



## Whether Common or Not

By WILL N. MURPHY.

### A Boy's Complaint

"When I was jus' a little boy," pa often says to me, "I had more fun a goin' t' school than anybody roun'; An, if there wuz some mischief up I'd purty shore t' be Mixed up in it worse than th' rest uv all th' boys in town. I recollect onct on a time—" An' then he tells a tale Uv how him an' some other boys jus' played a orfle trick, But now, if I jus' bat .. eye in school he says he'll whale Th' very stuffin' out o' me—Say, that jus' makes me sick.

A few days jus' 'fore Hollere'en pa lays his paper down An' says: "Ma, recollect th' time we young kids in Blue Hill Jus' tore up sidewalks, fences, gates, an' purt' nigh wrecked th' town?" Then up an' told 'bout how 'twas done, an' laughed nigh fit t' kill. So Hollere'en I done th' same, an' gee, 'twas lots o' fun. But pa caught on an' he wuz mad—I saw that at a glance. He says to me, says ne: "Look here; that's gotter stop, my son," Then took me t' th' woodshed where he dusted off my pants.

One night last watermelon time pa brung a buster out, An' while we wuz a eatin' it he says: "Ma, recollect Th' time me an' th' other kids snaked some from ol' Bill Stout?" Then told th' tale 'tween lushus bites that his shirt bosom flecked. An' pa he laughed n st fit t' kill about that melon raid, So on that night some boys an' me went out an' swiped some, too. But pa found out an' iarruped me—Gee, how that hick'ry played! Now I don't think it's hardly fair t' act like that. Do you?

Tain't fair fr pas t' talk about th' fun they had, an' then Turn roun' when they've boys uv their own an' say we oughter be Ashamed t' act so orfle bad, an' tell us t' be men An' quit such wicked things like that. It don't look squar t' me. Pa's had his good time, but if I jus' undertake a trick He tells us havin' played when he was jus' about my size, He scowls an' says: "Will-yum, you go an' git that hick'ry stick—" An' when pa whips y' better bet th' fur jus' fairly flies.

It ain't no fun t' be a boy now-days, cause parents say The things they done when they wuz young ain't right t' do no more; An' they expect their kids to be Lord Fauntelroys each day— An' then they talk uv the good times, an' that's what makes me sore. No melon raids, no Hollere'en; jus' sit aroun'. O, pshaw! Ain't we boys gotter right to kick th' way they're treating us? When I grow up to be a man an' git t' be a pa You bet my boy can have his fun an' I won't raise no fuss.

### Just Thoughts

"What has become of the old-fashioned rag carpet?" queries an Iowa editor. There are a few of them left, and

you will find them in the quiet and peaceful homes of the old-fashioned folk in Missouri and Illinois. And you couldn't make a room look as restful with Turkish rugs, and melton carpets and Assyrian dewdads, as you can with a warm, thick "hit-an'-miss" rag carpet like our grandmothers used to make. When you walk in on one of those rag carpets you just feel like kicking off your shoes, flinging your coat in a corner, and flopping right down in front of the stove to get a r. l. genuine rest.

None of your dinky little old dingy rugs that decorate a polished floor like a postage stamp on a No. 10 envelope. Not much! When you step on that rag carpet you know it's tacked down and that it won't slip out from under you and throw you up against a lot of bric-abrac piled in artistic abandon on a wobbly onyx table that stands precariously on three legs right where it will smash the gold fish globe if it topples over. Not much it won't. You know that carpet, made by a bright-eyed old mother whose cheeks were rosy and whose mouth always wore a smile, and not by a sore-eyed Turk sitting cross-legged on a dirt floor and weaving impossible designs out of rags that came from nobody knows where—I say, you know that carpet will stay right there under your feet and not go to forcing you into a gymnastic exercise that will betray your stiff old joints and your forty-four inches around the waistband.

The old rag carpet is a perpetual invitation to a good time. When you see it you know you are welcome. But when you enter a room with a waxed floor and a job lot of imported rugs scattered here and there you just feel in your bones that the host is wondering if the nails in your shoes are going to scratch the floor or break a thread in the rugs.

Ever drink cider and eat apples and crack walnuts and hic'orynuts and pop corn in a room that had a waxed floor and a lot of dingy rugs from Abyssinia or Hindoostan or Turkestan or some other foreign parts? Not a bit of it. But in a low-ceilinged room whose rough floor was covered with a rag carpet you've done all those things and had more fun in a minute than you could have on a waxed floor and a lot of rugs in a whole generation. And you remember just such a room, too. And you'd give all the imported rugs and waxed floors and electric lights and artists' proofs and modern plumbing and everything else in your house if you could just slip back into that room for one evening and sit there surrounded by the same loved ones that surrounded you, O so many years ago. You remember every stripe in that old carpet. That red was a part of your sister's dress. And right over there is a dull gray that recalls a pair of pants mother made for you and which father dusted off one day because you forgot to pull the weeds out of the onion patch. And that stripe was a part of father's old overcoat—the one he discarded the winter he sold the hogs at such a good price. And that one, and that one, and that one—yes, you recall 'em all. Talk about imported rugs!

"What has become of the old-fashioned carpet?"

It has gone out with a lot of other good things to make way for tawdry display of ostentatious wealth. It was a luxury that had to give way as a sacrifice to foolish pride; a comfort that had to be put behind in

order to satisfy a foolish fancy for "artistic sense."

When our ship comes in we're going to dig right down into the hold, and if there isn't a big rag carpet there we'll refuse to receive the ship. If there is, then we're going to put that carpet right down on the parlor floor, and the first visitor who turns up his or her probocis in a sneering way is going to fail to receive an invitation to take a chair.

That's what we think about the old-fashioned rag carpet.

### Failure

The Great Financier sat in his sumptuous office and thought earnestly.

"My life has been a great success. I have secured everything that the heart of man could desire, money, fame, power—everything."

"But you have not secured me," whispered a something from out the surrounding silence.

"What are you?" queried the Great Financier.

"I am Love."

"But I have secured control of the money of the country. I have secured control of the coal mines of the country. I control the grain markets, the railroads, the mills and the factories."

"But you do not control me," said a chilling voice from out of the surrounding silence.

"What is it that I do not control?" queried the Great Financier.

"I am Death."

And when they found the Great Financier in the morning they found him captive instead of captor.

### Regrettable Mistake

Hearing a noise in his room the president of the Excitable Mutual Insurance company sprang from his bed, turned on the electric switch and saw a masked man standing by the safe.

"How dare you invade my premises?" demanded the awakened sleeper.

"I beg pardon, boss," said Bill the Bug. "I got twisted in me bearin's an' didn't know where I was. I didn't mean to butt in an' work your side of th' street."

Bowing gracefully and begging pardon for his unprofessional conduct, Bill the Bug retired hastily through the window.

### The Difference

The czar of Russia is worth forty million dollars and has ten millions a year to spend.

My bank account is in red ink and the czar's income for a day would make my yearly wage look like a busted toy balloon.

But I can walk whistling down the street, while the czar hikes under the bed every time he hears a foot-step in the hall, and he is so busy dodging poisoned food that he couldn't enjoy a dinner of boiled corn beef and cabbage if he tried.

Taking it all in all, we'd rather whistle and enjoy corned beef and cabbage than to have 'steen millions and be afraid to come out into the open.

### A Greater One

"Say, Billson; what was the riddle of the Sphinx?"

"I don't know, but I'll bet it wasn't a marker to the puzzle of trying to patch up my busted automobile in a rainstorm on a muddy road eleven miles from home."

### Unfair

"How much do you make a week?" asked the visitor of the office boy who was guiding him into the inner office.

"I make about nine bones a week, but de boss keeps six of 'em."

### Brain Leaks

Real charity has no advertising bureau.

Self-sacrifice doesn't mean sacrifice for self.

We always envy a boy who has an old maid aunt.

Life is made up of trifles, but it is unwise to trifle with it.

Some fathers think that in order to be fair they must fume.

Some men wouldn't know what to do if it were not for their brass tags.

The man who is always well often wonders how so many doctors make a living.

It is hard to sit before a steam radiator and call up recollections of a happy past.

Some people start into save for a rainy day and then become frightened at the first little cloud.

What has become of the old-fashioned woman who always had a few "pem'mint lozengers" in her reticule?

When a man complains that he is "down on his luck" it is pretty safe to guess that he is also down on his pluck.

One of the easy marks is the old-fashioned gentleman who still thinks that it is a lawyer's business to settle disputes.

When a man gets the notion in his head that the world is against him he is very apt to be willing to let it be against him.

Once in a while we meet a man who boasts that he never whips his children, but we reserve judgment until we know the children.

The worst feature about being sick is that when you are just getting well and want to tell your friends how sick you were, he turns in and tells how much sicker he was a few years ago.

Why is it that when these cooking school "experts" give a demonstration they usually broil a porterhouse steak that would put the average workingman's weekly wage into a crimp for thirty-six hours?

## HOW Mrs. Keith Made Christmas Money

MRS. GEORGE KEITH, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, writes:

"For three years I have paid for my own clothes, bought Christmas presents for the children and earned my own spending money by representing THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL and THE SATURDAY EVENING POST among my friends and neighbors. The prize money received each spring has been added to the fund which we are saving to buy our own home. Any mother will appreciate how much satisfaction this has given me."

IN ADDITION to paying liberally for every subscription secured this winter, we shall give

**\$42,000 IN EXTRA CASH PRIZES**

Each month not less than \$5000 will be given to 325 persons who do the best work during that month. Everything necessary will be sent on request.

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