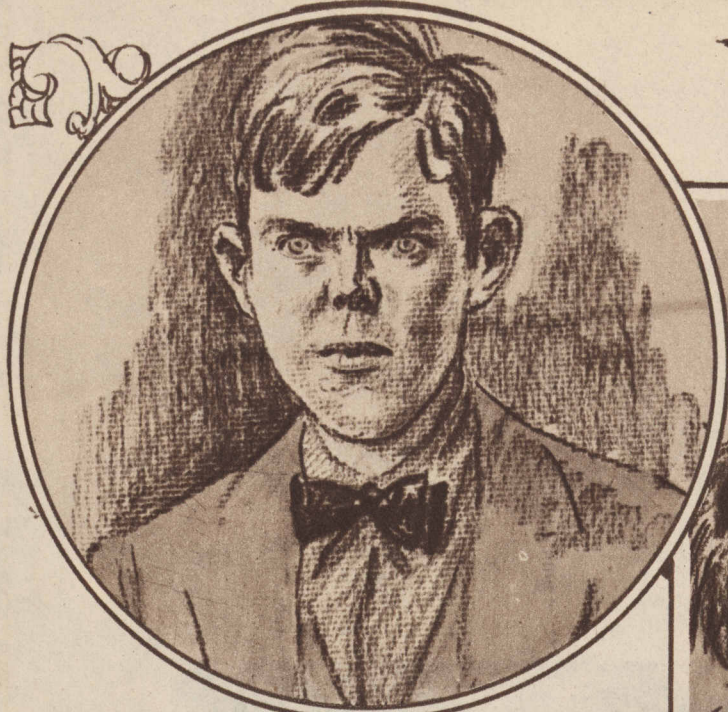


The Unemployed

By W. E. Hill

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The hot dilettante. Edgar's poppa has so much money that to the average mortal the sum means about as much as something in the fourth dimension. So, naturally, Edgar doesn't have to tie up with any steady employment. Spent a year at Harvard, one at Oxford, and one on the left bank of the Seine, where he got into the free verse habit. Edgar is proudest of his poem beginning: "The fetid winds howl over the corpse of the suicide." It was thought pretty hot on the left bank. Back home in Swickley one reading of it brought on his mother's neuritis.



The hotel lobby menace. Mrs. Toy sold the old house and now lives in a big apartment hotel, with no housekeeping to worry about and nothing to do but brood over her daughter-in-law's not writing as often as she should and other grievances. Does a lot of complaining to the management about the restaurant, the maid and elevator service, besides deviling the life out of her hired companion.



The night club hostess. Miss La Vere, popular night club hostess, is a member of the great unemployed due to pressure from without. It's this way: First one political faction will make a drive for the bone dry vote by shutting down on a night club. Fine. Then the rival party will make a big grand stand play for the dry vote by padlocking something. Fine again. And Miss La Vere being almost more of a celebrity than even President Coolidge or Marie of Roumania, they usually know where to find her, which is pretty hard on the girl. No sooner does she open the Coo Coo club than they padlock her. Then the same thing happens to the Chu Chu club, and so it goes. O, it's a sad, sad world!

"If she came into my kitchen once, she came into it twenty times a day, peering into the ice box, and asking where the white meat had gone, till she fairly turned my stomach, the sassy thing!" Mrs. Hilda Peepvogel is giving Miss Jewel Moynahan the low down on her last place. Miss Moynahan, Mrs. Peepvogel, and Mrs. Maye Heeney are culinary artistes, and their present lack of employment is due wholly to sensitive natures. They are resting their tootsies in an intelligence office, so called because in it a housewife has to summon every ounce of intelligence at her command in order to convince an apathetic cook that she wants to come and work in said housewife's kitchen. This is a difficult job, because a cook out of work is happier than any other member of the great unemployed.



The grass widow. Hattie has her divorce, and now she's one of what less polite circles than Hattie's call the matrimonially unemployed. Every morning Hattie goes to the beauty parlor and tries out the astringents, the puffy eye patters and the lifting massage. There's always a chance that she may come out looking, if not sweet sixteen, a nice, ripe thirty-six, which is a swell age for a girl who knows her whereabouts. Hattie is a great movie fan, favoring those pictures which feature Ramon Novarro and Gary Cooper.



Otis Eastcake and the little wife have joined the happily unemployed. Every bright boy gets a break some time or other, and when Otis, through a friend or two in the legislature, got the state road contracts, he sat down and thought hard. After figuring and planning and dividing by two (by three, in some cases), Otis discovered that by using a mixture of cheap grade molasses and wood ashes, instead of tar and gravel or what usually goes into a state road, prices could be cut to a minimum, leaving a nice big residue for the Eastcake nest egg. So now Otis and the little woman have a box at the opera and Mrs. Eastcake is learning to say "Didn't she flat something terrible tonight!" with the rest of the highbrows.



The beneficiary. Addie, being a product of the mauve decade, was brought up just to be a perfect lady, and it was thought to be sufficient for all emergencies at that remote period. When the estate was settled it was found that Addie's knowledge of dividends and refunding 7 percenters was faulty, and that she very often confused a handful of railway coupons with the kind she had been saving for a percolator. So now a trust company with very gentlemanly employes sees to Addie's affairs, and everything is lovely.

Noblesse oblige. There's so much "noblesse" (which is high hat for "it" in expensive circles) about Alicia, the gay deb, that seeing her here on the side lines of the Weewinkle Manor toy dog show with a couple of socially registered boys, and everything, you'd never believe she was a working gal one day last week. Posed for a big, full page cigaret ad, blindfolded, smoking a Hot Dickety, with the caption in big red letters: "Society lauds Hot Dickety Cigaretts because they combine gentility and distinction!"



The gang leader. Morris is a member of the One Eye Big Pete McGloopy gang, and naturally, with the present day racketeering what it is, Morris doesn't have to bother with the employment columns any longer. "No work and big pay as long as the bulls will let you play" is the McGloopy slogan.