

HOW SONG IS SUGGESTED.

The nimble witted journalist is ever ready to take a hint and to turn nursery rhymes or antiquated jingle into marketable matter, thoroughly up to date. It was one of those clever fellows, the late Ben King, who, remembering the old quatrain:

"There was an old woman and what do you think?  
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink.  
Yes, victuals and drink was the chief of her diet,  
And this funny old women could never keep quiet."

Grasped the idea and wrote the popular doggeral, altered but not improved, by Walter Jones in his tramp scene in "1492," which runs as follows:

"Nothing to do but work,  
Nothing to eat but food,  
Nothing to wear but clothes  
To keep us from being nude.  
Nothing to breathe but air,  
Quick as a flash it's gone,  
Nowhere to fall but off,  
Nowhere to stand but on.  
Nothing to comb but hair,  
Nowhere to sleep but in bed.  
Nothing to weep but tears,  
Nothing to scratch but head.  
Nothing to sing but songs,  
Ah! well! alas! alack!  
There's nowhere to go but out,  
And nowhere to come but back.  
Nothing to see but sights,  
Nothing to quench but thirst—  
And I'm still suffering."

Another bright fellow over in London noticed that the nursery rhyme,

"The cat ran over the roof of the house  
With a raw lump of liver in her mouth."

Was popular because of its alliteration, and taking the hint, wrote:

"Linger longer, Lucy,  
Linger longer, Lou;  
Longer linger, linger longer  
Linger longer, Lou."

This atrocious bit of tangling trash was set to music and caught the town, and afterward became the rage in the music halls of two continents.

A slighter hint than either of those cited gave rise to the song: "Wait! Mister Postman," which tells the story of a little girl who wrote a letter "to mamma in heaven," and insisted that the post man should mail it. The first stanza is as follows:

"The postman was late  
And was running along,  
To gather the letters in time,  
When he heard a sweet voice,  
Like a meadow lark's song,  
Or a mellow-toned silver bell's chime:  
"Wait, Mister Postman;  
Don't hurry so fast;

Wait, Mister Postman;  
I've caught you at last;  
This letter must go in the mail before seven—  
This letter I've written to mamma in heaven."

The author of the song, being a newspaper man, was literally on the alert for suggestions, and when his little girl ran to him one morning with an old envelope, which she had picked up somewhere and told him that she had a letter from Nellie, a little playmate of hers whom she loved very much and who had recently died he saw the pathos of the incident and in a few minutes had written, "Wait, Mister Postman."

Every line that is printed has its suggestion in something that has existed, as every man has a shadow, and if we could trace the history of works of fiction, of songs, or even the funny paragraphs which we read so carelessly, we find history back of them all, perhaps tragedy.

HER FORTE.

She is fond of athletics, they are her soul's delight,  
And at tennis, ball and rowing she is simply out of sight;  
But at present she has banished all pleasures from her mind,  
For she loves a game of football more than all the rest combined.

She wishes that she was a man some twenty times a day,  
It makes her mad to tell her that she isn't built to play;  
I always see her on the grounds whenever there's a game,  
But she says the looking at it is monotonous and tame.

Of course, you say, she'd be no use upon a football team,  
But appearances, they tell me, are not always what they seem;  
'Tis true that in the rush line she'd be nothing but a stick,  
But she'd make a dandy full back; you ought to see her kick.

—CHARLES E. NETTLETON.

GINGER SNAPS.

Don't sit in a draught. If you do the doctor will in all probability be the one to cash it.

"Are you a district messenger boy?" asked the near-sighted old gentleman of an urchin in the street.

"No sir," was the reply, "it's my sore toe that makes me walk that way."

Mr. Binks—I see by this paper that hairpins were invented in 1545, and

Mrs. Binks—Dear me! How do you suppose women buttoned their shoes and unlocked trunks before that?

An Observing Celestial. A chinaman is speaking to himself as he irons a shirt. Picks up shirt showing evidence of being well cared for, and says:—

"Bachelor. Him landlady fix him."

Picks up another, buttonless and all frayed at the neck and wrists, and says:—

"Mallied man."

"Where's yer daddy?"

"He's ploughin'."

"An' where's yer mammy?"

"Makin' him plough."

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