

JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK.

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(Continued From Yesterday.)

Jo Ellen did find a special meaning in his way of taking her hand, or at least a stronger touch, as if what he was thinking was nearer to the hand—not so much as if he were dreaming and reaching out under some vague need for an accompaniment. He wasn't actually going over to the way just now, and his feeling about the slight momentousness of the departure seemed exaggerated. He always wanted her to see more meaning in things than she really could see; or perhaps it was that he wanted her to say what he saw and felt, when feelings were a busy enough matter in themselves.

"I'll be telling you about the camp," he said, "and how everything goes."

"I'll be rough work," said Jo Ellen.

"Yes. And you'll tell me about Mr. Trupp and—"

"Not a word," Jo Ellen insisted. "It would take too long."

"Anyway, I'll tell me about Mr. Trupp."

"Something that really happens, if there is anything."

"Any you'll know all the time that I'm thinking a lot about—about everything that happens to you."

"I'm sure nothing ever will happen to me—not really."

"You always talk," said Marty, "as if—well, I think you'd like something doing—fearfully—like a play, may be—"

"If it was real."

"Or like the war."

"I think the war's beastly—making believe to hate one another."

"They do hate one another. That's what it's about."

"You don't hate anybody, and you're going to train going to be a soldier."

"Hate—no, I suppose I don't. Except— This seemed to give Marty an idea. He interrupted himself to seize it, tightening the hold on Jo Ellen's hand. "I'd rather love some body," he added solemnly.

Jo Ellen decided that this was because he was going away and felt romantic. She knew, while she noted the bare trees in the little gulch he was tense and intent. Of course, it was romantic. Wasn't there some thing uncomfortable about romantic things when they tried to gather you in, and you had to decide or say or stop letting yourself go some simple way of your own? In a few hours would be a soldier. This was what it meant. And there were things you considered about soldiers. You had to begin considering these things when anyone was going to be in his chest sticking out. With all this setting up and work outdoors he would look different when she saw him again, and perhaps be a bit stouter, which would make her laugh. In later letters he offered allusion to the time when he should come to the Hill, before going across. Everything depended upon what should happen in the matter of the war. He began, in fact, to have that air of being subject to vast circumstances and particularly to the immediate pressure of authority. Jo Ellen concluded that she would not like to be in the grip of something that ordered you this way and that, and told you just when and how you were permitted to breathe. Of course, it was lucky that Marty, if he had to be gripped, could get so much satisfaction out of that "we" way of thinking.

Jo Ellen's attitude toward the "we" of things was to have discomforts. Mrs. Trupp, for instance, had an eagerness to wear something.

Mrs. Trupp was not so fat as Mr. Trupp, but her amplitude expressed a harmony with his, which Jo Ellen thought could not be quite traditional. She fancied that fat men always had thin wives. The second time Mrs. Trupp came in—the first visit was brief and obviously for the purpose of objectifying Mr. Trupp's selection—she had begun telling Jo Ellen about Mr. Trupp. He was, it appeared, rather a trying man. People might not think so. He was so agreeable to everybody. But he was trying. For one thing, he was careless about his eating. When she could feed him he was all right. But he lunched with people and had no sense at such times. The results were fearful for his insides. She described these results minutely. And then about his clothes. He had no inkling of order; none at all. Never knew where anything was. Probably it was the same at the office. Anyway, he had a distressing habit of shedding things at home—dropping them as if nothing had a place. Picking up after him kept a person busy. If she ever was away for a week or so, as when she went to visit her sister in Malden, the place became a sight. When he tried to be orderly he was worse. It was inconceivable that a man could have so little judgment, for example, about putting pants away. She sometimes told him he had better leave them out. He was exasperating, too, about money; good, you might say, at making it, but no sense about spending it. People

cheated him a good deal. His relatives were simply extraordinary. Wilton was bad enough, but these were rascals in the lot, and some female hangers-on that—well, it was a puzzle why the Lord made such tiresome people.

"Then there's his clubs," said Mrs. Trupp. "What does he get out of them? Not a thing. Just places to gab in. And me sitting alone, and tired of the magazines. Think clubs are good for business; that an insurance man has to mix, and all that rot. I tell you, my dear, being a wife to a man's exhausting."

It often occurred to Jo Ellen that she might have had an inadequate idea of Mr. Trupp without the help of his wife. Yet, evidently, two views might not always make a total. When you worked for a man you felt about him as Jo Ellen did. When you were married to him you felt as Mrs. Trupp did. Perhaps you couldn't really add the two views together and find Mr. Trupp. Sometimes it seemed that one view might have to be subtracted from the other, and this was confusing.

During the inclement periods Mrs. Trupp seldom dropped in. She came more frequently in the spring. In the summer she sat in range of the electric fan and talked about war work. She decided to put in some hours every other day helping with bandages. There was a thing you could wear with a red cross on it that appealed to her. She never could

knit, but once in a while she tried it again. She understood the government had forgotten all about socks. Imagine those poor boys in winter. . . . Something Jo Ellen said about the slaughter in Europe brought a gasp from Mrs. Trupp.

(To Be Continued Monday.)

THE NEBBS

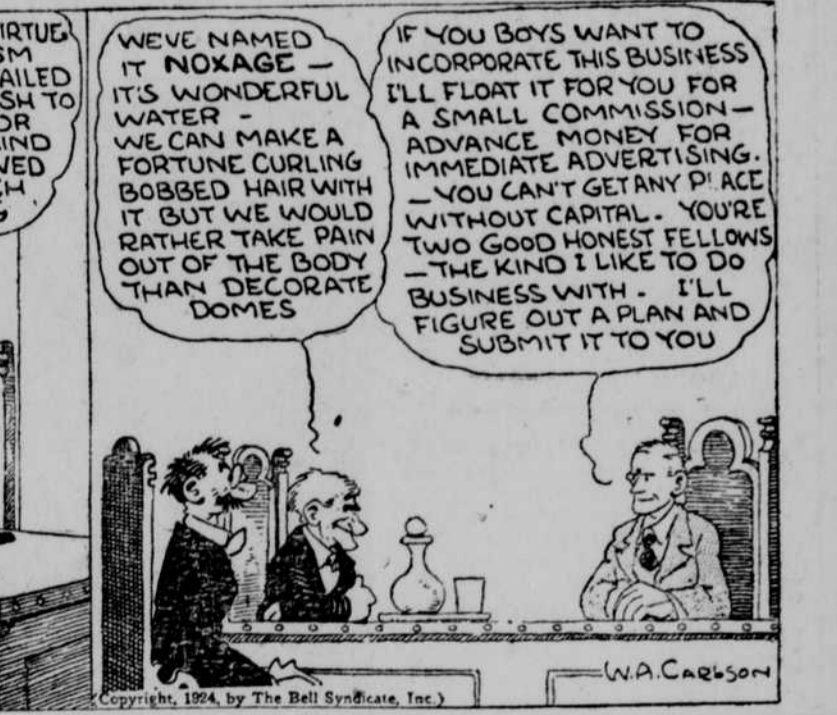
NEBB AND SLIDER ARE RETURNING THE CALL OF RENROD TO GIVE THEIR ANSWER TO THE OFFER OF \$25,000 FOR THE ESTATE



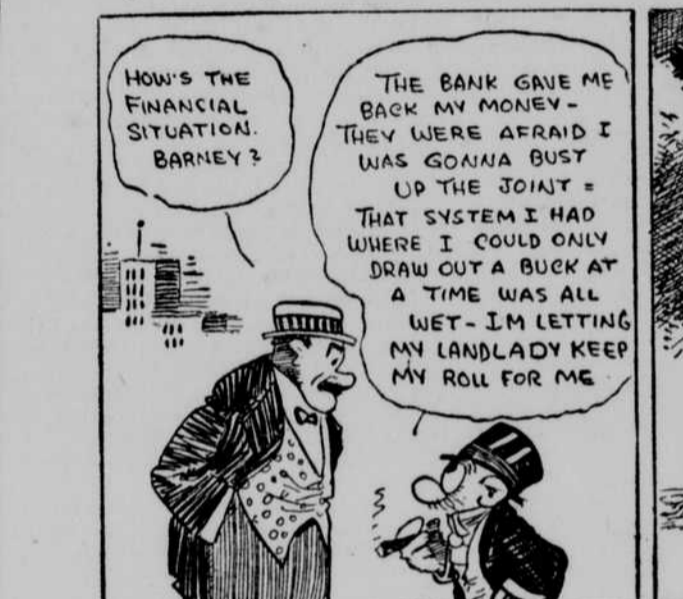
WILL YOU STEP INTO MY PARLOR?



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



Barney Google and Spark Plug



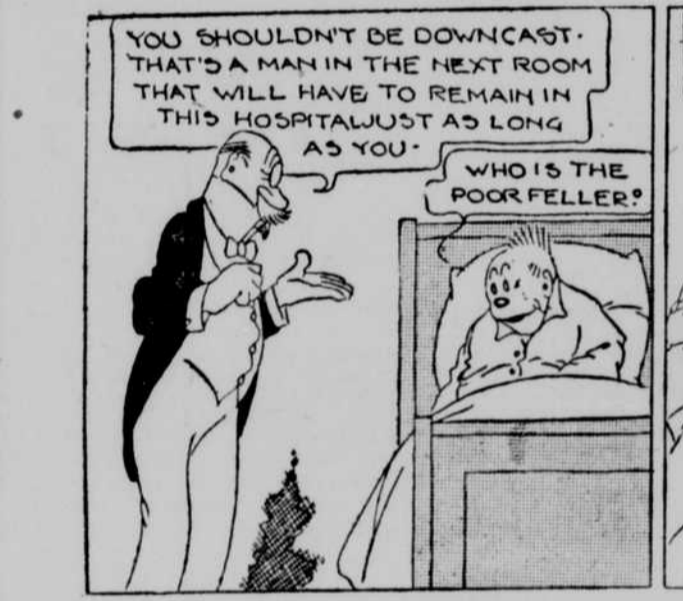
BARNEY'S NOT WORRYING NOW.



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck



BRINGING UP FATHER



SEE JIGGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus



JERRY ON THE JOB



A SAD PARTING



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, July 19.—The Automat is almost as much of an institution along Broadway as Times Square. No revut or variety show is complete without its quip about this famous nickel-in-the-slot eating place, hard by the Globe theater.

It swirls with the froth of Broadway life—the peripatetic ads of the one-flight tailors, the rah, rah boys, the chorus girls, scripping newsboys, leading men, visiting school teachers, members, ladies of the evening and herd-boiled gents.

No great gulf yawns between the Automat and the smart cafe. After the theater one sees silk hats there as well as gleaming white shoulders. It is one of the melting pots of Broadway, where all casters rub elbows and enjoy their food to marble topped tables.

The Automat is something like the clafoutis—a frying pan crashing into the upper circles. The cashiers with their mountainous high pile of nickels, exchange them for bills and the customer goes from slot to slot inspecting the sample enclosed in flaps.

What he desires is magically shot out of a receptacle in exchange for a nickel. These are carried to the table he selects. It is food on the fly and obeys the New York impulse—Hurry! At noon and at midnight the Automat bubbles with life.

There is something engaging about the coffee spout. The nickel is inserted, the cup held under the spigot and the button pressed. A spurt of coffee fills the cup nearly to the brim and then magically turns to cream. The cup is never overflowing.

No waiters are standing about. The only employees are the bus boys who remove the dishes. The menu at the Automat includes almost everything from flannel cakes and smoked sausage to cream puffs and Welsh rarebit.

Red Gallagher, for 25 years a bill-poster with Barnum and Bailey's circus, appeared on Broadway the other day. Red was not supreme in his art. He was more a dauber than an experienced eight-sheet man, yet he managed to hold his job. Friends who saw him in the midst of the circus season were surprised at his being in the city.

"What are you doing in town?" a friend inquired.

"They got smart with me," he said, "and I left Barnum and Bailey flat in Des Moines."

The best dressed men in New York are to be found in Gasoline Alley—that restricted Broadway mile of automobile salesmen. They are an amiable salesmen. Brahmins in the temple may cry: "Clothes don't sell cars!" yet no prospective patron can help but be impressed by the sartorial grandeur of the auto salesmen. There is a splendid background for them with the Louis something or other thrones, luxuriant groves of palms, indirect lighting and plush curtains. It is a fit setting for monogrammed handkerchiefs, robin's egg blue ties and delicately striped shirts.

The narcotic squad reports an increase of victims in the Tenderloin of the "black smoke"—the White Way term for opium smoking. Three song writers are reported to be confirmed addicts. One leading lady has been able to hold her job only a few weeks at a time due to her craving or "yen" for the pipe. Opium parlors are not in Chinatown's area of crooked streets. They are to be found in smart apartment houses. Two were recently raided on Central Park West.

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The Cross-Word Puzzler's Bridegroom.



By Briggs ABIE THE AGENT



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield

