

# CURRENT HAPPENINGS PICTORIALLY PRESENTED BY DARLING

REMEMBER FILLING OUR OWN CELLAR WITH COAL ISN'T ALL WE HAVE TO DO TO GET READY FOR WINTER.



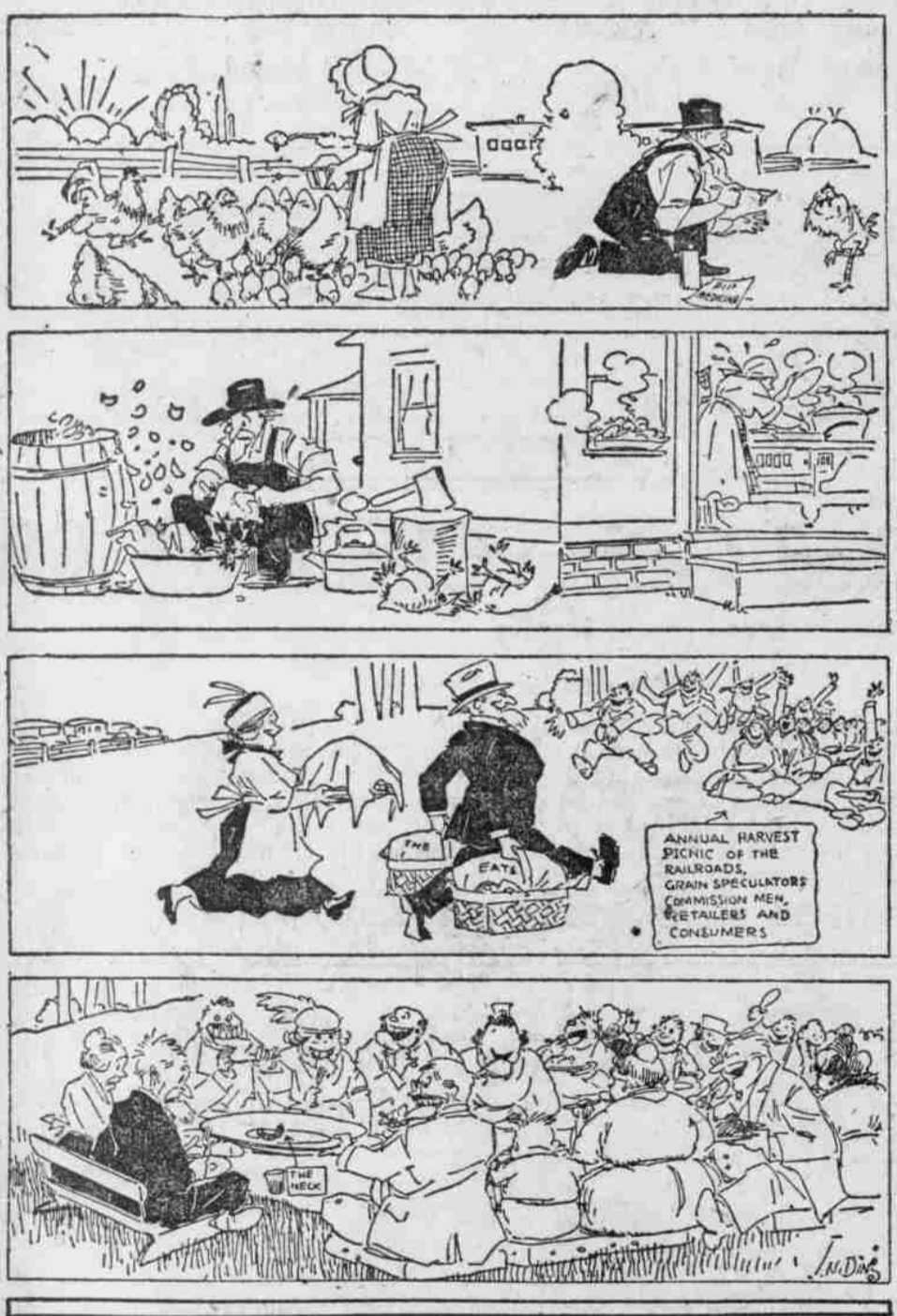
THE "PROSPECTS" FOR 1924 ARE ALREADY COMING IN.



HOW MANY OF US STOP TO CONSIDER AT WHAT A DREADFUL COST OF ANGUISH AND SUFFERING WE ARE ENJOYING THE PROTRACTED WARM WEATHER.



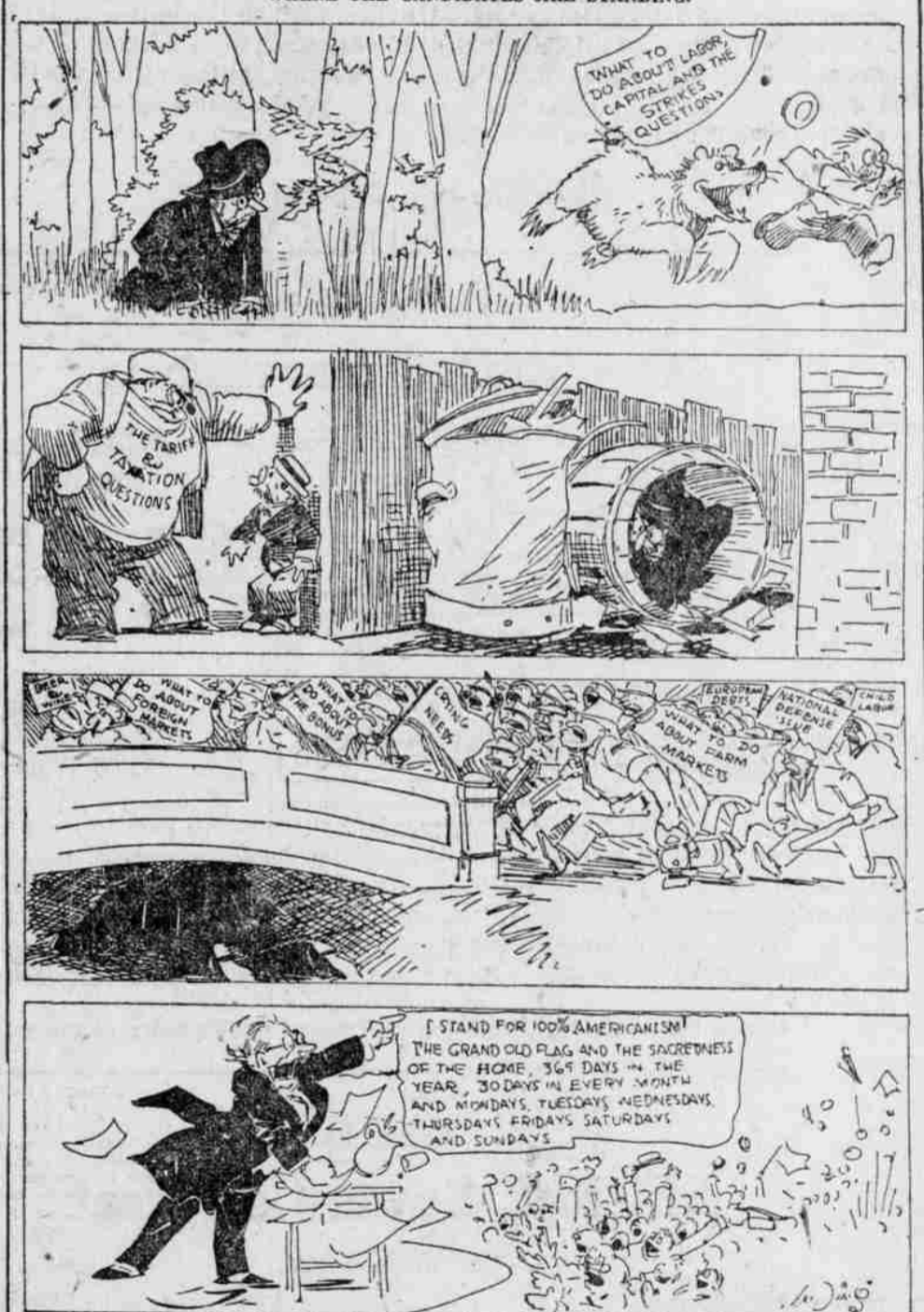
WHY THE FARMER SOMETIMES MAY SEEM DISCONTENTED.



AT THIS SEASON PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEIR FENCES ARE AT ALL.



WHERE THE CANDIDATES ARE STANDING.



## THE MARRIED LIFE OF HELEN AND WARREN

BY MABEL HERBERT URNER.

Gray, Rainy Day Adds to Somber Solemnity of Passion Play; It was all Part of Primitive Life of Village, Yet It was Isolated Mountain People Who Inspired Production.

EVERY seat in the great amphitheater was filled, yet so silent and reverential the audience that the crowing of a cock in a distant barnyard was curiously distinct.

Four thousand spectators, pilgrims to Oberammergau from all parts of the world, awaited with hushed expectancy the opening scene of the Passion Play.

With a strange sense of unreality, Helen looked down upon the open-air stage, beyond which loomed the bleak Bavarian Alps, the peaks now shrouded with menacing clouds.

All through the night a beating rain had drenched the village. Awakened by the downpour on the cottage roof, Helen had twice stoiled to the window to peer through the rain-veiled darkness, with a wordless prayer that the morning would be clear.

Up at daybreak in the barren, primitive room, she was too excited to worry over Warren's grumblings at the cold and lack of hot water to shave.

A simple breakfast by candlelight, and at seven they joined the throng in the muddy road, trudging through the chill mist toward the amphitheater.

Now, promptly at eight, with the last setting stir, came the opening bars of the overture from the orchestra in the sunken pit beneath the stage.

The chorus of 24, in majestic Greek robes, filed out.

Still singing, they moved aside in a semi-circle, as the purple curtains behind them parted on the first tableau—the "Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden."

Following this came the first scene of Act I—"A street in Jerusalem."

Helen caught her breath at the wealth of realism of the stage settings.

A thrilled stir as the distance, and the mob of over 700, waving palms, heralded "Christ's entrance into Jerusalem."

The rabble parted as far down the street appeared the small donkey bearing the figure upon which all eyes were riveted.

A gasp as the audience recognized the face familiarized by centuries of religious paintings. The same long fair hair, finely chiseled features, sensitive mouth, and eyes of compassionate tenderness.

His hands outstretched in blessing, with gentle dignity he passed through the parting multitude, followed by his disciples.

Helen felt that this scene alone was worth the journey to Oberammergau. It seemed incredible that these simple peasants, most of them wood-carvers, could produce so marvelous a spectacle.

But scene after scene followed, all masterfully staged, and played with a sympathy and reverence that no

dramatic school could have taught. So vivid was the pantomime that Helen rarely referred to the translated text in her hand.

In the temple scene, Christ, denouncing the traders and money lenders, freed the doves exposed for sale. The birds, set at liberty, flew out toward the mountains, an example of the realism which marked the whole performance.

Mary Magdalene anointing the feet of Christ was exquisitely portrayed. The long luxuriant hair with which she dried the ointment was her own, for no wigs or make-up were allowed to mar the beauty and sincerity of the Passion Play.

The last supper, with Christ and his disciples at the long table, was di Vinci's famous painting vitalized. The tension was momentarily relieved by a portly cat who strolled toward the stage, brushed against one of the disciples, and then trotted off, serenely unconscious of the amused consternation that ripped through the audience.

Flawlessly presented were the next two scenes—Jesus on the Mount of Olives and his lonely watch in the Garden of Gethsemane.

An absorbing moment, for those interested in spiritual healing was where the Nazarene instantaneously healed the wounded Roman soldier.

It was on Christ's betrayal by Judas that the curtain fell for the midday intermission.

For over four hours 4000 people had been held enthralled. Now reluctant to break the spell, they

silently poured from the huge auditorium.

In subdued groups they walked back to the cottages for the noonday meal, served by those who had taken part in the performance, for almost all of the villagers were in the play.

"Dear, how could they do it? How could these simple mountain people produce that play?" marveled Helen as they filed along the rain-soaked path.

"Look out for that puddle!" gruffed Warren, ignoring her question.

"Plainly he did not want to discuss the play. As always when deeply stirred he took refuge in silence."

Even at luncheon the conversation was subdued. The only one inclined to talk was a voluble woman journalist, an American, who had witnessed the performance last week and had stayed over for additional atmosphere.

She told of her introduction to Anton Lang, the Christus, and of his simplicity and reserve. How he secluded himself before and after the play. These two hours at midday he spent in prayer in his bare dressing room, to be better fitted for the ordeal of the afternoon.

The doctor from Philadelphia, who sat opposite Warren, spoke of the physical endurance needed for the crucifixion. The 20 minutes suspended from the cross was a perilous strain on the heart. A medical journal had commented on the dan-

ger of the circulation being so long impaired.

When the chorus again appeared their rich, colorful robes were replaced by somber mourning.

As they sorrowfully sang the dirge of the crucifixion, from behind the curtains came the ominous sound of hammering.

A tremor ran through the audience when the curtains slowly parted, revealing the prostrate cross on which was nailed the body of Christ.

A final spike fastened the inscription above his head.

The brawny executioners strugglingly erected the ponderous cross, planting it firmly between the two thieves already bound to smaller crosses.

When Mary Magdalene and a few of the faithful pushed their way through the mob to the foot of the cross the emotional tension was almost unbearable.

It was here that a strange thing occurred. All afternoon the clouds had been gathering, and now a rumble of thunder added to the terrifying solemnity.

From out of the deepening gloom came Christ's final prayer. Even in the foreign language the supreme words were unmistakable.

When at last the thorn-crowned head dropped in the limpness of death, so marvelous was the impersonation that his tortured body seemed to collapse.

To satisfy the rabble that life was extinct, one of the soldiers pierced Christ's side with the spear. The brutal thrust brought a stream of blood. At this heart-breaking realism, a stifled sob swept the audience.

It was raining, the very clouds were weeping when the little group of mourners, with infinite tenderness, lowered the Nazarene from the cross.

A ladder was placed at the back of the cross. The cruel nails drawn out gently, with long strips of linen, the lifeless body was lifted down—

ward under the weight of the cross.

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