TRIPARTITE CONTROL OF RAILROADS WOULD BE A FAILURE AND A DISASTER

CONGRESS and the American people have been confronted with a demand by the railroad brotherhoods that the private owners of the railroads be retired from control and that that control be lodged in a tripartite association of railway employes, operating officials and the public.

The demand has to be considered seriously and with thought to determining whether private, government, or tripartite ownership is best. The subject of tripartite control is open for discussion. At first glance the following ideas suggest themselves:

Control and operation of the railroads by operating officials, employes and the public would amount to control and operation of the railroads by officials and employes. The public, that is to say the government, would figure only nominally, in all probability, until it came time to pay operating deficits.

This system of operation would tend to lower efficiency to the vanishing point.

Supporters of the demand may argue that efficiency would be stimulated by the desire to give good service in order that a greater volume of freight and passenger traffic might be secured, each road for itself, and larger dividends might be possible. They may say this would encourage competition between roads for careful handling, prompt loading and speedy shipments.

But it is probably true that such an invigorating ambition would exist on relatively few lines. It is probable that dividends could be paid on more than 25 percent of the railroads, even if all the "water" were boiled out of the stock and even if the roads were most carefully and intelligently administered.. The remaining majority of lines would slump. There would be a tendency to routine, a tendency not to struggle for dividends which, under the most hopeful conditions, could only be secured by the most intelligent planning and the most assiduous work; a tendency, in short, to let things "rock along" and the public make up the deficit.

Thus competition would vanish and the last incentive to good service likewise would disappear. Tripartite control would be worse than government control, in that particular.

Glen E. Plumb, author of the new plan, declared before the house interstate commerce committee Friday that "organized labor is not willing to have the government operate the railroads because it does not believe so great an industry can be conducted by any political autocracy. If we leave operation in the hands of political appointees we would place the railway systems ultimately in the hands of politicians and that, we submit, cannot be done safely."

However, the fact remains that under government operation, there would be some central responsibility. The political party in control of the government would feel itself responsible for the success or failure of railroad administration during their tenure. Under official-employe-government control, who would be the man on any road to whom to point and say: "You are to blame?" Responsibility would be passed from one to another with resulting inefficiency.

In an organization of this kind, the public would suffer not only poorer service than is received now, but at higher cost. Let it be supposed that on a railroad there were two directors representing the officials, two representing the employes and two representing the government. Opportunity would be presented, on prosperous roads, of forming voting combinations of the first two groups of directors to vote salaries and wages high enough to absorb any surplus revenue earned by the road and the directors representing the government could not prevent it because they would be outvoted. On roads not prosperous, not in the dividend class, the same combination could be worked to boost salaries and wages at the expense of the government.

Be sure that it would be at the expense of the government, meaning the American people, because it is certain that neither officials nor employes would bind themselves to share losses of the roads as they desire to share profits.

When Edward Hurley assumed the chairmanship of the emergency fleet corporation, the government shipbuilding concern, in the early days of the war, he did it, as he said afterward, with considerable optimism because he believed the absence of competition, the ability to buy at will and the spur of patriotism on the men who were working for the government in building ships at a critical period would make for success. But he became disillusioned in time as he saw, first in one shipyard and then in another, a steady slackening of effort, a continual decline in volume and speed of output that could be ascribable only to government control and the absence of authority and competition. If such conditions existed at a time when patriotism should have overcome the ordinary tendencies of human nature, what would happen under a "soviet" administration of railroads?

Consider also, for a moment, what dissatisfaction among the railroad men themselves would be created. Officials and employes on lines like the New York Central and the Pennsylvania, which lines are so strongly intrenched and so favored by conditions as to be big earners of revenue, would divide a great profit among themselves, either in salary and wages or in dividends, or both. Officials and employes on lean roads in the west would work just as hard, but at very much smaller pay. Either they would desert the poor road for the rich one or they would work on with a grievance. If it were attempted to pool all the surplus revenue of such roads as had anything left above operating expenses and distribute it evenly to officials and employes of every road in the country, whether dividend earning or not, there would be dissatisfaction among the men on the lines that earned the surplus; proportionately greater dissatisfaction among the men of the lines who earned the largest surplus. They would feel that a part of what they had earned by their labor and enterprise had been taken away from them and given to others who had not so exerted themselves. Certainly they would checkmate it by making all surplus disappear in the form of larger salaries, wages and operating expenses.

Nor would it be possible, under such control as is proposed, to bring about those extensions and improvements of lines and purchase of new equipment as would be possible under private ownership or even under government control for the minds of the railroad operators would be set on routine and the largest possible immediate salary or wage. Not for a minute would they countenance any financial curtailments necessary to finance extensions and improvements running into millions of dollars.

The tripartite plan calls for the retirement of the present owners of the railroads, they to receive government bonds for the actual value of their property.

This presents a number of grave difficulties. First, it means that the people of the United States would be taxed to fund bonds of the government to purchase the railroads from their owners and present them to the operating officials, employes and, lastly, the public.

The proposal is that the owners, meaning millions of large and small stockholders throughout the country, receive "a fair valuation," which means, in the minds of the brotherhoods, the squeezing of "water" out of the stocks by process of putting replacement valuation on the properties.

But on what shall replacement valuation be figured? On the valuation figures already at hand, some of which are years old and few of which are at all recent? You can't tell a man you will allow him what it would cost to replace his railroad in 1912. He will insist that today's costs of labor, material, etc., serve as the replacement basis, and he would be right, but figuring on that basis would run up the cost enormously.

And mere physical valuation would not be acceptable for there is more value in a railroad or any other institution than the mere materials that are in it. There is the value of the organization, of the system of doing business, of the good will. Consider these few facts and guess how mammoth would be the task of reaching an equitable settlement with the railroad stockholders.

The arguments against socialization of the railroads seem insuperable. If there is any good that could come of it, except to a comparative handful of men on a few favored lines, the fact is not apparent. The country is not ready for soviet railroad administration.

Furthermore, any such plan, if adopted, would furnish a precedent for its application to other industries. It would lead, comparatively soon, to complete socialism.

And now Mr. Lansing admits that of the Americans at the peace conference, Mr. Wilson was chief cook and the others were the bottle washers.

A Houston paper says: "Villista bandits put to rout by federals." That's making them hit the trail.

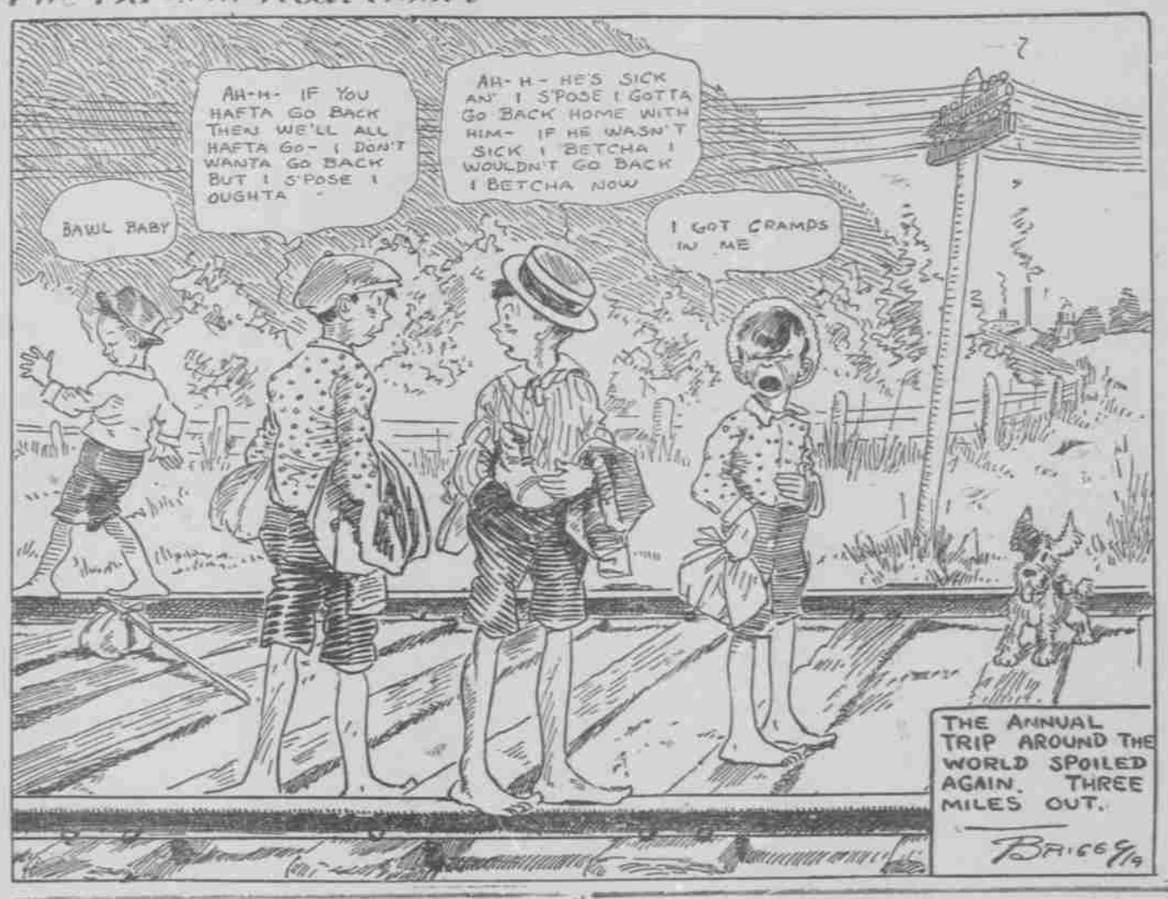
The bathing girl of today is almost adequately garbed if she wears a coat of tan.

Going gunning for the high cost of living merely seems to scare it up higher.

If you have profiteers, prepare to shed them now.

The success of any great moral enterprise does not depend upon numbers. —William Lloyd Garrison.

The Days of Real Sport - - - - - *By Briggs*



When A Fellow Buys Up A Lot Of Stocks, He Grows Leary Abopt 'Em

By S. C. B.

DO YOU SPECULATE?

COMMON stock shares of $10 par value—offered by us at $3.25 per share—of the ..... Oil company seem to us to afford an extraordinary speculative opportunity. In our judgment these shares possess possibilities of profit in very large amount. We recommend these shares. The ..... Oil company is going on its third year. A big company and a prosperous one should be made of it.

We will be glad to receive your order and remittance for such number of shares as you wish to purchase.

DEAR SIRS:
* * *
YOUR CIRCULAR came.
* * *
AS PRINTED above.
* * *
IN THIS morning's mail.
* * *
AND I want to thank you.
* * *
FOR THE opportunity.
* * *
YOU OFFER to me.
* * *
TO ENRICH myself.
* * *
BUT A long time ago.
* * *
I MADE up my mind.
* * *
THAT WITH one more sucker.
* * *
BEING BORN every minute.
* * *
THEY DIDN'T need me.
* * *
AND EVER since then.
* * *
I'VE HAD fairly good sense.
* * *
BUT I have a proposal.
* * *
I'D LIKE to make.
* * *
AND IT is this.
* * *
IN AN old warehouse.
* * *
I HAVE some shares.
* * *
OF MINING stock.
* * *
THAT I acquired.
* * *
AWAY OUT in the west.
* * *
DURING mining booms.
* * *
THAT USED to come.
* * *
EVERY LITTLE while.
* * *
AND ONE of the shares.
* * *
IF MY memory serves
* * *
IS A three color share.
* * *
WITH A beautiful bird.
* * *
WITH CRIMSON wings.
* * *
THAT STRETCH right out.
* * *
TILL THEY almost touch.
* * *
THE ARTISTIC border.
* * *
THE PRINTER put on.
* * *
WHEN HE printed the stock.
* * *
IT'S DONE in a tint.
* * *
AND IS really grand.
* * *
AND ANOTHER share.
* * *
HAS A great bear head.
* * *
EMBOSSED in gold.
* * *
AND THE border is gold.
* * *
AND SOME of the lettering.
* * *
IS PRINTED in gold.
* * *
AND NEXT to the one.
* * *
WITH THE crimson bird.
* * *
IT'S THE finest I have.
* * *
AND ANOTHER one.
* * *
WHICH I think comes third.
* * *
WAS ORIGINALLY meant.
* * *
FOR A fishing concern.
* * *
AND IT has a fish.
* * *
I THINK it's a perch.
* * *
RIGHT ACROSS the front.
* * *
AND WHAT I propose.
* * *
IS AN even trade.
* * *
OF ONE of these shares.
* * *
FOR ONE of yours.
* * *
BUT I'D much prefer.
* * *
YOU WOULD leave me the fish
* * *
BECAUSE IT never fails.
* * *
TO HAND me a laugh.
* * *
I THANK you.

TEACHING MECHANICS.

The new high school in Merced is to have an automobile shop so that high school students may be given the rudiments of gas engine practice. It is gradually becoming recognized that mothers are regarding the automobile about as essential as the kitchen table.

Queen Victoria of Spain is an honorary colonel of Spanish cavalry.

Patter And Chatter.

By S. E. KISER

SIMPLE SIMON.

SIMPLE SIMON played the races,
And was filled with vain regrets;
Wise young men with smiling faces
Told him how to place his bets.
With no money left whatever,
Simon, walking homeward, swore:
"I have learned my lesson! Never,
Never, never say more!"

SIMPLE SIMON saved each penny
That he earned by daily toil;
Then, one day, he read how many
Men were getting rich in oil.
Smith and Jones and Brown and Meyer,
All were sudden millionaires—
Simple Simon took a flier,
Loading up with ten-cent shares.

YOU have guessed the truth; they flimmed him
In a game as old as Time,
And refused, when they had trimmed him,
To hand back a single dime.
Simple Simon fumed and fretted,
Howled, in fact, till he was hoarse,
But the folly he regretted
Could not be undone, of course.

SIMPLE SIMON, plunging blindly,
Bought a patch of weeds one day;
Fate looked on his venture kindly,
And a city moved that way!
When they'd handed millions to him,
Simple Simon, stepping high
And with proud thrills passing through him,
Said: "How wise a man am I!"

OUR OVERWORKEKD PREACHERS.

Clergymen are beginning to want an eight-hour day. As far as the golf players are concerned, they may have it, with Sundays off in addition.

ONE IS ALWAYS CROSSING YOUR PATH.
There is use for the watch on the wrist,
And feathers help some kinds of hats,
But why do people insist
On filling the world with black cats?

Abe Martin

WHO remembers when th' stores staid open as long as ther wus a nickel on th' streets? Auntie Moon took a turn for th' better yisterday, but suffered a open muffler relapse about midnight.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Which one of our presidents traveled the most?—A. C.

A. Roosevelt's tour in 1903 covered 14,000 miles, while Taft traveled 13,000 miles on one trip in 1911.

Q. What is the meaning of Rio de Janeiro?—F. M. M.

A. This term means "River of January," and was applied to the capital of Brazil because of its discovery in that month.

Q. Is it true that the Armenians were so maddened by hunger that they dug up the corpses in their cemeteries and ate them?—F. T.

A. The committee of aid for the starving in Russia Armenia report that at Igdyr, Armenia, they found open graves and gnawed bones to confirm this horrible tale.

Q. How is the altitude of a place ascertained.—C. W.

A. By observing the pressure of the air with such instruments as an aneroid barometer, or registering barograph.

Q. What was the origin of the motto: "United we stand, divided we fall?"—F. N.

A. It comes from one of Aesop's fables called "The Four Oxen and the Lion." Four oxen were attacked by a lion. They were safe when they turned their tails together, and presented their horns, but when they separated the lion killed them singly.

Q. What kind of work does a sapper have to do?—T. F.

A. This is the name given to men in the engineering corps who do such work as tunneling under enemy trenches so they can be mined and blown up.

Q. What are the roots of the French word "camouflage?"—W. C.

A. This French word is a slang term derived from the verb "se camouffler," meaning to disguise oneself.

Q. Why does a white feather denote cowardice?—J. M.

A. The expression, "He showed the white feather," has its origin in reference to game cocks. Pure bred game cocks have only red and black feathers, but cross breeds have a white feather in the tail. The slightest impurity in the strain is said to destroy the bird's pluck, hence the white feather is used to denote cowardice.

Q. Where was cologne invented?—J. F. V.

A. The first cologne was called Hungary water, from the country of its invention. It was made from spirits of wine distilled upon rosemary.

Q. Is it true that the phrase, "don't care a dam," is not profane?—H. E.

A. It is not profane. The "dam" is a small coin current in India, and the phrase properly speaking means "don't care two pence."

Q. What is meant by the "freedom of the seas," and why Great Britain adverse to it?—H. K. T.

A. By freedom of the seas the United States insists that neutral ships should be free to sail the high seas during war without danger to the life or limb of crews or passengers—in other words that submarine sinkings should not be permitted without the vessel having first been searched to ascertain if it was carrying contraband, and passengers and crew had been given time to leave the boat. Britain is opposed to submarines sinking ships without warning, but believes in restricting the freedom of the seas in war times to the extent of preventing even food reaching an enemy.

(Any reader can get the answer to any question by writing The Herald Information Bureau, Frederic J. Haskin, Director, Washington, D. C. Give full name and address and enclose 2 cent stamp for return postage. Be brief. All inquiries are confidential, the replies being sent direct to each individual.)

Little Interviews

Bad Packing Costs Fruit Growers Loss Of Local Market Embargo On Food Exports Might Lower Cost Of Living

"HERE," said an El Paso groceryman, "is an example of what we get when we try to sell the local stuff—fruit raised in the El Paso valley," and he picked up a rotten peach on the top of a box that had just come in from the lower valley, then another, and another. Then he began to dig down into the box and almost half of the peaches either had rotten spots in them or were already decaying. As he said, they would not have remained fit to eat during the day.

"What if I send out to your wife," he asked. "She would order no more peaches from our store. We have to throw these out. The result is that we lose almost half the peaches in that box. Why? Because they were not properly sorted and packed.

"That is why we order from out of the city. We are forced to order from people who carefully select and pack their peaches. Some of the valley growers do so, but few of them take the time or trouble to do so.

"Before valley fruit raisers can dispose of their wares, they must pack them as they should be packed. Then the groceryman can sell them without losing money and local people will buy them.

"They call it profiteering if I buy peaches from the valley farmer at three cents a pound and sell them for eight and a third, yet I lose about half of the total I pay for, so it makes the peaches I am able to sell actually cost me about six cents a pound."

* * *

"The high cost of living could be materially decreased by stopping all shipment of food supplies to foreign countries," said Pendor S. Carter. "One of the best methods to force down the price of food is to hold our present supply for home consumption by prohibiting foreign shipments for a period of at least six months. I believe congress could destroy the profiteering menace within a short time by this method."

* * *

"The work of distributing the free text books is going to make the start of actual class work a little late this year," said superintendent of schools A. H. Hughey. "This work is something that the pupils in El Paso have never experienced before and a majority of the teachers have never had duties of the kind. Because of these facts and because it is the first time that the distribution has been ordered in the state, it will take longer than it will next year."

* * *

"No shortage of sugar exists in El Paso at the present time," said C. S. Nanita. "The wholesale mercantile houses of El Paso and the southwest are supplied with this commodity from California and the Pacific coast, and no scarcity of the product is anticipated in this section. The government recently asked for the shipment of 27,000,000 pounds of sugar from the warehouses at Fort Sam Houston to one of the northern cities, which the wholesalers of San Antonio protested on the ground that south Texas is experiencing a shortage in sugar. South Texas receives its supply from the cane fields of Louisiana and, according to reports, a scarcity existing in that section caused the wholesalers' protest."

* * *

"Now is the best time for El Paso housewives to can peaches for the winter," said Roland Harwell, agricultural agent of the chamber of commerce. "This week will be the peak of the season and housewives will be able to secure choice fruit for canning at a price lower than that paid for other garden or orchard products this season. Many producers and fruit growers in the valley have an abundance of fruit for which they cannot find an available market and will be glad to furnish fruit for canning purposes. Any housewife who desires to secure some of these peaches can ascertain the names of growers by phoning the agricultural department of the chamber of commerce, where a complete list of growers is on file."

* * *

"I believe that the custom of signing notes and the endorsing of bank checks many of which prove to be worthless is one of the main reasons for many persons' hard financial condition," said I. N. Davis. "A large number of men are so good natured that it is hard for them to refuse to sign notes when requested to do so by close friends, yet it has been my observation that many honest men have been thrown into a very critical financial condition by being compelled to pay notes which they signed, or make good worthless checks endorsed by them."

* * *

"We're doing a lot of talk about 'why doesn't Carranza exterminate the bandits of Mexico,'" said H. D. Baldfourt, "and while we are critically watching our neighbor's troubles are overlooking a set of bandits in the United States who are doing far more to harm us than Villa and his gang are doing to hurt Mexico. These are the sleek, fat, self satisfied profiteers who are eating the heart out of American democracy, and robbing the working class day by day. And they are doing it because we let them. Not that I would see us adopt any drastic methods as have the bolsheviki, but it is time we ferreted out these profiteers and put them where they can't do us any more harm. I know men in El Paso who are growing rich at the expense of others here, and who are as worthless as men can be. Let's get together and see what we can do in a sane and sensible way."

* * *

"I am surprised to see American women, apparently of good family, going to Juarez alone, spending the afternoon, gambling and then returning in a semi-intoxicated state," said Miguel Flores. "We Juarez business men would like to see the ports opened because it brings us much more trade, but personally I am glad that the one day passports are not to be continued. I dislike to see women drinking and gambling. I do not oppose their coming over here with their husbands, but I hate to see them come alone (some of them I know to be married) and meet men over here with whom they spend the afternoons drinking and gambling. There is a class of men who come over here, who do not work, and who prey upon other Americans, and it is usually that class who manage to meet the American women and, I suppose, in the end they get most of their money."

* * *

"I notice that there has been comment about raising rent," said A. P. Coles, real estate man. "Evidently this is misunderstood by the public. Last year and the year before, while the war was on, tenants requested agents to reduce rents which the owners agreed to do, on condition that they would raise again to normal after the war was over. I know of no owner of rental houses who is getting more than a just income from them. While rents may seem high they are not as high here as in other places and I doubt if any property owner is receiving more than 8 per cent, and most owners much less, on their investment. After paying taxes, which are gradually increasing, insurance and repairs. No one can afford to own rental property, unless it pays him a reasonable income. As to price of houses, we are offering for sale a great many houses past one year old for much less than they can be built for today. You cannot get people with means to put up buildings, either residence or business, unless they can get a reasonable income from them because these people can easily lend money at 7 and 8 per cent and have no tax or insurance to pay. However, we find little demand for money at 7 and 8 per cent. There seems to be a great deal more money offered to loan on good real estate securities than there are borrowers. This is probably caused by the fact that there is less building this year than in the past, but money seems to be plentiful for good mortgages."

* * *

"Reduction of billions of dollars in taxes by the government will mean the cutting out of a number of appropriations," said Karl M. Roberts, manager of the chamber of commerce. "However, it is not anticipated that agriculture and reclamation work will suffer from any reduction, since these constitute the very backbone of the nation. There promises to be unusual development in both agricultural and reclamation work during the year."

13th Are You Superstitious?

By IMOGENE BURCH

CLOTHES SUPERSTITIONS.

THERE are superstitions innumerable connected with the clothes we wear. Almost everyone is more or less familiar with many of them.

If you put a garment on wrong side out, by all means let it remain so; to change it would change your good luck to bad. A daughter of one of the presidents of the United States tells me that this is her pet superstition. "It is infallable," she says.

A hole in your stocking means that you will receive a letter. A run or "Jacob ladder" means that you are to have a dream that will come true. This last superstition doubtless originating with Jacob's dream of the angels.

If you meet a friend wearing new clothes, pinch him for good luck.

It is considered a good omen to meet a washer woman with a bundle of clothes if the clothes are clean, but a bad omen if they are dirty.

If a corner of a woman's dress should turn back, she should make a wish, and that wish is sure to come true, so say the sages.

A shoe lying inverted is a bad omen, one portending a family quarrel unless it is at once put in its proper position, according to the ancient Parsees.

Pick up a hairpin and hang it on some handy object and you will be invited to a party.

Many of us have little pet superstitions about our clothes. I have a friend who tells me that everything depends on what kind of a time she has the first day she wears a new dress, especially a party dress. "No matter where I go, if I did not have a good time the first evening when I wore a new gown I never have a good time when I wear that dress again," she says. "I have an old green evening dress which I have worn until now I almost hold my breath when ever I put it on for fear it won't last the evening through, but I simply haven't the heart to throw it away because without single exception, I have had a glorious time on every occasion where I have worn it.—Copyright 1919, Thompson Feature Service.)

Little Chris

"CHRIS," said mother, "make me think of that tomorrow," mentioning something she did not wish to forget.

"Oh, mother," said Little Chris, "I can't use my thinker to think for everybody. I use my thinker to think for myself; you use your's for yourself."

Short Snatches From Everywhere

Then there's the fat woman who takes so much exercise to reduce that she eats more than ever.—Los Angeles Herald.

A malicious person makes this suggestion: To replace the famous but obsolete slogan, "He kept us out of war," I offer as a suggestion, "He kept us in the dark." An open slogan, openly arrived at."—Topeka Capital.

Since his wonderful performance on the witness stand, the Topeka Capital has some curiosity to know who writes "Mr. Ford's Own Page" in the Dearborn Independent.—Kansas City Star.

When we finally bury the hatchet with the Germans it will be just as well to note carefully where it is buried.—New Yorw World.

Senator Borah acts as if he had bet on Willard.—Columbus, Ohio, State Journal.

Rippling Rhymes

By WALT MASON

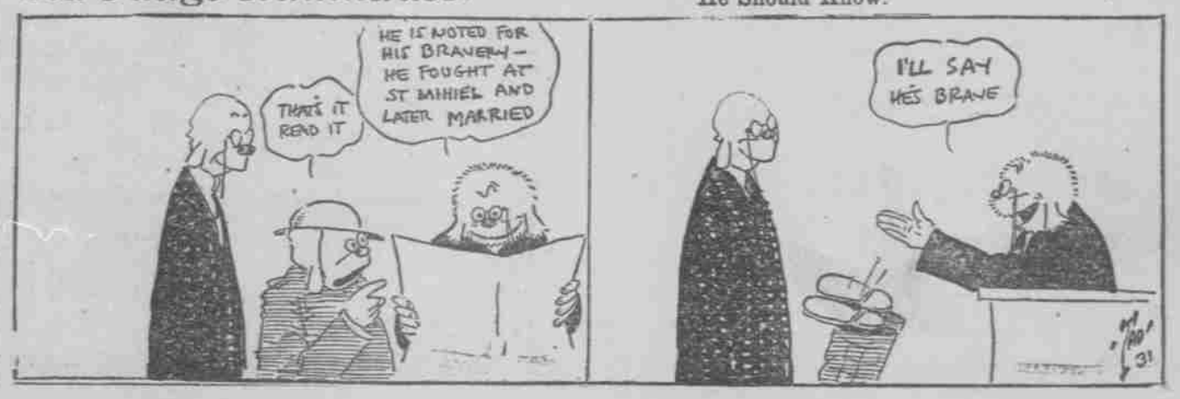
Moving Around

WHEN I blew into Johnson's store, to buy some prunes for Lizzie, no customers were on the floor, but all the clerks were busy. They carried boxes to and fro, and swept and brushed and dusted; oh, everyone was on the go, until his gallus busted. I said to Johnson, cheerful-faced, the tumult round him viewing, "Oh, why all this indecent haste, when there is nothing doing? Why don't the clerks sit down and rest, their useless labors dropping? Then they would bump and do their best when customers come shopping." Said Johnson, "People pass my store, on errands vain and dizzy; and they look through the open door and see the clerks all busy; and they reflect, 'That Johnson gent is surely up and coming; while other merchants make lament, he keeps things fairly humming.' If they looked in and saw my men all half asleep and yawning, they'd think I ran a moldy den, and go their way dogging. There's nothing like a busy front when trade is slack and dragging; so every clerk must have his stunt, and keep his trilbys wagging." I swiped some cheese and then I went, and, as I went, reflected, "There are upon this Johnson gent no flies that I've detected."

Copyright by George Matthew Adams

WALT MASON.

Old Judge Rumhauser - - - The Judge Is Married; He Should Know. - - - *By Tad*



EL PASO HERALD

DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE, THAT NO GOOD CAUSE SHALL LACK A CHAMPION, AND THAT EVIL SHALL NOT THRIVE UNOPPOSED.

H. D. Slater, editor and controlling owner, has directed The Herald for 31 years; J. C. Wilmoth is Manager and G. A. Martin is Managing Editor.

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