GREAT BOOKS

'Robin Hood' Is Favorite of Children

By ELIZABETH C. JAMES

PERHAPS the first time that you met Robin Hood and his Merry Men, you were a little child and were in bed with the measles. Perhaps your mother sat by the window where a ray of light permitted her to read to you from the stories of Robin Hood. Anyway, you certainly remember Robin's fight with Little John.

One summer's day Robin Hood and his Merry Men stopped their journey in the forest to rest in the shade. Their leader set out to rove the woods alone, taking his horn which he used to summon his men should he need them.

Elizabeth James

Going along gayly Robin found himself over a rushing river on a narrow log bridge, face to face with a man seven feet tall. Hot words passed between them for neither would go back to allow the other to pass first. Pulling an arrow from his sheaf and placing it to his long bow, Robin prepared to end this argument, but the tall man taunted him with the name of coward.

"Do you not see me unarmed except for a staff?" cried his opponent. "And yet you would use your bow."

Robin left the bridge and cut himself a stout cudgel from a tree. Returning he faced the tall man and they began to fight, both balancing on the narrow log.

Robin Hood Falls.

A blow from Robin's staff seemed to shiver the bones of the other, but a quick stroke nearly cracked the crown of Robin's head. Thus they were struggling, hand to hand, when a dextrous stroke from the stranger tumbled Robin Hood into the water. Pulling himself from the river by the overhanging boughs of a bush, Robin gave a mighty blast on his horn. Running at top speed came his band of Merry Men in their liveried suits of green. Seeing their leader wet from head to foot, they asked the reason, and when Robin told them of the fight they beset the stranger to give him a ducking.

"Stop!" cried Robin Hood. "If this brave man will join us, he can become a member of the Merry Men!"

Shouts greeted these words, and the tall man agreed to accept this invitation, having heard much of Robin Hood's men.

"We must have a feast in his honor," they cried and set about preparing the venison and wines.

And so it was that on a summer's day in their secret haunt in Sherwood Forest, Robin and his Merry Men took Little John to be one of their band.

Another day Robin Hood heard of an archery tournament which he very much wished to win. Wearing a disguise he entered the contest and was soon left with only one opponent, a slender youth who shot with grace and skill. When the last round came, Robin stepped back to give first place to his opponent, who in turn gave way to Robin Hood. Then the outlaw saw that the hands of his opponent were trembling. So Robin Hood stepped to the mark and shot his arrows, making a perfect score. The youth missed the center of the target by a small margin.

It was then time to remove disguises. When the villagers saw Robin Hood they were astonished for they knew that the Sheriff of Nottingham was searching for him. At this very moment the Sheriff dashed up on his horse and a free-for-all fight began. The villagers helped Robin Hood for they loved him as a hero. In the confusion Robin noticed the slender youth beside him, fighting in his defense.

When the fight was over, Robin sought out the youth and inquired why he had fought thus in his behalf. The youth removed his disguise and his cap; beautiful long hair fell to his shoulders. Robin gasped, for the slender youth was really Maid Marian, Robin's sweetheart.

Robin Hood and his sweetheart rode away together, leaving the villagers smiling.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The authors of the Robin Hood stories are unknown as individuals but much can be deducted about them as a group. They hated the rich Normans who had taken the best of everything in England, they hated many of the churchmen who taxed the people excessively in the name of religion. Robin Hood was their champion for he robbed the rich and helped the poor. What King Arthur was to the nobility, Robin Hood was to the poor.

The deeds of Robin Hood have come down to us in ballads which were told and sung by the evening camp fires, long before the people could read or write.

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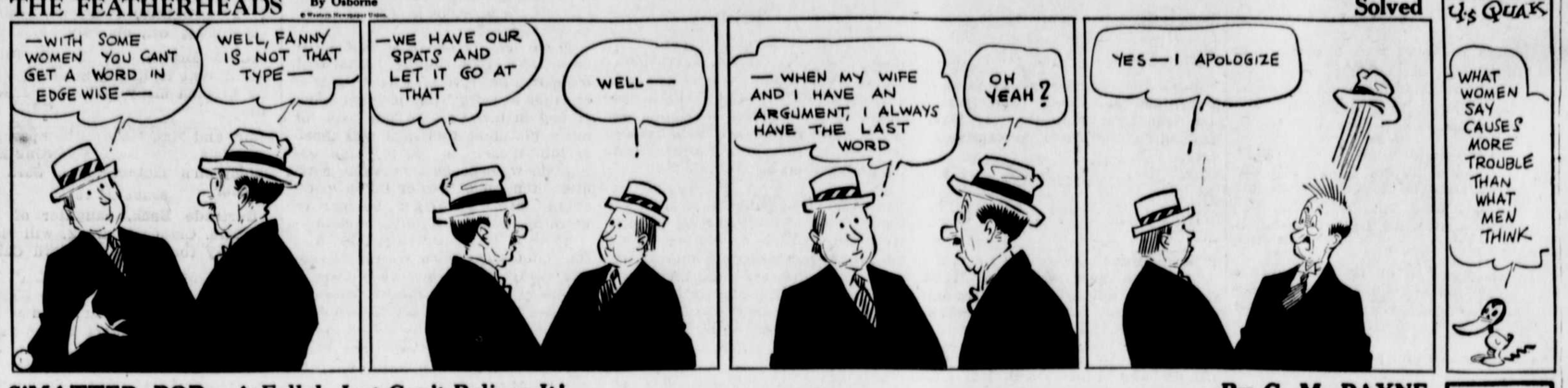

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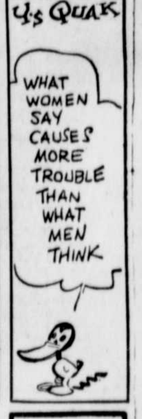

S'MATTER POP—A Fellah Just Can't Believe It! By C. M. PAYNE

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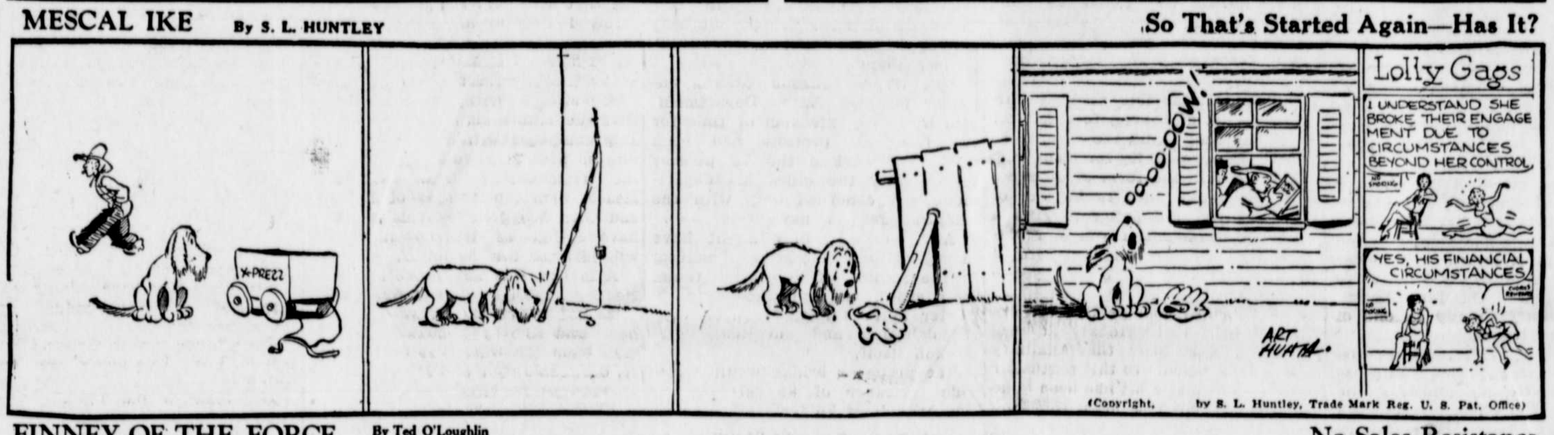
MESCAL IKE By S. L. HUNTLEY

So That's Started Again—Has It?



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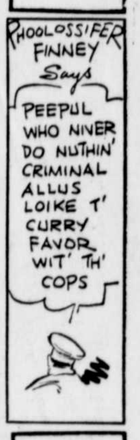
FINNEY OF THE FORCE By Ted O'Loughlin

No Sales Resistance



POP—Pop Wants to Know Which to Replace By J. MILLAR WATT

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QUIET READING By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

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CONCESSIONS TO THE TRADE

Customer—A dollar and a half for this prescription? That's very high.

Druggist—No, sir—the drugs in it are very costly.

Customer—Since when? I used to be a druggist myself.

Druggist—Why didn't you say so? It'll be 15 cents."—Farm Journal.

Appropriate

Aviator (entering clothing store)—I'd like some flying clothes.

Bright Clerk—O. K. We'll start you off with a wing collar.

Oak Joke

Officer—Hey, you! What're you doing up in that there tree?

Tramp—Believe it or not, mister, I sat on it when it was an acorn.

YOU CAN'T WIN

"But, my dear," exclaimed the peace-loving husband, "you've been talking for an hour and I haven't said a word."

"No," snapped his wife. "You haven't said anything, but you've been listening in a sassy way, and I'm not going to stand for it!"

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