Author of "The Bachelor Husband," "The One Unwanted," etc. Copyright by Wheeler Syndicate, Inc

of a five-barred gate, his hat at the ked in the band idly tapping his rather by brown boots with a rough stick ch he had pulled from a heige.

Not so far away then! He had a wague idea that he had seen a signpost to Somerton as he had tramped the last was his fact that was responsible. He thrust the letters and shabby case this fact that was responsible.

dr well-worn suit. It was a warm evening in early Sepmber. The trees all around were be-inning to be faintly tinged with autumn daring and a faint grown with oloring, and a faint gray mist was ris-ng from the bed of the river which lowed by on the other side of the field

t his back. Eight-and-twenty shillings. The For-

hand wearily across his eyes.

m after all these years.
To begin with, he was hungry, and To begin with, he was hangry, and inger makes a man a pessimist more nickly than anything on earth; but here was a sort of unwillingness in his eart to break into that last eight-andenty shillings until he was abso-

lely forced to do so. When things were at their worst, mething always turned up—or such. least, had always been the case with m, and with the sort of feeling that must get away from his thoughts d shake off his growing depression, e Fortune Hunter jumped down from e gate, and started walking up the

He was a tall man, and he looked like gentleman in spite of the fact that clothes were shabby and his boots inted heeling. Yet there was an un-niable air of breeding about him, and walked with a fine, athletic swing, spite his weariness.

His hair was short-cropped, and wed touches of gray here and there.

this face was burned by exposure sun and weather.

For a fortnight he had slept in woods barns, or out in the hedges; anying served him for a bed; he had ughed it in all four corners of the

ed, and never quarreled with the pil-provided by circumstance. Little further on the road forked; leading straight along, was dently the main road, and the other, rning into a narrower path, ulti-

tely ended in a shady wood.
The Fortune Hunter hesitated, then ned into the wood, where neither heat

fine Fortune Hunter recovered him-f and swore good-naturedly, ginne-down to see what had tripped him, n his face changed and he caught his the down to see what had tripped him, in his face changed and he caught his aid in a muttered ejaculation as he water dripping from him.

The girl had regained her self-control and brought the punt to the bank, but down among the green under-

half moved aside to pass on. Then and, stooping down, he pulled the bracken aside, peering more closely

the prostrate figure. it, his deft brown hands ing under the coat for a heart beat, tanned face pale with horror. For man was dead.

The Fortune Hunter had seen death many times to be mistaken, but it te him an unusual shock to have come as it here in the heart of a shady sh wood

urning the dead man gently over on back, he looked into his face. Quite back, he looked into his face. Quite foung face it was and not unlike his n. he thought vaguely, with its an-shaven lips and smooth skin, from the real face of h even death had not been able to erate the tan.

wore a rough tweed suit that sed rather Colonial in cut, and a gray hat lay a little distance off in he Fortune Hunter rose to his feet

stood looking around him with a brothe do? Inform the police, he suped. He turned his eyes again to what still form at his feet. hatever the cause of death, it had peacefully enough, for the face quite calm and unlined by pain the lips a little parted as if in

only some one would come along! Fortune Hunter had no idea how he was from the nearest village, but was turning to retrace his steps to main road, when he caught sight bulky package lying almost at his

letters. Fortune Hunter turned it over ortainly; then, with a little shrug rivule he shoulders, he pulled off the band road.

glanced through the contents. ey; a few letters, all in the same ing; an old photograph of a girl hair tumbling about her shoulders, on the fly-leaf of the pocketbook a evidently the name of the dead written in a sprawly hand:

John Smith."
The Fortune Hunter smiled grimly, had known many "John Smiths" his wanderings, but seldom had it a the rightful name of the man who med it; and it was with the idea finding some further means of identation that he unfolded one of the ers and glanced casually through it, was obviously written by a woman bore a date four months previous:

know you will think that I have a long time answering your last but now you will so soon be again I am beginning to be

fen years is a long time—and I only eighteen when you went y. Supposing you don't like me any e? Supposing I don't like you? Oh, now there has been nobody clse for er of us since, but I am afraid all same. I was a child when you went. same. I was a child when you went y, and now I am a woman, though an I look back on the days with you realize how far away they realiy

Tommy—my brother—is very dentification. The following proposed of the paused—"but, cate, you know."—she paused—"but, cate, you don't know," she added slowly.

The Fortune Hunter did not answer. He was a little puzzled by the girl's He was a little puzzled by the was

fear, I am longing to see you, and show in my heart I think—I feel it will be all right \* \* 1 it will be all right \* \* 1 it wite again—you will be home to you could get another letter. So just au revoir, dear.—Anne."

he Fortune Hunter shrugged his CONTINUED TOMORROW

HE Fortune Hunter sat at the top shoulders and glanced again at the

weary mile. He thrust the letters and shabby case into his pocket and turned

shabby case into his poon to the main road.

"Somehow, in my heart I feel sure it like all right—" The words echoed the niteously.

weary mile. He thrust the letters and shabby case into his pocket and turned on to the preoccupied look on his face and total oblivion to the fact that the of the gate was bordered with barbed to the exceeding danger of his aldy well-worn suit. It was a warm evening in early Sepher. The trees all around were bester. One of the field would never take place now, for John Smith lay dead in the silent wood, with the tall bracken bending above him. Odd how deserted the road was. It stretched before the Fortune Hunter dusty and empty as he quickened his tired steps, anxious new to be rid of t his back.

Eight-and-twenty shillings. The Forune Hunter took the coins from his
ocket, looked at them, laughed, and
ingled them back again.

He had been in many tight corners
uring the last ten years of his roving
fe, and had always managed to struggle
to f them, but today somehow his
sual optimism seemed to have failed
im. Perhaps it was the silence all
round that depressed him, for at any
at the sighed—a most unusual thing
or the Fortune Hunter to do—and
the sighed—a most unusual thing
or the Fortune Hunter to do—and
the sighed—a most unusual thing
or the Fortune Hunter to do—and
the sighed—a most unusual thing
or the Fortune Hunter to do—and
the sighed—a most unusual thing
the sighed—a

He watched the girl with a curious sense of satisfaction; she and the quiet ssed a hand wearily across his eyes.
For a fortnight now he had tramped agland, waiting for something to turn a for he was a firm believer in his ck, and this was the first time he had chimself even to consider the chimself even to consider the country home wherein a man had neither friends nor money. k, and this was the most consider the lowed himself even to consider the neither friends nor money.

The girl wore a white frock with

short sleeves, and the rays of the sink-ing sun glittered on her bair, turning it to gold, as her slim body moved with slow grace, propelling the little punt upstream.

or a boy. The Fortune Hunter could not be sure which, for the figure was stooping over the side of the punt, watching something in the water; and across the silently flowing river the man on the roadway could hear their voices distinctly through the still evening.
"If you'd only sit still, Tommy, You do please." And

can't reach them-do, please." And then came a shrill scream and a stifled as the punt seemed to lurch The girl swayed dangerously, only re-

covering herself with a fremendous effort, but the other figure tumbled headlong into the water, without apparently making the least attempt to save itself.

save itself.

"Serve him right!" thought the Fortune Hunter grimly, and stood still for a moment waiting for it to reappear. But the seconds passed, and beyond a sort of swirl where the boy had disappeared there was no sign.

The girl was on her knees in the punt now, screaming helplessly, and all at once the Fortune Hunter seemed to realize that the matter was serious and that the boy was in danger of drowning.

that the boy was in danger of drowning.

He ran along the road till he was almost abreast of the drifting punt, then he kicked off his shoes, flung his jacket aside and plunged into the river.

The girl saw him and stretched ago-

s cool and frosh.

He took off his hat and let the soft beat on his forehead, walking menically along until suddenly he poed and almost fell over an obstable half hidden in the thick bracken hanging the narrow footpath.

The Fortune Hunter was a powerful swimmer and the distance was nothing to him, but when he reached the boyal half hidden in the thick bracken a lad of about seventeen—it was not such an easy matter to bring him to shore.

she was very pale and her voice shook Drunk!" was his first thought, and as she knelt down beside the exhausted

Oh, Tommy! Oh, are you all right Oh. Tommy-I was so terrified \* Oh, Tommy—I was so terrified \* \* ''.

She tried to put her arms round the boy's drenched figure, but he repelled her almost roughly.

"Shut up:" he choked. "Leave me alone. It was your fault; you ought to have balanced the beastly boat better."

He looked a miserable enough object as he she there in the long groups that

as he sat there in the long grass, shiv-ering and shaking, and the Fortune Hunter felt a wave of contempt as he picked up the coat he had flung aside and calmly proceeded to put it on over

You must come in and get dry. The Fortune Hunter laughed.

"I don't take cold casily--" his careless gaze wandered over the girl's concerned face, and, realizing its at-traction, he added more graciously; "You're very kind—at any rate. I will help you home with " your brother?"

"Yes. I am sure we can never thank you. You saved his life. Oh, Tommy what should we have done if nobody had come along?"

The boy laughed harshly.
"I should have drowned, that's ail."
He began to hoist himself up from the grass with difficulty, and the Fortune Hunter put a strong arm around him, and lifted him to his feet.

"Lean on me," he said," "I can carry you if you like, but " " " "Thank you, I can walk," was the ungracious response. But he was glad of a helping hand before they had gone habby leather pocketbook, held toler by an clastic band and bulging

papers or letters.

habby leather pocketbook, held toler by an clastic band and bulging

papers or letters. of the way, the water running from both of them in uncomfortable little rivulets, leaving a trail along the dusty

The girl followed silently. From time and jottings of various sums of ran ahead and opened the gate, standing ey: a few letters all in the same fran ahead and opened the gate, standing ey: a few letters all in the same ran ahead and opened the gate, standing aside to let him pass. It was an old-fashioned house, with ivy-colored walls and a garden sloping down to the river. Tubs filled with ivy geraniums bordered the terrace, and striped sun blinds were drawn over the windows of the house. The Fortune Hunter cast a swift glance around him and wondered if this was the turn in his luck for which he

had been waiting.

He followed the girl into the hall. It was cool and shady and rose-scented, and he put his burden down gently.

"You'd better have a hot bath at once," he said casually. "A ducking once," he said casually.

doesn't hurt me, I'm used to roughing it, but you ""

The boy limped away toward the stairs without answering; he was an ungracious sort of youth, and his thin, delicate face was fretful and ill tem-

pered.
The girl looked up at the Fortune

You must be patient with me, won't manner; and when presently he was Don't expect too great things shown into a bathroom and given a suit me at first, although in spite of of dry clothes which, even if they were ear. I am the small side, were a wel-

THE GUMPS-Ho! Hum!

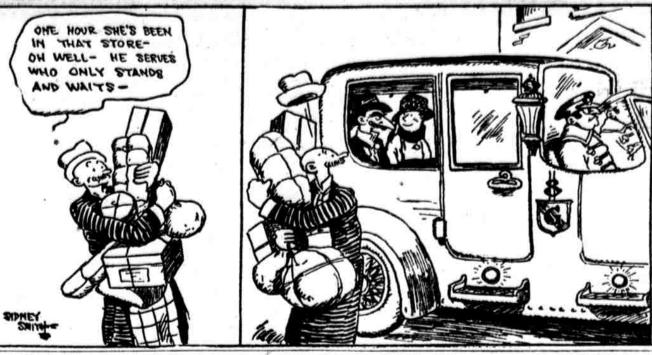
HLY A FEW MORE DAYS TO DO THEIR SHOPPING -

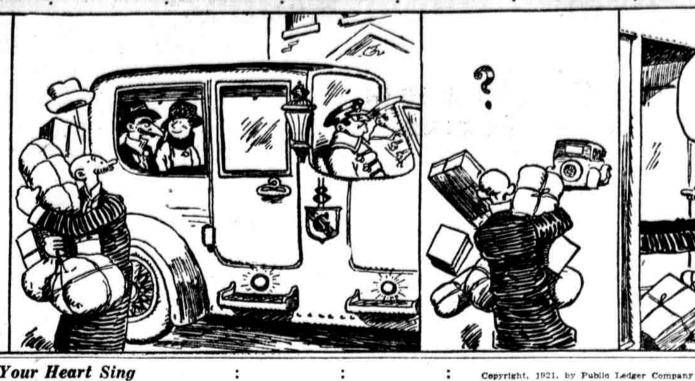
HIM QHA YORA ARE OUT TO DO THEIR BIT. =0=

THEY'RE JUST GOING TO SPEND THEIR WHOLE OWY DHA YAD MONTHS' INCOME TO BUY HIS GIFTS -BREAD CAST UPON THE WATER

---- FOXY OLD

ANDY-





SOMEBODY'S STENOG-Try It, It Will Make Your Heart Sing

GOING TO BRING YOU, LITTLE BOY ? CRIPES! DO YOUSE FALL FER THAT BUNK TOO ? YOUSE IS BIG ENOUGH TO HAVE SENSE! DON'T LET EM KID YOUSE! DON'T I HEAR POP AN' MOM SCRAPPIN ABOUT THE MONEY

THAT'S WHAT I CALL A CRIME ALLRIGHT! SOME GROWN UPS DON'T CARE HOW THEY MURDER THE PRETTY THINGS IN A KIDS MIND! BECAUSE THEY GET SOURED ON LIFE THEM-SELVES IS NO REASON WHY THEY GOT TO MAKE LEMONADE OUT OF A CHILDS EE-MAGIN -ATION: IT'S LIKE TEACHIN BABY TO SAY "NASTY FLOWERS . COULDA'T YOU KILL THE PERSON YOU HEARD DOIN' THAT ? I ONLY GOT A FEW BUCKS LEFT BUT THEY'RE GOIN TO WORK!

WELL! NOW MEXT DAY LADY! LISSEN! THEY IS A SANTA CLAUSE BECAUSE I NICE! 5 GOT A SLED AND I KNOW POP DIDN'T BUY EM HE'S OUTA WORK AND MOM GOT A BIG BAG OF VEGIBALS BAG OF VEGIBALANIAN SHE'S HOME HER THAT -

MOBODY CAN SAY THIS OFFICE AINT FULL OF CHRISTMAS CHEER! LOOK AT THAT HAPPY SMILE! THAT ADVANCE I GAVE HER ON NEXT WEEK'S PAY MUST HAVE HELPED OUT HER SHOPPING

By Sidney Smith

By Hayward

The Young Lady Across the Way



THE KEY TO THE JAM CLOSET





IT CERTAINLY IS BLAME TOUGH TO HAVE IT 'JES BEFORE XMAS' WHEN A FELLER FINALLY GETS HOLD OF THE KEY TO THE JAM CLOSET.

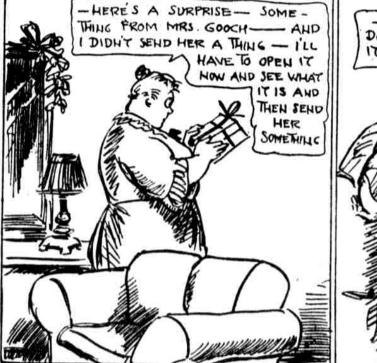


The young lady across the way

says it seems strange to award the

Nobel prize for literature to a

Frenchman when so few of us read









GASOLINE ALLEY-Nothing But a Merry Twinkle



By King