



"He's always trying to make me save my money," accuses Bert, "as if I didn't know he has plenty for us both!" But Wheeler admits that his pal is largely responsible for his success.

BOB is worse than a wife. Always nagging, always picking on me. Always trying to make me save my money, as if I didn't know that he has plenty for us both to live on.

When I first met Bob a few years ago I didn't think he was funny. We were featured comedians in Ziegfeld's original New York production of "Rio Rita." I had never seen Bob before. As I had been in the "Follies" four years, I was the fair-haired boy. Ziggy really thought I was funny. A pal(?) told me that I had nothing to worry about as Bob wasn't funny. Bob is very direct and out-spoken. After a few rehearsals of the show, he told me to my face that if I insisted upon using my revue and vaudeville comedy methods, I would throw my characterization right out of the window. Was I burned up? I told him to go lay down and roll over, but on the opening night he bounced so many laughs off the top of my head that I thought I was in the ring with Jack Dempsey.

I was a flop that opening night. After thinking it over, I came to the conclusion that this Woolsey knew what it was all about. Next day I made up with him. Then and there he started in picking me to pieces and nagging away like an old hen. But when he got through with me I was clicking. We worked together for three solid years in "Rio Rita," and we grew so used to one another that we decided to stay spliced.

Just having Bob around all the time is like being married, and I ought to know, because I have been married twice.

He is always finding out where I was last night, and I never try to disappoint him. I have a weakness for staying up late at night clubs, while Bob is happily mar-

What I Think of Bob

Half of a cuckoo comedy team talks about his wild-and-Woolsey partner

By
Bert Wheeler

ried and likes to stay home. One day on the set when I looked particularly tired, Bob suggested I give the director and cameraman a break by getting some sleep. We shook hands and I promised to be a good boy. But habit was too strong that night and my foot slipped. As Bob didn't happen to sleep very well that night, he arose at three o'clock in the morning to take his dog out for a walk. Just around the corner from where he lived there was a speak-easy. He stepped in to get a bracer—and there was his side-kick, the lone customer, making whoopee with the Hawaiian orchestra. Bob has never recovered from that episode. (Continued on page 86)



The firm of W. and W. give Raquel Torres a surprising welcome in "So This is Africa," their new film, in which the clown princes are a couple of slightly cracked explorers.

What I Think of Bert

The man with the cigar
tells the whole truth about
his team-mate

By
Robert Woolsey

I HAVE no one to blame but myself. It was my own idea and I'm stuck with it. I took Bert for better or worse, and I got both.

Of course, if I had it to do over again I would do the same thing, because I realize that Bert is a nice, lovable little guy who would be absolutely helpless without me. He is God's gift to Woolsey.

When I first laid eyes on Bert some ten years ago, he was featured in Ziegfeld's "Follies." He was working with a broken arm, and I vividly recall how the little



"I took you for better or for worse," retorts Woolsey, "and I got both!" But he gets along all right with his accomplice—because, he says, he wouldn't know how to get along without him!

punk aroused my sympathy. I have been a sucker for his appeal ever since.

He has that God-given sympathetic personality that makes everyone want to take care of him, and everyone does, from me to the prop man. The women are natural set-ups for Bert. They love to "mother" him because they think he is so darned cute and helpless.

Bert knows everybody. He is a great mixer. He likes to be called "Bert." He is the most popular guy I have ever known. It often takes him an hour to walk a couple of blocks on Hollywood Boulevard or Broadway because everybody stops him to talk.

"Hello, pal," says Bert. "I'm certainly glad to see you. How long have you been out here?" And the guy probably replies, "Five years." But Bert still manages to make him believe that he is an old pal. Then he usually turns to me and asks, "Who was that guy, Bob?"

I call Bert "A Hail Fellow, All Wet!"

But he is one swell little guy, Bert is. I have never known him to say an unkind word about another person, nor to hurt anyone's feelings. He never indulges in practical jokes at another's expense.

Bert has the finest sense of loyalty I know, and he is generous to a fault. If he had one-tenth of the money he has earned, he would be a rich man. Before we formed a corporation, he spent his money like water, and seldom knew where it went. In two years he bought seven different new and expensive automobiles. But when he went to an Auto Show and purchased an airplane, that was the pay-off. I had had enough. It was up to me to get his money back, which I did.

Although Bert has no business ability, he can drop \$10,000 in the stock market or (Continued on page 87)



Reverse English—or is it German? The members of the firm take revenge on Marlene Dietrich and the other trouser-toting ladies by beating them at their own game. Wally Beery acts as their escort.

Corporation, so that I could be protected from myself. I am supposed to be very dumb about money matters, but I will say in my own defense that I never opened one of those peewee golf courses. Bob did. I was the only customer he had, and I al-

ways charged it. His theme song for the course was "Three's a Crowd." He hates to be reminded of that \$15,000 he lost, but he did keep his sense of humor when he posted that closing notice: "Opened By Mistake."

What I Think of Bert

Continued from page 63

bad investments, without a squawk. No one ever hears him mention money. To Bert, money was only made to give him and his pals pleasure.

Now, he is going to save his money. We have formed a corporation, pay each other a nominal salary, and we are forced to save the rest. My greatest ambition in life is to see that Bert accumulates another fortune, with sufficient income and paid-up insurance policies, to take care of him comfortably in his old age.

Bert was worse than a wife when it came to knowing his bank balance. He just kept on writing checks until his banker would stroll by his table at the Brown Derby with the jolly greeting:

"Hello, Bert. You're overboard."

Bert is a natural comedian, with rare talents for commanding sympathy and pathos, as well as laughs. I am a manufactured comedian. After seventeen years in stock companies acting every type of rôle, I deliberately adopted comedy to live. This was necessary because of my lack of physical requisites for other rôles. When I first met Bert in "Rio Rita," I adapted my cocky, bragging type of comic to suit Bert's personality. Possibly the only thing that saves me as the co-star of the team is in making myself even dumber than Bert! Audiences will usually laugh at the smart guy, who pretends to know it all, when they know that he doesn't know what he is talking about.

Bert doesn't know how he gets his laughs, nor can he explain. But he is sure-fire as death and taxes. He may not be versatile, nor have a particular style of comedy. He doesn't have to. He is Bert Wheeler, and there is only *one*.

An author must know Bert intimately in order to write lines for him. He can't say bright lines, nor play with tongue in cheek. But that infectious catch in his voice and his sweet, sympathetic little dumb-pan never fails to panic the cash customers.

The little cuss even makes me write most of his comedy lines, which means that I always have to give him the best of it. Maybe he isn't so dumb after all.

Don't get me wrong. Bert knows his way around. He is just too good-natured and lazy. He hates to rehearse, but I can always depend upon him to bob up with some excellent comedy lines and business. No, Bert Wheeler didn't get where he is today by accident.

Bert has terrific vitality. My hardest fight is to persuade him to take a rest from work between pictures. He is forever wanting to make personal appearances on tour, or radio broadcasts. He is so restless and nervous that he always has to take an airplane to wherever he is going, so that he can get there as quickly as possible. He claims that he likes to go places between pictures, because he needs a little mental relaxation after his hard work on the story. After what I've been telling you, go ahead and laugh.

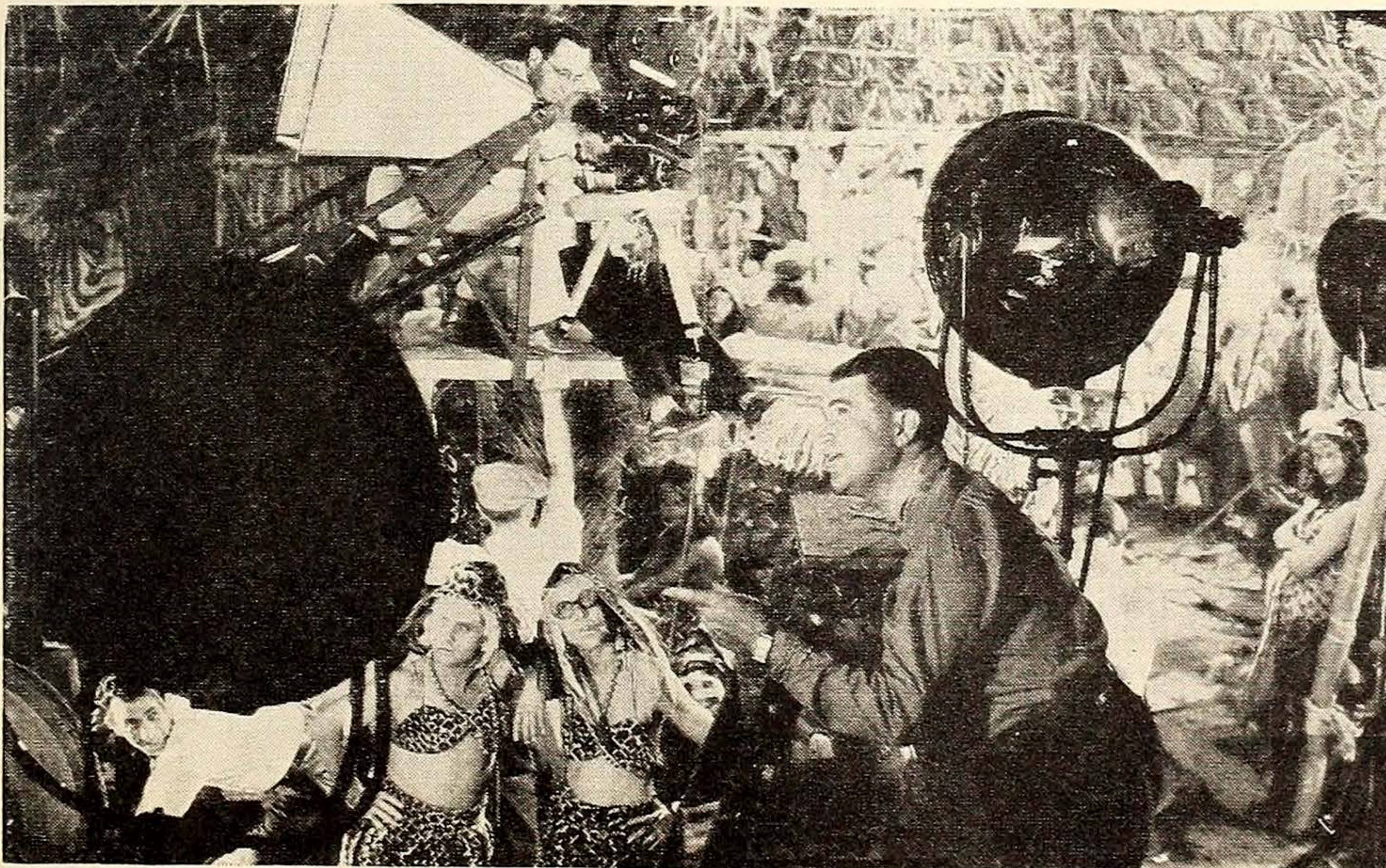
At that, I would rather go vacationing with Bert than anyone else, even if I do have to do all the work. He is great company, has a swell disposition, and a marvelous sense of humor. Never talks shop or business. And his one idea in life is to keep himself and everyone else happy.

He hates to be alone. He loves crowds. When he isn't working he never misses luncheon at the Brown Derby with the gang, nor dinner at one of Hollywood's bright spots. He is a familiar figure at all sporting events from the fights to six-day bicycle races.

And I'll have to admit that he has a way with women. As to his choice in girls, he is a swell picker. (Miss Patricia Parker, please note advt.)

Bert is an Irish Catholic and I am a Shriner—but we'll never go to Reno.

I took him for better or worse, so I'll just have to keep on taking care of the helpless little punk!



Bringing Africa to Hollywood! By the crafty use of cameras, lights and scenery, director Eddie Cline makes the California locale of the Wheeler and Woolsey comedy, "So This is Africa," look like what it isn't.



Beauty Questions and Answers

and

by **helena rubinstein**

DEAR MADAME RUBINSTEIN:

Everyone is talking about your new Red Poppy lipstick and rouge, and I would love to have both of them, but I am afraid they are too expensive for me. On the other hand, I have discovered that it is no saving to buy cheap cosmetics for I have been using a cheap powder and the result is that my nose and chin are filled with blackheads. Please give me some practical advice.

Elaine E., Bronxville, N. Y.

DEAR MISS E

I will let you into a little secret. For a dollar you can get one of my lipsticks in the new Red Poppy shade or Red Raspberry or Red Geranium or Red Coral. And you can use it as a cheek rouge too. Or you can get my rouge en creme in either of the four Rubinstein reds and use it for your lips. That's real economy, and you will be sure you are getting pure cosmetics that contain the finest, safest ingredients and last a long time.

Since you say your pores have become opened and embedded with blackheads because you have been using cheap powders, I think you will be interested to know that my powders are only 1.00. And I am certain you will adore the new Peachbloom shade. To get rid of the blackheads you now have, I suggest that you wash with my Beauty Grains which remove all skin impurities. They are from .50 up.

Send all questions to

helena rubinstein

Dept. SC5, 8 East 57th Street, New York City

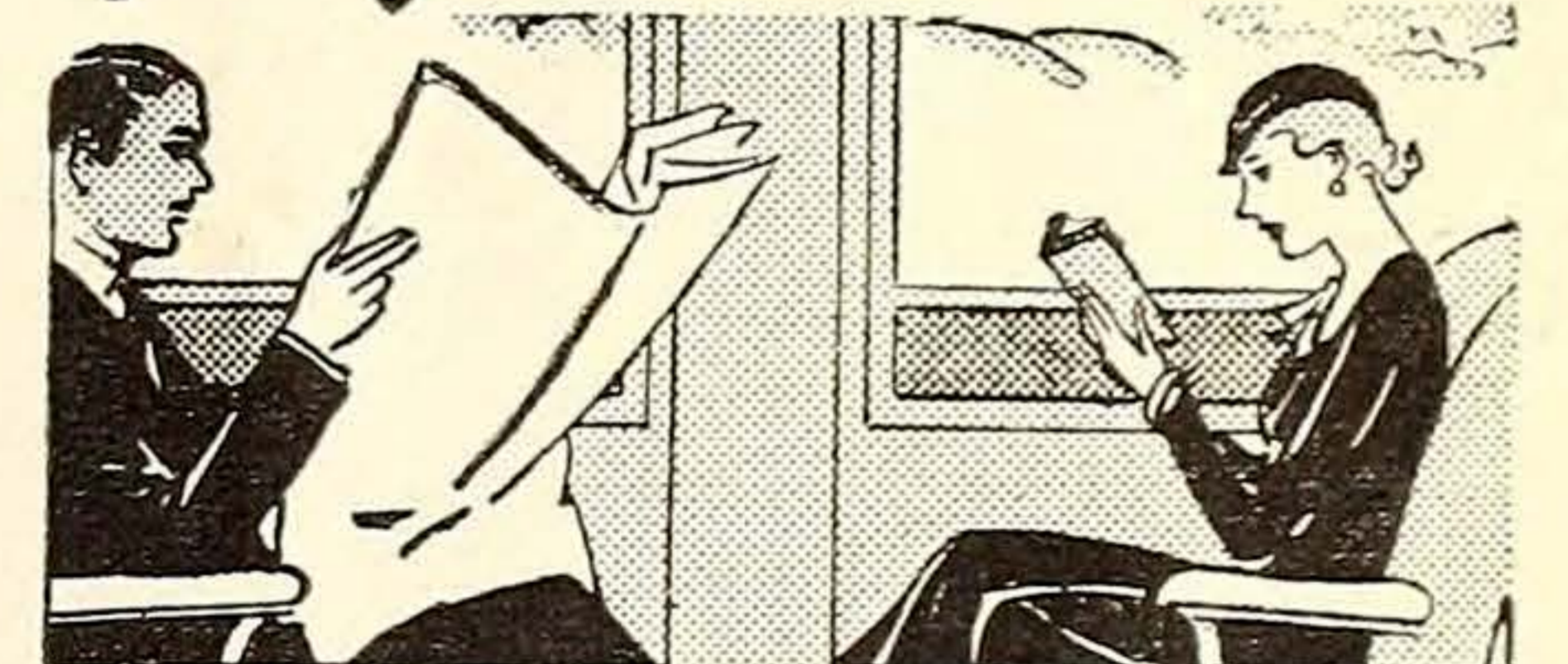
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