By Thornton W. Burgess

THE THISTLEDOWN NURSERY

Mother love scorns work unending,
That is a part of baby tending.
—Old Mother Nature.

Five tiny babies nestled together in the softest of soft beds. No babies ever had a softer bed. It was of thistledown, a truly downy bed. It was in the snuggest of snug homes, the walls of which were woven of grass. This was hidden in the middle of a clump of long grass, some of which stood above, and much of which fell over the little home completely hiding it.

Those wee babies needed a soft downy bed. They were pink mites with no little fur coats at all; there wasn't a hair on their tiny bodies. Their tiny eyes were tightly closed. No more helpless babies could be imagined. They were not pretty, even though they were pink of skin. That is, they were not pretty in the eyes of anyone except their mother. To her, they were the prettiest babies in the world. She was Nanny Meadowmouse. But of course to all mothers their babies are the prettiest in all the Great world. This is as it should be.

Nanny was a good mother.

Baby Mice grow fast. They grow surprisingly fast. By the time the five mites in the thistledown nursery were four days old, they were no longer pink. They were wearing little fuzzy gray coats, so of course they were no longer naked. They were only a little over a week old when their eyes were open, and they had sharp little teeth. They had found their legs, too, and were squirming about in that soft bed and trying to get out of it. Nanny was a good mother; she always is a good mother. She gave all the time to the care of her babies, excepting when she went out to get something to eat. She was ready to risk her life for these precious babies. There could be no more devoted mother. She was ready to risk her own life for them at any time.

Danny Meadowmouse wasn't as good a father as Nanny was a mother. In fact, he wasn't a good father at all. It is doubtful if he knew his own babies. You see, Danny believes that bringing up babies is a mother's job, and not a father's. There are some human fathers who seem to agree with Danny.

Few babies grow as fast as baby Mice. Some baby birds may, but not many. Nanny's babies were not quite three weeks old when they were outside that snug home and finding their own food. One or two of them were doing this when they were only two weeks old. Of course that was a great relief to their mother. While she worried over them while they were helpless, she stopped worrying about them as soon as they began running about. That is the time when most mothers worry most. But not Nanny Meadowmouse. She thinks that when they are three weeks old they should be able to take care of themselves. And in a measure they are; at least, they can feed themselves.

The last of the five babies in the thistledown bed left home the day he was three weeks old. He had to. Mother pushed him out. You see, more babies were coming to take the place of these five, both in that fine thistledown bed and in mother's heart. It is that way with Mice. So, it is a good thing that the babies are tough little rascals almost from the time of birth. They can stand surprisingly well cold and wetness which most babies could not stand at all.

All about that home in the clump of grass were little paths. They led in all directions. They had been cut by Danny and Nanny and other Mice. They were almost like tunnels, for the grass hung over them, and sometimes was even matted over them. This was a good thing because it hid those who were running along them from sharp eyes always watching for them. No babies in all the Great World have

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Contract Bridge

By Josephine Clubertson

NOT A MATTER OF "RULE"

One of the questions put to bridge experts most frequently is this: "When I have six cards of a suit and dummy has three, or I have five cards and dummy has four, how should I go about catching the queen — by finessing, one way or the other, or by laying down the two tops in the hope that the queen will fall?"

Unfortunately, the correct mathematical answer to this question — that the play of the ace king has a slight advantage — often harms the one who asked the question, because he is then apt to misapply the advice. In short, he may soon be declarer under some such circumstances as the following:

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable

	♠ 8 7 ♥ 9 4 ♦ K J 10 9 6 4 ♣ A 8 2	
♠ 10 6 2 ♥ K 10 7 ♦ Q 8 5 ♣ K Q J 3	N W E S	♠ 9 4 3 ♥ Q 8 6 5 ♦ 3 2 ♣ 7 5 3
	♠ A K Q J 5 ♥ A J ♦ A 7 2 ♣ 10 6 4	

The bidding:

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

West made his natural lead, the club king. Dummy's ace won and declarer drew trumps in three rounds. Then he laid down the

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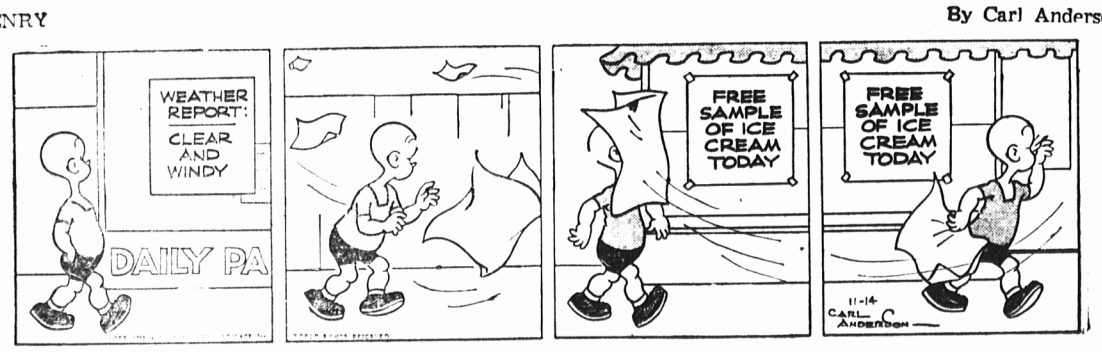
LI'L ABNER — By Al Capp

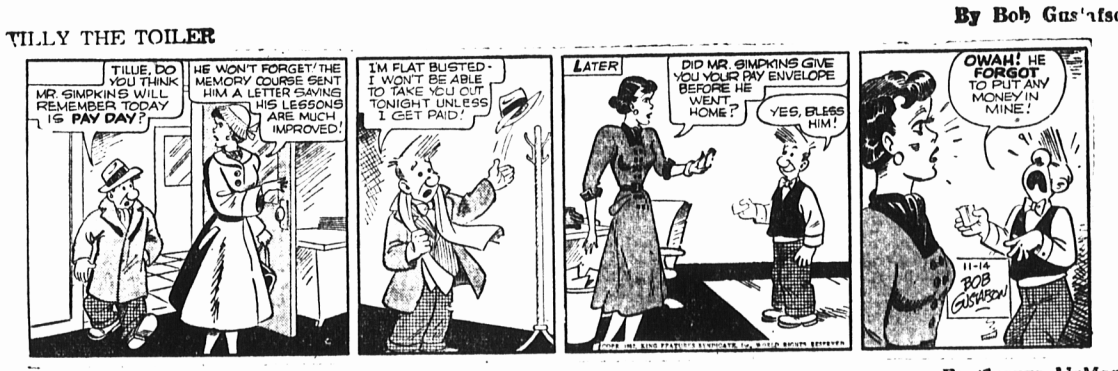
HENRY — By Carl Anderson



KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED

PENNY — By Harry Haenigsen

TILLY THE TOILER — By Bob Gustafson



BRINGING UP FATHER — By George McManus

POGO — By Walt Kelly

DOTTY DRIPPLE — By Ed