

LIFE STEPS IN

By Claire Pomeroy

She wanted to marry Anthony—it was all she wanted in the world, but Anthony was already married, and to this girl who sat laughing and talking with her in such a friendly way.

She leaned back in her chair with a little sick feeling.

It was all horrible—horrible. She felt as if someone had thrown pitch all over something beautiful which she valued.

Supposing she never could marry Anthony? Supposing—there she was again, straining every nerve to look ahead into the future. Why could she not be content to wait, and leave everything to the man she loved?

For the first time she was conscious of something very near despair. She had built a castle in the air, and lived in it for a few hours—but already the castle was tottering and threatening to fall. She was thankful when Mollie said she must go.

"It's been lovely seeing you, and I hate running away, but I've got an appointment at three," she said.

Ana looked at her steadily.

"I saw you in a car the other day with Mr. Mahon," she said. She longed desperately to tell Mollie all the truth; to say "Anthony and I were together and so you, and Anthony knows everything, or thinks he does. He and I love each other. What are we going to do about it? Don't you care for him any more? Do you want to lose him?"

But she dared not. Mollie flushed up to her pretty eyes, but she laughed.

"Did you? Poor old Ralph! He will run about after me. Of course, he has a pretty thin time with his wife."

She deliberately changed the conversation.

"How do you get back to Wimbledon? It's an awful long way out, isn't it?"

They parted outside the hotel. "I'll tell Anthony I saw you," Mollie said.

Ana walked away without answering. "Horrible, horrible," she told herself again, but hardly knew what she meant.

She felt guilty, as if she had been discovered in some crime. She tried to recall what Anthony had said to her, how he had looked, how he had held her hands and kissed her lips, but somehow it all seemed unreal and so far away. With him she had forgotten that he was Mollie's husband; now she could remember nothing else.

She went back to Wimbledon by the longest route. She felt she could not bear the silence of the house. Even poor old Benny would have been a welcome companion.

When she got home she made herself some tea. Her head ached, and she was surprised to find that her hands were trembling.

"I wish I hadn't seen Mollie," she thought angrily. "Why did I?—It was like being a Judas."

The postman's knock rang through the empty house, and Ana ran to the door. One letter lay on the mat. It was addressed in Anthony's writing.

Ana picked it up and held it to her heart. She was conscious of a sudden reaction—a grateful reaction. It was as if he were with her

again, showing her how beautiful her fears away, showing her only the beauty and happiness of the future with him.

"I love him. I will never give him up," Ana told herself fiercely, and realized for the first time that since she left Mollie that afternoon there had been no other thought in her mind but that she must give him up, that she could not go on.

Anthony Hambleton's letter was short. "Unless you hear from me to the contrary," he wrote, "I shall be in London on Monday." He gave the address of the hotel at which he would stay. "Come to me there, Ana. I saw Mollie's wife when I got back here—or rather she came to see me. I will tell you about it when we meet. You can say goodbye to Wimbledon, my dear—I am not going to part from you again. I have come to the conclusion that 'honor' is an empty word invented by somebody without human impulse. I feel like a man who has unexpectedly been let out of prison into sunshine which only exists because of you. I give you my word that you shall never regret the step we are to take together. I am living only for the moment when I shall see you. A man's life is his own affair, after all. If you have any fear for the future I will make you forget it when we are together."

"He is mad," Ana told herself breathlessly. She read his letter to her lips. "But I love his madness!" Monday and today was Friday.

Anthony made no mention of Mollie, nor of the General; he took it for granted that Ana would ask no question, raise no objections. She sat down at the foot of the stairs with sudden overwhelming weakness.

Life had been so uneventful until lately, and now all at once she was whirled into the midst of things which she had never thought could touch her life.

She was conscious of a great fear through all her happiness. What would the world say? What would Miss Sawyer say?

She shut her eyes and tried to realize the gossip there would be—the horror among her aunt's few cronies; the nine days' scandal—Ana had been brought up with a wholesome idea of scandal. It had always seemed so terrible to her to hear people talked about in lowered voices, as if they were unclean; whispered about with a sort of ghoulish glee.

It would be terrible for Miss Sawyer, too; she so prided herself upon her unimpeachable respectability.

"Run away with a married man! How shocking! What a terrible woman!"

She seemed almost to hear the voice of Miss Selby and Mrs. Clair, her aunt's chief friends.

Ana clasped her hands to steady their trembling. Once before she had heard those two excellent, but exceedingly narrow-minded women sitting in judgment upon a girl who, like herself, had thrown everything to the winds, and followed the call of love.

She had even listened and approved of their condemnation.

"He cannot possibly marry her"—so they had declared. "He is a mar-

(Concluded on Page 7)

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

From Trees To Pancakes

By Harold Gray



REG'LAR FELLERS

A Backward Lad

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

A Wild Ride

By Glenn Chaffin and Hal Forrest



DUMB DOEA

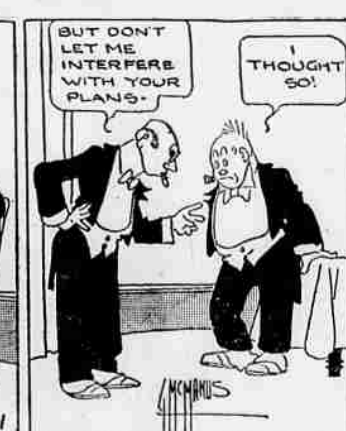
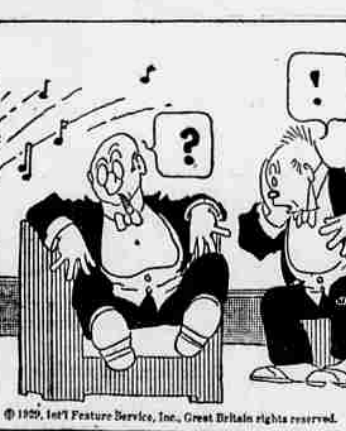
Necessary Equipment

By Chick Young



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



MUTT AND JEFF

By Bud Fisher



Today's Cross-Word Puzzle

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- HORIZONTAL**
- 1—food-fish
 - 5—discordant
 - 9—be in process of adjustment
 - 13—crouch from-blingly
 - 14—wagon track
 - 15—wireless
 - 16—declara
 - 17—stiff
 - 19—cereal grass
 - 20—dwell
 - 22—narrator
 - 24—lower for instant and raise
 - 26—tooth to impart motion
 - 28—beseech
 - 29—a hero
 - 33—malign look
 - 35—seraglio
 - 36—cozy retreat
 - 38—dwarfish spirit
 - 39—pertaining to marriage
 - 40—deface
 - 41—congluti
 - 43—indulge freely
 - 44—deceiv
 - 46—a molar tooth
- VERTICAL**
- 1—blamish
 - 2—but
 - 3—inspires with reverential fear
 - 4—mocker
 - 6—dry
 - 7—floor
 - 8—covering voice
 - 9—agitate
 - 10—model of excellence
 - 11—more refined
 - 12—agent
 - 17—corded fabric
 - 18—pertaining to number ten
 - 21—excavate
 - 22—record of ship's progress
 - 25—receives from source
 - 27—chooso
 - 28—confuse
 - 29—ventured
 - 30—instrument for measuring
 - 31—take exception
 - 32—scatter
 - 34—addition to house
 - 36—equipment of draft animal
 - 37—undermine
 - 42—conveyance
 - 44—abandon
 - 46—to front (as cake)
 - 47—thigh of animal
 - 48—apprais
 - 50—leap about
 - 51—foigned
 - 52—a season-ing
 - 53—to mound
 - 54—bespangle
 - 55—system of signals
 - 56—in addition
 - 57—accreted
 - 60—poem
- Herewith is the solution to yesterday's Puzzle.
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