EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY CAN FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING HERE TO READ

STEALTHY TERROR

By JOHN FERGUSON

Copyright, 1918, by Public Ledger Co.

THE STORY THUS FAR

Abercromby, a Scotch surgeon, finishing his education in Berlin, accidentally comes upon a crowd of German plotters murdering one of their number in the Kesselstrasse. Before this man, Otto Meschel, dies he asks Abercromby, after the latter's vain attempt at rescue, to take a small leather packet "over." Without quite understanding, the Scotsman accepts it, and his troubles begin. After refusing to accept a warning to return the packet at the peril of his life he has several narrow escapes from death, and the last time is saved by the intervention of a Miss Thompson, who admits him into a friend's home.

While there the Germans attempt to enter, but are prevented. Before leaving, however, they kill one of their number. This gives Abercromby a chance to escape, and he ships the body out in a box, followed by Miss Thompson. A spy follows this strange procession to the railroad station, where Miss Thompson buys tickets for Hamburg. Abercromby follows in disguise, having planned to meet his rescuer on the boat to England.

In Hamburg Abercromby learns that everything is being watched, and while in a fret over the added dangers he hears a drunken sailor singing, whom he follows and talks to in a saloon.

The sailor's assistant is in the hospital as the result of a brawl, and Abercromby jumps at the chance of entering the boat disguised as the missing stoker. The pair, simulating drunkenness, get safely into the boat.

Abercromby does not disclose his presence until the boat arrives safely. Then, at Miss Thompson's instigation, he opens the wallet and finds a child's drawing, by Prince Eitel to his father, as a birthday present. Abercromby's humiliation does not prevent him from noticing that a waiter has observed the whole scene.

CHAPTER VII

THE London train, when it left that afternoon, left without me. I draw a veil over that part of my journey home, which was made in the company of Miss Margarita Thompson. It was full of constraint on my part, and as for her, she made many attempts, for which I hated her, to be kind. Perhaps you can imagine the fool I felt — all these alarms and excursions and accompanying mysteries—for what? A little boy's drawings for his dear papa's birthday! Miss Thompson never once referred to that accursed paper during the journey, nor did I, you may be sure; but this very silence was eloquent. The one thing I had to be thankful for was the opening of the thing before I had taken the train to London; it was, at least, some comfort that I had not rushed into the Whitehall office.

When at last the train drew up at the junction for St. Andrews, and the girl had to change, I am afraid the words of thanks that I made myself address to her were more cold and formal than I could have wished.

She had been more than kind, but I had not understood her lately, and though the memory of her goodness to me almost made me forget, for the moment, yet, when at the last I held her hand to say good-by, I saw her lips tremble at the corners, and knew that she found it hard to restrain a smile. I could not, of course, deny that the affair had its amusing side to others; but when the big express moved on and she, standing clear of the baggage and passengers, waved me farewell, I was glad of every roll of the wheels that left her, a little rapidly diminishing figure on the platform.

In the history of the human race there have been, indeed, scattered examples of individual old men temporarily become ridiculous in the eyes of their brothers, who yet did not find the experience insupportable; but the young man has never existed who, suddenly and incontestably fallen from the heroic to the ridiculous in a woman's eyes, would not find it preferable to be dead. I am increasingly aware of that. I perceive, too, that the fewer the years of life men have left them, the fewer become the things for which they would willingly die; but at twenty-seven the catalogue is still relatively extensive, and perhaps Ridiculous to Woman is the last item to go.

It is hard to say why I didn't burn that paper when I got to my room that night. And anyway there was no fire. I tossed it into the empty grate.

In the succeeding days it was a source of unfailing delight to me to visit all the places and things in the garden and woods which had associations with my boyhood.

This house, which had been my mother's home ever since my father's death, stood on the foothills of the Grampians, and four miles from the railway station, near which also ran the great North road from Perth to Aberdeen. The village lay on the road to the station, a little more than a mile distant, and our house stood on a side road which traversed the glen beyond us, and crossed the Grampians into Deeside. The house itself was about a hundred and fifty yards from the road, facing south, with a little garden in front that sloped down to the fields, and it seemed to seek shelter against the wild northwest winds, so close did it stand to the big wood at the back. It was a wild and lonely countryside, very pleasant in summer, but in winter—and winters in the Grampians were long—eerie to a degree. Then, when darkness began to fall at about four in the afternoon and the frost stiffened the snow on the ground so that it "crunched" to one's tread at every step, to come on that house with its dark and mysterious background of larches and firs, was to receive an impression of remoteness and silence that lingered long in the memory.

Of wild life there was, of course, an abundance; and when one's remembrances stirred about that old place, it was not so much by people, of whom there were few, as by the wild things of the forest and moor; black crows in slow flight in the gathering dusk over snow, the young deer, no bigger than a sheep dog, that came without fear about the garden in the early spring, the rabbits loping out of the wood in sunny evenings, the hen-pheasant with her speckled brood, the monotonous note of the wood-doves, of which one never tired, the squirrels that chased each other with incredible agility, chattering with mirth—these, and not people, are what one remembers best.

It was to this life I returned, after, as I thought, the very unpleasant chapter in my experiences, just recorded, had been closed for ever. And the old place at once stirred in me a zest for old and half-forgotten things. When I was a boy there were times when I looked outward and away from the place, to the great world that lay beyond, the world of romance and strange adventures, of which I had read in books, but never seen, the tremendous cities, the soldiers that marched behind brass bands, going to the wars, the tall ships, and sailors with gold-ringed ears and swarthy faces, who came from foreign countries. But now, I felt that while this wide world was still curious, for a while I could find my own home and countryside glorious enough.

My mother would have liked nothing better than to see me settle down as a general medical practitioner in some quiet place, driving my own Ford car, and familiar with the names of every cottage baby in the parish. Don't imagine for a moment that I am sneering at this country has no class of professional man more worthy of honor than that of the medical profession, men who are kindly and tolerant invariably, which the ministers are sometimes not, often like the minister, underpaid but seldom overvalued. But the glamour that belongs to the specialist's side of the profession was too strong for me to resist. I told her this one day when I was helping her in the garden. Perhaps she was a little disappointed, but she made no remark, and I made haste to change the subject.

"I see you have 'wired' the garden," she said, going on with her work. "That is for the rabbits; they eat everything."

"Is it be any good? I saw old Mac, the forester, yesterday, and he says that the rabbits are learning

"Learn?" she said.

He appeared to be a peddler, for a yellow tin box, to which a leather strap was attached, lay on the ground at his feet.

"He says it's true. They sink the netting round a nursery of young trees, so as to stop them burrowing under, and yet the damage still went on, and they could not understand it till they set a snare, for a joke, on the top of a gate. The next day they had a rabbit in it."

"Humph!" she remarked. "In your long absence you have forgotten old Peter's reputation."

It was great fun, too, to roam the old forgotten ways through the mighty woods. Such strangers as did come to our part of the country were generally people interested in forestry, for ours was one of the few places in which forestry was treated as a science; indeed, several of the foresters had been to Bavaria to study German methods. It was one of Peter Milne's tragedies, perhaps the greatest that he had been thought too old to go. What a fund of material he would have gathered for his favorite occupation, which, after all, was not forestry but romance. The old man, however, unlike myself, was wise enough to find it in his daily work, in the lonely woods where he had been all his life.

I had been little more than a week at home, and was in a fair way toward forgetting the late romantic adventures that had ended so ludicrously at that table in the Edinburgh hotel, when I was startled by an incident that occurred, an incident that brought back into my newly ordered and serene life that element of the mysterious of which I had lately had more than enough. One day, having hunted out an old trout-rod to try my hand at the old sport, and the burn being very low on account of the long spell of fine weather, I had gone away up the glen and fished the whole day beside a little lock. The thing happened as I was coming home. But for the proper understanding of what happened you must understand something of the configuration of the glen through which I traveled. Both sides of the glen, which at its widest was never more than two hundred yards, were covered with thickly planted woods. The road ran along the south side, and the burn usually kept to the north, but twice diverged and cut across the road, and at these two places there were bridges, but for foot-passengers only.

It was a calm, still evening, one of the first with a sunset since my return, when I set out to walk the three miles of the glen that lay between the little lock and my home. I was pleasantly tired with my long day, for the road took its way through a lovely country, and I made good going, while the sun, low down on the hills behind, made my shadow grotesquely elongated take giant strides on the road ahead.

I met no one, but once, away to the left among the trees, I heard the reverberant crack of a gun that spoke of a gamekeeper on his rounds.

When, however, I approached the first of the two footbridges that span the burn at the point where the glen narrows and forces the water to take a loop across the road I became aware of a man who stood on the narrow rustic bridge and looked down on the burn. He appeared to be a peddler, for a yellow tin box, to which a leather strap was attached, lay on the ground at his feet. Now it was a rare thing to see any of his kind on that road, for, as I have said, the district was remote, a place that lay far from the main roads, and the population was sparse.

Tramps and hawkers were quite unfamiliar figures, for this road ran over miles of moor and mountain, and so as I came to the peddler I was prepared to warn him that for the next twenty miles he would find none to whom he might sell his wares save grouse and the wild deer of the glens.

He was a short, slight man, spare of flesh, but as the police put it on certain grim occasions, apparently well nourished.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

What It May Come To

Slavey—Please, mum, the coal ration has come. There are thirty-one little lumps—that's ten for the drawing room and ten for the dining room and ten for the kitchen. If you please, what shall I do with the lump over?—London Opinion.

The Super-Hun

—The Tatler.

"Yer talk a lot about the 'Un atrocities, Mrs. Large; I should like yer to 'ave my old man for a week or two."

THE DAILY NOVELETTE

UNCLE ZEKE'S MILLENNIUM

By HAROLD CARTER

"THIS war," said Uncle Zeke, wagging his head solemnly, "is the beginning of the thousand years in which Satan's to rule. I've looked it up in Revelations, and I'm sure I've got it right. Why, the figures correspond exactly. 'Times and times and half a time,' it says."

And he went on to explain the meaning of the mysterious prediction which has baffled all the students of the Scriptures. As Uncle Zeke had a comfortable fortune, we listened respectfully.

"So you see, Henry," he continued, addressing my husband, "if the Holy Book speaks the truth, which I believe with all my heart, the world, as we know it, is coming to an end in three weeks—time at half-past 7 in the morning of Wednesday. Some time it ought to end on a Saturday night, but that's what the Book says, and it ain't for me to reason why. So, as I was about to say, I won't need my money after Tuesday night—except enough to pay the millennium when it comes at 7 the next morning, and I'm going to divide all I have between you and Nephew James and Niece Jenny."

Laying Plans

Henry and I had a considerable argument after we got home. Of course we realized that the many old men at his time of life, Uncle Zeke was failing. But we knew that if James Carnigan got hold of the third part of Uncle Zeke's money and Jenny Myers of the second third, wild horses wouldn't drag it from them when Uncle Zeke woke up and found the world hadn't ended as he expected it to.

"What we've got to do, Henry," I said, "is to stop Uncle Zeke giving his money away, or, if we can't do that, to get him to give it all to us, so that we can give it back to him. He won't last long, anyway, and maybe he'll have us in his everything as a reward for our honesty."

Henry thought that was best, and when I met Cousin Jenny on the street that morning the way she looked at me showed me that she was after Uncle Zeke's money. She had a new coat which made me think she'd been buying it because she felt sure of Uncle Zeke's fortune. And the first words she said confirmed my suspicions.

"Have you heard Uncle Zeke thinks the millennium is coming?" she asked.

"I have," I answered, "and likewise that he's going to divide up his money among his nephew and two nieces."

"It's a shame," says Cousin Jenny hotly. "Why, what'll he do when he wakes up and finds it was all a delusion?"

"He'll have just enough as much money as he had before," I answered.

"Well, you take the truth from me," snapped Cousin Jenny in her thirty and walked off in the rudest way.

Misunderstood

When Henry came home for lunch he told me that James had been into the store and was trying to get him not to take Uncle Zeke's money. So then I knew that Cousin James had something in his mind, too.

"Well, my dear," said Henry to me, "the best thing we can do is to go to Uncle Zeke and try to persuade him to let us take care of his money for him, in case he's made a mistake."

Which he did, and I never saw Uncle Zeke so angry in my life.

"You're the third," he says to me. "What with James and Jenny and you all trying to get hold of my property, you're debasing my faith in human nature. Not that it makes the least bit of difference, because after half-past seven on Wednesday morning come three weeks, money won't be of no use at all. Why, you poor, silly creatures, the very sidewalk we walk on will be made of gold. And the house-fronts will be of rubies and diamonds. It's all there," he says, slapping the Good Book.

He was so emphatic that we couldn't argue with him any more, and reluctantly Harry agreed to accept the third of his capital, which came to seven thousand dollars. He had drawn everything out of bank and sold out his holdings at a loss, and I tell you it made me gape to see Henry coolly pocketing seven thousand dollars in bills. Cousin James and Cousin Jenny had already had theirs.

"The poor old fellow will have an income of just six dollars a week when we hand this back to him," said Henry to me, as we walked homeward.

We put the money in the stocking in the chimney, and after that there was nothing to do but wait. Three weeks went by, and then we all got invitations to be at Uncle Zeke's house on Tuesday night at ten.

When we got there we found James and Jenny waiting in a sort of grim silence in the parlor, with Uncle Zeke holding out to them about Revelations.

"I've made a mistake, children," he says to us. "I wasn't allowing for the difference between American and original time. The millennium will begin exactly at three minutes before midnight tonight."

And he showed us a chart of the sky with which he had figured out his theory.

There was a dollar and nine cents on the table for the milkman, which Uncle Zeke had set there because he said that, though gold and silver wouldn't be anything but dross, it was a man's duty to pay his debts.

The Alternative

"Suppose the millennium doesn't come?" suggested Cousin James, about eleven o'clock. His words relieved me, because I had been getting a queer sort of creepy feeling, sitting there and waiting for the end of the world.

I thought Uncle Zeke would get mad, but to my surprise, he looked quite mournful.

"Children," he says, "I don't mind telling you now that I've had my doubts all along. That was what made me seem so sure. I wanted to show my faith, but somehow I've mistrusted whether it wouldn't be 500 years more instead of tonight. You see, there's a passage in Daniel which seems open to two meanings. But, anyway," he says, "it'll either be tonight or in exactly 500 years, if you add on another three."

I tell you, when it was five minutes before midnight I felt all shivery. And the hand went round to the three.

"It's coming now," says Uncle Zeke.

But it didn't come, and when midnight struck Uncle Zeke banged down his hand on the table.

"Gabriel can't be late," he says, like a disillusioned man. "It won't be for 500 years to come, and—and I'm a pauper."

"Oh, you ain't, Uncle Zeke," tells Henry, and shoves the $7000 under his nose.

And, would you believe it?—what did Cousin James and Cousin Jenny do but pull out seven thousand apiece and plish it onto the table?

"Why, Jenny?" I cried. "I thought you and James were trying to work up uncle into giving each of you everything, and I wanted to save it from you."

"Same here!" says Cousin James, staring at me.

But Jenny and I were kissing each other so hard that I only saw out of the tail of my eye how Uncle Zeke grabbed the bills and stowed them away.

Yes, human nature isn't so bad as some folks claim.

Tomorrow's Complete Novelette—"DICKY—A BIRD."

What Convinced Him

Defendant's Lawyer—You say my clients called you names! How do you know for sure that they were talking to you and not to somebody else?

Plaintiff—Well, maybe I was mistaken, but when they accompanied their conversation with biffs on my jaw and swats in my ribs, I naturally couldn't be blamed for thinking they were addressing their remarks to me.—Judge.

Alice Kent and the Day's Work

The Story of a Business Girl Who Would Not Fail

By MARTHA KEELER

Copyright, 1918, by Public Ledger Company.

XI

MRS. PRATT was on the watch for me as I approached her home. On the doorstep she greeted me with, "Well, you don't look like your mother, do you? Howsumever," drawing me into the house, "handsome is as handsome does. Your mother wasn't a beauty either, but she was so good it just shone out in her face. And she was the highest-educated person that ever set foot in my house. Some folks put on airs just because they know more than the rest of us, but it wa'n't so with your ma. The more she read an' studied—she was always studyin'—the humbler she was, an' there wa'n't nobody too low f'r her to speak to an' try to help. Not that she preached goodness to 'em. She didn't. But she practiced goodness all the time an' that's what folks remember after you are gone."

Then in the casual way in which many well-meaning persons tear open a wound, Mrs. Pratt inquired, "Ever hear from your sister?"

I shook my head.

"Well," she continued, as if glad of a chance to free her mind, "I didn't suppose you did. The Blakes just worship the ground that child walks on. Nothin's too good f'r her an' it'll be a mercy if she ain't spoiled. Let's see, how old is she now?"

"Twelve."

"I thought so. Well, she's like a little doll, as pretty an' dressed up as can be, an' they say she's quicker than chain lightnin', too. But, of course, all the old inhabitants know she didn't get her brains from the Blakes. An' between you an' I that's what's worryin' 'em. You know, Mrs. Blake was pretty well along in years when she got married anyway, an' then marryin' her first cousin so, why, children was a sensitive point with her. An' she overdoes it, tryin' to convince herself an' everybody else that Barbara is her own flesh and blood. An' the doctor is every mite as bad. That child drives with him everywhere when he's out' makin' calls, unless it's somethin' catchin'.

"An' she ain't allowed to go to public school for fear some of the scholars will up an' tell her she's adopted. She studies at home. I'd have you know, an' a high-priced teacher comes there every day from Bellington. An' there's only a few children in the village that's good enough f'r her to play with, an' then only under Mrs. Blake's eye. I called there one day to get some medicine an' there was so many patients in the office ahead of me that the hired girl showed me into the sittin' room. Mrs. Blake was there workin' on some embroidery an' Barbara, as round an' as rosy as could be, set rockin' in her little rockin' chair. Blueby she sneezed.

"'Oh, darlin'," shouted Mrs. Blake, as scared as if she'd seen a ghost, 'please move over to this high-backed chair. Mamma's so afraid you'll catch more cold in your little rockin' chair. There's no protection to it.' Honest, I had to laugh. I don't suppose the Blakes will fancy the idea of your bein' in these parts." Here she regarded me with close scrutiny. "You two girls don't look a mite alike. You're your father all over again an' Barbara, as far as I can see—an' I have eyed her pretty close at times—don't favor any of her folks." After a pause my hostess asked: "Are you goin' there to call when they get back from their western trip?"

The question took me off my guard. "Why, no," I said. "Of course not."

"Well," the woman rejoined a little testily, "she's your sister, an' I should think you'd want to see her."

I made no answer.

But Mrs. Pratt was not to be sidetracked. "Don't you?" she persisted.

I looked straight at her. "It isn't a question of what I want."

"You don't need to have false modesty," she urged, "about introducin' yourself. For the whole village knows that some of the best blood in this country runs in the veins of your father's family."

"Then here's a chance for me to prove it," I replied, and as soon as courtesy permitted brought my visit to an end and started back to Bellington.

(Continued Tomorrow.)

"DREAMLAND ADVENTURES"

By DADDY

THE INVISIBLE FAIRY

A complete, new adventure each week, beginning Monday and ending Saturday.

CHAPTER V

A Patriotic Bargain

Peggy, protected by Camouflage Perfume, visits the Giant of the Woods and persuades him to pretence as a patriotic farm worker. As he goes to apply for a job she finds two boys who are quitting because they have to stay on the farm when they want to go to war.

THE Giant of the Woods was bargaining with the rich farmer when Peggy came rushing up. Neither of them could see her, for she was still hidden by Camouflage Perfume.

"As I can do two men's work I ought to get two men's wages," argued the Giant, who was evidently a shrewd bargainer.

"I'll give you half as much again as I give my ordinary hired hands," replied the farmer, who was looking him over very carefully.

"That sounds reasonable," said the Giant. "I think I'll come."

"Wait! Wait!" whispered Peggy taking hold of the Giant's hand.

The farmer looked around in surprise.

"There are two boys at the next farm who want to go to war. You can add them," explained Peggy.

"What was that? I heard some one speak," cried the farmer, looking up and down and all around for Peggy.

"It was the voice of opportunity," said the Giant. "I must listen to it." With that he strode away, Peggy leading him.

"There! Here! Don't go! I'll let you take the auto every Saturday night. And we'll have ice cream for dessert on the Fourth of July." The rich farmer was growing more and more anxious to hire the Giant.

"That ice cream sounds good to me," said the Giant, pausing. "I'd have to have a whole quart for myself."

"We'll give you a quart and a half," agreed the farmer.

"Strawberry ice cream?" asked the Giant.

"Yes, strawberry, said the farmer.

"Come! Come!" urged Peggy, and the Giant went with her.

"I'll give you my answer later," he called back to the farmer.

The two boys were waiting. They eyes nearly popped out of their heads as they saw the size of the Giant.

"My, but you're a whopper!" was their abrupt greeting to him.

"And you're husky looking youngsters. You'd make fine soldiers!" answered the Giant.

"That's just what we say," agreed the boys. "We ought to have been over in France months ago fighting for liberty. And here we are tied down to a farm when there are thousands and thousands of men not fitted to be soldiers who could take our places here if they were not so lazy."

"That's you!" said Peggy to the Giant.

"What's that?" The boys looked around for Peggy just as the rich farmer had done.

"It's the voice of conscience," echoed the Giant.

"You can take their places," suggested Peggy.

Again the boys looked around nervously.

"There it is again," they said.

"It's the voice of duty," responded the Giant. "I'll do your work on the farm while you go to war."

"You will?" shouted the astonished young men. "Father, come here quick." A frail looking man came from a nearby field. They greeted him in great excitement.

"This big man will take our place on the farm so we can go to war."

The frail man studied the Giant.

"He looks as if he could do the work," he commented, with a smile.

"I can do two men's work," boasted the Giant. "The farmer up the road offered to give me the wages of a man and a half."

The smile on the face of the frail man died away.

"I cannot afford to pay wages," he said sadly. "That's why I have had to keep Ben and Bill home from the war when they want with all their hearts to fight for Old Glory, as I fought in the Spanish War, as their grandfather fought in the Civil War, as their great-grandfather fought in the Mexican War, and as their great-great-grandfathers before that fought in the war of the Revolution."

"I know how they feel," said the Giant.

"But I am poor and not well," went on the old father. "One farm can be made to produce big crops and Ben and Bill have just got old enough so that they can help me work it properly. The food it will yield is needed by our armies, by our allies, by the people back home."

"But if I take their place—" the Giant was interrupted by the rich farmer, who had come up unnoticed.

"You're going to work for me," said the rich farmer. "That's all settled."

"No, I don't know as it is," replied the Giant, looking at Ben and Bill, whose faces, all aglow for a moment with new hope, were now growing gloomy again.

"I'll give you one and three-quarters regular wages," bid the rich farmer. "Mr. Dalton can't afford that."

"No, I can't," agreed Mr. Dalton, sadly shaking his head.

Peggy was hanging tightly to the Giant's hand. What would he do? Would he take the rich farmer's offer? Or would he be a patriot and send Ben and Bill to battle for the United States?

"I don't know as I can afford it either," mused the Giant.

"I'll give you double wages," eagerly bid the rich farmer, "and the auto Saturday nights and the ice cream. Think of the ice cream."

"No," said the Giant.

"Then what is your price?" asked the astonished rich farmer.

"My price is two young men for Uncle Sam," thundered the Giant. "Can you pay that price, Mr. Rich Farmer?" The rich farmer promptly shook his head. "Can you pay that price, Farmer Dalton?"

"Yes, I can pay it, and gladly," cried Father Dalton.

"Then I accept your offer," declared the Giant, "and all I want in return is food for myself and Billy Belgium."

"Good! Good! Good!" shouted Peggy.

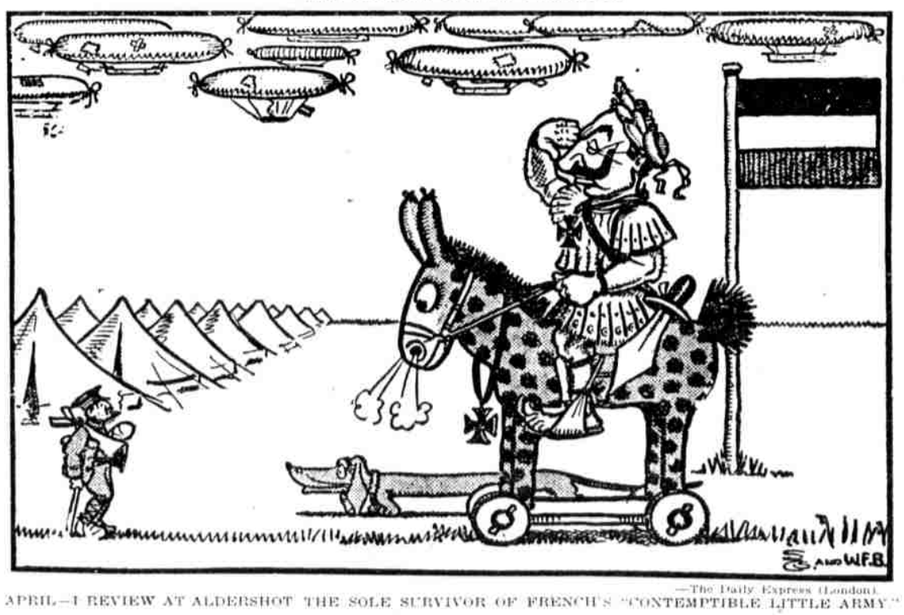
"What's that?" cried the four men.

"It's the voice of my country, to which I give all myself from this day forth, even as these two boys are giving themselves." Thus spoke the Giant so solemnly that even the rich farmer took off his hat.

(Tomorrow the "Invisible Stranger" adventure will be brought to a conclusion, with the patriotism of the Giant of the Woods put to a real test.)

"It was the voice of opportunity," said the Giant

THE KAISER'S DREAM CALENDAR



—The Daily Express (London).

APRIL—I REVIEW AT ALDERSHOT THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF FRENCH'S "CONTEMPTIBLE LITTLE ARMY."

In the Past Tense

—Cornell Widow.

"Well, did you enjoy your stay at the infirmary?"

"Naw. I got there too late!"

"How's that?"

"My nurse was good-looking about ten years ago."

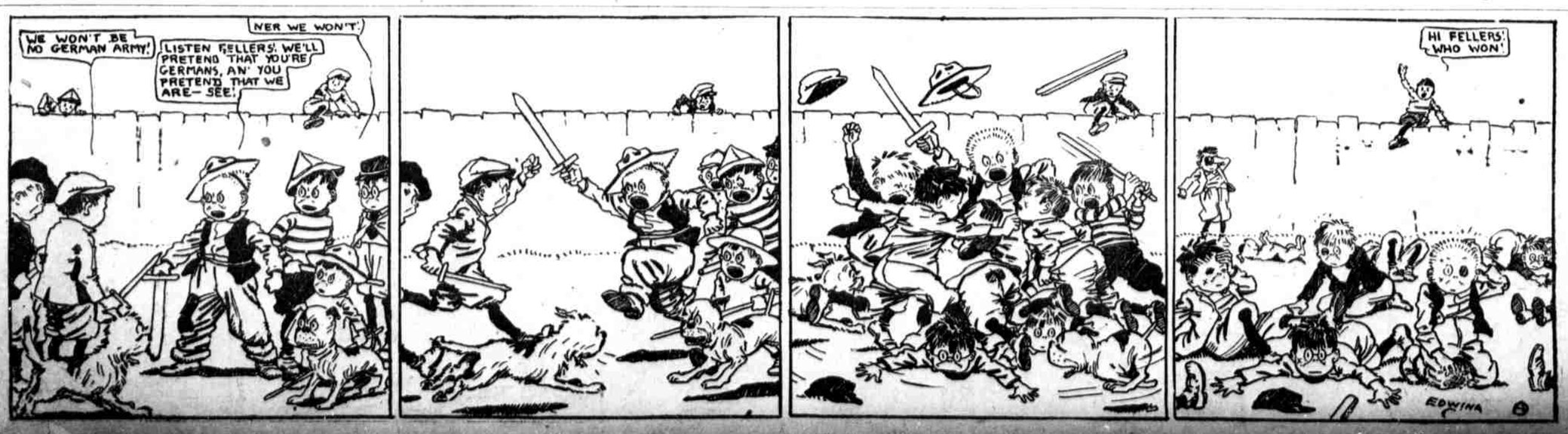
Alas!

"What's good here tonight, waiter?"

"Cash only, sir." — Jack-o'-Lantern.

Feminine Intellectuality

—Penn Punch Bowl.

"CAP" STUBBS—The Finish Couldn't Have Been Otherwise

By EDWINA