MORNING STAR

— BY MARIAN SIMS —

SYNOPSIS: After the death of Edwin and Emily's baby, Emily determines not to publish her grief to the world, but to do the best she can to pick up the threads of her normal life and live again. Edwin's primness and stubborn narrow-mindedness were difficult enough before; now, however, he seems to feel there is something rather disgraceful in Emily's actions. Grief is grief to Edwin, and one should wear black to prove it.

Chapter 33

TRUTH COMES OUT

SUNDAY, the day after Christmas Emily moved restlessly about, throwing out faded flowers, putting greeting cards into a box to be used as an index to next year's list, emptying ashtrays that had been filled by their Christmas callers.

The box of cards, she decided, could go in the guest room desk, where they would be quite out of the way until next year. She opened the guest room door and stopped short upon the threshold.

Edwin was inside, quite motionless, staring into the opened chest that held the tiny possessions of Jeffrey Felton Barnes.

She had carefully refrained during Christmas day from any mention of the thing nearest her heart and the sight broke her completely. With a tearing sob she crossed the room and put her arms about him.

"Oh, my darling, can't we help each other?"

The silence that followed was like a cold hand upon her heart. She realized suddenly that Edwin's arms were not holding her; they were merely about her. She raised her head and looked intently into his expressionless face.

"I didn't know," he said finally, in a level, monotonous voice, "that you needed help."

In that instant she understood. Understood his first rush of tenderness after the baby's death and his gradual withdrawal during the past few weeks.

Edwin had been trained to a rigid code of respect for the dead and he had expected her to mourn, visibly and audibly.

He had doubtless expected her to wear black clothes for a year as an outward indication that her heart was broken, and at the end of the year to take them off because her heart had mended suddenly, in a day.

And understanding that, she saw for the first time how hopeless it all was; how useless her struggles and concessions and sacrifices had been. In a year and a half Edwin had learned so little about her that he could think she didn't care.

He still measured her conduct in terms of conventional behavior, in a thing that lay so close to her heart. She realized that after this she could never try to please, or even to live with him, no matter what she had promised.

She looked into his eyes for a great many seconds. "Would you mind coming into the living-room where it's warm?" she asked steadily. "There are a lot of things I'd like to talk to you about."

He followed her wordlessly and they faced each other on the hearth. He politely offered her a chair but she shook her head. You didn't fight for your life sitting down.

"Edwin," she said finally, "you don't love me at all, do you?"

He hesitated. "You make it—difficult, don't you?"

"That isn't what I'm asking just now. Do you?"

"I don't feel as I once did," he confessed honestly. "You're such a different person."

"Meaning that you loved me once but that you don't care any more?" she insisted. "Don't be afraid of my feelings; I—haven't any left."

"I know it," he said. "That's why I can't love you—as much."

"THAT'S what I wanted to find out." She was amazed at the steadiness of her own voice; she scarcely recognized it. "Now then will you tell me why you changed?"

"Because you did," he said promptly. "Your—leaving me—was the first blow; you'll never know what that cost me. And you've been different ever since you came back from Birmingham. You knew how I felt about—things—before you married me, and instead of respecting my views you've disregarded them entirely. Laughed at them; not openly, but really, from the very first."

"Has it occurred to you, Edwin," she asked, "that the reason I left you in the first place was because I wasn't altogether in accord with your views about—things?"

"You never said so before we married."

"You would never give me a chance. You avoided talking about important subjects as if they had been indecent. But it didn't matter so much then because I wasn't your property. I didn't belong to you."

He made a gesture of protest but she disregarded it. "And did it never occur to you," she drove her arrows mercilessly home, "that having left you once and having come back, under duress, as it were, because I promised when you were so desperately ill, that I might need to be humored in my eccentricities if I was to be happy with you? You were so frightfully upset over the discovery that I wasn't making you a good wife that you overlooked completely the possibility that you might be making me a bad husband."

He defended himself hotly. "I've never been unfaithful to you even in my mind."

She laughed ruefully. "My dear man, you might have betrayed me half a dozen times and it wouldn't have been half so fatal as constantly disapproving of me!"

"You see?" he cried. "That's exactly the sort of thing I'm talking about. You deliberately laugh at everything I hold sacred. You'd laugh at anything on earth."

"I've laughed most of the time, Edwin, to keep from crying. And at least I haven't tried to change your opinions; I've let you cherish them in peace."

"There's no need to be ashamed of them," he insisted complacently. "At least, their morality isn't questionable."

She sighed. "It must be lovely to be so sure of your own infallibility. That's the spirit that makes me think that uncompromising morality does more to foster vice than anything else in the world."

SHE broke off suddenly. It was as if she and Edwin were speaking different languages, and there was no interpreter present. She realized with amazement that she disliked Edwin more than she had ever disliked anyone in her life, and that she had always disliked him.

She had lived with him a year and a half, and in that time their spirits had never even approached each other. And having made her discovery she asked only to be done with the whole relationship. She pushed on.

"Laying aside the question of my views, in what other ways have I failed?"

"None," he admitted readily.

"I've been a good housekeeper, haven't I?" She knew the respect he had for the domestic virtues.

"Yes," Edwin said honestly. "you've been perfect."

"And I've been interested in your affairs," she thought of hours of the wholesale grocery business, "far more than you've ever been in mine."

He could not deny that, but his silence indicated plainly that there was very little in a woman's affairs that merited interest.

"And I've been—affectionate, Edwin." She was determined that he should acknowledge her virtues as well as her failings; this time her conscience was going to be clear. "There have been times when I've put a great deal more into—caresses—than you have. I've often kissed you lately when I've had the feeling that you would never have thought of it."

His silence was a tacit admission of that. With all his prejudices Edwin was as honest as herself.

"And as for—the baby—" her voice broke on that, "you've never known about the nights I've cried myself to sleep, because you were already asleep. I've tried to fill the vacuum, and you haven't realized that the reason I've worked so hard to fill it was because the vacuum was so unbearable!"

She couldn't talk any more of that if she was to get through this thing. She steadied, summed it up tersely.

"Then the reason I've failed—lost your love—is because I haven't been able to change my self?"

"If you want to put it that way."

"And you can't, or won't, see that my self is just as important, just as vital, to me as yours is to you? It's the one thing I'll never change, even to make you happy."

"I don't expect you to. I stopped expecting that a long time ago."

She gathered her courage into her hands. "Then, Edwin, we're going to get a divorce."

"What!" He was speechless with amazement.

"Yes." She almost smiled at his consternation. "I promised to stay as long as you wanted me. You've admitted that you don't love me; I'm telling you now that I don't love you. That ends it automatically."

Her only thought now was to get away. She caught up a hat and coat and without a backward glance walked swiftly from the house.

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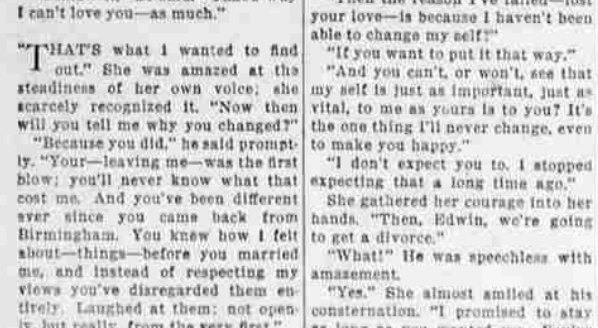
Emily finds two valuable allies, tomorrow.

Weather.

Northern California: Fair tonight and Tuesday; fogs on south and central coast; temperature above normal in interior; gentle to moderate northerly winds off the coast.

Oregon: Fair tonight and Tuesday, but fogs locally on coast; warmer interior west portion Tuesday, with lower humidity; moderate to fresh northerly wind off the coast.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.



RELIEF COIN FOR JOBS TILL JULY

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7.—(AP)—Employment for an average of 2,500,000 persons in the nine months beginning November 1 was named today as the aim of Harry L. Hopkins' works progress administration, the mainstay of the work relief program.

High officials estimated that $500 of federal funds would be the average WPA expenditure per job to carry the program up to July 1. On that date, in contrast to an estimated $900,000,000 still unspent by slower-moving agencies engaged on heavy construction, they said WPA'S entire $1,250,000,000 would be spent.

MODESTO, Cal.—(UP)—Low flying airplanes have been held responsible for a number of fires which burned over hundreds of acres of grain on a ranch near Varnalis.

George Fink of Crows Landing said a careful check and observation revealed particles of carbon from planes flying at low altitudes for purposes of crop dusting started the fires. The minute pieces of carbon, he believed, fanned themselves into hot coals that set off the fires in the dry grain.

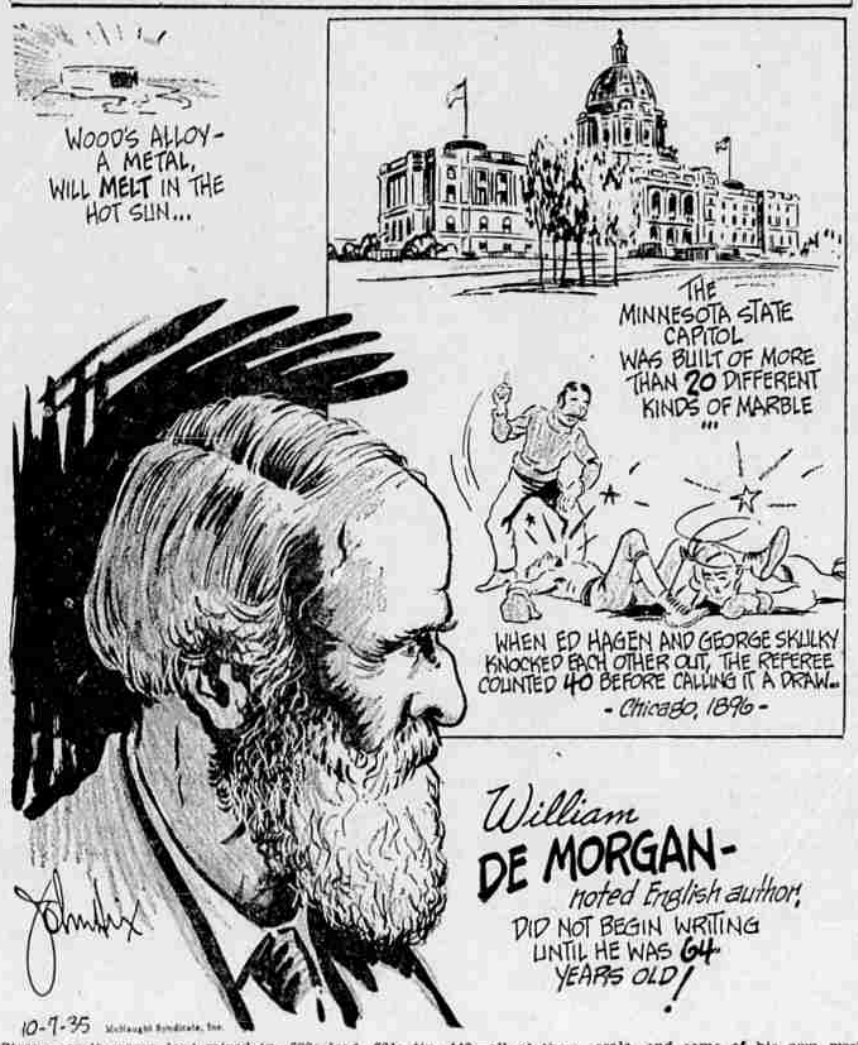
High Court Light Globe Sets Record

SALEM, Oct. 7.—(AP)—Twenty-two years of service without a flicker and never failing to cast its gleam throughout that length of time an average of four times a day, was the record of four times a day, was the moved from the supreme court building!

The building superintendent under the secretary of state was asked to replace a globe that was growing dim. Upon taking the 300-watt light down, it was discovered the electric light was placed in the building when it was constructed in 1913, and still was not burned out.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



Strange as it seems, lead mixed in the correct proportions with bismuth, tin and cadmium, all of them metals, produces an alloy that will melt at 65.5 degrees Centrigrade, or about 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Although it is generally classed as a lead alloy, there is nearly twice as much bismuth in it as lead. Wood's alloy is made of 15 parts bismuth, eight parts lead, four parts tin and thre eparts cadmium. Melting points of these metals are: bismuth, 519.8; cadmium, 609; lead, 621; tin, 449—all of them much higher than the melting point of their alloy.

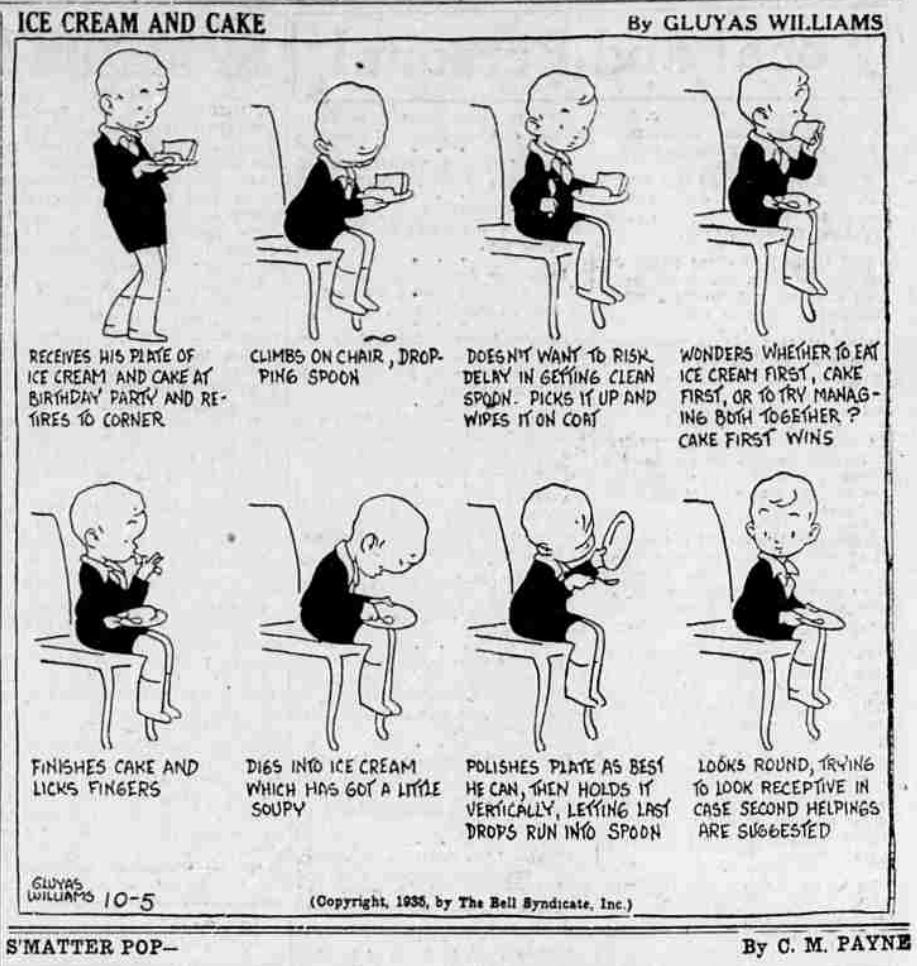
William de Morgan, son of the great Augustus de Morgan, was born in London in 1839. Most of his life he spent as an artist and potterer. He rediscovered the lost art of obtaining certain colors in glazed tiles, and invented many devices used in the art. He formed a company which produced pottery on a commercial scale, and some of his own work is today prized as museum pieces.

He did not begin writing until he was 64 years old, and later retired from business to begin a highly successful literary career. His first, and most widely read novel was Joseph Vance, published in 1906. Other writings included Alice-for-Short, Somehow Good, When Ghost Meets Ghost and The Old Madhouse.

Tomorrow: Gold Is Everywhere.

ICE CREAM AND CAKE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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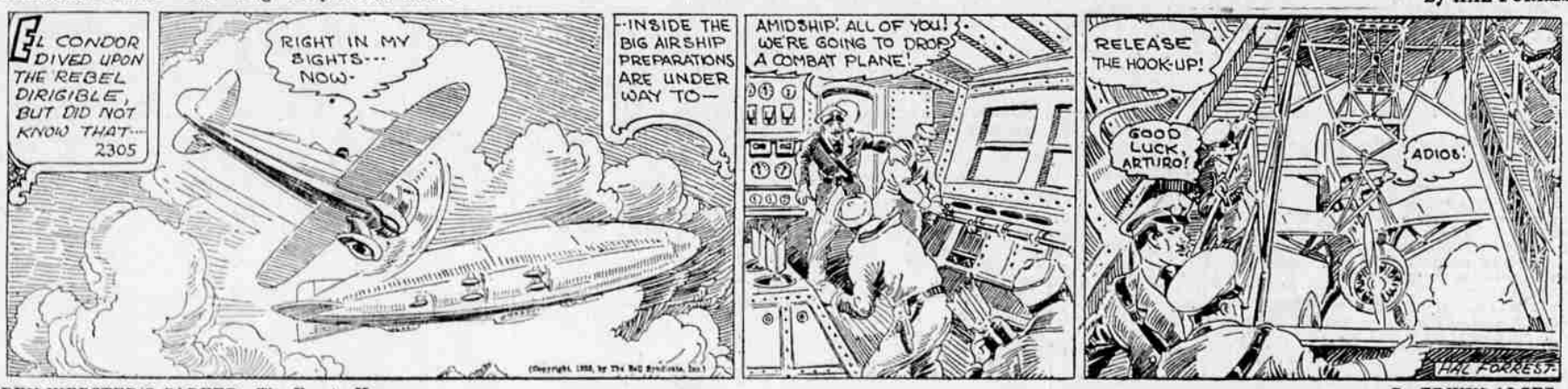
S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The "Dirg" Prepares for Battle!

By HAL FORREST



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Empty House

By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Wake Up!

By SOL HESS