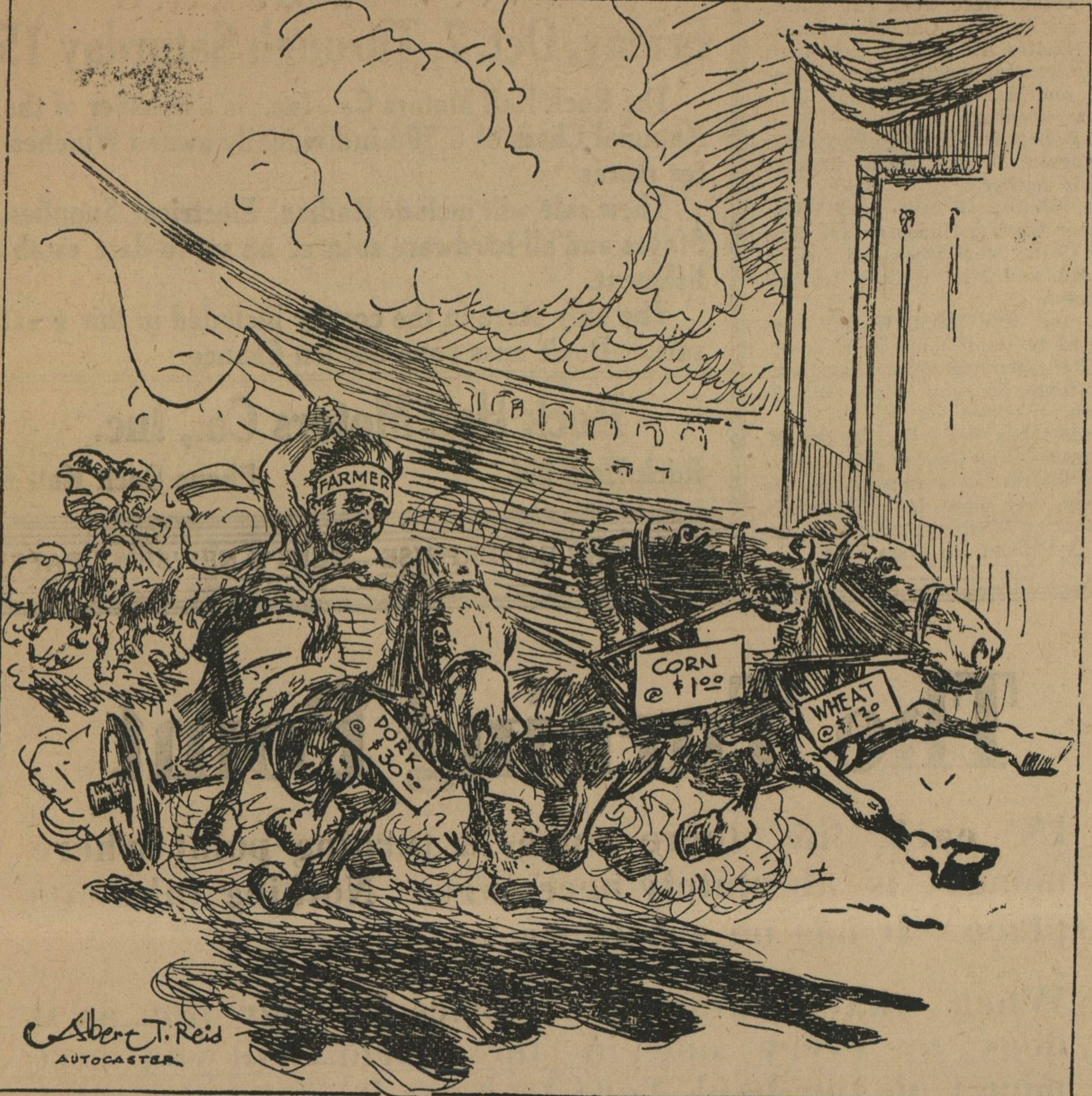


Come On, Ben Hur, You Gotta Lead Now!

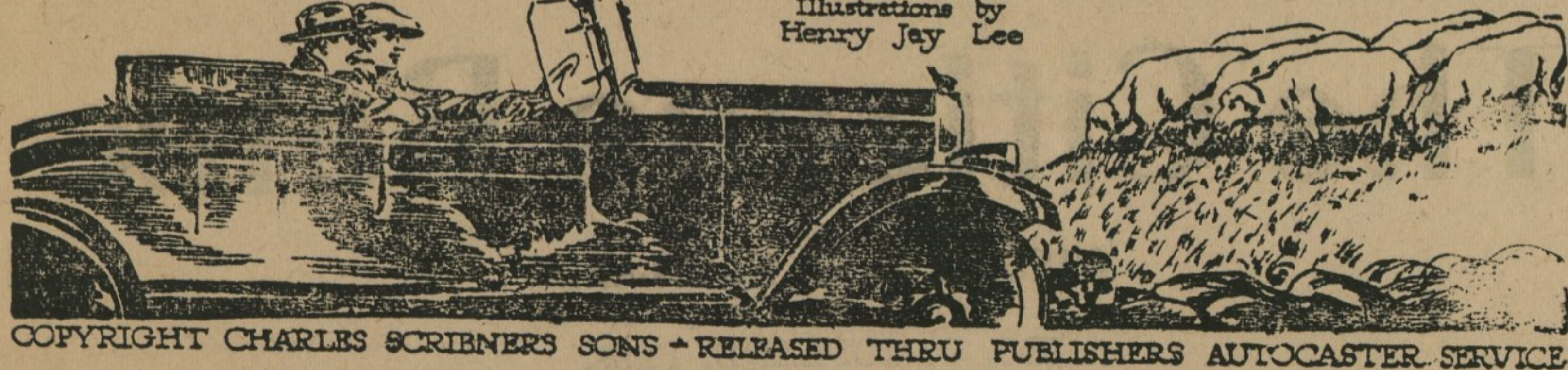
By Albert T. Reid



BLACKSHEEP!

By Meredith Nicholson

Illustrations by Henry Jay Lee



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CHAPTER I
MRS. HOWARD FEATHERSTONE spent much time thinking up things for her brother, Archibald Bennett, to do, and as Archie was the ideal bachelor brother, he accepted her commissions in the most amiable spirit and his services were unfailingly satisfactory.

"I passed you on the street the other day and made frantic efforts to attract your attention but you were in a trance and failed to see my signals."
"I was taking my walk," he stammered.

"You're a tremendously formal person, Mr. Bennett. What you really need is a good hard jar. Every morning you know exactly what you're going to do every hour of the day. It's routine that kills. Suppose you were to hold up a bank messenger in Wall Street and skip with a satchelful of negotiable securities and then, after the papers were through ragging the police for their inefficiency you would drive up to the bank in a taxi, walk in and return the money, saying you had found it in the old family pew at Trinity when you went in to say your prayers. Here would be an opportunity to break the force of habit and awaken your self-confidence."

CHAPTER II
Archie didn't know that the note caused Isabel a great deal of trouble. She must write that note that would not require an answer; this she felt to be imperatively demanded by the circumstance. She thought Archibald Bennett a nice fellow and she was sorry for him, but no more and no less sorry than she would have been for any one else who failed to find the world a pleasant place to live in. Something a little cryptic, yet something that would discourage further confidences without wounding him—this would solve the problem. Finally she hit upon these lines and copied them in her best hand:

CHAPTER III
It was close upon midnight and the presence of a prowler on the premises caused his heart to gallop wildly. He seized the pistol, crept to the window and peered cautiously out, when a sound in the room below renewed his alarm. He caught the door in two jumps. He could hear the opening and closing of drawers and see the flash of an electric lamp as the intruder moved swiftly about. Then through the vast silence of the big house the unknown gave voice to his anger and disappointment:

"Well, I'll be damned!"
A series of quick flashes on the wall gave warning of the intruder's invasion of the upper rooms. Archie drew back and waited. His thoughts and emotions in this hour of danger interested him. It was immensely gratifying to him to realize that while his heart was beating quickly, his pulse was regular.

"The thief had become more cautious and was tiptoeing up the uncarpeted treads of the stair, still sending occasionally a bar of light ahead. He was now coming boldly down the hall as though satisfied that the house was empty. A flash of his lamp fell upon the door frame just about Archie's left hand. A flash clipped the dark for an instant. Then a hand groped along the wall seeking the switch. Archie could hear its soft rasping over the wall. As the switch snapped the room flooded with light. The bewildering glare leaping out of the darkness held the man in the doorway and he raised his arm and passed his hand over his eyes to shield them from the light. The burglar's shoulders drooped as he gaped at Archie's figure which was reflected in a long mirror. The eyes of the two men met, the gaze of each gripping and holding that of the other. Then swiftly the intruder jerked a pistol from his pocket and fired point blank into the mirror. The report crashed horribly in the room, followed by the tinkle of fragments of glass. Archie aimed at the doorway, but his shot seemed only to hasten the man's flight. A rug slipped and the fugitive fell with a frightened yell that rang clearly thru the house. In the hall Archie turned on all the lights and gaining the landing fired at the retreating figure as it lurched toward the front door. At the crack of the gun the fugitive stopped short, clapped his hand to his shoulder and groaned, then sprang through the front door and Bennett heard immediately the quick patter of his feet on the walk.

"The lock bore no evidence of having been forced. The frame of the photograph of the young girl that had so charmed him lay on the floor face down. Bennett picked it up and found that the picture had been removed. It was a curious business, but he dismissed the subject from his mind to consider the graver business of how to avoid the disagreeable consequences of his encounter. He must leave the house and escape from Bailey Harbor before daybreak and he went upstairs and hurriedly began dressing.



HEALTH and EVERYTHING

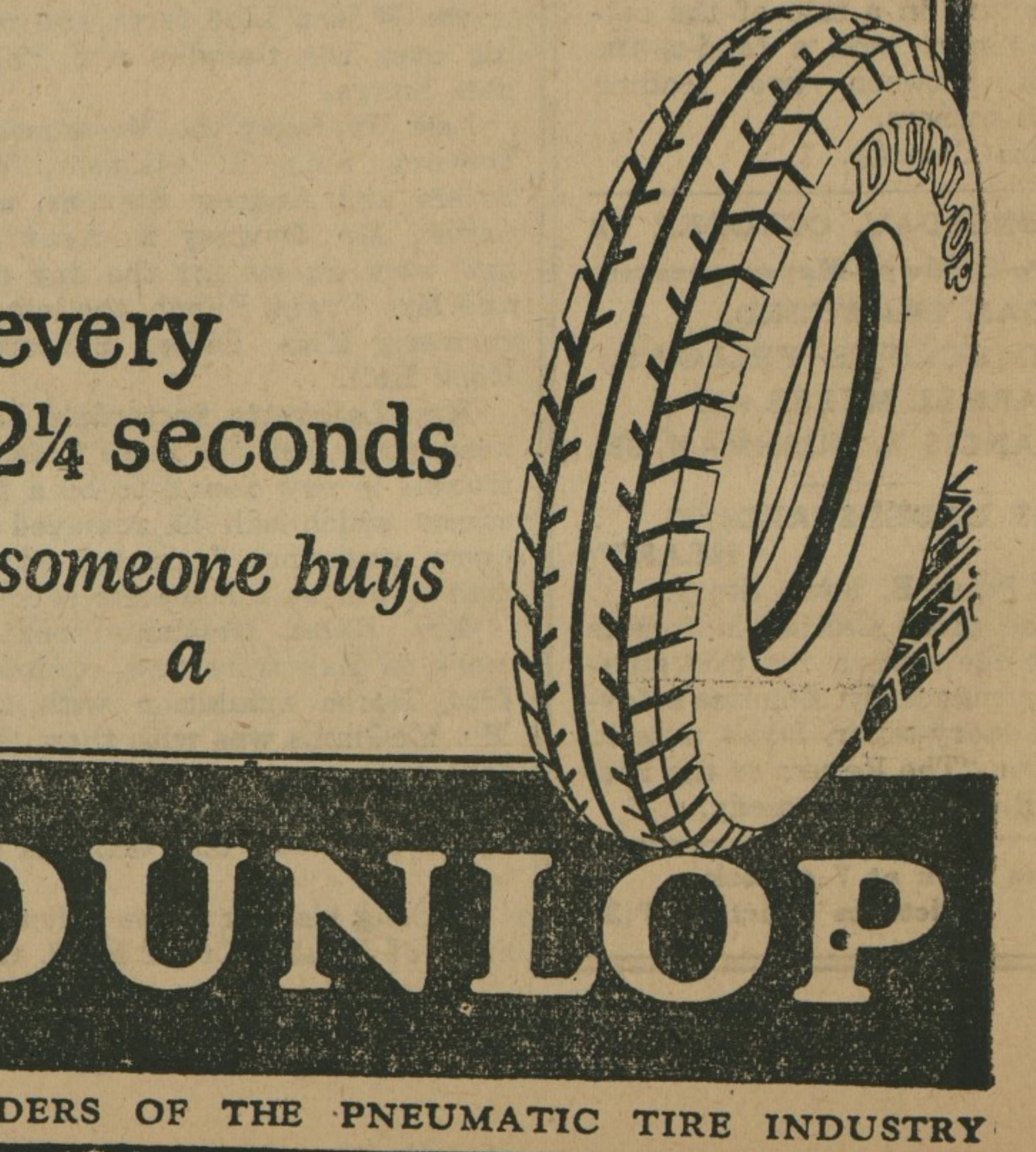
How much is it worth to you to keep your children healthy and happy? Certainly no parent would consider the cost of a quart of milk a day prohibitive—for milk is a health food—there is no better body builder. It is a complete food for grown-ups as well as children. These are the months when you must build up resistance if you are to withstand winter ailments.

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UNDERS OF THE PNEUMATIC TIRE INDUSTRY

ONE BEST WAY
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New York, June 10, 1917.
Mrs. Alice B. Congdon,
Bailey Harbor, Maine.
Your letter has your character.