

# JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK. Copyright, 1924.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

In the clamor of the day thought of Cora Vance and the party quickly faded. Jo Ellen called up her indelible images on the way home, and let them fade again. Such suggestions of the irresistible, of a life that came and went, that lifted or put away by free choice, that could take a "little joy" with a light acceptance, appraising it altogether by the immediate tang, came like the notes of Broadway itself, as sights and sounds through which you passed or that came to you vaguely from the cross streets. These people had drudgery and emotions under the compulsion of their work. Beyond that they looked for the alleviating thing. Probably this was often to be found in something slight, with no glitter in it. The stage and all of its works had relentless iterations, and at times a noisy rush that blended the likeness of a boiler factory and a mad house. No wonder the people who made and gave shows wanted, somewhere, sometime, to be altogether themselves. . . . Anybody might stumble on the same wish. You didn't have to go behind footlights to be held by a part. It was a plain human wish, deep as your bones—the wish to get loose. When you couldn't get loose, when you turned from one escape to another, when you lost the feel of your very self, that thought of being quite loosened and unaccountable became fantastically fascinating. Very likely no one else escapes by this means. Yet to make believe that you were escaping. . . . Perhaps this was the best most people were able to do. Even the delusion of being free must be worth the fact. When you were awakened, as by a kind of Eberly buzzer, that said you were securely tied after all, you might be able to believe that the dream was not a future. This might mean, indeed, that though you had always been hungry for real things, and thought you hated make-believes, a dream could win some sort of standing. Sunday had a dull sky. Beyond the hard rail of the roof all outlines wavered in a September haze. Mrs. Simms slept most of the afternoon. Marty huddled over a magazine or a book he always asked what she was reading. It was difficult for him to concentrate on his own page if she seemed to be absorbed. He would end by shutting his book and remarking upon the tiresomeness of print, as if to suggest a pause for her. If she went on reading he found another

voice—there was a faint click as of a swallowed laugh, an unpleasant sound—"take the case of my first husband over there. He was a certain kind of person. I was a certain kind of person. It was no use. We had to crash. A marriage like that is sure to be a flop. But I couldn't know that when I was twenty, could I? He looked good. You'd say he was some looker, wouldn't you?" Jo Ellen could only nod. "Maybe he isn't so reckless as he used to be. Well, neither am I. . . . He's a wonderful boy for slipping through. His father has a great drag with the producers. Politics, too. A little while back there was a mix-up and they put the whole police department on getting Stan—mostly, I guess, to squeeze his father. Quite a story. As usual he got by."

"Do you mean," Jo Ellen asked, "that he's—"

Ellen concluded that "interesting" was worn out. Yet she soon discovered that Miss Lenning's rooms were, at certain points, amusing enough, if you were open to amused impressions.

Jo Ellen reached Cora Vance's hotel in a state of rather bewildered numbness. Her feeling of rebellion was clear, but what she was to do with it, how far this expression of

It was likely to be comfortable, remained uncertain. It was sufficient that this was not her job, and that it was neither one of two homes. There was no imperative need to offend either home. The imperative thing was getting away from both.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

## THE NEBB

## THAT'S WHY THEY MADE THE PIN.



## Barney Google and Spark Plug

## FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY.

## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck



## BRINGING UP FATHER

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

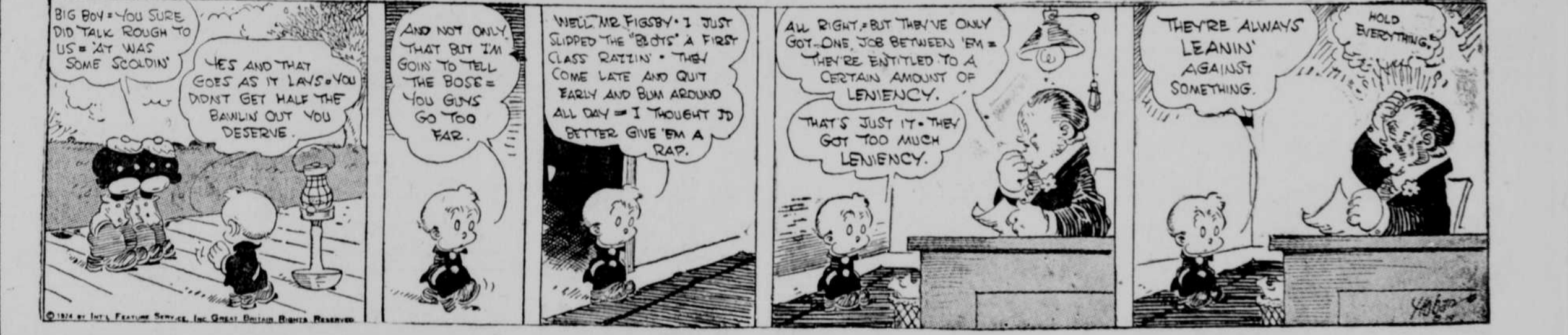
## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus



## JERRY ON THE JOB

## THIS SORT OF THING MUST STOP.

## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



## The Days of Real Sport

## By Briggs ABIE THE AGENT

## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield



## New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. McINTYRE.

New York, Aug. 19.—As a patron of "the halls"—known to some as vaudeville—I can find no tinge of excitement in the flood of "wonder kiddies" who have lately come to grace the variety stage. There is a feeling they should be home in bed.

Most parents of ordinary children must have the urge, after witnessing the sophistry of the stage child, to rush home, slap their offspring and cry: "How dumb you are!" The "wonder kiddie" specializes in imitations of Elsie Janis and Ethel Barrymore.

They are smooth, witty and self-assured despite their baby lips and extreme youth. I saw one the other night at a benefit who was not more than 9 years old. She had the stage presence and suavity of a Leslie Carter. It would be difficult to picture her world weariness at 15.

There are at least a score of these acts in vaudeville—melody twins, solo dancers, singers and those who give imitations. Their parents are always awaiting in the wings, especially on pay night. All the simple pleasures of childhood are denied the youngsters.

They become petulant, puffed darlings almost before they cut their teeth. Some of them are even touched by that nebulous essence known as temperament. It is told that one walked off in a huff because the spotlight was faulty.

Gus Edwards has no doubt produced more child acts than any other producer. Many of his charges have become big stars. They are as a general thing children of theatrical parents. Their training begins as they are weaned.

A child performer draws—at least their parents do—a salary of from \$100 to \$150 a week. There is one who makes \$225. On the screen their incomes are enormous. Jackie Coogan, for instance.

Ashton Stevens, the Chicago critic, saw a poor play in New York and wired his paper this succinct claim: "The play ran late, the audience early."

There is always a touch of the comedy humane among shoppers in department stores. It was during a bargain counter rush at one of the big stores on Thirty-fourth street, a harried little man on the fringe of the crowd waiting for his Amazonian wife who had charged into the maelstrom. Finally she emerged a little disheveled but had the prized bargain package she sought.

"Now that you have it, what are you going to do with it?" he inquired with a show of unaccustomed bravado.

"I'm going to smack you over the head with it," she snapped. And that is exactly what she did.

The New York dance hall is the rival of the old time saloon. The founder of "The Door of Hope" declares that about 70 per cent of the fallen girls of Manhattan were tripped up by jazz. Other moral investigators say one of the greatest perils of the city is hooping the light fantastic, check to check.

The dance halls here are open cases of oscillation and osculation. These are the places young folk with small purses must go to spoon and find amusement. The "instructors" are oftentimes profers. The idea is to apply the deplorable instincts that were formerly satisfied by Rainier law hotels and Venus pedestals.

In the larger dance halls the patron may dance with the "hostesses" for 25 cents a dance. They get 50 per cent of the amount they make. Many of them carry on private bootlegging on the side. It is all a species of disguised prostitution.

The "hostesses" are the strange types New York breeds. There is an ennui about them all. Their bovine apathy is only masked by the jaws that chew gum incessantly.

(Copyright, 1924.)

SODA POP