

Whether Common or Not.



The Annual Trouble.

I shudder when my work is done
And I approach my cottage door,
For fear the yearly rout's begun
And I am in for it once more.
Around the corner near my home
I slyly peep in doubt and fear
That to my eyes a sight will come
To banish hope and light and cheer.
For Dorothy the last few days
Has looked about with well-known gaze.

The symptoms fill my soul with dread
And fear my very being racks;
For as I sleepless toss in bed
I think of rags and nails and tacks.
And at the morn I know full well
The blow must soon or later fall;
That naught can break the gloomy spell
Which settles o'er us like a pall.
And 'tis no longer wise to hope
To miss the scent of paint and soap.

Washrags and piles of well-worn clothes;
A scrubbing brush and cans of lye;
A broomstick tacked on bit of hose,
Stepladder standing idly by.
The clothesline stretched from house to shed,
And mops and brooms in open sight—
That's why I come with fear and dread
Home from the office ev'ry night.
I feel that soon the awful blow
Will fall and fill me full of woe.

And when at last I see the sign
That I am up against it hard—
The carpets hanging on the line,
The furniture strewn 'round the yard—
I'll know the yearly week of dread
Has come, and that my loving spouse,
With dust cap set upon her head
Has gone to work at cleaning house.
And then the carpets I must beat
And be content with scraps to eat.

Modernized Proverbs.

The world loves a cheerful loser.
Love never laughs at goldsmiths.
A beer in the brewery is worth two in the hide.
Congressmen who vote franchises must not be muzzled.

A stitch in time may cure appendicitis.
War has its congressional grafts no less profitable than peace.

Never look a slot machine in the face.
Behold what a great smell a little cigarette kindleth.

Modern Business Methods.

Irate Customer—"I thought you said these were fast colors!"

Smooth Clerk—"Do not become excited my dear madam. Let us understand each other perfectly. If I say a horse is fast, do you understand that I mean the horse will not run?"

Irate Customer—"Why, no; I guess you mean—"

Smooth Clerk—"Exactly, madam. You misunderstood me when I said those were fast colors. I used the word 'fast' as you would in speaking of a speedy horse."

Irate Customer—"But—"

Smooth Clerk—"At the book counter you will find a late and thoroughly revised edition of 'English as She is Spoke.' Step that way, madam. Call again, please."

Uncle Eben.

"I have noticed," remarked Uncle Eben, as he replaced the lid of the pickle barrel, "that th' man who is allus quotin' scriptur' is a mighty good man t' watch in a hoss trade.

"An' another thing I hev noticed," continued

Uncle Eben, "it ain't safe t' figure that a man an' his wife live happy jus' because they allus call each other pet names when company comes."

She'll be There.

A blooming young miss of Eau Claire,
With lips like red roses a paire,
Said, "Sure I will geau
To the Buffalo sheau
If papa the money can spaire."

Life's Shooting Gallery.

Some men are sure to miss the goal at which they aim,
But marksman, not the bow, is most to blame.

Sure Return.

He who will always trouble borrow
Must usury pay in shape of sorrow.

All Alike.

"I see Carnegie wants to die poor."
"Well, he won't have any more than the rest of us after he is dead."

An Ancient Pigmy.

"How big was Alexander, pa,
That people call him great?
Was he like some giant steeple tall,
His spear an hundredweight."
Then papa opened up his mouth
And this truth did relate:
"He wasn't half as big as some
Who run our ship of state.
He wasn't big enough to form
A scheme within his pate
And financier it till he had
A monster syndicate."

Of Course.

"How did you like the new minister's sermon."
"Much better than I did that stuck-up Mrs. Peachely's new spring bonnet."

Cheer.

I won't need flowers about my head
When I am lying cold and dead.
But they will fill my soul with mirth
While I'm alive and still on earth.
With flowers the living's pathway pave—
'Tis better than bouquets on the grave.

—W. M. M.

Nature's Phenomenon.

"They tell me that Mrs. Whitney's hair turned gray in one night."

"Well, you see, a burglar frightened her in the night so that she was too nervous to put on her blonde wig in the morning."—Denver News.

Fishing Time.

I only wish and wish and wish
That I could fish and fish and fish;
I'd like to sit the live long day,
Upon a bale of prairie hay,
Down where the river sadly wails,
And fish for suckers and for whales.
'Tis shameful that on this free soil,
A man must toil and toil and toil;
And grunt and swear and strive and groan.
And burst his martingale and moan:
Grow old and bald, before his time,
In following the festive dime.
Ah, life would be a pleasant dream,
If one could sit beside a stream,
With rod in hand, at early dawn,
No comrade but his demijohn
(The latter filled with lemonade)—
To sit there in the drowsy shade—
What higher bliss could mortals wish!
Ah, let us go and fish and fish.

—Exchange.

An Example Inviting Caution.

The European country which is said to resemble the United States more nearly than any other in industrial character and spirit is Germany. And it is certainly true that both countries adhere to the high tariff policy, both have been given over to the syndicating of production above other countries, and in both do we find an unequalled dash and enterprise in speculation and industry.

But at the moment industrial conditions in these two countries contrast strangely. Of the situation in the United States we need not speak. The tide of prosperity seems to be still rising, the combination and inflation of industrial and railway investments proceed on a scale not before approached during four years of amazing expansion, and the Wall street speculation passes all previously known bounds. Confidence in the future is unclouded, labor is fully employed, and all goes exceedingly well in the amassing of mighty fortunes.

The current dispatches from Germany reveal a very different situation there. The speculative breakdown and industrial reaction, which began there about a year ago, continue, with deepening adverse consequences to the people. The Berliner Tageblatt of a day or two ago describes conditions as so bad that charitable efforts are powerless to cope with the situation. Cases of reduced production and dismissals of working people are so numerous as no longer to attract notice. It is safe to say, says an Associated press dispatch of yesterday from Berlin, that 25 per cent of the working people are either idle or insufficiently employed; prices in many industries are so depressed that there is difficulty in meeting the bare costs of operation; "many factories have closed, and in others the hours of labor have been reduced, while workers crowd to the gates of the factories seeking employment."

Another dispatch from the same point says that the great Krupp iron and steel works have already dismissed 4,000 employes, and are about to discharge 5,000 more, and it is added: "The industrial depression continues. According to a recent estimate, one-fourth of the workers in Berlin are very insufficiently employed or totally idle. The distress of many is acute. There is no prospect of improvement."

And this is the country of which it was reported barely two years ago that "every chimney is smoking and every wheel turning," and of which Consul General Mason at Berlin reported to the American state department: "The 200 trusts and syndicates which were in existence in Germany at the beginning of 1899 are increasing in number day by day until there is scarcely a single important product of manufacture of which the output, price and conditions of sale are not governed by a combination or understanding between producers." And this is the country where the belief obtained wide acceptance, as in our own country, that the trusts and syndicates were establishing a stability and evenness of industrial conditions which would prevent a recurrence of periods of overproduction, panic and depression. In the trusts, it was thought, as a Berlin correspondent of a New York commercial organ recently stated, the country had found a panacea for industrial depressions.

This far-off situation may or may not be considered as of domestic concern or bearing, as you please. The common notion, supported by experience, is that the commercial nations are so closely interrelated that no one of them can hope to hold itself unaffected by the influences and conditions affecting any of the others. The word of caution is clearly in order at just this time in the United States, if it is ever in order where speculation appears to be in danger of going mad.—Springfield (Mass.) Republican.