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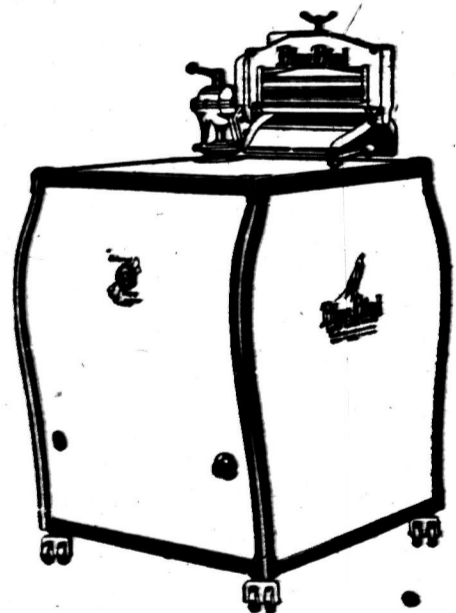
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The Family Herald & Weekly Star

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The Jarvis Record, Local Agent

THE OLD TIMER

By Arthur Lynn

Old Dave Marler wasn't really old. But he was certainly a veteran. Any one would easily judge his age as being about sixty. To be exact, he was sixty-one. Selling had been his only occupation for forty years—selling shoes.

For thirty-five years old Dave had worked the same territory calling on the shoe men. He had witnessed many changes. Towns that were struggling villages had grown into busy industrial centres. Others that had cherished and even boasted of a great future had flared up for a while, then settled down to certain mediocrity.

Dave Marler knew shoes. He knew leather by the feel. No matter how cleverly it was finished he could tell its quality. But above all he had an uncanny foresight as to styles. Rarely was he mistaken in his predictions about next season's "sellers." This reputation made him a close adviser of his firm's policy. But old Dave had never forsaken the road. He was a bachelor and his daily work was life itself to him. Most of his friends were his customers.

To strangers Marler was just another hard-boiled old timer of the road. He was corpulent, slow of foot and short winded on the climb. He impressed one as being devoid of sentiment as a rubber ball is of corners. I first became acquainted with old Dave in the smoker. After that I met him quite frequently. His slow, drawly way of talking and his surprising interest in a wide variety of subjects attracted me. I began to look for him each week. Our friendship was rather odd, too, because Dave was old enough to be my father. Anyway I got closer to him, without realizing it, than any of the others.

There was one thing about him that puzzled me a little. The more I talked to him the more I wondered why he had never married. He never talked of married life—never expressed his views one way or the other. But somehow I got the idea that single blessedness wasn't old Dave's choosing.

One evening after supper I dropped into his room for a chat. As it happened it was the little town where I had spent my boyhood. The talk drifted into a discussion of the town. "You know," I said, "this is the town where I went to school as a kid."

"Yes, I know," said Dave. "You know? How did you know that. I never mentioned it before." I thought Dave looked kind of funny when he answered. "Oh, I don't know," he said; "heard somebody say, I guess." I knew he lied. Because I had never mentioned it to anyone and very few people remembered me around town. It made me curious. It was then I realized that Dave had never mentioned any personal incidents of his early days. I decided to do a little questioning.

"Do you remember this town away back, Dave?" "Sure," he said. And that was all. He fumbled with some stock sheets on the bed with his back toward me. "I guess you were selling shoes in this town when I was toting a school bag, eh?" "Yeah," he said, without turning around.

Why I blurted out the next question I don't know. Maybe I thought that a little kidding wouldn't hurt him. He seemed so close mouthed that night.

"I guess the sight of this burg brings back old memories," I said off-handedly. He stopped sorting the papers on the bed and half-turned around and looked at me. Right away I saw that my stray shot had touched the old-timer in a vulnerable spot. Just think, I thought to myself, Old Dave with a sweetheart back here in Carterville! I lit another cigarette before addressing him again. The turn of the one-sided conversation wasn't making much of a hit with my partner.

"Come on Dave," I teased, "tell me about that old love of yours." He was silent for a second or two. "What makes you think I ever had one?" he asked. I detected a note in his voice that was different than usual.

"You don't deny it then?" "Why should I?" he replied. "No reason in the world. Tell me, Dave, what did she look like?" I had a crazy idea maybe the old timer would enjoy telling me about his old flame. Perhaps he might like to unload after all these years. You can see what a fool I was, because old Dave kept silent. After a minute or so I tried again.

"Did she live here in Carterville,

Dave?" I was surprised when he answered.

"Yes, she did," he said. That soft note was in his gruff, old voice again.

"Wouldn't it be funny if I knew her?" I suggested, laughing.

"Yeah, wouldn't it?" he agreed without interest.

"I bet you had a way with you when you were courting," I kidded. I thought he laughed a little nervously. But he didn't reply, of course.

"Did you have a girl in all the other towns, too, Dave?" I expected him to throw something at me, but he didn't.

"No, just the one," he said seriously—"here in Carterville. "That one was enough for me."

He had finished with his stock sheets. He sat down on the edge of the bed facing me and started to fill his pipe.

"How do you mean enough?" I asked.

"I liked her. She suited me," he replied, simply.

I had a sudden impulse to say good-night and quit bothering the old timer. But my curiosity overcame my better feelings and I questioned him again.

"What happened, Dave?"

He drew hard at his pipe to get it going right, then crossed his legs and looked me straight in the face for the first time that evening.

"She married your father," said the old timer, softly.

GET A NEW ANGLE

Life is not only what we make it but also what we see it to be. We can see life as something joyous, worth while and glorious, or as something drab and gray, not worth living, and full of misery. It all depends on the spectacles we wear on the eyes through which we look out on life. Perhaps it is best to put it this way, that life depends upon the angle from which we view it. So many of us are looking at life from wrong angles that we don't see life in all its fullness of opportunity and miss altogether the joy of living.

Get a new angle on life if life is, in your opinion, not treating you right. It is sickness and disease that is troubling you, you should remember that these do not connote life but the reverse. Get a new angle. Try the health angle from which to survey life instead of the disease angle. Let the conception of health as your rightful portion in the land of the living is yours. Think health instead of disease. Stop talking about your ailments and begin talking of how well you feel. Avoid the person who is always "enjoying poor health." He'll have you sick soon, if you listen to his wailings and moans. Get the health angle.

If you are not doing well in regard to this world's goods and things are going badly with you, get a new angle on life. Get the prosperity angle. Think prosperity and cease thinking poverty. Abundance is your portion, not lack. See yourself possessing plenty. Visualize yourself in prosperity with everything coming your way, and everything will come your way. Refuse to consider yourself poor. Be rich in your mind and you will become rich in your circumstances. The employer knows when a man is satisfied with low wages and pays him accordingly. But if a man sees himself a worth more to the boss, he'll make the boss see it, too. That is, if he is worth while. The peculiar thing about seeing things from different angles is that we seem to compel other people to see them from our angle. You look at life joyously, meet everything, with a smile, smash sorrow with a song, and the effect will be contagious. Others will see your angle and look at life from it. Life is what you make it and how you see it, therefore, see it right, and it will be right.

FATHER WANTED TO KNOW

Father—"Well, do you think you can make my daughter really happy?"

Suitor—"Say, you should have seen her last night."

THE ARGUMENT

The Lady—Count yourself again, big boy, you ain't so many.
The Gent—Stick a thermometer in your lips, baby, you ain't so hot.

DOCTORS DON'T TELL

Pompous physician (to man plastering defective wall)—"The trowel covers up a lot of mistakes—what?"
Workman—"Yes, gov'nor—and so do the spade."

ASK MOTHER, SHE KNOWS

Mother—"Helen, I want to know what you and George were doing on the sofa until three o'clock this morning?"

Daughter—"Oh, mamma, didn't your mother ever tell you?"

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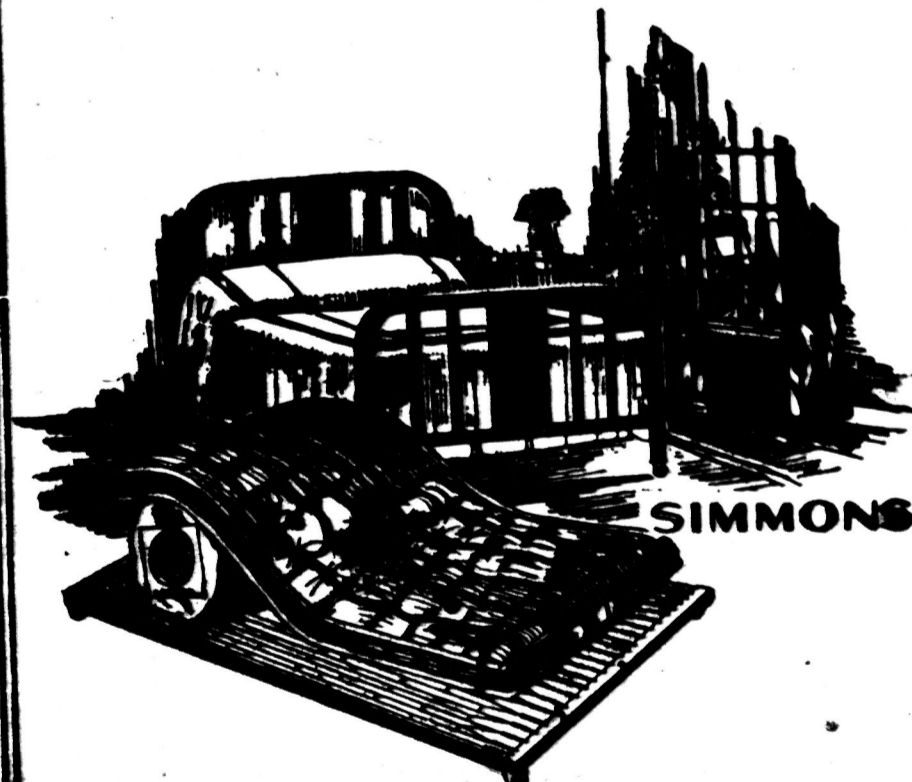
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