

TOMMY MOORE—namely, one of the snappiest poets which ever wins himself a splitting headache trying to find a word which will rhyme with “oblige”—once got the following out of his system:

“Those evening bells, those evening bells,
How many a tale their music tells!”

By a odd coincidence, gang, bells has told many's the pungent tale to me, likewise: ship bells, church bells, school bells, dinner bells, fire bells, cow bells, wedding bells, shooting gallery gongs, clock chimes, old-clothesmen's and scissors-sharpeners' bells, burglar alarms, doorbells, Isabelles, telephone bells, small-town belles, Mabels, belladonna, or which is the main entrance? But of all the bells which ever clanged, I'll state they's one whose music is as familiar to me as the smell of arnica and resin. In round numbers, I refer to the bell which starts and ends each frame of a prize fight. One of them gongs made boxing history—hark ye!

I'll have you know that managing the logical contender for a world's championship, like hypnotism, sword-swallowing, or driving a car in Los Angeles, calls for ability along peculiar lines. Honest to Rickard, a guy's got to have the nerve of a blind aviator, the brains of the chief warden of Yale, the showmanship of a revivalist and the patience of a flea-circus trainer. This master mind's got to be his fighter's governess, cash register, yes-man and pal, standing between him and the raft of loud-speakers which infests the training camp of the Grade-A scrapper, craving to live off him while he's out in front.

Them poisonous gate-crashers spray the highly pleased kid with “Hello, Champ!” before he's ever peered from behind his guard at the title-holder—and should he finally do so and get himself knocked off, well, “I told you he was just another bum!” sneers his former wild admirers.

Them eggs, other managers which wishes to steal the gold mine you created, and the Good-Time Charleys with their hotsy-totsy ladies, is what the boxer's teeth-gnashing pilot's got to kick out the door in a diplomatic way. You can wager all the tire-irons in Detroit that to do this and keep peace with your battler is a difficult feat, my masters. Fighters is made, but managers is *born*—many with two strikes on 'em!

“Well, to get down to cases, as the bootlegger says, I'm afraid I was all broke out with what it takes to front

for a mauler, so making championship material out of Jackie King, a flashy welterweight, was simply a matter of routine. Jackie made canvas-inspectors out of all the other challengers in jig time and finally Jimmy McCabe, the champ, run out of excuses and had to box him, for fear the kiddies would tag after him in the streets and howl “For shame, for shame!”

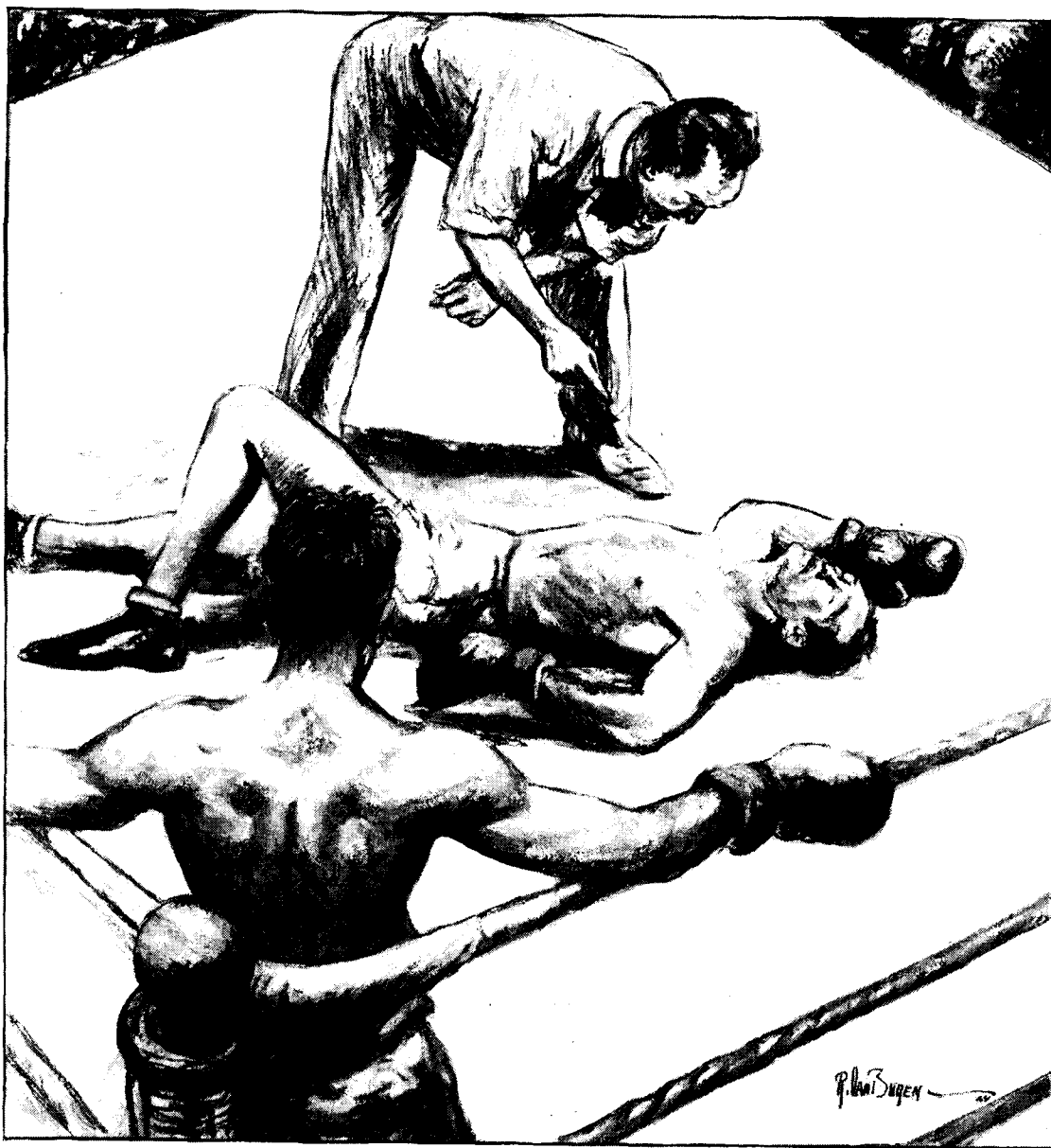
TO LURE this pacifist into a ring with us, we had to cross the palm of his owner, Shylock Wiggins, with fifty grand and this was to be returned to us intact should McCabe go crazy and win. If, on the other hand, Mr. Champ should get slapped stiff, they would take the fifty thousand dollars to buy enough ammonia to bring him back to life.

That pact was merely the usual “just-in-case” protection a title-holder rates in what is now a high-class racket with the small-time yeggs eliminated. It's against the rules of the boxing commissions in every state where assault and battery is okay if tickets is sold for

same, but then so's selling booze against the rules. Ha, ha!

A heavy rain postponed the Battle of Eternity for a week and this steamed up my bold Jackie, which was anxious to flatten McCabe so's he could co-star with the breath-taking Fay Daniels in a great, big talkie. For no reason at all, Jackie had worked as a type in a flock of epics on the Coast and this break was promised him at fat wages and a fatter percentage, should he click. The proposed seven-reel attack on your intelligence was to be directed by Melbourne Maxim, our buddy and one of the greatest megaphone flaunters which ever admitted the word “No” was simply a typographical error in the dictionary. So much for that.

A hopeless victim of girl trouble, Jack was about to commit marriage in cold blood with Fay Daniels; viz, the ace peasant-player of Colossal Productions' speakies. Unlike four thirds of her Hollywood playmates, my dears, this pretty troupier could talk Park Avenue English and also packed a singing voice which passed through your



Illustrated by
R. Van Buren

The bell ending the fight rang with the champion still on the canvas, as cold as a polar bear's kiss

King High

By H. C. Witwer

*Reel ten of “Bigger and Better”—in which Luck
deserts Jackie at a crucial moment,
and comes back at another*

they'd immediately be up to their ears in lawyers.

While matters was hanging fire, Moe Weinstein, Fay's press agent, which was known as Director General of Publicity for short, give birth to his annual idea. This gil favored us with a visit at our inn.

“**JACK,**” he says, “Fay Daniels is going to talk over the radio tomorrow as a ballyhoo for her new picture, Two-Thirds Married, and likewise to smoke up the opera she'll toss with you, if you stop the champ. I'd like to have you make a brief sermon, too. Can I count on you?”

“Don't speak about *counting* on him, Dizzy!” I exclaims, jumping up nervously. “Where'd you ever see anybody counting over Jack King?”

“Pardon you,” grins the pest. “I must have used the wrong verb, as the cross-word puzzle fiend remarked. But seriously, this radio gag would be a great boost for Jack.”

“If the broadcastin' station's near, I'll do it,” announces Jack. “But it's got to be close, so's when I finish my monologue I can bound back to this trap and hear myself talk on my own loud speaker!”

“Ha, ha!” Moe yesses. “You kill me! Say, can I print that nifty? It'll get a laugh!”

“Sure,” says Jackie. “But don't try to print it in the Evenin' Howl.”

“Why not?” inquires Chevalier Weinstein.

“Because that's where I read it,” yawns Jack.

The following morning, the sun broke its own consecutive appearance record by rising again and, after inhaling a light breakfast, Jackie hopped off for

the broadcasting joint. He was to get a dress rehearsal before the mike first, though till midnight he'd howled his three-minute talk at me, selling it like all get-out. It was a yell—all about "The manly art of self-defense," and "spiritual and physical development that comes from facing an opponent in an honest contest of brains and brawn" and other such hooley. Personally, we was both satisfied it had been wrote by the Hon. James Joseph Tunney.

I'd promised my athalete I'd be on hand when he cut loose with this apple-sauce on the innocent millions listening in and as I was ankling across Times Square a very abba-dabba cutey side-swiped me and like to made me turn turtle. She nearly took a flop herself, so I grabbed her and we clinched till we both got our feet. The perfume almost had me set for a operating table, children, and then, either muttering a apology or swearing at me, she was gone. I immediately reached for my watch and pin, but they was safe at their moorings and so was the bankroll, as I felt with a touch of my hand in my pants pocket. Still scowling, I was just going to pull out the wad and take stock, when somebody calls:

"Marty Evans! What on earth put that look on your face?"

"My parents," I growls to beautiful Queenie Davis, my betrothed, for such, gentle reader, was whom which addressed me. This little panic was in tow of her mother, with which I was as popular as scurvy.

"I'm going over to hear Jack King speak on the radio for the first time in his life," I adds. "Come on with me and bring your delightful parent."

"Let's go, Mother," gurgles Queenie. "It'll be lots of fun!"

"You must get another dinner gown for your next picture," says dear old mother, putting on the chill. "And if I don't go with you, Heavens knows what you'll pick out. It certainly wasn't from me that you get your rather peculiar taste in dresses—and husbands!"

WITH that, she give me a dirty look and got it back with loan shark's interest, what I mean.

"I love that!" Queenie exclaims, burning. "What's the matter with Marty? He's honest, sober and reliable."

"So is Oscar, our German police dog," says Mother calmly. "If you'd played your cards as I directed, you might have married a millionaire—a Harvard cut-up or one of those Yale specials."

"Oh—money!" sniffs Queenie scornfully. "Don't worry, we won't starve. I'll be a star some day and Marty's smart—he'll always get change when he pays a bill no matter how big it is! I did lots of window shopping, Mother dear, before I selected him. My husband must understand me!"

"Humph!" replies my menace. "Why shouldn't he? Those women who say their husbands don't understand them are probably right now and then, but sooner or later they find out that nobody else understands them, either!"

"Well, let's hear my funny boy friend speak his piece," I says, to change the

subject and the predicate likewise. "Jack can't turn a wheel if I ain't behind him."

"Another nice boy you ruined," snaps Queenie's charming female ancestor. "He wouldn't be a fighter if it wasn't for you!"

I consider that one of the greatest compliments I ever been paid in my life. That's exactly what I'd been trying to tell Jackie King for years!

My next imitation was to call a taxi, boys and girls, and when we clattered up to the radio station I squinted at the clicking cheater and seen the stick-up was two bucks and eighty cents. So I pulled out my roll, flipped back the dollar bill on the outside—and instantly swooned back in the seat with a moan! Under that dollar, mind you, was a mass of neatly cut strips from a newspaper. Creeping mackerel! That blonde which stumbled into me a little while before had sent me to the cleaners and Queenie coming along the next minute had stopped me from finding it out right away. I couldn't help but admire that lady dip's technic, but the burly taxi driver was scowling at me and I was as broke as a political promise! What to do?

"C'mon, send in, Brother, or I'll show you some John Laws!" grunts our chauffeur courteously, while Queenie gasps and her mother seems tickled to death. She was having a gorgeous time, for it looked like I'd get pinched. This is always a show-stopping act on the sidewalks of New York and already

a audience was gathering to give me the bird. How we laugh when Life, that ace of slapstick comedians, hurls a pie at the other guy, hey?

"I'm Marty Evans, manager of Jack King, the fighter," I whispers, a bit weak. "I ain't got a thin dime on me, but wait till I dash upstairs and I'll come down with plenty."

"Now I'll tell one!" snarls the taxi driver. "You cheap gyppers is gettin' on my nerves!"

With that, he went to work and bawled to the traffic cop and that baby strolls over for a earful. While he's getting it, I butted in.

"OFFICER," I pants, "a woman bumped into me in Times Square and rolled me for the works. I—"

"Which of these dames was it?" demands the copper, stepping on the running board and frowning at the dumfounded Queenie and her mother. Both of 'em exclaimed indignantly and Queenie hurriedly paid off for me, while the crowd laughed heartily.

"And that," sneers my coming mother-in-law to Queenie, "is the clown you're going to marry!"

"Oh, hush, Mother!" snaps Queenie, as we backed into the radio building. "A thing like that could happen to anybody!"

"Anybody like him!" growls this fan of mine. I said nothing. I was fit to be tied!

Upstairs in the broadcasting-room, good folk, Jack and a merry crowd was

on hand, most of which we knew. The first acquaintance I pegged was Kemp-ton Calhoun, *née* Peter Dugan, a life guard, now a star for Colossal Productions and triple cuckoo over Fay Daniels, which he'd formerly been teamed with in box-office wows. They was likewise another of the eye-soothing Fay's victims present in the shape of Welton Gordon, a bald-headed millionaire playboy which loved to stall around wherever the front-page habitues held forth. Both these prancing jobbies was like something in your eye and they was perpetually trying to put over a fast one on Jack, but to date he had 'em cheated. They greeted us warmly—the snakes in the grass!

"That postponement of the championship bout was a lucky break for you, King," says Calhoun, which was East getting his voice vulcanized for the talkies. "You ought to pray it will rain forever!"

"Yeah?" remarks Jack softly, as Fay frowned and moved over to him. "How come?"

"Why, McCabe was never better in his life!" explains Calhoun loudly, so's all can hear. "He'll just about execute you, old son, when you do get in there with him. I wouldn't be in your shoes for all the money in the world!"

I gazed at this sneering bozo and then over to where Fay had her arm around Jack. Digging my elbow in Calhoun's ribs, I pointed to the happy lovers.

"You wouldn't be in Jackie's shoes, hey?" I grins. "Don't kid me, Big Boy!"

Calhoun snarled viciously and turned away to get his feelings soothed by this Welton Gordon tomato.

WELL, the blah-blah announcer pattered a few pre-war wisecracks and then, as it was almost ten o'clock in the morning, some bird goes on the air with bedtime stories for chorus girls and night watchmen. Following that, lads and lassies, come a number which goaled me and Jack. They broadcasted a couple or three phonograph records over the radio—the height of something, I don't know what, but I'll say that's cutting down expenses, tough on the radio fans! Next, Fay Daniels released a nobby talk on her current movie, warbled a ballad and then come the dessert—Mr. Jack King.

Jackie was handed his recitation on a slip of paper, which, as had been carefully figured, could be read in three minutes flat. How the so ever, Calhoun's sarcastical side remarks had the kid running a temperature and his set speech on the mysteries of boxing went by the board. They snickered when he got up to speak, but before the astounded Moe Weinstein could drag him away from the mike, Jackie had turned loose the following in a high, shrill voice:

"The talkin' picture has come to go! The producers has simply hit a bum bottle and they'll be plenty headaches amongst 'em before this flurry about sound is over. The public was gettin' fed up on the machine-made hooley turned out by. (Continued on page 51)



She nearly took a flop herself, so I grabbed her. We clinched until we got to our feet

Wings of



Illustrated by
O. F.
Schmidt

The Story Thus Far:

MILLARD DELAVAN is court-martialed and dismissed from the United States Air Force on the charge made by Captain Lastry of striking his superior officer, Captain Lastry himself, and of cheating at cards. Stacked against him are the facts that he is adept at card tricks and that he speaks German perfectly.

The only one in sympathy with young Delavan is Major Henrichs, who thinks the charges absurd. After the court-martial Major Henrichs befriends the boy, who is heartbroken and disillusioned, and introduces him to his brother, Judge Henrichs, who listens to the story of the trial and further draws the boy out about his life.

Millard is an orphan, the son of a once famous actor who has been dead for many years and about whom Millard knows little, except that some rich woman "made a monkey out of him and sent him away." The boy, brought up by an aunt, a German woman, has lived very much by himself and in his imagination and has always wanted adventure.

At Judge Henrichs' home Millard meets Madame Seidler, Joyce Van Deusen and her aunt, Mrs. Van Deusen. Mrs. Van Deusen stares hard at Millard and after he goes breathlessly asks the judge where he found him.

II

JUDGE HENRICHS was seated at the desk of his private office—a pleasant room in an old-fashioned downtown building.

Three of the walls of his office were lined with legal reports—the treasured siftings of the grist-mills of the law. But in the fourth wall was a triple-casement which overlooked the confluence of Wall, Broad and Nassau streets—that is to say, the center of a golden corn field which fed a world at war.

The judge was not alone. To use the modern phrase, he was in conference.

On the other side of his flat-top desk

sat a visitor with the brooding eyes of a prophet and the hands of a son of Vulcan—a man whose mouth twitched now and then as though he needed rest. On the desk lay a number of stock certificates. Judge Henrichs had just opened his check-book

and was dipping his pen in the ink.

"Before signing the check," he said, leaning back in his chair, the precious drop of ink still held inviolate in the pen, "I think you ought to know one additional circumstance about Delavan. As I told you before, I am willing to vouch for him in every way. But I want you to know that he left the aviation service because of court-martial proceedings—striking his superior officer and—er—so forth. My brother, Major Henrichs, was on the court; and he is personally convinced that Delavan was well justified."

"As long as you vouch for him, Judge, and your check is good," cautiously remarked Vulcan's son, "I'll take a chance on him, even if he beat up his whole unit."

"The check will be certified," said the judge, leaning over his check-book again. "And while we're waiting for it, I'll ring for Delavan," he presently added, covering the stock certificates with other papers.

If you had been there when Delavan appeared—tall, pale and yet carrying himself with unconscious grace—you would have seen that, although perhaps the passing days had slightly softened its bitterness, he was still wearing the somber mask of those who walk the uncharted paths of the Vale of Disillusion.

"Delavan," said the judge, "this is Mr. Thomas of the Arrow Aero Manu-

facturing Company. I told you last night that Mr. Thomas was looking for a young man who knows something about aviation—and as soon as he mentioned his wants I naturally thought of you."

There was no mistaking the air of interest with which Delavan turned to Mr. Thomas—as a prisoner, it might be said, turns toward a possible way of escape.

"The Arrow Aero Company," he repeated. "Isn't your factory on Long Island?"

"YES," replied the other, reaching in his pockets. "Here's a picture of it—on our letter-head. I'll be glad to take you over and show you—when I get through here. We're working on a contract for the Greek Government and expect the planes to be rolling out of the assembly shop by the end of the week. We're also expecting a lot of work from Washington."

"The salary—" prompted the judge.

"Hundred a week to start," said Vulcan's son in the voice of one who repeats a lesson just learned.

"And when could he start?"

"Any time."

Delavan started that same day, thanking whatever gods there were for this diversion from the lonely paths of disillusion. The Arrow Aero factory, he found, was within commuting distance of the city; and although it was far from being as large as the drawing on the letter-head—the eyes of prophecy having probably guided the hand of the artist—it was by no means an unimportant enterprise.

"If this war only lasts long enough," said Vulcan's son, showing his new employee through the works, "we'll have Ford sweating before we're through."

Delavan couldn't have come at a better time. He spent his first day in the pattern shop, where the wooden forms were made. The next day he spent in the foundry, learning how models of wood are duplicated in aluminum, brass and steel. These parts he then followed to the machine shop, where he saw them smoothed and fitted as

though they were so much pine. Then after a day in the assembly shop he helped to roll a new plane out on the flying field and after a long trial flight with Holquist, the chief inspector, it was decided that Delavan should fly alone the following day.

"You've had plenty of solo flying, you say?" asked Holquist.

"Yes," said Delavan, somewhat shortly.

"How many hours?" persisted the other.

"About a hundred."

"And you're not in the army?"

"Are you?" demanded Delavan, his voice slightly rising.

The two men stared at each other, their eyes alert like those of two fighting birds. Delavan's glance, however, was easily the more steadfast, as though at a word—at a move—he was ready to spring. Holquist laughed a little and stooped down to pick up a handful of sand.

"You needn't get mad about it," he said. "Me—I'm not in the army because I couldn't get mad about that, either."

He moved away and deep in his heart Delavan knew that he had made an enemy—an inquisitive enemy—where it would have been better to have had a friend. . . .

He went up alone the following afternoon. He had written Judge Henrichs of the coming event, but at three o'clock he decided to wait no longer.

HEADING against a light breeze which was blowing from the south, the earth was soon gently swaying and swimming away from him—only the roaring of the engine to convince him that he was not drifting over the world—a disembodied spirit, not far from being one with the gods seated on a cloud and whiling away an idle hour by glancing down at the scene of the human comedy. Away to his right were the distant towers and minarets of New York; on his left was the faded blue immensity of ocean.

"If I only had gas enough to fly over there!" he thought, with a wistful glance at a steamer's smoke at sea.

Being denied the straight-away, he accepted the merry-go-round—that is to say, he followed the common lot of men. Finding his plane was riding easily, he tried her on the turns, banking more and more steeply till he was all but pivoting on his wing-tips.