

**FACTS AND FANCIES.**

BY ALLAN D. MAY.

It is all right to toot your own horn, but be sure you have practised privately before you toot publicly.

The postmaster at a neighboring town received a letter addressed to "The Leading Merchant" of that town. The postmaster was wise, for he consulted the editor of the local paper and learned the name of the most extensive advertiser and delivered the letter accordingly.

It is no longer lawful to shoot ducks in Nebraska, but yesterday a man went hunting and loaded one barrel of his gun with No. 5 shot and the other barrel with buck-shot. The No. 5 shot was for the first flock of ducks he saw. The buck-shot was for the game warden, if he happened along. He saw neither.

He had hoarded wealth and garnered in the golden sheaves of grain; He had bonds and stocks and acres, and his bins were filled with grain; He was rich and getting richer every day he spent on earth, And his neighbors said he really didn't know what he was worth. In this ignorant bliss he labored till one pleasant April day Came the deputy assessor, and before he went away This man's personal education had a new and mighty birth And he knew, down to penny, just the sum that he was worth.

Let us learn a wholesome lesson, find a moral if we can, In this tale of the assessor and the rich and powerful man. Let us make a resolution not to lay up treasures here Where the moth and rust corrupteth, and assessors we must fear; But instead of bond and mortgage and of hogsheads filled with gold, Lay our treasures up in Heaven, for in scriptures we are told There the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest— Which would indicate the absence of assessors 'mid the blest.

When we were a boy we were always trying to make something—to build some kind of a machine or invent some kind of a contrivance or other. Whenever we came across an odd shaped bit of metal or an old rusted spring, or a bolt or screw, we hid it carefully away in a box kept for that purpose, in the belief that some day it might come in handy. In those days we tried to build everything from a wooden windmill to a dynamo, a phonograph and a locomotive. In those days we allowed nothing to go to waste. The main spring and wheels of an old clock might be of no use to day, but tomorrow they might be just what was needed to complete some marvel of mechanical ingenuity that would fill with envy all the other boys for four blocks around. So the keeping of all odds and ends

that came into our possession, became a habit. If we had a nickel, we would spend it for chewing gum or soda water, but if we had a casting from an old dismantled lawn mower or an old lamp burner, we would file it carefully away in our treasure chest. This habit clung to us until, with other childish things, we put away the making of mechanical marvels and took up the more prosaic work of trying to make a living. But how often are some of our childish habits recalled in later life? The other day we wanted an old sewing machine stand out of which to make a typewriter table. A friend donated us an old machine and when we came to dismantle it we were seized with the same old desire and found ourselves looking for a box in which to put all the component parts and yet we knew very well that they could never be of the slightest use to anybody. But the old temptation urged us to save all those bright knobs and little polished dingbats and bluesteel thingumbobs. We did not save them, and yet we could not regret that the old habit had, for the moment asserted itself and recalled the days when our work shop in the wood house was a busy place and of the days when the world was deprived of many mechanical triumphs, simply because the wheels wouldn't go round or the dynamo withheld its current.

At most any meeting of the county board the innocent bystander may hear something besides long and dry reports of the committee on revenue and taxation, or the more or less strenuous complaints of those who have fallen through defective bridges and cracked their crowns, and the corroborative evidence of someone who came tumbling after. At one of the sessions of the board last week, Mr. McCray took occasion to protest against the furnishing of the inmates of the poor farm with tobacco at the expense of the county. He declared that tobacco is a luxury, and that those dependent upon the county for support had no right to expect to be provided with luxuries. When the kick had been duly registered, Mr. Glasser attacked Mr. McCray's position in a very forcible and masterly manner. He pointed out that to the aged and infirm men at the county farm, tobacco is not a luxury, but a necessary of life. After a man has used the weed for lo, these many years, to deprive him of it, would be to subject him to torture; to fill his declining years with insufferable longing and to bring his gray hairs down in sorrow to the grave. There are men who would rather

go with but two meals a day and have their tobacco than to have three meals a day and do without the weed. And we believe that Uncle Joe is right. To the old man who has seen better days, but who has come to spend his last years in the more or less friendly shadow of the poor house walls, the pipe must be as a solace and a comfort. As the fragrant smoke curls upward it will form before his weary old eyes the images of friends in the days when he had friends; out of the curling vapor will be formed the faces of the dead and he will go with them again down the old paths that lead amid the old scenes. The kindly hand of Dame Nicotine will smooth many of the rough lines from the picture of the past. To deprive him of this solace would be cruel, and if we must be cruel, let us

capture a book agent and burn him at the stake, but let us be merciful unto the old man who is dependent upon our bounty.

Nay, let the old man hit the pipe  
As often as he will;  
Provide him with the weed and let  
The county pay the bill.

Deprive him not of pleasant dreams  
Conjured by curling smoke;  
Deny him not this boon although  
The treasury goes broke

Reform—ah, 'tis a glorious thing,  
The time for it is ripe,  
But use it not to separate  
The old man and his pipe.

Two minutes is not a very long stretch of time, but it is long enough to cause you to miss your train if you do not keep track of the changes in the time tables.

E. V. Kauffman has let the contract for a three story brick hotel and sanitarium to be erected at Sycamore springs.

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