

SPITE MARRIAGE

by Katharine Howland Taylor

SYNOPSIS: An interesting study of the relationship between Bob and Marsha Powers is Bob's refusal to understand Marsha's relation with one of her old friends, and Marsha's inability to force Bob to listen to reason. But it is enough to bring them to the edge of a divorce. Soon Bob must return to Mexico; he considers whether it might be wise to ask Marsha to go with him.

Chapter 33

BOB IN TROUBLE

THERE was much to trouble Bob in his third week at home. He heard that Geoffrey Tarleton was attending a dancer who could hardly write her own name, but who, for one sort of male, had vast appeal.

With distaste, but thoroughly, Bob verified details to find that the rumors were based upon truth. Marsha, with that! It was unthinkable! There were good things about her which were, he knew, too good to be wasted in such a way.

Again and again he decided he would have it out with her; ask her, no matter what else she did, to keep free from Tarleton's soiling touch. But she was obviously avoiding every chance for intimate talk with him and he did not once, during the week, find the moment when he could force upon her the topic he wished to discuss—discuss "coolly."

He planned what he would say, with opportunity for words given, as he lay awake by night, and as he saw, by the slit of light beneath her door, that she too lay awake.

She was even thinner and her frail appetite had dwindled yet more; that troubled Bob deeply. He supposed, with a chilling of his tired, suddenly old heart, that she had heard of Tarleton's defection and was wounded by it. Bob knew that Tarleton would always wander thus and that she must, for the sake of her future and the peace that might be in her future, know it.

Conjecture, too, distressed him that week. Marsha had, before she married him, endured an unhappy life in her aunt's company in order that no aspersions be cast upon the acid maiden lady by those who might wonder too deeply about Marsha's living alone.

He did not want Marsha to live with Miss Gertrude. "It would be absolute hell for her!" he murmured aloud more than once, considering the matter that, with others which were equally unpleasant, dogged his weary footsteps.

He wanted to talk that over with her, and he had no chance to talk anything over with her. She eluded him deftly; she squirmed from every net he spread to trap her.

"She hates me," he thought; "it hurts her even to be in the same room with me!"

It did not seem quite fair to him that she should hate him; he felt he had been fairly stung about the blow that had come to him through his realization of how he had been cheated.

Of course, he reasoned, she had not known how hard the blow had been, still was. He presumed, when he was an old man, he would still be thinking of her with yearning and with the thought of her return to him which through despite every real and sometimes brutal discouragement.

MARSHA, on her side, kept from Bob's path as much as was possible, and a deft woman can make that easily possible. She kept from him because, with him, she feared she might betray herself.

If she said, "I want to go back with you; I want another chance!" he would remember all she had done for him to respond with a consent he would make sound hearty.

And then another hell for them, with her wanting more than he could give her, knowing her; and he forcing himself to give as a gesture of gratitude.

Marsha thought often: "If he had been as starved for love as I, he would know that the way I care does count, no matter how second-rate I am." She knew that no other woman would ever love Bob so deeply, wholly and truly, and she felt that any woman who knew him, must love him.

Perhaps after the divorce he would marry again; that possibility appeared against the black curtain of dark, each night, to make her sit up in bed, turn on the light, try to read.

Trying to read was all she could do; a page half understood, and she would lay down her book to think, "I do want him to be happy." She did, but she could not yet subdue

the terror that came with. "He may, of course, marry again."

If he married again, everything would be so entirely done for her. Doubtless, in time, she would reach that tepid ground where she could drug herself by collecting little pieces of porcelain; rare books or fans or dolls. Dolls, she dismissed, after consideration. No, she would never collect dolls.

Mrs. Powers had thought she would be a lovely mother. The tears rolled down her cheeks remembering this of the woman she had called "Mother"; the woman whom she had felt to be "mother."

She ached from her need of the small, old lady; and she never suffered thus without thinking, "Poor Bob! Poor Bob!" But Bob's suffering, real as it was, was not so tragically real as was Marsha's.

She could not speak of Mrs. Powers without a trembling of lips, a harsh summoning of control which made her tense. Bob, seeing this, realized she had cared; it touched him deeply. One day, at the end of that long, third week, he laid his hand upon her arm to say "How shall I ever thank you for all you did?"

She cried to answer, "Love me! or if you can't do that let me do it for you, around the world, wherever you go."

She said: "You gave more to me than I've given to you and something that has lent a light to my living, that will never dim."

Then she had left him quickly, realizing that she had spoken a truth that had left her uncertain and tragically lonely.

She sat a great deal in Mrs. Powers' room, Bartholomew told Bob after a cough and a little hesitation. "It isn't the best thing for her, Mr. Robert," Bartholomew pointed out, "to brood so."

HANNAH said her clothes were only hanging on her, so thin she was. Bartholomew reported this to Bob, adroitly and after a plea for pardon.

"I know," Bob answered, sharp from strain. "God!" he hung out then, running nervous fingers through his hair; frowning.

"I have a definite feeling, sir, if you will pardon me, please, Miss Robert, that something is weighing on Mrs. Powers' mind, a something beyond her sorrow."

Bob turned to Bartholomew who, years back, had taught a small, lean, flecked Bob to make sailors' knots and who had helped this same Bob to collect marbles and to make fish nets from twine.

They had once been punished together, for trying to get a hornets' nest that Bob wanted in his collection. Bob still had a tiny ship that Bartholomew had whittled for him . . . the bond between them was an old and tight one and memories made their relation gentler and more real than that of man and servant.

Bob could remember Bartholomew's weeping at the death of his father, and how Bartholomew had said, "So long as you'll let me serve you all, I shall do all I can, and thank you and God for the chance given me!"

Yes, the relation was more than that of man and servant. "What can I do, Bartholomew?" asked Bob. "What haven't I done?"

"If you'll forgive me, sir, she's that painful dependant upon affection. We've all noticed it to speak of it, and it has quite touched us. Never have we seen the like. She is like a child, as one might say, sir, when she feels affection; like a child who has been a bit naughty and who is forgiven and that is tremulously grateful for it! I think with an unusual gentleness, she would tell you what lies on her mind."

"Thank you, Bartholomew."

"Thank you, sir! That will be all, sir?"

"That will be all."

For some time, alone, Bob stood by a window staring upon the misty, chill world. He had never known, he reflected heavily, so dismal a spring.

He tried to draw Marsha out that evening at dinner.

"Child," he said, "is something troubling you?"

For a moment stark panic was in her eyes; she grew pale then she flushed hotly.

"Why do you ask that?" she questioned. Did he know, she wondered, what she had done one day when it seemed she could not go on alone? But he could not know. No one save she knew; no one save she could know!

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Tomorrow, Marsha tries to open a box.

COUNTRY ENJOYS STRONG POSITION IN WORLD TRADE

Broad Bargaining Powers Given Roosevelt Also Factor in Continued Lead—Japanese Inroad Slight

By RICHARD GRIDLEY
United Press Financial Correspondent
WASHINGTON—(UP)—America's already strong trade position, broad bargaining powers given President Roosevelt, and the revival of world trade will assure the United States continued lead in the foreign commerce of the world in the opinion of administration leaders and important business interests.

The No. 1 position of the United States as the world's largest exporter of goods is not believed threatened by the series of "trade wars" in various sections of the country, or by the encroachment of cheap Japanese, or other foreign goods, on the domestic and foreign United States markets.

After leading the export nations of the world in the volume of foreign exports for many years, the United States, according to official figures, further has increased its gain since the start of the current year. United States exports through April were 62 per cent ahead of a year ago, com-

pared with a gain of only 26 per cent by Japan, its nearest competitor.

Slight inroads by Japan. Some inroads on American trade by cheaper Japanese goods have been admitted, but the United States had more than made up for these losses elsewhere. Germany at the present time appears to be the largest loser of foreign trade, but still maintains third place in the leading export nations of the world.

It was pointed out in responsible circles that there is little fear of Japanese domination of world trade. President Roosevelt, in addition to the huge resources of the United States, has ample power through reciprocal trade bargaining powers, to secure important agreements for trade with other nations of the world, and thus offset any alarming foreign inroads on American trade.

WEATHER TOO WARM FOR NUDIST COLONY

RAVENNA, O. (UP)—Ironically, nudists of the "Natural Friends League," near Rootstown, found the weather too hot for nudism recently. That is the way Chester Riel, colony head, explained the shortage of members when Sheriff Leroy Jones raided the colony.

Only three, in the nude, were found by the sheriff when he penetrated the mass of undergrowth surrounding the camp. All were men, sitting around a home-made picnic table. Riel, at his office, explained the scant numbers:

"It's the weather. Too hot."

F. W. Bartlett, Medford's Taxidermist and Purrier, will open shop on about Sept. 1st, at 20 S. Central.

JAZZ ERA GOING SAYS PROFESSOR

CINCINNATI, O. (UP)—Dr. Ernest L. Talbert, associate professor of psychology at the University of Cincinnati, believes that society's pendulum is swinging back from the day typified by the "flapper and the jazz band" toward a more conservative era, he told students here recently in a campus address.

"The social sciences, once a subject for jokes and ridicule, are rising in popular esteem. The generous support given to the courageous and humane social philosophy of President Roosevelt is indicative of collective attitude. Whatever may be the outcome of his efforts, for the time being there is an upturn in the status of the social scientists," he said.

WILLAMETTE OPENING SLATED SEPTEMBER 17

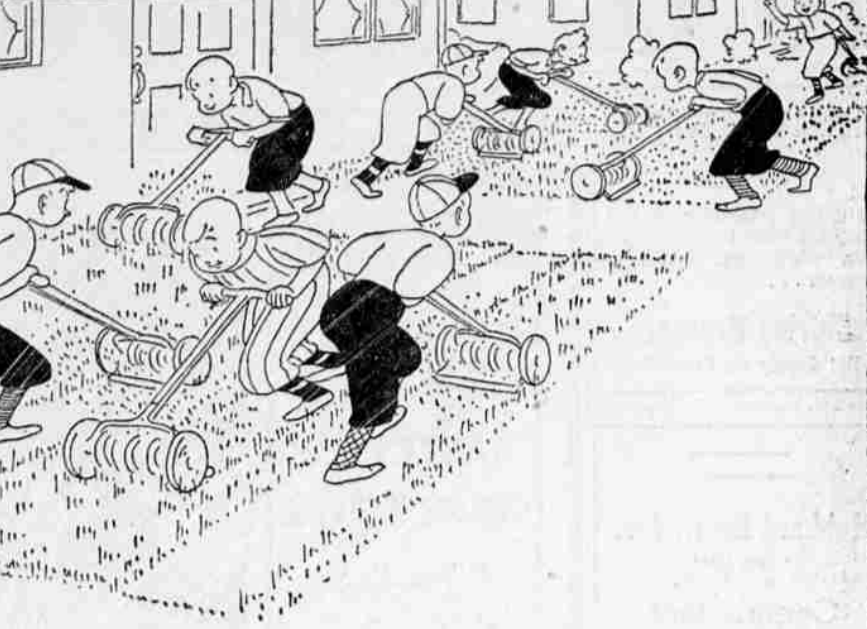
SALEM, Ore.—(UP)—September 17 has been set as the date for opening of Willamette university this fall. Acting President Frank M. Erickson announced today.

The day will be devoted largely to registration of the freshman class and other activities to introduce the newcomers to the school.

Sophomores and upperclassmen will register on the following day, and on Wednesday, September 19, classes will begin.

NEIGHBORHOOD BALL

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE START OF A LEAGUE GAME, THE TEAM LEARNED THAT THEIR BEST PITCHER COULDN'T PLAY UNTIL HIS LAWN WAS MOWED; BUT BY COMMANDERING ALL THE LAWN MOWERS ON THE STREET THEY WERE ABLE TO PLAY ON TIME AND WITH FULL FORCES

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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SMATTER POP—



By C. M. Payne

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy in a Tough Spot!



By Hal Forrest

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Hermit's Hurricane!



By EDWIN ALGER

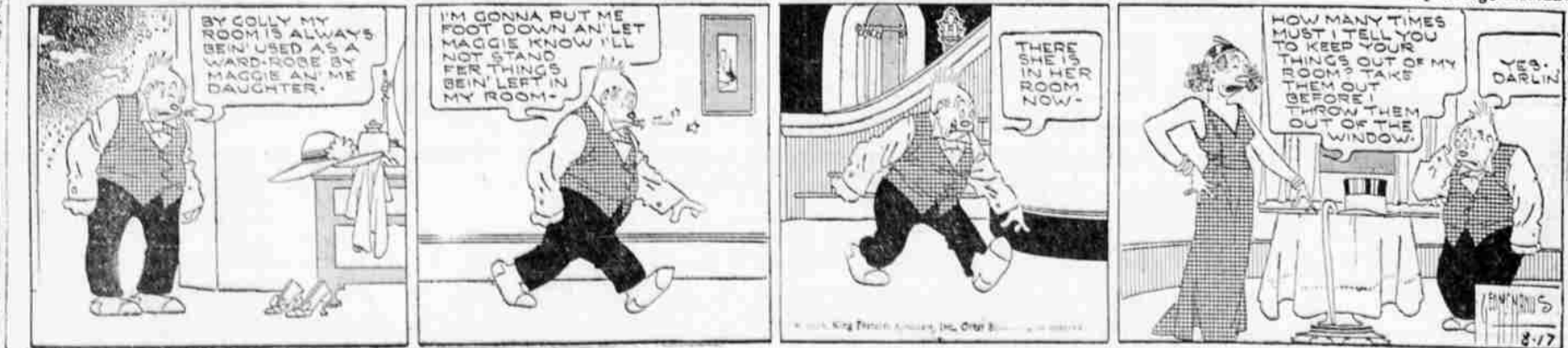
THE NEBBS—It Would Never Do



By Sol Hess

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BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus

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ENJOY
WRIGLEY'S
SPEARMINT
GUM
THE PERFECT GUM
5¢
AND
WORTH IT!
SWEETENS THE BREATH

Claims Halloween Beating
ST. CLAIRSVILLE, O. (UP)—Lester French celebrated Halloween by beating her. Garner French charged in a divorce petition.

Wrappers Talk Code
ASHTABULA, O. (UP)—Tri-State Wrapping Paper association delegates at their convention here discussed code provisions and trade practices. William S. Hewins, Ashtabula, president, presided.

Divided for Religion
STREUBENVILLE, O. (UP)—When Raymond H. Shirod dies for any program other than a religious one, his wife, Beira, turns the switch, he testified here in a divorce action.