

**Comment -- and
Discomment**

The Lincoln newspapers carry an interview with a very learned physician who discourses on the subjects of cats. You'll remember how, since your infancy, stories have been afloat about the family Tabby mounting into the cradle and sucking the breath of babies. You have probably heard of dozens of cases where the cat was taken off the baby's breast just in time to save its life. It isn't hard to find folks who believe this sort of stuff, but it is amusing when the theory is expounded by a physician, who of all people ought to know better.

"Among news despatches in Sunday's papers," says Dr. J. H. Long, of Lincoln, "I saw one from Osborne, Kas., relating that a two months old infant was found dead in the crib, the family cat having jumped from the crib at the approach of the child's mother. Now, in spite of the fact that by Dr. Brady and some of Lincoln's defenders of the cat in the late controversy over pussy's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, the idea that the cat would suck a baby's breath was called an old woman's yarn, an exploded idea, etc. I am here to say that the charge of child murder by this lovable, beautiful feline creature is horribly, positively and absolutely true!"

"How do I know?" says the doctor. "I have seen the family pet in the very act of sucking a child's breath, lying on the baby's breast, a paw at either side of the babe's mouth, the cat's lips pressing those of the child, and the infant's face pale as that of a corpse, its lips with the blueness of death. And I am here to state that it required twenty minutes' hard work to resuscitate the baby. I do not know whether the cat sucks the baby's breath," says Dr. Long, "or poisons it by exhaling its own breath but this I do know and emphatically assert: the cat is guilty of infant murder and no mother should permit the family pet access to the sleeping room of her child."

This sort of rot harks back to the days of witchcraft, and has about as much foundation as the yarns that preachers and others used to tell—and believe—about old women riding around on brooms or pretty girls bewitching children. Pretty girls are bewitching, of course, but not in the way the charges used to read. Perhaps the good doctor is trying to get a little publicity, or he may be only an ordinary chump, but newspaper men ought to have sense enough to brand these stories as silly superstitions or else lose them. We're not particularly fond of felines, but there are enough things that can be

said against them without helping to keep afloat a superstition that has been thoroughly exploded for at least half a century.

The great American public is peculiar. This very original observation is called forth by the reception given to the divorce brought against Charley Chaplin by Mildred Harris Chaplin. One would naturally think that the matrimonial mishaps of the most popular screen comedian would be fine food for curious fish, but Mrs. Chaplain's sensational disclosures have failed to raise even a ripple of excitement. Even the yellowest newspapers didn't print them on the front page, and unless the front page is gained, everything is lost, from the press agents' point of view.

Personally, we think that the custard pie artist is to be congratulated. Two or three times we have endured movies in which the comedian's wife was the star, and to be brutally frank, she gives us a pain. We have sympathized with Mr. Chaplin, knowing that he must suffer more than the ordinary run of mortals because he possesses a greater fund of temperament. Our idea of a lifetime of torture would be to have a woman like that pour out our coffee each morning.

The disclosures Millie makes, however, throw an interesting light on a somewhat unpopular subject—mothers-in-law. It seems that Charlie was eccentric in the matter of clothing. "He would have been in rags if I hadn't looked after him and bought things for him with my own money," his wife is quoted as saying, "I don't think he had a decent pair of socks when we were married, and his shirts and pajamas and underwear were frightful, all full of holes and rips and tears."

However, this sad state of affairs was corrected by the mother-in-law, the woman who is the butt of all the gibes of the comic artists and vaudevillians. "Mother looked after all that," says Mrs. Chaplin, "and when she had him fixed up he was delighted." We'd think he would be. What man wouldn't appreciate a mother-in-law who would take care of all the work that the wife is supposed to do, but doesn't? So far as we are concerned, we call the Chaplin tangle a draw, and refuse to award honors to either party.

Francisco Villa says that Mexico ought to go back to the constitution of 1857. This is the document Abraham Lincoln is said to have praised as the greatest of constitutions. If Pancho were a proper American bandit he might conform to the custom of the country and claim to be "in accord with the teachings of Abraham Lincoln."—Ex.

It's now up to the German board of tax commissioners to tell the former kaiser how much of that \$30,000,000,000 indemnity he is supposed to pay.

However, something tells us that Venus is the planet more likely to have something to say. Venus is feminine.


The rich women in Spain are going without hats, while some in this country are going without almost everything else.

The average man pays 400 cents a day to keep the churches going, but of course the upkeep of the movies is more expensive.

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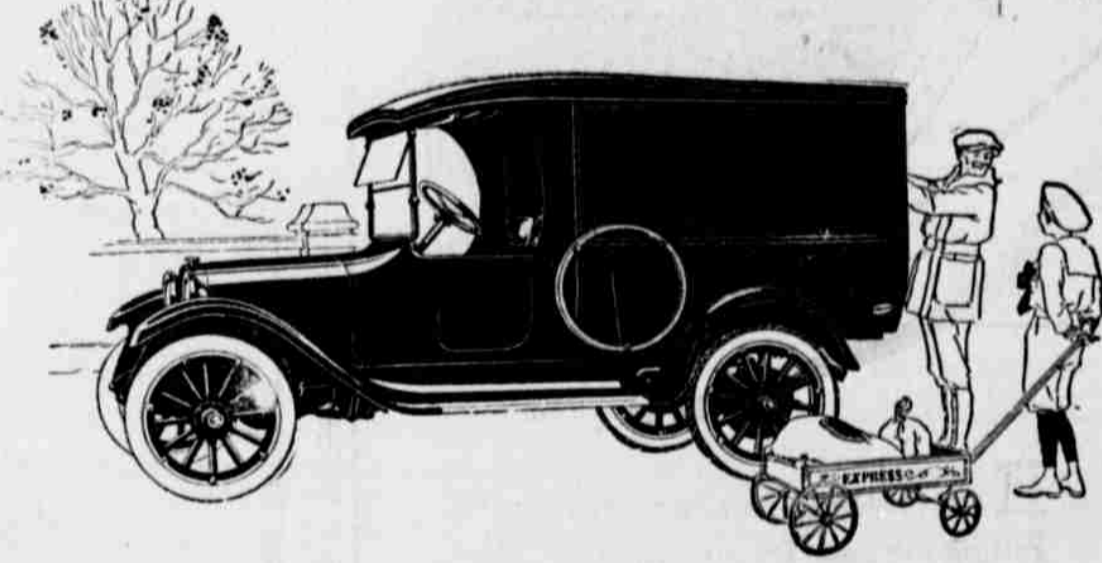


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