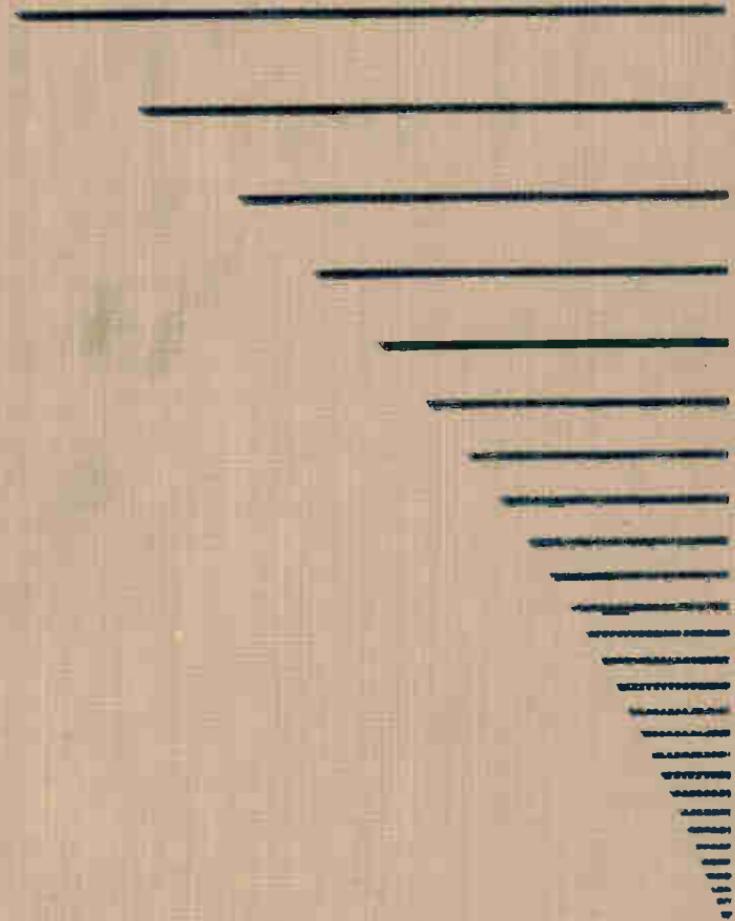


EDGAR A-GUEST

BROADCASTING



EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

To the Radio Audience which has honored me with its patience and its devotion, I want to express my deepest gratitude.—Edgar A. Guest



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**EDGAR A. GUEST
BROADCASTING**



TO JEFFERSON B. WEBB

**IN MEMORY OF THE CONSTANCY OF HIS
FRIENDSHIP AND THE INSPIRATION OF HIS LIFE**

F O R E W O R D

This book has no other reason for existence than the constant and countless requests from far and near from my radio friends for copies of certain verses exactly as I have given them over the air. With few exceptions, almost everything here will be found in other books of mine. The difference lies wholly in the occasions which prompted their use and the brief remarks which prefaced their introductions into my weekly radio programs. Requests for these introductory words became so many that the task of remembering them and making copies grew impossible to perform. I have endeavored here to recall them as exactly as I could. Some may have lost flavor by being stripped from the context of programs which had been based upon their use; however, as I look over the proof pages of this broadcasting volume, I pride myself a little in the belief that I have done faithfully what seemed to me at the first to be a prodigious undertaking. Only the insistence and the assistance of my friendly publisher has kept me at it. It seems now to be a book of memories.

There comes back to my mind the night when Miss Jane Addams passed away and the word of her death came to us in the studio as we were at work upon a program which had been planned to the second with other material. It seemed most earnestly to be desired and most fitting that we should pause for a moment to pay some little tribute to so beloved a

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woman. The change was made instantly and I shall remember that night as one on which the business of radio was swept aside by the surging waves of sorrow and affection.

There is included here, also, our attempt to honor the late Will Rogers.

I hope, of course, that this book will have in it the seeds of comfort and cheer. I hope it may recall to those who may think enough of it to read it, happy memories of the past. If now and then it shall do this, perhaps its publication will have been justified.

Edgar Guest

TOO MANY CHILDREN?

Whenever the mothers' club holds a session on our front porch I get a chuckle. To hear some of them talk you'd think they were doing the Lord a favor to have a child or two instead of the Lord favoring them mightily to let them have 'em. The responsibilities of parenthood have been magnified so much and dwelt upon so long by the experts that they've actually frightened off countless couples who would have had happier lives if they hadn't heard about the difficulty of bringing up children.

"Oh," said one woman in a session at our house, "we haven't dared to have a baby. Children tie you down so; the responsibility is so great."

I was about to say to that dame: "It's too bad your mother didn't have the same idea." But Nellie, who reads me at a glance, kicked me on the shin as a signal to me to keep still.

I've yet to hear of a man going bankrupt because he had four children to support; I've yet to hear of a man getting rich because he had no child to feed or clothe; my observation is that the man who thinks he'll get his fortune first and a family after usually winds up with neither. It seems to me to be not a question of whether you can afford to have children but can you afford to do without them.

We had hard times when I was young, harder even than these have been, and our family was large and we lived them through. The little dining-rooms in those days were literally cluttered with youngsters; mothers were kept busy patching little breeches and feeding hungry little stomachs. The responsibilities my mother faced would frighten to death some of these modern conversationalists, yet she met them all as a matter of course and thought nothing about them. I'm sure that my father never once thought that he'd have more of his salary to spend on himself if some of us hadn't been born. So

long as we were fed and clothed and housed he was content.
It was for us he was working, not for himself.

It makes me smile to hear 'em tell each other nowadays
The burdens they are bearing with a child or two to raise.
Of course the cost of living has gone soaring to the sky
And our kids are wearing garments that my parents
couldn't buy.

Now my father wasn't wealthy, but I never heard him
squeal

Because eight of us were sitting at the table every meal.

People fancy they are martyrs if their children number
three,

And four or five they reckon make a large sized family.

A dozen hungry youngsters at a table I have seen,

And their daddy didn't grumble when they licked the plat-
ter clean.

Oh I wonder how these mothers and these fathers up-to-
date

Would like the job of buying little shoes for seven or
eight.

We were eight about the table in those happy days back
then,

Eight that cleaned our plates of pot pie and then passed
them up again;

Eight that needed shoes and stockings; eight to wash and
put to bed,

And with mighty little money in the purse, as I have said,
But with all the care we brought them, and through all
the days of stress,

I never heard my father or my mother wish for less.

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*This tribute was given by Mr. Guest over the radio August 20, 1935,
a few days after Will Rogers' death.*

TRIBUTE TO WILL ROGERS

I would like to take a moment to place my tiny petal of remembrance at the foot of the mountain of tributes under which the beloved Will Rogers sleeps tonight. In the words of a true poet, of him it can now be said:

None knew him but to love him,
Nor named him, but to praise.

I think never was the intimate kinship of joy and sorrow more clearly revealed than by the strange and sudden passing of this man beloved by all mankind. Yesterday he set us all to smiling; today he fills all eyes with tears.

Surely the worth of a man can best be measured by the grief which his death occasions. Only that which has meant much to us is greatly missed. Only those whom we have deeply loved we mourn for long. And by this measure Will Rogers will take his place among the truly great of all the world. He fought sham and hypocrisy and greed and the lusts which degrade and debase, with the gentle weapon of laughter. He knew both the sting of failure and the joy of success and he was unspoiled by either. He held up for himself a high standard of conduct and was true to it, and he had only pity and understanding for those of us who were weaker than he. I have heard it said by some of the aristocracy of culture that he broke all the rules of grammar, but the glory of his life is this: he kept all the rules of honor, and sympathy, and decency, and charity. His was a gentle and an understanding heart. He had pity for poverty because he had suffered it; he had scorn for conceit and arrogance and boastfulness and the pomp of riches and the display of luxury because he knew the vanity of it all.

It is as certain that such a man will be honored and loved

and at the last mourned by all as that the sun will rise in the east. In the moment that brought to me the sad news of his death I seemed to sense a wave of sorrow sweeping over the land. Death is a daily occurrence; it visits every little hamlet and every little street; even at this very minute hundreds are leaving the world, but only now and then does an entire nation of people pause to grieve. And so:

Stilled the laughter and the jest.
Closed the twinkling eye.
North and south and east and west
Sorrow passes by.
Men whom he had never met
Stand in groups and say
With a genuine regret:
"Will Rogers died today!"

There's a hush upon the land!
Where with laughter glad
Men and women used to stand.
Every heart is sad.
Strange in such a little while
He should have to die.
Yesterday he made men smile
Now for him they sigh.

Above the din of traffic flies
Sorrow's fateful word.
What is that the newsboy cries?
Have we rightly heard?
Stunned and saddened by the blow
Of the news they send.
Rich and poor and high and low
Mourn him as a friend.

HERE IS SPRING!

Well, it's springtime—the time of bud and bloom and bird. It is the renewal and the restoration of all the things that winter seemed to have taken from us.

Age has known many springs; youth only a few, and yet these young people look forward gaily to adventuring to age. We who are no longer young fancy that those delights of our past youth are no more, because the days of our romance lie behind us, because we have come to care and responsibility, and have grown to be what we call "settled down." Sometimes we look out upon a beautiful spring day and wonder if love and hope and the thrill to joy, which once were ours, still exist. But there is ever an army of new young folks coming on—dreaming the dreams we dreamt and claiming the joys which once were ours. They have the same faith and courage and will-to-do as we ourselves once had. They look forward hopefully, and surging in their veins is the warm blood of desire. They are the springtime of the race; we are the summer, the autumn, and the winter. Should that army ever stop, the world will return to desolation.

Should ever springtime cease to be
And youth no longer dream,
Should bud and bloom desert the tree
And song the rippling stream
Should man and maiden nevermore
By tender thoughts be stirred,
The days will hold no joy in store
And faith be just a word.



THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT!

I once had an old friend who loved his garden more than anything else in this world. He was the kind of man for whom the flowers seemed glad to grow. He was up early and late among them and often I used to think as I watched him potter about among the plants that he asked nothing more from life than the privilege of many blossoms.

While most of us are working for fame, for fortune, for position, for power, he devoted all his years to petunias and marigolds and zinnias and phlox. He cared nothing for clothes, nor automobiles, nor steam yachts. That by working as a gardener he could raise his family of children to fine men and women delighted him.

Old John Fromm reminded me strangely of a monk who had renounced the world. He loved his flowers so well that he gave his life to them. I think from him I learned that life holds more joys of achievement than those so many strangely seem to seek. Perhaps after all it is something to bring flowers to bloom. Perhaps it isn't necessary to wear fine clothes to be happy. Old John's bankbook wasn't much to read, but his flower beds were glorious to see and in that respect he was eminently successful.

He knew the flowers by name, and though a man was he,
Blood-brother to the daffodil and rose he seemed to be.
He'd lived his life among them, and when spring is in the
air,

There'll be sorrow in the garden for Old John will not be
there.

From dawn to dusk he labored through the years among
the flowers,

And I'm sure he lived a richer and a happier life than
ours,

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For his face was calm and placid, and he never seemed to care
For the glory that is business or the crown that skill might wear.

All his waking time was given to forget-me-nots and phlox,
To his peonies and pansies, and his sturdy hollyhocks;
And I've watched him many a summer bending over bloomy beds,
Just as tender as a mother stroking little curly heads.

Now the Lord has called him yonder, and the spring is coming on,
And the tulips and the jonquils will be asking: "Where is John?"
And I'm wondering what the roses and forget-me-nots will say
When the word is passed among them that "Old John" has gone away.



A Tribute to Knute Rockne, delivered by Edgar A. Guest, in the Graham Radio Hour, Sunday, April 5, 1931.

ROCKNE

Here in Detroit we have had a glorious Easter. The sun has been shining brightly all through the day and the first evidences of spring are everywhere to be seen. The long sleep of winter is ended; the brown tulip bulbs of last fall are awak-

ening. In a few weeks now they will justify with bloom the faith of those who believed in them.

The papers of today, world over, carried an account of the funeral rites of the beloved Knute Rockne, of Notre Dame. He and I stood together on the same platform here just a few weeks ago, and I can see him now as he waved his hand in parting. What an inspiration he was to all of us! I thought that morning as I listened to him, impatient with his manuscript and flinging it aside to let his thoughts flow out as they would, that none could come into his presence without catching something of his courageous spirit. He was not a theorist; he was an example.

In Knute Rockne, whether we knew him or not—we have all had a true friend. Down at the *Detroit Free Press* office that afternoon they brought me the word which had just come in over the wire, "Rockne is dead." That is the world's way of speaking; that is the newspaper column's way of conveying sad news. It is the only phrase we seem to have. I thought then, and I still think, that Knute Rockne had just begun to live. His spirit will be at Notre Dame so long as football shall be played. It will be on every football field to the end of time. Alive he belonged to the great university which he loved and served so nobly; now he belongs to every college and every school and every gridiron. Rival coaches will recall his spirit in their hours of desperate need, and he will respond; boys down through the future will remember Rockne, and be brave; they will remember him, and be clean; they will think of him and give their best to life!

Knute Rockne has left us for a little while, but how privileged has our age been! He was ours to know, and though now we are saddened by his loss we have the memory of his presence to console us.

They sealed his tomb yesterday at South Bend, but Knute Rockne is no longer there. He lives beyond, and he still

lives here. And so tonight, in his memory, I read these simple Easter verses:

They found the great stone rolled away
And Him, whom men had crucified,
With cruel spears had pierced His side
And mocked with jests and gibes that day,
Gone from the darkness and the gloom
Of death's grim tomb.

Where He had slept in death's embrace
The linen of His shroud was piled,
The white-robed angels gently smiled
And bade them walk into the place.
"The Lord is risen!" To them they said,
"He is not dead!"

Keep ye the faith and still be brave!
From every tomb that Easter day
The stone of death was rolled away;
The soul lives on beyond the grave.
Death is but rest from pain and strife,
The gate to life!



A BOY AND HIS DOG

There goes a boy and his dog right at his heels. Whenever I see that combination I always think that there is a friendship that selfishness cannot spoil.

In this life we make friends of which we are fortunate to keep a few to the end of the journey. Some are taken from us

and some disappoint us. Some find other people with whom they would rather be. But the dog has no idea of selfishness and no knowledge of pride or ambition. That dog would rather be with that boy right now than with the King of England. Millionaires and the leaders of society, the so-called great of the city could be passing by and that dog wouldn't even turn to look. They might whistle or call to him and he wouldn't respond. So far as that dog is concerned, the finest human being on earth is that boy master of his. He waits for him to come from school and no matter what the teacher may have said to him during the day, no matter how poorly he might have spelled or how indifferent his work may have been, that dog will be glad to see him when he returns.

It is so when we are grown up. In spite of all our shortcomings the dog sees in us only the good. Bankrupts may come home, but the dogs will wag their tails to greet them. Sometimes I think it is too bad that we allow our friendships to be spoiled by the temporary failures and disappointments and defeats.

A boy and his dog make a glorious pair:
No better friendship is found anywhere,
For they talk and they walk and they run and they play,
And they have their deep secrets for many a day;
And that boy has a comrade who thinks and who feels,
Who walks down the road with a dog at his heels.

He may go where he will and his dog will be there,
May revel in mud and his dog will not care;
Faithful he'll stay for the slightest command
And bark with delight at the touch of his hand;
Oh, he owns a treasure which nobody steals,
Who walks down the road with a dog at his heels.

No other can lure him away from his side;
He's proof against riches and station and pride;
Fine dress does not charm him, and flattery's breath
Is lost on the dog, for he's faithful to death;
He sees the great soul which the body conceals—
Oh, it's great to be young with a dog at your heels!

* * *

GUIDING OUR CHILDREN

I find it difficult sometimes to reconcile myself to the attitude of age to childhood. So many grown-ups seem to look upon the youngsters through glasses of the past. They remember their own childhood of the 90's, but they forget that the childhood of today is being lived in different circumstances.

Personally, I never see a child without glimpsing behind him a vision of the man he may some day be. But more than that, I see also the difficulties of his time. Life is difficult even for children. They want and need certain amusements and pleasures which were not dreamed of when we were young. We had little else to do in the 90's but get our lessons. There were no distractions. There was neither radio, nor moving pictures, nor telephone, nor motor car. Neither space nor time had been conquered. But your child and mine today are beset with allurements. I wonder how they ever get their lessons.

The problem of every father and mother is, as I see it, how to give their children a childhood they will remember with gratitude. How to bring them to manhood and womanhood through this great field of distraction. I remember that the

greatest of our men and women were once little boys and little girls and the greatest of the men and women of tomorrow will be some of those who are now baffling us with these new problems.

If any one of us had one seed of a rare flower—a seed that had cost a hundred dollars—he would give it the utmost care. He would watch it, water it and feed it; shield it from the heavy winds and storms, and once seeing it brought to bloom he would consider all it had cost worthwhile. Each of our children carries within its youthful breast the seed of greatness. Surely the best of our time and devoted care is not too much to give them.

A possible man of affairs,
A possible leader of men,
Back of the grin that he wears
There may be the courage of ten;
Lawyer or merchant or priest,
Artist or singer of joy,
This, when his strength is increased,
Is what may become of the boy.

Heedless and mischievous now,
Spending his boyhood in play,
Yet glory may rest on his brow
And fame may exalt him some day;
A skill that the world shall admire,
Strength that the world shall employ
And faith that shall burn as a fire,
Are what may be found in the boy.

He with the freckles and tan,
He with that fun-loving grin,
May rise to great heights as a man
And many a battle may win;

Back of the slang of the streets
And back of the love of a toy,
It may be a Great Spirit beats—
Lincoln once played as a boy.

Trace them all back to their youth,
All the great heroes we sing,
Seeking and serving the Truth,
President, poet and king,
Washington, Caesar and Paul,
Homer who sang about Troy,
Jesus, the Greatest of all,
Each in his time was a boy.

• • •

THINGS WORK OUT

I don't know just how to say this, but looking back over my life it seems to me that the doubts and worries and things that have fretted me most have, with the passing of time, solved themselves. Even when the worst has happened, later I have come to glimpse a little of the purpose. The trouble that loomed so great in anticipation and was so fearful has later become the quaint bit of comedy we laughingly relate. The pie that fell to the floor and spoiled the dinner seemed to be an evil prank of Fate. The result was tragedy when it occurred, but the next day when the guests had gone we sat at the table and laughed, and we shall tell that story again and again until there's no one left to hear. So it seems now to be with all the discomforts and discouragements that we have known. They worried us once, but we have lived them through

and now we can laugh about it. The journey was hard and toilsome while we were making it, but once safely arrived at our destination we rejoice in the difficulties.

Because it rains when we wish it wouldn't,
Because men do what they often shouldn't,
Because crops fail, and plans go wrong—
Some of us grumble all day long.
But somehow, in spite of the care and doubt,
It seems at the last that things work out.

Because we lose where we hoped to gain,
Because we suffer a little pain,
Because we must work when we'd like to play—
Some of us whimper along life's way.
But somehow, as day always follows the night,
Most of our troubles work out all right.

Because we cannot forever smile,
Because we must trudge in the dust awhile,
Because we think that the way is long—
Some of us whimper that life's all wrong.
But somehow we live and our sky grows bright,
And everything seems to work out all right.

So bend to your trouble and meet your care,
For the clouds must break, and the sky grow fair.
Let the rain come down, as it must and will,
But keep on working and hoping still.
For in spite of the grumblers who stand about,
Somehow, it seems, all things work out.



WHAT PRICE WAR?

Early in 1914 I found among the dispatches from the battle front a few little lines which merely told that the German army officers had shipped home thousands of little brass identification tags taken from the uniforms of their dead. It was the custom then to place about the arm or neck of each soldier such a tag bearing a number so that in the event of death and mutilation, identification could be made. All that went home for many a brave soldier boy who marched away was that little brass tag.

To me those few lines comprised all the horror and tragedy of war. I shall never again be able to hear war mentioned without seeing baskets filled with those little brass tags at some clearing depot on the field.

All that is left of her wonderful son
Is a little brass tag;
All of her baby that shouldered a gun,
Is a little brass tag.
He that so proudly marched off in line,
Clear-eyed and smiling and splendid and fine,
Is home, once again, on the banks of the Rhine,
Just a little brass tag.

He with the eyes that were kindly and blue
Is a little brass tag;
He with the shoulders so square and so true,
Is a little brass tag.
He that stepped forward to follow the flag
To ride with a sabre or march with a Krag
You'll find now with thousands, shipped home in a bag
Just a little brass tag.

O mother—the boy you're so hungry to see
Is a little brass tag.
The end of your dreams of the man he would be
Is a little brass tag.
Your beautiful visions of splendor have fled,
Your wonderful man of tomorrow lies dead.
He went as a soldier—but comes home, instead,
Just a little brass tag!

• • •

A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED MEAL

I am for home cooking. Fancy food may be all right occasionally, but I am the old-fashioned sort that likes to sit down at a table to a good solid, substantial meal. You can have your artichokes and your pretty pink salads and your little triangle sandwiches, but when it comes to regular eating I want a good old lamb stew, which mother has made herself, and a rice pudding with a lot of raisins in it. I don't want candles on the table and I don't want to eat in semi-darkness. I want all the lights going so I can see the smiles on the kiddies' faces and mother can see the spot of gravy that's on my chin. I don't want over-trained people bringing in one thing at a time and serving me from the left side. I don't want to have a lamb chop brought in to me and left there to get cold while I am waiting for the servant to get back with the mashed potatoes, and after she does get back I don't want to have to wait another ten minutes for the gravy and another ten for the side dish. I like it all on the table so that we can get started at a gallop and keep it going down to the dessert.

Of course, I know that the women folks come up to occa-

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sions when they feel they have to be fancy so that other folks will think they are smart and up-to-the-minute, but a good old family dinner, served family style, is my choice.

I've sipped a rich man's sparkling wine,
His silverware I've handled.
I've placed these battered legs of mine
'Neath tables gaily candled.
I dine on rare and costly fare
Whene'er good fortune lets me,
But there's no meal that can compare
With those the missus gets me.

I've had your steaks three inches thick
With all your Sam Ward trimming,
I've had the breast of milk-fed chick
In luscious gravy swimming.
To dine in swell café or club
But irritates and frets me;
Give me the plain and wholesome grub—
The grub the missus gets me.

Two kiddies smiling at the board,
The cook right at the table,
The four of us, a hungry horde,
To beat that none is able.
A big meat pie, with flaky crust!
'Tis then that joy besets me;
Oh, I could eat until I "bust,"
Those meals the missus gets me.

* * *

THE SIMPLE THINGS

There's nothing in this world without a price. Life issues no passes to its performance. A few may get a box seat but that box seat carries an obligation. In the first place if you are sitting there you have to dress the part and sit up straight and be uncomfortable so that if the commoner people look at you they will be impressed with your importance. If you grow to be rich the responsibilities of wealth lie heavy upon you. I know certain rich men who have to have body guards and private telephone numbers, and nobody comes to see them without a special invitation. They have become almost as much hermits as those who run away from the world to live in caves. If you become famous you will be expected to pay the cost of fame and you will have to meet that bill either graciously or ungraciously. You will be singled out wherever you go; freedom will be yours no more. Man may desert his duty, but duty never deserts a man. Whatever his situation in life, certain things will be expected of him and he finally becomes a failure or a success as he meets those expectations.

Personally, I am ambitious in a limited way. I find now that I have no great desire to be the greatest anything. I think I would like to be the best friend anyone who knows me ever had, but beyond that I wouldn't care to go. I should be satisfied if I could reach the end of my life as one who has looked upon his neighbors with understanding and has been able to share with them all the joys and vicissitudes that mark the span of years.

I would not be too wise—so very wise
That I must sneer at simple songs and creeds,
And let the glare of wisdom blind my eyes
To humble people and their humble needs.

I would not care to climb so high that I
Could never hear the children at their play,
Could only see the people passing by,
And never hear the cheering words they say.

I would not know too much—too much to smile
At trivial errors of the heart and hand,
Nor be too proud to play the friend the while,
Nor cease to help and know and understand.

I would not care to sit upon a throne,
Or build my house upon a mountain-top,
Where I must dwell in glory all alone
And never friend come in or poor man stop.

God grant that I may live upon this earth
And face the tasks which every morning brings
And never lose the glory and the worth
Of humble service and the simple things.



WE AREN'T ALONE

Looking back over the years, I find that all that I have known of happiness and pride has come to me from others. In every memory that I cherish there is so little of myself. I think I have been normal in this and that I have had ambitions and desires. I thought I wanted certain things for myself, but I know now that the things I wanted in themselves had little to give.

Had I been forced to live my life alone, I should have re-

quired but very little. Enough to eat, and a suit of clothes to wear, and a place to sleep and any solitary man could be content. A solitary man for whom no one cared and in whom no one else took pride would find little joy upon this earth. Put a millionaire on a desert island and all his money would be futile. Permit the greatest genius of the world to write a book or carve a statue and if he only could see it and enjoy it he would think his labors in vain. Whatever good comes to us is good only because there are others who will delight in it. Success is sweet only because someone else will rejoice in the triumph. A champion takes pride out of his championship merely because others know about it. So it is with failures. They take on importance because there are those whom failures will hurt as deeply as they have hurt us. There is no such thing as a self-made man. He would be too lonely a creature to pass the first obstacle.

All that we are and do and strive to be, others have taken and will take a part of. I think it would be a horrible world to live in if man had neither loved ones, nor friends, nor neighbors with whom to share his days.

If nobody smiled and nobody cheered and nobody helped us along,
If each every minute looked after himself and good things all went to the strong,
If nobody cared just a little for you, and nobody thought about me,
And we stood all alone to the battle of life, what a dreary old world it would be!

If there were no such a thing as a flag in the sky as a symbol of comradeship here,
If we lived as the animals live in the woods, with nothing held sacred or dear,

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And selfishness ruled us from birth to the end, and never
a neighbor had we,
And never we gave to another in need, what a dreary old
world it would be!

Oh, if we were rich as the richest on earth and strong as
the strongest that lives,
Yet never we knew the delight and the charm of the smile
which the other man gives,
If kindness were never a part of ourselves, though we
owned all the land we could see,
And friendship meant nothing at all to us here, what a
dreary old world it would be!

Life is sweet just because of the friends we have made
and the things which in common we share;
We want to live on not because of ourselves, but because
of the people who care;
It's giving and doing for somebody else—on that all life's
splendor depends,
And the joy of this world, when you've summed it all up,
is found in the making of friends.

* * *

*An appreciation of the life of a great newspaper man given by
Mr. Guest over the radio the evening of April 9, 1935.*

A TRIBUTE

Nothing that we could do here tonight would be more fit-
ting than to pause for just a few moments to pay tribute to
that great man whose labors on the earth have just ended. I

refer to Adolph S. Ochs, known throughout the world as the publisher of the *New York Times*.

If our faith means anything to us at all we should not be overly sad as we do this. Rather we should rejoice in the splendor of his example and be grateful for the inspiration and hope which his life leaves for us all.

Adolph S. Ochs built the *New York Times*, one of the great newspapers of the world, on standards of decency and clean living. He supported what is best in our society with all his heart and all his mind and all his strength, and as far as was humanly possible refrained from sullying his pages and the minds of our growing generation with the sordid details of what is worst. In this he was truly a great soul and for this he will be long remembered.

He began his business career at the age of eleven; worked as printer's devil and reporter, and with none of the advantages of education rose to the top of our profession so that many great universities are proud to honor him. He was such a man as leads me to say that true greatness will glorify any creed and any language.

Upon his courage and his foresight the *New York Times* flourished and grew. Tonight I want to do this little bit for you in his memory, almost as though I were speaking his creed:

To live as gently as I can;
To be, no matter where, a man;
To take what comes of good or ill
And cling to faith and honor still;
To do my best, and let that stand
The record of my brain and hand;
And then, should failure come to me
Still work and hope for victory.

To have no secret place wherein
I stoop unseen to shame or sin;

To be the same when I'm alone
As when my every deed is known;
To live undaunted, unafraid
Of any step that I have made;
To be without pretense or sham
Exactly what men think I am.

To leave some simple mark behind
To keep my having lived in mind;
If enmity to aught I show,
To be an honest, generous foe,
To play my little part, nor whine
That greater honors are not mine.
This, I believe, is all I need
For my philosophy and creed.

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SPRING FEVER

Once in a while I think it is good for a man's soul to play hookey. Maybe the Lord knew that and fixed this earth so there would occasionally be attractions on it no man of us could resist. Some like to go fishing. Some like to play golf. Some are for the baseball game, but no man has ever been born so poor on this earth that life did not have some joy to give him.

But how strange it all is, while every one of us looks forward to pleasure as the ultimate end of striving, it is only occasionally that he can enjoy it. If he were bound to pleasure as he is bound to his work, he would grow to hate it. Golf is only good to play when man can leave his work behind. A

man who has nothing to do but to play golf in time deserts the game. It has become boredom to him. So would fishing, for the fisherman who has to do it for a living it is work. The only thrill in the catch is the profit it will bring.

So, on a warm spring day, when the skies are blue and the breeze sweet with the first faint hint of fragrance, the boy in me insists on making holiday. Neither duty nor profit can hold me longer. Even at the risk of failure I yearn to cut loose from obligation and necessity, and take such a day selfishly to myself.

When the blue gets back in the skies once more
And the vines grow green 'round the kitchen door,
When the roses bud and the robins come,
I stretch myself and I say: "Ho-hum!
I ought to work but I guess I won't;
Though some want riches to-day, I don't;
This looks to me like the sort of day
That was made to idle and dream away."

When the sun is high and the air just right,
With the trees all blossomy, pink and white,
And the grass, as soft as a feather bed
With the white clouds drifting just overhead,
I stretch and yawn like a school boy then,
And turn away from the walks of men
And tell myself in a shamefaced way:
"I'm going to play hookey from work to-day!"

"Here is a morning too rare to miss,
And what is gold to a day like this,
And what is fame to the things I'll see
Through the lattice-work of a fine old tree?
There is work to do, but the work can wait;
There are goals to reach, there are foes to hate,

There are hurtful things which the smart might say,
But nothing like that shall spoil to-day."

"To-day I'll turn from the noisy town
And just put all of my burdens down;
I'll quit the world and its common sense,
And the things men think are of consequence,
To chum with birds and the friendly trees
And try to fathom their mysteries,
For here is a day which looks to be
The kind I can fritter away on me."

• • •

EASTER DAY

I am not a preacher and therefore this necessarily cannot and will not be a sermon that I will deliver. Rather let us think of it as merely a heart to heart talk. I think you all will agree with me when I say that it is much better to be a sermon than to preach one—better to see a sermon than to listen to one. All creeds are merely words strung together unless they come to life in action and deeds.

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.

The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear.
Fine counsel is confusing but example's always clear;
And the best of all the preachers are the men who live
their creeds
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.

I can soon learn how to do it if you'll let me see it done.
I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too
fast may run.

Though the lecture you deliver may be very wise and true
I would rather get my lessons by observing what you do,
For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you
give,

But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how
you live.

When I see a deed of kindness I am eager to be kind.
When a weaker brother stumbles and a strong man stays
behind

Just to see if he can help him, then the wish grows strong
in me

To become as big and thoughtful as I know that man to be.
And all travelers can witness that the best of guides today
Is not the one who tells them but the one who shows the
way.

One good man teaches many; men believe what they be-
hold;

One deed of kindness noticed is worth forty that are told.
Who stands with men of honor learns to hold his honor
dear,

For right living speaks a language which to every one is
clear.

Though an able speaker charms me with his eloquence, I
say

I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one any day.

And so today I want to talk about that first Easter, for it
brought hope into the world. For most of us Easter Day is
just another festival. Our thoughts turn to new clothes and
the spring flowers and the Easter parade, and the meaning of

the resurrection is lost in the petty trappings of life. But let you and me forget about the Easter parade this morning and let us think for a few minutes about that First Easter.

They had left Him for dead. They had seen the great stone rolled against the mouth of the tomb; they had gone away hopelessly to mourn, for in those days the grave seemed triumphant and the sting of death the greatest of human agonies. And early that Sunday morning Mary Magdalene went to the sepulcher:

Dead they left Him in the tomb
And the impenetrable gloom;
Rolled the great stone to the door,
Dead, they thought, forevermore.

Then came Mary Magdalene
Weeping to that bitter scene
And she found to her dismay
That the stone was rolled away.

"They have taken Him away!"
Mary cried that Easter Day.
Low, she heard a voice behind!
"Whom is it you seek to find?"

"Tell me where He is," she cried,
"Him they scourged and crucified.
Here we left Him with the dead!"
"Mary! Mary!" Jesus said.

So by Mary Magdalene
First the risen Christ was seen
And from every heart that day
Doubt's great stone was rolled away!

That, friends, is what I think the true meaning of Easter to be—the meaning which we need to understand and remember as never before. Because—oh, I don't know—but somehow it seems to me right now all over the world there's a feeling of doubt—a feeling of doubt as immovable and ponderous and spirit-crushing as was the great stone which was placed at His tomb. Doubt, fear, distrust and hopeless desperation. Never a day goes by that I don't hear some one say: "What am I working for? What's the use of all the struggle? Why carry on? What is there in life for me? Nothing but worry and heartache and—and—death." The immovable stone of doubt, and yet I have seen it rolled away. I have seen men rise again from the tomb of their broken dreams. I have seen men who thought themselves failures rise again to be victorious. There are resurrections of courage and of spirit taking place about us every day. I have seen men crushed by ill fortune, who for a time had thought themselves dead, restored to life. There are countless Easter days for you and me. Life is not easy; it never will be; it never can be. And it seems to me as we falter and grow afraid and give away at times to weariness and despair, always we find our faith restored and our strength renewed. It is the miracle of life that the stone of doubt so often is rolled away. A resurrection of the spirit takes place. Where once we feared, we stand again with confidence; where once we doubted we have been assured of something within us that is divine. The struggle was difficult, but we have lived it through. This is the joy of life—not to have escaped its burdens, but bravely to have borne them all.

And somehow or other it seems to me that is the plan—that each of us shall find his Easter days through hours of trial—be tested by rules of strife—be tried by self-denial—and come at last to see the great stone rolled away and find the purpose of all suffering. Only by faith can men grow strong; only by faith can men withstand the griefs that fall; only by faith do men reach Easter and its victories.

It is faith that bridges the land of breath
To the realms of the souls departed,
That comforts the living in days of death,
And strengthens the heavy-hearted.

It is faith in his dreams that keeps a man
Face front to the odds about him,
And he shall conquer who thinks he can,
In spite of the throngs who doubt him.

Each must stand in the court of life
And pass through the hours of trial;
He shall tested be by the rules of strife,
And tried for his self-denial.

Time shall bruise his soul with the loss of friends,
And frighten him with disaster,
But he shall find when the anguish ends
That of all things faith is master.

So keep your faith in the God above,
And faith in the righteous truth,
It shall bring you back to the absent love,
And the joys of a vanished youth.
You shall smile once more when your tears are dried,
Meet trouble and swiftly rout it.
For faith is the strength of the soul inside,
And lost is the man without it.

And so today let us believe still that the stone of doubt will be moved from our hearts, let us rejoice in the true meaning of Easter and with renewed faith—faith in ourselves—faith in our fellowmen—and faith in Him who has given to us. His children, life everlasting—let us go forward to the tasks of life hopefully and unafraid.

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

The old cry that was first heard at the Garden of Eden—"Am I my brother's keeper?"—still falls unthinkingly from selfish lips. It is the alibi of selfishness and the slogan of indifference. Many men are still making the mistake of thinking that they live unto themselves. They assume that if all is well with them, all is well with the world. They stay aloof from others in the false belief that the misery of others touches them not.

Yet, one has only to look about him to discover that in the welfare of his neighbors lies his own safety. He may think nothing that happens to them can harm him, but he is mistaken. Should a plague break out he would soon change his mind. Were he to go home tonight and learn that four blocks away a case of smallpox had been discovered, he would discover in his terror that that ill-fated neighbor lived much too close to him. He would wonder about the patient and immediately begin to ask questions as to the condition of the stricken person. Should a second case be discovered in a day or two, his alarm would increase and he would join with all in the community in a battle against the spread of the disease. He would know then how closely his welfare was knitted to the welfare of his neighbor.

I think it is so in other matters. One can't be all happy and his neighbor all sad. We share this life whether we know it or not, and in many respects our own security is based on the security of all and whether we think so or not we are our brother's keeper.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" answered Cain
When questioned of his brother Abel, slain,
And since such record keepings first began
This phrase has lingered on the lips of man.

Still is it heard: "Oh, is it mine to care
What miseries my brother has to bear?
Lord, is it not enough that I must see
That I have food and all is well with me?

Suppose a plague should fall upon the town,
Would it not trouble men of great renown
To learn that on some little near-by street
Were those, perhaps, they once had scorned to meet
Sore-stricken with the malady? And would
They not unite with all the neighborhood
To win to health and happiness again
The very humblest of their fellow-men?

Within their brother's health they'd seek their own,
To them his daily progress would be known.
They'd watch the sick and suffering and share
Their misery lest the pain be theirs to bear.
For what harms one, another may destroy;
Not in our own but in another's joy
Lies common welfare. Brothers are we all!
Where one man stumbles every one may fall.

* * *

IT COULDN'T BE DONE

Almost every day some new adventurer astonishes the world by doing something which yesterday couldn't be done.

Henry Ford once said to me, "Do you know the difference between the wise man and the fool? Well, the wise man knows a thing can't be done and he doesn't find out that it can be

done until some fool who doesn't know that it can't be done comes along and tries it and does it."

How right the years have proved that to be. He, himself, today is doing things which a few years ago were listed among the impossibles. In our homes we are using devices now commonplace and ordinary, which to our fathers and mothers were but the idle dreams of faddists and fanatics. It seems to me that all our culture and advancement and improvement come from the courage and the faith of a few. We are the throng, waiting until some plodding dreamer finds the way to lead us to comfort and convenience. Those brave visionaries seem to see beyond our day. They are too vague for us who doubt to understand. They are the servants of the possible; we the admirers of the impossible. We are the foolish wise; theirs is the splendid folly to believe.

And so, out of Henry Ford's remark to me this bit was done:

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one ever has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

* * *

THE FISH THAT GETS AWAY

I don't suppose there was ever an accurate estimate of the size and weight of the fish that gets away. Imagination paints him large and conversation makes him even larger. No one has ever caught a fish as big as the one that got away.

But this trait is not alone peculiar to fishermen. It is as human and common as breathing. The joys we just miss always seem richer and sweeter to us than the ones we have had. Disappointment sits at every man's door. The job he is never going to get takes his mind off the job he already has. He ought to be the superintendent, but he isn't, and therefore he forgets to be the best workman in the place. Most of us are always remembering the fish that got away. We have tenacious minds for all misfortunes, but we forget quickly the times that fortune has smiled upon us. We forget the fish we caught—they were small, they didn't amount to very much, but the fish that got away was a beauty!

Perhaps it would be better for all of us if we could in some way make more of what joys we have and think a little less of the joys we miss. No matter how sufficient a man may be,

he will never drain the glass of life. Not every joy will be granted unto him, not every dream will be realized, not every hope come true; some pleasures must escape.

Some mourn the fish that gets away
And boast his size and weight;
They stop their friends at night to say
How sorry was their fate.
Almost unto the net they'd brought
This beauty superfine;
It seemed to them they had him caught
And then he snapped the line.

Oh, yes, they had some fish to show
For all the time they'd spent;
Some luck they'd been allowed to know,
But they were not content.
The ones they'd caught seemed rather small
When put upon display,
And could not be compared at all
With that which got away.

He broke but once where sunbeams dance
Upon the waters blue,
And though at him they'd but a glance
His weight and size they knew.
Not one in all their splendid catch,
Which came to them that day,
For beauty could begin to match
The fish which got away.

Perhaps against us one and all
Could lie the self-same charge:
The joys we catch seem very small,
The ones we lose seem large;

We pass our many blessings by
As though no worth had they,
And dolefully we magnify
The joy that gets away.



A PURPOSE IN LIFE

I presume that at some time or another every living human being has questioned the purpose of his birth. In the silent hours when a man sits alone he must wonder somehow what this life is all about and what his ultimate destiny is to be. So little can be proved and so much must be taken on faith that none of us can speak with assurance of what has preceded or what lies beyond this life.

All that I am personally sure of is that I have been born and that my name is Edgar A. Guest. I deduce from that fact that the good Lord must have wanted an Edgar A. Guest on this earth and he gave me the job. My duty then, as I see it, is to make the best possible Edgar A. Guest I can make and let it go at that. If the Lord had wanted me to be someone else, I should now be living and working here under another name. I believe this life goes on. Somehow and somewhere and at some time I expect to return. It may be I shall be asked to give an account of my life here. They may say to me then, "You have had so many years, so many months, so many weeks on that earth, is anyone down there any better off because we let you live that long?" It occurred to me that in that moment I should hate to stand ashamed and admit that I had utterly wasted the years, that I had taken the gift of life and fretted it all away. It seemed to me as I thought of it then that I ought

so to live on this earth that others could rejoice in having known me.

And so, for myself one day as a constant reminder of the purpose that I see but vaguely, this bit was done:

I'd like to think when life is done
That I had filled a needed post,
That here and there I'd paid my fare
With more than idle talk and boast;
That I had taken gifts divine,
The breath of life and manhood fine,
And tried to use them now and then
In service for my fellow men.

I'd hate to think when life is through
That I had lived my round of years
A useless kind, that leaves behind
No record in this vale of tears;
That I had wasted all my days
By treading only selfish ways,
And that this world would be the same
If it had never known my name.

I'd like to think that here and there,
When I am gone, there shall remain
A happier spot that might have not
Existed had I toiled for gain;
That some one's cheery voice and smile
Shall prove that I had been worth while;
That I had paid with something fine
My debt to God for life divine.

THE HOME TOWN

When we are young we look forward to going away. The distant city is alluring. Places afar off have the charm of unfamiliarity. A trip is an adventure and the strange sights are dazzling to our eyes. The home town and the home neighborhood seem to be commonplace in that familiarity which breeds contempt. We look upon the buildings, the parks, and even the people, without surprise or admiration.

As we grow older, especially if we have traveled much, we reverse this process of thought. We have discovered that happiness lies near by and not afar off. That what once dazzled us has lost its power to charm, and we discover that in those old familiar surroundings are all the joys that make for peace of mind. The people in the different places we have discovered are really no better and no worse than the people at home. In fact, they are very much like them with this difference: We know the home folks better. We have been on closer terms with them. We know their sorrows, we know their hopes and their aims, their virtues and their weaknesses, and by that intimate knowledge we are more comfortable in their presence. So at last I think we always come to see that the home town, whether it be a great city or a humble one, takes its place in the mind and the imagination as the best spot on earth.

It doesn't matter much be its buildings great or small,
The home town, the home town is the best town, after all.
The cities of the millions have the sun and stars above,
But they lack the friendly faces of the few you've learned
to love,

And with all their pomp of riches and with all their teeming throngs,
The heart of man is rooted in the town where he belongs.

There are places good to visit, there are cities fair to see,
There are haunts of charm and beauty where at times it's
good to be,
But the humblest little hamlet sings a melody to some,
And no matter where they travel it is calling them to
come;
Though cities rise to greatness and are gay with gaudy
dress,
There is something in the home town which no other
towns possess.

The home town has a treasure which the distance cannot
gain,
It is there the hearts are kindest, there the gentlest friends
remain;
It is there a mystic something seems to permeate the air
To set the weary wanderer to wishing he were there;
And be it great or humble, it still holds mankind in thrall,
For the home town, the home town, is the best town after
all.



MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

The story of an opportunity has always fascinated me. At Christmas time I always think of the people whose privilege it was to play a part in the glory of Bethlehem. I sympathize greatly with the inn-keeper there. His was a golden opportunity which he never sensed.

I fancy that inn-keepers then were much like inn-keepers now. They have their problems and their troubles, and their

inns become crowded and guests at times must be turned away. I can imagine Joseph and Mary arriving at the crowded hostel and being told that there was no room for them. He must have had sympathy in his breast, for he realized Mary's condition and offered her the stable. He never knew the miracle of that birth. I doubt that he ever lived to know that his inn and his stable and his act would be remembered and recalled through all the ages so long as this world shall exist.

Some day I fancy I shall meet him over there. A friend may introduce him as the inn-keeper at Bethlehem and I think I know exactly what he will say to me—I have heard it said so often here on earth—"If I had known that he was a friend, I might have found room for him." By letters of introduction men today contrive to get accommodations which to total strangers are coldly denied. This is only human. Men always have and always will favor the well-known. It is as natural that it should have happened then as that it happens now.

And so, if we ever shall meet and I shall ask that inn-keeper about that first Christmas Eve at Bethlehem, I am sure he will shake his head and say: "If only I had known." Of course, he will regret it, but there never comes a Christmas Eve but what I think of him.

"Oh, if only I had known!"

Said the keeper of the inn.

"But no hint to me was shown,

And I didn't let them in.

"Yes, a star gleamed overhead,

But I couldn't read the skies,

And I'd given every bed

To the very rich and wise.

"And she was so poorly clad,

And he hadn't much to say!

But no room for them I had,
So I ordered them away.

"She seemed tired, and it was late
And they begged so hard, that I
Feeling sorry for her state,
In the stable let them lie.

"Had I turned some rich man out
Just to make a place for them,
'Twould have killed, beyond a doubt,
All my trade at Bethlehem.

"Then there came the wise men three
To the stable, with the morn,
Who announced they'd come to see
The great King who had been born.

"And they brought Him gifts of myrrh,
Costly frankincense and gold,
And a great light shone on her
In the stable, bleak and cold.

"All my patrons now are dead
And forgotten, but to-day
All the world to peace is led
By the ones I sent away.

"It was my unlucky fate
To be born that Inn to own,
Against Christ I shut my gate—
Oh, if only I had known!"



TWO SIDES

When children reach the age of observation, of understanding and curiosity, I am sure the thing which interests them most is the story of their parents' romance. They begin to ask mother, "How did you and father meet?" and all the questions which youthful minds can think of.

I noticed him first eyeing his beautiful mother and then turning and looking me up and down. It was obvious that a great question was forming in his mind and then one evening at dinner he blurted it out. "Ma," he said, "where did you meet him? Did you like him the first time you saw him? What was there about him that attracted your attention? What did he say to you? What did you say to him?" And we both laughed and put him off with the pretty little fairy tale most parents tell. But he was persistent about it and kept at it and one day it dawned on me that he was asking the only two people in the world who could tell him the truth about what he wanted to know. So I decided to write out for him a true version of the meeting of his mother and myself, and I had been married long enough to know that I wouldn't be permitted to have the last word in such a matter.

When I had finished my version of our meeting it occurred to me that mother herself would like also to give her version, so I put fresh paper into the typewriter and told the story as I thought she would tell it to him. I coupled these two bits because they will show what two people who have an identical set of facts can do. Both are true, I believe, and yet so different. I told my version first and then let mother tell her side of the story.

Well, you see, I met your mother at a wedding, long ago,
And though I was four-and-twenty, up to then I didn't
know

EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

That in all our busy city, which I'd traveled up and down,
There was such a lovely creature, with such lustrous eyes
of brown.

But the minute that I saw her I just stared and stared
and stared,
And right then I would have hugged her and kissed her—
if I'd dared!

She was acting as the bridesmaid, I was best man for the
groom,

And of course the bride was lovely, but the loveliest in the
room

Wasn't just then getting married—'twas my thought as
I stood there—

For I couldn't keep from staring at your mother, I declare,
And I couldn't keep from thinking, as we knelt there, side
by side,

There must be another wedding, and then she must be
my bride.

Well, the wedding party scattered, bride and groom and
guests and all,

But I asked that lovely bridesmaid if she'd let me come
to call.

Well, she blushed and gave permission, and when Sunday
evening came

I bought a box of candy, with a very famous name,
And I went up there to see her, and her Pa and Ma were
there,

And I wanted so to kiss her—but of course I didn't dare.

Now that's how I met your mother—and 'twas twenty
years ago,

And there was another wedding—just the one I'd longed
to know,

EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

For one lovely Sunday evening, when I went up there to call,
I caught her up and kissed her, as we lingered in the hall,
And we planned right then to marry—it was love that made me bold—
Now that's how I met your mother—but don't tell her that I told.

Now Mother tells her story:

When first I met your father, it was at a wedding, dears,
And he wore a high white collar which stretched up to his ears,
He was thin and short and nervous, and his dress suit didn't fit,
And I didn't like the way he dressed his hair a little bit.
It was parted in the middle and it lopped across his brow—
And I never dreamed that evening I'd be married to him now.

I knew a dozen fellows who were handsomer than he,
And all of them were richer, and they thought a lot of me;
They brought me flowers and candy each time they came to call—
So this meeting with your father didn't mean much after all.
And besides his ways annoyed me—I'd have told him if I dared
That I didn't like his manner and the vulgar way he stared.

Well, next Sunday after dinner he came up to call on me
And stayed so long that Grandma then invited him for tea.

After that he came so often that your Grandpa used to say:

"That skinny gawk is driving all the healthy stock away!"
But somehow I'd grown to like him, and I marveled that I could,

For he never tried to kiss me—though I often wished he would.

Now that's all there is to tell you—by next June I was his bride,

But before that I had made him part his hair upon the side,

And I'd made him change his collars, and I'd slicked him up a lot—

For I taught him what he should do, and the things which he should not.

But don't tell him that I've told you. That's the way I met your dad.

Would I do the same thing over? Well, he hasn't been so bad!

* * *

NOT FIFTY-FIFTY

One frosty autumn morning I was about to start for town and mother stepped to the car, as I fancied, to wish me good-bye. She handed me an old hat of mine, saying: "I have been looking over your things and if you get this hat cleaned it will do you for another year." It didn't strike me at the time that there was anything unusual in such an incident, it had happened to me all down through the years and I had begun to

look upon it as a matter of course. But strangely that morning I found myself laughing. "Imagine," said I to myself, "what would have happened had you reversed this situation. You have morally and legally just as good a right to go rummaging in her wardrobe and pick out stuff which to you looks just as good as new and carry it to her, saying, 'If you get this cleaned it ought to do you for another year.' " But we are not foolish enough to try it or silly enough to think we could get away with it. In this case what would be sauce for the gander would be a battle cry for the goose.

And so that morning, still chuckling, this bit was done:

To-day as I was starting out,
The lady that I write about
Stood at the door as if to chat,
Then handed me an old-time hat,
A bonnet I had worn, I know,
The first time several years ago;
"Now get this cleaned," she said to me,
"And just as good as new 'twill be."

I chuckled as I carried down
That old fedora, rusty brown.
I chuckled, living that scene o'er,
The good wife standing at the door,
As earnest as a wife can be,
Handing that worn-out lid to me,
And saying: "Have this cleaned, my dear,
'Twill serve you for another year."

Let's twist the scene around and see
What would occur if I should be
Prompted to try a trick like that
And hand to her an ancient hat,

A bonnet of a vintage rare,
Saying: "It's good enough to wear,
Just have this blocked and cleaned, my dear,
'Twill serve you for another year."

I fancy then the fur would fly
If such a trick I dared to try.
She'd wither me with looks of scorn
And spoil another autumn morn.
But let it drop. A man and wife
Have different views of hats and life,
And meekly to the Greek I went
And had it cleaned—and she's content.

* * *

TRAFFIC TOLL

More and more the necessity grows for education and co-operation in matters of public safety. The appalling increase in the number of deaths from motor accidents is convincing proof that something must be done. If a plague were to break out, say of small pox or diphtheria, immediately both public officials and citizens would be aroused. Strict measures to prevent the spread of disease would be adopted and willingly obeyed. They would be recognized at once as necessary to the welfare of all. The daily toll of traffic makes it an even greater menace than disease. The reckless driver must be controlled. Sometimes I wonder if there is any way in which a sense of responsibility can be developed in drivers of automobiles. It seems not enough merely to know certain rules adopted for the regulation of traffic.

EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

I have often thought that if it were my business to issue licenses to motorists there are several questions over and above can you tell red from green, or can you read stop signs that I should like to ask. I should like to ask questions like this: Do you expect old people to be as alert as young? Does it occur to you at times that human beings in great distress and trouble walk the streets; that there are deaf people and blind people and absent-minded people, all of whom have a right to be out, and if not a right to, a hope, for some consideration from their fellows? At any rate, if I were in a position to judge motorists, these are questions that I should ask.

If judging drivers were my task,
There are some questions I would ask
Concerned with dangers of the street
Which every one is sure to meet.
Before a license I'd bestow
Some simple facts I'd want to know,
Like these: When little tots you see,
Must you or they most careful be?

What have you learned of children's ways?
If on the curb a youngster stays,
Do you expect him to remain
Until the street is clear again?
If ball or hoop roll into view,
What do you think a child will do?
And if into the road he flies,
Will you be taken by surprise?

Do you drive every little street
As though no child you'd ever meet?
You know the lights both red and green,
But do you know what white canes mean?

And has it ever crossed your mind
That those who carry them are blind?
You blow that horn your path to clear.
Do you expect the deaf to hear?

Do you expect alone to meet
The hale and strong on every street?
Can you, at any rate of speed,
The minds and ills of others read?
Would you retort to shirk the blame:
"I didn't know the man was lame?"
If judging drivers were my task,
'Tis things like this that I should ask.

* * *

NAMING THE DAY

When I was a boy in a drug store, the proprietor at times would send me out on errands of collection. He used to like to give me the past due bills in the hope that I might find a debtor at home in a paying mood. I seldom did. Even as a boy I was impressed by the glib way the debtors would say, "Not today. Call some other time. My husband isn't home. I am not prepared to pay that bill today." And how I used to say, "Will you tell me when I may call again?" and always the answer was, "Any time, but not now."

I cite them now merely as evidence that no experience is wholly lost. It may escape the mind and seem to be forgotten. One may travel many years away from it and yet strangely at some unexpected moment it may return. At least so it has been with me. I had forgotten entirely, I thought, those labors

of my boyhood. I had gone out in the newspaper business, had grown to manhood and had married and had come well into middle life. Six of us were sitting at luncheon one noon and the conversation turned to the passing of one of our dear friends. Someone at my right said, "Wasn't it too bad he didn't live a little longer to enjoy some of the success which had just begun to come his way?" One to my left remarked, "Wasn't it strange! They just built their new home—he was hardly in it before the last illness overtook him. Surely he would have liked to have stayed on a little longer." And in that moment a strange thing happened to me. Again I saw the little boy of the drug store and I seemed to be standing on the steps of a debtor and the debtor was saying to me, "Not today. Come some other time. I am not prepared to pay that bill today." And for the first time in my life it occurred to me that those trite remarks of the debtor to the collector were the identical remarks that each of us would make today if the Great Collector should call for us: "Not today. I am not prepared to go today. Come some other time." And then if, as I did, the Great Collector should say, "When? Name the day precisely," not one of us could do it.

Death, the collector, came to him and said:
"I want the payment for your drink and bread!
I want the price which tenants all must pay
For having occupied a house of clay.
This is a bill which cannot be denied."
"Please call another time," the man replied.

"I'm sorry, but today I'm not prepared.
I really thought your master little cared
How long this lease of mine on earth should run.
I've planned some work which still is far from done.

There's still a hill or two I wish to climb;
Come back, collector, at some other time."

"I've heard that story countless times before,"
Said the collector, standing at the door.
"You say you want more time! Well, Mr. Man,
Give me the date precisely, if you can.
Suppose I grant you five years more or ten,
Are you quite sure that you'll be ready then?

"When will your work be finished? Can you say
At fifty with a smile you'll go away?
At sixty shall I call? and will you then
Be glad to quit the fellowship of men?
Ah, no, my friend, only the Master knows
The day and hour life's mortgage to foreclose!"



MY AUNT'S BONNET

Nothing fascinates me more than the strange little events by which the current of our lives is turned. I used to think this life a simple proposition, that all one had to do and all one had to learn was the difference between right and wrong, and knowing that one might go serenely on.

However, I have lived long enough now to realize that right and wrong themselves are difficult to know, that what seems right today may tomorrow be regretted, and what now seems wrong and hard to bear may later prove a boon.

It occurred to me also that perhaps all that has happened in

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history had to happen precisely as it did that we might be comrades now. Had something not happened which did happen, our lives which seem so fixed and safe might have been otherwise. It was this thought that I had in mind when I remembered a strange happening of my boyhood days.

I had an old aunt who kicked up more disturbances in the neighborhood than all the philosophers in the world could explain. She was the sweetest and gentlest of human beings and it was farthest from her mind to hurt a soul. Her conduct was puritanically correct. She lived her life for the sole purpose of doing good. She had no idea that anyone's life on this earth could ever be the worse for having met her. She had a high sense of responsibility, and she never once lowered her standard of propriety for an instant lest she might be the means of leading someone astray. She never knew it and yet, thinking of her I remember a terrific upheaval in human life which resulted from one trifling bit of carelessness.

They say life's simple—but I don't know.
Who can tell where a word will go?
Or how many hopes will rise and fall
With the weakest brick in the cellar wall?
Or how many hearts will break and bleed
As the result of one careless deed?
Why, my old Aunt's bonnet caused more dismay
Than a thousand suns could shine away.

She wore it high through her top-knot pinned,
A perfect kite for a heavy wind,
But the hat would stick though a gale might blow
If she found the place where the pins should go.
One Sunday morning she dressed in haste,
She hadn't a minute which she could waste,

She'd be late for church. Now the tale begins,
She didn't take care with those bonnet pins.

Oh, the wind it howled, and the wind it blew,
And away from her head that bonnet flew!
It swirled up straight to select its course,
First brushing the ears of the deacon's horse;
With a leap he scampered away in fright
And scattered the children, left and right.
A stranger grabbed for the horse's head,
But stumbled and fractured his own instead.

After the bonnet a small boy ran,
Knocked over a woman, and tripped a man.
The deacon's daughter married the chap
Who rescued her from the swaying trap,
And she lived to regret it later on.
In all that town there abided none
Whose life wasn't changed on that dreadful day
When my old Aunt's bonnet was blown away.

Some were crippled, and some went mad,
Some turned saintly, and some turned bad,
Birth and marriage and death and pain
Were all swept down in that bonnet's train.
Wives quarreled with husbands! I can't relate
The endless tricks which were played by fate.
There are folk to-day who had not been born
Had my Aunt stayed home on that Sunday morn.

THE RICH AND POOR

I was playing golf one day with a man of great wealth. He is envied by all who know him and seems forever to be safely beyond the touch of care and doubt. Like all the others who knew him I thought him a great success. Then he ran his fingers through his iron gray hair and said: "I had a rotten night last night. Didn't get a wink of sleep. Five o'clock this morning before I closed my eyes." A strange thought came to me. I turned to him and replied: "Last night I was a richer man than you." He said, "What?" "Last night," I repeated, "I was richer than you. At least I had for myself what you with all your money could not buy—I had a good night's sleep."

Since then I have thought about him a good deal. It occurred to me that afternoon that all the differences of caste and creed and wealth and position and power are only for man's waking hours. In order to be the King of England the king must be awake. In order to be the millionaire the rich man must be awake. As I drive home now at night passing the darkened houses, I wonder who are the rich and who the poor of the night hours. To whom are the dreams of happiness being sent? To whom the tortures of insomnia?

In my dreams I have owned yachts and done great things. For that part of the day I have known contentment. So it seems to me that of whatever we grow to possess, we have only part time possession.

When night comes down
To the busy town
And the toilers stir no more,
Then who knows which
Is the poor or rich
Of the day which went before?

When dreams sweep in
Through the traffic's din
For the weary minds of men,
Though we all can say
Who is rich by day,
Who can name us the rich man then?

It is only awake
The proud may take
Much joy from the stuff they own,
For the night may keep
Her gifts of sleep
For the humblest morta. known.

By day held fast
To creed and caste
Men are sinner and saint and clown,
But who can tell
Where the glad hearts dwell
When the dreams come drifting down?

* * *

SANTA PASSES

I don't know as I was entirely happy that last Christmas. We have had Santa Claus with us as a real and genuine saint all down through the years, but I suspect that he has come to us now for the last time.

It happens to every family, I suppose. Christmas from now on of course will be as happy as possible, but it will be dif-

ferent. By the time the boy was ready to say goodbye to Santa, little Janet was ready to welcome him, and so we carried on. There is no baby in our house now and when Janet dismisses him the jolly old fellow will have to look elsewhere for welcome. I shall miss him, I think, because his visits have meant so much fun. I have enjoyed telling about him as much as Janet has enjoyed hearing about him. He has been a part of our family life. His comings have been looked forward to and planned for.

But this year I have noticed that upon that little mind has fallen the seed of doubt. Those eyes of hers have learned a subtle wink. I think she and her brother have a secret confidence. Wisdom has begun its work. She has begun to mistrust where once she whole-heartedly believed, and I am sorry that it is so. From now on only the deadly, dull, dry fact will be hers. The delights of elusion and fancy will be no more.

This is called growing old. I am sure she is giving up Santa Claus, but I hope that to the end of her life she will retain the love that made his visits possible.

Well, it was a Merry Christmas, of that fact there is no doubt;

The little house proclaims it, for the toys are strewn about.
From the break of day till bedtime there was laughter in
the place,

But I fancied that I noticed something curious in her face.
In the midst of the excitement there would come a wistful
pause,

And I somehow have the notion that's the last of Santa
Claus.

Down the years we've had him with us; every Merry
Christmas day

Santa Claus has paid his visit in the good old-fashioned
way.

For when Buddy rose to boyhood, little Janet came along,
But I somehow have the notion she suspects there's some-
thing wrong;
For I thought that I detected in her conduct, now and
then,
A break in her devotion to the jolliest of men.

She hung her little stocking by the fireplace as of old,
And she gave a cheer for Santa, but it lacked the ring of
gold,
And though Christmas day was merry, I began to realize
That our lovely little baby now is growing very wise;
And I can't help feeling saddened and regretful, just be-
cause
I am sure our house last Christmas saw the end of Santa
Claus.

* * *

THE CHANGE-WORKER

Back in the early days when Mother and I were just start-
ing out, the days slipped by almost without a care. We were
young and alive with spirit. It seemed to us then that we had
only ourselves to serve. Such burdens as we knew were almost
trifling. It mattered little whether or not we spent or saved.
We had only ourselves to care for. If today we squandered
what might be needed tomorrow, we only would be the ones
to suffer.

And then the baby came and strangely the picture changed.
I awoke that morning to the realization that from that minute
on it mattered greatly what I should do. Henceforth I was

ever to be a responsible individual. It would matter greatly all through the years how I should live. That baby's life could be no better than my own. I could no longer squander for my own pleasure. I dared not take for my delight the substance that helpless little infant might later grow to need. I think with every baby comes this changed point of view. Those who have been just husbands and wives suddenly find themselves changed into fathers and mothers, and with that change come dreams and hopes and ambitions and responsibilities.

A feller don't start in to think of himself, an' the part that
he's playin' down here,

When there's nobody lookin' to him fer support, an' he
don't give a thought to next year.

His faults don't seem big an' his habits no worse than a
whole lot of others he knows,

An' he don't seem to care what his neighbors may say, as
heedlessly forward he goes.

He don't stop to think if it's wrong or it's right; with his
speech he is careless or glib,

Till the minute the nurse lets him into the room to see
what's asleep in the crib.

An' then as he looks at that bundle o' red, an' the wee
little fingers an' toes,

An' he knows it's his flesh an' his blood that is there, an'
will be just like him when it grows,

It comes in a flash to a feller right then, there is more here
than pleasure or pelf,

An' the sort of a man his baby will be is the sort of a man
he's himself.

Then he kisses the mother an' kisses the child, an' goes
out determined that he

Will endeavor to be just the sort of a man that he's wantin'
his baby to be.

A feller don't think that it matters so much what he does
till a baby arrives;
He sows his wild oats an' he has his gay fling an' head-
long in pleasure he dives;
An' a drink more or less doesn't matter much then, for
life is a comedy gay,
But the moment a crib is put in the home, an' a baby has
come there to stay,
He thinks of the things he has done in the past, an' it
strikes him as hard as a blow,
That the path he has trod in the past is a path that he
don't want his baby to go.

I ain't much to preach, an' I can't just express in the way
that your clever men can
The thoughts that I think, but it seems to me now that
when God wants to rescue a man
From himself an' the follies that harmless appear, but
which, under the surface, are grim,
He summons the angel of infancy sweet, an' sends down
a baby to him.
For in that way He opens his eyes to himself, and He
gives him the vision to see
That his duty's to be just the sort of a man that he's
wantin' his baby to be.

* * *

THE GOOD WORLD

Only a few of us can become famous. Only a limited few
can come to great riches. Only a few can be champions, but
all can enjoy the glory and the beauty of autumn days.

Mother Nature shows no favors and issues no special privileges. One has only to step outside to become a sharer in all the riches of the Fall. The great and proud hold no monopoly here. There is no prohibitive admittance fee to bar the poor. Dressed in scarlet and in gold the woods provide a living panorama that is free to all.

If in trying, in difficult, and in sorrowful hours we doubt the Lord's care for us, we have only to look about us to discover his presence everywhere. He has provided us with a beautiful world in which to live and work. He has made the earth a place where men ought to be happy, and if we are not we ourselves must surely be most to blame. The world might have been left drab and colorless and cold as a slate, instead it was adorned with infinite charm and colored with countless fascinations.

The Lord must have liked us, I say when I see
The bloom of the rose and the green of the tree,
The flash of the wing of a bird flitting by,
The gold of the grain and the blue of the sky,
The clover below and the tall pines above—
Oh, there's something about us the good Lord must love.

The Lord must have liked us, I say when I stand
Where the waves like an army come into the land,
With the gulls riding high on the crest of the breeze
And the ducks flying north in their echelon V's,
The sun slipping down into liquefied gold—
Oh, it's then the great love of the Lord I behold.

The Lord must have liked us, I say at the dawn
When the diamonds of dew gleam and glow on the lawn,
And the birds from their throats pour the red wine of song
As if life held no burden of sorrow or wrong;

The Lord must have loved us, I whisper just then,
To give such a world to the children of men.

The Lord must have liked us, I say as I pass
The nest of a meadow lark deep in the grass,
Or hear in the distance the quail calling clear
And know that his mate and his babies are near;
Oh, I say to myself as His wonders I see,
The Lord loves us all or this never would be.

* * *

UNSUSPECTED RICHES

Years ago when I was a police reporter, a report was made at headquarters that a wealthy woman visiting in Detroit had lost an extremely valuable brooch. The jewel was advertised for, the pawn shops were searched daily and every means by which it might be found exhausted. Finally the incident and the report were forgotten.

Ten years later a little old woman, whose hands were red with toil, stepped into a jewelry store and asked timidly if two little pearls might be replaced in the trinket which she passed over the counter. The clerk turned it over in his hand, examining it closely. He went to consult with others and returned to say that the pearls could be matched but at great cost. "These are genuine pearls," he said, "and to replace the missing ones will require twelve hundred dollars." The little old lady almost fainted. She explained that years ago she had found the brooch on the street, had thought it pretty, but had not thought it valuable. Down through the years she had worn

it to pin her blouse when she went to work. Over the wash-tub day after day that brooch had glistened. No one had ever noticed it. Now her daughter was to graduate from high school and she had thought by spending a few dollars to repair it as a graduation gift.

There is so much to that story that I never tire of repeating it. Here was a woman who had riches at her breast and was entirely unaware of them. I have always thought that perhaps most of us are richer than we think or know ourselves to be. Thinking of her it occurs to me also that we seldom look for riches save where we expect to find them. In all the years it never occurred to any employer of that old woman that that brooch which pinned her waist might be worth thirty thousand dollars. No thief would have bothered to seize it, no house-wife would have offered to buy it.

A little woman found a brooch upon the street one day;
It looked to her like jewelry the 10-cent stores display.
She took it home to pin her waist while out to wash she
went,
And day by day that trinket gleamed as o'er the tub she
bent;
But no one stopped to notice it. No mistress at the door
Would cast a second glance at things the washerwoman
wore.

"It is a pretty brooch," she thought. "I'll wear it while
I may,
Then give it to my daughter on her graduation day.
It's rather sad to look at now; I've lost a pearl or two,
But I can pay a jeweler to make it good as new."
So when the happy time arrived she asked a man the cost
Of two small pearls which would replace the ones that
she had lost.

The jeweler the trinket took and gravely looked it o'er.
Said he: "Wait just a moment, please; I fear 'twill cost
you more
Than you expect. These pearls are rare." She trembled
at his speech.
"For gems like this we'll have to charge two thousand
dollars each.
This is a most expensive brooch, exquisite, charming,
quaint!"
The washerwoman heard no more. She'd fallen in a faint.

To find that brooch police had searched the city up and
down,
And all the time it glistened on a woman's gingham gown,
And all the time it glistened as she toiled some floor to
scrub
Or shed its rays of loveliness above the steaming tub
But like this washerwoman, countless folks, year in, year
out,
Perhaps are blessed with riches they have never learned
about.



TIMES CHANGE!

In these modern days I think the sweetest sound that any father or mother can hear is the opening of the garage doors at two o'clock in the morning. When that crash reverberates they can settle back and go to sleep. The worry is over. The boy or the daughter is safely home once more. Parents cannot escape this fear, nor should they. It is folly to compare our

youth with the youth of now. The modern car is as much a part of modern life as was the gas jet in our days. Time and space have been altered. Dangers of the streets are inevitable. Our boys and girls must learn to avoid them. What seems strange to us is ordinary to them.

He came into my room one night and when I asked him where he had been, in the most matter-of-fact way he said: "Oh, she was hungry. She wanted a hot dog." And when I suggested that it was late he said: "Well, we just hopped in the car and went." After he had gone to his room I laughed. It occurred to me that had I offered in our courting days to buy his mother a hot dog at two o'clock in the morning, that boy might never have been born.

"Twas two o'clock when he came in, and rising in my bed,
"Where have you been till such an hour?" to him I sadly
said.

"Oh, she was hungry," he replied. "She had a sandwich
yen,

And so we hopped into the car to find a hot dog den."
"And did you find one?" I inquired. "Of course I did,"
said he,

"There's one just twenty miles away—an Indian tepee!"

There was no harm in such a trip; so do our customs
change,

That youngsters view with no concern what older minds
think strange.

This hot dog craze is modern stuff; the car is at the door,
And when a girl wants frankfurters, what's twenty miles
or more?

Distance and time are different now, and taste has altered,
too;

When girls in our day hungry were, a hot dog wouldn't do.

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We took the trolley home at night; no motor cars had we,
Who stayed till after midnight knew an angry dad he'd
see.

But, is it fair to judge them now by standards long out-
worn?

The modern girls, it seems, like food their mothers viewed
with scorn.

Though twenty miles seem far to us, it's just a hop to
them

Who yearn for hot dog sandwiches at two o'clock A. M.

* * *

ON GOING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

Once a year I remember vividly an incident of long ago and I find always some time and some place to relate it publicly. I shall do it again this year and I think so long as I shall live and have strength.

I was riding in a street car and immediately in front of me sat two eager and alert young men. They were on their way up in the world and it was apparent that all that seemed important to them was the work they were doing. "Are you going home for Christmas?" said one to the other. "No, not this year," was the reply. "The folks want me to come but I wrote yesterday that I shall be too busy to get away. I may be able to make it next year." I was urged to talk to that boy, but the street car is so public a place that I refrained.

However, I couldn't get him out of my mind all day long. I could see him unthinkingly causing a sadness of which he never dreamed. I could see the disappointed mother as she read that letter and I decided to go fishing for her. I decided

to cast out a line into the great sea of humanity and try to catch him for that waiting mother.

So this bit I am about to do for you on the radio tonight is really my annual fishing trip. I have never known whether or not I caught that particular boy of that street car, but during the weeks which followed the publication of these simple verses, I received more than a score of letters from other young people telling me they had changed their minds and because of it they were going home for Christmas.

He little knew the sorrow that was in his vacant chair;
He never guessed they'd miss him, or he'd surely have
been there;

He couldn't see his mother or the lump that filled her
throat,

Or the tears that started falling as she read his hasty note;
And he couldn't see his father, sitting sorrowful and dumb,
Or he never would have written that he thought he
couldn't come.

He little knew the gladness that his presence would have
made,

And the joy it would have given, or he never would have
stayed.

He didn't know how hungry had the little mother grown
Once again to see her baby and to claim him for her own.
He didn't guess the meaning of his visit Christmas Day
Or he never would have written that he couldn't get
away.

He couldn't see the fading of the cheeks that once were
pink,

And the silver in the tresses, and he didn't stop to think
How the years are passing swiftly, and next Christmas it
might be

There would be no home to visit and no mother dear to see.

He didn't think about it—I'll not say he didn't care.

He was heedless and forgetful or he'd surely have been there.

Are you going home for Christmas? Have you written
you'll be there?

Going home to kiss the mother and to show her that you care?

Going home to greet the father in a way to make him glad?

If you're not I hope there'll never come a time you'll wish you had.

Just sit down and write a letter—it will make their heart strings hum

With a tune of perfect gladness—if you'll tell them that you'll come.



This little talk was given impromptu by Mr. Guest over the radio the night of Miss Jane Addams' death, May 21, 1935.

THE PASSING OF A GREAT SPIRIT

Word has just come in of the passing of Miss Jane Addams, one of the noblest and I am sure the most devoted women of the world. Within this very hour there has come to a close a career made beautiful by unselfishness. She will be remembered long by countless people; by great of birth, who will recall her sacrificial service, by the humble and the poor as a

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beloved friend who has smoothed the way for them more than once.

Spring is again returning. As she greets us the trees are budding and bright, fresh flowers are blooming in exultation. It is the time, I think, she would herself have chosen to depart and so tonight in her memory I do these few very simple lines:

And if I shall remember
 The tulips of the spring,
The Christmas each December,
 The songs the children sing,
Their bits of merry laughter
 Which meant so much to me,
That's all in that hereafter
 I'd keep in memory.

I do not ask to go there
 With boastful tales to tell,
I'd like to have them know there
 This life I've loved so well.
I would recall a few things
 My eyes rejoiced to see,
The tender and the true things
 Which brightened life for me.

And shall I wake from sleeping
 To face eternity
But these I would be keeping
 Of earthly memory,
But these I would remember:
 The songs the children sing,
The Christmas each December,
 The tulips in the spring.

A BOY AND HIS STOMACH

Take it from a small boy, there is little justice in this world. Any ten-year-old can tell you that conditions here are most unfair.

I remember once a boy who complained bitterly to his father in this wise: "It's all wrong, it's all wrong. When mother's sick you go out and buy her ice cream. When I'm sick you make me take castor oil."

Children are too young to understand things good and bad. It is difficult to teach them why the candy which is so sweet to the taste will eventually result in that dose of castor oil. That one can have too much good never occurs to their youthful minds. So it was in this spirit, on the day after Thanksgiving, that I overheard a genuine complaint.

This boy was undergoing the miserable day after the glorious day before. He had celebrated Thanksgiving up to the neck. He had treated that stomach of his to all the good things. He had worked diligently to make that stomach happy, but it had played him false. It had shown no appreciation of his kindness and no gratitude for his devotion. It had actually turned upon him in rage and hate. For the joy it had known it was returning only suffering and this boy was resenting, as only a boy can, such ingratitude.

What's the matter with you—ain't I always been your friend?

Ain't I been a pardner to you? All my pennies don't I spend

In gettin' nice things for you? Don't I give you lots of cake?

Say, stummick, what's the matter, that you had to go an' ache?

Why, I loaded you with good things; yesterday I gave
you more

Potatoes, squash an' turkey than you'd ever had before.
I gave you nuts an' candy, pumpkin pie an' chocolate cake,
An' las' night when I got to bed you had to go an' ache.

Say, what's the matter with you—ain't you satisfied at all?
I gave you all you wanted, you was hard jes' like a ball,
An' you couldn't hold another bit of puddin', yet las' night
You ached mos' awful, stummick; that ain't treatin' me
jes' right.

I've been a friend to you, I have, why ain't you a friend o'
mine?

They gave me castor oil last night because you made me
whine.

I'm awful sick this mornin' an' I'm feelin' mighty blue,
Because you don't appreciate the things I do for you.

* * *

WIPING ONE'S FEET

Once on a rainy evening I was hurrying home and on my little street I saw a man industriously wiping his own feet on his own door mat. Even in the rain I chuckled. I had always thought of myself as the best trained foot-wiper in the city of Detroit. I had been instructed in the art of feet-wiping by an expert. It had been explained in language there could be no mistaking, that that mat at the door was there for a very definite purpose and that I was never to stain, in a moment of carelessness, the floors and carpets within.

Being ever on the lookout for something to write about, I

welcomed that neighbor's rainy evening performance. I decided to write a frivolous bit about a man being compelled to make sure that his feet were clean before he crossed the threshold of his own home. On the way down the next morning as I passed that man's home, the idea returned to me and I began to play mentally with the thought. I was having considerable fun with it when that little voice, which has so often interfered with my affairs, broke in again. "Why don't you treat it seriously?" it said. "Perhaps that man wasn't merely wiping his feet. Perhaps he was doing a little more than you could see as you hurried by. Perhaps the feet are not important. Perhaps some homes would be happier if more men took the trouble to stand at the doorway for just a minute and leave the cares and irritations of the day."

And so, instead of being a frivolous piece as I had first intended, the result was this:

He wiped his shoes before his door,
But ere he entered he did more:
'Twas not enough to cleanse his feet
Of dirt they'd gathered in the street;
He stood and dusted off his mind
And left all trace of care behind.
"In here I will not take," said he,
"The stains the day has brought to me.

"Beyond this door shall never go
The burdens that are mine to know;
The day is done, and here I leave
The petty things that vex and grieve;
What clings to me of hate and sin
To them I will not carry in;
Only the good shall go with me
For their devoted eyes to see.

"I will not burden them with cares,
Nor track the home with grim affairs;
I will not at my table sit
With soul unclean, and mind unfit;
Beyond this door I will not take
The outward signs of inward ache;
I will not take a dreary mind
Into this house for them to find."

He wiped his shoes before his door,
But paused to do a little more.
He dusted off the stains of strife,
The mud that's incident to life,
The blemishes of careless thought,
The traces of the fight he'd fought,
The selfish humors and the mean,
And when he entered he was clean.

* * *

TOMORROW

I once knew a man who would have been loved by us all had he lived until tomorrow. Today he was a disappointment. He would never give the little that he could to any worthy charity because he could not give the much that he desired. He wanted to do the big things. He preferred to wait until he could head the subscription list rather than write his name among those of us who were far down on the list.

So he shrank in our esteem. Whenever we asked for his help the answer was always the same: "I am too busy today, tomorrow I may have more time."

I like to give him credit for being sincere in that belief. I have often thought that he really did look forward to the time when by one magnificent gift he could end the misery of many. I like to think that he believed that the time would come when he could afford to put aside absolutely all selfishness and devote both his strength and his money to a generous and useful work. I think he meant to retire some day and become kind and good-natured and lovable, but he scorned all the little opportunities by which men grow to be friendly and beloved—and he died. That carefree tomorrow to which he looked forward never came.

**He was going to be all that a mortal should be
Tomorrow.**

**No one should be kinder or braver than he
Tomorrow.**

**A friend who was troubled and weary he knew,
Who'd be glad of a lift and who needed it, too;
On him he would call and see what he could do
Tomorrow.**

**Each morning he stacked up the letters he'd write
Tomorrow.**

**And thought of the folks he would fill with delight
Tomorrow.**

**It was too bad, indeed, he was busy today,
And hadn't a minute to stop on his way;
More time he would have to give others, he'd say,
Tomorrow.**

**The greatest of workers this man would have been
Tomorrow.**

**The world would have known him, had he ever seen
Tomorrow.**

But the fact is he died and he faded from view,
And all that he left here when living was through
Was a mountain of things he intended to do
 Tomorrow.

 • • •

YOU MAY WANT IT SOMEDAY!

When I was a boy I was slave to a junk box. It sat under the table in the old-time summer kitchen and into it my father used to make us children throw everything which we thought no longer of any use. I am sure it was one of his hobbies. He treasured every broken bit of material; every bent nail and rusty screw; every bit of metal and leather. Always he would remark: "Someday I may find a use for it."

It seemed to me that I was forever putting things into that box and never getting anything out of it. Not until years later, until my father had passed away and the junk box had been discarded entirely did I ever find in it a thing which I could use. And then one morning in the office as I sat thinking of my boyhood days, I saw again in memory that old collection of rubbish, and lying on top and staring me in the face was an idea. Now the idea must have been in the box all down through the years, but I had to grow up and mature and see much of the world and its hardships and its heartaches to discover it.

The thought was this: As my father had always gathered broken bits of material to save them because he might have some use for them someday, so in his relations with his fellow men he was just as careful. I remember that it had

made no difference to him how low down in the scale some poor fellow might seem to have fallen. I never heard my father say the word, I never saw him give the kick that would send that man still lower down. It seemed to me that he had always in mind the thought that broken though a man might be, he would put him away in the box of his friendships for the day when he might return to usefulness.

My father often used to say:
"My boy, don't throw a thing away;
You'll find a use for it some day."

So in a box he stored up things,
Bent nails, old washers, pipes and rings,
And bolts and nuts and rusty springs.

Despite each blemish and each flaw,
Some use for everything he saw;
With things material, this was law.

And often when he'd work to do,
He searched the junk box through and through
And found old stuff as good as new.

And I have often thought since then,
That father did the same with men;
He knew he'd need their help again.

It seems to me he understood
That men, as well as iron and wood,
May broken be and still be good.

Despite the vices he'd display
He never threw a man away,
But kept him for another day.

A human junk box is this earth
And into it we're tossed at birth,
To wait the day we'll be of worth.

Though bent and twisted, weak of will,
And full of flaws and lacking skill,
Some service each can render still.



JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

I was sitting at my desk on the morning of July 22, 1916, bothering with the odds and ends which make up the routine of a newspaper man's daily round, when the boy brought in to me a telegraphic flash. I glanced at it and read: "James Whitcomb Riley died this morning."

What a loss to the nation, I thought, and then strangely as if out of the atmosphere came to me what I now like to think of as another "flash." "Yes," said that wee small voice, which speaks to us only in solitude, "the world has suffered a loss, but think of the joy in the realms beyond where they now are waiting to welcome Jim Riley back again."

Into the typewriter went paper and that morning this bit wrote itself:

There must be great rejoicin' on the Golden Shore to-day,
An' the big an' little angels must be feelin' mighty gay:
Could we look beyond the curtain now I fancy we should
see
Old Aunt Mary waitin', smilin', for the coming that's to be,

But the heavenly angels missed him, missed his tender,
gentle knack
Of makin' people happy, an' they wanted Riley back.

There must be great rejoicin' on the streets of Heaven
today
An' all the angel children must be troopin' down the way,
Singin' heavenly songs of welcome an' preparin' now to
greet
The soul that God had tinctured with an everlasting
sweet;
The world is robed in sadness an' is draped in sombre
black;
But joy must reign in Heaven now that Riley's comin'
back.

* * *

THE AUTUMN OF LIFE

One day in October I was puttering about my lawn when I heard on the street the almost human screech of grinding brakes. H'm, I thought to myself, two Fords are about to kiss. I turned, expecting to see the tragedy, and was surprised to discover that sound had been produced by a single car. Then out of it began to pour the great crowd of people, which only a Ford can hold—the grandmother, the grandfather, the aunt, the uncle, the mother, and the children, and last of all, the father, who was the driver—and they arranged themselves into a group and began to admire a single tree ablaze in all the glory of the Fall.

It wasn't difficult to reconstruct what had taken place.

EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

An' Little Orphant Annie an' the whole excited pack
Dancin' up an' down an' shoutin': "Mr. Riley's comin'
back!"

There's a heap o' real sadness in this good old world
to-day;

There are lumpy throats this morning now that Riley's
gone away;

There's a voice now stilled forever that in sweetness only
spoke

An' whispered words of courage with a faith that never
broke.

There is much of joy and laughter that we mortals here
will lack,

But the angels must be happy now that Riley's comin'
back.

The world was gettin' dreary, there was too much sigh
an' frown

In this vale o' mortal strivin', so God sent Jim Riley down,
An' He said: "Go there an' cheer 'em in your good old-
fashioned way,

With your songs of tender sweetness, but don't make your
plans to stay,

Coz you're needed up in Heaven. I am lendin' you to men
Just to help 'em with your music, but I'll want you back
again."

An' Riley came, an' mortals heard the music of his voice
An' they caught his songs o' beauty an' they started to
rejoice;

An' they leaned on him in sorrow, an' they shared with
him their joys,

An' they walked with him the pathways that they knew
when they were boys.

Among them, I am sure it was the mother, was one with an eye to beauty. She had caught, through the little clear space allowed her, a flash of that scarlet foliage and had called excitedly to that father, "Stop!" I fancy he wondered what it was all about, but being dutiful he obeyed the command. And there they stood for a few minutes to admire that tree then closing its year of labor in a burst of beauty.

There was something about the incident that stayed with me. Men and women grow old and feeble, beauty deserts them and at the end of their years so far as appearances go, they are at their very worst. Save the spiritual glow which comes from lives well lived, there is little about them to admire. I thought, wouldn't it be fine if we could come to the autumn time of our lives in splendor; if we could close our careers, keeping the admiration of all who have known us. And so that day this bit was done:

I want to come to autumn with the silver in my hair,
And maybe have the children stop to look at me and stare;
I'd like to reach October free from blemish or from taint,
As splendid as a maple tree which artists love to paint.

I'd like to come to autumn, with my life work fully done
And look a little like a tree that's gleaming in the sun;
I'd like to think that I at last could come through care and
tears

And be as fair to look upon as every elm appears.

But when I reach October, full contented I shall be
If those with whom I've walked through life shall still
have faith in me;
Nor shall I dread the winter's frost, when brain and body
tire,
If I have made my life a thing which others can admire.

SUNRISE

Up at Pointe aux Barques, where we spend the summer, our cottage faces the lake which is due east. Since there is nothing between us and Lake Huron, I have occasionally gone to bed without bothering to draw the shades. That bit of carelessness resulted in my being awakened very, very early one morning. A great flood of golden light was streaming across my face. I rose to shut it out. I got to the window and reached for the curtain cord. "Since you're up," said that small voice, "why don't you stay and see this inspiring spectacle?" So I stayed there and witnessed the birth of a new day. I watched the last tired troops of night retreat.

If ever you grow weary of the world, if ever you get to feeling that life is deadly dull and the days monotonous, escape from the city sometime and go where in the wide open spaces a sunrise can be witnessed. It will exceed in grandeur and richness any man-made pageant. In right circumstances both sunrise and sunset are incomparable.

Today I saw the sun come up, like Neptune from the sea,
I saw him light a cliff with gold and wake a distant tree;
I saw him shake his shaggy head and laugh the night
away
And toss unto a sleeping world another' golden day.

The waves, which had been black and cold, came in with
silver crests,
I saw the sunbeams gently wake the song birds in their
nests.
The slow-retreating night slipped back, and strewn on
field and lawn,
On every blade of grass I saw the jewels of the dawn.

Never was monarch ushered in with such a cavalcade;
No hero bringing victory home has seen such wealth dis-
played.

In honor of the coming day, the humblest plant and tree
Stood on the curbstone of the world in radiant livery.

Pageants of splendor man may plan with robes of bur-
nished gold,

On horses from Arabia may prance the knights of old;
Heralds on silver horns may blow, and kings come rid-
ing in,

But I have seen God's pageantry — I've watched a day
begin!



GRACE AT TABLE

Always I have been more or less fascinated by the little table prayers used by families down through the years. The one my mother gave us sticks now in my mind as perhaps the first bit of verse I ever learned to say. For bedtime hour I was taught to say, of course: "Our Father," but the family grace was a little different. I have often wondered who was the author of it. Instead of being merely an expression of gratitude for blessings received, it was an invitation to the Lord to be with us. As my mother repeated it slowly so that we might all catch its meaning, it seems to me as though she felt she was actually inviting the Lord to make His presence known to us. She never spoke it hurriedly as though anxious to be done with it, nor would she allow us to do so. There was something simple and sincere in the way she conducted us

through that brief little ceremony. Very naturally the grace that was her favorite is mine also.

When I was but a little lad, not more than eight or nine,
The mother had a table prayer she taught us line by line.
With all the family gathered round, heads bowed and
hands in place,
We'd sit in solemn silence until one of us said grace.

"Be present at our table, Lord," her favorite grace began.
"Be here and everywhere adored," the little couplet ran.
"These creatures bless and grant that we—" I hear it
now as then—
"May feast in Paradise with Thee!" and all would say,
"Amen."

Day in and out through weal and woe, high gain or com-
monplace,
At every meal our heads we bowed throughout this simple
grace.
"Be present at our table, Lord!" From all that has oc-
curred
And all the joy that we have known—I'm sure He must
have heard.



TIED DOWN

Occasionally you will encounter that peculiarly selfish person who will not risk a moment of her own happiness to adventure with a responsibility. She will say to you very

coldly and very logically that she could not bear to have a child for fear of losing it. Again occasionally you may hear a woman say that because children "tie you down" she prefers not to have them.

I was sitting in a room minding my own business one day, when I overheard precisely that remark, and the next day I couldn't get it out of my mind.

"They tie you down," a woman said,
Whose cheeks should have been flaming red
With shame to speak of children so.
"When babies come you cannot go
In search of pleasure with your friends,
And all your happy wandering ends.
The things you like you cannot do,
For babies make a slave of you."

I looked at her and said: "'Tis true
That children make a slave of you,
And tie you down with many a knot,
But have you never thought to what
It is of happiness and pride
That little babies have you tied?
Do you not miss the greater joys
That come with little girls and boys?

"They tie you down to laughter rare,
To hours of smiles and hours of care,
To nights of watching and to fears;
Sometimes they tie you down to tears
And then repay you with a smile,
And make your trouble all worth while.
They tie you fast to chubby feet,
And cheeks of pink and kisses sweet.

"They fasten you with cords of love
To God divine, who reigns above.
They tie you, whereso'er you roam,
Unto the little place called home;
And over sea or railroad track
They tug at you to bring you back.
The happiest people in the town
Are those the babies have tied down.

"Oh, go your selfish way and free,
But hampered I would rather be,
Yes, rather than a kingly crown,
I would be, what you term, tied down;
Tied down to dancing eyes and charms,
Held fast by chubby, dimpled arms,
The fettered slave of girl and boy,
And win from them earth's finest joy."

♦ ♦ ♦

WHAT A BABY COSTS

In the early days when he was just a little fellow, he, like all other small children, began to wonder about things. I suspect that he was picking up information and misinformation from wherever it happened to fall. Among the questions with which he plied us is perhaps the commonest of all: "How much do babies cost?" This begins early in all families. The answer as a rule is the same. As time goes on, of course, the truth has to be told and the manner of telling depends upon the parents.

One day in answer to that often repeated query I said:

"Well, a baby costs about a hundred dollars and that's a lot of money." It seemed so to him, I am sure, because he went away quite satisfied that the price was beyond our reach. His idea of a hundred dollars must have been a sum which only a very few could ever accumulate in a lifetime. We heard no more about it for several months, and then one day he bounded into the house, his eyes aglow with excitement. He almost breathlessly announced: "The Browns bought a new baby yesterday. If they can afford a hundred dollars, why can't you?" And we had to say to satisfy him that the price had gone up.

However, his question, "How much do babies cost?" caused me to ponder and it occurred to me that there is a very different price which all parents are required to pay. It is a cost that must be taken out of the heart and not the pocket-book. A transaction that is never closed. A bill which runs through our childhood and adolescence up to maturity. And so for his benefit at a later day I wrote it out for him.

"How much do babies cost?" said he
The other night upon my knee;
And then I said: "They cost a lot;
A lot of watching by a cot,
A lot of sleepless hours and care,
A lot of heartache and despair,
A lot of fear and trying dread,
And sometimes many tears are shed
In payment for our babies small,
But every one is worth it all.

"For babies people have to pay
A heavy price from day to day—
There is no way to get one cheap.
Why, sometimes when they're fast asleep

You have to get up in the night
And go and see that they're all right.
But what they cost in constant care
And worry, does not half compare
With what they bring of joy and bliss—
You'd pay much more for just a kiss.

"Who buys a baby has to pay
A portion of the bill each day;
He has to give his time and thought
Unto the little one he's bought.
He has to stand a lot of pain
Inside his heart and not complain;
And pay with lonely days and sad
For all the happy hours he's had.
All this a baby costs, and yet
His smile is worth it all, you bet."



THE OLD WOODEN TUB

There was a time when Saturday night had a meaning all its own. In the days of my boyhood Saturday had character. It stood out from the rest of the week days if not with the solemnity of Sunday, with the distinction of preparations for the Sabbath. So changed are our customs and habits and methods that Saturday is now no different from the other days of the week. Saturday can come and go and scarcely be noticed. What was once "bath night," in city life exists no longer. The invention of rapid heaters has made taking a

bath an ordinary matter. One has merely to turn the tap at any hour of the day or night and the bath is ready.

But in the early days the bath was a weekly event. It meant preparation and assignment. It had to be planned so that every member of the family would rise Sunday morning fit for church. This was well enough in the summer time, but in the winter this family rite grew more difficult. The upper floors were cold. The upper rooms were like refrigerators, and so in the severest weather the kitchen was set apart for the ceremony. There beside the comfortable wood or coal stove the tub was placed.

Perhaps those were difficult and trying times, but now they seem to shine among the happiest of my memories. I am not sure that I should like to return to that old-fashioned method, but I do rejoice that it was my privilege to have known it, and I regret that my children will have no such experiences.

I like to get to thinking of the old days that are gone,
When there were joys that never more the world will look
upon,

The days before inventors smoothed the little cares away
And made, what seemed but luxuries then, the joys of
every day;

When bathrooms were exceptions, and we got our weekly
scrub

By standing in the middle of a little wooden tub.

We had no rapid heaters, and no blazing gas to burn,
We boiled the water on the stove, and each one took his
turn.

Sometimes to save expenses we would use one tub for
two;

The water brother Billy used for me would also do,

Although an extra kettle I was granted, I admit,
On winter nights to freshen and to warm it up a bit.

We carried water up the stairs in buckets and in pails,
And sometimes splashed it on our legs, and rent the air
with wails,

But if the nights were very cold, by closing every door
We were allowed to take our bath upon the kitchen floor.
Beside the cheery stove we stood and gave ourselves a rub,
In comfort most luxurious in that old wooden tub.

But modern homes no more go through that joyous weekly
fun,
And through the sitting rooms at night no half-dried chil-
dren run;
No little flying forms go past, too swift to see their charms,
With shirts and underwear and things tucked underneath
their arms;
The home's so full of luxury now, it's almost like a club,
I sometimes wish we could go back to that old wooden tub.

* * *

KNOWING ANYONE

I have often thought that we move about from day to day
as individuals, but each of us is in reality, like a bundle of
fagots, many persons. Certainly each of us is many sided.

To my grocer I am known as a customer. From his point
of view I am either easy or hard to deal with, doubting or
trusting, prompt or slow, and he judges me solely from his
observation of and his experience with me. My employer

knows me as an employe. My wife knows me as a husband and a father. All her judgments of me are based on what she sees and knows. To my neighbor, I am a neighbor; to my friends, a friend; to the stranger, a stranger, and I am set down in their minds to be what they may have chanced to discover in our occasional meetings.

I wondered once if ever anybody ever gets to know all about a man. I doubt that it can be done, but I think perhaps there is one place where this may closely be achieved. If three or four men spent a week or two together in a fishing shack on a stream, each will come back knowing the other without adornment and without pose. They will discover the hidden little traits which ordinary contacts of a busy life do not reveal, and I presume if ever a man is free from sham and pose and affectation, it is in those rare hours when he has slipped away from the tasks of the world to rest for a little while and be himself. It is when he is out fishin'.

A feller isn't thinkin' mean,
Out fishin';
His thoughts are mostly good an' clean,
Out fishin'.

He doesn't knock his fellow men,
Or harbor any grudges then;
A feller's at his finest when
Out fishin'.

The rich are comrades to the poor,
Out fishin';
All brothers of a common lure,
Out fishin'.

The urchin with the pin an' string
Can chum with millionaire an' king;
Vain pride is a forgotten thing,
Out fishin'.

A feller gits a chance to dream,
 Out fishin';
He learns the beauties of a stream,
 Out fishin';
An' he can wash his soul in air
That isn't foul with selfish care,
An' relish plain and simple fare,
 Out fishin'.

A feller has no time fer hate,
 Out fishin';
He isn't eager to be great,
 Out fishin'.
He isn't thinkin' thoughts of pelf,
Or goods stacked high upon a shelf,
But he is always just himself,
 Out fishin'.

A feller's glad to be a friend,
 Out fishin';
A helpin' hand he'll always lend,
 Out fishin'.
The brotherhood of rod an' line
An' sky and stream is always fine;
Men come real close to God's design,
 Out fishin'.

A feller isn't plotting schemes,
 Out fishin';
He's only busy with his dreams,
 Out fishin'.
His livery is a coat of tan,
His creed—to do the best he can;
A feller's always mostly man,
 Out fishin'.

WHEN FATHER SHOOK THE STOVE

I lived my boyhood in the days when what I like to call "the world's greatest delusion" was being practiced. When I recall for our children the times in which we were reared, they stare at me in amazement and wonder how we ever survived the first winter. When I tell them that houses used to be without electricity, telephones, furnaces, bath rooms, vacuum cleaners, thermostats, and all the modern jim-cracks, I am certain they think of us as people who must have been merely camping out.

So familiar and so commonplace have the marvels of our day become that my boy would be utterly helpless were he to be stranded somewhere with a coal stove and an oil lamp. He has never seen a base-burner and has never trimmed a wick, yet that base-burner stood in the center of our sitting room and the stove pipe went straight up through the ceiling to emerge at the second floor. It was carried again to the ceiling and elbowed and run the entire length of the upper hall into the chimney, and we were told as children and compelled to believe it that enough heat leaked out of that stove pipe to warm the entire upstairs. We slept in bedrooms so cold that the frost never left the windows from November to May. We were aroused in the morning always by the shaking of that stove. My father was never satisfied merely to shake the stove, it seemed to me he wanted to shake the entire house. One of my recollections is that of bouncing out of bed and racing through the cold hall and down the cold stairs to dress in the sitting room before the red glow of that stove.

"Twas not so many years ago,
Say, twenty-two or three,
When zero weather or below
Held many a thrill for me.

Then in my icy room I slept,
A youngster's sweet repose,
And always on my form I kept
My flannel underclothes.
Then I was roused by sudden shock,
Though still to sleep I strove,
I knew that it was seven o'clock
When father shook the stove.

I never heard him quit his bed
Or his alarm clock ring;
I never heard his gentle tread,
Or his attempts to sing;
The sun that found my window pane
On me was wholly lost,
Though many a sunbeam tried in vain
To penetrate the frost.
To human voice I never stirred,
But deeper down I dove
Beneath the covers, when I heard
My father shake the stove.

Today it all comes back to me
And I can hear it still;
He seemed to take a special glee
In shaking with a will.
He flung the noisy dampers back,
Then rattled steel on steel,
Until the force of his attack
The building seemed to feel.
Though I'd a youngster's heavy eyes,
All sleep from them he drove;
It seemed to me the dead must rise
When father shook the stove.

Now radiators thump and pound
And every room is warm,
And modern men new ways have found
To shield us from the storm.
The window panes are seldom glossed
The way they used to be;
The pictures left by old Jack Frost
Our children never see.
And now that he has gone to rest
In God's great slumber grove,
I often think those days were best
When father shook the stove.

* * *

THE THRILL OF FAILURE

If life ever becomes matter of fact and settled and fixed, the thrill and joy will have been squeezed from it. It is because we can dream and plan and hope that we rise with good heart to greet the morning. It is failure that makes victory sweet, and doubt that makes the struggle worth the pain. If it were easy to succeed, we would all look for something more difficult to do. If we could know with certainty the outcome, there would be no thrill in the contest. Few would care to play any game that they were sure to win. It is the possibility of loss that makes the gain worth going after.

Napoleon once said of the British that they would never win anything but the last battle. It is the final victory that counts. That holds compensation for a dozen failures. The final victory makes every heartache and every set-back memorable.

The victory won after many failures is the sweetest. There is no pride and no satisfaction in an effortless achievement, and so, one broken dream or one failure, or many broken dreams and many failures, should not crush the spirit. Disappointment and doubt and difficulty should merely spur us on. No man is a failure until he has given up trying. No man can be written down as defeated until he has surrendered the last battle.

One broken dream is not the end of dreaming,
One shattered hope is not the end of all,
Beyond the storm and tempest, stars are gleaming,
Still build your castles, though your castles fall.

Though many dreams come tumbling in disaster,
And pain and heartache meet us down the years,
Still keep your faith, your dreams and hopes to master,
And seek to find the lesson of your tears.

Not all is as it should be! See how littered
With sorry wreckage is life's restless stream.
Some dreams are vain, but be you not embittered
And never cry that you have ceased to dream!

* * *

A PACKAGE OF SEEDS

I was riding home one evening in the spring, when I saw in the hardware store the boxes in which seeds are displayed for sale. It occurred to me that I had not as yet bought the

zinnia seeds for my garden, and having a little time, I decided to stop then and there and get them.

I dropped the three bright packages on the seat beside me and started on, when what to me was a strange thing happened. One of the packages seemed to speak as I looked down upon it. "Bought flower seeds, didn't you?" it said. "Yes," I answered, "that's what I hope you are." "Well," said the package, "you got more than that." "I did?" I replied. "What more did I get?" "If for a minute you will stop to think," the package answered, "you will realize that you have just purchased a dime's worth of miracle. You have just bought ten cents worth of something which any living man cannot create for you or explain. All the armsful of zinnias you are planning to gather next Fall are folded now within this little envelope."

I wondered as I thought about it why down through the years I had accepted seeds as something commonplace. It was actually the miracle of Spring and Summer that I was buying. Mystery and life inexplicable were sheathed within each dry, brown seed. And so that day this was done.

I paid a dime for a package of seeds
And the clerk tossed them out with a flip.
"We've got 'em assorted for every man's needs,"
He said with a smile on his lip,
"Pansies and poppies and asters and peas!
Ten cents a package! And pick as you please!"

Now seeds are just dimes to the man in the store,
And the dimes are the things that he needs;
And I've been to buy them in seasons before,
But have thought of them merely as seeds;
But it flashed through my mind as I took them this time,
"You have purchased a miracle here for a dime!"

"You've a dime's worth of power which no man can create,
 You've a dime's worth of life in your hand!
You've a dime's worth of mystery, destiny, fate,
 Which the wisest cannot understand.
In this bright little package, now isn't it odd?
You've a dime's worth of something known only to God!"

These are seeds, but the plants and the blossoms are here
 With their petals of various hues;
In these little pellets, so dry and so queer,
 There is power which no chemist can fuse.
Here is one of God's miracles soon to unfold,
Thus for ten cents an ounce is Divinity sold!

* * *

THE HAPPY TOAD

I have never known a man or woman or child who for long has been perfectly happy and content. People whom I thought should have been happy are not, and strangely enough, people whom I have thought had every right to bemoan their fate were bravely smiling.

We are not born to be placid. There is no way by which man can secure himself against disappointment and heart-ache and despair. The best that the most fortunate of us can do is to strengthen our spirits for the tests. I wonder if any creature on earth really finds contentment.

One day as I was playing golf, out of a hole into which my ball had dropped there jumped a toad. Evidently he was well fed. Such raiment as he required he had. As far as toads go

he was dressed with the best of them. He was up-to-the-minute in toad styles. There wasn't anything a toad needs that he didn't have or couldn't get. The minute I should pass him and he had ceased to fear what I might do, he wouldn't have a worry in the world. As far as I could tell as I looked at him, he wasn't trying to invent anything, no boss was asking him to work overtime, he didn't owe the next door toad a thing he couldn't repay. If there was illness in his family, he didn't bother about it. His wife wasn't wanting dresses he couldn't afford, nor was she eating her heart out because she wasn't in high society. There he was in the sunshine, sitting in the mud, placid, content and perfectly happy.

As I was walking down the road
I met an ugly, grinning toad,
Who squatted in the shade and said:
"I never wish that I were dead.
Wherever I may chance to stray
I find rich food along the way;
I have no dreams I can't fulfill;
I owe no other toad a bill;
In slimy places I abide,
But with them I am satisfied.
My little children I forsook
As tadpoles in a nearby brook;
I know not where they are nor care.
I have no burdens I must bear.
At night I never lie awake.
My bitterest enemy is the snake.
I have no taxes, no beliefs,
No cares, ambitions, hopes or griefs;
No clothes to buy, no cash to lose,
No tools that I must learn to use.

I sing no dirges, tell no jokes.
I'm just a jumping toad who croaks.
Contented, placid, happy I
Shall be until the day I die."

* * *

Yet, as I trudged along the road,
I thought, "Who wants to be a toad?"

• • •

THE TEMPTRESS

Many a day I make a vow to myself that from dawn to dusk I will walk the straight and narrow path and do only what I know to be right. I promise myself that I will not be beguiled by temptation nor led astray by selfish desires, but the flesh is, oh, so weak and the lures to man's downfall are many.

Against some things I can be strong but I crumple before feminine tears. There is something about that feminine sex that I cannot cope with. From six to sixty, woman can work me and the trouble is she knows it. She knows that with the first glistening tear I shall give in. If she wants anything and I know it, I must avoid her or I shall be lost.

There is a temptress who daily lies in wait for me. She knows my habits and my hours, my departures and arrivals, and where best she can waylay me. She is lovely to see and cunning in coquetry. Mother has told me time and time again how to be firm. She has taught me what to do and what to say. She has even confessed to me the wiles of women and tutored me in the art of avoiding them, but all in vain. This temptress has a tear that is irresistible, a pouting lip that

destroys good judgment, and a charm so sweet that I prefer to fall and take the consequences.

As I went walking down the way I met a pretty miss,
Who boldly looked at me and said: "A lovely day is this!"
Her hair was of a golden brown, her eyes a sparkling blue.
I proudly doffed my hat to her and answered, "Howdy-do!"

She placed her graceful hand in mine and turned to go
my way.

Said I: "I have no time to flirt; I've work to do today,
I think you'd better run back home." With sadness
dropped her chin,
"We'll pass the drug store soon," said she, "I thought
you'd take me in."

"Oh, no," said I, "that wouldn't do. The hour is growing
late

And I am on my way to town to keep a business date.
Besides, to make it very plain, no time for girls have I!"
At such a cold rebuff from me the maid began to cry.

Now, though I've been a married man for six-and-twenty
years,

I haven't learned in all that time to cope with woman's
tears.

And so I let that temptress fair, who's scarcely seven
years old,

Escort me to the pharmacy where ice cream cones are
sold.



PRISONER AT THE BAR

As a reporter I used to visit the courts. The proceedings interested me intensely. I can remember no unfortunate so abject and so base that no one before sentence was passed came forward to speak a word in his behalf. It may have been a hired lawyer, or it may have been a friend of the family, or it may have been a relative, but often it was the mother. Since courts are human institutions, the tragedies played there are very human always. Politics, influence, power, position, sympathy, pity—all are used. The judge must listen to exceptions and excuses. Always there was someone to plead for mercy. Only occasionally would a man stand at the bar of justice alone and friendless and destitute and in that instance the judge himself would appoint a friend of the court to plead for him.

One day after witnessing the drama of the court room, I was driving home thinking about the scenes I had witnessed, when it occurred to me that there will come a time when each of us shall stand at the bar of judgment, where the reason for all of our actions will be known. And this bit wrote itself:

And the judge said: "What! no money to pay
In your hour of need
A lawyer to plead
Your case today?
And you come to the bar
Just as you are,
Poor and alone, with no friend to nudge
The solemn sides of the powerful judge
And ask as a personal favor that you
Be spared the punishment justly due?
Well, be not afraid!
Let your case be laid

Here before me. Though poor you are
And alone you must stand at the judgment bar
With the best and the worst of you known, my son,
I'll forgive you most of the wrong you've done."

If these lines you've read
You may think them odd,
But the man was dead
And the judge was God.

• • •

TO A FRIEND

There has been many a time that I've felt the way that I've tried to express in the following little verse. I think that this one speaks for itself:

I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have been to me;

I'd like to be the help that you've been always glad to be;

I'd like to mean as much to you each minute of the day As you have meant, old friend of mine, to me along the way.

I'd like to do the big things and the splendid things for you,

To brush the gray from out your skies and leave them only blue;

I'd like to say the kindly things that I so oft have heard, And feel that I could rouse your soul the way that mine you've stirred.

I'd like to give you back the joy that you have given me,
Yet that were wishing you a need I hope will never be;
I'd like to make you feel as rich as I, who travel on
Undaunted in the darkest hours with you to lean upon.

I'm wishing at this time that I could but repay
A portion of the gladness that you've strewn along the
way,
And could I have one wish this year, this only would it be:
I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have been to me.

* * *

MOTHER'S DAY

Sons and daughters all over the country are wending their way home to be with Mother on Mother's Day. Millions won't be able to do this, but with the coming of that May Sunday dedicated and set apart to motherhood, they'll be writing to her, renewing their devotion and repeating, to her delight, the old tributes of affection. They'll be with her in spirit.

To those of us who have her now only in our memories the day will be one of rejoicing. If your heart is still torn with anguish; if the memory of her last day on earth is still fresh in your minds; if you are still in the shadow of her passing and conscious only of the great loss which you have suffered, you may not believe this, for it takes time. In a sense, which you shall some day come to experience, we are closer to our mothers now than ever before. She is with us now constantly. There are no partings; no long absences. We have only to think of her and she is with us. We can take her with us wherever we choose to go. We can wake, as children, in the night and her spirit hastens to be with us. Now she is never

too ill to come, or too weary. In life the frequent absences were very real. Now neither time nor distance matter. Death has separated us only to bind us closer.

Gentle hands that ever weary toiling in love's vineyard sweet,
Eyes that seem forever cheery when our eyes they chance to meet,
Tender, patient, brave, devoted, this is always mother's way.
Could her worth in gold be quoted as you think of her today?

There shall never be another quite so tender, quite so kind
As the patient little mother; nowhere on this earth you'll find
Her affection duplicated; none so proud if you are fine.
Could her worth be overstated? Not by any words of mine.

Death stood near the hour she bore us, agony was hers to know,
Yet she bravely faced it for us, smiling in her time of woe;
Down the years how oft we've tried her, often selfish, heedless, blind,
Yet with love alone to guide her she was never once unkind.

Vain are all our tributes to her if in words alone they dwell,
We must live the praises due her; there's no other way to tell
Gentle mother that we love her. Would you say, as you recall
All the patient service of her, you've been worthy of it all?

RIGHTING WRONGS

Personally I'm glad there's so much wrong in the world. If all things here were already perfect our days and nights would be deadly dull. We'd be out hunting for wrongs to right and matters to improve. Complain as I do at times about debts and taxes and injustices and pain and sorrow and frustrated dreams, I'm still grateful for them all. As long as I can worry and feel pain and care greatly about anything and everything, I know that I am still alive. As long as I am anxious and eager and concerned the gift of life is still mine. Only the dead and the hopelessly insane are indifferent to such things. The dead can no longer be disturbed. Their pains have ended; their debts have all been paid.

If one could succeed without effort there would be no thrill in the victory. It's the struggling against the odds that makes the triumph glorious. He who has set one little wrong to right has lived a day worth while. The joy of life lies not in escaping care and trouble and pain, but in having known them all and lived them through. All honeymoons are happy; but the proof of the marriage comes with the silver and the golden anniversary. To reach those days the man and wife must share many a heartache and many a disappointment. Paradoxical as it may seem, the happiest marriages usually have been the saddest and the most troubled. Such people have proved their devotion and earned the right to smile.

The joy of life is living it, or so it seems to me;
In finding shackles on your wrists, then struggling till
you're free;
In seeing wrongs and righting them, in dreaming splendid
dreams,
Then toiling till the vision is as real as moving streams.
The happiest mortal on the earth is he who ends his day
By leaving better than he found to bloom along the way.

Were all things perfect there would be naught for man
to do;

If what is old were good enough we'd never need the new.
The only happy time of rest is that which follows strife
And sees some contribution made unto the joy of life.
And he who has oppression felt and conquered it is he
Who really knows the happiness and peace of being free.

The miseries of earth are here and with them all must
cope.

Who seeks for joy, through hedges thick of care and pain
must grope.

Through disappointment man must go to value pleasure's
thrill;

To really know the joy of health a man must first be ill.
The wrongs are here for man to right, and happiness is
had

By striving to supplant with good the evil and the bad.

The joy of life is living it and doing things of worth,
In making bright and fruitful all the barren spots of earth.
In facing odds and mastering them and rising from defeat,
And making true what once was false, and what was bitter,
sweet.

For only he knows perfect joy whose little bit of soil
Is richer ground than what it was when he began to toil.

• • •

THE JOB AND THE MAN

Whenever I hear, and it happens all too frequently, somebody say that So and So has a good job now, if he can only

keep it, I wonder how that idea got started. If there is such a thing as a good job there must also be such a thing as a bad job. Men have risen to high posts from most inferior positions and others have failed dismally in positions of great promise. I am quite satisfied now that the man is more important than the job. If he has it in him to succeed he'll take whatever job comes to hand and make something out of it.

The job is merely the opportunity for the man or boy to prove his worth. Success is usually an accumulation of little tasks well done. The lad who fails as the office boy is not the one who will be chosen to succeed as a clerk. Job is just another word for opportunity. It is merely a place provided by some one else for each of us to display our character, our courage, our willingness to work, and our ability. The good man makes a bad job good; the mediocre man makes it a mediocre place, and the idler and the shirker makes a failure of it. So—

The job will not make you, my boy;
The job will not bring you to fame,
Or riches or honor or joy
Or add any weight to your name.
You may fail or succeed where you are,
May honestly serve or may rob,
From the start to the end
Your success will depend
On just what you make of your job.

Don't look on the job as the thing
That shall prove what you're able to do;
The job does no more than to bring
A chance for promotion to you.
Men have shirked in high places and won
Very justly the jeers of the mob,

And you'll find it is true
That it's all up to you
To say what shall come from your job.

The job is an incident small
The thing that's important is man.
The job will not help you at all
If you won't do the best that you can.
It is you that determines your fate,
You stand with your hand on the knob
Of fame's doorway today,
And life asks you to say
Just what will you make of your job.

* * *

SAWDUST AND DREAMS

One time a little girl came to me crying because her doll had gotten caught on a nail and where the cambric was torn the doll's insides had come pouring out, and the child discovered them to be—only sawdust. Someone—some cynical grown-up who hadn't anything better to do than destroy a child's illusions—had chided her with the fact that the doll she had loved so passionately was only a thing of wax and sawdust after all. So she came to me crying bitterly. I gathered her up in my arms and after promising to have the doll mended so as to hold the sawdust in, and have her face cleaned up and made as good—or almost as good—as new, I tried to explain to her that her doll, while she loved it and cared for it, was something more than sawdust and wax. Her love for it and dreams about it made it something more, clothed it with the beautiful stuff of fairy tale and illusion.

When she had gone away, pacified and content, I thought to myself, "There are too many people in this world who try to reason in terms of cold realities only, who don't take account of the dreams which change harsh realities, if only we'll let them."

"Ah," the scoffing cynic said,
"You thought your doll a lovely thing.
You took it in your arms in bed
And fancied it worth cherishing.
But now it's broken, child, and you
Shed tears above it in despair.
This is a foolish thing you do.
There's merely wax and sawdust there."

Said one unto the weeping child
Who knew the truth as well as he:
"Come, little one, be reconciled!
Perhaps your doll can mended be.
Forget the sawdust you have seen.
Forget this grim and dreadful truth.
Such tragedies as this have been
An everlasting part of youth.

"So keep your love of dolls, my dear,
And cherish them the while you may.
You'll find with every passing year
That many a joy must go away.
Cling fast to beauty though it fades
And press your playthings to your heart.
When reason cold your mind invades,
Then much that's tender must depart.

"So treasure wax and sawdust things
Which warm the soul and glad the eye.
Heed not the cynic's mutterings
Who coldly reasons how and why.
'Tis well to love the good and true,
But keep your dreams and fancies here
And never grow so wise that you
Are left with naught to do but sneer."

* * *

ONLY ONE WAY TO WIN

So many of us, in this life, gamble everything on the turn of a wheel. And if it comes out right we think we've won, while in reality we have lost.

There are a thousand ways to cheat and a thousand ways to sin,
There are ways uncounted to lose the game, but there's only one way to win;
And whether you live by the sweat of your brow, or in luxury's garb you're dressed,
You shall stand at last, when your race is run, to be judged by the single test.

Some men lie by the things they make; some lie in the deeds they do,
And some play false for a woman's love, and some for a cheer or two;
Some rise to fame by the force of skill, grow great by the might of power,
Then wreck the temple they toiled to build, in a single shameful hour.

The follies outnumber the virtues good; sin lures in a thousand ways,
But slow is the growth of man's character, and patience must mark his days;
For only those victories shall count, when the work of life is done,
Which bear the stamp of an honest man, and by courage and faith are won.

There are a thousand ways to fail, but only one way to win!
Sham cannot cover the wrong you do, nor wash out a single sin,
And never shall victory come to you, whatever of skill you do,
Save you've done your best in the work of life and unto your best were true.



AMERICA

April 30th, 1935. One hundred and forty-six years ago today, George Washington, our first president, delivered the first inaugural address. If I remember right he said in that address something like this, "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency."

God has been good to men. He gave
His only Son their souls to save,

And then He made a second gift
Which from their dreary lives should lift
The tyrant's yoke and set them free
From all who'd throttle liberty.
He gave America to men,
Fashioned this land we love, and then
Deep in her forests sowed the seed
Which was to serve man's early need.
When wisps of smoke first upward curled
From pilgrim fires, upon the world
Unnoticed and unseen, began
God's second work of grace for man.
Here where the savage roamed and fought,
God sowed the seed of nobler thought;
Here to the land we love to claim,
The Pioneer of freedom came,
Here has been cradled all that's best
In every human mind and breast.
For full a hundred years and more
Our land has stretched her welcoming shore
To weary feet from soils afar;
Soul-shackled serfs of king and czar
Have journeyed here and toiled and sung,
And talked of freedom to their young,
And God above has smiled to see
This precious work of liberty,
And watched this second gift He gave
The dreary lives of men to save.
America! The land we love!
God's second gift from Heaven above,
Builded and fashioned out of truth,
Sinewed by Him with splendid youth
For that glad day when shall be furled
All tyrant flags throughout the world.

For this our banner holds the sky,
That liberty shall never die;
For this, America began:
To make a brotherhood of man.

One hundred and forty-six years ago today, Washington pointed out that which we, as citizens of the United States, seem at times to have forgotten, the privilege to carry out the divine purpose—freedom—political, economic, social and religious—which we can make to the progress of the entire world. I only hope that each man and woman throughout our country will remember this in all the days to come.

* * *

THAT MAN CULBERTSON

Funny the way some perfectly amiable married folks let a little game of bridge get under their skins. I've seen people who've been happily married for upwards of twenty years sit and glare at each other as if they wished 'they were man-eating tigers for the space of twenty minutes.

We men have been used to playing a nice friendly game of cards now and then with the neighbor folks, having a nice jolly evening ending up with cider and doughnuts, maybe. And the women were glad to play that way, too, with some gossip about the latest in strawberry jam recipes or a new way to put up pickles. But suddenly all that was changed. A frigid silence began to surround our bridge tables. When one of us men started to tell a little joke and look across at the wife for confirmation we'd meet a glare in her eye and maybe a leading question such as, "Let's see, I believe it was your bid, Lucy?" When we'd think that the game was a little

dull and decide to take a little flier into no-trump, and probably get set, we'd get a cold glance and be told that we had been too "vulnerable"—or something like that. Finally all of us men got together and talked things over and we found that the same little book had made its appearance in all of our homes at the same time, and on that little book was the name of—"Culbertson." So—

For eight and twenty years we've shared
The summers fair and winter blizzards,
The ins and outs, the hopes and doubts,
The chicken livers, wings and gizzards.
We've kept serenely on our way,
Despite the cares which came to fret us,
And so to her I smile and say:
"Why now let Culbertson upset us?"

I've done full many a foolish thing,
But far apart we've never wandered.
No angry word from her I've heard
About the money I have squandered.
Adown the years until today
We've shared whate'er the Lord would let us,
And so to her I smiling say:
"Why now let Culbertson upset us?"

What if my two-bid now and then
Is made without sufficient holding?
I could rehearse faults so much worse
She's borne and never thought of scolding.
We've lived through many a troubled day
And never let grim hatred get us,
And so to her I smiling say:
"Why now let Culbertson upset us?"

EDGAR A. GUEST BROADCASTING

We've never met this teacher chap,
I'm sure that he has never seen us,
'Tis not his looks, it's just his books
And system which have come between us.
As one we've stood when skies were gray,
As one we've thought when trouble tried us,
And so to her I smiling say:
"Why now let Culbertson divide us?"

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