm going to try to get a message through to Headquarters," he said, "unless the wire's been cut, as it probably has. Show me the telephone!" he demanded of the butler.

The man, still mumbling, turned and preceded him out of the room. At the head of the stairs the lantern, which he had deposited there, gave out a little

gleam in the darkness of the interior. He picked this up and led the way down to the hall. Lawrence, having located the telephone, picked up the receiver, but, as he had anticipated, there came no response from the local exchange.

He hung it up. "Wires cut," he said. "They've done their work thoroughly."

MARIANNE SANDS came running down the stairs. She came to his side. "What is the use—what are you going to do?" she panted. "What's that you said?"

The girl seemed beside herself with terror.

"The wire's been cut," said Shore. "Your man will have to notify the village police." He turned to the butler again. "Tell them what's happened," he said, "and have them get in touch with Headquarters in New York right away. Say that the assailant of Mr. Sands got away in a car a few minutes ago, and that Doctor Shore is remaining at the house to attend Mr. Sands, and will be over as soon as possible. Who's the regular physician?"

"Doctor Featherston, sir, but he's gone away for a week. Doctor Banks, of North Centre, is attending his patients."

"Ring him up afterward and tell him to come over immediately. That's right, Miss Sands?" he continued, turning to the girl, who had once or twice appeared to begin some protest.

"Oh, I suppose so," she answered drearily. "What does it matter now that they've got my father? You'd better do as he tells you, Anderson."

She plucked Shore by the sleeve.

"Won't you come back and see—see if nothing can be done for him?" she begged. "I'm quite calm now."

"Hurry!" said Shore to the butler, and he and Marianne ascended the stairs again. Sands lay on the lounge exactly as he had been placed there. Marianne kneeled down beside him again and peered anxiously into his face, seeming to hang upon every breath that he drew. Shore began to count the pulse. It was full, steady, and very slow. The pupils under the closed eyelids were contracted to pinpoints. Sands showed no signs of awakening. The injury seemed even more severe than in the case of Bronson.

SHORE tried to figure out the situation during the few minutes of silence that ensued. Mrs. Bronson's charge was certainly discredited more thoroughly than by any other possible means. The attacker had laid his plans with horrible efficiency. And there was no clue; but Shore's suspicions kept turning toward the man Anderson. He did not like him. The butler's story had been plausible, it had effectually acquitted him of being Sands's actual assailant; but it was too plausible, too timely—just the sort of alibi that a confederate would have arranged for himself.

As if reading the thoughts that went through Shore's mind, Marianne rose, turned toward him, and asked:

"Who did this? If I knew, I swear there is nothing I would not do to bring home his guilt to him. I'd go through fire—I'd die! Is there no clue at all?"

"None, so far as I know, Miss Sands. We hoped to save your father. I was five minutes too late."

"You weren't to blame. The police sent a man to watch the house, but Daddy sent him away. He wouldn't believe he was in danger. He seemed so confident—that's what I couldn't understand."

"Miss Sands," Shore interposed, "may I ask you something? What did you mean when you cried out that your father was only pretending to have been injured, and that he was trying to frighten you?"

SHORE sensed the change in her before he read it in her face. She was on guard immediately, and for the first time the idea occurred to him that she knew or suspected something that she was unwilling to communicate to him.

"You do trust me, Miss Sands?" he asked.

"Of course I do. But——"

"Remember that we are anxious to devote all our interest to clearing up this mystery, to punish the assailant of your father, and to prevent the possibility of its recurrence in the case of others. You must do everything in your power to help us."

"Do you mean that I—that I'm not willing?" she demanded vehemently. Shore could see that his words had agitated her intensely.

"I don't mean that. But when you seemed to think your father might be pretending——"

"I don't know what I said, or why I said it. How should I remember? I was stunned when I came in and saw that the blow had fallen, the blow we'd been fearing every moment since Mr. Cattermole was attacked. How should I know?"

"And you suspect no one?" asked Shore.

The stubborn, set look on the girl's face began to confirm his suspicions.

"You said something was useless," he continued, hating to press her, and yet growing more and more sure that she could tell him something which might throw a new light on the conspiracy. "You said it was all useless, all for nothing. Did you mean certain precautions that you had taken?"

She wrung her hands.

"I didn't mean—I didn't mean that," she answered. "If I were to try to speak—but I can't speak now. I can't. I must think. I haven't a friend to turn to. I must wait till I can see clearly what I ought to do. If you force me, I shall tell you lies. Wait—wait—"

A ROAR interrupted them, so deep, sudden, resonant, that both leaped backward. As that night in the vestibule of Moschenhoff's, so, now, the stricken man had suddenly come back to consciousness. Charles Sands was sitting bolt upright upon the lounge.

And the sounds that came from his lips were like those that might have been made by an enraged gorilla.

But it was perfectly clear that he was not infuriated. He stopped, and, evidently under the impression that he had perfectly expressed himself, he seemed to be waiting for a reply. There was recognition in his eyes as he turned them upon Marianne, and perplexity in the stare with which he favored Shore.

Marianne flung herself beside him and put her arms about his neck, breaking into heart-rending sobs.

But she sprang back as another roar issued from Sands's mouth. And now the financier seemed to realize that something was wrong. He became silent again, and looked at Marianne in irritation and bewilderment.

Then he clapped his hand to his injured eye. He remembered and understood. A groan broke from his lips. He fell back on the pillow, silent, bracing himself to meet the realization.

Shore bent over him.

"Listen, Mr. Sands! Do you understand what I am saying? If so, nod your head," he said.

Sands did not nod his head; he only stared at Shore with the same look of pathetic helplessness.

"Have you a pencil and a sheet of paper?" Shore asked Marianne.

The girl hastened to a desk in a corner of the room, and came back with them. She was holding herself together with an intense effort of will. Shore wrote:

"Can you write down what has happened to you?"

He held it a little distance from Sands's face, so that the light from the oil lamp should fall on it. Sands looked at it and then at Shore. He took the pencil in his hand. Shore drew up the table and laid the pencil on it.

Sands began scribbling furiously. The paper was quickly covered with fly-tracks and ellipses, such as might have been made by a child of four. But there was absolutely no meaning in them.

Shore took the paper from the table. It

was all exactly as he had expected. Marianne stood before him, her hands clasped tightly.

"There is no chance at all?" she asked.

Shore, who knew that there was none, tried nevertheless to minimize the shock of the truth.

"I'm afraid he is in a bad way."

"Then he is doomed to go through life like this? For years, perhaps?"

Shore inclined his head.

"Then," said the girl slowly, "I'll tell you what I know. . . . What was that?" she added quickly, assuming a listening attitude.

THERE was the sound of low voices in the hall below. Anderson must have returned with the police. Marianne's fingers gripped Lawrence's arm.

"I'll tell you," she repeated. "I'll trust you. I said I hadn't a friend to turn to. Will you be that friend? Tell me your name and where you live, so that I can send a message to you."

Lawrence told her hurriedly. The men were bounding up the stairs. The door flew open. Two policemen leaped into the room. Over their heads Shore saw the butler, Anderson.

"That's him!" shouted Anderson exultantly.

The two flung themselves on Lawrence and precipitated him to the floor. While one of them went through him, the other, who must have weighed three hundred pounds, straddled his chest and thrust the barrel of an ancient revolver against his cheek.

"One move and you're gone!" he panted.

Shore heard Marianne scream. Taken entirely by surprise, after a momentary struggle he lay perfectly still, making no attempt at resistance. From his place on the floor he saw a fourth man push past the butler and make his way into the library.

He recognized this man as Vincent Blake, from the photographs which had been frequently published in the newspapers.

Vincent Blake had been a Sunday celebrity ever since his rise to fame.

"Hold him!" he commanded, casting a glance at Lawrence on the floor. His eyes fell upon Sands, who seemed to have relapsed into unconsciousness, and, as Marianne cried out again, he turned to her and put him arms about her.

"Try to be brave, Marianne! Found anything on him?" Blake asked of the policemen.

"On'y this," answered the one who was searching Lawrence, holding out his pocket-book. Meanwhile the stout police captain, having satisfied himself that he had his captive in hand, got off his chest, puffing, and motioned him to get up.

MARIANNE detached herself from Blake's arms and stepped forward.

"Let Doctor Shore go! This is ridiculous!" she exclaimed. "Doctor Shore climbed in through that window when he heard my father cry for help. Do you suppose he would have remained here to be arrested? He's from Headquarters in New York."

"Detective, p'raps?" inquired Captain jones sarcastically. And to Shore, "Where's yer badge?"

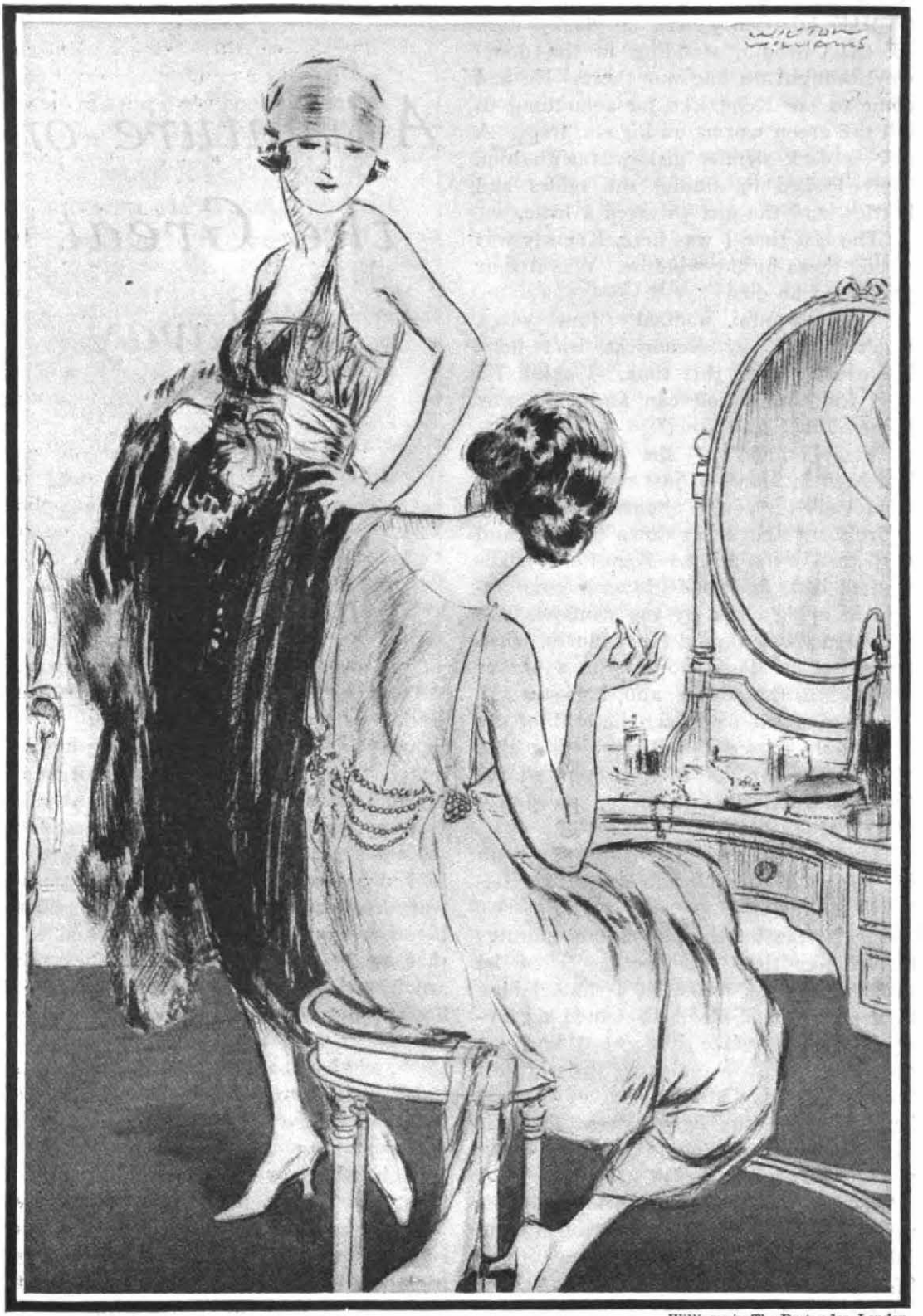
"I am a police surgeon for the N'th precinct, and am acting for Headquarters under instructions," answered Shore hotly. "You'd better get after the right man!"

"And what business had you prowling about this house and breaking in?" demanded Blake vehemently. "Captain, I advise you to hold that man."

"Well, that's about what I was thinkin," answered Captain Jones good-humoredly.

And with surprising dexterity for one so cumbersome he snapped an ancient, rusty handcuff on Lawrence's right wrist, and attached the other to his own.

(The concluding chapters of "The Four Dumb Men" will appear in the November issue of WAYSIDE TALES AND CARTOONS MAGAZINE.)



Williams in The Bystander, London

A FIANCE'S FINANCIAL FIASCO

"Haven't you been engaged to Harry long enough to get married?"
"Too long! He hasn't a penny left!"

Adventure on the Great Highway

By Dixie Willson

THE laboratory was so dusky dark that Brodin, standing in the doorway, thought no one was there. He had come to see Kendricks for something to kill the green worms on his elm trees. A girl—a dark slender girl, was with him. They looked in among the tables and bottles, and the girl shivered a little.

"The last time I was here, Kegway was sitting there by the window. Was it four years ago he died?"

"Yes," Brodin nodded, "four years. Don't know why Kendricks isn't here. He usually is at this time. I think I'll wait for him if you can find your way home alone. Can you?"

"Yes—I think so," she decided. (She had been in Marshall just one day.) "I'll come back for you in about an hour."

Brodin watched her down the hall and out, then turned into Kendricks' acid-scented den, and made himself comfortable in a big chair by the window. He had been there a good ten minutes, when the sound of liquid pouring in a beeker tinkled into the silence, and, half-startled, he sat up and looked over the back of the chair, only to see Kendricks sitting at a desk on the far side of the room, all absorbedly mixing, measuring, pouring—thinking!

"The devil!" Brodin exclaimed. "You *are* here! Why can't you speak to a fellow!"

But it was another good ten minutes before Kendricks *did* speak. Then he came across the room, lit a shaded blue light above Brodin's head, turned a gray-cloth chair to face his guest, and sat down, smiling. Two slender vials of dull purple liquid lay in the palm of his left hand. Where the light caught them, it gave Brodin the thought of their being mixed with fire!

"When'd you get back, Brody?" Kendricks greeted him, delivering a warm hand shake. "I've missed you a long time. Glad you came."

Brodin found a case of cigarettes in his pocket, offered one, and helped himself.

"Just got back today, Ken," he began, lighting his cigarette, and tossing by the match, "and I found a million worms in my elm trees. Those pesky green ones. Got anything deadly?"

Kendricks fingered the little vials and looked out into the gray of twilight. He was handsome, was Kendricks. Tall, blond, serious, with dark eyes, and lips that meant a great deal before they said anything at all. Firm, expressive lips—boyish, humorous lips—serious, decisive lips, and a firm, fine chin. His hair was thick, brushed back from a splendid forehead, and his eye-brows keen and close together. He was older than young, and younger than old—a boy, a man—a thoughtful, almost dreamy combination of both.

"Yes," he said at last, facing Brodin and smiling again. "I have something deadly tonight all right! I've got—Brodin, I've got what we've been waiting for!"

"Ken!" Brodin exclaimed, coming to his feet. "You've *got* it! You *have* it!"

Has the "love story" seen its day? Is an old-fashioned love story with a modern, 1921 setting still possible? Have all the known and available changes been rung upon romance? Don't say no until you have read this altogether charming tale by Dixie Willson about the man and the maid who met and re-met upon the Great Highway — a beautiful story that you'll remember, and tell others about.

Kendricks slipped the little bottles in his pocket.

"Yes," he assured his friend, "I've got it. I'm so sure of it, I can't wait to try!"

Brodin was thoughtful a long minute.

"Kendricks," he said at last, "if you *have* got it, you've done the most wonderful thing in the world! You've found the way out of man's one great terror! You've discovered the one long road—the one great country no man has ever known. Have you told the boys?"

"No," Kendricks replied. "No, I haven't. Call them, will you? Tell them to come soon, and we'll find out the rest."

He put his handsome blond head back against the gray chair, and looked out again into the gathering night."

"I'm *mighty* anxious to know," he said, thoughtfully. "Tell them to come—tonight."

SEVEN MEN were iron-bound pals. Seven men, and bachelors: John Kendricks, the chemist; Barbet, an author; Dean Fletcher, a millionaire; A. C. Rolly, a carver; Dickerman, a mechanic; Woodson Belding, a gardener, and Brodin, a scientist.

These were the six good men who had put up six pots of money for John Kendricks to do this thing he had so much believed in.

"If certain chemicals can *stop* life," Kendricks had said, "then also certain chemicals can *begin* it."

At first the six pals had let him talk, but finally he had convinced them. He believed so well what he could do—believed it so positively that at last he left no room even for them to doubt. He would prepare two chemicals of opposite action—one to stop life, one to start it. He would take the first, and thus put himself where he could see those things that no man sees, and discover the country that no man knows; the second would bring him back to tell them all he had found!

It was so easy! It was as easy as turning red to blue and back again, and yet such a big thing for men to know!

Kendricks had become very eager to go through with it! He had begun to dream about what he should see, as he had once dreamed about a trip to Alaska.

"I wonder if I'll find old Kegway," he had mused. "I wonder if he'll ask me why I let them give away his railroad stock.

"I wonder if he'll ask me if Carrie has been happy since he died!"

And just for fun, with the whimsical spirit of a tragedy mask and a comedy smile, he had called Carrie on the phone to find out, in case Kegway *did* ask him.

SO NOW he was all ready. By the lucky accident of a wrong combination of formulæ, he was now all ready, and with cool excitement, he was eager for the boys to come! He listened while Brodin called them, and asked him to remind Dickerman to invite someone in his place for next night's opera.

"Tell him I'll be dead tomorrow, so

I'll bring Kegway and come without a ticket," he laughed.

Kendricks was like a boy waiting for his first ride on the train! Brodin regarded him thoughtfully.

"Ken, you're very positive, aren't you?" he said. "It will be a wonderful, wonderful thing if you really make it true but—" He stopped, and walked the length of the shadowed laboratory. Kendricks smiled.

"Sit down, Brody," he said: "It will be just going into another Metropolitan Museum that's all. I'll tell you what I'll do to make you feel better. I'll run over to your place for a box of those green elm worms, and give *them* a chance at dying and living, to show you. How's that?"

"Why, I'll get them for you," Brodin began, reaching for the telephone. "Sit still!"

But Kendricks was already getting into his coat.

"No," he interrupted. "I'd like to take another spin down Woodward Avenue before my—" He smiled in that boyish way of his and fingered the little bottles in his vest pocket—"before my vacation, you know," he laughed; "when I come back I'll be so famous I'll never be able to drive out in privacy again! Make yourself at home—but don't touch anything."

BRODIN heard him stride down the hall—then he remembered something, and hurried to the door.

"Oh Kendricks," he called, and the blond fellow turned to listen—"I forgot to tell you about Elise. You'll find her there. Just stop and say hello. She's—you remember my sister, Mary Navarre? Elise is Mary's daughter, and she's here for a day on her way to the mountains. She's a lovely thing. I'd like you to see her. Just tell her who you are, and say hello. She knows your name."

In the drive by the door Kendricks' gray car was waiting, and along the street the lights were bright, like little signals of life going on everywhere. It was a festive thing, was life. Did dead men see those lights, Kendricks wondered as he purred out into the avenue. Were dead men living up and down that white road, riding in the wind? Would he, the next night, be looking on and laughing at how little he had known this night—or would he, on next night, be all gone—in the dark somewhere—just a snuffed-out nothing! But anyway, when he came back, in still another night—when he came back, *then* he would know! Whatever he would find when he got there, at least he could bring back word of. And he would be the greatest man in the world. . . . He took off his cap and lifted his head to the wind. The greatest man in the world. He smiled to think how proud the old professor would be—and then he turned up Brodin's driveway, and suddenly remembered he hadn't brought a box to carry those worms home in!

But he knew Brodin's house like his own. He ran up the steps, pushed open the door, hurried down to the den, and there, in Brodin's big willow chair, was Elise!

Somehow it didn't seem to frighten her when he came in. She smiled and asked him what he was looking for. Her voice was low and very full of the sweetness one thinks of when one thinks of a woman. She was rather pale, slender, with wide gray eyes, and a beauty that brought into John Kendrick's mind a moon-flower he had found one midnight in his grandmother's garden.

"Are you looking for Brody?"

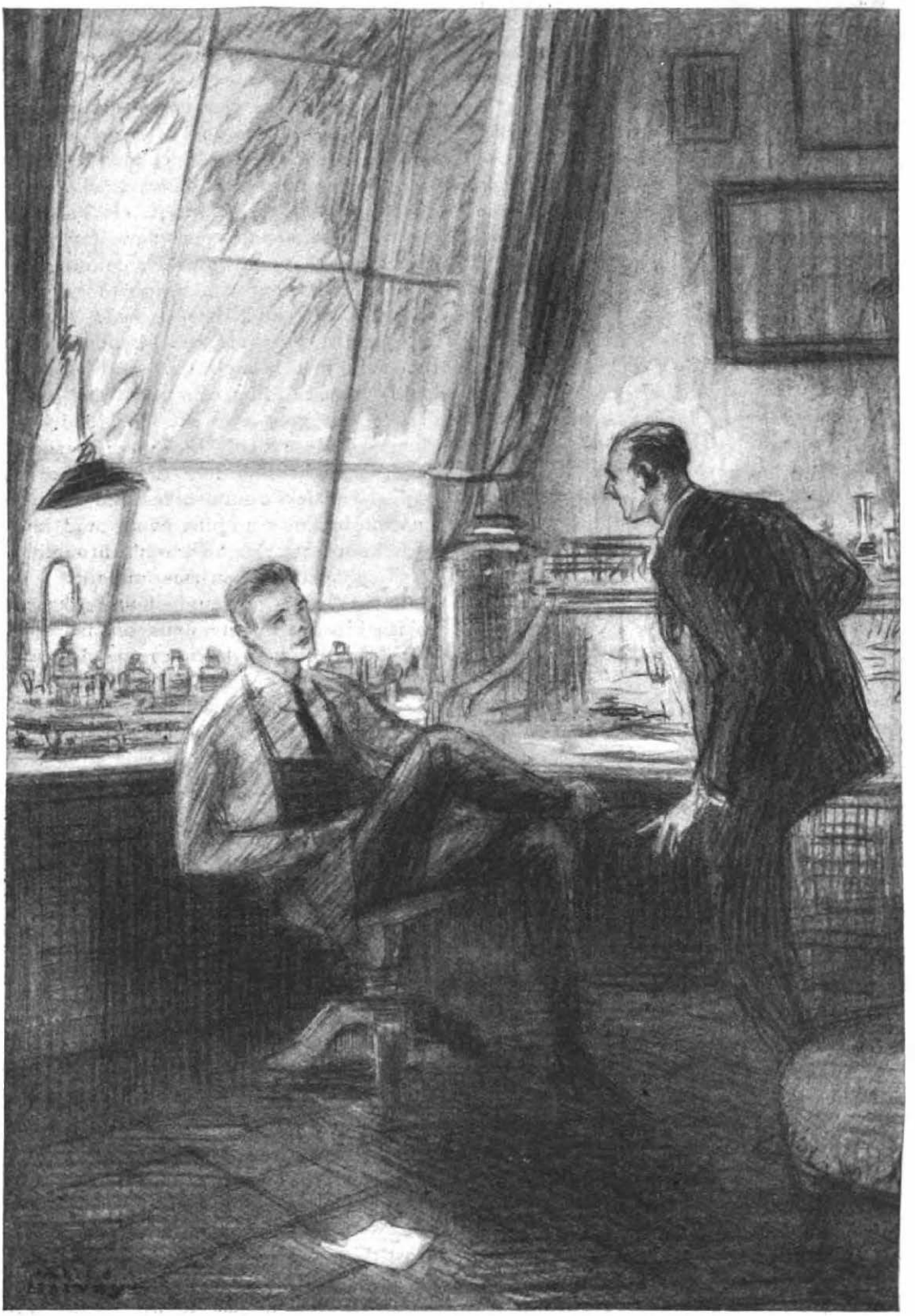
"No," he told her. "No, I'm looking for you. I'm John Kendricks. Brody told me I'd find you here."

"Did you know my mother?" she questioned. "Why are you looking for me?"

"Why I—I haven't any reason," he said. "I—I just came!"

He sat down on the wide sill of the open window by the willow chair.

ALMOST always we try to make life rather than just to live it, and too often our clumsy fingers make mud pies from soil where seeds of roses are. But



"'Ken,' Brodin exclaimed, coming to his feet. 'You've got it! You have!'"

when in some long now and then we let life come as it was meant, then uncertainness is spared, for when it comes that way it is so right there can be no uncertainness!

In the shadow of Brodin's den, John Kendricks and Elise Navarre talked of everything—talked of nothing. But both knew all the while that suddenly the wonderful thing had happened!

"Elise," he said slowly, "you know what I'm thinking of, don't you? I've heard of things like this. I've heard of finding—" he hesitated, then said it softly—"of finding love all of a sudden, but I never believed it. I never *could* believe it."

Elise looked beyond him.

"I can't believe it—*now*," she whispered.

John picked up the hand in his lap and closed it in his own.

"Elise may I kiss you?" he asked, as quietly sure in daring to love as he had been sure in daring to die. "Then you'd believe it. I'm sure you want me, Elise—don't you?"

Her fingers lay in his a moment, then she rose, and crossed the room—closed her eyes and turned her face away from him—turned away to try to know if, when he was gone, she *did* want him. Could it really be that in this man's nearness was the strength, the warmth, the joy that makes love real! It had come so soon! *Dare* she believe it!

A minute Kendricks waited—two minutes—then in the half darkness, he heard her crying.

"Elise!" he cried, reaching her in a second. "Forgive me if I frightened you! I'll go! See, I'll go right now!"

But she turned to him smiling, tears still on her lips.

"No," she said, "you're right. I *do* want you."

LOVE is hard to tell about. If one hasn't had it, one knows too little—if one has had it, one knows too much. But when it comes, it takes away every yesterday that has been, and every tomorrow that might be—it takes away oneself and everybody else, and leaves one just completeness!

John Kendricks was twenty-nine years old, and a man who had gathered himself knowledge of every subject men need to know—except the one of love. Not that he hadn't thought about it. It had occurred to him, but as a vague far-away something that only meant a lot to men who had no other vital thing to get out of life. But John Kendricks *had!* Chemist, scientist, psychologist—his life was so full with just himself that nothing else had occurred to him. So now, when suddenly these gray eyes set his blood tingling—when suddenly the touch of these fingers caught him like the teeth of a trap—Kendricks found himself lost in an emotion he knew nothing about at all!

He kissed her. He held her head against his shoulder, and then after the first fear of it was over, he laughed and popped boyish kisses all over her face.

"I didn't think anything ever could happen like this," he laughed. "You came like the girls a genii brings when he snaps his fingers!"

"But it's very real," she said thoughtfully. "It doesn't seem new to me somehow. You don't seem strange. When I first saw you there in the door, I felt you as close as you are to me now."

"It will be wonderful to have you in my house," he mused. "Why I don't know how I can ever go back at all without you! Think how it will be to find you sitting in my leather chair, and find you reading my books, and have you somewhere around to answer when I call! I'll call a thousand times a day just to hear you answer! *You* feel that's just where you belong, don't you?"

She put her arms around his waist, shut her hands together against his back, and looked up at him smiling.

"Yes, John, I do," she said. "It seems to me there never has been any one at all but you, or any time at all but now. Will you go to the mountains with me tomorrow? I can't even think ahead without you"—and she laughed happily.

"Oh boy, you know it!" he fairly exploded. "We'll make it a honeymoon! We'll be married tomorrow! I'll have the laugh on everybody!"

Then he caught her in his arms and looked straight into her shining eyes.

"Elise!" he said with tremulous tenderness, "Elise—I love you!"

II

BRODIN played host in the Kendricks den. Dickerman arrived first, feeling in a serious solemn mood. Rolly came next, taking it rather as a joke.

"Ken's got it in his head he's going to see Kegway," he laughed. "Can you imagine that? I'd send him a glass of good beer—if I had one!"

Then Barbet, Fletcher and Belding came, and the six discussed the thing, and waited for Kendricks to return.

Brodin told how sure Ken was of success.

"I wouldn't believe it possible, if he didn't seem to know so well himself," Brodin said, "but now I declare I *do* believe it. I feel certain he's going to find out exactly what he's going after. I think in one day John Kendricks will be the most famous man in the world! I think in one day John Kendricks will have solved the great mystery!"

And the more the matter was discussed, the more certain the six became. Why not? Why not? Wireless, electricity, the X-ray—all had been impossible things nobody could do—until sometime somebody dared really to do them!

So they waited eagerly, and began to count the hours until morning, when he should have gone beyond the horizon and come back to tell them what was there.

They waited eagerly. Nine o'clock—ten—

"Call up your house, Brody," Dickerman suggested. "See what's keeping him."

So Brodin called. For fifteen minutes he called, with no answer.

"He must be on his way back," he decided. "Probably be here any minute now."

Ten thirty—ten forty-five—then Belding became apprehensive.

"Brody, did he have the stuff with him?" he asked suddenly. "Did he take it with him when he went? Would he have dared to—"

Brodin thought a minute.

"Yes he did have it," he remembered, "but would he—"

Each man's face questioned the others in thoughtful concern.

"My big car is here," Barbet said. "Let's go over there."

DOWN the lighted length of Woodward avenue, the six men went in search of the other one. Brodin's house was dark, but Kendrick's car was in the drive, and striding up the steps Brodin found the house with door wide open. In two minutes the place, flooded with light, had been searched, every room, and Brodin's man, snapped out of the tail of a nap, was informing them that he had let no one in during the evening! Well—Ken wasn't there!—that was obvious, but more than that, Elise wasn't there, either!

It was Rolly who thought of the garden, and the garden was where they were found—Kendricks and Elise in Brodin's big swing, his arms around her, her head on his shoulder, wishing on stars like two children.

They didn't hear anyone coming behind them.

"See that little red star four feet over the next-door house?" Kendricks was saying. "Well, my wish is that we'll see that star together every night for——"

She interrupted him with a kiss on the tip of his ear.

"For ninety years!" she finished. "But then we'll be so old I don't suppose we can see anything at all but each other!"

Just behind them six astonished men stopped, looked and listened.

"Well I'll be damned!" exploded Brodin. "Elise can't you——! Kendricks what the—well, I'll be damned!"

Kendricks looked up over the swing back.

"Oh, hello boys!" he said. Then he grinned. And laughed! Then he stood up and grabbed Brodin's hand.

"Say, old man," he cried, "everything's great! Wonderful!"

He drew Elise up beside him and turned her toward them, her face—her arms, her dress, almost transparently white in the moonlight.

"Excuse us, boys," he said. "This just happened tonight, and you'll have to excuse us if we're a little bit unconventional."

Then he noticed a peculiar tone in Brodin's look.

"Why what's the—what's the odds Brody?" he asked. "What's the matter with all of you?"

Brodin laughed shortly.

"Well, you've been a fast boy at this end of the line," he said, "but we've been waiting five hours at the other end. You know when I told you to say hello to Elise I didn't mean——"

"By George," Kendricks interrupted, "I forgot all about you fellows!" And then he grew suddenly serious. "And I forgot all about the rest of it, too!" He felt in his vest pocket and brought out those little vials, that seemed, even in the darkness to be holding liquid fire! "I really forgot—what I was going to do tonight!"

IT WAS VERY QUIET in the garden. Just a breeze through the trellis, and that little live sound in the grass. Anxiously Elise questioned Kendrick's face—and seriously the others watched him, too. Brabet broke the silence.

"Are you—going to do it tonight?" he asked. "Or are you—afraid to try?"

Kendricks put an arm around the shoulders of the girl beside him.

"Well," he said, "it looks a lot different now. I'm not afraid. I'm perfectly sure, but it does look a lot different, now that I've found Elise," and he drew her closer.

"Well," Brodin said, "if you don't know what you're doing, of course that's another story, but if you are as sure as you were when you left me, it's such a big thing that some of us ought to go through with it, even if you don't. I will, Kendricks. I'm ready right now."

"Or I will," volunteered Dickerman. "I'll take the chance."

Kendricks rolled the little vials in his fingers.

"Shall we go in the house and talk it over?" he suggested. "We needn't worry Elise with all this."

Her face questioned him, but his man's smile reassured her of everything.

"Just a little while, sweetheart," he said. "It's nothing much. I'll see you in just a little while."

He smoothed her dark hair back from her forehead, put a whisper kiss squarely on her lips, and followed Dickerman, Brodin and the others into the house.

AGAIN Brodin and Dickerman offered to try the experiment in his stead, but Kendricks was insistent.

"Why, it's nothing so serious," he said. "You needn't be so solemn about it. You don't seem to understand that I know perfectly well what I'm doing! I don't mind this little trip any more than I would any other. You know," and he laughed boyishly, "you know, I'd think quite a while about even going down to the club for lunch, now that I'd have to leave Elise to do it. But this isn't for you to do, Dick, nor you Brody. It's just my own little errand, and if you don't mind my being in your house instead of my own, Brody, we'll go ahead."

He gave Brodin the smaller of the vials.

"Let Elise give me this, when it's—" he looked at his watch—"it's almost midnight now. Let her give me this in the morning. I want her to be the first one I see when I come back. . . . I say," he laughed, "I never knew how much the Lord puts into a man until tonight! Get out now, everybody, and leave me alone. It'll be a great day tomorrow! My wedding day, Dickerman!"

And he prodded his young pal in the

ribs as he playfully pushed the six of them out into the hall.

"Get out the rice, Dick! Order the old shoes!"

But at the door he held Brodin a minute, and his face was suddenly serious.

"Old man," he said, "I've been mighty careful about this. There isn't one chance in a thousand to slip, you know, but I do love this little girl of yours, and I just want to say that everything I have is hers—whether I give it to her tomorrow—or whether you do."

"I'm damned glad you found her, Ken," Brodin answered, seriously. "You're the biggest man I know!"

In the dark of the hall the two men gripped hands understandingly, then—

"So long boys!" Ken called down stairs. "So long, old man!" as, smiling at Brodin, and putting off the light on the wall, he closed the door between himself and everything—but Elise Navarre!

KENDRICKS crossed the room to the window and looked out into the garden. There, swinging just a little in the white-night shadows lay Elise, her dark head pillowed on her arms, her face watching the stars.

Kendricks felt his heart pounding against his ribs.

"That old heart is strong enough for anything," he said, aloud. "It's strong for *you*, sweetheart!"

And with a little ghost of her in his arms, he put the first vial to his lips—drained it—and dropped it, empty, out onto the grass.

III

THE WIND was cool against Kendricks' face—no—it wasn't wind, it was a cloud—no, not a cloud—it was just a feeling of freedom—the coolness of just a thought that is tied to nothing at all—a lazy kite without a string.

"Hello!" he said to himself. "Hello John! Where are *you* going?"

And then he laughed. For the first time since he could remember there was nothing—absolutely nothing in his way. It reminded him of mornings at his country grandmother's, when he used to waken in a room full of sunshine, with green meadows out of the window, and a white bed to stretch in, and nothing to think of but the creek full of water to wade in until night time!

"That was nice," he said, "but quite a while ago."

"This is nicer," his grandmother said "and this is right now!"

John turned to look at that sweet old grandmother of his, and then, like the big boy he was, he snatched her up and hugged her.

"Say, you're good to see!" he cried, "I've missed you a lot—but—" and he felt puzzled for a minute—"but aren't you dead, Grandmother?"

"Why, yes," she laughed. "So are you. So are a lot of people!"

And then Kendricks remembered.

"Well, yes," he said. "I *am* dead, that's right. What's the difference?"

"Why—I forgot," his little Grandmother said thoughtfully. "I don't remember how it used to be. Do you?"

GRADUALLY it all came back—and Kendricks remembered why he had come, and he began to think of whom he'd like to see before he went home again. And the very wonderful thing about it was that when he thought of them—there they were!

His Mother! He hadn't dared to think about finding—his Mother!

"Oh!" she said. "Oh, my big little boy! My dear big boy! Let me touch you!"

Her soft fingers kissed his face. And his head in her lap found rest it had forgotten could be. How long he stayed! Such blessedness it was to have her!

Kegway!

"Well say, old John!" Kegway laughed. "*You've* come along have you! Now listen, John—wha'd you let 'em give away my railroad stock for? And say, John—is Carrie happy?"

Kendricks winked at his friend.

"Called her up yesterday on purpose to tell you, Keg," he said. "Carrie has lots of money and a new husband, and it's fine. And what d'ya think? Dickerman wanted me to bring you a glass of beer!"

Kegway laughed.

"Dickerman's needing beer worse than I am," he said. "Say isn't this great, Ken? Don't need a thing! Don't want anything at all! You feel like a spring day smells, don't you? My soul plays marbles all the while!"

Kendricks looked ahead of them—around them.

"It's just a great highway," he mused. "Just sky and space and the smell of flowers—just a great highway. But it's so big! So wide and free! Isn't there any end to anything?"

"Of course not," Kegway smiled. "There's no end to soul, is there?"

"Work and streets and duties and people would be hard to live with after this," Ken remarked. "I'd feel tied up like a big thing in a little pen!"

"That's all any man is anyway," said Kegway—"a big thing in a little pen. Yes it would be mighty hard to be shut up in the limit of a life again!"

But still—there was Elise. Ken told Kegway about Elise.

"She's such a beautiful thing," he said. "Just a flower—that's all. I—I want her, Kegway. I do want Elise!"

"Well," Kegway said quietly, "if you want her now you do love her. Real love is the only thing you can't leave behind you. Most love isn't real, so *that* doesn't matter on the great highway, but when love is love—death can't make any difference. Here, as in life, you only wait, and —know! But here it's joy to wait, because here always love comes back to love—so a world of waiting isn't long."

THEN Kendricks told about his going home again. "Well," said Kegway, "maybe you will—maybe you will—but I don't see how anything could squeeze you into a body again. I couldn't put an oak tree back in a seed, but maybe you know how it's done. But life is so little! People just step on your toes all the while!"

Kendricks thought of his four-wall laboratory, and the dark stairways—of little Woodward Avenue that had seemed so wide before! He thought of having to pour things out of bottles, and mind the hours and days! Such a lot of little troubles! Such a lot of building blocks and tipping them over! . . . But still, there was Elise. The great highway was empty without Elise! Yes, for her he must go back. They must build their blocks and live their little days together. He thought about it quite a while—and then from out of a distance he heard her voice!

"Ken," she was calling—"Ken, hold my hand! Don't you know me! Here I am! Look at me! Look at me! Can't you see me, dearest dear?"

He felt her fingers soft and sweet in his.

He felt her cheek against his own. He heard her voice, closer—closer—but he couldn't see, he couldn't see! And then out of a mist she began to come to him—her wide gray eyes shining with tears—her hair dark against her forehead—her lips sweet, and trembling and half afraid.

"Oh," he cried, "oh, my sweetheart! I knew I'd find the way back to you! Days and work and life are little—but love is big!

"I can bear even life again, for you!"

SHE held him close. "Is—is the other so good, then?" she asked, curiously. "Tell me about it, dearest dear?"

"It's just a great highway," he told her. "Wide, fresh cloudless sky, and—" he remarked Kegway and smiled—"and no one to step on your toes. Shall we go and tell the boys?"

"Do you want to see the boys?" she asked. "We'll find them if you *want* to, but there are a lot of people around the house, and they're pretty busy."

"Busy!" Ken said, a bit surprised. "Why, what are they so busy about?"

"Oh," she told him, "with flowers and things"—and then he remembered.

"By George, that's right! It's our wedding day!" he exclaimed. "This is 'tomorrow' isn't it! And to think it's only yesterday I found you! Oh my sweetheart, can we believe it!"

Elise, her eyes shining with love, looked into his adoring face.

KEN," she breathed, "you big sweet boy! Don't you know any better than that? They aren't our wedding flowers, Ken! The flowers are just for—me! This isn't 'tomorrow!' Ken, don't you know you never came back? Don't you know that now, at last, *I've* come to *you*—that *'yesterday'* when you found me was twenty years ago?"

The Language of Flowers

By James Owen Tryon

Doctor Abercrombie took the afternoon train from New York to Philadelphia to call upon Miss Fellowes. He had been introduced to the young lady for the first time the previous week at the Charity Ball, had danced or sat out seven dances with her in the course of the evening, and in availing himself of her urgent invitation to look her up when in Philadelphia, believed that he saw the commencement of a mutual fancy which had promise of developing into something stronger.

After leaving the station he walked to his hotel, stopping on the way at a florist's establishment to order a box of flowers delivered to Miss Fellowes' address immediately. At the hotel he called her up on the telephone, announced his intention of calling that evening, and was pleased at the apparent enthusiasm with which his unexpected presence in her vicinity was received.

During his solitary dinner at the hotel, Doctor Abercrombie's thoughts were entirely occupied with the coming meeting and with the novel emotions caused by the prospect. No other young woman had ever set his heart in such a flutter.

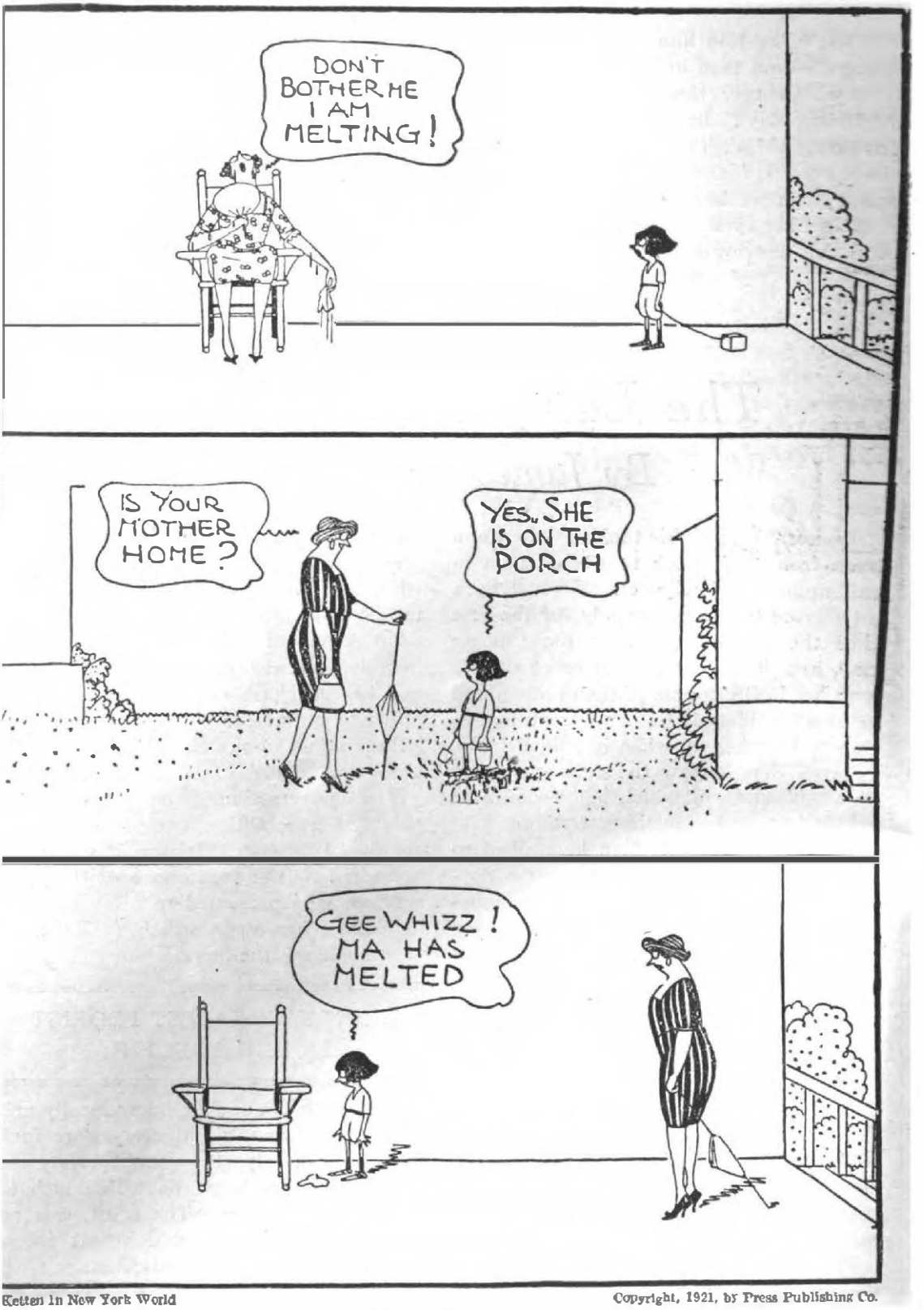
Precisely at eight-fifteen he mounted the steps of a substantial brown-stone house on a quiet street and was shown by a man-servant into a tastefully furnished library. A dignified interval only preceded the appearance of Miss Fellowes, who greeted him cordially. In the mental stress of attempting to determine just what degree of warmth her manner was intended to convey, the doctor quite forgot his purchase of the afternoon and failed to notice the absence of any floral tribute either upon Miss Fellowes' person or in the room.

The conversation, from a commencement of generalities, became more personal and intimate. It was at length interrupted by the appearance of the man-servant, who presented to Miss Fellowes an oblong box upon which, in large letters, appeared the inscription:

> COHEN, CHEAPEST FLORIST IN PHILADELPHIA

Miss Fellowes smiled enigmatically and opened the box. The doctor swore furiously but silently, and sought vainly for some uncensorable words with which to express his feelings. The result was an unintelligible sputter, which was interrupted by a deliciously musical laugh from the lady.

"Why waste words?" she asked sweetly. "You have said it with flowers!"



Ketten in New York World

Can you beat it?

Carr in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

"Well, my dear, I won my divorce, hands down. The Judge awarded me custody of the Pekingese!"

The Wages of Greed

By S. Omar Barker
and
Phil Le Noir

The setting is laid in old Mexico. The theme is the old, old story of the debasing power of the gold lust, in striking contrast to the transmuting power of the pure, white love of Ysobel Ortega.

The Mexican village of Ojo Sarco is old. The clank of Spanish mail once echoed down her narrow, aimless streets, and there was once the shadow of waving plumes on her dull mud walls. Spanish cavaliers have passed, and doddering, black-cowled Dominican monks where now still stand the cracked adobe walls and axe-hewn *vigas* of an ancient day.

A tale there is that there is gold—enormous wealth—hidden in the walls of Ojo Sarco and beneath her tortured streets. If it is so, Ojo Sarco is a cunning miser and guards her secret well, for today her only visible gold is of the desert sunset or the deep red *chili* drying on her ugly walls.

Hidden, like her fabled treasure, within the walls of sunbaked mud and beneath a cloak of utter outer ugliness, the village has also beauty. Starry eyes, and lips like rich red wine, and love and life—and even hate—are there, securely hidden, for outwardly Ojo Sarco is old and staid and gray.

Like the village of his birth was Don Juan Montoya—old and utterly unbeautiful, with wrinkled features brown as the straw-flecked adobe of the cracking walls and houses; and, like the ancient town, a miser. But it was often whispered among the brown-armed women as they drew water at the village well that his was a real treasure, not fabled as that of the age-old village, and carefully guarded in some secret place.

One might know, they said, the hiding of the cunning wolf, but never the hidden pitcher containing Don Juan's gold. Even the hawk-like, plotting eyes of Pedro, his ne'er-do-well son, had never found the coveted treasure of the miser. And much as old Don Juan loved and trusted his other son, Francisco, this secret he had kept from him as from his mother now long since dead.

Often sharp eyes, black and covetous, peered from under huge straw sombreros and catlike feet followed Don Juan as he moved about the village, for the men of Ojo Sarco loved gold. Chief among these watchers, always with a long knife in his belt, was Antonio Ortega, gambler, evil-minded and unscrupulous, but withal father of Ysobel, sweetest flower of ancient Ojo Sarco.

IT WAS MAY. The light of a warm spring sun glinted on her hair and warmed her bare brown arms as Ysobel Ortega came tripping with huge earthen jars for water at the plaza well. There was a rippling song on her lips:

"Cuando voy a tu casa, Celita linda—"

As she came out on the plaza toward the well her song was interrupted.

"*Buenos dias, Señorita Linda!* You are very happy this morning, is it not true? You sing and the very birds are jealous!"

Pedro spoke softly but without removing his yellow cigarette from his lips nor his beaded sombrero from his head. His small black eyes had a covetous light in them.

Ysobel smiled. Pedro was neither handsome nor attractive. He was not even commonly courteous, and Ysobel did not like the proprietary stare in his eyes. But it was May and the world was bright and kind: why spoil it with cross words? She smiled and answered him, half joking, half serious.

"*Buenos dias, Señor Guapo!* Certainly I am happy this morning. And why not? I keep no big sombrero on my head to hide me from the sun, and there is no stench from yellow *punche* curling in my eyes.

"You men, you smoke until I think the very fireplace is jealous of your smell! . . .

"*Ah! Buenos dias, Don Paco Montoya!*" she called brightly, turning from Pedro and waving a shapely brown hand to Francisco, plowing in a little field near the plaza.

Francisco called a morning greeting to her gravely. Even at that distance the girl noted the damp ringlets of handsome black hair lying on his forehead as he courteously removed his slouching work hat.

"Your brother is a *caballero*—a handsome gentleman, Don Pedro. You should be proud of him."

Her eyes still followed the tall figure at the plow, not knowing the heavy heart he carried at seeing her with Pedro.

"Bah!" exclaimed Pedro with an ugly laugh.

"Paco is a fool. A simple-minded peon! Handsome? What is that without brains?"

Ysobel's face flushed a deep red under its brown as she picked up her *ollas* and started on to the well.

"The day is too lovely and the sun too bright to mar it with unkind words. The world is too kind today for anger, Pedro, or I should know how to answer you. *Adios!*"

The ill feeling in Pedro's eyes as they followed her gave place to an expression of plotting desire. He smiled a twisted, cryptic smile, shrugged his shoulders and left the square.

THAT NOON when Ysobel had everything prepared for the mid-day *comida* and her father did not come, she slipped quietly out and followed the footpath, overhung with mesquite brush, that led from the village a few hundred yards over the hill to *La Cantina de los Viajeros,* where Antonio Ortega, the gambler, could often be found. The noon day sun was warm, and near the crest of the hill the girl paused to wipe the dampness from her pretty brown forehead.

There was a worried, anxious look in her big dark eyes which changed at once to a startled one as Pedro Montoya stepped suddenly out of the thicket of mesquite and confronted her.

"A-ah! 'Tis thee, eh, fair little daughter of the devil? Dost seek a tryst on the deserted path at noon? So! We are well met, my little one, for—"

"No, no!" she interrupted, anger kindling in her eyes at his insolent use of the familiar pronoun. "I go to *La Cantina*—let me pass!"

"*La Cantina?*" Pedro smiled, the smoke of his yellow cigarette framing his face as he blocked her way. "It is wine thou desirest, *hijita linda del diablo?* See, here I offer thee wine of love, and after—Pedro they servant will go and bring what thou mayst desire from *La Cantin*—"

The last word was cut short by a blow on his mouth from the soft palm of a swift little brown hand. It knocked the hot ashes of his cigarette into his face, and as he spluttered Ysobel tried to pass, but he caught her.

"Then she listened quietly at the door until she had heard a one-sided rehearsal of the meeting on the trail with herself and Francisco, the finding of Montoya's hidden wealth—all poured into willing ears by the wily tongue of Pedro."

"So!" His nails dug cruelly into her soft arms and as she winced he smiled. "It is thus thou wouldst greet thy lover—thy *novio*, eh? Now give me a kiss to pay for that blow! No, thou canst not cry for help," he added, placing a rough hand at her throat to restrain her.

Ysobel was not frail nor was Pedro big and strong like his brother, and the girl struggled and scratched like a wildcat, hoping someone might happen along the trail.

But the villagers, *dueños* and *peones* alike, were all at their noon *comida*, and the streets of the village in sight below seemed deserted. The strength of the man gradually overcame her. His loathesome lips were almost at her mouth when she felt a slight jar and saw a brawny fist strike Pedro's jaw. Like the laxing of muscles when one wakens from a dream, Pedro released her and turned on his assailant.

From the village below, Francisco had seen struggling figures on the hill. Quickly guessing the situation he had run up the path and now faced bare-handed the long knife his brother had jerked from his belt. Even thus armed Pedro was no match for Francisco's superior strength and agility. Twice Francisco dodged by a hair's breadth the skillfully handled weapon and a third time caught the arm that swung it. With a powerful effort he wrenched his brother's arm until Pedro cried out in pain and dropped the weapon.

Unarmed, Pedro was helpless and cried out for mercy. A few punishing blows and it was granted.

"Now *véte!* And learn to treat young women with respect. Were thou not my brother thou shouldst not escape so easily!" Francisco motioned him away.

A DOZEN STEPS down the path toward *La Cantina* Pedro stopped and rolled a cigarette. Then through the curling blue smoke he called in sneering tones:

"Wait, thou *hijo de un demonio!* This is not my last with thee!"

"Go!" Francisco moved a step toward him.

Pedro shrugged his shoulders.

"*Bueno,* I go," he muttered, "but wait! This is not the end!"

Francisco turned to the girl.

"He did not hurt you?" he asked anxiously.

Ysobel gave him a look and a smile that brought a tingling flush of delicious embarrassment to his face, and nodded a negative. Then she came close and laid a hand on his bare, muscled arm.

"And you, Paco, you are not injured?" The question with the familiar use of his nickname was almost a caress. She said no word of thanks, but Paco did not mind. He was drunk with what he seemed to see in her deep eyes, and confused at his sudden discovery.

"He did not touch me," he answered. "I wish—may—I—the truth is, I must apologize to you for my brother's rudeness," he added in confusion. "It shall not happen again. But the sun is warm—shall we not return to the village?"

"I was going to the saloon for my father, but perhaps he does not wish to come home for dinner, anyway. Many times he does not come and many times he is late and curses me and beats me if I displeased him. Yes, I will walk back with you to the village. If he sees me with you he will be angry—but then, I am used to that!"

Together they walked down the path and at the plaza they parted, a new note of happiness singing in the heart of each.

Across the hill the beaten Pedro walked slowly and broodingly down the path toward *La Cantina.*

SUDDENLY Pedro was startled by a cry. He stopped and listened. A little to the left of the trail was a big clump of mesquite. From behind it came a voice, strangely familiar, calling for help. Without hesitation, Pedro ran around the big mesquite. A large flat stone of blue slate lay slightly tipped against a jutting of the main ledge, and

from between the two protruded the grizzled head of Juan Montoya, Pedro's father, wedged tight by the weight of the flat rock. In going to his gold the old miser had allowed the stone to fall before getting his head below the surface.

"*Por vida de Dios, Papa!*" exclaimed Pedro, "what are you doing there?"

"Dying, fool!" howled the old man, "if you stand there like the *tonto* that you are and ask questions! Hurry! Lift this stone from my neck, or the curse of Judas be on you!"

From above, where one could obtain an easy grasp on the stone it was easy to raise, and in a moment Pedro had his father released, slightly bruised but otherwise unhurt.

Under the stone was a circular shaft with a rough ladder leading down into what was evidently a subterranean chamber.

PEDRO dropped quicly down the ladder to the bottom and struck a match. In one corner of the little hewn-out cellar stood a huge earthen jar; into which Pedro thrust an eager hand and drew forth gold! The secret of secrets had been discovered.

As rapidly as his old legs and the weakness from his recent ordeal would permit, the miser followed his son. His voice took on a pitifully whining tone.

"For the love of the Virgin, Pedro, *hijo mio*, do not disclose my secret! You shall have gold—see—here, you may keep that handful. Ah! It is beautiful, my gold! Next to you and Francisco, my sons, I love my gold. It is an old man's only joy. You will not disclose it, Pedrito, no! Promise me you will not!"

The old man fell to his knees at his son's feet. A queer light came into Pedro's eyes and he smiled his evil smile, but his voice was soft and soothing.

"No, my little father, certainly I will not diclose your secret. And I will take no gold. See, only this one small coin to drink the wine of an evening to your health."

THE OLD MAN rose reassured, and together they climbed quickly to the outside and carefully replaced the big flat stone so that there was no sign of an opening in the earth. Then Pedro turned again toward the saloon and the old man went back over the hill to the village.

"My good Pedro," he mumbled to himself, "he will not tell! He will not tell!"

But the crafty Pedro had plans of his own. Through the thick, ill-smelling tobacco smoke of *La Cantina* his eyes sought Ortega—and found him, half drunk and in the midst of a group of gamblers and parasites of the tables.

"*Por a Santa Virgin, compadre!*" he exclaimed when he saw Pedro, "what has happened to you? You look like the bedraggled rooster in a first-class *gallo* race.

Pedro came close before he answered.

"Just a little ill luck," he said, "I must tell you of it and of other things you will wish to hear—something to delight your soul, *compadre*."

The gambler's keen eyes searched Pedro's. Slowly the inquiry passed from them and his yellow stained teeth showed in a comprehending grin. He called for *aguardiente* and filled two glasses.

"Pedro Montoya," he said pompously as he lifted his glass, "the friends of Antonio Ortega are welcome at his home. You say you have important news for me. It is well. But not here. This is a den of thieves. Tonight—tonight you shall come and we will talk. Is it not well so?"

Pedro gulped his glass of whiskey

"*Convenido!*" he said. "It is well—tonight."

IN THE unlighted night of Ojo Sarco, when only the moon shadows tall sombreros on the dingy walls and streets, the faces beneath them are faces of mystery. As in the days of the Spanish cavaliers, dark-skinned Romeos twang their guitars in soft accompaniment to old Spanish airs of love, while olive-skinned Juliets slip from the protecting wings of parental care to court romance in the witching night.

But romance is not all there is abroad on moonlit nights in Ojo Sarco. As in days of old there stalk abroad both knaves and knights.

And so it was that Francisco, nursing in his heart the hope of love he had seemed to see that day in the eyes of Ysobel, and as yet not daring to go to her, wandered forth into the warm May night and took the solitary path that they had trod together in the day.

Pedro, nursing in his heart plots and plans of another sort, slunk like the knave he was to the house of Antonio Ortega, who welcomed him at the door. At once they were in conference, and Ysobel, in another room, awaiting, too, perhaps, the song of a too timid Romeo, overheard them speak her name.

Then she listened quietly at the door until she had heard a one-sided rehearsal of the meeting on the trail with herself and Francisco, the finding of Montoya's hidden wealth—all poured into willing ears by the wily tongue of Pedro. And then she heard the contract whereby it was agreed that her father should steal into Montoya's secret chamber and remove the gold, after which she was to be given to Pedro as his reward, and the three were to disappear from Ojo Sarco. The next night was chosen for the deed.

Shocked at the disclosure of plotted crime, her thoughts turned instinctively to Francisco for aid. A light mantilla about her head and shoulders, she ran swiftly to the Montoya house and knocked.

Only the voice of the old man ansered her call.

"Quien es?" he called before opening the door.

"It is I—Ysobel. I must see Francisco at once! There is something like the smell of the señor devil in the air!"

Montoya opened the creaking door.

"Come in, *niña,*" he said, the ugly lines of his face softening into a kindly smile. "The old man is alone. My two good sons are out mooning in the warm night —singing, perhaps, at the portal of some *señorita,* not knowing that the fairest of these is come to their very door."

WHEN she had entered, Ysobel came quickly to the object of her visit, telling the old man what she had planned to tell Francisco. She laid bare her father's plot, but because she knew how old Don Juan loved his sons, and lest he should not believe her, she did not mention Pedro's part in the affair. Her own father she did not spare.

During the relation of the proposed plot, Don Juan twitched from hands to eyebrows in agitation, but as she finished he became calm, and placed a wrinkled hand kindly on her shoulder.

"Niña," he said, "it is well that you have told me. I shall know what to do. And as for you, you need not worry. You know I have no daughter, child, and often I long for one. Whatever else he may do, old Juan Montoya will not forget your kindness. Should aught befall your father"—a hard gleam came into his eyes when he mentioned Ortega—"you shall come to live with me."

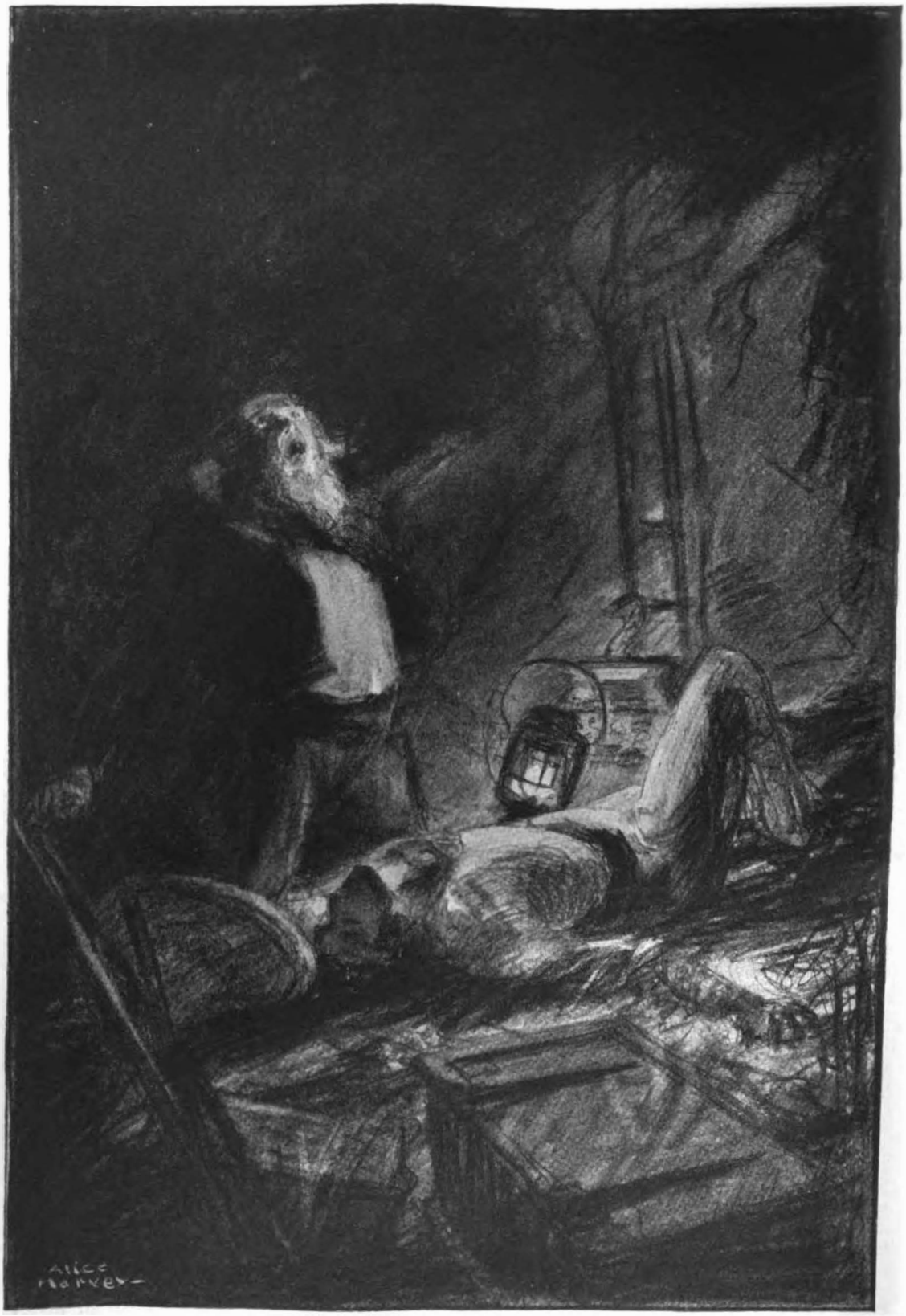
His kind words and tone, of a sort to which she was unused brought tears to her eyes as she left him; but outside she met Francico, returning from the hill and sad thoughts left her as he turned timidly to walk at her side along the old gray wall of passion vines that led to her home.

And then, having told his father, she made no mention of the plot to Francisco. lest she divert his mind from dearer things.

When Ysobel had gone, Montoya's lips stiffened into a hard line and he raised a tightly clenched and gnarled old fist toward the heavens.

"In the name of sweet revenge, Antonio Ortega, tomorrow night you shall feel its just and heavy hand!"

The next day, Don Juan Montoya spent out in the sage brush on a strange mission. With him he carried a lidded water jar, a small rope, a black shawl, and a small flask of dark Mexican whiskey.



"The old man fell on his knees, sobbing. 'Santa Virgin! Oh—ay-ay-ay! Pedrito, little son, it was not for thee—not for thee! For thee I would have given the gold—all! Speak—speak! Little Pedro, ay—gran Dios!'"

EVENING came and then in the dark hour before the rising of the moon the conspirators met in the shadowed alley beside Ortega's door. But the gambler had a new plan. Like men of his ilk from time immemorial, he shrank from the possibility of personal injury in the execution of a dangerous deed.

"Pedro, *compadre,*" he said, "we must not both go for the gold. Do you wish your bird to fly the nest while we are away and have naught but the gold on your return? No? Then must I stay here and keep her, for she is suspicious of us, while you go bring the gold. It is better thus, *compadre.*"

"Or I will stay—and keep her—safe—while you fetch the gold," said Pedro, his eyes lighting evilly at the thought.

"No, no! It is better that the girl should not suspect until all is safe. No, I will stay. Besides, you know best just where to find the gold. No, Pedro, it is best that you should go."

"Bien!" Pedro responded, "we will not quarrel over it—I go. In an hour I shall be back—with the gold!"

He slipped off into the darkness. As he stealthily lifted the great stone and descended the rude ladder, he did not see the figure of his old father hidden beside a browsing burro in the mesquite and sage brush.

Nor did the old man recognize the stealthy figure as his son; and Francisco, strolling up the path to breathe the soft night air before making the visit his heart told him he must, saw neither the old man nor Pedro and passed on.

AT THE MOUTH of the hidden chamber, Juan Montoya listened expectantly. He heard the slight click that accompanied the removal of the cover from the *olla;* then a faint buzz as of a bee in dry leaves, followed by a human shriek of pain and horror indescribable.

"Ah!" exclaimed the old man. "Antonio Ortega, robber, son of the devil, revenge is mine! Thou hast thy punishment!"

After the shriek came groans of agony, and fear, and the sound of groping footsteps, as of one bewildered seeking an exit. Montoya waited. A few moments and there was the sound of a body falling to the floor. Then he descended, lit his lantern and approached the body of the robber, motionless, but still groaning.

"Antonio Ortega," he intoned, "it is thy just fate!"

With his foot he turned the body face upward. . . . The man was not Ortega. The face that looked up at him out of the agony of approaching death was that of Pedro.

The old man fell on his knees, sobbing.

"Santa Virgin! Oh—ay-ay-ay! Pedrito, little son, it was not for thee—not for thee! For thee I would have given the gold—all! Speak—speak! Little Pedro, ay—*gran Dios!*

Fumblingly the old man felt for his knife and then cut deep gashes across Pedro's hand where the wound was, hoping that the flow of blood would carry out the poison. He even put his lips to the wound and sucked and spat frantically in an effort to save his son. But the poison was acting quickly and there was not even recognition in Pedro's eyes. In a few moments the hurrying blood had carried poison through the heart valves and the body was still in death.

Only then did the old man arise. Still sobbing, he seized a stone and hurled it at the big uncovered *olla.* The stone shattered it and among the pieces all in a pile of gold coins a huge rattlesnake lay coiled, ready to strike. For a second it remained thus and then glided to a thin crevice in the hewn stone wall of the cellar and disappeared.

Montoya's face became suddenly calm. He stared alternately at the pile of gold and at his dead son. His agitation ceased as if a burden of years had been removed. A grim determination showed in his eyes and with it a strange, whimsical smile on his wrinkled lips. With great difficulty he carried the body of his dead son up the ladder to the surface, came down

again and gathered the pile of gold into a sack made from his coat, re-ascended, and then fetched the browsing burro. The moon was just rising over the trail from *La Cantina de los Viajeros* as the burro topped the ridge with its doleful burden. Across its shoulders, already straight and stiff in death, lay the body of Pedro Montoya. Back on the burro's hips, sitting erect and with his long hair glistening in the moonlight, rode the old man.

OJO SARCO is old, and there are those among her aged men who have seen strange things. Old Jesus Castro, the village shoemaker, will cross his beard devoutly, and mutter prayers to the blessed Virgin as he tells you of a May night in the days of old Montoya the miser, when he looked up and saw against the white orb of the rising moon at the top of the trail a living, moving cross. And (*qué la Santisima Virgen nos proteja!*) at the top of the cross the long hair of the crucified Jesus could be seen to move in the moonlight.

And the next morning the bodies of two men were found—dead by the hand of judgment—Pedro Montoya and Ortega, the gambler; while along the trail to the village was the red track of blood shed by the avenging, living crucifix!

And all through the streets of Ojo Sarco were found bloody coins of gold, strewn there for the poor—aye, by the gracious, nail-pierced hand of God!

The Opening Sesame

By Harry Irving Shumway

Mr. Youngblade was staying late. Both he and Myrtle realized it with a start when her father, Old Yellencuss stamped into the room. Myrtle trembled for her lover. Had she not seen more than one young man thrust bodily out into the cold, empty ozone?

"Young man," roared Yellencuss, "this is no all-night parking place! Haven't you any home—answer me; have you forgotten your address?"

"Pardon me, sir," began the young man, "I was just telling Myrtle—"

"Yes, and you've been telling her too darned long. It must have been important news."

"Why, all I was talking about was—"

"Was about five hours," snapped the girls father. "Too demned long. Now you beat it before I—"

"Yes, I am going right away. I was just describing the round of golf which I played this afternoon. 'Now Myrtle,' I said, 'my ball went into the trap on the seventeenth hole. I was away from the pin at least a hundred and twenty yards. I took my mashie and the ball soared up over the cluster of trees and landed—where do you think?'"

"Yes, yes, where did it land?" breathlessly inquired old Yellencuss. "I never could get over those trees."

"Plunk on the green," proudly answered Youngblade. "Yes sir, two feet from the pin. We'll I'll bid you good-night."

Yellencuss pushed him back in the chair with firm hands.

"Sit down, sit down," he cried eagerly, "it's just the shank of the evening. Say, I want to tell you how I did the eight hole the other day. It was like this—"

As they say at the races, "they're off!"

"One up on Bogey."

Williams in The Bystander, London

A story of the ponies and those who play them, being particularly the story of Rand Warwick, to whom life was an open racing book, who operated just a hair's breadth inside the law, but who at heart was as straight as they make them. And then there was Amelie—

Romance and Rand Warwick

By W. Carey Wonderly

Rand Warwick lived by his wits. Many of us do. But Warwick belonged neither to the modern crusaders, professionally trying to reform the world, nor was he a member of the Wall Street brotherhood, a politician nor yet a gentlemanly crook. He was a track follower and he was to be found invariably where the ponies raced.

His specialty was easy money. Sometimes he owned a horse or two, again he trained briefly for a newcomer to the sport, and he would bet his last penny when a melon was to be sliced or a sure thing ready to be turned loose on an unsuspecting public. Always he kept within the law. He knew better than to incur the displeasure of the Jockey Club, or get himself in the bad graces of the Pinkerton men who patrolled the tracks. Seldom were his dealings open and aboveboard, yet if his game savored of sharp practice, he was blessed with common sense enough never to cross the safety zone.

Coming down to Maryland for the autumn meetings, an old ally, Whitmarsh, handed Warwick the lay-out with which to gather a cool thousand or two without as much as soiling his well-kept fingers. The transaction was perfectly legitimate, even if Whitmarsh had overreached himself and was hurrying away by invitation. There was an old well-to-do farmer in the neighborhood who owned a pet horse called Gipsy Baron, and it became Warwick's business to get hold of this worthless animal through the claiming route. It was an old trick and one with which the young man was thoroughly familiar. He promised Whitmarsh a commission, saw him away on a train headed South, and then sat down to wait for the magic name to appear in the overnight entries.

Rand Warwick was seven and twenty, tall, slim, fair, with an engaging smile and a wheedling tongue. Known from Tia Juana to New Orleans, and from Maryland to Canada, the paddock had been his nursery and the race track his alma mater. Like Mrs. Stowe's immortal Topsy, this well-groomed and debonair young gentleman might have just "growed" for all he bothered his handsome head over the subject of ancestors. Actually, he was more concerned about the hang of a sleeve, the cut of a waistcoat. Foot-loose, he followed the thoroughbreds as religiously as the faithful sought the Holy Grail, and the oldest regular could scarcely remember the time when Rand Warwick wasn't flirting with the ponies.

In spite of his nomad's existence, gipsying from the border to the gulf, he lived a simple, somewhat monotonous life. In days of plenty he feasted, and the exorbitant, brass-band hotels knew his ready smile; yet when famine came his mood was just as care-free in a little hall-room, with his pockets lined with pawn tickets. Warwick met the same acquaintances in

both resorts. They nodded and passed on, with a golden tomorrow always just around the next corner.

Prince George's was an unimportant track in a primitive, sparsely settled corner of the State. The town was small and dull, a community that became aware of its neighbors only when the race meetings were in progress each spring and autumn. The natives set themselves on record as being against the track, but the paved streets of the town, the flourishing schools and handsome churches were silent but eloquent testimonials to the generosity of the horsemen. During the meets the little hotel which was patronized by the turf followers was invariably deluged with tickets for suppers and fairs and books of chances to provide a stained glass window, the winter's coal, or a new red carpet for the Sunday school.

Rand Warwick had bought and helped whenever and as often as he was approached, but never before tonight had he considered even remotely the desirability of attending one of these church socials. Afterwards he couldn't have told you to save his soul what it was that had prompted him to walk into the Sunday school room of the Prince George's congregation that was celebrating its annual Harvest Supper. Usually he hated this sort of thing with a man's healthy hatred. He dined sparingly, and made friends slowly, so that he was in search of neither corporeal nor spiritual refreshment when he wandered in at the door.

The dinosaur couldn't have created a more pronounced excitement than when Rand Warwick appeared in these people's midst. At the door someone had relieved him of one of the six tickets he had bought, and then, just across the threshold, he stopped and waited, and waited all evening for a welcoming hand or word. The natives eddied around him like toy boats around a treacherous shoal, and like the worthless barks escaped destruction. He was a danger to be played with —and ignored. The buxom belles of the county withdrew to a safe distance of ten feet and then discussed him in undertones. Magnificent and righteous young manhood marched by without a look. And the elders sat along the wall and nodded their approval of the whole proceeding.

AT FIRST it was a sort of latent pride that held Warwick chained to the spot. He wouldn't be driven away like this. What he had hoped for in the beginning he scarcely knew. He had some money in his pocket. He would have spent it all—gladly; laughed a bit with the church officials, a joke for the men, a compliment for the girls, and then taken himself off as he had come, satisfied with the moment. This harmless, swaggering rôle was not to be his, however. Sweeping the assembly with challenging eyes he failed to come across one kindly, sympathetic face until he glimpsed hers!

The rest of the evening Warwick spent in watching her. Each was conscious of the other's interest. The girl reminded him of a sapling, straight and slim and suggesting the new and delicate green of springtime. Her hair was a cloudy chestnut mass which she wore low on her forehead and away from her ears, revealing little pink lobes, attached to which were heavy gold hoops. These earrings, an alien touch in a Quakerish profile, were emphasized by the dark eyes. Without the gold ornaments, and forgetting her eyes, the girl was a prim and unawakened little puritan, a little finer grained perhaps than those Warwick saw in the town; it was when she looked at you, and the significance of her glorious gaze was realized that yon were reminded of the influence of foreign blood.

All evening she was closely attended by a long, gray, silent man who in some way suggested the earth from which he made his living. And yet, while he was forever at her elbow, the girl seemed in some mysterious manner happily aloof from him, as if her heart and soul, if not her spoken word, belonged to her alone.

When she stepped out in the moonlight, ready to go home, Rand Warwick came up to her and touched her on the arm. "I want to talk to you," he said.

She wasn't surprised, and neither did she resent his words or actions. Disney had gone back in the hall to fetch a forgotten cloak, and she walked on with Warwick as if such a person as her middle-aged lover didn't exist.

"Why did you look so kindly at me all evening?" he demanded, and his rich, tempestuous tones stirred her strangely. "Don't you know who—what—I am? Why should you be kind to me? I could have thrashed every man-Jack of them in the room tonight, and then I wanted to laugh, they were so cheap and ridiculous! It was a struggle between anger and contempt, and then, all at once, I saw . . . you!"

His eyes as much as his words required an answer, and Amelie replied as if she had known him all of her life.

"You didn't see me when you first walked in."

"Somehow I wasn't conscious of you, no!"

"I turned and looked over my shoulder just as you came in."

"It couldn't have been very long before I discovered you." Rand Warwick looked at her searchingly. "You were the only one in that room that didn't knife me with a glance."

She sighed. "It was rather daring of you, I guess."

"'Daring'?" he questioned.

"Yes. None of—of you have ever come to the church sociables before, you see. You weren't kind of expected."

"But I bought half a dozen tickets for this affair tonight," Warwick argued. "Surely I was privileged to use one of them. Your people were anxious enough to get my money, but when I ventured to receive a return for my investment I was treated with the courtesy which might have been extended to a leper. Never mind! My friends and I have paid for the last ton of coal and the last stained window. I wonder how many tickets the church will sell the next time they send a batch to the horsemen who aren't expected to use them?"

Her unruffled calm contrasted oddly with his little outburst of passion. Her smile was sort of far-away and eerie.

"Never mind them; I don't," she said. "There are far more important things in the world."

"Yes, there are you and me," cried Warwick. "You know who I am and you don't turn away; you knew what I was and you tried all evening to make up for your townspeople's affront. Girl, girl! I wonder if you know what you've done to me? I'm not the same. I walked into that hall tonight for something to do, for some place to go; and when I got into the atmosphere I hated it all—everybody! I hated myself. And then you came upstairs and everything changed. Why? You aren't so beautiful, you know, but, God! what a girl you are, the girl for me!"

All a-tremble, she answered him with gentle dignity. "You don't even know me," was what she said.

Warwick threw back his head and laughed, and Amelie thought his laughter was the proudest, happiest sound she had heard in all her life.

"As if that mattered," he cried. "I don't know your name, but . . . as if that mattered! You are you! Girl, I don't care who you are. You might go away from here and I'd never see you again, but I'd love you—so help me, God! I'd love you as long as there's breath in my body. You little flower-thing! You're like the little spring flowers, aren't you? After a time come larger ones, gayer ones, but those little flowers that come along in early springtime—! You are just as sweet as one of them."

Perhaps it was the moonlight, the perfume of dying flowers, or just his words; anyway, she turned faint and swayed, and it required all of her courage and strength to say, "You mustn't—don't!"

"Mustn't?" Rand repeated after her,

"All evening she was closely attended by a long, gray, silent man who in some way suggested the earth from which he made his living."

and laughed. "Why, I love you so well I'm going to take you away when I go, take you away and love you to death. Little, little, flower girl, kind to me in a den of hypocrites!"

She shook her head soberly.

"It isn't right to bet on the races and win money."

"But suppose you bet on the races and lose?" teased Warwick. "Good heavens, little sweetheart, they're not teaching you to look for the hole instead of the doughnut, too? Not on your life! When I'm going to steal you away and marry you—!"

There was a hot-headed, picturesque note to the man's passion which fairly swept Amelie off her feet, for no one had ever talked like this to her before. In Prince George's it was generally understood that some day she would marry Silas Disney, but the middle-aged widower who called regularly on Sundays and Wednesdays, each week, left her as cool and collected as a snow-maiden, and she saw in him only the husband of her stepfather's choosing. Love, the love she had read about and dreamed of, Amelie had never glimpsed before tonight.

With an effort she roused herself, shaking her head sadly as if putting from her a dream too rare to last.

"It's just nonsense," she said in a low little voice. "You don't even know my name, and I—I am going to marry someone else. It's just nonsense, and now go away, please, because Silas is coming and —and I'd rather be alone."

There was a moment so still and deep that the girl could feel the silence. In spite of herself her eyes were drawn to Rand Warwick's; she looked and turned aside, with something akin to a half-smothered sob. He caught the echo of this sound and started towards her, when she shook her head and waved him off.

"You mean that?" Warwick asked harshly, after another pause.

"Yes."

"You're going to marry that man!"

"Ye-es."

He straightened up and shook himself like a capable, wiry terrier, tired of such foolishness and master of the future.

"You're going to do no such thing!" he announced with smiling, triumphant eyes. "You're going to marry me. I've got some plans on tap that will take several days to mature; then I shall have plenty of money and I'm coming after you. I'm coming back to get you—make no mistake about that. Never mind your name, never mind anything but that you can't marry any man but me. You're mine—I'm coming back, girl!"

For the first time in his life, then, Rand was seized with an overwhelming desire to make money—for her. Returning to the track it seemed as if he could scarcely wait for the name of Gipsy Baron to appear in the entries, and it was significant of his mood that he was more determined than before to wring the last penny by his bargain. If the horse was entered for a thousand dollars, it would cost his owner at least four to get his pet back again. Warwick entertained little doubt as to the outcome of his scheme, and with a couple of thousand dollars to his credit he could return and claim his lady-love.

THE dawn of the momentous day found Rand Warwick fully prepared for the business at hand. In order to claim a thoroughbred in such a race as Gipsy Baron was entered in it becomes necessary for the claimant to be represented by a candidate; but Rand, without horses of his own just then, got around this rule by making his claim in the name of a friend who had a starter in the race. According to turf law this was a perfectly legitimate course to take, although Warwick's name never figured in the transaction. Gipsy Baron was entered for twelve hundred dollars, which meant that his present owner valued his horse at that figure, while any other owner fancying the old fellow had a chance to possess him providing his claim over-topped all others. Warwick didn't believe there would be any great demand for the Baron, but in

order to protect his hand he wrote out a voucher for fifteen hundred dollars and deposited it with the stewards before the race.

Gipsy Baron hadn't won a race in years and his intrinsic value was probably a few hundred dollars. As a racing tool he wasn't worth his salt, but to the well-to-do old farmer who took a childish joy in seeing his horse perform, the thoroughbred was well-nigh priceless. This man, Abner Trenworthy, regarded the Baron with the deep affection men usually bestow upon wife and child. Old Abner was without blood relations, a widower with what he considered an unfortunate matrimonial experience. Small wonder, then, in his dour existence, that he made a pet of his racer, that the horse was seen to follow him through the plantations with the docility of a dog.

Rand Warwick didn't know old Abner; he had no great desire to know him. The young man's game was to capitalize the farmer's affection for his horse, scarcely a commendable thing, but then, as Rand worked it out, a perfectly lawful thing to do. When the field paraded past the stands, Warwick, from his secluded corner, picked out and scrutinized Gipsy Baron with frankly cynical eyes. He was wondering if the old fellow could complete the mile and a furlong journey without accident.

There was nothing to the race as far as the Trenworthy entrant was concerned. He was beaten off in the first quarter and finished a distant last, trailing his field by a dozen lengths. In no way surprised, Warwick came down from the grandstand and went in search of his friend, Venton.

When the box was opened, and the claims examined, it was seen that Gipsy Baron went to George Venton on his bid of fifteen hundred dollars. The stewards were mildly surprised to discover there was anyone so foolish as to desire the old horse; but their emotions were moderate compared with Warwick's when he went with Venton to take possession of the racer.

The stable was empty, and old Abner, with folded arms, stood in the doorway. He offered no criticism of the stewards' order giving the horse to another man, but launched his subject without preliminaries.

"You can't have Gipsy Baron, gentlemen. Why, he's like one of the family! I didn't know the rules, I reckon. I didn't think nobody'd want my old hoss. I got a mare and a weanling out on my farm, and you can take them; but no man gets Gipsy Baron."

It was useless to argue with the old farmer, and Rand Warwick, who preferred not to figure openly in the transaction, was afraid of saying too much. On the whole, he was elated at Abner Trenworthy's stand. He was fonder of the horse than Rand had supposed and the Baron's price rose accordingly. The law was on Warwick's side, and Venton reminded Trenworthy that unless he turned over the thoroughbred without further trouble owner and horse would be ruled off the turf for life.

"I don't mind that. I never win anything nohow. It's all fun. And if you want my hoss, let me see you get him, that's all," announced Abner with a bravado he was far from feeling.

Rand Warwick nodded to Venton and the two friends left the stable together without further argument. "Trenworthy's hidden his horse on his farm. I'll take the warrant and run out there tomorrow and probably the trouble can be adjusted with satisfaction to all parties. I think so," was Rand's comment, as they walked back to the paddock.

George Venton grinned. "I'll say the old fellow sure loves his nag. Well, to get down to cases, it's an ancient bird that knows no plucking. Best o' luck!"

WHEN he reached the Trenworthy farm next morning, Rand Warwick's pulse was beating out a paean of praise for the golden November weather. Autumn comes late to this corner of the State and there were none of the

graying skies and dying foliage which makes this month so dreary in the North. The woods were a riot of orange and scarlet in which birds still lingered; the fields had yet to be ploughed up for the fall planting; and there was a virile note in scene as well as air.

Rand left his saddle horse beside an apple tree and walked up to the farmhouse, low and comfortable in the sunshine, like a purring, contented cat. There was nobody at home, as repeated knocking testified; but the open door and the dinner table inside led Warwick to believe the owner could be located on the grounds. Turning away from the house, he spent the next ten minutes roaming through the kitchen garden and the little plantation of silver birch trees, so that his progress was visible to those at the barn long before he arrived there.

The lower halves of the big double doors guarding this structure were closed, with a long, lean, gray man sitting on the rather narrow edge waiting for Rand. Now he was conscious of the pungent smell of hay and feed and cattle, coming through the huge opening above the man. Warwick's chin went up, not so much a challenge as a keen appreciation of the scene and all it stood for. In spite of the spic-and-span order of the farm there was a homelike atmosphere about Abner Trenworthy's domain.

Not immediately did he recognize in this man guarding old Abner's property the Silas Disney of the Sunday-school supper, Rand's potent rival since the girl —his girl—was betrothed to Silas. But when Warwick finally placed his man, he felt that he was going to enjoy himself more than he had anticipated.

"I'm here on business with Abner Trenworthy," Rand Warwick commenced, eyeing Silas from a distance of a dozen feet. "I've a warrant ordering the horse Gipsy Baron to be turned over to me. What do you know about it?"

"Everything, I guess," answered Disney. "Abner's gone in to town to consult a lawyer, but—"

"That won't help matters any," interposed Rand impatiently.

"Just what I told him," Silas Disney said, from his perch on the barn door.

"When you play the game—"

"—you got to abide by the rules. That's what I was telling Abner. But he's so plumb crazy about his old hoss—"

"Well, I can understand a man feeling a real affection for a horse. There's nothing so strange about that. The lesson to be learned is that Trenworthy must be careful how he uses his horse in the future, if he doesn't want to lose him."

"He's already lost him, ain't he?" demanded Disney blandly. "There ain't nothing to be done about it that I can see. I keep telling Abner so, and now he's gone off wasting money for a lawyer—! You'll be racing old Baron yourself, I guess; but you're too slick to place him where Abner—or anybody—can get hold of him, I'm thinking."

"Every animal in my stable is expected to earn his way," Warwick said, a bit pompously for him. "If Gipsy Baron can't win among the handicap horses, he will soon find his way in with the platers. He'll have to earn his oats with me."

Silas laughed derisively.

"Shucks! Gipsy Baron ain't going to win in any company," he said. "Abner just liked him, that's all. The hoss ain't worth fifty dollars on the race tracks. Unless you're just naturally fond of him, you'd better sell him to draw a wagon. I always told Abner that."

"Fortunately it isn't true," replied Rand with a superior smile. "I believe the horse is a valuable racing tool. Of course I do!" he insisted quickly at Disney's incredulous look. "Why else did I claim him? I believe if properly trained and placed Gipsy Baron will more than pay his way. Fifteen hundred dollars—a man doesn't part with that money for a cart-horse!"

"No-o! You mean it?"

"You'd better believe I do. I expect to win him out at Prince George's yet. Now, I want my horse. I've come for him."

"But Abner Trenworthy said the Baron wasn't to be disturbed in his absence—"

"You know the law." Rand Warwick produced his warrant. "I want that horse now."

SILAS climbed slowly down from the door and stood with his back against it, twisting a blade of grass between his thin, bloodless lips.

"My friend would rather part with half his farm, I guess," he observed, filled with concern for Abner's happiness. "You don't know. A hoss is a hoss to you—to you racing fellows. All you think is what an animal is worth—in money. Now, it's different with Abner Trenworthy. I dare-say his colors have never won a race—he don't look for old Baron to win—nine years old, high in flesh, and sort of familiar, like a puppy. And you expect him to win races!"

"I do."

"He's not worth fifteen hundred dollars, young man."

"He is to me," insisted Warwick, rather enjoying himself.

Disney felt his way cautiously, with cunning little glances towards Rand. "You—you wouldn't part with the Baron, then?"

Rand Warwick's voice was cool, but not discouraging. "I didn't say that. I'm not anxious to dispose of my bargain—I just got the horse, you know. But I'm a chap who'll sell every time—at his price. If Mr. Trenworthy wants to talk business, he knows where to find me."

Disney nodded. "He might want to—I don't know. That old hoss is like his own flesh and blood. If he'd give you—how much say, to keep Gipsy Baron, young man?"

"I can't say offhand. He'll have to make me an offer."

"Two thousand?"

"Don't let's waste our time talking nonsense. Five thousand would be more like it."

Silas Disney's jaw dropped. "That's a lot of money," he faltered.

"The horse is worth it to me. I expect to win him out many times—"

"Three thousand, young man. The Baron ain't worth it, but Abner's that fond—"

"Fond of the horse, is he? Then why does he hold on to a dollar until the eagle shrieks?" Rand Warwick threw back his head and laughed loudly. "I'll tell you what I'll do—make it forty-five hundred, take the nag or leave him. He's worth that to me as a racing tool. If Abner Trenworthy's sentiment is less than his greed, it's nothing to me. I've said the last word on the subject. Come across—forty-five hundred cash and the animal remains in that barn."

Silas Disney looked at him for several minutes without speaking. Then he turned and threw open the lower doors of the barn, calling to someone who was hidden in the cavernous recesses.

"You can come out now, Millie, and bring the hoss with you," said Silas. "Seen I was right, ain't you, girl? I told you and Abner what he was up to. All this nice-spoken, slick-haired young fellow wants is your step-dad's money. You heard him? Demandin' forty-five hundred for the Baron—says the hoss is worth it to him. All right. You get that forty-five hundred dollar hoss for fifteen hundred, mister—dirt cheap from your point o' view. Take him away—take him away; and win him out at Prince George's—if you can."

ROOTED to the spot, Rand Warwick discovered that his power of speech had deserted him. He could only stare at Amelie, leading by a short rein from the barn, the animal that all unknowingly was the cause of this heart-break and tragedy.

The girl wouldn't look at Rand. She had fastened an orange and purple scarf around her shoulders, which, contrasting strangely with her print frock, threw into bold relief her dark and scornful eyes. Wind-tossed hair curled low on her neck; the gold hoops glistened in the

sunlight as she walked proudly out to him leading the horse.

"You don't understand," cried Warwick, when she was close enough for him to touch her sleeve. "If you'll let me explain—"

"What is there to explain?" Amelie demanded, briefly lifting eyes to his. "I was in there. I heard all that passed between you and Silas. It turned out just as he said."

The man cursed his luck and grasped frantically for the frailest straw. "Had I known Gipsy Baron belonged to your father, girl—"

She shook her head, and Rand experienced a feeling of failure. "A horse is a horse and a man is a man," she said. "When Silas pointed out that you had planned to take advantage of the sentimentalism of a childless old man I couldn't believe it, and so he made me hide in there and listen. I heard. And I wish I were dead."

Her note of complete surrender to despair turned him faint, and he was afraid, oddly afraid; then he knew he must comfort her, win back her favor even by fraud.

"I meant all I said. I want the Baron and I'm going to win races with him. Can't you understand what this man is trying to do? He hates me because you don't.

"Girl, if you'll only wait awhile and see!"

Hope crept into her face, coloring her cheeks and brightening her eyes; she took a little step towards Rand, her hands clutched to her breast. Yet before he could follow up his slight advantage, Silas Disney claimed the scene.

"Don't let yourself be misled a second time by his wheedling tongue, Millie," commanded the gaunt, gray man. "But there—he's got no moon; and somehow things sound different by daylight. One of them fellows that can explain away the sin of Cain, and you've got no call to listen to him. Millie, I don't ask you to ponder on what I've said; that man stands self-condemned out o' his own mouth."

A curiously hard expression swept all traces of youth from her pretty features.

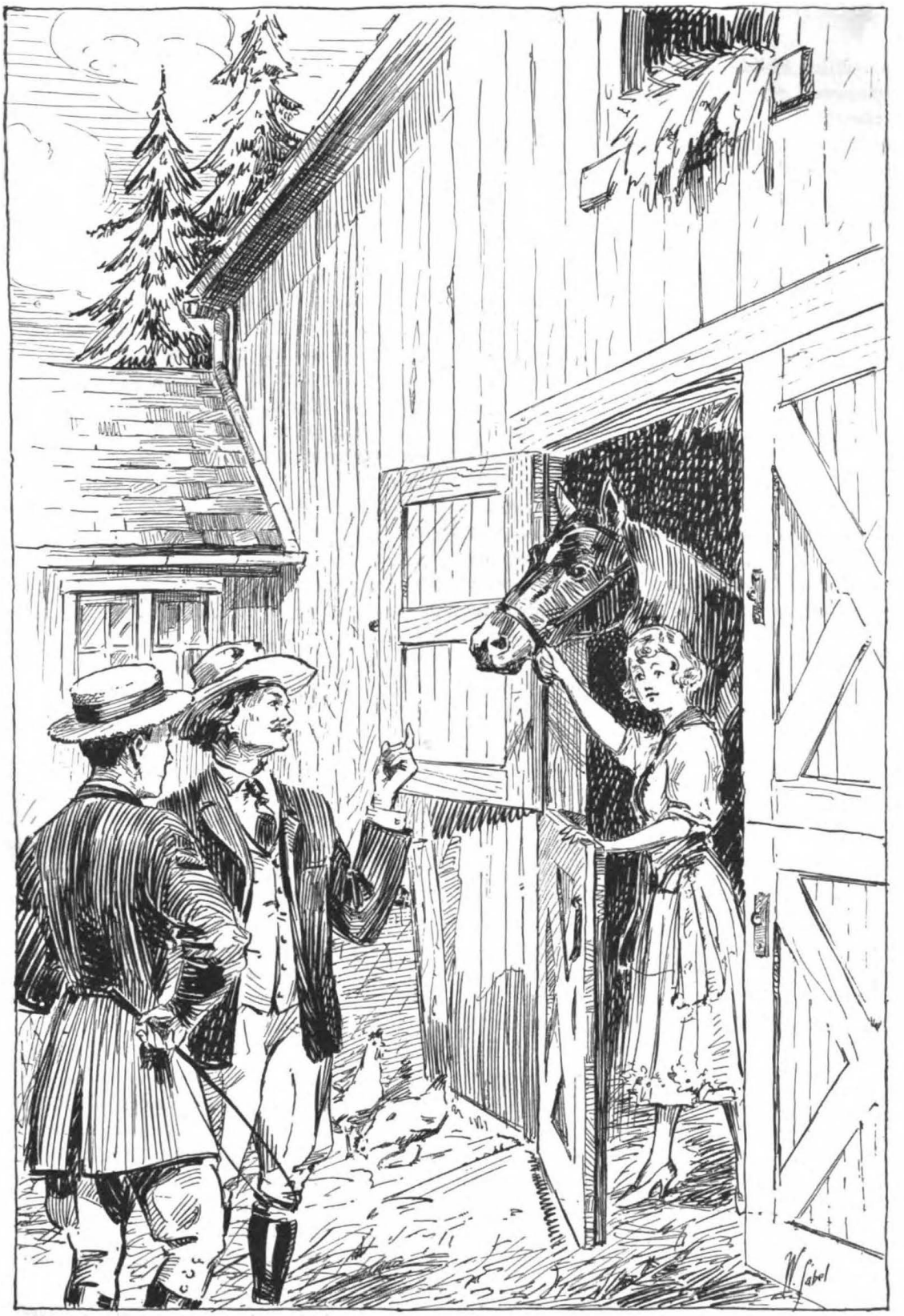
"Are you going to keep Gipsy Baron?" she asked Warwick, with a significance which sent the blood surging to his brow.

He put out his hand and caught hold of the short check-rein. "I am, and you're going to be mighty sorry, too, some day soon. Here are my credentials." Rand proffered the stewards' warrant to Silas Disney. "That completes the deal, I believe. Trenworthy's got my money—or can get it from the track officials—and I've got his horse. Well, may the worst man lose."

AFFECTING a jaunty air he was far from feeling, Warwick made his adieux and led the Baron through the plantation to the apple tree where he had left his saddle horse. It was with an odd sensation of failure and dismay that he rode back to the race-track with the ancient thoroughbred in tow. There was only the knowledge that Amelie had climbed to the brow of the hill to catch the last glimpse of him to sustain Rand Warwick. She must care—a little. So it became imperative for him to make good his brave words and in this way recover his lost caste in her sight.

Down in his heart Rand felt that his acquisition in horseflesh was scarcely worth bringing home, and this in spite of the fact that he did his best to make himself believe otherwise. The first owner of the original white elephant was confounded with no greater problem than he. Gipsy Baron was Rand Warwick's old man of the sea, and he clung tenaciously. There was the feeling, too, that his friends knew he had been vanquished by the common enemy, so that it was as necessary to demonstrate to them as it was to prove to Amelie's satisfaction that his horse was a winner of races.

He gave over the early morning hours to training the Baron and quickly discovered that the old fellow was as difficult as



"He could only stare at Amelie, leading by a short rein from the barn, the animal that all unknowingly was the cause of this heart-break and tragedy."

a spoiled child. Not that he was mean-tempered or moody; on the contrary, he resembled a playful Newfoundland, without thought for work, and delighting to follow his master in faithful dog-fashion. Rand could readily understand how old Abner had come to love the horse. But his very geniality made doubly hard the rigor of training.

Purposely Warwick had remained away from the Trenworthy farm, feeling that he couldn't approach Amelie until he had made some progress with the racer. He wanted to see her. Often he spent hours walking along the sandy country roads, rehearsing what he would say to her—and Rand possessed a wheedling tongue when not caught unawares. Given a half-hour he could subjugate her. He had the strongest arguments ever devised all ready for the asking. He could prove Silas Disney to be a liar and a hypocrite and cover himself with glory and honors. There were only ten days now left of the racing season, and when he set out for New Orleans Rand wanted Amelie with him.

Yet he couldn't go out to the farm; something held him when he got as far as the gate and wouldn't let him enter. More and more time he devoted to Gipsy Baron's schooling, and without appreciable results. Fortunately for him, however, he was directing the exercise boy from the infield, on the morning old Abner came out to the track to visit his pet.

Undoubtedly Rand looked very efficient, signaling to the lad who obeyed these commands as religiously as if he were astride Man-o'-War. Formerly high in flesh, the old horse had taken off some of his excess weight under Rand's guiding hand, he had been clipped, and his chestnut coat presented a racy appearance when the sunlight struck him. But—it seemed that the Baron couldn't do a mile in better than 1:48 to save his neck.

RAND WARWICK permitted old Abner to stand beside him for several minutes before he deigned to notice him at all. Indeed, in his rôle, Rand might have moved away without speaking but for the sudden appearance of Silas Disney and Amelie. They had stopped to read the bulletin and faced him, a dozen yards off, before he guessed they were in the grounds.

"Breaking any records, young fellow?" Silas asked with dry humor, as he came within speaking distance.

Rand removed his cap and bowed to the girl. He was as well groomed at noon, out on the track, as he was in a public place at the dinner hour. Silas seemed a grotesque figure beside him; but then, Silas hugged to his breast a sense of righteousness which Warwick didn't know, and the older man was more than willing to cross swords with such an adversary.

"How do you think he's looking?" Rand addressed his question to Abner and saw the old man's eyes fill with a mingled pride and pain.

"He looks kind o' thin, sir."

"He must tip the scales at twelve hundred," thought Warwick.

"The Baron never looked like that in his life!" cried Amelie, her words stumbling over each other in her excitement, ignoring Silas.

Disney's laugh spread like an evil whisper. "Handsome is as handsome does, I guess. The Baron's just dressed up, that's all. All that sleekness don't make much difference in his speed, I'm thinking. A real companionable old fellow, eh, mister?"

Refusing to answer Silas, Warwick signaled to the boy to put Gipsy Baron to a drive; and approaching the head of the stretch the lad set the old horse down, so that he came through the lane in a manner that couldn't fail to impress the novice. But consulting his stop-watch Rand saw that the time was wretched, and that the old thoroughbred had practically no speed at all. Yet he must be made to win a race for Amelie.

The old man and the girl were watching Rand's face anxiously for a favorable sign.

"That was right fast running," ventured Abner at last.

All along Amelie's attitude toward Warwick was one of shyness, and now she turned to Silas with unmistakable triumph in her voice. "The Baron's going to win—you'll see!"

"Yes, and pigs 'll fly," chuckled Silas Disney, moving away with hands back of him.

For some reason Amelie elected to follow, and presently Rand found himself alone with Abner.

There was a real longing in the old man's face.

"I just didn't come over to see the hoss, Mr. Warwick," he confessed. "Silas knows, and he's walked away a-purpose, chuckling to himself; but I don't care. I'll buy him back, like you said, for forty-five hundred dollars. It may seem foolish to you, and it seems foolish to Silas Disney, but I ain't got the heart to go outdoors no longer, knowing the Baron ain't around. I'm an old man, and somehow my hoss is pretty close to me."

Rand experienced a genuine thrill at the words, but first he wanted to satisfy his curiosity in another respect.

"You've got your daughter, Mr. Trenworthy," he said.

"Not my own flesh and blood," answered old Abner, sighing. "A fine, square girl, but we ain't got much in common, Millie and I. Sometimes I think it's her foreign blood. I married her mother when Millie was a little tot, and her own dad was a seafaring man, called the Portuguese. Besides, Millie's due to marry Silas. He's waited a long time, but I guess he's getting tired, now. So you see, with her gone, and without my hoss—! Five thousand, if you keep your mouth shut to Silas, young man."

RAND was never more horribly tempted in his life. He still had a little money left out of his winnings in the North last summer, but the check for Gipsy Baron had depleted his savings more than he cared to remember. Five thousand dollars just at present looked like a fortune and it would go far towards paving the way for a joyous and prosperous season at New Orleans. With the last work of the Baron fresh in mind, Rand was tempted almost beyond human endurance.

And yet, if he sold back the horse to Abner Trenworthy it meant more than the mere branding of himself a liar and a cheat. It made all that Silas had ever said of him come true. And it meant losing Amelie. In spite of her affection for him, which Rand believed he saw in her shyness, it seemed to him that he couldn't hope to win her while he stood convicted of sharp practice. He was a holdup man, and he just had to make good or confess his calling.

Amelie and Silas were coming back, slowly, but he had to make up his mind. Old Abner seemed hanging on his answer.

"I guess the Baron's not for sale," the young man announced at last. "I'm sorry, and I appreciate how you feel about the old fellow; but I'd like to win with him—"

"Can you?"

So even Trenworthy doubted! Rand felt the blood sting his cheeks. "I'll show you," he said doggedly, as Silas and the girl joined them.

Disney, all forbidding smiles, rubbed his horny hands together as he put his question to Abner. "Takin' the Baron home with us, friend?"

"No," replied the old farmer shortly. "Mr. Warwick here won't sell."

Rand had lost his investment, but his reward came in the shape of Amelie's transfiguring smile.

THERE was a race in the book for the last day of the meeting which Rand Warwick thought Gipsy Baron could win. It was a case of then or never, for the contest was framed for the cheapest sort of selling-platers, and with many of the thoroughbreds shipped away, it was scarcely likely that the entrants would be formidable. For ten days now Rand had spent most of his time studying the book

for the meeting, looking for a spot, hoping for a chance to drop his horse down to victory. Twice he had entered his candidate and then scratched out, sensing the folly of sending the old horse out to meet such fields.

But now—Gipsy Baron was a fresh horse, there was that in his favor. He hadn't been raced to pieces day after day. True, he hadn't any speed at any stage of the journey, but he could go a route; he was a stayer. The race in question, a mile and a furlong, was about the right distance. So Rand Warwick entered the Baron's name again.

When the entries appeared he scanned his racer's opponents carefully, and believed he had a chance. Small stables seeking winter money, cast-offs, has-beens, and never-were-at-alls, and Gipsy Baron. Wretched company, and yet Rand knew he was fortunate in finding at last what looked to be the right spot.

During the afternoon he sent word to Trenworthy farm—the Baron went for all the money tomorrow. Rand felt pretty confident by this time, and he wanted Amelie and Abner—yes, and Silas Disney—there to see his triumph. They weren't turfmen; they wouldn't understand the conditions under which he raced: all they'd see was the horse come home at the head of the procession.

And then Warwick heard something that threatened to plunge him into blackest despair. George Venton came to him with a whispered tale of an attempted coup on Flying Squirrel. The horse had been kept under cover; he had gone miles in better than 1:44; the shrewdest people in the business had him in hand.

All night long the name of Flying Squirrel rang in Rand's ears like a requiem. Yet in the morning Venton found him in a moderately cheerful frame of mind, and when the bugle sounded boots and saddles for the first race, he was greeting his guests with a smile of rare confidence. Abner and Amelie and Silas had driven over from the farm in Trenworthy's cheap automobile. When they had been escorted to the grandstand, Rand Warwick whispered that they could go down on Gipsy Baron with both feet, he was going to win today.

"Pretty confident, ain't you?" mocked Silas. "I heard 'em at the post office last night talking about a hoss, but I forgot his name. He was a certain winner they said, however."

Amelie turned anxious eyes from the program to Rand.

"What do you think? It isn't possible—?" She knew how old Abner desired this race for Gipsy Baron.

Warwick laughed and stuck his pencil through the name Flying Squirrel. "Is that the horse?" he asked Silas.

Disney took the program and read aloud the printed name of owner and trainer. "Yes, that's the one," he almost shouted in his excitement. It was the Hamberton crowd—same name as on the program—that was boastin' about the hoss. If the Baron can lick him—"

"I've declared to win with Gipsy Baron and I don't care a tinker's dam who knows it," laughed Rand Warwick, throwing back his head. "If you want to get yourself some easy money—" Then he broke off, glanced at the girl, and began to tease. "I forgot. It's wrong to bet and win; it's only when you lose that the sin's forgiven. Well, then, stay off, for the Baron's the surest thing today you ever saw!"

TEN odds and ends of thoroughbreds paraded to the post for the sixth event of the matinee. Old Abner hadn't spoken since he arrived at the track, but when he saw the Baron, an ear-pricking, rejuvenated Baron, gallop past the stands, two bright red spots appeared on his cheeks. The start was at the top of the stretch, with the field passing the grandstand twice in order to complete the mile-and-a-furlong journey, and armed with an ancient pair of opera glasses the old man watched breathlessly for the barrier to be sprung. He knew nothing of the mechanism of racing and when Gipsy

Baron left the wire sluggishly and trailed his field through the straightaway, Abner Trenworthy looked as if he were going to die.

As the field swept in front of their box Gipsy Baron was in fifth position and closely attended by Flying Squirrel.

"I bet Hamberton's hoss beats him now," muttered Silas, and was promptly hissed down by Amelie, who began to cheer feebly for the Baron.

"Don't you mind, dad, he doesn't drop back—he's gaining," she whispered in the old man's ear. "It's a long way to go yet, and there'll be many a foot-weary horse before the wire is reached. Watch Baron."

Down the back-stretch it seemed, indeed, that the old horse was moving up, and while he lay a half-dozen lengths in back of the leader, he raced with long, even strides. At the elbow the Baron went forward again, this time into second place, but as before he was closely lapped on Flying Squirrel, racing under stout restraint.

Then the long, straight lane. How many a faint-hearted horse had died down as he sighted this forbidding stretch! To tired chargers it seemed like eternity itself. The leader cracked at the eighth pole and to a rousing cheer Gipsy Baron forged to the front. Closely attended by the Squirrel, he raced straight and true down the middle of the course, and then, within a few yards of goal, with none near them to threaten victory, Flying Squirrel dropped back and Gipsy Baron came on to an easy score.

While cheers for the winner rang in her ears, Amelie turned to her step-father. Tears honest and unashamed stood in his faded blue eyes. "My hoss, Millie," he said, and felt for her hand.

Behind them Silas Disney coughed violently into his handkerchief. "Well, that Flying Squirrel almost had him," he announced. "Once or twice I thought it was all up, and it was—the Squirrel quit. Maybe your heart's satisfied, Abner, even if the Baron does belong to another man now."

The girl's voice laughed a challenge to the universe. "Mr. Warwick said he'd win with the horse!"

They went down to the paddock, Abner Trenworthy stumbling along in his haste to shake Rand Warwick's hand and get to his thoroughbred. All the way he talked to himself, while Amelie's heart sang an accompaniment. Once she turned and looked at Silas, following on leaden feet. No words passed between them, and Disney proved that he understood women; for when they found Rand, her elderly suitor had fled.

Rand Warwick's eyes were as triumphantly happy as Amelie's were. He wanted to steal away with her, woo her all over again with words that crowded for utterance, and then sweep her into his arms, cover her lips with kisses. But he had to pause to listen to old Abner, and Abner was choked with praise.

"A real smart young fellow," he was saying, appealing to Millie with every other breath he drew. "I reckon I'd rather he had my hoss than anybody else, girl."

It was with his answering speech that Rand clinched matters for all time with the old man. "Gipsy Baron's made good and now he goes home, Mr. Trenworthy, if you care to buy him back from me. The price is just what I paid—fifteen hundred. I won't accept a penny more and you can have him only on those terms, Is it a bargain?"

Abner's thanks were cut surprisingly short by a hurried departure, and Rand didn't grasp the significance of this until Amelie pointed out that the old man had gone to the stable to claim his pet before Warwick could change his mind.

"I'm glad you've given him back," she said softly. "I couldn't bear to leave my stepfather on the farm without Gipsy Baron."

"And you're leaving the farm very soon, eh?" Rand whispered, with a boy's happy chuckle in his throat. "I'm going to take you far away with me, sweetheart, and you're never going to get out of eye-shot

again. New Orleans—! Ever been in New Orleans for the Mardi Gras? I guess you haven't, but it's good fun—fun for you and me because life's so darn good itself. I want to show you all the world, I want to see it all again with your eyes. You care a little, you're coming with me, girl?"

WALKING through the paddock, they had left the race-track behind and come to a little lane still in leaf and strangely apart from the frantic, excited mob over there.

Suddenly Amelie stopped still in the roadway and faced Rand with tremulous eagerness. "Are you sure you want me?" she asked.

"Want you, girl?" He threw back his head, laughed, and poured forth all his colorful, lover's language. "What makes you ask that, sweetheart? Is it that I don't care enough? Girl, in all my life, in all my wanderings, I never wanted to marry a woman but you."

"I don't deserve it—don't!" she murmured, hiding her eyes.

"There's nothing too good! Nothing good enough—"

"You."

"I? I'm no tin god, little girl."

"You're wonderful! You're everything that's big and fine and noble!" Her passion frightened him; he drew back and listened, oddly stirred. "When I think of how I've acted—what I've said—letting Silas Disney influence me, half convince me—"

"Convince you of what, Amelie?"

"He said you were tricky, insincere. He got me to hide in the barn that day, and I did it. Can you forgive that? Even when you took Gipsy Baron and said you'd win with him, Silas kept whispering insinuating things—. And I half-believed them—in spite of myself I half-believed the things he tried to prove. Tricky, he said—and I didn't strike him down for it! Well, today you've kept faith with us, even with unbelievers. All you said you were going to do, you've done. When I think of how I acted that day—how I've doubted since, even, I could creep away and die. Forgive me!"

Rand didn't draw her into his embrace and whisper his forgiveness; he neither struck her down, as she had seen the farmers do their women, nor call her to him, which somehow seemed Rand's way. He just looked at her, all at once white and still.

"Suppose I were?" he asked at last.

"Suppose you were—what, Rand?"

"Well, tricky. Suppose Silas was right, and it was all—all a trick this afternoon? Suppose . . . Gipsy Baron couldn't win?"

"But he did win!" Amelie cried, with a vague feeling of alarm in her breast.

Warwick frowned at the tip of his boot. "The Baron won today because I said so. You've got to know the truth—it was what Silas—some people—would call a trick. Although within the law — all according to the rules and regulations of good racing. . . . Why do you make me say these things, girl?"

"I haven't asked you—"

"No, but I've got to tell you. You've got to know the truth about me. I *am* tricky — just that. For I always keep within bounds, there is never enough against me to deny me the privileges of the tracks under Jockey Club jurisdiction, though again and again my operations savor of sharp practice—just that. If I were an out-and-out crook it wouldn't be so bad, perhaps. I'm doubly dangerous, I guess, because I don't break the law; I get around it. Today Flying Squirrel was pounds the best horse in the race and yet the Baron won and I knew he was going to win. Can you figure that out?"

A horrible fascination had crept into Amelie's eyes and kept them fastened on Rand's face. She shook her head slowly as she said, "But I saw it all. Flying Squirrel quit in the stretch."

"Riding instructions," nodded Warwick laconically. "When the boy on Squirrel saw that none of the other

horses could pass Gipsy Baron, he pulled up his mount and the Baron came on to an easy victory."

"You mean the jockey on Flying Squirrel didn't try to win?"

"Yes. The instructions were to let your father's horse score."

"And who gave those instructions?"

"I did."

"And it wasn't honest, you mean."

"It was all according to good, ironclad rules," declared Rand Warwick, with a three-cornered smile. "See here, I had to win with that horse to make good my boasting—to set me right in Old Abner's eyes. Silas Disney had called my bluff when he let me take Gipsy Baron—I didn't want the animal. What he said was true; I had claimed him to sell him back to your father at a fat profit. Silas blocked my game, and I had to keep the Baron. To save my skin I had to win with him.

"You didn't know what a tough proposition that was, girl! Except as a pet, as Abner keeps him, that old horse isn't worth his oats. As a racer—! I studied the entries day after day like a child studying his lessons. I'd think I'd found a spot to drop him in and then something would show up and I'd know the Baron couldn't do it. Time and again this happened. It began to look as if he couldn't lick a flock of sheep and then I stumbled on today's race. The cheapest sort of company—bad legs, poor 'nerved' brutes, badge horses—! But it looked like the right spot, and I'd only boasted I'd win a race with the Baron, and didn't mention the kind.

"And then I discovered the Baron couldn't even win there. The Hamberton boys had a 'good thing' under cover—Flying Squirrel, yes. They had been waiting with their horse, just as I had waited with Gipsy Baron, and according to the work-outs, Squirrel could race the Baron off his feet. I didn't know what to do. I went to the Hambertons and talked it over with them. Naturally, they wanted to win—wanted the purse and the betting privilege. I couldn't induce them to scratch their horse, so I bought him."

THE words spoken, Rand waited anxiously for Amelie's verdict and she didn't keep him long in suspense.

"You bought Flying Squirrel and nobody knew it? I remember that he was down on the program as owned and trained by the Hambertons. You mean that you took over the horse without anyone's being the wiser and instructed the jockey to let Baron win the race—for step-dad's sake?"

"Something like that." Warwick smiled briefly. "Though I suppose really the Baron won for my sake—yes, for me. To impress you. To make Silas out a liar. Do you see?—that's the kind of chap I am. Though I didn't do anything as crude as running Squirrel without reporting the change of ownership to the racing stewards. No, I always work within the law. What I did was to wait until the programs were printed—with Flying Squirrel set down in black and white as the Hamberton's property. That was to fool you and your father and Silas. I waited until the programs were printed—then I reported the sale to the stewards.

"It became necessary then to announce this change of ownership on the bulletin—which I knew none of you would ever see. And since Squirrel was my property, he and Gipsy Baron were coupled as the Rand Warwick entry, and Rand Warwick declared to win with Gipsy Baron. That was my privilege—that is why I paid out my last dollars to get hold of Flying Squirrel. Squirrel was my horse, and I could tell the jockey to pull him in so that Baron could win the race. I was within the law. There it was chalked up on the bulletin—Rand Warwick declares to win with Gipsy Baron. Those simple words permitted me to trick your father last as I had attempted to trick him first. I knew he'd never look at the bulletin. According to the program the horses ran in different interests, but really they were both mine, with Squirrel the

better animal. Now you know what I am, now you see how I work—careful to keep within the law, but never wholly honest of purpose. Something I can't explain has made me tell you this. Now that you know the truth, I guess you had better go back to Silas Disney."

Out of her face went all light and color until only her eyes seemed alive. "You mean you don't want me any longer?" Amelie asked.

"Want you, girl!" The man was trembling with passion. "That has got nothing to do with the case, my wanting you," he said grimly, after a silence. "Disney is well-to-do, respected and reliable—"

She tossed her head, the Portuguese sailor's daughter, with gold hoops swinging from her ears. "You can send me back to the farm, but you can't make me marry Silas," she cried. "I marry no man but one!"

Rand looked at her long and steadily, and hope and courage slowly returned. "Girl, you don't know what you're saying," he muttered at last. "I'm thinking of you—of your future happiness. Now that you know the real Warwick—"

"I can't help what you've done. But what you do tomorrow—"

"I could go straight with your help, Amelie. It's simpler to be honest. Thinking it over, it's mighty hard sometimes to be tricky. The same energy directed along other channels, I suppose, would bring better results. Somehow I never cared before, as long as they couldn't jail me; but now—I care tremendously! It won't be easy at first, perhaps, for I'm used to doing things the other way, but— What have you got to say?"

"If you won't have me, I know I shall die an old maid," Amelie whispered, creeping into his arms. "You have no right to send me away to another man. There, now!"

But Once That Way

By Henry King Thayer

The well-dressed gentleman who smiled in the doorway was plainly a book salesman.

The lady of the house sensed that such was his calling. She greeted him rather icily.

"Madame," he said politely, "I am selling a volume, a single volume which I think will interest you. May I not—"

"No books," she said firmly. "Positively none. I am not interested in any books."

"Ah, not any books possibly, but this particular book of mine is the only one of its kind in the world. It is only four dollars and worth many times as much to its owner. May I not—"

"No!" snapped the lady. "I wouldn't buy it at any price. I am tired of opening my door and finding an agent standing there waiting to sell me something."

"I thought as much, my dear madam, and that is why I hope to sell you—"

"I am not interested—"

"I shall never come this way again. I knock but once—then pass on forever. The title of this volume is 'How to Get Rid of an Agent Without Buying.' Yes, indeed, madame, four dollars is correct. I thank you! Good morning!"

From Der Brummer, Berlin

"Why have you kept me waiting so long?"
"In the caves there is a seven-fold echo—and it made such a pleasure of kissing that we couldn't leave before!"

The Story That Might Have Been

By

Vincent Starrett

NINE O'CLOCK, Monday morning, and the day's grind was about to begin.

The police court was packed to the doors, and the reek of fourteen nations rose to the rafters, subtly blended with the less pungent odor of tobacco smoke.

In the foul atmosphere, a single electric fan on the judge's bench hummed a long note of exasperation, realizing the futility of its efforts. An inconceivable babel filled the chamber, a symphony in which, incredibly tangled, occurred the voices of policemen, lawyers, reporters, harlots, negroes, pickpockets, hangovers and professional bondsmen. Thin, sharp-faced little Jews, these latter, hardly distinguishable from their brother-jackals, the shysters—they punctuated the disorder with furtive gesturings and slinkings.

In a corner, near the dusty windows, a group of plain-clothes detectives exchanged vulgar repartee, or chinned hopefully with sensation-seeking journalists.

A court clerk, behind his wicket, talked shrilly and rustled his innumerable papers as if he were shuffling a new deck, and a huge bailiff with the eyes of a rat and the manners of a thug made himself objectionable to all about him.

In the ceaseless line of prisoners pouring into the chamber from the bull-pen became odoriferously evident the impartiality of justice and the comparative failure of the Volstead act. These passed into the temporary confinement of a wired enclosure, like a rabbit hutch, pending the calling of their several cases. Witnesses, and a regiment of morbid spectators, crowded the benches.

A small, gray-haired man pushed through the pack toward the bench. As he progressed, he exchanged idiomatic humor with his attachés and with reporters, lawyers and policemen of his acquaintance. At length he mounted to the bench, behind which the upper half of him assumed a sudden and unsuspected majesty, a phenomenon for which his elevation was responsible.

The husky bailiff pounded for order with a young mallet, and the noisy clerk rose from his position with his mouth open. From the alarming aperture thus disclosed issued an unintelligible medley of words only the opening and closing syllables of which were decipherable.

"Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye . . . pursuant to recess!"

When he had finished, the chatter was resumed in full volume, and the huge bailiff added himself to the uproar until he had shouted down and pounded to silence all but the lawyers.

"Call the first case," said the court, calmly.

And the wheels began to grind.

FAIRFAX of the Daily News watched the performance listlessly. It was old, old stuff, and even as local color the murky turmoil long had ceased to interest him. From his seat, slightly below and to one side of the judge, he had seen it all before, and had extracted from it its final decorative detail.

Moreover, he was a languid youth, and on Mondays—after his day of rest—he was always tired and sleepy. He felt,

And it was worth telling, was Fairfax's yarn. We suspect that the poet was dreaming when he said that dreams are the stuff that life is made of, and that in a waking moment he would have said that dreams are the stuff that life is made up of. Wherefore Dromgoole was not so much of a phantom after all, as a transcript of a bit of life.

indeed, that he might as well sleep as listen, for Monday is a dull day even in the news market. He could invent better stories than he was likely to hear, and on occasion he had done so. He had no regular assignment, it pleased him to remember; he was to pick up what he could in the way of a "feature" and to "get in early."

He listened with bored patience, automatically alert for a new thrill and serenely confident that it would not come off. The old, familiar stories! Lies that were hoary with age; heart-throbs that had ceased to stir when "Beatrice" Fairfax was in rompers. The cynical youth at the reporters' table profanely wondered why they did not think of something original. The heat was stifling.

Well, he could always fake something that would pass muster, something that was not libelous for the reason that the principles in the narrative did not exist. What should it be? Something out of Burke . . . "Limehouse Nights" . . . a negro triangle?

Quite suddenly he straightened, looking hard at a man who now came forward from the press in response to the waggle of a policeman's finger. For here was something promising.

THIS man—prisoner or witness—was a person of refinement. Tall, slim, pale. A strip of court plaster bisected one cheek, and another crossed his chin. His throat was heavily bandaged. But he was clean, his hair was neatly parted and brushed back, and his eyes were gentle. And just behind the prisoner's eyes lurked a second prisoner—fear! A good literary touch, that; it could be worked into the story. Fear! This man was afraid of something.

Without knowing why, Fairfax found himself becoming excited. He glanced about him surreptitiously. Apparently his companions had noticed nothing unusual. He leaned forward to catch the first spoken words.

It was the court who spoke first.

"What is this man charged with?"

"Murder," said the detective in charge of the prisoner. "This is Peter Dromgoole. Your honor will remember . . . ?"

Fairfax wanted to scream. He, at least, remembered! The case had been his one great failure. God, how he had hunted for Peter Dromgoole! Murder, indeed! For unless he could prove a tremendous alibi, this pale, frightened man would hang for the unprovoked slaughter of an entire family. This, after four years, was Peter Dromgoole! What did his appearance mean? Confession? And why here?

It occurred to the reporter that he was missing some of the testimony, and he put his memories behind him and leaned farther forward across the table.

"We picked him up last night," the detective was saying, "roaming around the very place . . . !"

He nodded significantly and, unseen by the prisoner, tapped a finger against his forehead.

"He insisted on talking to your honor. He said your honor had been kind to him, and he would confess only to your honor."

The detective shrugged humorously, but did not relax his grip on the prisoner's shoulder.

"I remember," said the court, his eyes on Dromgoole. "I prosecuted him, some years ago, in a petty larceny case, and got him a light sentence because it was a first offense. So he has remembered that!"

"I do not forget my friends, your honor," suddenly spoke up the prisoner, and Fairfax was held by his voice. Low and sad, and mute of malice. Could this man be the murderer of a family?

"May I speak?" asked Dromgoole, looking eargerly at the judge. "Thank you! For four years I have been in hell, and it will relieve me to speak. Sometimes I think I am losing my mind."

He drew a full breath, looked about him uneasily, and seemed to he listening.

"Crazy!" thought Fairfax. "Crazy as a bug! They can't hang him!"

"I am accused of the murder of Casimir Arizewski, my employer, and his wife and two children," said the prisoner, clearly. "I am guilty! I killed them with an axe, one after another, as they lay in their beds asleep. None of them woke, none of them will ever wake. I also killed a dog that was in the house. It is the dog that has brought me back."

DROMGOOLE chose his words carefully, keeping his bright, fearful eyes on those of the judge.

"So much for my confession. Let me tell you my defense. Casimir Arizewski was a jeweler, and he was very wealthy. I, sir, am an educated man, and I worked for him as an expert. I repaired his watches. Casimir Arizewski was an ignorant man. He spoke English poorly, and he was not an expert watchmaker. His hands were clumsy.

"There came into his shop, one day, a beautiful young woman, with a ring that was to be cleaned. A plain, gold ring like a wedding ring. It *was* a wedding ring.

"I received the ring, and from the moment she spoke I was her slave. I loved her. I told her she could have her ring back the next day, and offered to bring it to her; but she smiled and said that she would come for it. As a little joke, she said: 'When it is ready, you must place it on your finger and turn it. I will know, and I will come.'"

He looked at the judge with eager, haggard eyes, as if praying belief; and the judge squirmed humorously and looked unutterably foolish. Fairfax grinned slowly, and stole a glance at his fellow press men.

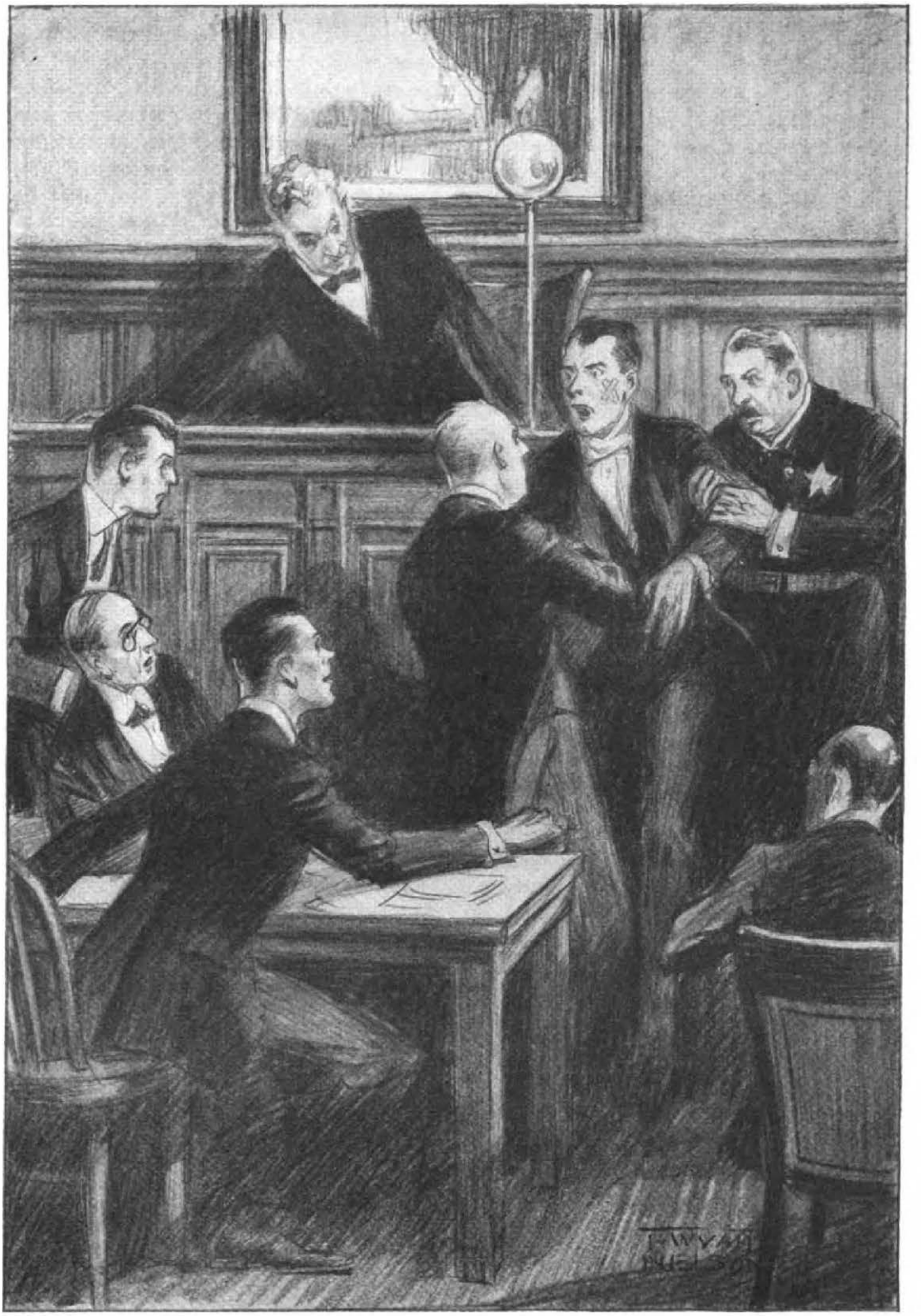
"Crazy as a lark!" he whispered. "But a *regular* story, what?"

"When she smiled, I knew she was joking," continued Dromgoole, "but when she had gone away, this ignorant Casimir ran into the room like a madman and snatched the ring from my hands. He had heard what she said, and had believed it. He was ignorant and superstitious.

"He told me that this woman was a sorceress, and that with the ring we could command the wealth of the world; and he added that she had fallen in love with *me*, and would do whatever I asked of her.

"I told him he was mad, and stretched my hand out for the ring. But he would not give it up. He would clean it himself, he said, since I was stupid and a fool. We quarreled, then, and in the end I was discharged. He was my employer, and I had to go. I cursed him with the curses I knew would frighten him most, and went away.

"That is why I went to the home of Casimir Arizewski that night. It was to recover the ring. It was very late when I entered his house, but I had no difficulty, for I knew it very well. Everybody was asleep. How I searched for that ring! But I did not find it. Then when I thought of that beautiful young woman, and how I loved her, I became insane; and I swore that if I might not have her, this ignorant Casimir should not. . . . And I found an axe in the kitchen, and took it to his bedroom. I was quite mad . . .



"'I hear it now!' he moaned."

"And there I saw the ring on his finger!"

The speaker paused, almost in embarrassment.

"And then you killed him?" asked the court, softly.

"I struck him without remorse," said Dromgoole, fiercely, "and when I had killed his woman beside him, I hacked his finger off and took away the ring!"

KINGSTON nodded vigorously. The murdered man's finger certainly had been cut from his hand. It was a circumstance that had added to the mystery of the case.

"His children were in another room. I am sorry I killed them; but I was insane. There were two, and one was very young. I killed her last. It was then, as I killed the last, that the watch dog barked, and I was afraid. It was a savage dog, and very faithful to this brutal, stupid Casimir.

It knew me, and disliked me. I was afraid to stay any longer. I went away.

"But when I had got home, I thought of that dog. I knew that it would track me to the end of the world, and I knew that I should have killed it, too. I packed my satchel and left the house quickly, and that night I spent in a dirty little hotel hardly a block from the home of the man I had murdered.

"In the morning, the papers were full of my deed, for it had been discovered through that cursed dog. His barking had brought the neighbors and then the police. I knew that the dog, too, must be killed.

"The police did not guard the house that night. There was nothing to guard; the family were dead. And I returned to it, after dark, and killed the dog. I killed it with a heavy stick. As I was leaving the house, a young man came up and began to talk to me. I was terribly frightened. I told him I was a relative of the family, and knew nothing. He was a reporter, and I see him here today."

He pointed at Fairfax, whose eyes were bulging. The court looked also at the reporter.

"That's right," nodded Fairfax, addressing the judge. "I'd never have recognized him, but I did meet a man outside the house that night. Gee!" he added, "if I had only known!"

A ripple of interest passed over the courtroom, and a few cold-blooded persons snickered.

"Gentlemen," continued the prisoner, slowly, as if he were addressing an audience, "I have heard that dog barking ever since! The police and the reporters hounded me from place to place, and were close on my trail more than once: but that dog was *always* with me. When I tried to sleep he wakened me with his barking, long and terrible, as he had barked when I killed the last one—the little girl!

"Once again I saw this young man" (he indicated Fairfax). "It was three weeks later, at a railroad station in Indiana. He was persistent. He had struck some little clew and was running it down like a bloodhound. I feared him more than any other except the dog. Once, that second time, I thought I should have to kill him, too. Perhaps you will remember, young man, a poorly dressed stranger who directed you to a hotel . . .'

"By George!" ejaculated the thunderstruck Fairfax, forgetting that he was in court. "So that was you, too!" He added hastily, "Pardon me, your honor!"

The court nodded good-humoredly; he liked Fairfax.

"But that cursed dog never left my heels," concluded Dromgoole. "Once I heard him, at night, in a western city, and I got up and went out into the dawn—and something gray and shadowy leaped at my throat and tore it. The wound is not yet healed. Some day the dog will kill me!"

DROMGOOLE stopped abruptly, and shuddered. With an indefinable thrill, Fairfax realized that the man's ear was cocked in an attitude of listen-

ing, and in the clairvoyant mood induced by the story he had heard the reporter could almost hear the long bay of the ghostly, implacable hound.

"Are there—ah—wounds on his throat?" The voice of the court broke in dryly.

"Yes, your honor," said the detective. "He evidently *did* have a run-in with a dog, somewhere."

"Hm-m!" said the court. After a moment, he turned to Dromgoole and asked:

"You really believe all this? About the ring—and the woman? And that this dog is haunting you with its bark? That it attacked you?"

Then, with a cry, the court was on his feet with concern in his eyes, for the pale prisoner's face was contorted with fear, and his body was shaking as with palsy.

"I hear it *now!*" he moaned. "It is louder than it has been for months."

Suddenly he screamed aloud.

"It is outside the door! It is in the room! It has come for me!"

He flung himself upon the giant detective and buried his head in the breast of that embarrassed and astounded man.

THIS bit of melodrama upset the decorum of the court room. The reaction from the suspense of the man's narrative was spontaneous. A roar of laughter swept over the packed benches. . . .

But high and clear over the cackle rose the deep bay of a hound, doleful and prolonged and terrible to the heart; and an awful silence fell again over the chamber.

Then Peter Dromgoole tore himself from his maudlin embrace and started to run.

With wavering steps he ran toward a side door, and no one attempted to stop him.

But in a moment he had turned, and now came clattering back, and suddenly they saw that both doors stood open, although no human hand had turned the handles. And the chamber resounded with the musical bay of the hound. Then dreadful padded feet thudded along the boards, where no thing was visible, and Dromgoole screamed again.

The prisoner turned at the bench and stood at bay, his face twisted and tortured, his hands thrust starkly before him, his eyes shining. . . .

Those who were nearest heard the leap, and saw the man's head snap back as something lunged upward at his bandaged throat; they heard the snarling and worrying of a maddened dog, and turned sick. . . .

Only Fairfax of them all retained some measure of sanity. Only Fairfax had seen what the terrified Dromgoole saw, the shadowy, sinister outline that plunged with awful accuracy toward its victim.

With a cry of warning he started forward, but a corner of the bench interfered and he fell back with aching head.

Then he was conscious of the remote, grinning face of a fat policeman, and turned his head to the bench. The court's austere lips quivered imperceptibly. And suddenly a rude bailiff laughed aloud.

Fairfax went crimson.

The pale prisoner had vanished. In his place stood a bewildered negro, grinning vacuously. The chamber was a-titter.

Fairfax blew his nose vigorously; a foghorn blast to conceal his embarrassment.

"Musta fallen asleep," he muttered sheepishly to a police lieutenant, standing nearby; and the officer's face confirmed the amazing deduction.

He looked at the clock. It was ten minutes past the hour of nine, and he had been asleep for about five minutes.

Silent profanity filled his soul, as he waited for the next case.

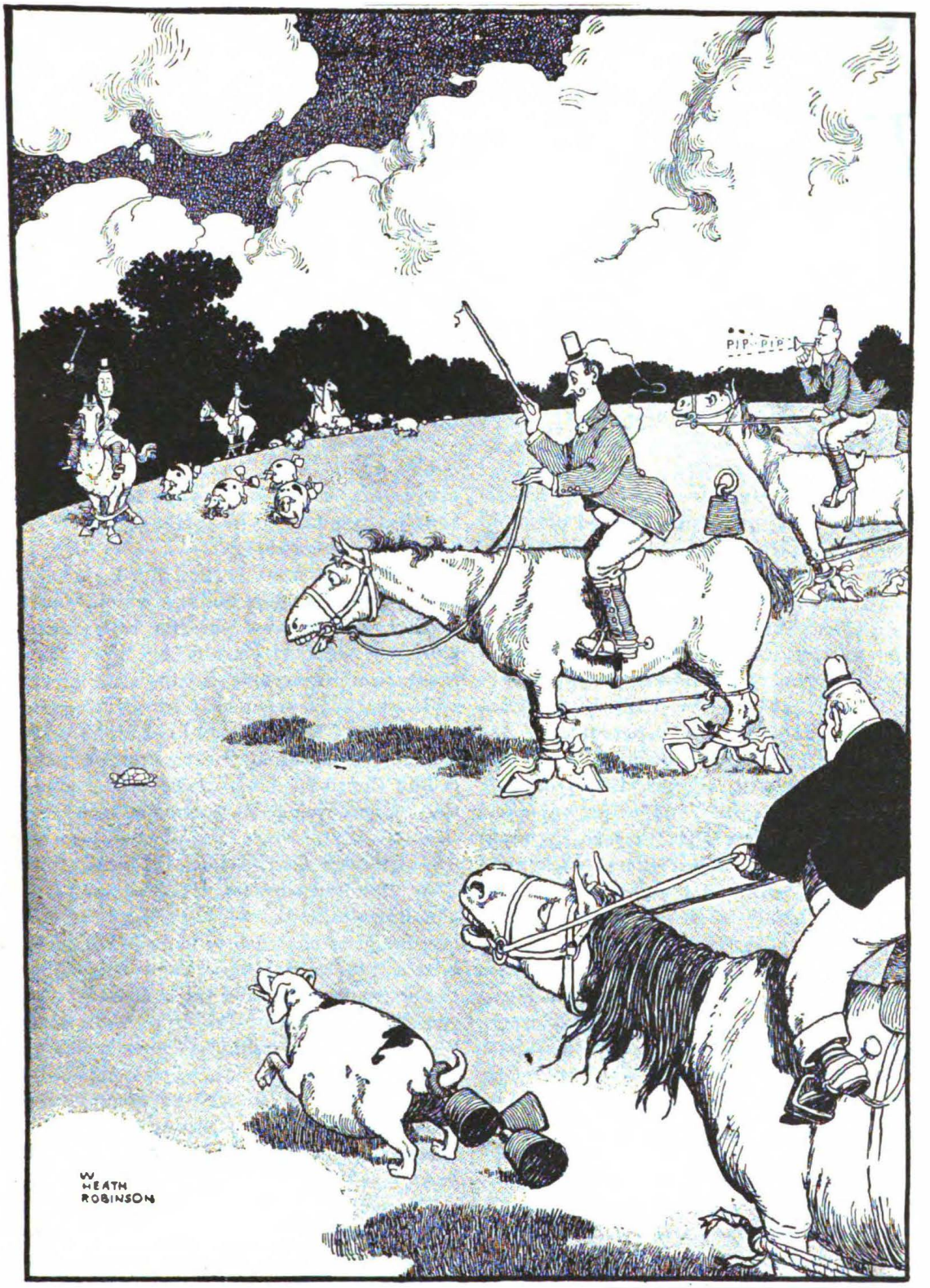
ON HIS WAY to the office, Fairfax reviewed the story of his dream prisoner with mingled shame and delight, and the lips of Fairfax cursed the luck of Fairfax for that it had not actually occurred as dreamed.

"It's a good story, anyhow!" he declared, savagely. "And it ought to *go*, somewhere. Darned if I don't write it, anyway!" He did. This is it.

Rehse in New York World

THE SHOW

"What kinda dogs are them two what looks jes' alike, Herman?"
"Them? Why them's Pickles an' Mustard, the chow-chow twins."



Heath Robinson in The Passing Show, London

"A-HUNTING WE WILL GO"
The only really sportsmanlike way of trapping the tortoise.

Ebb Tide and the Dawn

A poignant tale of the sea in a mood of fury—one of those moods when, as old Jerry put it, "she comes leapin' and snortin' and foamin' in," and tries to steal folks' lives—though in the end she brought love and happiness in the wake of her rage.

By
Leslie Gordon Barnard

Because the sun was directly behind, sinking slowly into a dun-colored mass of cloud, Elizabeth saw his shadow sprawled upon the grass beside her before she turned to look upon Old Jerry himself. The man was scarcely less grotesque than this same shadow. He gave the impression of being all shoulders—and eyes! Childhood deformities had kept pace through the successive ages of man to leave at last a withered hulk of humanity. Shoulders; great, broad hump-backed shoulders that were almost ape-like. Eyes; queer little sparkling beads that gave a suggestion of almost uncanny intelligence, with just a softening, humanizing network of creases at the corners.

"Mornin', Miss Garden!"

"Oh, hello, Jerry!"

Nobody ever thought to call him anything but Jerry to his face, "Old Jerry" behind his back. Somewhere in the mists of the past a mother had brought Jerry into being, his names—Christian and surname—had been inscribed carefully in church and civil records and written by love upon the tablets of a mother's heart.

But now he was just "Old Jerry." None knew his age; few his history beyond rumor, speculation, and tradition. He himself laid claim, with seeming authenticity, to being the oldest living inhabitant of this little resort by the sea. Nature, it seemed, having taken from him proportion and symmetry of shape, had sought to compensate with the gift of some strange vitality.

Long years, now, he had lived alone—largely upon public bounty which, with dignity, he accepted—in the little tumble-down cottage far along the cliff. Meals were moveable feasts with Jerry, which perhaps accounted for his invariable habit of accosting all his friends with a greeting designed for the period preceding the noon meal, whatever the position of nature's timepiece, the sun.

A GREAT CALM held the ocean. A hundred and fifty feet below the cliff-top where the girl and Jerry stood lay long reaches of sand, rippled into brown ruts and hollows and ridges by the action of wave and tide. Beyond, far out, the tide ebbed in its last outward sucking before the dull surge of breaking waves, ceaseless even in such a calm as this, would begin to creep up towards the crumbling caves and grottoes of the cliff. Elizabeth stood watching the scene, Old Jerry's eyes quizzically upon her.

"You like to watch her, miss?"

"You mean the sea? I love it, Jerry. It has so many moods—always different, changing."

"Ah, miss, 'tis myself that knows it. Always changing, that's it. Love it? Well, miss, folks come down like you

of a summer and see her a day like this, and say how calm an' peaceful she is, an' what sweet songs the waves are singin' and all. Oh, I know—I've heard 'em—and I just sit back and smile at 'em."

Jerry's mouth wrinkled into a toothless chuckle, then the smile died. He said, almost in a whisper, "Are you never afeared of her, miss?"

"Of the sea? Why, no."

This was truthful. It rarely entered Elizabeth's pretty, dark-haired, little head to be fearful of any created thing. Someone once characterized her as having all the wild, untamed nature of a filly without its timorousness. Life was a thing demanding tremendous vivacity, and a capacity for joy; the world a playground for youth.

JERRY chuckled again. He said: "You're like the rest of 'em. But I know *her*." A gnarled fist shot out defiantly towards the gray-blue shimmering expanse beyond. "She cheated me, she stole from me before. Look, miss!"

He pointed over the precipitous bluff to the sands below.

"See how nice it looks, like gold in the sunshine, but I know it—when she comes leapin' and snortin' and foamin' in, how that sand sucks at the feet and tries to steal folks' lives. I know too" (Jerry was very confidential), "though they laugh at old Jerry down t' the village. I know that every day she's eatin' away at this cliff and some day there'll be trouble. Some day soon."

Elizabeth laughed, a little silvery peal, accompanied by a smile that few of the opposite sex could withstand. But Old Jerry remained unimpressed. A blaze lit his eyes.

"Just like the rest of 'em. Laugh—laugh at old Jerry! I know—because I know her. She's gettin' ready now to take another bite out of the cliff. Look!"

His long arm shot out, sweeping towards the west where cloud banks were obscuring the blood red disk of the sun, then to the eastward out across the sea. A peculiar mist veiled the horizon, the dead-calm expanse of water had lost its sunlit glitter. "Something goin' to happen. I know it. Somethin' tells me, just like it told me that time before. Harkee! —don't ye hear her talkin' down there for all that she looks so peaceful? Just like a woman mutterin' when she's sullen, and angry-like."

Elizabeth did not answer. Old Jerry, muttering to himself still, plodded on his way along the cliff. The girl had reverted, with characteristic suddenness, to her own affairs, and was watching some pieces of white paper, fluttering on the sand below, caught in a little eddying gust of wind.

PRESENTLY, humming a queer little tune, Elizabeth went slowly along the crest towards the cottage that for two months now had been the family's summer stamping ground—a pretty, lawn-surrounded place with an exceptional view that the jutting out of that particular bit of cliff afforded.

A man, immaculate in golfing flannels, stood on the edge of the lawn practicing imaginary drives. He waved a cheery greeting to the girl. Even a casual observer, seeing these two together, would have recognized the striking family likeness and probably classified them as brother and sister did further observation not reveal slight traces of middle life that suggested father and daughter. The same straight-limbed, decently tall figures; the same dark hair and eyes; the same look in the eyes—a careless, happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care, hail-fellow-well-met look that was far from being a true index of character.

"Hullo, Beth."

"Hullo, Dad. You're home early."

"Too beastly sticky on the links. There's not a breath of air."

He made another swing with his club. A little powdery puff of dust swirled eddying away, landward.

"The wiseacres down the village promise a blow by night. Wanless sent a message for you. They're having a little

affair over at Inchcliffe Club house tonight; he wants us to run over with him. He'll call at eight with his car. I told him yes—was that right?"

The girl's eyes sparkled.

"Ra-ther. It's been slow as a funeral around here the last week. Wait, though—can I?"

"Come on now, Beth, don't be a spoilsport. You mother won't mind—she's fonder of her books than of us."

Their eyes met suddenly, and shifted. A little twinge of conscience came to the girl. But she said:

"Mother will be all right, I suppose. It's Lynn."

"Lynn?"

"He's written to say he's arriving on the ten o'clock, and will come right up to the house unless I meet him."

"I thought he was away on a special business trip."

Elizabeth poked savagely at a dandelion with the toe of a well-shod foot.

"He's—peeved about something. Oh—I suppose I shouldn't have written him that silly letter. I jollied him about Bob Wanless—Lynn is so deliciously funny when he's jealous. I was only fooling, of course, but he thinks I'm serious. He's such a terribly serious person." Elizabeth sighed.

Richard Garden threw back his shapely head and laughed.

"Do Mr. Lynnwood Forbes good," he opined. "Doesn't do for these young gentlemen to get too cocksure. Time enough when the clerical Amen ends the ceremony and begins married life.

HE PICKED UP his golf-bag, replacing his driver, and started for the house. A sudden breeze from the ocean lifted his cap and carried it ahead of them in a little whirl of dust. They followed, boy and girl like in their laughter, in merry chase. Breathless, but triumphant, they reached the house. All traces of work had vanished from Elizabeth's eyes; gone was the memory of that savage moment when she had torn Lynn's stupidly serious letter into fragments, and tossed them down a hundred feet or more to the sands up which, already, the gray line of surf was slowly creeping.

II

THE life of Constance Garden was a thing of passive resignation rather than active struggle. And yet it was something more. Tranquillity of countenance when the heart bears a constant burden of unrest is a thing not to be gained without some sustaining power. Perhaps the woman herself had never thought to analyze it, but the power that had enabled her to take—without reserve of heart or mind—Richard Garden for "better or for worse" still held her through the years.

Of late a new source of unquiet had come to distress her. Elizabeth was no longer a girl, but a woman. Twenty-two years now since the happiness of motherhood had been Constance Garden's—somehow the years had flown, and it seemed incredible that the merry childhood and the rollicking teen-age were past already. To see Elizabeth at work or play, to hear her speak, was sufficient to discredit her years.

"Just like her father," Constance Garden would tell herself, and always, in the telling, feel a quick contraction of heart.

"Yes, what a carefree, light-hearted pair. I don't know that I'd want them otherwise—and yet?" There was Lynn Forbes, for instance, whose ring Elizabeth was even now wearing. She felt a pang of sympathy for him. He never spoke to her of his troubles, but her heart understood, because it, too, had suffered.

Smiling, she watched them now race up to the house, breathlessly, demanding cold drinks and what not, in spite of her expostulations that they would spoil their appetites for the evening meal.

"We'll just have a snack," Richard told her, "Beth and I are going over to the Inchcliffe Club for an affair, and they're

strong on eats over there. Bob Wanless is calling for us at eight."

"Oh!" Patient resignation triumphed again, but it took a moment or two of unnecessary adjustment of the golf-bag he had deposited in the hall to prevent a break. Sometimes Mrs. Garden felt that her nerves were not what they used to be.

"What's the matter? You don't seem enthusiastic. We thought you'd be quite happy as usual with your books."

CONSTANCE turned away again. When the flood-tide of love had swept them before it they had shared these very books together; she had often wondered since how much of a trial that feature of the courtship must have been to Richard. She spoke to Elizabeth:

"I thought you said Lynn was coming?"

"He is. Tell him he can bunk in the spare room, and I'll see him in the morning. Dad and I'll be late."

"Beth, dear! Do you think it just fair to Lynn—running off this way?"

"Mother—please! Every time I'm going to have a little fun you drag up Lynn like a bogey-man to spoil things."

The blaze in the girl's eyes was genuine. She said, tartly:

"Sometimes I think I—almost hate him!"

"Beth, my dear! How can you talk that way, even in fun, when you're wearing his ring, and all?"

"I don't know that it is in fun."

Richard Garden interposed.

"Here you two, cut out that stuff. Let the girl alone, Constance, she doesn't mean any harm. She'll only be young once."

CONSTANCE said nothing. Elizabeth ran upstairs to her room; the door banged behind her. Garden looked at his wife reprovingly, shrugged his shoulders, and went up to seek the refreshment of a bath. In the back of the house the library window slammed. The woman hurried out to prevent possible damage. An ominous darkness hovered over the ocean. A row of poplars that clung precariously to the cliff edge just behind the cottage turned their leaves against the hot blast of a fitful east wind.

III

WANLESS came promptly at eight, his horn honking its impatient summons in unison with the announcement of the cuckoo clock within. Constance Garden, watching them go from the doorway, waved a brave goodbye. She saw Richard pulling his cap more securely down, and Elizabeth bending gracefully toward the wind that caught her skirts and coat sail-like, flattening them against her. The sound of the surf booming below the cliff was like a muffled, heavy cannonade. A rising wind moaned across the expanse, shrieking at last around the corner in a vicious swirl, snatching the door from her grasp and banging it to, as though to shut her rudely within.

She attended first of all to the windows; one that rattled more than its fellows she secured with a wad of folded newspaper.

Her books—companions of many a lonely hour, a goodly fellowship of great souls! Yet tonight they failed her. A singular depression was upon her. She chose a volume in lighter vein, but its humor palled upon her. She went at last to a little desk, unlocked a drawer, and took out a book of red-padded leather, in which her own neat handwriting supplanted the printed page. It was quite a thick little volume, and the writing was small.

Memories—what a flock of them came tumbling out at the opening of that book. Memories that, willy-nilly, evoked laughter; memories that brought simply a tender smile; memories, too, that touched some nerve in exquisite torture; honest entries these, as every dairy worthy of the name must hold!

Entries that covered her long engagement to Richard Garden; entries tremulous it seemed between rapture and fear.

His courtship largely, awakening at first little response; the coming at last of a passionate sense of fear lest he should not speak. She smiled now at her recrudescing timidity when the moment had come. The record held the story of it.

> "At last it has come—and yet I have delayed my answer. Richard has swept me from my feet. When he spoke my heart cried out, 'Say yes . . . say yes,' but some inward prompting—no doubt a canniness inherited from my Scotch forebears—bid me delay. Not for my own sake—that will I chance for him, but because I should never want to fail him.
>
> "Let me face the issue squarely. Is this love I feel a passion that the burden and the heat will fade, or something that will grow, like the ivy I planted on the southern wall, clinging to and covering even the rough bare spots. I shall sleep little tonight for fear and joy."

And the successive entry:

> "All night I have been asking myself the question Tennyson—isn't it?—so clearly puts:
>
> 'Heart, are you great enough
> For a love that never tires?
> Oh heart, are you great enough for love?'
>
> And the morning brings the answer of the heart. What a morning, designed for such joy as mine. Richard, how can I wait till you come?"

Constance Garden set down the little book. A sense of tranquillity had come with the reading. It seemed to require a summoning of courage to read further. A later entry challenged her:

> ". . . I know he means no harm, and does not realize how it hurts me, that he should take others out now that we are engaged. He is so light-hearted and a wee bit thoughtless. . . ."

She put the book down again. The light of the reading lamp invested her with a soft halo. Outside, the wind howled, spindrift slashed occasionally against the windows, for the little library was at the back. The woman was absorbed with her memories. By and by she rose and went over to a picture of her husband hanging on the far wall, above the bookcase. She stood long before it.

"Sometimes I wonder, Richard"—her soft tones came as naturally as if he stood before her: more naturally perhaps because such expression in his presence had been denied her—"wonder if you thought to ask yourself the question: 'Heart, are you great enough for a love that never tires?' "

She added in quick defiance: "I don't care—I'm glad it all happened, even the suffering, because my heart has—never—tired—and some day I know he'll find out what love really is—that a woman needs more to satisfy than clothes to cover her and food to gratify the lesser hunger."

SHE started. A banging at the door shattered her mood of absorption, bringing a rude intrusion of present things. At first she thought it was the wind, but again the knocking sounded. Ordinarily no thought of fear troubled her mind, but tonight some vague depression—

She opened the door. The wind seemed to thrust past her into the house a grotesque figure, dripping wet with rain and spray.

"Why, it's Old Jerry! What a night to be out, Jerry. You'll have rheumatism tomorrow."

A queer light was dancing in the old man's bleary eyes.

"Listen!" he said, setting a wizened finger to his mouth. "She's crazy tonight. Once as a little lad they took me to a circus. A child was playing too near a cage where they had a tiger. It sprang and its paw come through the bars, crushing the child's skull. The animal roared just like she does tonight. Listen!"

He gripped her arm. More awesome than the violence of the gale was the surge and boom of the great breakers against the cliff face. A hundred feet and more below, but the spray was rattling against the rear windows.

"Hear her growl!" said Old Jerry. "Feel her shake! She's in a bad mood.

I know her, I do. Come away with me—you're too near her. She might crush you. Oh, I know her and her ways. I've been along just now warnin' all the folks on the cliff. They just laugh—but you won't laugh at old Jerry, will you? 'Cause—you're nearer her than any of 'em."

His voice fell into a warning sibilance.

Constance repressed a smile. Everyone knew Old Jerry's peculiar obsession. But she said seriously:

"Thank you for coming, Jerry. But I think I'll be all right. Won't you stay? I hate to have you go out again into the storm."

Old Jerry shook his head. He had work to do. When *she* was biting and snarling he must be busy warning. Don't say he hadn't given warning. They laughed at Old Jerry—but some day—

Mumbling still, he passed out into the storm again.

CONSTANCE GARDEN went back to her diary. After a space she picked up pen and ink, and wrote:

> "Some urge within me bids me write tonight. Old Jerry has just gone, croaking his prophecy of evil. A strange loneliness and depression is upon me—akin to fear. I wish Lynn would come. His train will be due soon. Tonight I cannot hear it whistle owing to the wind, and storm."

The woman paused. A heavier boom of the storm smote the cliff; the house shook.

"I wish Lynn would come," the woman said uneasily. "I wish he'd come."

Then she went on with her writing.

THE Inchcliffe Club house lies snugly at the end of the sand dunes that separate, by a matter of a mile or two, the village and summer colony and the Inchcliffe Beach with its line of straggling summer hotels, and its popular attractions that draw to its smooth, surf-lapped sand crescent a mixed but gay multitude. The Club house, coming at the very end nearest the dunes, possesses a sense of aloofness, that befit it moderate exclusiveness in the matter of members.

They were dancing tonight; white-flannelled males and frilly maidens—dancing to the sprightly music of a five-piece orchestra.

Perhaps because the storm made the closing of the windows necessary the place was oppressively close. Elizabeth Garden whispered in her partner's ear:

"Bob, let's slip out and get a breath. It's stifling."

He fetched her a wrap. They went out the door to leeward, and fought their way around to the side verandah. The wind nearly swept them from their feet.

"Isn't it glorious, Bob!" She clung to his arm. "Oh!"

She gave a little shriek. An extra boisterous gust carried a drenching spray soakingly upon them.

"Highest tide I've seen," declared Bob. "We'll get drowned here. Good life, girl, you're wet!"

She said, exultingly: "I don't care! I love it! Feel the taste of the salt, Bob. . . . Sometimes I think there must be some old viking strain in me."

A dim electric light fell upon her face, upraised to his. He drew her impulsively to him.

"Dear little Viking," he said, and kissed her.

Elizabeth made no protest. It seemed that her senses were intoxicated by the moment: the seclusion, the voice of the storm, the thunder of the waves upon the narrow strip of sand beyond, the tang of the salt spray. All the senses exulted. When he found a secluded spot, sheltered, in the lee of the building, and fetched two wicker chairs, and a protecting rug, she still made no protest. Forgetful of the dance, they sat together in the alcove, regardless of the passing of time.

JAGGED clouds broke to admit a ghostly gleam of moonlight; the wrack drifted, storm-whipped, across the crescent of the moon.

Two great eyes of light rose and fell beyond them on the sandy road leading to the clubhouse.

"It's coming here—seems in a hurry, or else they're careless of springs and axles," Wanless said.

The motor stopped squarely before them, its two eyes upon them, lighting up their alcove like noontide glare. Elizabeth sprang up uncertainly. A man, mackintosh clad, ran up the steps and faced them.

"Beth!"

"Lynn! You!" His eyes frightened her. "What—made you—come here?"

"Where's your father, Beth?"

"Inside, Lynn—there's something wrong. Tell me——"

But Lynn had gone. There was something in the manner of his leaving that set her heart throbbing poignantly. It was as though he were a stranger to her; as though no common bond existed.

She heard a chuckle behind her, and swung around.

"Funny," gurgled Bob Wanless, "speak of the devil and all that, you know! Funny you should just have been telling me how deliciously jealous he gets. Don't look so mad, I'm quoting, you know."

Then he met her blazing eyes, and his smile faded.

As though fleeing from the devil, she turned and sped towards the door of the clubhouse, and ran squarely into the arms of Richard Garden. He was garbed ready for the road. His face was set and grim.

"Father—what is it?"

He met her questionings with an attempt at lightness. Some accident or other up at the village, due to the storm. She must stay and not worry; Mrs. Whitefield would look after her over night.

"I must know — all. It's . . . mother?"

Richard Garden nodded. He spoke with difficulty:

"Part of the cliff—is gone—and part of the cottage——"

She interposed hastily.

"And—mother?"

The man turned away. She shook his arm, repeating the words: "Tell, me, Dad, tell me."

They haven't found her yet," he said. "Quick, dear, you mustn't delay us."

"I'm coming with you——"

"You can do no good."

Lynn's voice spoke:

"Let her come, Mr. Garden. It'll be easier for her than staying here."

She ran to get on her wraps, grateful for Lynn's interposition, almost grateful for the calmness of his voice and bearing. It gave a sense of support in a time when all props had gone.

Lynn sat beside the driver in the front seat. Elizabeth's heart cried out for his comforting presence beside her, but her lips were sealed. The memory of the last hour or two with Bob and—vaguely, in the background, that silly letter to Lynn—was acute. Beside her, seeming not to heed the fierce grip on his arm that she maintained, sat Richard Garden. She had never seen his face like that before.

She could not stand it, after a time. She called to Lynn to tell her more of the affair. Speech was difficult, but he told her of his coming on a later train, of finding the village ablaze with excitement, of hearing the news and investigating, of trying to get telephonic connection and failing owing to the wires being down, of finally learning where they were and coming on in the hired car he had taken from the station.

THE wind threatened to lift the car from the precarious road across the sand dunes. Came at last the flashing of lights, and the village, and the faces of watchers in lighted windows, and, in the streets, clumps of women who stood aside to watch, with awesome glances, the car go hurtling by. The men were already all away up the hill to the scene of the disaster. More lights—impromptu flares—the coming of the car to a standstill—the red gleam of the flares upon oilskins

of the coastguard, whose aid had been invoked—the crowds of anxious watchers. The men alighted. They left the girl in the car. She felt numbed, unable to move, scarce daring to look.

She heard someone shouting an answer to an eager questioner.

A few yards of the cliff gone. Undermined! The authorities are to blame, they must have known it wasn't safe. No, not much harm done, a corner of the Garden home gone. But they say it's the library, and Mrs. Garden is missing."

She told herself she would wake up and experience relief at the passing of a nightmare. When Lynn came to take her to a neighbor's, she went without a word. By and by she would wake up.

It took the compassionate welcome of Mrs. Stebbins, to whose sheltering roof and care she was taken, to bring a realization that the nightmare would only end in a more terrible reality. She read the worst in the woman's eyes.

IV

EBB TIDE! Daybreak, cold and bleak—more like November than August—and a watery yellow in the east. Slowly the grey tumble of waters retreated across the wet sands, as though reluctant to leave the work of destruction.

Pools lay upon the beach—pools, and seaweed, and wreckage, caught mostly about the little areas of jutting rock that honeycombed the sand. And in a large pile of rock where the landslide had occurred men in gleaming oilskins, with picks and crowbars, worked to release the imbedded wreckage from above. Men—and one woman! She came alone, finding her way down the jagged trail, a slight, athletic figure in her mackintosh and boyish cap.

"Beth! Dear, you should not have come!"

"I had to, Dad! No, no, I'll not leave —Lynn, tell him I may stay. My place is here—with you."

The men's eyes met. Elizabeth interpreted the look. But she just said again:

"My place is here. I can face it as well as you."

They stood aside in a little group. The workers were skilled in their task; unskilled aid would have been a handicap. But it took fortitude not to attack that ominous pile of rocks, and brick and wreckage, and still more courage not to run from the revelation that any moment might bring.

"You're trembling, Daddy."

"The wind's cold, Beth," he told her.

Both knew it was something more than the cold.

Lynn was speaking to one of the workers, helping direct operations. He came over to the father and daughter.

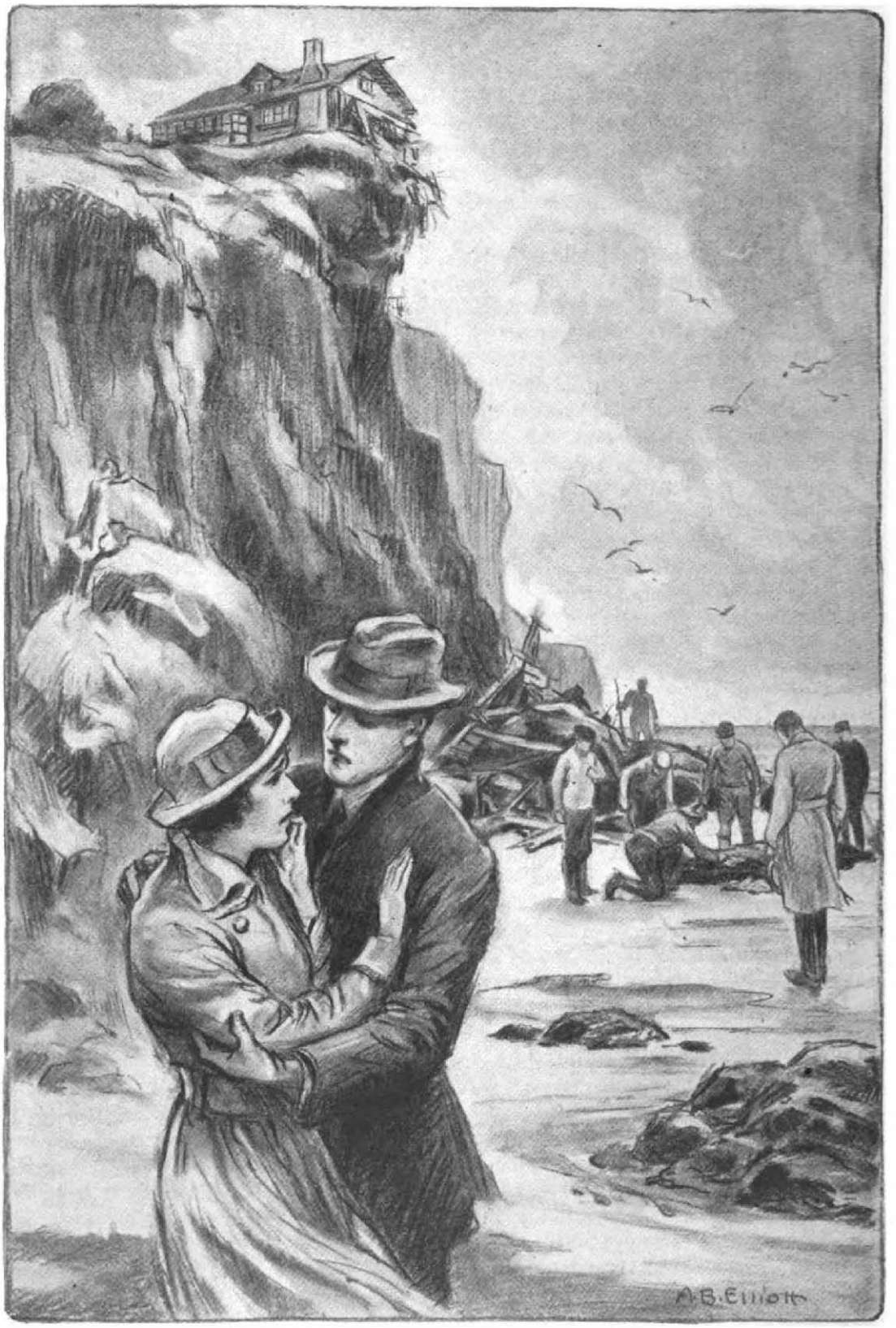
"Beth—could you get a large pot of coffee from Mrs. Stebbins, and two or three cups. If you want to help—that's the way."

BETH nodded understanding. She turned to go, welcoming action. She went along the beach, passing the jutting cliff that shut the workers from sight. It occurred to her they might like something to eat as well. She would ask Lynn. Beth retraced her steps.

And then it dawned upon her why Lynn had hurried her away for the coffee. The workers had gathered in a little ominous group upon the beach. Two of them were tenderly lifting an object, to lay it on a level stretch of sand. Lynn's arm was around the bent shoulders of Richard Garden.

The awful horror of it all drew the girl with a strange fascination. Her progress was mechanical. They saw her coming, and Lynn ran to stay her, taking her in his arms, shielding her sight from the —the object there.

Someone had placed a piece of sailcloth over it. but not before a glimpse of recognition came. Just a torn piece of a dress that protruded, but Beth knew it. It was the summer material her mother always wore.



"My place is here. I can face it as well as you."

V

LYNN it was who took Elizabeth away from the scene; who supplied such comfort as might be; who shielded her from word of the condition of the woman's body, battered beyond recognition, had it not been for the shredded clothes.

Until the safety of the place could be determined and repairs made, the cottage was impossible of occupation, even had not associations driven them from it. To their need the vicarage was opened in kindly hospitality.

No [redacted] had been granted to the girl to help her grief; marble-faced, dry-eyed she wandered about the silent house. Tears came only after she found her father poring over a little red-covered book. Richard Garden seemed to have aged in a night. How long ago the time when they had raced across the lawn in merry chase—and yet it was only yesterday. Through the open window the sunlight streamed; out beyond the houses, the grassy lawns, and trees the sunlight sparkled upon the sea—a sea that was still running high as an aftermath of the gale. It came to Elizabeth that she hated it—as Jerry had hated it. She wondered where Jerry was all this time, but other things dismissed him from her mind.

Richard Garden spoke. His voice was tense but quiet.

"They found this," he told her, holding up the book, "jammed in the drawer of the splintered table. It is—her diary. She must have been writing in it—then!"

He stopped to steady his voice.

"It's almost as if she felt this thing was coming. She left a note for you, girl. Perhaps it will help you to see things—straight before it becomes—too—too—late."

She could not bear to look upon the thing in his face. She fled, taking the book with her; fled downstairs. She felt that something inside her would burst. She saw Lynn sitting over in a shaded corner, saw him dimly because the sunlight and now the darkened room blinded her. She paused a moment as though in hesitation, but the thing within her demanded comfort. She ran to him, arms outstretched, with a little cry. An arm went around, steadying her. She looked up, drawing back, startled.

"Bob!"

"Beth, dear girl. I came to tell you—"

SHE heard no more. It came to her that Lynn had seen her distress and followed her half into the room . . . in time to see and misconstrue this. Not that anything mattered much—now! And yet she could not help running to the window and watching Lynn stride, bareheaded, across the gravel walk out into the garden. There was something brave in the way he squared his shoulders.

She dismissed Bob Wanless somehow—anyhow. But she could not face Lynn just then. Bob had awakened memories of last night; remorse and shame came in a flood. She picked up the diary and read. Especially the final entry:

> "Tomorrow I shall speak to Beth. Silly old Jerry's croakings have disturbed me. If anything should ever happen me, I want that she should have her mother's advice. I think I shall quote her that verse I always liked. Perhaps I can recall it, now.
>
> 'Unless you can think, when the song is done
> No other is soft in the rhythm;
> Unless you can feel, when left by ONE,
> That all men else go with him;
> Unless you can know, when unpraised by his breath,
> That your beauty itself wants praising;
> Unless you can swear—"For life! For death!"—
> Oh! fear to call it loving.'
>
> "Unless Lynn means that to her, far better he should go. Time the boy was here now. I wish he would come. That sounds like someone knocking now. How wild the sea is; it is hard to hear anything tonight."

Elizabeth put the book down. The last entry of all had done it. Hot tears flooded

to her eyes. She flung herself, sobbing, on the sofa; her lips repeated the outcry of her heart.

VAGUELY, as from a distance, came the sound of hasty footsteps; of voices—many voices! The bell clanged an imperious summons. A trim maid hurried to obey it. Beth heard her startled cry, and then familiar voices. A sense of unreality kept her rooted to her chair, when the scene in the little hallway should have galvanized her. Old Jerry—and beside him, pale and evidently perplexed—Constance Garden.

"Beth—dear girl!"

Her voice broke the spell. The next moment Elizabeth was in her mother's arms.

"My dear—you must leave a little of me for—your—father."

White as a statue Richard Garden stood at the bottom of the staircase. No words were needed to give him welcome. Constance went to him, and even old Jerry knew enough to turn away, that alien eyes might not witness the meeting of one who was as dead and yet was alive again.

VII

PERHAPS it was natural that in that time of transport Lynn, who had shared the burden, should be largely excluded from the family joy. It happened, too, that Bob Wanless, learning the news on his way from his summary dismissal, took heart of grace and returned to join in the rejoicings before Lynn became aware of it at all.

Old Jerry stood in the background through the time of explanation, chuckling and mumbling to himself.

It seemed that Mrs. Garden was summoned shortly before the accident to attend a sickbed at Dibblegate, five miles inland. It was in a family in whom she had become interested because one of the daughters did her washing—a girl who was rather simple, for whom Mrs. Garden had conceived a liking. The girl had come up from the village where she boarded with the laundress, for whom she worked, to say that her mother was very sick, and could Mrs. Garden go at once. The boy was here with the rig, and could not find a doctor. Mrs. Garden had gone with her, leaving the door unlocked for Lynn, and a note of explanation on the library table. It must have been shortly before the landslide occurred.

"It was Providence," the vicar said solemnly.

Old Jerry chuckled.

"It was me," he declared. "I sent her. Oh, the woman was sick enough. I met Kate and the boy looking for the doctor, and I told them to get the missus here. She's better'n two doctors. And I knew"—Old Jerry winked confidently—"I knew *that* 'ud fetch her away, though she'd stay there and let the sea get her for all *my* talk. I went out early this mornin' I did, to fetch her in, an' tell her old Jerry was right about the cliff. Folks won't laugh now."

He swung his gnarled frame around quickly, his eyes blazing, and shook his fist through the open doorway at the sea in the distance. "I beat her that time," he chuckled. "I cheated her that time."

IT WAS NATURAL, too, that in the excitement the body of a woman lying starkly in the little chapel nearby was nearly forgotten. Someone spoke of it. Notes were compared.

Elizabeth said, shakily: "It was mother's dress, I'm sure. That blue one you wear so much, mother."

Mrs. Garden paled.

"Why," she told them, "I had that lying on a chair intending to do a little mending on it. The girl—Kate—was fascinated by it. I've given her other things. I said she could have this some time, perhaps. She wanted to take it with her, but I told her it was too wet a night and to come again."

The woman stopped.

"Would you mind"—it was Jerry's

voice, a queer, quavering voice that spoke —"would you mind phonin' the laundry place, and askin' if Kate Connor is there?"

Bob Wanless it was who phoned. Bob had the faculty of making himself quickly at home. He reported presently:

"She went out last night with her brother from home to find a doctor. She hasn't been back since. They thought of course she'd gone along home with him."

OLD JERRY said nothing, but his twisted body seemed suddenly to shrink. He drew his hand across his forehead, and slipped out into the sunlight. Lynn followed him—out across the sunlit lawn, through the old-fashioned garden, and so into the little chapel where the casket lay.

Old Jerry was sitting beside it, a picture of pathetic tragedy.

"I reckon it's Kate, right enough," he told Lynn resignedly. "I thought I'd cheated *her,* but she got Kate, too. Years ago she took Kate's sister in a storm, and sent Kate's mother off her head, so when Kate was born she warn't quite right either. When her mother died I had Kate adopted out to Dibblegate. Nobody but Mrs. Connor ever knew she was mine."

Old Jerry paused, then added, shaking his grizzled head:

"I reckon I was crazy, too. I thought maybe I could cheat *her*." His long arm shot out towards the direction of the ocean. "But it warn't any use. You can't fool her. She wanted us all. She'll get me someday now. I reckon I'll go on home now. I can't do nothin' here."

LYNN walked over and looked out through a narrow gothic window. The first long shadows were falling across the garden. The earlier breeze had dropped. Birds sang in the trees. The peace of nature in her most tranquil mood was over all.

Old Jerry stole out of the chapel door, starting homeward. Lynn hesitated for a moment, then he caught up with the old man, linking his arm in his.

"I reckon," said Old Jerry, "that's good of you."

SUNSET touched the ripples of incoming tide, but the watery waste beyond grew darker.

Lynn sat beside old Jerry outside his cottage on the cliff edge, smoking in silent comradeship. Lynn was living in the future, Jerry in the past. Lynn would go first thing in the morning; he would spend the night here with poor Jerry. He had postponed that business trip to settle the matter of the letter; well, he had seen enough to convince him that Beth had meant it. Yet he was glad he had come—to be here to serve her in her hour of need. That helped!

THE crescent of the moon grew brighter against a steel-blue sky. The night was soft as velvet.

A voice spoke in his ear.

"Lynn!"

"Beth!"

He could hardly credit it. And then he saw the form of Bob Wanless in the background, and understood. He said, rather shortly:

"Jerry's better not to be bothered tonight. I'll stay with him."

"But Lynn—I didn't come to see poor Jerry. I—I—"

She turned quickly, calling to her escort.

"Thanks, Bob, for bringing me down. Lynn will see me home."

It did not occur to Lynn to demand much explanation. The soft dusk, the silver crescent of the moon, the dull voice of the sea made anything but the fact that they were together seem unnecessary. Little by little, though, she told him all, confessing very simply the things she had learned through the hours of suffering. Nothing would do but she must read him the lines from her mother's diary, while he cupped a match with his hands to give light.

> Unless you can swear—"For life! For death!"—
> Oh, fear to call it loving.

FROM out of the darkness behind them came Jerry's voice. They had forgotten him.

"Would you mind, miss, reading that again?"

Beth read it. Old Jerry sighed contentedly.

After a space he said:

"For life—for death! That's as can be, miss. I reckon, maybe, the old sea ain't so bad a friend after all. Now my old woman she warn't very strong—she suffered a lot; and Kate's sister she took after her; and Kate—well she warn't ever right in her head, you know, and yet I reckon she knowed enough to feel bad when folks called her queer; and me—why I'm a queer shapen old cuss, but I've had a long life an' lots of good things in it. Now over—over there, you know"—Jerry waved a vague direction with his right arm—"over there I reckon there'll be no sufferin' and Kate'll have a chance she never had here, and—why maybe I'll stand a chance for a new body—funny, you know, even now I feel nasty when folks laugh and point at me. So I reckon when we all meet over there it'll make a heap o' difference. Don't you think so, sir?"

There was no answer. Along the cliff to the right two figures were dimly discernible.

Old Jerry actually chuckled a little as of old.

"I reckon," he said slowly, "they ain't interested in anything much but themselves just now. And that's as it should be. Why I mind the time when I was courtin' my Martha—"

THE quavering voice trailed off. Old Jerry puffed steadily at his pipe. Memory—the refuge of age—had taken hold upon him. Below the cliff, the tide swished softly against the rocks. But the voice of the sea was a peaceful voice, crooning a lullaby.

My Strip of Sea

By Chart Pitt

Only a fragment of sea is mine,
  Distant and dark and blue—
Only a breech in the stubborn hills
  Where the river rushes through.
A little rift in the beetling crags,
  With the pine-trees bending o'er—
Beyond it the ocean's endless tides,
  And the call of a foreign shore.

I watch a sail in the twilight—
  Watch till it fades from sight:
For dreams are mine when ships go by
  On the marge of the summer night.
But the soul of youth is a vagabond,
  And little enough care we—
For hand in hand, the river and I
  Go down to the waiting sea.

Rehse in New York World

A VAUDEVILLAINOUS PLOT

"I'm looking for a vaudeville partner."
"But I understand you were obliged to lay off for the next few months."
"That's just it—I want someone to share expenses."

Love came—and went, as love has a way of doing. And in the fullness of time it came again. But not in just the way that Lawrence Carter had thought it would—although when it returned he would not have had it different.

Out of Arcady

By

Victor Rousseau

When Carter got out of the train at the sleepy little station more than a score of years had rolled away. Unconsciously he straightened himself; the springiness of youth came into his stride; he looked about him bewildered that time had made so few changes in Dorchester.

The line of white maples across the road stood just as it had, although the trees were fuller and leafier than when Cy Bennett had set them out. A few new residences had been constructed along the ridge, and Main Street, which had ended commercially at the station, now extended a half-dozen blocks beyond, and the new shops sported large plate-glass windows. But that was all the difference Carter's eyes could trace.

He took in a score of forgotten things: the same line of hacks waiting before the gates, with their fat horses and slouching drivers; the billboards opposite, plastered with advertisements; the old post-office, unchanged, the crowd gathered about the steps and peering through the curtained windows of the room in which the mail was being sorted.

Disregarding the invitations of the drivers, Carter walked out of the station and down the street. Here and there a name over a shop flashed back into his memory; some faces looked vaguely familiar, and some he recognized. But he spoke to no one, and made his way to the end of the sleepy Main Street, and took the sharp hill leading past Brown's farm into the pike, running like a dusty ribbon before him over the undulating hills to Washington.

Every house and farm now began to assume sharpness in his mind. He knew the inside of each one of them, the pools where the sleek cattle, plentiful in the fields, drank. Two boys, with towels over their arms—a degeneracy of which his contemporaries had not been guilty—passed at a lope and turned into a by-path through meadows yellowing with goldenrod. He knew where they were bound.

"Good swimming?" he called.

They turned to grin at him, and he stood to watch them vanish beneath the railroad arch, beyond which was the well-remembered pool.

Then he went on, still taking in the marvel of it all. It was all a heavenly recreation—the dusty pike, the humming telegraph poles, the sumach bushes, the goldenrod and opening asters, the blue haze on the hills and the faint, pleasant odors of rich earth, and above all, that indefinable sense of joy and bounty which is Maryland.

A GIRL was standing at the gate of a tiny garden before a tiny cottage. Carter stopped. He had never gone down the hill without inquiring for the old

paralyzed man who had lived there thirty-eight years with his wife and adopted daughter, Miriam. "Is your mother in, Miriam?" he asked, forgetting the lapse of years for the instant.

A buxom, middle-aged woman appeared from the cottage. "Someone asking for you, Maw!" called the girl. "Guess he's made a mistake."

Carter looked from one to the other as the woman came forward. "You're never Miriam Anderson?" he asked.

"Well, I was," she smiled, "until Joe Bennett changed it for me."

"What, Cy's son that went to California after—after—" He stopped. That trouble had happened long ago.

"That's him. Shucks, that didn't amount to a hill of beans! He was back next year, and 'twas all forgotten. He came back to marry me; we rented the Peach place till he died last year. Then I came back here. But I guess we have'nt met before, have we?"

She peered at him closely. "Why—why it's never Larry Carter!" she exclaimed. "'Tis so! Laura, you remember how often your pa and I used to speak of the Carter boys! This is Larry. And where's Jim?" she asked, almost fiercely.

"Jim died five years ago," said Carter.

She drew her brows together.

"And you'll be coming home to look things over," she said. "Well, we'll miss him. He was a fine man, your uncle Roger, and never looked his eighty-five years. You'll be coming into the property, I suppose?" she continued, with simple directness.

"Yes. I never expected it, and yet I was his nearest relative. I was away when the wire arrived, or I'd have come to the funeral. It was a surprise altogether."

"And you've come back to stay?" She looked at him a little wistfully. "You Carter boys were real Maryland folks, though you weren't born here. You ought to have stayed with your uncle, Mr. Larry, as he wanted you to, instead of going to New York."

She looked at him self-consciously. "It's queer how those little things that happened so long ago stick in our memories," she said apologetically. "And I suppose you're married long since?"

"I've got a boy of twenty-three," said Carter. "His mother died five years ago."

"I'm sorry," she answered simply. "Seems when we get to be middle-aged death becomes so much more familiar. Like a friend, almost. Miss Tyson's gone back to the old place, you know. Her husband gave up his business last year. She's got a girl about your boy's age, or a little less. You remember her?"

"Yes," answered Carter, "I remember her well."

"You ought to bring that boy of yours down to get acquainted with the folks."

"He's coming the day after tomorrow. I'm going to pass the old place along to him, to see what he can make of it——. Well, I'll be getting along, Mrs. Bennett. It's pleasant to have seen you. And your girl, what do you call her?"

"She's Hallie," said Miriam Bennett. "Not as unusual as I'd have liked to have named her, but her pa fancied it. It was the name of an old sweetheart of his. Well, it does one good to see old friends and old faces. I hope you'll bring your boy in when you're passing, Mr. Larry!"

CARTER climbed the hill steadily. On his left was the old Taylor pasture, now a waste of scrub oak and wild persimmon. Beyond, the road dipped sharply through low-lying meadows toward a wilderness of undergrowth. This was his uncle's property, which he had inherited so unexpectedly—eighty-two unfarmed acres and an old wooden house, which even in his day was falling into ruin. He had not seen his uncle or the place since his departure.

Not once in twenty-five years! He could not bear to revisit Dorchester after Mary Renfrew married Frank Tyson.

Reaching the pasture, he sat down under an oak, and for the first time in all those years he let his mind roam back upon the past. He lived it again, the in-

tervening years, which had seemed all his life before, had dropped from his memory like the wraith of a dream.

It was strange now, as he looked back upon that single week of infatuation, when the old playmate had suddenly become the Vision Wonderful of his dreams, to think how it had colored all his existence. Mary Renfrew's father owned the adjacent property, and there had been years of intimacy, of boy and girl acquaintance, running the gamut from the kicking and hair-pulling stage to the era of straw-rides and picnics, at none of which had he chosen Mary for a partner.

AND THEN had come the wonderful week. It had broken upon him with a suddenness that defied all analysis and swept him off his feet. They were walking home from a neighbor's house, a little after sunset, and insensibly, and for the first time, a graver note had come into their conversation. Suddenly, as he looked at her, he became conscious that everything was changed.

It was as if a veil had been torn aside. He no longer heard what she was saying. He hardly dared to look at her again. The mighty upheaval in his soul had struck him dumb and deaf. Dimly he knew that she had become conscious of it at the same moment. Always before they had chatted together unconcerned, old friends, comrades in a rough and ready fashion; now the mystery of sex had swept across the vision of either, so that they were almost dumb during the remainder of the journey home.

When he left her at her gate she looked at him very steadily—and it was that frank, straightforward glance of hers that he always recalled as her most striking quality.

"Lawrence," she said, "I want you to know something. I'm engaged to Frank Tyson."

"I congratulate you—both of you," he had mumbled mechanically.

He went away, knowing that she was watching him, and possessed of a mad desire to turn back and snatch her in his arms.

Then when he got to his uncle's house he was breathing like a man who has run a race. The sweat beaded his forehead. He went up to his room and sat staring out over the low Maryland hills. He was shaken to the depths of his being. He was afraid. And the magic of it all was the transmutation, as if his consciousness had transferred itself to another plane. He had never thought of Mary Renfrew as a woman to be held in a man's arms, with lips for kissing, and eyes to reveal the intimate thoughts of love.

WHEN they met two days later he fancied she understood. But now he was not sure. He thought she avoided his glances, that her bosom rose and fell more quickly at the touch of hands. His doubts agonized him.

The engagement had already been announced. Tyson was a lawyer in Baltimore, the son of a Dorchester farmer, a pleasant, commonplace young fellow. Lawrence had known him, too, for years, and marvelled at what Mary saw in him —she with her quiet depths and spiritual isolation. He watched the two together. He saw Tyson's hands flutter about Mary, helping her on and off with her cloak, relieving her of little burdens. Still he wondered how much she knew.

Lawrence's departure for New York had already been arranged. The boy had been offered a place in the office of a large corporation; his uncle had been opposed to his taking it, but in the end it was arranged that he should try it for six months. There was an informal engagement party the night before he started. Mary Renfrew was the soul of the gathering.

She sang—love songs; and her eyes met Carter's once or twice as the boy watched her from across the room. Then he was almost sure she knew. Afterward they were together on the verandah. Tyson had had to leave to meet a client who had come out from Baltimore upon a

sudden urgency, but he was to return in an hour.

Mary spoke of New York. "I wish you every kind of success, Larry," she said. "We'll miss you very much."

The two were standing very close together. The room behind was dark—some surprise was being planned in another part of the house. The night was velvet black, with innumerable points of light—fireflies that whirled and spun like constellations in miniature. They were standing so near each other that he could feel her breath on his cheek. The fragrance of her hair was in his nostrils. He saw her profile dimly, the curve of her cheek and bosom. He felt maddened, incapable of self-control; she was drawing his personality and consciousness from him. Their hands touched on the verandah rail. He heard her indrawn breath.

Then a light flashed in the room behind them. Connie Elkins was carrying a lamp. "What in the world are you two people doing here?" she cried gaily. "It's a good thing Frank doesn't know, or there'd be coffee and pistols in the morning, Larry. Come along, people! We've got something to show you."

Tyson did not return, and Lawrence took Mary home from the Elkins'. It was two hundred yards from gate to gate. He knew that his life's destiny was to be decided in those two hundred yards. But Tyson was his friend, of a sort, and he had been brought up among gentlemen. If the game was in his hands, he couldn't play it. So they said good-night at Mary's gate. Then Lawrence went home, to lie awake all night, at first watching the light in Mary's window till it went out, then burying his face in the pillow and choking the sobs that tore him.

IN THE MORNING he had left for New York. Some weeks later the announcement of her marriage reached him. He had never opened it, because he could not bear to read it, but he had kept it—the only letter of hers he had, as an ironic memory. It was his only memento of her. Her personality was in the writing—small, square, with queer syncopations of the downward strokes.

He had it in his pocket now. He meant to throw it away after he had faced the dream of twenty-five years at last. He had looked forward to this ultimate meeting as the one great thing in his life, but he had never dared to guess how he would act when he saw her.

He had been in love with his wife, but there had been none of that mad exultation and wild uplifting that he had felt in that one memorable week. Yet no word had been spoken, and he had never even kissed her.

CARTER rose up, still possessed of his dream, and went slowly through the pasture until he reached the branch road that ran past his uncle's farm. He knew every tree that overhung it. Here was the maple, struck by lightning years ago; his uncle had said that ought to come down before it fell into the road, but it was still standing, a hollow shell, amid the undergrowth. Here was the rabbit warren, and, as he watched, two rabbits scampered away. At the turn, the homestead came into sight, with the same fence of sagging pickets, a little more disreputable than he had remembered it. Across the road was the Renfrew cottage, from whose chimney a coil of smoke spiralled into the still air.

He went through the open gateway of the old house. The garden, overrun with weeds, seemed to have remained unchanged since the days of his boyhood. Where the marigold border had been—the English species, not the monstrosities of modern fashion—a few flowers, lineal descendants in the twenty-fifth generation, still straggled. Hollyhocks rose singly, like gaunt spires, out of the wild asters. The doorbell of the house hung a little more limply from its attachment.

When Carter had rung three times and hammered, a very old black woman came to the door.

"You'll have to 'scuse me; I'm a trifle

deaf," she piped, her bleared eyes searching his face.

"Aunt Chloe!" shouted Carter, seizing her hand and wringing it hard.

"It's Master Larry!" cried Aunt Chloe tremulously, pressing his hand to her wrinkled lips. "To think I didn't know you, and me setting here waiting for you, Master Larry, and dreaming of the old days! You—you've grew up," she quavered.

"Come in, Master Larry, the table's set for you."

He followed her into the well-remembered house. For the first time since his departure he remembered the old clock, ticking as busily as ever, at the head of the stairs, and the faded ottoman in the hall. A spotless table-cloth was laid in the dinning-room, and through the open door he saw the gleaming pots and pans of Aunt Chloe's kitchen.

Aunt Chloe turned to Carter triumphantly. "I'se got a fried chicken for you, honey," she whispered. "I ain't forgot how you used to like it. And blueberry pie!"

"May I eat in your kitchen as I used to, Aunt Chloe?" asked Carter, swallowing a lump in his throat.

She looked at him doubtfully, then laughed and clapped her hands together. "Why, you'se not grew up after all!" she cried. "Bless your heart, Master Larry, come in and set there where you useter!"

Carter took his accustomed place at the plain, worn table. He ate such a meal as he had not tasted since he had been away. All the while he ate the old woman talked of his uncle, and questioned him. Yes, she had heard of Will, and was glad he was coming down to taste Maryland cooking. Master Larry must be proud of his boy. Had he a sweetheart yet? Mis' Tyson's girl and he must get introduced; not that Lucy Tyson was a patch on what Mary Renfrew had been. But then you couldn't expect the young folks to come up to the old. Carter ate and listened. "And I've kept your old room for you," Aunt Chloe announced triumphantly.

AFTER the blueberry pie Carter went up to the little room that had been his in boyhood. The same paper was on the walls, hanging in tatters here and there. There was his little bed, the same tear in the faded drugget, and the worn patch before the window. Nothing had changed, and the perceptible march of time was in himself alone. It seemed monstrous that his surroundings could have remained unchanged when he was different. It seemed incredible that he would not presently hear his uncle tramping below, or see Mary Renfrew, driving down the road toward the village in her buggy with the grey pony.

He looked out of the window. He could see the Renfrew cottage plainly through the maples. Someone in a white dress was moving in the garden. The sun was declining. Carter had reached the point where he must face the ordeal to which he had set himself.

He went downstairs and walked slowly to the Tysons' house. When she opened the door, for an instant he was back in the dead years again. The porch, shutting out the sunlight, made it almost dark within. He had the illusion of the same Mary Renfrew. Then he saw that, in figure, at least, she was no longer a girl. She gave him her cool hand, and there was a moment of silence.

"I'm glad to see you, Lawrence, after all these years," she said in her grave way. "My husband's in the garden—and Lucy. I want you to meet them. We've been looking forward to your visit."

When she stepped out into the sunlight he saw the fine lines about her mouth and eyes. There were streaks of grey in her hair. There was nothing of the old magic at all. She was just a woman of matronly age, holding her beauty well. She looked back at him and smiled. Her glance held the quintessence of friendship—but no more. If ever Mary Tyson had felt the same passion that had been his, she had forgotten it.

Frank Tyson and his companion, Lucy, strolled toward them out of the well-kept

garden. Frank was stouter, more polished, suaver, but little changed. He grasped Lawrence's hand warmly.

"We're mighty pleased to see you, old man," he said. "This is Lucy."

A pert, freckle-faced girl of about nineteen put her hand in his. It was not cool, as Mary's hand had always been. She was the image of her father: Mary seemed to have no part in her.

"Mamma's been talking a lot about you, Mr. Carter," she said, giggling. "I guess you were an old beau of hers, weren't you?"

A faint flush heightened on Mary's cheeks, but Tyson laughed. "I guess Larry isn't the only one—eh, Molly?" he asked. "Gee, old man, I was scared about you once!"

"We're going to have tea on the lawn, Frank," said Mary. "It'll be cool under the maples."

"You didn't happen to bring that boy of yours along, did you, Larry?" asked Tyson, as they walked toward the rustic house. "I'd have liked him and Lucy to meet."

"He's coming on Thursday," answered Carter, and Tyson looked at Lucy, who giggled again. Evidently there was some family joke upon the subject.

CARTER did not stay long, but before he left he had promised to bring Will to tea on the Thursday. He made his way back in angry bewilderment and resentment. Everything was changed. He had lived on a lie and a delusion, to which he had given his life. He wanted never to see Mary Tyson again. He would leave as soon as Will was settled.

He had wanted so little—just the knowledge that Mary had cared. So little contents us when we have reached middle-age. Carter was no philanderer, but he had stood aside and let Tyson take all upon a point of honor. He had hoped only for some captured glance, some wordless intimation that they had both shared the buried past of that one week in Dorchester. Something in him seemed to have died. He felt that all his life had been thrown away.

HE WANDERED round the topic because he could not help himself, probing his own wound. "I feel as if life has cheated me of a good deal, Mary," he said, a few evenings after, as the two sat together on the porch. Tyson had had to go into Baltimore, and Will and Lucy were playing croquet in the garden in the fading light. There was a rattling accompaniment of mallet-strokes and laughter.

She raised her eyes in question, and he continued: "I see now that happiness consists principally in the presence of familiar things and people. More than half my life has been spent in New York apartment houses, and all the while, although I didn't know it, my true life lay in the scenes of my boyhood."

"I think everyone feels that," she answered. "Frank and I did, at least. And I was always urging him to come back to live in Dorchester until he agreed."

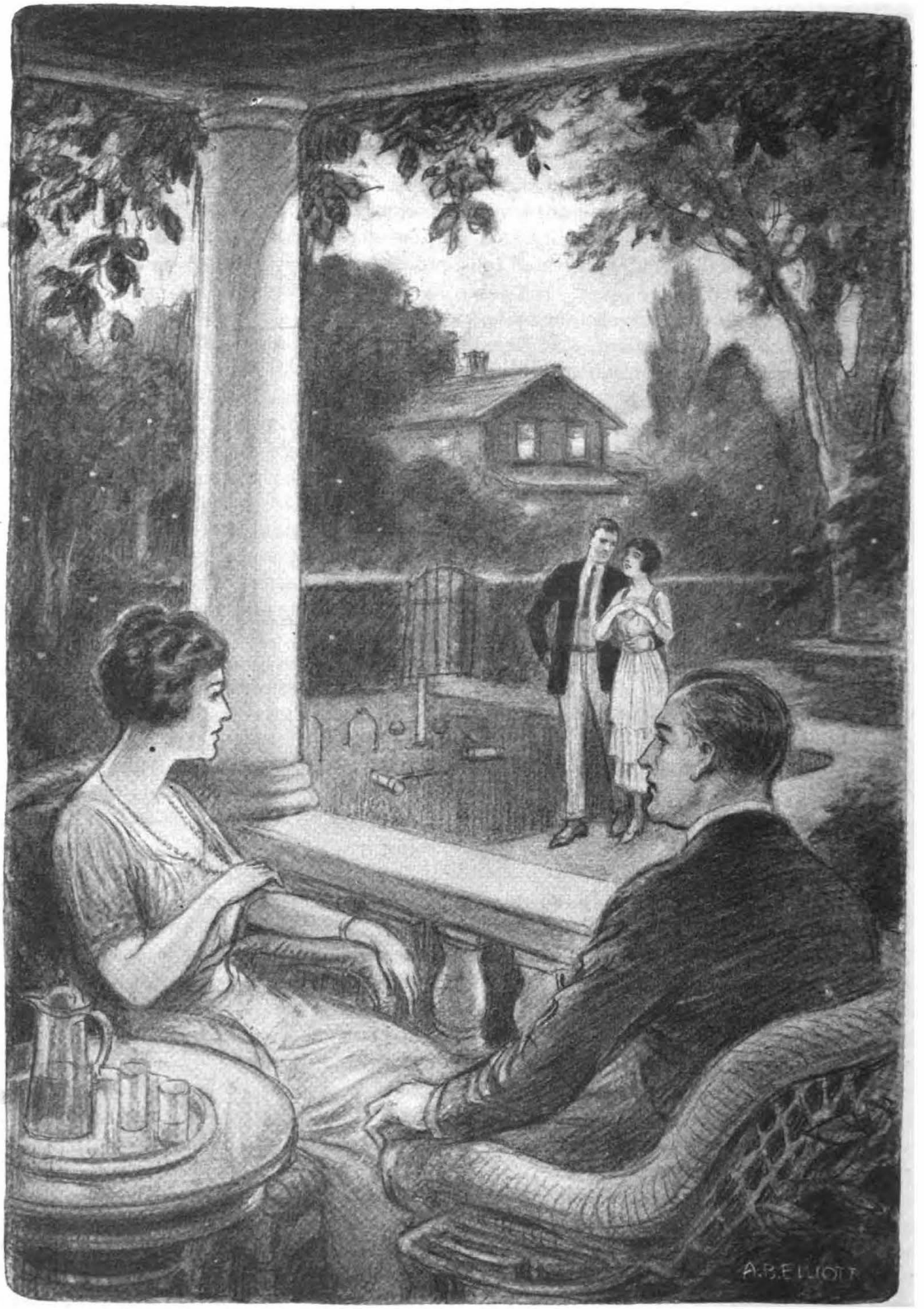
"I wish I'd known you all these years."

She looked at him rather sharply. "Well, why didn't you, then?" she asked. "We all wanted you to stay. And we still hope you'll stay."

"But it wouldn't be the same. The people I used to know are scattered, or dead. You can't transplant a grown tree. It's ironic, this coming back to an unchanged home, and finding different figures moving in the same drama."

She thought a little. "Perhaps you're right, Lawrence," she answered. "Yes, of course it is different with you than with us. Frank and I, though we had our home in Baltimore so many years, did come back often, and kept in touch with the old folks. What are you going to do with Will, Larry?" she continued.

"I'm leaving that to him. He's always had a taste for country life. If he can make good farming the place, I'll be just as satisfied as if he were in business. I've nothing much to offer him, except a job on the bottom rung of the ladder that I've been climbing."



"Suddenly he heard a quick exclamation from Lucy. A giggle, a low remonstrance. The white dress was bisected by an arm as the two came strolling slowly through the trees."

"You'll be lonely without him."

"A good deal. But he's been away so much, at school and college; and then, once I get back, all this will grow dim again, I suppose. It's horrible—I mean the way one has to let one's memories slide. But it's essential to happiness to be able to live in the present."

"Yes," she answered absently.

HE STOLE A GLANCE at her face as she sat beside him in the falling dusk. He had quite convinced himself during his week's visit that that week before he left had meant nothing to her at all, though he still believed she might have perceived his own emotion. But women were like that. Love was to them a blending of practical joys; they knew nothing of that emotion that had seemed to rend his being, revealing an unknown, unsuspected presence within. Probably she looked on him, as Lucy had said, as an "old beau."

It was love that had been revealed to him, not Mary Renfrew. He knew that now. There were no such depths in her as he had thought he saw. There was nothing at all of what he had imagined in this pretty, matronly, contented woman, who seemed incapable of any grand passion, whose very soul was loyalty and affection toward her own. He felt again as if he had been stumbling into a bog.

"And you really are going back tomorrow?" Mary asked. "You've paid Dorchester such a short visit. You ought to come down now and then, at any rate, especially now that Will's going to remain for a while, at least."

She looked away again to where a white dress was just visible in the dusk. The tapping of the croquet mallets had come to an end. Carter could just make out the figure of his son, standing beside the girl. Lucy's rippling laughter came faintly to his ears. It was growing dark very quickly; already the fireflies were beginning to flit through the air like points of fire. The memory of that last night was strong in him. How different everything had been. Gusty anger surged through him. If he had never plumbed Mary Tyson's heart he might have dreamed his dream to the end.

Suddenly he heard a quick exclamation from Lucy. A giggle, a low remonstrance. The white dress was bisected by an arm as the two came strolling slowly through the trees.

Mary was speaking. "I'm glad the children get along so well together, Lawrence," she said. "Lucy isn't a foolish girl, but she does love a good time. She's very like I was at her age—do you remember?"

He thought her voice was softer. So she did preserve some sentimental, cheap memory of his infatuation! He had learned that much, and his anger rose. Not against Will, but against his own folly. Was the thing that his son saw in that pert, freckle-faced girl the same thing that he had once seen in Mary Renfrew, a tragic memory, something that would have driven him to heights of heroism or plunged him into abysses of madness? Was it nothing but the life spirit, a perpetual lure, revealing itself indiscriminately to all created things, and investing all it touched with the same tinsel lure?

LATER that night, as they walked homeward, his son slipped an arm through his. "I think I like it here, Dad," he said. "And I've been deciding that I'd like to stay and see how I can make out here. Of course, I'll hate like thunder leaving you, now that we've been together a little after my leaving college, but—"

"Well, I'm glad, old man, if you think that way," said Carter heartily. "I've never had any grandiose ideas about business success, and if I died there wouldn't be much to hand on to you, except this place. And, after all, though you've never been here before, it's your own country!"

"That's just what I've been thinking," answered Will. "And the people are so fine and neighborly. I think I'll love Maryland. Well, I'll try it out, if you'll promise to run down often."

"Good for you, boy! Of course, I will!" said Carter.

HE LEANED OUT OF THE WINDOW of his darkened room again, watching the light behind the drawn shade in Mary Tyson's. He was offering a sacrifice to heaven—the dreams of a man's life, the little secret idol that he had treasured.

Of a sudden a bird began to call from a tree. It was a strange call in the dark, a simple one, one or two notes only, but golden clear. It was a yellow warbler's, and he remembered for the first time in years how a yellow warbler had called in the dusk that night when he stood on the verandah with Mary Renfrew. He had heard it during that walk of two hundred yards from gate to gate which had decided life for him, crying as if its heart was breaking.

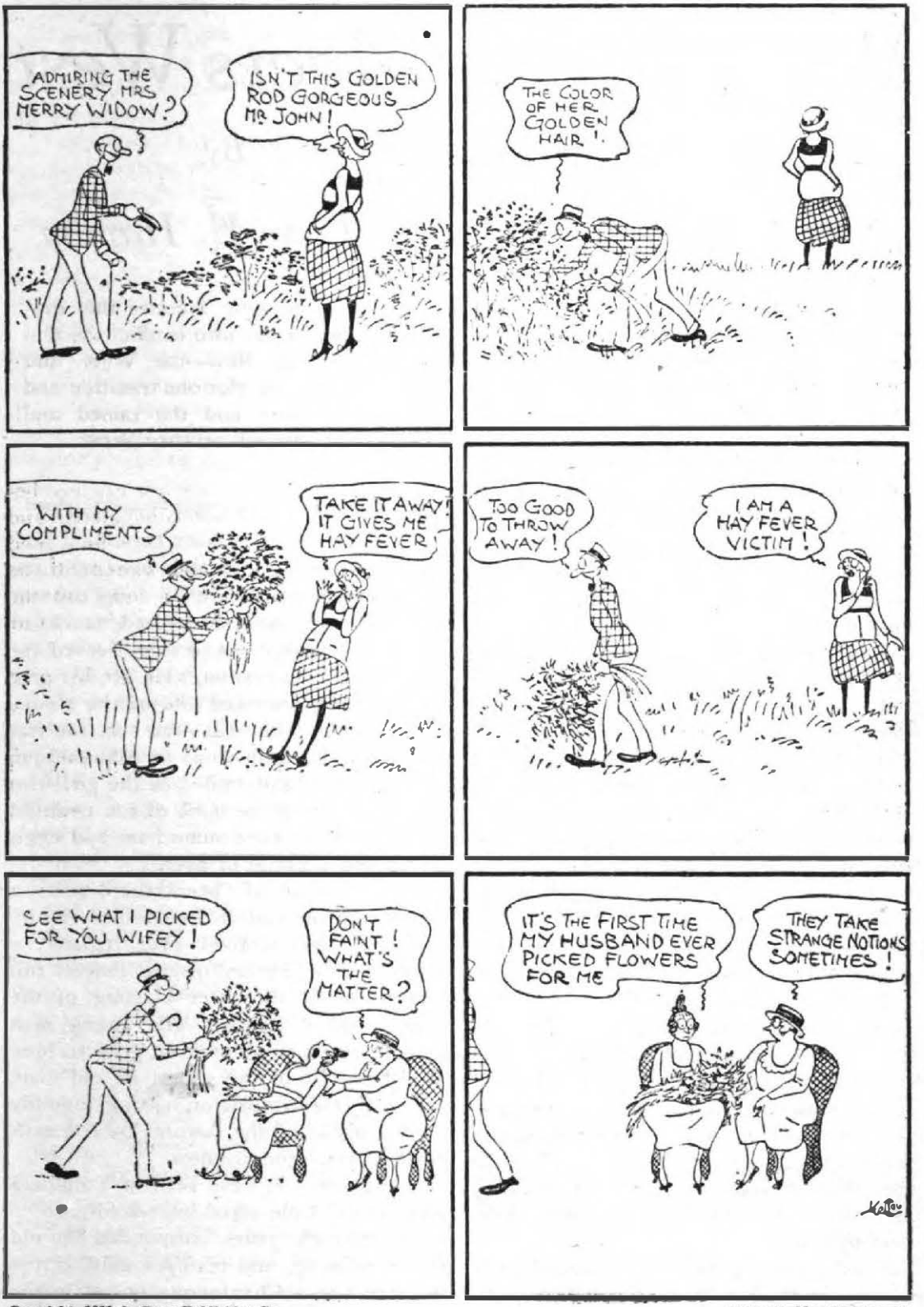
He drew from his pocket the unopened envelope of five-and-twenty years before, Mary's wedding announcement, opened the envelope to read it, and then, despising himself for that last act of folly, struck a match, applied it to one corner, and flung the letter into the grate. He watched it as the yellow flame crept along the edge, caught the paper, smouldered, charred it, and died down, leaving a few lines of writing visible.

But—but it was a letter, not a wedding announcement! He stooped down and picked up the fragment, and read, with quivering lips:

"...can't bear your going...must write this to you, dear, because...breaking from loneliness...why you said nothing, and honor you more than...know that I shared what you felt...Lawrence, I love you with all my heart and being, and every breath I draw...never told that to any man before...life impossible... wherever you are, nothing else counts... waiting to hear from you... want you to know whatever I may do, wherever we are, whether I'm married or dead...will always have my heart."

CARTER read it through gravely before he struck a second match and watched it burn to ashes. Then he turned to the window again and waited till the warbler's cry came to an end, and the light across the road went out. Dear Mary Renfrew!

Carter now saw Mary Renfrew quite clearly; he knew that he would never see her again, and that it had all been inevitable from the beginning—and good; an immense gladness filled his heart. He had given Tyson all, keeping the unrealized and imperishable essence of their love for the resurrection of all things.



Ketten in New York World

Can you beat it?

Where West Meets West

By

William H. Hamby

In a most gripping manner this dramatic story brings into conflict the Old West and the New—the West that was, the West of glorious tradition and two-fisted men; and the tamed and changing twentieth century West.

The transcontinental train whistled across the Yolinda bridge, and plunged on into desert spaces. Franklin Cole picked up his grip from the station platform and started up town.

There was a swinging nonchalance in his step which the eagerness in his eyes belied. He was looking everywhere at once, as though seeking for some particular thing, but unwilling to miss any of the rest.

An old Westerner, with faded moustache and pale blue eyes, sat in the doorway of an adobe house that jutted up against the sidewalk. A Mexican with the face of a grave digger shambled across the street. On the curb, three Indians sat stolidly side by side, their coal black hair bound with head bands of brilliant red, blue and green.

And this was the West—the far flung West!

A girl was coming down the walk—slender and lithe, with soft dark hair and distinctly arched eyebrows and long black lashes, and wearing a thin light dress, with slashes of color in it. The young man stopped as she passed. She was demure enough; she did not even notice him, but there was something foreign, something smoulderingly tropic hidden in her soft dark eyes, concealed in her free graceful movements.

Cole came to, when she had passed, and went on up the street with a distinct feeling that something had happened.

A half block ahead a waitress had come to the door of a lunch room to catch a few whiffs of the cool breeze and lose a few whiffs of the kitchen fries. She saw the stranger and put up her right hand and shoved two or three straggling hair pins into line.

"Had your supper?" She smiled provocatively as Cole came to a rather startled stop. "I thought you looked hungry."

"I am."

He turned in. It was one of those cheap eating places with a long counter on which daily several hundred "stacks of bucks" are shoved out to shirt-sleeved applicants for indigestion. He set his grip on the floor, mounted one of the stools, laid his wide straw hat—the sort tourists buy while the train stops at Albuquerque—on another, and smiled at the girl who had taken her place back of the counter.

"Suppose we have some ham and eggs, sister, and a bottle of beer."

At the sound of "beer" there came a snort from the end of the counter—up by the small second-hand cash register, a snort of such abysmal disgust that its full import meant the utter blasting of the whole United States. The young man turned with a good natured grin, to look at the author of the snort: an old man, evidently the proprietor, sitting moodily on the inside of the counter by the cash register near the window.

"I suppose you have been in Yolinda a long time?" Cole asked interestedly.

"Thirty-eight years," responded the old fellow moodily, and his eyes went across the street to a Chautauqua poster in the window of a vacant saloon. "And she's deader than a butterfly in hell."

"Have coffee?" the waitress asked, solicitously, looking up into the roving blue eyes of the young stranger with increasing admiration.

"You mustn't pay any attention to dad," she said, setting the cup of coffee before him so carefully that it did not slop into the saucer. "He's let Dago Dan get his goat."

"Dago Dan?" Cole exclaimed. "Is Dago Dan still here?"

"The surest thing you know," she replied, carefully drying the counter near his elbow with a cloth. "They put him out of the saloon business. But—" the waitress, not unattractive in a way, significantly winked the left eye—"he's still here.

"What gets daddy's goat," she added, "the Italian is opening up a swell eating joint only two doors from here. That was his girl you passed on the street just before you came in. Some swell looker, ain't she? They call her the Princess down at the road house."

"The road house?" Cole's blue eyes had a touch of interested deviltry in them. "Where is that?"

"Sh'h!" She glanced toward the moody old man at the cash register and spoke in a lower tone. "I'll show you sometime. . . . No, not tonight—but sometime."

"Stranger here, ain't you?" Bartell remarked as the young fellow paid his check.

"Oh, no!" He paused with the hat in his hand, and ran his fingers through his thick, wavy brown hair—the waitress's eyes said she would like to do it for him. "I've lived here most of my life."

The restaurant keeper grunted dubiously, and remarked skeptically:

"I don't seem to remember you."

On the sidewalk the young man looked up and down the street musingly, and added to himself:

"Stranger? Why, I've been killed often enough on these streets to fill a grave yard.

"And if all the bad men I've made bite the dust in this town were counted, it would depopulate Yolinda twice over."

II

AT TEN O'CLOCK that night Franklin Cole stepped from his room at the old Territory House out on the screened-in gallery that ran around three sides of the hotel. For half an hour he walked, too restless, too excited to go to bed. At last he sat down on an old hickory chair on the gallery, and faced the west.

And this was Yolinda! His father's Wild West! And had the father come back here—and was he still alive?

It was eleven o'clock and most of the lights were out and the people off the streets. It was so still that he could hear the "wooish" of the river. Off in the distance some belated player blew a few notes on a cornet, and a piano tinkled intermittently. The desert stars glittered, and a young moon showed pale through the limbs of a cottonwood tree.

He felt a thin edge of sadness creep in. Cole was twenty-four the most reminiscent age between fourteen and seventy-four.

He moved in the chair, and put his hand down to where something hard pressed uncomfortably against his hip. Then he grinned into the dark. He had forgotten that revolver. It was his father's gun, given to Franklin on his seventh birthday. The mother, filled with secret horror of that gun and all it represented had hidden it, and he had not seen it again until a month ago, when, in going through the house the day after her funeral, he had found the revolver on the top shelf of the closet in her dressing room.

And it was that evening after the funeral that he had got the full story which made him understand his mother's horror of the gun. He had slipped out of the house and lay down in the hammock swung between the two big elm trees which his mother had loved so much to think. Two women, a rather romantic aunt, and a distant relative, brought their chairs out into the yard to talk. They

did not see him, for it was quite dark and the aunt began telling the story about his father and mother, which Franklin had never known except in patches!

"DICK COLE was a cowboy," said the aunt, "about twenty-two years old when he met Etta. He was powerful handsome, and had black hair and black eyes, and a reckless smile that would turn any girl's head. Etta was one of the daintiest, prettiest things you ever saw. She was visiting up in St. Louis and Dick had brought in a carload of cattle from Arizona.

"I think they met by accident. Etta never would tell quite how it was. Anyway it was the worst case of love at first sight you ever saw. He followed her back here to River Grove and in two weeks they were married.

"Etta had inherited this place from her father, and she just loved every stick and stone of it, and every flower and blade of grass and tree and she would not hear to going west. She told him so before they were married.

"They were about the happiest couple alive for two or three years. Franklin—his father always called him Klin—was born the second year. But by and by I could see Dick was getting restless. This town seemed awfully slow to him. Nearly everybody had lived here for generations, and had their old friends and their family celebrations, and nearly all of them went to church and were law abiding and—safe.

"Dick I know must have just been dying for something dangerous to break loose.

"He loved little Klin, though, and more than half the time he was off with him in the woods or along the river. And the stories he told that boy—the most dreadful stories of riding and shooting and gambling—and girls in saloons. I reckon he was proud of it, and used to boast of how they would spend six month's wages in one night.

"I told Etta that Dick would put ideas in the boy's head she could never get out—and she was awfully worried about it.

"But I needn't have worried, for after Dick ran away there never was a boy better to his mother than Franklin has been.

"Then after she started the little book store, he took hold—and he's never given her a moment's trouble. Quiet and steady, he hasn't even gone about much with other young people—just read and stayed with his mother.

"Poor boy, I don't know what he'll do now."

And Franklin had smiled grimly up in the dark limbs above him. How little they knew. All these seventeen years he had been going about helping his mother in the body, but in his imagination he was living in the Wild West of his father. He read of it, dreamed of it, and twice started to run away, as his father had done. But both times his heart failed him at the last moment. He was glad now that he had not gone while she was alive. He was glad she thought he loved the old house, and the small quiet town, and her ways. But now he would waste no time.

And he had not; within the month he sold the book store and bought a ticket for Yolinda. Now he was here!

COLE got up and went into his room, undressed, and, taking a large roll of bills from his pocket, stuck them under one end of his pillow, and the revolver under the other. He had sold the book store for ten thousand dollars and had brought it all with him in bills—one big roll.

He wanted a roll to flash.

"Tomorrow," he told himself as he stretched out, "I'll see if I can get any trace of him."

He still hoped his father had returned here and was alive.

"And then I'll forget that damned Ohio town and have a hell of a time!"

And with that he fell asleep—to dream of Dago Dan's daughter.

III

NEXT MORNING Cole went down the street to Jim Bartell's place. He wanted breakfast, and he wanted more information. The lunch room in the light of morning looked even less inviting than last night. The screen door had a hole in the rusty wire, large enough to let all the flies in that were willing to hunt for it. The greasy doughnuts looked rather malignantly heavy, and the battered coffee urn smelled of ancient grounds. Along the board counter were several remnants of "stacks of bucks" which had not been totally demolished by earlier starch stokers.

"Hello!"

Ivy Bartell, the waitress, had been watching for him, and smiled wide, showing solid white teeth. She had tied a wide bow of yellow ribbon around her hair this morning.

They talked in snatches between the varied courses of his devastating breakfast.

The girl's vocabulary was limited, but her attention and intentions were not.

Bartell, who had been absent from the cash register, shuffled in from the kitchen, his hair obviously undisturbed by recent comb and brush, his greasy trousers hanging perilously on a sharp left hip.

"By the way," the young man turned to him, "did you ever happen to know a man out here named Dick Cole?"

"Nope!"

Bartell shook his head indifferently.

"Never heard of him." He sat down on the stool near the cash register and looked out the window and wearily pulled his drooping mustache.

"Of course," he added reflectively, "I might have knowed him, but not by that name. In them days a name didn't mean nothin'. A feller's name was just what he was called by."

The old timer seemed reluctant to talk. Morning showed him the ghastliness of Yolinda's fall. There was that empty saloon building straight across the street, with the Chautauqua poster in its window!

"Better ask Bill Callondar, the old sheriff," suggested Bartell as Franklin paid his check. "If anybody by the name of Cole was ever here, Bill would know it."

COLE went out to look for the old sheriff. Somehow the matter-of-factness of Yolinda in broad daylight struck him disappointingly. A truck load of vegetables had backed up in front of a grocery store, a farmer with a load of baled alfalfa drove down the street, and a belated milk wagon rattled by. Clerks stood in the doorways of stores in their shirt sleeves. It was so peaceful and businesslike that he grew secretly ashamed of carrying that huge roll of greenbacks around and went to the bank and deposited nine thousand of it. He would still keep some ready money in his pocket.

About five o'clock Cole climbed the hill to the abandoned penitentiary, where he was told he would find Callondar.

The ex-sheriff came upon him sitting bareheaded, looking toward the desert. The weather-beaten old fellow ran his fingers through his wiry gray hair, and his pale blue eyes took on the look of speculative interest:

"Well, stranger?" he broke Cole's reverie.

FRANKLIN knew from the moment he looked up into the retrospective pale blue eyes of Bill Callondar that here was a real Westerner.

"Did you ever know a man out here named Dick Cole?"

The old sheriff studied a moment and then shook his head. He sat down on the end of the rock a few feet away and hooked his hands around his right knee. He was a rough, grizzled chap, essentially unchanged since the day forty years ago when he came down the desert trail out yonder leading a burro with a prospector's outfit on his back, headed for the Chocolate Mountains. Miner, cowboy, guide, bullion guard, sheriff, warden of the

prison—he had lived through all of it. Yet the changes in Yolinda had not changed him. He was fading out as the old life was, but not like it, into something new and different. He felt a responsive interest in this eager youth, and began to talk, slowly, reticently, but with that peculiar flavor of the man who has been a part of it.

And it was the very stark reality of these tales that made for Franklin Cole, as it does for millions of others, the romance and fascination of the old West.

They treated life roughly and held it lightly—bartered it for a drink or night's carousal, spilled it over an ugly word, gambled with it in the desert, threw it away for a friend.

"There was one feller we called 'Curly Buck' who was foreman of the Temple Dome silver mine where I used to guard bullion," recalled Callondar. "I don't know why, but I just never saw a feller I liked so well. Wasn't nothin' he wouldn't do for a friend. Didn't care no more about money than he did water. Quick tempered, though—he'd draw at the bat of an eye. And when he started to draw on you, you shore didn't want to have any creepin' paralysis in your right arm."

As the old sheriff rambled on in his bold, unexpurgated stories of Curly, the sun went down, the shifting sand hills gleamed yellow, a vast glow flowed over the desert, breaking into billows of indescribable color on the painted mountains to the north. Below, the swift dark river sucked and gurgled and swooshed, bringing down from a thousand miles of mountains rich soil to be spilled over the valleys. Back of them the grim old prison, with its dim cells, the iron rings in the stone floors, and, below, the little black crosses in the fading light!

"That was the life!" he exclaimed.

THE ex-sheriff stopped. His hands relaxed from his knee. The foot dropped down, and he leaned forward, resting his chin in his hand. He looked very old and faded in the twilight, as one who has lost something that he does not expect to see again.

He made no reply to Franklin's exclamation.

Directly he stirred, shook his head slowly in the dusk, and looked over his shoulder at the row of cells, as though expecting a ghost—perhaps Curly's ghost. Then getting up rather hastily, as though ashamed of even suggesting sentiment, he remarked:

"Got to get out and rustle some grub now. Hain't had supper, an' I'm hungrier'n a coyote."

As Franklin went down the hill in the early twilight, his head up, his face still flushed, walking with a reckless swing, he chanted an old cowboy refrain which he had learned from his father.

Near the foot of the hill, where the road turned into a street of old adobe houses, he saw a girl come in from some side street and walk ahead of him. His heart went thumping more recklessly than his gait. The movement of the lithe, slim body, the light dress, the slash of color around the waist—it was Dago Dan's daughter, the Princess. Sure! He quickened his step, but never caught up with her—and she did not look around.

OVER his ham and eggs at Bartell's he asked Ivy, in an undertone, "Can you go tonight?" He felt himself blushing clear down his neck, and hated himself for it.

She glanced furtively toward her father, and nodded: "I think so. Come back about nine, and I'll let you know."

When he went out onto the street he felt himself still flushed, with a sort of secret shame. "Oh, hell!" he said, in vast disgust at himself. What sort of a Westerner was he to blush like a school girl over a thing like that?

He strolled up and down the street waiting until nine. He started to enter the corner drug store where the big soda fountain drew a continuous trade—but stopped and drew back, as though the

screen door had given him an electric shock. The Princess was coming out, had put her hand on the screen just as he reached for it, and their eyes met—met straight and held for a moment. Such eyes! He never had seen such eyes—felt such eyes—before.

He stepped half way back on the sidewalk to let her pass. She walked hastily away—almost as if running—and never looked back. Franklin felt himself hot and tingling. But curiously enough it was not the sort of flush that had come from the invitation to Ivy.

A few minutes later he inquired of a loafer the way to Dago Dan's road house—and, without going back to Bartell's, set out to walk the mile down into the cottonwood grove by the river.

Franklin Cole felt the thrill of adventure as he went through the woods toward the surreptitious light that gleamed now and then between the trees. He felt as though he had known Dago Dan all his life. The Italian in the old days of which Franklin's father had told him had kept the big saloon on Main Street.

THE road house was an old two-wing ranch house. In the center was the bar, supposed to serve soft drinks, although a ten dollar bill slipped to the waiter put a lot of kick into this softness. In the left wing was gambling—roulette, black jack, stud poker; in the right wing, dancing.

The floor was rough, and the tables were bare pine boards. The place was crude enough for the old days. But the patrons did not fit his picture of the roistering prodigal of his father's time. They looked guilty and surreptitious, and were too well dressed—and not one bit hilarious!

Franklin took a seat at a small, square board table. Two men and two girls sat at the table jammed close to his elbow. The place was well patronized.

"That is Dago Dan behind the bar," said one of the young men.

Already Franklin had been watching the skillful mixer of drinks, wondering if he were the Italian. It scarcely seemed possible he was fifty years old. His hair was black, his eyes quick and alert, his face pink. But he remembered his father saying that Dago Dan would never touch a drop of his own whiskey.

"He is one smart Dago," remarked the other. "He must be coining money—at ten dollars a pint." He laughed.

"I hear," said the other, "he is planning to clean up here and turn respectable. He's bought the old Temple Dome silver mine, and is opening up a swell café in Yolinda."

Cole slipped a ten-dollar bill to the waiter as he had seen the others do, and the drink he got brought a very rapid change in his circulation. He began to feel gay and hilarious almost at once. This was all right—this was the life.

IN A BRIEF LULL the Italian stopped mixing drinks and stood with folded arms looking over the room. Franklin got up and went to the bar and asked quite easily:

"Ever know a man named Dick Cole—twenty-five years ago?"

The Italian's dark eyes looked at Franklin closely a second, his lips parted in a friendly smile, showing the whitest of teeth, and he shook his black, curly head.

"Never knew him by that name. What they call hem—you know?"

Franklin shook his head. He wished his father had told him what the fellows called him. It would have been easy then.

"Who was he?" the Italian asked, "somebody you look for, eh?"

"He was my father."

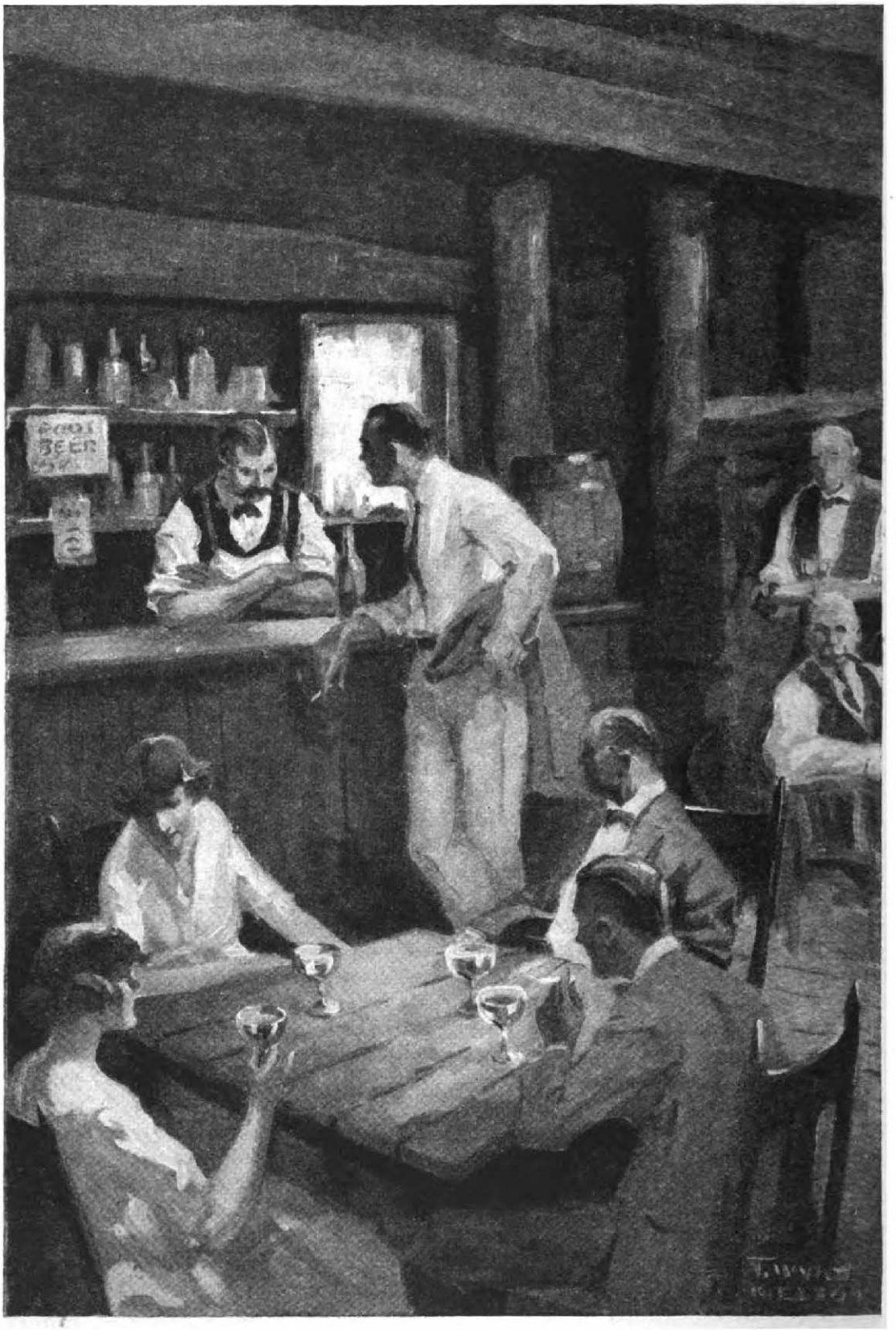
The young man tried to say it carelessly, but his tone trembled a little.

"Maybe if you have picture," suggested Dan hopefully, "I know hem."

But Franklin did not have a picture.

Dago Dan was reaching under the counter and pouring things upon ice in a glass. After giving it a good shake he set the drink before the young man.

"Have one for hem," he said, smiling.



"'Ever know a man named Dick Cole—twenty-five years ago?'"

"If he ever in Yolinda he drink with Dan."

Franklin turned the glass up. It was a delicious drink, a bit strong, but—well, that was the stuff.

As he set down the glass, Franklin glimpsed a quick look of displeasure on the Italian's face, and, turning, saw the Princess coming directly toward them.

From the half puzzled surprise in the father's eyes, Franklin guessed the girl was not a frequent visitor to this place. But he asked with unmistakable parental fondness:

"What is it leetle one?"

"Oh nothing," she shrugged. "Only a glass of lemonade!"

Dan reached for a lemon with one hand and the shaker with the other, talking as he worked.

"Bonita, this young man's father used to drink with me twenty-five years ago. Before you were born, eh? But he don't know which of those wild fellows he was—for Mester Cole do not know what we call hem."

The girl, standing by the bar near him, looked straight up into Franklin's face. Such eyes! Not jet black like her father's, but a soft, dark brown, and large with long lashes. For a moment or two their eyes met, held—until his head fairly swam, and he felt as though he were floating in air.

They talked for a few minutes while she sipped her lemonade. He saw that the lips that touched the glass were soft and richly pink. He was not drunk yet, but he never knew what they said during that brief conversation.

THIS was the West! He had found it at last—the glorious, reckless, carefree west. Look at her hair—those eyes! And the whiteness of her neck and shoulders. He would show her he was of the West too—that money, nothing mattered with him, but a good time.

He went into the gambling room. She went with him and watched him join in a game of poker. The drink was taking effect now. He bet a hundred dollars and won, and laughed loudly. He bet two hundred and won, and became almost boisterous.

Then he lost.

But he would show them he was no cheap sport—no timid tenderfoot.

He lost again, and then began to write checks—thousand-dollar checks.

After that everything was oblivion!

When Franklin awoke next morning he was in his room at the hotel and it was ten o'clock.

Last night came back to him rather dimly; but he did remember about those checks. He leaned over the edge of the bed and reached for his coat, which had been thrown across the back of a chair, and found his check book. Habit had been strong even in drunkenness, and he had filled in the stubs. He had given nine one-thousand dollar checks—exactly what he had in the bank.

There was a moment when the sickening thought raced through his consciousness to the rhythm of "damn fool, damn fool!" But he stopped it with a wry grin. "Well, I showed 'em speed, all right. They must have known I was a real sport or they wouldn't have taken my checks."

In the early afternoon he went down the street, rather pale, rings under his eyes, but his jaws set with reckless defiance. He was a real Westerner now, and he was going through with it.

Down by the river he found an old prospector with a loaded burro just setting out on a trip. Cole talked to him an hour; then bought his complete outfit for twice what it was worth, and without even going back to the hotel to check out, led the burro across the bridge and headed off into the desert toward the mountains.

IV

THERE are two situations in which the desert has charms: one when viewed at a distance from a well watered, comfortable shade; the other after one has suffered from it and sees it in retrospect. . . .

Late in the afternoon of the third day, Franklin Cole staggered into the north canyon, where an old prospector was preparing the deserted Temple Dome mine for reopening. His head ached, his muscles were sore, and his feet were skinned at every protuberant angle. But the old miner gave him water and food, and after supper they sat out in front of the cabin and talked.

Of him Franklin asked about Dick Cole. The old miner smoked and thought a long time, and then believed he had known a man named Cole. Some of the old bunch—it seemed to him it was Curly Buck—had told him once when they were prospectors together that his name back east had been Cole.

"I tell you who would know," said the ancient prospector, "Dago Dan would know—for it was him that turned Curly Buck over to the sheriff after Curly shot Texas Jack!"

The chill of conviction ran through Franklin like a shiver of ice. He had feared all the time that Curley Buck and his father were one. . . . His father locked up in that terrible prison! Hate, swift and vengeful, surged through him. He got up and walked away from the old miner and looked up at the stars. Damn that Italian into hell fire—if he had betrayed his father, he should pay the price!

Cole set out next morning with his burro, his pans and picks, beans and crackers, and a roll of blankets, up the range of mountains to the northwest. It was thirty miles to the next water, a hard two-days' journey over the broken trail.

As he lay on his blankets in the sand that night—his first night alone on the desert—he did not feel the thrill he had experienced when he had heard or read about it in all those Wild-West stories of his youth. Instead, as he looked up at the stars he got to thinking about his mother. She had worked hard all those seventeen years to build up that store—up to where he could sell it for $10,000. He kicked at the blanket violently, turned over on his side, shut his eyes, while that mocking refrain ran through his brain: "Damn fool—damn fool—damn fool!"

There was one grain of comfort—he had not sold the house with its grass and rose vines and elm trees which she loved. And, he thought as he dropped off to sleep, he never would sell it!

THREE DAYS later he pitched his permanent camp near a spring at the foot of the Chocolate Mountains, seventy miles from the Temple Dome mine. And he discovered, during the days that followed, that when one digs among dead mountains for gold, bruised and sore and aching, hot and thirsty, and blistered by blown sand, he does not go into ecstasies over the yellow and purple and silver colors of the desert. Neither does he throw out his arms and breathe in "great drafts of the clean, sweet air." He digs and swears and suffers; eats and sleeps and moves on.

Nothing but the memory of his father, and all those hard riding, hard working Westerners of his adventurous imagination kept him alive and going. But he had begun to fear that either he was not really one of them, or else their life had not been so roisterously exuberant as he had imagined. In all that he had ever read of these Westerners they did not care how much they suffered—nor did they care a damn about money.

But in spite of himself, Franklin kept remembering that nine thousand dollars he had squandered—nine thousand dollars his mother had worked all her life to save! And in spite of everything, that grimacing refrain would rise in him: "Damn fool—damn fool—damn fool!" And, too, he kept recalling glimpses of the old life; mornings when his mother called him to breakfast, and he awoke with the soft wind stirring the muslin curtains at his window, outside the sun shining on green grass and silvery leaves; or again the long wooded path down the river where in June he had gathered wild strawberries and smelled the blossoms of the wild grape in the woods.

FRANKLIN, like millions of other lovers of adventure—literary adventure—had imagined that all Westerners took life all the time with a zip of boisterous enthusiasm. But it was not so—not by a million removes. Many an old time Westerner dug and sweated and cursed at the jabs of cactus and the saltness of the pork and the burntness of the beans, just as you and I would do. Life was meager and drab. He had rheumatism that bothered him on cold windy days and nights, he was hungry, and there was not the slightest glory in going two days without water. He wanted money, he wanted a good bed, he wanted a lot of things that he could not get. So he went on hunting for a stake that would enable him to leave this "cussed country" and go back to the sweet romantic pastures of the East and enjoy himself. He seldom got there, and if he did he found as little of the glory in it as, say, Franklin was finding now in his prospecting.

There was only one thing he had found in the West so far that more than filled his expectations—and that was Dago Dan's daughter. The Princess was the Romantic West. She stood out like a flame in his fancy during these days of disappointingly flat suffering. She was the West that called to his riotious dreams. And yet—he had sworn to kill her father!

From the first Cole had known his search for gold was futile. He knew he was not a prospector, that this was not his sort of work. And yet he did get a lot of grim, savage satisfaction out of the thought that he could stand it.

ONE NIGHT at the end of three weeks he found his provisions practically exhausted, and realized he must get away immediately. He started a little before sundown the next evening for the eastern end of that low range of mountains to the south, which he judged was the shortest way back to Yolinda. He took with him what provisions were left, and two gallons of water.

Even a level desert has sand dunes and arroyos. Many times Cole lost sight of the mountains, and at best they were very dimly visible by starlight. He tried to lay his course by a certain star; but often lost track of which star he was following. At times the desert was broken and rough; at other places loose sand made progress slow for him and the burro. At midnight he had scarcely gone ten miles, and he was so tired his legs would scarcely move. At four o'clock he gave up to his weariness, and lay down.

In the night he dreamed he had wandered out from River Grove and down the path that led through hazel and sumac to the clear cold spring that bubbled out under the rocks in the shade of the great oaks, and as he knelt on a mossy stone and leaned over to drink, he awoke gasping with thirst to find the sun an hour high and already hot. He rubbed his eyes and looked anxiously for his landmarks. Fear, real fear, got him for the first time. The end of that range to the south seemed to have receded. It had. He had drifted farther west.

He ate a hasty breakfast, gave the burro a quart of water, drank a pint himself, and once more headed southeast. Heat or no heat, he would have to push on through the day. But by ten o'clock the heat was growing intolerable; and the glare on the desert makes the very eyeballs ache.

Every mile or two he stopped and rested a little in the shade of the faithful burro. Twice he shared his water with it. But when night came the mountains looked almost as far away as they had that morning. He slept a few hours, a tortured restless sort of sleep.

At midnight he got up and went on. When daylight came, he perceived he had made headway. The mountains looked much nearer. Perhaps not more than ten miles off. But his burro was done for. Cole put it out of its misery, swung the canteen, which was fearfully light now, over his shoulder, and started on.

There is one western thing at least

that has never been over-colored—the danger of the desert. Too many human skeletons bear mute testimony to its stark reality. And one of the ironic tricks of that menacing desert demon is to slay the victim within a few miles or a few hours of water and succor. Thirst and fear are the twin destroyers of the desert. When water is gone the seething heat envelops the wanderer, panic seizes him, and he fights as one being suffocated.

ALL that day Cole staggered on, panting and gasping. From sheer exhaustion he dropped down every few hundred yeards. But up again in a fever of fear! His water had been gone for hours, his tongue was swelling. Sometimes the wind dropped and the whole desert seemed like a cauldron; and again the wind blew and it felt like the breath of hell. And in his half conscious delirium Cole fancied he was staggering down the hill road back home and just ahead were the green valley and the peaceful little town with its shaded streets, and at the end, the frame house with the green shutters, the rose vines and the big elm trees —and his mother! Only his mother would change every few minutes, and it would be the Princess reaching out her arms to him. Just a little farther and he would be there—one more hard pull. He stumbled and fell on his face and did not rise.

V

A LITTLE CAR, with the back part filled with boxes and bundles of provisions, bounced and bucked its way across the dim desert road from Yolinda toward the Temple Dome mine. The driver was a girl, a slender girl with soft dark hair, and delicately arched eyebrows. But she drove with skill and a firm hand; and occasionally her brown eyes swept the desert ahead of her. It was Bonita Simonetti, taking provisions to the old prospector who was re-opening the Temple Dome mine for Dago Dan.

"You know," said the old timer after he had unloaded the provisions from the car, "I've been sort of worried about a tenderfoot that came out this way about three weeks back. He had bought a real outfit, but he didn't know a darn thing about camping or mining either. He went off up the range toward North Canyon. I figured he'd be back in a day or two, but he ain't showed up yet."

"Do you know who he was?"

The Princess' eyes opened wider, showing a little fright.

"Seems to me," the old miner scratched his head, "that he said his name was Cole. Yes," he nodded, "that's it, I recklect now—he said he was goin' to—"

But even before he finished, the girl had thrown a few things back into the car—bread and cans of food—leaped in and was off across the unbroken desert to the northwest.

"Well, I'll be swilled!" exclaimed the miner still scratching his head.

BONITA SIMONETTI did not know what had happened to her that first evening she met Franklin Cole on the street. But something strange and fearful had flamed up within. She dreamed about him that night. She managed to see him a half dozen times the next day and to cross his path as he came down from the old prison. And she had followed him to her father's roadhouse that night.

And—and now that strange feeling flamed and surged within her and sent her plunging wildly across the desert with only one great burning desire—to find him.

She found his first camp, and then the second. Twenty miles farther up the range, she came upon the third, in the North Canyon. This must have been his last, for it had not been abandoned long.

She got out of the car and studied the tracks, some of which, in sheltered strips, were still uncovered by drifting sand. She felt a catch in her side, and a dry tightening in her throat. He had started south,

two, perhaps three, days ago, across that desert. She knew the danger.

It would be hard trailing him, for in many places the blown sand would have obliterated all tracks. Undoubtedly he had headed for the short low range of mountains near the river.

She lost the trail several times but kept on in the general direction and each time picked it up again. About one o'clock she came upon his abandoned camp outfit and the dead burro.

There is no greater miracle than a little piece of machinery on wheels that plows across a desert in four hours, over which a man would stagger fighting heat and death for four days. By mid-afternoon Bonita was within a few miles of the range of mountains. The desert became so broken that she left the car here, slung a water bottle over her shoulder, and took up the trail through the sand dunes and shallow arroyos.

It was terrifically hot, the walking hard, but at times she ran until the pounding heat in her head made her stop. Then on again, stumbling, leaping, calling!

She stood still, the desert whirling a mad dance about her, her heart almost ceasing to beat. Yonder he lay, face down in the sand. He must be dead.

She went to him, walking heavily, as though her feet would not lift. She bent down dreading to touch him.

No—he wasn't dead!

She turned him over and poured water into his mouth. She bathed his forehead, and wet his hair, murmuring the while to him in soft, passionate pity.

He had not been without water long. His tongue was not badly swollen. He had fallen more from exhaustion and lack of sleep than from strangulation. In a little while the muscles of his throat relaxed. He swallowed the water freely. She knew directly he would pass from unconsciousness to sleep. In an hour she could rouse him, and they could get back to the car, and be in Yolinda before midnight.

But passing her moistened handkerchief very tenderly over his forehead, she smiled and shook her head.

Toward sundown when he was sleeping peacefully she left him, went back to the car and brought his blanket and some food.

He was still sleeping, but swallowed a tin of milk. Then she spread the blanket on a smooth bed of sand, and eased him over on it. Her face was very flushed, her eyes very happy as she worked.

She sat down beside him and bathed his face and temples with water and combed his thick brown hair with her fingers. Night came and stars glittered, and she sat crooning to him endearing Italian love songs which she had heard her father sing.

TOWARD MORNING he awoke, but did not stir. As he opened his eyes he saw her standing a half dozen yards away, looking up at the stars. He was fully conscious now, and trying to remember. Only dimly did he recall that someone had come to him when he thought he was dying. Dimly remembered her voice—sweet and soothing—and the water.

Yes, it was she, it was Bonita Simonetti, and he was not dreaming. The desert wind stirred her hair—her hands were locked behind her, her face lifted—very still.

She was singing low—it sounded almost like a chant—in a tongue foreign to him. But he knew it was a love song, an Italian love song. Now soft and tender, now pleading and passionate.

And as Franklin Cole listened he stopped trying to remember. There wasn't any past, any desert, any West—nothing in the world but Bonita Simonetti—and he loved her!

She turned directly, came and sat down on the blanket beside him. He lay very still, his eyes closed. Her fingers ran lightly, caressingly, over his face and through his hair. She bent and kissed him. For a moment his body seemed to float in a golden ecstasy—He would reach out in a moment and enfold her in his

arms. Then with a crash he remembered. She was Dago Dan's daughter! Dago had betrayed his father to prison—and he was going to kill him!

VI

IT WAS DUSK when Cole stirred, opened his eyes, and struggled up from sleep to consciousness sufficient to remember where he was and what had happened.

Bonita Simonetti had got him to Yolinda in the cool of the morning. And left him at the Territory House. He was in bed in his room now.

Something wonderful had happened. . . . Oh, yes! Bonita had kissed him while she thought him unconscious—and he loved her as no other man ever loved a woman. And yet—what a damned, damned muddle everything was! He must kill Dago Dan. For nearly twenty years Franklin had lived in his mind by the code of the West—the Wild West his father knew. And, by the code, when a man betrayed your friend he paid the penalty at your hand. You did not count the cost—you merely gave him a chance to draw and then killed him like a dog.

He had miserably failed as a Westerner. But this one thing he would do for his father—who even now perhaps was behind iron bars in that newer prison in the Salt River Valley.

But first he would be sure. He got up and dressed and went down to Bartell's lunch room. Ivy was surprised to see him—and shocked at the look in his face. Where had he been? Had he been sick? Why had he not come for her that night, as he had promised?

He scarcely answered, and scarcely noticed what he ordered or ate. He was waiting for old man Bartell. Directly he shuffled in from the kitchen where he had been jawing the milk man, and took his seat by the cash register.

"Did you know Curley Buck?" Franklin turned to him abruptly.

"Of course," old Bartell answered, wearily, staring out of the window at the vacant saloon across the street.

"What became of him?" Franklin asked, his heart beating smotheringly.

"Oh he had some trouble with Texas Jack over at the Temple Dome mine. Both drew, but Curley got him. He always got his man first. Then Curley came in here to liquor up. And that damned Dago Dan sent out for the sheriff and had him arrested while he was drunk."

Franklin's hand closed convulsively on the edge of the counter. He got down off the stool, picked up his hat and went out.

NEXT MORNING Franklin Cole arose, shaved and dressed very carefully. He discarded his Wild West clothes and put on the palm beach suit he had worn when he arrived in Yolinda. He spent some time in brushing his hair and adjusting his tie. During the night which had seemed an interminable hell he had fought it out and emerged cold and determined. Curley Buck was his father. Dago Dan had betrayed him. He would kill Dago Dan. After that—nothing mattered!

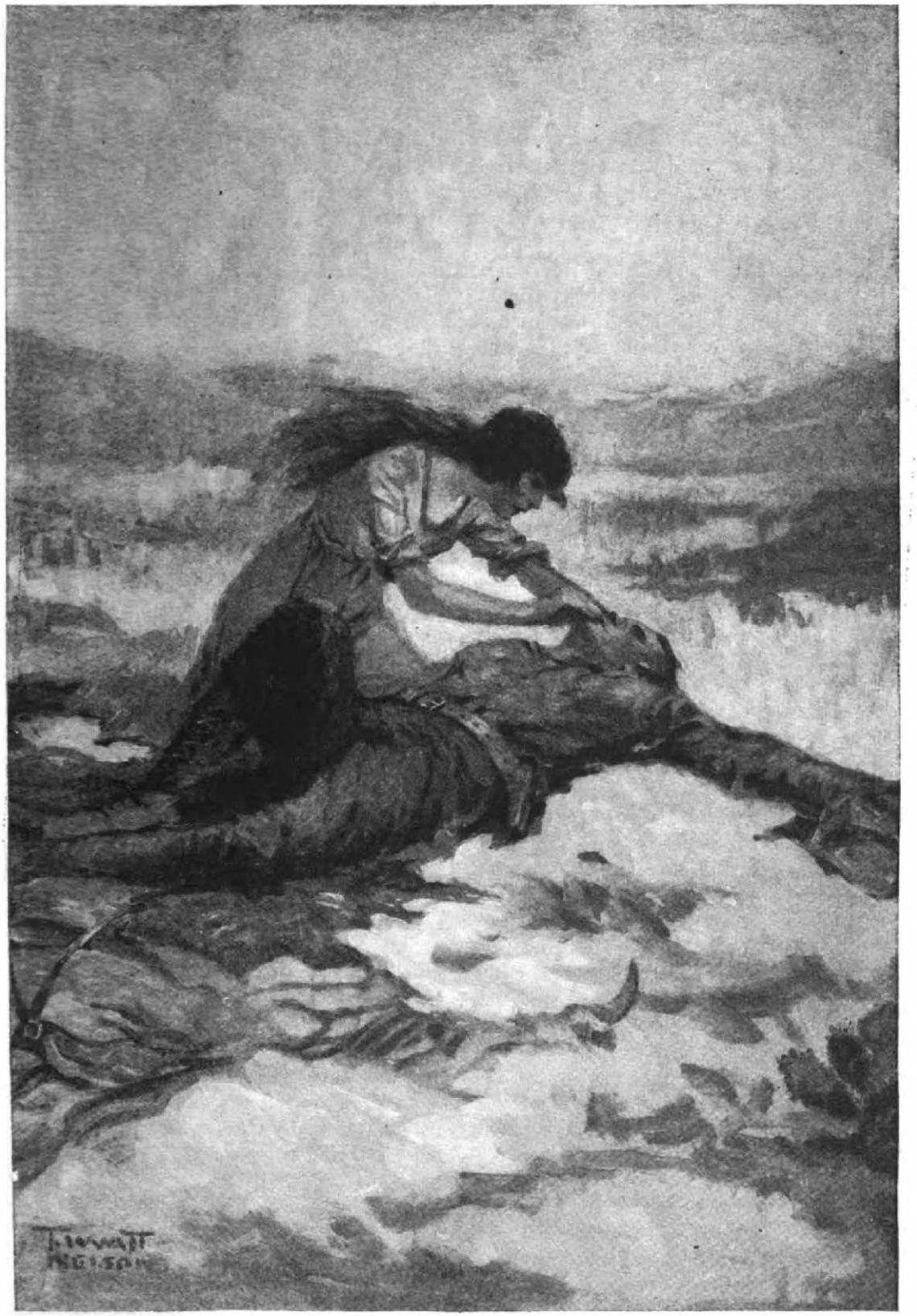
He slipped his father's revolver in his hip pocket. It was heavy and made his trousers sag. He drew them up and hitched the belt tighter, and went down stairs.

Yolinda was very still under the fierce heat of June as he went down the street toward Dago Dan's new café. A truck load of cantaloups had stopped before a fruit market; a man in his shirt sleeves entered the bank with a handful of checks and bills folded in his deposit book; a youth and a girl were sitting by the soda fountain at the front of the drug store.

In the stillness, the matter-of-factness, the peace of the street, murder seemed incongruous—unreal. But he grimly held to his purpose. He would avenge his father by his father's code.

A workman in the front of the café told him Simonetti was in his private office at the back of the building.

As Franklin approached the office, he



"She bathed his forehead, and wet his hair, murmuring the while to him in soft, passionate pity."

put his hand on his revolver. He had planned that the scene should be very brief.

The door opened brusquely at his knock, and there stood before him a large man with a ruddy face, and black hair, with brown eyes smiling warmly—and an outstretched hand.

Bonita's father! He could not do it. His hand dropped away from his pocket. All the strength seemed to go out of him and he almost staggered to the chair which the Italian offered.

SIMONETTI sat down by his desk and turned on Cole the friendliest of smiles. He noticed the drawn look in the young man's face, and the almost fixed stare in his eyes, but attributed it to his recent experience in the desert, of which Bonita had told him. He liked this young man.

"Did you know Curley Buck?" Franklin asked, trying to revive his deadly hate.

"Oh yes; I knew hem well. He very queeck tempered and reckless. We often, what you call hem—argue? I say to hem, 'Curley, it foolish to waste anything; but most foolish of all to waste life. It just a leetle bit we got, and it go purty queeck.' I say, 'Curley, if you have very fine gold watch, and see very small spider on rock, and you smash that leetle spider with that very fine gold watch, you damned fool, aint' you?' Curley laugh and say he sure would be. Then I say, 'A feller come along and call you a liar or some bad name—just words that bite a leetle, but no more dangerous than that leetle spider—don't really do anything to you at all! But you shoot. He shoot. One of you killed. Your life that look very good, poof! All out. Ain't that damn fool?'

"But Curley he only swear that no cussed man can call hem so and so.

"One day some cussed man do call hem so and so—it was Texas Jack. He very bad man. They both draw guns. Curley kill hem."

Simonetti stopped and turned his face away, looking out of the window. Cole leaned forward in his chair, breathing fast.

"Well," Simonetti continued sadly, "I think a great deal of Curley—I love Curley more than brother. Curley come in to my saloon and I say, 'Curley, Jack's friends bad men—they kill you sure. You go away queeck.' But Curley only laugh and say he not run from the devil and all his angels.

"I know he wouldn't. I study about it all day. Curley get drunk and I put hem in my bed. I can't sleep that night thinking about Curley being killed. He such a nice boy and love to live very much.

"So I go to the sheriff and say, 'Come and arrest Curley and put him in jail—he kill man.'

"He do it—I very good friend of judge. He like Curley, too, and send him to prison for five year, but promise me so soon as Jack's friends gone, and it safe, he parole Curley out."

AGAIN the Italian stopped. His ruddy face gone distinctly pale—and for the first time little lines showed at the corner of his eyes.

"But poor Curley—he got mad at guard—guard say some ugly word—and Curley grab piece of loose iron and kill hem."

Franklin felt himself collapsing, but struggled against it, and said weakly:

"Curley was my father."

Simonetti gave a start, and turned quickly peering at him.

"No, you do not look like him. And yes, I remember, Curley tell me once he have no people—no wife, no leetle boy—and his name was Smith."

As Franklin left the office, he wondered if that was really true, or if Simonetti was merely trying to spare him.

VII

TOWARD EVENING he went up to the penitentiary hill—drawn by a sort of horrible fascination. He must see that cell where Curley Buck had been locked in.

Bill Callondar, the old sheriff was feeding some mules now stabled in what used to be the main dining room of the prison.

"If you don't mind," Franklin said with suppressed embarrassment, when Callondar had finished scattering a fork full of alfalfa for the mules, "I'd like to see inside some of the cells."

"Sure," said Bill, and led the way around the big rock to the north side, and unlocked the iron doors of several.

"All of this row," said the ex-sheriff, "was for the bad ones—the ones that had to be chained down. But this one was used when a prisoner was to be shuffled off!"

"Which was Curley Buck in?"

Franklin's voice was barely audible.

"This one."

The old sheriff indicated the death cell.

Franklin stood looking in. Somehow he dreaded to enter. He was afraid the sheriff would see how moved he was.

But Callondar started away. "Just look around as long as you want to," he said over his shoulder.

Franklin went in—almost crept in. The cell, hewn from the solid rock, was about five feet wide, twelve feet long, and eight feet high. When that solid iron door was closed the only light and air that filtered in would be through those two rows of inch holes near the top of the door.

He sat down on the stone floor and fought hard to keep from shivering. He felt ghosts here—the ghost of Curley most of all. What must he have remembered that last night; the light on the Chocolate Mountains, the glow on the desert, the lush grass down on the river bottoms where cattle grazed, the long trail, the merry boisterous ride to town where there were lights, and drink, and games, and girls!

FRANKLIN closed his eyes as he called up these visions which the prisoner must have seen while listening to the pace of the death watch outside his cell. He opened them and looked around. Curley was not the only one that had spent his last night on this stone floor. Many words and names had been scratched on the stone wall—words and names that came in these last hours. A few blasphemies, a few obscenities . . . but mostly—names! Just "Red," or "Dick," or "Susie"—that was the only woman's name on the wall.

Franklin looked them over, spelling them out—for some were mere rough scrawls—wondering which it was Curley had made.

And then his heart gave one horrible thump, and stopped—seemingly forever. He grew cold all over. There to the right was a name clearly clipped in the rock—not once, but three times, like a cry. "Klin, Klin, Klin!"

He did not know how long he sat there staring at those three words. Curley *was* his father. And had spent his last night here.

He staggered out of the cell into the sunshine, and sank down on a large flat rock.

THE sun went down. For a few moments the crests of the Chocolate Mountains glowed red like blood, and then dusk crept over the desert; but still Franklin sat, shoulders lurched forward, his elbows on his knees, looking down at the swirling muddy river, and the little black crosses at the edge, where the convicts slept, no longer rebellious at the narrowness of their cells.

And as dusk deepened into star pierced darkness, he was back again on the leafy path that led down from River Grove along the singing little river. He saw the green fields of wheat in the valley, and the waving blades of corn. And sat beside his mother in the cool fragant twilight.

There was moisture on his cheeks—and he was unashamed. All at once he knew that the Wild West he had cherished all these years was a fevered dream. Simonetti was right, it was hard and cruel and wasteful. He hated it. It was not for him. Back there was home—and his heart ached with homesickness.

A quick, light step approached, but he did not turn. Yet his heart knew that step and began racing and surging like the river below.

She slipped down on the rock beside him—close beside him, for she knew he was in trouble. Without a word she put her arm over his shoulder; and he put his around her waist and drew her convulsively close to him.

"Bonita," he said solemnly—"I love you. Do you love me?"

She kissed his temple. "I love you!" she said, with awe in her rich, colorful voice. "Like the desert at noon—and like the river that never ends."

"But, Bonita," grave trouble in his voice, "you love this West. I thought I did; I had dreamed of it all my life—but it killed my father—and I hate it. I'll stand it for your sake, but I am afraid I'll be awfully homesick sometimes for River Grove."

Her hand rose from his shoulders and played softly in his thick hair, and then she laughed.

"You do not understand. One time, long time ago, many wagons pass to California. My mother in one. She see my father. They fall in love queeck—just as I fall in love with you. She was American.

"She died when I was ten—but I've always worshiped her, and I always dreamed some day that I would go back to the country she tell so much about—where it rains, and grass is green in summer, and leaves colored in the fall, and it is all so quiet and happy."

"Will you go, Bonita? Really go back with me?"

He put both arms about her and held her until she could scarcely breath.

"It will be Paradise," she said reverently. "But I would go with you even to purgatory."

And then in a few moments he thought of material things.

"We'll be poor," he said, "at first, anyway. If I had not been such a damn fool and wasted my money."

Again she laughed.

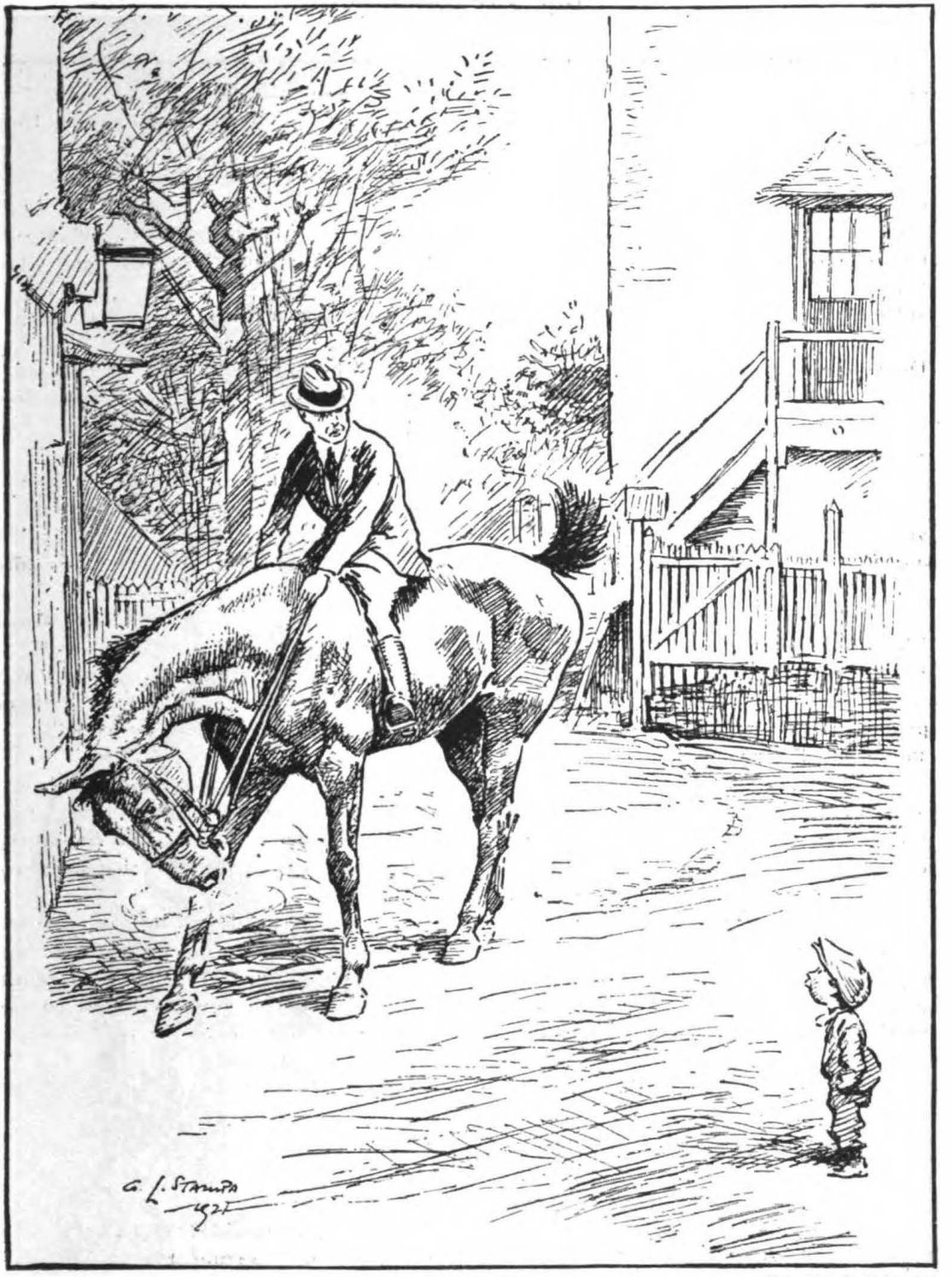
"That is what I came up here for—but you so sad, and I love you so much I forget. Here!"

She thrust crumpled bits of paper into his hands.

"Your checks. You were a very drunk boy that night. They cheat at cards. I saw and took the checks away from them—and make them beg I do not kill them. All your money is still in the bank." . . .

AS THEY went down the dim hill road toward the town, their arms were about each other's waists, and his spirits soared higher than the stars that sprinkled the deserts of the sky.

"I am so glad, dear," he said exuberantly, "that we are going back tomorrow. You are my West, and I'll be the happiest man alive. But if you ever want to run away from River Grove—let me know and I will run away too."



From Punch, © London

"Here, boy; find someone to hold this horse, will you?"
"What yer mean, 'find'? I'm 'ere, ain't I?"

THE MONTH'S BEST CARTOONS

(In this and the pages which follow will be found a digest of the month's best humorous cartoons, drawn by the world's greatest funny men.)

From Notenkraker, Amsterdam

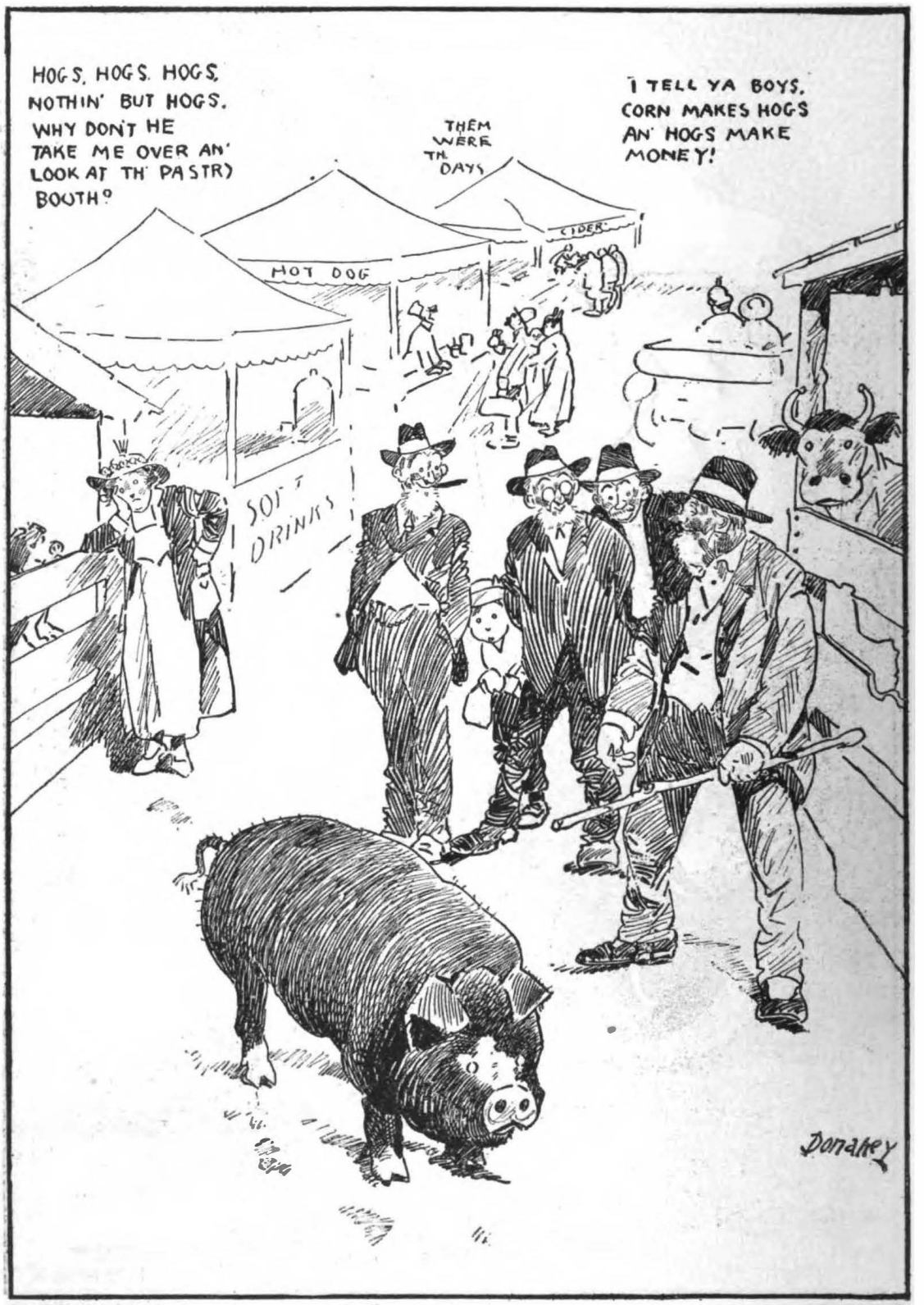
IN THE SMITHY

"Look what a crude and heavy hammer. The workers have no sense of art or delicacy."

Lemen in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

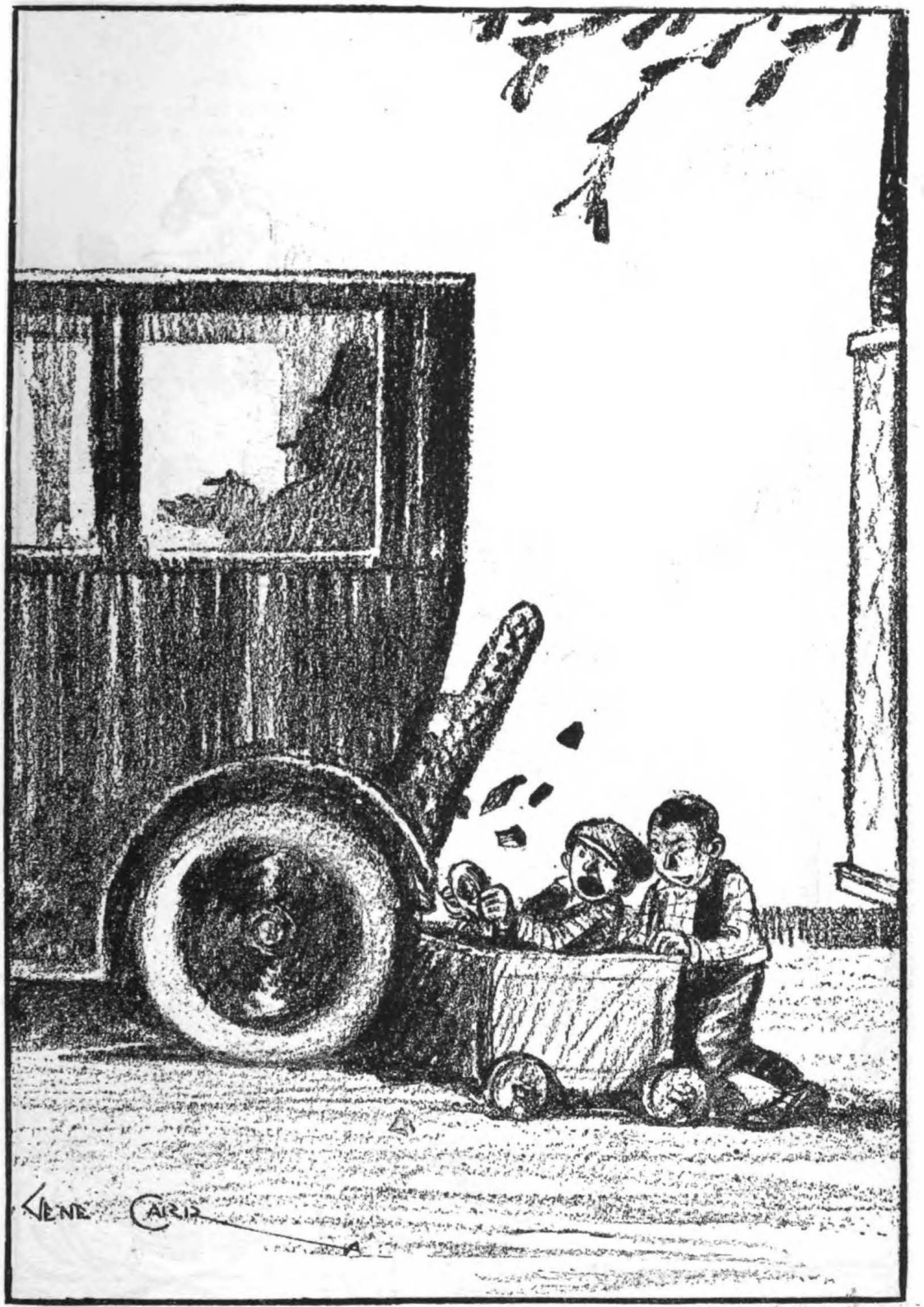
AT MOSQUITO INN

The short-skirt enthusiast has to commandeer father's fishing boots!



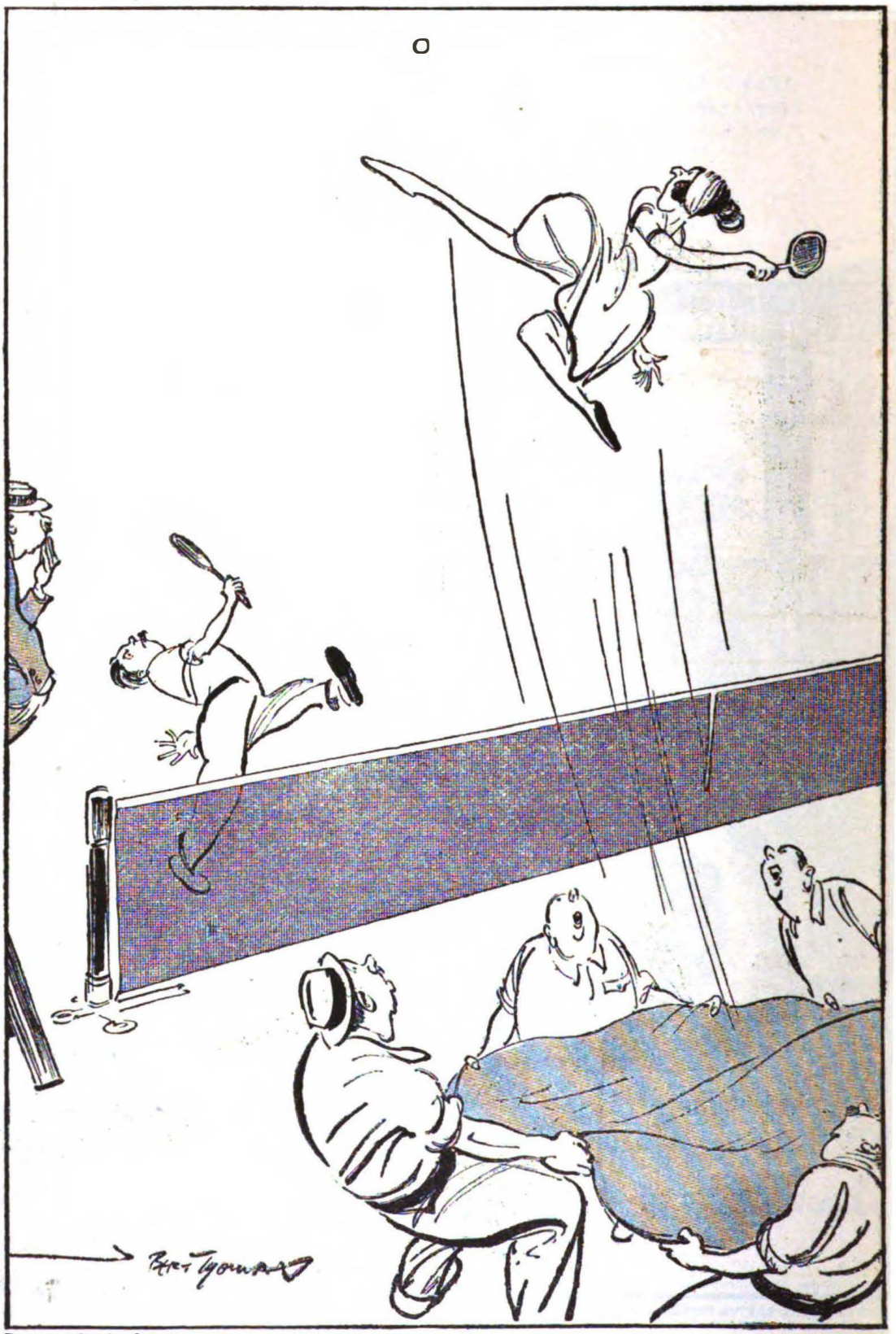
Donahey in Cleveland Plain Dealer

Fair days!



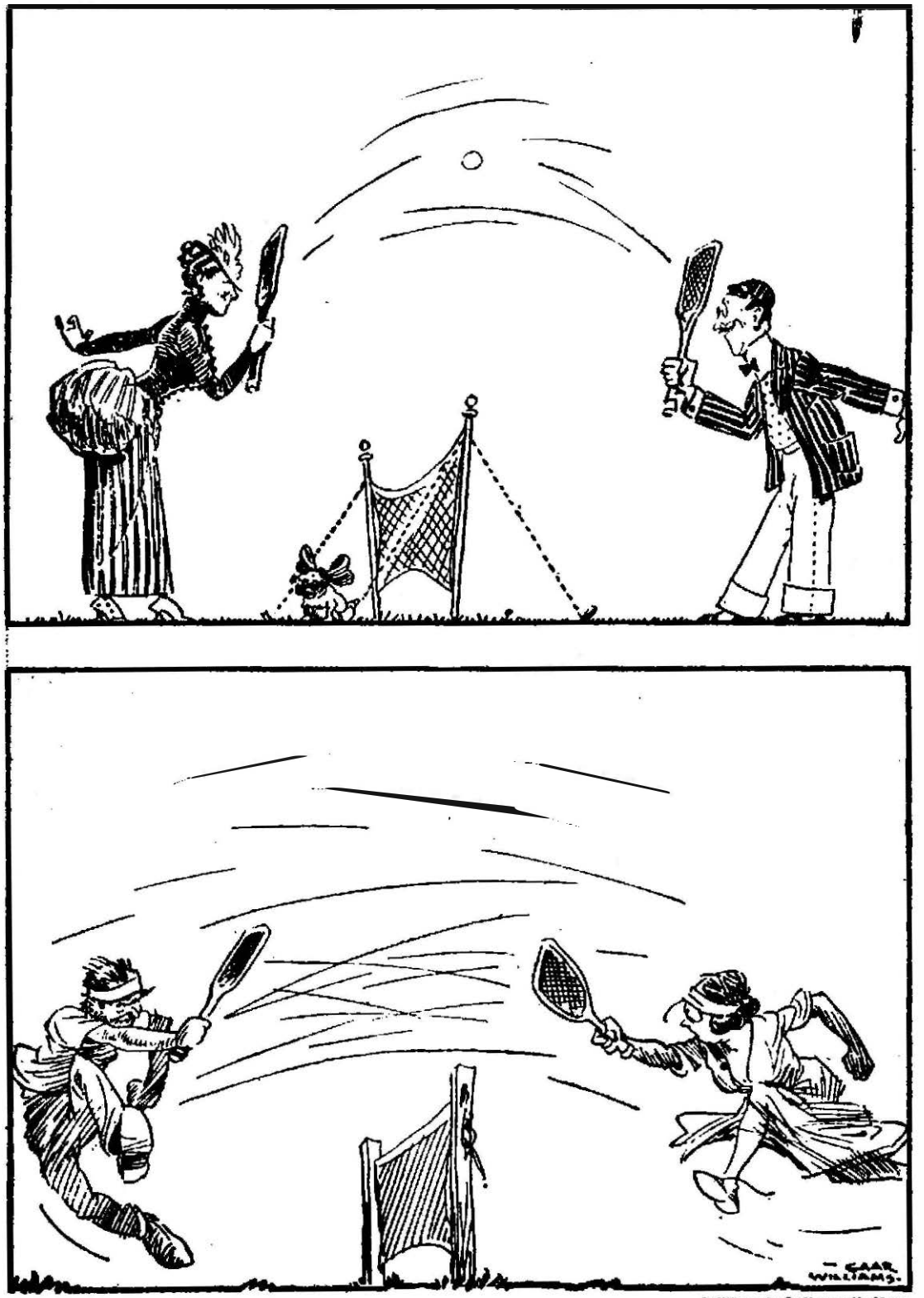
Carr in New York World

"Why don't that poor fish put his hand out when he's going to stop?"



Thomas in London Opinion

What we may come to if the enthusiasts of the weaker sex persist in taking their tennis aerially

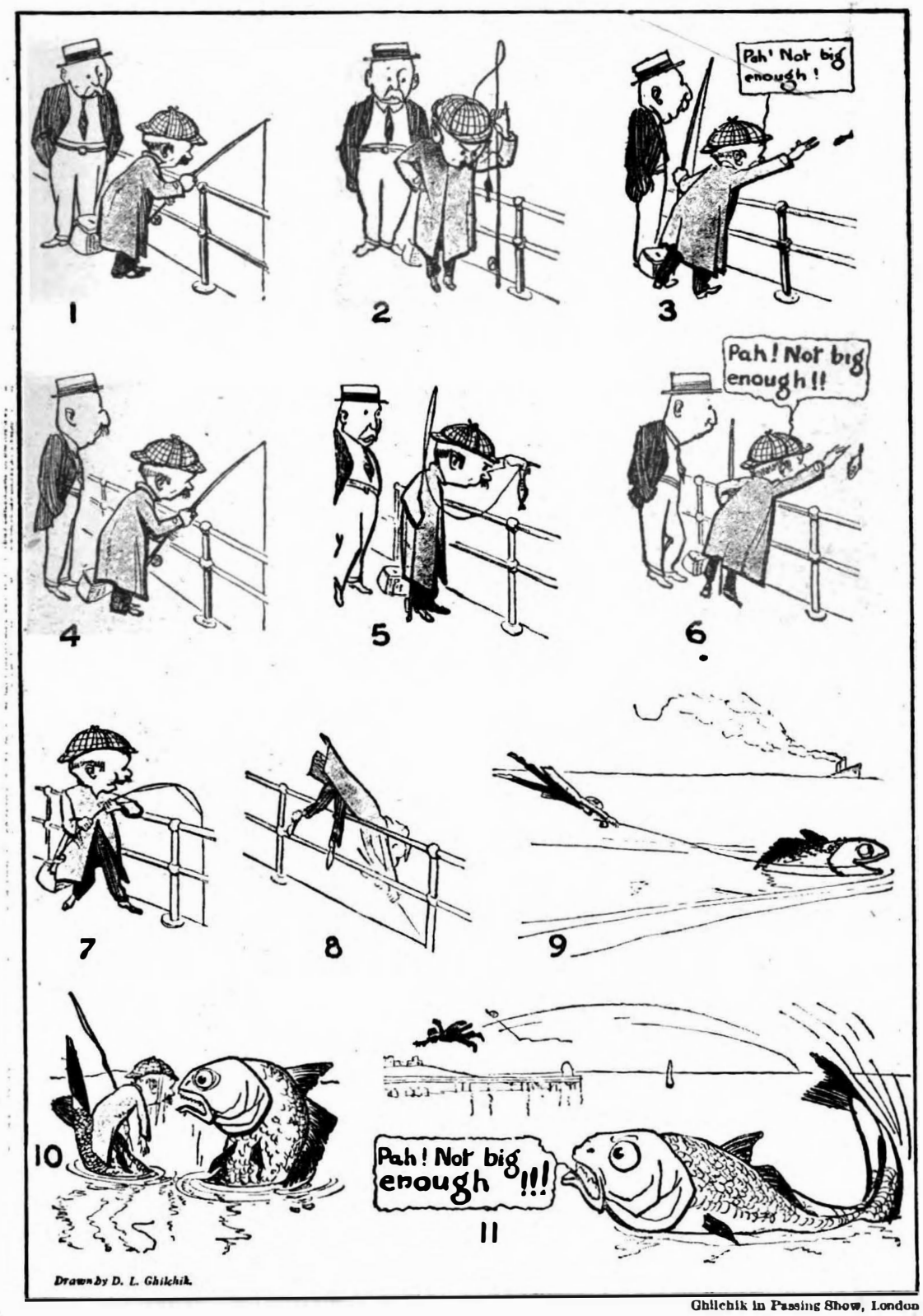


Williams in Indianapolis News

The pep and vigor of their grandparents.

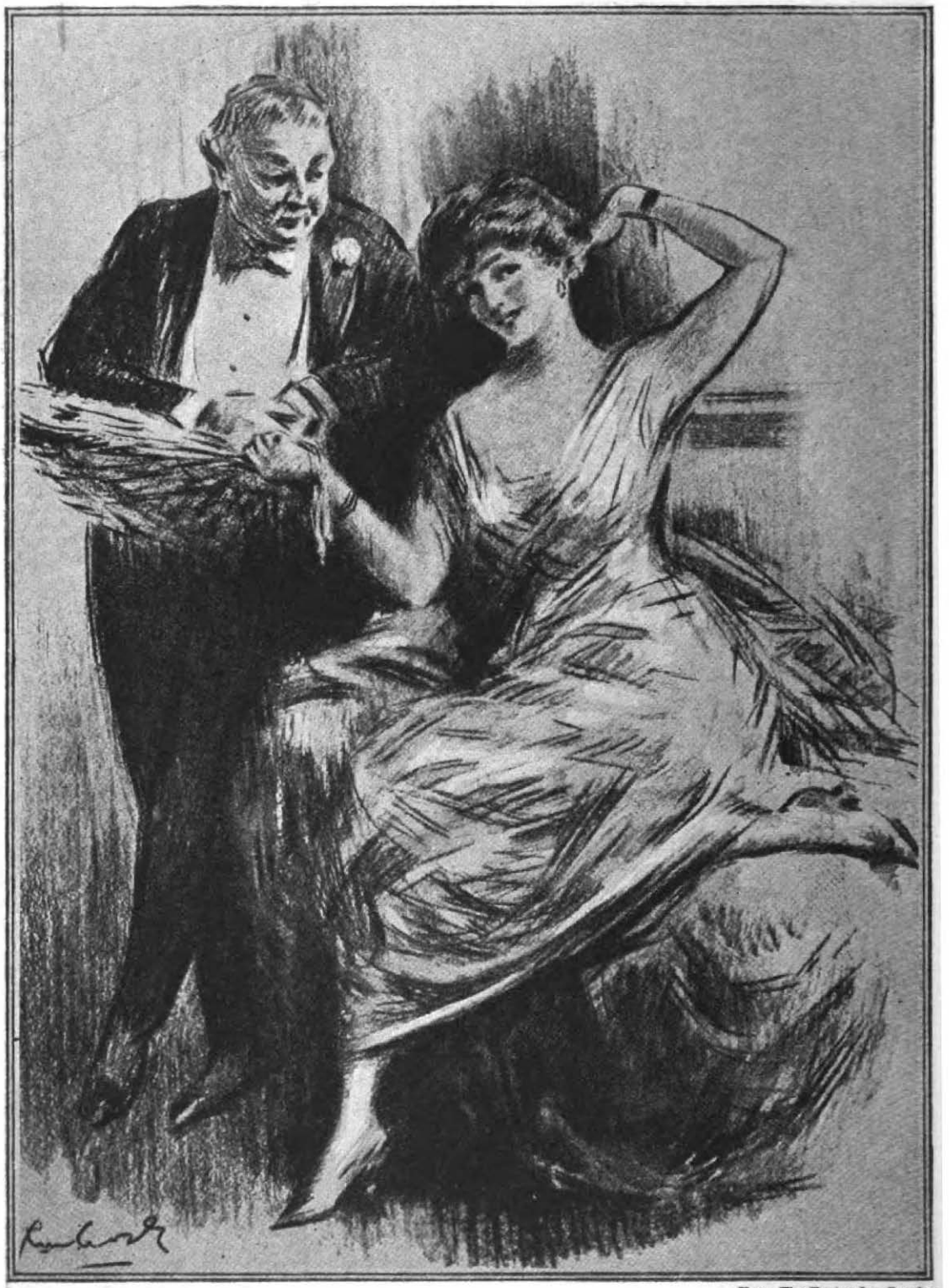
D'Egville in The Sketch, London

CLUB WATER
Or a likely pool



Ghilchik in Passing Show, London

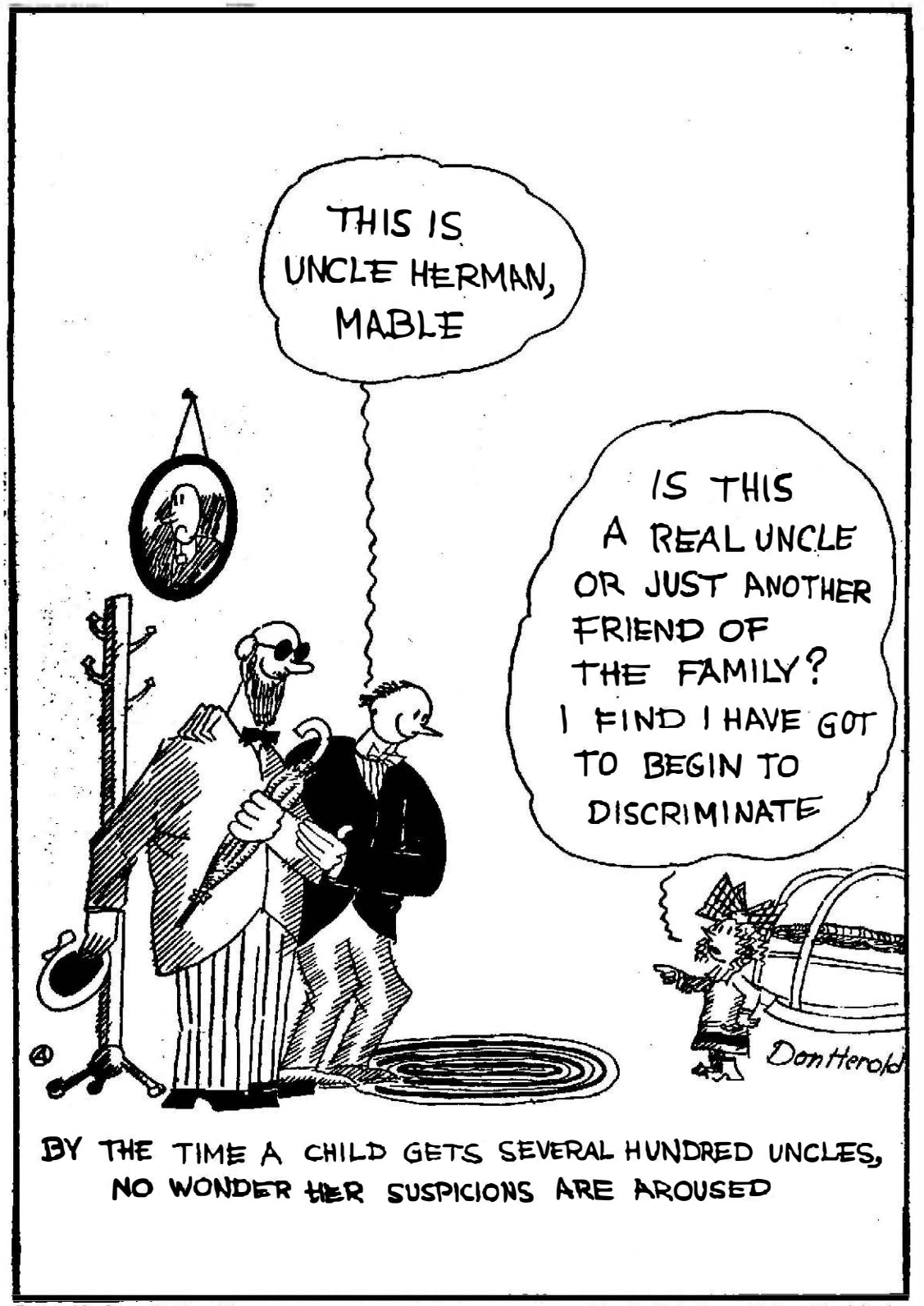
THE FASTIDIOUS FISHERMAN
—Or "tit for tat"



From The Bystander, London

TO SOFT MUSIC

He (teasingly): D'you know, some one told me you had been divorced three times!
She: Flatterer.



Do you pull that "uncle" stuff on your child every time a man friend comes to the house?

Webster in New York Herald

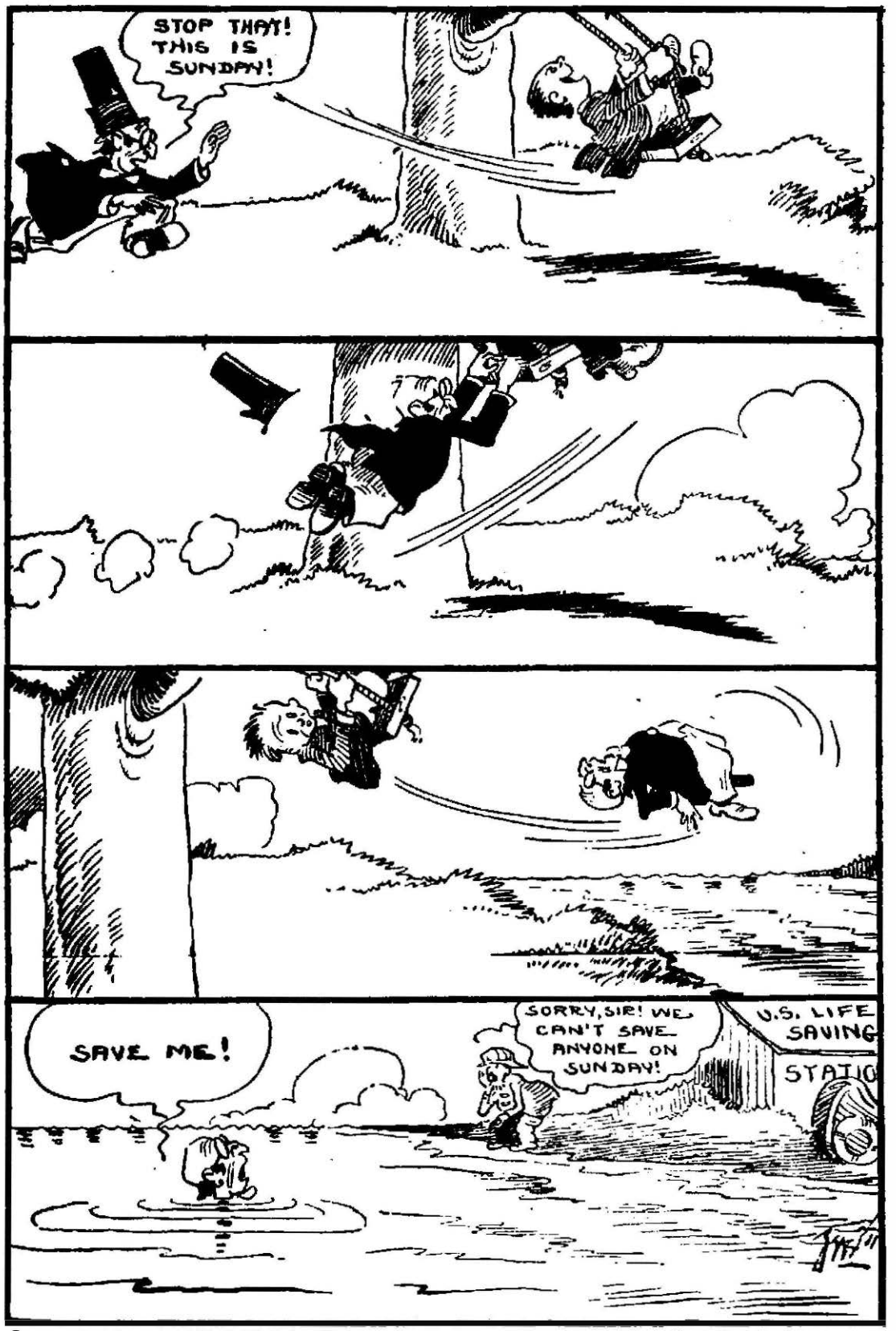
The home brewer narrowly averts a catastrophe!

Briggs in New York Tribune

When a feller needs a friend!

Donahey in Cleveland Plain Dealer

Street gossip!

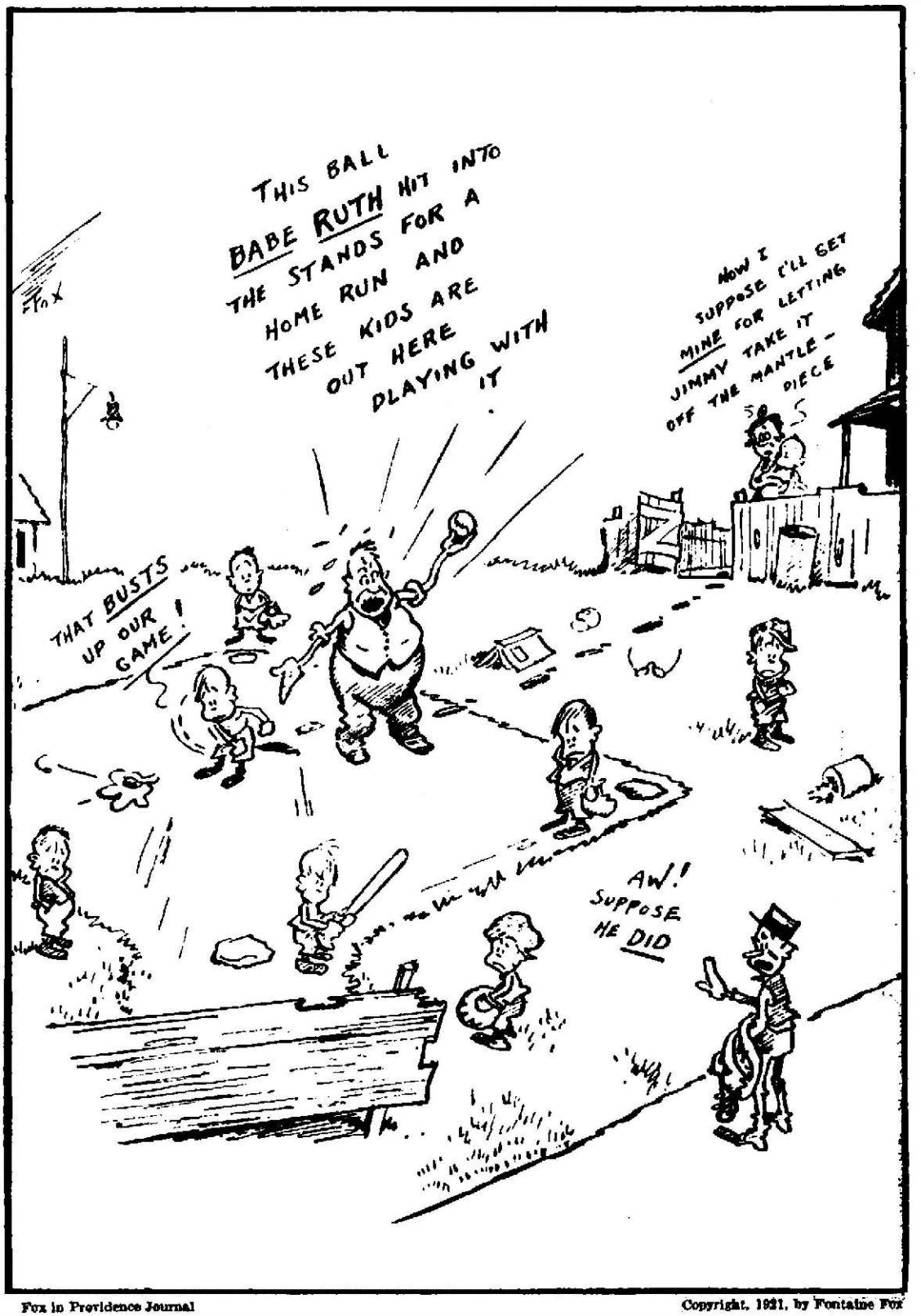


Zere in New York Evening Post

The Grat blue Sunday

 Don Herold for George Matthew Adams Service

Up north, where the nights are six months long, it must be hard to decide how many covers to put on the bed!



Fox in Providence Journal

Dad rushes out and breaks up the ball game!

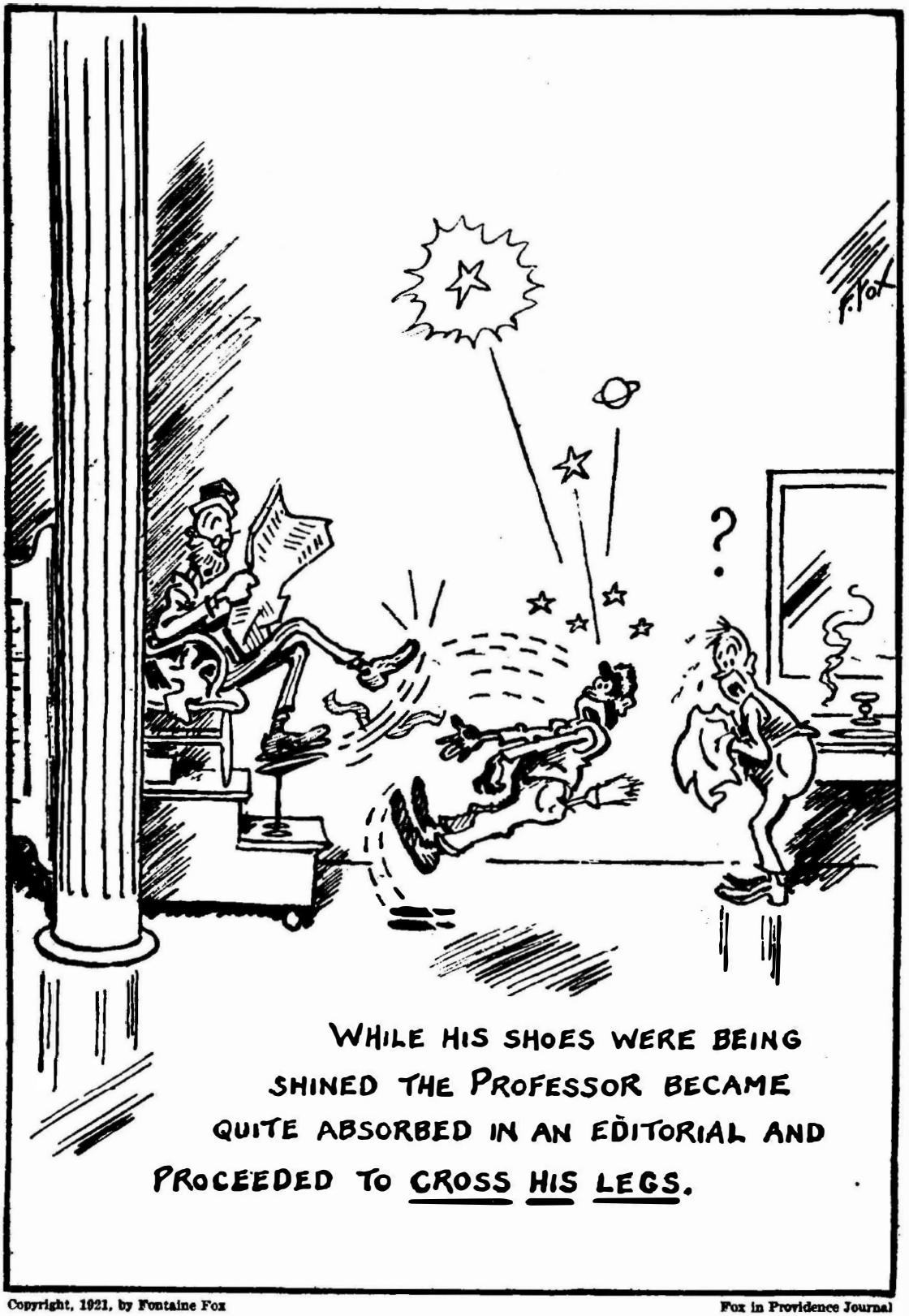
Donahey in Cleveland Plain Dealer

Canning days!

Rehse in New York World

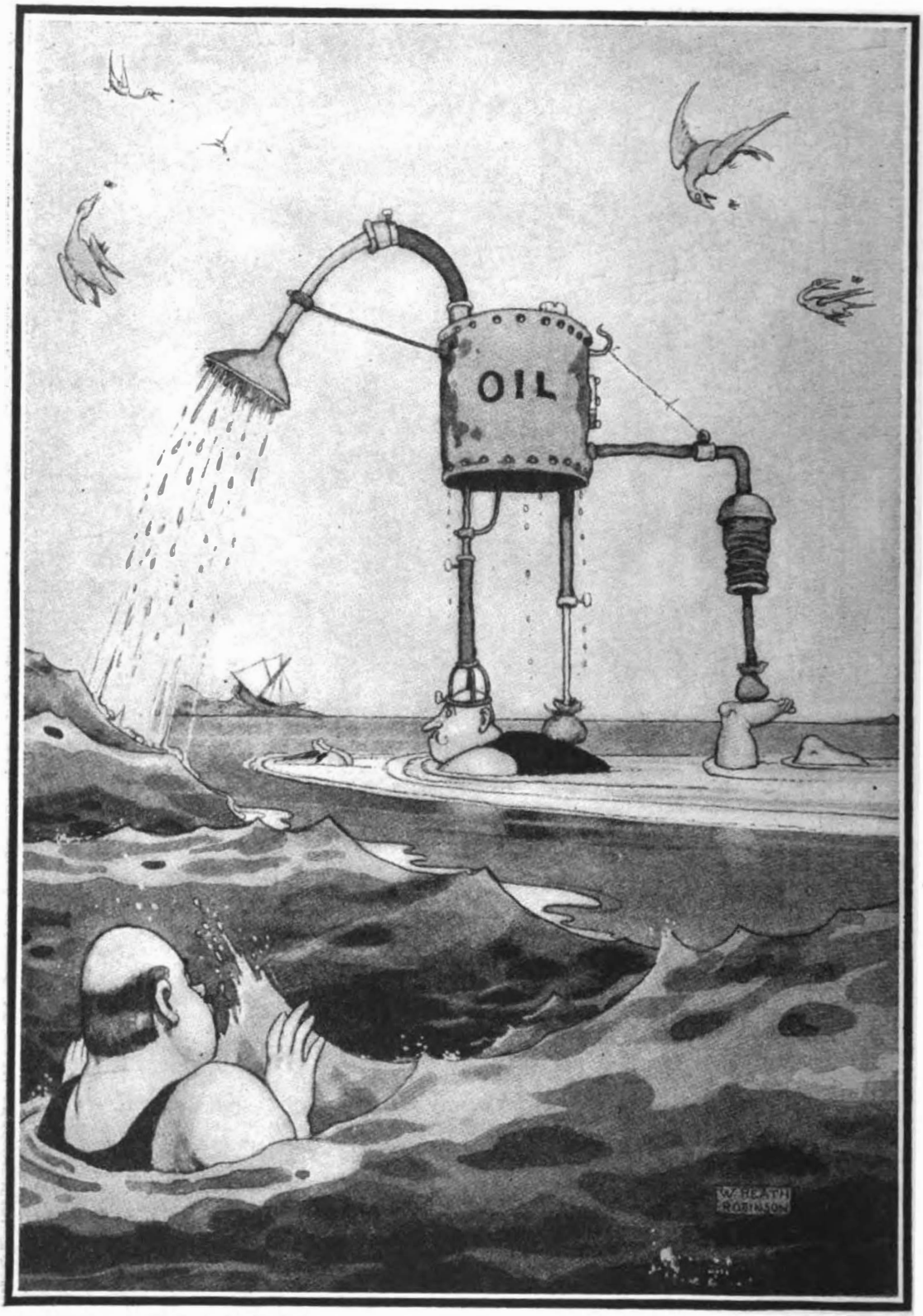
THE SUDDEN HALT

Passenger: Say, Guard, who's the guy that's motorman on this train?
Guard: Oh, he's an ex-baseball player—famous as a short stop.



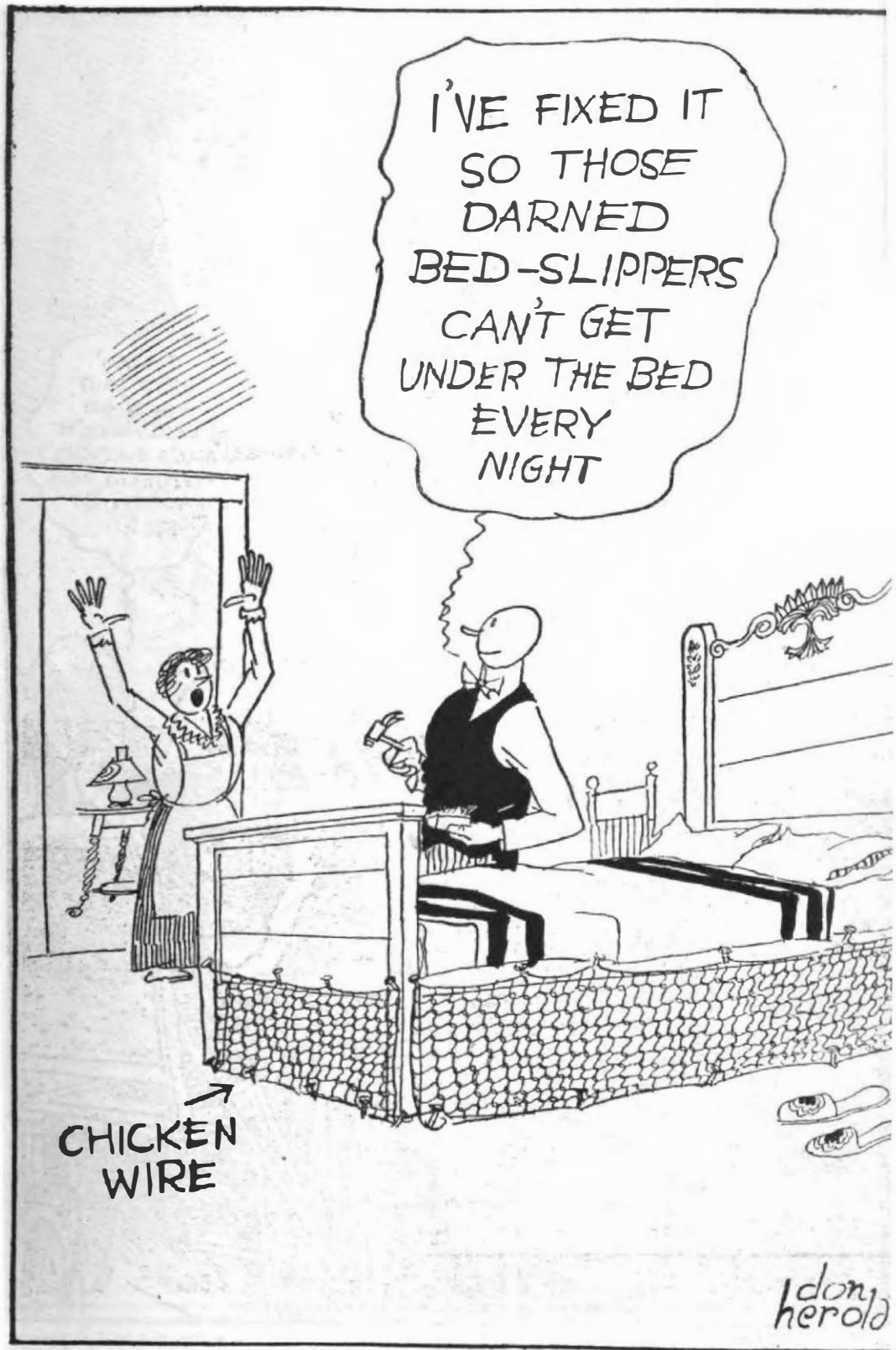
Fox in Providence Journal

The absent-minded professor!



Heath Robinson in The Bystander, London

FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF BATHERS
A neat appliance for pouring oil on troubled waters



Now, how on earth is a woman going to sweep under that bed?

Webster in New York Herald

The gang forty years hence!

From The Mail, London

Every mouse his day!

Oh, Very!

"Is your wife economizing these days?"

"Yes; she cut our vacation expense in half by leaving me at home!"—New York Sun.

Appropriate

"Chilton is having the interior of his new house decorated with a rather ornate frieze."

"That's appropriate; he made his money in the ice business, you know."—Boston Transcript.

From London Opinion

Pugilist: I'd rather not take gas.

Dentist: I dare say! But I won't risk attending you without!

Thine

Where unto which art thou, who within whom?
Thou are the you of my bold hours, and I.
I am thy me. But when thou dost ensky
Your eyebrows, I accord to thee the plume—
An oriflamme with but a hint of broom!
Oh, homely touch that costs me but a sigh,
Yields the incorrigible, whence of why
And whispers wherefore? in a vacuum.
What is the whither of thy pulseless lure,
The notwithstanding of your nevertheless?
Thee knows the functions of your Quaker dress!
Your winsome thou shall solecisms cure,
Make I's at any me's that I possess
And wreak in perpetuity thy your.

—Baltimore American.

He Knew!

Teacher: If you are kind and polite to your playmates, what will be the result?

Scholar: They'll think they can lick me. —Edinburgh Scotsman.

In Short, Percy!

"What sort of a dog do you want?"

"Well, I'd like a fairly good dog; one that will be good enough to play around the house, and yet not good enough for other people to care to steal."—Detroit Free Press.

From Der Brummer, Berlin

FLATTERING

"Shall I accompany you to the theatre?"
"No, thanks! I hear the play is quite interesting!"

Enough to Start With

"Where's Jimmy?" asked the head of the house, coming home from work.

"He was very naughty," replied his wife. "I sent him to bed for swearing."

"Swearing?" roared the indignant father. "I'll teach him to swear!" and he rushed upstairs. For some minutes the indignant parental voice resounded through the house and then Jimmy's mother called:

"John, dear, I'm sure Jimmy has heard enough for the first lesson."—Passing Show.

As to Luck

"Do you think Friday is unlucky?"

"No, I was born on Friday."

"Well, what do your parents think?"—New Haven Register.

Woes of the Commuter

"Look pleasant, please," chirped the photographer.

"Can't be done," growled his victim. "I'm having this picture taken to paste on my commutation ticket."—Dental Digest.

From Passing Show, London

Irate householder (awakened by midnight reveller): Go away! You're ringing at the wrong house!
Reveller: Not a bit, old boy—you're shouting out of the wrong window!

A Demonstration

The Customer: Fifty-five cents for a haircut! How's that?

The Barber: The haircut was merely to illustrate my scientific lecture on the care and treatment of the scalp, for which I charge four bits. The nickel's for war tax.—Columbia State.

Satterfield for Newspaper Enterprise Association

THE END OF A PERFECT DAY!
My stars, John, I believe I forgot to lock the back door!

Incorrigible

"Poland," said James M. Beck, at a banquet in New York—"Poland is the infant terrible of the world. She attacks Russia, and Germany—she is always attacking.

"Poland is as bad as the colored preacher who was always preaching on infant baptism. His congregation got tired in the end and a committee waited on him and announced that if he didn't drop infant baptism for a while they'd look around for a new pastor.

"Well, the old fellow took this warning in good part. He said that on the coming Sunday he would preach from the text, 'Adam, where art thou?'

"And he was true to his word. He rose in the pulpit the following Sunday and said that 'Adam, where art thou?' was the subject of his discourse. Then he struck an attitude and began:

"'Mah tex', breddern and sistern can be devided into fo' heads. Fust every man am somewhar. Second mos' men is whar day hain't got no business to be. Third, you'd better watch out whar yo' is. Fo'th and last, infant baptism. And now breddern and sistern, passin' up de fust head, we comes to de las'—infant baptism, which I devides into seventeen sub-heads or cross sections, to wit, as follers.'"—Detroit Free Press.

From Punch, ©, London

Golo: a development of the polo habit. Maneuvering for a putt.

Pleasing the Ghost

"You admit, then, that you voted for a man who had been dead for ten years?"

"Yes," said the practical politician, "but he was an old friend of mine, and I knew that we were carrying out his wishes."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

The Big Question

The movie producer was giving his final instructions for the production of part 19 of "The Adventures of Annie."

"Mr. Daring," he addressed the curly-haired hero, "for realism purposes I have borrowed a real live lion for this act. The animal will pursue you for 500 feet."

Mr. Daring interrupted him. "For 500 feet?"

"Yes," replied the producer. "No more than that. Understand?"

The hero nodded dubiously. "Yes, I understand, but—does the lion?"—Edinburgh Scotsman.

Reflected Glory

"Who's that man over there?"

"Why, he's the husband of Geraldine Garden, the great singer."

"Yes, but who was he before he married?"—Boston Transcript.

From The Mail, London

She: Oh, Percy, you always said you'd face death for me!
He: I would, but that beastly bull isn't dead!

Old Fashioned Doctor

I see by the papers that old Doc is dead. Well, he was a good doctor, and I'll always remember him with affection. I'll never forget last winter when I had the influenza; how hard he worked to keep me alive—and sick. And the winter before that, when I didn't have the influenza, but was afraid I was going to, I called Doc up one day when I was feeling under the weather and nervous.

"Doc," I said, "what's good for the influenza besides whiskey?"

"Gosh," answers Doc, "who cares?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Girl At Sea

The speaker was an Admiral who was discussing at a dinner party certain strictures that had been passed upon the navy.

"Why," he went on, smiling whimsically, "that armchair critic is as ignorant as the girl on the Cunarder.

"This girl, crossing to England, got friendly with one of the ship's officers, a young man of twenty-five or so. The two were leaning side by side on the rail one day when the officer said:

"There goes four bells. I must ask you to excuse me. It's my watch below."

"Oh, stop your kiddin'!" said the girl. "Whoever heard of a watch striking as loud as that?"—Washington Star.

Very Good Reason

"This isn't a very good picture of your little baby brother, is it?" said the visitor.

"No, ma'am," replied little five-year-old Alice. "But, then, he ain't a very good baby."—Detroit Free Press.

Donahey in Cleveland Plain Dealer

The morning after the day before

From Kasper, Stockholm

Old girl (at the wedding celebration, the old soldier having fired a gun in celebration): What is the idea of firing a gun at a wedding?
Soldier: It just shows that hostilities have commenced!

More Reparation

(A doctor declares that any burglar could be reformed by a room decorated in black and blue.)

He started to work while the household was sleeping
(For burglary makes a man shockingly late)
Intent upon taking straight into his keeping
Our various items of family plate.
With visions of profit his courage he bolstered,
And, heartened thereby, without further ado
He entered the room we had just had upholstered
In black and in blue.

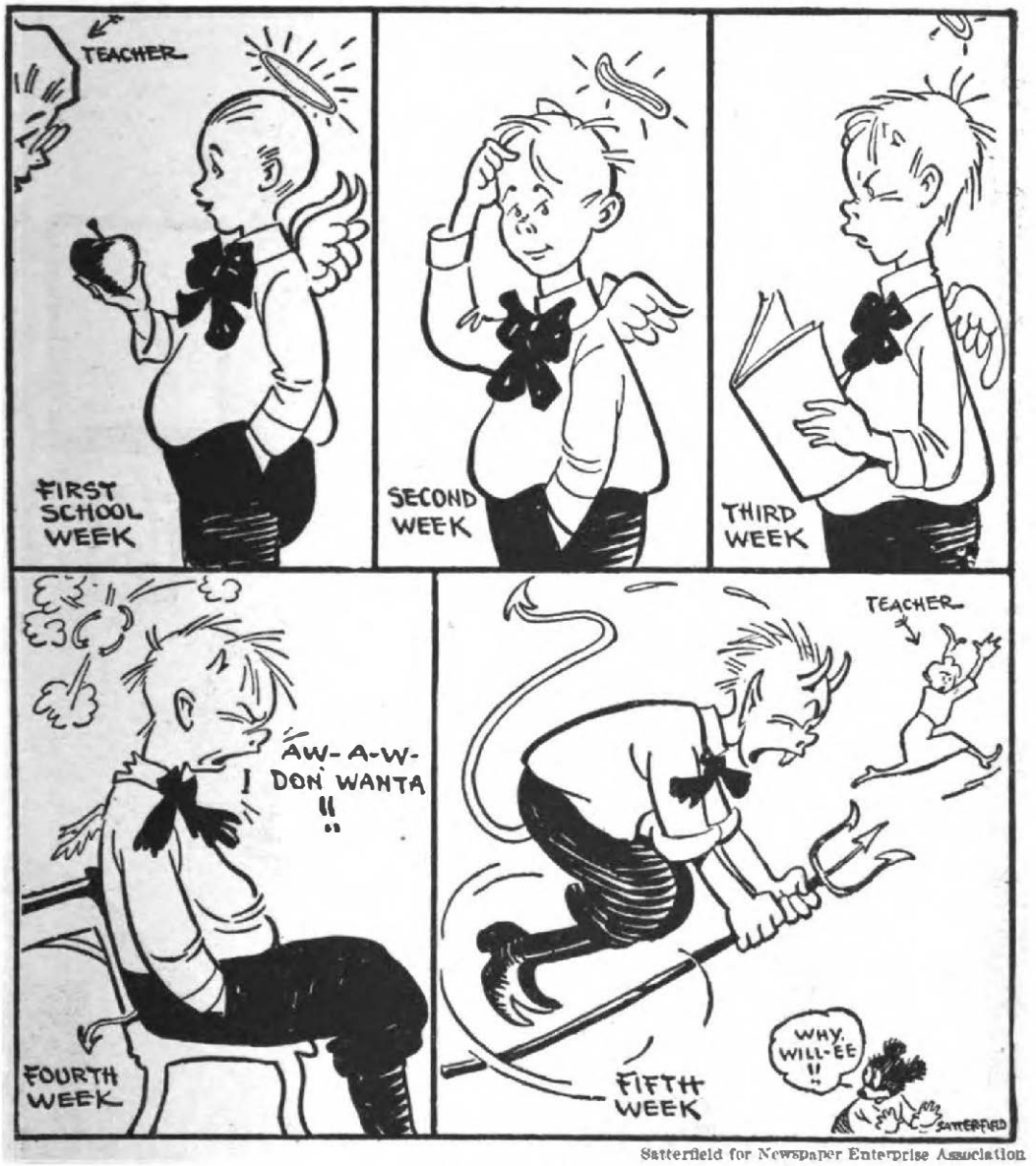
In silence he gathered his booty together,
No touch of conpunction as yet had he got,
But merely a critical wonderment whether
The rose bowl was silver (it's certainly not.)
But soon his delight at the haul he was making
Was blent with a nebulous feeling of shame;
The room made him doubt if the course he was taking
Was playing the game.

And quickly such doubts followed one on another;
By prospects of lucre no longer beguiled,
He thought of his boyhood, his aunts and his mother,
And broke down and wept like a simple che-ild.
He put back his spoil with a zeal that transcended
The plundering greed that had moved him at first,
And then in a fit of contrition he mended
The lock he had burst.

—London Opinion.

Heath Robinson in The Bystander, London

WHAT EVERY GOLFER WANTS
More Improvements



Satterfield for Newspaper Enterprise Association

The evolution of Willie

Service

"Johnnie, the stork has brought you a little sister." "Aw g'wan. Stork nothin'. It was the milkman brought it. Doesn't it say on the wagon, 'Families Supplied Daily'?"—American Legion Weekly.

'Tis Often So

Wife: You know, Henry, I speak as I think.

Hubby: Yes, dear, but much oftener! —Kansas City Star.

Not Then

"I hate to hear a man talking to himself, don't you?"

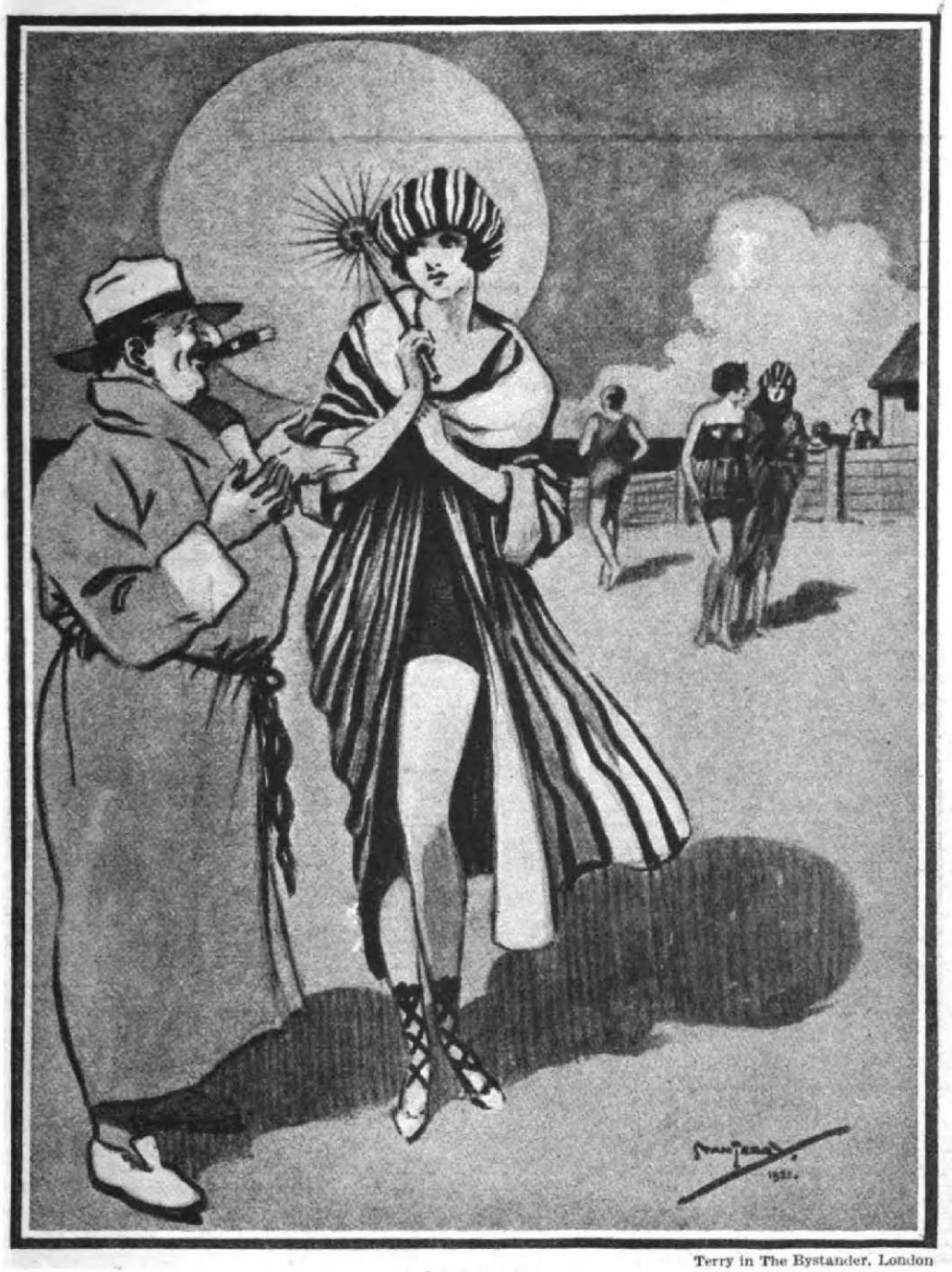
"No. If he's talking about his troubles I'd sooner have him talk to himself than to me."—Boston Transcript.

But They Don't Scare Anybody

The sea serpent has not been reported from the beaches, but he must be pretty much in evidence around the three-mile limit.—New Orleans Times-Picayune.

Lemen in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Another disillusioned "red"



Terry in The Bystander, London

LOAN-SOME

Fair Maid: Can you float alone?
Financier: I don't know, dear! How large a loan do you want?

Home Brew

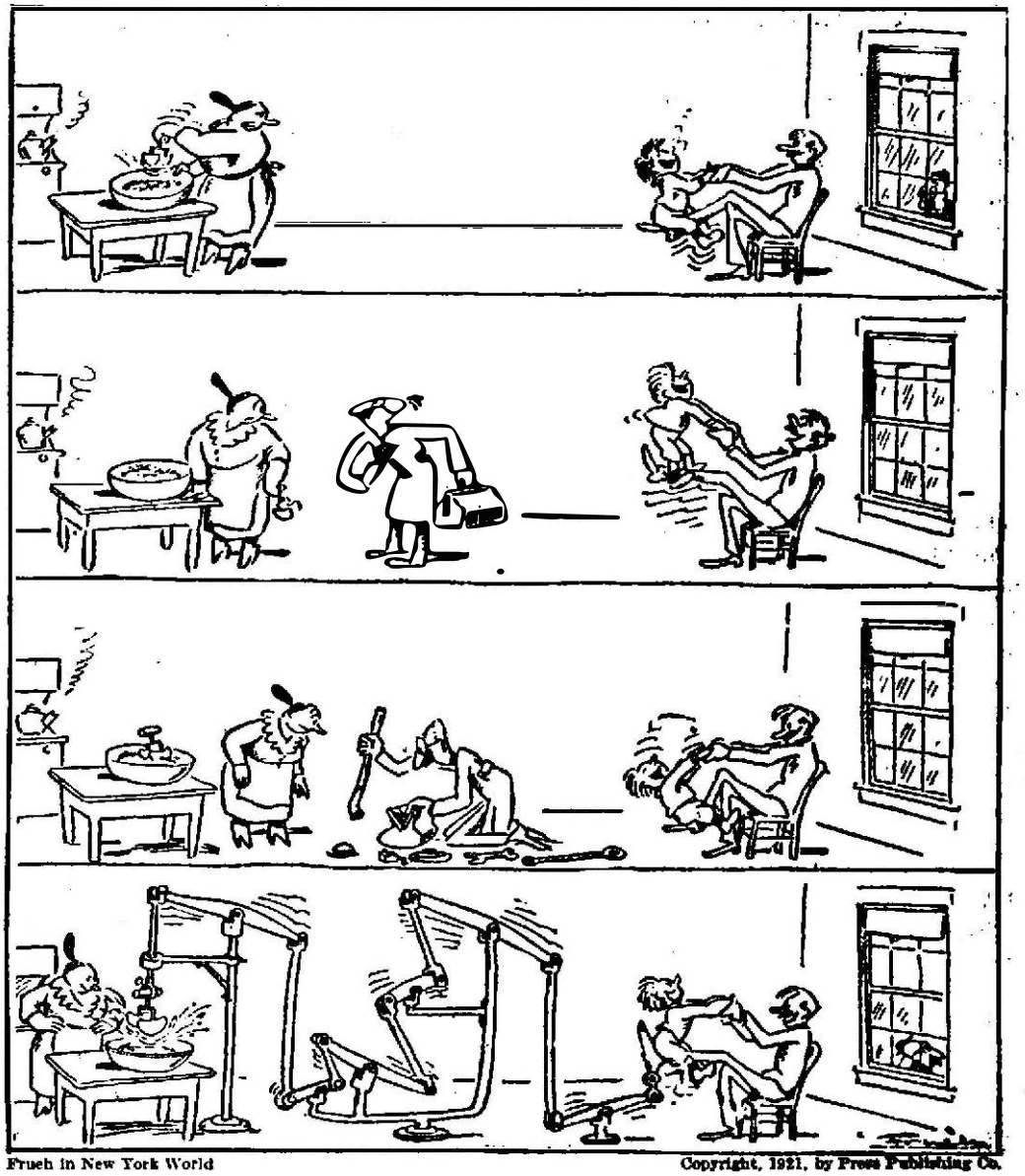
"What is this insipid stuff?"

"My wife made it, Colonel, and she fondly imagines it has a terrible kick to it. It would please her if you would act a trifle soused."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Between Friends

Maud: "I am really surprised when I see what a lot of homely women get married."

Ethel: "Surprised and encouraged, eh, dear?"—Boston Transcript.



The efficiency man!

The French Sportwoman

Georges Carpentier was talking to a girl reporter.

"The modern Frenchman," he said, "is well up in sport, but the Frenchwoman is still rather retrograde.

"I know a young Frenchwoman who called a friend up on the telephone the other day and said:

"'I'm sorry to trouble you, dear madam, but can you give me a good recipe for cooking clay pigeons? Jacques has just sent me word that he is going out to shoot some, and he is sure to bring a lot home, and I can't find a single word about them in the cook-book.'"—Atlanta Consitution.

Record Sidewalks

The new wide sidewalks are fine, but there is just one man in 50 who, while leaning up against the building, can spit to the curb.—Jewell Republican.

Yes, How Do You?

An American in dear old London was bragging about his auto. He ended his eulogy by declaring:

"It runs so smoothly you can't feel it, so quietly that you can't hear it, it has such perfect ignition you can't smell it, and as for speed—boy, you can't see it!"

"But my word, old dear," interrupted the Briton, anxiously, "how do you know the bally thing is there?"—American Legion Weekly.

Where Silence Would Be Golden

There was nobody who could play the violin like Binks, and he was delighted when asked to play at the local concert.

"The instrument I shall use at your concert," he explained to the host, "is over 200 years old."

"O, that's all right, old chap. Don't worry about that," replied the host. "I shan't tell, and no one will ever know the difference."—Ideas.

From The Bulletin, Sydney

The small one: S'pose you've got a little boy?
Miss Oldbird: Oh, no, Johnny.
The small one: S'pose you've got a little girl, then?
Miss Oldbird: No, Johnny.
The small one (who has been thinking it over): Well what kind have you got then?

Reynolds in Punch, ©, London

Wife (reading from catalogue): "The artist. By himself."
Husband: "So he ought to be!"

Speed

"Is Miss Keyes a rapid typist?"

"I'll say she is. Why, that girl can operate a machine faster than she can spell."—New York Sun.

Some Sight

Teacher: You dirty boy, you. Why don't you wash your face? I can see what you had for breakfast this morning.

Bob: What was it?

Teacher: Eggs.

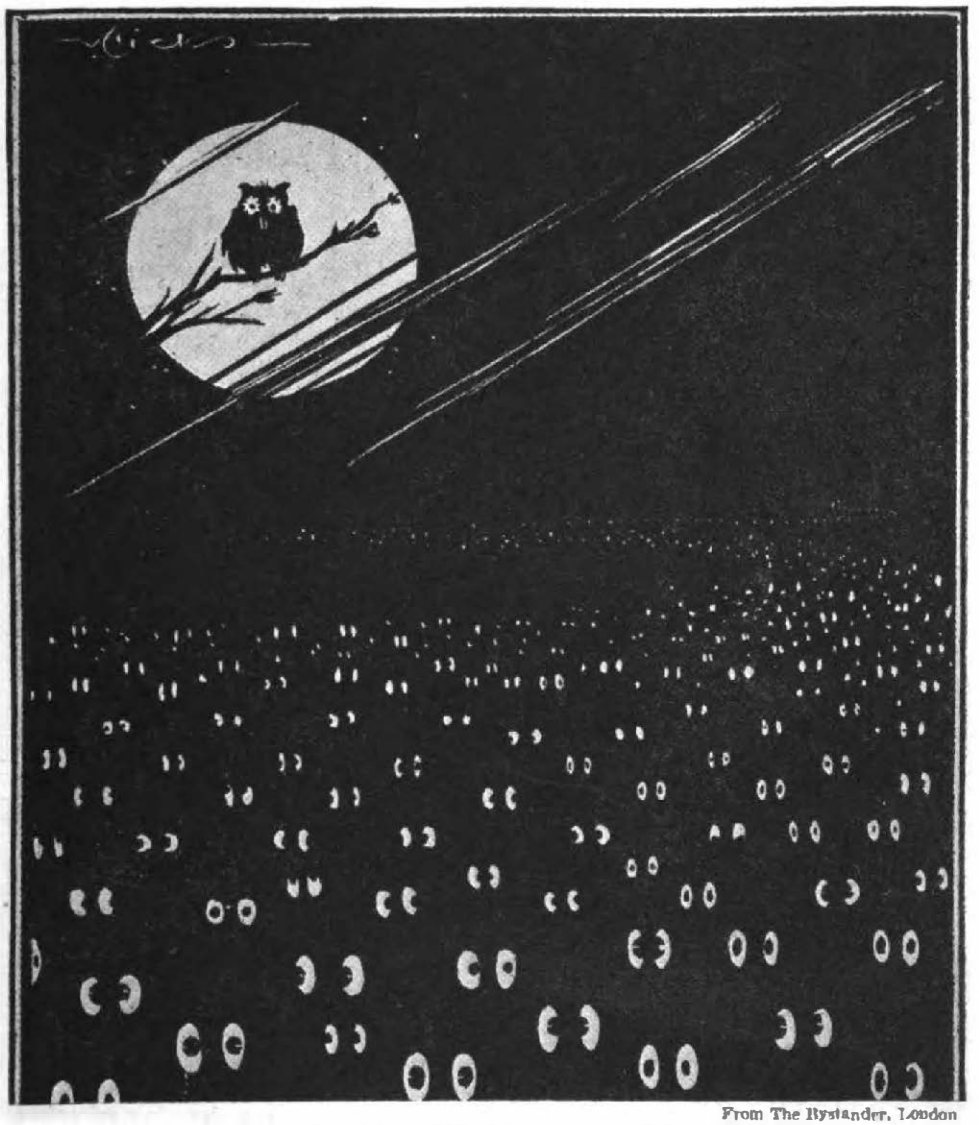
Bob: Wrong. That was yesterday.—Passing Show.

Not on the Race Card

They were in a railway train and were discussing Dickens. "Well," said one, "John puts 'Bleak House' first and 'Martin Chuzzlewit' second." "Excuse me, gentlemen," said a husky voice from the seat behind. "I don't know your pal, John, but you're being steered. There ain't no such horses runnin'."—Fort Worth Star Telegram.

Donahey in Cleveland Plain Dealer

Sis entertains her new beau on the front porch swing!



From The Bystander, London

THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPEN
All the Southern darkies go "Way Back Home to Dixie"

Good in All Things

The Bore: This weather is awful.

The Girl: You shouldn't grumble at the weather. If it wasn't for that you would have nothing to talk about.—Karikaturen.

Reckless

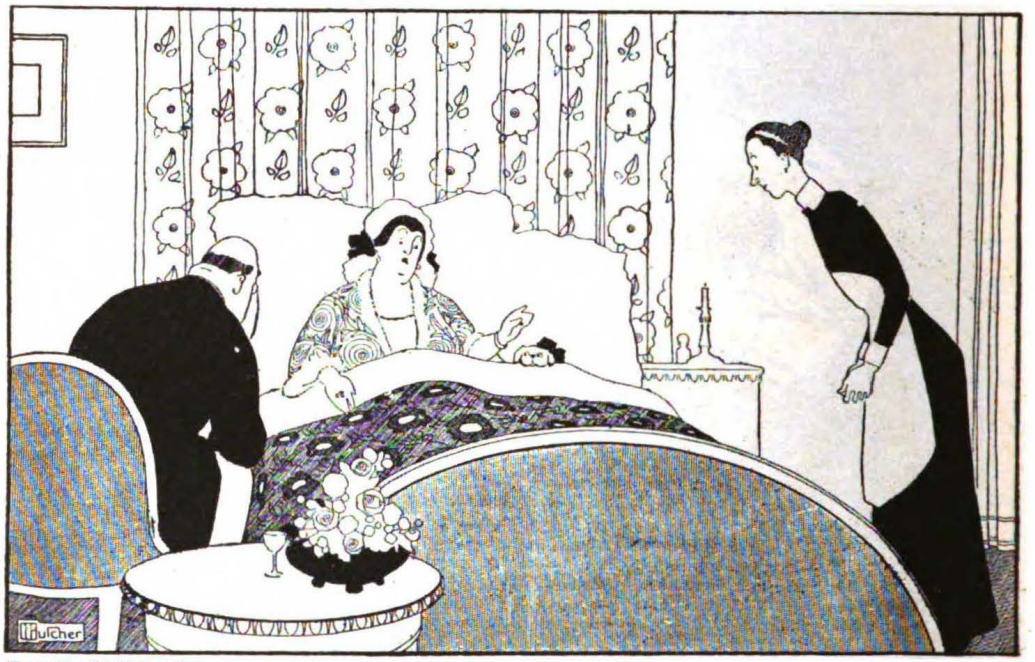
"That fashionable doctor seems to have a large practice." "Got so many patients he can afford to send bunches of them to Florida for months at time."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Madridgal"

The spanish girls are sirens,
And they will get me yet,
Since, when they start a-dancing
For me they cast-a-net.
—New York Sun.

Too Noisy for One Thing

"What is that machine?"
"A concrete mixer."
"Let's have a look."
"It's not adapted to making home brew."
—Birmingham Age-Herald.



From The Mail, London

"Collins!"
"Yes, my lady?"
"Cough like I did yesterday, for the doctor to hear!"

Our Own Movie Censor

Picture: "Flames Destroy Soap Works at Detroit, Mich., Doing $50,000 Damage."

Eliminate subtitle, "Only Bare Walls Remain Standing"; anything bare is barred from movies.

Eliminate closeup of fire chief; hole in left rubber boot exposes his big toe; very immoral.

Picture: "Overland Expresses Crash Head-On at Syracuse, N. Y.; Engineer Breaks a Leg."

Eliminate reference to engineer's leg; too suggestive. Eliminate subtitle 'Coaches Stripped of All but Framework"; no stripping scenes allowed.

Picture: "West Point Cadets Spell Soup in Novel Drill Formation."

Eliminate cadets: too suggestive of war.

Eliminate reference to soup: it's a loose term.

Picture: "Steeple-Jack Smokes Cigarette 500 Feet in Air, Penobscot, Me."

Eliminate cigarette; bad example to youth of land; substitute lollypop or stick of slippery elm.

Eliminate view of tall steeple: it's over audience's head.

Picture: "England Launches 500,000 Ton Battleship."

Eliminate scene showing girl breaking quart of wine over bow of ship: very depressing.

Picture: "Liege, Belgium, Burgomaster Opens Annual Cheese Exhibit."

Eliminate burgomaster or make him wear skull cap; too immodest from eyebrows up. In close-up of cheese eliminate the holes; not essential to development of plot.

Picture: "Boston Fishing Smacks in with Record Catch of Smoked Herring."

Eliminate the fifth herring from the end (right) in the third row from the back: conduct too frivolous: general manner offensive.—H. I. Phillips in Chicago News.

Carr in New York World

Anybody can see that!

Lemen in St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The censor visits the beach

Psycho-Analysis

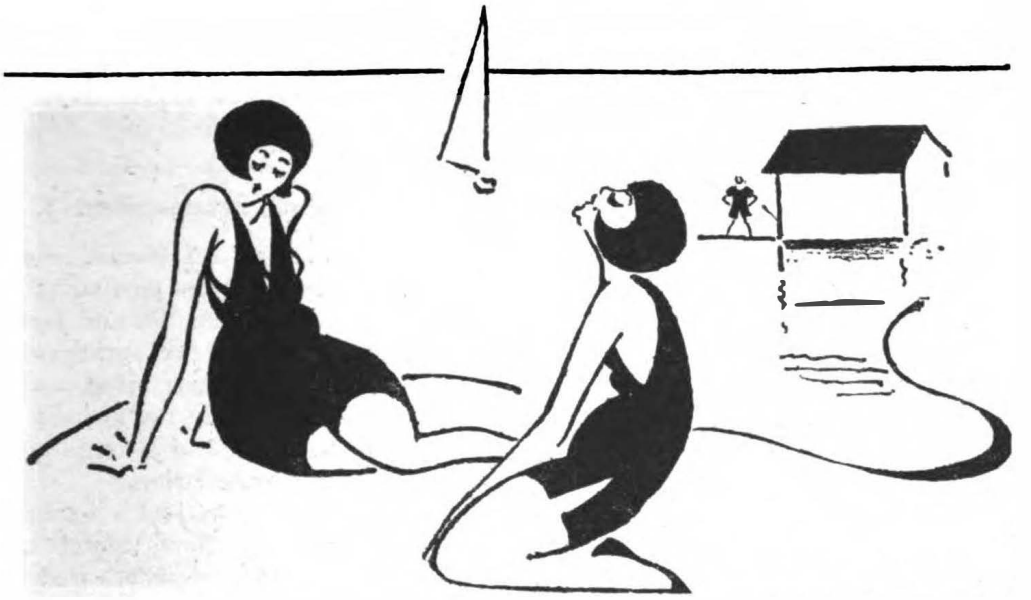
Dissect his motives all you can,
  You'll not discover what he's got;
You never really know a man
  Until you see him top a shot.
Analysis will not suffice,
  His heart you cannot read at all,
Until some day you see him slice
  His ball.

You may suspect that he is brave
  And has a soul of solid gold,
That in a crisis he'll behave
  As did heroic men of old.
But when you see the fellow quit
  When still an even chance he had,
Your judgment, you'll perforce admit.
  Was bad.

His piety you may approve,
  It shines reflected in his face;
No troubles, you may think, could move
  His tongue to evil words and base.
And then the divots he will shear,
  And miss the pill and fan the air,
And you'll be horrified to hear
  Him swear.

For years you may have looked on him
  As stern and wise and proud and strong,
Forever calm, forever grim,
  Though all the world seemed going wrong.
But see him lay a mashie dead
  And putt the ball around the hole,
And then you'll know, for you'll have read
  His soul.

—James J. Montague in New York World.



From Karikaturen, Christiana

"I don't like Miller—every time he sees me he tells me I look younger!"
"But that is a compliment!"
"Not at all! Men only begin to tell a woman she looks younger when they think she is beginning to look old!"

Fictions of Finance

"Nobody attempts to sell a farmer gold bricks or green goods any more."

"What's the use?" inquired Farmer Corntossel. "They can work faster and safer with oil-stock literature."—Washington Star.

Forgotten Horrors

General Vanderbilt was talking about the German war criminals' trials in Leipzig.

"Certainly," he said, "our war prisoners had a terrible time of it in the German prison camps.

"A western farmer said to his son, who had been a war prisoner:

"'Jim, how did you like that leather jacket I sent you at the prison camp? Fine, wasn't it?'

"The boy nodded enthusiastically.

"'Fine!' he said. 'The very best piece of leather I ever ate.'"—Baltimore Sun.

Not All Of Them

Teacher: Do you know the population of Bradford?

Kenneth: Not all of them, teacher. We've only lived here two years.—Edinburgh Scotsman.

A Clever Ruse

She thought she heard a burglar in the dining-room. She was quite alone. She dared not descend to the lower floor, she could not handle a revolver, and she was afraid to scream for help.

At last a bright inspiration came to her. There was an old "To Let" sign in a cupboard. She put it in her window, where the arc light from across the street would fall full upon it.

In three minutes a crowd had gathered before her house, and three men had burst in her door. As she heard their determined tread climbing the stairs, she dropped into a chair and swooned with relief. She was saved!—Passing Show.

Cuttings from the College Cut-ups

Getting Off

Man: Is New York the next stop?
Porter: Yes, sah; brush you off, sah?
Man: No, I'll get off myself.—Banter.

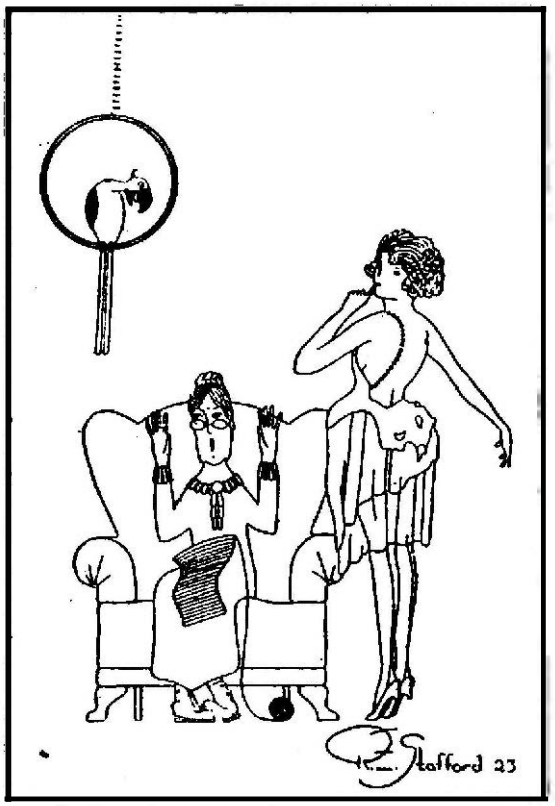
They'd Fire Him

Senior: I'm a big gun around here.
Junior: Is that why they'r talking of cannon you?—Pelican.

Division of Labor

"I see Jack and his father are carrying on the business as usual."

"Sure; the old man operates the business while Jack does the carrying on."—Cornell Widow.



From The Pennsylvania Punch Bowl

Twice-told tales!

A. Laurie, Americanized

Virginia's shores are bonnie,
Where sweet the birdies sing;
And 'twas there that Bill and Johnnie
Made love to me last spring;
Made love to me last spring,
Both kissed me in the swing;
And for both Bill and Johnnie
I wear a diamond ring.
They both ha'e gone and left me;
I tried to keep them, though
I knew that they were married
To Annabelle and Flo—
About three years ago.
They saw my wedding ring—
And yet, both Bill and Johnnie
Made love to me last spring.
—Cornell Widow.

For Kissing

He: Your mouth and mine are about the same shape.
She: You mean to suggest—
He: That's about the size of it.—Purple Cow.

The Skoit

My goil's name's Goity Moiphy,
She surely is a boid,
She lives on Toity-second street,
Right next to Toity-toid.

She knocks off woik each Toisday,
We goes down to Coney Isle.
I asks me Goit to marry me,
She knocks me half a mile.
Ain't she some goil?
—Penn State Froth.

Cable Rates

An American girl in France who wanted to save cable tolls telegraphed her father: "Marseilles tomorrow."—Tar Baby.

The Cold Diggers

Two little worms were digging away. They were digging in dead earnest. Poor Ernest!!—Purple Cow.

The Change and the Weather

She: Wouldn't it be better if we didn't go out for supper? I think it's going to rain.

He: Yes, I think so, too. I can tell by the change in my pocket.—Jack-O-Lantern.

How's His Humerus?

"His humor is quite contagious."

"How do you mean?"

"Whenever I hear it it makes you sick."—Yale Record.

Happy Habits

He eats his soup with honey,
He's done it all his life.
'Tis not because he likes it so,
But it sticks upon his knife.
—Voo Doo.

Local Color

Felix: They tell me that your complexion is all made up.

Felice: That's false.

Felix: That's what they meant.—Princeton Tiger.

Raising the Value

Collegian: Dave has all his checks photographed.

Coed: Does he keep a "mem" book?

Col.: No, he has them enlarged.—University of Washington Sun Dodger.

Trying!

First: I read about a funny thing yesterday.

Second: What was it?

First: A man sued for his overcoat and lost his suit.—Punch Bowl.

From The Harvard Lampoon

"Did she buy that narrow-waisted coat?"
"No, she thought it was a bad habit to get into."

Accidents Will Happen

Judge: Why did you say the shooting was accidental?

Culprit: Why, the wictim accidentally called me a liar and I shot him.—Octopus.

The Kissing Miss

Worshipped He: Your lips were just made to kiss.

Modern She: Did I really make such a good job of it?—The Virginia Reel.

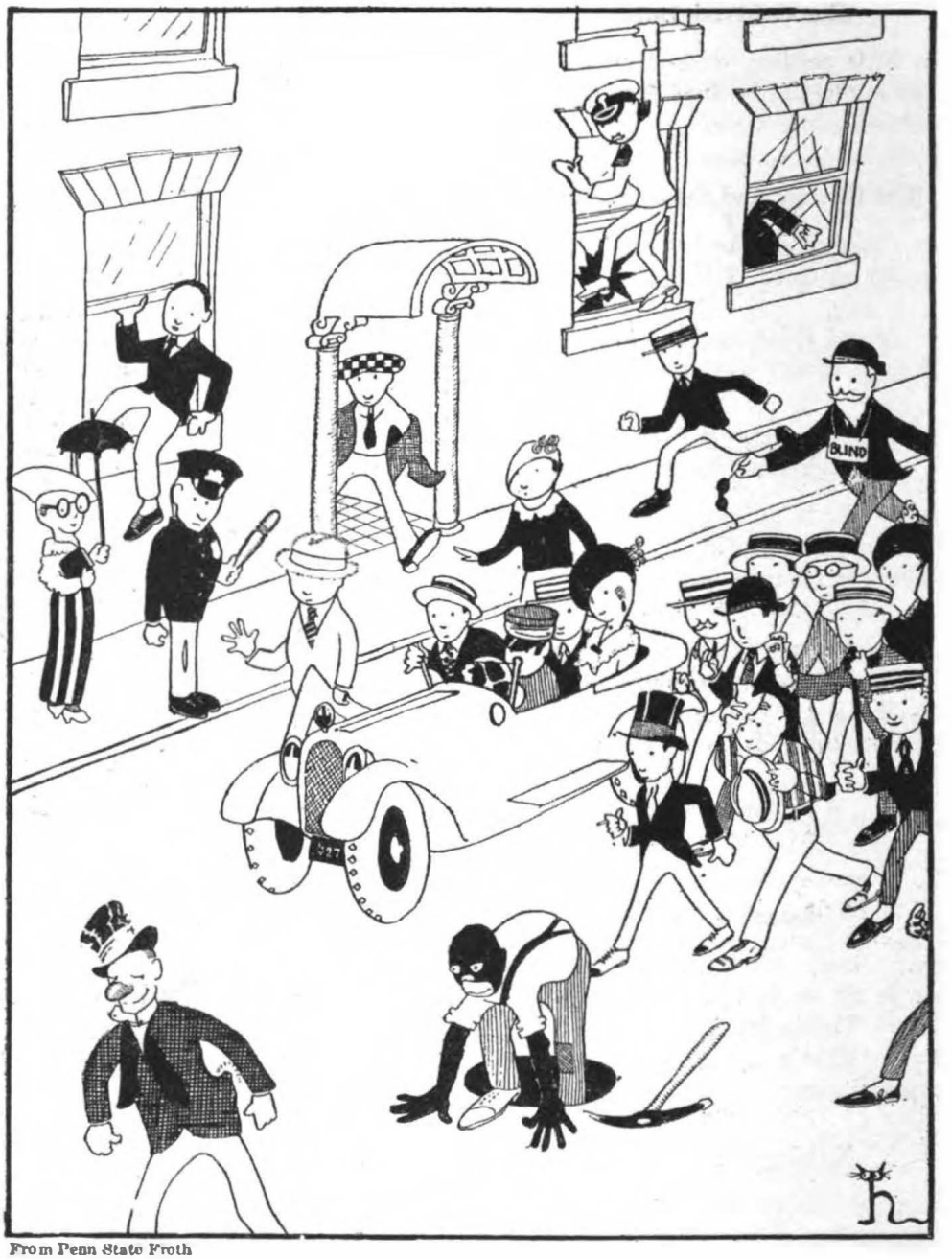
A Toss-Up

"My heart is with the ocean!" cried the poet rapturously.

"You've gone me one better," said his seasick friend, as he took a firm grip on the rail.—Tiger.

Getting Away With It!

"At your service," said the burglar, as he jimmied the family sideboard.—Goblin.



From Penn State Froth

The modern "pied" piper!

The Evils of Intemperance

Two pints, one quart,
Two quarts, one fight,
One fight, two cops,
Two cops, one judge,
One judge, thirty days.
—Syracuse Orange Peel.

Within the Law

First Tea Toad (after the dansant): What do you mean by telling the girls your dad was a rich Southern planter? He isn't, is he?

Second Tea Toad: Only part way; he's an undertaker.—Lyre.

Record Bad Luck

"What is sadder than a man who loses his last friend?" "A man who works for his board and loses his appetite."—Stanford Chaparral.

That's Right

She: What does Jack mean when he says I "slide a slippery heel?"

He: That's just his slang; he means that you "shake a wicked hoof!"—Yale Record.

Good-Night!

Father: What were you up to last night?

Son: Twelve o'clock.—Pelican.

Sad But True

Mary doesn't rouge her lips,
Neither does she paint;
Is she a hit among the men?
You know damn well she ain't.
—Lyre.

At 7:45 P. M.

The maiden scrambled round in haste.
"I'm terribly late," she raved.
"I have a date at eight o'clock
And eyebrows still unshaved."
—Sun Dial.

Their Meal

Phil: Say, Bill, had any Socrates yet?

Bill: Nope, but I've had Plato soup.—Harvard Lampoon.

The Egg

"There's the guy I'm laying for," said the hen as the farmer crossed the yard.—Puppet.

Fitting!

He: Shall we all squeeze in the front seat?

She: John! Can't you at least wait till we get home?—University of Pennsylvania Punch Bowl.

Hen: Whence the black eye, old thing?
Lee: Oh, I went to a dance last night, and was struck by the beauty of the place.

Doggone

Him: You think more of your poodle than you do of me.

Her: Why not? He growls less.—Brown Jug.

Not Partial

She (fixing mussed-up hair): My, but I like it in the fall.

He: Hum, I like it any time.—University of Michigan Gargoyle.

Bess!

"If I should ask you to marry me what would you say?"

"Guess."

"Well, what would it rhyme with?"

"Guess."—Tar Baby.

Shirks Both Ways

One man plus one wife=Housework.
One man plus two wives=Workhouse.

Gifts of Ye Gods

Some people are so generous
That every time they pay
A compliment, it seems to us,
They give themselves away.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by Jim Henderson

"My gawd, stranger, you must live a fur piece from here!"

The Spinister Has An Idea

Why can't they make a bachelor wed?
There ought to be something for't;
I say, the law should take a hand
And summons them to court.

Vast Difference

There was never any haste at Aunt Dorothea's table; consequently Ruth, the youngest of all the nieces and nephews who gathered at Hunting Hill in the summer, had learned what to expect. Everything was served by Aunt Dorothea herself and age had strict precedence.

There came a day, however, when Ruth, returning to the family dining-room after a season spent in her room with a sore throat, found at her place a little delectable apple pie, so small that it seemed as if it must be meant for her alone. Nevertheless she determined to be cautious.

"Am I"—she looked anxiously toward the head of the table, where sat her awe-inspiring relative—"am I to be aunty for this pie, or is it all mine, Aunt Dorothea?"

Oodles of Karats

He: I want to get you the finest engagement ring in the world. What kind of stone would you like?

She: One like David in the Bible used.

He: Meaning?

She: The kind that'll knock 'em dead.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by G. B. Inwood

First taxi driver: They ain't so many jaywalkers now a days.
Second taxi driver: Naw, they ain't hardly enough to go around.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by Perry Barlow

Genuine sympathy!

Drawn for Wayside Tales by Don V. Ulsh

The Juggling McSwatts, being temporarily out of work, open a restaurant

Myself and I at Tea

I love a good party at luncheon or tea
I like with goodfellows to dine.
With appetites hearty and gay raillery
It's all very lovely and fine.

Delightful the chatter of restaurant folks
As victuals and drink they devour,
The hubbub and clatter, the laughter and jokes,
I can listen to it by the hour.

I count it a pleasure, a real rare treat,
To dine as we say *en famille.*
With bountiful measure of all that's to eat,
And the jolly "at home" that I feel.

But, sometimes, I'd rather be playing the host
To myself, that ubiquitous guest,
With no one to blather or blarney or boast,
At home in my own little nest.

What matter the ration of platter or cup?
I'm as happy as happy can be,
When my hermit collation I nibble and sup
And renew my acquaintance with—me!

Sophie E. Redford

A Total Loss

The fair maiden plucked a daisy, and, with coyly lowered lashes, began to pull off the petals one by one, as she murmured softly, "He loves me; he loves me not. He loves me—"

"That is a most inefficient procedure," the young man beside her said briskly. "No need for that repetition of words, or the destruction of the blossom. Simply count the petals; if the total is an even number, the assumed answer to your hypothetical question will be in the negative, while if the number is odd, the answer will be in the affirmative. Even in the most trivial affairs the principles of efficiency may be—"

But the fair maiden wasn't listening. She was thinking sadly that here was another glorious summer afternoon quite wasted.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by G. B. Inwood

"Is he well bred?"
"Say, lady, if any o' your neighbors has got a dog ye'd like to see snubbed, this dog will do the job for youse!"

Drawn for Wayside Tales by G. Frank Kauffman

He: Well, what 'ave you got for supper tonight?
She: Crab meat!

Duds!

Lots of men who make the most noise in the world are really in the blank cartridge class!

The Offering

Why should I try for you?
Nobody knows,
Love, I suppose.
Many who sigh for you
Gladly would buy for you
Castles and clo'es.
While I—who'd die for you,
Pluck (very shy) for you
A rain-jewelled rose.

Julia Boynton Green.

Don't Foot Your Bill

A girl should not kick when a fellow lays his heart at her feet!

Ain't It the Truth

It's easy enough to be pleasant
When the film goes by like a song;
But the fan worth while
Is the fan who can smile
When the operator gums things so that the screen goes dark just as the hero is about to be mashed to bits beneath a descending freight elevator unwittingly run by the smiling heroine who is kidding the villian, and all the time wondering whether her handsome Harry is going to get in wrong!

—Frank H. Williams.

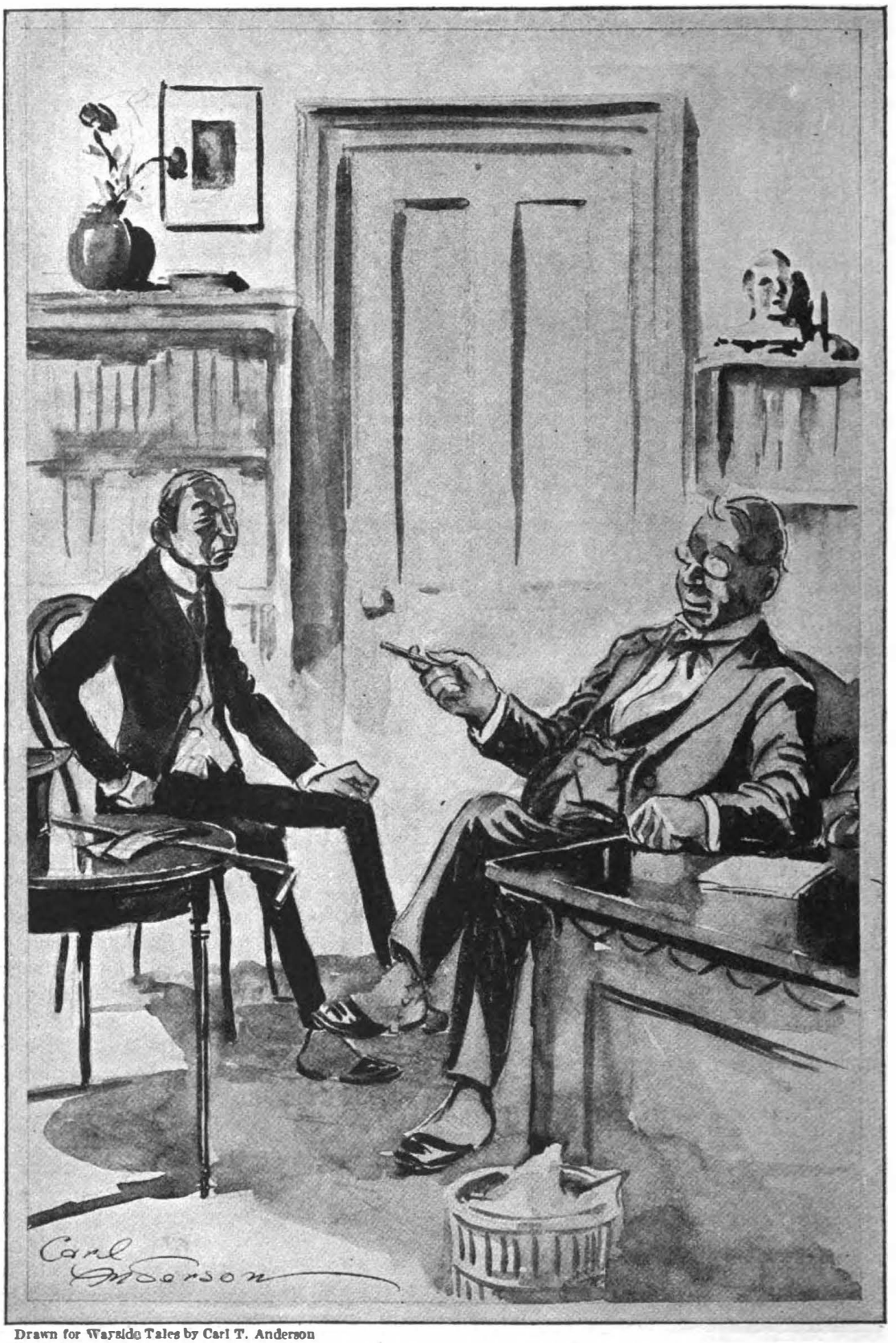
Insomnia

Visitor: And what brought you here, my man?

Prisoner: Walking in my sleep, lady.

Visitor: And they shut you up for that?

Prisoner: Well, it was in a bank where they found me walking.



Drawn for Wayside Tales by Carl T. Anderson

Profiteering landlord: Doctor, when I was poor I had a splendid appetite, but now that I am rich I don't appreciate good food and can scarcely eat at all.

Doctor: Forget your wealth and eat only what your tenants invite you to sit down to.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by Herbert O. Williams

DOWN IN GEO'GA!

The Judge (plantation letter-writer, writing to Biff's girl): Now, Biff, you're sure there isn't anything else you would like to say?

Biff: Well, now, Judge, you might put dere at de bottom, befo yo write mah name, "Please 'cues de writin'."

On the River

Girls in white, and girls in blue!
Girls a many, girls a few!
Loving solitude *a deux*,
On the river!

Maids of seventeen or more!
Maids, say, upwards of fourscore!
Pretty maids, and maids who bore!
On the river!

Grassy vale and woody dell!
Music from the banjo belle!
Loafers only fit for—well—
On the river!

Fancy often says canoe!
Just the very thing for two!
Don't upset, or you'll be blue
As the river!

La Touche Hancock.

Old Acquaintances

"Does he meet his obligations?"

"Yes, often. But he passes them by pretending not to recognize them."

Force of Habit

Baseball Manager: Say, four men stole bases on you to-day. You've got the longest wind-up I ever saw.

Pitcher: It's my former environment, boss. I used to be a maker of eight-day clocks.

The Alter Ego

Judge: Your tale that you stole this money sub-consciously impresses me.

Prisoner: It's true your honor. I, my real self, didn't know a thing about it.

Judge: Therefore, I am going to let your sub-conscious self imagine that it is out and getting the air for six months.

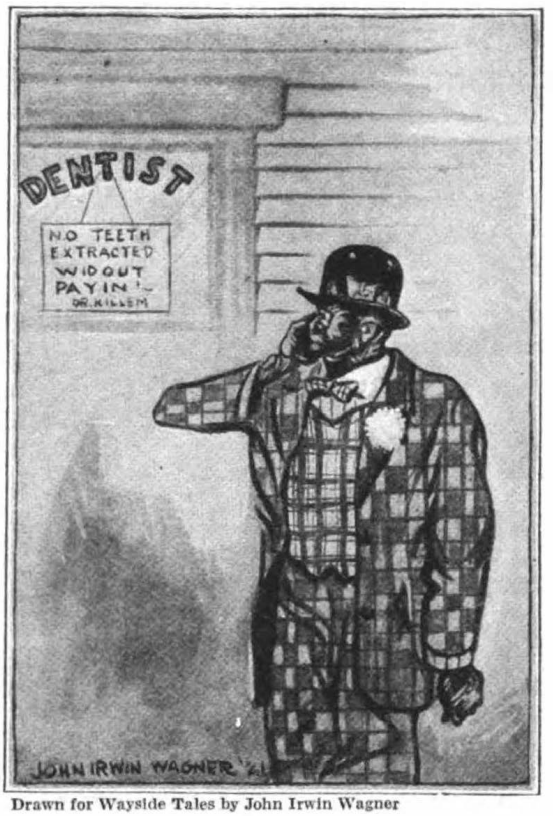
Cash on Delivery!

That money talks,
Of course we know.
Sometimes it squawks:
"I told you so!"

No Bargain Sales

"Yes experience comes high!"

"Yes, and the trouble about buying it is that you can't always get it to match."



Drawn for Wayside Tales by John Irwin Wagner

Mose: Pshaw! I thought dis wus a painless dentist!

An Expedient

If Martha's name were something else—
  Say Polly, Prune or Janet—
I might complete an ode to her,
  If I but once began it.

But inspiration balks at names
  Which lack both rhyme and beauty,
And ingenuity's at loss
  To meet poetic duty.

As rhymster, I would use my art
  This once for Martha's glory,
For all my heart is hers alone,
  But—that's another story!

So there is only one way left
  To have both rhyme and kisses;
I'll take her to the minister
  And change her name to "Mrs."

James Owen Tryon.

Her Boots

The shortness of my lady's skirt
  Demands a high-cut boot,
Laced neatly to the very knee,
  Her modesty to suit.
She heretofore had always had
  A dozen beaux at least,
But since she donned those high-topped boots
  The number has increased.
And when the laces come untied,
  Not one adoring swain,
But twenty lovers wait the chance
  To tie them up again.

Minna Irving.

A Blessing

When the setting sun is shining
  On the sea—
(I have not the least idea when
  That may be!)
That is just the very time I
  Think of thee!

As the river runs unerring
  To the sea—
(How it finds its way is very
  Strange to me!)
So my feet are always running
  After thee!

If the setting sun and river,
  And the sea,
Never more in poets' verses
  We should see,
Oh, my goodness, what a blessing
  It would be!

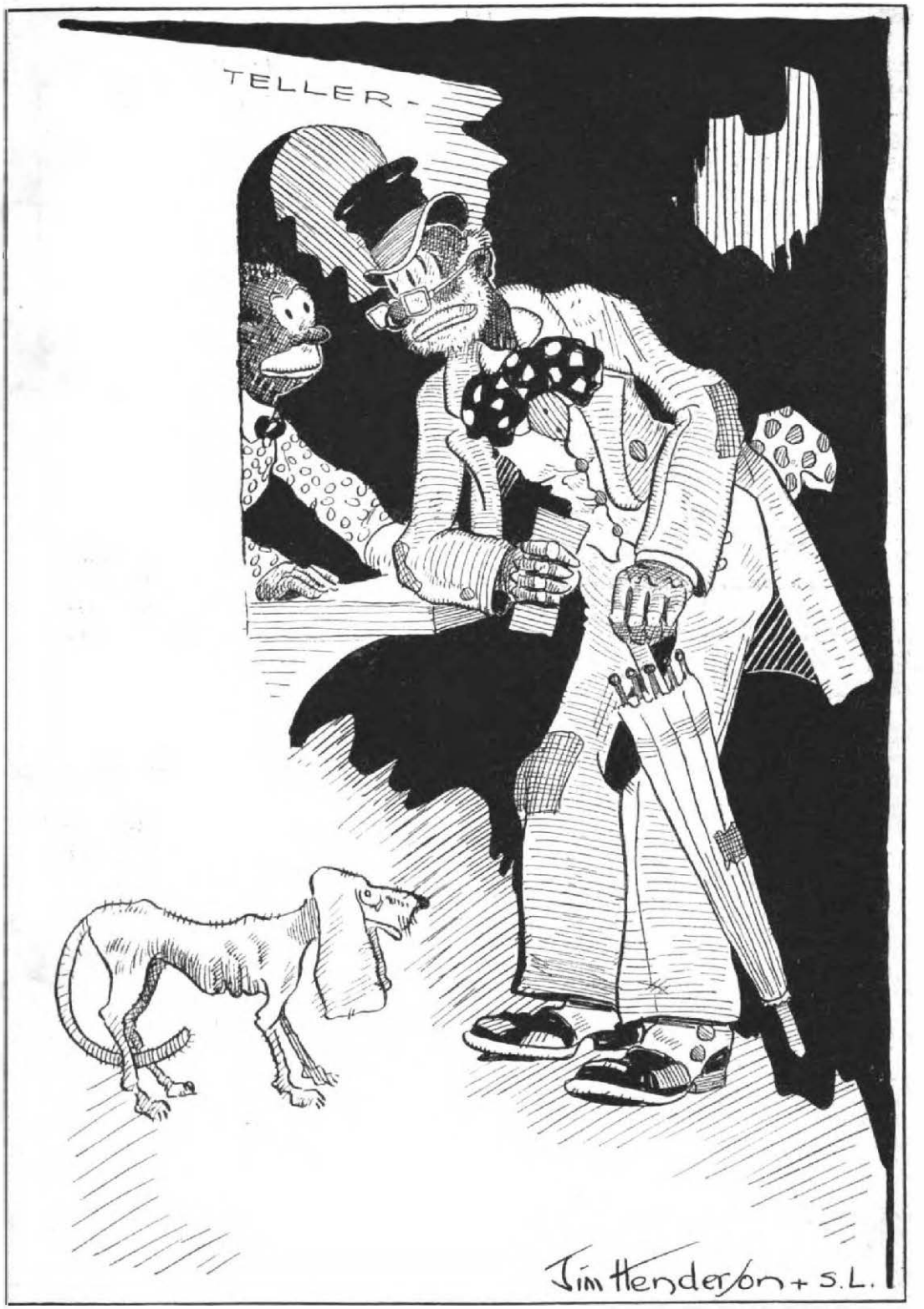
Two of a Kind

Jay: Don't you hate to play poker with a bad loser?

Ray: Yes, almost as much as with a good winner.

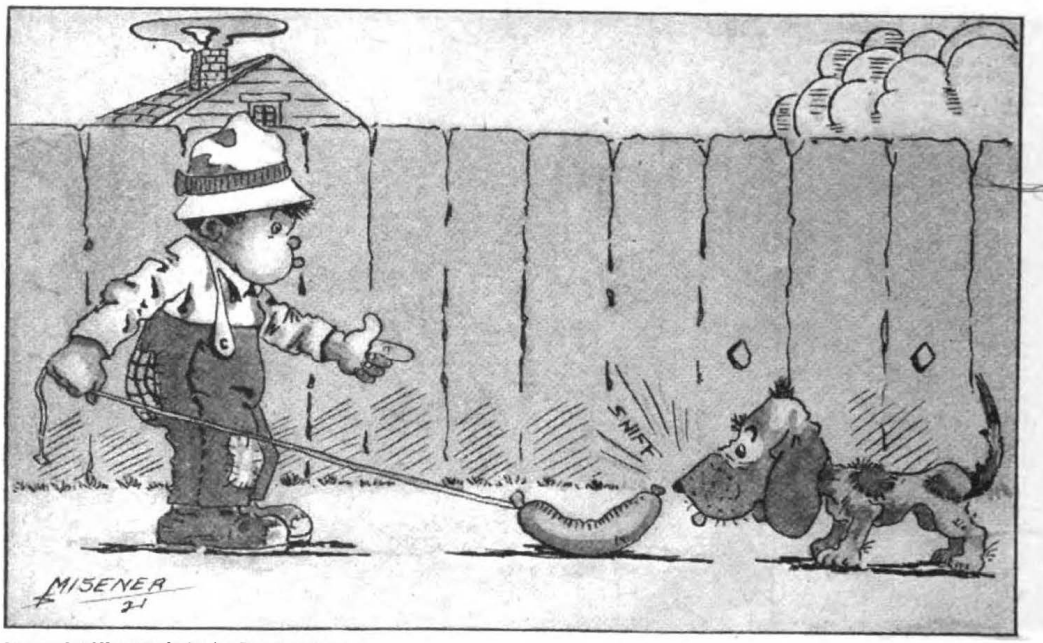
Ego Answers Yes!

Some persons do not consider that they are taking their own part unless they grab the whole works.



Drawn for Wayside Tales by Jim Henderson

"I wants to draw out dat money I put in dis bank four years ago."
"Man, you ain't got no money in here now! De interest done et up de principal long ago."



Drawn for Wayside Tales by Stanley Misener

"You leave my dog alone!"

Game Always

Preacher (solemnly): Rastus, do yo' take dis here woman for better or for worse?

Rastus (from force of habit): Pahson, Ah shoots it all!

As A Man Breathes

(French physician declares he can read character infallibly by phrenoscopy.—News Note.)

From Halifax to Frisco, from Butte to Alabam,
Oh, man, you'd better watch the antics of your diaphragm!
A medico can tell exactly what you are about
And the phrenoscope will get you, if you don't watch out!

If he should catch you breathing, you'd better call a halt.
He says that he can tell us your besetting sin or fault;
That he can read your character, we haven't any doubt—
And the phrenoscope will get you, if you don't watch out!

I wonder if you'll dare to draw a breath in all your life,
If this radioscopic fixin' should be purchased by your wife,
For she'd surely get you napping some unlucky day, old scout,
Then the phrenoscope will get you if you don't watch out!

If the federal agent had one it would be your very death,
He could then locate your cellar by the way you draw your breath,
So you'd better practice breathing like a young and tender sprout,
Or the phrenoscope will get *you*, if you don't watch out!

Sophie E. Redford.

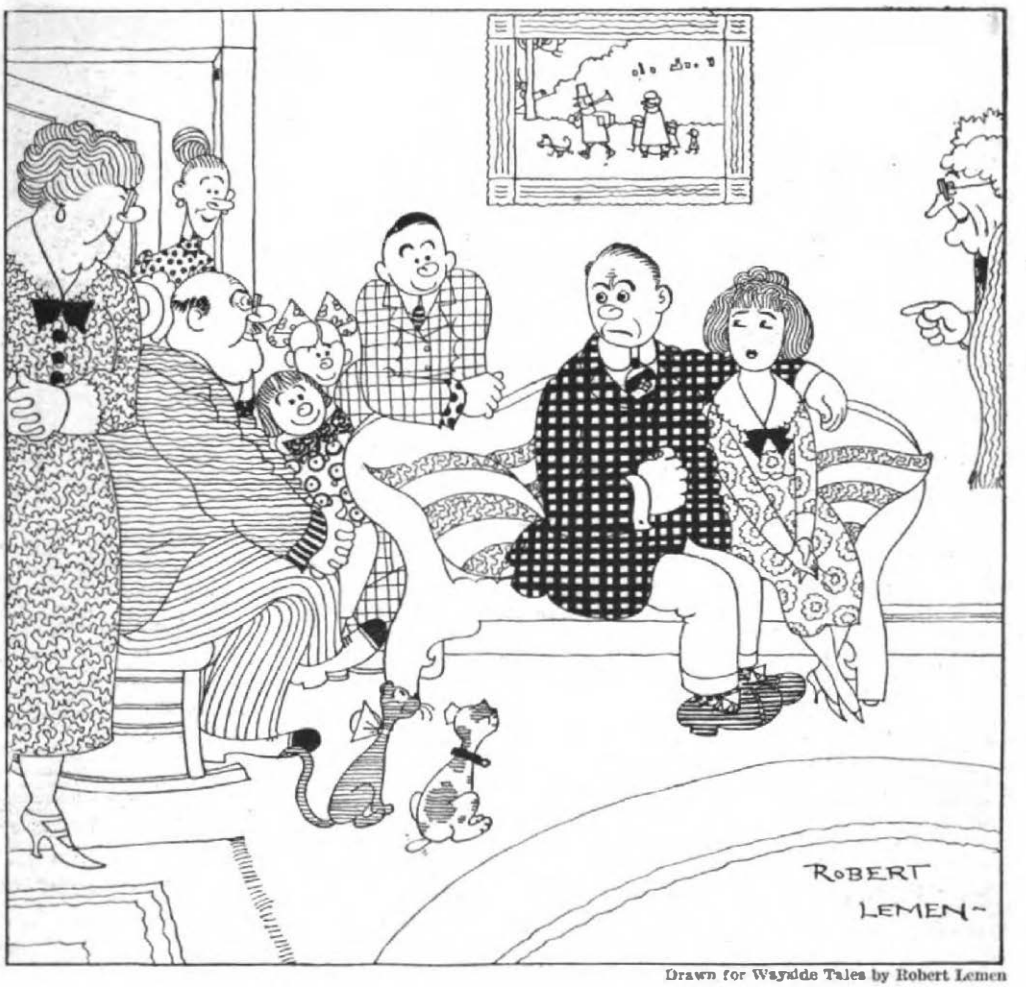
Narrowed Down—

Prejudices are merely other people's opinions!

The Net Result

Kirk: Man wants but little here below.

Patrick: And he's the only fellow who gets what he wants.



Drawn for Wayside Tales by Robert Lemen

Horrible example of the young man who developed too much personal magnetism

Should He?

If a body meet a toddy,
And a body's dry,
Should a toddy treat a body
Comin' through the rye?

Not Much Left, Either!

"Why do you call him scatter-brained?"

"Because he gives every one a piece of his mind."

Enter Poverty

When poverty comes in at the door love never waits for the burglar alarm to go off.

As If—

He: I love a girl like you!
She (jealously): Who is she?

Every Hole A Gasp

Monkey: What are you stuttering so for, Mr. Ostrich?

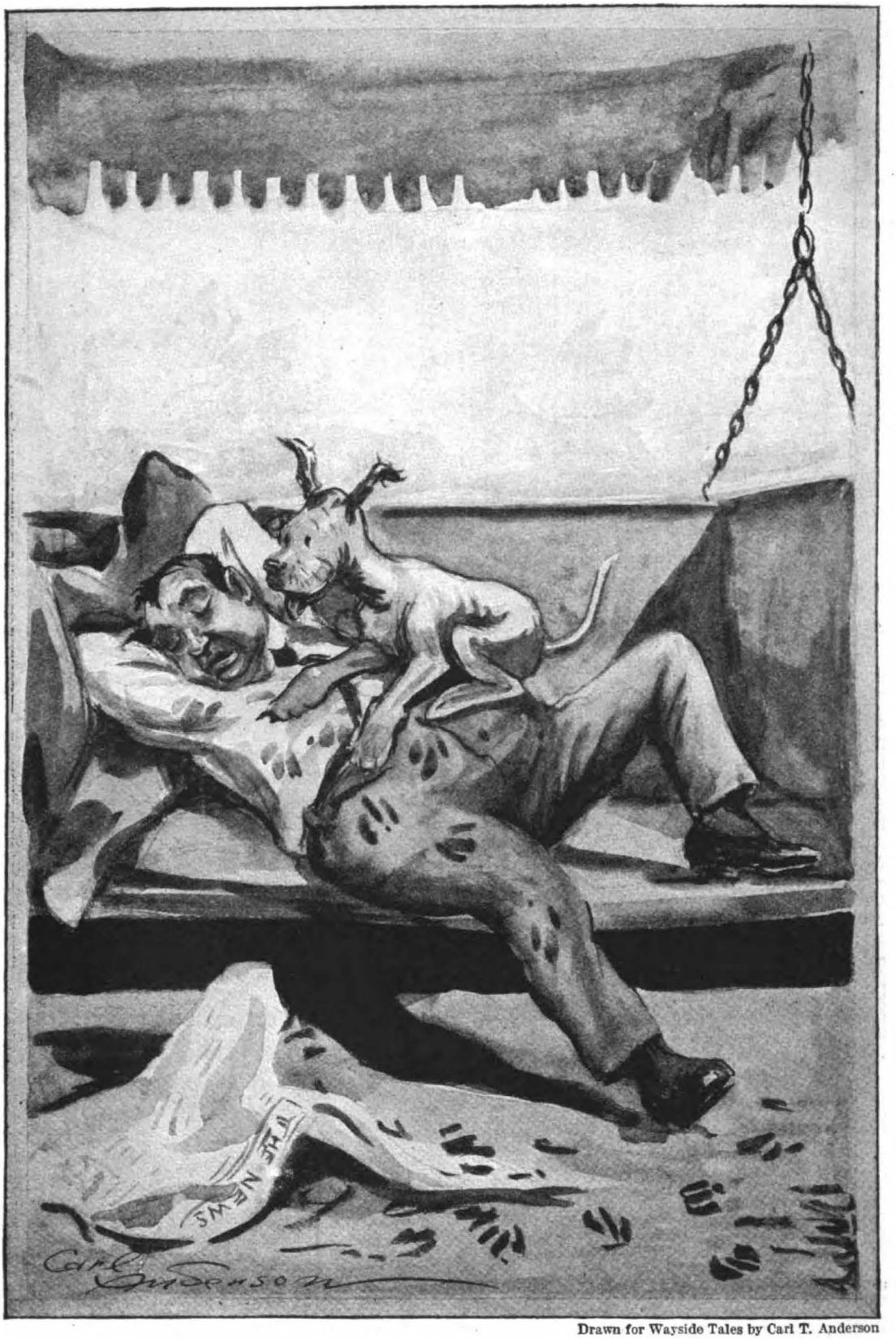
Ostrich: I sw-swallowed one-one of th-those per-perforated music rolls and th-the da-damned thing's t-t-turning over.

No Doubt

If all the sea were full of wine,
Or beer or ale, I think
They'd fence it off and never let
A fellow get a drink.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by G. B. Inwood

"I suppose, cook, now that you are leaving us you will want me to write a recommendation."
"No, mum, all I ask is photygrafts of the family to show folks."



Drawn for Wayside Tales by Carl T. Anderson

Stray dog: When he wakes up he'll probably adopt me or something.

Drawn for Wayside Tales by Robert Lemen

The "skeleton" in the closet

Droll!

Said a bibulous chap from the South,
In a state of perpetual drouth:
"Now it surely seems droll
That a punch in the bowl
Could e'er have been worth two in the mouth."

Touching Bottom

"What is Beatham's credit rating?"

"So low he can't even get a battery charged."

Suggested Desk Motto for Congressmen

The country's so full of a number of hicks,
It's easy as can be to play politics.

The Way of the Maid

Blake: It's a beautiful sight to watch a young girl growing into womanhood.

Lake: That's right. So many of them nowadays seem to want to grow into manhood!

The Lover

"You know, love laughs at locksmiths!"

"Thereby proving that love isn't such a serious matter after all!"

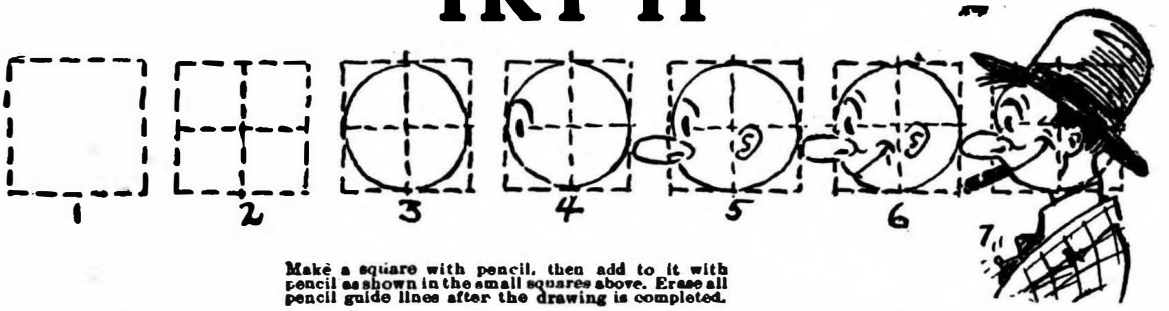
Vice Versa

"I am gong to serve on a jury. I think I will knit all the time."

"Huh! It's more likely they will want you to unravel."

Here Is a Simple, Easy Way to Draw a Comic Face

TRY IT



Make a square with pencil, then add to it with pencil as shown in the small squares above. Erase all pencil guide lines after the drawing is completed.

HAVE you ever wanted to draw cartoons like those reproduced each month in this magazine? If so, you owe it to yourself to get full details about **Cartoonist Evans'** course of instruction in cartoon drawing, because we feel sure he can help you. Some of the very cartoons you have admired and copied may have been drawn by some of the former pupils of this school who are now on some of the **largest newspapers** in the country.

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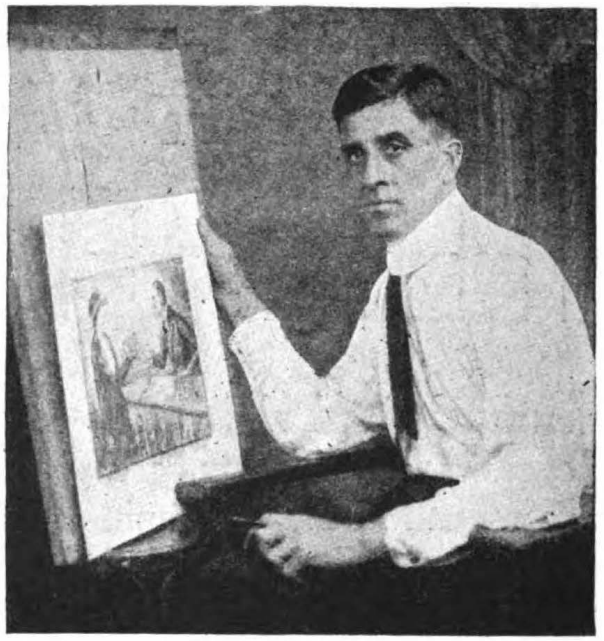


Bob Boardman at Work in His Studio at the Rotarian Magazine

Wins Success Through Federal Training

BEFORE the war, Bob Boardman was a well known coach and physical director. When war broke out he dropped everything and joined the colors.

On his return from France, Boardman was confronted with the necessity of making a new start. Having frequently heard of the Federal Course from former Federal students, he decided to enroll. During the hottest months Boardman worked daily on the Federal Course. In less than two months he completed nearly Eight Divisions.

This intensive training gained him a position on the Rotarian Magazine where he has been doing excellent cartoons, illustrations, and advertising design.

Text Books Solve Daily Problems

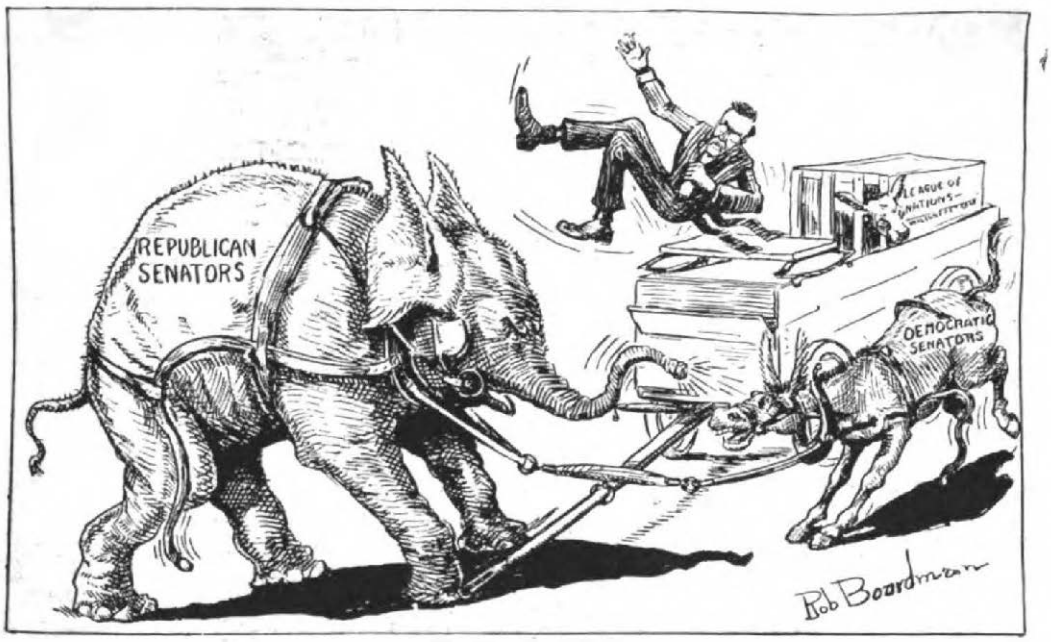
Boardman says, "Inquiry as to the best course, while in France, surprised me at the number of boosters for the Federal School. I have since found the course is far ahead of anything I ever dreamed it could be. I refer to the lessons nearly every day in my work. Often in the evening I read the Divisions for knowledge of some difficult problem that has arisen during the day's work. It is 'par excellence.' I had previously taken another course, but it covered only pen and ink, and was much given to copying.

"The Federal School was directly responsible in securing my position as staff artist on the Rotarian Magazine. I want to thank you for the real interest and help you have given me. I am receiving a satisfactory salary, having had a number of good raises during the year. The course has been of great help to me and you may rest assured I shall always boost for the Federal School."

How You Can Capitalize Your Talent

The necessity for finding a new profitable vocation spurred Boardman's determination to succeed. Why can't you, too, through a little extra effort, equal Boardman's success? Perhaps you are confronted with the same necessity for finding a means of increasing your income. You may have ability but lack the training to make this ability pay you handsomely. Don't you think you owe it to yourself to find out what the Federal Course can do for you?

More than 60 of America's leading artists constitute the Federal Staff. Mastery of the secrets and methods these men teach you is your surest road to success. You can best



SOME TEAM WORK
A sample of cartoon drawn by Boardman for the Rotarian Magazine.

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Chas. L. Bartholomew (Bart) and Joseph Almars

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J. N. Darling (Ding)—New York Tribune.
Fontaine Fox—Central Press Ass'n.
Herbert Johnson—Saturday Evening Post.
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EDITED BY

CHAS L. BARTHOLOMEW

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ALBERT H. AUSTIN is drawing a front-page cartoon each week for the Lowell Sunday News, and very busy the remainder of the time in the advertising department, which he finds most interesting, as well as bringing good remuneration. Thirty-five dollars for one tone design and a weekly average of forty dollars is held very satisfactory by this beginning worker in advertising illustration.

DONALD FRASER

DONALD A. FRASER of Fairy Lake Farm, New London, Conn., was cartoonist on "The Echo," published by The Filene Co-operative Association in Boston, where young Fraser had experience in vaudeville through first using chalk talk in connection with the entertainment work of his business organization. At present he is applying cartooning to farm betterment and extension work in New England.

RICHARDSON ROME

RICHARDSON ROME is holding a position with the Kammann Advertising Service in Sioux City, working in connection with Tom Fanning, who is doing tone drawings for newspaper advertising. Young Rome's work is illustrating for folders, booklets and newspaper ads, which he solicits, using his ability to sketch the layout while with the customer, thus assuring sale of advertising. Both Fanning and Rome are studying the broadest uses of illustration for business purposes.

ROBT. WILLIAMSON

ROBERT WILLIAMSON'S cartoon "Snapshots," for the People's Popular Monthly, Des Moines, are proving very successful illustration. In a recent letter, Mr. Williamson says "Work has been going first rate. I have averaged fifty dollars a week this year—at one time made forty dollars in one day." Mr. Williamson's assertion, "The best way to break into the art business is to take the Federal Course," is certainly being verified in his case.

ROGER RASE

ROGER RASE of Omaha, in connection with his study of Illustrating and Cartooning, has succeeded in having cartoons reproduced in the Omaha Daily Bee, World Herald, and Daily News, with credit to the Federal School printed beneath reproductions of his drawings.

ROZENDO M. GONZALEZ, eighteen year old cartoonist and editor of the Brackenridge Times, the weekly newspaper published by the students of Brackenridge High School, received high praise for himself and the Federal School in the columns of the San Antonio, Texas, daily paper.

JOHN PAVEL

JOHN PAVEL is inking in cartoons on celluloid, painting backgrounds, and lettering titles for the Cartoonigrams, Inc., animation studios in St. Paul. He gives the credit for his success to the "wonderful" training received through the Federal Course.

Get a Bart Drawing Table

The Bart Table in Use for Chalk Talk

Adjustable to every need of the practical draftsman, illustrator, card writer, cartoonist, and chalk talker, the Bart table and chalk talk equipment starts you in these most fascinating callings.

You need Bart's special crayon for practice and public performance. Description of table and prices sent on request.

50c Special Offer

For 50c Bart sends you an assortment of the famous American Crayon Company's colors. (This company is the original maker of chalk talk crayons.) Bart will also send his "Do's and Don't's of Chalk Talk" and pictures of Sid Smith and Clare Briggs producing their famous characters in crayon—"Andy Gump," "Min," "Skinny," and "When a Feller Needs a Friend."

Send for these today

For 6c in Stamps

Enclose 6c in stamps for Bart's chalk talk folder, color card and Sid Smith's alphabetic faces.

The Bart Table in Use by an Illustrative Draftsman—It Fits Each Drawing Requirement

BART SUPPLIES 7 SOUTH SIXTH ST. MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

"CARTOONING MADE EASY"

Consists of

20 PRACTICAL CARTOON LESSONS FOR $8.00

The subjects dealt with are: Cartooning, Comic Drawing, Caricaturing, Portrait Drawing, Engraving, Store Window Cartooning, Motion Picture Slides, etc. The set contains hundreds of illustrations, twenty full sized plates and forty instruction sheets. It is printed on heavy glazed paper and is enclosed in a portfolio.

HERE'S WHAT OTHERS THINK OF THIS SET

"Cartooning Made Easy" is the most exhaustive course on the market for the small price asked." CHARLES BARTLETT, DETROIT, MICH.

"The illustrations alone are worth the price, regardless of the thousands of paragraphs of instruction." HARRY FORBES, NEW YORK CITY.

"I have had your lessons only a month and can already draw salable cartoons." LEON RICHARDS, LIMA, OHIO.

A SHORT SYNOPSIS OF THE COURSE

Lesson No. 1—How to copy a picture. No. 2—Divisions of the anatomy. No. 3—Skeleton work, divisions of the head, collecting a morgue. No. 4—Drawing from life. No. 5—Note book sketches. No. 6—Expressions. No. 7—Drawing at conventions. No. 8—Engraving. No. 9—Perspective. No. 10—Caricaturing. No. 11—Eyes, ears, nose and mouth. No. 12—Action and wrinkles. No. 13—Animals. No. 14—Shading. No. 15—Contrast. No. 16—"Roughing in a sketch." No. 17—Symbols of nations. No. 18—How to reverse a picture, spatter work, etc. No. 19—Types and characteristics. No. 20—Photograph cartoons and other stunts. How to get started as a cartoonist.

K. RICKETT GRANVILLE, OHIO

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Small cost. Send today 2c stamp for particulars and proof.

O. A. SMITH, Room S504, 801 Bigelow St., PEORIA, ILL.

SCENE PAINTING

A valuable book on the Art of painting Scenery and which should be owned by all Cartoonists, Pictorial and Sign Painters and Window Decorators. Thorough and up-to-date, highly recommended and fully illustrated. Only book covering exclusively the Art of painting Scenery for Theatres and Moving Picture Shows. Very valuable for artistic window decorating.

Price $1.75. 186 pages

APPLETON PUBLISHING CO., Dept. 7, Box 1123 OMAHA, NEB.

You Can IMPROVE YOUR FACE FOR 25 CENTS

This book contains a complete course of instructions in Physical Culture for the Face

MORE than 900,000 persons are following these instructions today. They will do more to build beauty than all the paint and powder in the world, for they get right at the root of your facial defects and overcome them.

Not simple or silly. Just physical culture applied to the facial muscles; common sense—that's all. If you want to improve your looks, send 25 cents in coin for this book, today, at once, while it's on your mind. This book is equal to a $25.00 Beauty Course.

Prof. A. BARKER, D.C., Studio S065, 127 W. 42d St., N.Y.C.

We have always sold for cash only, but to unload our surplus stock, we will open charge accounts with reliable buyers, if desired. There is no extra charge for credit.

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SPECIAL LOW PRICES—30 DAYS TRIAL

Genuine blue-white diamonds, full of brilliance, and fiery radiance, sold direct to you by DIAMOND IMPORTERS at wholesale prices. Each diamond is set in a 14 karat solid gold ring included free of charge. Choose your ring and give finger size.

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If satisfied pay 1-5 of price and balance in 10 monthly payments.

We guarantee to satisfy you or refund your money.

Order direct from advertisement or write for 128-page catalog

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Please Mention Wayside Tales and Cartoons Magazine

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisements in this section, 5c per word each insertion.

To insure ads being inserted under proper classification in the November issue, copy must reach this office not later than September 25th

AGENTS WANTED

NEWEST Thing Out—Lithogram Initials for automobiles, motorcycles, canoes, golf sticks, tennis racquets, etc. Anyone can apply them in a jiffy. Sell to everybody. Set costs 15c; brings $1.50. Fast sales and big daily profits for agents. Write for catalog. Lithogram Company, Desk 24, East Orange, N. J.

MAIL us 20c with any size film for development and six velvet prints. Or send six negatives any size and 20c for six prints. Or send 40c for one 8x10 mounted enlargement. Prompt, perfect service. Roanoke Photo Finishing Co., 281 Bell Av., Roanoke, Va.

AGENTS—A New Invention. Harper's Fibre Broom and ten-use brush set. It sweeps, washes and dries upstairs windows, scrubs porch ceilings and does seven other things. Big profits; easy seller. Free trial offer. Harper Brush Works, Dept. F., Fairfield, Iowa.

BIG Money and Fast Sales. Every owner buys golds initials for his auto. You charge $1.50, make $1.35. Ten orders daily easy. Write for particulars and free sample. American Monogram Co., Dept. 70, East Orange, N. J.

BIG Money, Quick Sales, Fine Profits and steady demand selling Clows-Knit guaranteed hosiery direct from mill to wearers. All styles for men, women, children. Many making $3000 year. George Clows Company, Desk 44, Philadelphia.

WHY not carry our pocket outfit as sideline? Liberal Monthly commissions. Salesbook Service Company, Palmer, Negaunee, Michigan.

"WEAREMLOOSE" and be comfortable; "outosite" aluminum side suspenders unify shirt and pants without pressure; enormous seller; agents' sample, set, 50 cents. Leonard Woods, 501a North Seventh, St. Louis, Missouri.

ART AND ADVERTISING SERVICE

CARTOONS—Did you ever see a good Cartoon of yourself or friends? You don't know how funny you can be made to look. Just send your Photo and 50c and see for yourself; photo returned. Patton, 512 So. Fair Ave., Pana, Illinois.

CARICATURE—Send a clear photo and one dollar to Frank E. Patrick, 211 Columbia Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio. Satisfaction assured or your money back; photo returned.

BEAUTIFUL carved and gouged cards that make your eye twinkle with delight. No scrap book is complete without one of my tinted (all colors) and embellished gems fresh from my knife. For 50c I will carve you six handsome cards especially for your scrap book in six different styles. If you wish your name handsomely carved and tinted send 10c (coin). A. O. Ambrose, Card Carving Artist, Janesville, Wisconsin.

AUTOMOBILES

AUTOMOBILE Owners, Garagemen, Mechanics, Repairmen, send for free copy of our current issue. It contains helpful, instructive information on overhauling, ignition troubles, wiring, carburetors, storage batteries, etc. Over 120 pages, illustrated. Send for free copy today. Automobile Digest, 511 Butler Bldg., Cincinnati.

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

SIX Different, Interesting, Clever Publications, prepaid to any address, only 25c. Publisher's price $1.50. All current issues. Satisfaction guaranteed. Walhamore Company, Lafayette Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.

"HOW to Paint Signs and Sho' Cards." A complete course of self instruction, containing 100 up-to-date alphabets and designs for Sign Painters and Artists generally. Complete instruction in every branch of lettering and sign painting, including: Commercial art work and all tricks of the trade. Price, cloth bound, $1.50; order your copy today; satisfaction guaranteed. New Era Studio, 3013 Easton Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

LIGHTNING Cartoonist's book of Secrets, $1. Complete course trick drawing, over 60 stunts with chalk. Satisfaction guaranteed. Samples 10c. Sailor Artist Chris, 2925 Euclid, Kansas City, Mo.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

INITIALS in Old English Capitals, Gold with black outline with full instructions how to put on Automobiles, Lockers, Trunks, Suit Cases or any smooth surface in ¾-inch letter 15 cents each. Modern Instruction Company, 1916 Sheffield Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

BUSINESS won't walk to you! You have to go get it. Make Jacobus Sales Letters your star salesmen—they pull. $3.50 each. Write fully today. Jacobus Ad. Service, 41 Bruen, Irvington, N. J.

START a Magazine; capital $1, sample 10c. Cope, Box 233, Champaign, Ill.

HOW and What to invent for profit, free. Patents for sale. Patent News, 142 Washington, D. C.

ARTISTS, Signmen, investigate Duplitone Process. Mac Clarke, Ottawa, Kansas.

CAMERAS AND PHOTO SUPPLIES

GLOSSY Prints 3 cents each. Rolls developed 7 cents each. First class photography. MacFarlane Photo Service, 1712 Bluerock, Cincinnati, Ohio.

FILMS developed 5c roll. Velvet prints 3c each. Young Photo Service, 431 Delaware Ave., Albany, N. Y.

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RABBIT Hounds, Country raised—broken, Foxhounds, Coon, Opossum, Skunk, Squirrel dogs, Setters. Circular 10c. Brown's Kennels, York, Pa.

OLDFASHIONED Southern coon, skunk, opossum, rabbit hounds sent on trial. List 10 cts. McLister Bros., Brighton, Tennessee.

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AMBITIOUS Writers send today for Free Copy, America's leading magazine for writers of photoplays, stories, poems, songs; instructive, helpful. Writer's Digest, 615 Butler Bldg., Cincinnati.

MEN and Women, Learn showcard writing evenings. Course free. Pay for material only. Earn while learning. Sample lesson 6c postage. Modern Studio of Lettering, Dept. 3, Maxwell Station, Detroit, Mich.

DOLLARS Saved. All kinds used correspondence courses sold, rented, bought and exchanged. List free. Lee Mountain, Pisgah, Ala.

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FLYER! 28 words in 250 weeklies $10. Central Agency, Champaign, Ill.

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PATENTS—Write for free illustrated guide book and Evidence of Conception Blank. Send model or sketch for free opinion of patentable nature. Highest references. Prompt service. Reasonable terms. Victor J. Evans & Co., 168 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

WE make working models for inventors and do experimental work, and carry a complete stock of brass gears and model supplies. Send for catalog. The Pierce Model Works, Tinley Park, Ill.

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SPOT Cash for gold and valuables, returned if dissatisfied. Assaying for prospectors by graduate metallurgists. Central Refiners, 503 N. Prospect, Champaign, Ill.

MYSTIC Photos! Surprise your friends. Blank paper changed into handsome photographs in 10 seconds without camera. 24 blanks with directions, 10c. Catalogue free of the biggest bargains. Practical Sales Company, 1219 North Irving Ave., Dept. 10, Chicago, Ill.

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WE buy Canadian and Foreign Money, precious metals and uncancelled United States stamps. C. Morton King & Sons, Address Box 35M15, Station B, Brooklyn, New York.

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WANTED—Men and women ambitious to make money writing Stories and Photoplays. Send for wonderful Free Book that tells how. Author's Press, Dept. 117, Auburn, N. Y.

WANTED—500 Movie fans to earn money writing photoplays. My course will show you how. R. P. M., Box 368, Hammond, Ind.

MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

THE live-wire Vy-Bro Bridge for Banjos makes every banjo ring out from fifteen to twenty-five seconds with a snap. Improves your tone 50%. Sent by mail 25c. Order today. William Post, 489 H. 6th Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

MUSIC composed to words. Bauer Bros. (formerly of Sousa's Band), Oshkosh, Wis.

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INVENTORS—Send sketch or model of your invention for opinion concerning patentable nature and exact cost of applying for patent. Book "How to Obtain a Patent" sent free. Gives information on patent procedure and tells what every inventor should know. Established twenty-eight years. Chandlee & Chandlee, 415 Seventh St., Washington, D. C.

PATENTS FOR SALE

FOR sale outright, United States and Canadian patent on marble gun—a most attractive toy for boys; stimulates the game of marbles and encourages marksmanship. Simple device and money making proposition. Address Mack Banks, 5818 Lafayette Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

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TOBACCO or Snuff Habit cured or no pay. $1 if cured. Remedy sent on trial. Superba Co., S. S., Baltimore, Md.

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PECAN and Orange Orchards on the Gulf. Easy terms. Big quick returns. Dept. E, Suburban Acres Co., Ocean Springs, Miss.

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