

FLUFFY RUFFLES

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Verses by Charles Battell Loomis



SHE ATTENDS A SHINGLING BEE.

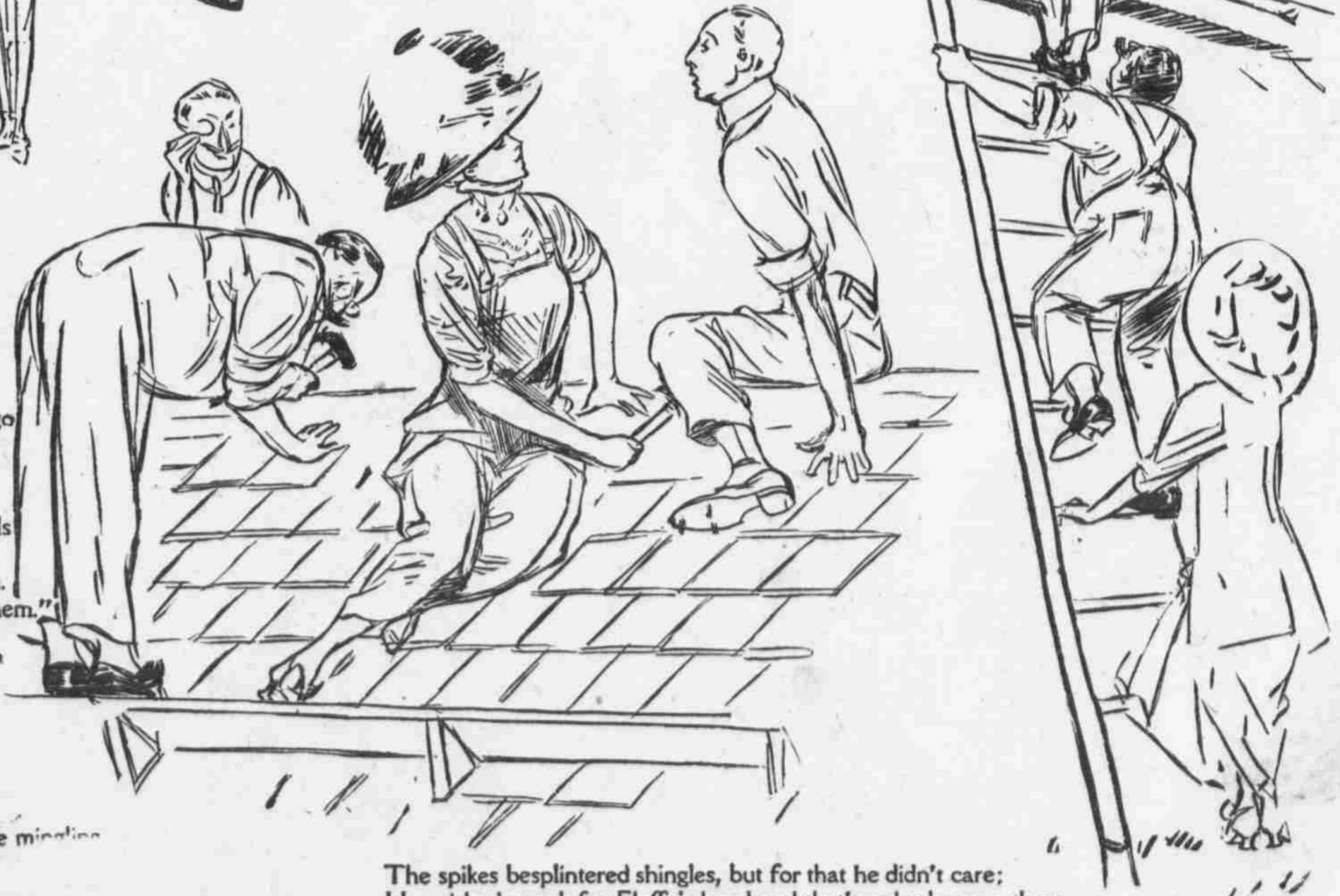
"Just listen to this letter," said dear Fluffy to her aunt.
 "The foolish things rich people plan. I'll have to say I can't."
 "What is it now?" Aunt Mary said, "a monkey masquerade?"
 "Not quite as bad as that," said Fluffy, "it's from Mrs. Wade.
 "She writes informally to say her monster barn at Lea
 "Is ready for its shingles, and she'll have a shingling bee.
 "Put on the oldest clothes you've got and join us in our fun."



Just then Joe Traddles sauntered in, a letter in his hand,
 And said, "I s'pose you'll go with me to join the shingling band?"
 Aunt Mary nodded quickly, then she whispered in his ear,
 "Wear spikes to keep from slipping and propose to her, my dear."
 "My dearest lady," Traddles said, "I'd better keep aloof.
 "What chance for such a luckless man aloft upon a roof?"
 But Fluffy said, "You are so kind to offer us your car.
 What would we do without you when the distance is so far?"



Joe thought her mood propitious, and he wished her aunt would go
 And let him ask her on the spot to tell him Yes or No.
 But Fluffy soon excused herself because (dear, helpful lass)
 She had to give an hour to a fresh air sewing class. . . .
 The day dawned clear and bracing, and the ride o'er Berkshire hills
 Evoked in Traddles keen delight and many rapturous thrills.
 They reached the home of Mrs. Wade; in overalls she met them.
 "I've furnished overalls like these. Come right upstairs and get them."



When dukes have left their dukedoms, and with common folk are mingling
 It is not often that they're put on such a job as shingling.
 But Mrs. Wade corralled a duke and an Italian prince
 (When they had donned their workmen's clothes you should have seen them wince)
 "Those mad Americans," they said; then mounted up the ladder
 (If Mrs. Wade herself was "mad" those titled ones were madder).
 Not so Joe Traddles, who was spiked as if for mountain climbing,
 And in whose mind the lovely day with loving thoughts was chiming.

The spikes besplintered shingles, but for that he didn't care;
 He wished to ask for Fluffy's hand and that's why he was there.
 One side of Fluffy knelt the Duke, the other side was Traddles,
 To make assurance doubly sure the long ridge pole he straddles.
 He'd made his mind up on the way that he would waste no word.
 So in a whisper far too loud (for all the dukelets heard),
 He asked her if she'd have him. . . . Ah, utter was his woe!
 No accident befel him but—fair Fluffy answered "No."