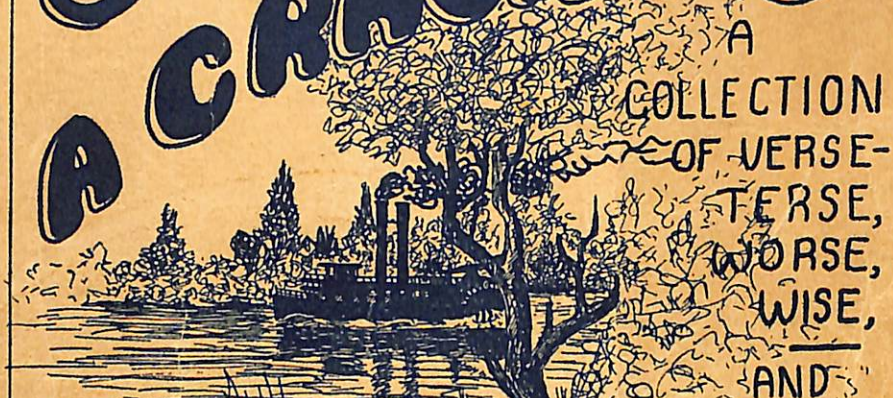


# A SARDINE AND A CRACKER



A  
COLLECTION  
OF VERSE-  
TERSE,  
WORSE,  
WISE,  
AND

OTHERWISE

BY

DALE WIMBROW

THE  
"MISSISSIPPI  
MINSTREL"

PUBLISHED BY  
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## A SARDINE AND A CRACKER

By

DALE WIMBROW

*"The Mississippi Minstrel"*

*Poet, singer, song-writer, humorist, philosopher, wood carver, soldier, artist,—he is also author and illustrator of this, his first collection of verse to be presented to the public.*

*We trust you enjoy the contents as much as we believe you will.*

*Sincerely,*

THE PUBLISHERS.



## FOREWORD

*Many of you readers have heard the author of the following pages, in various radio roles. You have also doubtless sung some of the songs he has written, but we venture to say that until very recently few of you suspected that he was also a poet of no mean ability. Nevertheless, bits of his own verse, recited by himself, have evoked such a storm of demand that he was utterly unable to meet it. We have therefore assumed that obligation.*





DEDICATED TO  
MY TRUE, AND TRIED FRIENDS

*(True for They've Been Sorely Tried)*



*The Fans*

I've written verse to Mother,  
And to Brother, and to Dad,  
And to almost everything that's known to man.  
But I've snubbed the most important  
Friend, broadcasters ever had,  
So this is dedicated to the fan.



There's not much satisfaction  
 Singin' songs in Radio.  
 The mike is dumb, the studio is bare;  
 But thoughts of all you folks  
 Who 'tune us in' and hear the show,  
 Makes up for much that's missing 'on the air.'

To sing before an audience,  
 And hear them clap their hands,  
 Thrills lowly chorus girl, or famous star.  
 In Radio it's letters  
 That, arriving from the fans,  
 Tell just how good, or just how bad we are.

So here's my toast to you folks  
 Who helped build the Radio.  
 Hats off to girl an' woman, boy an' man.  
 If we're bad you let us know it—  
 If we're good you tell us so—  
 So 'Bottoms up' to friends in need, "*The Fan*."

Respectfully,

*Wale Winbrow*

## *A Sardine and a Cracker*

### A TRIBUTE TO A FRIEND

*These stanzas are inscribed to W. C. Thurston—the Bard of Del-Mar-Va, whose verse is fully as bad as mine. Often our ornate DIScussin' has turned to just plain cussin'—however, an' notwithstanding, pals is pals, so—*

In retrospect I've searched the past  
 For friendships that I feel will last,  
 And few have I been finding.  
 For "*Friend's*" a word that's often used—  
 I ween more often yet—abused.  
 Few ties are really binding.

How often has the title 'Friend'  
 Misnomer proved. A simple "Lend"  
 Will oft weed out the masses.  
 Or if "Lend Me" does not suffice,  
 A bit of trouble or advice  
 Will rout the other classes.

Give me a cat, or dog, or horse,  
 And one good friend who will endorse  
 My note, when I am needy;  
 And you may have your limousine  
 That fairy drinks up gasoline.  
 I'm happier—if seedy.

But wand'ring on this path of thought,  
 Before my mind's eye there is brought  
 One friend o'er whom I linger.  
 The real congeniality  
 Exists between this friend and me.  
 He's too a lyric slinger.



We sit an' talk for hours on end.  
 Just talkin' friendly—friend to friend.  
 Our talk—you'd laugh to hear it.  
 But we're content to sit an' sit,  
 An' talk an' talk, an' smoke a bit,  
 An' to agree would queer it.

We talk till early mornin' hours  
 With them ol' Jimmy pipes of ours  
 A-burnin' up tobacker.  
 We set there facin', feet to feet,  
 An' if we're hungry, we jest eat  
 A sardine, and a cracker.

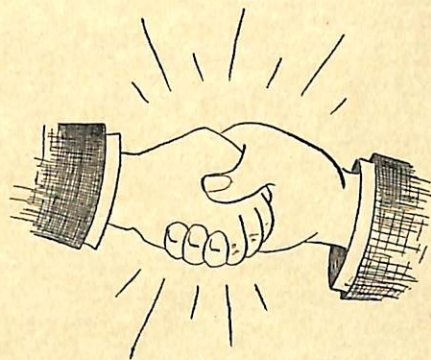
We start at 'soup,' we end at 'nuts.'  
 There's lots of ifs, an' ands, an' buts.  
 We argue long, an' tireless,  
 Of everything from Egypt's Queen,  
 To Henry Ford an' gasoline.  
 From dinosaur to wireless.

And if I say, "I want to rout  
 Our Congressman," then he will shout,  
 "Why, I'm his ardent backer—  
 I surely hope the man will win."  
 An' pass me up the sardine tin  
 An' I pass him a cracker.

We don't agree on things atall,  
 But winter, summer, spring, an' fall,  
 In any kind o' weather,  
 Each knows the other understands,  
 For when we part two friendly hands  
 Are always clasped together.

Now you who *pay* for friendly looks,  
 And glean your friendly lore from books,  
 You so-called better classes,  
 Who count your friendships by the scores  
 Nor segregate the saps, and bores,  
 The sycophants, an' asses—

You take your limousine along.  
 Your cabarets, an' dance, an' song.  
 Your homes of gilt, an' laquer,  
 An' take along your beer, an' wine—  
 But leave to me this FRIEND of mine,  
 A sardine,—and a cracker.





## LADY LUCK

*Lady Luck, mankind has wooed you, yet you smile  
on but a few.*

*Can it be that you are fickle, as they say?*

*Is it that, you have your chosen ones to toss your  
favors to?*

*Is it true that honest virtue doesn't pay?*

*Is it 'ACCIDENT' or "HAPPENSTANCE" when  
someone makes his pile?*

*When some mortals get what others call "THE  
BREAKS,"*

*Is it "CHANCE" that guides your fancy, and do  
"WHIMS" control your smile?*

*And my LADY—do you ever make mistakes?*

*Now I've asked some honest questions. I'm  
awaiting your reply.*

*Lady Luck, you're on the Judgment Seat today.*

*I have sought you long and faithfully, and now  
I'm asking why*

*You have always turned your face the other way?*

*What?—You say that I'm mistaken—That I  
HAVE been all along—*

*That your name is "HONEST WORK," not  
"LADY LUCK,"*

*And your ally "PERSEVERENCE"? Gee! I  
guess I had you wrong.*

*Pardon me—I'll see you later—Lady "PLUCK."*

*My*  
Every Day Thanksgiving  
Song

*Thanks for the love, of the old folks at home  
Thanks for the fires burning there.  
The light in the window, wherever I roam  
Reminds of their kindness and care.*

*Thanks to the sweetheart whose love is so true.  
Life's journey can never seem long  
Thanks for the sun and the stars in the blue  
Is my every day Thanksgiving Song.*

*Thanks for the dear ones whose mem'ries I keep  
Thanks for their mem'ry of me  
Thanks for the comfort and solace of sleep  
Thanks for a spirit that's free.*

*Thanks for the flow'rs, and the birds, and the bees  
Thanks for a heart free from wrong  
Thanks for the Great Love that gave all of these  
Is my every day Thanksgiving Song.*



## The Friend Who Wasn't There

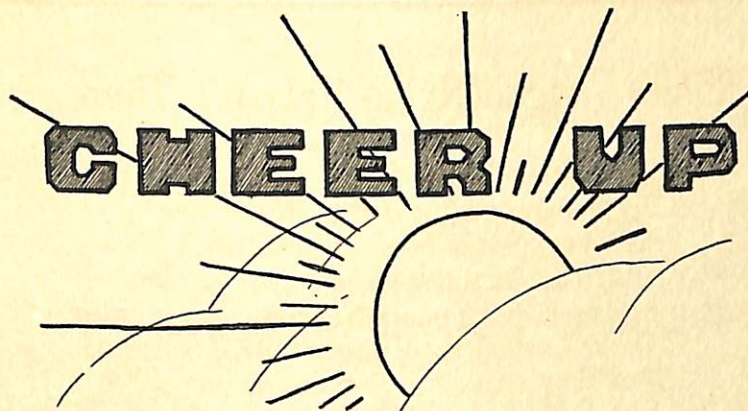
Just today I got a letter  
From some dear old friends of yore,  
And a tug came at my heartstrings  
As I read the message o'er.  
At an old pal's birthday party  
They recalled their friendships rare,  
And they turned a glass down empty,  
Just because I wasn't there.

While I've sought elusive fortune,  
And pursued my selfish way,  
And forgotten past, and future,  
In the rigors of today—  
They've been clearly understanding  
All the loads I've had to bear;  
So they turned a glass down empty,  
For the friend who wasn't there.

Ah! these shifting, changing, vistas  
Down the stream we label "Life."  
How we all abuse our friendships  
In the worry, and the strife.  
But how sweet to be remembered  
By the sort of friends, who dare  
To pay understanding tribute  
To the friend who isn't there.

Dear old friends—I ask forgiveness.  
Tho' our paths may never cross,  
In the future I'll remember,  
For *mine* is the greater loss.  
And if you arrive before me  
In that land so bright and fair,  
Keep the glasses full, and brimming,  
For—*God help me*—I'LL BE THERE.

# CHEER UP



The burdens of life,  
And the work and the strife,  
Are the easier things after all;  
For tho' we may frown  
If we're already "down,"  
It will not hurt so much when we fall.

Tho' our bank rolls are lean,  
It's us folks "in between"  
Who should never be worried at all;  
For the man who is "high"  
In the world, is the guy  
Who gets fatal results from a fall.



There's one advantage I find in being poor—  
If I hear a suspicious noise during the night  
—I know it's a mouse.



The advantage, however, is slight—  
My wife prefers burglars.



## Soft Pedal

*Les' not talk so much about "depression,"  
An' "savin' up the nickels, an' the dimes."  
It only goes to strengthen the impression  
That somethin' is the matter with the times.*

*There's more than food enough to feed the nation.  
There's wheat, tobacco, peaches, corn, an' peas.  
The banks are full, in spite of agitation,  
An' our cotton crop would span the seven seas.*

*How CAN we be in terrible condition,  
When we've got every blessin' God can give?  
We're blamin' politics, an' prohibition,  
When all we need is knowin' how to 'LIVE.'*

*While everybody shouts "Hard Winter's comin',"  
Les' take a little lesson from the squirrel,  
Who gathers nuts while bees are still a-hummin',  
An' when it's cold, asks nothin' of the world.*

*This constant everlastin' howl, an' holler,  
Is robbin' us of faith, an' joy, an' hope.  
It's got us scared to death to spend a dollar,  
An' our wives won't even buy a cake o' soap.*

*If we could only stop these glarin' headlines,  
That shout "Hard Luck" or "Panic" every day,  
It might not be so long before the 'bread lines'  
Would be filin' past a window, drawin' PAY.*

## Tomorrow's Another New Day

I reckon at heart I'm a gambler.  
The Future, to me, seems to say  
"No condition can last,  
So just padlock the past  
For tomorrow's another new day."

I'm takin' the cards as they're fallin',  
And thrilled as I'm watching 'em lay.  
When I pick up the hand,  
I may find something grand,  
Or I may not be able to play.

And if you know the future, then guard it,  
And tell me not one little thing.  
For the waiting is fun—  
But my joy is all 'done'  
Should I know what the future will bring.

The possible store of tomorrow,  
To me, is unending delight.  
I may get what I seek,  
In a year, or a week,  
And it may come by day, or by night.

I prefer not to know much about it,  
But simply continue my way—  
And not anticipate  
What I'm handed by fate,  
For TOMORROW's another new day.



# "Old Nell"

A TRUE STORY

*The old family horse is now tradition. The following is written about, and in memory of, one of the sweetest characters I've ever known, "OLD NELL"*

They say ol' Nell is useless—goin' blind an' gittin' lame;  
Can't eat her corn no more, because her teeth ain't quite  
the same.

She's got gray hairs a-showin' where she usta be so black;  
Her eyes ain't quite so bright now, an' a sag is in her back.

That back Bill used to ride on when he couldn't even  
walk;  
(Oh Bill an' Nell's bin cronies since he first begun to talk)  
An' when he'd fall off, Nell she'd stop, and stand right in  
her track,  
An' wait fer Bill to rise agin, and climb up on her back.

An' now they say she's useless, an' I ought t' have 'er  
killed.  
I wonder what I'd feel like if that heart o' hern was stilled  
An' I can't keep from wond'rin what th' wife 'ud say, if I  
Was to tell her that Ol Nell—our fam'ly hoss—was due  
to die.

She sets a deal o' store by her, an' I remember yet  
'Twas Old Nell I was drivin' time 'at I an' Betsy met.  
An' when I courted Betsy an' we went to take the air,  
I'd ruther had that one Hoss than a prancin', spankin'  
pair.

But Betsy—she'll be mindful of that black night, when  
the stork  
Was racin' death to our house thru rain an' storm an'  
dark;  
The bridge was out, th' crick was flooded; all th' wires  
was down,  
An' Ol Nell was the only link twixt death an' Doctor  
Brown.

I bridled her an' led her out, th' rain was in my face;  
'Twas dark, I couldn't see so I jes let her set th' pace.  
We plunged an' floundered, plowed an' swum; it was a  
sicknin' fight,  
But we got Doctor Brown—Yes, Little Bill was born that  
night.

\* \* \* \* \*

An' now they say she's useless,—that she ain't no good no  
more,  
But stands long hours a-leanin' up agin the stable door.  
They're right, she ain't no good, but I'm recallin' things  
you see—  
I reckon I'll jes keep 'er now that she's a-needin' me.

I got a field o' clover where a stream comes tinklin' thru;  
Where she can graze from morn 'till night with not a thing  
to do.  
An' maybe when I'm called to that Far Land so bright an'  
fair,  
I'll hear Old Nelly's "whinny" from the pastures over  
there.



## "What Price"

I'm amused—at opinions we have of our "self,"  
Our importance, our weight, an' our worth,  
An' the fuss we kick up in our struggle fer pelf,  
On this speck o' the cosmos called earth.

Why we're only *baccilli*, *microbes*, an' no more.  
Just the *germs* of the human disease.  
We're just like the grains of the sands on the  
shore,  
An' as helpless we're washed by the seas.

Once we *were* dust, kicked around by the feet  
Of things which to dust have returned.  
And *back* unto dust we shall some day retreat,  
And by feet once again we'll be spurned.

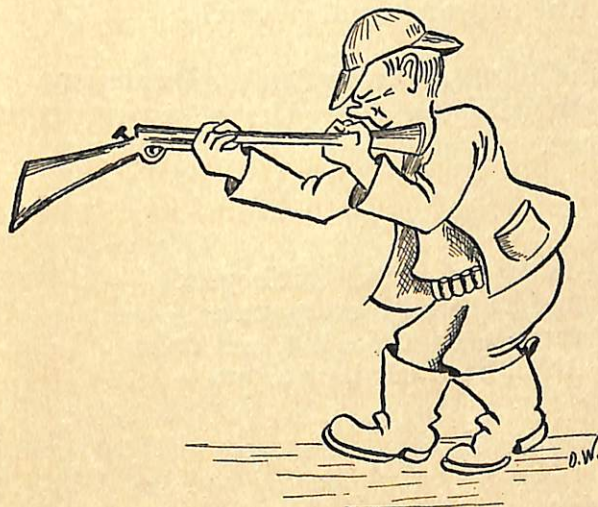
And feet that spurn *us* shall return unto dust.  
What difference why—where—or when?  
We come when we're called, and we go when we  
must,  
And there's neither Beginning, nor End.

Whence did we come, an' to where are we bound?  
Why worry?—we're pawns in the game.  
The cycle goes endlessly round, and around,  
An' the tides ebb, an' flow, just the same.

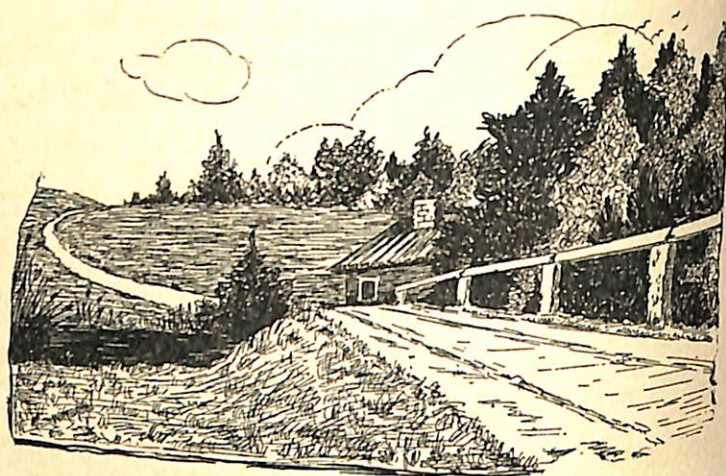
So by personal size let us not be impressed.  
We effect Time and Space, not the least.  
But while here, we *can* help some poor microbe to  
rest  
With a little more comfort, and peace.



*Here lies the body of Nathan Reese  
Who died while shooting at some geese—  
He would have killed eighteen or more,  
But he used the gun hind part before.*







## The High Road

The twisting highroad stretches out,  
 mile after mile unreels;  
 Beneath the skies it lays inert,  
 The butt of countless wheels.

First on the hillside, looming desolated and alone,  
 Then in the valley, gleaming like a serpent carved of  
 stone.

First in the town, then out beyond,  
 And on through every state  
 It goes; for mountain, hill, and dale  
 Alike, have felt its weight;

And those who ride along its surface in the cooling air,  
 Give little thought to all the toil and sweat that laid it  
 there.

If stones speak sermons, then this highroad  
 Has a lesson writ.  
 Along its curves it tells of those  
 Who toil and do their bit.

No matter where the Mercury may shoot its shaft o' red,  
 The work goes on mid grime and dust to earn the daily  
 bread.

No place is there among the ranks  
 For those who seek to shirk;  
 A highroad isn't built by aught  
 Save hard and constant work.

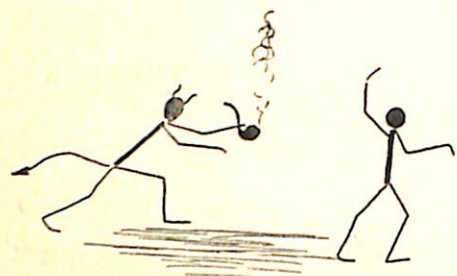
But honest labor ever was Salvation to the Soul,  
 And after all is said, who would achieve a lesser goal?

Gone are the days when grandma  
 Made her homespun at the loom;  
 And grandpa's axe cut meagre trails  
 Into the forest's gloom.

Gone are the days when men hauled loads  
 On rounded blocks of wood;  
 Man justifies creation,  
 God has seen that it was *good*.

For the toil and sweat of man, mid grime and clash and  
 roar,  
 The zones are joined together and the WORLD goes past  
 our door.





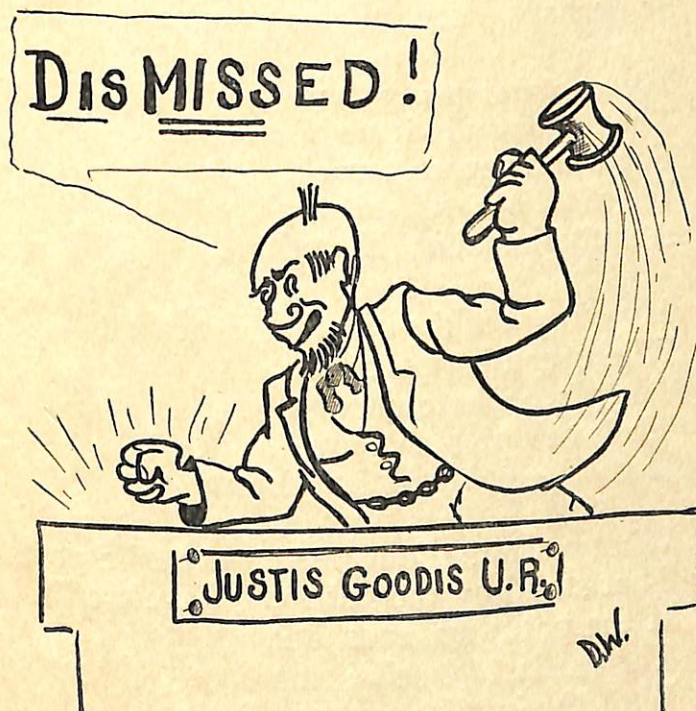
Did 'ja  
Ever

I'm trying to cut out smoking  
My doctor says  
It is hurting me  
And my vocal teacher concurs  
In this  
Opinion  
My wife says it smells up the house  
And that it is a bad  
Example  
For the children  
I know it is ruining my health  
And making me  
Sleepless  
And nervous—and irritable  
Yes—  
I am trying to  
I firmly intend to  
Cut out smo—  
\* \* \* \*  
Pardon me  
Have you a match?  
My cigar  
—Is out



## Not Guilty

*Charged with the murder  
Of Benjamin Bock  
Defiant I stood  
At the prisoner's dock  
"He was always telling stale jokes" I hissed  
"Not guilty," the judge cried  
"Case—*





## My Religion

### MY CHURCH, AND MY CREED

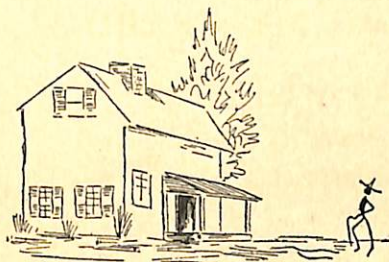
You ask me "what is my religion"?  
 Now what if I say I have *None*?  
 You'll be wrongly impressed,  
 And unduly distressed  
 So wait—I have only begun.

My *creed* in the sense that you mean it,  
 Has no *single* symbol, or sign.  
 Big, impressive, or small,  
 There is good in them all,  
 So perhaps *Your* religion is mine.

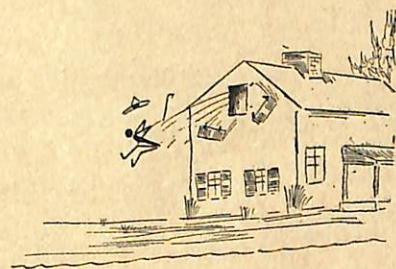
My *doctrine* is any that stands for  
 The honor and virtue of men.  
 For whatever we preach,  
 We're all striving to reach  
 A mutual goal in the end.

My *church* is the one that is nearest  
 Wherever I happen to be.  
 The place where men go  
 Their devotion to show,  
 Is *good*—and sufficient for me.

What matters the *Name* on the mile posts  
 That stand by the path you have trod?  
 If the pathway leads UP  
 Then at last you shall sup  
 With the infinite army of God.



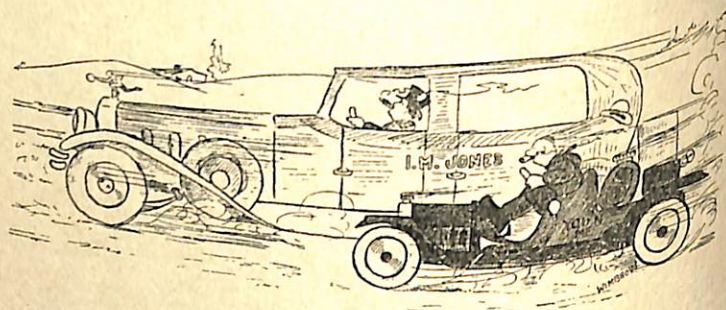
A feller named Tosti from Frye  
 Went to see a man's wife on the slye  
 But her husband gosh dern!  
 Come home outa tern  
 An' that was *that* Tosti's "Good-bye."



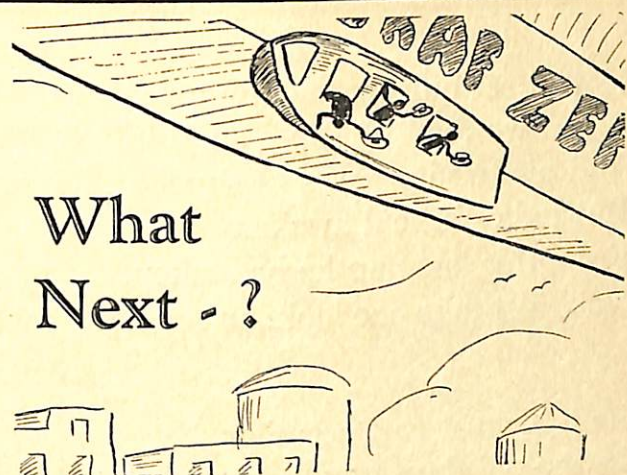


## It's all a Waste O' Time

*"Trying to keep up with the Jones'es"—  
It's the curse of cities and towns.  
You try to keep up with the Jones'es,  
And the Jones'es up with the Browns.*



*Don't try to keep up with the Jones'es.  
You'll just find out if you do,  
That the Smiths, and the Browns, and the Jones'es  
Are tryin' to keep up with you.*



## What Next - ?

In these times of revolution,  
And of constant evolution,  
There are changes to be noted every day.  
Things that used to be now aren't  
Those that were'nt, soon I'll warrant  
Will be, and that time is not so far away.

Come—go with me for a minute  
Back to history, now in it  
You will find that when a man went forth to "woo"—  
He just grabbed a stone "shilali."  
Now he takes a ukulele,  
And his fearsome roar has softened to a *coo*.



And this change in man's inflection,  
Calls up later recollection  
Of the days when knights in armor  
fought, an' bled,  
For milady's smile or favor.  
And his life oft-times he gave 'er,  
But those days are long forgotten,  
past, and dead.



How it set our eyes a-twinkle  
 When we read of Rip Van Winkle,  
 And his twenty years of slumber, long an' deep  
 But today if he'd awaken  
 From this last nap he has taken,  
 He'd just take one look, an' go right back to sleep.

Be it August or December,  
 In the old days you'll remember  
 Grandma's clothes were made to clothe from head  
 to feet.

But the man who leaves his desk now,  
 To attend the 'wild' burlesque show,  
 Misses more than if he stayed upon the street.

And in those days  
 you'll be noting,  
 While the men folk did  
 the voting,

Grandma talked of  
 cannin' peaches,  
 corn, an' peas.

Nowadays instead of  
 peaches

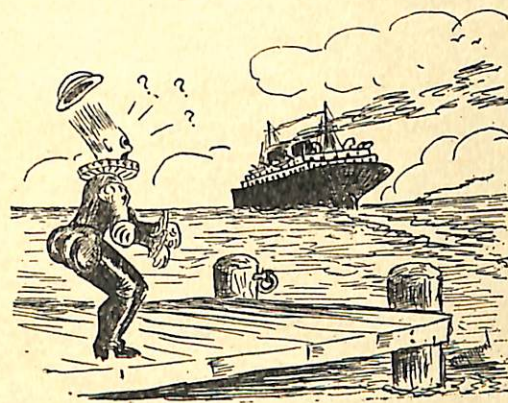
It is politics *she*  
 preaches,

While the men are swapping home-brew recipes.



Now our thots almost benumb us  
 When we think what old Columbus  
 Must have suffered, when he braved the unknown  
 deep.

But if this thot sets us blinkin',  
 What do you think *he'd* be thinkin'  
 If he suddenly awakened from his sleep?



For we're talkin' now by wireless,  
 An' we're cookin' food by fireless,  
 An' we've introduced new methods in our wars.  
 We have built ships most gigantic,  
 We have flown the broad Atlantic,  
 And we'll soon have week-end parties on the stars.

Now I've merely been expoundin'  
 On the incidents surroundin'  
 Our past history, an' I am sore perplexed  
 When I look into tomorrow—  
 Never trouble do I borrow,  
 But I wonder—what in thunder's comin' *next*.



## “WHERE”

*I set an' I wonder  
I ponder an' set  
An' I ain't gettin' nowhere a-tall  
I think about this  
Speculate about that  
And I allus bump into a wall.*

*We're money mad crazy clear down to the core  
An' I'm wonderin' where it'll end.  
We're all so durn busy a-pilin' up more  
That we've simply forgot how to spend.*

*We're so busy bakin', we're spoilin' the cake,  
We're rushin' around, man and boy,  
For money is somethin' we all want to MAKE  
But never will learn to enjoy.*

*Take a look at the feller who's laid up his pile,  
An' notice how sick is his grin.  
Why most of us folks have fergot how to smile,  
Unless we are haf full o' gin.*

*I set an' I wonder—jest floatin' along,  
While life passes by with a whiz!  
We're headin' fer somethin', as sure as you're  
born,  
But durned if we know what it is.*

## Tomorrow ~ Today

Oh why do we wait for tomorrow  
And thereby of Joy be deprived?  
Let us try to find cheer  
In the day that is here—  
'Twas *tomorrow* before it arrived.

Why do we depend on the future,  
And center our fondest laid schemes  
On a day which is Not;  
When the day that we've got  
Maybe harbors the ship of our dreams?

If we'll shorten the gaze of our seeking,  
And leave that tomorrow alone,  
We will find, you, and me,  
That there's plenty to see,  
For *today* has a need of its own.

Oh it's fine to have "*Faith*" in *tomorrow*,  
And it's healthy to hope, and to pray,  
But if we'll do our best—  
God'll handle the rest,  
And *tomorrow* we'll find, is *today*.



## Baby O' Mine

The baby is teething.

My wife and I took a long automobile trip  
And the baby was fretful and hung on my wife.

And I pitied my wife

And got sore with the baby

And my wife got sore with me

For getting sore with the baby

And I got sore with my wife for getting sore with  
me

And when we retired that night

I was sore with my wife, and the baby, and the  
flivver.

And we were all sore, and we tried to sleep.

The baby slept first

And while she slept she chuckled loud

And I looked at her and saw a sweet smile on her  
baby lips

And from across the crib my wife looked and saw  
the baby smile

And we looked at each other

And our eyes got wet. We were both sorry.

Then with remorse in our hearts we both kissed  
the baby

And the baby awoke and howled until three A. M.

And now my wife and I—

Oh! Heck!

## Ol' Doc Pill

*Dedicated to that glorious old, and now almost  
extinct fraternity, "The Family Doctor,"  
and especially to my dear old friend,*

*S. Norris Pilchard,  
lovingly called "Ol' Doc Pill"*

Both a daughter an' wife, have made brighter my  
life,

I'm a-settin' on top o' the hill.

But I'll tell ye right now, life 'ud be dull somehow,  
If it warn't fer Ol' Doctor Pill.

He has treated my ills, with advice an' with pills,  
An' he never yet sent me a bill.

Never thinks o' his self, er of glory, or pelf—  
He's a durn fool, this Ol' Doctor Pill.

Fer he works night an' day, lots o' times without  
pay,

An' his labor seems never to end.

But he keeps up the pace, till he's blue in the face,  
An' there's no man who can't call him "friend."

He is human I guess, but down under my vest  
There's a feelin' that maybe he ain't.

Fer he does unto you, like he wants *you* to do,  
Therefore he's a fool—er a saint.



Now most o' the guys I have viewed with these  
 eyes,  
 Are like wolves settin' in at the "*kill*,"  
 But the guys who make life *worth* the grief, an'  
 the strife,  
 Are the durn fools—like Ol' Doctor Pill.

But when fate taps the gong,  
 An' I've sung my last song,  
 An' I go where I'm hopin' I will,  
 I shall say to their face  
 That I don't like the place,  
 Unless I find "*Ol' Doctor Pill*."



### Uncle Pete Says

He's always had  
 The impression  
 That  
 The reason  
 The guy who 'Can't Sing'  
 Sings louder  
 Than anybody else  
 In church  
 Is because  
 Church  
 Is the only place  
 He can do it  
 And  
 Feel safe.



Just what is the value and meanin' of gold,  
 And what is its mission on earth?  
 "The answer," says I, "I will have to be told,  
 For *me*—I don't know what it's worth."

So I started a stroll down the byways of trade,  
 And asked of all those whom I met.  
 "Gold," answered they, "is a game that is played,  
 And you try to get all you can get—

"It's a game that once started you never can stop.  
 You work, and you struggle and slave,  
 For 'Gold' is the boss, and it rules from the top,  
 And the *end* of the game—is the grave."

And wherever I went I still got that reply,  
 Till homeward I finally turned,  
 And when I arrived I sank down with a sigh  
 By the hearth, where a cheery fire burned.

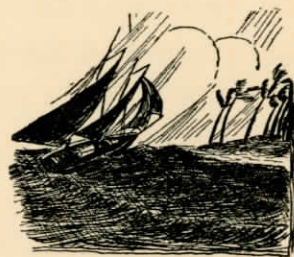


And 'Gold' was its color, and 'Gold' was the glow  
 That it shed on the one sitting there,  
 Who murmured a greeting, a word soft and low,  
 And 'Gold' was the light on her hair.

And I looked at that slender compassionate hand,  
 So fragile yet tenderly strong,  
 And I caught the faint gleam of the 'Gold' wedding band,  
 And I said "All the answers were wrong."

For gold can be master, or gold can be slave.  
 It all rests with you, and with me.  
 The meaning of 'Gold,' 'twixt the birth and the grave,  
 Will be just what we *want* it to be.

## Warden Nell



Say, ain't it strange how viewpoints change  
 And life's ambitions vary?  
 For in my youth said I, "In truth  
 I'll wed a girl named Mary."

For Mary had a meaning sad,  
 And sweet, and sound, and able.  
 The kind of wife to make my life  
 Complete and full and stable.

And in my youth said I "Forsooth  
 Some day I'll be a roamer,  
 Neath foreign skies—let other guys  
 Be what we call the homer."

"I'll sail the seas, and let the breeze  
 Be pilot, guide, and warden.  
 A traveller bold in jungles old  
 I'll be, till arteries harden."



Instead I fell in love with Nell.  
 Forgotten were predictions,  
 For Nell's a girl, I'll tell the world,  
 Who has her own convictions.

So we were wed, and now instead  
 Of roaming Veltds, and Pampas,  
 I sit, and tell my Warden Nell  
 Of wild life—*on the campus*.



Yeah—we *usta* brag about what we were "Goin' to be"—  
 Now we brag about what we "Usta be"



*Truth*, just like *Democracy*,  
 And *Santa Claus*, and *Liberty*,  
 Is just a name; we read it, and we spell it.  
 It doesn't really mean a thing,  
 Save that it packs a husky sting  
 The minute we begin to try to *tell* it.

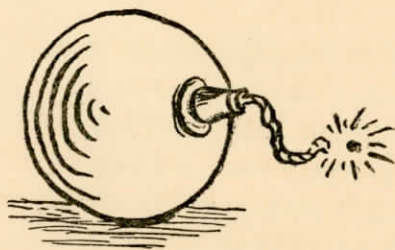


When Smith asks daughter to recite  
 And asks you what you think—It's right  
 To tell the truth, and say to Smith, "'Twas rotten"—  
 And lose a friend. But more *astute*  
 To say, "Now ain't she sweet and cute."  
 You lie of course, for truth is quite "verboten."

When Mrs. Jones leaves Mrs. Brown,  
 And says "Be sure to come around  
 Again," you know that maybe she is lyin'.  
 But if she said "You durned old hen  
 I hope you *never* come again"  
 Faith! Don't you know the fur would soon be flyin'?

To speak of *truth* is well, and good,  
 To tell it as they say we should  
 Is simply suicidal, dumb and silly.  
 All right to rant of truth, and rave,  
 But take it with you to the grave.  
 Don't tell it, less you want to wear a lilly.

There was a time, in ages gone,  
 When mankind put his fig leaf on  
 Because he told the truth about the apple.  
 We say just what we're *taught* to say  
 For sayin' what we *ought* to say,  
 Would simply make the sexton dust the chapel.



## Wife O' Mine

*There's a song I can't explain*

*Wife o' mine*

*It is ringing in my brain*

*Wife o' mine*

*And this song so sweet and dear*

*Keeps my spirit fresh and clear*

*In my heart there is no fear*

*Wife o' mine*

*Tho the future may seem dark*

*Wife o' mine*

*There's a haven for our bark*

*Wife o' mine*

*Tho the tide of life is rough*

*And the going may be tough*

*We will always have enough*

*Wife o' mine*

*Since they wedded thee to me*

*Wife o' mine*

*All the gloom has turned to glee*

*Wife o' mine*

*Let us sing the happy lays*

*For a bright eye alwaysi pays*

*We won't mind the "rainy days"*

*Wife o' mine*



*Life will have its 'ups' and 'downs'*  
*Wife o' mine*  
*But with smiles where there were frowns*  
*Wife o' mine*  
*All the dim past, dead and gone,*  
*Lies a-mouldering in the dawn,*  
*Of the future,—BRING IT ON!"*  
*Wife o' mine*



## *My New Friend*

I've found the kind o' friend Diogenese was out  
to find.  
The kind that never dares to criticise.  
The kind that's always truthful, day or night, or  
rain or shine.  
The kind that never fools a man, or lies.

My friend will never argue, give advice or any-  
thing.  
My friend can't get despondent, low, or blue,  
Nor get the least impatient when I raise my voice  
to sing;  
And when *I* smile, my *friend* is smiling too.

My friend is not affected by pretense, or gilded  
sham.  
Somehow I know we'll always get along.  
And I don't seem to mind it when I'm told just  
"what" I am  
For this new friend o' mine is never wrong.

Yes—I've found the kind o' friend that *everybody*  
tries to find,  
That's faithful winter, summer, spring an' fall.  
An' now I'll just explain that this new PERFECT  
FRIEND o' mine  
Is a lookin' glass, that's hangin' on my wall.



## “Mother”

There's been a lot written an' said about mother.  
There's libraries crowded with volumes, and  
more,

For poets, and savants, have vied with each other  
And tried to excel in this dearest of lore.

They've written of tenderness, mercy, and kind-  
ness

Sacrifice, bravery, kindness of heart.

But even with all of their tributes to fineness,  
Those bards of the ages have said but a part.

For “Mother's” a word beyond all understanding  
Of any mere man to describe, or define.

“MOTHER”—a word so exacting—demanding—  
That naught could explain it, save phrases divine.

There's been a lot written, an' said about mothers,  
Whose spirit could come from no place but above.  
There's naught I can add to the words of those  
others,

Or render *my* mother, save honor, and love.

## “Father”

Why is it the poets don't write about father?  
On mothers there's thousands of books to be had.  
But somehow or other they won't take the bother  
To write a wee recommendation for dad.

Far be it from me to detract from our mother.  
She's really entitled to be at the top.  
But while we are throwin' boquets at another,  
Le's pick us a posie an' give it to “pop.”

'Twas once said that he was the Lord of Creation.  
By all living creatures he was to be feared.  
But this was ironic mis-rep-re-sen-ta-tion  
By gray-headed savants (who laughed in their beard)

He's scolded, and kidded, he's flattered, and hounded  
By mother, and brother, and sister as well.  
He gets no real peace till life's curfew is sounded,  
An' kin folks are gleefully tollin' the bell.

He's scorned, an' neglected throughout the whole nation—  
Till *I'm* gettin' “Fed up” with all of this stuff.  
So I'm here to render my three-cent oration  
Before the church sexton makes notes on his cuff.

So THREE CHEERS FOR FATHER. Soon may he  
come into  
His own, in this land of the free, and the brave.  
Let's give flowers *now*, for we couldn't begin to  
Lay all he deserves, on the poor feller's grave.



## The Wife Again

No matter what I try to do  
My wife, she says it's wrong,  
When somethins' done, the blame is laid on me.  
An' she can always tell me  
When I raise my voice in song,  
That I'm outa tune, or slightly off the key.

I'm insulted, I'm derided—  
I am very much misused—  
Tho' I walk, or work, or talk, or play, or sing,  
I'm corrected, an' I'm chided,  
Till I feel much abused,  
An' I'm madder than a bear in early spring.

I thought I had 'er kidded  
When I wedded her for life,  
(An' I'm turnin' thirty-six this very day)  
But it's most exasperatin'  
To discover that m' wife  
Is convinced my feet is made o' common clay.

For she points out all my blunders  
On the radio, or stage.  
But the thing that makes me lose my sleep at  
night,  
Cuss a bit an' tear my hair,  
An' gnash my pearly teeth in rage,  
Is that—durn it all!—my wife is always *right*.

## And Now The Wife and Baby

### THE MIRACLE

*It hasn't been so many years  
Since I looked in the glass,  
And wondered, if (with bitter tears)  
Such homely guys could pass  
Thru life. I wondered many times.  
The future seemed so dark.  
And here I'm sittin' makin' rhymes  
A-waitin' for the stork.*

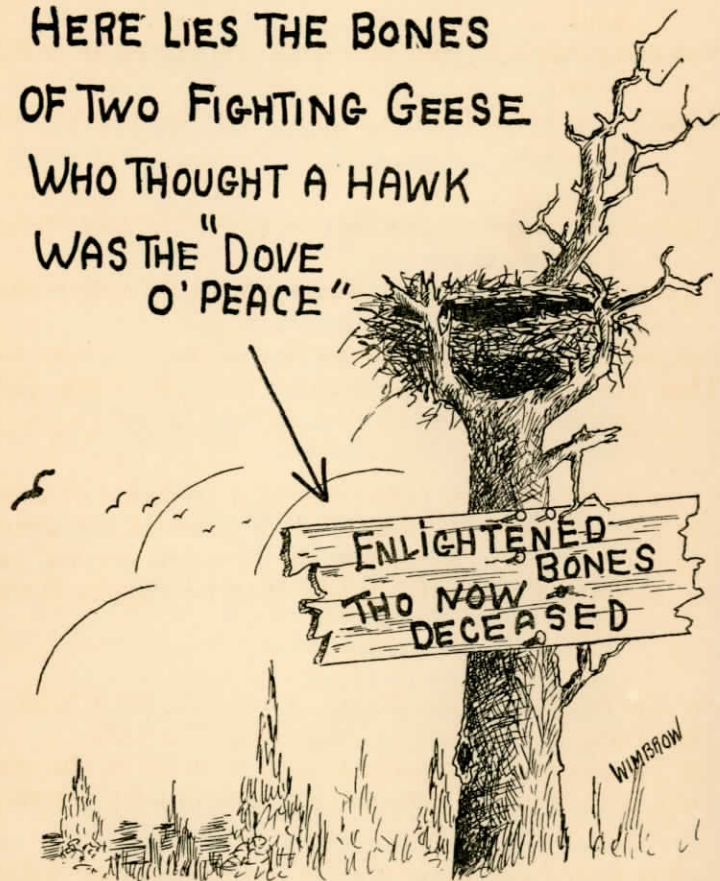
*The miricle began that day  
I met a certain girl,  
And knew that if I had my way,  
She'd represent my world.  
The second miracle was when  
She said (shy as could be)  
Before the preacher there, and then,  
She'd bide along with me.*

*O'er that third epoch I reflect  
With awe, and bated breath.  
She twined her arms about my neck  
And scared me near to death.  
She made a "certain prophecy"—  
My face began to beam—  
That such things could occur to me  
I never dared to dream.*

*But fact is fact, and truth is truth,  
More strange than fiction bold.  
And now I face the fact, forsooth,  
That I am growing old.  
But thru the Future's open door  
I see God's face above,  
And old, or young, or rich, or poor,  
I'll have ONE MORE to love.*



HERE LIES THE BONES  
OF TWO FIGHTING GEESE  
WHO THOUGHT A HAWK  
WAS THE "DOVE  
O' PEACE"



## The Jungles Come to Town

There has been a lot o' talk about the dangers of the wild  
But compared with modern city life, the open road is  
mild  
You can paste it in your hat band, you can go an' write it  
down  
That a cog somewhere is slippin', for the Jungle's come  
to town.

I have roamed the tangled forests, braved th' swamp-lands  
fetid breath  
I have crossed the desert where an empty water-skin is  
death.  
But there never was the danger in the wildest savage land,  
That I'm standin' in this minute, from my *lovin' fellow*  
*man*.

I can dodge the kind intentions of a crocodile or two  
But I *can't* dodge "hold-ups," on a peaceful city avenue.  
I prefer my poison reptiles to the bath-tub gins an' beers  
An' I'd sooner shoot the rapids, than be shot by Racket-  
eers.

An' I'm not in half the danger in a roarin' army tank  
That I am, in any city, as the cashier of a bank.  
An' I'd sooner take my chances on a rocket to the moon,  
Than with drunken auto drivers on a Sunday afternoon.

So I'm settin' sail tomorrow, to the wildest land I know.  
I can smoke the Pipe o' *Peace* with *cannibals* in Borneo.  
For you needn't ever doubt it, tho' you twist, an' squirm,  
an' frown,  
Smoke it in your pipe, an' *like* it folks, the Jungle's come  
to Town.





## Child O' Nature

*This Is The Outlook On The "Country" After Too Long  
a Sojourn In The City*

I've read about the sighin' of the breezes in the trees,  
And volumes 'bout the hootin' of an owl,  
I've heard about the industry of little honey bees,  
And all about the mournful coyotes howl.

"Back to Mother Nature," is the bards unendin' song.  
"Go back to Earth and revel in the clay.  
Go back where Nature greets you in a silence deep, and  
long,  
And let communion wash your sins away."

Well:—I'm a child o' Nature, so I took the bards advice.  
I says, says I, "I'll take a little trip"  
And to a place that everybody said was mighty nice  
I wended me, with trunk, and bag, and grip.

I dressed in cap, an' knickers, and my oldest golfin' hose,  
An' before I had a chance to feel 'immense'  
An over touted honey bee had stung me on the nose,  
And a bull had left me sittin' on a fence.

I went to bed my lamplight, and the silence dark and deep  
Bore down upon me like a ton o' coal  
A shutter creaked, a hoot owl moaned, I heard a cricket  
cheep,  
And a racketeer mosquito took my roll.

The next day Spanish thistles made a very brilliant coup.  
With gnats and flies I fought a thousand rounds.  
Some tickle grass got in my shoes, a beetle in my soup,  
And a black snake made me lose a hundred pounds.

So here I am a renegade, I'm back to city life.  
I'll take the smoke, and dust, and ask for more.  
I'm back among the hustle, and the bustle, and the strife,  
Where the rivet hammers lull a peaceful snore.

You take your open spaces, with the little peepin' star,  
And sonnets to the "Whippor-willies" song  
Sure, I'm a son of Nature—but I'll worship from afar  
For I reckon I just simply don't *belong*!





## Decoration Day

We decorate their graves—our soldiers final resting place.  
 Their noble race on earth at last is run.  
 But it seems I see a look o' disappointment on their face,  
 For we who're left have failed them, every one.

They may have won a victory, as judged in terms o' *war*  
 But if we ever stop to count the cost,—  
 The blasted hopes, the ruined lives,—we won't get very  
     far,  
 Before we'll all decide the fight was *lost*.

The world was full o' *wrong*, they went away to make it  
     *right*.  
 It broke a lot o' hearts to see them go.  
 With high falutin' phrases, they were sent to fight a fight,  
 That only those who FOUGHT can ever know.

An' now,—we go an' tie a bunch o' bunting on a grave.  
 We sing a song, an' shed a tear or two—  
 The band plays martial music, and the banners skyward  
     wave,  
 An' "cannon fodder" passes in review.

'What Price,' a so-called empire's economic rise, or fall?  
 NO war is worth the price the WARRIORS pay  
 "GREAT GOD OF HOSTS BE WITH US YET LEST  
     WE FORGET IT ALL,  
 An' TWO flags wave, where ONE is placed today."

## "Wake Up"

We take pride in independence, and we rip, an'  
     rant, an' rave  
 But our much esteemed ancestors must be turnin'  
     in their grave  
 For it seems that independence, down the years,  
     has come to mean:—  
 Take the moat from *Brother's* eye, but in our *own*  
     ignore the "Bean."

When our dads unloaded tons of 'Orange Pekoe'  
     in the sea;  
 That Tea-Party gave a meanin' to a word called  
     Liberty  
 An' they rang the well known bell so hard, it  
     cracked on Freedom's note  
 But their sons are too durn unconcerned to even  
     cast their vote.

We let *others* do the voting, in this democratic  
     land  
 An' we wonder why it is that CRIME is clampin'  
     down its hand  
 While our laws tell harmless neighbors, that they  
     can't do "this" an' "that"  
 All around us thieves are thrivin', waxin' rich, an'  
     gettin' fat.



We have auctioned off the 'rights' for which our  
fathers dearly paid

*How* those "Declaration Signers" must feel cheat-  
ed, an' betrayed,

When we *sell* that which they left us, an' for which  
*our* heroes died,

Folks—in God's *Name*—what's become of all our  
self-respect, an' pride?

When we get sufficient courage up, to cast our  
honest vote

Nor be swayed by gangsters' threat, or politicians'  
dollar Note

When we speak right out in meetin'—when *we're*  
"Brave Men" *You*, an' *Me*

Then once more this ol' U. S. will be the Home  
Land of the "Free"

And we'll listen to the music of the "Rackets"  
dyin' song,

While the ones who do the killin' will be put where  
they belong.

But we've got to WAKE UP people, for it's going  
to be too late

When they wave the 'Skull an' cross-bones' from  
our good ol' Ship o' State.



## Hospitality +

*Down our way*

*The folks are very hospitable*

*Last week a man was motoring through*

*And stopped at a farmhouse*

*To get a glass of milk*

*The farmer*

*Not only gave the stranger*

*All he could drink*

*But also refused to accept*

*Any money.*

*And when*

*The stranger returned to his car*

*He found a*

*Cow*

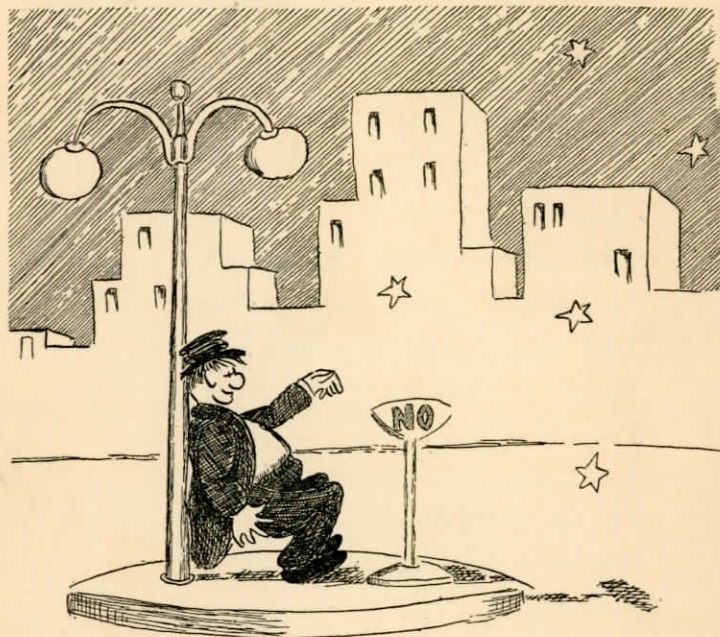
*Tied to the hind wheel*





## Mother Goose Today

*"Sing a Song o' Six Men's Pockets Full o' Rye"*



*Twinkle, twinkle, little star, first you're near and  
then you're far—  
You twinkle here, you twinkle there—hic!  
M'gawd! You twinkle everywhere.*

*Simple Simon met a pieman going to the Fair;  
Said Simple Simon to the pieman, "Let me taste your  
ware."  
'Twas thus that Simon passed away and all because he  
meddled;  
He drank not what the pieman DRANK but just the kind  
he PEDDLED.*



*Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn;  
Women till the fields, while the men are drinking corn.  
Where is the little Boy who don't mind the cow?  
Why bless you, don't you know he's a BOOTLEGGER now.*

*Mary had a lamb, I say.  
And he was white, I vow.  
He drank from Mary's flask one day;  
\* \* \* \* \*  
HE'S WITH THE ANGELS NOW*







*Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard  
To get her poor dog some gin;  
When she got there, the cupboard was bare—*

\* \* \* \* \*

*The dog had already been in.*

## SMILES

*Possibly the efforts of the professional optimist  
may affect, somewhat along the following lines, the  
poor feller who IS really havin' tough sailin'*

*I'm really not a Bolshevik in my philosophy  
I'm not a "Red" or even turning pink  
But let me whisper to you sort a confidentially  
A certain man is drivin' me to drink.*

*I'm speakin' of the feller who says "Smile when things is  
wrong  
Meet hard luck with a grin an' spirit bold  
When trouble comes upon you, sweetly meet it with a  
song"  
He's Causin' "Silver Threads Among the Gold."*

*An' he will say "Keep smilin' when the market takes your  
dough  
Just pucker up your lips an' trill a tune  
An' giggle at your wife, who sees the butter gettin' low"  
Well, he's gonna have me crazy as a loon.*

*"Don't mind it when the doctor says your kid has got the  
flu  
Just cause a grin to crinkle up your eyes  
And laugh right at the landlord when he says your rent is  
due"  
This guy will have me chasin' butterflies.*



My boss has kicked me out, my dog has et a poison pill  
 My sweetheart went an' took the other man  
 My telephone is out, because I couldn't pay the bill  
 Outside the sheriff's backin' up the van.  
 My mother's old and feeble, father's health is on the  
     wane,  
 The bum stock that I bought has took my pile  
 There's no place on my body that I haven't got a pain  
*An' I'm supposed to take it with a smile.*

\* \* \* \* \*

No, I'm not bolshevistic, but I get an awful pain  
 Those sugar-coated guys, my patience tax  
 The next soft-soapin' baby who says "*Sunshine*  
     *after rain*"  
 Will get it where the turkey gets the axe.



*The flowers we gave  
 When the feller was dead  
 Neither sweetened the grave  
 Nor softened the bed.*

## "Mending"

*He said his heart was busted, in a thousand mil-  
     lion parts.  
 His eyes were big with unfamiliar pain.  
 And I could not convince him, that these things  
     we call our hearts,  
 Are pretty tough, and always mend again.*

*He thot his life was ruined, and his future was in  
     doubt.  
 "SHE" was the only one he'd ever found.  
 And I could not convince him, he was merely find-  
     ing out  
 The force that makes the universe go round.*

*There's few of us, if any, who have lived upon this  
     earth,  
 Who love but once, and never love again.  
 The only way of finding out just what our love is  
     worth,  
 Is by spending it on someone else—in vain.*

*For first—you've got to BREAK a heart, to find  
     out what's inside.  
 To value pride, of pride you must be shorn  
 Then midst the wreck of shattered dreams, and  
     hopes and wounded pride  
 A Better—Finer—Stronger love is born.*



## Twenty-four Hours a Day

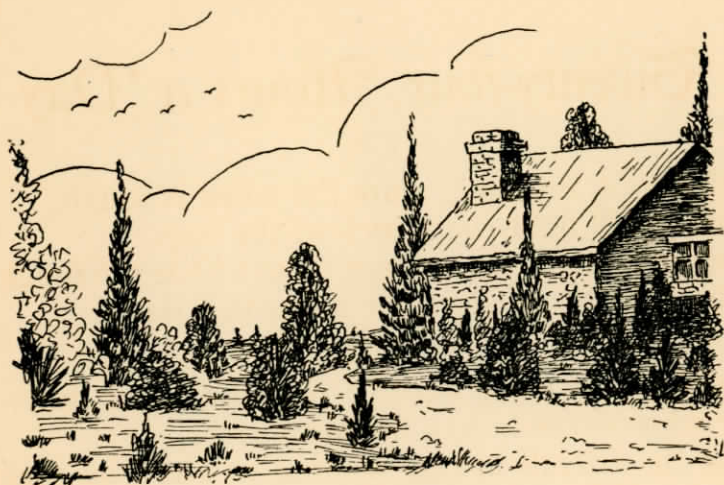
Stick to it, my boy. Sure the going is rough,  
And you'll fight every inch of the way.  
But remember when things seem a little too tough,  
That, there's twenty-four hours in a day.

Success may come quickly, or flee at your call,  
Or when earned, may be taken away,  
But the friends always waiting to give you their  
ALL,  
Are those twenty-four hours a day.

They are twenty-four friends always sturdy, an'  
strong.  
They're twenty-four friends always true.  
An' they're all just alike, *sixty full minutes long*;  
How they're *USED* is of course up to you.

Other friends may forsake you, but these linger on.  
In your fight for success, or for fame,  
Fondest hope never leaves till the last one is gone,  
And the bell tolls the end of the game.

So stick to it, my boy. There's a world at your  
feet,  
And a trail that winds out, and away.  
But be sure that the best of *all* friends you will  
meet,  
Are your *TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY*.



## Life O' Riley

You may roam your tangled forests  
Where the Mighty are the kings  
Where the Panther stalks the white tail  
An' the bull moose bosses things  
While the 'beasties' keep you steppin'  
I'll just take my sweet repose  
In my comfy little cottage,  
With someone to press my clothes.

You may roam the matted jungle,  
Where the leopard hunts at night.  
Where the snakes as big as water mains  
Embrace you with delight  
While you're neckin' "Bo constrictors,"  
I'm content with sweet romance  
Neath my peaceful little roof tree,  
With someone to patch my pants.



You may climb the mighty Matterhorn  
 While I climb into bed.  
 While you Shiver in the 'Chinook,'  
 I'll just cover up my head.  
 You prefer your livin' raw—  
 So with your avalanches flirt—  
 While I take my home-cooked meals  
 With someone to mend my shirt.

You may vote for storm tossed waters,  
 An' a life that's wild and free;  
 But you meet a girl like mine,  
 An', you'll be hooked the same as me.  
 Then you'll trade your giant Redwoods,  
 For a clump o' *Holly hocks*  
 Where you'll live the life o' Riley,  
 With someone to darn your socks.



*Never say to a feller*

*"Hey! Whadda you think I am?"—*

*His opinion an' yours may vary*

*A trifle.*



This good ol' boat that bears me up an' down the Mis-  
 sissip;  
 Kin hold her own with anything that bears the name o'  
 "ship."  
 I've felt her shudder, heard her groan, an' quake in ev'ry  
 beam,  
 But still in spite of all, she keeps on *plowin'* down the  
*stream.*

Roots an' snags has gouged her sides, an' weeds, has  
 fouled her wheel,  
 Muddy flats has held 'er fast, an' rocks has ripped her  
 keel.  
 She's calked, an' braced, an' patched, an' she's been mend-  
 ed o'er an' o'er,  
 Till now the ol' scows stronger, than she ever was before.

If flats has caught her once, then she don't go that way  
 again.  
 She knows Ol' Mississip from shore to shore, an' end to  
 end.  
 She's had her mite o' trouble, an' she's had her share o'  
 fun;  
 From Natchez, down to New Orleans, she's took her  
 chance—an' *won.*



An' I can't keep from thinkin' how much Man is like a  
boat—

How hard it is sometimes to manage jest to keep afloat,  
With whirlpools in the channel, an' with shoals along the  
shore.

We need the keenest kind o' eye, an' steady hands, an'  
more.

It takes a pretty sturdy craft to breast the stream o' life.  
There's none of us who don't show signs o' damage in the  
strife,

But never mind the patches from the keelson to the beam,  
The *Vict'ry* goes to them that keep on PLOWIN' DOWN  
THE STREAM.



Dear Folks:

*I want to explain why (as per usual in such cases) this book wasn't dedicated to my wife, mother, mother-in-law, or business associates.*

*The only reason I didn't add "All that I am I owe to my wife, mother, mother-in-law and the Columbia Broadcasting System" is that I'm purty sure none of 'em care to accept the responsibility.*

*Just the same I thank them—and you, so meet me regular in front of yore Speak Louder and les' "Roll on Ol' Mississippi—Roll on."*

Sincerely,

"THE SKIPPER."

*In passing thru a field where grows a bit of every-  
thing,*

*Where weed, and sweetest bloom together blows,*

*Suppose that in the mingled growth, a nettle plant  
should sting,*

*Should I forget the fragrance of the rose?*



