RANDOM REELS

By HOWARD L. RANN.

THE THRIFTY WIFE.

The thrifty wife is a priceless boon to man who is never appreciated until the other kind has been given a thorough trial.

Man has always been considered a wise, brainy animal, but he has never yet learned to put anything in the bank except some relative's life insurance. It is a sad reflection upon man's two-ply intelligence that while he handles all of the money that he and his wife earn, in so many instances none of it reaches the bank except to appease the appetite of a sight draft. This has resulted in a widespread movement to allow women to run the family till, and whenever this happens the savings deposits grow faster than an electric light bill after the installation of a $4 toaster.

One reason why a thrifty wife can save more money than her husband is because she sees so little of it. One of the evidences of our corrupt civilization is the nonchalance with which the average man can throw out a crisp, yellow-necked $20 bill and see it broken up into small fragments in the purchase of two 5-cent cigars. If a thrifty wife ever gets hold of a $20 bill she will stand off everybody from the milk man to the milliner before she will allow it to be split up into small change. If the male sex had more of this spirit the banks of the country would have to store their deposits in portable corn cribs.

In some homes the thrifty wife runs things with a high hand. It is an inspiring sight to see an economical

housewife going about on tiptoe and turning off the electric lights and admonishing her husband not to shake the furnace more than once a day. Some of the worst forms of martial discord have arisen because a blunderheaded husband left the bath room light on while he stepped out to hunt a pair of tan socks.

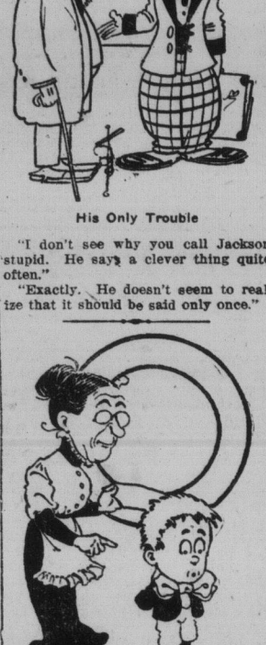
Polygamy is a mixed blessing, but if some bachelors had twenty wives with a large bump of thrift they might be able to save a part of their salary.

LAUGH WITH US

A Good Business Plan.

She—I think it so silly to throw kisses. Don't you?

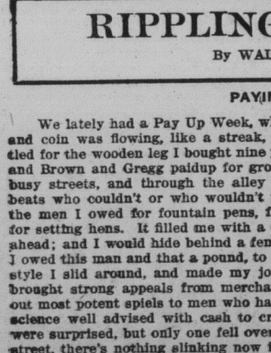
He—Rather, I always deliver the goods.



His Only Trouble

"I don't see why you call Jackson stupid. He says a clever thing quite often."

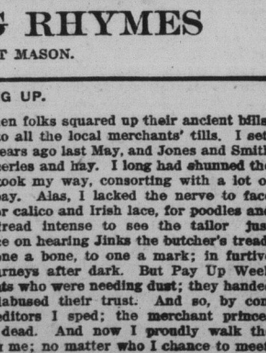
"Exactly. He doesn't seem to realize that it should be said only once."



Ill Used.

Magistrate—Your husband charges you with assault.

Prisoner—Yes, Your Honor. I asked him if he would ever cease to love me and he was so slow answering that I hit him in the eye with a mop. I'm only a weak, helpless woman, Your Honor, and a woman's life without love isn't worth living.



Making Sure.

Mother—You've been gone a terribly long time. Did you find out what time the next train leaves for New York?

Tommy—Yes, but I wanted to be sure, so I waited until it came and saw it start with my own eyes.

RIPPLING RHYMES

By WALT MASON.

PAYING UP.

We lately had a Pay Up Week, when folks squared up their ancient bills, and coin was flowing, like a streak, to all the local merchants' tills. I settled for the wooden leg I bought nine years ago last May, and Jones and Smith and Brown and Gregg paidup for groceries and hay. I long had shunned the busy streets, and through the alley took my way, consorting with a lot of beats who couldn't or who wouldn't pay. Alas, I lacked the nerve to face the men I owed for fountain pens, for calico and Irish lace, for poodles and for setting hens. It filled me with a dread intense to see the tailor just ahead; and I would hide behind a fence on hearing Jinks the butcher's tread. I owed this man and that a pound, to one a bone, to one a mark; in furtive style I slid around, and made my journeys after dark. But Pay Up Week brought strong appeals from merchants who were needing dust; they handed out most potent spiels to men who hadabused their trust. And so, by conscience well advised with cash to creditors I sped; the merchant princes were surprised, but only one fell over dead. And now I proudly walk the street, there's nothing slinking now in me; no matter who I chance to meet, I do not hide behind a tree.

"YOUR LIPS WILL NEVER TOUCH HERS, MINE WILL BE FIRST"

Miss Baird's Dying Curse As She Swallowed Poison and Died in the Hope That Her Last Bitter Wish Would Wreck the Happiness of the Lover She Hoped to Marry.

Miss Jean Katherine Baird, authoress and teacher in Beaver College, near Pittsburgh, Pa., had waited twenty-five years for her schoolgirl sweetheart to marry her. When she was twenty, just out of high school, she watched helplessly as he turned from her to marry another girl.

Years went by and her love remained faithful.

Then his first wife died. Belief that her waiting was now to be rewarded was strong in her, and then her air castles were blown away by the news that he had again married another. Sitting in her room at the college Miss Baird drank poison. Before she died she left a letter to her old sweetheart. In it she said, speaking of the woman who had taken, as she thought, her rightful place:

"Your arms will never be around her at night but my dead face will be between you; your lips will never touch hers but my dead lips will be there first. Every day of your married life will be a curse Before the year ends you will do as I have done."

Psychology has had before it no more interesting problem to watch than the development of this dying curse of college teacher Jean Baird. The power of suggestion has been recognized as a mighty one ever since the human race attained consciousness.

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," says the Bible. But it is equally true that the manner in which men think "in their hearts" is largely a matter not of their own volition, but of scores of suggestions crowding into their minds from every side. And usually the dominant suggestion dictates the manner of his thought. The "curse" is as old as the human race itself, and has had its victims wherever superstition has ruled in any age—and where in any age has superstition not ruled? It is a favorite subject of literature. Some of the greatest tragedies of history have grown from seed thus sown.

That a "curse" is effective only to the extent to which the person cursed believes in it is no refuge for those who lack the power to disbelieve, and if one disbelieves himself, he cannot always shake off the effect upon him of those who know the circumstances and watch him anxiously, waiting for the "spell" to take effect.

It is a matter of common knowledge that a man perfectly well can be made ill by a number of people solicitously and anxiously telling him how "bad he looks." This is a phase of suggestion blood brother to the historic curse. And knowledge of the good as well as the evil effect of suggestion, has enabled modern medicine to effect many a cure of obscure mental and also physical diseases having their origin in the disturbed condition of the patient's mind.

It is all this that makes Miss Baird's letter so interesting to science. What will be the reaction of this anathema of a dying woman whose love, turned at last to bitterness, was so strong throughout the years? Can the intensity of that love give added force to her wish?

And if the man can forget it, can the second wife, being a woman and more impressionable, forget it?

Consideration of the facts of the tragic romance may shed some light upon the future, although the future must ever remain in doubt.

It was back in the early '90's that Jean Baird, ambitious, a dreamer, sensitive and still in her teens, first grew to love ardently a young Pennsylvanian—E. W. Hess. He was ten years older than she, but even when her hair had been in pigtails she had admired him. He was studying civil engineering and it would appear, had "courted" her."

At least in his answer to her dying letter he says, "I led her on, I admit, but I was married about that time and forgot all about her."

Whether Hess was in love with the romantic girl or not, it is certain that she had expected, or at least hoped, that he would marry her. She was at her home in Renova in Pennsylvania when this wish was broken.

"I can love no other man and I shall always wait for him," she said. Young, exceedingly attractive and with a mind unusual in its keenness, her friends did not believe her.

"Jean is just the kind of girl to make some man the happiest husband in the world," they said.

It may be that she was, but she had set her heart upon only one. She delved more strongly into study, began to write, secured considerable reputation as a novelist and a poet, and soon became in demand by various schools making women's education a feature. She was an honored teacher in the Central State Normal School at Lockhaven, Pennsylvania, and at the Randolph Macon School of Lynchburg, Virginia. At last she entered Beaver College and became the dean of the Women's Department. She had travelled extensively, had been a prominent figure at educational gatherings throughout the world, but neither broadening interest nor travel had dimmed the light of love in her heart.

Apparently she had met Hess frequently during the years. He had attained high position in his profession and some wealth. But as the years went by the school girl who had become a cultured woman of the world, did not see them passing over him. To her, it would seem, he was always the ideal of her school girl days and always the belief that he would sometime marry her was fixed in her mind.

Then a few years ago the first wife of Hess died. Hope then became certainty to the woman, but again the days and weeks went by without reward of her years of waiting being realized.

And then it would seem that doubt began to creep in. At any rate Dr. H. D. Haskell, president of the college, told her sisters when they came for her body, that he had noticed for sometime that Miss Baird had been much depressed. He had spoken to her at Easter time, asking her if she was suffering from any illness. In reply she said:

"No, I am not ill bodily, but I am trying to come to the decision of a question which has been with me night and day for twenty years."

She had then made Doctor Haskell a confidant—her only one, it seemed. For twenty years, she said, Hess had been paying marked attention to her. They had dined together, Doctor Haskell said she told him, had gone to theatres and had shared in the deepest friendship. Why all this had not developed into marriage she did not make clear.

A few weeks ago the doubt turned to certainty. She was teaching when she received the news that Hess had again married another. At once she began to break. Two nights later she went to her room early. Somewhere she had secured some cyanide potassium. She destroyed many letters and then disrobing, arranged her bed for sleep. She wrote a few notes and then at last came to the letter she was to write to Hess.

As she wrote, the poison before her, into her mind, no doubt, came a vision. She seemed to see before her her old sweetheart, and beside him this new wife who had taken the place she thought belonged to her. And she seemed to see herself, a spirit shape, standing between them and holding them apart and seeing this she set down, bitterly, her curse.

"You have taken everything from me but my honor. I thank God I still have that. Your arms will never be around her at night but my dead face will be between you; your lips will never touch hers but my dead lips will be there first.

"Every day of your married life will be cursed. Before the year ends you will do as I have done."

This she signed and sealed and then, mixing some of the poison in a little bowl, drank it and had just time to go to her bed and compose herself before the spasm of death that cyanide brings extinguished in her heart the love that for twenty-five years had tortured her.

Her body was found the next morning. The sisters who came for it told Dr. Haskell that they had known of her friendship with Hess, but that she had never revealed to them the depth of her love for him.

"No doubt her age made the situation deeply hard for her to bear," Dr. Haskell said. "For twenty years or more she had loved this man; the best of her—her youth—had been taken, and when he whom she had loved so faithfully, shut her out of his life by marrying another, it must have been more than she could bear."

"When word of the suicide was brought to Hess he said:

"Miss Baird was a word-painter and inclined to draw on her imagination. If she was infatuated with me, that was her own lookout. Twenty-five years ago I led her on, I admit, but I was married about that time and forgot about her. When my wife died, I was in correspondence with and saw Miss Baird at times. A week ago I was married the second time. I can say that since our boy-and-girl affair of twenty-five years ago there has been nothing more than a friendship between Miss Baird and myself."

Hess also remarked that he had received many letters from Miss Baird, four within the last month—but "I never answered any of these letters. I did not lead the woman on after my first marriage, nor did I lead her on during the interim between the death of my first wife and my marriage last week. I saw Miss Baird last Spring for the first time in five years.

"Always much given to imagination, Miss Baird was a word-painter and wrote in passionate and romantic vein. She was a writer of fiction, you know, and of the artistic temperament that leads one to overdraw their feelings. I am as much surprised as any one that she should pen such a note to me on the brink of death. There was no excuse for it, so far as I am concerned. The curse does not worry me, for I am not superstitious."

Nevertheless, the day after the letter was revealed, Hess and his bride left Clearfield quickly without telling any of their numerous friends where they were going or when they would be back. This unquestionably was the first reaction.

And what will follow? Even if the man can resolutely thrust from his mind the threat of the woman who died because she loved him too well, will his wife be able to forget? When she greets him—and in the night—will she think that she feels cold, dead arms beside hers and on her lips the frozen kisses of a woman dead?

DER KAISER'S SONS

By W. F. Kirk.

In some glad hour far away—undreamed of at the present day—some later Homer, taking wing, about Der Kaiser's sons will sing.

Der Kaiser's sons are soldiers, too. They fight the crimson seasons through That is, they wear their uniforms and sidestep through the raging storms. The screaming shells, with all their speed, have never touched this gangling breed. No bullet from an allies' trench has found them where they "play the bench."

Der Kaiser's sons are gruff and grim and look on human life like him. When their poor dupes are slain groups they prate about "our gallant troops!" How murky is the German mind, to all this selfish slaughter blind! How worse than blind the German eyes that see not, when their manhood dies, the madness of that crimson king and all the woe his reign must bring! They fall in hordes beneath the guns that miss der Kaiser and his sons!

And still we see Death's angel roam from German home to German home. And still we see that royal brood all safe as if in solitude! One of them loses, now and then, another fifty thousand men, but not one "Prince" (God save the mark!) steps into the Eternal Dark.

No race so blind will ever be as those who cannot, will not see! How will Der Kaiser's glory fall when weighed in History's level scale! This King who dreamed of Caesar's reign without one-tenth of Caesar's brain! This man who aped Napoleon's will without Napoleon's matchless skill! This, only this, will History say, when telling of this war's last day: "The allies crushed the last weak drive. The Kaiser's sons are all alive! The only man of all the Huns who has not given up some sons!"

Of course, a Prince is quick to cry the reason why he must not die, were he to go he might not know the sort of show he'd get below! If Satan be no fraud or fake he'll have some royal blood to bake and he might make Vienna buns of Kaiser Wilhelm and his sons.

And thus the red tides ebb and flow with Wilhelm's offspring on the go. Whatever sector they may pick will not be where the shells are thick. They will not take the foolish stand of dying for their Fatherland, although that Fatherland, God knows, is sick of watching princes pose afar from where the life blood flows to multiply their nation's woes! Be sure that after War's last last glare Der Kaiser's sons will all be there to clasp their Papa by the hand and help to boss their Fatherland. For his six sons—all healthy men—are living now and will be then!

The Best Place.

Mr. Bills—I won't be home until very late tonight.

Mrs. Bills—Shall I leave a light for you?

Mr. Bills—Yes, leave it in the keyhole.

PEPPER TALKS

BY GEORGE MATTHEW ADAMS

IT'S HOW—NOT WHAT!

What a strange world this would be if everybody won his fight? If there were none about but successful people. But its strangeness would be wrapped in a kind of tragedy.

For a world demands color, contrasts, and offsets to make it real.

It is worth more than the greatest fortune to humanity to have had in its midst such a brain as that of Robert Browning, who could at the close of his life, say that "what I aspired to be, and was not, comforts me."

It's the fine failures, who aspire and work, yet who lose their point that make effort endurable.

A friend of mine, in looking at a beautiful work of art with me, recently remarked that he liked it because the artist had made such a failure of his picture. That he had attempted a magnificent theme but did not succeed with it.

I took an added interest in that picture, after my friend's remark and I wanted to own it as an inspiration to me.

It's the way you take up and handle the reins of life that counts, not wholly where you go or what you do. Many years ago I came across a wonderful little poem that I learned. I will quote it as I recall it. I do not know the author.

"He cast his net at morn, when fishers toil,
At ev'n he drew it empty to the shore;
He took the diver's plunge into the sea,
But thence, within his hands,
No precious pearls he bore;
He ran a race, but he never reached the goal;
He sped an arrow, but he missed his aim;
And slept, at last, beneath a solitary stone,
With no achievement carved about his name.
Men called it failure, but as for myself,
I dare not use the word—
For what if Heaven, shall question,
Ere bias judgment shall be given;
Not hast thou won, but only HAST THOU STRIVEN!"

PRIVATE DANNY'S WAR BOOK

BY FRAZIER HUNT.

BY FRAZIER HUNT.

Well what do you think—old Corporal Jake Wart who I always thought had so much bone in his dome has turned out to be a regular kind of a person. He and Sandy and me is now the best of friends and along with Private Pete Peters is four of a kind.

Last night the word was kind of passed around that within 48 hours we would be starting for France and Sandy and me decided that we would have a final evening in a little town that is near Camp Merritt here. So we beat it out and sneaked by the guard and went to a picture show over there and ate about 40 cents worth of soda apeace and acted like we was having a heck of a time.

Well along about 10 o'clock we decided we would sneak back through our guards to our barracks. But just as we was leaving the picture show who should we run head on into but Corporal Wart.

"Hello boys," he said kind of throwing us off our guards with a kind tone. "I didn't know you fellows was on a pass."

Neither Sandy or me said anything for about a half minute and then Sandy said, "Well I suppose we are caught red handed. We aint got any more pass than a jay bird."

"Well that's all right. I guess I can get you in," he said.

"What did you say?" Sandy asked not believing his ears.

I said I guess I could get you by the guard," Jake repeated.

"Why I thought you was an enemy of Danny's and mine," Sandy said in a surprised voice. "I expected you'd be tickled to death to report us for being A. W. O. L."

Poor old Jake looked kind of hurt and said; "I got to be stern when I'm on duty and then I'm trying awful hard to be a sergeant so that I can have more money to send my folks. And I wouldn't any more think of spoiling your last night on American soil for anything in the world. And I got a hunch that I aint coming back from the big show over there, and I been feeling awful blue all evening."

Sandy looked up at his old enemy and then he kind of patted him on the back. "Oh, that's all thin air stuff," he said. "The Germans aint got a chance to get a big strong guy like you. Say, we'll all be coming back here in a year or so with medals on our chest and everything like that."

Honest Jake had tears in his eyes and when we started walking towards the camp he had his arms hooked between both Sandy's and mine. And when we come up to the guard Corporal Wart stepped out and showed his pass and just kidded the guard into letting us by.

Which just simply shows that you never can tell anything about a solder by the size of his feet.

TALK THRIFT

BY H. ADDINGTON BRUCE,

Author of "The Riddle of Personality," "Psychology and Parenthood," etc.

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The newspapers have forcefully been preaching thrift. From the pulpit clergymemn have been earnestly advocating it. Lecturers on war subjects continually refer to it. Every department of the government has urged it through innumerable pamphlets and posters.

Yet all this have not been enough. Thriftlessness still is rampant. Something else is needed.

That something, it seems to me, is persistent talk about thrift, in the home and on the street, by all persons who appreciate the exceptional need for thrift at the present time.

Let thrift become a general topic of conversation, and it is safe to predict that waste and extravagance will soonsbe far less in evidence than they unhappily are today.

Many people, it is important to remember, do not read newspapers carefully. Many do not read them at all, because they are illiterate and can read nothing.

Many never go to church. Many have failed to attend a single war lecture. Many do not give even a passing thought to books, pamphlets, or posters on serious subjects.

Such people necessarily remain unaffected by the various agencies for inculcating thrift.

If they are wasters they continue to be wasteful—particularly with regard to food,—because they early acquired habits of wastefulness, and because their mental habits are such that they are adamant to most educational influences.

It is not maliciousness or wilfulness that makes them wasteful. It is a colossal, almost incredible ignorance.

Only one thing can effectively enlighten them—a constant preaching of thrift in their hearing by fellow citizens.

They need to hear thrift talked in the street cars, at the theatre, at the moving picture show, in the markets, and department stores where they shop. Thrift should become so universal a theme that they cannot help hearing of it wherever they go.

And this public discussion of thrift should be exceedingly concrete. Specific ways of saving, little economies in the sewing room and the kitchen, should be talked about. Specific forms of waste, notably in misuse of food, should be unsparingly condemned.

As a result there will unfailingly be borne into the dull minds of the wasters the consciousness that they are out of tune with the rest of the community.

They will listen—they cannot help listening—and thereby they will learn. Gradually they will grasp the importance of renouncing wasteful customs of which they have been guilty.

Impervious to everything else, they will not be, they cannot be, impervious to public opinion. But public opinion must speak out loud to affect them.

Keep this in mind. Talk thrift at every opportunity.

When in the street car you meet a friend turn the conversation to some thrift topic. Tell your friend some of the things you are doing to help your country through thrift.

Your friend may be as thrifty as you. But, in the seat opposite, an ignorant waster may need the education your talk will give.

For the waster's benefit and your nation's good make it a point to spread the thrift gospel. It is a patriotic duty you should be more than willing to perform.

DICKY DIPPY'S DIARY.

—By SINNOTT.

The Quickest.

The Dame—Little boy, which is the quickest way to get to the railway station?

The Kid—Run, lady.