

O. O. MINTYRE WRITES: "One of the slickest fellows I ever saw in full evening dress was a young ranchman from Fargo, N. D. That should interest the other Fargo ranchmen, and frequent reference to it will be made when the boys gather in the bunk-house or around the chuck-wagon at the annual round-up. There will be some curiosity as to which of their number exchanged chaps and bandana for tails and white tie. Usually Chicago is the end of the journey, when the boys take down a trainload of cows, but one of them has evidently wandered as far east as New York, and there has taken the measure of the Big Town. And there's something about a cowboy that enables him to fit into any situation.

THIS YEAR AMERICAN Manufacturers will offer more than 10,000 different types of playthings for the Christmas shopper. And there are only three weeks left within which the buyer may make the necessary selections for little Johnnie's or Susie's stocking. Clearly many of those two thousand items will fail to get even the once-over by the individual purchaser.

THE TOY BUSINESS IS ONE of the most uncertain in the world. In this country millions are invested in the manufacture of toys, and whether or not the toys, when made, will sell, depends on a public taste which is always erratic and largely unpredictable. In part, types of toys are based on what the public taste is expected to be, and as preparation must be made at least a year in advance, a good deal of guessing must be done on that point. What kind of toys, for instance, are likely to be good sellers in December, 1937? Will the public taste demand mechanical devices, games of chance, games of skill, dolls and manikins, or what? Not many of us would hazard a guess, but the manufacturer must reach some conclusion, and his profit or loss will depend on the correctness of his estimate.

THE MANUFACTURER MAY rest assured that dolls will always be popular. They have always been popular, and presumably they will remain so. With that fact understood the manufacturer of dolls can proceed with some degree of assurance to introduce certain novelties of construction and design. Once the wax doll was the aristocrat of her race. Attired in the choicest of raiment she was the admired of all beholders, but she required careful handling. A tiny scratch would mar the delicate texture of her skin, and if left a little too close to a fire her features would run into a vision of horror, productive of indigestion and nightmare.

MODERN DOLLS ARE BUILT to stand hard knocks. They are to be dressed and undressed, cuddled and spanked, in defiance of all rules for child training, and they become in reality part of the life of the family. They may talk, or cry, or remain silent. And notwithstanding the great variety of commercial dolls, there will always remain a place for the rag doll in the affections of the little mother. Quite often, when the expensive doll has been duly admired, it is the shabby old rag doll that the child demands for her bedfellow.

WHILE THE Manufacturer of toys must estimate as best he can the direction that public demands will take, his own product, when placed on display, is an important factor in shaping that demand. If the merchant's shelves are filled with toys of a particular type, his customers are quite apt to fall in line, provided the designs have been chosen with reasonably good judgment.

HOW LONG WILL THE CRAZE for a new kind of toy last? Nobody knows, exactly, but those who have spent years in that field have reached the conclusion that the more sudden and sweeping the demand, the shorter will be its duration. Failure to observe that tendency has landed many an inexperienced manufacturer in bankruptcy. Accepting the sensational popularity of a type this year as evidence of next year's demand, he has plunged on its manufacture, to find that the public will have none of it. While there are many concerns engaged in the manufacture of toys, only a few are successful, and almost invariably those have been in the business many years.

WHILE WE ARE PROPERLY interested in and agitated over the domestic affairs of British royalty, we must not overlook what is going on in our own First Family. When son-in-law and daughter enter the employ of that sinister figure, William Randolph Hearst, and take charge of one of his newspapers; when another son is already in the employ of the same Hearst in one of his oil enterprises; and when another son is about to marry into that family of economic royalists, the du Ponts, we have a situation that calls for our serious attention, and perhaps for a senatorial investigation. Are we to understand that President Roosevelt is going over to the enemy? Or is it that the forces of greed and monopoly, having failed to capture the citadel by direct attack, are seeking to gain entrance in disguise and by stealth? Our investigators must stand ready to do their duty.

A BIT OF INFORMATION that may interest those who like to have cut flowers in the house, and who have trouble keeping them comes from the Scientific American. It is that a small quantity of sulfurous (not sulfuric) acid added to the water in which cut flowers are kept will cause them to retain their freshness much longer than if they are kept in clear water. The magazine recommends that the quantity of acid which will be contained in an ordinary eye-dropper be added to each pint of water in which the flowers are kept. This, it is said, will cause the flowers to retain their freshness and continue blooming much longer than in clear water.

IT IS ADDED FURTHER, that the flowers which respond best to this treatment are those with large stems, such as lilies, hydrangeas, chrysanthemums, gladioli and rhododendrons, will respond to this treatment much better than those with small items, such as daisies, snapdragons and carnations. It is important to use the right acid—sulfurous. Sulfuric acid will destroy the flowers.

THE POETS" BYRON AND Moore, after a few hectic passages, became great friends. Moore, who wrote for a time under the pseudonym "Thomas Little," appropriate because of his diminutive size, not only entertained sincere regard for his friend, but was dazzled by his title and aristocratic position. Notwithstanding their friendship Byron could not resist the temptation to write of Moore the satirical line "Little Tommy dearly loves a lord."

MOST AMERICANS WOULD indignantly disavow any such sentiment on their own part, nevertheless, most Americans display an avid interest in the doings of British royalty, and one of the great American textile associations announces that because of the approaching coronation — provided nothing happens—"coronation colors" will be the vogue for next spring, and manufacturers are all set to go on that basis.

CORONATION COLORS, WE are told, are those associated with the great coronation pageant, some being the colors of historic jewels and others of distinctive robes and uniforms used in the ceremony. Of the 12 listed the following descriptions are given:

Crown Ruby . . . The ruby of great historic value in the royal regalia, notably the huge gem called the Black Prince's Ruby, set at the front of the king's state crown.

Crown Sapphire . . . Valuable sapphires prominent in the regal emblems, especially the famous St. Edward's Sapphire and the Stuart Sapphire adorning the king's state crown. A precious sapphire also in the king's coronation ring.

Crown Pearl . . . The king's state crown embellished with four great pear-shaped pearls, said to have been the earrings of Queen Elizabeth. Other costly pearls in St. Edward's crown, or the crown of England.

Crown Emerald . . . Many precious emeralds in the regal insignia, including the king's three crowns, the royal scepter and the orb.

Royal Amethyst . . . A beautiful ball-shaped amethyst in the royal scepter just above the famous "Star of Africa" diamond. Another huge amethyst over the king's golden orb.

Royal Yellow Sapphire . . . An extremely rare yellow sapphire set in the scabbard of the king's magnificent jeweled sword of state.

Royal Turquoise . . . A turquoise of large size and great beauty inserted in the scabbard of the jeweled sword of state.

Imperial Gold . . . Gold strikingly revealed in the majestic coronation vestments of the king, including the supertunica, the armilla or stole and the royal robe of cloth of gold. Gold also resplendent in the royal regalia, particularly St. Edward's crown, which is of massive gold.

Regal Purple . . . Sumptuous purple the color of the royal mantle with which the king is invested after his coronation. A cap of purple velvet, known as a "cap of maintenance" inside each of the king's three crowns.

Knight's Blue . . . Inspired by the stately mantle worn by the distinguished Knights of the Order of the Garter, who hold a

golden canopy over the head of the king while he is being anointed during the coronation ceremony.

Royal Crimson . . . Suggested by the rich glowing color of the royal robe worn by the king before he is anointed. Crimson mantles also worn by peers and peeresses.

English Scarlet . . . This brilliant hue everywhere reflected in the glamorous coronation pageantry. Especially outstanding in the dashing uniforms of high military officers, in the great standards of the empire and in the scarlet coats of the royal pages of honor.

THOSE OF US WHO LIKE beef prefer it tender, and it has usually been assumed that the less exercise a beef animal were permitted the more tender would be the steaks and roasts cut from his carcass. The agricultural department of the University of Illinois has reached a different conclusion. At the college a herd of cattle was divided into two groups, the animals in one being confined in their stalls during the three months of the test, while the others were forced to exercise half a day each on a treadmill which kept them jogging along. All were fed alike. At the end of the period the animals were slaughtered, and it was found that the meat from the exercised animals, while leaner, was more tender than that from the stalled animals.

THE HEAD OF THE Department gave this as his explanation: "In the exercised cattle there were more muscle cells which had formed without increasing the connective tissue. We could only conclude that the exercise caused the increase in muscle cells, making the meat more tender."

THE INFORMATION, However, needs to be applied with care. I recall a case in which a farmer friend thought he had a prize meat animal in a fine young steer which had had the run of fields covered with waste grain, but the meat from which was tough as tripe, while in another case a thin old cow was fed heavily in close quarters and yielded meat that would almost melt in one's mouth. In one of his books on Arctic travel Stefansson says that tough meat is just as nutritious as tender meat. It may be so, but it's more wearing on the jaws.

DR. ALBERT EINSTEIN, whose higher mathematics reach altitudes far beyond the reach of the ordinary mortal, and who is supposed to have no aptitude for practical things, comes to the front as an inventor. He and a friend have patented a little device which, applied to a camera, makes the instrument independent of variations in light. With it the amateur need only focus the instrument and the little gadget automatically adjusts it to the degree of light. The thing is so simple that Einstein is a little ashamed to talk about it. The learned doctor is a great scientist and a musician of parts. Perhaps if he set his mind to it he could invent a ten-cent can-opener that will work:

PROFESSOR WALTER Barnes, a New York educator, demands more slang in speech, but he wants the slang to be vigorous, picturesque full-blooded, folksey, racy, sinewy. That's a large order, and slang of that kind can scarcely be taught. It comes out of the inner consciousness, and when there is no inner consciousness the slang that is superimposed is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Few things are more pathetic than the repetition of slang phrases which in their origin had real meaning, but which, when repeated, are as devoid of meaning as the wise-cracks of a parrot.

IN THE CURRENT ISSUE OF the "Billboard," the national magazine devoted to the stage, the circus and entertainment generally, John P. Grace, circus editor of the publication, gives a summary of the circus history of the country since the early nineties. In 1894, says Mr. Grace, there were 66 shows touring the country, 24 by rail and the rest wagon shows. Of the rail shows only three were on the road in 1936. These are the Ringling-Barnum and Bailey, the Al G. Barnes and the Cole circuses.

IN THE INTERVENING years many new circuses were started, to be disbanded or to be absorbed by larger organizations. The Ringling organization, of course, is the largest of them all, and for years it has dominated the circus business of the country. Of the five Ringlings, Charles, Al, Alf, Otto and John, only John is left, and he is in poor health.

SINCE THE ABOVE WAS written, information has been received of the death of John Ringling.

A PARAGRAPH IN THIS Column yesterday on the history of the circus in the United States mentioned the five Ringling brothers of whom John was then the sole survivor. While the column was being made ready for the press the wire brought news of John Ringling's death. For several years he had conducted alone the vast show enterprise which he and his brothers had founded and which controlled nearly all of the large-scale circus business in the country. The Associated Press mentions the "seven" Ringling brothers, but John P. Grace, circus editor of the Billboard, lists but five, Charles, Al, Alf, Otto and John.

THE RINGLINGS SPENT their early boyhood at Baraboo, Wisconsin and after some early experiences with concert companies they took to the road with a wagon show of their own. Their rise was rapid, and by the middle nineties they owned one of the two or three big circuses of the country. Their show appeared in Grand Forks for the first time about 1897. An excellent performance was given in the afternoon on grounds in the northern part of the city, but a sudden deluge of rain flooded the grounds and made an evening performance impossible. Reloading was begun in the early evening as soon as the rain was over and this was continued until about 4 A. M. when the long train pulled out. The heavy wagons sank to their axles in the mud, and teams of 7 and 12 horses were required to handle them.

EARLY IN THEIR CAREER the Ringlings acquired the reputation of being good, clean showmen, a reputation which remained with them through life. Their tents, wagons and other equipment were always in first-class condition, and it was a pleasure to see their matched, sleek and well-trained horses at work. Much of the proverbial roughness of circus life was eliminated from their working force, and the loud-mouthed bully was not tolerated in their employment.

PURCHASE BY THE RING-lings of the Barnum and Bailey show brought under one management the largest two circuses in the world. For a time the two were operated separately, but later they were combined. That purchase took place in 1907, and I have heard it said that one of the conditions of the purchase was that the name "Barnum and Bailey" should be retained during the next 50 years. Dexter W. Fellows, dean of American publicity men, served for many years as Barnum and Bailey's representative, and he still heads the press department of the combined organization.

FOR SOME YEARS THE Ringling shows have made their winter quarters at Sarasota, Florida, and there, on an island a mile or two across the channel, John Ringling built a palatial home. He was a lover of art, and his offices in Sarasota became a veritable art gallery. In the spacious rooms were displayed paintings by many of the great masters, and Ringling was continually adding to his collection.

THE CIRCUS IS A Peculiarly American institution. There were traveling shows of various kinds in quite early days in Great Britain and on the European continent. I have heard my grandparents speak of Wombwell's menagerie, which toured Great Britain by wagon more than a century ago and which was considered a mammoth affair. That, however, was strictly an animal show. Early American showmen, of whom Barnum was greatest, developed the acrobatic and spectacular features in the sawdust ring, and this gradually became the main attraction. The single-ring show of the time when Barnum traveled with his own outfit became the combination of today with its multiplicity of rings and platforms and many performances under way at the same time.

IN RECENT YEARS THE Elimination of the street parade has robbed the circus of one of its most picturesque features, and the substitution of gasoline power for horsepower has also tended to reduce it to the commonplace. Originally all circuses traveled by wagon, often showing at places only 20 or 30 miles apart. As the shows grew in size they traveled by train, a big show using 100 cars or more for its transportation. The use of the automobile and the building of roads on which automobiles could run made for the wider separation of show points, as the modern circus can draw easily from territory 100 miles distant. The development of the automotive industry has also tended to revive the small road show, and such shows are now often met in the summer on the highways, traveling under their own power and showing in the smaller towns.

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED A copy of the annual mail-away edition of the Bradenton, (Florida) Herald, sent, I am sure, at the instance of my friend J. H. Griffin, who spends his winters at Bradenton. Bradenton is on the West coast of Florida, about half way between St. Petersburg and Sarasota, and is in every way a delightful place. The water of the Gulf is always warm and pleasant for bathing, and good roads lead from the city to all the points of interest on the peninsula.

IT WAS NOT FAR FROM Bradenton that I enjoyed my only near-shipwreck some 10 years ago. Our party of about 100 newspaper people were going from St. Petersburg to Sarasota, a number of large launches being used for transportation. The coast, like most of the coast on both sides of the peninsula, has a border of "keys," long, narrow islands, sometimes quite close to the main land and sometimes several miles distant. The inside passage is a desirable one, if you know the way, but there are innumerable shoals which the pilot must be careful to avoid.

THE PILOT OF OUR SHIP, IT developed, was not as familiar with the channel as he should have been, and he ran us aground on a sandbar. All hands were moved to the stern of the launch in the hope that the grounded bow might thus be raised and the craft could be pushed off. That didn't work. Then we all took to the small boats, but we had struck too hard for that device to work. There was nothing to do but to get aboard again and wait for another launch to come and take us off, and we remained there stuck fast for about three hours. Fortunately the weather was fine, with no wind. Because of the shallowness of the water that channel is said to be capable of becoming a wild place with a few minutes strong wind.

ON THAT WINTER'S JAUNT our party was entertained at a dinner at Palm Beach. The boom of the early twenties was flattening out, and the prospects were not attractive. Most of our people were from the north, and the speaker who delivered the address of welcome saw fit to scold the entire northern population, and the northern newspapers especially, for their alleged unfriendly attitude toward Florida. All the northern papers, he said, made it a point to feature everything of an undesirable nature which occurred in Florida.

THE SPEAKER WHO Responded on behalf of the guests turned the tables neatly. He disavowed any intent on the part of the northern people to disparage the beautiful state of Florida. "But," he said, "I notice that every newspaper in Florida today has big black headlines across the front page telling of the terrible blizzards that are sweeping through the northern states." And it was a fact. I was reminded of that incident when I noticed that while The Bradenton Herald gave a secondary head to President Roosevelt's visit to South America, its main head, in bold black letters reads "Snow Blankets North as Winter Grips Region." Nevertheless, Florida is a delightful state, and I'm for it.

COLONEL, PAUL BLISS, whose "Spin Dance" and "Cirrus from the West" were reviewed in this column, has his eighth book of poems under way. His former books were printed outside the state, but he thinks that the time has come for a North Dakota book to be made an all-North Dakota product. In accordance with this idea he is having his latest book printed locally on butchers' paper, and it is to be bound by hand in grain sacking. Bliss is assistant to Thomas H. Moodie, WPA administrator for North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA WINTERS are not conducive to outside building operations, but the right idea seems to have been struck in the construction of the Texaco oil station on Fourth street. The whole premises is enclosed in a rough board structure, made airtight with tar paper. Inside the work can proceed no matter how the stormy winds do blow.

JUST WHY SHOULD Anyone select as a business the making of cloth pads to serve as holders for the hot handles of laundry irons? There would seem to be no special reason for it, nor any very attractive prospect in such an occupation. Yet when Samuel Rosenberg came to the United States from Poland in 1853 he started to make his living in that way, and from that starting point he built a fine business in which he prospered until his death in New York the other day at the reputed age of 105. Pads for holding irons remained his specialty through all these years. In the beginning his principal customers were the Chinese laundry-men in New York's Chinatown, but as his business grew he shipped pads to all parts of the country. He became a man of substance and influence, known for his public spirit and his philanthropies. He never smoked—if that interests anyone—but he enjoyed an occasional glass of whiskey and he drank large quantities of milk.

NORTH CAROLINA Education, a magazine devoted to the development and progress of educational work in North Carolina, has an article in its November issue entitled "Centennial Pageant Making" by Dr. Frederick H. Koch, who for many years has been instructor in dramatics at the University of North Carolina, and whose work there has made him a national figure in that field.

THE NORTH CAROLINA Education is planning a great pageant drama to be presented next April, and Dr. Koch, stressing the value of community co-operation in this work, invites the participation of those interested in promoting it. No one in the United States is better qualified than Dr. Koch to speak of the value of this form of activity. Into it he has put the labor of many years, labor which has had the dynamic power of unquenchable enthusiasm and which has been guided by the discriminating intelligence of sound scholarship. It is with no little interest that North Dakota readers may recall that it was during his service as instructor in dramatics at the University of North Dakota that his views on this subject first took on definite form in the preparation and production of pageants at the Bankside theater, a natural outdoor amphitheater on the University campus. Dr. Koch's estimate of the influence of those agents on the development of the art is indicated in the following paragraphs from the current article:

IN 1914, AT THE UNIVERSITY of North Dakota at Grand Forks the historic "Pageant of the Northwest"—Dialogue, songs and music—was written under my direction by eighteen undergraduate students and produced out of doors in the lovely Bankside theater there. It was a thrilling adventure, enjoyed by many hundreds of people. In its unique communal method of authorship "A Pageant of the Northwest" was, I think, without a precedent in modern pageant-making. It was a distinct contribution to pageantry because it demonstrated that the community, with c'equate direction, can not only enact in dramatic form its own traditions and history, but can actually create pageant literature itself—so that literary, as well as histrionic art, is cultivated in the community. The work, though long and hard—for the writers were more than nine months in collecting the historical data and converting it into pageant form—was an altogether refreshing adventure, recalling the very beginnings of literature in "those happy days," as Herder calls them, "when literature lived in the ears of the people, on the lips, and in the harps of living bards."

"THE SAME UNIQUE PLAN of co-operative authorship by which "A Pageant of the Northwest" was so successfully produced in 1914 was followed in 1916 in the preparation of "Shakespeare the Playmaker," a communal masque designed and written by a group of twenty students at the University of North Dakota to commemorate the tercentenary of the death of William Shakespeare. It marked another contribution to the new pageantry of the people. It was a further development of the art of writing a community drama."

THE MAGAZINE ARTICLE IS illustrated with a portrait of Dr. Koch which is almost a speaking likeness. Dr. Koch is remembered here, not alone for his work in various forms of dramatics with college students, but for his annual reading of Dickens' "Christmas Carol," which was one of the outstanding events of the Christmas season. I hope that in his present field he continues that splendid contribution to the happiness of the season.

"I FOUND NO PEACE" IS THE rather mystifying title of a book by Webb Miller, famous newspaper correspondent, published by Simon and Schuster. When one reads the record presented he will be convinced that the statement that the writer found no peace is quite superfluous, for Miller's professional life thus far has been amid scenes of strife and carnage, beginning with a police job on a Chicago newspaper in 1912, and carrying him into whatever corner of the earth there were battle and sudden death, whether in Europe, Asia, Africa or America. Surely a man earnestly in search of peace would have chosen to look for it elsewhere.

WEBB MILLER WAS A Michigan farm boy with a passion for writing. He describes himself in his youth as shy and supersensitive. He was diffident in the presence of strangers and the sight of blood revolted him. He ate no meat until he became a man, not that he was influenced by conscientious scruples or that he believed meat unwholesome, but because the thought of eating the flesh of dead animals disgusted him. As a boy he read voraciously, and the one book that appealed to him more than any other was a collection of Thoreau's essays. The quiet philosophy of the New England recluse appealed to him as pointing the way toward the ideal life. With that temperament and that attitude toward life he entered newspaper work and spent the next 24 years in the midst of disturbance wherever it was to be found, from trailing Villa in Mexico, through the World war and the Gandhi riots in India and the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. When he finished writing the book he started for Europe to be ready for the next war. He is still a disciple of Thoreau, and still he has found no peace!

MR. MILLER IS AN Entertaining writer, and while his book deals chiefly with his own experiences in finding news and getting it on the wire and adds little to the knowledge already available concerning the influences which brought about the various conflicts which it was his business to report, his story is told in a highly interesting way, brightened here and there by bits of humorous description. There are some excellent paragraphs descriptive of interviews with such notables as Poincare, Mussolini, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Gandhi. Another bit tells of Miller's sending information from Mexico concerning the deplorable condition of American war aircraft, an exposure which created a sensation and resulted in vast improvement of the service.

ONE ENTIRE CHAPTER IS devoted to a statement by Roy Howard, head of the United Press, by which Miller was employed, telling the story of the "premature armistice." Howard wired his American headquarters on November 7 that the armistice had been signed. The publication of that story started a nation-wide celebration four days before the armistice was actually signed. Howard tells of the peculiar train of events which led to that premature announcement. The story, he says, passing through official channels, has been traced to a telephone message which was supposed to come from a proper authority, but the sender of that message has never been identified. Howard's own opinion is that the phone message was sent by some German spy in Paris, acting under orders, in order to create the belief that the war was ended, the German hope being that the demonstration of satisfaction following such an announcement would so impress the Allied officials that they could not hold back from agreeing to an armistice. It is an interesting theory, at any rate.

ASIDE FROM ITS Description of war experiences, which are well done and valuable, the part of the book that interested me most greatly was the first chapter in which the writer describes his life as a Michigan farm boy. The picture presented is clear and accurate, and I have never seen the farm life of that territory and period better described. Miller has worn out several copies of Thoreau and is still seeking peace. May he find and enjoy it.

IN THE COURSE OF A REIGN lasting more than a quarter of a century the late King George V of Great Britain developed a philosophy and established certain rules of conduct for his guidance in the performance of his duties, public and private. Those rules he caused to be set forth in a few brief maxims, copies of which hung over his desk and in the rooms of his private apartments. From a good friend I have just received a beautifully mounted copy of what may be termed King George's code, some parts of which, especially the first paragraph, appear to be particularly apropos in the situation in which British royalty is now involved. The six maxims read:

"TEACH ME TO BE Obedient to the rules of the game.

"Teach me to distinguish between sentiment and sentimentality.

"Teach me neither to proffer nor to receive cheap praise.

"Teach me to win if I may; if I may not, teach me to be a good loser.

"Teach me neither to cry for the moon nor for spilt milk.

"If I am called upon to suffer, let it be like a well-bred beast that goes away to suffer in silence."

KING GEORGE SOUGHT earnestly to live in the spirit of that code. It is an excellent code for a king, and not a bad one for the private individual.

I HAVE READ WITH MIXED emotions the accounts of the duels, completed or prospective, by means of which Dr. Franz Sarga, of Budapest, seeks to defend his honor and that of his wife. When malicious gossip reported that the doughty little doctor had married his wife for her money he became wrath, quite naturally, and he undertook to efface the blot from the family escutcheon by challenging nine of the gossipers to combat with lethal weapons. The spectacle of nine duelists against one—and that one a little fellow—is one that stirs the imagination, and immediately I gave the doctor a round of hearty applause. Three duels have been fought, two with pistols and one with sabers. One of the pistol duels was fought almost in the dark. In it seconds and spectators were in almost as great danger as the combatants, but the challenged party in that case received a bullet wound in his arm. In the saber duel the challenged party was whacked over the head before the police interfered and broke up the party. Six saber duels remain to be fought.

READING OF THE Conditions under which saber duels are fought in that country gave me a fit of shivers. The duelists are stripped to the waist—not to their underwear, but right to the bare skin. Think of that! Of course one may receive as bad a wound through his shirt as without shirt, but there is something that seems cold and unsympathetic about having a man come at one with an exaggerated carving knife when one hasn't a stitch on above the trousers line. I am for the doctor in all of his remaining engagements, but as for me, I'm not issuing any challenges to sword-combat, bare naked. I'd rather take the chance of hitting the other fellow with a brick when he isn't looking. Sabers and bare skin! B-r-r-r!

THE EAST WIND BLEW FOR a day or two, and then we had snow. Practically all of our regular downfall of rain or snow comes with an east wind. This is a fact which those who propose to change our climate have overlooked. What this country needs is more east wind, and if the climate-changers will only attend to that, rainfall will take care of itself.

PROPHETS HAVE Prophesied that this is to be a long, hard winter. About as many have predicted a mild, open winter. Evidence in favor of the respective predictions is about 50-50. In the meantime the proponents of an early winter seem to be one up on their opponents. Navigation on the Great Lakes was blocked by ice much earlier than usual. Scores of ships near the Soo were frozen in, and although they were released it seemed for a time that they were locked up for the winter. The New York barge canal froze up and tied up thousands of tons of shipping. Even the harbors of Pelee island, which juts out from Ontario into Lake Erie, froze up, and the prospect is that the products of that fertile and salubrious island cannot be moved until spring.

I'VE BEEN BRUSHING UP A little on art. One needs to do those things occasionally or he becomes hopelessly out of date. There was a time when a picture was expected to look like the object which it was intended to represent, otherwise it was regarded as a poor picture. I can remember that in my youthful efforts at picture-making if I wished to represent cow tied to a tree, the inscription of the words "cow" and "tree" in appropriate places did much to clarify the situation. Without those identifying words no one could have told the difference.

BECAUSE OF THAT Deficiency in the matter of identification my artistic efforts failed to arouse enthusiasm. Nobody ever asked me to draw a picture, and my excursions into the realm of art were confined to the blackboard when the teacher wasn't looking and to the back fence, which was usually covered with drawings decidedly unconventional and always anonymous.

IT APPEARS THAT OUR Conception of art in those days were altogether wrong. In the light of our later knowledge and greater sophistication it appears that a picture ought not to look like anything in particular. The fact that it does—if it does—is evidence either of sophomoric immaturity or of total absence of artistic soulfulness.

ART, IN ITS HIGHER Altitudes, has become completely subjective rather than objective, if you get what I mean. I am not quite sure, myself. And the immaterialism of modern picture-making is necessarily extended into the related field of sculpture. They are having an exhibition of it in Minneapolis just now, and published illustrations of some of the exhibits are illuminating. One of these is entitled "Woman Walking." The artist is Archipenko, of whom one enthusiastic critic has said "He hurls himself in pursuit of space and undertakes to mold, as he would clay, pure atmosphere." Nobody would suspect, without instruction, that the figure is that of a woman, or of anything else, which, of course, is the essence of art. With the key supplied it is possible to identify certain features, but the lady seems to have been involved in a bad accident. Her head is split into two irregular parts, with a hole where the face might be expected. The artist makes a specialty of holes. Legs, evidently of wood, are prominently displayed. How the lady could walk in that condition is a mystery which only modern art can solve.

ANOTHER NUMBER IS ENTITLED "The Horse." This is by Duchamp-Villon and the figure is said to have been done before the war. Without this information I should have surmised that it was done during or immediately after the war, and that the animal had been subjected to shell-fire for several hours. I suppose it is the perfection of art, for close inspection fails to reveal anything in it even remotely resembling any part of a horse.

A CORRESPONDENT ASKS for the origin of the quotation "Great, not like Caesar, stained with blood, but only great as I am good." The quotation is from a little poem entitled "The Infant Orator," which, sixty years ago, was one of the most popular selections to be spoken by very juvenile speakers at school entertainments. The smaller and younger the speaker—a boy—the better. The opening lines are: "You'd scarce expect one of my age  
To speak in public on the stage, But if I chance to fall below Demosthenes or Cicero, Don't view me with a critic's eye, But pass my imperfections by."

In an old book of mine the lines are ascribed to one J. Everett, whom I have not found listed anywhere. Thousands of small boys have spoken those lines, tremblingly and haltingly on appearing for the first time before an audience.

ELEANOR WILSON M'ADOO, daughter of President Wilson, is giving to the public in a series of magazine articles some interesting reminiscences of the home life of the Wilsons, beginning with the time when the children were small and the father was an unknown college professor, and running through Wilson's advancement to the presidency of Princeton, the governorship of New Jersey and the presidency of the United States. The articles give intimate descriptions of the reactions of the family to the various changes which were brought about and to several incidents which have now become historic.

SOME OF THE Recollections of this second daughter of the president are highly entertaining. Thus one of her relatives was a widowed aunt who always wore mourning and who maintained an air of dignified sadness. Eleanor loved her aunt and admired her greatly, and determined that when she grew up she, too, would be a widow. Secretly, when there was opportunity, she would deck herself out in some of her aunt's black and parade before the mirror to observe the effect.

THERE IS AN INTERESTING account of the first meeting of Wilson and Bryan and of the doubt that was raised concerning their relations after the publication of Wilson's famous letter to a friend written several years earlier expressing the wish that some way could be found to "knock Bryan into a cocked hat." That latter failed to stand in the way of the later friendship of the two men. A decidedly human touch is given to what became known as Bryan's speech of abdication, in which, after years of struggle to attain the presidency he declared his support of Wilson, saying: "The time has come for new leaders, free from the asperities of the past."

READING THAT I WAS Reminded of an incident at once impressive and pathetic, which marked Bryan's last visit to Grand Forks. It was during that first Wilson campaign, and in his address at the auditorium Bryan was in fine oratorical form. Theodore Roosevelt was campaigning vigorously, and with the Republican party divided between him and Taft the election of Wilson was a foregone conclusion. Bryan confidently predicting a sweeping victory for Wilson, drew a picture of a distinguished couple (Governor and Mrs. Wilson) sitting at their home in New Jersey on election night listening to the election returns and being gladdened by the news of state after state declaring for Wilson. "And," he said "on that same night, away out on the plains of Nebraska will be another couple, listening with equal interest to the same returns, and also rejoicing in the triumph of great cause."

EIGHTEEN YEARS EARLIER Bryan had first been a candidate for the presidency. He had been a candidate three times, and until the campaign of 1912 he had never relinquished hope of reaching the desired goal. Wilson's triumph made the realization of that ambition impossible, and it much have been with profound emotion that he accepted the destiny that fate had decreed for him, That part of his address made a deep impression on all who heard it, and I shall never forget it.

THE CRISIS THAT HAS Developed in Great Britain over the king's proposed marriage has reminded me of one of the finest bits in that famous play "The Squaw Man," which made its first appearance many years ago. In the play the hero, whose stage name I have forgotten, is first shown as an officer of a crack British regiment and a member of an aristocratic family. To save the reputation of the family he assumes responsibility for the defalcation of a relative, is dismissed from the regiment in disgrace and starts ranching in Wyoming.

THERE HE MARRIES A young Indian girl who has saved his life, and a son is born to them. When the boy is about five years old the matter of the defalcation is cleared up and the young rancher is visited by the family lawyer who brings him the news and asks him to return and take his proper place as the head of the family. At first the rancher is overjoyed at this prospect and then he thinks of his Indian wife and his obligation to her. He cannot take her into an environment in which she; will be unhappy, and he will not leave her.

\* \* \*

FAILING TO SHAKE TH. resolution the lawyer turns his attention to the boy. If the father will not return home he must at least permit the boy to go, that he may be reared in a fitting manner, but the father loves the boy and cannot let him go. Argument after argument proves unavailing until the lawyer appeals to his young friend's sense of duty. The young man has been trained to reverence duty, and at the sound of the word he straightens up, braces himself, and says "Duty! Duty! You've won."

\* \* \*

IT MAY BE OBJECTED THAT that was only in a play. But it is fortunately true that in real life there are those who place duty above everything else, and who are great enough to renounce whatever stands in its way.

EVERY LITTLE WHILE there is occasion to commend the little republic of Finland for its independence and integrity in making prompt payment of its indebtedness to the United States as payments become due. Finland's course in this matter is especially noteworthy in view of the fact that all the other war-time borrowers, no matter how great and powerful, have permitted themselves to become delinquents. Finland alone, having signed on the dotted line, pays regularly and promptly.

ASIDE FROM ITS RECORD IN payment of debts Americans have had little occasion to know much about Finland, but the country is well worth knowing. Its existence as a separate nation in these modern days is part of the aftermath of the World war. Long an appendage of the Russian empire, Finland achieved its independence toward the close of the World war, and after a few stormy years developed a measure of stability which has permitted a highly creditable degree of social and economic improvement.

"DEVOTEES OF ATHLETIC sports have had their attention directed to Finland by the remarkable achievements of athletes in world-wide competition. The fact is less generally known that in Finland the percentage of literacy is higher than in almost any other country. Most of her people speak and write two languages, and the country maintains three universities, 5,000 elementary schools and numerous schools for special training in agriculture and other vocations.

AWAY FROM THE BEATEN lines of travel, Finland presents exceptional attractions to those tourists who are fortunate enough to visit it. Three-fourths of the country's area is covered by vast forests of pine, spruce and birch, and there are more than 40,000 lakes, most of which are connected by natural streams or canals, forming a vast natural waterway of great variety and beauty.

THE KING HAS QUIT. LONG live the king!

REGARDLESS OF WHAT their feelings may be concerning the events which led up to the abdication of King Edward, the people of Great Britain especially, and lit lesser measure those of the British dominions have good reason to feel grateful that the crisis has been passed without rendering necessary the abandonment of plans for the coronation. Presumably the coronation of King George will occur at about the time originally set for the coronation of King Edward.

THE CORONATION IS MORE than a pageant with an imposing and picturesque historical background. It is an economic event of vast importance to millions of people. Tourists from all over the world have been making plans to attend it, and already reservations have been made with the shipping companies for the transportation of many thousands of them. In the work of preparation for the great event every industry in Britain has been speeded up. The great spectacle in London will be only one feature, but associated with and growing out of it there will be pageants and social gatherings in every community in the kingdom at which the participants will strive to appear at their best in all that relates to social life. Demands are therefore made on the services of merchants, manufacturers, laborers, everyone in order to meet the requirements of the occasion for what is newest and most attractive. If for any reason the coronation had been canceled the whole country would have been plunged into economic gloom as dense as the fog which has recently enveloped London, and great numbers' of British tradesmen would have been forced into bankruptcy.

FOR THE FIRST TIME ON record next spring the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus is to have competition as an indoor attraction in New York city. For many years the Big Show has opened in Madison Square Garden, and has enjoyed a monopoly in that field in the city. But a combination organized by former employees of the major show is now to challenge its supremacy. The Cole-Beatty circus is to open at the Hippodrome on March 18, running until April 11, while the Ringling show will open at the Garden about the same time.

ONE OF THE ORGANIZERS of the new combination is Clyde Beatty, whose animal act was for several years one of the features of the Ringling show. There is no Cole in the combination, that name having inherited from former outfits, but the two men who control the Cole title are former Ringling employees.

INTEREST IN THE Momentous events in Great Britain during the past week or more has caused increasing multitudes of Americans to listen to radio communications from abroad, coming either by short wave direct or by what has become a very satisfactory method of re-broadcasting. While these facilities have been brought into more frequent use of late, they are used regularly by great numbers of people, and the element of time involved presents some interesting situations.

THUS, A KING ABDICATES IN London just before noon while the Grand Forks resident is turning over in bed in the early morning for another nap. A Winnipeg station is conducting a sort of amateur hour which seems to be highly interesting to Winnipeg people. A former Winnipeg man now in London writes the station that on the nights of the broadcast, in order not to miss any of it, he sits up until 2 in the morning, listening to what is going on in Winnipeg at 8 P. M.

TIME WORKS TO THE Advantage of the mid-continent area in the matter of reports from the eastern states. The difference an hour in time brings the New York stock market report to Grand Forks apparently an hour before the New York exchange closes. On the other hand, we are at a disadvantage of two hours with reference to occurrences on the Pacific coast. On election night our people are counting the ballots while the people of California still have two hours in which to vote.

AS ONE GOES STILL Farther around the circle there is added to the difference in hours of the day the further complication of difference in the days of the week. Thus, when it is noon today in Grand Forks it is three o'clock tomorrow morning in Japan, and the radio listener in Melbourne, Australia, has to get up at 3 o'clock this morning to listen to a broadcast that is being sent from San Francisco at 9 A. M. yesterday.

A CORRESPONDENT ASKS for information concerning the species of birds that may be attracted to bird houses erected on poles or attached to trees in the vicinity of residences. I think everyone will agree that the house wren is the one bird of all that frequent this locality that lends itself best to this kind of domestication. It is exceedingly sociable and will nest fearlessly close to inhabited buildings and it will occupy almost any sort of shelter, no matter how crude, which is out of the way of marauding cats.

ALMOST ANY SORT OF Little box will be appropriated as a home by a pair of wrens if it is secure from molestation. Hollow gourds are often used for this purpose. The opening should not be larger than an inch in diameter, otherwise sparrows will take possession of it. I have heard it said that wrens will not occupy a house that is hung in a tree, but I have found that this is not true. If the house is placed where it is not screened by heavy foliage and fastened securely the birds seem to like it. Of course they will make homes in houses on poles or attached to buildings.

I HAVE HAD NO Experience with martins, but there are numerous martin houses about the city which contain thriving colonies of birds each summer. Unlike the wrens, which prefer one house for one family, the martins like to colonize, hence martin houses are built to accommodate several families. The universal practice, I believe, is to place martin houses on firm poles in the open, as the martins seem to prefer plenty of space.

THE BLUEBIRD IS ONE OF our most beautiful and attractive birds, but seems to be somewhat shy and it is apt to be pestered by sparrows. These three species are the ones which usually occupy local bird houses. Other species can no doubt be attracted, but must depend on the locality of the home where the houses are erected. In the timber along the river there are many species of birds which seldom venture into the more open territory only a few blocks away. I suppose one reason for this is the greater abundance of cover in the form of shrubbery that is to be found in the native timber. There are here and in the surrounding territory many persons who have specialized in bird houses for years. I should be glad to hear from any of them in order that their experience may be passed on to others. This is a good time to be thinking about bird houses for next spring.

"IT MAY BE SOME TIME Before I return to my native land," said Edward in bidding farewell to his kingdom. While there has been no parliamentary edict exiling him, his absence was undoubtedly decided on by himself and the ministers as being best for his own peace of mind and the tranquility of the country. His presence in England would have served continually to incite controversy and provoke unfortunate exhibitions of partisanship. More than a century ago another eminent Briton exiled himself, and while the circumstances are quite different, Byron's farewell as given in the first canto of "Childe Harold" are recalled by the departure of the late king, secretly, at night, for an unknown destination. The first and last stanzas of Byron's farewell read:

Adieu, adieu! my native shore  
Fades o'er the waters blue; The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,  
And shrieks the wild sea-new. Yon sun that sets upon the sea  
We follow in his flight: Farewell awhile to him and thee,  
My native land—Good Night!

With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go  
Athwart the foaming brine; Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,  
So not again to mine. Welcome, welcome, ye dark blue waves!  
And when you fail my sight, Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves! My native land—Good Night.

THE DOINGS OF ROYALTY have received more attention in this country of late than has been given them for a long time, and, many incidents and practices have been exhumed from old records. It is recorded, for instance, that in 1842 Queen Victoria took her first railway journey, an adventure which must have been as thrilling as an airplane flight 30 years ago. The master of horse, whose duty it was to provide horses for the queen's journey by road, resented this innovation as an interference with his prerogatives. He marched into the station several hours before the start to inspect the engine, as he would have inspected a steed, and the queen's coachman suggested that he mount the engine and at least make believe to drive it. The irate official compromised by mounting the pilot engine which was to precede the royal train and riding on that. On the journey his scarlet uniform, wig and white gloves suffered greatly, becoming covered with soot and cinders, and thereafter he was content to waive his rights.'

AFTER THE QUEEN'S Marriage to Prince Albert the prince undertook to simplify some of the archaic practices which had governed the domestic arrangements at the castle. The royal residence and grounds has been under the control of four different officials, the lord chamberlain, the lord steward, the master of horse and the commissioners of woods and forests. Concerning the effect of this arrangement Baron Stockmar wrote:

"THE LORD STEWARD FINDS the fuel and lays the fire; the lord chamberlain lights it. The lord chamberlain provides the lamps; the lord steward must clean, trim and light them. The inside cleaning of the windows belongs to the lord chamberlain's department, but the outer parts must be attended to by the office of woods and forests, so that windows remain dirty unless the two departments can come to an understanding."

IN 1842 THERE WERE SPLENDID fetes in honor of the king of Prussia, great-uncle of the late Kaiser, who held the infant prince of Wales, afterward Edward VII at the font during his baptism. Among other things there was a fancy dress ball at which the prince consort appeared costumed as King Edward III, the young queen as Queen Philippa and the gentlemen of the court as knights of Poitiers. That threatened to create an "incident" between Britain and France, for the French did not care to be reminded of Poitiers, where their ancestors had been signally defeated by the forces of Edward and his son the Black Prince. They regarded the ball as an unfriendly gesture, and it was proposed that a counter demonstration be held in Paris in the form of another ball with the duke of Orleans impersonating William the Conqueror.

I REMEMBER THAT LONG ago I told of a massive silver communion service and a large pulpit Bible which are jealously preserved at a Mohawk church and Indian institute near my home town, Grantford, Ontario, but the facts will perhaps bear repetition in view of the events of the past week. Sometime during her reign Queen Anne gave the communion set and Bible to an Indian church in the state of New York. During the Revolutionary war the Mohawks, being partisans of the British, feared the loss of these relics and buried them. After the war they were resurrected, and as the New York church had been disbanded, they were given to the little church at Brantford, about the close of the 18th century. There they have since remained.

SPECIAL INTEREST Attaches to the Bible, for on one flyleaf there are the personal signatures of Edward, prince of Wales, later Edward VII, King George and Queen Mary, then duke and duchess of York, and Edward, prince of Wales, who recently abdicated as King Edward VIII. The young prince told the matron of the institute that he believed that sheet of paper to be the only one in the world containing the personal signatures of his grandfather, his father, his mother and himself. What would that be worth to a collector?

ON DECEMBER 8 A Resolution introduced in the city council of Kitchener, Ontario, pledged anew the fealty of the council and the city to King Edward VIII. One alderman in supporting the resolution, said "We thought he was a fine fellow a year ago. If he wants to get married, that is his business." Action on the resolution was discreetly deferred "until a more suitable time presents itself." Two days later Edward abdicated.

KITCHENER IS A CITY OF about 30,000, the county seat of Waterloo county. Until the World war its name was Berlin. Among the early settlers of that county German families predominated. Quite naturally they gave to their county and its villages names reminiscent of German history or places. Waterloo is Belgian, but it was at Waterloo that Prussian soldiers assisted in Napoleon's tragic defeat. The embryo county seat became Berlin, and so on. The inhabitants were sturdy, thrifty people and excellent citizens. When the war came, as a gesture of loyalty to their adopted country, they changed the name of their county seat to Kitchener. The city is a prosperous one, the center of a rich agricultural district and the seat of a number of manufactures.

A CONSTITUTIONAL, Question not related to the recent transfer of royalty has arisen in Canada. Manitoba authorities have given notice that a tax of \$1.20 a case will be imposed on all beer brought into Manitoba from other provinces. Outside brewers have protested that it is contrary to the spirit of the constitution for one province to levy duties on imports from another, and a very pretty lawsuit seems to be in the making. As an immediate measure of retaliation some of the outside brewing companies threaten to boycott Manitoba barley.

WHEN YOU LAUGH AT A joke by your favorite radio comedian it is not at all unlikely that you will be listening to a joke written by David Freedman and bought by your comedian from him, for Freedman made a business of writing jokes and selling them, and He has a large clientele. There was a sort of grim, humor in the fact that when Freedman's suit for \$250,000 against Eddie Cantor was about to be called for trial, the plaintiff's attorney rose and said to the court: "I am sorry to inform the court that Mr. Freedman is dead." Freedman had just been found dead in his bed from heart failure.

THE STORY OF FREEDMAN'S rise to fame and fortune reads like a fairy tale. The son of an impoverished Rumanian newspaper writer, he came with his family to New York when but a year old. His father achieved some prominence as a writer for Jewish language publications and was able to send the boy through high school and college. There David made a good record, and in college he won his Phi Beta Kappa key. After experimenting with various occupations he managed to sell a humorous skit to a magazine and thereafter he devoted himself to humorous writing, specializing in "gags" which he sold to stage and radio performers. His output was enormous and it found a ready market and Freedman became a rich man. He and Cantor became business associates, and it was out of that association that Freedman's suit against Cantor grew.

THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE placed on exhibition in New York a large display of Chilean products as a means to promoting trade with the United States. Among the exhibits sent were several cases of Chilean plants. The customs inspectors at New York viewed them with suspicion because there are rigid laws relating to the importation of plants, intended to prevent the introduction of foreign plant diseases. The Chilean consul tried in every way possible to have the plants inspected, certified and released, but he was shunted from one office to another until the plants were all dried up. Now he must ship the withered remnants back home, for the law prohibits their destruction here. Therefore those boxes, containing only a few handfuls of what were once plants, and on their way back to the country of their origin.

PERSONS WHO HAVE Trouble in obtaining sauer kraut or the juice therefrom may be interested in the statement just made by the president of the National Kraut Producers' association that the pack of kraut this year is only about half the normal, and is the smallest for 20 years. The supply on hand is estimated at 68 per cent of that a year ago and 49 per cent of the supply of the preceding year, when a record pack was made.

THE PRESS DISPATCHES have told of the loss sustained by British business people through the substitution of one king for another as the chief figure in the coronation which is to be held next May. Cancellation of the coronation altogether would have amounted to a national calamity because of this feature alone. As it is, while the loss will be considerable, there will be some salvage. Millions of yards of fabrics which have been woven, or for which preparations have been made, to supply the coronation trade will serve as well as if there had been no change in the program, and this is true of many of the purely ornamental things which bear to special reference to either Edward or George.

THERE IS AN IMMENSE quantity of material, however, which must be junked. Chinaware, silverware, and a great quantity of cheap decorative material stamped with the name or the likeness of King Edward must go into the melting pot or the junk pile. Some of this material may be put on the market at bargain prices, to be bought and kept as souvenirs of a unique passage in British history, but the sum realized from such sales will be small in comparison with the anticipated returns. The empire may be able to tighten up its political bonds, but tradesmen must write off a lot of loss in red ink.

AMERICAN TRADE IS NOT likely to share in much of this loss, although on this side there has been a looking forward to the coronation as a gala event of unusual significance. One of the January magazines has in anticipation of the coronation a fine full-page picture in color of King Edward in uniform, surrounded by emblems of office and pictures of historic objects that are used in the coronation ceremony.

A FRIEND HAS JUST PASSED on to me for inspection a little picture supplement issued by a British magazine devoted to the two princesses, daughters of the new king and queen. The supplement was published as a matter of current interest before there was any thought of Edward's abdication. There are charming pictures of the two girls, Elizabeth, now heiress to the throne, and Margaret, who still calls her elder sister "Lilibet."

THE TEXT OF THE Supplement is devoted to the home life of the children and to their training in Scottish habits of thrift by their mother. The girls are taught to be careful of their clothes and to make them last as long as possible. Although they prefer to go bareheaded they usually wear hats when on the street. When they were permitted to go abroad without headgear the hat industry suffered, and their mother therefore decided that the girls should wear hats.

A CORRESPONDENT ASKS for the rest of the verses beginning "You'd scarce expect one of my age," writing: "That was my first recitation in public, and I remember how I trembled as I spoke the words. I had forgotten most of the lines, but the part that you quoted came back to me. Won't you publish the rest? I want it for my scrap book."

THE SELECTION IS NOT very long, and here it is:

**THE INFANT ORATOR.**

You'd scarce expect one of my age  
To speak in public on the stage;  
And if I chance to fall below  
Demosthenes or Cicero,  
Don't view me with a critic's eye,  
But pass my imperfections by.  
Large streams from little fountains flow;  
Tall oaks from little acorns grow;  
And though I now am small and young,  
Of judgment weak and feeble tongue,  
Yet all great learned men, like me  
Once learned to read their A, B, C.  
But why may not Victoria's reign  
Bring back the good old days again;  
Exceed what Greece and Rome have done,  
Or any land beneath the sun?  
Or, where's the town, so far and near,  
That does not find a rival here?  
Or where's the boy, but three feet high,  
Who's made improvements more than I?  
These thoughts inspire my youthful mind  
To be the greatest of mankind;  
Great, not like Caesar, stained with blood,  
But only great as I am good.

ONE OF THE PLEASANT things about the Christmas season is the music that is associated with it, especially the singing of Christmas music. Grand Forks is especially favored in this respect. In all the public schools the pupils have been trained in chorus singing, and their rendition of appropriate selections has been pleasant and beneficial both to themselves and to school patrons who have heard them sing. Last Sunday's program under the auspices of the Shrine was one of the outstanding events of the season, and it is to be followed by another Sunday program arranged by the Community Music association.

ON WEDNESDAY TWO OF the service clubs heard a splendid program given by the University Madrigal club under the direction of H. C. Rowland, and similar programs have been given or are to be given in all the schools and at the hospitals and the Home for the Aged. The pleasure which these programs have given to those who heard them can scarcely be overestimated, and it would be difficult to overestimate their value to the young singers themselves. In the training which is given them these young people learn the value of discipline, and they learn, too, something of the dignity that there is in real music. This community, and other communities into which this glorious message of song is carried are receiving at this season one of the most precious of Christmas gifts.

SOME ATTENTION HAS BEEN given of late to the genealogy of British kings. In this country official position does not go by inheritance, but there are American families whose members, generation after generation, have achieved a certain prominence. Thus Russell B. Harrison, who died a few days ago in Indianapolis at the age of 82, came of a family several of whose members in different generations had been conspicuous in public life.

RUSSELL B. HARRISON WAS the son of President Benjamin Harrison, who, in turn, was the grandson of President William Henry Harrison, the hero of Tippecanoe, whose father, Benjamin Harrison, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Continental congress. The activity of the Harrison family in public affairs was not confined to this continent, for, the signer of the Declaration is said to have been a descendant of the General Harrison who, as Cromwell's right-hand man, commanded the soldiers by whose aid Cromwell expelled from the house the members of the Long Parliament.

RUSSELL B. HARRISON never became a national figure. A young man when his father was elected president, he gave Sherman capable service in the treasury department, and for several years he operated a newspaper at Helena, Montana. At about the age of 30 he undertook the study of law, and he spent the rest of his life in the practice of his profession. He served in both branches of the Indiana legislature, and he seems to have been a solid, substantial citizen and a credit to his family.

IF ANY YOUNG MAN WISHES to make his best girl a present of a watch for Christmas it may be the prudent thing for him to deliver it in person, or at least see that it is not running when it is delivered. A New York man was called to the phone the other evening and a voice which he did not recognize told him that a package had been left on the front porch. On the porch he found a little package from which came a faint sound, "tick, tick." He had heard of bombs, and to be on the safe side he threw the package into a mud puddle in the yard. Next morning he called the police and an officer came and gingerly lifted the package from the mud. The ticking was still heard. The cop placed the package in a pail of water, and after a while the ticking ceased. When the package was opened it was found to contain a wrist watch for the daughter of the family from her boy friend.

A BOOK REVIEWER, Describing the precise method of composition followed by George Moore, wrote: "He wrote always with the complete work in his mind, but with the immediate page his first consideration." Not a bad method to apply to any activity.

A FEW DAYS AGO THE wires brought news of the death in a Great Falls, Montana, hospital, of Richard D. Bennett, pioneer North Dakota attorney and one of the few surviving members of the North Dakota constitutional convention. Mr. Bennett was born in 1851 at Rewnfre, Ontario, and in 1878 he came to Grand Forks and started studying law in the office of George H. Walsh. He was a member of the city council from 1882 to 1888, and he was elected probate judge (now county judge) in 1886 and 1888.

IN 1889 MR. BENNETT Served as a member of the constitutional convention, and in that body he was chairman of the committee on municipal corporations and an active participant in the debates on the convention floor. So far as can be ascertained only four of the members of that convention are now living. They are William Budge, who moved some years ago from Grand Forks to Medford, Oregon, and has since lived in California, F. B. Fancher, later governor of North Dakota and E. W. Camp, both of whom are now living in Los Angeles, and Horace M. Clark, of New Rock-ford, N. D. Richard Bennett moved to Great Falls in 1903 and practiced law there until he retired in 1928.

FOG IS NOT AN UNUSUAL thing in this territory, although it is rather late in winter. But I have never seen a more dense fog anywhere than that which enveloped Grand Forks on Wednesday evening. One feature not usually seen was that the fog came in waves, its denser bodies moving quite visibly from the southeast. Driving home shortly before 10 P. M. I was obliged to stop when within two or three blocks of home, because even the front of my own car was no longer visible. The rest of the journey was made with one person driving at a snail's pace while another walked ahead to make sure there were no parked cars in the way.

THE NEAREST APPROACH to that in my experience was while driving through the Adirondacks in 1935, when clouds rolling over the mountains obscured the road from time to time. On one other occasion I became lost in a fog while searching for the cows one morning in the home pasture. Barefooted, I had gone as usual in the early morning to bring the cows to the barnyard for milking. While it was possible to see a few yards, when I got well into the pasture everything looked alike, and in a few moments I had lost all sense of direction. I couldn't find the cows, nor could I find my way back. I remained lost until the fog lifted.

A LONDON FOG, I AM TOLD, is never pleasant, but I have always had a strong desire to see one—just one—and a really good one. Friends who have been caught in them say that the comparison to pea-soup is an apt one, but the fog seems palpable as well as opaque. Fog is often encountered at sea and on the Great Lakes. Many years ago, in going down lake Superior, we passed for many hours through a fog which, while not dense, obscured vision greatly, and! our fog-horn kept sounding its mournful note at regular intervals. Suddenly, out of the mist, came the sound of a bell. Coming from nothing visible it had an eerie sound. Then, just a little distance to our left appeared the ghostly vision of a sailing vessel, with all sails set, her outline and that of her sails and rigging just dimly discernable. In a moment she was gone, and her bell tolled more and more faintly until the sounds were lost in the distance. It made one think of the Flying Dutchman and other ghost ships the stories of which make one's flesh creep.

CHORAL MUSIC IN Westminster Abbey is being sung to the accompaniment of a piano. The organ is being tuned and repaired for the coronation.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT Coming from the University of Alberta of the development of a new strain of wheat which is drouth resistant and in large measure resistant to heat waves is a matter of interest to all the hard wheat territory. While visionaries have been fooling with schemes to provide people with wealth without effort, science has been working slowly and patiently to enable man to content successfully with the unfavorable aspects of nature.

IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS? In the life of every child in Christendom there comes a time when that question demands an answer, and the answer may bring to the child the shock of sad disillusionment or the strengthening and blossoming of faith. Twenty - nine years ago little Virginia O'Hanlon, an 8-year old girl, puzzled and perplexed, wrote to the editor of The New York Sun the following letter:

"DEAR EDITOR: — I AM 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says 'If you see it in the Sun it's so.' Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?"

Virginia O'Hanlon.

The editor turned the letter over to his assistant, Francis P. Church, and asked him to answer it. Church is said to have been not very enthusiastic over the assignment at first, but presently he got into the spirit of it and wrote the following reply, which was published in The Sun on September 21, 1897, and whose republication in this column has become an annual event:

"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 but 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.

"YES, 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 child-like 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, not even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal 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, no, ten thousand times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

TO WHICH I APPEND THE comment made in former years:

What an answer! It brushes aside the inconsequential fictions of materialism and goes right to the heart of the subject. Like a fresh, clean breeze, it dissipates the mists of misunderstanding and permits the truth to shine forth, clear and distinct. It gives faith something on which it can take hold and discloses to us a meaning in life independent of the trappings in which we sometimes dress it up. It shows the perplexed parent a way in which childish questions may be answered, and it may help to clear away some of the difficulties of the parent himself.

A RATHER NOVEL "OPEN house" is scheduled for the vicinity of Hettinger, N, Dak., early in January—novel because the house involved is made of rammed earth. I have an invitation from Colonel and Mrs. Paul S. Bliss, owners of the house, to attend "the official house-warming of North Dakota's first all fire proof, ram-med e a r t h house." The house is located on their ranch—the Scoria Lily— 12 miles east of Hettinger, in Adams county. It was built, the invitation says, "in the interest of better housing for man, beast and machine on farms." The house-warming is set for Saturday and Sunday, January 2 and 3, with a special showing of movies in Hettinger the first day depicting the progress of construction of the building.

COLONEL BLTSS IS WELL known in Grand Forks, where he has appeared several times in connection with his work with the WPA. His official office is at Bismarck, but since September 7, 1936, when he started work on the rammed earth house, he has found time to supervise the construction. He has told me that it was constructed at a very reasonable cost, and he believes this sort of building may have a real influence on future farm building in areas where it is difficult to obtain lumber at a reasonable price, or where the price is not available.

FROM TIME TO TIME Comment is heard about "the terrible raid on forests" in connection with supplying enough Christmas trees to go around each year. As a matter of fact, conservations agree the cutting of Christmas trees helps, rather than harms, the forests. Trees of a size suitable for Yuletide purposes are regarded as undergrowth which saps the strength from more hardy specimens and retards their growth. In stands of marketable timber this undergrowth would have to be cleared out anyway. Incidentally, a great number of the Christmas trees used in the United States come from Canada. One source reports that 4,000,000 Christmas trees have been shipped this year from Canada to the United States, New York alone getting 850,000 of them.

AND SPEAKING OF Christmas, Santa Claus might use his influence with the weather man to obtain for us a nice, three or four inch covering of clean snow to help the Christmas setting. The recent dust storm ruined what little snow we had.

WHILE A FLICKERING Candle on a Christmas tree was one of my childhood delights, it is well for the children of today that the "safe and sane" electric light has replaced the tallow candle. In earlier years, news reports the day after Christmas always reported a considerable death toll in fires resulting from lighted candles on trees; nowadays, such a report is a rarity. One of the last serious disasters from that source was the Calumet, Mich., school party fire, when more than a score of little children were burned or trampled to death when candles fired a Christmas tree. That was 21 or 22 years ago.

A LITTLE FRIEND HAS Asked me to publish again the poem so dear to children — "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." And, in accordance with my long established custom, It will appear in this column on Thursday—Christmas Eve.

PERHAPS THE Outstanding organization job of disseminating Christmas cheer to underprivileged boys and girls of Grand Forks is performed by the Santa Claus Girls, an organization sponsored by the Herald and composed largely of the young matrons of Grand Forks. The members of the organization give freely of their time from September until Christmas Day, meeting once each week to prepare Christmas gifts for some 700 boys and girls whose Christmas without this work might be indeed an empty one.

THERE IS NO THOUGHT TO detract in any way from the work done by many other worthy organizations at Christmas time. We know of the special efforts put forth at this time by the Salvation Army, fraternal organizations, churches, parent and teachers groups, and many other organizations. But no organization makes so thorough a search for underprivileged children as does the Santa Claus Girls club. This group has accepted the responsibility of bringing some measure of happiness to underprivileged children on Christmas morning without encroaching in any way on the work done by other organizations.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW the vast amount of gifts, candy, etc., prepared for distribution by the Santa Claus Girls gave me some idea of the task involved. All through the fall the work of planning and preparing for the Christmas distribution goes on, with members of the group finding full reward in their work in the pleasure their efforts mean for the many children whose Christmas morning might otherwise be a dreary affair. A useful gift, a toy and candy go to each boy and girl, and to hundreds of them, the Santa Claus Girls mean Santa Claus.

THERE IS ANOTHER HAPPY angle in this charitable venture, too, and that is the opportunity afforded everyone to participate through financial aid for the cause. These contributions are the only source of income, and while the Santa Claus Girls do much of the work themselves in preparing gifts, the average necessary cash outlay is one dollar a child—certainly a "good buy" when one measures the happiness each dollar brings. For parents whose children will have ample evidence of a visit from Santa Claus on Christmas Eve or Christmas morn, it is a source of gratification to know that in the less privileged homes their will be Christmas joy, too, due to the activities of the Santa Claus Girls. And so, in the words of Tiny Tim, let us say: "God bless them, every one."

OUR SPRING-LIKE Weather of recent weeks, particularly the past few days, has led growing things astray. There is evidence of this in the budding poplar tree branches brought to our desk by Mrs. Mary Norman, 310 Lincoln avenue, East Grand Forks. The branches, heavily loaded with fat, bursting buds, were taken by Mrs. Norman from a tree near Grand Forks, in a spot not particularly sheltered. This may have some significance in forecasting weather conditions for the rest of the winter, but I am not qualified to deduce it.

OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG men and women may not exist today on a basis comparable to that of 25 or 50 years ago—at least, so I have been told—but there is something to think about in the discovery by two undergraduates, at Macalester college in St. Paul of a formula for extracting explosive gas from clover. Experimenting in the Macalester college chemical laboratory several months ago, Harry Ohlgren and William H. Mahle blew up the equipment as a result of some work with a basketful of clover. Realizing the explosion had been caused by some kind of gas they repeated their previous experiment and found they had happened upon a process which not only extracts gas from, clover, wood and cellulose materials, but also triples the amount of gas that can be taken from coal. Scientists all over the world have shown a deep interest in the discovery, and Ohlgren and Mahle recently turned down an offer of a quarter of a million dollars for their patent.

INNUMERABLE TRADITIONS and customs have become associated with Christmas day and the Christmas season. Many of them are directly related to the Christian faith, while others are of pagan origin. In many cases ancient pagan forms, many of them beautiful and impressive, have been retained and given new significance by having implanted in them elements derived from the story of Jesus. Without these traditions and customs Christmas would lose much of its flavor. With the day we associate the Christmas tree and the Christmas candle, holly and mistletoe, the ringing of bells and the singing of carols, and there is a great multitude to whom the Christmas season would not be quite complete without the opportunity to read or hear read that famous old poem "The Night Before Christmas."

THE AUTHOR OF THE POEM, Clement Clark Moore, was born in New York in 1779 and died at Newport, R. I., in 1863. He was graduated from Columbia in 1804, and for 25 years served as a professor in New York General Theological seminary, occupying the chair of Biblical Learning and later changing to that of Oriental and Greek Literature. He published a volume of poems and was the author of theological treatises. Like the creator of "Alice" and inventor of her amazing and amusing adventures, this teacher of serious subjects is now known and remembered for an achievement of an entirely different type, a bit of verse which he probably regarded as of no consequence, but which is known and loved the world over. It has become my custom to publish that little poem sometime during the Christmas season, and here it is again:

**THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS.** 'Twas the night before Christmas,  
when 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, Tore open the shutters and threw  
up the sash. The moon on the breast of the  
new-fallen snow Gave a lustre of midday to objects  
below; When what to my wondering eyes  
should appear, But a miniature sleigh and eight  
tiny reindeer. With a little old driver so lively  
and quick I knew in a moment it must be St.  
Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name.  
"Now Dasher! Now Dancer! Now Prancer and Vixen!  
On Comet! On Cupid! On Donner and Blitzen!  
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 met with an obstacle,  
mount to the sky, So up to the house-top the coursers 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 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  
gave a whistle; 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."

INNUMERABLE STORIES have been told of the man with a raging toothache who, determined to have the offending member removed, visits the dentist's office, and whose toothache leaves him immediately upon his arrival at the dental precincts. Also, every automobile owner has driven to the repair shop with an engine which missed fire, squeaked, or otherwise misbehaved, to have the engine purr as sweetly as any kitten as soon as the shop is reached. In such a case the engine stubbornly persists in giving a perfect performance as long as it is within reach of repair, and the job of diagnosing the trouble becomes raised to the nth power.

THE PRIZE STORY IN THIS category comes from Minneapolis. The secretary in the office of a Minneapolis throat specialist looked up from her desk as a young man, a stranger, entered. She greeted him pleasantly, and waited an explanation of his call, but received none. The young man uttered not a sound. His silence was somewhat embarrassing, but suddenly he put his hand to his mouth and gave a slight cough. A pleased expression spread over his features as he held up what proved to be a small fish-bone. Then he spoke: He said: "I didn't answer you because I couldn't speak. I got that bone stuck in my throat and couldn't get it out, and I couldn't utter a sound. I came here to have it removed, but nature has taken care of the job."

WHAT A PLACE OF JOY AND sorrow, anxiety and relief, a modern hospital is! The patient who is in serious trouble gets little of its atmosphere, for he is apt to be only partially conscious of his surroundings, but if his malady is of a minor nature and he is there merely for observation, every sound that comes through his open door, every footfall in the corridor, becomes charged with interest. And, if a telephone is near by he catches innumerable bits of human drama.

A SHEETED FIGURE IS wheeled by on a stretcher. Does that mean life or death? He cannot tell. In the background there may be the history of a frightful accident, with mangled flesh and broken bones, or the onset or of some maladjustment of functions which calls for the use of the surgeon's knife. What of the next hour, or the next day or month? Are anxious friends somewhat anxiously awaiting news from the operating room?

A MAN'S VOICE IS HEARD, evidently at the telephone: "Is mother there?" a pause. "Hello, that you, Grandma?" "Yes, it's 'Grandma,' all right. A boy, and a fine one.—About half an hour ago. — She's fine — I'll be home for lunch and I'll bring you down as soon as she gets rested up a little." That conversation is easily interpreted.

ANOTHER VOICE IS HEARD at the phone, a woman's voice, strained and tremulous: "They've just got through — He's not out of the ether yet. — They can't tell, but I'm so afraid. — I'll call you when there is any change." All is being done that can be done by science and tender care, but heart-strings are being pulled, and a shadow hangs over some home.

WHAT WAS THE Prevailing color of houses in colonial times? A partial answer to that question is given in the September House and Garden magazine in which appeared a number of illustrations of houses of Colonial design, all painted white. Concerning the matter of color the magazine says:

"AS YOU PAGE OVER THE thirty-odd houses in the second section you will note that almost invariably the Colonial house is painted white. This would come as news to what our statesmen would call the Founding Fathers. First, it was not until the country was well founded that the out-sides of houses were painted at all, and, second, they weren't painted white. In Connecticut few houses were painted before 1700, and in Massachusetts it was not until well into the 19th century that houses in country towns knew paint. The first or second in that state was the Andrews house in Topsfield, Mass., built about 1710, which went giddy with India red on its window frames and corner boards. The clapboards went unpainted. The India red—today's equivalent is barn red—was made by mixing red ochre with fish oil. In Connecticut, which was always a willful colony, old records show that houses were sometimes painted red or yellow or blue. The customs of painting houses white did not come into general practice until the Revolutionary period.

Up in Salem they tell the story of a merchant who prospered and thought to outdo his neighbors by having his house painted. They remarked, "Wal, I see Sam's feelin' his oats—he's begun to paint his house." That was in 1804.

ACCORDING TO THE USUAL practice in English-speaking countries the weapons used in what is termed the "noble art of self-defense" are the clenched fists, and a man who is properly handy with his dukes is supposed to be more than a match for an adversary with a knife or club, and even to give a good account of himself in an encounter with a man armed with a shooting-iron. Taking them nation by nation, Anglo-Saxons surpass all others in the use of their fists, but they are sadly deficient in the use of the feet in combat. The French specialize in that field, and they have developed astonishing dexterity in the use of the "coup de savate," of which the English equivalent is "the boot," otherwise the kick in the face.

IT WAS FAMILIARITY WITH this form of combat which enabled a French visitor, Emile E. C. Mathis, to rout two New York bandits who attempted to rob his wife of her jewels. Mr. Mathis, a wealthy young French automobile manufacturer and his wife are visiting in New York. Returning to their apartment late one night after visiting friends, they were attacked by two men as their cab stopped in front of the building, and one of the two bandits seized a necklace worn by Mrs. Mathis. The string did not break, however, but the jewels sank into their owner's flesh, and she screamed. Mr. Mathis struck out, not with his fist, but with his foot, which landed accurately in the fellow's face. In the rough-and-tumble which followed Mr. Mathis made such vigorous use of his feet that the robbers, unaccustomed to that style of combat, took to their heels. It might not be a bad idea to include a course in the "coup de savate" in our school athletics. One can imagine few things more disconcerting to a bandit than a swift kick in the face.

MY TASTE FOR MYSTERY and adventure stories often gets me tangled up with yarns which are neither instructive nor elevating, and in them I have noticed a technique which seems to have become contagious with writers of a certain class. One peculiarity noticed in this particular line of fiction is the amazingly poor marksmanship of the villains of the several pieces. Shooting point blank at the distance of six feet the villain misses the hero altogether, or merely scratches him. The criminals of fiction ought to be taught better shooting. Another remarkable phenomenon is the wonderful fistic skill of the fiction heroes. Time after time the hero emerges from combat with enemies armed with lethal weapons, leaving the ground strewn with unconscious bodies which he has flattened out each with a single blow on the point of the chin. This has become so common that I have lost interest in those fights. I know exactly what is going to happen. There will be a mix-up lasting only a moment or two, and then the hero's trusty right will land precisely on the point of the other fellow's chin. The villains can neither shoot nor box.

AS AN AID TO SAFE Driving it is suggested that this little jingle be committed to memory and repeated once in a while: Here lies the body of Michael

O'Day, Who died maintaining his right of  
way; He was right, dead right, as he  
sailed along, But he's just as dead as if he'd  
been wrong.

MYLES STANDISH, Descendant of the famous New England captain who employed John Alden to speak for him, took unto himself a wife the other day, and in so doing he became the first foreign service officer of the United States to be married under the state department's regulations prohibiting the marriage of such officers without department permission. Unlike his ancestor, Mr. Standish spoke up for himself. He sent his resignation to the secretary of state accompanied by his announced intention to marry Miss Betty Walls, a native of Manchester, England, where Mr. Standish is vice consul. His boldness brought a reward that timidity denied to the seventeenth-century captain of Plymouth colony. A few days ago came a request from the state department that he withdraw his resignation and proceed with the nuptials.

NORTH DAKOTA HAD Another Standish, descended from the famous Plymouth captain, in the person of W. H. Standish, of Grand Forks, who served for a term as attorney general of the state. He died some years ago in Missouri.

IN CONNECTION WITH THE annual republication of "The Night Before Christmas" last week, a brief account was given of the career of the author, Dr. Clement C. Moore, in his day a distinguished scholar and professor of theology and Oriental literature. I have just come across some additional facts relating to the writing and first publication of the poem.

Dr. Moore wrote his poem in 1822 as a Christmas present for his children, but it was not until a year later, December 23, 1823, that it first appeared in print in the Troy Sentinel. A daughter of the Rev. David Butler, Episcopal rector, heard Dr. Moore read the poem while visiting the Moore home, and hastily copied the words in her album.

DELIGHTED OVER THE Merry account of the "little old driver, so lively and quick," she sent it to the editor of the Troy paper who published it under the heading, "Account of a Visit From St. Nicholas or Santa Claus.

The editor explained that "we know not to whom we are indebted for the description of that unwearied patron of children" but "from whomever it may have come, we give thanks for it."

Its publication brought an immediate response of delight as the editor had predicted but not from Dr. Moore. He deemed it beneath the dignity of a Professor of Divinity and to friends expressed his "chagrin."

LATER HE ACKNOWLEDGED authorship and included it in a volume of his poems published in 1844. Before he died in 1863, his account of the house in which "not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse" had been translated into many foreign languages and an autographed copy had been requested by the New York Historical Society.

HIGHWAYS COATED WITH ice have their disadvantages, but at least they provide good skating. On Sunday a group of Grand Forks boys donned their skates and skated on the oiled highway all the way to Thompson and back, a round trip of nearly 30 miles. It is not recalled that such a feat has ever before been possible in this territory, although several sleet storms have left much heavier coatings of ice. This time the thin veneer of ice was firm enough to bear the pressure of skates without cutting through.

IN THIS PART OF THE country people seldom skate in order to go places. Streams are infrequent, and where there are streams their ice is usually covered with snow as we have little of the alternate freezing and thawing which is common in the east. The river of my boyhood, which ran along our pasture and the adjoining school yard, provided ample opportunity for skating, and children living on farms near it, I and even some distance away, habitually skated to and from school, and people skated for many miles on errands of business or pleasure, much as they do in Holland, where the flat country is a network of canals which freeze each winter.

THE SKATES COMMONLY used in my boyhood would be considered crude affairs in these days. The skate consisted of a steel runner set in a wood block through which went a broad strap to buckle across the toes and another for a narrower strap to go around the ankle. A screw set firmly in the wood attached the skate to the heel of the shoe in which a hole was bored for that purpose. A gimlet carried in the pocket was a necessary part of the equipment, to clear the hole of ice. For ordinary skaters the steel runner was mostly straight, turned up in front and cut off at an angle at the rear. For beginners the skates might be "guttered," so as to get a better grip on the ice. Experts affected "rockers," which were rounded all the way from toe to heel. They were tricky things, but some of the top-notchers could perform some wonderful evolutions on them. I could skate just so-so, but I have seen some of our boys and girls in that country district who, without instruction, could do fancy skating of which no skater need be shamed today.

DOWN IN NEW ENGLAND one George W. Jacobs, wishing to vary the monotony of regular hunting, started out after deer with a bow and a quiver full of arrows. He found no deer, but he came upon the tracks of a bear, and when last seen he was following the tracks, intending to try conclusions with Bruin with his bow and arrow. He also carried a pistol, just "in case."

PROBABLY NO POEM HAS been more widely quoted, certainly no New Year's poem, than Tennyson's "Ring Out, Wild Bells." Its lofty idealism, is always timely, and never more so than as the year draws to a close. Familiar as the lines are, I repeat them now as an expression of what, I am sure, lies in the thoughts of most of us as we contemplate the passing of the old year and the dawn of the

**RING OUT, WILD BELLS. By ALFRED TENNYSON.**

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty  
light;  
The year is dying in the night; Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new, Ring, happy bells, across the  
snow;  
The year is going, let him go; Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring out the grief that saps the  
mind, For those that here we see no  
more; Ring out the feud of rich and  
poor, Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause, The ancient forms of party  
strife; Ring in the nobler modes of  
life, With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the  
sin, The faithless coldness of the  
time; Ring out, ring out, my mournful  
rhymes, But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and  
blood,  
The civic sander and the spite; Ring in the love of truth and  
right, Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease; Ring out the narrowing lust of  
gold; Ring out the thousand wars of  
old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free, The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the  
land, Ring in the Christ that is to be.

OGDEN MILLS, FORMER Secretary of the treasury, was robbed the other night. The interesting feature of the case is not that a wealthy resident of New York was robbed of a few hundred dollars<sup>^</sup> and a watch, but the persistence shown by the burglar in accomplishing his purpose. The thief climbed a 20-foot cedar tree, from which he jumped to the roof of a one-story extension of the residence. Then he walked 30 feet along the roof and crept along a foot-wide ledge to a bedroom window, where he cut the copper screen and raised the unfastened window. He got away with \$380 in cash, a gold watch and gold cigarette case. Mr. Mills, sleeping in the room, heard no sound, nor did his wife, who slept in the adjoining room. None of the eight servants in the house noticed any suspicious noise, though it was reported that the family dog had barked once or twice.

LIKE ANYONE WHOSE JOB it is to write things every day, Edgar Guest produces work of uneven quality. But to all and sundry I commend his verses which appeared on this page on Tuesday, beginning "The king rode by." If you missed it, by all means look it up, and if you are keeping a scrap-book I am sure the poem will find a place there.