

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS
AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS

Books by George Ade

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OBSERVATIONS
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SINGLE BLESSEDNESS AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS

BY
GEORGE ADE



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In this book you will find, possibly disguised and altered, certain dissertations which first found their way to the public through the columns of *The American Magazine*, *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The Century Magazine* and *Life*. Also there is some miscellany, first exhibited in private and now put into type for the first time.

GEORGE ADE

1922

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SINGLE BLESSEDNESS
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THE JOYS OF SINGLE BLESSEDNESS

THE bachelor is held up to contempt because he has evaded the draft. He is a slacker. He has side-stepped a plain duty. If he lives in the small town he is fifty per cent. joke and fifty per cent. object of pity. If he lives in a city, he can hide away with others of his kind, and find courage in numbers; but even in the crowded metropolis he has the hunted look of one who knows that the world knows something about him. He is led to believe that babies mistrust him. Young wives begin to warn their husbands when his name is mentioned. He is a chicken hawk in a world that was intended for turtle doves. It is always taken for granted that the bachelor *could* have married. Of course, he might not have netted the one he wanted first off. It is possible that,

later on, circumstances denied him the privilege of selection. *But* it is always assumed by critics of the selfish tribe, that any bachelor who has enough money in the bank to furnish a home, can, if he is persistent, hound some woman into taking a chance.

Undoubtedly the critics are right. When we review the vast army of variegated males who have achieved matrimony, it seems useless to deny that the trick can be turned by any man who is physically capable of standing up in front of a preacher or whose mental equipment enables him to decide that he should go into the house when it rains.

If Brigham Young, wearing throat whiskers, could assemble between thirty-five and forty at one time, how pitiful becomes the alibi of the modern maverick that he never has managed to arrive at any sort of arrangement with a solitary one!

We know that women will accept men who wear arctic overshoes. Statistics prove that ninety-eight per cent. of all those you see on station platforms, wearing "elastics" on their shirt-sleeves, have wives at home.

The whole defense of bachelorhood falls to the ground when confronted by the evidence

which any one may accumulate while walking through a residence district. He will see dozens of porch-broken husbands who never would have progressed to the married state if all the necessary processes had not been elementary to begin with, and further simplified by custom.

Even after he is convinced, he will stubbornly contend as follows: "Possibly I am a coward, but I refuse to admit that all these other birds are heroes."

At least, he will be ready to confess that any one can get married at any time, provided the party of the second part is no more fastidious and choosey than he is.

These facts being generally accepted, the presumption of guilt attaches to every single man beyond the age of thirty. And if, as the years ripen, he garners many dollars, and keeps them in a hiding place which is woman-proof, he slowly slumps in public esteem until he becomes classified with those granite-faced criminals who loot orphan asylums or steal candlesticks from an altar.

Finally he arrives at a state of ostracized isolation. He has every inducement to be utterly miserable, and probably would be so, except for frequent conversations with married men.

At this point we get very near to the weakest point in the general indictment against bachelors: Is it generally known that bachelors privately receive encouragement and approbation from married men?

Not from all married men, it is true. Not, for instance, from the husband of any woman who happens to read these lines. But they *do* receive assurances from married men, of the more undeserving varieties, that matrimony is not always a long promenade through a rose bower drenched with sunshine. The word "lucky" is frequently applied to single men by the associate poker players who are happily married.

The difficulty in rescuing the hardened cases of bachelorhood is that the unregenerate are all the time receiving private signals from those supposed to be saved, to lay off and beat it, and escape while the escaping is good. Many of them would have fallen long ago except for these warnings.

There are times when the most confirmed, cynical, and self-centred celibate, influenced by untoward circumstances and unfavourable atmospheric conditions, believes that he could be rapturously content as a married man, and that he

is cheating some good woman out of her destiny. Conversely, the Darby who wants the world to know that his Joan is a jewel and his children are intellectual prodigies and perfect physical specimens—even this paragon, who would shudder at mention of a divorce court, tells his most masonic friends that it must be great to have your freedom and to do as you darn please.

No matter which fork of the road you take, you will wonder, later on, if the scenery on the other route isn't more attractive.

The bachelor, being merely a representative unit of weak mankind, isn't essentially different from the Benedict. Probably at some time or other he wanted to get married and couldn't. Whereas, the married one didn't want to get married and was mesmerized into it by a combination of full moon, guitar music, and roly-boly eyes.

A poor wretch who had lived under the stigma of bachelorhood for years once confided to several of us that he was all ready to be married at Columbus, Ohio, in 1892, and then learned that it would cost at least eight dollars to put the thing over.

Bachelors are willing to be segregated or even

separately taxed, but they don't wish to be branded with too hot an iron. They come to regard themselves as potential married men who never received notice of their inheritances. Married men are merely bachelors who weakened under the strain. Every time a bachelor sees a man with an alpaca coat pushing a perambulator, he says, "There, but for the grace of God, goes me!"

Whatever excuses the bachelor may secrete in his own mind, the following definite counts have been drawn against him:

1st. It is the duty of every good man to become the founder of a home, because the home (and not the stag boarding-house) is the cornerstone of an orderly civilization.

2d. It is the duty of every high-minded citizen to approve publicly the sacrament of marriage, because legalized matrimony is the harbour of safety. When the bachelor ignores the sacrament, his example becomes an endorsement of the advantages offered to travellers by that famous old highway known as "The Primrose Path."

3d. It is the duty of every student of history and economics to help perpetuate the species and protect the birth rate.

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These are the damning accusations. Any representative woman's club, anywhere, would bring in a verdict of "guilty" against a notorious bachelor, in two minutes, without listening to witnesses.

The moment a man marries, the indictment is quashed. For the time being, he is snow white. A little later, after the divorce proceedings, he may become speckled, but he never sinks quite back to the degraded estate of bachelorhood.

He tried to be a good citizen.

Having an altruistic and almost Chautauquan regard for home and the marriage sacrament, and feeling that *someone* had to step forward and save the birth rate, he put aside all considerations of personal convenience and, like a sun-kissed hero, stepped to the edge and jumped over the precipice.

Yes, he did! You know he did!

Here is what happened:

The dear old goof found himself in immediate juxtaposition to The Most Wonderful Woman in All the World. When she smiled at him, his blood pressure went up twenty points. When she appeared to forget that he was among those present, he wanted to rush into the street and lie down in front of a taxicab. He hovered

near her, every night, until ordered out. Then he reeled back to his den, stepping from one cloud to another. He sat up in the still hours of the morning to write notes which elected him even if, later on, he had wanted to welch. He arrived at his office without remembering what had happened since he left home. He tried to dictate letters, and nothing came from him except gurgles. He wondered what was happening to Her. In the telephone booth—only about eight cubic feet of air—partial asphyxiation after twenty minutes. But who wouldn't be willing to die, with the sound of that Voice strumming in the ears, like an Æolian harp hanging in the gateway of Paradise?

Now, when Waldo finally got married, does any one really insist that he did it because he was prompted by a sense of his duty to provide food and lodging for a member of the opposite sex?

Did he calmly decide to give his endorsement to the sacrament of marriage and to help protect the birth rate?

Did he?

Lay the bride's curse on the bachelor, if you will, and let his name become a byword and

hissing at every bridge party, but don't hang any medals on Waldo until you have all the facts in his case—which will prove to be a carbon copy of a million other cases.

Waldo got married because he needed sleep. It was a toss-up between Sweeties and a sanitarium, and he selected the easier way.

He could not picture an existence which did not include the radio-magnetic presence of Honey. He was governed by sex impulse and not by what he had read in books on sociology.

Not until weeks later, emerging from the honeymoon trance, did he discover that he had honorably discharged his obligations to Society and had become a member of the Matrimonial Legion of Honour.

What happened to Waldo might have happened to any petrified hermit now hiding at a club. And if Waldo, on a certain occasion, had happened to meet merely Another Flapper, instead of The Most Wonderful Woman in the World, he might now be camped at a hotel instead of being assistant manager of a nursery.

We are all wisps, and the winds of chance blow in many directions.

Just because a man gets married is no sign that he has a high and holy and abiding regard

for womanhood. Visit any court room and hear the sufferer go into details: He threw a meat platter at her—squeezed her arm until it was black and blue—tore the feathers off her new hat—kicked the Pomeranian into the fireplace—made her sleep on the lounge, etc., etc., etc.

It isn't usually a lack of intense regard and reverence for womanhood that keeps the bachelor single. Often enough, it is a lack of regard for himself as a fit companion for the goddess up there above him on the pedestal.

One of the most highly despised bachelors I ever knew once said that if he ever asked a woman to marry him and she said, "Yes," he'd begin to have his suspicions of her. And yet he was supposed to be a woman-hater!

The rooming-houses are packed with mature single men, each of whom looks up to Class A women with such worshipful adoration that he never has felt worthy of possessing one of the angelic creatures.

Charley Fresh—who regards himself as the irresistible captivator—googles his way among the girls for six nights a week and is known as a "lady's man." The marooned and isolated males who watch his performance refuse to enter into any contest which features Charley Fresh as a

formidable rival. If he is what the women want, they cannot qualify. They accept the inevitable, and decide that by habit and circumstances they are debarred from the matrimonial raffle, and they might as well make the best of it. They know that they lack the peacock qualities of the heartbreaker, as they have studied him in Robert W. Chambers and the movies. They never could live up to the specifications. Not one of them wants to compromise by grabbing a third-rater. They want a topnotcher, or nothing; and they haven't the financial rating, the parlour training, the glib vocabulary, the baby-blue eyes, the curly hair and the athletic shoulders to make them real mates for the distant Dianas of their day dreams.

Some are restrained by caution, some by diffidence, and some are put out of the running by Fate.

Is it not true that the bachelor uncle is always a hot favourite with the children? And doesn't he often tell Minnie, his brother's wife, that he would give a thousand shares of Steel Common if he could have one of his own? Of course, if he had one he wouldn't know what to do with it; but it just shows that the parental

instinct can often be aroused by a good home-cooked dinner.

This defense of bachelors is getting to be pretty wobbly; but it still has a few guns in reserve. For instance, if the birth rate languishes, shall no part of the blame be put on the modernized young woman who is ring-shy until he can show her a five-thousand-dollar automobile?

How about the great armies of salaried women who have come into financial independence in the office buildings and don't wish to exchange it for the secluded dependency of the flat buildings?

There are oodles of reasons why the bachelors have not married. Let there be general rejoicing that many of them have remained single. Special congratulations to the might-have-been children! They will never know what they have escaped.

Who knows but your old friend Bill was made a bachelor by Divine decree, so that some poor, frail woman wouldn't have to sit up until two or three o'clock every morning?

And now for some pointed advice and inside information: If you believe that grown-up males who refuse to marry are, in the aggregate,

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a menace to society, don't base your propaganda on the assumption that bachelors live in a care-free Paradise, which they are loath to exchange for the harrowing responsibilities of the family circle. Try to convince the bridegroom that he is winning a prize instead of surrendering a birth-right.

If you want to keep a line waiting at the marriage license window, preach to the wandering sheep that they should come in from the bleak hills, and gambol in the clover pastures of conubial felicity.

Arrange with the editors to suppress all detailed reports of divorce trials; also to blue-pencil the shoddy jokes which deal with mothers-in-law and rolling pins.

Fix it with theatrical producers so that the stage bachelor will not be a picturesque hero, just a trifle gray about the temples, who carries a packet of dried rose leaves next to his heart, while the husband is a pale crumpet who is always trembling and saying, "Yes, my dear."

Try to induce department stores to remove those terrifying price tags from things worn by women. Many a wavering bachelor has looked in a show window and found, by an easy mental

calculation, that his full salary for one month would supply My Lady with sufficient wardrobe to take her past the morning tub, but not enough to carry her into the street.

The two lone items of hats and shoes would spell bankruptcy to a fellow of ordinary means, and he knows that there must be countless other intermediate items connecting up the \$60 hats with the \$22 shoes.

At least, give him credit for always picturing *his* phantom wife as being extremely well dressed. Married men may be tight with the checkbook and moan over the bills; but the intangible, make-believe wife of the secluded bachelor always wears the most *chic* and alluring confections shown by the shops.

He has no intention of giving up the two-room snugger which has been his home for eight years, but if he *should* become adventurous at any time and go sailing the uncharted seas, he knows that his travelling companion will be a queen in royal garb. She will sit in the rear of the boat, bedecked with pearls and wearing a coronet. He never meets her, but his intentions are generous, up to the last.

"I wouldn't get hooked up unless I could give my wife the best of everything." How often

have we heard those words, spoken by some brave outlaw. The inference being that he has passed up a sacred privilege for fear that he could not supply Her with all of the costly luxuries she deserved.

Whereas, his associates know that he has become encased with a hard crust of habits and could never adapt himself to the give-and-take conditions of married life.

They can't be taught new tricks after they begin to moult.

But they continue to explain, and even in the deepest recesses of the most funereal reading-room of the most masculine club, you cannot find one so fussy and crabbed but that he will insist that he is "fond of children."

The lexicon of the unyoked is full of Old Stuff. The most hopeless misogynist (see dictionary) can always hang the blame on someone else and give himself a clean bill.

The point now being made is that the information agencies, by which the credulous public is influenced, seem to aid and abet the bachelors. Newspapers, magazines, picture plays, novels, current anecdotes—all have fallen into the easy habit of making it appear that the bachelor is a devil of a fellow; that the spirit of youth abides

with him after it has deserted the stoop-shouldered slaves commonly depicted as mowing lawns or feeding furnaces.

The bachelor, as an individual, may sell very low in his immediate precinct; but the bachelor, as a type, has become fictionized into a fascinating combination of Romeo and Mephistopheles.

You never saw a bachelor apartment on the stage that was not luxurious and inviting. Always there is a man servant: It is midnight in Gerald Heathcote's princely lodgings. Gerald returns from the club. Evening clothes? Absolutely!

He sends Wilkins away and lights a cigarette. There is a brief silence, with Gerald sitting so that the fireplace has a chance to spotlight him. It is a bachelor's apartment and midnight. Which means that the dirty work is about to begin.

If, at any time, you are sitting so far back in a theatre that you cannot get the words, and you see a distinguished figure of a man come on R. U. E., self-possessed, debonair, patronizing—no need to look at the bill. He is a bachelor, and the most beautiful lady in the cast is all snarled up in an "affair" with him. If she ever crosses the threshold of his voluptuous "lodgings," un-

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accompanied by a private detective or a chaperon, her reputation won't be worth a rusty nickel.

That's the kind of a reputation to have! Never too old to be wicked! Lock up the débutantes—here come the bachelors!

Now, if you persistently represent single blessedness as seated in a huge leather chair, with Wilkins bringing whisky and soda, and a married woman of incredible attractiveness waiting to call him up on the 'phone, you need not be surprised if, in time, the whole social organization is permeated with a grotesque misconception of the true status of the bachelor.

For years I have been compelled to observe large flocks of him at close range. Only about one half of one per cent. have lodgings which could be used effectively for a Belasco setting. Only a very few, mostly east of Buffalo, employ English manservants to "do" for them. Those who like to refer to "my man" are compelled to get new ones every few weeks. Probably the loneliest job in the world, next to taking care of a lighthouse, is to valet an unmarried man who has gone in for dancing.

Bachelors do not habitually wear evening clothes. To get one of them into the extreme

regalia may involve the use of chloroform. Nearly every bachelor knows a few married women; but these women are not pursuing him—that is, not all of the time. Once in a while they pursue him in order to find out what has become of their husbands.

If one of these charming matrons visited a bachelor apartment, it would be to throw a bomb. She has him down on her list as poison ivy.

The bachelor is a polite outcast, and he knows it. The married folks tell stories about him, and it is all for the best that he never hears them. For instance: "I helped him off with his overcoat when he came in. We wondered why he didn't follow us into the living-room. I went back and found him standing in the hallway. Yes, indeed, waiting for his check! When the children came in to meet him, he trembled like a leaf—thought they were going to kiss him. When he sat down for dinner he inspected the knife and then wiped the plate with his napkin. After dinner the maid found a quarter on the tablecloth."

The idealized bachelor of fiction may be a super-gallant, but the real article is a scared fish the moment he swims out of his own puddle.

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Possibly you expected from me a wordy attempt to prove that a man may acquire happiness by avoiding matrimony. Well, you cannot secure contentment by a mere avoidance of anything. The only worth-while days are those on which you sell a part of yourself to the brotherhood of man and go to the mattress at night knowing that you have rendered service to some of the fellow travellers. The more you camp by yourself the more you shrivel. The curse and the risk of bachelorhood is the tendency to build all plans around the mere comforts and indulgences of the first person singular.

Sometimes a bachelor gets to taking such good care of himself that he forgets that some day or other he will need six friends to act as pallbearers.

Next to *solitaire*, probably the most interesting single-handed pastime is trying to visualize one's own funeral. The bachelor often wonders if it will be an impressive function.

No use talking, when a transient undertakes the journey alone, he is compelled to be in doubt as to terminal facilities. His friendships are insecure and all the arrangements unstable. He has a lot of liberty, but he doesn't know what to do with it.

No man can cheat the game by merely hiding in a hotel and having his meals served in his room.

He can run in the opposite direction from matrimony until he is all out of breath, but he will never travel far enough to get away from himself. When he flees from the responsibilities of family life he is incidentally leaving behind him many of the experiences which belong to a normal career. He cannot get away from the double-entry system of accounts revealed in Doctor Emerson's essay on Compensation. The books must balance.

No man can take twelve months' vacation each year. A vacation is no fun except when it comes as a release from the regular routine. Each July the married man is supposed to sing:

"My wife's gone to the country. Hurrah! Hurrah!"

Thereby he gets an edge on the bachelor. He has a chance to throw his hat in the air at least once a year. When does the bachelor pull his "Hurrahs"? Think it over.

If the locked-up hubbies believe that the boys still at large are raising Cain seven nights a week and fifty-two weeks in the year, let them cease to be envious. It can't be done. The most fa-

tiguig activity in the world is that of royster-ing. It is terrible to be fed up on royster-ing. Almost any group of case-hardened bachelors would rather row a boat than sit around a table and sing.

Bachelors do not regard their respective caves and caverns as modified cabarets. Their so-called home life is merely a recognition of the physical fact that no one can entirely dispense with slumber.

The "jolly bachelor" in his own retreat is often just as jolly as a festoon of crape. He is not discontented. He is calmly reconciled. But not celebrating.

He has been saved from the shipwreck by miraculous intervention, but he finds himself on a lonely island and not a sail in sight.

The bachelor doesn't have to watch the clock, and no one is waiting to ask him where he has been; but how about that rapidly approaching day when he will not find—in all the world—ham and eggs that are cooked just right or coffee fit to drink?

As the autumn days grow shorter, and each milestone begins to look more like a tombstone, the bachelor becomes less and less declamatory regarding the joys of single blessedness.

He doesn't weaken, mind you. He can explain why it would have been manifestly impossible for him, at any time, to undertake such a crazy experiment. His training, his temperament, the conditions enforced by his employment, the uncertainty of his financial outlook—these and thirty other good reasons made it utterly impossible for him even to think of playing such a ghastly joke on a nice woman.

He is there with a defense; but when you ask him to add up the net blessings and benefits which accrue to the bachelor, his discourse becomes diffuse and unconvincing. If he is past forty, he doesn't brag at all. If he is past fifty, he begins to talk about the weather.

And now, having received all of this secret information from the camp of the enemy, you know as much as we do regarding the joys of single blessedness.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

THE undergraduate—a confusing combination of slick-haired Apollo and spoon-fed infant.

We glance at his pin-feathers and grin. Then we look him in the eye and quail.

The old grad may be rated as a success in his home town, but when he gets back among the cloisters he discovers that he has been travelling down-hill ever since he took the sheepskin.

The unripe generation has it on us in everything except experience, and the only sure fruit of experience is caution, and caution is always the symbol of weakness.

Bobby is an awkward high-school cub, and then, in a matter of weeks, the transfiguration, and the demi-god is sitting up there on the edge of a cloud, giving orders to his relatives on the dull earth below.

We are acquainted with his weaknesses and

respect them because they are sanctified by tradition.

The sophomore has vast reservoirs filled with special information which would mean nothing to a person more than twenty-four years of age. Alternating with these crowded compartments are roomy, open spaces which are approximately vacuums.

It is a marvel that he who dawdles should know so much. Also it is a never-ending miracle that one who spends so many hours in classroom could have at his command such abysmal reaches of ignorance.

Those who profess contempt for the rah-rah rowdies and the sisterhood of fudge-makers know mighty well that we cannot have a contempt for those of whom we are deathly afraid.

We may envy the ukelele-player seated beneath the pennant and we would prefer the electric chair to the cold appraisements of a sorority house party, but those who sniff at the coming rulers of the universe are merely showing off a cheap bravado.

Why not recognize the fact that we play second to the kids? The Governor and the Mater never sell so low in the pools as when the children are home from school.

Which reminds us that college students should be given credit for making the most important discovery of the twentieth century, *viz.*, that the parent is a joke.

THE TORTURES OF TOURING

SOME people think that the first purpose of motoring is not to travel but to arrive. The driver who carries his helpless victims from Buffalo to Albany in one day goes about accepting congratulations, whereas he should be hauled into court.

Nothing emitted herewith must be regarded as a narrow-minded, pedestrian protest against motoring in general. The joys of life may be made to increase with the multiplication of cylinders. The privilege of cutting across country and the diversion of travel from stiff and straight rail lines to shady by-ways—these are real boons.

Attack is being made only on those motorists who are obsessed with the belief that because a car *can* hit up fifty-five an hour, it is hanging back when it does a measly thirty-five, and who further count up the result of their tours by the miles instead of by the smiles.

The main idea with the road-whippets seems

to be the necessity of registering at some far distant point within a highly sporting time limit.

Probably the man at the wheel gets most of the zest to be derived from the performance. He feels that exultation which accompanies the controlling and directing of mighty energies. By hanging over the gear he steadies himself physically, and he finds mental employment in repeatedly solving the problem of how to avoid sudden death.

If you like that kind of motoring, by all means claim the privilege of driving. Then, when the car turns turtle, you will have something to hang on to besides a Blue Book.

If you are a back-seat passenger, with a cargo rating the same as that of a suitcase, a thermos bottle, or a golf bag, you will find yourself rock-a-byed through whirling landscapes, and realize all the time that you are merely a limp Something, riding on the winds of Chance.

The driver seems grimly confident that he can always zip within eight inches of the car which comes tearing head on—insanely seeking a collision. How superb of him not to give more roadway than the other fellow gives! And will it be a first-page story, with photographs and the names in black caps? Or will it be bunched

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with the other casualties of a busy day on the bloody highways?

It seems that the driver himself is never frightened. He is too busy boring a hole in the atmosphere to consider the other people in the car. Their nerves may be kinked into hard knots, and their eyes may be protruding, and their hearts may be suspending action for thirty seconds at a stretch, but what wots it? The delirious chauffeur is having the time of his young life.

Usually, one of the sufferers is the owner of the car. He is simply excess baggage. His only privilege is to produce more money at regular intervals.

Besides, he knows that a classy driver and a high-powered car are both deeply insulted at the very mention of a speed limit. If held down to twenty-five miles an hour, they feel that they have been demoted and had their stripes cut off. They are publicly shamed when they take the dust of cars costing one thousand dollars each, or even less. What is the use of going on the road unless all of the white-faced spectators along the route can be properly impressed?

These must be the facts, because we know that only a few persons, possessed of abnormal

cravings, *like* to travel at top speed. Yet the rarest sight in the world is a long-waisted, expensive car moving through a rural district at a sane and safe and sensible pace. It is always trying to arrive at some point, one hundred miles ahead, before six o'clock in the evening.

Among the back-seat victims may be found at least one Invited Guest. When he is asked if he objects to stepping along on high, he supinely answers, "No."

To be auto-shy and favour a moderate gait is evidence of moral inferiority, the same as being seasick or wearing woollen underwear.

Probably persons really alive never come so near to being dead as when they fall out of a motor car at the end of a jolly 200-mile spin.

"Spin" is the word. They know how it feels to be a gyroscope. The blood of each is congealed—partly because he has been folded away in a cramped posture, and partly because he has been visualizing himself as the central attraction of a large funeral. The intellect and the emotions are in a totally benumbed state. Memory is a mere blur of shimmying houses and reeling telephone poles.

The one compensation comes two weeks later when the sufferer has recovered sufficiently to an-

nounce to the envious stay-at-homes that, after taking a late luncheon at Upper Swattomy, he arrived at Manchester in time for dinner.

When a person travels at the speed rate ordained by all high-salaried drivers, he sees nothing much except the roadway. So far as relaxation and instruction and gentle diversion are concerned, he might as well be put into a hollow projectile and fired out of a big Bertha from one city to another.

If he could take a large sleeping powder and lie down in the bottom of the car, after leaving a call, he would be in better condition at the end of the run, because he would not be compelled to put in several hours unspiralling his nerves.

It is well known that the start of a long run is always delayed. Every car that you see burning up the pike is in danger of being late at the next important destination, thereby losing caste.

We spill the golden hours with prodigal foolishness, until we find ourselves in an automobile, and then every minute becomes as precious as a pearl.

There are exclamations of dismay when a sharp detonation tells of tire trouble. Instead of finding it a privilege to get out and stretch the legs and gaze at scenery which consents to

stand still, the birds of passage all begin moaning and looking at watches. It is now 4:13 and they expected to be in Springfield at 5:30; but it begins to look as if they might not arrive there until 5:45! Too bad!

Americans are accused of offering too many sacrifices to the mud idol of Aimless Hurry. They never hustle to such small purpose as when they make this mud idol their motor god.

Every day we see them go grinding and flashing past our quiet place in the country. Their faces are tense. They stare straight ahead through the disfiguring goggles. They are half-crouched, to fight more successfully the on-rushing current of air.

They are temporarily ossified—studies in suspended animation. They may be *willing* to turn around and look, but the cervical vertebræ have become locked together and will not rotate. They can see nothing except the white roadway, the speedometer, and the undertaker.

The speed worshippers and schedule slaves have taken the joy out of what should be a restful antidote for brain fag. Motoring would seem to be a proper prescription for nervousness. As a matter of fact the poor neurasthenic who is—or is the victim of—a speed maniac might

as well go over to the electric light plant and ride on the flywheel.

Now is the time for an organization of passengers who wish to protect themselves against dare-devil drivers. It should be oath-bound and effective, the same as the Ku Klux Klan. Declaration must be made that the purpose of motor touring is to bring enjoyment to all occupants of the car, even if the driver does earn the contempt of Ralph de Palma and Barney Oldfield.

The maximum rate of speed should be thirty-five miles an hour. The moment the speedometer registers thirty-six, an automatic contrivance should cause a placard to appear on the wind shield immediately in front of the driver. The placard would read as follows: "You are fired."

Or, better yet, have each passenger secrete on his person, before the start, a short leather billy stuffed with sand or bird-shot. This so-called "persuader" is the kind that has been used professionally in all of our large cities since the world was made safe for democracy. Just as the indicator passes the thirty-five-mile mark, each passenger will take a firm grip on the small but dependable weapon and do his duty.

It needs to be understood, once and for all,

that even those on the back seats retain their constitutional rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The driver must watch the roadway; but why should all the others be compelled to help him? When the speed becomes so whistling that the pleasure jaunt resolves itself into a gamble with death, the passengers find themselves gazing straight ahead with a sort of fascinated horror. Mile after mile they discern nothing but a thin white streak, the farther end of which is linked to the horizon.

They should not be compelled to close their eyes and curl their toes in order to avoid going into the ditch.

They should be able to converse among themselves without having their teeth bent inward.

Just as there is no fun in motoring when every new mile becomes another hazardous adventure, so there is no profit in motor travel if too many miles are negotiated each day.

Even when the members of the party are permitted to look at the growing fields and the grazing herds and the comatose villagers on the front porches, they find themselves, after a few hours, definitely filled up with sight-seeing. They are stuffed with impressions.

The average mortal can eat about so much food in twenty-four hours without discomfort. He can listen to so much music and look at so many pictures and read so many pages of a book. By the same token, he can speed only a limited number of miles across country and retain a normal human interest in his surroundings. Let him overtax his capacity, and mental weariness supplements his physical torpor, and he is suffering from what may be designated as *motoritis*.

Therefore let all who have suffered unite in a demand for:

1st: A speed limit of 35 miles an hour.

2d: A distance limit of 100 miles a day.

Any one not satisfied with the above arrangement may board an express train and lie in a berth.

Automobiles must stop their scooting and learn to tarry.

The occupants of a car should not be compelled to huddle under the lap robes, like hibernating bears, for hours at a time.

All of our motorists, everywhere, are rushing past the things worth seeing, instead of stopping to enjoy them. There is no township, however remote, but has within its boundaries some

exhibit which will instruct or entertain the caller.

In order to crowd the one hundred daily miles with rare entertainment, the thing to do is to stop and visit in every town. You can get acquainted in two minutes.

Don't annoy the postmaster and don't go near the bank. The banker will think that you want a check cashed. Drive right into the heart of Main Street and pull up in front of a red-white-and-blue pole. The barber is the lad for you. He is always sociable, and he can immediately put you in possession of the local traditions and scandals. If there is anything in the whole countryside worth visiting he can give you the needed information, surrounded by details.

Tell him that as you drove in through the residence district, you were more than favourably impressed and that you have stopped off for a visit—and what is there to see? He will immediately submit a list of attractions, which may include the Carnegie Library, a blind pig, and a milch cow that took first prize at the state fair.

Or, better yet, he will ask Elmer to finish the man he is shaving, and he will put on his coat and take you out to meet the town celebrity.

It may be the old soldier who gave General Hooker a lot of good advice at Lookout Mountain, or the woman who has been working twenty-two years on a patch quilt which will eventually have seventy-five thousand pieces of silk in it. Or he may want to show you the birthplace of the man who played the slide trombone with Sousa's Band for seven years.

Every incorporated town has some hold upon fame. Here are some sights dug up in smaller Indiana settlements which are entirely overlooked by the tourists:

A town idiot who can foretell the weather and has not made a mistake in five years.

A red-headed negro who drives a pink mule—art eclipsed by nature.

An endless chain whittled out of one piece of wood.

A house which was one of the main stations on the "Underground Railway" for fugitive slaves, before the war.

The quarter-mile track on which Dan Patch received his first try-out as a pacer. First valued at \$500 and later, after establishing a world's record, sold for \$100,000.

The cream separator first used for making quick applejack out of hard cider.

And so on, and so on. Our neglected nation has stored up a wealth of recent legends and is

rich in "character types." The way to "See America First" is to resist the silly habit of rushing furiously from one city to another. Seek out the communities in which the residents are severally important as individuals and not mere names in a directory.

Get the habit of stopping and visiting at the slightest provocation. Bestow a little friendly attention on the native population, and it will warm up and begin to radiate hospitality. The city man who is not "stuck up" always makes a sensational hit in the small town. Of course, if you are a metropolitan yap with a movie education and a vaudeville sense of humour and want the "rubes" to perform for your entertainment, you had better keep right on travelling. And ask the local garage man what his charges are before you hire him. When the rural worm turns he gives a correct imitation of a boa constrictor.

In order to insure more leisurely habits of travel and arouse a proper interest in the varied charms of all outlying regions, we need in this country an entirely new sort of guide book for motorists.

The kind of book now in use devotes too much attention to the roadway, instead of giving spicy

information about what may be seen from the roadway.

It is a mere chart, whereas it might be made a document bubbling with human interest.

Even when it turns aside to say something about a town on the route, it gives inconsequential facts, such as the population and the altitude above sea level. Even the people who live there do not know how much they are elevated above sea level. And who cares about the population? The question isn't how many people live in the town, but what are they *up* to?

Let us have road guides which will keep the tourists sitting up and interested. Something like the following:

ROUTE 23A—HICKSVILLE TO JUNIPER—26.8M

0.0 Hicksville. Started by Truman Hicks about 1800. The town is famous on account of the Liberty Hotel (large faded structure on Main Street), it being claimed that more travelling men have committed suicide within its walls than in any two other hotels in the state. The elderly persons seen along the business thoroughfares are retired farmers. They are talking about the taxes. The small vacant room next to the post office was used as a manicure parlour for three weeks during 1917, but public sentiment prevailed. In order to get out of town as soon as possible proceed east on Main Street. Note on the left the drug store owned by Henry F. Pilsbry. After local option went into effect, and before the Eighteenth Amendment was passed, Mr. Pilsbry bought two large farms. Look out for stretch of bad pavement. The contractor who did the work was related to the mayor. Cross R. R.

- 2.6 Bear toward left with County Poor-Farm on right. The old gentlemen with carpet slippers, seated under the trees, thought they could outguess the Board of Trade.
- 3.3 On a distant hill to right note the spacious farm dwelling owned by Waldo Jefferson, who holds a world's record for being converted, having joined church every winter since 1879.
- 4.2 Jog left, passing on left country schoolhouse attended in 1874 by Rufus Jenkins, for many years head bartender at the Burnet House, Cincinnati, O.
- 5.1 Sparrow's Grove. In the general store of Eli Nesbit may be found stick candy dating back to U. S. Grant's first Administration. Worth a short visit, as it claims the distinction of being the only village in America which does not offer souvenir post cards for sale. Straight on past a fawn-coloured bungalow with purple trim to
- 5.9 Large stock farm owned by Lee J. Truckby, who never took a drink of liquor and has been married four times. He believes in infant damnation and is opposed to hired girls. May be found back of the barn, keeping tab on the help. Visitors just as welcome as the foot and mouth disease.
- 7.2 Nestling in a grove of jack oaks may be found Zion M. E. Church. Built in the Centennial year. Cupola added in 1888 after a design by the County Superintendent of Schools. The cantata of "Esther" was given at this church during the darkest period of the World War, netting \$41 for the Red Cross.
- 8.4 On the left the Saxby home. There are four Saxby boys, all of whom can move their ears.
- 9.8 Note at right in pasture a venerable elm tree. It is said that under this tree the Potawatami chiefs, while intoxicated, signed a treaty with Colonel Hoskins, receiving \$2 worth of merchandise for all territory lying west of Sandusky.
- 11.7 Nubbin Hill (Pop. 63). Locally famous as the home of Baz Turnbull, who travelled with a circus for two years. Mr. Turnbull is said to be the only man in the township who still knows where to get it. He is employed at the cream depot and may be easily identified as the one wearing a derby.

- 13.2 Log cabin back in woods at left, built in 1838 by Jephtha Halliday, father of twelve children. The second oldest son (Cale) moved to Chicago, where he was well known to thousands of people, having officiated for years as train caller at the Illinois Central Station.
- 16.7 Chautauqua Grove in suburbs of Peatsburg. The tabernacle may be seen in distance. It was in this grove that a member of the Peabody Family of Swiss Bell Ringers became engaged to Professor Herman Belcher, mind-reader and mesmerist. They were married later at Alton, Ill., separating at Crawfordsville, Ind.
- 16.9 Peatsburg (Pop. 1,500, many residents having been overlooked by the census enumerators; who, in 1920, reported a total of 967). Has more pool players in proportion to size than any other place in the world. Jasper Wilkins, champion checker player of the seventh Congressional District, lives in small frame cottage back of the Harney & Co. Hardware store. Mr. Wilkins is a member of the Volunteer Fire Department. His wife takes in washing. George Spelvin, who may be found in front of post office (cataract over left eye), has been working for 15 years on an invention intended to do away with steel rails in the operation of railway lines. He will exhibit blue-prints to those who can be trusted.
- 17.3 New iron bridge spans the Catouchie River. Note names of County Commissioners on tablet. All were candidates for reelection and were defeated.
- 19.4 Near hitch-rack immediately in front of the Parson farmhouse (bed of nasturtiums in front yard), two citizens of Putnam County engaged in a desperate fist fight in October, 1920, the subject of the controversy being the League of Nations. Said to be the only time when the whole thing was really settled.
- 20.4 Favourite picnic grounds for Sunday-schools and benevolent orders. Over 1,000 empty pop-bottles picked up during last fiscal year.
- 22.0 Bennington (Pop. 8). Mr. Klingfeldt, age 93 (brick house with portico), can remember when tomatoes were not supposed to be good to eat.
- 23.2 Artesian well at right. Water highly impregnated and therefore supposed to have medicinal value. Visited by Irvin Cobb during recent lecture tour.

- 24.8 Fair grounds at right. On half-mile track Lulu Livingstone in 1908 paced one mile in 2.48 without toe-weights. In Floral Hall two years ago was exhibited a rutabaga which bore a striking resemblance to Eben Mosely, president of the Juniper State Bank. It was seen by thousands.
- 26.8 Juniper (Pop. 3,402). County seat, and known far and wide as "The Pride of Putnam." Has had a cafeteria since 1915 and gets all the Douglas Fairbanks releases within a year after they are seen in large cities. Ellis Trimble, office above the Help-Yourself Grocery, was one of the greatest criminal lawyers in the northern part of the state up to the time they took his liquor away from him. Mae Effingham, a native of the town, is now a member of the Winter Garden chorus. Photographs of Miss Effingham, in costume, may be found in the window of the Applegate Piano and Music Store. Clyde Applegate (the one with the gold in his teeth) can relate many interesting anecdotes dealing with her girlhood back in the old home town.

That is merely a suggestion; it is simply a stray leaf taken from the guide book of the future. But surely, even from this sample, you can begin to sense the possibilities.

Europe has no monopoly on hallowed traditions, and the Wabash has legends the same as the Rhine, if we will just dig them up.

Travel slowly. Stop often. Get under the cover of every neighbourhood. Snuggle up until you can feel the very heart-beats of your beloved countrymen. The more you find out about them, the less inclined you will be to pay \$2.50 to get into a theatre.

DIGNITY

WHEN a man cannot be anything else, he can be dignified. Dignity is the sure-fire asset of the twenty-two calibers.

The physiognomy must be stern and rock-bound. It is better to wear dark clothes. The *vox humana* should be keyed low.

All horse-doctors, phrenologists, and justices of the peace are dignified. Also the head floor-walker. Also the village embalmer.

In every community there are citizens who are useful only as background to a public speaker. The visiting celebrity and the pitcher of water are at stage-centre, and the local examples of Dignity are in minstrel formation behind—a massive border of self-conscious rectitude and wisdom. They have brain-lobes of exactly the same chemical composition as kohlrabi. But they look like the Council of the League of Nations.

All during the vocalizing they gaze at the

speaker with a heavy and frowning simulation of interest. Each smile bestowed upon a pleasantry is painful compromise.

They have been hand-picked to provide a draping of gloom to the proceedings, and they never wander from the assignment.

Sheathed in the armour-plate of Dignity, many a counterfeit travels undetected from the grammar-school to the grave. Probably no one, except his wife, is ever on to him.

Nine times out of ten, a godlike demeanour may be regarded as the façade of a Greek temple opening abruptly into a one-room bungalow.

Dignity was invented to mask the absence of works.

Some men are silent while brooding over the solemnities of life and others are silent because they haven't anything to pass out through the window.

Profound calm and an air of abstraction may prove that the subject is meditating on the Lodge theory of life beyond the grave or they may indicate that a short circuit has been established between the cerebellum and the medulla oblongata and all the cylinders are missing.

Only those who have moral courage can stand out in the presence of Dignity and be frivolous and deliberately normal. The man who fights off the temptation to be dignified must expect an inferior rating. Only the connoisseurs will identify him as a hero.

Nevertheless, avoid the blight of Dignity. Don't use any of it. The whole world-supply is needed in Great Britain.

Dignity received a body-blow when the frock coat went out.

The dancing-craze, and golf, and Roosevelt, and the Eighteenth Amendment, and other influences have weakened the cult. Bourbon whisky supplied many an old-time lawyer with the Dignity which is supposed to impress juries.

Doctors are no longer identified by their whiskers, and college professors are becoming approximately human. Is it not true that the young man in the box-office at the theatre is less like King Solomon than he was a few years ago? Piano-tuners are more affable. There is hope.

LOOKING BACK FROM FIFTY

A MAN is old on the day when he begins doddering of the past instead of planning for the future. With reluctance I sit me down to check up the changes that advertise themselves to a mere child of fifty.

I discover this year that a young man is one under fifty. An old man is one over fifty.

There is no other rule. We—whether thirty-two or forty-seven or fifty-three—continue to be just ourselves, neither old nor young.

Those who antedated have given me their word on it that it is fifty years since I was born. An even fifty years. There is no getting away from the cruel mathematics.

James Whitcomb Riley took off five years and fooled everybody until the day after he died, but he did not have many relatives.

Oh, very well! We have come to a crossing and we must hop it. I am fifty years old, and it almost chokes me to say it, because it was only night before last that someone told me I

was a rising young author who would be heard from in time.

I could see myself at fifty. Bearded, of course. Probably in Congress. Certainly wearing the dark regalia of a learned profession.

Instead of which, here I am in plaid knickers, trying to control my mashie.

As for my failure to represent the Tenth District, I have seen Congress and I am reconciled.

For a grand total of forty-five years I have been revising my judgments and watching the parade.

What a privilege to happen along just when things are eventuating! All the early regrets at having missed the Civil War are forgotten, now that I have lived to know Theodore Roosevelt and watch the stupendous show in Europe.

The period between 1871 and 1916 has been so full of readjustments and rapid adaptations, one is ready to believe that for fifty years before the dawn of this golden era people did nothing much except sit around and wait.

It is all so wonderful that I feel like telling the story to the dear young people who never saw bustles or box-toed boots, and possibly never heard a throaty tenor, with oil on his hair, sing "Juanita."

When we regard the long and unvaried existence of the Democratic party or a redwood tree, we know that a very brief span has elapsed since Horace Greeley thought he was running against U. S. Grant, and yet that campaign seems almost as remote as the Punic Wars.

All that we cherished in '72 has been moved to the attic.

So far as I can testify, and as I do verily believe, nothing much happened previous to 1870. The world at that time was all prairie and cornfields, except for the white houses of the county seat and a dark line of timber against the horizon.

There was a railway in front of our house at the edge of town. Beyond the railway ran a country lane—gray and ruddy in dry weather, black porridge every spring.

As for the railroad, the soft metal of the rails was dreadfully snagged, and the locomotive was mostly smokestack.

Wagons, canopied with white, toiled through the mud, all headed for Kansas and Populism.

It was only a short cut across fields to unbroken prairie that never had been touched by plough.

Every township in the Middle West should

have reserved and parked one square mile of the prairie, leaving it just as the settlers found it. It was a grassy jungle matted with flower gardens. Tall perennials shot up their gummy stalks and waved broad, fibrous leaves. A traveller leaving the beaten road found himself chin-high in a rank growth of blue and yellow blooms.

We have gasoline chariots now, and clothes ordered from the catalogue, but the glory of the open country has departed, save for a vivid patch here and there at some neglected corner.

When I was a boy, the explorer could start from anywhere out on the prairie and move in any direction and find a slough. In the centre, an open pond of dead water. Then a border of swaying cat-tails; tall rushes; reedy blades, sharp as razors, out to the upland, spangled with the gorgeous blue and yellow flowers of the virgin plain.

A million frogs sang together each evening, and a billion mosquitoes came out to forage when the breeze died away.

Did you ever try to elude the man-eating galinipper by sitting in the smoke of a "smudge"? A smudge was an open fire, smothered with damp leaves or fresh grass.

The *Anopheles* mosquito, purveyor of ma-

laria, went along unrestricted and unsuspected. Chills and fever entered into the programme of every life; but those who chattered thought they were being jounced by the hand of Providence.

The "smudge" is gone, and quinine is no longer a staple.

The sloughs have gone, and after years of tile drainage and the levelling processes of cultivation, the five-acre pond on which we skated is just a gentle swale in a dry and tidy cornfield.

Thirty dollars an acre is no longer a boom price. Offer the man two hundred, and you fail to interest him.

Geese and brant, mallards and red-heads, prairie chickens and quail—so plentiful that the hunters brought in wagon loads. We used to tire of quail potpie and long for meat from the butcher's.

This is not Saskatchewan or Oklahoma that we are describing. This country of croaking frogs and black mud and myriad flocks of wild fowl was so near Chicago that one night in October, just as far back as I can reach into the past, we sat on the fence and looked at a blur of illumination in the northern sky and learned

that the city which we had not seen was burning up in a highly successful manner.

Squeaking loads of grain filed by our place on their way to the elevator. Many of the drivers wore army overcoats of ultra blue.

Coming out from town, it was a sportive custom to gallop the horses, while the driver stood erect in his wagon box and let out staccato yelps. In those days the rural desperado drank his whisky undiluted and sent a periodical defi to the town marshal.

Some of the old comrades held on to their blue overcoats for an incredible number of years, but now both the comrades and the blue capes have been laid away, and the country saloon has been killed dead by the church women, and there is no bottled nourishment left anywhere except in the quiet cellars of the well-to-do.

It was only a few ticks back on the long clock of eternity, and yet it was an era of melodeons, tin lanterns, clumsy vehicles, and stick candy striped with cinnamon.

The first lessons learned were those of political hatred. We studied our Nast cartoons before we tackled the primer. I know now that Samuel J. Tilden was a courtly old gentleman who lived in Gramercy Park, but in '76 he was

a snorting demon with eyeballs like coals of fire.

How our elders held to the old grudge against Copperheads and Knights of the Golden Circle! The traitors attended church and travelled the straight and narrow, but they could not cover the blackness of their souls with boiled shirts.

We believed that if the Democrats won, the blacks would be returned to slavery, the rebels would be pensioned, the earth would slip on its axis and the whole solar system would be disarranged.

What has become of the partisan who wore the oilcloth uniform and carried the smoky torch? He is circulating a subscription list and trying to get the Chautauqua back next year.

Where are the girls who wore the white dresses and rode on the decorated hay wagon and squealed for Hayes and Wheeler? They are in session at the assembly room of the Carnegie Library, trying to follow Amy Lowell.

Between 1870 and 1880 I came to know a small town dropped down in the comparative lonesomeness of the corn belt. That is why I find myself setting two pictures side by side.

One is the town of the seventies. It was garished with mud, bordered by wooden sidewalks and dimly marked against the night by coal-oil

lamps. The general store was a congress of odours emerging from open crates and barrels. The front of every cubical house was a sealed tomb, with lace curtains mercifully screening the gilt frames and varnished monstrosities.

Against this picture I set the sophisticated county seat of to-day. To begin with: Pavements, curbs, and hard sidewalks, because we learned twenty years ago that these, and not literary clubs, are the primary essentials of civilized existence. The motor cars whiz by each summer night—an endless parade under the arc lights. The show windows and shops are expositions of decorative art. The house shaped like a cube has grown wings and borders, and has a roomy, vine-draped veranda.

When one is looking back from fifty, no doubt he should mark the growth of tolerance, the quadrupled interest in books and magazines, the slow death of political hatreds, the gentle evaporation of religious bigotry, the laudable craving to know more about the rest of the world (either by travel or hearsay), the reversal of the verdict on higher education and scientific methods, and all those side-lines of evolution which have converted the simple villager into a keen little cosmopolite.

The change is there, and those who don't think so are invited to visit a small town and try to put something over.

But when I motor past the old corners, the never-ending surprise is to find these people, who camped out among the swamps a few years ago and led a sort of skillet and axe existence, now placidly enjoying their kitchen cabinets, cream separators, phonographs, telephones, tractors, pumping engines, threshers that feed the sheaves and stack the straw and measure the grain, running water at the kitchen sink and a bathtub upstairs, R. F. D. boxes, and whole flocks of automobiles, and not seeming to know they are implicated in a set of miracles.

If the boys of to-day are going to look down from their biplanes in 1950 and pity the pioneers of 1916, the question is, how far do we go before we slow up?

In the eighties I came to know the inland college and tasted the excitements of a town large enough to have a Grand Opera House.

The school at which I served my term called itself a university, because it was not a college. Later on it became important, but thirty years ago, borrowing some scornful descriptive from an Eastern educator, it did noth-

ing much except issue catalogues and gasp for breath.

The sequestered college of the eighties calls for a bit of looking back. We thought we were about six feet behind Yale and Harvard, but we didn't even have a yell. The equipment was meagre and, although we could show some first-class men in the faculty, the curriculum had not yet developed to the specializing stage, and we took our medicine from a few large bottles bearing stock labels.

Student life was almost primitive. We lived in a dormitory and roached our hair and went to "literary" meetings. We had no organized athletics with coaches and trainers and a modern gym. The clubs and frats in their spacious homes, the daily paper, the bulky "annual," the glee club, dramatic clubs, May festivals, the university band, the student union, and the twenty other activities that now complicate an undergraduate career were all in the future tense.

The photograph of the senior wearing the single-breasted "Prince Albert" and the gates ajar collar and the quilted cravat is like a message from another world.

Since I took my degree, the young men, not

only in colleges but also in the large and small towns and the cities, have been going keener and keener on outdoor life and organized sport. The young fellow who expects to inherit some money from his father finds himself out of the fashion if he puts in too many hours at the pool-room. He tries for some sort of team if he has the ghost of a chance, and he must slam a fairly good game of tennis and be somewhat better than a duffer in golf.

When an old grad takes me by the arm and says, "I want you to meet my kid," I take it for granted, in advance, that the youngster will be deeper in the chest and squarer at the shoulders and more of a husky in general than Dad used to be in the days when our principal daily exercise was popping corn over a gas jet.

Here is a change in which we may take real satisfaction. The child of fortune is no longer flabby, and he has stopped using perfumery.

If I had to select one adjective to describe the rounds of existence in the smaller settlements thirty years ago I think I should favour the word "mopey." I mean the ante-trolley days, when gasoline was used for removing grease spots and the Acme Photo-Play Theatre was still a feed store.

I seem to have progressed on the decimal system. From '70 to '80 I was a small-town question mark. Between '80 and '90 I wore tight trousers and began to see the great world. From '90 to 1900, I did exactly ten years on a Chicago newspaper. During the next ten years I travelled to far-away countries, beyond the circulation of newspapers containing reviews of the plays I had written. If we are going to be geological, I suppose the ten-year stratum now being laid would be classed as the serene period of agriculture and golf.

In 1890, Chicago was a mining camp, five stories high. It was owned by the gamblers. What I seem to remember most clearly of that all-night and wide-open time is that the minor courts were controlled by agents of crime. The poor man, unprotected by an alderman, was helpless when the vultures swooped down on him. No wonder we had anarchists.

I knew my Chicago twenty-five years ago, and it was some laboratory! New England still regards it as an area unrelated to the study of botany, but the Chicago of to-day, as compared with the Gomorrah of World's Fair year, is a cross-section of the millennium.

The courts are beyond the reach of the crooks.

The night life consists mostly of going to one's room and reading a book. The voters want good government, whether they get it all the time or not.

I am not disposed to brag of the spindly skyscrapers, but it is worth noting that Chicago, by persistent and conscious effort, has made Michigan Boulevard one of the show streets of the world, and is going ahead with big plans for cleansing and beautifying a huge and unwieldy town.

Looking back from fifty, it seems that every year has been kicked full of dust by our efforts to improve physical conditions.

The times show an easier standard of morals and, strangely enough, a better average of behaviour. People are dancing more and drinking less. It is no longer sinful to play cards or go to the theatre, which looks ominous to some of the old-timers, but while we have been yielding to the lure of bridge and musical comedy we have evened up the score by forgetting all about original sin, predestination, and babies being toasted on pitchforks.

We discuss in books and portray on the stage the secrets of anatomy, physiology, and hygiene. Young women with tortoise-shell glasses gather

around a samovar and tackle topics which a man would have been afraid to mention to his doctor thirty years ago. And I am sure that in the glad Victorian days of what-nots and hair-cloth furniture the spooning couple never got around to eugenics.

Let us not worry. It is a cleaner, bolder, more candid, less hypocritical world than it was in the days of the yappy seventies.

The most popular occupation seems to be fighting some kind of disease. Every active man gives part of his time to outside work which is quite unselfish. The fact that many appeals are being made and that you and I respond to them, as people have never got together before, ought to encourage us to believe that we are not as depraved as our relatives believe us to be.

Our country's unselfish work in the Philippines, Porto Rico, Cuba, and Panama has been one of the amazing and soul-warming exhibits of our time. Several nations calling themselves highly civilized, and regarding Americans as mercenary Yankee traders, did not believe that a powerful Government could deal with a humble and unprotected race except for purposes of exploitation. Even now they think there is a catch or a trick somewhere and that we are nurs-

ing in the background some vast scheme for making money out of our little black and brown brothers. Uncle Sam made up as Santa Claus does not strike them as a convincing characterization.

The trouble is, they do not know us. While we were pulling for France and Great Britain and the perpetuation of democracy, we were supposed to be getting rich making shrapnel. And yet, 999 out of every 1,000 Americans wouldn't know shrapnel from scrapple if they saw it in a show window.

I have put in most of my fifty years getting acquainted with my fellow citizens. I have seen them at home and abroad, scattered and bunched. A good many of them are provincial, especially congressmen, and a lot more have been fed on misinformation; but, take them as they run, they are kindly and fair-minded and always trying to work back to the main road.

There is more brotherhood of man at large than ever before. That is my conclusion, looking back from fifty—war or no war.

DANCING

ONCE in a while you meet a man so great that he can live down the reputation of being a lovely dancer.

A lovely dancer is one who can lift a fair-sized woman simply by resting his hand lightly on the region of her vertebræ.

His partner pays him the most sincere compliment included in the catalogue of modern chivalry when she says that while dancing with him she seems to be floating in the air.

A lot of nice fellows in the U. S. A. would be successful if they could wear their pumps in the daytime. The great mistake they make is in changing from evening clothes to street clothes. The minute they get out of the range of a throbbing orchestra they begin to bleach, fade away and shrivel to the relative unimportance of a goldfish floating on its back.

On the other hand, a captain of industry whose feet are not mates should go behind the

palms at 8:30 p. m. whenever the wife throws a dinner dance. Moral grandeur has no rating in a ballroom. Take all the heavy-weights of history and put them out on a waxed floor and they would be terror-stricken at the approach of a pug-nosed flapper.

I have seen the Holy Rollers out in the country sway and chant themselves into frothing hysteria. I have seen the revolving dervishes of Turkey wind themselves up until they were quivering with a mechanical sort of ecstasy. I have seen the aborigines of North America revert to type and hotfoot in a circle until they were yowling maniacs.

But no one ever observed mortals more glassy-eyed, giggling, gibbering, and generally locoed with artificial bliss than a bunch of our best people while under the influence of this year's dance music.

Along about 9 p. m. they drag themselves wearily to the centre of the jazz-pit and their drooping demeanour seems to indicate: "This is a tough ordeal, but probably we will have to go through with it."

At 3 a. m. they are writhing like angleworms and squealing for encores.

They never quit. The acrobatic saturnalia

continues until the snare-drummer wears out his sticks.

Then a janitor, or someone, pushes them out and locks up.

Yes, you are right, Edith. If the writer knew how to dance, the whole thing might look different.

MUSICAL COMEDY

WHEN the first piano was built the owner needed something to put on top of the piano, so the popular song and the light opera were invented. As the musical taste of succeeding buyers developed and improved, light opera became lighter and lighter until at last they had to weight it down to keep it on the piano. There came a time when the manufacturers were prohibited under the Pure Food Law from using the opera label. They had to call the output something or other, so they compromised on "musical comedy."

Musical comedy has done a great deal for our fair land. It has depopulated the laundries, reduced the swollen fortunes of Pittsburgh, and bridged the social chasm between the honest working girl and the pallid offspring of the captain of industry.

It has taught William Shakespeare how to take a joke. It has developed a colony of

angels and incidentally it has given the foot-power piano an excuse for being.

A good musical comedy consists largely of disorderly conduct occasionally interrupted by talk. The man who provides the interruptions is called the librettist. I would advise any man who hasn't the nerve to be a foot-pad or is too large to get through a transom, to become a librettist.

I'd rather be a burglar than the man who writes the
book,

For the burglar is anonymous—a self-concealing
crook;

When they catch *him* with the goods he merely does
a term in jail,

While the author has to stand and take a roast from
Alan Dale.

I wrote this years ago, but it is still true.

The so-called music of musical comedy must be the kind that any messenger boy can learn to whistle after hearing it twice. At the same time it must satisfy the tall-browed critic who was brought up on Tschaikowski and Bach. As for the dialogue, it must be guaranteed to wring boisterous laughter from the three-dollar patron who has a facial angle of thirty degrees, and a cerebellum about the size of an olive; also it

must have sufficient literary quality and subtle humour to please the dead-head who is sitting in the fourth row with a hammer in one hand and a javelin in the other.

Every young man who goes into the libretto business thinks he is going to revolutionize the American stage. He is going to begin where W. S. Gilbert left off. He gets a fountain pen, a pad of paper, and a few pounds of opiate, and then he dreams it all out. He is going to write a musical play with a consistent and closely connected plot, an abundance of sprightly humour and nothing said or done that would bring the blush of shame to the cheek of the most sensitive manager.

His getaway is usually very promising. By way of novelty he has an opening chorus. A lot of people are standing around in aimless groups there in the green sunshine. Occasionally the green sunshine changes to amber. They tell all about themselves and explain their emotions. Then the principals begin coming on and tell why *they* are present, and the wedding is announced and the people in front begin to get a faint outline of plot. This goes on for about ten minutes until a beautiful blonde, who was educated for grand opera and then changed her

mind, suddenly says, apropos of nothing in particular, "Oh, I am so happy to-day I could sing my favourite song, 'Won't you be my little gum-drop?' "

That is what is known as a "music cue." That is where the author goes into the side pocket and the producer becomes the whole proposition.

First the beautiful blonde sings it all by herself. Then the beautiful tenor with talcum powder all over his face comes out and helps her. Then the refined comedian, recently graduated from vaudeville, breaks in and they do the gum-drop number as a trio. The soubrette arrives, merely by accident, and the song regarding the gum-drop now becomes a quartette. Then eight young ladies in Spanish costumes come out and sing it, introducing a dance. Then eight young ladies in white are lowered from the flies and they sing it while hanging in the air. Then the lights are turned out and the entire company sings it in the moonlight. Then the sunshine is turned on again and all sing it by daylight.

The man who leads the orchestra is a mind-reader. He knows that the public wants more verses of the gum-drop song whether it ap-

plauds or not. This is what is known as the "noiseless encore." The reason he is so willing to respond to encores is that he wrote the song.

At last, after the entire company has sung and danced itself into a state of staggering exhaustion, and even the iron-handed ushers have become satiated, the whole covey disappears and that grand old annoyance who shows up in every musical play, the bride's father, wanders on the stage and tries to collect the shattered fragments of plot. Of course nobody pays any attention to him. All the people in front are lying back limp and groggy, trying to recover from the excitement of that gum-drop affair. They have forgotten all about the fragment of "story" that showed up a half hour before. Father, however, starts in to remind the audience of the wedding day and the bride and the birth-mark and the picture in the locket and the other essentials, and just about the time he is getting a foothold the Egyptian dancers glide on and everything is once more floating upside down in the air. The morning newspapers say that the plot did not seem to be well sustained.

I do not wish to be understood as attacking musical comedy. It has helped a great many people who belong in trolley cars to ride in

motor cars. It provides mental relaxation for the tired business man who doesn't want to think. Probably if he ever stopped to think, he would get up and go out.

Musical comedy has educated the public. When it was first introduced the American people were devoted to such simple and old-fashioned melodies as "Roll On, Silvery Moon," "Then You'll Remember Me," "When the Corn is Waving, Annie, Dear," and "The Gypsy's Warning." The campaign of education has been going on for years and now we have worked up to a midnight show on a roof, with songs which would be suppressed by the police if the police could fathom the significance of the *double entendre*.

It is said that every man in the world thinks he can edit a newspaper, manage a hotel and write a comic opera. I have been in the newspaper business and I have gone against operas that were trying to be comic. I am still sure that I can manage a hotel.

ARRANGERS

YOU can hide away from your enemies, but your friends will get you.

No man ever woke up in the morning with a case of side-way jumps and said, "My enemies did this to me."

Suggested marking for a headstone: "He was the best-liked man in his class at the varsity and wherever he went he was royally entertained."

The social outcast may have regrets but he never has the gout.

Our beloved Riley of Indiana once in a while consented to recite his poems in public. He had a genius for character acting. As a storyteller he was delightful beyond all description. Whenever he appeared on a rostrum, the auditorium was jammed with well-dressed people leaning forward. His readings brought him many dollars and gave happiness to the kind of "folks" for whom he had an affection. And yet, for many years, he refused to go on tour.

"If I could slip into a town," he would explain, "and detour to the hotel and brush up, and then wander around and look in the windows, and get a snack and go over to the hall and deliver the show, and then drift back to the hotel and go to bed, I wouldn't mind the trouping. The trouble is, in every town the arrangers get hold of me. They are the nicest people in the world and they are bursting with unselfish designs. They surround me with committees and exhibit me. They put me into clammy spare bedrooms and tempt me with huge portions of rich food. They keep me up at night. They crowd in on me and talk to me about the pieces I have written. They smother me with kindness. I never have discovered any tactful method of convincing them that I would like to be let alone. After enduring all forms of hospitality, I have learned that to escape the horrors of being entertained, I must remain in quarantine."

Popularity and pepsin go hand in hand under the electric lights. Everybody is trying to do something for the favoured children of fortune who are already loaded down with Christmas presents.

Self-appointed committees are all the time assigning to themselves picturesque duties to be

performed on high platforms. The helpless spectators and victims are never consulted in advance.

Too many fixers are trying to regulate the wheels of Destiny and make the solar system an auxiliary to some local club with a membership of about 150.

While the first-born is chewing on rubber and inspecting the chandelier, the arrangers in the next room are plotting to make him an attorney at law, although the star under which he was born lights the way to a long and useful career as train-caller.

Women of high voltage are especially keen as arrangers. The married woman decides that Herbert, her husband's bachelor friend (with the false eyebrows), is just the man for Ella, a hold-over from the puff-sleeve period. So she invites the two case-hardened waifs out for the week-end and issues secret orders that whenever Herb and Ella can be assembled together on one settee, then all the others are to run away and leave them. And yet you may have read in a book somewhere that woman is man's best friend!

Just when you get your programme all blocked out, some promoter comes along with a blue

pencil and begins to edit—because he likes you. Always with the best of intentions. The road to hell is paved with good intentions and the main contract has been sub-let in a thousand different directions.)

The arrangers have put us on a diet, hid the cocktail shaker and spanked the big-eyed vamp of the movies. They lay back the covers for us every evening at 11:15. Before you bust over on Sunday, find out what instructions the police have received from the arrangers.

Nearly everything is being done for us. Also to us. The wails of the sinful minority are drowned by the hallelujahs of those who never enjoyed the privilege of being corrupted. At least, the unhappy ones have the satisfaction of knowing that before long they will be as standardized as anything that can be purchased f. o. b. Detroit.

VACATIONS

WHEN the days are long, get ready to file off the ball and chain.

Wait until the asters are blooming and then, no matter where you are, go somewhere else. Only an oyster remains forever at the old homestead.

If the all-wise Arranger had meant for you to look out of the same window all the time, he wouldn't have given you legs.

The planet you are now visiting may be the only one you ever see. Even if you get a transfer, the next one may not have any Grand Canyon or Niagara Falls.

Move around before the ivy begins to climb up your legs.

It is true that a rolling stone gathers no moss, but it gets rid of the rough corners and takes on a lovely polish. Besides, who wants to be covered with moss?

Go on a journey every year so that you may jolt out of your brittle head-piece the notion that

our home township is the steering-gear of the universe.

Some hermits are learned, but only the travellers are wise.

If you have earned a vacation, take it. The time has come to exchange your cold currency for some new sensations. You are due to accept a reward for all the years of sacrifice and denial. But you worry. If you splurge around and have a good time, maybe the children will not have all the funds they need, fifteen years hence, to keep them in red touring cars and squirrel coats.

You are afraid to make a will reading as follows:

Dear Offsprings:

Go out and get it—the same as I did.

Think of the thousands of worthy old people now penned up at home who ought to be scooting about in henrys and lake steamers and Pullman cars, rounding out the long day of toil with a late afternoon of gleeful enjoyment! It wouldn't cost them a cent. The heirs would pay all the bills.

We need in this country many Night Schools for Old People. It is time to declare for the rights and privileges of the passing generation.

The world and the fullness thereof do not belong entirely to the flapper with the concealed ears and the dancing tadpole whose belt-line is just below the shoulder-blades.

Take your vacations while you can get them. Eventually you may not be able to name the spots you are going to visit next.

BABIES

SOMEONE said: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Now revised to read: "The hand that rocks the cradle should be amputated."

The human race is, according to a guess by H. G. Wells, 75,000 years old, and only in the last 25 years has any one known how to welcome a baby and take care of it. All those who survived during the preceding 74,975 years were just plain lucky.

The first impression gained by a baby of the nineteenth century must have been that Earth is inhabited by elderly people, all females except one and all wearing spectacles.

The newly arrived of to-day probably decides that the world is walled with white, tintured with anæsthetics, and peopled by efficient internes and calm nurses.

The cold edicts of science have converted a social event into a private business transaction.

We know now that the multitude of old-

fashioned mothers decorating the pages of domestic history were either misinformed or blindly ignorant.

Even a very young child learned that if it yowled enough it would be taken on an exciting journey from room to room and have a special audience with the canary and be permitted to listen to the latest sentimental ballads.

Consider the case of a lately arrived infant. After it had come to believe that life under the new management consisted of riding a cock-horse to Banbury Cross, of being thrown up—up—almost to the ceiling and then being caught safely on the breathless descent; of being jolted into convulsive giggles by large dependable hands smelling of tobacco—after all these wild raptures, how about the boredom of lying flat on the back and looking at the lighting fixtures?

When one might relieve *ennui* merely by lifting a protest, why suffer in loneliness? Thus reasoned the tiny tots of fifty years ago.

It is different now. A wide conspiracy has been framed against the nestling. Hysterical adults who have the uncontrollable impulse to churn every baby in order to hear it gurgle, are barred from the nursery.

Isn't it amazing? Think of the millions of

miles of walking the floor that might have been saved if the goose-minded parents of former generations had known that fourteen pounds of infancy will deliberately put something over on 300 pounds of parenthood!

When the time-table baby hits the crib at eventide, it is in for the night. It no longer has the kingly privilege of waking up at 2 A. M. and demanding a special vaudeville performance. At least, so we are told.

Also, between times of being weighed and inspected, it is cured and hardened in icy sleeping-porches. Grandmothers raise feeble protests but find themselves dusted out of the way by modern methods.

Recent babies may become physically fit under these Dempsey training rules, but they don't have as much fun as we had, do they?

TO-DAY'S AMAZING CROP

LET us precede our moaning with a confession:

There never was a time since the first peep o' dawn when things were right.

Also, before the lamentation is formally inaugurated, let it be admitted that when the arteries and enthusiasms begin to harden, and the joints to creak, and the diet list is more important than the dance programme, judgment is inclined to warp at the edges; and charity, instead of falling like the gentle dew from heaven, has to be applied with a force pump.

This is no attempt to give a clean bill to the crabbed elders. Let us even admit that a prejudiced statement is about to be made to a prejudiced jury. Mark off forty per cent. on account of emotional astigmatism. And then, with your hand on your heart, speak up and tell us if you ever saw the beat of the young people of to-day.

By "young people" meaning, broadly and

generally, all immature specimens between the age of orange juice alternating with milk and that hazy borderland of matrimony producing principally cheek-to-cheek dancing and cigarettes.

We have to take the very young ones into the picture because they are the chief disillusionizers of the present hard-boiled times. (They know there isn't any stork before the stork itself is a half-block away from the house.)

And, if you want to get a dirty look, just tell any two-year-older that the doctor brought him in a satchel!

Most of the amazing phenomena are to be detected among the fledglings who cause expense accounts. From the time of the first fluttering desire to be in the movies up to the college perihelion, when life is a succession of house parties, the juniors can move in more directions at the same time and put more parents on the mat (both shoulders touching) than ever before in the history of the universe.

We are not setting in to scold the juveniles. They don't belong to us and we wouldn't get any further with our noisy reprimands than if we were the legal guardians of the aforesaid juveniles.

What could be more futile than raving because town cars have replaced side-bar buggies, and the toddle has pushed the polka into a corner, and noisy Bill, aged eleven and wearing a football suit, starts in just eight miles ahead of where little Rollo left off?

This is no broadside denunciation of the child wonders who congest every Main Street in America. It is simply a gasp of wonderment.

To lose faith in all boys and girls between the ages of twelve and twenty-two would be to admit that the *genus homo* has come to a bad finish, and that the experiment of the new republic has diminuendoed into a fiasco.

The young people inherited all of the qualities so often criticized. A new situation has arisen because these hereditary qualities have been given unexpected outlets and opportunities. Be careful, and don't put too much blame on the lads and lassies.

Why take unnecessary risks? Already we have earned their scorn. Why dig ourselves deeper into the degradation which mires down every adult above the age of forty?

Not to be young nowadays is somewhere between a misdemeanour and a crime.

Even the snow-whites, who should be sitting

with folded hands, awaiting the final summons, are running around in knickerbockers and short skirts, and fooling nobody except themselves.

You cannot turn back the hands of the clock by putting on a gay hatband. Either you are young and have inherited the earth or else you are effete, and are being tolerated as a customary part of the background.

In England they are asking, even as we are asking over here, *not* what may be done with the children, but what are the children going to do *with* and *to* us.

Just think! In placid England, where misses let the hair hang free and are guarded by governesses until they are over six feet tall, and where pale lads, attired mostly in Eton collars, regard bread and jam as somewhat of a lark—in conservative England, where minors still believe in fairies and wait expectantly for the Christmas pantomime, there is a nation-wide agitation against the swank and swagger and mutinous exploits of the whole nursery output. The tender age has toughened up until you can't put a dent in it.

It is reported on good authority that flappers of eminent lineage call their dancing partners "old bean," while young gentlemen not yet

ready for Oxford listen to the matter with unconcealed annoyance, and then say "Pooh!"—just like that. Therefore letters are being written to the "Times," and there is a feeling that some action should be taken.

Without recurring to our Yankee habit of boasting, let it be proclaimed that the elders of Great Britain who think that they are up against a sassy outfit haven't been anywhere and haven't seen anything.

As a novel international sporting proposition, why not have a bench show and exhibit the swankiest products of the two English-speaking nations? When it comes to matching up eighteen-year-old roués and nineteen-year-old vamps, the odds will be three to one that our beloved country will make a clean sweep of blue ribbons.

In England there are many tremors and much head-shaking because the youngsters are so different from those of the Victorian period. In the U. S. A., the children were not so blamed Victorian, even when the good queen was alive. As far back as we can remember, the average homegrown lambkin had a tremendous lead over any foreign competitor in the matters of fluent vocabulary, argumentative skill, aplomb, off-hand confidence, ability to penetrate the thin

disguises of pretentious adults, premature love entanglements, positive preferences as to food and drink, slavish devotion to the modes of the moment (especially as affecting the hair), poignant grief over inability to adjust one's self to an unsympathetic and unresponsive world, half-concealed disappointment as to the social standing and immediate prospects of most important relatives, spirit of revolt against arbitrary enactments which have no purpose except to hamper the flight of genius—to say nothing of that superb and cultivated quality of indifference which permits one to listen without hearing anything.

It is not contended that the new brood has invented any characteristics. They have taken the old ones and developed them, not only to the *n*th degree but away beyond that—say to the &c mark.

Our present crop is everything that the junior population of the last century hoped to be.

The emancipation of woman is no more of an accomplished fact than the general unshackling of the heirs.

Which doesn't necessarily signify that the whole social organization is going to the bow-wows. Perhaps it is all for the best that the bantlings should jump in and take advantage of

the new freedom. It may be that they know, better than the old people, how to regulate their amusements, dietary arrangements, nocturnal activities, manners, social connections, and expenditures.

Are we at all mistaken in assuming that a revolution *has* been effected?

Have we any homes in which the occupants who are less than twenty years of age designate the hour at which breakfast shall be served?

When the young people have a party, who finally fixes the hour at which the festivities are to close?

When the junior drives the car, does he observe the speed limit suggested by his apprehensive parents or just go as he doggone pleases?

Who decides as to the style and cost of costumes to be worn by minors?

How many parental edicts can withstand a united attack by the offspring?

Is it true that many fathers and mothers have given up trying to control the dancing demons and the débutantes, and simply stand around wondering what is going to happen next?

Isn't it a fact that the cherub who flatly contradicts papa or mamma has a fifty-fifty chance of getting away with it?

When women get together and become confidential, do they confess that they are retreating before the onward march of the conquering cubs?

Isn't it a fact that the old cardboard motto, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," has been moved to the attic?

Is respect for parental authority selling lower in the pools than ever before?

These are merely a few questions, but after you have answered them truthfully, admit that there have been some bewildering changes since grandma was a girl.

Consider the case of a society queen of seventeen who is looking up a rest cure; or take a squint at the world-weary man about town, aged eighteen, to whom the adoration of many women has become a vexation, and who is getting ready to cut out the sex.

Did you ever try to account for the abnormal sophistications and temperamental tantrums of these very recent specimens?

If children have become theatrical, isn't it because all of us have put a premium on precocity? We have stuffed the bambinos with huge portions of worldly knowledge, when they should have been rolling their hoops.

If those present will pardon the introduction of the first person singular, I will try to illustrate the objective point by recalling the privileges and worldly pleasures of the very young in the decade connecting 1870 with 1880. That isn't so long ago, in years, but the contrast between the rising generation of now and the simple urchins of then, so far as environment and daily experiences are concerned, is simply a book of miracles.

In the first place, the young ones of fifty years ago who lived in the small towns or out in the farming regions were really in the country. Not only geographically, but removed from urban influences.

Nowadays we haven't any out-in-the-country. The telephone, the R. F. D., and the motor car have coöperated to cut out distance, until every villager lives just across the street from the city fellow, and every farmer lives next door to the villager. Also, there is the radio.

If you were to take an average working girl of Boston, a girl of corresponding social importance from a small city in Ohio, and the daughter of a well-to-do farmer in the corn belt, and stand the three of them in a row, attired in their most circus regalias, each of them short-skirted and

high-heeled and hair-dressed according to her own specifications, you couldn't tell which was which, unless the country girl should betray herself by putting on too much face powder.

Political economists and legislators are worrying because there is a steady movement of population from the farming regions to the cities. But the real phenomenon is the citification of all the country people. You can sell more gold bricks in upper Broadway now than you can in Nebraska, and the more careful students of big-league averages are the boys who loaf around the grain elevator. Why shouldn't the farm hand be as slick as the floorwalker? He sees the same moving pictures.

Let us get back to the boys and girls of fifty years ago. Except for a few silverspoon favourites in a few residence avenues in a few cities, the young folks were not acquainted with luxuries. Take any one of my colleagues as a fair sample. In the summer he wore as few clothes as possible, went barefoot until the meadows were silvered with frost, fished in tiny "cricks," and splashed in muddy swimming holes, picked up an occasional nickel as a reward for unwilling labour, and came to regard a stick of candy or a bag of peanuts as a kind of holiday spree.

Rural communities were not organized for recreation and entertainment in those days. No Chautauquas, no band concerts, no intertown ball leagues, no community coliseums, no basket-ball games, no high-school track meets.

Far apart on the map were county fairs. One circus a summer was a high average. Christmas tree at the church, firecrackers on the Fourth, a magic lantern show at the town hall—these helped to add an occasional high spot to the monotonous level of village life.

For weeks at a time every country lane and every town street would be a mush of mud or a jumble of frozen ruts. The speed rate of wheel vehicles was three or four miles an hour. The town ten miles away was off in another world. We were a race of snails and lived mostly in our shells. As nearly as I can recall, the adult population devoted all summer leisure to sitting on porches and all winter leisure to sitting by red-hot stoves.

In cold weather we boys went about in bob-tailed suits and Eskimo caps, and warped boots which failed to join up with the "pants." The homemade yarn "comforter" exploded into bright colours at each end, and the mittens were connected by a cord hung around the neck.

Pocket handkerchiefs were effeminate and unessential—but why go into details?

If you have a little yell-leader in your home and you tried to force him into one of those 1875 costumes, you would have to use chloroform.

As to the experiences of the city children fifty years ago, the writer must confess a profound ignorance, but he understands from those who were there, that the wildest dissipation of the offspring of wealth was going to dancing school, while the other young ones were not so different from those of us out in the villages, except that they could look at the Indians in front of cigar stores and take an occasional ride in a horse-car.

Youngsters everywhere sought their own simple enjoyments, and not much was provided. Nickel libraries were concealed in haymows. The boy with a high wheel was king of his clan. Cinnamon water and corn-silk cigarettes made up the full programme of an orgy.

In the seventies, school-teachers were trying to explain the newly invented telephone. Visitors returning from the Centennial at Philadelphia told of the unbelievable electric light. Any boy fifteen years old who had seen the inside of a sleeping car was a world traveller.

Newspapers contained only rectangles of routine news and political editorials.

We who were beginning to be in evidence fifty years ago can sit back now and realize that the greatest pageant of progress and the most terrific conflict of forces ever witnessed by man have been staged for our especial benefit.

Villages have grown to cities, and each city has become a metropolis. The material devices which transform all the routine of life have been crowded into just a few decades. We have been kept busy for a half-century providing storage space for long-distance 'phones, arc lights, giant locomotives, talking machines, half-tone printing processes, mail-order catalogues, refined vaudeville, the merchandising methods of great department stores, the Bessemer process of making steel, skyscrapers, motor cars, flying machines, wireless telegraphy, golf, the germ theory of disease, telepathy, the enfranchisement of women, and so on for a couple of pages.

Back yonder we had in our home a "what-not," a couple of sea shells, a melodeon, some hair-cloth furniture, a wood-burning cook stove, and a few other incidentals, including the bootjack. Now, every modern home is a museum of wonders; a complex demonstration of what may be

achieved by the ingenuity, the imagination, and the skill of the cleverest people in the world. Just around the corner is the moving-picture theatre, the most potent single influence of the century.

Did you ever stop to think that the children now coming into action get the entire accumulation of fifty years at one dose, and take it without blinking?

Just as a Chinese infant easily picks up a language which the missionary cannot learn in twenty years, so the absorbent little ones now shouting in the schoolyards take on, without conscious effort, a mighty cargo, which includes the whole array of inventions, the results of the war, the complicated developments of the silent drama, a working knowledge of sports and pastimes, a list of the modes and fashions, all the popular songs which pour out of the phonograph, and the myriad facts of existence which are lined up along motor routes and trolley lines.

They are compelled to accept all of our favourite marvels as commonplace and everyday incidentals. They listen to talking-machines and look at airplanes, and scoot around in automobiles, and talk over telephones, and then mildly inquire, "Why not?" The cinema drama

which would have paralyzed the 1875 boy with amazement and delight, they regard with weary impatience and then say: "Step on it! Go into the high! Give us a touch of speed!"

Fifty years ago we played two-old-cat, and watched the trains go through. Nowadays they have athletic fields and gyms and leagues and associations; and even the country boys, living away out, have travelled to distant cities in horseless carriages and laid up vast stores of erudition.

Is it any wonder that the rising generation is blasé? Is it strange that the wealth of worldly knowledge which they inherited, all in a lump, has somewhat gone to their heads and given them the usual conceits and pretensions of the newly rich?

Why does their self-satisfaction rasp us? Probably because every person above thirty-five lives somewhat in the past, and our kid associates have a grinning contempt for all those mementoes of bygone days which we regard with solemn reverence.

The pictures which we hold in affection, because of long-ago association, are preposterous and prehistoric jokes to the superior adolescents. They are bored stiff when we begin to mumble

about the belles and beaux and bright dramatic lights of away back yonder, and their forbearance is taxed beyond endurance when some tottering and senile wreck, forty-two or forty-three years of age, tries to break up the dancing party by requesting a waltz!

It is one of the happy illusions of the youthful that they represent full bloom and that everything beyond them is decay.

They burst upon the scene and accept all the legacies, for which we have toiled, as personal property to which they are entitled because of their all-around superiority to any other living objects in sight.

We have smothered them with riches and blinded them with revelations, and then we are surprised because they differ from the little gawks and ignorami who circulated around the schoolhouse back in Hickory Creek, when Pa smoked cheroots and Ma owned a Cashmere shawl.

Come to think of it, *we* were a little stuck-up in those remote days because we had coal-oil lamps instead of candles and, when we hunted rabbits, we used percussion caps instead of a flintlock. Possibly we were slightly amused by the old fogies who preferred "Roll on, Silvery

Moon" to the up-to-date entrancements of "Molly Darling," and "Love Among the Roses."

I remember the first bunch of bananas shipped to our town. Undoubtedly we felt sorry for all preceding generations of boys who never had tasted bananas, and probably we felt sorry for the generations of boys to come, because we had used up all the thrills and surprises and there wouldn't be any left for them.

I suppose the older folks around town thought we were gaited pretty high—what with eating bananas and carrying glass marbles and playing on mouth organs and raising Cain generally!

But, oh, my comrades of that distant yesterday, we were as primitive as papooses! The big show for children had not opened. Now it is in full swing. Will the older people kindly move to the rear seats?

PUTTING UP A FRONT

WHEN we learn that most of the men dashing through the portals of exclusive clubs are tailor-made lads of breezy manner, we begin to weaken on some of the moral precepts found in copybooks.

The principal of the high school told us that nothing counts in the long battle except those flinty virtues which are practiced by deacons with throat-whiskers.

Be honest, be temperate, be frugal, be industrious, be persevering, be just, be et cetera and then—what?

Why, you may be all of these, and handsome withal, but if you have not learned the open secrets of putting up a front, some day you will be working for an inferior being who knows how to dress his show windows.

The subterranean sweatshops of all the beehives of the world are clogged with undiscovered geniuses.

They thought they could find the road guide

to material advancement in a book—so they never mingled with other travellers on the highway.

They never seemed to grasp the following:

First: A good story told at the right time has more commercial value than a concealed knowledge of political economy.

Second: In any city above 100,000, the haircut is more important than a consciousness of moral grandeur.

Third: In a crowded street, the upstart with a banner attracts more favourable attention than the intellectual giant who has fallen into a coalhole.

Putting up a front involves:

Learning to talk rather entertainingly on all occasions.

Learning to listen with simulated eagerness.

Well-fitting clothes of recent pattern, garnished with clean linen and, if the excuse can be found, a flower in the buttonhole.

Playing up a placid optimism, somehow suggestive of hidden resources.

Absolute refusal to look up to those who may regard themselves as important because of money or family connections. The front will crumble if it is not backed up by a superb

belief in the non-superiority of all other mortals.

Too much premium has been awarded the rough diamond qualities.

The man putting up a front has been accused of dealing with superficialities.

Not at all.

He arranges his wardrobe and dresses up his personality and supervises his vocabulary and stage-manages his conduct so as to make all comers believe that he is important.

He need not be a bluff, but if he *is* a bluff, the front becomes doubly valuable.

Travelled Europeans and all cosmopolites know how to put up a front.

We of the homespun variety and necks shaved high affect a scorn for the outward graces of the Old World.

And yet, any talented foreigner who comes with his *savoir faire* in one hand and a mildewed title in the other, can get free board and entertainment for life anywhere in America.

Every college should have a chair of Frontology.

The front is a prodigious asset—whether you have the goods in stock or not.

HOME-COOKING

EACH spring, as we say good-bye to the final buckwheat cake of reluctant spring and go forth, wearing garlands, to greet fried chicken, we are again reminded that what every woman knows can never be learned by a chef.

Regard the two items listed in the preamble.

When the first killing frost whitens the fields, Aunt Libbie compounds a large crock of batter which is bubbled on top and has a yeasty aroma. She keeps it in a warm spot and, by judicious replacing, dips from the earthen vessel, during the cold months, say 2800 to 3000 buckwheat cakes which are as much superior to the factory-made flapjacks of hotels and restaurants as roses are more fragrant than rutabagas.

Here is a question never yet answered: Why cannot hotels and clubs and cafés master the simple technique which seems to be nature's gift to every housewife?

Why is it that when you put a white cap on

a man and pay him \$18,000 a year he can think of nothing except sauces?

Is he too proud to go to Aunt Libbie and find out how to rush from the griddle a product that is thin and hot and snappy and crispy and altogether enticing?

He has a million recipes with French labels, but when he serves an order of strawberry shortcake, he simply advertises his shame.

Certain dishes may be regarded as the culinary corner-stones of domestic tranquillity.

She who makes good oyster soup deserves every honour accorded Joan of Arc.

Oyster soup? Why should it be a hidden and unattainable secret to any one?

And yet, when you get among the onyx columns and the Alsatian noblemen and the symphony orchestras, the glorious blending of savoury ingredients becomes a tepid pool in which oysters at high-fever temperature are struggling feebly.

Any man who has lived in a civilized home knows the ritual in connection with poultry of the adolescent kind.

He knows that the carcass should be dismembered into the largest possible number of units and that these priceless tidbits need to be soaked

in cold water before they are rolled in flour and committed to the hot skillet. Then there is a precautionary steaming just before they are hand-forked to the platter.

Year after year the patrons lined up at public eating racks have been ordering "Fried chicken, country style," hoping in vain that some day or other they will get what they want.

It is now a crime to shake up a cocktail and yet thousands of caterers who try to fry one half of a spring chicken in one individual segment are permitted to stay out of jail.

Shall we take up the matter of waffles? How about rice pudding?

Did you ever find in a four-million-dollar hotel the kind of layer cake served by the ladies of the M. E. Church?

Fillet of sole as done at the Marguéry—yes! Cottage cheese, mince pie, new asparagus in cream, light biscuit cookies, noodles—no!

BROADWAY

IT IS an extreme provocation—attacking a man in the region of his geography. And for a Middle-Westerner to pick flaws in New York—presumption carried to the limit!

So let it be understood that this is not the attempt of a jealous provincial to belittle the glories of the mastodonic metropolis.

Call it, rather, the candid attempt of a man who has travelled a great deal to set down, without prejudice, the impressions which smite him whenever he rides the whirlpool.

This is not a cry of pain from one who paid one dollar for "Eggs Mornay" and twenty-five cents to get the derby hat back, and is now writing for purposes of revenge.

Our principal seaport has no monopoly on high prices or unblushing brigandage by the imps of the check room.

Waiters must be tipped everywhere in the world. The common carrier in every clime is an immediate relative of Jesse James.

Also, let it be freely admitted at the beginning that we casual visitors from the hinterland do not see the real New York. We arrive in a jam and remain in a bedlam, surrounded by squealing orchestras, lolling loungers who live to dance or dance to live, jabbering waiters, pages who look like mechanical toys, while all of the intervening spaces are filled in with non-residents who have temporarily lost the importance which attaches to them at their various post-office addresses.

Granted that most of us get only the most superficial glimpses of New York as we whiz in the merry-go-round; granted that the frantic attempts to crowd a month of lunching and dining and supping and roof-gardening and play-going and shopping into one short week disarrange our temperaments and disqualify us to render cold judicial opinions; granted that the cosmopolitan spirit does not abide in one who sits on the front porch in the evening; granted almost any similar premise, and still the question is: "Why should New York City be classified as the Garden of Eden, with modern attachments?"

The propaganda pulled in behalf of New York is subtly intended to foster the belief that the

sun shines over Fifth Avenue all the time that rain is descending on Omaha; that the food served at the Biltmore is chemically different from any that might be procured at the Palace in San Francisco; that Life—with a capital L—is more carmine, even on off-days, in New York than it could ever hope to be in Little Rock, Arkansas.

My earliest recollection of fiction is entangled with murderous conspiracies on the Bowery, night-prowling among the docks of East River, and a triumphant capture of all the “miscreants” by a New York detective of superhuman courage and cleverness.

The popular songs and the plays, as far back as we can remember, exploited Manhattan Island as the centre of the Universe.

ACT 1. Geoffrey Williston's office in Wall Street. “Weaving the web.”

ACT 2. City Hall Square by moonlight. “Caught in the meshes.”

ACT 3. *Scene* 1. A basement in Houston Street. *Scene* 2. The East River Docks. “Dead men tell no tales.”

ACT 4. A saloon on the Bowery. “He laughs best who laughs last.”

ACT 5. Harold Ferguson's home on Fifth Avenue. “Reunited.”

For years and years, in every one-night stand "opera house" known to the booking agencies, the public was being taught that New York was forever a-tingle with intrigues and hair-breadth escapes and noble sacrifices and heroic rescues.

We never saw on the stage a sneering villain—silk-lined cape coat, tall hat, cigarette—whose habitat was Norfolk, Virginia.

If the snaky adventuress with the low grating laugh and the jet ornaments had been set forth on the play bill as a Milwaukee product, she wouldn't have been accepted as a real Circe.

And the square-jawed police captain who appeared in the last act—do you remember? "I arrest you for the murder of Roger Thorndike!" Ta-da-a-a! A long chord from all of the stringed instruments. Thunderous applause from the gallery. Would the scene have carried any weight if the captain had been a member of the Indianapolis police force?

Think of the millions of farm hands and small-townners who have been beguiled by the songs about Broadway.

Back in the days of the saccharine song and dance—the dear old Billy Emerson period of plush trousers and hair oil—it seemed that every

popular tune was adjusted to words somewhat like the following:

As I stroll along Broadway,
You can hear the ladies say:
"He's a dandy, he's a dude, as you can plainlee tell;
He-e-e's a regular New York swell!"

No boy residing west of the Alleghanies would have purchased a song-sheet which permitted the captivating heartbreaker, first person singular, to promenade on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, or Tremont, in Boston. No, sir; the idol of the women had to "stroll along Broadway."

I have had the much-touted thoroughfare under observation for a good many years, and I don't believe that any one ever "strolled" along Broadway. If he made any progress he had to duck, sidestep, use the shoulder occasionally, and do more or less climbing.

Running a close second to Broadway in the folklore of the corn belt is that starchy strip of territory known as Fifth Avenue.

It has been featured by song writers for several generations. When the musical comedy dicky-bird with the one-button slashaway and the geometrical eyebrows invites sixteen bella-

donna heiresses to go on a toodly-oo up the "avenoo," the most crustacean form of tired business man understands that Ethelbert is not referring to Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, or Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

All he needs to say is "*the Avenue*," and the trained public silently agrees with him that there is only one avenue in America which could provide a sufficiently patrician background for a nasal tenor and sixteen harmless little playmates with bare legs.

If the villagers everywhere in the United States have come to regard "Gotham" as the city of dreadful pleasures, they are not to be blamed. The writers of the "Sunday letters," and the space-fillers who provide those one-page stories concerning Wall Street night-hawks and "vamps" with long eye-lashes and chorus girls of killing beauty—they have loaded up the outside population with conceptions of New York as a sort of luxurious lair, lined with eider-down, drenched with perfumery, and with scarlet flags flying about it.

Every struggling hamlet has a son or daughter who has been lured to the white lights of the "great city." This local product may be only a department-store menial or a subway guard,

but when she or he gets back home all the local functionaries sit humbly in the background and listen to Aladdin tales of the enchanted Bagdad.

The Great Myth is being perpetuated by common consent. Everything on the wrong side of the Hudson River is Siberia. "When you leave Jersey City, you're camping out." . . . "I'd rather be a lamp-post in New York City than a millionaire in Chicago."

I have heard two New Yorkers, meeting each other out in the Middle West, condole together as if they had been cast upon a cannibal island. And I have seen them later, back in the good old town they loved so well, taking orders from corner policemen and bowing down before head waiters.

New York is the largest city of the New World. It is first in almost everything. It has more banks, more hotels, more theatres, more cloak and suit lofts, more actors out of work, more taxi drivers who should be back in Sing Sing, more smartly groomed women, more women with chameleon costumes and enamelled faces, more table d'hôte restaurants, more drifting down-and-outers, more streets torn up, more blinding electric signs, more flap-jack demonstrators in show windows—why enumerate? Of

course it is some maelstrom and we stand off and marvel at it.

But, assuming that a man has but one life to live and that he has not been endowed with a craving for crowds and excitement, and has no morbid desire to stand very near the big guns when they are roaring, why should he wish to travel up to the city and become lost in the crush?

The following may be treason, but we will let it ride just the same: The essentials of a civilized and decent and soul-satisfying career are no more plentiful in New York than they are in Minneapolis or Seattle.

Of course, a man who decides to set in his chips in Wall Street will want to sit near the wheel. Furthermore, the jobber in ladies' hats will camp where he can get at the buyers. And the magazine illustrator will want to be near the editors. And so on, for pages and pages.

All the residents of those vast congested areas have good excuses for remaining. Perhaps two per cent. of them find stimulus and inspiration from being near the palpable evidences of vision, courage, and ambition. The others derive a sort of dull satisfaction from being identified with what promises to be the most stupendous mate-

rial achievement of all history, viz., New York City.

A good many of the "typical" New Yorkers who sit at the large desks and are known to the doorkeepers at the clubs can be dated back to little New England towns or Western farms. The streams of business activity converge toward the great seaport, and they were wise enough to set their nets where the waters meet.

But the Great Myth is not founded upon New York's importance as a merchandising centre. It assumes that the only true happiness in the U. S. A. is to be found lurking somewhere between the Battery and Yonkers. We who live outside are supposed to believe that life without cabarets is drab indeed. How far away St. Louis seems when one is almost in the immediate presence of the latest discovery in show girls! And what a line upon the general New Yorkness of things to reflect that only a few years ago this same reigning queen was a waitress in St. Louis!

Every rhinestone that wants to pass for a diamond instinctively moves toward Broadway.

There are more make-believes between the lower wholesale district and Central Park than anywhere else in the world, figuring the same

area. There are more bluffs wearing violets, more beautiful show windows with no stocks of goods behind them, more polite adventurers who are trying to get something for nothing, more ragged-edgers and almost-somebodies than we may ever hope to assemble in our inland cities.

Why does New York get them? Because they are the willing victims of that ancient and perennial fiction that New York is the abiding place of Joy; that Pleasure beckons from every window and there are no turnstiles guarding the primrose path.

They find it convenient to get into an atmosphere where "front" may be made a substitute for character or reputation.

Constantly they delude themselves into believing that they are finding the thing they seek. The hallucination that New York *must* be the nearest earthly approximation to Heaven has been so hammered into them that they are afraid to deny it, even to themselves. When they are walking on their spats and waiting anxiously for luncheon invitations, they continue to be grateful that they are not back in Grand Rapids.

You say that all these sarcastic observations do not concern the real New York—the great

body of executives, and heavy-weight financiers, and keen professional men and clever, public-spirited women who give the metropolis its real fibre. Quite true. The real New York is a wonder. The men and women who actually direct the mainspring influences of New York are well-dressed, well-mannered, well-poised, and acquainted with the rules for good living.

Many of them are self-centred, except when a great upheaval, such as the recent war, gets them out of their narrow orbits. Most of them are inexcusably ignorant regarding their own country. They share, with the polite riffraff and the uncounted thousands of city yaps, a serene belief that Providence has been kind to them in permitting them to live in New York. Newspapers and magazines and plays have fed them the same insidious propaganda that lures the village heller who thinks he is a "twelve-o'clock feller in a nine-o'clock town."

If a man goes to New York because he can make more money there than anywhere else, that fixes his alibi, but does not touch upon the real merits of the case.

If he says that the food and drink are better in New York than can be found anywhere else in the Western World (and most of the glaring

virtues claimed for New York have been suspiciously identified with the digestive tract), the indignant denials will come not only from Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, but there will be shrieks of protest from New Orleans and San Francisco, and even Chicago may refuse to remain silent.

The truth is, there has been a standardization of first-class hotels and restaurants throughout the world. Catering is no longer an old-world secret. There are competent managers and trained chefs and luxurious suites in dozens of growing cities which the stay-at-home New Yorker still classifies as frontier towns with dance halls and shooting affrays.

Furthermore, the Eighteenth Amendment has been a great leveller. Even while the chief asset of Gomorrah is disappearing, the true champion of New York boasts that those who are known to Henri, the head waiter, can "get it" in a tea cup for \$1.50. And after you have enveloped it, you hold on to the table and wonder whether you will try another dance or take a little ride in a white ambulance.

The only man who has a right to discuss comparative values these days is the man who has travelled with an open mind.

Most New Yorkers travel in the wrong direction. And in making up their estimates they too often overlook the fact that inland America is now fairly crowded with people who know their New York and their London and Paris and Rome.

Furthermore, the New Yorkers who have unlimited money and leisure spend at least eighty per cent. of their time at country places, down in Florida, or over on the Riviera. These trunk-dwellers use New York principally to go to once in awhile and to refer to all of the time.

Having delivered these spiteful slams and side swipes, let us revert to the original proposition: New York City is *immense*, in the full significance of the word—our prize exhibit in the way of cities and the logical destination of every tall-grasser who has a bank roll and an aching desire to throw it at something.

We who live out where the plaster is green on the walls and the original settler is still talking politics, derive a very sentimental satisfaction from rambling into the corners of New York which are redolent of history. Even the comparatively modern structures are Parthenons to us. We do not require a Fraunce's Tavern or the house in which Aaron Burr

courted one of his many widows. City Hall means more to us than it does to Tammany.

The cottage in which Poe lived, and Gramercy Park, and the beautiful old Brevoort House, where Jenny Lind came out and sang for the college students, are shrines to the provincials, even if they are only street numbers to the people who ride by reading their newspapers.

Above all else, possibly we remember New York as an embarrassment of riches.

One can dine in but one restaurant in one evening, but isn't it wonderful to have your choice of a hundred places, ranging from a Cascade Room to a ravioli haunt?

And the theatres! There are several hundred show-shops, each with coaxing lights in front of it, and at least a dozen of the new things have been especially recommended. Ziegfelds to right of us, Dillinghams to left of us, and a lot of Barrymores in between.

Because a town is big and alluring is no reason why it should be regarded as the best sort of home. The spirit of neighbourliness seems frozen out of the air in New York City. The stranger doesn't feel that he is getting any friendly glances. He wonders what would happen to him if he should drop dead. Probably

the people would step over him and grumble a little at the obstruction.

New York is full of underlings who are frightened to death if you step up and address them as human beings. They have been dehumanized and put into the white-rabbit division under slow pressure from imported customs, snobbish practices and false systems of classification.

In New York, more than in any other large city in the world, wealth is over-manicured and perfumed and too freely decked with gauds. It is more Oriental than Yankee.

Once more, no one denies the presence in New York of a substantial filling population which is representative of all the best qualities of the best American citizenhood. But the flash, vulgarity, and self-advertising of new wealth are more in evidence than are the rugged New England traits.

That is why it is such a relief to escape, after a week or ten days, and get out somewhere and associate with trees.

New York oppresses the visitor who has a real solicitude for his fellow man, because of the evidences that an overwhelming majority of the residents are not getting very much out of life.

Some of us don't wish to settle down where we will be forever surrounded by packed-in men, women, and children, who live like eight canaries in a cage.

We can find no satisfaction in regarding a juvenile population compelled to use the streets as playgrounds. We would not be comfortable in such a mess of stunted and warped and disproportioned lives.

The most ignorant and inert persons I have ever encountered in North America live in the congested districts of our large cities. There is less hopefulness *per capita* and more asphyxiated ambition. But I never found one of the aborted specimens who didn't pity me because I had to live in Indiana!

New York has an abiding fascination because the exhibits are varied and picturesque, but the big show is about one half Bal Tabarin and the other half Chamber of Horrors.

So, if several millions of us are willing to be regarded as eccentric in preferring the outer dimness to the inner circle of bright lights, go ahead and say what you please about us.

We will come and visit you, no matter what you say, but the return ticket will always be pinned inside the vest.

ADIPOSE

THAT Victorian female figure—"fair, fat and forty"—has gone into the discard with the horse-drawn landau, the voluminous bathing suit, and the napkin ring.

Every woman who is now dodging the harpoons of criticism tries to look starved to death and not over 28, except when washed up.

No more of that antiquated stuff about an architecturally attractive abdomen, with good capon lined. Straight fronts are the mode for both sexes. The flapper prides herself that she can hold together and look compact, even after she has checked her corset and made ready for an evening of catch-as-catch-can with the flippers.

It is all right to be athletic, but no one must advertise the tummy.

Gracious me! It seems only yesterday that the person not palpably underlaid with suet and carrying the foundations of a double chin was supposed to be "run down" and was, therefore, urgently advised to go on cod liver oil,

Now we can look into any home and see the socially prominent standing in front of phonographs and going through absurd jack-knife exercises so as to get rid of the evidence of being well-fed.

The statement that nobody loves a fat man has been weakly contradicted, but just now it seems generally agreed that no fat woman loves herself.

When one of the plump kind sees another who is chubby and asks, "Am I as fat as *she* is?"—the man failing to lie promptly is in wrong for days to come.

Consider the drama. In the days of "Evangeline" the most admired girl in the chorus was shaped like a bass viol. Now she is like a fountain pen.

Almost for the first time in history the steady loss of weight is regarded as a moral triumph instead of a symptom of some wasting disease.

For centuries the waist line was unmeasured and unconsidered and then, all at once, every book-shop became crowded with volumes on how to diet while continuing to eat nearly everything put in front of you.

Then someone discovered the vitamin, and the confusion became more general.

Almost at the same time there came from invisible headquarters a decree that every woman who was skinny should advertise to the world the degree of her emaciation—both above and below.

Our idea of a rich afternoon would be to get Benjamin Franklin, Martha Washington, Dr. Samuel Johnson, Queen Elizabeth, and Oliver Cromwell together on the sunny side of either Fifth Avenue or Michigan Boulevard some pleasant *matinée* day and just let them see for themselves. Would they, or would they not, get an eyeful? And how about having something to talk about after they arrived back home?

LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION

LET us now select words which may be transmitted through the mail and which will, at the same time, properly stigmatize the individual who insists upon giving to the reluctant party of the second part a letter of introduction to some innocent and unsuspecting party of the third part.

If we have any scalding anathema left over, use it on the beaming boulder who wants *you* to give *him* a letter of introduction to someone off yonder.

Then, if there should be a residue of vituperative phrases, how about you, yourself? How about the backbone which so closely resembles a length of macaroni? Why do you, in order to escape the gurgling pest, wish him on to someone who was in your class at college?

Worth-while associations and friendships are worked out by easy and natural processes. The beaten paths converge or run parallel and you have time to size up the fellow traveller and

decide whether or not to say "Hello!" If you get a glazed eye instead of a smile, the incident is closed.

But when you lasso two persons out of a crowd and lash them together, much suffering ensues.

Take a typical case. Consider the physical writhings and mental anguish which result from a strict observance of a kindly custom inaugurated away back yonder by the original buck-passer.

A sits in his office. B enters. B says that he and Mrs. B are going to spend a few weeks at Swizzleham and, because they know that Mr. and Mrs. A once visited the Glugg-Tupleys at Swizzleham, would they advise the Bs to live at the new Hyperion, where the liver and bacon is said to be very good, or move out to the Pomposo, overlooking the park?

Now, on this particular morning, there is no one item, in all the vast reaches of the universe, which so little concerns A as the plans of Mr. and Mrs. B in connection with Swizzleham. A has no appetite for B. The overhanging moustache suggests a walrus nature and the glittering stick-pin is the top note in bad taste. His immediate ambition is to remove B from the rug.

He happens to think of C, who lives in Swozleham. Good old C—always courteous, considerate and obliging! In other words—a goat.

So he gives B a letter to C. It is a compromise between downright perjury and a secret desire to communicate some kind of warning to C. Any code specialist, reading between the lines, would translate the whole thing as follows: "Lay off of this bird. He tells dialect stories."

C is all ready to grab a bowl of whole-wheat biscuit and milk and then hurry to the first tee when the two-legged disease germ gets past the body-guard and all the world is dark.

C reads the letter while his important vital organs try to sink into the lower extremities.

He wants to know what he can do for B. The latter is suddenly pervaded by an overwhelming consciousness that his only purpose in calling on C was to present a letter of introduction. For the first time it occurs to him that he might have burned the letter. He wishes that he had done so.

No one knows who laid down the rule, but it is sacred and binding! He who comes with a letter of introduction must be taken out to luncheon.

Also, the host must force either oysters or clams on the embarrassed visitor. No one eats shell-fish in the middle of the day except upon a letter of introduction.

C must order several courses for B, in order to prove that he has a proper regard for A. He insists upon "some kind of a sweet." This is part of the ritual.

Within a day or two the wives must meet. They never hit it off. In the meantime A moves among his neighbours, respected far beyond his merits.

Do you want to make someone happy? Get a letter of introduction to the famous bone-setter or to the man who can give you cards to any club or to the lady who gives dinners to people who have done things. After you have left town, mail the letter to the might-have-been victim and explain that you were very busy all during your visit.

For once, somebody will say nice things about you.

AWAY FROM HOME

EVERY persistent traveller finally commits himself to a fad. One collects walking sticks and another becomes a fan on church architecture. Once, coming back on the steamer, a man from Pennsylvania showed over forty different kinds of toothpicks!

The camera fever proved to be intermittent, and a passion for accumulating unusual foot gear naturally wore itself out after one trunk was filled. But the old game of guessing at the fellow travellers never lost the original zest.

You happen upon a cluster of Americans, stubbornly trying to "do" Switzerland or Japan or Jamaica according to the printed instructions, and at once you are impelled to bring out your best Sherlocking and try to classify them.

Are they New England or Mississippi Valley? Is it their first time out? Are they having a good time or merely serving a sentence? Has the daughter been away to school? Is Mother really managing the expedition? Did Father

have a nervous collapse before leaving home, or is that hunted look the result of recreation? From what size town do they hail? What do they think of the natives hereabouts? And what do the natives hereabouts think of them?

Well, a good many of them are sappy, that's a fact; but I would rather be a woozy tourist than a blasé expatriate. Heaven help the aloof nondescripts who cease to be American without becoming European. The war has recently interfered a good deal with their loafing, but you will still find a group of them in every European capital, and they are the ones who take a savage satisfaction in burning up their uncivilized countrymen.

It disturbs them to encounter Americans who do not reside in Boston.

And the cheery, what-ho person who wears both suspenders and belt, in accordance with the modern precept of "Safety First," who addresses each stranger as "Brother," and who affects the small American flag in the button-hole—he gives them the frothing rabies.

Let it be admitted that the gabby lad with the smokeroom training can be an affliction when he lets himself go; but he is a good deal easier to take if you sit back, nonresistant, and

hang on to your sense of humour. He simply hasn't learned as yet that all that brotherhood-of-man stuff was written as a joke.

Regard him and all other fellow travellers with a large tolerance and a bountiful compassion. Ever remembering:

That every man becomes erratic in his behaviour when he is out of his own bailiwick and up against new problems. This applies to men of all degrees in all countries. There are not enough cosmopolites in the world to fill Madison Square Garden.

That the speech and dress and manners of any people are puzzling and amusing to every other tribe, so that the tourist, wherever you find him, is rated as a cross between a clown and a mental defective.

That the torments of travel gradually breed in the pilgrim a mood which is one half resentment and one half apprehension, the result being that even when the skies are clear the victim is looking about for dark clouds.

That the readiest weapon of defense is talk, and when you deprive a man of his vocabulary you put him back into the dumb animal division, and load him down with a sense of unworthiness.

When we get away from home we violate all the rules governing our everyday conduct. Our habits are no good to us unless we have the accustomed tools.

American travellers are no more eccentric

than the other frenzied ramblers, but there are more of them, and they represent every possible degree of wealth and social position and previous conditions of provincialism.

The United States of America is the only country producing farmers, small-town merchants and schoolma'ams who have the ambition and the courage to exchange their hard earnings for the benefits of foreign travel. In all other lands, motor cars and steamship tickets are outward evidence of wealth. Can you imagine an English governess or a French peasant farmer drawing all the money from the bank and going on a spree of spending?

The whole of our domain was settled by intrepid pioneers who picked up and left stagnated communities somewhere east of us. The wanderlust is a rightful heritage. Furthermore, we have the money with which to make our dreams come true, provided we do not dream on too large a scale.

But, when we go moving about by the thousands and hundreds of thousands, we certainly do provide entertainment for the side lines.

We start out with an over-developed reverence for landmarks and traditions. Each pilgrimage is apt to take on the hue of a business propo-

sition. We must load up on assorted facts and "broadening influences" each day, so as to get our money's worth. All ways and means are permissible when one is eagerly searching for knowledge and "local colour" and has a time limit hanging over him.

Therefore we see Presbyterian matrons, who will not attend the movies back home, calmly sizing up the wicked antics of a Moulin Rouge, and never a flutter. We must not conclude that travellers leave their morals at home. They are simply playing the game from all angles, and sightseeing covers a multitude of irregularities.

Are most travellers ill-mannered? No—just a little fussed-up by the consciousness that they are giving the party and someone is holding out on the refreshments.

The American traveller who battles at all times for value received is a rarity. Our British cousin has been acknowledged champion in getting everything that his ticket called for, and a little plus. Sometimes he seemed to feel that the seat by the window and the luggage racks were his because Britannia rules the Waves. That logic does not always appeal to a Yank who is already wearing the black-and-blue sou-

venirs of a jolly outing. Whereupon, the *entente* is strained and a second battle of Bunker Hill seems impending. It takes more than a world war to get that fifty-fifty idea accepted by one type of traveller.

The average American on tour is reasonably patient and trying to worry himself into having a good time. One trouble with him is that he tries to be friendly with subordinates who are accustomed to crisp commands. He has not acquired the adamantine "front," combined with the oleaginous *savoir faire*, which enables the crafty old-timer to get what he wants without wrestling for it.

The American away from home is said to be a braggart. This is one of those crystallized misconceptions, the same as the side whiskers of the Englishman and the ruffled shirt of the Frenchman. When an American *does* speak up for his native land, perhaps he has been goaded beyond endurance. For every voluble person there are three or four who are tongue-tied and lonesome and completely out of war paint.

Women get more enjoyment and profit out of travel than the men get. Perhaps the very best example of tourist is the woman who has prepared for the outing by years of inquiry re-

garding history, languages, customs, art, architecture, and music. The only Americans who can speak the foreign languages so as to get along are the women and the college girls. Their French is not the boulevard article, but they make it work. As for dear old Father, he cannot understand "*Oui*." He has been joking Mother for years about her club activities, but when she gets him into the old cities she shows him up. At least she knows Michael Angelo was not Irish, and can pronounce the name of the hotel so the driver will compranay.

"Don't Worry" should be painted on every piece of luggage. Travelling together through the dark woods of an unfamiliar region is the supreme test of compatibility. Prolonged proximity induces irritability. Solitary confinement with another person present is a terrible punishment. The greatest risk of travel arises from too much forced companionship. Happy and much out of the ordinary is the wanderer who doesn't get fed up on his playmates.

We feel compelled to travel in groups, and the members of the party are literally thrown upon each other for hours and hours at a time. Someone has to manage and be spokesman, and if he can hold the job to the satisfaction of all

the persons concerned, he is a seven-times wonder.

If there is a "Wait-a-Minute" in the bunch, he or she can organize a constant strain of ill feeling. Have you ever met Mr. or Mrs. or Miss Wait-a-Minute? The whole expedition is set and ready to move and the marching order is given, and then there is a jam and a maddening delay. The Wait-a-Minute, after sitting around for thirty minutes and doing nothing whatsoever, has suddenly discovered that the post cards must be mailed, the camera loaded, and the shoes brushed up, and the handkerchief of yesterday exchanged for a fresh one, and the guide book unpacked, etc., etc.

If travellers act loony (and they do) probably two thirds of the afflictions which threaten to unhinge reason are wished upon them by friends and relatives. Every day a hundred petty problems present themselves. They are of no importance whatever except to an overchafed imagination. Regard them with smiling indifference, and you ride over without a bump. Keep on tearing the hair and wringing the hands and, after a while, every mole hill will look like the Himalaya Mountains.

The happy pilgrims are those who do not

attempt to move in a herd all of the time. The thing to do is to go bravely up to your good friend and travel mate and say, "Comrade, I have inspected you at close range until your well-known personality has lost all the charm of novelty. I could write a book on the technique which you employ in opening eggs. The slightly audible effects which you originate when gathering coffee from the cup have ceased to be music to my ears. I know that your character is still unimpeachable and you have lost none of the rugged virtues which give you a high standing in our golf club at home, but I am dead weary of seeing your Adam's apple in action. In other words, dear friend, you have got on my nerves, and I have no doubt whatever that you would be happy to gaze at a landscape once in awhile without discovering me in the foreground wearing the same old suit of clothes. Therefore I suggest that, at the next stop, you go to the *Continental* and I will go to the *Bristol* and each will do as he blame pleases for three days, and then, when we get together again, we can look at each other without shuddering."

The tantrums which the amateur traveller exhibits when he is far from home could be headed off if he would take a short course in Christian

Science before booking his passage. Drench your spirit with a don't-care calm. Acknowledge, with a smile, that the biggest fool job in the world is to attempt to reconstruct the inevitable according to your private plans and specifications. If you have become so ossified by habit that you cannot put up with the manners and customs and transportation facilities and cooking and cocktails of the older civilizations, the thing for you to do is to stay at home and watch the trains go through.

Once I heard a man, standing in front of the Café de Paris, say that he couldn't get anything to eat in Paris. He meant that he couldn't get thin beefsteak that had been pounded with a potato masher and then rolled in flour and fried with onions.

Have you ever met the family that went to Europe in search of culture and came back with the news that all the coffee had chicory in it?

Seeing the outside world is the most diverting and profitable of all employments, after one has learned the simple recipe of sitting back relaxed; refusing to be frightened by imaginary pitfalls, and declining to worry over some experience that is rapidly sliding into the past tense.

Beyond every frontier lies a country which

has spent many centuries in arranging its own domestic affairs to suit the resident population. When you drop in from Missouri or Michigan, the clever thing to do is to accept the local arrangements and not try to be a missionary.

Also, remember that you are on a visit and not attending a vaudeville performance. There is no need of exploiting the far-famed nasal accent. You can't get rid of it, but you can omit the tin megaphone. Many of the ladies living in Europe twitter instead of talk. We haven't many of the twittering kind here at home. Our women-folks converse. It sounds all right until you hear it shattering the deathly stillness of the *salle à manger* somewhere on the Continent, and then it sounds just like a billboard advertisement of the U. S. A.

Travellers cease to be painfully abnormal in their habits when they learn that all the beaten paths are smooth, and all the arrangements fool-proof, and the ticket which secures kind treatment is the friendly spirit, with unfailing courtesy attached as a coupon.

Speaking of the perils and delights of a long journey, consider the case of the woman on the veranda at Singapore.

She was a large woman and she sat gazing

seaward, with the Raffles Hotel as a background. Her eyes were red from weeping and the handkerchief was still in reserve, but her grief had racked itself down to a succession of dry sobs. She was almost leaning against the equator and yet her gown was dark as to colour and shaggy as to material.

This woman was just as far away from her home town as it was possible to be and still remain on the planet Earth. It was about an eight thousand miles dig straight through, or possibly thirteen thousand miles, travelling either to the east or west by the established zig-zags of steamship and railway routes. She was certainly a long jump from her own front porch. She felt fifty thousand miles and she looked twice that.

Hiding around the corner, out of range, sat the promoter who had enticed the weeping lady from her corn-belt environment and dragged her to faraway lands of romance and legend and mystery. Now he was trying to decide what to do with her. He was offering her freely to any one who wanted a travelling companion. No takers.

The others had scattered like pigeons in a panic, and only the heavy woman in black and

the nerve-shaken manager remained as the broken remnant of a Grand Personally Conducted Pilgrimage around the World.

He told us the whole story—how he had investigated all applicants before making up the party and taken every precaution to book only those who were moral, refined, and “congenial.” He couldn’t understand why all of his plans had gone to smash. They were all nice people, but they had organized into cliques and were fighting like panthers before the boat was three days out from San Francisco. It was supposed to be a happy family, out for a glorious lark in the Old World. The vacationers were to ride in rickshaws and gaze at sunsets, and listen to temple bells, while the “Squidge” attended to all of those petty adjustments which are inseparable from the business of travelling.

Explanation—“Squidge” is a comic opera term for the menial who follows the king about and does all his worrying for him.

The man who attempts to squidge a drove of twenty or thirty temperamental tourists, each one of whom has come from a community in which he or she is a mountain rising from the plain—that man travels a thorny path.

What will be the verdict of the W. C. T. U. women on the two who smoke cigarettes?

What chance has the Sunday-school superintendent to hit it off with the poker players?

Think of the immediate rating established by the woman who can't play bridge, but does?

When Sioux City, Iowa, attempts to fraternize with Hartford, Connecticut, what ensues?

Will there be indignation meetings organized by those who get inside rooms at the hotels?

If the Burdicks find that the Appletons have a larger stateroom and are nearer the bath, and have been seated at the captain's table, will they suffer in silence? They will, until they can find someone to listen.

It has always seemed to me that Messrs. Cook and Raymond and Whitcomb were out to shatter the two world records held for many centuries by Job and Solomon.

I would rather mobilize an army of five hundred thousand men and march it over the Alps in the dead of winter than attempt personally to conduct twenty-five of my countrymen to Europe and back.

The reason being that when you take an adult of set habits and uproot him from all of his filamentary local connections and get him out-

side of his regular zone of influence, he ceases to function and begins to flop.

When the catfish gets away from the tadpoles and the shady spot under the willows and keeps on swimming until he is out in the ocean, surrounded by sharks, octopi, and mermaids, he is a sorry exhibit and knows it.

The man far from home is put to a brand-new occupation—that of sight-seeing, alternating, possibly, with periods of sea travel, which are supposed to be given over to absolute rest. It takes him a long time to find out that sight-seeing is the hardest work in the world and, when overdone, an expensive drain on nervous energy. As for absolute rest, he regards that as a crime. There will be plenty of time for resting after one arrives at the cemetery.

Returning to the woman who was wearing her winter stuff in Singapore. Somewhere back yonder she had been a small-town pillar of society. The recently departed had left her in possession of a comfortable house of the Hayes and Wheeler period. She had money in the bank and was a guiding influence in club life and her spiced watermelon rinds had received many encomiums.

She was a reader of books and magazines and

was not entirely numb to the calls of romance and adventure. She had aspirations. A woman without positive aspirations never would have arrived at the Raffles Hotel, Singapore.

It has become quite the fashion for those who think they are sophisticated travellers to rag and ridicule the bewildered first-timers who are stumbling their way through foreign lands.

"Where do they come from?" you hear. "Why does it happen that all the yaps in the world suddenly made up their minds to go travelling this year? How, may I inquire, do they get that way? We never see such freak specimens back home!"

The answer being, of course, that they are not freaks or yaps until they are violently separated from the local routines, the established connections, the fixed habits of eating and drinking and recreation, and all the other regularities of some placid and wind-shielded community.

But remember this: When you bump against the American barbarian in Tokio or Cairo or Interlaken, and marvel at his gawkeries and get ready to label him "Impossible," always take into consideration that if he *hadn't* been willing to plan far ahead and make real sacrifices and endure hardships in order to travel and find out

about the world and add a few cubits to his stature, he wouldn't be there at all!

The woman at Singapore was a comedy figure, but also she was the emblem of blasted hopes. The rating which she had laboriously established back in Whiffletree did not help her when she joined the other circumnavigators. They never had seen her house with the pillars in front or read the evening paper accounts of the fêtes on her "spacious lawn." When the factions began to form, she was marooned. Finally, the travellers became so weary of looking at one another and putting up with the maddening social errors of their unspeakable countrymen, that they revolted and demanded refunds, and every separate group hied off by itself, leaving the haggard manager and the panic-stricken widow camped on the veranda of the Raffles Hotel.

He offered her money and transportation, but she refused them. She could not travel alone. She had been promised an escort to protect and advise her, so she sat and wept and held out for the terms of the contract. When we sailed for Hong Kong she was still there, and the manager was waiting for a steamer and gradually submerging his Chautauqua habits under Scotch

whisky. That's no way to wind up a story, but the point of the episode is that the woman was a picturesque and aggravated example of the Yankee abroad.

She never had coached herself to be adaptable and accept new conditions with an amiable philosophy.

She found herself computing by the Adams County standards of weights and measures.

Every new traveller far from home is a victim of Fear. That is why his manners and his mental processes become temporarily abnormal and he falls under the ridicule of those who are sitting at ease, in their accustomed environment, watching him perform.

One kind of traveller yields abjectly to this fear engendered by strange surroundings. He acknowledges the hopelessness of the situation, and becomes dumb and unresisting. He holds out a handful of money to the shopkeeping bandit and says: "Take what you want."

Another kind tries to hide his fear under a loud combativeness. Battling with strange weapons, and not knowing any of the rules of the game, he still hopes that he may exhibit enough of the conquering American spirit to save him from utter humiliation. He demands

itemized statements, and is much given to putting down in a small book the names and numbers of cab drivers who overcharge him. He tells those who are plucking him that he knows the American consul. They are seldom thrilled by the information. He gives himself a good many unhappy minutes and loses more battles than he wins, but, at least, he is entitled to the credit of trying to prove that not over ninety-nine per cent. of the migratory Americans are movable targets and that any one is welcome to take a shot.

Then there is the kind who tries to conceal all the misgivings and trepidations under an hysterical affectation of gayety. The kind who speaks out freely in order to prove that he or she is not to be smothered under the formalities of the *table d'hôte*. Whereupon, the French eyebrow is elevated and the mackerel eye of Merrie England becomes even more glazed than usual, and the speaker is classified "as one of those dreadful Americans."

As a matter of fact, the speaker isn't dreadful at all. Just a little agitated and beating against the bars. Indulging in a high-strung reaction against the chilling regulations of an over-ripe civilization.

The American in a strange country is certainly a ruffled-up and fluttery bird of passage. But, like the erring sister in the sentimental song, he is "more to be pitied than censured."

ORATORY

WE SEE twelve good men and true assembled in one corner of the courtroom.

After they have been reduced to emotional irresponsibility by the maddening inconsequentialities of a tedious trial, the imported hypnotizer stands before them.

He massages their primitive sensibilities with strange incantations until they are mentally and spiritually disintegrated to the consistency of corn-meal mush.

He quavers and trills to them about their gray-haired mothers and little children kneeling down at night to pray and the dear old flag and the dying soldier boy.

Even as the Hindu charms the snake with a droning wind-instrument.

All of the stage groupings and the soft lights and the off-stage music which produce sure-fire effects in the theatrical realms of Bunk and Folderol are used with Belasco cunning. The

proceedings have to do with almost everything except the brutal facts of the killing of a defenseless citizen.

After a time the premises are salty wet.

The assassin is turned loose—a bouquet in his hand.

The collapsed jurors are taken to their homes in ambulances.

And the rhetorical necromancer who has effected this monstrous perversion of justice is, in a more magnified measure than ever before, the superman of the neighbourhood.

The old-time colossi of the criminal courts represented the full flower of the age of oratory.

The word-paintings which charmed the lachrymose agriculturists are now easily identified as chromos.

No Hall of Fame for the late celebrities who merely specialized on mesmeric oratory.

They surrounded Truth with verbal smoke-screens.

They set up false gods and hung wreaths on them.

They were he-sirens, forever leading simpletons off into the bogs.

The glorified spellbinder lost his job when

men began to read and meditate instead of relax the lower jaw and listen.

For many decades our susceptible sires handed the affairs of that huge business institution known as The United States of America over to ornamental song-birds wearing long-tailed coats.

Men got into Congress because they possessed the mountebank's gift of emitting musical sounds.

The national emblem should have been a thrush, instead of an eagle.

The orator lived upon applause. He wanted the noisy approbation of the moment.

The "art" of which he was so proud easily degenerated into a bundle of cheap tricks—a collection of tremolos and mechanical apostrophes and conventional gestures.

He departed without causing any vacancy because his entity was mostly atmospheric. The curse of his example still rests upon us lightly. His lineal descendants are concocting "art titles" for the movies.

GOLF

WE WHO live so near the controlling population of the Middle West that we are jarred by its thought waves carried an important message into the cities a few years ago. We told our friends in the crowded streets to make ready for the big drought.

"What drought?"

"The supreme, climacteric, eventual drought of all time. The whole country is going dry."

One listener would break into raucous laughter. Another would gaze in pitying silence. A third would blister the prophet with the most approved invective of the boulevards. No one, except those who had been in communication with the sovereign, trouble-making voters, believed that an influential city club could be deterred from having highballs on the table and a good song ringing clear.

Those who regarded the drinking of a cocktail as an amiable preliminary to dining could

not or would not understand that a majority of their fellow citizens regarded the drinking of a cocktail as a crime, the same as blowing a safe or beating a crippled child.

The verdict on alcoholic stimulants had been voted and the jury was in the box before the city folks learned that any indictment had been drawn.

They told themselves that a metropolis could not be regulated during play hours by R. F. D. routes. They were like the chair warmers in a brokerage office, who never believe in a panic until after it arrives.

Those of us who predicted nation-wide prohibition happened to be standing where we could see the thing coming. Our view of the funnel-shaped cloud was not obstructed by tall buildings and crowds of people. We had observed the slow, cumulative growth of a sentiment which was inexorable and irresistible.

First, the farming townships went dry. Then the small towns surrounded by the farm lands went dry. Next the counties were cleaned up. The saloons scurried like rabbits and took refuge in the smaller cities. Again they were smoked out. Then the fighting was transferred from courthouses to statehouses. Members of the

state legislatures began to read the signs in the sky. They threw up pinches of dry grass to see which way the wind was blowing. And they got wise.

How often have we heard some puffing gram-pus in a city club say that prohibition was sneaked through while the boys were in France; that a fanatical minority outwitted a somnolent majority; that the Anti-Saloon League hypnotized and bulldozed a lot of feeble-minded lawmakers who were not alive to their responsibilities.

Oh, mush! When an ex-preacher with a white necktie compels a hard-boiled politician to sit up and bark and roll over and play dead, it is not because he is Svengali, but because he carries a gun. The coercive methods of the Anti-Saloon League were effective because congressmen and state legislators were deadly afraid of the weapons carried by the League. And they wouldn't have been afraid of these weapons if they hadn't already checked up the sentiment regarding "booze" in every precinct which they represented. They signed any kind of a pledge put in front of them because they had the trembles every time they thought of the farmer vote and the church vote and the imminent votes for

women. A lot of them would just as willingly have voted for wood alcohol in order to save their various little one-cylinder, sheet-iron political machines.

The man responsible for the dry tidal wave is the bright lad who first suggested that the opinions of the majority shall govern the behaviour of the minority.

The crushing leverage of the Anti-Saloon League began to be felt as soon as it had definitely lined up a good healthy reserve in addition to the fifty per cent. Those who took the trouble to find out what people in the country and in the small towns were thinking knew that the reserve was there, waiting to take orders, and that J. Barleycorn was already in the death chamber. So we stated the facts with a good deal of certainty, and ever since we have been pulling on our city friends the most disagreeable combination of words in the English language, viz., "I told you so."

The gift of prophecy has gone to our heads. If we dally further with a tricky trade it is because our predictions worked out to the very last item.

The real trick of horoscoping is to reveal something that has already come out of the hat.

The wise clairvoyant is a private detective. If the Hoosiers knew about prohibition months before it impacted itself upon the simple urbanites who stand around the corner of Forty-second and Broadway, it was because they were up the road to meet the parade.

If I now attempt another prophecy in regard to a revolutionary change which is ominously spreading from the important centres of population toward every little town, I proceed with a good deal of confidence, because I have been over the territory which is undergoing the change. That's the safe bet! Wait until the thing has happened and then announce that it is *going* to happen.

When prohibition was impending, the alarm had to be carried from the villages to the large cities. Now that golf is getting ready to permeate, the startling news must be carried from the congested apartment buildings out to the placid hamlets. The time has come to stand forth on the Main Street of every settlement with a population running into four figures and shout a warning.

Do you remember the pleasant thrill and the shuddering expectancy that caught you when the solitary horseman, far out in advance, called

to the multitude, "Look out for your horses. The elephants are coming."

The moment has now arrived to say, "Look out for your husbands! Golf is coming!"

Of course the easy-going towns and the sun-drenched lanes are not going to be stirred by the first shrill cry. History does not go into detail, but we may safely guess that even along the Paul Revere route a majority of the annoyed Colonials merely turned over and went to sleep again.

The incredulity, the mirth, and even the contemptuously aroused by the prohibition prophecies of ten years ago will now be visited upon the first golfing Saint Johns to begin talking in the wilderness. They will be told that they are crazy with the heat and numb above the collar button. Even the thousands of male persons already selected by the logic of events and the circumstances of their environment to become happy victims of golf will boast of their ignorance of the game and pooh-pooh the suggestion that it may become a lure to them. Wait and see. Even the "flu" victim is always surprised to find himself included in the epidemic.

The prophecy toward which we are preambing is that golf, hitherto regarded as an ad-

junct to the society column and holding no interest except for city dwellers, is going to carry its fluttering flags to countless dales and hillsides, and become a life-saving diversion for small towns in every part of the United States.

Numerous millions of dollars will be expended within the next decade for tees and fairways and greens and traps and waterpipes and mowers.

Myriads of business and professional men residing in county seats and their neighbouring satellites are going to attire themselves in shameless knickers and shortsleeved shirts and renew their youth in the green fields and beside the still waters.

Men who are too old for tennis and baseball, and too masculine for croquet, and too negligent to hold themselves to any drudging routine of "exercises," are going to find in golf a real elixir of youth—the only golden panacea that will bring back a has-been.

They are going to come out of their slouching laziness and have springs put into their legs.

One of the popular delusions, fostered by careless poetry and loose editorial writing, has been that the people who live in the country and the small towns are necessarily more rugged and

rosy-cheeked and surging with vitality than the flat-dwellers of the cities. Look at the mortality statistics. Study the death rates. Ask the insurance men and the school authorities and the hospitals.

Country air is no good if it is kept outdoors. Wholesome food can be converted into an explosive if cooked in the right kind of grease. Much sleep is not to be regarded as a substitute for the shower bath. Most of our country relatives who are walking with canes and praying for relief from racking pains are simply in need of the dentist.

No man ever acquired bodily vigour by remaining away from the cities. And no other man can be as old at forty-five as the small-town business or professional man who lets down and loses his hold on outdoor activities and starts to take things easy. He will become fat and slow and ponderous and creaky—enjoying no intermediate stage between youth and old age.

Suppose he is a banker or a merchant or a lawyer or a grain buyer in some town large enough to have a couple of movie theatres and paved streets. It is a good town, but it is set to a slow tempo. The prominent citizen we are

considering will live three or four blocks from his place of business. If he walks down town in the morning the chances are that he will adjust himself to the moping gait of those who are headed in the same direction. Or he may, in order to avoid even the pretense of limbering up, ride down in the family "jit" and leave it parked out in front. He visits the post-office and pauses on the corner to talk about nothing in particular. His principal occupation during the whole day, next to that of garnering a few dollars, is to avoid getting his blood into circulation. If it is winter, his office will be frightfully overheated, and he will intensify the atmosphere of comfort by smoking a few cigars. His days are devoted to heavy sitting around indoors. Does he tramp across country with a gun, or heroically work in the garden whenever he can, or go horseback riding? Not one in one hundred does anything of the sort. He is too busy laying the foundations of "rheumatism" and "stomach trouble"—twin Bolsheviki of the corporeal organism.

Coming right down to it, what would you do for recreation and outdoor excitement if you were Mr. Business Man of Oak Grove or Hickory Centre? You would do the same as he

does—become logy and lazy, and satisfy your conscience by riding out in the car each evening for “a breath of fresh air.”

One of the reasons why golf is going to the small towns, to remain there, is that countless thousands of small-townners need it, and it is the only open-air game which will appeal to them forever and ever.

You have heard it called a “rich man’s game.” That is because so many clubs adjacent to big cities have to use a lot of fancy real estate, and are extravagant in the management of the clubhouse and the course, and pay fancy salaries. The dues and assessments in many of these clubs have terrified the player of moderate means. In the meantime, the little nine-hole clubs in the smaller towns have continued to do business. The public courses, operated by municipalities and usually charging a small playing fee, are congested with players from dawn until dusk.

In Scotland the clerk or mill hand returns from his work at 5:30 p. m. or thereabouts, has his tea and seed cake, and goes out on the “links” and plays 18 holes, for the twilight does not thicken until after nine o’clock. He has his supper after the game. A set of clubs

will last him for years. He will average several rounds to every ball used up. Would Scotland tolerate a game intended for spendthrifts? Don't ask foolish questions.

With the gradual cutting down of the working day in America, the Saturday half-holidays, the dull intervals in both factory and farm towns, when all business is condensed into a few "rush hours" each week, don't you see that we have thousands of men and women of all ages who will be candidates for golf every summer afternoon and evening? Furthermore, for these house dwellers to get into the free open, with the springy turf under their feet, and the green stretches ahead of them and the ecstasy of contest tugging at their hearts—it will be a God's blessing to every one of them.

The hard roads and the multiplication of moderate-priced cars have squeezed the rural communities into a close brotherhood. Every man who lives within twenty miles of a golf course can get from his desk to the first tee within an hour. The city man with membership in a suburban or country club will average at least an hour from his office to the clubhouse. Therefore, when you figure on supporting memberships for clubs that will soon be organized

you must understand that the town fifteen miles away is just the same as across the street.

And when golf once gets into a community it isn't a flare-up that fades away, like archery or ping-pong. It becomes as intrinsic as the mating instinct and as perennial as the Masonic fraternity. The blamed thing isn't a "game" at all. It is a life work. When a man consecrates himself to it, he is liable to slacken up on all other obligations. That is why it is in order to announce: "Look out for your husbands! Golf is coming."

Returning to our text and hammering it in, point by point, after the manner of theologians, golf is going to take up a permanent residence in the provinces, because there aren't any provinces any more. The boulevard highways and the wife-driven flivvers, to which reference has been made, and the long-distance 'phone and the R. F. D., and the mail-order catalogues, have made every farming township a suburb of the city. The man in the country who has money will spend it for electric lights, tailor-made clothes, grapefruit, Galli-Curci records—also fancy chocolates and bonbons mixed at one dollar per throw. When it becomes evident to him that golf is a reasonable luxury to which he is

entitled, he is not going to balk because of money considerations.

Don't overlook the fact that the folks who live in the small towns are more closely upon the heels of new events than ever before. One month after Mr. Ziegfeld produces a new "Follies" in New York, all of the young folks in our neighbourhood will be dancing to the latest tunes invented by Gene Buck and Irving Berlin and appraising their relative merits.

Do you know that late in the nineties there was a sudden and terrific increase in attendance at all colleges and universities, especially west of the Alleghanies? There are five times as many college-bred men and women living in the rural communities of America as there were in 1890. In the townships near my post of observation there must be ten times as many. Most of these ex-collegians do not believe that they must move into the cities in order to be successful and happy. A great many of them are farming, on a large scale and according to most revolutionary methods. They are just as alert and up-to-date and receptive to live propositions as their classmates who took to the large cities. They read magazines of the right kind. They know what is happening in all parts of the

world. Any one who classes them as "yaps" proves that he has a Sunday supplement education.

Now, the fact that community leaders everywhere have begun to inquire about the Scotch invasion, and to wonder if it will take in their neighbourhood eventually, is the best possible evidence that golf courses will hereafter multiply on an increased ratio. Those who do not wish to be tempted and fall must refrain from flirting with golf even in their day dreams. The investigator first endures, then pities, and then falls hard. The tantalizing cajoleries and postponed realizations can hardly be described to those who know of golf merely as a sweeping blow at a small ball with a slender implement made of iron and wood. They must find out for themselves, and then it will be too late. Fooling with golf is like taking hypodermic injections of morphia just to find out if there is a resulting sensation—only you finish in a locker-room instead of a sanitarium.

Golf is catholic in appeal, the same as rag-time, high-heeled shoes, and chewing gum. It is like the black locust, growing bravely wherever it is planted.

In any community that has a population of

regular human beings who are not hard up for money, and who can steal a little time from the treadmill, the conditions are already ripe for the organization of a country club which shall be a live social centre and a grand rejuvenator for all those who are becoming attached to their shells and sufferings from atrophy of the spirit of youth.

The greens are eighty per cent. of a golf course. You can have a tall flag pole, and a pillared palace for your social doings, and a Scotch "pro" with knotty wrists and a Harry Lauder dialect, and the most beautiful young women of the countryside pouring tea on the veranda, and comfortable benches at every tee, and alluring vistas of trees and water and spangled wild flowers, but if you haven't true and velvety greens on which the little pellet will speed straight from the club without jump or deviation, you will have no moral right to advertise your social organization as a golf club. You will simply be a promoter of profanity and a procurer for the lower regions.

On every course the tees should be neat and well surfaced, the boxes cleanly painted and always supplied with good sand, the direction flags fresh every season, the greens ready for

putting. When a man is playing golf he shouldn't be called upon to look at anything displeasing, except the fellow who is licking him.

To make the turn at the far end of a golf course and then, starting homeward, to look out across the spread of vivid green, the matted hills gleaming on one side and shadowed on the other, the trim fairways contrasting sharply with the jungled neglect of the "rough," every line of vision saved by some attractive interruption before it dares to become monotonous; just enough movement by white-clad players to put a touch of life into an otherwise sleeping panorama—it is great! It is, unless you happen to miss your drive, in which case the whole picture resembles one of Gustave Doré's illustrations of Dante's "Inferno."

If you are going in for golf, and of course you are if you get a chance, use your influence to make the local course a delight to the eye. Golf is play, even if it does look like work, and the scientists are right in urging that we keep our souls in condition by leaning up against the true and the beautiful. The confirmed golfer feels a boyish happiness when he stands at the first tee of a well-planned and well-maintained course. He is impatient for the feel of the turf under his

heavy shoes and the unfolding charms of the successive avenues, each picturesquely different from the preceding, and arousing within him a tingling hope of glory to be achieved.

It is true that he may come in a couple of hours later walking on his knee caps and putting the duffer's curse on Saint Andrew, but all that temporary grief is merely incidental to the career. The heartbreaks are quite transitory, and next day the struggler is back in the locker-room putting on his gayest duds and straining at the leash, because at last the day has arrived on which he is going to sting the ball and give it a ride, somewhat after the manner of Harry Vardon.

The man who wrote "The Pleasures of Hope" must have been an early golfer. Likewise, the writing person who said something about "Of all sad words," etc., might have received his inspiration by listening in at the nineteenth hole.

It is a game of restraint, of relaxation, of calm concentration, of easy and deliberate planning, instead of mere smashing through by youthful strength. That is why the man of seventy will often trim his grandson of twenty, who prides himself on being an "athlete." You can't get anywhere in golf merely by having lumps on

your arms. You need a judgment of distance, a sense of rhythm, the temperament of a Chinaman and a trained coördination of muscles and nerves.

The man who has played for thirty years still feels that he is standing on the outskirts of golf waiting for someone to hand him a ticket of admission.

Because golfing skill is elusive and usually in the future tense, the game never loses zest and no one ever put it aside as something accomplished and done with.

And then, best of all, coming back to the principal asset of the game—it is the only outdoor pastime which middle-aged and elderly men may play with abiding interest for hours at a time at almost any season of the year.

It is the only game which is an absolute diversion. The player who follows that ball down the course, eager to get it into that tricky little cup, forgets everything else except the methods to be employed in arriving at the flag. If he has a note falling due next day and sinks a putt from off the green, he feels just as happy as the man who is holding the note—possibly happier.

Golf leads one away from domestic vexations and business worries. Sometimes the remedy

is almost as agonizing as the ailment, but at least the game differentiates our tribulations and adds the spice of variety.

Even those who become hopeless addicts are seldom able to explain why golf has such a grip on them. One reason, as already suggested, is that the student is constantly drugging himself with the belief that he is about to attain the unattainable. Nirvana is always about two holes ahead. He never catches up with it, but he continues the chase until he holes out in a cemetery.

Isn't it possible that another important secret of the game's popularity is that it permits the player to progress, literally and geographically, instead of compelling him to remain in one spot doing the same fool thing over and over again? Put a regular golfer on the croquet grounds or in a tennis court, and he feels as if he were locked up in a prison cell. He wants the big open spaces and plenty of elbow room.

Golf is a long journey on foot, with the fatigues and monotonies of pedestrianism miraculously extracted.

It gratifies the instinct, which every man has kept over from his primitive forebears, to get beyond the house walls and fences, and scout

around bareheaded through fields and forests and along meandering "cricks." It combines a communing with nature and the lust for victory, and that, it will be conceded, is some combination.

It inveigles and wheedles and seduces lazy men into working like galley slaves and forgetting that they are tired, so long as they have a chance to lug home the bacon.

If you will watch the foursome holing out at the home green, you will notice that when the last ball has blopped into the cup, the players suddenly come back to themselves. With sagging shoulders and dragging footsteps and gusty sighs and laboured breathing they move wearily toward the clubhouse, proclaiming to the blue sky above and the green grass all around that they are dog-tired and all in. And the nineteenth hole has nothing on except Orange Pekoe! Oh, well, perhaps it's for the best!

But they are going to get even with you country people for taking their Scotch away from them. They are going to wish on to you a lot of drivers and brassies and spoons and middies and mashies and jiggers and goose-necks and pulls and slices and tops and founders and skies and sclaffs and dubs and chips and lofts and

run-ups and bogies and pars and birdies and eagles. Don't you know what these words mean? Be patient. You will learn by and by.

A great life, my friends, if you don't weaken, and you can't weaken when the match is all square and a small bet riding.

If the doctors are safe in predicting an epidemic when they know that germs are finding their way into certain people who have not been rendered immune, are we not justified in posting up our prophecy in regard to golf? The germs are everywhere and working incessantly. No one between the cradle and the grave is immune.

Small towns ahoy! Golf is coming!

NON-ESSENTIALS

WHICH traveller collects the hardships—the one with the toothbrush or the one with three indestructible trunks?

Happy is he who can put within reach the things he needs and avoid becoming a haggard caretaker.

If our friends acquired only those items which are indispensable to reasonable contentment, what would they do with all the cedar chests and extra closets and attics and storerooms and safety deposit boxes?

The founders of the family name arrived with an axe, a rifle, a skillet, and a spinning wheel. While building an empire, they frequently gave thanks for all the bountiful goodnesses vouchsafed to them.

And now, granddaughter thinks that the Fates are treating her rough if she doesn't get her facial massage once a week.

Civilization means the banking up of material accessories which we do not need.

The fun of spending money is to garner things for which we hanker, without being compelled to explain why.

But the shopping pastime can be worked up into a dreadful mania for collecting non-essentials.

The problem is to find a happy compromise between living in a tree and endeavouring to carry a ton of personal property under each arm.

Do you ever play the new game of solitaire called "Looking Backward"? You get all the cancelled checks of last year and finger them over and ask yourself, "Why?" If you can find the answer, you win.

The article we covet begins to shrink the moment the price-tag is removed.

Every poor man in America would like to own an orange grove and a yacht. Did you ever see an orange grove or a yacht that wasn't for sale?

What becomes of the beautiful specimens of neckwear seen in shop-windows? Men rush in and buy them and then hide them.

We of the U. S. A. are the greatest little tribe

of buyers in the world, specializing on gorgeous tomfooleries.

Maybe after a while you will learn to project yourself into the wiser realms of the future. Before signing a check or committing yourself to a venture, you will find it possible to see the transaction as it will appear two years away, on the road behind. When you acquire this gift, you will lose much of your fretful desire for freak golf clubs, mining stock, striped shirts, platinum cigarette cases, hair tonics, toy dogs, and midnight suppers.

INDIANA

INDIANA has a savour not to be detected in Ohio. It is decidedly un-Michigan-like. Although it tinges off toward Illinois on the west and Kentucky on the south, the community is neither nebulous nor indefinite. It is individual.

Indiana is not Out West or Way Down East or Up North or south in Dixie.

It is true that, west of the Platte River, Indiana is supposed to be under the wither and blight of Eastern decay. Conversely, as one leaves Columbus, Ohio, and moves toward the region of perpetual sea-food, he encounters people to whom Terre Haute and Cripple Creek are synonymous.

The Hoosier refuses to be classified by those who lack information. He knows that his state is an oasis, surrounded by sections. Our people are clotted around the exact centre of population. Boston is not the hub. It is a repaired section of the pneumatic rim.

When a state is one hundred years old (Indiana is beyond the century mark) it escapes the personal recollections of the pioneer, and is still so young that newspapers do not burn incense before the grandchildren of eminent grandparents.

We have grown some ivy, but we have not yet taken on moss.

Indiana has made history, but it figures that the present and the future are more worthy of attention than a dim and receding past.

Indiana has cemeteries and family trees, but does not subsist on them.

If the Hoosier is proud of his state, it is because the state has lived down and fought down certain misconceptions. Even in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the fact that Indiana produces more gray matter than hoop-poles is slowly beginning to percolate.

For a long time the Hoosier was on the defensive. Now he is on a pedestal.

Forty or fifty years ago the native son who went travelling owned up to an indefinite residence somewhere between Chicago and Louisville. To-day the Hoosier abroad claims Indiana fervently, hoping to be mistaken for an author.

The Indiana man respects his state because it has grown to importance and wealth without acquiring a double chin or wearing a wrist watch.

The sniffy millionaire and the aloof patrician do not cause any trembles in the state of Indiana.

Even our larger cities have no thoroughfares shaded by the gloomy strongholds of caste. Some of the more enterprising comrades are unduly prosperous, but they continue to reside in homes.

The state is short on slums and aristocratic reservations. In other words, we are still building according to specifications.

The number of liveried servants residing within the boundaries is incredibly small and does not include one person born on the banks of the Wabash.

We have a full quota of smart alecks, but not one serf.

Because Indiana is not overbalanced by city population and is not cowed by arrogant wealth and has a lingering regard for the cadences of the spellbinder, an old-fashioned admiration for the dignified professions, and local pride in all styles of literary output, the Hoosier has achieved his peculiar distinction as a mixed type

—a puzzling combination of shy provincial, unfettered democrat and Fourth of July orator. He is a student by choice, a poet by sneaking inclination, and a story-teller by reason of his nativity.

Indiana has been helped to state consciousness because a great man arose to reveal the Hoosiers to themselves. The quintessence of all that is admirable in the make-up of the native was exemplified in James Whitcomb Riley.

No wonder he was beloved and has become the central figure of our Walhalla. Why shouldn't we be proud of our own kin?

The state is full of undiscovered Rileys, inglorious but not necessarily mute.

Your passer-by looks out of the car window and sees the Hoosier on the depot platform, necktieless and slightly bunched at the knees. According to all the late cabaret standards, the Hoosier is a simpleton, the same as you observe in the moving pictures.

Alight from the train and get close to our brother before you turn in your verdict.

Forget that he shaves his neck and remember that many a true heart beats under galluses.

Pick out a low, roomy box on the sunny side of the general store and listen with open mind,

while he discourses on the crops, and bass fishing, and preparedness for war, and General Lew Wallace, and Christian Science, and how to find a bee-tree. Do you want a line on Booth Tarkington or Albert Beveridge or Tom Taggart? He will give you the most inside information and garnish it with anecdotes.

The Hoosier may wear the wrong kind of hat, but he is alert on men and affairs and living doctrines. For sixty years the state has been a crucible of politics. It was a buffer between crowding factions all during the Civil War.

Just as the Hoosier emerges from the cradle he is handed a set of convictions and learns that he must defend them, verbally and otherwise. So he goes into training. He may turn out to be a congressman or a contributor to the magazines, but even if he escapes notoriety he will always be a belligerent, with a slant toward the intellectual.

What happened away back yonder to make Indiana different? Listen! There were two migrations early in the nineteenth century. From the seaboard there was a movement to the west. From the Carolinas and the mountain regions there was a drift northward across the Ohio River. Indiana was settled by pioneers

who had the enterprise to seek new fields and the gumption to unpack and settle down when they found themselves in the promised land.

Indiana is a composite of steel mills and country clubs, factories and colleges, promoters and professors, stock-breeders and Chautauqua attractions, cornfields and campuses. It grows all the crops and propaganda known to the temperate zone.

If a high wall could be erected to inclose Indiana, the state would continue to operate in all departments, but the outsiders would have to scale the wall in order to get their dialect poetry.

Here's to Indiana, a state as yet unspoiled!
Here's to the Hoosier home folks, a good deal more sophisticated than they let on to be!

COMPARISONS

WERE the mint juleps of the Pendennis Club, in Louisville, more seductive than those of the Union Club, in New York City? Go ask of the wind that blows across the bone-dry prairie.

In a voting contest between Baltimore terrapin and New Orleans pompano, who could make up his mind?

All the time we are being asked to pin our approval to dangerous comparisons. Don't you think St. Louis is a better town than Detroit? Isn't Pasadena pleasanter in the winter than Palm Beach? Don't you feel convinced, in your heart of hearts, that alligator pear is immensely superior to salted nuts? What is the answer in any case? The answer is that there is no sense to the fool question.

If your best girl lives in Gopher Prairie and is sitting there waiting for you, why then Gopher Prairie has it plastered all over Newport for architecture, beauty, civic pride, social distinc-

tion, all-around intelligence and sophisticated up-to-dateness.

To the derelicts on the benches along the Thames Embankment, London is a stifling charnel-house.

Perhaps you look out of the car window and pity the people who have to live in those towns. You compare the meagre picture of the village with the far-flung and megatherian panorama of the city boulevard, streaming with life and buttressed by towering palaces. Before you add up the total of your observations, remember that the village dignitary has seen the boulevard and does not crave it.

Every town is a city if the man living there finds opportunity, the right woman, a sound roof above his head and the trimmings of normal existence. And before you make him the victim of any smug comparison, try to find out if these moving motor cars and high apartment houses have really added any importance to your submerged career.

Revising an old adage, comparisons are odorous. They are rooted in ignorance and thrive upon prejudice.

Once a native son and a gilded codfish met at a dinner party and entered upon a heated de-

bate as to the relative merits of San Francisco and Boston. Finally they turned to the by-sitters and demanded a verdict and the sufferers responded, as with one voice, "Philadelphia wins!"

The point of which is that no one ever dislodged any mortal from those preferences and predilections which are founded upon the sentimental associations of youth.

The flapper raves of John Barrymore and grandmother smiles in pity and says, "My dear, you never saw Edwin Booth."

Jenny Lind was as incomparable to the hoop-skirts as Galli-Curci is to the no-skirts.

Try to convince an old-time fan that Mike Kelly did not class with Ty Cobb or Babe Ruth.

Uncle Henry out at Willow Grove believes that Haverly's minstrels were bigger than the Hippodrome.

The Varsoviennne vs. the Toddle—there is an argument that never could be ended!

The eyes of youth are magnifying glasses and the imagination which has not become weary sees everything in colours. Go back to your old home town and learn that the stately mansions have shrunk to cottages and the "ole swimmin' hole" is just a puddle of warm water.

The most desirable spots on the map are those that treated you right. Our best people are those who send invitations. All streets are wide to the prosperous man. No other town can compare with the town which has a triumphal arch at every intersection, giving welcome to contentment and happiness.

SERVANTS

THE first fruit of prosperity is to have someone else fill the tub. And breakfast in bed! Nothing could be more so, even in Newport.

The top knoll of success has not been attained until the climber is entirely surrounded by cringing and whispering menials. The harder the climb, the more the menials. In all the perfumed realms of the Newly Important there is no matron so haughty as she who built the fires up to the time she was eighteen years of age.

We have set all the scenery for a spectacle involving the employment of a great army of supers. They are to provide the dull background, while the spangled kings and queens of the elect stand down front and sing the solos, flooded with the soft spot-lights of an admiring publicity.

We have built up an enormous demand for serfs, but no one has invented a process for turning them out.

The young lady who brings in the food scorns the garb of slavery and is made up for the third act of a musical play. Why not? She has been taught for years that she is entitled to all of the social privileges and toilet arrangements of Mrs. Astor and Gloria Swanson. In bestowing the romaine she does a correct imitation of Queen Mary handing out the term prizes at an Orphanage.

The public schools compel the freckled lad to believe that he is a swelling bud, and that the full bloom may be Thomas A. Edison, Judge Gary, or Warren Gamaliel Harding.

When the lad arrives at the age of twenty and declines to wear a whipcord uniform and touch his cap to some large pink lady in tulle then it seems that the trials of the rich are quite beyond endurance.

Probably no good butler ever was born in the U. S. A. No Boy Scout ever grew up to wear side-whiskers and arrange the flowers for a dinner-party.

The girl who feels within herself the surging talents of a Maude Adams is not going to act as day watchman over a strange baby.

They say that domestics captured direct from the steerage have to be locked up or they

become temperamental. It must be the climate.

The same old regulars line up at the employment agencies—nerve-shattered millionairesses looking for meek females with a supernatural gift for doing everything right, and battle-scarred veterans of the kitchen and pantry, still searching for that imaginary haven in which “interference” will be unknown.

When any one says that now, since the war, we produce everything the same as in Europe, tell him to drop off at Peoria, Illinois, and try to engage a good valet!

THE OLD-TIME RALLY

THE "rally" is just about extinct. Voters firmly refuse to be wrought up at regular intervals, even in Indiana. They will turn out in flocks and droves to welcome a presidential candidate and they will cheer decorously and then drive home in a placid state of mind, glad they are going to vote for the right man. But this is Christian Endeavour politics—sterilized politics—imitation politics.

Oh, for the frenzied days of forty years ago! Do you remember the "Tanners" with their oil-cloth capes, the flaming torches, the Greeley hats, the maniacal shrieks, the fisticuffs, the night riders, the gesticulating swarm of hot-eyed men outside of each polling place? If you didn't live in Indiana during the seventies and eighties, you never saw partisan politics in full bloom.

The smouldering hatreds of one presidential campaign overlapped upon the growing ani-

mosities of the next one. County and township elections in between helped to maintain a constant and genial temperature of about 212 degrees Fahrenheit. The bloodstains and fever of war were still in evidence. Soldier boys were still voting as they shot and talking as they voted.

And the newspapers! The editor started in with "hell-hound" and worked up from that.

Indiana was the hottest cauldron in the national kitchen because the result of each campaign was in doubt. Grant carried the state in 1872; Tilden captured it in 1876; the Republicans stormed it in 1880 under the leadership of Garfield, and kept their banners planted on the dark and trampled ground until 1884 when the Democrats made a furious charge under Cleveland and Hendricks and regained the position, holding it until 1888, when Benjamin Harrison and his home guard repelled the foe. They were driven out in 1892 but the Republicans came back again in 1896 and clung for sixteen years!

In each presidential year there was a state election in October. The result of this election was supposed to have an immense moral influence upon other wavering states. The national

and state campaign committees shipped heavy artillery and small arms into Indiana by the train-load. The Hoosier state was the funnel-shaped whirligig right in the heart of the raging storm. It was called the "pivotal" state. It began to pivot early in the spring of each presidential year and kept on pivoting until snowfall.

The early months were given over to skirmishes and battles within the party—sorting out county tickets, booming rival candidates for state offices, endless discussions in superheated harness shops, grocery stores, meat markets, livery stables, and undertaking establishments of the comparative chances of the giants who were striving for the presidential nomination. The newspapers, which from one year's end to another had no editorial policy except to heap fulsome praise upon all representatives of their own party and throw poisoned javelins at leaders of the corrupt and venal opposition, would begin breaking into italics and exclamation points.

All quarrels within the party ended with the conventions. The independent voter was unknown. If you lived in Indiana, you had to be a Republican, a Democrat, a floater, or a help-

less female. The greenbackers, a hybrid growth resulting from morbid conditions, sprang up in occasional fence corners for a while and then were plucked and put back where they belonged. By the way, "belonged" is the word. Every man "belonged" to a party and loved to say so, in a loud and penetrating voice, while standing in front of the drug store. The voter who never had scratched his ticket was a wayside hero and sang his own praises. This is how he told it: "I'll vote for a yellow dog if he's runnin' on our ticket!"

Sometimes he almost got his wish.

When the presidential candidate was named, messengers on horseback carried the news to the outlying townships. Telephones had not come in. The buzz of incipient frenzy began to freight the air. Surely it could have been heard anywhere in Illinois or Ohio. Every town big enough to have a place on the map immediately called a "ratification meeting."

Has any one heard of a ratification meeting lately?

They piled up the tar-barrels and turned loose the defiant oratory. That was the real opening of the campaign—in June, not September.

After waiting possibly a week, the townships would begin raising liberty poles, organizing sheepskin bands and mobilizing the faithful into marching clubs. Each member of the fanatic company known as a marching club chipped in for a coat of red, white, and blue, a cap with a fluffy plume, and a torch shaped like a ballot-box. In the moneyed centres, such as LaFayette and Terre Haute, the business men's club would go in for flambeaux, white plug hats, and star-spangled umbrellas. All this was in June, mind you—not September.

Campaigns were not engineered by chairmen in those delirious days. The voters manufactured their own excitement. Party leaders simply galloped along the side lines and tried to keep up with the procession. There was no make-believe about it. Each partisan loved his own candidate—worshipped him. He was blind and idolatrous in his worship—shouted and sang and marched and counter-marched until he was in a trancified condition, the same as a whirling dervish or a Moki snake-dancer.

Looking back from the calm of these later years it seems almost unbelievable that so many thousands of sincere and patriotic citizens should have hated with a devouring and ven-

omous hatred the misguided but well-meaning Horace Greeley; a brave and clean and dignified soldier such as General Hancock, or an incorruptible executive such as Grover Cleveland.

Our shame is slightly modified by the reflection that we were goaded beyond endurance by the insults heaped upon General Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, our much-beloved "Jim" Blaine, and the favourite son of our own state, Benjamin Harrison.

The cubs in every country town snarled and yelled and fought the same as their elders.

"Hurrah for Hayes!" would shout some bright-eyed little republican Rollo.

"A rope to hang him and a knife to cut his throat!" would retort some Diminutive Democrat, full of home-training.

Then the two would clinch and go down into the dust together.

What could you expect from the juveniles when the voters were still singing about hanging Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree?

A county-seat rally in those days was ostensibly called for the purpose of gaining votes. In reality it was a noisy demonstration of contempt for the opposition. It gave the frantic

partisans a chance to get together and further inflame their minds and nourish their prejudices. They wanted to hear the campaign orator who could say the most scalding and vitriolic things about the contemptible and cowardly marplots of the opposition.

The farmers drove for miles and miles across the prairie dirt roads to attend these hate-feasts. Each wagon had a spring seat in front. Behind it were boards laid across, and there, in the tail end, was a rocking chair for some withered grandpa or grandma whose remaining vitality was still being exerted in the right direction. Down the dusty roads they came, wagon after wagon, the men in dark store clothes of grotesque misfit, the women baggily gowned, and the young folks rigged out in fearful and wonderful costumes of home manufacture. Usually each township came as a solid delegation—a long row of wagons decked out with branches of trees and strings of cheap bunting, a martial band thumping away in one of the wagons, hand-painted banners of a highly insulting character hoisted above others, probably one "float" built up from a hay rack, with girls in white dresses and tri-coloured sashes to represent the states of the union, and high in the

centre the goddess of liberty, grinning benignly.

The heated imagination of those days ran to allegory. I have seen as many as twenty floats at a country rally, one representing a brutal Southern master flogging a Negro, another showing gruesome figures of the Ku Klux, another depicting a boy in blue upholding the banner of our candidates, and so on, all tending to keep alive the bitterness of the wartime and reveal in picture form the malign schemes of the enemy.

At a Republican rally the Democrats lined up to welcome these tableaux and jeer at them. The repartee was usually direct and intensely personal. The town marshal and his assistants had a busy time untangling the belligerents. By day the speechmakers shouted and the glee clubs sang, while fifes and drums kept up their tedious but exhilarating thump and tootle. By night the uniformed clubs trailed in torch-light parades, and when it was all over the delegations rode homeward making night interesting with their whoops and howls.

These rallies represented in the aggregate a tremendous expenditure of time, money, vocal energy and spiritual essence, without changing very many votes. Probably ninety-eight per

cent. of the voters in Indiana were rock-ribbed in their adherence to one party or the other. They were almost equally divided. The election went to the party that could capture the "floaters" or could rush illegal voters across from Kentucky or by night train down from Chicago. The "floater" was usually an unlettered son of the hazel brush, a village loafer or a large town hobo who craved either personal solicitation or currency, and usually both. The "floater" held aloof from either party and pretended to be much in doubt as to whither the call of duty led him. He felt flattered and saw himself in a new importance when he could induce men of large affairs and tremendous standing in the community to coddle him, handshake him and take him out for long walks at night.

On election day the floater sat on a fence near the polling place and waited, still pondering on affairs of state; still holding his head and trying to come to some decision. He would be approached by a party worker, to whom had been assigned the delicate task of getting Bill. Something like the following dialogue would ensue:

"Hello, Bill."

"How are you, Cap?"

"Voted yet?"

"Nope."

"How you goin' to vote?"

"Well, I can't just make up my mind. Good many people been talkin' to me. Don't know as I'll vote at *all*," and he looks down street, evading the gaze of the determined "Cap."

"Bill?"

"Yep."

"I'd like to see you for a minute."

"All right, Cap."

He detaches himself from the fence with some difficulty and follows "Cap" across the street and down the alley into a secluded poultry house, trailed at a not very respectful distance by two or more gentlemen wearing badges that are not similar to the badge worn by "Cap."

What happens in the poultry house will never be known until the practical politicians of Indiana begin writing their secret memoirs. But when "Cap" comes out holding Bill by the arm, Bill has a ballot folded in his right vest pocket. "Cap" takes him on a dog trot to the polling place. The friends of "Cap" block and interfere when opposition tries to crowd up and rescue Bill; the "floater" is pushed in front of

the open window; the ballot comes out of the vest pocket and is poked through the window. The judge announces in a loud voice that Bill has voted.

Men of the "Cap" variety had a lot to do with carrying Indiana for one party or the other until the Australian ballot law began to hamper individual enterprise.

Then the "floater" began to lose his relative importance. He could be fixed, but he couldn't be delivered.

New issues and new methods have gradually eliminated the old-time political madness. At one time campaigning was the only form of public entertainment known in our state. Now we have the movie theatre, the coloured supplement, the radio ear-muffs, the street carnival, baseball, and band concerts. The bitterness of the war period has evaporated and newspapers try to soothe rather than to agitate. Republicans no longer hate Democrats. They do not so much as pity them. They simply regard them as the less interesting features of the landscape.

OVERLORDS

ONE day, in the shade of the big top, the "fixer" employed by an amusement enterprise billed as the world's greatest, revealed the secret: "When a trouble-maker tries to put over a false claim for damages, knowing that the circus will be leaving at midnight and that we cannot stay over to fight him in court, I never try to settle with him. I find out who owns him and then I go and square the whole mix-up with the man higher up. A few big guns give all the orders in every town."

How about those essays on the essentials of leadership? It is easy to sit at a desk and decide that the men who dominate the crowd have superior methods of reasoning, a wider range of vision, and a large store of expert information on many subjects. Theoretically, college professors should constitute a ruling class. Between ourselves, we know that they form a large but ineffective group, well in the back-

ground. They utter many dogmatic opinions, but cut very little ice.

China was inert for centuries because officials were chosen by the test of scholarship. Now the men who smash through and get results have taken charge.

When you size up the rugged party who rides down opposition and rules his neighbourhood, you may not find the outward symptoms of culture but often you will find a lower jaw suggesting the bulldog that takes first prize at a bench show.

From the sewing circle and the nine-hole golf club up to the most powerful political machine in the world, the whip is cracked by some assertive individual who issues crisp commands while you and I and all of our kind are hemming and hawing and inquiring as to precedents.

The smallest town you see from the car window harbours a small replica of Dick Croker or a milk-fed miniature of Charles Murphy.

We advertise our democracy and then, in every crisis, throw back six centuries to the feudal period and wait to get our instructions from some benevolent baron.

The precincts and districts in politics are owned in fee simple by certain sachems who do

the bargaining. Some of them are beheaded, but even then the supreme authority does not revert to the strap-hangers. It is simply transferred to a new set of moguls.

When a bunch of boys assemble on the common to "choose up," one of the lot, with steel-gray eyes and knotty looking fists, steps out and says, "I'll be captain." No one dares to challenge him. The opposition is not organized. He tells the others what to do next. If he lives to be eighty, he will still domineer and dictate—and get away with it.

That's the trouble. The world is full of Napoleons who carry mufflers. Pacifism is more important to them than the meal ticket.

Many of the subordinates have everything needed to make them executives except the nerve to assert themselves.

"Rolling Mill" Kelly said that when four Irishmen worked on a job, one was boss, another was foreman, the third was overseer and the fourth was superintendent.

Which explains why the Irish Free State is in Dublin Castle while Egypt and India are merely wailing their discontents. The trouble with the Hindus and Arabs is that they are not named McCarthy.

MUSIC

YOU see her for the first time, and somehow she gives you the impression that she has just bitten into a lemon; so you say to yourself, "Probably she plays the piano very well."

Why does perfectly good music have a curdling effect upon its high priests and virginal altar-tenders?

It is made for soothing purposes, so Shakespeare says, yet those who dope themselves too heavily with the rich varieties become temperamental dyspeptics.

Probably it would be awfully hard to room with one who knew too much about music.

The cruel pity lavished by the bridge expert upon the mental defective who fails to comprehend signals is as naught compared with the devastating scorn which the Grieg fanatic visits upon the loyal followers of Irving Berlin.

Men who are not afraid to walk up to a

machine gun will run a mile when they see a young woman who has been thoroughly conservatoried.

The light-headed layman whose cerebral corridors are constructed upon the general plan of a cantaloupe always begins to look about and select the nearest exit when the conversation shifts to Grand Opera.

Music is the universal heritage. Somewhere in the flower-dotted fields between Brahms and "The Maiden's Prayer" there is room for all of us to ramble.

The hairy denizens of the studios probably would favour the electric chair for any one who spoke out in defense of any tune that has committed the unpardonable offence of transmitting ecstasy to about ninety per cent. of the population.

Popularity need not be a synonym for cheapness and unworthiness. Prunes and sunsets and georgettes and kodaks are popular, but what would our vaunted civilization do without them?

A song which will caress the emotions of several millions of people is of more practical value than the average Congressional enactment. During the period which follows an

orgy, what could be more beneficial than a restful diet of mush?

And yet who has the courage to look a teadrinker straight in the eye and say that he prefers "Mother Machree" by John McCormack to "Tristan and Isolde"?

Speaking as one who has advanced from "Molly Darling" to "La Bohême," it is not to be denied that even the lowly born may learn to handle, and almost assimilate, music which appeals to the head as well as to the heels.

Only a few of us can establish altitude records in the higher realms of music. Be fair in your judgment of those who go up so high that they are no longer visible to the naked eye.

Be comforted by the reflection that all music is good. If jazz could be converted into music it would be all right too.

Because you seek the drugging effects of ragtime, do not contradict those who claim to get an actual kick from the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Be not ashamed of a sneaking fondness for minstrel songs and the solemn cadences of the old-time hymns. Make no apology for sentimental ballads. Maple-sirup, it is true; but

what in the name of Vermont is wrong with maple-sirup?

The monthly issue of "records," the mechanical players, and the invading Lyceum entertainers have carried a lot of real music into the most distant townships. The neighbours are becoming "educated." But they are still deathly afraid of the morbid genius who regards music as a secret cult instead of a general dispensation.

MARK TWAIN—EMISSARY

MEN and women in all parts of our spread-out domain, the men especially, cherished a private affection for Mark Twain. They called him by his first name, which is the surest proof of abiding fondness. Some men settle down to kinship with the shirt-sleeve contingent, even when they seem indifferent to the favour of the plain multitude.

Mark Twain never practised any of the wiles of the politician in order to be cheered at railway stations and have lecture associations send for him. He did not seem over-anxious to meet the reporters, and he had a fine contempt for most of the orthodox traditions cherished by the people who loved him. Probably no other American could have lived abroad for so many years without being editorially branded as an expatriate.

When Mr. Clemens chose to take up his residence in Vienna nobody hurled any William

Waldorf Astor talk at him. Everyone hoped he would have a good time and learn the German language. Then when the word came back that he made his loafing headquarters in a place up an alley known as a *stube* or *rathskeller*, or something like that, all the women of the literary clubs, who kept his picture on the high pedestal with the candles burning in front of it, decided that *stube* meant "shrine." You may be sure that if they can find the place they will sink a bronze memorial tablet immediately above the principal faucet.

Of course, the early books, such as "Innocents Abroad," "Roughing It," and "The Gilded Age," gave him an enormous vogue in every remote community visited by book-agents. The fact that people enjoyed reading these cheering volumes and preserved them in the bookcase and moved out some of the classics by E. P. Roe and Mrs. Southworth in order to make room for "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn," does not fully account for the evident and accepted popularity of Mark Twain. Other men wrote books that went into the bookcase, but what one of them ever earned the special privilege of being hailed by his first name?

Is it not true that when a man has done his

work for many years more or less under the supervising eye of the public, the public learns a good many facts about him that are in no way associated with his set and regular duties as a servant of the public? Out of the thousand-and-one newspaper mentions and private bits of gossip and whispered words of inside information, even the busy man in the street comes to put an estimate on the real human qualities of each notable, and sometimes these estimates are surprisingly accurate, just as they are often sadly out of focus.

Joseph Jefferson had a place in the public esteem quite apart from that demanded by his skill as an actor. Players and readers of newspapers came to know in time that he was a kind and cheery old gentleman of blameless life, charitable in his estimates of professional associates, a modest devotee of the fine arts, an outdoor sportsman with the enthusiasm of a boy, and the chosen associate of a good many eminent citizens. When they spoke of "Joe" Jefferson in warmth and kindness, it was not because he played "Rip Van Winkle" so beautifully but because the light of his private goodness had filtered through the mystery surrounding every popular actor. William H. Crane is another

veteran of the stage who holds the regard of the public. It knows him as a comedian and also it knows him as the kind of man we would like to invite up to our house to meet the folks. The sororities throb with a feeling of sisterhood for Maude Adams because the girls feel sure that she is gracious and charming and altogether "nice."

Mark Twain would have stood very well with the assorted grades making up what is generally known as the "great public" even if he had done his work in a box and passed it out through a knot-hole. Any one who knew our homely neighbours as he knew them and could tell about them in loving candour, so that we laughed at them and warmed up to them at the same time, simply had to be all right. Being prejudiced in his favour, we knew that if he wanted to wear his hair in a mop and adopt white clothing and talk with a drawl, no one would dare to suggest that he was affecting the picturesque. He was big enough to be different. Any special privilege was his without the asking. Having earned one hundred per cent. of our homage he didn't have to strain for new effects.

His devotion to the members of his family

and the heroic performance in connection with the debts of the publishing house undoubtedly helped to strengthen the general regard for him. Also, the older generation, having heard him lecture, could say that they had "met" him. Everyone who sat within the soothing presence of the drawl, waiting to be chirked up on every second sentence with a half-concealed stroke of drollery, was for all time a witness to the inimitable charm of the man and the story-teller.

Furthermore, is it not possible that much of the tremendous liking for Mark Twain grew out of his success in establishing our credit abroad? Any American who can invade Europe and command respectful attention is entitled to triumphal arches when he arrives home. Our dread and fear of foreign criticism are still most acute. Mrs. Trollope and Captain Marryat lacerated our feelings long ago. Dickens came over to have our choicest flowers strewn in his pathway and then went home to scourge us until we shrieked with pain. Kipling simply put us on the griddle. Even to this day, when a frowning gentleman surrounded by shawls and Gladstone bags is discovered on the Cunard pier, we proceed to search him for vitriol. George Bernard Shaw peppers away at long range and

the London *Spectator* grows peevish every time it looks out of the window and sees a drove of Cook tourists madly spending their money.

It is a terrible shock to the simple inlander who has fed upon Congressional oratory and provincial editorials, when he discovers that in certain European capitals the name "American" is almost a term of reproach. The first-time-over citizen from Spudville or Alfalfa Centre indicates his protest by wearing a flag on his coat and inviting those who sit in darkness to come over and see what kind of trains are run on the Burlington. The lady whose voice carries from a point directly between the eyes, seeks to correct all erroneous impressions by going to the table d'hôte with fewer clothes and more jewels than any one had reason to expect. These two are not so much in evidence as they were twenty years ago but they are still gleefully held up by our critics as being "typical."

Probably they are outnumbered nowadays by the apologetic kind—those who approach the English accent with trembling determination and who, after ordering in French, put a finger on the printed line so that the waiter may be in on the secret.

There are Americans who live abroad and

speak of their native land in shameful whispers. Another kind is an explainer. He becomes fretful and involved in the attempt to make it clear to some Englishman with a cold and fish-like eye that, as a matter of fact, the lynchings are scattered over a large territory and Tammany has nothing whatever to do with the United States Senate and the millionaire does not crawl into the presence of his wife and daughters and the head of the House of Morgan never can be King and citizens of St. Louis are not in danger of being hooked by moose. After he gets through the Englishman says "Really?" and the painful incident is closed.

Once in a while an American, finding himself beset by unfamiliar conditions, follows the simple policy of not trying to assimilate new rules or oppose them, but merely going ahead in his own way, conducting himself as a human being possessed of the standard human attributes. This unusual performance may be counted upon to excite wonder and admiration. Benjamin Franklin tried it out long ago and became the sensation of Europe. General Grant and Colonel Roosevelt got along comfortably in all sorts of foreign complications merely by refusing to put on disguises. But Mark Twain

was probably the best of our emissaries. He never waved the starry banner and at the same time he never went around begging forgiveness. He knew the faults of his home people and he understood intimately and with a family knowledge all of their good qualities and groping intentions and half-formed plans for big things in the future, but apparently he did not think it necessary to justify all of his private beliefs to men who lived five thousand miles away from Hannibal, Missouri. He had been in all parts of the world and had made a calm and unbiased estimate of the relative values of men and institutions. Probably he came to know that all had been cut from one piece and then trimmed variously. He carried with him the same placid habits of life that sufficed him in Connecticut and because he was what he pretended to be, the hypercritical foreigners doted upon him and the Americans at home, glad to flatter themselves, said, "Why, certainly; he's *one* of us!"

WHIRLIGIGS

THE boy you knew back in grammar school, the one locally groomed for the U. S. Senate—what became of him? Driving a taxi right back there in the old home town.

And silent Edgar, who was not good enough for the ball team? Merely president of the J. P. and H.

We live in a land of opportunity—and blow-ups.

Did any other part of the globe, at any time, ever witness such meteoric flashes across the open firmament or such cataclysmal collapses into the soft mud?

In older regions, where usages have petrified, each individual may find himself wedged and locked into a numbered social stratum and destined to remain there.

Over here, the facilities for going up in balloons and falling down elevator shafts are glorious and unexcelled.

The well-known team of Presto and Change is doing legerdemain in every centre of population. Now you see them and now you don't see them!

If you want to check up on the sensational upsets and sky-rocket ascensions, do not figure a man merely from one birthday to another. Invoice him at twenty and, after that, leave him alone until he is fifty. Then add him up. Compare the ratings.

Youth is heedless and cannot be warned, because it commands no perspective of the years. It never has seen towering notables peter away to wilted remnants, while plodding yokels grew into giants and sat on their thrones as if they had been born under purple hangings.

It isn't the start that counts, here in the land of whirligigs. It's the finish.

Trunk lines heading for the most important destinations go through a lot of scrubby way-stations.

The traveller picked up by an avalanche and carried to nameless depths of oblivion passes a lot of superior scenery on the way down.

The point being that our immediate background this afternoon doesn't matter so much, but it is most important to know which way our little solitaire special is headed.

A most revealing occupation is to get out the family album and review the biographies of those dudes and débutantes who were in bud about the time of the World's Fair in Chicago.

Discover, if you can, why Fate seems to work with a dice-box instead of a T-square.

Try to explain why the most theatrical matrimonial alliances finish on the rocks, wrecked to a fare-ye-well.

Regard the painful smash-ups which waited for young people who inherited money and were supposed to be "lucky."

Learn by deduction that money doesn't care to whom it belongs.

Good reputation can be switched on and off, like an electric current.

Why call it a melting-pot? It's a churn.

ADVICE

THE cream of all jobs is that of perching on the fence and telling the other fellow how to saw the wood.

If you have a bad cold, a punctured tire, a temperamental wife, or a crooked partner, then Mr. John J. Wiseman will pause beside you and your predicament long enough to complicate the situation by mixing in some wordy counsel. Advice is the first gift laid in the dimpled hands of childhood and the last kick directed at the withered buttocks of old age.

It is the only item of ostensible value which one receives every day without asking for it. Advice will continue to be served in large portions because each gift carries with it a presumption of the relative superiority of the giver. He who prescribes policies, exalts himself.

You need not have a record of past performances in order to qualify as a professional adviser.

The down-and-outer, watching the tape, wishes that he could get some word to the Morgan crowd.

Who writes to the Congressman and points out the concrete pathway back to general prosperity? The gentleman whose wife takes in washing.

The most plausible rules for the Kings of Big Business are cooked up by a High-Brow who never looked a pay-roll in the face. The pouchy millionaire is asked to give inside information to a covey of squabs. Will he give the gaping young things his real recipe for being successful? The chances are nine to one that he doesn't know it.

The prominent citizen tells them to be sober, frugal, industrious, devoted to the interests of the boss, always giving more service than is demanded, never finding fault, patient in the knowledge that reward will come eventually.

All the inside furnished rooms and pasteboard bungalows are occupied by elderly plodders who have been sober, frugal, industrious, obedient, willing, uncomplaining, and patient. They took the whole prescription and did not wake up as millionaires. Conventional advice is good soft gruel for subordinates, but the lad who wants

red meat goes out gunning all by himself and brings in the big game. He has the gift of finding the dollar mark on the trail and he did *not* get it by reading a book or listening to lectures.

Since the giving of advice has become epidemic, here is a rule: Always advise your friend to do the thing which you know he is not going to do. Then, if he falls down in following his own judgment, you will get credit for having warned him. If he succeeds, he will be tickled at the opportunity to tell you that you were dead wrong.

CHRISTMAS IN LONDON

WHEN you set out to qualify as a circumnavigator, your whole timetable must be adjusted to seasonal conditions in India. Only in winter may the tourist in Agra, Jaipur, and Benares find protection under a pith helmet. Therefore, when two of us planned to go around the orange, following the most beaten track to the east, we began guessing at dates and destinations and learned that we would have to make an early start to avoid being trapped by the deadly heat so picturesquely advertised by Mr. Kipling.

All this copious prelude so that you may understand why we found ourselves in London at Christmas time. One needs an alibi in a case of that kind. Do you remember the melodrama, "Alone in London"? We appeared in it.

London on Christmas Eve was abuzz with gaiety (modified British gaiety) and crowds. We awoke on Christmas morning to find that during the night the human race had evaporated.

We got this first at the egg ceremony in the lonesome grill. It was repeated by the field marshal who stood at the main entrance. Also, this particular Christmas was spoken of very highly by the musical comedy hero who assigned the rooms.

Taking one 25th of December with another and striking an average, we would have said that this London Christmas was not even a dismal suggestion of the real thing.

A soft gloom covered the earth. The sky was a sombre canopy, compromising between a gray and a dun. If you should mix battleship colour with the shade used in painting refrigerator cars, you might get an approximation of the effect. The light came from nowhere. Not freezing weather, but in the sluggish air a chill which cut right through top-coats.

But a jolly Christmas, nevertheless, because the fog had lifted and no rain was falling.

Probably we had been spoiled in the matter of Christmases. Our romantic specifications called for white draperies on the hillside, feathered plumes surmounting each thicket, the smoke from every chimney going straight up, and a steel-cold sun hanging in burnished splendour overhead,

We had made no plans for the day, somehow feeling that every Christmas works out its own programme. Certainly we had looked forward to being in London on the day which English-speaking people have garlanded with so much of homely sentiment.

Probably we had a lot of Dickens still lurking in our systems. We rather hoped to find, in London at Yuletide, the carols ringing out on the frosty air, while the backlog roared, the punch-bowl was wreathed with spicy vapours, the boar's head smiled from its pillow of holly and, on every hand, crabbed old gentlemen melted perceptibly before the good cheer of the blessed day and began giving money to crippled children.

It may be that the English Christmas is just what has been represented to us in song and story, but the homeless transient sees no part of it.

As we walked forth that Christmas we found that the metropolis of the world had become merely an emptiness of walls and shutters. If machine-guns had been planted at Trafalgar Square to sweep each radiating thoroughfare, there would have been no fatalities.

Probably behind the high walls (spiked with

broken glass) and the drawn shades, the nuts were being cracked and cobwebby bottles of old port were being tenderly operated upon, and Uncle Charleys with shining faces were proposing toasts.

But even a prohibition agent, intent upon compelling merrymakers to find their wassail in grape juice, would have been deceived by the outward solemnity of Christmas in London.

It seems to be the one day in the calendar on which every Englishman retires into his own home and pulls up the drawbridge. Those who have country places go to the country and those who know people having country places put in acceptances weeks ahead. At every hearth-stone the relatives who have been shunned during the previous 364 days are stuffed with warm food.

So we were told.

By noon we decided to escape from our hotel. It was so near the Thames that we dared not trust ourselves.

We learned of an old tavern, miles up the river, where a special dinner was served on Christmas Day. Sure enough, we found a bed of coals in a grate, a Pickwick sort of person sitting in front of it, and a head waiter with apologetic side-whiskers.

We made out, as you might say, but if you, reader, are planning to be in Merrie England on Christmas Day, look up the forkings of the ancestral tree and try to discover a relative.

LUXURIES

RIGHT here, and nowhere else, except in two or three other *new* countries, poor people get in on the luxuries.

Do you know of any one past the age of eight who never rode in a motor car?

Countless millions in Europe regard the automobile as a rich man's luxury. It is a symbol of splendour which chases them off the roadways. They never dream of becoming acquainted with anything so huge and important.

The farmer in France or Italy or Germany has no telephone in his house. A good assortment of live stock—but no 'phone.

He has cows—but he does without butter.

He grows grain—to make white bread for the aristocrats of the city.

Meat on the table means a family feast.

The movie to him is a holiday treat and ice cream is a semi-annual jamboree.

The daughter has never rocked around on high heels or hit herself in the nose with a powder rag.

The son has never worn a snappy suit with the belt surrounding the lungs instead of the digestive organs.

Most of the human beings outside of this hemisphere line up as paupers. Invoice their holdings and you will find that the assets, per person, run up to about \$8.75.

The ordinary man we pass in the street carries probably \$75 worth of merchandise. The guess is low rather than high, because we have to take into account a suit of clothes, a hat, a pair of shoes, various undergarments, buttons made of a precious metal, and possibly some expensive fillings in the teeth.

If he had been born in Egypt or Ceylon or Burma or China or Japan or Africa he would be wearing a costume worth \$1.80 and be thankful that he had advanced from the breech-clout.

About sixty-five per cent. of all the people in the world think they are getting along great when they are not starving to death.

In these days of hard-upness, when so many of us are curled up in mental anguish because we cannot slather money as we did in 1919, it may help if we reflect that, at least, each of us has a mattress at night, meals as usual, books to read, and some sort of entertainment in the next block.

That's more than most of our far-away neighbours have.

We suffer more than they do because we have come to regard luxuries as necessities.

Many a man thinks the government at Washington is a failure if he has to stop smoking 35 cent cigars and compromise on cheap stogies costing only 20 cents each.

Take silk stockings away from a woman who has got used to the feel of them and she is liable to go into her room and die of a broken heart.

It is easy to believe that the things we have succeeded in getting are necessities.

The Russian housewife gets up in the morning and prays for a loaf of black bread.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnny-Jump-Up of the U. S. A. arise at 8 A. M. and gloomily face the prospect of getting along with five servants instead of seven.

The lean years may have their uses.

While we are down in the valley we may have time to figure it out that the five-pound box of candy at \$2 the pound may be taken out of the daily existence without leaving a scar.