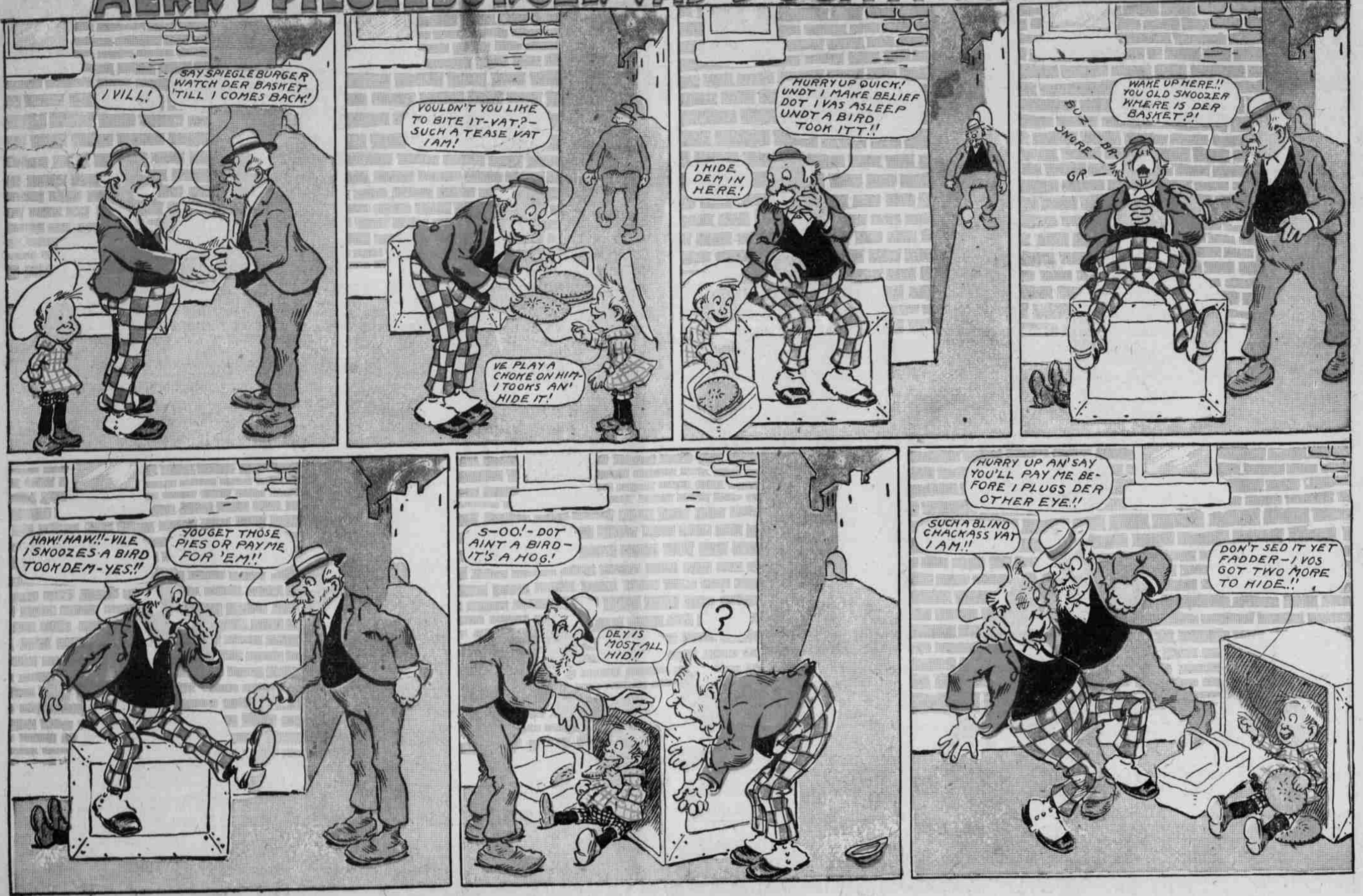


HERR SPIEGLEBURGER VAS SUCH A TEASE-VAT?



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The House Palm and Its Care

THE greenhouse has all the world of flowers for its parish. The living-room, less lucky, must content itself with what will thrive and grow in it. The list is none so long, but still full of choice things. Palms, for example, it is scarcely worth while to attempt house-culture of more than half-a-dozen species; but why complain when that half-dozen includes the fern-like Kentia, the luscious round-leaved Lantana Borbonica, and the stiff Old World grace of the sago palm?

These, and about as many more, will thrive and burgeon in a sunny window, of temperature that never goes lower than fifty degrees. High heat does not hurt them; they are all children of the tropics. But great and sudden alternations of heat and comparative cold make the leaves spot, and look raggedly disconsolate. Give them plenty of pot-room, but not too much. Shift once a year, if growth requires it, but not oftener. Once in two years is more likely to be right, unless the palm's lines have fallen in exceptionally sunny and well-aired places.

Fertilize every fortnight. A palm in fair growth needs a teaspoonful of ammoniated bone-meal, either dug in about the roots, or stirred well through tepid water and poured over the pot. In between fertilizing water well, but not too well. Never let water stand in the saucer around the pot. But in watering, keep on until a little shows through. That is proof that the earth is properly soaked. After such soaking, leave it untouched until there are little dry blotches upon the upper surface.

Beware the ordinary jardiniere. Many a good palm and true has died of hideous red or yellow glazed earth-encrust. Palm roots need air, nice, free-circulating air, not that which is damp and close, and full of mould bred by confinement. The dampness alone often rots off the fine feeding rootlets, and sets up decay that at last runs on to the main stalk. Keep pots clean outside. There is a more artistic that that of dull red earth.