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William Preston Davies

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CREATOR'S ACROMATICS were so spectacular that press agents featured them in their publicity, and advertising matter for the concerts always contained a liberal number of cuts showing Creator in all manner of grotesque poses. Not a few people gained the impression that the whole performance was a pose for purpose of publicity, and the impression was a most natural one. But one view of Creator in action was sufficient to remove it. Doubtless there was the consciousness up to a certain point of advertising values, but the performance had too many evidences of sincerity and spontaneity to be wholly artificial, and I have never doubted that during his wildest extravagances the director was undergoing a tremendous emotional experience, such an experience, perhaps, as can be understood only by those who live in an atmosphere of music.

CREATOR HAS BEEN PLAYING in Winnepeg, and I had lost track of him for a good many years. He played here in the spring of 1905. He was but one of many great musicians who have visited Grand Forks. Sousa, of course, has been a rather frequent and rather recent visitor. Theodore Thomas and his Chicago orchestra had world-wide fame. Thomas himself did not visit Grand Forks, but he sent his orchestra and a capable director with it.

ANOTHER OLD-TIMER IS ON the road and has reached the Northwest, although he is not to play in Grand Forks this time. Walter Whiteside opened in Minneapolis on Thanksgiving with his new Chinese play. In January, 1903, he played "Hamlet" and "Richard III." He has been here in other plays, tragic and romantic, but in recent years he has devoted himself to oriental plays with elaborate settings and usually with a mystical atmosphere. He has, or had, a remarkable speaking voice. Here's hoping we may see him again.

THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY number of the Winona, Minn., Republican-Herald, about which I shall write more as soon as I can reach it, has an interesting article on the drama as it was in Winona some thirty years ago. Nearly all of the actors and actresses named in the article as having played in Winona also appeared in Grand Forks, and they were among the best in the country.

W. P. DAVIES.
I was not to play in the orchestra that evening, as the company carried its own clarinet player. Of course I was a much better musician than the man they brought along, but they used their man just the same. It so happened that I did not have my pass book, so I was not allowed to see the famous "Ham Tree." But there was one incident, which prompted this letter, which showed how those two comedians could come to the rescue with a new joke at any time.

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"THE OPERA HOUSE BEING situated close to the Great Northern tracks, if an actor had an important line just as an engine came along, it was necessary for him to stop until the engine had passed. McIntyre and Heath in this play represented two stranded darkeys out on a railroad crossing many miles from nowhere. They were hungry and broke, and were just contemplating walking to the nearest town. Just then a big engine came along the track just outside, making a tremendous noise. The two hungry men stopped talking and just stood there. When the puffing finally ceased Heath gulped and said, "Gee! if we was only outside we could get THAT train." It was a few minutes, so I was told, before the men could continue with their regular parts."

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THAT REMINDS ME OF AN INCIDENT in the days of Elmer's variety theater in Jamestown, nearly fifty years ago. The place was of a type quite common in the West in those days. The stage entertainment was chiefly an excuse for getting people in to buy drinks, which were served on the main floor and in the boxes, the "actresses" serving between turns as salesladies. Three or four people served through the season as a sort of permanent stock company, this force being augmented by traveling performers who played a week or so at a time. Jim Murphy, leading man of the permanent staff, was no great shakes as an actor, but he was Irish, quick-witted, and resourceful. In one performance he impersonated a traveler who found himself at a country hotel where everything was wrong. In one scene he was shown seated in his room, complaining in soliloquy of the accommodations. The room was shabby, he complained, the bed uncomfortable, the food execrable and the service rotten. At that point the landlord entered to see if his guest required anything. He showed every appearance of intoxication, swaying uncertainly as he walked, and as he started to cross the room he stumbled and almost fell. Murphy caught him, whirled him about and ejected him, continuing his complaint "and on top of it all, a drunken landlord." It was very well done, and the audience supposed it all to be quite regular. As a matter of fact, the play called for nothing of the sort. The landlord was actually drunk, but the stage hands did not realize his condition until he got into the scene. There Murphy's quick wit turned what would have been an embarrassing situation into an effective bit of acting, which the audience thought was all a part of the play.

W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I SUPPOSE A GREAT MANY people have speculated on what would have happened if Lee had won the battle of Gettysburg. In Scribner's magazine Winston Churchill, famous British statesman, approaches the subject in reverse with an article entitled "If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg." The title challenges attention, for one wonders at first if there has not been a mistake. But the title is correct, as the article, presumably written in 1930, is based on the assumption that Lee did win the great battle, and that his winning of it had a profound influence, not only on the United States, but of the world. Supposing himself to be in a world so influenced, Churchill speculates on what might have happened if Lee had been defeated, his speculations in this field reaching the same conclusions that have been reached by events themselves.

* * *

IF CERTAIN THINGS HAD been done which actually were done, says Mr. Churchill, Pickett's charge would have been repulsed (which it was) and Gettysburg would have been a great Northern victory (as it was.) The author then refers in a casual way, as if to matters of current knowledge, to the results of this supposed victory of Lee's. It placed Lee at the head of the southern Confederacy, displacing Davis. By a master stroke Lee solved the vexatious problem of slavery, declaring that the Confederacy "would pursue no policy toward the African negroes which was not in harmony with the moral conceptions of western Europe." This satisfied those British who had supported the Union because of the slavery issue. With that issue out of the way there was no reason why they should not recognize the Confederacy, and this they did. With the able assistance of Gladstone the new nation created for the liberated slaves "institu-

THE AUTHOR ASKS WHAT would have happened if the liberation of the slaves had been followed by "some idiotic assertion of racial equality, and even by attempts to graft white democratic institutions upon the simple, docile, gifted African race, belonging to a much earlier chapter in human history." There follows a picture of what actually occurred during the days of reconstruction.

* * *

THEN FOLLOWS AN INTERESTING OUTLINE of the political developments which are supposed to have followed Lee's victory and British recognition. With the slavery issue settled Lincoln counseled peace, holding that it would not be right to prolong the slaughter on the question of sovereignty alone. Bitterness continued between the two sections, and for years there was danger of fresh hostilities, with the British a constant menace from the Canadian border. At length there was effected under Balfour, British premier, and Roosevelt and Wilson, respectively northern and southern presidents, a moral and psychological reunion of the English-speaking peoples, with complete political independence guaranteed to each and provision made for common citizenship.

* * *

WE ARE TOLD THEN OF what might have happened if no such association had been perfected. The frictions and jealousies of continental Europe are outlined, and the events leading up to the outbreak of the World War are described. Had it not been for the British-American association, says Mr. Churchill, there would have resulted such a catastrophe as actually overtook the world. But in this crisis the English-speaking association intervened, and served notice on all the mobilized powers that "failing a peaceful outcome, the association must deem itself ipso facto at war with any power in either combination whose troops invaded the territory of its neighbor."

* * *

THAT DECLARATION HAD the desired effect. Military movements were halted, differences were adjusted, and peace reigned. Presently continental nations themselves joined in a like beneficent association of their own. Concerning the kaiser, the article says, "If today he occupies in his old age the most splendid situation in Europe, let him not forget that he might well have found himself eating the bitter bread of exile, a dethroned sovereign, and a broken man loaded with unutterable reproach."

The article is filled with interesting allusions to things which actually occurred, and to things which might have been, among them the influence of Lee's victory on the careers of Disraeli and Gladstone, each following what the author holds to be his natural bent. Disraeli becoming the champion of democracy, and Gladstone the bulwark of conservative aristocracy. Because of its substitution of fable for fact and the plausibility of its argument, the article is one of the most interesting read in a long time.

W. P. DAVIES.
SOMEBOB ON THE MINNEAPOLIS JOURNAL evidently read "Tom Sawyer" when he was a boy. He writes of the picture play which has just been presented as follows:

"These boys (in the audience) found excitement and thrill in 'Tom Sawyer,' with no note of sadness, but some of us who read and re-read Mark Twain's immortal masterpiece until the old blue covered volume fell to tatters may have difficulty in keeping back a tear when dear old Aunt Polly, that sissified Sid Sawyer, lovely Huckleberry, battling Joe Harper, villainous Injun Joe, sweet Becky Thatcher and poor befuddled Muff Potter are re-created for him on the screen. Well, life is like that."

"In the main, the picture makers have stuck close to Mark Twain's story. Of course, Tom didn't have a fight with Joe Harper. The fight was with the new boy who came to town, and Injun Joe didn't get killed falling into a hole in the cave. He starved to death, everyone knows that. And Tom didn't have more than one boy help him at a time whitewashing the fence in that classical scene. But these are only trifles and probably wouldn't be noticed except by one who boasts that he has read the adventures of Tom Sawyer at least 50 times and expects to read it that many times more before dissolution sets in."

* * *

I DIDN'T SEE THE PICTURE when it was here, but if I had I should certainly have noticed those variations from the original. My father gave me a copy of "Tom Sawyer" soon after its publication, while I was quite a small boy. After the fashion described above, I read and re-read it until the cover came loose and the leaves fell apart. I could almost have recited it, forward or backward.

* * *

THERE WERE FEWER books then, and for that reason those that were accessible were apt to be more thoroughly read than are most popular books now. Children now read more books, but because they have so many to read the tendency is to hurry through one and pass on to the next. Many books are not worth more than one hasty reading, or
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

MR. M'INTYRE—FOURTH column to the right—discusses literary plagiarisms and coincidences, and as an example of the latter he mentions the strange case of two authors on opposite sides of the continent sending to McClure's magazine at the same time manuscripts the opening paragraphs of about 60 words were identical with the exception of two words. All question of fraud or collusion seems to have been eliminated. Such a case is enough to baffle even the expert in mental science.

* * *

NEWSPAPER PEOPLE ARE familiar with coincidences of another sort, some of them quite remarkable, which seldom come to the attention of others. It is fairly well known that daily papers on the same Associated Press circuit receive the same telegraphic dispatches over the wires each day. The dispatches are sent out from a central station to all the member papers in a given area. But with the sending of the dispatches, the responsibility of the Associated Press ceases, as does its control. Each paper receiving these identical dispatches is at liberty to use them as it sees fit. It may use one and discard another, or it may spread one in big type all over the front page and bury another in some obscure position on an inside page. In this matter the newspaper is a law unto itself. The Associated Press has nothing to say about it.

* * *

THE DECISION AS TO WHAT use shall be made of a particular dispatch, where it shall be placed, and how it shall be headed, rests with the editor in charge of that department of the paper's work. It is his business not only to decide what prominence shall be given to the article, but to write or cause to be written the head which is to accompany it. As men's judgment differs as to news values, and as a given article may have greater interest in one territory than in another, the treatment given to news stories varies greatly. It is also true that the same dispatch will be given special prominence by all the papers receiving it, this being because of its obviously outstanding character in the news of that day.

AS HEADLINES ARE INTENDED to indicate in brief the character of the article which follows, there is necessarily some similarity in headlines, and here comes in the coincidence to which I referred. It is not uncommon to find in two newspapers, widely separated, headlines which are not only identical in meaning but almost identical on wording. Occasionally the correspondence is perfect. Such a case occurred here a few months ago. The Evening Herald featured a certain article with a large display line across the top of the front page, with the customary subordinate heading following. Next morning the St. Paul Dispatch arrived with the same article given in the same position, with exactly the same wording in the large display head and in the first section of the secondary headlines. In all there were twenty or thirty words exactly duplicated.

* * *

IF THE READER THINKS there is nothing remarkable about that, let him submit any news story to a group of twenty or thirty people, ask them to set forth its salient features in forty or fifty words and then see how many of them will have seized on the same central idea and expressed it in identical or even similar language.

* * *

I AM REMINDED BY ALL this of my old friend General W. H. Standish, who served as attorney general of North Dakota in the Populist administration, and who afterward practiced law in Grand Forks until he moved to Missouri. The general and I were good friends, although he never approved of my politics, and he was a frequent visitor in the office. It was in the days of McKinley and Mark Hanna, and the general was quite sure that Hanna controlled all the important business of the country and intended to make himself dictator. He was sure that Hanna dictated everything that went into the newspapers, overlooking the fact that a good many newspapers were pounding Hanna as hard as they knew how.

* * *

"OF COURSE THE HANNA combination owns the Associated Press," he said. "Just look at the papers. Same dispatches in all of them, almost word for word, and there's hardly any difference even in the headlines."

"General," I said, "I can't prove to you right here that Mark Hanna doesn't own the Associated Press, but as to the handling of the dispatches after they get here, I am doing all that just now myself, and I assure you that I have never had a word from Mark Hanna on the subject. As to headlines, I'll make you an offer. You come in here some night when we're not busy, and I'll let you look over the report and write all the headlines yourself, deciding which article should have big headlines and which little ones, and remembering that it takes just so many letters of a given size type to fill a line."

* * *

OF COURSE HE DIDN'T TAKE me up. He was obviously puzzled, but I knew that he went off with the feeling that while my proposal looked all right, there must be a hitch in it somewhere, and that Mark Hanna was telling all the newspaper men what to write.

W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I ASKED THE OTHER DAY for information concerning the time when a Great Northern train was snowed in for several days somewhere in Nelson county. I have received from D. C. Macdonald two photographs, one a side view and the other an end view of a train in a cut where the snow reaches almost to the tops of the cars. That may be the train about which I inquired, but no date is given. It would be hard for those who have never seen such a sight to believe it possible.

* * *

I HAVE ALSO RECEIVED from Rev. Dr. H. P. Cooper, one of the oldest Methodist pastors in the state, and now stationed at Enderlin, N. D., several newspaper clippings describing experiences of many years ago. Dr. Cooper thinks that the train about which I inquired was stuck in the snow near the present town of Ray. One of the clippings says of this episode, which occurred March 14, 15 and 16, 1902:

"AT MINOT OVER 1,000 PASSENGERS have been delayed. All are being taken care of by the Great Northern in good shape, and one of the employees stated last evening that it was remarkable the good-natured way in which they took their situation. The delay is treated as a huge joke, and while many of them have been seriously inconvenienced, they take the matter philosophically. Minot is naturally crowded, and every available place is occupied by cots. Sleeping room is at a premium, and causes more figuring than the question of eatables, as there are plenty of restaurants, all of which are doing a rushing business.

"PRESIDING ELDER H. P. Cooper, who returned from a trip to the Missouri river Friday last when the storm was getting well under way, says many of the newcomers in that section were ill-prepared for a storm such as the one experienced. When the storm broke he was about 20 miles west of Souris, and made the drive to that place while the storm was raging, with a farmer who was called there on business. The ride, he says, is one that he will not forget for some time to come, as the wheeling was bad. He arrived safe at Souris, however, and took the train for this place and the next morning went to St. Thomas to hold services there, but it is unnecessary to state that no services were held, and his 200-mile trip was in vain.

"THE MONDAY BEFORE THE storm Rev. Cooper was at Souris and talked with a number of the immigrants from Iowa who arrived with their goods on that day. He counseled them to leave all their goods they did not have to take with them to their farms on the first trip, and instead to take lumber for their houses. This they did, and all the shelter many of them had during the storm was what they constructed between Monday and Friday, when the storm broke. It is thought that some of their stock and chickens certainly perished, as some of the settlers stated when at Souris that they did not believe shelter for the stock necessary, as the weather was so warm. Rev. Cooper advised them that the weather at this season of the year was often treacherous, and that shelter for the stock should be provided at once. Nothing very definite has been received from these newcomers, and fears are entertained for their safety. Farmers residing in about the same section, however, have reported at Minot as above referred to, and have heard of no casualties."

* * *

OTHER CLIPPINGS TELL OF Dr. Cooper being compelled to walk five miles through the snow in the southwestern part of the state because of an accident to his cutter, and one contains a letter which appeared originally in the Atlanta Constitution in which the writer tells stories of escapes and tragedies in storms in the old territorial days. We are told that Judge J. F. Kinney, Indian agent at Yankton, reached some point in Nebraska after nine days' travel in blizzards, on several days his train making only six miles per day. The letter also tells of the freezing to death of two children on a stalled train, and of a man who lost his way while riding home in a storm and was frozen stiff in his saddle. The story says that the horse found its way home with its grim burden, and when the man's wife, hearing something outside, opened the door, the horse stood there with her husband's body frozen stiff, upright in the saddle. That last sounds a little strong to me, but many remarkable things occurred in those storms.

—W. P. DAVIES.
C. F. SIMS, WHO FOR MANY years was superintendent of an elevator company, with headquarters in Grand Forks, was a constant reader and great admirer of the old St. Paul Pioneer Press. He had begun his daily reading of that paper when it was under the direction of Colonel Wheelock, and he kept it up. He considered the paper's editorials the supreme authority on politics, science, philosophy and everything else that they discussed.

"I read those editorials every day," he said to me once, "and agree with every word of them."

IT ISN'T OFTEN THAT A newspaper has a reader like that. Personally, while I enjoy and admire greatly the editorials in some of the papers that I read, I can't say that I always "agree with every word of them." Sometimes I am not quite sure about my own. I have a very high opinion of Gilbert K. Chesterton. I do not always agree with him, although he doesn't know it. But I have just come across a statement by him about Main Street in America, and Sinclair Lewis' treatment of it, and I found myself agreeing with all of it. Here is a part of what he said:

"A DOCTOR WHO CAN DRIVE through a storm under the most unfavorable conditions operate upon a man and save his life, a wife who can accompany him and, though unaccustomed to these things, can stand by and administer ether—people like that have something fine in them, they have qualities that go for the making of a great country. Though Mr. Lewis has described incidents such as these, he has stressed the foibles and little peculiarities that are, after all, non-essential, and in that way has produced a picture which, though it has truth in it, nevertheless puts emphasis on what to my mind are the wrong things.

"SUPPOSE,” HE WENT ON, "A woman does belong to a secret society, a female Masonic order, and that she has diplomas and cryptic drawings hanging on the walls of her drawing room. This may be humorous in itself, but it does not play such an important part in her life as the fact that she is a wonderful mother and manages her house beautifully. A description of her that emphasizes these things but does not dwell upon her efficiency or spiritual goodness is not a true picture of her.

"I DO NOT WANT TO BE PREsumptuous. I have lived on Main Street but a few weeks, but I found that there are two sides to it, as there are to all other streets. One of them is sunny, the other is in shadow. I think in order to describe it both sides must be taken into consideration."

SINCLAIR LEWIS IS ONE OF my pet abominations. For all I know he is a very pleasant gentleman—I never met him—but he has always struck me as being ashamed of himself for being raised in a small town. There are plenty of others who spend most of their time picking out flaws, but not all of them win prizes for doing it. Dr. Van Dyke may have stretched it a little when he said that the awarding of the Nobel prize to Lewis is an insult to America, but it was certainly no compliment.

THERE IS IN THE SMALL town much that is cheap, and coarse, and scirld. That is equivalent to saying that in the small town there is a great deal of human nature. And, if these qualities are fairly representative of the small town, human nature itself is in a pretty bad way, for the small town is human nature in miniature.

CHESTERTON IS A SATIRIST of no mean order, but he does not convey the impression that the things that he satirizes constitute all that there is of life. That is exactly the impression made by Lewis, and his manifest purpose is to create that impression. Chesterton is able to heap ridicule on the things which he believes to be ridiculous, and still leave with the reader the consciousness that there are other things, basic, fundamental, which are fine and noble and altogether lovely. Lewis is seem-
THAT REMINDS ME—W. P. D.

HOW AND WHEN SHOULD the child learn to read?

As to the how of it, we have passed through several stages. The method applied to many of us was first to teach the A, B, C's, and to teach them pretty thoroughly. The process was pretty nearly mechanical. The child was drilled until he could name all the letters at sight, and then he was required to learn them in their regular order so that he could recite them without mistake. By accident of one sort or another during this process he was apt to associate a good many of the letters with sounds and simple words, but this was not an intended part of the system. The idea was to learn the letters mechanically and then to put them together to form words, the latter process also being largely mechanical.

SOME YEARS AGO THERE was a complete reversal of this method. Instead of learning letters, and making words with them, the new idea was first to learn words, then take the words to pieces and identify the letters of which they were composed. The child was given first the word, usually associated with a picture or object, then the sounds which entered into the word, and then the letters which represented those sounds. By a judicious selection of words all the letters and their several sounds were thus treated.

* * *

THERE APPEARS RECENTLY to have been some reaction and a tendency to strike a mean between these two extremes, and many children are being taught letters before they learn words, but with the learning of the letters goes the learning of the simpler sounds represented by them. The building of words comes next.

SO MUCH FOR THE "HOW." As to the "when," there has also been considerable change. When the mechanical learning of the alphabet was the very first step in education it was not thought necessary to expend any great amount of professional skill on the beginner. Anyone was competent to teach a child to say A, B, and C. Parents were encouraged to teach the child his letters at home. That saved time and labor at school and nobody cared how the child had been taught his letters so long as he knew them. If he could read a little, so much the better.

THEN THE SCHOOLS CHANGED all that, and such teaching at home, while not prohibited, was regarded with disfavor. Somebody discovered that it made a great deal of difference to the child's future whether he first learned that "c-a-t" spells "cat" or first learned to take the word "cat" to pieces and find that it was made up of the letters "c-a-t." It also made a difference whether or not in the teaching the right method of psychological approach were employed. Hence it was greatly preferred that the child should first come to school with a virgin mind, innocent of all knowledge of the alphabet, and unspoiled by methods not strictly professional. I have been informed that that preference still exists.

* * *

I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE are to do about it. As to whether the alphabet shall be learned first, or second, or third, it does not seem to make much difference if one may judge by the product of the several systems. We have all learned to read, and apparently about as well under one system as under another. It is true that if the letters are not learned in their regular order quite early and quite thoroughly they are not likely to be learned well at all, and a defect here is apt to cause some inconvenience later on. I have known of persons wasting a lot of time over a telephone directory because they couldn't remember whether the letter they were looking for came in the middle of the alphabet or near one end. There has been complaint of loss of time by filling clerks from a similar cause.

* * *

I THINK IT IS AGREED THAT nothing is gained by crowding a young child, but if the youngster is fairly bright and inquisitive, how is he to be prevented from learning his letters at home? We might pass a law against it, but then we should have somebody bootlegging the alphabet and all the infants learning surreptitiously. The only effective way in which to keep the infant mind in its virgin purity would be to move away out in the world, take no printed matter along, and see that there are no road signs within traveling distance. Letters are lying loose all around the child. He wants to know what they are, and what they are about, and he is going to find out. And I don't think it hurts him a bit.

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

BECAUSE REV. H. P. COOPER, just now of Enderlin, N. D., is a preacher of long standing, a former presiding elder and a doctor of divinity, he might not be supposed likely to keep in his file of newspaper clippings a column of pugilistic gossip written when John L. Sullivan was champion of the world, and dealing with such worthies as the original Jack Dempsey, Kilrain, McCaffrey, Charley Mitchell, Pat Kilken, Patsey Cardiff and others once prominent in fistic circles. Many persons, however, have learned by experience that Dr. Cooper has a strong flesh strain in him, and that when occasion calls for it he can put up a stiff battle. Dr. Cooper might explain that the clipping has two sides, and that the side which he intended me to read is the side containing a letter about northeaster blizzards, from which I have already quoted. That is a perfectly good explanation, but I have read both sides, and I am going to quote a little from the pugilistic side. The reader may draw his own conclusions.

THE SAME DAY IT WAS TO have been given out in this country that McCaffrey was to go to Havana to give the Cubans a taste of his quality as a sparrer; but instead of going there, he was to have sailed incognito for Southampton in one of the fast German steamers, and to have gone into training in a quiet village in England away from the beaten tracks of pugilistic sharps. At the proper time he would, duly heralded, have made his appearance in an exhibition in London, and his backer believed that an immense throng would be present to see the unknown who had the hardihood to plunk down $5,000 in one lump to fight the champion of champions.

HE BELIEVED THAT WHEN it was found out that the unknown was Dominick McCaffrey, who had once before met Sullivan, the excitement would go to fever heat, and that the anxiety to see him would pack any hall in London at big prices for two weeks. Then, if Dominick beat Sullivan, he would be the idol of the day and the Monte Cristo of the sporting world.

THAT IS ONE OF THE stories that Dr. Cooper has been keeping stored away all these years. The reference to a stake of $5,000 a side for a world championship match seems funny in these days, when nothing short of seven figures interests a real pugilist.

THE WRITER OF THE STORY describes the McCaffrey-Dempsey fight at some length, ascribing to Dempsey all the furious aggressiveness for which both he and his modern namesake are famous. There are some speculations, too, on the future of Sullivan, who was said to be sorely harrassed by letters that had been written concerning him. It is also said that in the opinion of many, if Sullivan is ever beaten it will be by a man much smaller than himself, whose quickness and skill will enable him to evade the big fellow’s rushes and terrible right, wear him out, and then finish him at his leisure. Something of that nature happened when Corbett wrested the championship from Sullivan.

—W. P. D.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

A CENTURY AGO MACAULAY wrote of national and world conditions, business, social and political, in such a way as to show that while human understanding has been enlarged and its results have been multiplied and much more widely distributed, motives have not changed greatly, and even the problems of the past are projected into the life of today.

LAST SUMMER THERE WAS held in Grand Forks an industrial conference whose purpose was to co-ordinate the effects of various sectional groups for the better development of the resources of the state. The purpose was admirable, and many of the suggestions made have practical value. But such a movement is by no means new. Away back in the early days of statehood men who had established themselves in North Dakota recognized the potential value of what they saw around them and understood something of the importance of concerted effort to realize on the prospects which appealed to them as being so attractive.

IN FEBRUARY, 1896, WHEN Bryan was planning to capture the presidency, when the air was full of free silver arguments and demands were being made that the government should lend money in great gobs to all comers to relieve the stringency of hard times, there was held in Grand Forks a meeting of business men of the state, and there was organized a State Business Men's Union whose purposes were identical with those of the gathering held here last summer. Problems of marketing were discussed. The desirability of establishing industrial plants to work up the raw material of the state was stressed. The value of the state's enormous deposits of lignite was emphasized. With only slight changes the addresses would fit very well into the conditions of today.

THE IDEA OF A TERMINAL elevator to aid in the orderly marketing of northwestern wheat is often supposed to have originated just a little before the organization of the Nonpartisan League. But at the meeting here in 1896 resolutions were adopted urging the building of great terminal elevators to provide for the storage and treatment of wheat so as to avoid flooding the market immediately after threshing with wheat whose quality could be improved by cleaning, drying and other treatment. It is to be noted that the desire expressed was for the building of such elevators by means of private capital and not as state-owned institutions.

THE GATHERING ALSO held that such terminal elevators, situated within the field of production, would be advantageous to the farmers of the northwest as a means of preserving the identity of northwestern hard wheat with its superior milling qualities. Protein analysis was not known by name then, as it has become known in recent years. But it was known that wheat produced on the fields of North Dakota possessed certain qualities which made it almost indispensable for mixing with the softer southern wheats, and it was urged that steps be taken to enable our farmers to realize all the benefits to which they were entitled from this fact.

THE BODY ALSO TOOK UP the matter of farm storage and stressed the desirability of the farm granary as a place where the farmer could store his wheat cheaply and economically and have it absolutely under his own control at all times. It appears, therefore, that in thirty-six years we have traveled completely around the circle and have about reached the point from which we started.

I HAVE RUN ACROSS AN anecdote of the late Colonel Plummer which ought to be given circulation. The colonel was an orator of the old school whose ability on the platform brought him into politics and kept him there. He could talk eloquently and convincingly on any side of any subject. He could wring tears from his hearers or convulse them with laughter. He could ascribe to a political candidate the wisdom of Solomon and the virtues of Washington and Lincoln combined, or he could convince an audience that the same candidate was unworthy of a place in decent society.

AT A POLITICAL CONVENTION on one occasion the colonel was out of favor with the people in control. Certain demands which he had made had been rejected, and he was out for blood. He took the platform and launched into a long speech in which the pla...
THAT REMINDS ME—W.P.D.

nobody reads all of any newspaper. Each person reads the parts in which he is particularly interested, and lets most of the rest go. But it sometimes seems that everybody reads the parts that are wrong. A short time ago I wrote an editorial correcting what I supposed to be an error in a news dispatch which said that the Nobel peace prize was awarded by a Norwegian commission. On attention being called to my blunder I corrected that in another editorial. But notwithstanding this later correction, the mail has brought me one, two or three letters at a time calling attention to the mistake in the original editorial. If I am to judge by the correspondence received, everybody detected the blunder and nobody has seen the correction.

DURING HIS TIRADE HE brandished a copy of the paper and occasionally pointed to something in it which seemed to excite him. I had no chance to break in for some time, but I recalled dimly the last paragraph which I had written, and wondered if I might have made some bad break which would let the paper in for a libel suit and me for a licking. When my friend got out of breath I asked him to show me what it was all about, and he exhibited the offending paragraph. I read it over carefully and felt greatly relieved. No names or places were mentioned or suggested. I said:

"I don't see anything here about you or your house."

"No," he said, "but anybody would know that it was meant for me."

I assured him that the article had no reference to him or his place of business, and volunteered to say so in the paper if he wished me to do so. He knew better than that, and declined very promptly.

WHILE WE ARE TALKING shop, in a way, I may explain a little matter about which several of my friends have inquired. I have been asked recently why this column has not appeared recently in the Sunday Herald. In the regular course the column is published first in the Evening Herald and repeated in the morning paper. Under a circulation arrangement recently inaugurated the Sunday paper goes to all subscribers, morning and evening alike, and on that day the space usually occupied by this department is used for the general summary which is published under the heading "Events of a Week," thus avoiding duplication of matter to the same subscribers.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED A letter marked for the "mail bag" department, but which I have swiped for this column because I want to comment on it. The letter is properly dated and signed. For reasons of my own, which perhaps others will appreciate, I prefer not to use the writer's name. The letter is headed "Why I Hate Christmas," and reads as follows:

"Christmas comes but once a year and to a great many it means pleasure and fun. Families have their reunions and presents are exchanged, but I have none of these. Generally I spend the day at a hotel. Although sometimes invited out I do not care to go because I cannot enter into the spirit with the others and feel that I am not wanted.

"The day generally drags heavy upon my hands and for a week or more my friends ask me 'How did you enjoy Christmas,' Like a great many others I lie and say 'Oh wonderful.'

"Christmas means to me a day of sadness, a day of interruptions, of loneliness, a day that I dread and I am always glad when it is over. I have not the means to travel nor to give presents to children that I would like to. I hate to be asked out for Christmas and I hate to be seen alone at my hotel. I hate to get drunk and I hate to stay sober. I hate to hear of the waste of those who have and I hate to hear of the suffering of those who have not. I love little children and hate to know that they are deprived of things that Christmas advertising makes them think they will get from Santa Claus. I hate the thoughts of Christmas and am glad when it is over and with it its heart aches."

* * *

I THINK THAT LETTER IS genuine as representing what the writer believed at the moment to be his real sentiments. I cannot believe that it is the expression of an abiding sentiment. It seems to me more like the utterance of a passing hour of gloom which may not be related at all to Christmas or any other season. My guess is that before the season is over the writer would be willing to take it all back and admit that Christmas is not such a bad time, after all.

* * *

IT IS TRUE THAT THERE are at Christmas time some cases of wasteful extravagance, and innumerable cases in which children fail to receive some of the things for which they have hoped. But I have yet to learn of anyone who impoverished himself by giving Christmas presents, and I think that in nearly all cases such disappointments as children experience are forgotten in the joy which they derive from the more modest tokens of affection which they actually receive.

* * *

LOOKING BACK UPON MY own childhood I have some very distinct recollections of Christmas. I have no doubt that, like other children, I hoped for things that were beyond my reach. What those things were, I have forgotten. I doubt that the thought of them ever entered my mind on Christmas day. But I remember well the cheap toy, the knitted comforter, and the fat orange right in the toe of my stocking. Those things gave me such joy and satisfaction that there was no room for disappointment, and the fact that here were children of more wealthy families, who received presents more valuable than mine never troubled me at all.

* * *

IF THE WRITER OF THE above letter persists in thinking how and why he hates Christmas, he is in for a rather doleful time, for we can always find abundant reasons why we should be miserable. My suggestion is that he put forth an honest effort during the next two weeks to forget about himself and try to realize that back of the visible evidences which have become so familiar there is a spirit which lies at the very root of all that is best and finest in human nature, a spirit which brings joy to the sorrowing, comfort to the afflicted, and strength and fortitude in time of distress. And then, if he feels something of the mellowing influence of the spirit, some slight warming of the cockles of the heart, let him look around him and see if there is not someone near him whose face he can brighten with a word of cheer, some child whose Christmas can be made happier by a trifling gift and a bit of attention, some family whose path he can make just a little smoother. If he will follow that course faithfully, in complete forgetfulness of self, he will thank God for Christmas and count the days until another rolls around.

—W. P. DAVIES.
IN CONTRAST TO THE "MAIN STREET" spirit Mrs. Porter submits the following lines by Elizabeth H. Olmstead as her favorite small town poem:

"When the powers that be were busily attending to my case,
Picking out my disposition and deportment for live's race,
They put back the love of cities in its lofty pigeon-hole,
And they handed me a common, undiluted, small-town soul.

How I love a country village with a maple-shaded street,
Where you hear a word of friendliness from everyone you meet,
Where you find a human interest in your every-day affairs,
And it warms the exiled heart of you to know somebody cares!

Oh! You hear the city boasting that 'It lets a man alone,'
But the small town treats you better where you know as you are known.
If there's nothing like its malice when a scandal lifts its head,
Yet there's nothing like its kindness when you're watching by your dead.
And it's like a larger family in its easier praise and blame,
Where they know your fads and foibles, but they love you just the same;
They may score you for your errors, but they help you when you're down,
For hearts beat close together, in a little country town."

SOMETHING HAS REMINDED me of an old story of Sir Thomas Blank—that name will do as well as any other. Sir Thomas, a British aristocrat of the old school, and a little hard of hearing, had his shirts made by a certain tradesman who did good work and also had social ambitions. By dint of considerable scheming the shirtmaker obtained an invitation to a gathering at which Sir Thomas was also a guest. Immaculately dressed, he mingled with the crowd in the reception room, and, meeting Sir Thomas, he greeted the baronet most cordially. Sir Thomas responded, but looked puzzled. The face looked familiar, but the formal dress had changed the man's appearance. The shirtmaker, seeing that he was not recognized, and enjoying the joke, whispered in the baronet's ear: "Made your shirts."

"Oh, yes indeed. Of course," said Sir Thomas. Then, turning to a distinguished gentleman who had just approached, he said: "Allow me to present my friend Major Schurz."

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W. P. D.

Few poems have attained a greater degree of popularity than "The Night Before Christmas." It has charmed millions of children by helping them to visualize one of the most charming pictures known to childhood, and it has awakened in children a larger growth of memories which are much more precious than the material things of life. It has been published in schoolbooks and translated into many languages. Familiar as it is, it is often mislaid, and at one time or another I have had scores of appeals for assistance in finding it. It is in response to such requests that the poem is again published.

* * *

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her kerchief and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap—
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!
Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all!
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-tops the courses they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack:
His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump—a right jolly old elf;
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know there was nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team—What a whilte,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle;
And I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

* * *

This famous poem was written by Clement C. Moore, who was born in New York in 1779 and died at Newport, R. I., in 1863. During the greater part of his life he taught theology and kindred subjects, and wrote and published poems and other works. Whatever the value of his other work, probably none of his has contributed more to human happiness than "The Night Before Christmas."

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I AM INDEBTED TO MRS. Fannie M. Heath for the following instructive account of her observations of the effect of the recent sleet storm:

* * *

HAVING JUST PASSED through the very worst sleet storm in the history of our state so far as records are available a few notes on how the different varieties of trees stood the test may not be out of place. It seems that Grand Forks and immediate vicinity was the section receiving greatest damage to telegraph and telephone lines and so far as we can learn our grove was in the very heart of the worst of it. Here are a few facts and I will ask the readers to use their own methods in estimating the weight some of our trees must have carried. One twenty-one-inch branch with a few side branches totalling 48 inches when put on the scales weighed three pounds and ten ounces. After the ice was melted from it, it weighed a bare two ounces while still very wet and was a bare half inch in thickness at widest part. The melted ice measured three pints and a half teacup full of water. By these same estimates what must have been the weight of one huge branch thirty-five feet in length and many side branches that came down. Being somewhat short of time and not short of water I did not weigh and measure up this one except to take the length. But I know that where before the storm there stood between our house and barn a huge Cottonwood tree with wide spreading but few branches and this 35-foot branch on one side and a 28 feet branch on the other there now stands an almost branchless trunk perhaps 65 feet high with a branchless stub 8 or 10 feet long and a few three to four feet branches giving mute but unmistakable evidence of the havoc one of these storms can create and of the few hours it took this storm to undo a tree growth of over forty years. Much of the damage was done the first evening for the ice covered trees were threshed by a strong wind. Then there followed the two days of almost breathless quiet. In my near 50 years on the Dakota prairies never have I seen two succeeding days that were freer from wind. Not a branch was stirring even at the very tops of the tallest trees. It was awe inspiring just to watch them.

* * *

THEN THE SECOND STORM started and again accompanied by strong wind the havoc was great. Treelops and branches were coming down so often that it was dangerous to go beneath them. One large top carrying hundreds of pounds of ice came down less than two minutes after husband had walked under it. When the sun came out those ice-covered trees were the most beautiful sight I have ever seen with the billions of diamonds sparkling and flashing in the sun and I cannot see how even heaven can have anything more beautiful to offer. Truly a never to be forgotten picture.

* * *

AFTER THE STORM WE made a careful survey of the grounds to see how the various varieties of trees had stood the test. Boxelders, Cottonwoods and Willows showed much the same results. All had lost many branches but not so many of the trunks were broken. We were much surprised to find that in this respect the Ash trees had suffered most. Many of these with trunks more than six inches though many feet up showed their entire tops snapped off. Basswood split badly but the good old American Elms stood the test nobly. Scarcely a branch was broken. Arborvitae were broken considerably but not as much as one would expect considering the load of ice they carried. The Spruce trees were pathetic objects indeed with branches close to their trunks, yet when the ice had left them showed scarcely a break. Our Birch, Oak and Chinese Elms are all small so just laid down as did the shrubs until the weight was removed then were damaged surprisingly little.

* * *

ON THE BLACK WALNUTS

not a twig was broken which has led me to wonder why this splendid tree is not more often planted. Its one failing is that they are almost impossible to transplant but they are easily raised from seed and make a rapid growth. People seem to think it takes too long to grow trees from seeds but the time goes in just the same whether you have trees growing or not and it takes but a few moments to bury a nut just where you want your tree to grow.

"In doing this there is only one point for us of North Dakota to remember and that is to procure your seed nuts from just as far north as possible. The Agricultural college can usually supply them. We lost all of our first and second plantings because we had procured the seeds from too far south and they were not hardy here. Our trees grown from seeds from the A. C. are making splendid growths and are a beautiful shade tree to say nothing of the pleasure of growing your own nuts and the value of the trees as furniture lumber in years to come.

"The Walnuts sold in the stores are not the Black Walnut and are useless as seed. I make this statement as quite a number of persons have asked me about planting these Walnuts."

* * *

MRS. HEATH, AS MANY readers already know, has devoted years of study to the plant life of the northwest. At the family farm home just a few miles from Grand Forks she has a unique and valuable collection of flowering plants native to North Dakota, and she has become a recognized authority on this subject. Thousands of persons admired the beauty left by the sleet storm, while they regretted the destruction wrought by it. But I suppose that few have realized what a tremendous load in tons of ice was carried on tiny twigs which bore themselves bravely, yielding gracefully to the weight, but not breaking beneath it. Mrs. Heath’s investigation sheds an interesting light on this natural phenomenon.

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THE DRILL PROBLEM submitted some time ago by O. Karineimi, of Lawton, has apparently been too much for most of the puzzle fans. I was afraid it would be, as there are many readers who do not understand what the “tally” of a drill is, or how it operates. If there are some who are still interested in the problem it may be explained that on each seed drill is a little device which tallies the number of acres covered by that particular drill. The smaller drill in the problem recorded up to 16 acres, then started over again. Each of the other drills recorded up to 20 acres. When the tally on the small drill had made several complete revolutions and then showed 6 acres, it had seeded a number of acres equal to 16 times the number of revolutions, plus 6, and so on with the others.

* * *

THE PROBLEM IS REALLY A very pretty one. One correspondent wrote of it “It is fully as good as the coconut problem; there is, in fact, a surprising similarity between the two which becomes apparent in the solutions.” This correspondent, who prefers to be anonymous, Geo. W. Feinstein of Grand Forks, and Mr. Karineimi, who submitted the problem, send identical answers, namely, that the total area seeded was 1,232 acres, 342, 418 and 532 acres for the respective drills. Mr. Karineimi has solved the problem by arithmetic, while the other two used Algebra. These are the lowest figures that will fit. One correspondent also gives several other possible answers, 4,012, 6,732, and 9,452; a series which may be continued indefinitely, as in the coconut problem.

I should like to give the several solutions. They are quite intelligible when written out, but typographical limitations make it diffi-
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I pity the man or woman who cannot look back upon a childhood in which Christmas played a prominent part. The Christmas atmosphere of half a century or more ago has surrounded each succeeding Christmas with a wealth of memory without which, it seems, life would be very imperfectly filled. I consider myself especially fortunate in the manner in which Christmas was kept in my own childhood, and I hope that each of my friends feels himself in like manner peculiarly blessed.

* * *

It was at about the age of seven in my case that doubts concerning the physically reality of Santa Claus arose, and that was a time of great spiritual upheaval. At length, probably within a few weeks, the new philosophy was accepted. Modernistic ideas prevailed, without, I think, any letting go of fundamentals. Santa Claus has remained to me an assured and glorious fact.

* * *

Both before and after that period of spiritual tension, hanging up the stocking was a ceremony full of delightful anticipation. I borrowed for the occasion the stocking of an aunt or grandmother, my own being much too small. That was a real stocking, not one of your flimsy things of silk, but a sturdy, capacious creation of wool, capable of enduring hard knocks and being stretched to thrice its diameter without injury. Efforts to remain awake after the stocking was hung were fruitless, for farm chores and outdoor play make a boy drowsy in spite of himself.

* * *

The filled stocking was examined by early lamplight, sometimes by candle-light, and what treasures it contained! There were no mechanical toys, and in our family no expensive presents of any kind. In cash value the contents of that stocking might represent anywhere from 25 to 50 cents. There might be a humming top and a little book. There was always an orange, and nuts and candy filled the loose spaces in the stocking. Small, bare and pitiful? Not a bit of it! Everything in that stocking was a treasure; its discovery was an adventure and its possession a joy. No child on whom fabulous sums are spent ever had a happier Christmas morning.

* * *

After the examination and comparison of presents, which, with occasional excursions, occupied the forenoon, there was the Christmas entertainment which was one of the established institutions of our little church, and which occupied the rest of the day. Ours was an odd little church, belonging to a group founded by a religious worker named Ingham, at one time a companion of the Wesleys. He and the Wesleys had differed on certain doctrinal points, and Ingham thereafter worked alone, establishing churches of which only a few remain. Our church was congregational in form, independent of all external control, a pure democracy if ever there was one. It was a rural church, beautifully situated about two miles out of town, and there the farm families, with a goodly number from town, repaired for the Christmas exercises.

* * *

The afternoon was devoted to a children's entertainment, for which there had been weeks of preparation. There were recitations and dialogues which the children had rehearsed over and over again, and songs which the Sunday School had practiced diligently. I often hear old hymns over the radio which I first heard as we prepared for those Christmas exercises.

* * *

Following the afternoon exercises there was a big supper—not dinner—in the old church building near by. There the children were seated first, for it was primarily a children's day, and the little ones had to be got home and to bed. In connection with those suppers I remember chiefly the great slices of roast turkey, with which, of course, went mince pie and a general assortment of good things.

* * *

Following the supper—and an hour or so for visiting and digestion, there was the evening en-

ALL OF THIS ISN'T MUCH TO write about, but I like to think about it, and I can wish for no one a better time than I had on those Christmas days.

W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

FRIENDS OF COLONEL E. S. PERSON of Minot, whose death occurred recently, will appreciate a tribute to his memory written by an intimate friend, E. J. Isleifson, also of Minot.

"ACCORDING TO PREVIOUS reports," writes Mr. Isleifson, "three outstanding activities have been attributed to Colonel Person's life. He was widely known as a banker and financier, also as a breeder of purebred Guernseys, and nationally known as a soldier; and in one item there was a mention that he was interested in music, as a hobby. The fact of the matter is, that music with Colonel Person, was not a hobby but a passion; he was a fine musician. Music was the biggest thing in his life, and it is mainly because of the fact that his very soul was absorbed with this wonderful fine art, that I am prompted to write this tribute.

COLONEL PERSON AND MYSELF came to the City of Minot at about the same time, twenty-two years ago. He preceded me a few months; I came in the spring of 1908. The city was young then and in the fall of that year, the chief interest of the inhabitants was centered in a new choral organization, which was called the Minot Choral club. It was composed of mixed voices, and included every available singer of the city, numbering about one hundred. Colonel Person was conductor of the club. I met him through a friend, and upon our first introduction, and subsequent try-outs, they gave me the tenor solos with the club, which lasted for several years.

DURING THE LIFE OF THIS organization, we gave five concerts every winter season; three sacred oratorios, starting with The Messiah at Christmas, and two secular cantatas placed in between. Without throwing any reflections on other musical efforts which have taken place here since that time, I venture to say that the Minot Choral club was the best and the biggest thing that we have ever had in the musical life of our city, chiefly because we were fortunate in having Colonel Person conducting it, for he was not only a thorough musician, and a great reader, but he had the gift of drawing out of the singers, the original meaning, interpretation, and beauty, which was meant by the master composers, and also because the organization was an established institution that lasted for several years, which was made possible by the untiring work and encouragement of the Colonel.

IT WAS THROUGH OUR RELATIONSHIP in music that a warm friendship sprung up between Colonel Person and myself, and that friendship lasted until the parting of the ways. I feel proud of that friendship, and am happy in the thought that the Colonel appreciated more perhaps than any one else, the things that I am gifted with, and he was always encouraging me along musical lines.

THE LAST TIME I SAW COLONEL Person alive was at a local hospital, where I visited him for an hour or so one Sunday afternoon. This was about a month after the unfortunate accident which finally caused his death. He was in a very cheerful mood, for he was improving rapidly, and at that time, he had a good chance for a complete recovery. We had a fine visit, and the bulk of our conversation, as usual, ran along musical lines. He had both legs in a plaster cast, and he had me slap them, just in order to show me that he was all right, and he remarked in a joking way that now he was half statue and half human.

BEFORE I LEFT, I KEPT thinking what a strange man was lying there, for I was reminded of a number of times when I used to drop into the bank and if he was not very busy, I would usually talk with him, and at the very mention of music—our foremost topic—he would instinctively warble parts of oratorio roles, most of which he knew by heart, forgetting for the moment the pag...
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I HAVE JUST COME ACROSS a new superstition, at least, one that is new to me. Mrs. Fannie M. Heath, whose information about the effect of the sleet storm was just published, asks me to say something about the belief that fire caused by lightning cannot be extinguished with water, but will yield only to milk. Mrs. Heath tells of one instance in which a haystack on the farm was set on fire by lightning, but by prompt and hard work the family put out the fire, using water, of course. Friends learning of the fact expressed surprise, and one acquaintance said he would have made no attempt to extinguish the blaze, as he had always understood that only milk be used successfully for this purpose, and as the quantity of milk available would be insufficient, he would just have let the hay burn.

** * * *

I NEVER HEARD OF THIS fantastic idea before, although the belief may be quite widely entertained. Of course there is nothing in it. A fire caused by lightning is just like any other fire. Its original cause has disappeared, utterly and instantaneously. What remains is just a quantity of burning material, and it burns in just the same way, no matter what started it.

** * * *

IT IS TRUE THAT WATER should not always be used to quench fire. If the burning substance is oil or gasoline the application of water is almost certain to spread the fire rather than to put it out. Such fires may be extinguished, if not actually beyond control, by smothering with sand, an old blanket, or anything that will exclude the air.

** * * *

THERE ARE STILL CHRISTMAS tree fires, although they are not so numerous since more trees are electric lighted. I often wonder that any of the old trees escaped. They were decorated with all sorts of inflammable stuff, and after a few days in the warm rooms in which they were placed, became like tinder, or they would under modern conditions. One saving feature was that the trees were fresh. The day before Christmas Dad would take his ax back to the wood lot and cut him a Christmas tree, which would be set up that evening, full of moisture to the tips of its foliage. A favorite place for the tree was the front parlor, ordinarily a gloomy and sepulchral place, cold as Greenland except when temporarily heated for the entertainment of company. In that atmosphere the tree had little chance to dry out during the few days while it was in use. That is probably why Christmas candles did not set more fires on fire than they did. People in the cities and villages, of course, had to get their trees from the country, but as a rule the trees were not hauled far or cut long in advance.

** * * *

THE EDITOR OF THE MINNEAPOLIS Journal has a parrot which he has recently acquired, and which he expects to be a great source of comfort. Here's hoping. The bird's owner seems to lean toward the scientific rather than the popular opinion concerning the speech of parrots, namely, that it is mechanical and imitative and has little basis of intelligence.

** * * *

I NEVER OWNED A PARROT, but I once had a nodding acquaintance with one which was owned by a family next door to where I was doing a bit of gardening. The lady of the house often set the bird in its cage out in the yard where Poll could enjoy the sunshine, and there Poll and I exchanged bits of conversation from time to time. The bird's vocabulary was limited to "Hello," "Ha-ha-ha!" (an excellent imitation of laughter) and a whistling note like the call of a Bob-white, the first note low and the second several tones higher. I often exchanged those calls with her, and she would respond readily. Then, after the Bob-white call had been repeated several times I would reverse the call, whistling the high note first and following with the low one. Poll detected the change at once, and for a time there would be no response. After the changed call had been repeated two or three times she would try it, and make a fizzle of it. Then would come a burst of laughter, "Ha-ha-ha!" as if Poll knew that the joke was on her, and enjoyed it.

I AM NOT SETTING MY opinion against that of the scientists who hold that parrots have no sense of humor, but that parrot certainly acted as if she enjoyed a joke.

—W. P. DAVIES.
IS THERE A REAL SANTA Claus?
That question has perplexed millions of children, and millions of grown people have been puzzled to know just what answer should be made to that question. There is a bit of Christmas literature which seems to answer the question perfectly.

IN 1897 VIRGINIA HANLON, then 8 years old, wrote to the editor of the New York Sun, saying that some of her friends had told her that there was no Santa Claus. She appealed for an answer to the direct question: "Is there a Santa Claus?"
A member of the Sun's editorial staff answered the question in an editorial which has become famous. He wrote:

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

"Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be, as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childish faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

"NOT BELIEVE IN SANTA Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.

Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

"YOU TEAR APART THE baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

"NO SANTA CLAUS! THANK God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

THE CAPTIONS MAY OBJECT that Virginia's question was not answered fairly; that what she wanted was information, in language that she could understand, concerning a physical fact; and that what was given her was a beautiful philosophy, much of it beyond her comprehension. But the writer of that eloquent little essay did better than reply with a simple "yes" or "no." He interpreted a spiritual principle in a way which has enabled innumerable parents to satisfy innumerable little Virginias that truth is something more than that which can be seen, and weighed and measured, and which has enabled those children to grow up with faith and intellect in harmonious association.

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

TWO RESPONSES HAVE been received to the request of Mrs. Porter Gilby for information concerning the poem about the "woman with the serpent's tongue," one from Mrs. Helen Foubert, 409 Oak St., Grand Forks, and the other from Senator Henry Hale of Devils Lake. Both correspondents give the authorship of the poem, and Mrs. Foubert submits a complete copy, with the following interesting account of how the verses came to be written:

"KIPLING WAS NOT THE only poet who let his feelings run away with him at an inopportune time. William Watson also lost a possible appointment when the death of Alfred Austin left the laureateship vacant in 1913. Not royalty, but Mrs. Asquith—the sharp speaking Margot—was the burden of his lay. She had flicked her delicate, rapier edged, uncaring tongue at his friend, Campbell-Bannerman, the prime minister. Apparently Campbell-Bannerman's somewhat stolid virtues had not commended themselves to the scintillating Mrs. Asquith, but the fact that her husband and the prime minister had ridden in the same political boat and that Mr. Asquith was leader in the house of commons in the Campbell-Bannerman regime would of course make those flickings all the more reprehensible. Mr. Watson, taking up the cudgels for his friend, laid about him in this wise, in his poem called The Woman With the Serpent's Tongue.

"SHE IS NOT OLD. SHE IS not young. The Woman with the Serpent's tongue. The haggard cheek, the hungering eye.

The poisoned words that wildly fly. The famished face, the fevered hand—
Who slighted the worthiest in the land.
Sneers at the just, condemns the brave,
And blackens goodness in its grave.
In truthful numbers be she sung.
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue;
Connecting whom, fame hints at things
Told but in shrugs and whisperings:
Ambitious from her natal hour.
And scheming all her life for power.
With little left of seemly pride;
With venomed fangs she cannot hide:
Who half makes love to you today.
Tomorrow gives her guest away.
Burnt up within by that strange soul.
She cannot slake, or yet control.
Malignant lipped, unkind, unsweet;
Past all example indirect;
Hectic, and always overstrung—
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue.

To think that such as can mar
Names that among the noblest are!
That hands like hers can touch
The springs
That move who knows what men
And things?
That on HER will THEIR fates have hung!—
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue."

MR. ASQUITH, who was premier when Austin died, could hardly be expected to shower blessings or favors on the post who had lambasted "Margot," his wife. It is quite easy to see why the laureate wine—a butt of sack or canary which was part of his pay—was not delivered at Mr. Watson's area door. It went, instead, to Dr. Bridges.

Watson must have been doubly disappointed, because this was the second time he had failed to attain the post.

MARGOT WROTE A GREAT many provoking things, nevertheless, that was no proper way to write about a lady.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW approved of Sinclair Lewis, his writings and his speech. That's perfectly all right with me, but I

am no abject worshipper of Mr. Shaw, either, and he can take that or leave it.

THERE IS AN OLD CHESS board stunt which has interested many chess players, but the working of which requires no knowledge of the game of chess. The task is to move a chess knight from any starting point in such a manner that the piece will occupy each square on the board once, and once only. Anyone who has ever played chess will understand that in a moment. A few words of explanation may enable others to entertain themselves with this little game.

EVERYONE IS FAMILIAR with the ordinary chess or checker board of 64 squares in alternating colors. The several chess men have different moves, a fact which contributes to the interest and complexity of the game. The knights moves two squares in any direction except diagonal, and one square at right angles to its original course. Treating the board as a map, with the side farthest from the player as north, the knight can move two squares north or south and one square east or west, or two squares east or west an done north or south. For the purposes of the puzzle a real board is not required. A sheet of paper, ruled into squares will do quite as well as colors in this case are not necessary.

THE PROBLEM IS, THEN, TO place the knight on any desired square, and move the piece as described above until every square has been occupied once, and only once. As there are 64 squares, 63 moves will be required. I should welcome answers to this, and, for the sake of uniformity, I suggest that the moves be numbered consecutively, beginning at the upper left corner, and reading across each time from left to right. That, in sending in answers, instead of using diagrams, correspondents may merely record the number of squares occupied in the order in which the moves are made. Thus, if the piece be placed on the first square, that would be indicated by the figure 1, the first move by 11 or 13, and so on until the entire board has been covered. There is no trick in this. The thing can be done, but some patience may be needed to discover the right way.

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

IT WAS FATHER O'BRIAN who started it, although Father Schmidt was a close second. One is a Methodist and the other a Lutheran, despite their names, and both Methodists and Lutherans have done some lusty scrapping in their time. The riot occurred at the Kiwanis Christmas luncheon, where scores of children were present and all should have been peace and harmony. All was going smoothly when Father O'Brian, without any provocation, so far as I could see, propounded this one:

** * 
"IF A MAN BUYS A FARM FOR $110 an acre, sells it for $105, and then buys it back at $115. How much does he lose?"

* * *
"FIFTEEN DOLLARS AN acre," promptly responded Father Schmidt. "That's easy."
"Are you sure?" asked O'Brian, with a wicked gleam in his eye.
"Why, of course" said Schmidt. "He lost five dollars the first time, and then five dollars more when he bought back."
"You're wrong," said Joe Roller. "He lost only ten dollars, five the first time, and then five more than the original price."
"Yes," said O'Brian, "but if he had kept it wouldn't he have been five dollars better off?"
"What's that got to do with it?" demanded Doc Ruud. "You've got to figure what he actually lost, not what he might have made."
"Well, you have to figure it both ways," offered Elton. "That's what we always do in the legal profession."
"But the man who goes to law," said Smith, "has nothing left. This fellow had a farm."
"So much the worse," said Ruud. "I knew a man that had a farm—"
"I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GET-
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

DR. WILLIAM LYON PHELPS, in his “As I Like It” department in Scribner’s, suggests that the effect of “temperance” on literature would be a good subject for a Ph. D. thesis. The remark is prompted by a letter from a correspondent who quotes a passage from Cooper’s “Last of the Mohicans” which makes it appear that Hawkeye made and drank his own homebrew. The redoubtable character is described as “Taking breath after a draught, whose length announced how much he admired his own skill in brewing.”

The passage, it appears, is omitted from some recent editions of Cooper.

I DO NOT KNOW IF ANY scholarly treatise has been written on the effect of elimination of alcohol from literature, but it is certain that if all kindly references to the use of alcoholic beverages were to be blue-penciled our censors would be kept busy for some time, and much of our literature would be greatly changed.

* * *

THERE IS A PASSAGE IN Scott’s novel, “The Betrothed,” which tells of the preparations made by the Flemish weaver, Wilkin Flammock, for the defense of the castle. Flammock has ordered that the Norman defenders be served liberal quantities of the wine to which they are accustomed, and there arises the question what shall be done for the English, to whom wine does not appeal, and who would be crazed by spirits. Then follows this bit, the castle butler being the first speaker:

What think you of ale, an invigorating, strengthening, liquor that warms the heart without inflaming the brain?”

“Ale!” said the Fleming.

Hum—ha—is your ale mighty, Sir Butler? Is it double ale?”

“Do you doubt my skill?” said the butler. March and October have witnessed me ever as they came around, for thirty years, deal the best barley in Shropshire. You shall judge.”

He filled, from a large hoghead in the corner of the battery, the flagon which the Fleming had just emptied, and which was no sooner replenished than Wilkin again drained it to the bottom.

“Good ware,” he said, “Master Butler, strong, stinging ware. The English churls will fight like devils upon it—let them be furnished with mighty ale along with their beef and brown bread.”

Of course the story could be told without that, but we should miss a little etching which illustrates manners and customs in the days of the crusaders, when the brewing of beer was one of the ordinary domestic tasks.

* * *

HOW MUCH SHOULD WE have left of “Pickwick” if all reference to milk punch and other similar beverages were eliminated? That treatment would eliminate from Dickens literally hundreds of passages which are good literature because they are life-like.

Irving’s description of the Christmas celebration at Bracebridge Hall would be reduced to mere skin and bones if we applied the one-half of one per cent rule to it. That we should be obliged to quit quoting:

“A book of verses underneath the bough.
A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness.”

For that matter, we should be obliged to throw old Omar away bodily, and with his bibulous references would go his entire philosophy, which, whether sound or unsound, expresses certain tendencies in human thought in a way which contributes much to the understanding of human nature.

W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

IN HIS "PERSONAL GLIMPSES of Famous Southlanders" in the Los Angeles Times, Lee Shippee presents a sketch of Major General Charles Stewart Farnsworth, retired, which will be of interest both to former soldiers who served under General Farnsworth, but to North Dakota alumni and others who knew him more than thirty years ago when, as Lieutenant Farnsworth, he was military instructor at the University of North Dakota.

* * *

GENERAL FARNSWORTH, we are told, was the son of a small-town dentist in Pennsylvania who did his best to educate the lad till he was 16, then told him he would have to make his own way. Young Charlie got a job as a clerk, but his father didn't like that. He told his son, after a short while, to resign as he had another job for him. Charlie must have been a born soldier, for he didn't ask what or where it was. He gave notice that he would quit the first of the month. When he had done so his father took him to a man who was building telephone lines—and Charlie was given a job digging postholes.

* * *

IT WAS NO SOFT SNAP, BUT his father assured him it was better than becoming a white-collar man—better for him physically, and would teach him something of what was to be a great new business some day. So Charlie did his job the best he could. It was hard work and he wanted to show those other fellows he could do it as well as they could. He made good and got a little higher—climbing poles to string wires.

* * *

THE BOY WAS CLEVER enough and unusual enough to see that telephones really were going to amount to something and to decide to study evenings instead of spending his time and money on good times of dubious value. His work was taking him about a good deal, but back in the old home town they knew he was making good.

There was a competitive examination to select a boy for appointment to West Point. A tall, handsome, well-educated fellow won it. But just then there was quite a scandal about hazing at West Point. The young man who had won the appointment got into a blue funk and decided not to accept.

"Give it to young Farnsworth," someone suggested. "He can take care of himself in any company."

FARNSWORTH WAS GRADUATED from West Point in 1887 and served in Dakota Territory, Montana and North Dakota till 1893. Those were outpost days in Indian country in those days, but Farnsworth did not quit studying. For four years he was professor of military science and tactics in the young University of North Dakota. By the time the war with Spain came along he was an officer of established standing and got into the fighting at Santiago, Cuba.

* * *

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE war he was sent to Alaska. The gold rush was then on and there was no law in Alaska. No courts had been established and the Army had to perform duties somewhat similar to those of the Northwest Mounted Police, with additions. Prospectors who went out in pairs like brothers grew so taut under the strain and hardship and solitude that they hated each other, and the Army had to sit on the dissolution of partnership. In one case two men could not agree as to which should have the boat they had used, and cut it in two, each going his way with a perfectly useless half. In another, two men were ready to fight each other to death because there was an odd number of cans of tomatoes—worth, up there, about $1 a can—and neither would agree that his retiring partner should have the extra can. An army officer settled that by throwing the can into the Yukon river. Men grow picayunish when their nerves go to pieces and in a region where they would fight over a can of tomatoes anything might happen. It was no easy job Farnsworth had to handle, but he succeeded so admirably that in 1910 he was sent to Alaska again as commander of Fort Gibbon.

* * *

IN THE MEANTIME, FARNSWORTH returned to the States in 1902 and constructed cantonments at the Presidio of San Francisco in 1903. Then he was transferred to the Philippines, where he saw an entirely different kind of service. In 1916 he was with Pershing's punitive expedition into Mexico. When the service of supplies for that expedition broke down he was sent back to Columbus, N. M., to command the base of communications and then went to the El Paso district as chief of staff. When we got into the World war he was made commandant of the Infantry School of Arts at Fort Sill, and after similar service at Camp Lee went to France as major-general commanding the Thirty-seventh division. He was in the St. Mihiel drive, the terrific Argonne-Meuse offensive and the grand wind-up of the war in the Ypres-Lys sector.

* * *

SINCE HIS RETIREMENT a few years ago General Farnsworth has made his home at Altadena, Cal., with his wife, formerly Helen Bosard of Grand Forks, and his son, Robert. On high holidays he dons his uniform again, and last fall he led the Armistice day parade in Los Angeles. En route to his California home after his retirement he stopped off and visited friends at Grand Forks. He spent several days in the harvest field on the Bosard farm in Polk county; and he confessed that the work was tougher than any soldiering that he had ever done.

—W. P. DAVIES.
That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THERE WAS NOT MUCH Christmas in Russia this year. The government has done its utmost to suppress every form of religious observance, and Christmas is considered particularly objectionable as tending to keep alive the religious spirit. The older people, to whom Christmas was once a time for rejoicing, have lost heart, and the children have been taught to regard Christmas exercises as the relics of old superstitions which have no place in this modern world. There were few Christmas trees in Russia, we are told, and scarcely any Christmas gatherings.

* * *

THERE WAS IN NEW YORK A Christmas gathering of young Communists, who take their cue from Russia, but it was not held in honor of the day or in commemoration of the great event which it recalls to millions of other people. The gathering was held in a theater and the exercises were devoted to denunciation of Christmas and all that it is commonly held to represent as inventions of capitalism designed to continue and complete the enslavement of the masses.

* * *

ON THE OTHER HAND, I RECALL a Christmas morning over in northern Minnesota of which the father of three young children told me some years ago. The father was a laborer and the family lived in the woods, distant from church, school and human companionship. A box of Christmas things was sent to the family by persons for whom the man had worked. The father, being notified of the shipment, obtained the box from his nearest express office and carried it on his shoulder, several miles through the snow, and reached home with it just before midnight on Christmas eve. He took his ax and went out and cut a fine Christmas tree, and he and his wife spent several hours decorating it and arranging the little gifts around it. The silver dollars would yield a profit just under half a million, when the children arose on Christmas morning. There was a wonderful sight: the question of market-awarded them. They had knowing. What would one do with all of the Christmas box, and those silver dollars after he had there, right before their eyes, was made them? If he attempted to keep for merchandise, to back into his own store and say someone would begin to wonder whether the money of that Christmas will they came from. The use of coin could not be treasured by those children; a silver bar would be quite common in their lives, and if it were kept, it would cut severely into not be a continual source of a private storehouse. As the discussion progressed, the helping them to keep one knew it became apparent that it more kindly toward each other and their fellows. And lie carry on such an enterprise on a scale large enough to make ordinary Christmas expenses paid by the children in Russia, without Christmas trees, without Christmas gifts without Christmas greetings. Such a thing was profitable, besides being a lot safer, with the Christmas of the Communists children in New York, with its appeal to a cold and narrow materialism, but say which type is to be preferred, which means more to human beings.

* * *

THE RECENT ARREST OF two men for the counterfeiting of silver quarters recalls a discussion during the days of the free silver agitation concerning the possibility of manufacturing real silver dollars and making money at it. At that time the silver in the dollar was worth about 50 cents—today it is worth something like 20 cents. It was maintained that dollars of the same size, weight, form and material as government dollars could be made in quantities for just a little over 50 cents each, and that when they were once in circulation their counterfeit nature would not be detected because of the excellence of their material. Conceding that differences in minting could be detected by experts it was maintained that the attention of experts would seldom be directed to them because there would be nothing about them to arouse the suspicion of the ordinary person.

* * *

THAT MUCH CONCEIVED, IT appeared that there was a very profitable and reasonably safe business awaiting some enterpris-
WHERE DOES THE NEW YEAR BEGIN?
The question may seem senseless, because we are accustomed to think of days and years in terms of time and not of position. According to the calendar which is in use throughout the civilized world, the new year begins when the clock strikes midnight at the close of December 31. That is all clear enough. But midnight does not come at the same time all over the world. When it is midnight in Grand Forks it is an hour past midnight in New York, and it lacks an hour of midnight in Denver and two hours in San Francisco. Midnight in London comes about five hours earlier than in New York, and so on. The farther one gets east the earlier midnight, on a given day occurs.

* * *

IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, that this process cannot be continued indefinitely, otherwise when we made the complete circuit of the globe we should have Grand Forks time 24 hours ahead of Grand Forks time itself, and if there were no stopping place each locality would be days, months or years ahead of or behind its own time. There must be a stopping place, and that place must be fixed arbitrarily by man, for there is nothing in nature that requires the day to begin in any particular place. Who fixed that place and why was it fixed just where it is?

* * *

WHEN MEN BEGAN TO make long sea voyages it became necessary to indicate positions by markings that could readily be understood. Land positions could be designated with reference to conspicuous natural objects, mountains, rivers, etc., but positions at sea were designated as so many degrees north or south of something and so many degrees east or west.

of something. The equator served as a natural base from which to compute distances north or south, but there was no such base running in the other direction. One had to be agreed upon to avoid confusion.

BEFORE THE SYSTEM BECAME organized on a world basis each of the great maritime nations used the meridian passing through its own chief city as a base, and positions were considered as so many degrees east or west of that. While these measurements did not coincide, their bases were all European. As exploration continued more east and west degrees were added to the known world, but there remained unknown and unexplored territory beyond. When the circumnavigation of the globe was completed it was found that the meeting place of all such measurements was somewhere near the middle of the Pacific ocean, just halfway from whatever starting point had been chosen. There, it was agreed, the day should be considered as having its start, because there would be little inconvenience in adding or dropping a day in a great waste of water.

* * *

SCIENTIFIC BODIES HAVE adopted a common standard with the base meridian running through the Royal Naval observatory at Greenwich, just a few miles out of London. For some time an effort was made to establish the Washington meridian as the base for American maps and charts, but that plan was abandoned, and the Greenwich meridian is in universal use.

* * *

THE 180TH MERIDIAN, where the day begins, cuts through the tip of Siberia and just severes the chain of Aleutian islands. It passed through several groups of islands in the Pacific and almost touches the eastern shore of New Zealand. In actual use the computation of time does not follow the meridian's straight line, but swings east or west to avoid the inconvenience of placing nearby islands in different time zones.

* * *

NEW ZEALAND IS THE largest and most important country in the area where the day may be said to begin. The people of that country began celebrating the advent of the new year about when some of the Grand Forks alarm clocks were sounding 5 A.M. on Wednesday, December 31. Then