

# Ronnie Barker



## PEBBLES ON THE BEACH



A PICTORIAL TRIBUTE TO THE SEASIDE GIRL



# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Once again I must acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to all those superb artists, many long forgotten, whose work shines out from these pages.

A word, too, for that wonderful breed, the second-hand booksellers, without whose diligence all these pictures might never see the light of day again.



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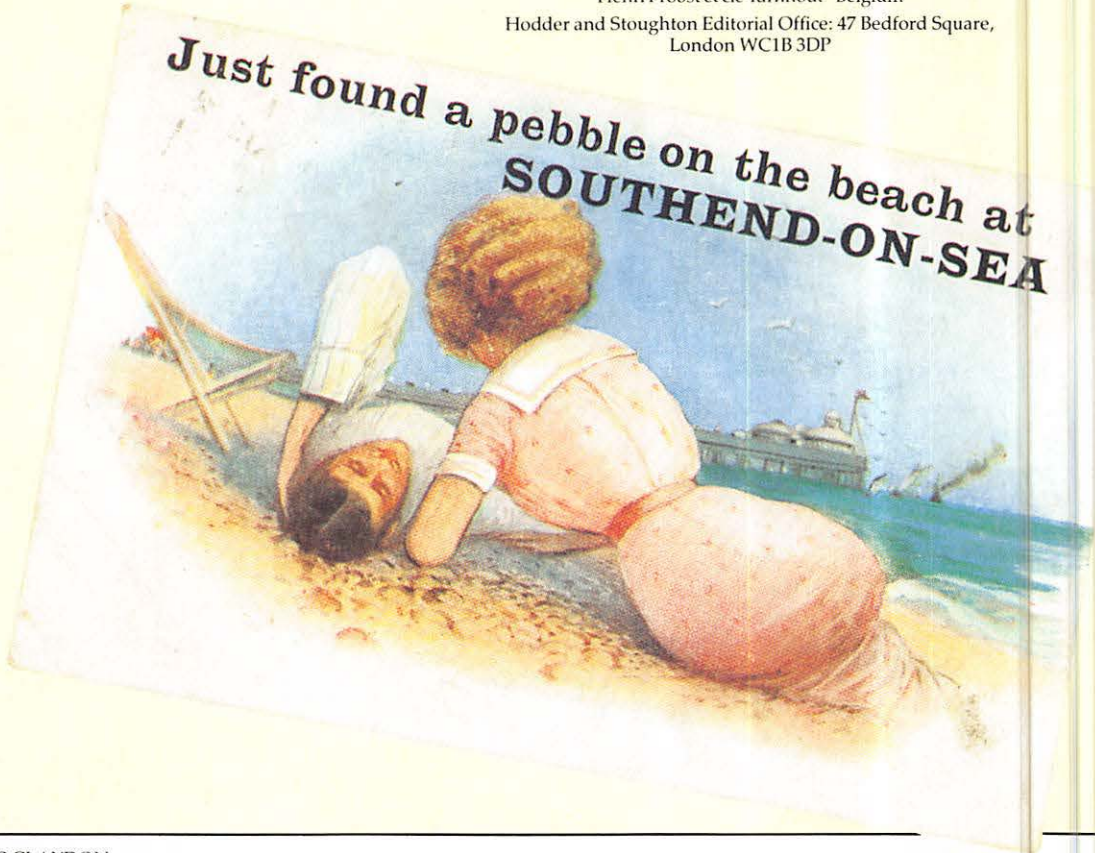
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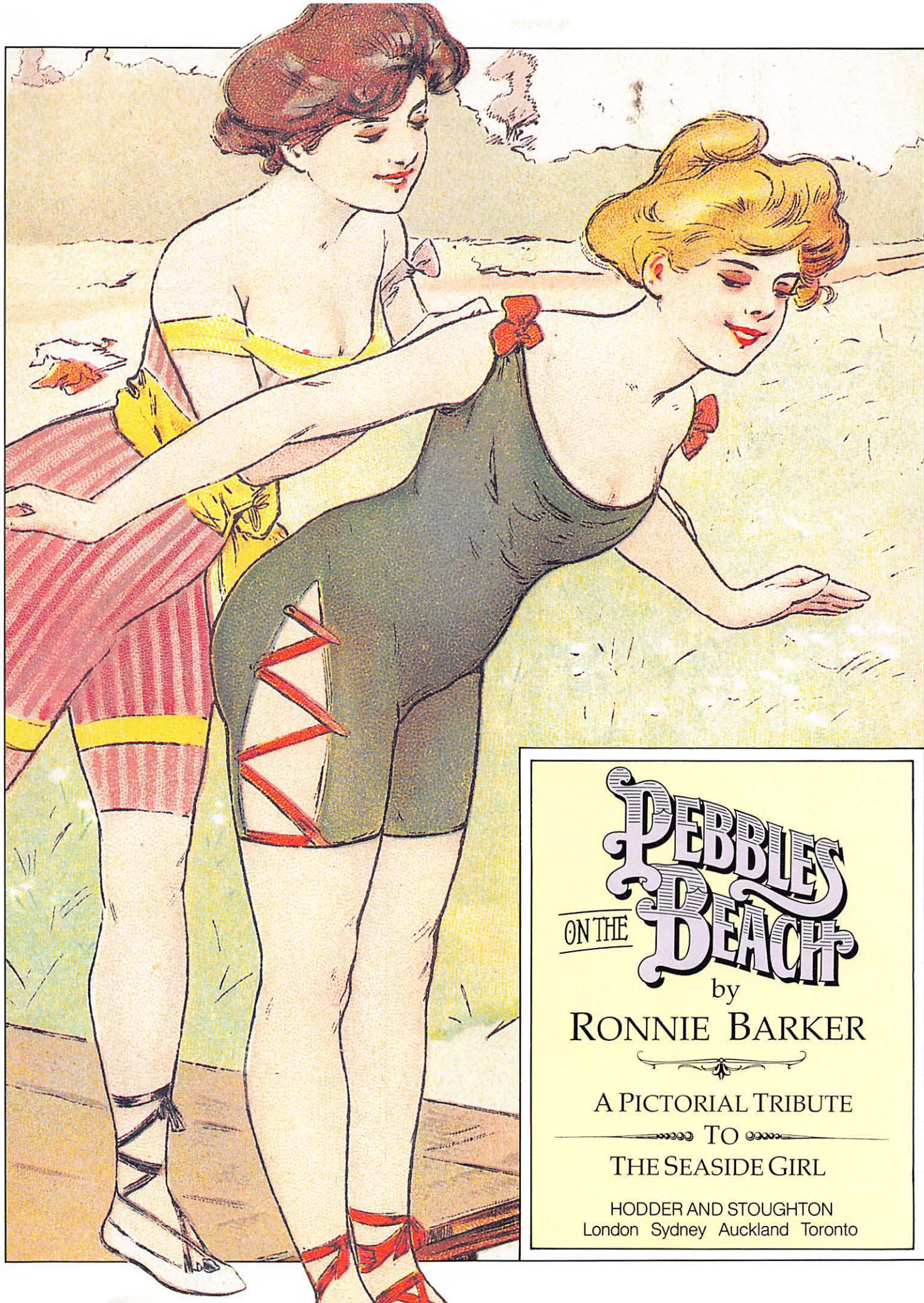
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Just found a pebble on the beach at  
**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**



ON THE  
**PEBBLES  
BEACH**  
by

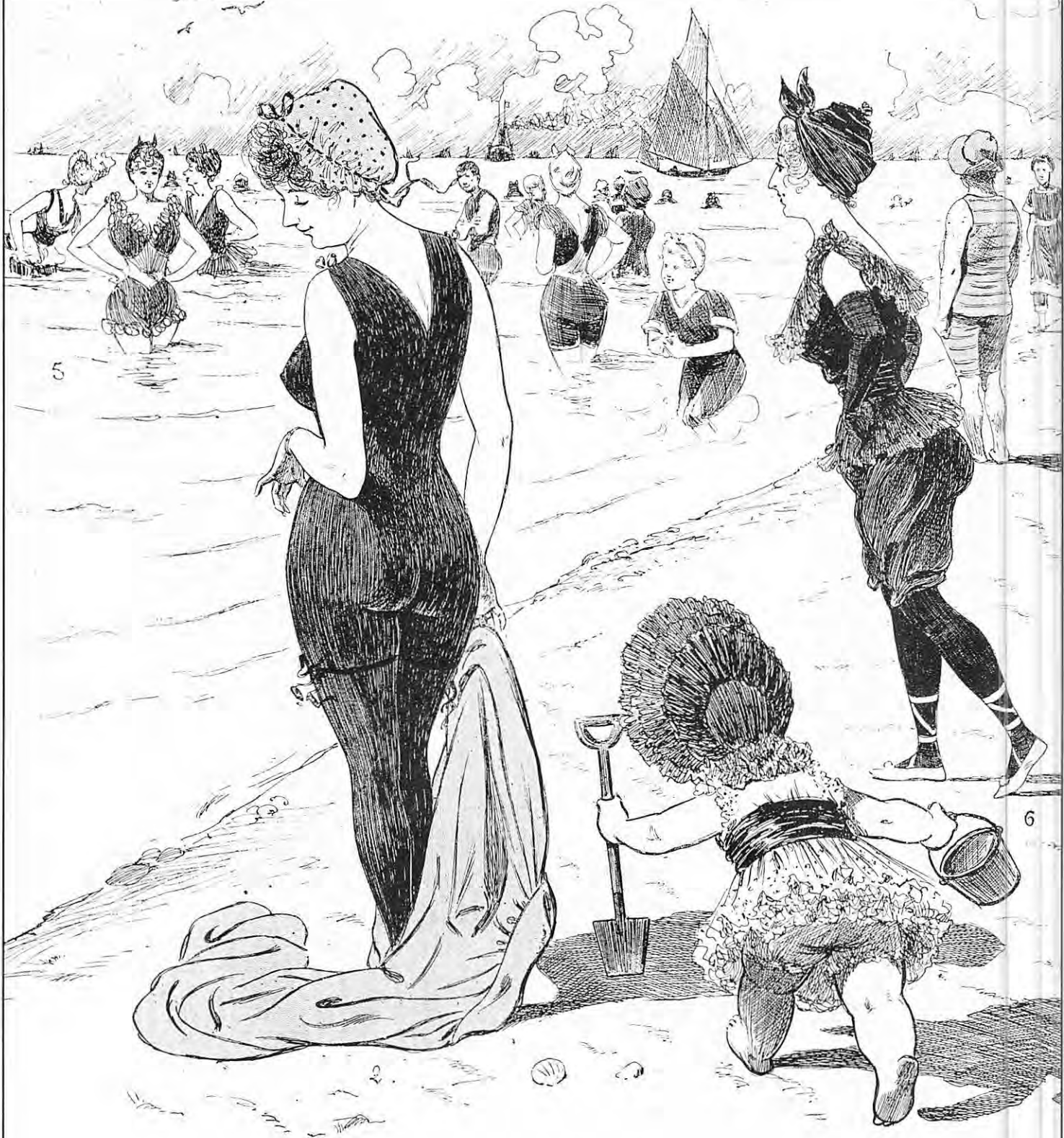
**RONNIE BARKER**

A PICTORIAL TRIBUTE

TO  
**THE SEASIDE GIRL**

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
London Sydney Auckland Toronto

"Is it worth getting it wet?"



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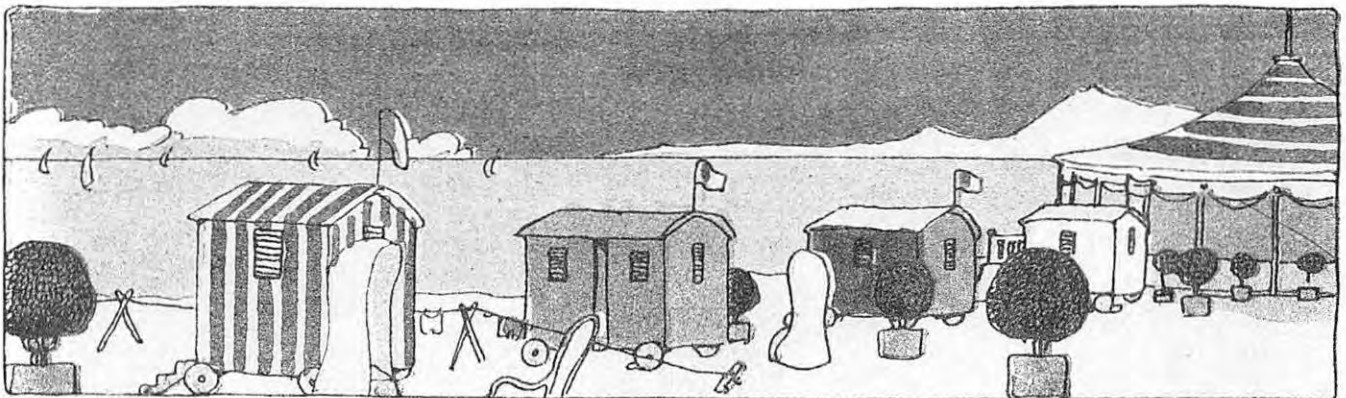
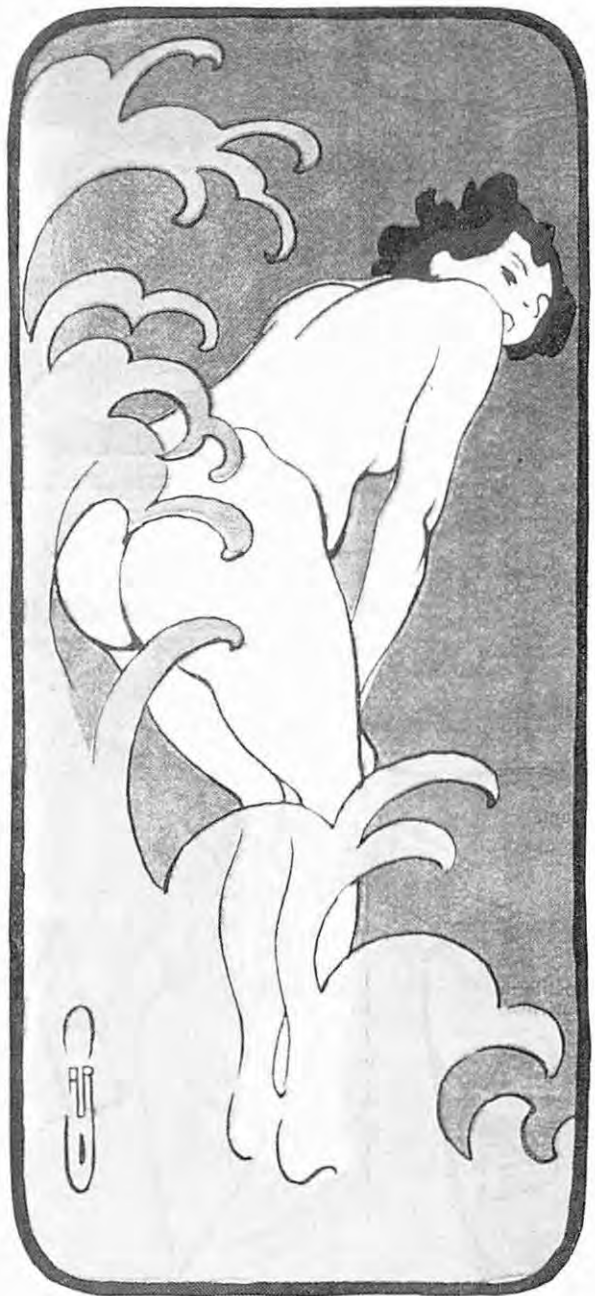
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IN THE GOLDEN OLDEN DAYS





B. WENNERBERG.

## FOREWORD

"Here we are again!" The annual visit to the seaside, in the golden olden days when these delicious drawings and saucy snapshots first appeared, was one of the best-loved of traditions. Fourteen days of sheer escapism, when Mother showed her knees, Father was allowed an extra tippie, little brother Johnnie fashioned bigger and better sand castles, and Sister Susie wowed the boys in her latest and most daring swimwear, as she stooped to gather seashells on the seashore. I venture to present another feast to the eye for your delight; a picture book of sun, sand and sea, in the days that used to be . . .

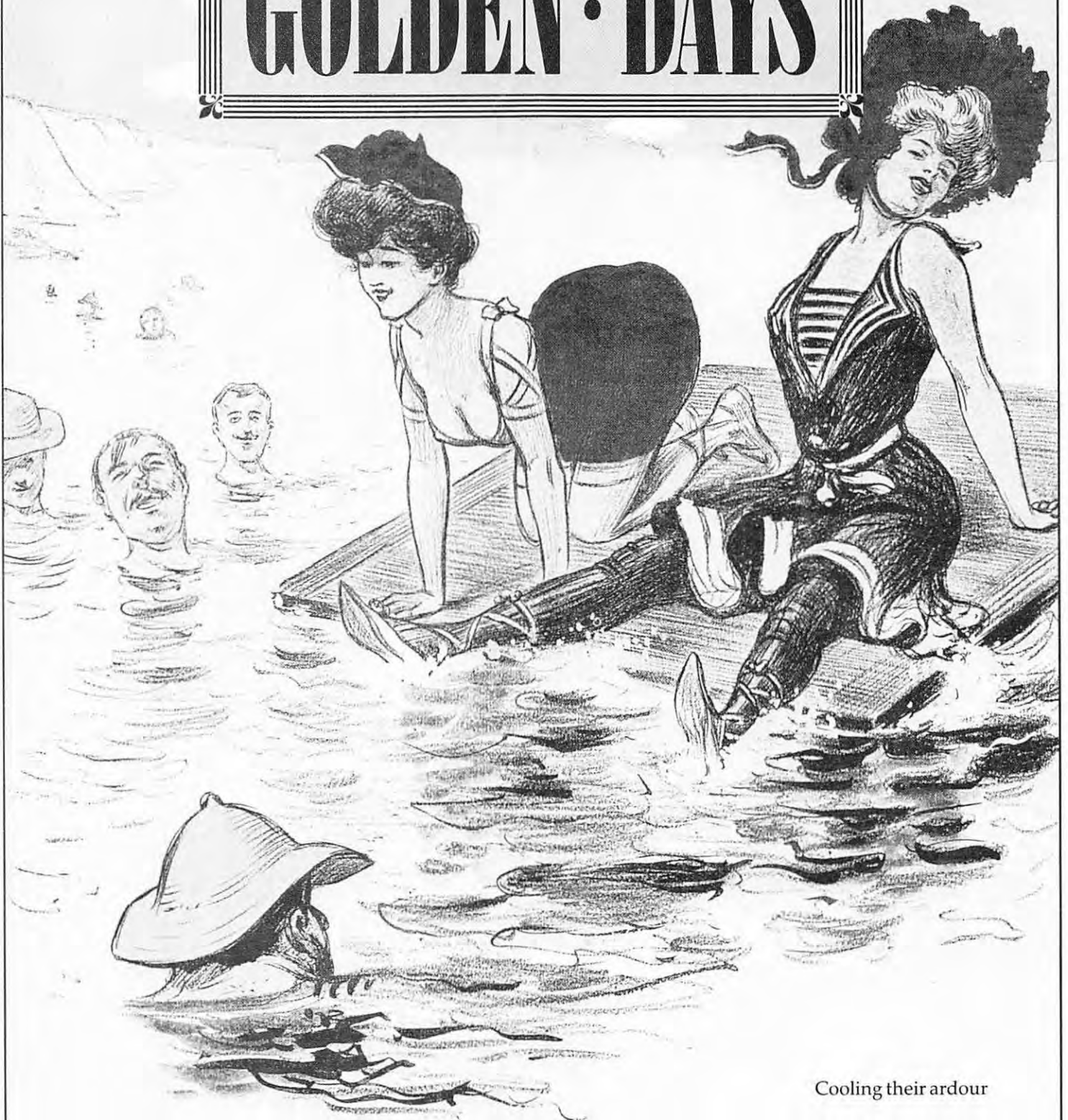


In the Golden Olden Days,  
In the Golden Olden Days,  
Sweet familiar music  
The hurdy-gurdy plays.  
We used to pass the hours  
In a hundred different ways  
In those fun-filled, sun-filled, lazy,  
hazy,  
Golden Olden days.

By the shining, silver sea,  
By the shining, silver sea.  
Those afternoons among the  
dunes,  
When you gave your heart to me.  
'Neath sparkling sun we were as  
one  
And swore we'd always be,  
By the tireless tinkling,  
Tossing, twinkling,  
Shining, silver sea.



# The GOLDEN DAYS

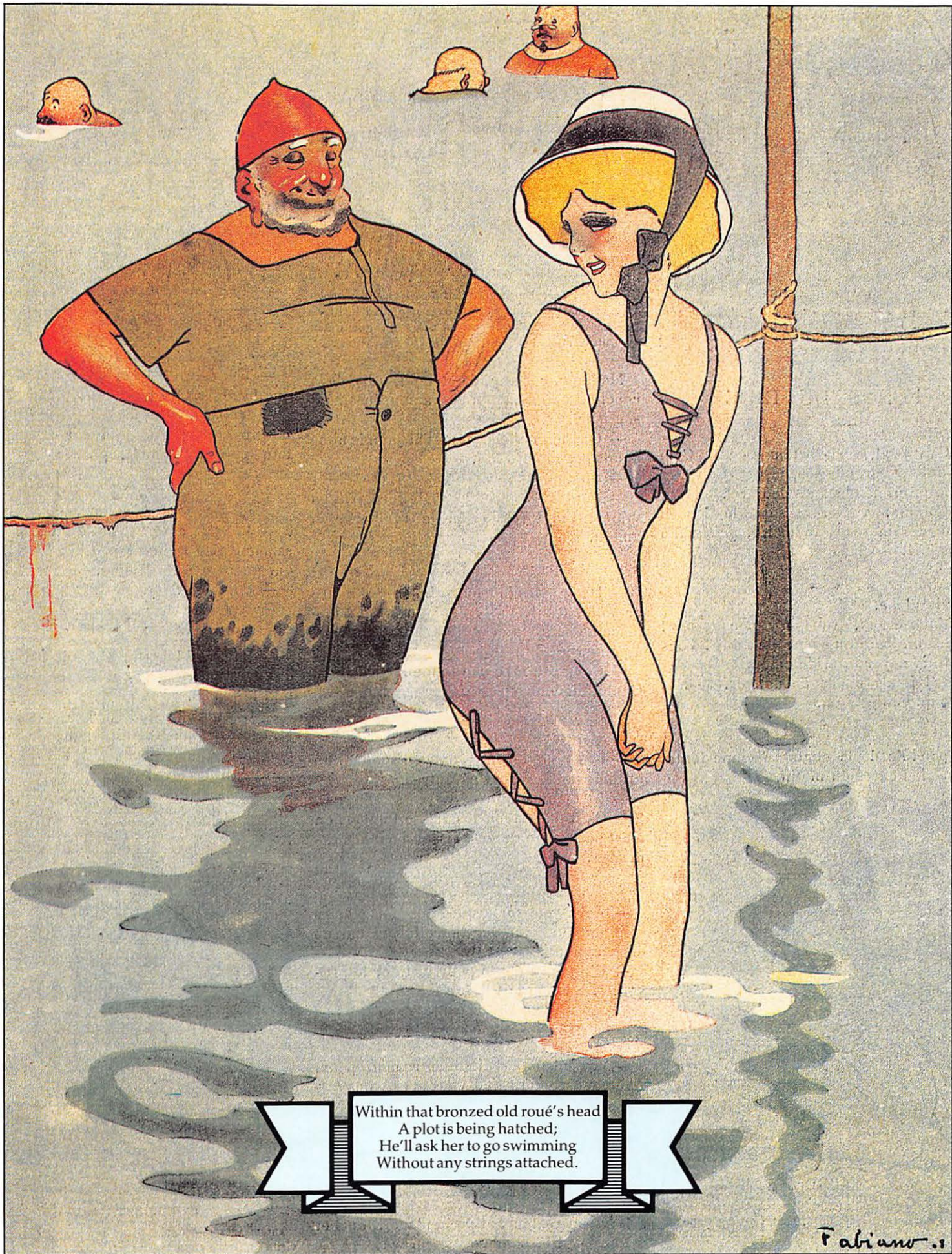


Cooling their ardour



Black magic: What kind of husband do you advise me to look out for?  
Green goddess: All of them.

HO DUEMA



Within that bronzed old roué's head  
A plot is being hatched;  
He'll ask her to go swimming  
Without any strings attached.

Fabiano.



She was a lovely Maiden,  
He was an ardent Male.  
He praised her figure in English,  
Italian, French and Braille.

"It's a beautiful frock, dear, but  
can't you get into it a little further?"





**Old hopeful:** You called me, Madam?  
**Young tease:** I'm frightfully sorry, I was mistaken.  
Your head looks terribly like my husband's, behind.



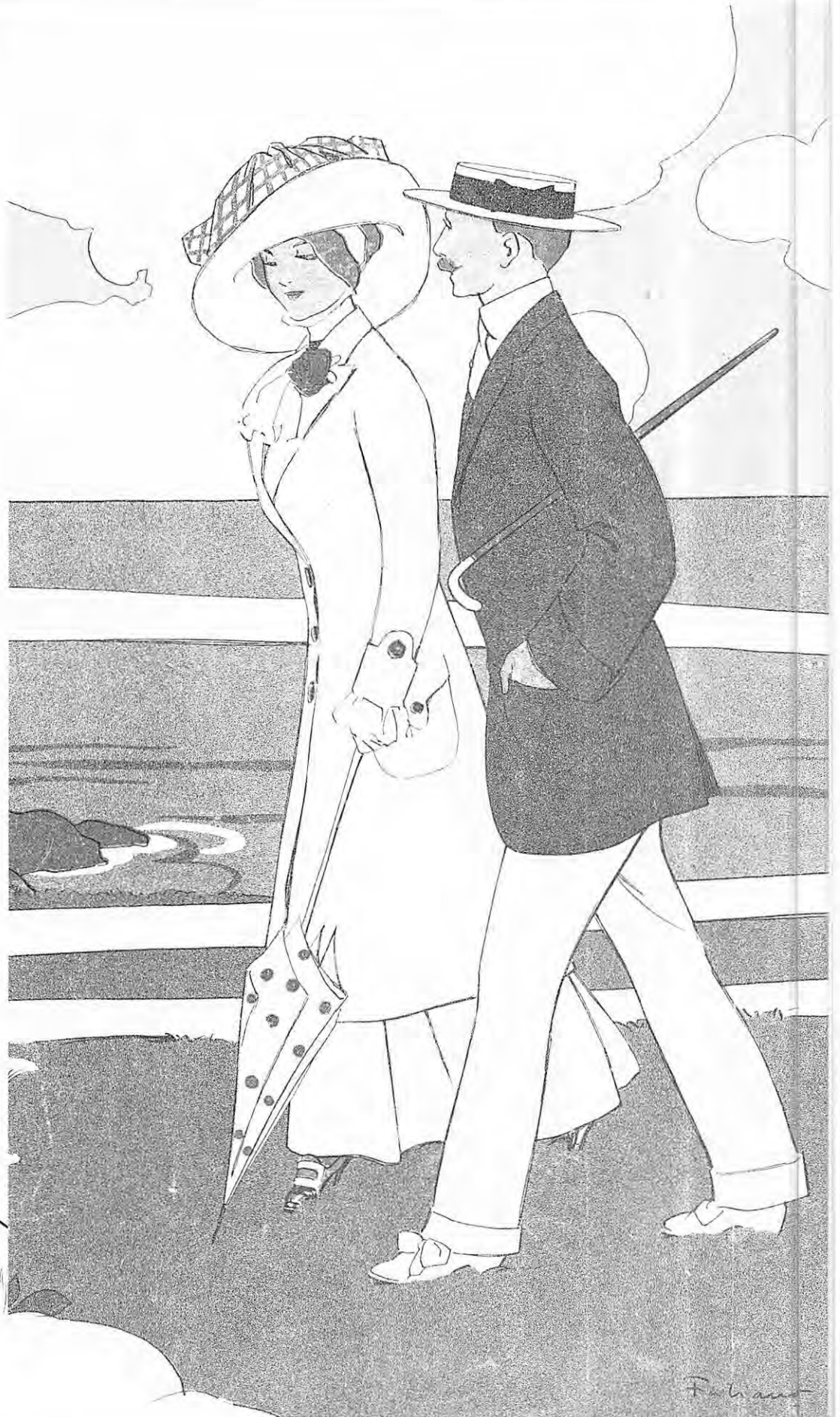


**Spots:** I wonder what men think about when they are on their own.  
**Stripes:** Probably the same things we do.  
**Spots:** How disgusting!



# GOODNESS

Good place,  
good weather,  
good views,  
good sand,  
good digs,  
good table,  
good waiter,  
good band;  
good wine,  
good soup,  
good fish,  
good duck,  
good brandy,  
good night –  
good girl.  
Bad luck.



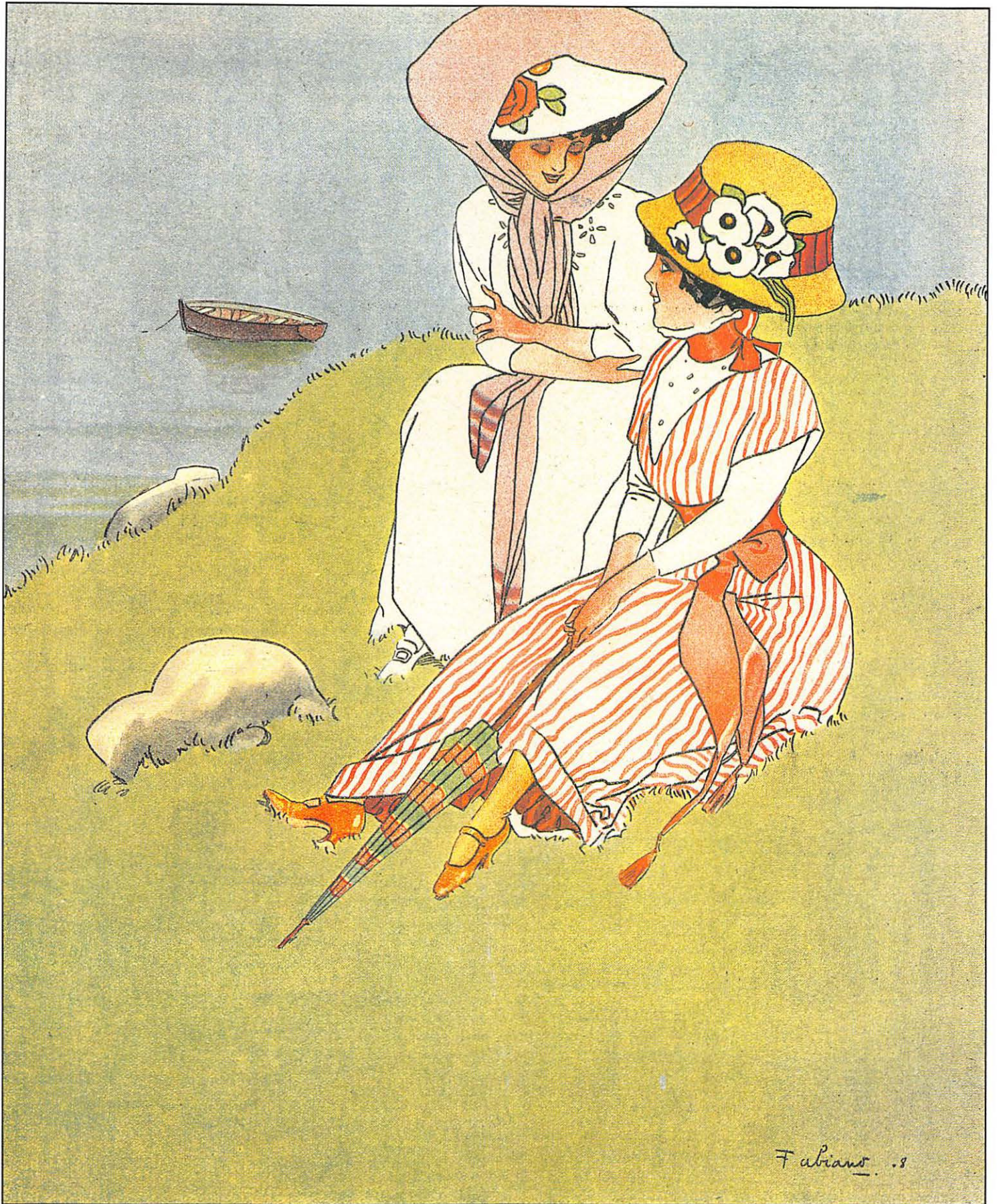


"Now you won't catch cold, will you, Auntie?"



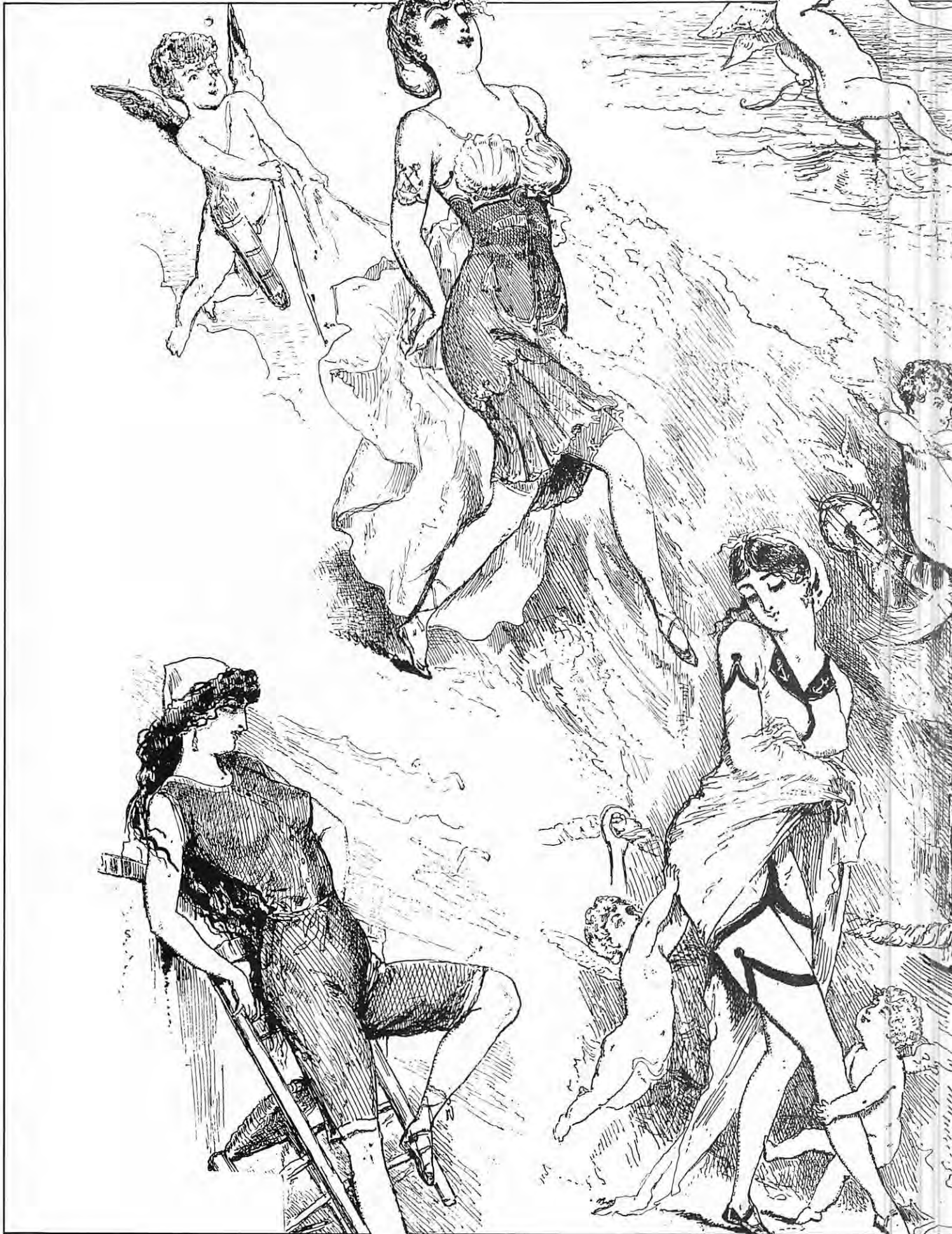
**He:** Do you know what it's like to  
feel your innermost soul vibrate?  
**She:** Yes, my boy-friend has a motorbike.

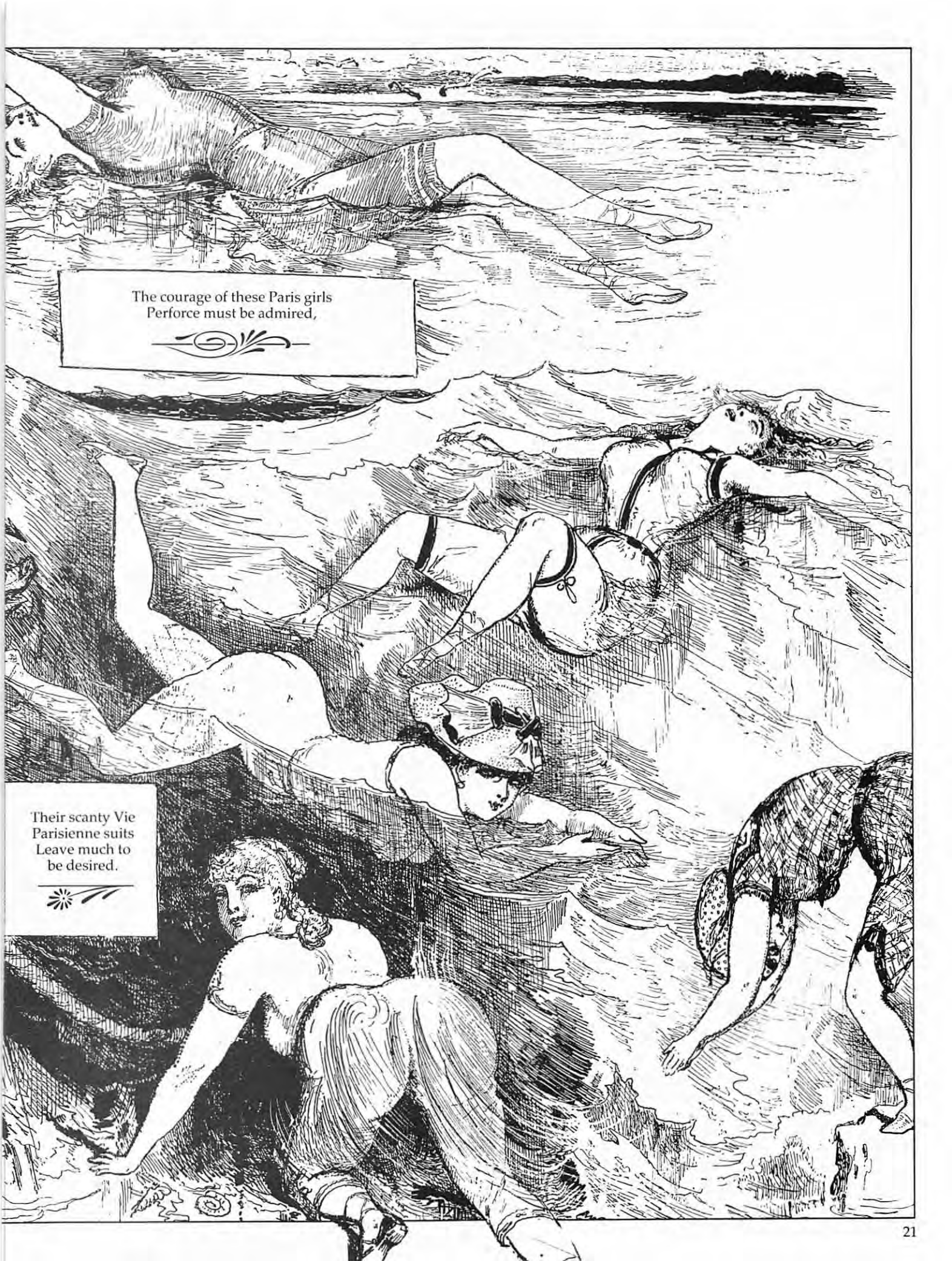




**Cora:** How beautiful it is here! There's no doubt about it, the best things in life are free.  
**Dora:** Yes, but isn't it a pity that the next best things are so expensive?







The courage of these Paris girls  
Perforce must be admired,



Their scanty Vie  
Parisienne suits  
Leave much to  
be desired.



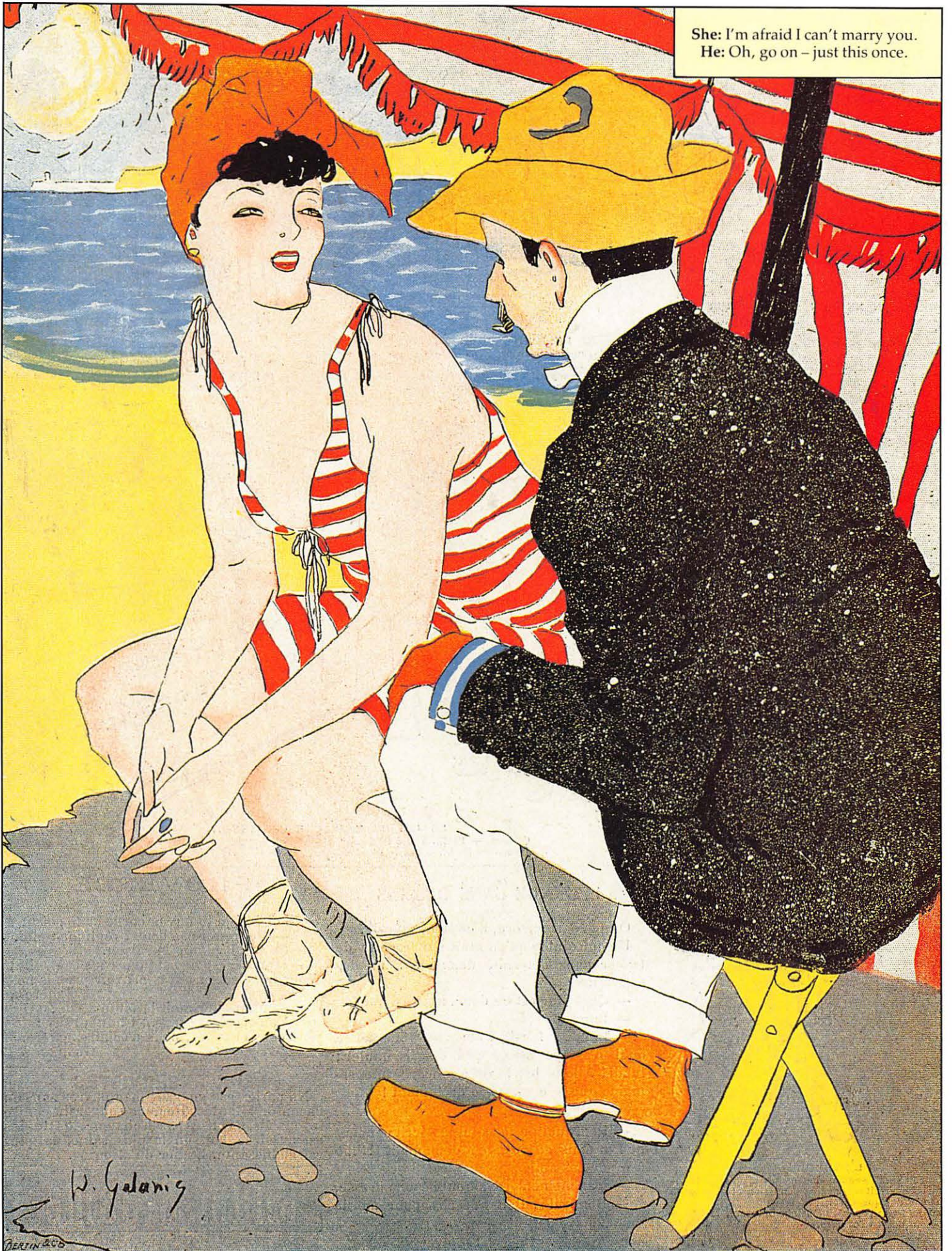


I'd love to plunge into the water,  
It looks so inviting and nice;  
But though fingertip warm on the  
surface,  
On the bottom it's colder than ice!



RR

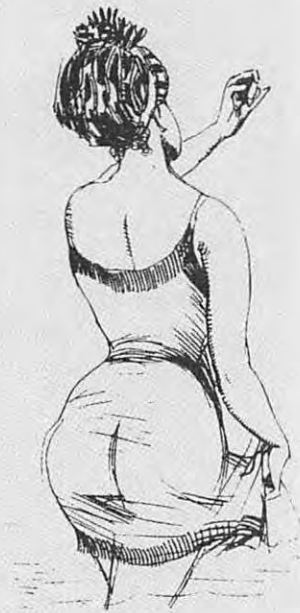
She: I'm afraid I can't marry you.  
He: Oh, go on - just this once.







She's pert and slim,  
And takes a swim  
Down by the harbour wall.  
She's only a cobbler's daughter,  
But she gives the boys her awl.





# GENEROSITY



He gave her this, he gave her that,  
A brand new car, a Paris hat.  
He gave her dollars, gave her pounds.  
His generosity knew no bounds.  
He spent it all, became flat broke;  
She thought it all a great big joke.  
To him the joke was not so funny –  
He had to marry her for his money.



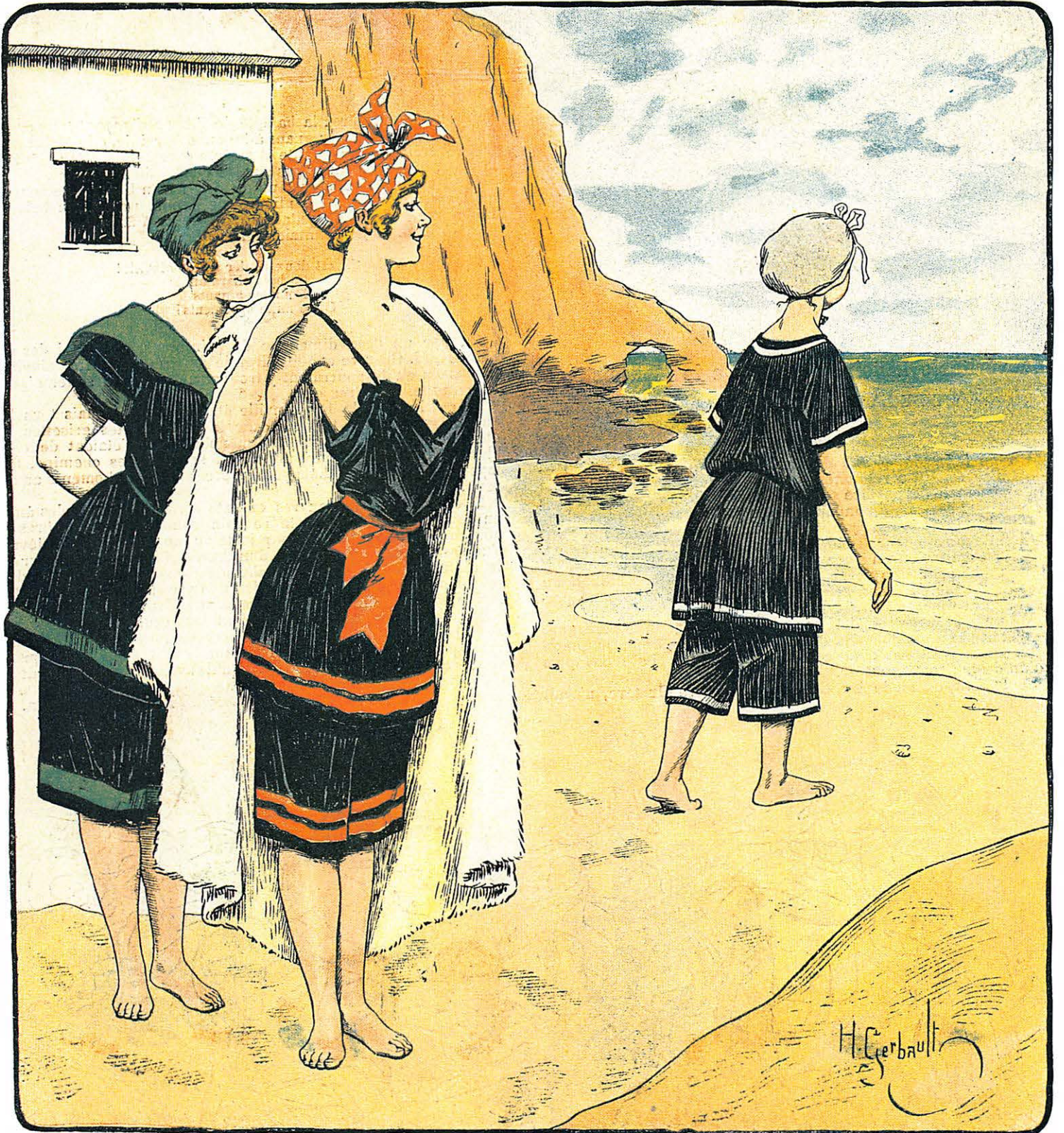


**He:** You think this place is dull? A few miles down the coast  
is a place called Walton-on-Sludge.  
**She:** Is that worse?  
**He:** Worse? Last week the tide went out and never came back.





Sea-nymph: Do you like her?  
Bosom friend: Well, she's got a good heart and means well.  
Sea-nymph: Neither do I.



ON THE ROCKS

He used to love me on the sand.  
His arms were strong, his cheeks were tanned.  
But sand will spoil a girl's best frocks,  
So now our love is on the rocks.





**He:** They say that opposites make the best marriages.  
**She:** I know – that's why I'm looking for a man with money.  
**He:** I've got money to burn!  
**She:** Really? Then I'd make a perfect match.

# MERMAIDS

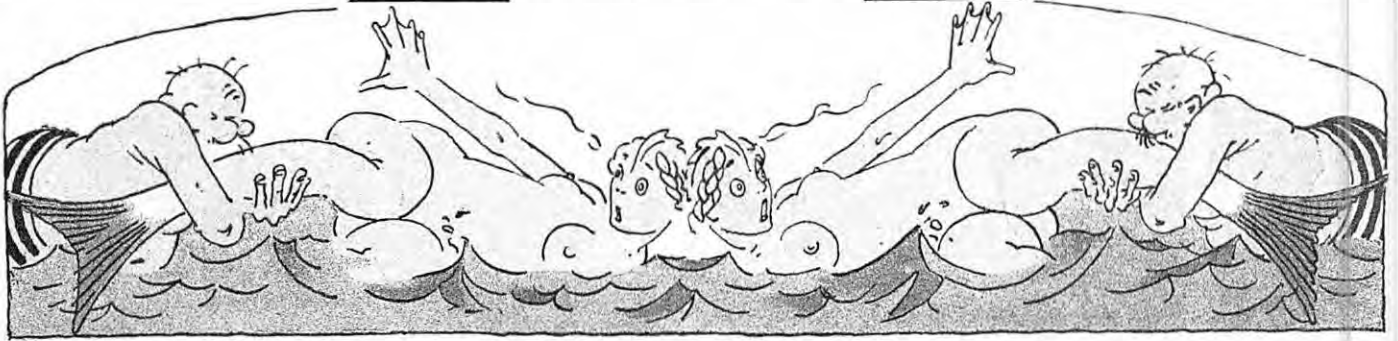
— AND OTHER FANTASIES —







— ONE —  
AMBITION LEFT



We moved down here four years ago, my Uncle George and me.  
My Uncle's got this great big house that overlooks the sea;  
I work in Uncle George's bank (I'm home again by three).  
We're happy as two sand-boys, my Uncle George and me.





We're definitely ladies' men, my Uncle George and me.  
Maids of every shape and size are all pursued with glee.  
"A milkmaid or a barmaid, Jack, they're all the same to me,"  
Says Uncle George. "A maid's a maid, and ever so will be."

We've had all sorts of serving maids, my Uncle George and me.  
A parlour-maid to tend the fire, and bring us cups of tea;  
A kitchen-maid, an upstairs-maid, a house-maid, too, you see—  
But we've never had a Mermaid, my Uncle George and me.

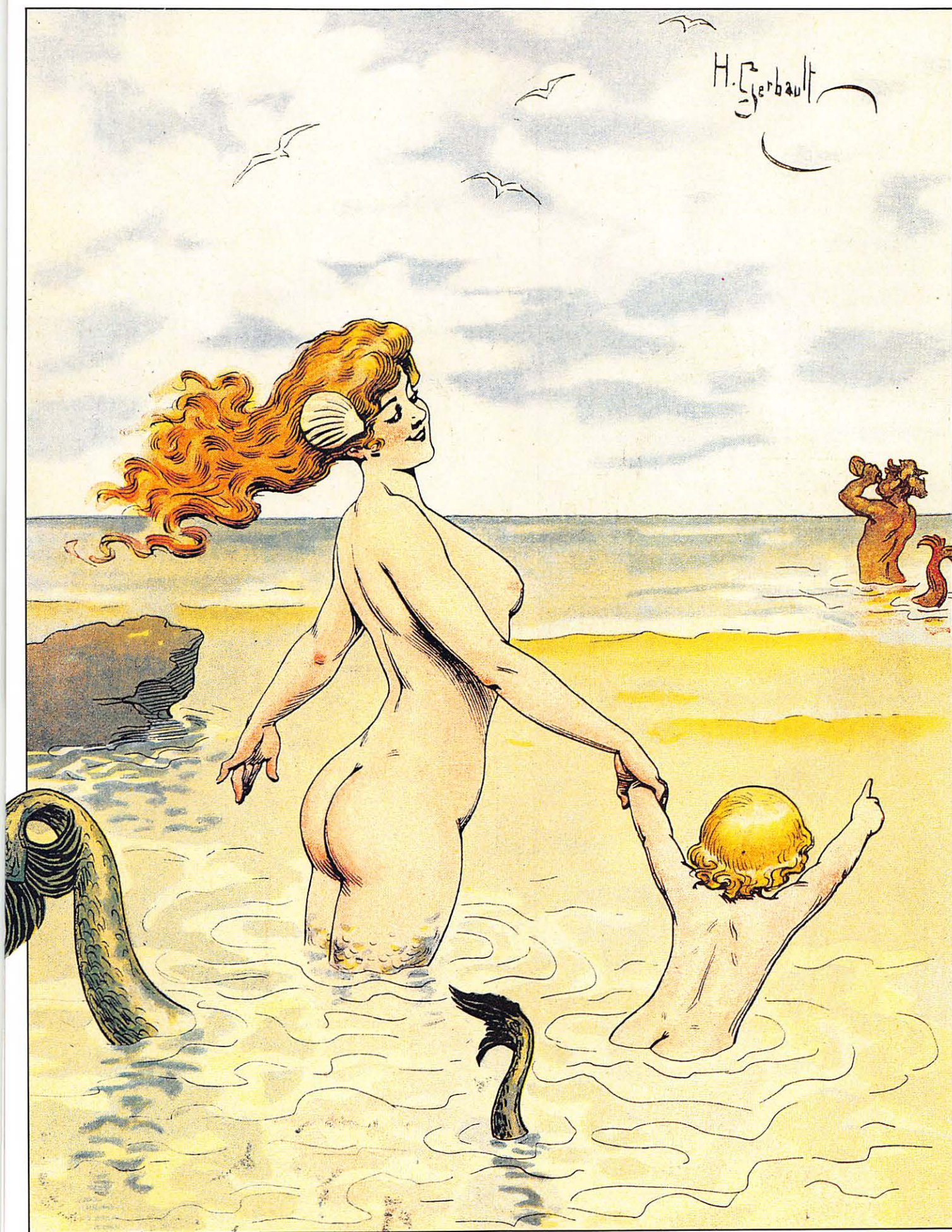




But Uncle George keeps hoping, as  
He dives beneath the sea,  
To come up with a Mermaid  
And bring her home for tea.

—

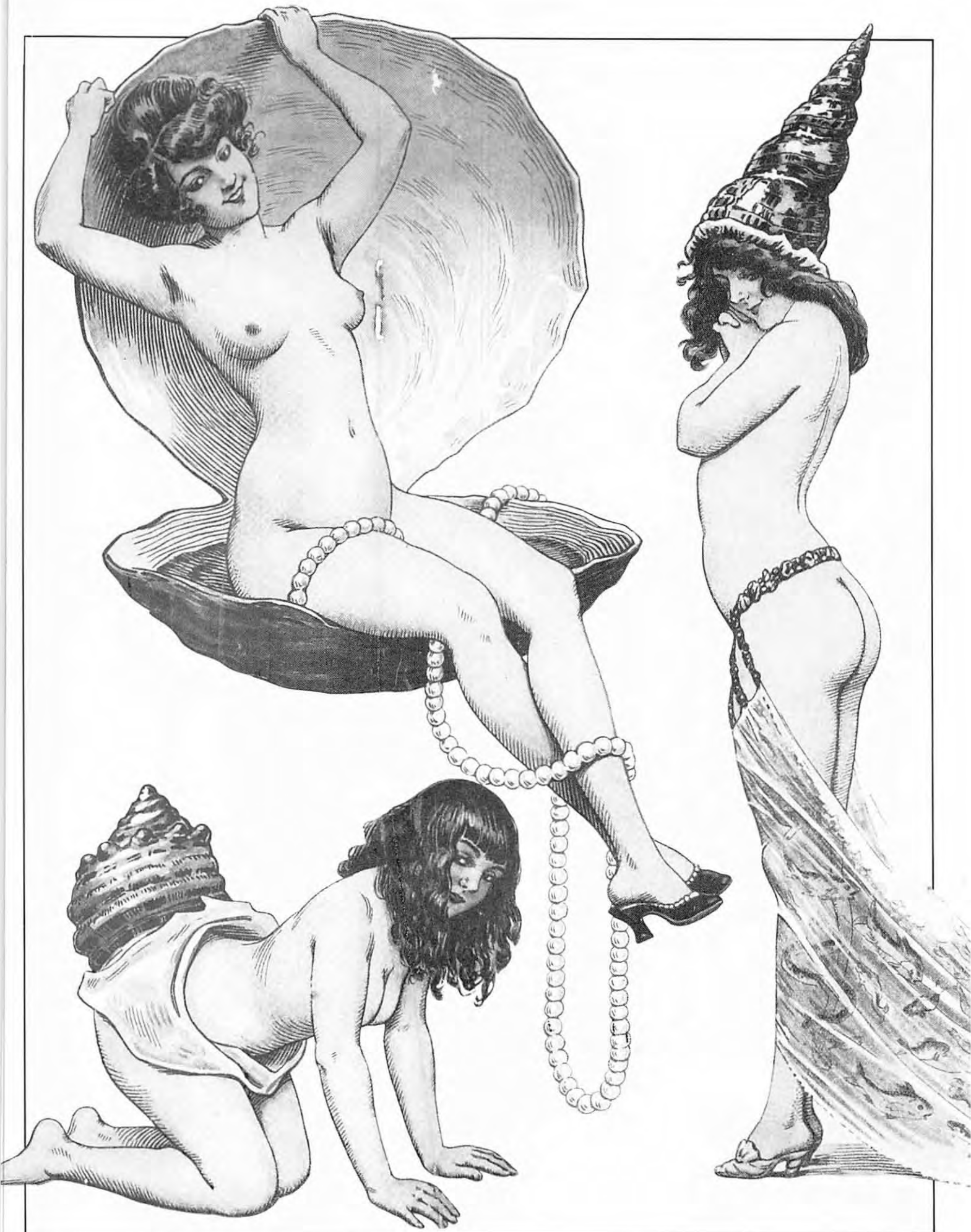
H. Gerbault





*S*eashells on the seashore –  
An artist's fantasy to delight your eye,  
whether you be a conchologist,  
or merely a winkle-picker.





# THE · HUMOUR · OF · THE · BEACH



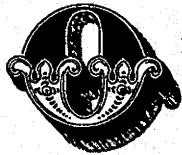
**Black pudding:** There's a man on the beach who keeps ogling me. He's either drunk or mad.

**Tangerine delight:** Yes, I can think of no other explanation for it.



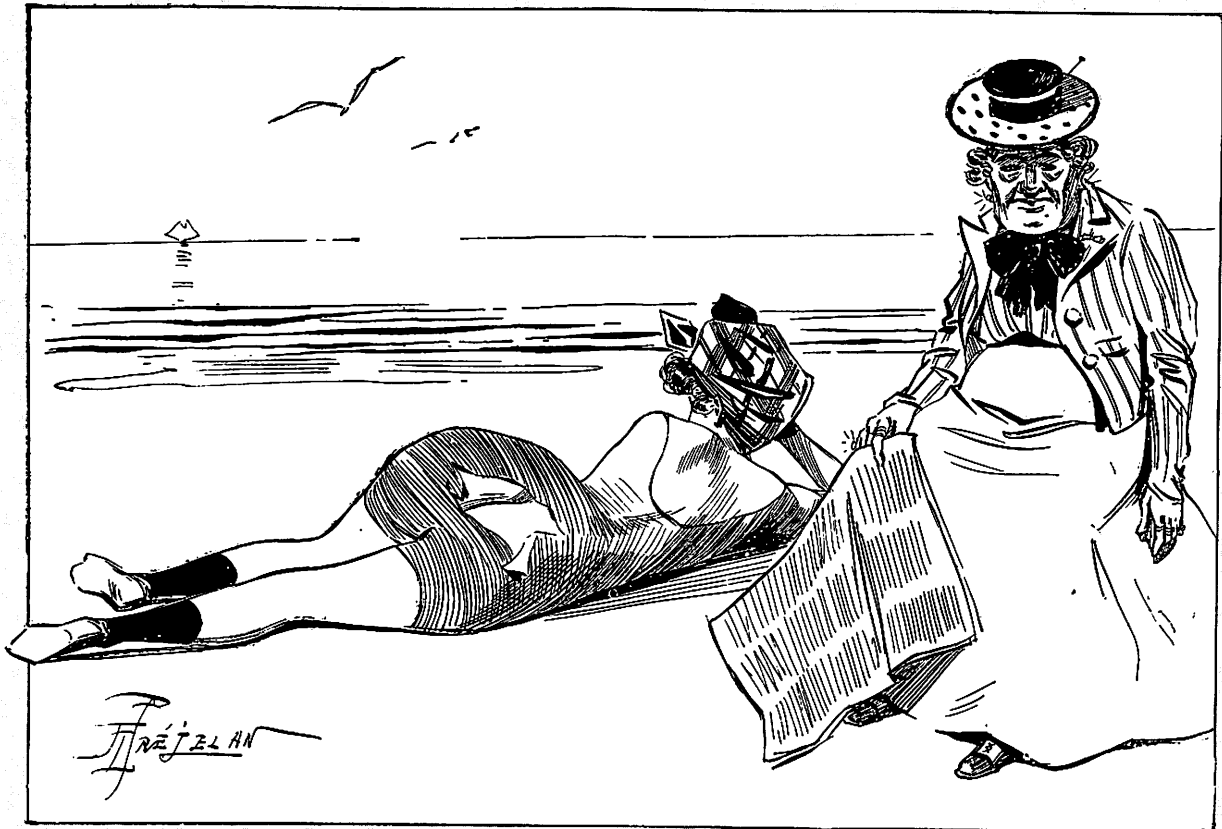


# The HUMOUR · OF · THE · BEACH



ne cannot think of a seaside holiday, without calling to mind the comic postcard. The double-meaning caption, the sometimes subtle, sometimes explicit drawing to go with it are an essential ingredient of any pier or promenade worthy of the name.

So naturally some are included here; boisterous, bracing, bright and breezy, like the sea itself. People like a laugh at the seaside, and the chance to send a card and brighten up the drab lives back at the factory or the office is too good to miss.



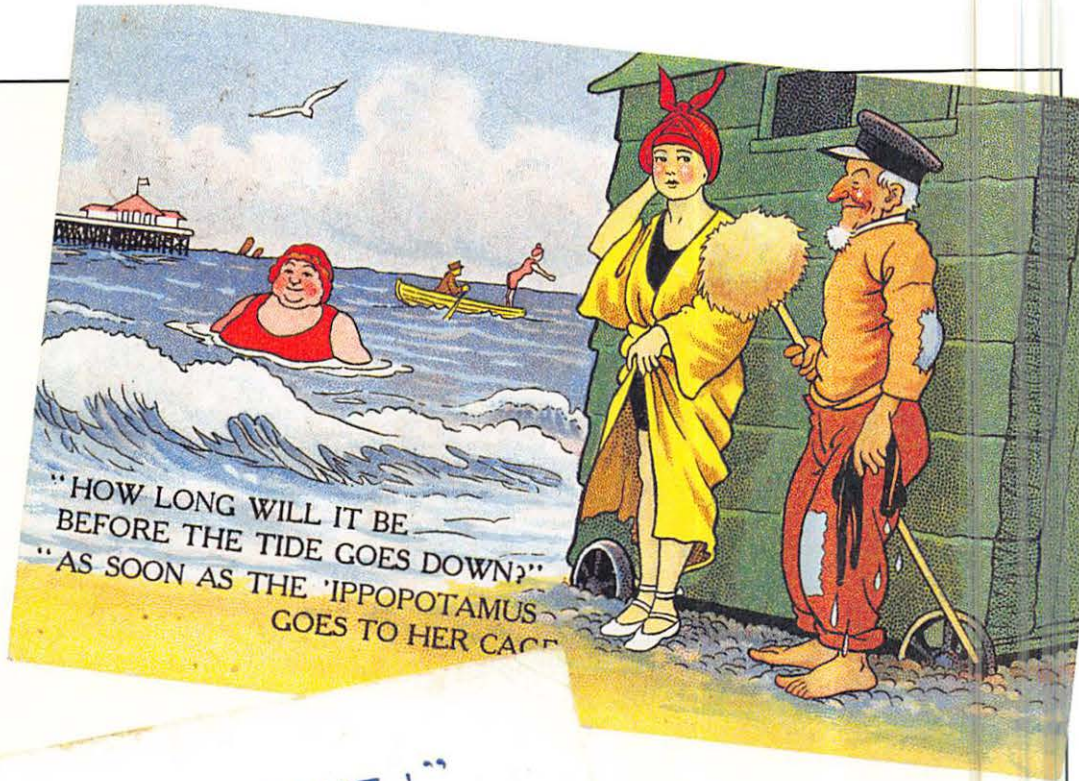
Beauty's servant: We're broke again, and there she lies, sunning herself, with never a thought of the out-goings.



# ALAMCA



**She:** I hear he used to be a great one for the ladies.  
**Her:** Not any more. He's reached the age where he only chases girls if it's downhill.



"I'M HAVING A RIPPING TIME!"



SEA-SIDE WEATHER



"WET-AND CLOSE"





*A strong attachment.*



*I'VE PICTURED YOU IN MY DREAMS  
WITH YOUR FRILLS AND DAINTY LACE  
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT SO SOON  
WE WOULD MEET FACE TO FACE.*



*My word, if you're not off  
I'll smack your bare arm.*



"My word, if you're not off, I'll smack your bare arm"  
Say the words on this postcard from Bude.  
Although utter nonsense, and perfectly clean,  
They sound most decidedly rude!





"So, Jane, you wish to leave to become an attendant at a mental home."

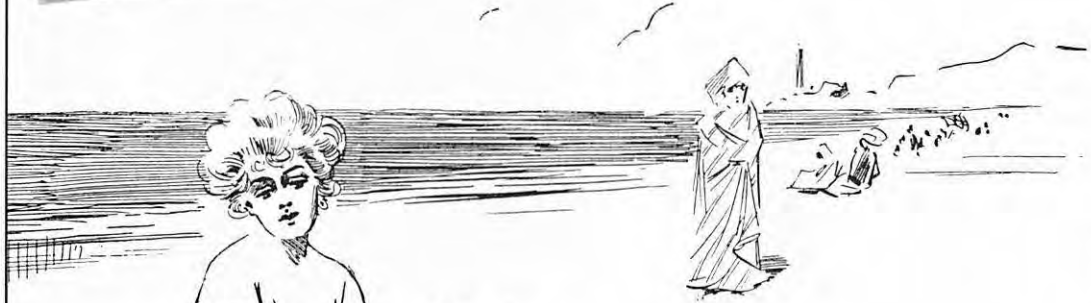
"That's right, Mum."

"What experience have you had?"

"Well, Mum, I've been with you for three years."

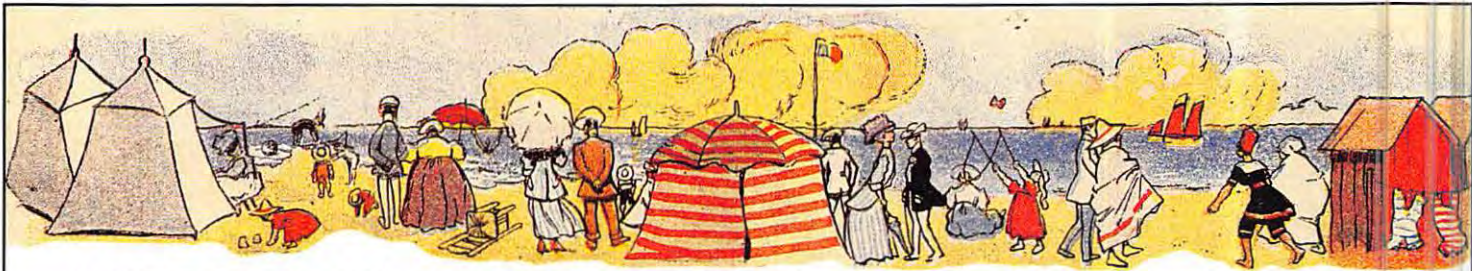


H. J. Gerbault



She: She says she can marry anyone she pleases.  
Her: Pity she doesn't please anyone.





# “ISN'T THE WATER WET?”

THE CELEBRATED COMIC SONG IMMORTALISED BY MISS ELLA TILLEY

FIRST CHORUS:

Isn't the water wet?  
Isn't the sunshine hot?  
Isn't the Man with the ices nice  
And hasn't he got a lot?  
Don't the nights get dark?  
Nights I'll never forget –  
Ain't the winkles wonderful  
And isn't the water wet!









SECOND CHORUS:

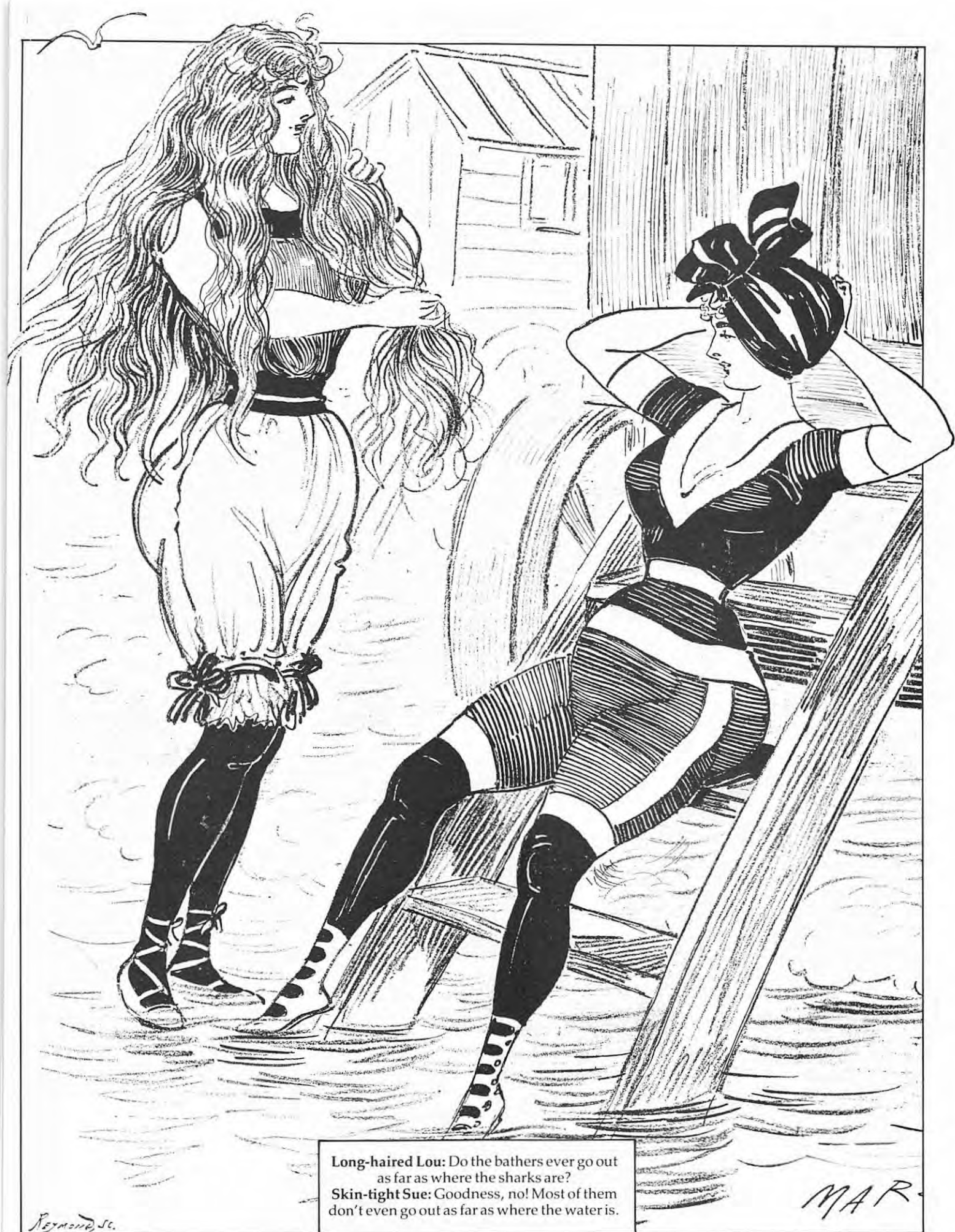
Isn't the water wet?  
 Isn't the sky ber-lue?  
 Nobody here but people,  
 And nothing but things to do.  
 Don't the boys look grand?  
 Sights I'll never forget –  
 Ain't the cockles a caution  
 And isn't the water wet!



THIRD CHORUS:

Isn't the water wet?  
 Isn't the ocean deep?  
 If the sand was all swept up  
 Wouldn't it make a heap?  
 Sailors with ship-shape shapes  
 Shapes I'll never forget –  
 Ain't the mussels marvellous  
 And isn't the water wet!





**Long-haired Lou:** Do the bathers ever go out as far as where the sharks are?  
**Skin-tight Sue:** Goodness, no! Most of them don't even go out as far as where the water is.

REYNOLD S.C.

MAR



**He (sotto voce):** Does he ever talk about his first wife?

**She:** He used to – all the time. But not any more.

**He:** What stopped him?

**She:** I started talking about my next husband.





Carleale.

Nervous Visitor: Do people drown  
very often here?  
Local: No, just the once.

"Don't you know her?  
She lives in the same square."  
"Yes, but not in the same circle."





Rose and her sister Heather  
Either alone or together  
Swim every day in Cockleshell Bay  
Whatever the wind and the weather.

Whether the waves are rough  
Or whether they're light as a feather  
Whether or not the weather is hot  
They swim in the altogether.

Though they look soft as silk  
They must be tougher than leather  
'Cos whether the weather is hot or not  
They swim in the altogether.





He: Dash it, Ermintrude, I love you. Let's get married, or something.  
She: Let's get married, or *Nothing!*





**She:** Let's go Dutch tonight.  
**He:** How do you mean, Mam'selle?  
**She:** You pay for the dinner and the drinks, and the rest of the evening will be on me.



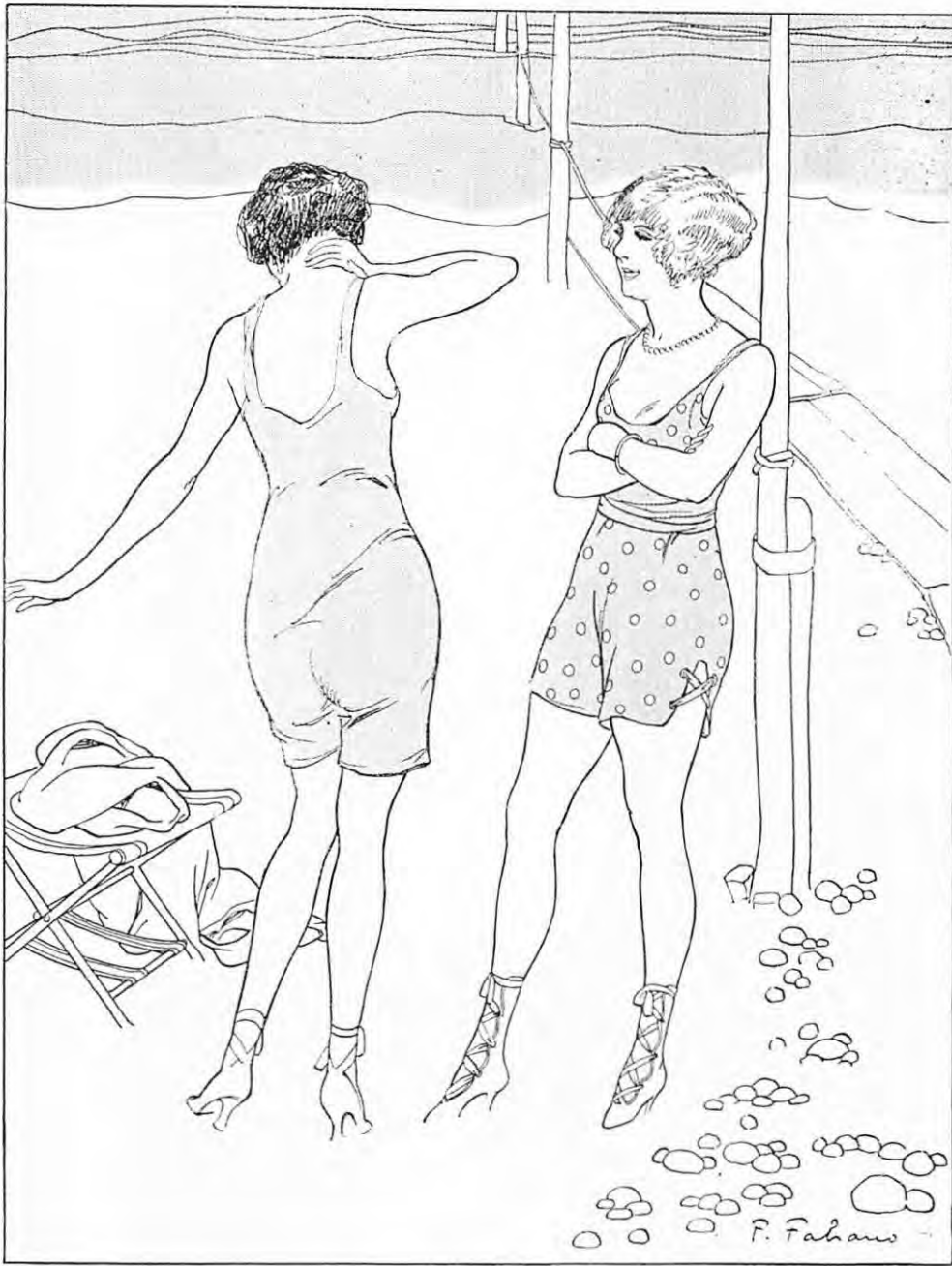




**Young and pretty:** Tell me, Aunt Alice, why is it you never married?

**Aunt Alice:** Well, I've got a parrot that swears, a chimney that smokes, and a cat that stays out all night – what do I want with a husband?

Fabiano . . .



"He's so deceitful. He pretends to believe me when he *knows* I'm lying to him."



"I call him jigsaw. Every time I look at him he goes to pieces."

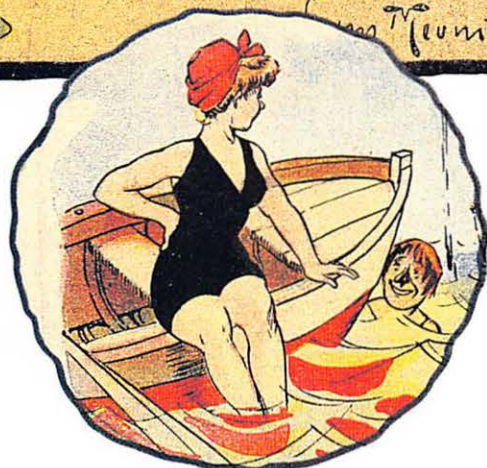


Little boys can be so very unkind,  
Their questions so awfully blunt;  
"Tell me, why have you got a behind behind  
And another behind in front?"





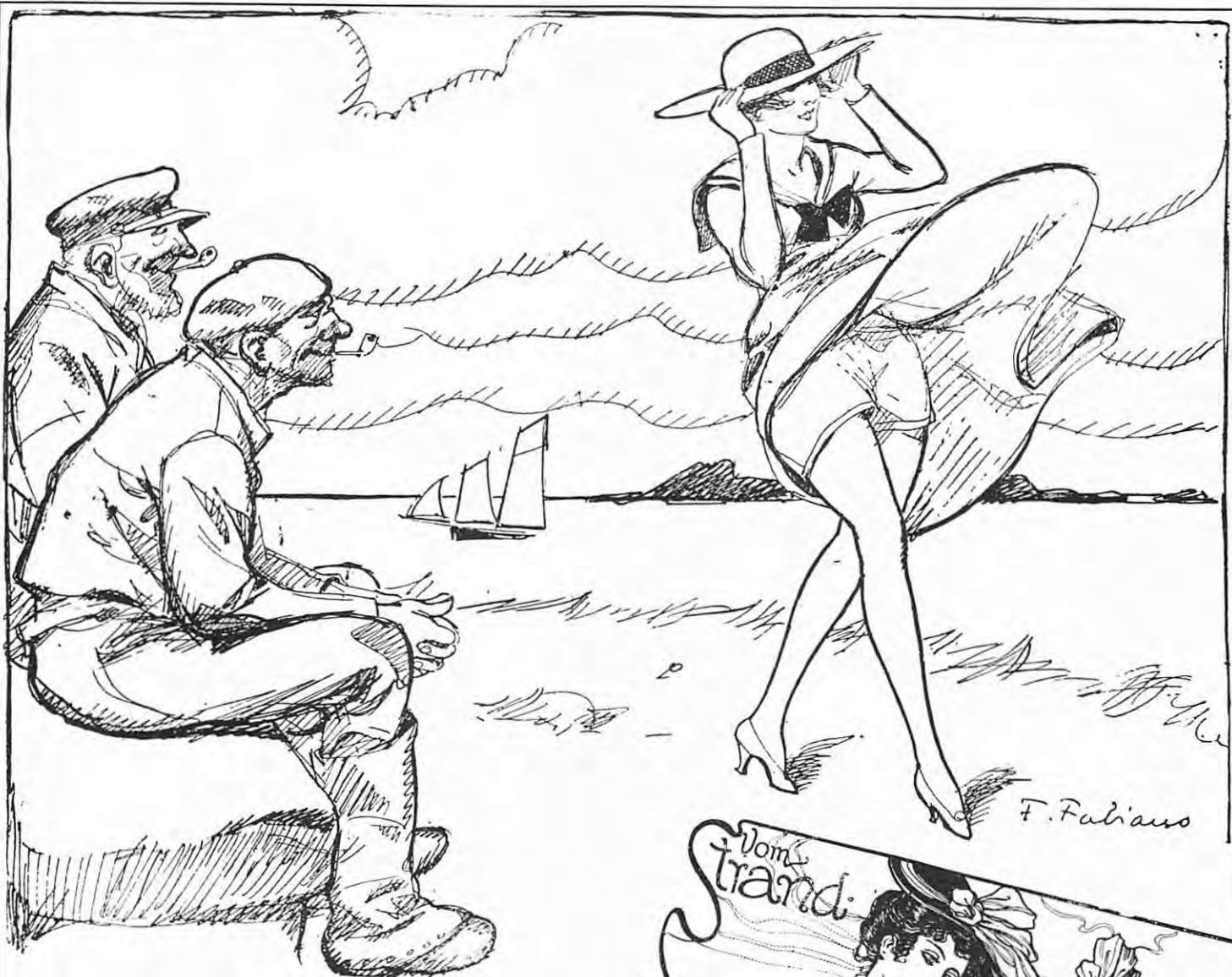
She: Oh! Oh! Hold me – I'm sinking!  
He: The way you're built, miss – impossible.  
She: People say my figure is like a boy's.  
He: It's like *two* buoys.



"It's no good knocking, you can't come in."



"Caught anything today, Martha?"



"A penny for your thoughts, George."

"What do you think I am, a slot machine?"

"Hm. Wind's getting up."

"Yes, I bet it is. It'll be cold on the front this morning."

"Ar, and a dirty night tonight."

"Ar."

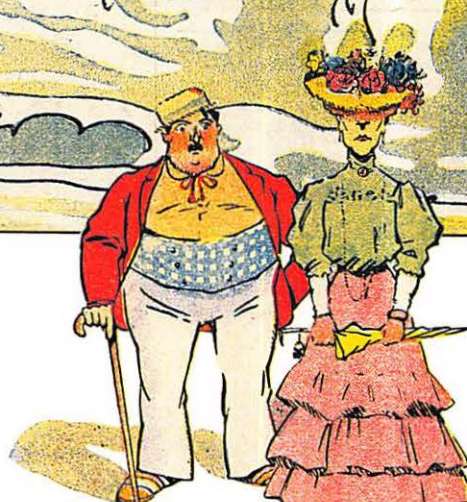
"Ar."

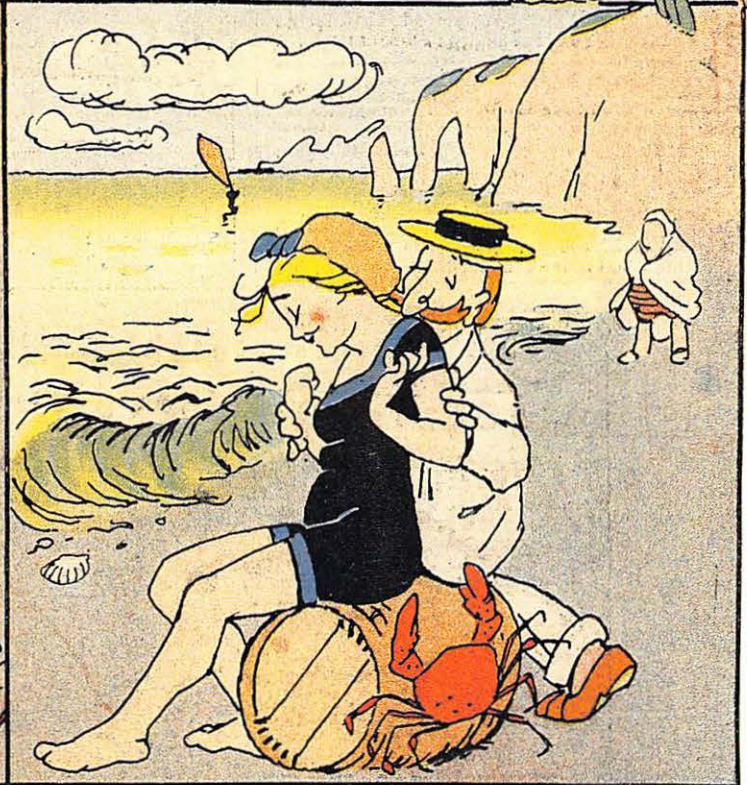
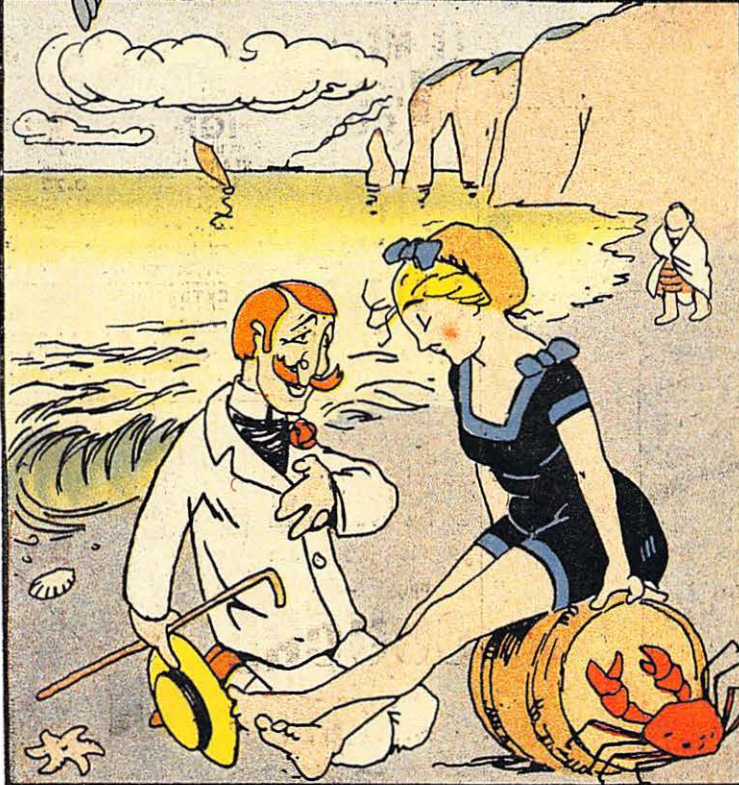
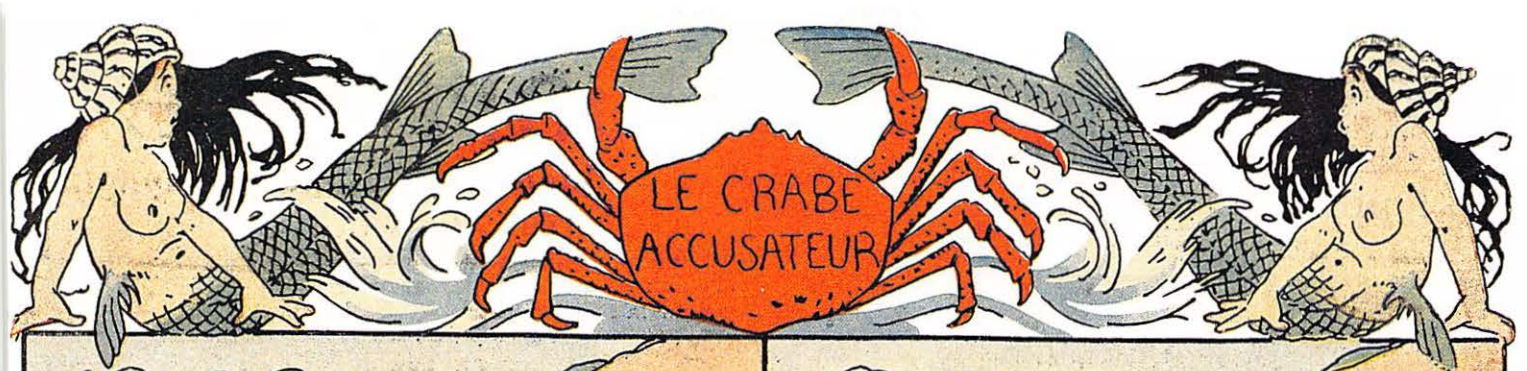


"Are you unattached?"  
 "No, I'm just sloppily put together."

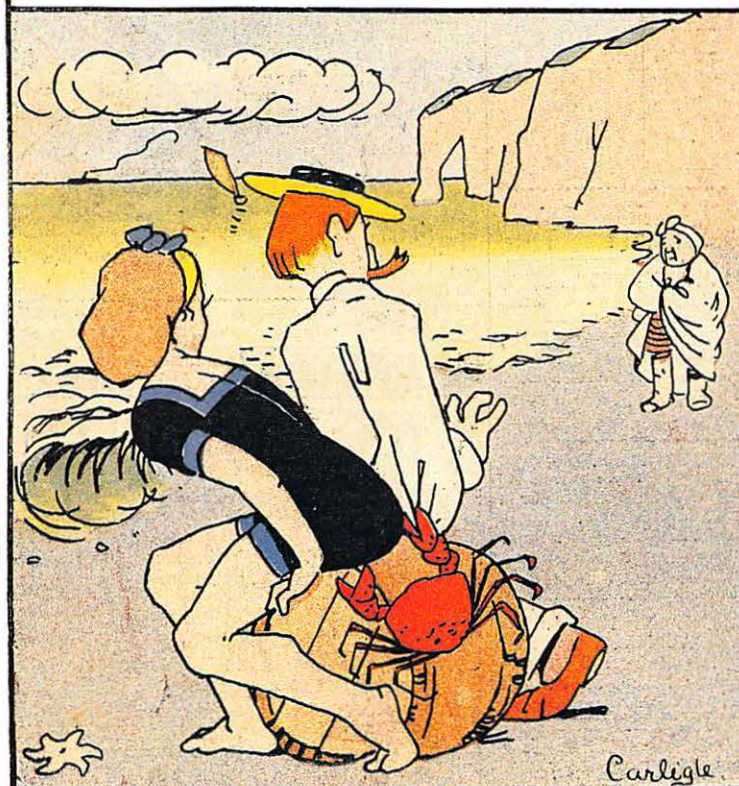


The sea is exceedingly rough,  
But old Mr Soaks is quite tough.  
As he dived he said "Quick -  
Take a look at my trick."  
I said, "Thank you, I've seen quite enough."





While his wife took a stroll round the bay, Casanova tried hard to make hay.



Carligle

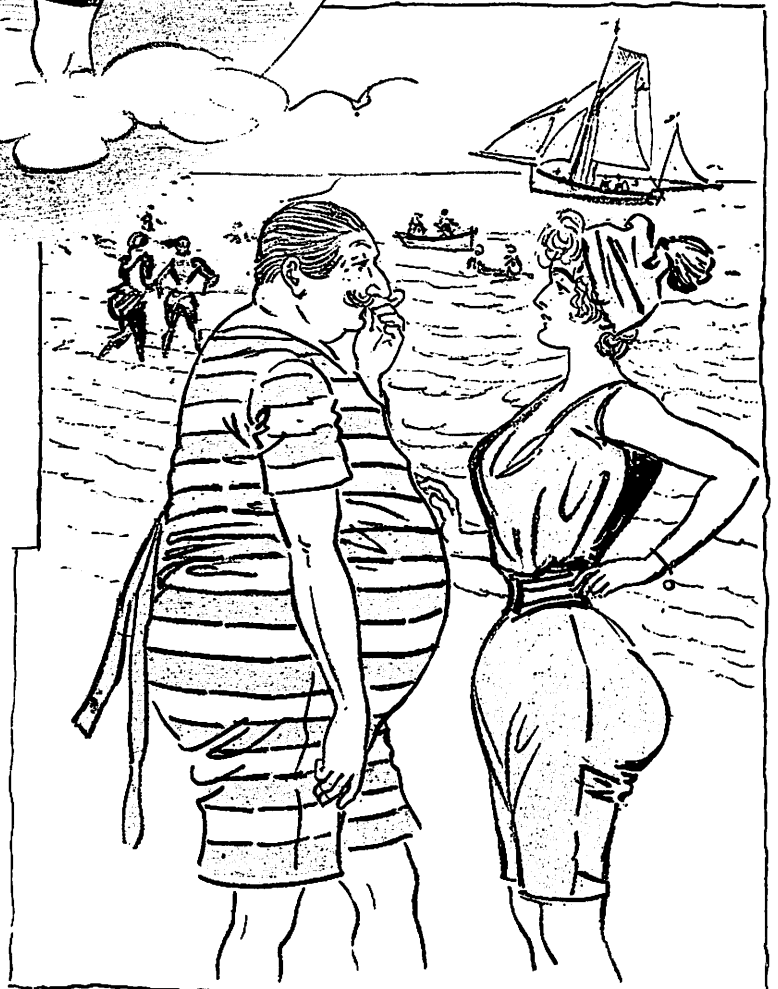
But his eager young blood was nipped in the bud, when a crab gave the whole game away.



# Ideal

I've found a girl so beautiful  
She'll make the perfect spouse –  
She's deaf and dumb and passionate  
And owns a public house.





## Offers

Girls who offer themselves as a wife  
 Will live in drudgery all their life;  
 Girls who offer wise advice  
 Won't be asked by the same man twice.  
 But girls who offer no resistance  
 Lead the very best existence.



# HISTORICAL BATHERS





LEDA AND THE HOT TAP

STONE AGE SINK

VENUS (BOTTICILLY)

NATURE'S WATERWINGS

WETTING HER WIMPLE

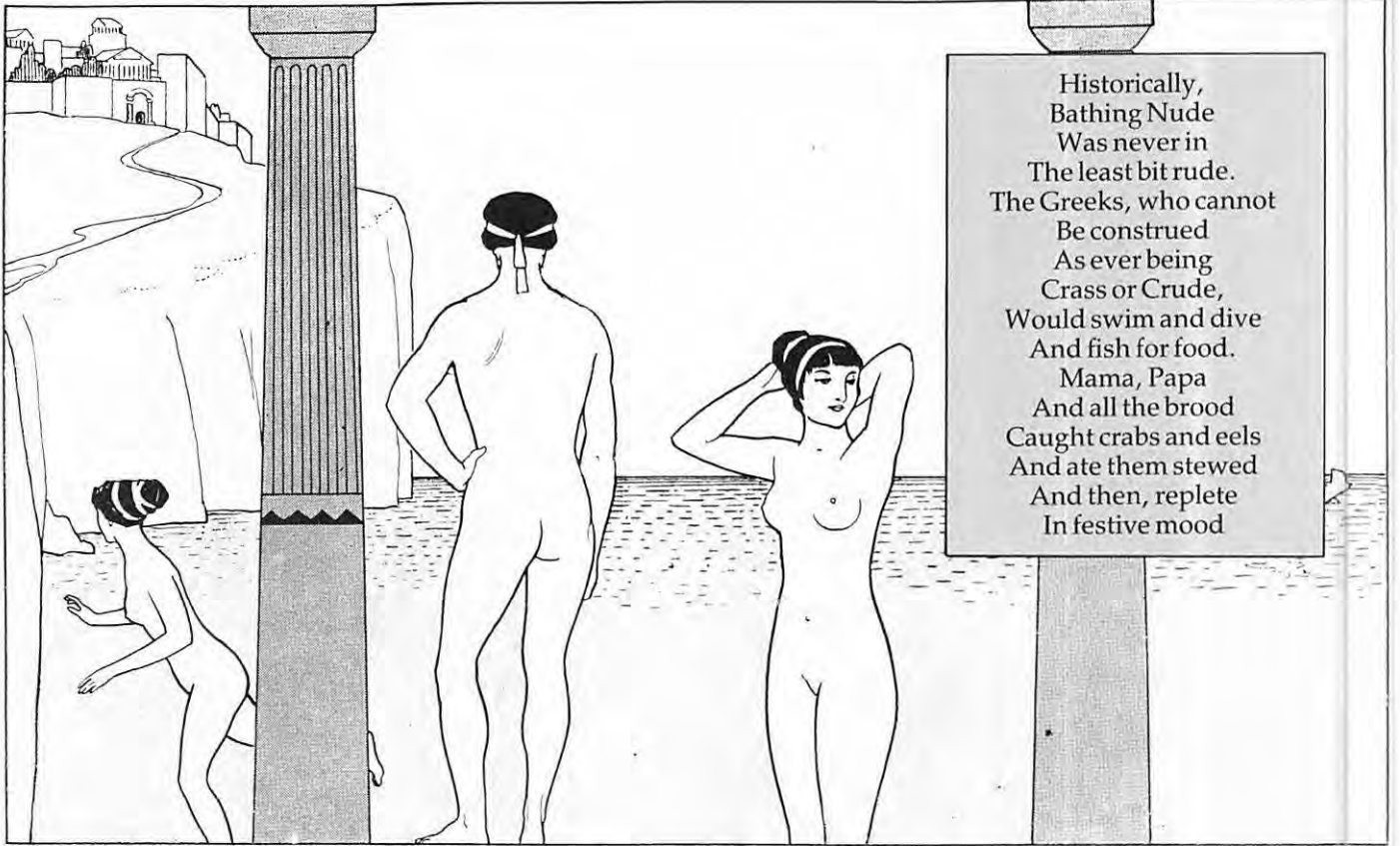
THE 17th-CENTURY JET SET (KEEPING A COOL HEAD)

THE WIFE OF BATH

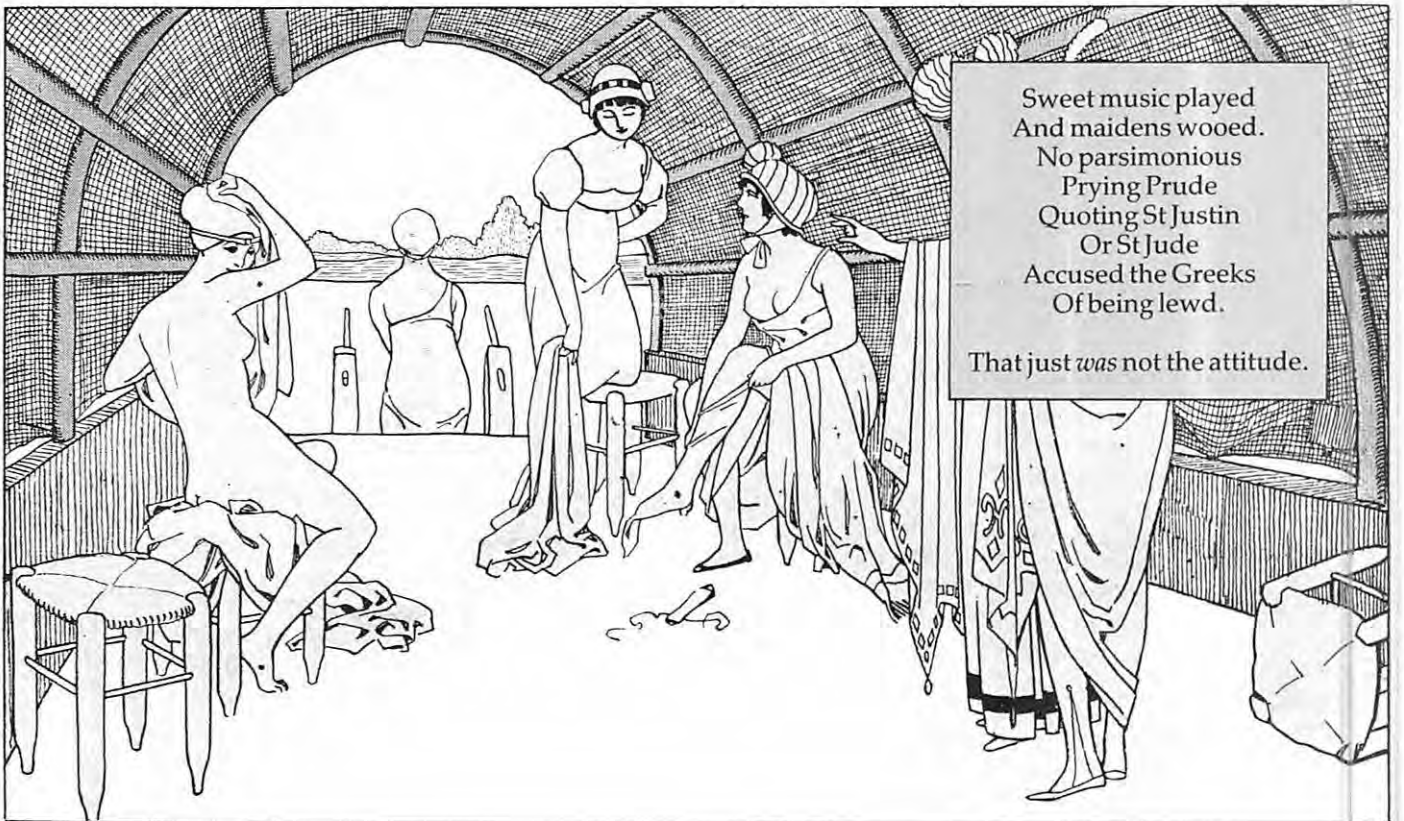
WATER MUSIC (AIR WITHOUT G-STRING)

A RARE BIRD THE STRIPED WATER WAGTAIL

Lucien Métével '98

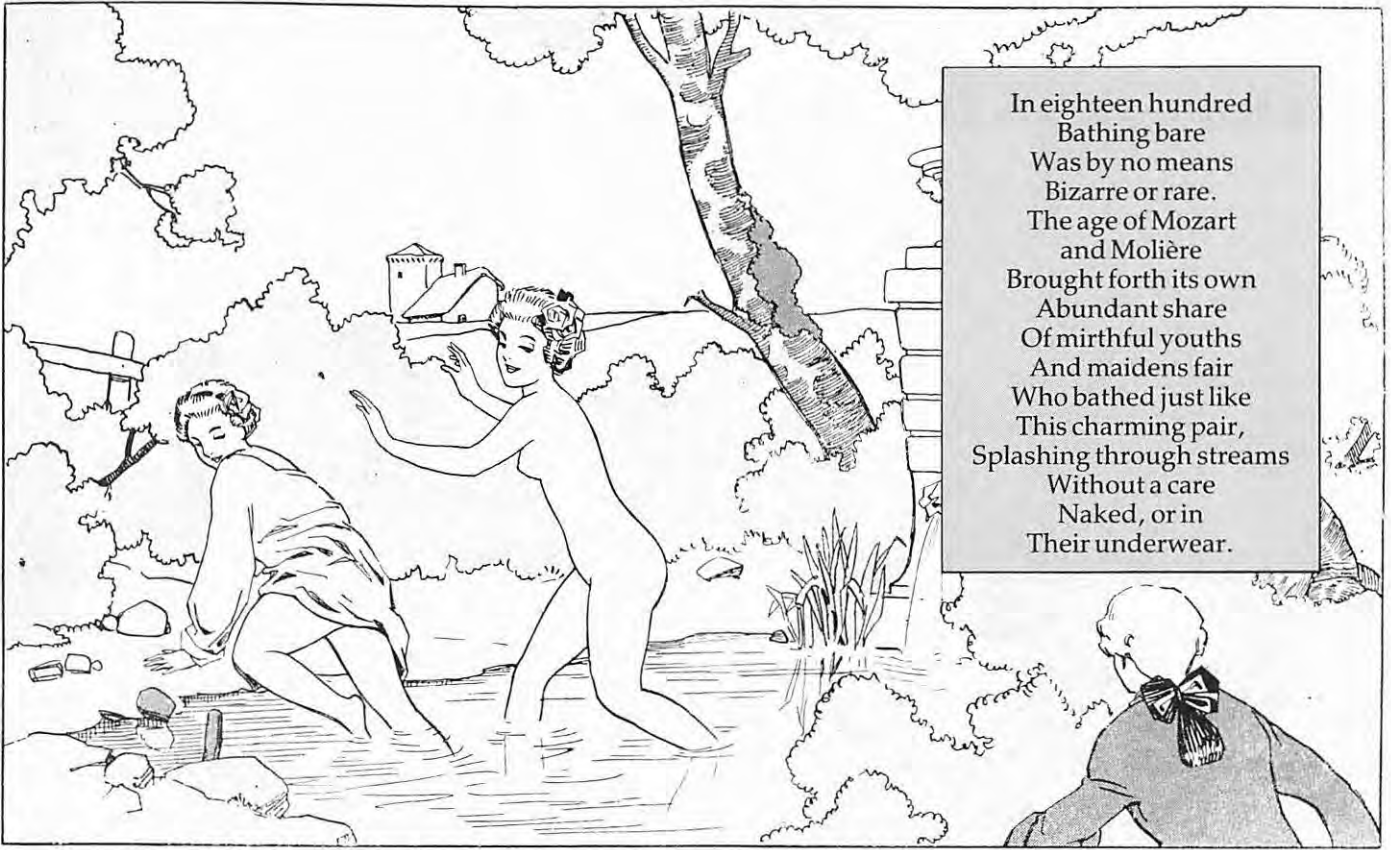


Historically,  
Bathing Nude  
Was never in  
The least bit rude.  
The Greeks, who cannot  
Be construed  
As ever being  
Crass or Crude,  
Would swim and dive  
And fish for food.  
Mama, Papa  
And all the brood  
Caught crabs and eels  
And ate them stewed  
And then, replete  
In festive mood

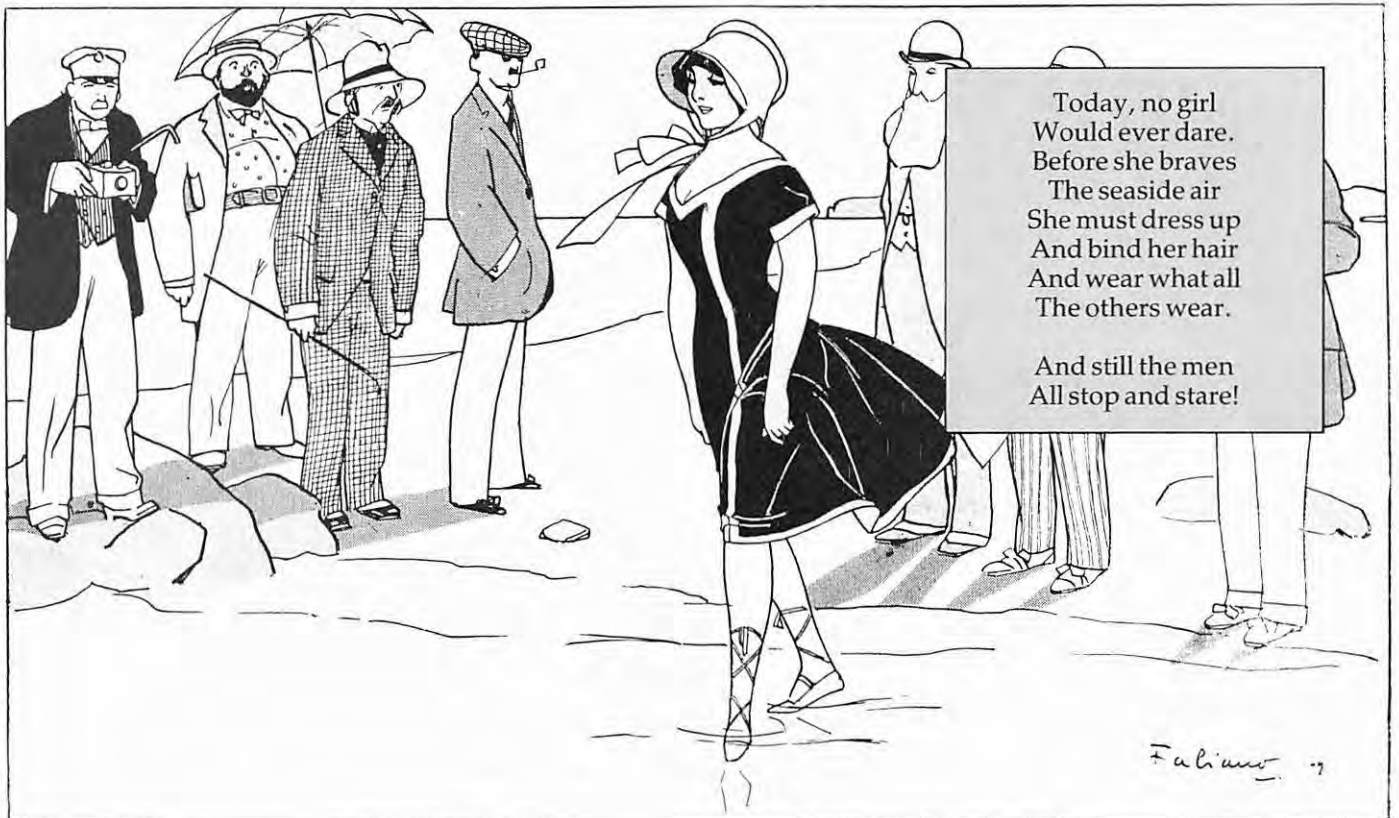


Sweet music played  
And maidens wooed.  
No parsimonious  
Prying Prude  
Quoting St Justin  
Or St Jude  
Accused the Greeks  
Of being lewd.

That just *was* not the attitude.



In eighteen hundred  
Bathing bare  
Was by no means  
Bizarre or rare.  
The age of Mozart  
and Molière  
Brought forth its own  
Abundant share  
Of mirthful youths  
And maidens fair  
Who bathed just like  
This charming pair,  
Splashing through streams  
Without a care  
Naked, or in  
Their underwear.



Today, no girl  
Would ever dare.  
Before she braves  
The seaside air  
She must dress up  
And bind her hair  
And wear what all  
The others wear.  
  
And still the men  
All stop and stare!

Fabiano 7

*Est-il mieux de*



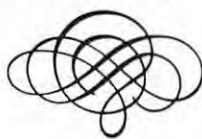
mer peut de voir ?

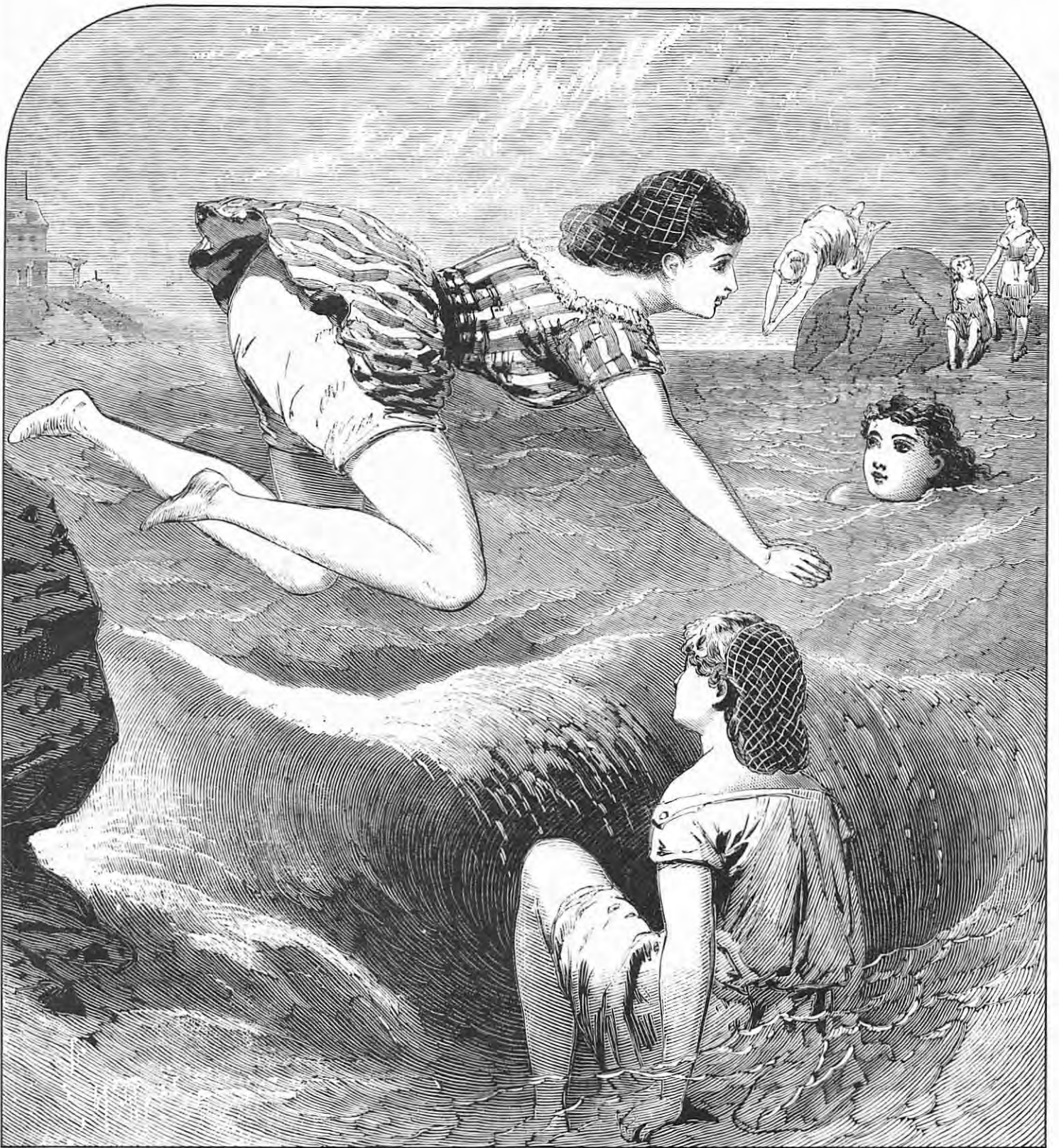






Historically, the sea was regarded as being much more treacherous and unfriendly than today. People treated it with more respect, as a cold adversary rather than a warm friend. They ventured rather than dashed into it. A sensational weekly newspaper of the 1870s with the unlikely title of "The Days' Doings" (see facsimile of original front page heading), produced some rather revealing wood engravings of young girls at the mercy of Father Neptune.





THE  
**DAYS' DOINGS.**



DRESS AND  
UNDRESS



# DRESS AND UNDRRESS

**A**s far as the ladies are concerned, (and insofar as we are concerned with the ladies) at the seaside, it's not what you do that matters, it's what you do it *in*.

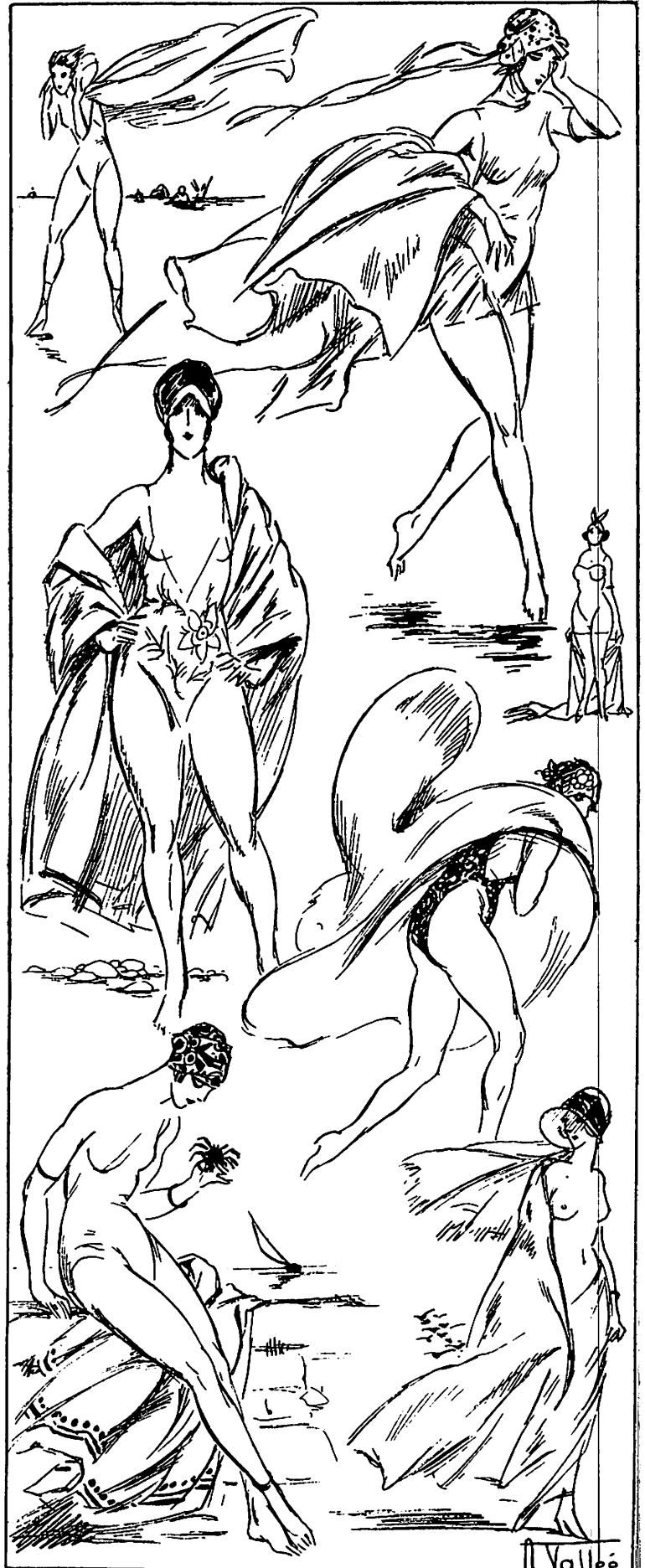
You can plunge in, plod in, paddle in puddles or simply peripatate on the perimeter, no-one cares two hoots. What matters (and I speak for all red-blooded males, and quite a few blue-blooded ones as well, I shouldn't wonder) is what delights you have decided to reveal or withhold on this particular morning.

When a man says to a girl, "What a pretty bathing costume", what he really means is, "How pretty you look in that bathing costume."

Because it has to be said that the same suit will not draw many glances when draped over the back of a deckchair.

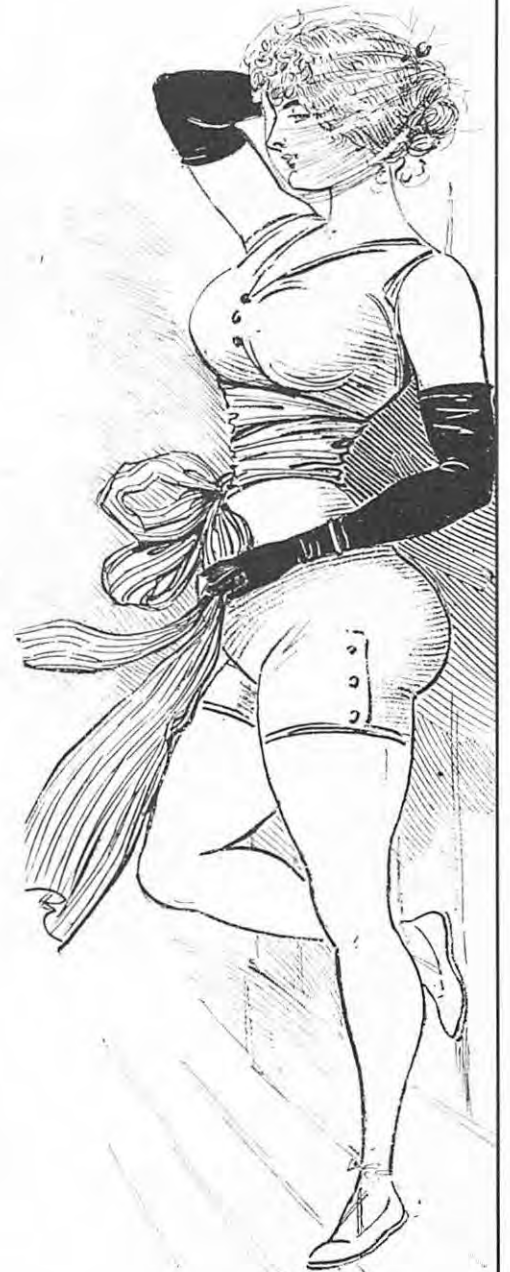
And, of course, each year they get smaller. Two men were heard on the promenade:

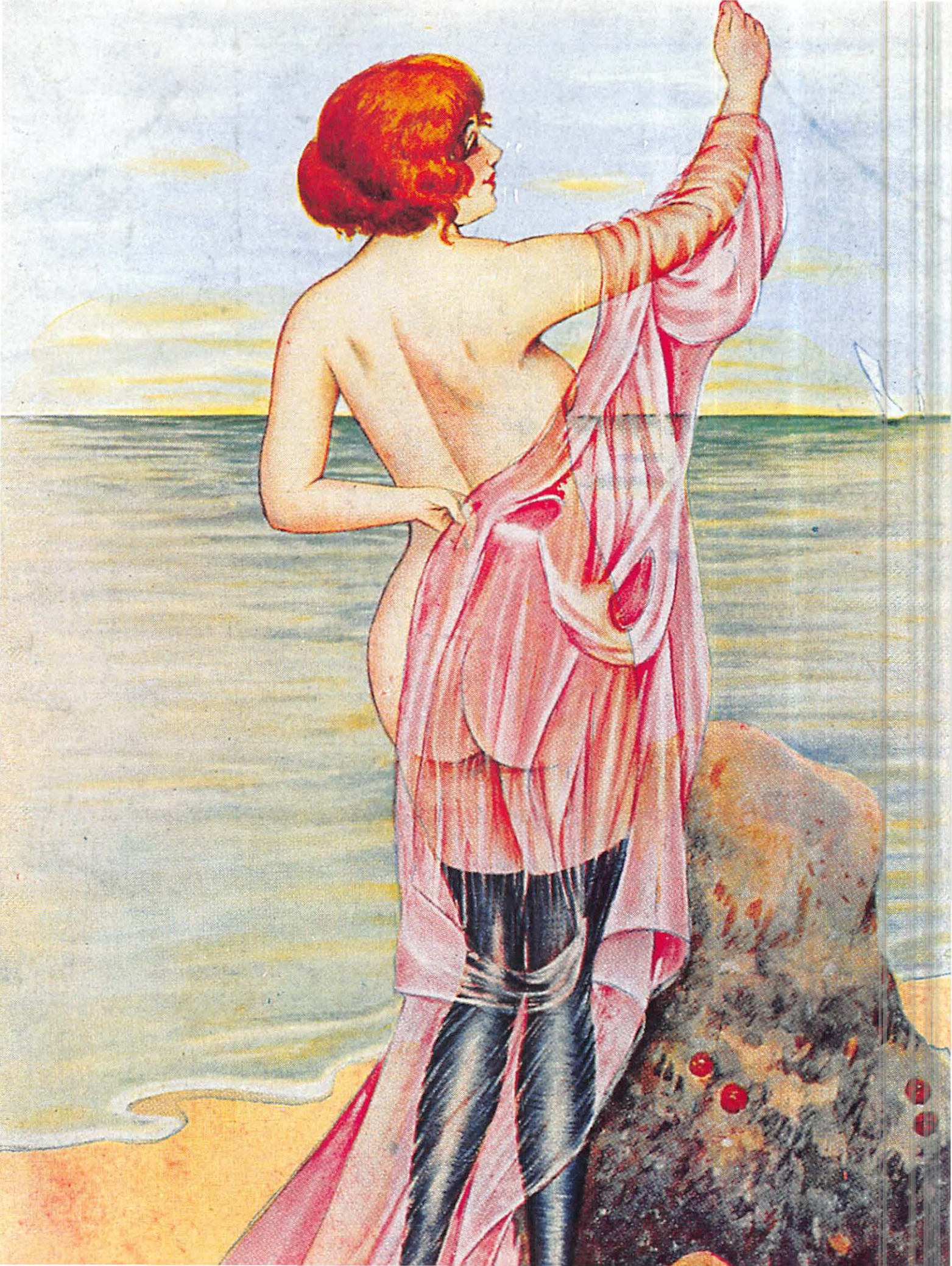
"My wife's very clever. She made my tie out of one of her old bathing costumes." "Really? Wait till you see the bathing costume my wife made out of one of my old ties."



# STARING

Why do the boys all stare so?  
I think it's awfully rude.  
Whatever bathing dress I wear  
Their eyes are simply glued.  
They're glued to my arms,  
They're glued to my legs  
They're glued all over the place—  
Yet strange to say, they're too ashamed  
To look me in the face!





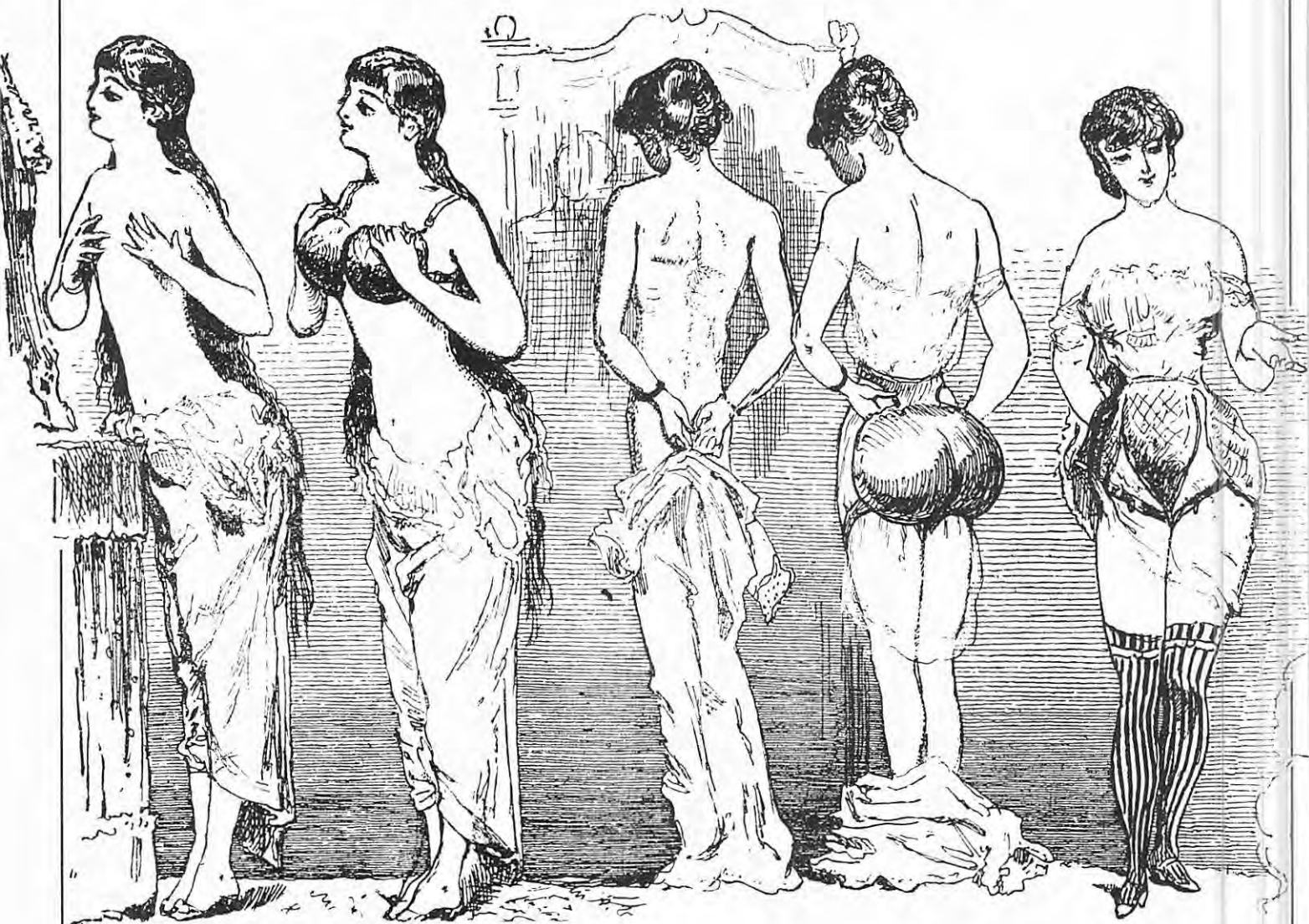






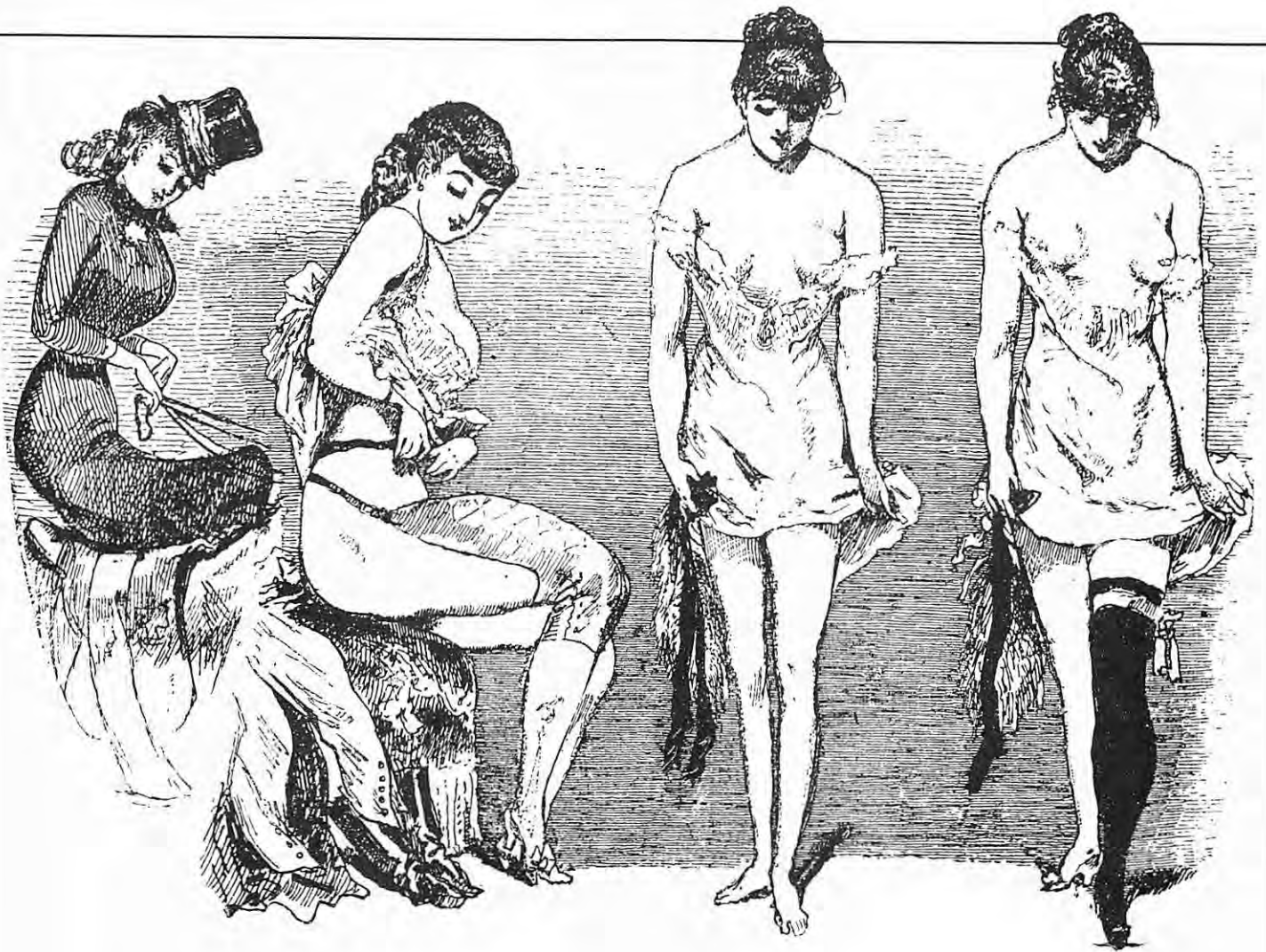
Witness the perennial rhyme, famous since the olden time,  
What Mother Nature has forgotten, crafty girls just stuff with  
cotton.

Here "La Vie Parisienne" (Journal for discerning men)  
States the bare facts, here and now; shows us where, and shows us how.



If the bosom is too flat  
Take two lumps of this and that  
Fix them on with string and struts  
If that fails - use coconuts.

Girls who lack a rounded rump  
Fix a sub-divided lump -  
It's the sort that young men like:  
Just the place to park their bike.



County girls that ride, of course  
 Wear more harness than the horse.  
 Since she lacks those strapping thighs  
 Strapped-on thighs instead she tries.

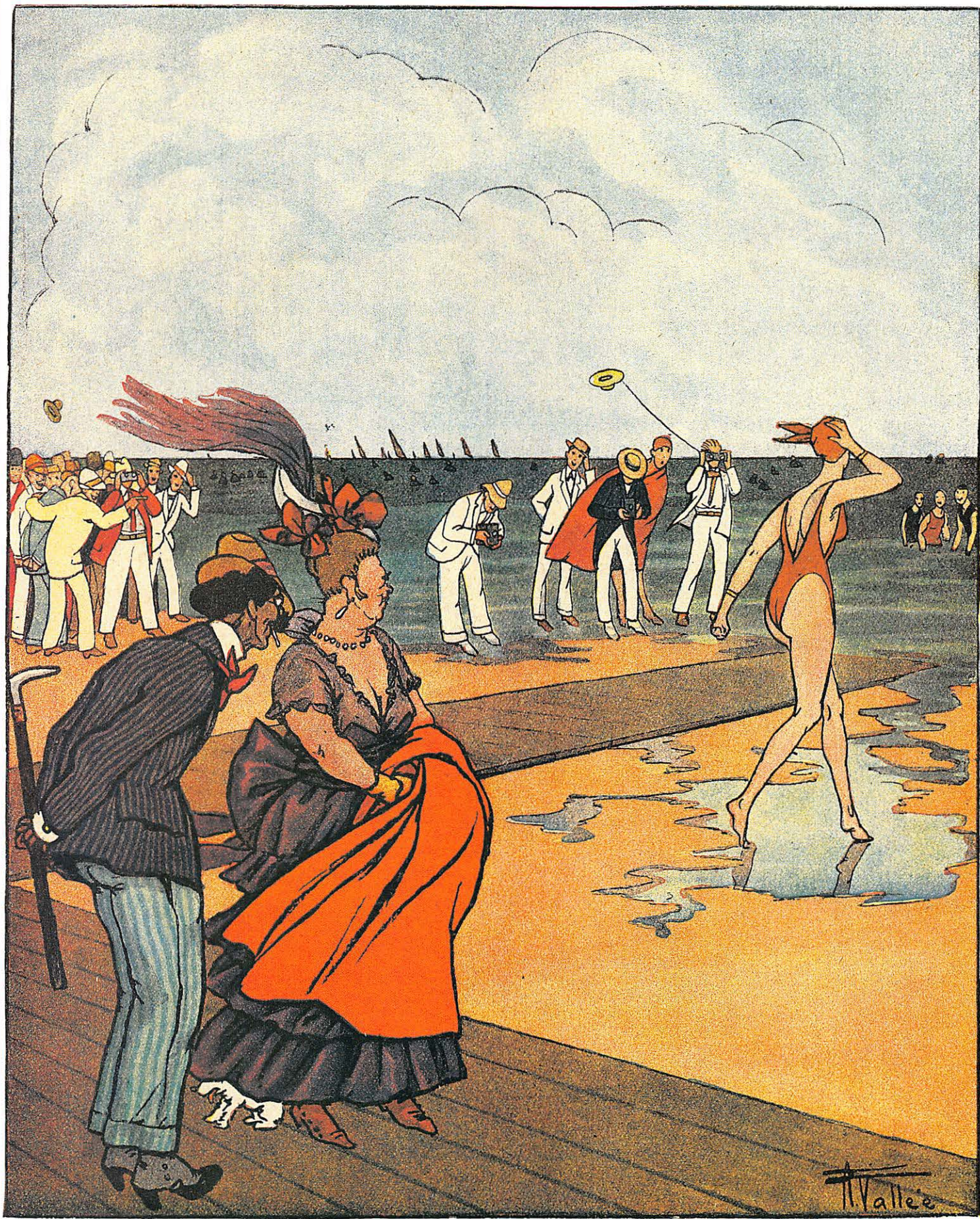
Girls whose legs are thin and shocking  
 Wear no ordinary stocking;  
 No good doing things by halves  
 Fool them all with padded calves!

THESE DECEPTIONS PROVE A BOON - THAT IS, UNTIL THE HONEYMOON!  
 PICTURE THE DISILLUSIONED GROOM, HIS WIFE ALL LITTERED ROUND THE ROOM!



FORTIFICATIONS





Mrs Rickenbacker: Really! Some of these costumes are no bigger than postage stamps!  
Groucho Marx's grandpa: One thing is certain – they'll always deliver the male.

# Comparisons



Lady Gish swims like a fish  
I'm awfully glad I met her.  
But Lady Snell dresses  
frightfully well  
And undresses even better.



H. GRAY



Lady Haas is bold as brass  
 To stranger as to friend.  
 Colossal cheek is used to seek  
 A means to her own end.

But when all's said I know I'll wed  
 For money, God forgive me!  
 Perchance I'll marry Lady Muck  
 If Lady Luck is with me.





**SONGS · OF**  
**THE · SEA**





♩ Allegretto moderato.



## A SHE SHANTY

Oh I must go down to the sea again,  
To the lonely shingly shores  
And all I ask is a tall ship  
And a girl in bathing drawers



For a girl in bathing drawers, lads,  
Is a thing beyond renown.  
She shines in this world like a beacon, lads,  
Especially when bending down.

You can keep your nifty nighties, lads,  
Your pyjamas and silk plus-fours  
Just give me a girl with her hair in curl  
Got up in some bathing drawers.





Oh the world may come and the world may go  
And it probably will quite soon;  
Well, let it! Just give me a bathing-girl  
As she swims by the light of the moon.

You can sail to the ends of the earth, and beyond,  
But a sight you will never forget  
Is a pretty girl in the moon's pale light  
With her bathing drawers all wet.





## ❧ "BY THE SEA" ❧

(AS SUNG BY THE GREAT HARRY POLLARD)

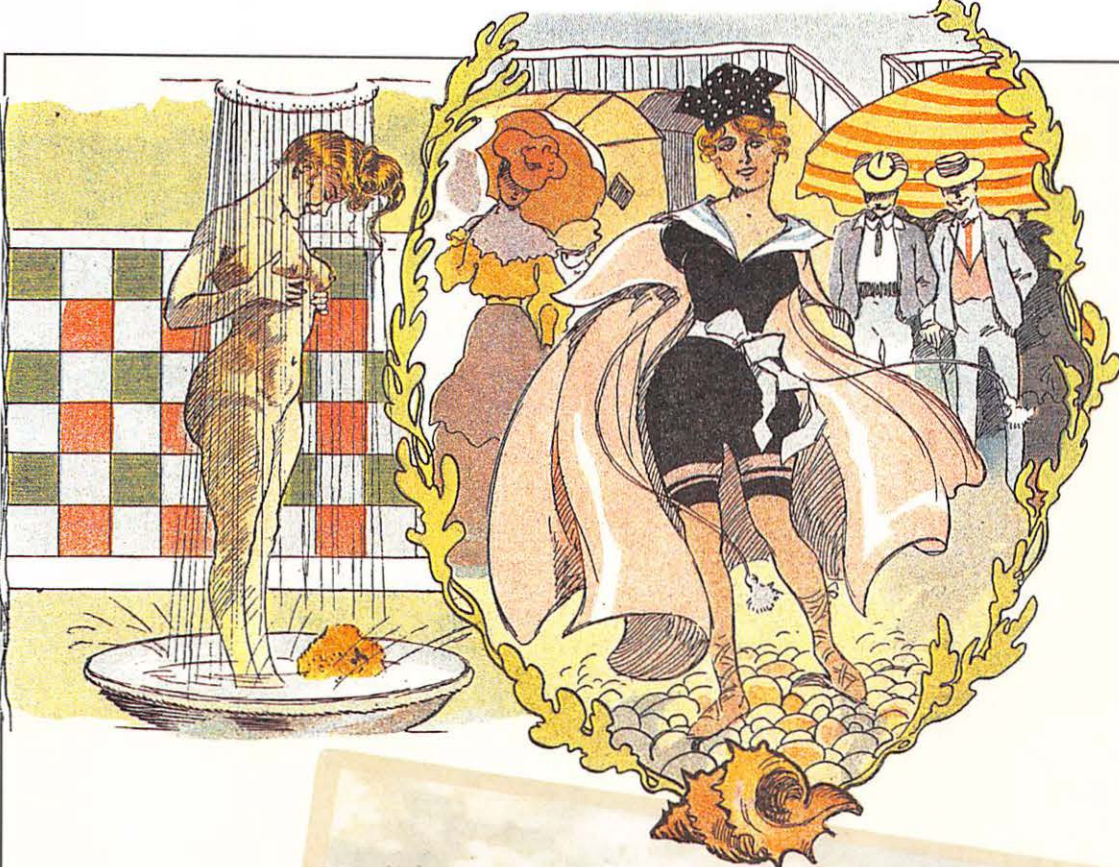
### VERSE ONE

By the sea – on the sand  
Down among the bathers and the band  
Boys of all ages with a light in their eye  
Watching all the shapes and sizes going by  
By the sea, on the sand  
A girl can get her cheeks severely tanned  
The girls down by the jetty, they don't lie on their  
backs  
They all lie on their tummies, like performing seals in  
packs  
Trying to catch the fishermen and waiting for the  
smacks  
By the Sea, on the Shore, on the Sand.

### VERSE TWO

By the sea – on the beach  
Not every girl's a melon or a peach,  
Here comes a lady who is showing too much,  
Two large rabbits in a very small hutch  
By the sea, on the beach  
The choicest fruits are always out of reach.  
Our hotel honeymooners are in love without a doubt  
They're usually the best of friends, they never scream  
or shout  
But when she wears a bathing-dress the pair keep  
falling out –  
By the Sea, on the Sand, on the Beach.





VERSE THREE

By the sea, on the shore  
 They're wearing rather less than Grandma wore;  
 Large lumps, big bumps, down among the dunes  
 Beach balls, golf balls, barrels and balloons  
 By the sea, on the shore,  
 When day is done there's so much fun in store –  
 When darkness falls along the sand the couples all  
 begin  
 To bill and coo, and fro and to, it really is a din  
 And what looks like the moon is just big Nellie diving  
 in  
 By the Sea, on the Sand, on the Shore.





# SAILOR JACK

(FROM "SONGS OF THE POOPDECK"  
BY HAROLD BELL)

I'll tell you a tale of a Matelot fair  
With great big muscles and curly hair  
He travelled the world both here and there  
And he sailed on the *Saucy Sue*.

Now his hair was black and his name was Jack  
And he had tattoos all down his back  
And all up his front he had them too  
And he sailed on the *Saucy Sue*.

Now the girls all loved this Matelot  
And they travelled with him to and fro  
And they'd go as far as he wanted them to go  
On the deck of the *Saucy Sue*.

WITH LOVE FROM YOUR  
SAILOR-BOY.



I send you love, my sweetheart true,  
From the longing of my heart,  
So dear to me you ne'er have been,  
Though we're so far apart.

S.O. 52-1



*I scarcely know what to say.*

Jack the Lad



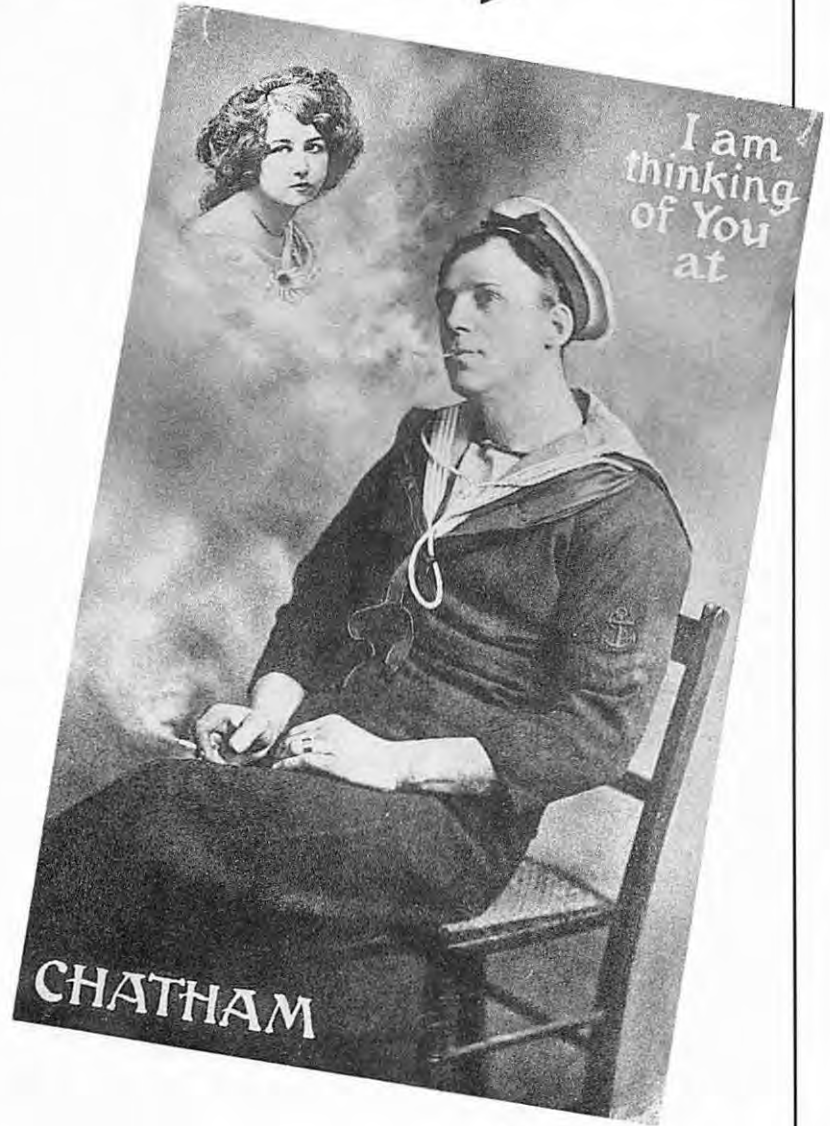
He'd woo each maid who came along,  
He'd woo her hard and he'd woo her strong  
And this was the burden of his song  
As he sailed on the *Saucy Sue*.

"Oh your eyes are jet and your teeth are pearls  
And your hair is a mass of golden curls  
And the rest of you's just like other girls  
And that being so, you'll do."

Now he loved a girl whose name was Pat  
And she had a figure that was round and fat  
But he sailed away and left her flat  
On the good ship *Saucy Sue*.

He loved the girls in every port  
He'd steal their cash and not get caught  
Oh many a tall girl he's left short  
As he sailed on the ocean blue.

But now Jack's age has reached three score  
He sails the seven seas no more  
He sits in a row-boat near the shore  
And still nets a nymph or two.





Sadly, all things must  
come to an end – and  
we are nearing the end  
of this helping of nostalgia . .

I hope you have enjoyed this picture book; there is no more to be said, and but one more thing to be done. In the spirit of the seaside saucy postcards of those golden olden days –



LA CABINE D'ÉMILIE DE MARENNES

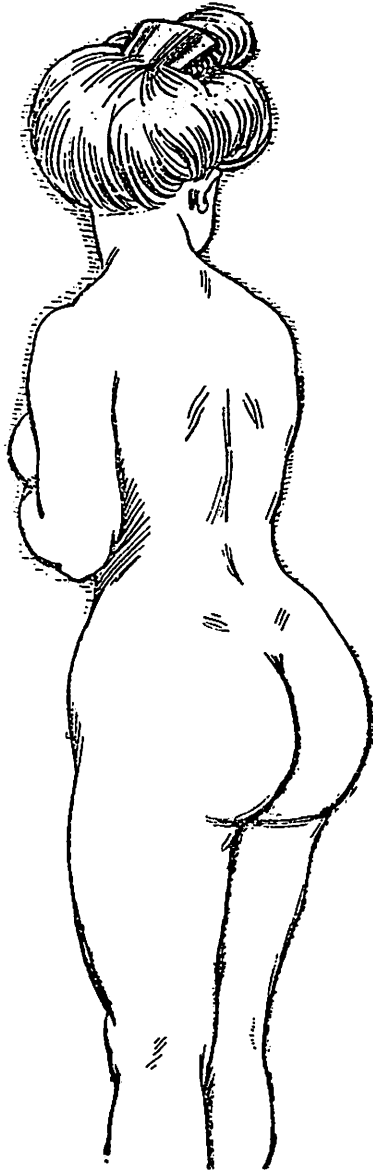


"HOLD THIS PAGE UP TO THE LIGHT  
THEN THE END WILL BE IN SIGHT."

Until the next time . . .

*Ronnet Barker*





THE END PAGE



ANOTHER  
SPLASH

— OF —

SPARKLING FUN

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