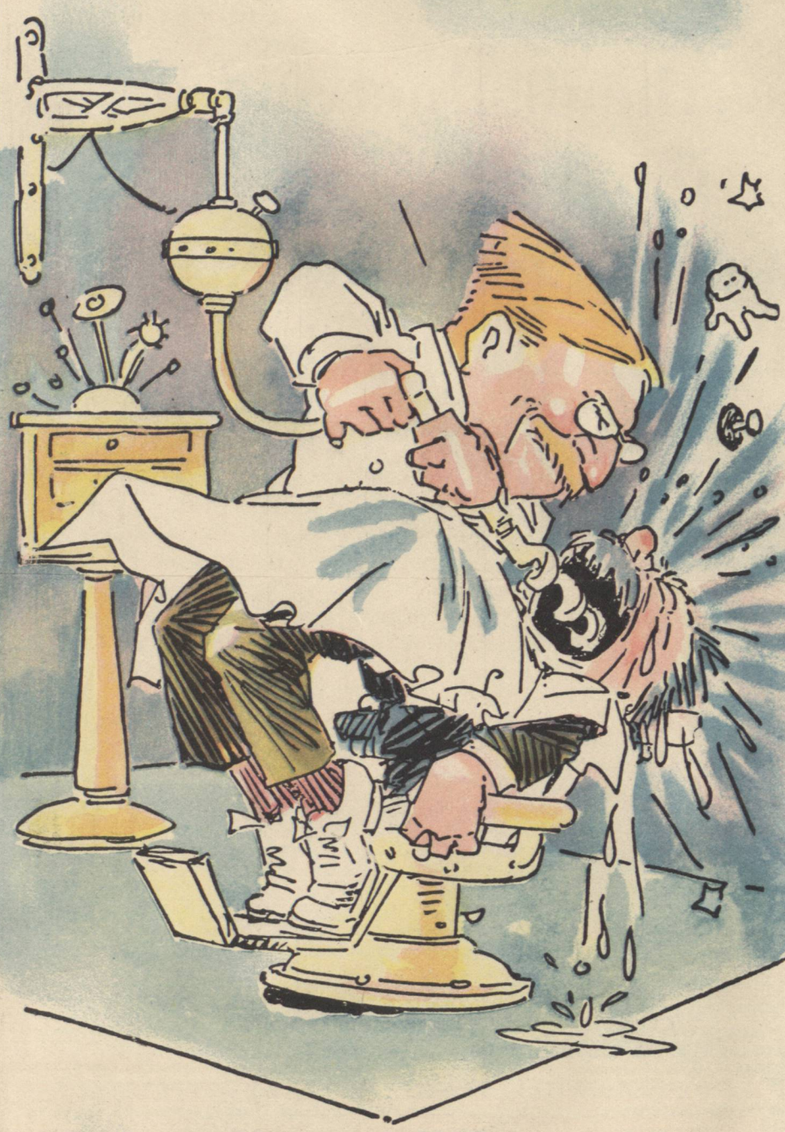
We Have With Us Today

THE DENTIST

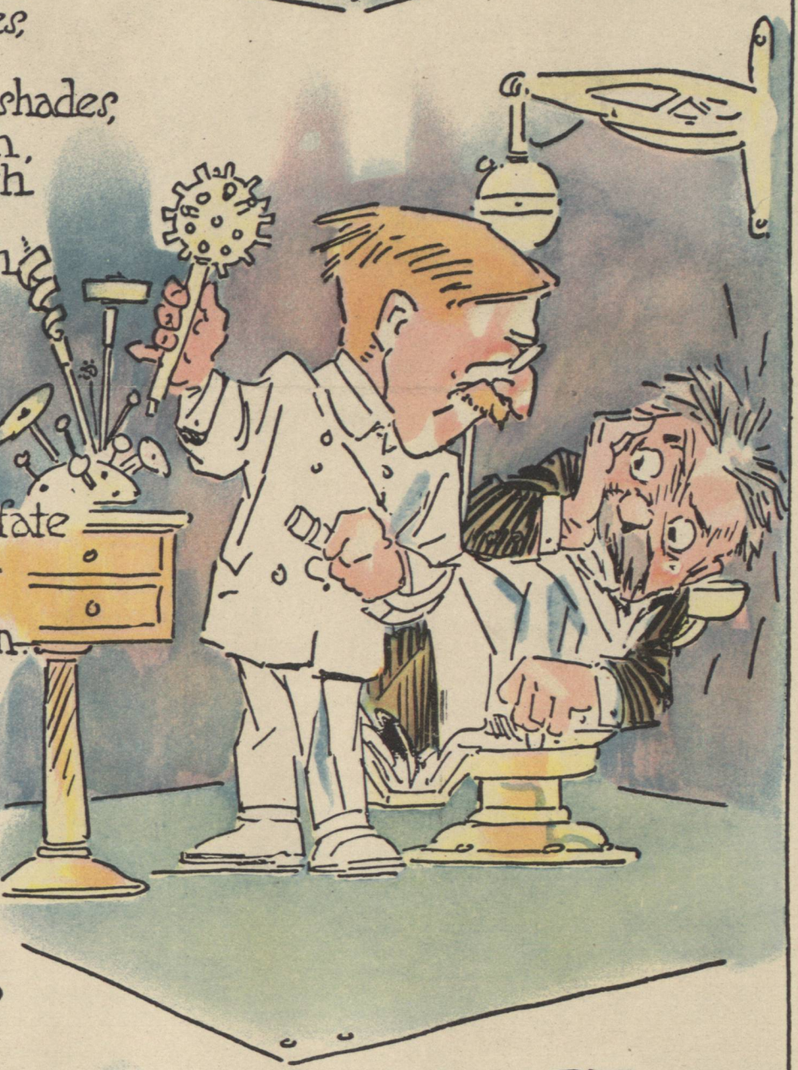
BY GRANTLAND RICE & J. N. Ding.

Your soul turns to a sodden lump,
You feel your weary shoulders sag,
When some old molar starts to jump
Like Dempsey punching at a bag;
You know the dregs are in your cup,
And yet you can't afford to wait,
And so you call your dentist up
And frame him for an early date.

In abject terror you recline
Within the big chair, near at hand,
While cold chills tango down your spine
And tremors shake your nervous hand;
As raw fear tears into your breast
He throws a gag into your mouth;
And as he taps the molar's crest
He hits the trail- and travels south.



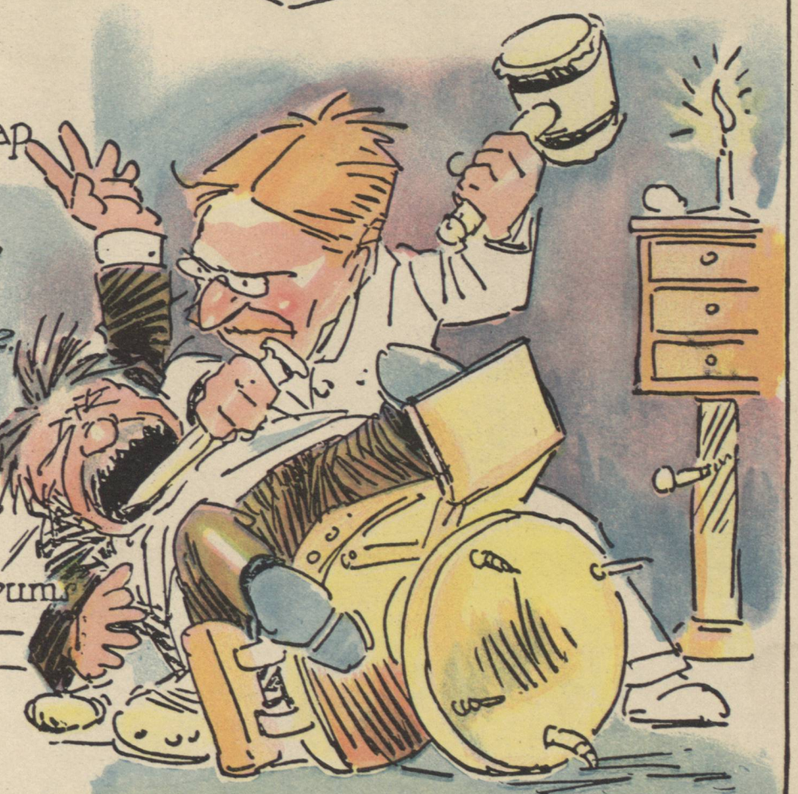
Of all the weapons you can name
From howitzers to hand grenades,
That rip into the human frame
Where horror brings its haunting shades,
The "buzzer" wins for age or youth,
As with your final gasp for breath
It jams against an aching tooth
And starts to jazz the Song of Death.



There's nothing like it on this trip,
And Old Gehenna, all aglow,
Will have to hit an awful clip
To tie it in the Realm Below;
How sweet death seems against this fate
How calm the grave you hope to win
As jazzing on at dizzy rate
The whirring steel sinks deeper in.

I sometimes wonder if they know
While tapping a molarie boil,
How deep into the tooth they go
Like drillers after hidden oil?
For I have often seen them swerve
Near sudden death, as with a spurt
They pry into a throbbing nerve
And softly murmur—"Did it hurt"?

It's bad enough when with a rap
They open up the molar's cleft,
And drop a death-bomb in the gap
To mop-up anything that's left;
But I believe it's even worse
When probing with that needle wire
He jabs until with smothered curse
You feel your blazing heart's on fire.



But when the "buzzer's" laid aside,
Suppresser of the aching hop,
And you can chew with buoyant pride
Upon a beefsteak or a chop-
Where once you thought of muffled drums
And firing squads in bitter rage,
The erstwhile villain now becomes
The Greatest Hero of the Age.