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Brereton Understands Women

By John Halloway Horn

He was thinking of Sadie and not of the very attractive girl he had just met—which in itself is significant—as he made his way through the soft greenness of the lanes to the house where a woman of a very different type awaited him. Libby McKechnie had been with him for many years. Nothing in him surprised her. He had left her for months at a time in his flat in Rio de Janeiro, and once for a full year in a luxurious apartment he had taken overlooking the Parc Monceau in Paris. She had accepted his sudden decision to return to England almost without comment.

"Well..... you know what you want, Mr. Brereton," she had said.

She was 62 and a spinster and although she would have indignantly denied it, poured out on her distinguished master the full flood of her latent maternal instincts. She stood no nonsense from anyone—excepting him, and in her eyes he could do no wrong.

The furniture had already arrived from the Paris apartment. The pictures were still unpacked in the big drawing room, but the small room leading from it was ready for him and it was in this room that his dinner was served by Libby herself that evening.

"It's good to be home, Libby," he said.

"Aye," she said, ignoring the mildly ironic touch in his words.

"We're going to like this place."

"It's cost a great deal of money. I'm thinking that you'll no see it back again."

"You're more interested in money than I am, Libby."

"That's because you've always had too much. That dealer has been on the 'phone again."

"Who, McFarlane?"

"That was the name. He wants to come down here as soon as he can see your pictures."

"Give him my compliments and tell him to go—you know where."

"Aye. Have you ever considered what will happen to all these pictures when you pass on?"

"'Pass'—oh, I see what you mean. Of course I've considered it. I've made my will. Many of them will be destroyed. I only want the best ones left. A man is far more likely to achieve immortality with a dozen really good pictures than with a hundred indifferent ones."

She sniffed.

"Don't do that," he said irritably.

She sniffed again: "And they're worth real money," she said.

"Of course they are. But I tell you that doesn't matter. Nothing matters but Beauty."

"Was the chicken all right?"

"Fine!"

"Then I'll be bringing in the apple pie. It was the most English thing I could think of to suit your present mood."

"Good!"

"Fossick, the gardener, has got the boiler going, so the water'll be hot."

"Splendid, I like Fossick. Did you notice the line of his chin and jaw, Libby?"

"I did not," she said. "Why should I?"

"It's very fine. Yet I suppose the intelligence behind it can't be very bright, or he wouldn't be a gardener."

"I'm too busy the night to take up points like that. I'll be getting the pie. The servants will be here in the morning."

"You had no difficulty in getting them"

"Didn't I?" she said and turned to the door.

Lady Selwyn Invites.....

The apple pie, in its way, was as good as the chicken and the turbot had been excellent. When the solitary meal was over he switched on the electric fire for there was a touch of chill in the May evening.

"There'll be nothing else you're wanting?" she asked when she had cleared the table.

"Nothing," he said. "I hope you don't find the place lonely?" he said doubtfully.

"It can't be lonelier than Paris and that outlandish American place," she said.

"There is that," he said in surprise. "It never struck me that you were lonely there, Libby."

"Mebbe I'm satisfied with my own company."

"Jones is coming down with the other car in the morning."

"He might give Fossick a hand in the garden. It's a big place."

"He wants to."

"He was eating his head off in Paris."

"What a curious habit, Libby. Where are the books I brought down in the car, by the way?"

"Where would they be but in the bookcase?"

"Quite," he said with a smile.

"But if I know you they won't be there long."

"But you don't know me, Libby. I'm a very difficult man to understand," he said with a sudden smile.

"In some ways that's true, Mr. Brereton," Miss McKechnie said as she turned to the door.

But the book Brereton was reading, although it was the work of one of the subtlest writers in Paris, failed to hold his attention that evening. Mocking brown eyes with red flecks in them persisted in coming between his and the printed page in front of him.

He switched on the light in the big drawing room. Packing-cases were piled here and there and the floor was uncarpeted. He found the big flat case he sought by the window and found his way down to the kitchen where Miss McKechnie provided him with a screwdriver. The case had been screwed down with elaborate care but at length he got the side off, and removed quantities of soft packing to reveal a picture.

(To be continued)

HANDY ANTLERS

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AUSTRALIA'S HUGE AREA

The area of Australia is approximately 2,974,581 square miles with a coast-line of 8,850 miles.

Dr. James B. Fisk, shown here, industrial research expert of Concord, Mass., was named by the U. S. atomic energy commission to direct its research division.

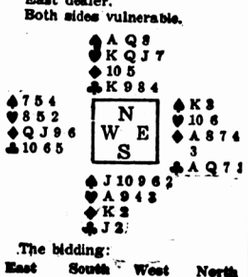
Contract Bridge

By JOSEPHINE CULBERTSON

OVERLOOKING SOUND INFERENCES

South's play for his contract in today's hand would have been fine if the opponents had passed throughout. As it was, however, East's significant bid and West's even more significant pass should have guided South to the winning line of play.

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.



The bidding:

East	South	West	North
1 ♦	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West opened the queen of diamonds, and East won with the ace. He returned the four of diamonds, and South won with the king. Declarer then led the jack of spades, losing to East's king. East led back a heart, and then waited for his two club tricks. When he got them, the contract was defeated.

It should have been apparent to South that East had only a five-card diamond suit. Since that placed four diamonds in the West hand, it was clear that the opening lead was from queen-jack; for if West had held queen and three small diamonds, he would have led the lowest card rather than the queen.

Locating the diamonds would have made West's pass highly significant. Surely West could not hold the king of spades together with four diamonds to the queen-jack— for he had been unable to respond to the opening bid!

Hence declarer's correct play was to play the ace of spades on the first round of trumps, hoping that East's king was blank or that an end play would work. The king would not drop, of course, and South would draw two rounds of hearts and then lead a trump. East would be forced into the lead. If he returned a club, dummy's king would win a trick; and if he led a third round of diamonds, dummy could ruff while South discarded a losing club.

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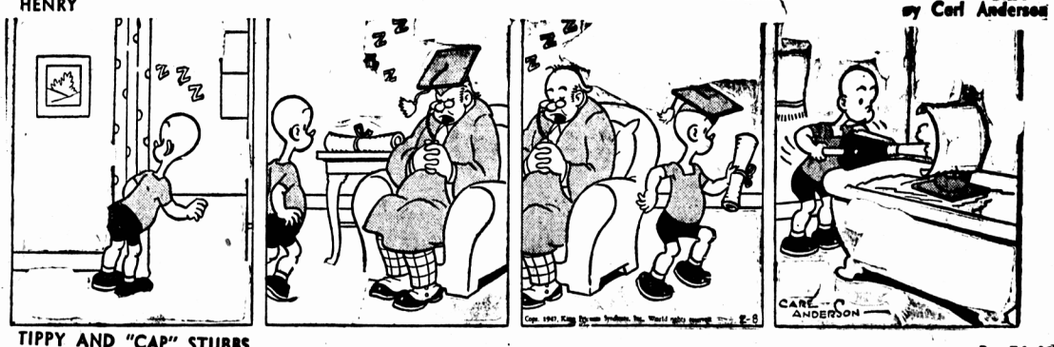
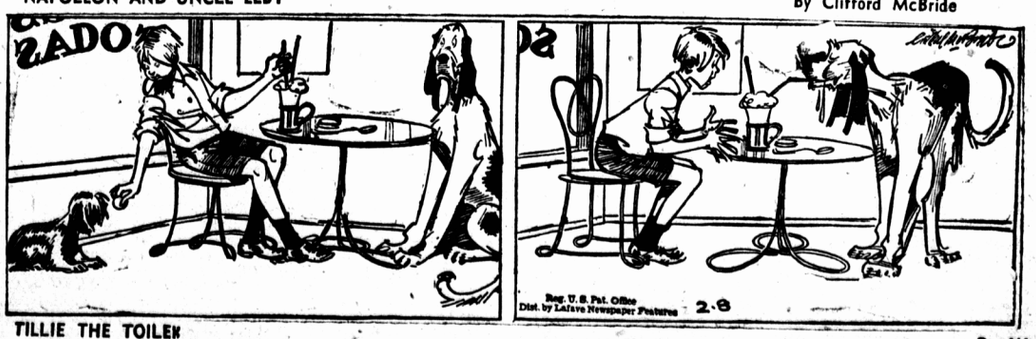
BRINGING UP FATHER — By George McManus

HENRY — By Carl Anderson



TIPPY AND "CAP" STUBBS — By Edwina

NAPOLEON AND UNCLE ELBY — By Clifford McBride



TILLIE THE TOILER — By Webster

OUT OUR WAY — By J. R. WILLIAMS

OUR BOARDING HOUSE — With Major Hoople