

Blood and Thunder

By R. H. WILKINSON
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ISAH FLEMISH was past fifty. He was fat and bald and prosperous. He was accepted in the better circles, was, in fact, regarded as somewhat of a social lion. He attended operas and musicals. Occasionally he took in a stage hit or went to the movies. In short, Isaih Flemish was not unlike forty or fifty million other Americans who are past fifty, bald and prosperous.

And, like all of the other forty or fifty million, Isaih had a weakness. It lay in the realm of literature. That is, if blood and thunder stories can be called literature. Isaih doted on stories of real heroes, men who carried six-shooters and handled them with uncanny skill; men who thought nothing of running a knife between the ribs of other men, men who lived by the law of might and cunning. It is said that all great men mix blood and thunder reading with the classics.

Not that Isaih was great. He was like great men only from a literary standpoint. And probably like the rest, Isaih's weakness was frowned upon by a socially ambitious spouse.

There was no use explaining to her that blood and thunder, to Isaih, was meat and drink to a soul that had been deprived of adventure.

As far as Mrs. Flemish was concerned, it was all a silly and un-called-for business.

Hence Isaih was forced to do his reading in private, and was forbidden to mention the extent of his literary achievements in public.

He would, Mrs. Flemish stated, ruin them socially.

He was told—and he believed it, too, that blood and thunder stories were for morons and nit-wits.

No one, he was given to understand, with an ounce of intelligence, would waste time and money buying and reading blood and thunder magazines.

As a result of this Isaih, through fear of being ridiculed, never mentioned his weakness to any of his compatriots.

His opinions and ideas regarding the great open spaces and the men who rode the range, were confined to his thoughts and secret dreams.

This, of course, was before Isaih met Buck Willard.

He was returning one day from a business trip to New York and chanced to glance over the shoulder of the man occupying the seat in front of him.

His heart leaped. The man was perusing the contents of Isaih's favorite blood and thunder periodical.

Moreover, the particular story then being perused was written by none other than the great Buck Willard, foremost of all blood and thunder writers.

Isaih stood up and with apologies seated himself beside the stranger.

Here, he thought, was a kindred spirit, an understanding soul.

One who would listen to and appreciate the prattle that he had for years longed to pour into ears of one who would know what he was talking about.

"I noticed," said Isaih by way of an opening, "that you are reading a story by Buck Willard. A great writer, Willard, I enjoy his stuff immensely."

"Glad to hear it," said the stranger, smiling in friendly fashion.

"I'm one of his most ardent admirers. In fact, my name is Willard. Buck Willard. I wrote this story."

Isaih's jaw sagged. He gulped. Reddened.

"You—you don't mean it! You're not Buck Willard, really?"

"None other. And no one enjoys reading my stuff better than myself. Great, I call it."

"Say!" Isaih's eyes filled with admiration. By George, this is a pleasure. By George! You don't know how I've followed your stories. This is an honor! Can't imagine anything I've wanted more than to meet a real he-man writer like yourself. You're good!"

Mr. Willard beamed.

"Sure, I'm good. Hope to be better some day."

"Look here, Mr. Willard," said Isaih earnestly, "mind telling me how you get material for stories? It must be interesting work."

"It isn't," said Mr. Willard. "It's drudgery. Forever plowing through encyclopedias and reading western novels and going to movies. It's—udgery, I'll tell a man."

Isaih was a little nonplussed. He couldn't quite conceive how a writer of blood-and-thunder stories could call his work drudgery.

Isaih changed the subject. "What part of the West do you come from, Mr. Willard? Arizona, I suppose? Most of your stories are laid down there. Must be a great country?"

"Don't come from the West," Mr.

Willard said brightly. "Never been outside of New York state in my life. Don't want to. Like it here. Wouldn't like to the West if I was paid for it."

"But—but—you must know a lot of westerners—two-gun men?"

"Don't know any. Don't believe there are any. Far as I can make out cowboys are a dirty, ignorant lot of miscreants who can't find anything better to do."

Mr. Willard picked up his magazine and went on reading. Isaih hesitated.

He was bitterly disappointed, sick to his stomach, disillusioned. He hesitated a minute, made as if to speak, changed his mind and stood up. He returned to his seat, and his glance fell on a copy of the latest issue of Western Thrills, his favorite magazine.

He had anticipated an enjoyable journey home, with two-gun artists as his dream companions.

Sight of the magazine angered him. He picked it up, flung it on the floor and slumped into his seat.

After all, he thought, a man is foolish to read that sort of stuff. Hereafter, he'd devote his time to better literature.

Read the classics, try to improve himself so that he could talk intelligently when Shakespeare or Trollope and Dickens was being discussed by his literary friends.

Isaih did not again see Buck Willard. The writer left his seat shortly after Isaih had returned to his own compartment and disappeared.

At Bridgeport, Buck Willard alighted, even though his ticket read Boston.

"Easier than I thought," he told himself as he hurried into the telegraph office. "Old lady ought to be satisfied."

He grabbed a blank and scribbled the following message: "Mrs. Letty Flemish, Boston, Mass. Plan worked fine. Your husband fell for gag. Is thoroughly disgusted with Buck Willard and all blood-and-thunder stories. Will expect check by return wire. Signed, Paul Jones."

Angel Fairy Decorated

Birds to Match Woods

When the world was very young and all the lovely things like trees and flowers were being made, an angel fairy was sent to paint the birds so that they should be as beautiful as the woods where they lived, observes a writer in the Montreal Herald.

So eager they all were that a long queue had to be formed for the birds to wait their turn. The large ones came first, the little ones stood at the end of the line.

Last of all, among the small birds, was the goldfinch. Such a perky little attractive fellow, too. Chirping impatiently to attract the fairy's attention, he hopped restlessly, instead of keeping his place.

"What a lot there are to be painted before my turn comes," he thought. "I'll take a fly around while I'm waiting."

Up and down he soared on his little wings, revelling in the clear sunlight and bright blue sky. Presently he flew down again. What a lovely world it was, fresh and young and glowing with color. He was admiring the just opened flowers and leafy trees when he suddenly remembered his own coat and flew back to the meadow. But the long queue of birds had gone. They had all been decorated and the angel fairy was just packing up his paints and palette.

The poor little goldfinch was left dowdy and plain in a beautiful world. Overcome with sorrow, he sat weeping on a branch until the fairy took pity on him.

"You were too late through your own fault, little bird," he said. "My paints are nearly finished, but I will do what I can for you."

He still had some scraps of color left and set to work on the finch's coat with these. There was a dab of crimson for his face, a touch of blue on his head and long wing feathers, cream and yellow and soft browns for his body, and—what luck—a big splash of gold for each wing. So that is—so it is said, how the little goldfinch came by his beautiful coat.

Eggs of Other Nations

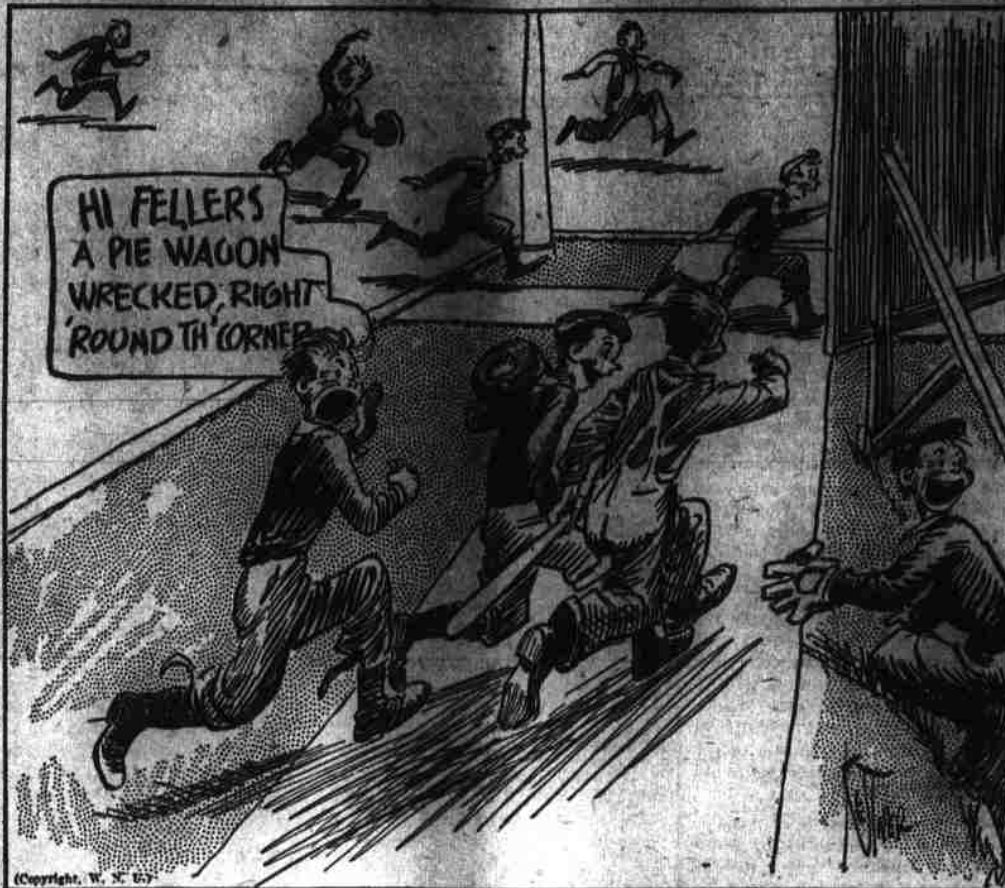
A favorite article on the menu of Peruvians is the egg of the cormorant, a bird which inhabits the islands off the coast of Peru. In Nicaragua the natives dig in the sands for alligator eggs which contain large yolks and are said to taste like duck eggs. Sea bird eggs form a delicacy for the Eskimos. Apparently the taste of man varies with different countries for in Mexico the eggs of certain species of flies are used in making a kind of food paste considered by the Mexicans as a great treat.—Pathfinder Magazine.

Sweden Keeps Relics of Past

In preserving relics of its past, Sweden keeps not only examples of costumes and handicrafts, but whole houses, barns and mills from every part of the country. At Skansen in a 70-acre outdoor museum are buildings representing almost every development in Sweden's national life and giving one a full picture of life in former times. To preserve the illusion completely the curators have furnished the dwellings with kitchens, furniture, hangings and wall paintings typical of each period.

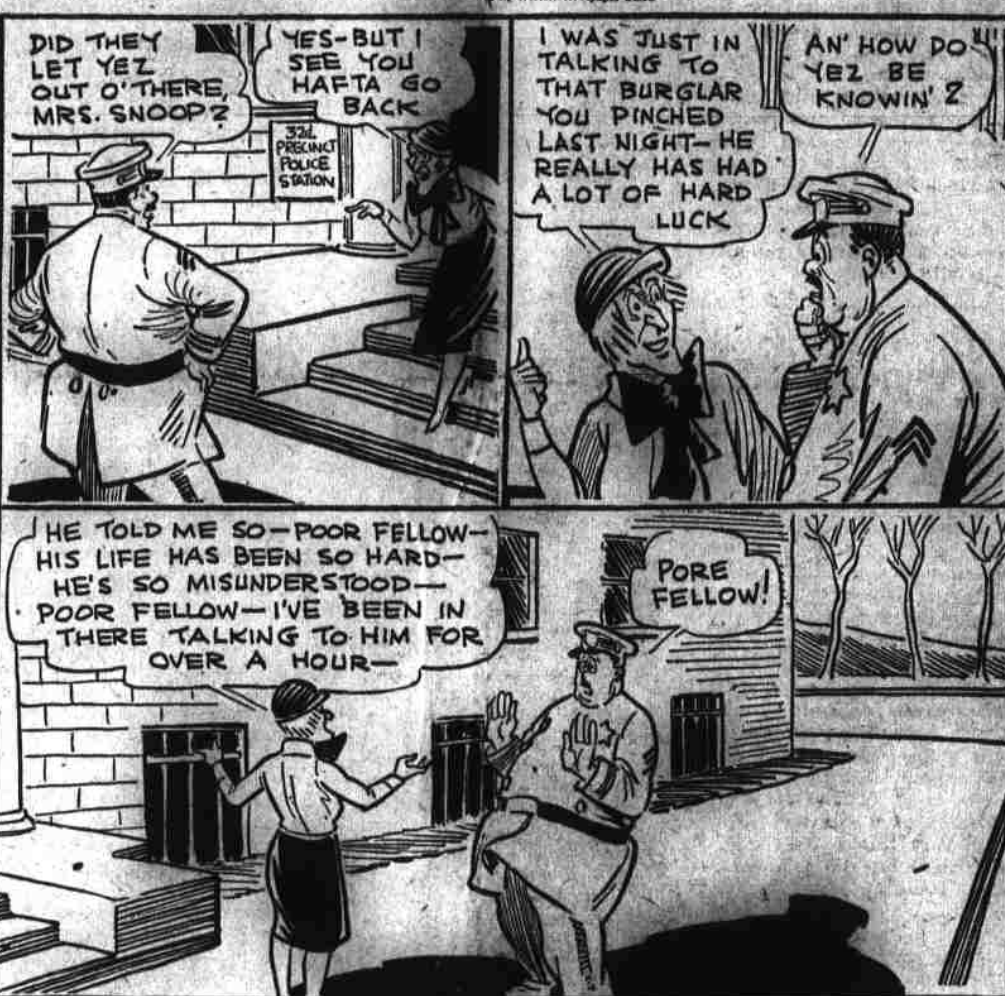
OUR COMIC SECTION

Events in the Lives of Little Men



FINNEY OF THE FORCE

By Ted O'Loughlin
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Poor Man

THE FEATHERHEADS

By Osborne
© Western Newspaper Union



Important

Let Our Medals Be GOOD HEALTH

BY DR. LOUIS ARMSTRONG
Professor of Bacteriology and Experimental Medicine, University of Illinois, College of Medicine.

LIVING WITH A HEART AFTER 45

In Illinois in the last 5 years, of every 100 persons who died of heart disease, 95 were over forty-five years old. This makes it clear that people over forty-five years of age constitute the heart disease group.

The same processes that cause the hair to turn gray, the skin to become sabby and wrinkled, also cause the heart to grow old. The heart of the individual around sixty years of age is probably his most important vital organ. The sudden seizure of pain in the left chest irradiating through the left shoulder down the arm and on the inner side with a sense of constriction as if the chest were held in a vise, and along with this a sense of suffocation and a feeling of impending death—these are the cardinal symptoms of angina pectoris.

Increased muscular effort usually is the exciting cause of these attacks, although sudden changes in weather may bring them on. The attacks are many times brought about by spasms of the arteries which supply the heart muscle with blood. The primary cause is exhaustion of the heart muscle.

In previous articles, I have discussed heart disease in relation to various age groups, beginning with birth and extending to the middle age period. Deformities of the heart at birth are responsible for the deaths chargeable to the heart during the first year of life. Then, bacterial infections begin to play an important part as causes of heart disease. During the second decade of life, or adolescence, we find a continuation of these infections, but during the first twenty years there are relatively few deaths from heart disease as compared to the total span of life. Of every 100 persons who die of heart disease in Illinois, only one is in the first decade of life, and only two are in the second decade. Between the ages of twenty and thirty-five, the death rate is four, and during the next ten years, that is, thirty-five to forty-five years, we find approximately six deaths. As we said before, 95 per cent of the deaths from cardiac causes are in the age group past forty-five. The same figures would generally hold true for the other states.

This does not mean that infection of the heart is so much more prevalent among persons over forty-five years. But it does mean that the wear and tear on the heart, due to previous infections, has exceeded the limit compatible with the ordinary duties of life.

A heart attack should not lead one to be pessimistic. It should be regarded rather as a red signal and a request from a tired worn-out heart muscle for a much needed rest. One should not become unduly excited, but should consult a physician to determine just what the heart can endure, so that it will not be overtaxed, to the point where it stops beating. Under intelligent and proper supervision, this right way of living may mean only a slight change in the daily routine, such as avoiding strenuous exercise or reducing the weight, or abstaining from tobacco, alcohol or such irritants.

It may be that complete rest in bed is the only solution, but this is seldom the case. An active, hard-working man or woman of fifty-five or sixty may actually be damaged by forced idleness in bed. The worry and sleeplessness will offset the value of such rest.

Usually the older individual with heart disease has in addition hardening of the arteries and often a deficiency in kidney function. Now that medical knowledge and an easier way of living have increased our life expectancy to a span of sixty years, the first forty years are proving the healthy years. After that we are likely to show wear and tear, and the degenerative diseases, such as heart disease, kidney disease and cancer become real hazards. The blood vessels of the brain may become so diseased and weakened that they break and apoplexy follows.

If we have damaged any of our important organs in our younger years, we are pretty apt to reap the results in our older years when this organ has reached the limits of its power of adapting itself to the needs of the body.

The heart normally beats 72 times a minute, with a rest period in between each beat. If it beats more often, then the rest period is correspondingly curtailed, and is keeping the heart has to go on on its reserved strength. We are born with just so much reserve force. The person who uses his reserve before forty-five, may expect to watch his step afterward.

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Fin de siècle is a French phrase and is defined "Literary style of the closing years of the nineteenth century for which was most progressive, novel in fashion, or advanced in ideas." The phrase is pronounced far de eye-ki—first a as in fat, a as in final, a as in prey.—Literary Digest.

Average Height of Humans
The average adult American man is about 5 feet 8 inches tall, and the average adult woman about 5 feet 4 inches. Records show that only one man out of 200 is six feet or more tall. May Walsh, who died in Chicago in 1922, was 7 feet 6 inches in height and was regarded as the tallest woman in the world at the time of her death.

The Indian River
The Indian river along the coast of Florida is really an arm of the sea enclosed by a string of long, narrow islands and a long, narrow peninsula. It stretches along the Atlantic seaboard from the northern extremity of Brevard county to north Martin county, a distance of 110 or 115 miles.

1,000 Miles to Land
The point in the Pacific that is farther from land than any other on earth is near where the one hundred and fiftieth meridian meets the fortieth latitudinal parallel. It is a thousand miles from any land, being equidistant from San Francisco, Honolulu and the western tip of Alaska.

Novel Suicide Cure
Up to the beginning of the Nineteenth century, England hanged anyone found guilty of attempting suicide. Thus it tried to stop its citizens from taking their lives—by guaranteeing death to those who sought it.—Collier's Weekly.

Old-Time Sausage
In the days of our forefathers sausage meat, chopped together with spices in a big handmade bowl, was put in a sausage gun which required two men to operate. One man held the sausage casing, and the other pressed the plunger.

Oldest University
At Lima, Peru, may be seen the Universidad Mayor de San Marcos, oldest university in the western world, founded in 1531—already more than a half century old when the first permanent settlement in North America was made.

Chewing Uses Up Energy
Gum chewing consumes five more calories per hour than are necessary to provide energy for the worker not so exercising his jaws, according to Dr. Thorne M. Carpenter of the Carnegie Institute laboratory.

Smiles
WHAT HE LIKED
Proud Author—So glad you like my new play. Was it better than you expected?
Frank Friend—No; shorter—Stray Stories.

Colony Supplies
Rural Druggist (reading customer's order)—Two pints of tincture of quinine, four thermometers, two dozen temperature charts, six pneumonia jackets—I say where's all this for?
Yokel—Them there nudists up in the woods.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

From Exam Papers
"Sky-scrapers are the men who study the stars."
"If the British Isles were submerged 100 fathoms, trade might be helped in England, as the mudbanks at the estuaries of the important rivers would be submerged."
"An antiquarian is one who does not drink water."

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