

OUR COMIC SECTION

Along the Concrete



HELLO DAD, THIS IS HENRY, I'M SORRY TO HAVE TO WAKE YOU DAD AT THIS HOUR. YOU REMEMBER I PROMISED TO GET IN EARLY, I WAS HURRYING TO KEEP MY PROMISE TO YOU, WHEN A SPEED COP COMES ALONG AND PINCHES ME FOR SPEEDING. IVE GOT TO GET A CASH BOND OF FIFTY DOLLARS FORE THEY WILL LET ME OUT. I'M SORRY DAD BUT I WAS ONLY TRYING TO KEEP MY PROMISE TO YOU. WILL YOU COME OVER AND GET ME OUT?

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WHY WE BEHAVE LIKE HUMAN BEINGS

By GEORGE DORSEY, Ph. D., LL. D.

We Do Not Inherit Instincts

Our nervous system is no ladder. It is built around a tube. It has plenty of reflex arcs, but it is surmounted by a brain whose big business is to learn and to profit by experience. The baby's spinal cord is largely organized at birth; but its big brain is a clean slate. There is nothing known it cannot learn. With man, plastic behavior reaches its highest point.

We do not inherit instincts, but an instinctive mode of vegetative and reproductive reactions; also an instinctive activity which by the nature of the stimulus says "yes" or "no," a positive or a negative response. With such activity, we can learn to walk and pull the cat's tail; we can form habits. We bump our head against the table; our next response to table is conditioned. We pull the wrong cat's tail; our habit of response to cats' tails is conditioned. All our responses are conditioned. That is the way we learn to behave. We do not require instincts; we can acquire habits. If we get set in them, we can forget our brains and live like ants.

Add it up; instincts are inherited habits. Have we more than a chimpanzee? We cannot say. But we can say that both of us have enough to start out in life; if not, we are defective and do not go far. We can also say that our inheritance of reflex arcs exceeds that of the chimpanzee by several ounces of neurons. As a consequence, we have more nervous machinery in general, more neurons to load, more paths to carry the load.

But the fundamental difference between man's and chimpanzee's inheritance is in parents. Once a chimpanzee, always a chimpanzee; but a man may become a skunk or a saint. Think of all the kinds of people you know!

Man's inherited habit-to-live can be modified into thousands of ways of living. We do not inherit habits of shaving, wearing kimonos, three meals a day, plug hats, skyscrapers, abstinence of pork, four wives, faith in Sunday schools, or belief in higher education for women. We do inherit parents who do not want us to disgrace them and who do their best to bring us up in the way we ought to go.

Which means that human inheritance varies from age to age and cradle to cradle. Little the new-born cares about a silver spoon in his mouth—he inherited the habit of responding to an empty stomach; or whether the roof over his head is copper or thatch—he inherited the habit of crawling in out of the wet.

To describe human adjustments in terms of instincts or analyze specific human behavior—or our own consciousness—into instinctive acts, is to stir the mud. Human culture is the accumulated responses of the man-animal to his man-made environment. It accumulates, it varies, because man can and does talk. This seems a handicap at times, but in the long run it has had enormous consequences. Without speech as an organized tool of exchanging acquiring, and transmitting experiences, human culture is inconceivable.

Life learns. An ameba probably learns new tricks not inherent in original protoplasm. Man also must learn by experience.

We inherit no nail-driving habit. We do not inherit a motor mechanism which feels good when functioning. We took our first lesson in driving a nail when we banged the rattle on the side of the crib. Later, stimuli of nails, hammer, soft pine, an environment holding other stimuli to activity; countless reflex arcs, some already learned in responses to such stimuli; thumb smashed, probably; but the nail is finally driven. And more nails, and more, until finally the carpenter drives nails from force of habit like an instinct.

It is the first walk that is the hardest. The steps we acquire later in life are mere child's play compared with the first step the child learns to make. Balancing the body on one foot on a wire rope is only possible because we learned first to balance the body on a half-inch in diameter.

Do we learn these acts, or are they innate responses that appear in due time? We know that the new-born's legs are not only weak, but are not yet shaped for an upright gait, and that its spine has not yet taken on human curves; legs and spine grow human. Several years elapse before they are entirely human in character. But they are human enough to walk on within twelve or fifteen months.

The great, the essential, the refined, the delicate movements are learned within three years. That little mechanism grows up with us. Throughout life we call upon it to run, to swim, to climb, to dance, to jump, to "hold 'em," to "knock 'em still."

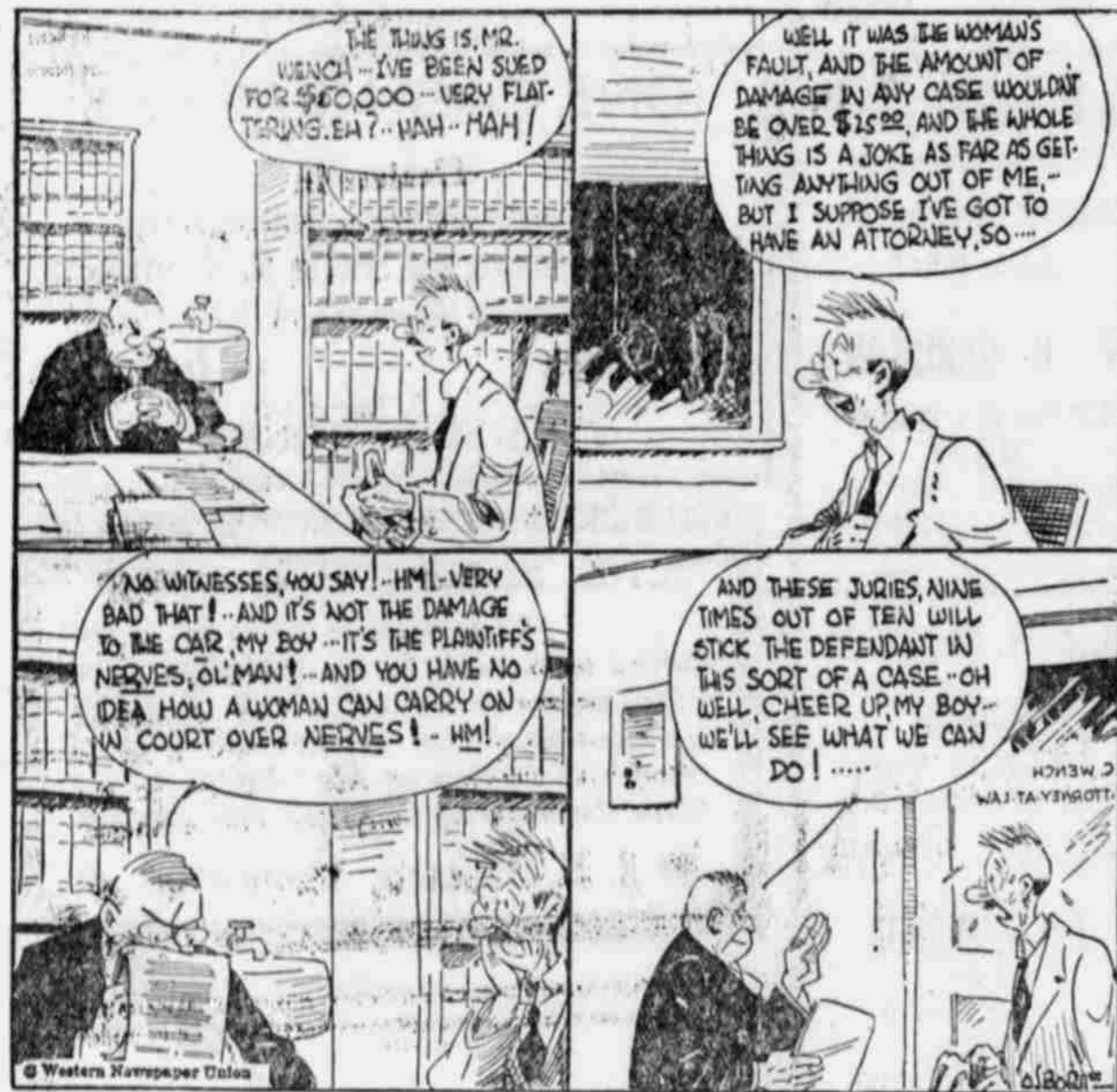
(© by George A. Dorsey.)

High Diplomatic Posts

Four Presidents have been diplomatic representatives of the United States prior to their Presidency. They are: James Monroe, who was appointed minister plenipotentiary to Great Britain April 18, 1803; John Quincy Adams, who was appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary February 28, 1815; Martin Van Buren, who was appointed August 1, 1831, as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary; and James Buchanan, who was appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary April 11, 1846.

THE FEATHERHEADS

Felix Gets Cheered Up



THE THING IS, MR. WENCH—I'VE BEEN SUED FOR \$50,000—VERY FLATTERING, EH?—MAH—MAH!

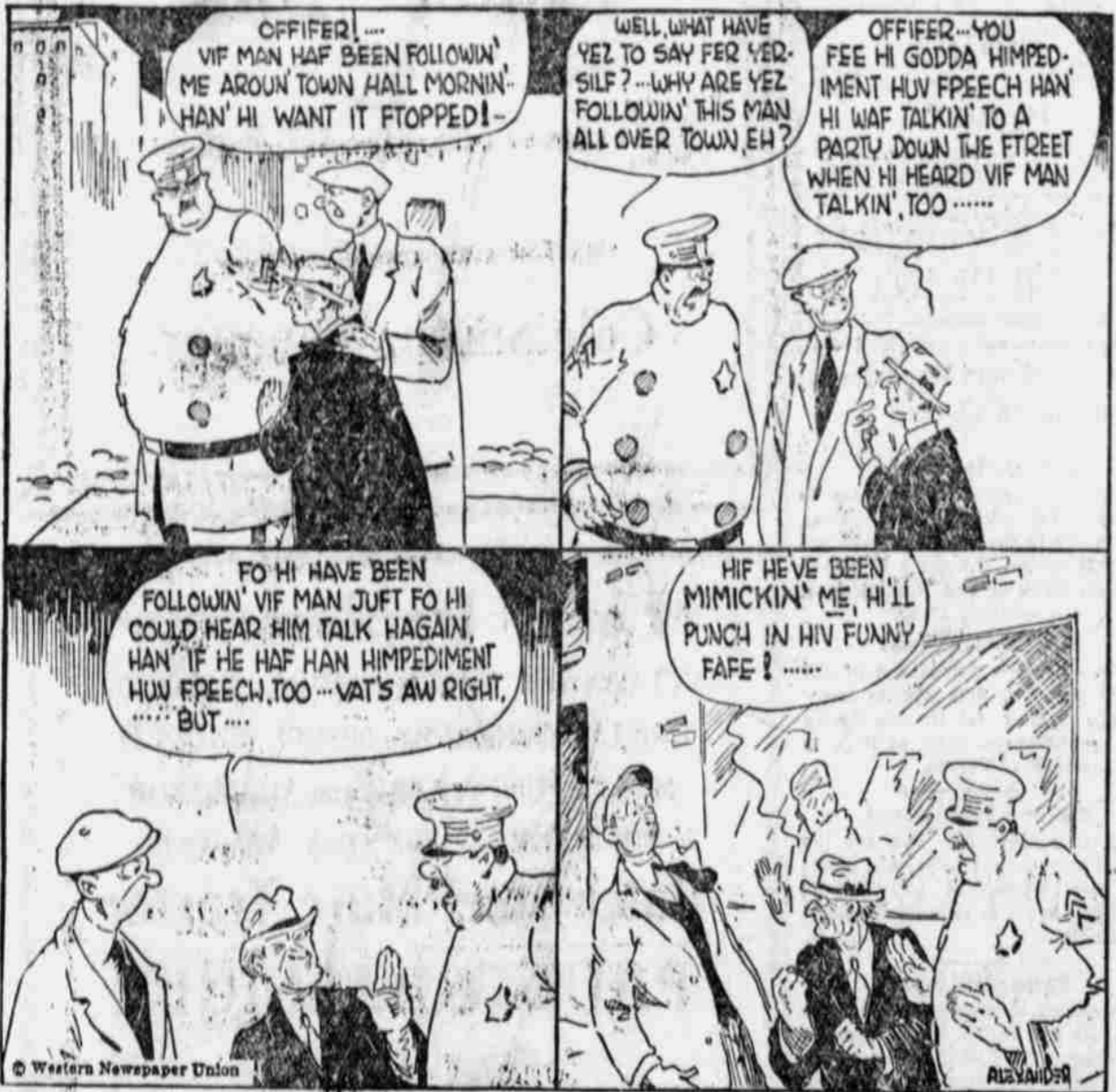
WELL IT WAS THE WOMAN'S FAULT, AND THE AMOUNT OF DAMAGE IN ANY CASE WOULDN'T BE OVER \$1500, AND THE WHOLE THING IS A JOKE AS FAR AS GETTING ANYTHING OUT OF ME.— BUT I SUPPOSE I'VE GOT TO HAVE AN ATTORNEY, SO....

NO WITNESSES, YOU SAY!—HMM—VERY BAD THAT!—AND IT'S NOT THE DAMAGE TO THE CAR, MY BOY—IT'S THE PLAINTIFF'S NERVES, O' MAN!—AND YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW A WOMAN CAN CARRY ON IN COURT OVER NERVES!—HMM!

AND THESE JURIES, NINE TIMES OUT OF TEN WILL STICK THE DEFENDANT IN THE SORT OF A CASE—OH WELL, CHEER UP MY BOY—WE'LL SEE WHAT WE CAN DO!.....

FINNEY OF THE FORCE

Parrot, or Another Hare?



OFFICER!—VIF MAN HAF BEEN FOLLOWIN' ME AROUN TOWN HALL MORNIN'—HAN' HI WANT IT FTOPPED!

WELL, WHAT HAVE YEZ TO SAY FER YERSELF?—WHY ARE YEZ FOLLOWIN' THIS MAN ALL OVER TOWN, EH?

OFFICER—YOU FEE HI GODDA HIMPEDIMENT HUV FPREECH HAN' HI WAF TALKIN' TO A PARTY DOWN THE FTREET WHEN HI HEARD VIF MAN TALKIN', TOO.....

FO HI HAVE BEEN FOLLOWIN' VIF MAN JUFT FO HI COULD HEAR HIM TALK HAGAIN, HAN' IF HE HAF HAN HIMPEDIMENT HUV FPREECH, TOO—VAT'S AW RIGHT, BUT....

HIF HEVE BEEN MIMICKIN' ME, HI'LL PUNCH IN HUV FUNNY FAFE!.....

Cleanliness, but Hard

on Rest of the Outfit

After a 12-day voyage we arrived at Brest, France, in July, 1918. We marched to the Pontonnaxen barracks that afternoon. Our outfit was assigned to two barracks, with a promise of a bath on Wednesday.

Water was very scarce there, and at each end of the barracks assigned to us was a barrel of water for drinking purposes.

I happened to get up about two o'clock in the morning and leave the barracks. On my return I saw Mike Connors in the barrel taking a bath. I told him that he should have known better, as the water was very scarce there. He said he knew that, but he really did need the bath and couldn't wait any longer.

"We'll drink out of the other barrel at the other end of the barracks, then," I commented.

"I got my clothes in that one," Mike assured me.—John J. Boyle in New York Telegram.

Belligerent Owl

A struggle between an owl and the engineer of an electric express train has been reported at Linköping, in southern Sweden. The bird, probably attracted by the headlights of the locomotive, burst against one cab window and broke the glass. Well inside, it sank its claws into the shoulders of the motorman and attacked him with its bill. The engineer could not leave his grip on the switch, and a fierce battle ensued while the train raced on its way. At last the motorman succeeded in strangling the bird, which was an unusually large specimen.

Pianos to Fit Horses

In order to transport pianos over mountain trails or difficult roads, an enterprising German manufacturer has constructed a special type of the instrument, which permits it to be carried on horseback. The piano has a U-shaped lower section which fits the animal. Other pianos are made dismountable so that they can be transported in several packing cases on the backs of mules, and assembled on delivery, because the instrument would be ruined were it to be hauled over many of the trails for hours, and often days, in a cart drawn by oxen.

Soviet Salvage

The Soviet Union has been recovering from the bottom of the Black sea the metal parts of warships and merchantmen sunk at various places within the last twenty years. One harbor is expected to yield thousands of tons of useful metal.

Biblical Pictures His Forte

Hofmann, who painted the famous "Christ in the Temple," was a German, born at Darmstadt in 1824. He died in 1902. His pictures owe their popularity to his illustrative talent and ideal conceptions of Biblical events.

Ungallant

There are some persons, nearly all of the female sex, who suffer from a chronic rush of words to the mouth.—Dean Inge.

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Marcelle
Complexion Requisites

Remarkable Memory

A caller on Elijah Harriman, South Warren, Maine, ninety-eight years old, found him doing his share of work and helping prepare the evening meal. His eyesight, hearing and memory are unimpaired. He said to the visitor: "I remember the first time I saw you; it was sixty years ago."

Would you like to try this doctor's laxative free of charge?

Every family has occasional need of a laxative, but it should be a family laxative. One that can't form a habit, but can be taken as often as needed. When breath is bad or tongue coated. Or appetite fails. Only a doctor knows the right ingredients. Dr. Caldwell discovered the correct combination years ago. Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin combines harmless herbs and pure senna. It starts muscular action and soon corrects constipation. Gently, but surely, it relieves a bilious or sluggish condition. It is mild. Delicious. Effective. All druggists keep this famous prescription ready, in big bottles. Or write Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, Monticello, Ill., for a free trial bottle postpaid.



HEADACHES

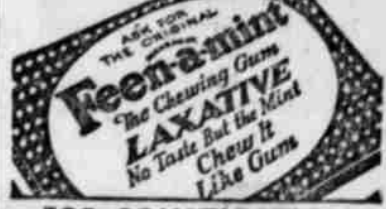
Needless pains like headaches are immediately relieved by Bayer Aspirin as millions of people know. And no matter how suddenly a headache may come, one can at all times be prepared. Carry the pocket tin of Bayer Aspirin with you. Keep the larger size at home. Read the proven directions for pain, headaches, neuralgia, etc.



Sheik Weaknesses

Sally—Do you mean you forgot you were to meet me here at six?
Sammy—Well, ever since I put grease on my hair everything slips my mind.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

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Not Homesick
Ann's parents left her at her grandmother's when they went East last summer. The little girl seemed quite contented for several days; then one evening she wouldn't eat. Her grandmother asked whether she was homesick. "No," she answered. "I'm not, but my stomach wants to go home."