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Gordon Wilson

ORIGINALS

TIDBITS OF KENTUCKY FOLKLORE

By

Gordon Wilson

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T+C

A good friend of mine, who has a teen-age son, told me a story recently that shows another sign of our times, a sure sign that boys still grow up and become men. His son, at the breakfast table, a few days before Christmas, 1963, stopped eating long enough to say, "Dad, in 325 days I can get my driver's license." That certainly was worked out in true boy fashion. I suppose that there have been and will be several more announcements of the approaching Great Day as the 325 days pass over the horizon. By the time this column appears, the boy will have only 200 or more days to wait to be a full-grown man, armed with a driver's license.

It was not so long ago that my own son, now a very dignified college professor, came in from high school at noon, proudly displaying his driver's license, issued on his sixteenth birthday! His teacher had allowed him to be out of school long enough to go over to the Armory, take his tests, and sign on the dotted line. You see, both he and my friend's son had fairly grown up with a steering wheel in their hands. My own son had wanted to sit in my lap and hold the wheel before he could make a full sentence. And, like all fathers who have sons, I held him there, secretly guiding the wheel from beneath his baby hands. He laughingly tells even yet that he sat in my lap and drove until he was so large that the seat would no longer hold the two of us, even though we pushed it as far back as it would go. And, on country roads he drove on his own, with me sitting by for moral and legal support. In fact, he could drive better than his father the very day he secured his permit to handle the wheel. And what boy, born since the 1920's, let us say, could not do just that? The ancient Romans had a celebration of declaring their boys mature. It was not at any certain age, but when it seemed that Junior, or whatever he was called, was ready to be regarded as a man, there was a big

show, in proportion to the prominence or wealth of the boy's dad. All of one's friends and hangers-on formed a procession and went down to the Forum; there a religious ceremony was conducted, the boy was given his first shave(unless he, like modern boys, had stolen out the family razor and given himself a bloody trial or two), and then he was dressed in the toga virilis, the toga that only full-grown men wore. Wouldn't you like to have attended such a ceremony? And wouldn't you like to have seen the triumphant look on the face of the boy, Roman though he may have been? And the father, too, must have strutted a bit as he showed to the world that he was now the proud parent of a grown son.

Now, we did not have any cars at Fidelity when I was growing up. We did not have any Forum except the Loafers' J'int at the country store. We did not have any toga virilis to put on a boy who had grown up. But there were some similarities between a boy's life at Fidelity and one at Rome or at Bowling Green. Maybe wearing long pants for the first time was a sort of Fidelity version of donning the toga of manhood; maybe "carrying" one's first date to Mount Carmel Church in the family buggy was a sort of stepped-down version of marching down the streets followed by all sorts of dressed-up fellows and a horde of hangers-on who were looking for the square meal that attended this coming-out party for Junior. Now, when I see a mere baby boy in long trousers, looking like a miniature copy of his grown-up daddy, I am sad, because that boy will never know what a thrill used to come when one's parents allowed a boy to wear long pants and gallluses and shave himself, maybe, if he had sprouted any fuzz on his still-pink face. And his voice was, by that time, safely on the side of grown-up stability and was not likely to run all the scale at one time. There is no sense in my feeling any sorrow for any boy, however, for the "little piece of paper" that gives a boy the right to drive the family car(not the old family buggy, horrors!) carries with it, in his world, more than any Roman or Fidelity boy could ever know or dream.

Some years ago Miss Marie Campbell, one of the greatest living folklorists, wrote a book with this title, FOLKS GOTTA BE BORN. It was concerned with her experiences with the colored registered midwives in southern Georgia, a research project that she had obtained through a Guggenheim grant. I can think of no book that I have read, in my avid reading of folksy books, that gave me more of the feeling of the pioneer physician or the dedicated, though often illiterate, midwife. These colored midwives had an organization, a very religious one, in which they were taught procedures by the county health nurses; they were encouraged to ask questions, to take part in demonstrations, to give testimonies of their own experiences, good and bad. And the rather elderly women entered into their labors with a strange zeal that reminds one of the faith of the early Christians. Miss Campbell was accepted as a close friend by the nurses and the midwives and allowed to participate in all their activities. There is something very elemental and inspiring in her deliberately simple and homely account of these dedicated women.

In the continued bitter weather of the 1963-64 winter I have often remembered the old family doctor, especially typified by my own father. On just such days and nights as we have had, with sudden turning of rain to sleet or snow, if Father was not already out on a call, my ~~his~~ brother and I would say that this was exactly the sort of night when some newcomer would make his appearance. And, as I look back now, we rarely lost our guess, for someone would appear in the blinding snow, holler "Hello" at the gate, and state his urgent need for the doctor. And my brother and I would saddle Old Clipper, Father's old yellow horse, Mother would get out Father's heavy, long overcoat and tufted gloves (the work of one of his former patients), Father would grab his saddlebags and whatever necessary things he owned for just such occasion

and into the night he would ride, with his trusty lantern dimly showing the wild winter landscapes around him and his horse. There were no telephones then, not until I was old enough to help build the first lines into our neighborhood and to our house; Mother would sometimes walk the floor as the storm raged, saying nothing, but thereby silencing any loud or joyful talk on our parts. It seemed almost sacrilegious to rejoice in my warm featherbed with Father out in that weather, but "Folks got to be born." And, some time up in the day following, Father and his big yellow horse would come back, he pretty flagged out, with the news that there was a new son or daughter in the cabin or more pretentious house of one of his patients. And, as Father lay down on the cot to try to make up for lost sleep, we children learned, very early in life, to be very quiet; Mother saw to it that our father got a few hours of rest before tackling the weather again, and often in longer and more serious cases.

Long before the days of the Dionne quintuplets Fidelity had its own sensation, and my father was the attending physician, the Dr. Dafoe. Anderson Perry, a tenant on the farm of Mr. Monroe Meador, became famous over night as the father of triplets, all of them plump and normal. The next day, a spring day when fish were biting, I was asked to help dig some worms and told that I could ride behind Father to Beechy Fork to fish. As we passed a tobacco barn on the way, we saw an elderly Negro sitting inside stripping tobacco; Father told him the news, and that old man's eyes brightened up until I still remember them, sixty-five years later. From everywhere the people came to see the three babies, named, respectively, for my mother, my older sister, and another lady of the "white folks." There were three good-sized boys in the family; when a buggyload of people would stop in front of the house, each boy would grab a plump triplet and take it out to be "ooed" and "ahed" over. And, for all the years until I left Fidelity, those three healthy, bright little girls attracted the attention of our little world.

T d C

This cold, snowy winter of 1963-64 has brought back to my memory many of the poems about winter and snow, poems that I have always loved. Two and a half centuries ago James Thomson, in "The Seasons," pictured the typical snowy winter that we associate with countries to the north of us and of such foreign countries as Scotland and England. Just last night, with seven inches of snow all over our end of the state, I picked up a book to look for something, and there I saw, as if I had been looking for it, Emerson's "The Snowstorm," with its few but revealing lines about just such a snow as Whittier was to celebrate in "Snow-Bound" many years later, though Whittier's actual snow had occurred in his boyhood, almost a half century before the poem was written. And Whittier was to honor Emerson by quoting some of the opening lines of the earlier poem, especially the ones that show how the storm came on, how it covered up everything, how it transformed the most ordinary landscapes into fairylands.

And many winter poems, from Thomson's down, have shown how a deep snow somehow opens warm places in human hearts, how whatever aloofness we may have built up in warmer weather breaks down when the ground is white. When I took a shovel and went out to break a path to the sidewalk, many of the passers-by took their eyes off the road long enough to exchange a word and to warn me, as an old man, to take my snow-shoveling easy. Not one in any ten who came by had I ever known; the magic of the snow removed barriers that city life and one's own affairs can and do build up. The girl students who live in the house next door have built a snow woman, a real work of winter art. And just about everybody stops to look at the sculpture; many pictures have been taken of the lady, often with some more earthly mortals standing by. And perfect strangers join in the strange joy of being human and warm-hearted under the outward coldness and the snow.

Civilization, especially the sort that we live with normally, seems pretty cold and unfeeling, at times. Some of the older friends of mine have often said how they miss the old-fashioned warmth and chatty neighborliness of Fidelity or Sassafras Ridge. Life is demanding, and clocks regulate our lives. But just let a snowfall somewhat change our regular routines, and we find, somewhat to our surprise, that we are the same fellows we were back at Fidelity. And thousands of youngsters, who never saw or heard of Fidelity, also find their sophisticated shells thawing or breaking, so that they can lay their books down and help get a stalled car going again or can, with their cars with snow tires or chains, give the unfortunate car a push over our small hill. And then, as a bunch of boys did yesterday, college youths who had helped another student over the hill with his small car, they can engage in a snowball fight with all the zest of the boys at the smallest country school of the last century. If I were a moralist, I might preach a sermon on the purity of the snow and how it somehow adds a whiter something to our lives. But rain or soggy weather also brings out these warm human touches, too. When the Ohio River, in 1937, forced hundreds of people to seek warmth and food elsewhere, many of them were brought by volunteer cars to my own town, 120 miles away. And there was shown more actual feeling toward the unfortunate in one week than I had seen, obviously, in any preceding ten years. The shock of it all, the breaking up of our regular routines, brought out in us some goodness and kindness that we did not expect to find, that we probably would have sworn a day earlier that we did not have. I somehow have a great deal more faith in my tribe after such evidences of homely but genuine kindness as is evidenced in times of trouble. If I had ever strayed away from the human race, which I certainly have not, I would, at such times, decide to play the part of the Prodigal Son and come back to the simple life that all of us actually love.

T+C

A VALUABLE ACQUISITION

Recently at a sale of household articles of a woman whom I knew and whose funeral I had attended some weeks ago, an old telephone box was put up for sale and at once received a bid for somewhat more than it originally cost, many years ago. There was some spirited bidding before it finally brought a very handsome price. It seems that an antique hunter, who was not able to be at the sale, had tipped off a friend of hers and mine to bid up to a fancy price. And the old box, probably looked upon as pretty old-fashioned and drab by many who were present, is now in the exclusive company of other antiques in the collection of the well-to-do woman who wanted it.

In spite of my interest in antiques, I frankly did not know that old-fashioned telephone boxes had got into the big money. Every day I find that I used to live in the midst of fine things: a marble-topped center table, a set of funny-looking glasses with knots on them, a hanging lamp, etc., etc. And now comes the telephone, which was only two years old as an institution in my own home when I went away to school at Christmas, 1906, to take its place among priceless things. What next? I will admit that when we got our box, I felt that it was priceless, but I was not thinking about cash money. Why, it opened the way into communities where I had never been and have not been yet. I carried on conversations with people who long ago have died of old age without my ever actually seeing them in the flesh. I learned of places that had not even been names to me before I could talk to people who actually lived there, six to ten miles away.

What is the basis of values? I don't know, though I suspect that actual money value is a pretty small affair, after all. How much would a great canvas bring at a junk yard? Some scrap iron would be worth more. And imagine a money-mad person, who thinks that money measures everything, even bidding on some old left-over bit of stuff

from the ruins of some ancient city, some dump that did not have a TV, or a telephone, or a car, or a daily newspaper, or a ball team! I can just see our former merchant at Fidelity, who later moved to a town and became the president of a bank, taking a fresh chew of tobacco and talking and chewing out his condemnation of people who do not know the value of money, who actually spend a lot of it on books and education and pictures and some naked or half-naked statues(only he would have said statutes or statures). Why, for the money spent on some old faded picture he could have bought up some fine bottom land, acres on acres of it, and could have raised corn that would have brought more than anybody else's corn. And, to tell the truth, he never lost any of his Scrooge-like hatred of anything except cold facts and cold cash. And the last time I saw him, as he sat in his ambeer-bespattered office at the bank, he was preaching against this nonsense called college education and wondering why some young fellows were crazy enough to borrow money to go away to school.

And that reminds me again of the scorn of a love of beauty, in nature as well as in man's works. If all the evils of a love of beauty that I have heard mentioned were to descend upon the earth at one time, it would make a run-away comet crashing into our earth look and sound like a roman candle at Christmas. In looking back at a long life that has been exposed to just about every sort of Ism that humanity follows, I am not sure which has caused most depression of spirit; maybe I would single out money-madness and hostility to beauty as the two that hurt my own youth most and have steadily lost ground in the world as a whole in my mature years. It is no longer felt to be smart to be ignorant of beauty in many forms; and everybody knows that money, which the Shakers called "the one thing needful," can buy only certain things, that, as Lowell says,

"No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer."

In late September, 1963, my last remaining brother died at Fidelity, where he had spent his almost eighty years. When my wife and I drove down to Calloway County to the funeral two days after his death, I was impressed over and over with the true Fidelity spirit that I found everywhere. People of all ages, many of them from far away, had come to "Mr. Quint's" funeral, for he had become a sort of living monument of the community and its ways. Frank, rather flat-spoken, intolerant of intolerance, not always tactful but always sympathetic with other plain-spoken people, he seemed a sort of spokesman for the homely old virtues that the small community represents and has long represented.

There must have been more than two hundred of my former neighbors who came around to shake my hand, to remind me who they were, for a half century, and more, often had come between our meeting and the one just before. Occasionally it was possible, by recalling what we used to call "family favor," ~~I could~~ for me to recognize in the middle-aged grandparent the features of the small child that I had not seen since 1906, the year I left Fidelity. In the simple but sincere appreciation these people I met had and had had for my brother I recognized again the fine values of what Whittier calls "simple life and country ways." Hosts of the people I met were newcomers to the area or people born long after my life at Fidelity. But I could see no noticeable difference between them and the older ones who had shared a small part of my own early life. When someone came up and introduced himself and said, "I don't know you, but I knew your brother," I knew that I was back at home again after all these years and in the hands of friends.

And I liked the same warmth and simplicity in the services, which showed again that the quaint old Fidelity virtues were still

very much alive. Our relatives are rather numerous in that general area, but you could hardly have told, from their attitudes, which ones were related to us and which were just friends.

Such experiences are reminders of the basic human goodness and tolerance often tucked away in rather stolid lives. Emotionalism in any sphere was rather rare at Fidelity; sometimes when I have spoken there at a high school commencement, an outsider might have presumed that the occasion was a funeral. But the high school graduation impressed my old neighbors as a sort of sacred thing, no more to be cheered than a service in the churches. After the program it was always hard to get away, for there was where each person had his chance to meet me again and renew old memories. Every time I have gone back to Fidelity in my mature years, though some of them have been sad occasions like this recent one, I have come away with more thankfulness for my having been born and brought up in that little self-sufficient neighborhood, which used to be so far off the main lines of travel but is today right on the Big Road, as it were. The old Fidelity blood runs true, generation after generation.

This article is in no sense to be taken as personal as it sounds. Just mark out Fidelity wherever it appears and insert the name of your community that still retains some of the distinctive community spirit, that is not ashamed of its former isolation and remoteness. In our 120 counties there must be many such places, like my Fidelity, now accessible to the rest of the world but still with a good deal of the self-sufficiency that made them distinctive long before railroads and automobiles created a new world.

GETTING EDUCATED

At various times in my long life among all sorts of people I have been disgusted at narrow conceptions of education. All my grown-up days I have been associated with education, with scholars in the older and newer sense of that word(that is, learners and learned). But there has rarely been a week when I did not find some person who is reputed to be learned who seems to have a whole area of dead brain cells. Our system of education has too often left out of account the well-rounded man, the learned man with his feet on the ground, who knows a lot about learned things and who pays his debts, is a member of society, and has never ceased to be inquisitive about what the world has to teach. Emerson, more than a hundred years ago, in delineating the scholar spoke of three great influences that educate us: 1. nature, or what happens to us as human beings--food, growth, weather, traditional learning; 2. books("the mind of the past" he calls this influence); and 3. experience. I have often felt sorry for the learned man or the learner who assumed that only in books can one find learning. It is true that the core of a great education is there, not to be memorized merely,but to be interpreted into active life.

Think how much of the most ponderous learning is, after all, traditional, how much is colored by present and even remotely past human thinking. The most abstruse subjects have had to arrive at their present exactness by living through and living down ages of mere folklore. Some phases of biological sciences are still having to wage a fight against the merest legendary lore. But it is a wise scientist who has come up through this traditional attitude toward science and who knows how to meet it on its own ground. I can think of nothing much more pathetic than a biologist who knows his biology unly in a laboratory or in a textbook, as necessary as they both are.

When I have taken courses in literature under skilled scholars whose education was almost wholly in terms of accurate scholarship as it was interpreted in every field by the Germans some decades ago, I have wondered where those teachers had grown up, whether they had had normal boyhood and adolescence, whether they had learned how to turn handsprings and to dive off a springboard and to climb trees. Imagine a mere dry-as-dust scholar, knowing only his data sheet about Robert Frost, let us say, trying to interpret such down-to-earth poems as "Mending Wall," "Birches," and "The Death of the Hired Man." Whatever the future critics may say about Frost, he has made his unique appeal to most of us of his generation by his unashamed knowledge of just ordinary boy life in New England, not in some Forest of Arden or some Island Valley of Avilion. He knew how to climb trees, to help repair stone walls, how to dig ditches and cultivate crops. And his homely knowledge found in the simplest labor the profoundest outlook on life. Some of the teachers I have had would have dismissed him with a very brief reference because he had not followed an academic career and been recognized for his profound knowledge of some obscure little nook of literature.

What we learned outside of books when we were growing up and what we have learned along the way as we have matured and grown old are often neglected as valuable. Once a great scholar told me that in looking back at his doctor's thesis, he felt ashamed because it had been so bookish, so untouched by the common association with humanity that has rounded out his life into one of the most admirable that I have known. He was for a long time a mere bookworm in folklore, and then he found how deep down in our nature is folklore, how abundant it is in the most scholarly of us, how the ordinary mortal, who may or may not be conscious of it, is always coloring our points of views, our basic philosophies. A folklorist who knows folklore only in a book or even in huge collections of books is to be pitied.

~~1505~~ 1516

WHAT IS A BLACKSMITH?

A junior in my college came by my house recently to interview me about some phases of folklore, since she is a reporter on our college paper. I soon discovered that she had known many phases of folk life that I would not normally associate with one so young. She told me that, in spite of her youth, she had lived in a small village that must be right now not very far different from Fidelity as I used to know it. A few days before her interview she had casually mentioned the blacksmith shop in her village and immediately got some queer remarks from her dormitory friends: "What in the world is a blacksmith shop?" When she tried to explain, she got more strange looks and simple questions. Until that experience it had never occurred to her that there was any similar village that did not have a blackmsith. For several days the questions came, for her friends were interested but also somewhat skeptical. Shoeing a horse seemed the hardest thing to believe. All of the students had seen horses, but none had ever heard that horses wore shoes. And as for welding metal, that was too silly for any modern person to believe.

This student asked me whether I could tell her where to find a blacksmith shop near here, for she wants to take a group of the biggest doubters and show them that she can tell the truth. I had to admit that I could not remember any of the old type for years. But a half generation ago a skilled blacksmith moved to Bowling Green to educate his children. He told me, the teacher of his two daughters and a son, all now mature and excellent citizens, that he knew he could never make enough money to "send his children off to school." But he hoped that he could come to Bowling Green and find enough work to do to keep them at home until they graduated from college. And he did just that, for his skill soon became known, and his shop was

frequented by all sorts of people who needed iron work done. He shod lots of horses, too, for there are still a good many show horses here and near here. When the blacksmith laid down his hammer, a good many years ago, he had accomplished his goal and had also kept alive into our time one of the most picturesque institutions of civilization.

When I was a boy at Fidelity, blacksmiths were everywhere. I have never had a chance to renew with some other old-timer of that area the actual locations of shops. But I believe that at any one time in my childhood there must have been a half dozen shops within my father's practice area as a country doctor, between Blood River and the Mouth of Sandy, over in Henry County, Tennessee. I can recall having been in four or five of the shops, for the blacksmiths, like so many other people, paid the doctor in work. I would ride a horse to one shop and get it shod; at another shop I would go to get some farm machinery repaired; at another one, I distinctly recall, I went to pick up a small garden harrow that the blacksmith had made. Even our farm wagon when I was a growing boy was made by the blacksmith in Fidelity, and it was a good wagon a long time. Long before my time there were two shops in Fidelity that specialized in making wagons. A number of the farms where I visited had a genuine Fidelity wagon, strong and even good-looking in workmanship.

The student who caused so much discussion told me that her blacksmith, like our best-known one at Fidelity in my youth, was also a man of many talents; our blacksmith was a skilled finisher of old furniture; he also installed a small gristmill in the shed of his shop. But, again like my blacksmith, hers speaks of himself first as a blackmsith, even though most of his income comes from his many other activities, including his automobile shop. Probably some future student will be asked, "What in the world is a horse?"

~~1506~~ 1507

WHICH FOLKWAYS?

In the winter of 1963-64, when I got a grant that will pay for having all my more than 1500 articles written for this column typed by an electrical typewriter on excellent bond paper and the whole series bound in handy volumes of 200 articles each, I could not help noticing the recurrent subjects of the articles. In going over all my carbons, to get them as nearly faultless as possible for the typist, I concluded that my subjects could be classified into some 12 categories: 1. passing institutions, or customs, belongings, and philosophies that were once common but are now gradually declining; 2. folk psychology, an attempt to tell why we "do like we do," in the words of a once-popular song; 3. folk types, neighborhood characters, varying from "pillars of society" to the local liar; 4. boy life as we oldsters lived it and some of the worthy successors to our former interests; 5. the one-roomed country school and its standardized curriculum and customs; 6. social life in older times, with picnics, dinners on the ground, Quarterly Meetings, candidate speakings; 7. ~~you~~/"love's young dream," the ever-interesting story of "boy meets girl," whether in remote Fidelity or just anywhere; 8. the farm as it was and as it is becoming; 9. status symbols, all the way from ox wagons to flashy new automobiles, from nifty log cabins to ranch houses; 10. folk language, regional words, left-over grammar and vocabulary, taboos and euphemisms, intensives and banter; 11. folk remedies, from asafetida bags worn around the neck to high-priced nostrums bought at the store; and 12. folk wisdom, the wise sayings of the folk on all occasions and the telling comparisons that used to illuminate our speech.

In beginning the column I did not exactly plan the various lines I would follow, but by degrees I found myself returning again and again to the twelve categories I have listed. Every year of the series

I have read many books that opened new fields or new points of view on folklore. Nearly a half century of living and being of the folk preceded my first article, in September, 1935; and I somehow feel that my middle-aged and old days have been almost as folkish as any I knew as a boy and young man. I have consciously reviewed my whole life and tried to see how folklore fitted into its every day, for my life was and is very typical of a whole generation, and, because my generation arose when customs of long standing were so vital, I might say that ~~my generation~~ it in itself summarized many that went before. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob seem nearer to us than, often, our grandchildren seem.

It is no secret that there has always lurked in the background a teacher, for when a fellow has spent his whole life since eighteen in the schoolroom as a "professor," it is impossible not to be seeking an opportunity to present some learning, to discuss it, to make some conclusions, good or bad. Because I am of the soil, and not ashamed of it, and because I have lived all my college-teaching life in a town only a few minutes from cultivated fields and pastures, I have accepted or made opportunities to talk about man on the farm. I have rejoiced in every step forward in knowledge that has helped the farmer become a recognized business man; I have fairly gloated over the fine products of the farms that lie all around me. When some one stops a gully from its devastating work or sets out a tree or retires from cultivation a hillside that would soon become a menace because of its erosion, I have felt proud of the human race and wanted to add another name to the list of human benefactors. And every time a new bridge has been opened across some former stream that formed a physical and social barrier, I have wanted to be on hand to christen it and to wish it a long and useful career. You see, a teacher just cannot escape being a part of the world in which he lives, in which he has invested his energies and his hopes and his exultations.

There has been a great change in going somewhere since we older ones were young. The mere thrill of getting a few miles away from home is gone now; what are a few miles, anyway, when our cars can take us into several counties and get us back again in the time it used to take to get us to the county seat? I have often said that, if one were to judge by our church attendance, we oldsters must have been quite religious. Some of us were and are, but not all church-going people were seeking any especial spiritual blessing. They were eager to get away from their ordinary work and rounds of duty and found in church services a good excuse. It would have been pretty cruel to question a fellow's religious motives when he suddenly announced that he was going away out to New Hope Church to meeting, or even still farther into the interlands to Old Blood River Primitive Baptist Church. Decorous parents just warned their children who were seeking entertainment and adventure in far-away places to behave themselves. In our little world the very height of bad conduct was to cut up at a meeting. Only the very bad boys from remote outlying regions did such horrible things, and they were sometimes very justly brought to court and fined for disturbing public worship.

Old habits, however, are pretty hard to break. In my home town, right today, with a cold mist falling, there are old fellows and some not so old who are standing out in the rain down town discussing politics and farming, or they are crowded in the halls of our courthouse or in farm stores, ostensibly here on business but, honestly, just in town, in the same spirit that we country folks used to go to town. With their cars they could run in to town, conduct their business, if any, and be back home in an hour or so; but old habits cling to us, and they must take the better part of a day, just as they did in horse-and-wagon days.

With the coming of high-school athletics, another form of going somewhere was ~~added~~ added to the lives of hundreds of people. I have known elderly men who never missed a game at the nearest high school, even though basketball, for example, was as unknown to them in their youth as it was to all of us who are past seventy. And some of these old fellows who have talked to me knew practically nothing about the game but could tell the scores of their team for years on end. And some of these same old fellows were among the most outspoken voters who opposed the consolidation of small high schools, for, though they did not exactly say this, that would destroy their one big interest in going somewhere. But some of the oldsters moved with the crowds to the new big school and rooted as loudly as ever for the new team.

Some of the country churches have just about folded up. Cars make it easier to get away to other churches or just to get away. But I know a number of country churches that have greatly profited by the modern means of transportation. Several in my own county have members of prominence who drive out from town, help in all the affairs of the church, and have never lost connection with their native communities. I have seen some of these churches expand their buildings to add Sunday School rooms; I have seen modern and adequate heating arrangements installed, so that there is no excuse for a freezing out of church services in the winter months. Some of my own students, who have served such churches, have told me how satisfying it was to see a neighborhood reverse the process of giving up and being absorbed by the larger social units. It is not such an adventure now to go up the creek or out in the Flatwoods to church; why the Flatwoods is only ten minutes from Fidelity in an older car and half that in one just off the assembly line.

Recently , in tape-recording the voices of many people in the Mammoth Cave region as a part of the extended folklore study I am making there, I decided to have, largely among some of the older members of the maintenance crew, an animal-calling contest. The men entered into the recording with unusual zeal. Some of them said to me that some of the calling that was done was an echo of older times and was practically an unknown tongue to the younger people. Especially is this true of calling horses. I wonder whether "quup" or "quope,"or however it should be spelled, may not become one of our lost words soon. Why, even the most skilled whistler may not know how to whistle for a horse and may even forget how to call a dog with a slightly different whistle. "Gee" and "Haw" and "Whoa" may still exist by transfer rather than because of any normal use; I suppose that many people will go on "gee-hawing" to the end of time, whether that word is used or not. And every tall-tale spinner needs someone to call "Whoa" or "Whope" when the figures get a little too big or the exploits of the teller approach infinity.

And imagine trying to call the fifty cows that are to be milked at the dairy barn, particularly those with three or four names each! I notice that a middle-aged man who drives up the dairy herd on a farm where I often study birds still says "Hu-hy," again if that is the way to spell it. And the cows go along, either because of his language or because of the prospect of some good feed. One of my friends has completely destroyed the old custom of calling cows. He owns a big farm, on which are some dozens of beef cattle. How easy it has been for him to accustom the cattle to come when he honks his car horn! He has promised to take me out to show how even cattle are modernized. But our old cows, away back when, would have fairly run their legs off in the other direction if some such noise as a car horn had suddenly

occurred out in their pastures. "Come on, Jimmy, and sound the car horn, so the cattle will come up to be fed." Shades of the boys who used to be, who went, accompanied by their dogs, to drive home the cows!

My Mammoth Cave friends use almost the same pattern of calling hogs that we used at Fidelity or down in Hickman County, where I heard the champion hog-caller of all time. But these people say "Hoo--ey" and not "Goo-ey." The tone must be the thing, and I know that hogs, accustomed to that long-drawn-out call, just want to go home when they hear it.

Calling sheep may soon become a lost art, too. One year, not too long before I retired, I asked a large freshman class how many had known sheep well. Though more than half the class had grown up on farms and knew their cattle and hogs, not one had ever had a pet lamb, and only a few could call, convincingly, "Cu-sheepie."

Dogs are still called, I suppose, for they are certainly numerous in town and around the farms where I go to see birds. Just how to spell the sound we make in calling Fido I do not know, but it sounds like "Hye-uh," often with the dog's name added. I have known some very proper persons who said, actually, "Here, Fido." But I have noticed that Fido comes to the call he recognizes, whether it is sounded as Middle Western or as Southern or some half-way compromise in sound. My first landlord, when I was teaching my first school, merely called the dog's name, with no falsetto or "Hye-uh." and the dog came, just as my cattle-raising friend's cows come when he honks his car horn.

I think I will add to my first record of calling animals by having some small children, in the same area around Mammoth Cave, call all the animals they know, just to see whether this traditional custom has stayed alive through all the changes of farm life and the moving to towns.

ASHAMED TO PLAY

A news release from the United States Department of the Interior in early March, 1964, quotes Edward C. Crafts, director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, as saying: "Our national habits must change, but to overcome the force of habit is most difficult. Our national conscience must change and so must our sense of guilt about leisure."

These brief sentences somewhat summarize what I have so often said in this column about the old-fashioned devotion to work or what pretended to be work. Idleness as the devil's workshop was a bit overdone at Fidelity, so that we would be going through the motion of working when we were actually idling. Many of the "take warning" stories we heard were about boys and girls who did not work, who idled and therefore got into trouble.

As I look back now at my childhood, it seems to me that very few people knew how to relax. The ones who went fishing, for example, justified their outing by proclaiming how much their catch would aid the family larder. And many people whom I knew would fish so hard that they must have come back worn out with their leisure. Not a great many people felt that they had had any leisure unless they had eaten more than was good for them or even had drunk something stronger than branch water. A weekend binge of fishing usually left the fishermen pretty worn out to face another week's labor in the fields.

Most heads of families at Fidelity, especially the better families frowned on leisure. Bad boys, who were sure to grow into no-count men, might take off on Saturday afternoon from their farm work and make merry at the stores at Fidelity, but boys of the stricter families could get this privilege only by persuading their parents, and their consciences, that a trip to the store was necessary to purchase some needed groceries or farm needs. The actual time of purchasing was brief and that left some time to hear the latest risque jokes or to witness

some good practical joking. If the boy who felt that he must make the trip to the village got too enthusiastic about the easy life at the store, and got home later than he was expected, he got a lecture on the evils of wasting time.

Consciences, however, could be eased by our supposing that a dinner on the ground at Quarterly Meeting was just a part of a religious occasion. And on the Fourth of July, with a patriotic speaking both before and after the huge meal, we could feel that we had done our duty as citizens and, sheepishly, forget how much we had enjoyed the cessation of our sweaty work in the fields and our being able to allow crabgrass to grow and tobacco worms to fatten.

In my capacity as a keeper of records, I wonder why I never tried to follow up the later careers of the people who defiantly took their time off and compare this research with another one on the model fellows who preached and pretended to practice work, six days at a stretch. Somehow statistics are lacking to show just which of the numerous faults of the no-counts brought about their continuing being just no-count. Maybe hanging around the country store brought all the evils to our portion of humanity, that is, all except what the moon, the Civil War, and the party in power assured us. Most people believed in cumulative evils; therefore several generations must have hung around the stores, for some of the worthless ones just could not have been the products of a single generation.

When my family and I, in 1931, actually took off for a three-week vacation in Michigan, with some side trips, as to Niagara Falls on our round-about way home, a very pious lady of our acquaintance seemed badly puzzled. She said that she had never had a vacation, as such, in her life, somehow implying that there might be something wicked about the whole idea. Though she wished us well when we went away and actually asked us what sort of time we had had when we got back, I still believe that she expected us to suffer some calamity for being so worldly.

NEIGHBORHOOD LOYALTIES

Over and over, as the small community has lost its former importance or even been merged with a larger social unit, I have sat on the sideline and waited to see how humanity can or will adjust to changing conditions. A very few neighborhoods that I have known have recognized that they had so gone down in population that they could not afford to keep their school, for example. A few such communities, which had formerly been proud of their graded school, supported by local taxation, refused for years to admit that times had changed; one such small village taxed itself far above the tax rate of its county to keep its school on and on, even after the state department of education had warned it that it could not still be recognized as a standardized school. In one county that I know quite well, a community within easy walking distance of a large county-seat school, demanded and got a one-room school after many other schools in the same county were begging for consolidation. Every time I pass that schoolhouse site, I remember how even the county superintendent of the time felt proud of himself for giving the citizens of what would now be called the suburbs of the town a brand-new, dinky little school building.

Neighborhood jealousies have always been pretty numerous. In my youth I was the principal of a two-room school in a village that stoutly maintained its independence, especially against the neighboring village, where the population was building up, where a good road was being built, and where, ultimately, a good four-year high school was to function for decades, until all the small high schools of the county would be united in one respectable plant. Among older people, I suspect, that neighborhood jealousy must still exist; the younger people may wonder why Grandpap cannot see the value of the big county high school.

A good many years ago, I spoke several times in a big consolidated graded school that represented the union of ten one-roomed

schools. Fortunately, the first principal of the big new school was a good leader, not prejudiced toward any one of the nine schools that went out of business when the consolidated school was built where the tenth small school had been. Out in the front hall of the new school were displayed the pictures of the ten small schools and their teachers and pupils; a chance looking at these framed pictures soon convinced a great many people that the very small places were outdated, that the new center was in keeping with more advanced times. I have been at that school that united all these neighborhoods so well when it seemed that every type of neighborhood backing was present. But I must say that this was and is the exception.

In my own county, not too many years ago, the two teachers and every patron who had a child of school age asked that the small school be united with the large consolidated school not very far up the road. To this day I have never heard of a single regret from that community. The two teachers became a part of the larger unit, the children fit right into their respective grades, and the school is a good illustration of recognizing the passing of older times.

In accepting this changed condition, our generation has often adjusted more rapidly than could have been expected. In the earlier days of consolidation in our end of the state, tempers flared, name-calling got a big workout, and some old-timers in that area still carry around their resentment at the turn of things nearly forty years ago. Just yesterday I read an item in the daily paper that a new central high school for that entire county is being planned and will soon be erected. I wonder whether the neighborhood jealousies of the ~~late~~ mid-1920's will still be around when the new building is ready for occupancy. Of course, we hate to see our familiar customs change, we can always make out a case for our little nook back in the bend of the creek; but change is in the air, and it will need our support and our guiding care, not our hard-headed opposition because we remember only the good old days of the one-roomed school at Podunk or Fidelity.

T+C

A SHRINKING WORLD 1512

Since our entry into World War I, back in 1917, there have been hundreds of articles or even books written to show how the world, as we used to know it, has shrunk; it would take a regular Rip Van Winkle, not yet waked up, to fail to see the great truth in this commonplace point of view. Locally, as a recorder of folkways, I am more and more impressed with the shrinkage of the part of the world in which I have lived. Suppose we begin with what used to be a cosmos itself, the long-established community, such as my Fidelity. In no sense was I an underprivileged boy as seen in my time and place. But the world I knew as a youth was hardly twenty miles across. And, to be perfectly frank, I had rarely been to these modest limits of my universe. Since the wide Tennessee River was some six miles to the east of us, my world was lopsided, for, until I was grown and had been away from home on my own for more than a year, I had never been across the Tennessee River in any place. Relatives of both sides of my family lived a few miles west of Murray; some more lived at Puryear, Tennessee. To go to these distant places was hard on horseflesh, and such a journey was rarely attempted. The funniest thing about all this to me, as an old man, is that I could walk across the world of my childhood right now and feel no ill effects. But if a true map of my little world were drawn, it would show as a shaded portion, representing the part of the world I knew best, some eight or ten square miles, with some varying shaded areas along the roads to the ends of the world I knew. If this had happened just to me, I suppose that I would be ashamed of my ignorance of geography; but I was certainly above the average in the Fidelity neighborhood in the distances to which I had ridden my mule or driven the family buggy.

Having to work with maps a lot lately, I have been measuring air-line distances between churches and schoolhouses or country stores.

It is always a surprise to find out how small each little community was, how easy it would have been to find one's way out into a bigger world, how astounding it is that so few people felt any serious challenge to go "over the hills and far away." Of course, since the early days of pioneering, which somehow seemed to have exhausted the roving fever for many people, ways of getting anywhere had deteriorated rather than improved. Whoever has ~~ever~~ driven a wagon or buggy along a new cut road through woods and then has tried to negotiate the same road after some winters of hard usage will understand why roads deteriorated rather than improved. Many a road, before fences became common, wandered around through the woods, to avoid mudholes, until there would be worn wheel tracks everywhere in sight. We had graduated from ox teams to wagons and buggies, but traveling in bad weather was still what the name used to mean, "suffering."

When I first left home, I often told people that my father as a country doctor practiced over a large area , as big as the District of Columbia, that is, some 100 square miles. Since roads and cars have arrived in the Fidelity area, it would be possible to drive safely across Father's practice area in almost any direction in fifteen minutes at most; if you like speed, you would be across before you felt that you were actually getting started. From the Mouth of Sandy, over in Tennessee, it is barely nine miles to Fidelity, and Father's practice area extended a few miles to the west from the village. With my memories of the fearful distances of my childhood, you can see why I burst out laughing when I saw, some years ago, a sign that read "Speed Limit 60," a few hundred yards outside Fidelity.

Within five years I have heard elderly men declare that we should return to the one-roomed school. The last man who said that to me had just driven out fifteen miles from Bowling Green to a farm that he owned, where he was practicing the very latest farming methods and was making good money at it. I wonder how sincere these old fellows really are

THE HOME-TOWN PAPER

Among the thousands of letters and cards that have come to me in the twenty-nine years since this column began, I suppose fully a fourth have been from ex-Kentuckians who still take their home-town papers and thus know what is going on back in the small worlds in which they used to live. Within one week, some years ago, I got a long letter from an elderly judge, who has spent all his mature years in Arizona; and another one from his son, also a judge, who left one of our western Kentucky counties as a small boy but also took the home-town paper. Neither one knew that the other had written. The father was past seventy-five, the son was in the early fifties; they had been away from Kentucky since the young man was a mere lad. But every week they had read about their former neighbors and about the places that used to seem so far away, over on the other side of a smallish county. The younger man was planning a trip back to Kentucky with his grown and growing children to show them the marvelous places that he had told them about. I do hope that they were properly impressed, with their father's dream world if not with the actual scenes of his childhood.

I suppose my champion story about the home-town paper arose when a very old woman, living in Utah but from Trigg County originally, wrote to ask me whether I was one of the Wilsons from Sassafras Ridge. When I wrote back that I was not of that clan but regarded her identification of me with her own people as one of the best compliments imaginable, she answered immediately and wanted me to hurry up and publish a book based on my articles, so she could really show authentic accounts of Kentucky to her doubting neighbors. When my PASSING INSTITUTIONS appeared in 1943, she immediately ordered a dozen or so copies to give to her long-time friends; I hope that they were convinced that her memories and the items in her home-town newspaper were genuine.

One of the biggest surprises I ever have had as to the efficacy of the home-town newspaper came in the most trying days of World War II. From some obscure address in north Africa came a letter from a young man who had already done some excellent writing about Kentucky and who is today one of our foremost state fiction writers. He had just received from home a large package of his county newspapers, long delayed in reaching him; as soon as he had read his letters from relatives that had come that same day, he sat down and, said he, read every one of my articles, to get the feel of things back home. Before he went to bed that night, he wrote me one of the best letters I have ever had. The home-town paper had found him in the deserts of Africa, but, for the time, with news from places he knew, he was back in the Kentucky mountains, where his characters had already been found or would be found in his years of writing fiction. To be identified with the news from home pleases me immensely.

Some years ago I stopped in Harrodsburg to eat lunch. Just to start a conversation, I told the restaurant-keeper that I had in my classes a very prominent young man from that town. "Yes, I know him well and his father, too. The paper said last week that the boy had recently been elected the principal of ____High School for next year." Three other times that day I worked the same trick to get people to talk by mentioning, while I was buying gas at a roadside filling station, buying a handkerchief or two at a store, and stopping to ask directions to Herrington Lake, that I knew and had taught this young fellow. And each time I was told, in precisely the same words, what each person had read in the home-town paper. When I came back home, I at once contacted the publicity man of our college and told him how effective a news item is when it concerns somebody; everybody likes to see his name in print; and there is a reflected glory in seeing the name of someone whom we know and have an interest in. The president of my college, who was our former publicity man, says the county newspaper is the best-read newspaper or magazine of them all. I am inclined to agree with him.

T 4 C

BECOMING A PASSING INSTITUTION

For more than half my lifetime I have been talking or writing about passing institutions and have taken a real interest in setting down faithfully the customs that I used to know. I would be a hypocrite if I pretended that I liked all the institutions I have written about. They were in existence; I lived with them; in order to present honestly the times of my early boyhood and of my early manhood, even, I have tried to be just as honest in telling about customs that I did not especially care for as for those that were a very tender part of my memories.

Now here is something for me as an old man and for the older readers of this column. Let's be careful not to become passing institutions ourselves. Of course there were valuable things about our back-country times; we should not be ashamed that we lived when we did. But we have lived into other times and would like to be regarded as still far from senile. A good way to avoid senility, whether one is old or young, is to be a part of the world as it develops, not merely a citizen of some Lost Eden, some Limbo of Things That Were. Too many of the older people whom I have known, from my earliest days until now, have deified some portion of the infinite thing called time and have judged all portions by that tiny bit. A genuine sense of history early implanted into one's mind would help us to see that one generation stresses certain things, another stresses another, but that humanity, down under all the superficial unlikeness is almost comically like people of many other times. It is not our common humanity that senile people stress but some outward manner or dress or expression. We love to dote on the elegant gentlemen, the lovely ladies of another time, When "every goose was a swan, and every lass a queen."

Let's be fair with each other and look at some of the things that

older people love to glorify. A cord bed would be a good place to start. You may have slept on a cord bed that was more comfortable than a modern mattress, but I must have drawn the culls and rejects of such beds. I am a fat man and must bring out all the irregularities of cord beds. To own one is fine; but I would rather sleep somewhere else. A few days ago some town-bred person was dilating on the virtues of spring water. Well and good when the spring is a real spring that bubbles up through layers of sand and is not merely the outlet of an underground stream, such as most of the springs in the limestone areas are. This person somehow associated spring water, out at Grandma's, with the Fountain of Perpetual Youth. While old/sters are raving about fine old things, why not write a paean of praise for the old surrey; why not spend a tidy sum to have an old one restored or a new one bought? Where would you show off your fine old carriage? Maybe some of our enthusiasms for old things are basically no more sensible than it would be for me to sell my modest car, borrow some more money, and invest in a surrey like the one that used to excite wonder and covetousness at Sulphur Springs Church, back when the century and I were in the teens together.

As a lifelong teacher of literature, I know that I have had more than my share of teaching poems that glorified some dreamworld and tried to make it a reality. Some of these poems were written by dreamy young fellows, who had found ordinary living Now and Here pretty rough going. If only the poet could take the wings of the morning and fly away, how happy he would be in some Shangri-La, where youth never ends, where arthritic pains of oncoming age are unknown! At Fidelity I knew several dozen people who were convinced that only the times "before the war," the Civil War, of course, really offered youth and age alike a chance to live in a perpetual dreamworld. Meanwhile the farms were being washed away because of senseless methods of agriculture; ambitious boys and girls were escaping, whenever possible, to some living Here and Now elsewhere. Are you a passing institution?

THE TEMPLE OF LEARNING

Candidates for everything from jailer to Congressman, when they used to come out to Fidelity to solicit our votes, had a way of glorifying the little one-roomed schoolhouse, which they sometimes dignified by calling it a "temple of learning." In spite of the meager little building--dirty, hot in summer and never warm in winter, inadequate in just about every way--those word-slinging orators had something on their side. Within my lifetime, and especially since I turned fifty, thousands of one-roomed schools have "folded their tents like the Arabs and as silently stolen away," to misquote Longfellow slightly. Last night, when I was composing myself to sleep, I began to count the small school districts that I used to know--in my native county of Calloway, and in Warren and its adjoining counties, where I have spent my grown-up days. In trying to recall just where even one such school is still running, I finally recalled that a neighboring county has one, which is scheduled to close its doors at the end of this school year. When I used to conduct teachers' institutes in that county, back in the late teens and early twenties of this century, there were more than sixty one-roomed schools, and I remember that one such school was established after World War I. When I have mentioned this to some of the younger generation of that county, I have received a laugh that was kind but showed plainly some great doubts of my accurate memory.

One of the brightest students of my earlier days as a teacher at Western became a county superintendent and was, for his time, quite successful. One of his chief beliefs was that the one-roomed school had all the answers. He questioned the consolidation of schools that were so close together that the boys of one school could easily run to the other building and back in a game of Hare and Hounds and still have plenty of energy to stay awake and alive until school was over for the day. I do appreciate the zeal of that superintendent in his efforts to send to the remotest neighborhood as good a teacher as could

be found. He even tried to make salaries for teachers of these small schools attractive enough to guarantee a full faculty for his school system. Rightly or wrongly, and in spite of the tender feelings that have attached to the small school unit, humanity is going in another direction; a one-roomed school, at least in my part of the state, will soon be as unfamiliar a sight as a rubber-tired buggy.

Cynics always had a way of belittling the "temples of learning" that my county-superintendent friend admired and tried to improve. Many a person whom I have known along the way has looked at the small school in the same way that expensively-dressed ladies used to look at the filthy alleys and run-down houses and half-starved brats that they saw when they went slumming. Probably not more than a few years away from just such small educational centers, they had left forever their connections with rural areas and rural manners. The same cynicism has always been obvious among so-called educators on higher levels than the one-roomed school. On many occasions I have seen a teacher in a starveling private school all but insult the teacher in a public school, even a public school that was progressive and prosperous. No wonder brats often act so badly when older people show their brattishness!

Consolidation of smaller units is still a new enough thing to have enemies, almost everywhere. Neighborhood loyalties and declining populations have caused some rather bitter educational feuds in my time. Some older fellows, not wishing to remain a part of the world until Gabriel blows his horn, fall back on glorifying the school unit that was once everything, when the whole universe seemed to revolve around Shady Grove or Green Hill or Twin Branch or whtever was the name of the little school now so sacred in memory. Isn't it possible to appreciate things as valuable as our school life without deifying some phase of it and failing to keep up with the procession?

-14C

THE POOR MAN'S JOB

This morning, as I was washing and polishing the family car, an elderly man who works for the sanitation department of our city came to get our weekly accumulation of garbage. As he was emptying the garbage and trash into a huge can, the modern, brand-new street sweeper of our town came by. "There goes many a job for a poor man," said the sanitation department worker. And he was right. That machine can sweep and pick up as it sweeps, in a few minutes, the litter and dirt that a whole crew of workmen with brooms and shovels would have worked for hours to get off our streets.

When the garbage man and the street sweeper had gone on down the street, I got to thinking how I had seen dozens of similar happenings in my three quarters of a century of life. Suppose we start with the farm, where a large percentage of Americans used to live. The slow, patient ox team had just about gone when I could first remember. For hauling log wagons out of muddy river bottoms they were still useful, but farmers had already decided that the ox was too slow for plowing. All through my boyhood and on for two decades and more the mule was a symbol of modernness in farming. Four big mules hitched to a big plow marked the owner as somebody. As I have written before, I used to see big Missouri mules rented for the season of breaking wheat ground, back in 1907, when I taught my first school, down in the farming area of Hickman County. A poet could have written some strong verses about the wonder of three and four teams of these monsters as they followed each other around the fields. In the same year there was exhibited, in a show window at Clinton, the county seat of Hickman County, a natty little automobile. It attracted the attention of all the people who came to town on Saturday afternoons to do their trading. I wonder what would have happened if some prophet had told those farmers that this plaything sitting in a show window was the aristocratic relative

of a thing called a tractor, which would revolutionize farming and farm life. Even prophets, in those days, did not venture very far away from the safe-and-sound mule economy, which had so far exceeded the ox-team economy.

Think how the tractor has routed the mule, how a skilled driver of a tractor can do more than several mule-drivers and their teams could have done, how even huge farms now can be run by what would have been a skeleton force in my youth! And, linked with this change in farming, have come the automobile as one of our modern necessities, electric service, modern living conditions. At Fidelity only a few familes skimmed off the ice from the horse pond and stored it in an ice house; ice and its uses were extremely limited, for there was the spring, that foreordained place to keep milk cool. The weekly newspaper still exists, adapting itself regularly to changing times, but most of its readers have heard, at fifteen-minute intervals, the events of the whole world.

When spinning and weaving were wholly a matter of individual work, it took thousands of people to produce enough cloth, of any sort, for humanity. Each new invention put an end to some "poor man's job." And suppose that trained rowers were in demand today to move the commerce of the world! And silversmiths, who did such exquisite work! When we stop to think back over any phase of human activity, it is easy to see how every change has been attended by new adjustments, heartbreaks, changes in one's living conditions. One of the greatest lectures I ever heard was called "The Trap," in which an eminent college president gave instance after instance of highly-specialized work that was rendered almost useless by newer ways of doing things. Unless the skilled worker had some other skill to fall back upon, he sometimes became a victim of changing times. In every age of civilization it would have been possible to echo the words of the garbage man when he saw the new street sweeper go by: "There goes the job of many a poor man."

LIZARDS AND SAURIANS

~~SAURIANS AND TERRAPINS~~

Geologic time seems to most people a terrific struggle that Darwin called the "survival of the fittest." But in Biblical phrase, the race was not always to the swift, for some animals were able to outlive the more powerful creatures, the stronger, the more swift; often when I see a lizard cross my path, I think how the small little fellow has outlasted the larger members of his family. And a slow old terrapin could tell many tales of eons of time that would make the oldest trees of California, and the most ancient evidences of humanity, even, seem like upstarts.

When I first began to record passing institutions, I was fresh from years of teaching Latin and from studying the private life of typical Roman people. It was easy to see how many customs that were commonplace in Roman times long ago ceased to be or were changed into almost unrecognizable form. Christianity took some of these older customs, reinterpreted them, and gave them new life; waves of interest in classical times bring new knowledge of how people lived and thought; archaeology has often breathed some breath of life into peoples long dead, as in the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. In my years of reading I have often felt that I, too, lived in a time when the customs of ages were being buried beneath Vesuvian ashes.

From my boyhood I have resented the snap judgment by which many people judge other people and judge conditions that are different from what they have always known. I got my first hostility to this form of criticism from the brats of the other side of the county, who somehow refused to believe that we East Side brats could possibly get any joy out of life if we differed from them. And yet our ways, rather old-fashioned as I look back at them now, were somehow satisfying and now seem about as queer as the ones suggested by our relatives. We who

used to look over pictures in the old family album, and enjoy many a laugh at the funny folks who used to be, have often lived long enough to find ourselves quite as funny, even to ourselves. In looking over some older pictures in which I had a part I am often amazed and amused at the way I dressed, the stiff little boy or adolescent in his dress-up clothes. Take the old school picture of 1901 or 1902, in which I occupy a place; could that serious-looking, somewhat chubby-faced lad be the fellow I have known so long? Or take the earlier picture of me in my knee pants and with my six-year-old head held in what I feared was a death grip by the headrest that was to hold me still while the picture man administered his tortures. But the one that has caused the most laughter lately is a snapshot of my wife and me, almost fifty years ago, made in our city park by one of my students. It is nearly as hard to recognize myself there as to believe that the scared little boy of six was the same bit of human flesh that would become the oldish man of seventy-five. But time has taken its revenge, for now I find myself laughing at myself of another time, just as youngsters of all ages have got tickled at quaint old ways of acting, speaking, and dressing.

If the ancient Romans and we could have overcome the language barriers, we probably would have found much in common. We could have forgotten the mere outward trappings of our culture and recognized the basic truths of our beliefs and customs. And each one of us might have been able to tell the other age some very fine things that each of us in turn failed to learn or failed to put into practice. The little lizard might have the secret of living on into other ages that the big saurian did not learn; the sluggish terrapin might be able to preach, in true Aesop fashion, about some of the merits of taking life easy. Maybe the world is too small for the saurians and the modern lizard at the same time. Maybe humanity has gifts to offer that are appropriate to a certain time and place but not universal and long-lasting.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Any study of human institutions soon brings the student up against status symbols. Almost every thing that we do or say or eat or wear of think has some connection with what the neighbors will say. The old Latin word for customs , "mores," means just about this. The Latin people were long on the "mos maiorum," the customs of the elders. It takes only a few minutes of reading to see how the ancient Jews somehow built their lives around the customs of their elders, giving a custom a clean bill of health or a curt dismissal largely in terms of whether it agreed with what was done in the days of the patriarchs. Before we laugh too much at these worshipful attitudes toward ancient peoples, it might pay us to see whether we, too, are not often too prone to refuse to change because our charging might disagree with our own "customs of the elders."

In Kentucky a large number of us are interested in a revision of our state constitution, which, good in its day, is certainly only a human document and, like all such documents, subject to being outdated. Some years ago, when I went to speak to a woman's club in a big town of the state, almost the first thing I heard was stern opposition to our changing any item in our state constitution, for, as one of the strongest women in the club said, "Our grandfathers knew best." But this lady lived in a modern house, with all the gadgets that her grandfather knew nothing about: telephone, radio, steam heat, daily mail delivery, college education for Junior, her own woman's club, a daily newspaper, etc., etc. And, not the least of them all, an automobile, which had enabled her to travel farther in a few days than her grandfather, who had helped devise the 1891 constitution, ever got to travel. He was a distinguished Kentuckian, I will admit, but no Kentuckian that I have yet known could have known ahead of time how to provide for the changes in

our living that have come ~~w~~ since 1891. I am not wise enough to say what things should be kept in any revision of the constitution, but it certainly should be adapted to automobiles, at least, and whatever these necessities of our times bring with them.

One of our American humorists wrote a funny essay or chatty discussion many years ago about the evils of letting women have their own ways. First he pictured a typical pioneer home, where only the barest necessities were around, most of them home-made or home-grown. There was, for instance, the drinking gourd, hallowed by long use. But if the ancient gourd should spring a leak or rot away, another one, grown on the garden fence, could soon be made into an equally serviceable household necessity. Things went along happily for many years in a certain family; the good old drinking gourd held its place, just as it had from ancient days. But the woman of the family had visited among some of her high-class relatives and had seen a tin dipper, which seemed ever so much classier than a mere gourd, which even a no-account could have owned. Forthwith the woman began longing for a tin dipper; by and by she openly mentioned it as desirable. Her husband said nothing, fearing that one new thing might start a long chain of breaking down customs. But the woman persisted, and the husband finally broke down and did not raise too much fuss when the woman bought a shiny new dipper from a traveling peddler. And, sure enough, that started things to happening. The cabin began to take on some modern looks: some glass had to be bought for the window, to replace the wooden shutter that had served too long; the log house had to be ceiled and weatherboarded; and even the woman of the house had to own an open-and-shut fan to take to church, to replace the turkey wing that had always seemed sufficient. The next generation went still further, for the son of the woman who bought the dipper went to school at a private so-called college and then read law under a lawyer at the county seat; and the daughter married a doctor that had actually gone to a medical school. And old customs began to break into a thousand pieces.

"GROW WE MUST"

In late May, 1964, I made my 315th commencement address and certainly should be forgiven if I resort to an old man's method of telling how things used to be. The first thing I want to say, however, is that this speech, one of 287 given before high school graduating classes, marked the end of a long-established high school, one with 57 years of distinguished history. Next year this school will merge with the only other one left in its county, to form a big county high school. And that school will join the 175 places where I have spoken that no longer exist as high schools or , at least, under their original names. When there was a small high school at every crossroads, I often gave addresses to eight or ten classes in one year where there were fewer than a dozen graduates in each. In fact, it was many years after I began this practice of speaking before graduating groups before a class as large as 25 appeared. In some ways, I must say, these early small schools were very close to their clientele, and some of my finest experiences came in some of the smallest schools. People had waked up to the need of a high school education for their children and were very proud of the boy or girl who, first of a whole family or tribe, secured a very-much-coveted diploma.

But "grow we must, even if we outgrow all that we love," as Holmes truly says. A small high school is limited in its appeal; most of us have learned to think big; and our children want and deserve the chance that the larger school can offer. And, besides, small high schools cost enormously for the number of students enrolled. Thus the consolidation of smaller high schools has gone on rapidly, especially within the last twenty years. Many counties have centered their efforts on one centrally-located school, available to every child who is qualified to attend. And there has grown up a fine pride in the bigger school that embodies most of the small schools' loyalty and interest. Little provincial boun-

daries have ceased to be, and, in general, they have soon been practically forgotten.

Of course, there is an element of sadness in this consolidation of several formerly self-sufficient neighborhoods, but it is the tendency of our times to think in terms of larger units. And, whether we like it or not, we are living now and not in some long-ago time when a small range of hills or a spring branch marked off the boundaries of a school district. Modern roads and the automobile have reduced distances so much that it seems silly when younger people have heard me tell how an area that you could drive across now in ten minutes used to contain from three to five separate schools, many of them small. These were grade schools, of course, for the high school had not yet arrived. But I get a similar doubting laugh when I tell of having spoken before high school classes of fewer than a dozen, and on two occasions before a class of one. But there had to be a start, and both places where there was a complete commencement for a single graduate lived to graduate large classes before the high school in turn yielded to the larger unit and merely retained the local graded school.

Opponents of this tendency sometimes remind me of very old people who used to live at Fidelity and who were sure that everything had degenerated since the family used to live back in North Carolina, back in God's Own Country. It was hard to grow up in a community where most eyes, even young eyes, were forever turned backward. Humanity was in a sad way, if we had believed our local wiseacres. No person worth his salt had been born since the Civil War; each successive generation was getting worse and worse. No wonder these old-timers were compelled to look forward to a Hereafter that would be a glorified North Carolina, where all the dreams of not-too-famous descendants would be realized, and even the most ornery would be as great as the greatest, back in the central area of North Carolina. I wonder sometimes whether we later fellows are much brighter than were my backward-looking neighbors at Fidelity.

T & C

MODERN DRUGS

Just how far medical science has been accepted over most of the state I have no direct way of knowing, but for my particular part of the state there is no aspect of our present-day customs that has changed more within recent years. In my efforts to set down home remedies I find even people in middle age who have almost forgotten the every-day customs of my own childhood and youth. The younger generation know of home remedies largely by hearsay, not by [illegible] taste or feel.

Not long ago I was trying to find someone who had seen old-fashioned bleeding as a regular surgical remedy; I finally found a man who is considerably past seventy who recalled the last time he saw any one being bled. Some of the younger people who were listening to my talk with him seemed to believe that both of us old men had lost a considerable number of our marbles in trying to recall such a barbarous medical or surgical practice.

As yet I have been unable to find any genuine home-made bitters, though even youngish people can recall having tasted some of the concoctions of Grandma or some other self-ordained rural doctor. My next plan is to interview some of the old-fashioned herb collectors and try to get down on tape or on paper some of their practices. It would be a shame if some epidemic should break out and the knowledge of the making of bitters would be lost. Tragic results might follow.

Hospitals used to be merely places of last resort. When we learned that Mr. John had been taken to the hospital, we at once thought of a funeral; and often we were right. The very word hospital was almost as hush-hush as such words as consumption, cancer, lunacy. Now our hospitals are crowded, and new wings have to be added to the buildings every few years. Not to have been in a hospital somehow brands one now very much as not having ridden on a train did when I was young.

It is a little too risky a business for me, a mere man, to be nosey about what people buy at the drugstores, but I wish I could get an accurate picture of the sale now of patent medicines. It is possible that this source of health-giving nostrums has completely taken the place of some of the home-made, traditional remedies that my generation knew. Not long ago another older person and I got to mentioning the names of bottled stuff that used to be sold by the gallon at every cross-roads drugstore; neither of us could recall when we had even seen the names of old-time stand-bys in print. Maybe we associate with the wrong crowd. It is more likely that our old-time branch-water remedies are still around under some more modern names. Anyway, humanity just must have some bad-tasting stuff to take, to remind it(or them) that life is brief and full of pains. Millions of people have lived and died who sincerely loved to complain, and how can you complain effectively without having a bottle or two of strong stuff to take when the mood strikes you?

One aspect of adapting ourselves to modern medicine is slightly comic. The latest approved shots or pills or tonics are bought and paid for by people who were raised on burdock bitters and similar old-time remedies. But in some other fields of thought, not related to medicine, old ideas still hang around. It would seem that no one would be able to hold up his head in a farmers' meeting now if he followed the methods of planting that his grandfather practiced. And yet there are rich farmers, even, who follow the almanac as rigorously as did our next-nearest neighbor at Fidelity, who would not have dropped a single grain of corn into the soil or butchered a pig, or gathered an ear of corn without first consulting his almanac. Farm agents have, in some areas, just about routed this ancient dependence upon old superstitious practices, but within a few weeks of my writing this I have been taken to task for laughing at such a sacred thing as plating according to the phases of the moon. It was even hinted that I had departed from my raising and was becoming slightly dangerous. "Hurry up, Doc, and give me a shot; I've got to get back to plant my corn before the moon changes."

"GOODBY, ANDERSON SCHOOL"

The last one-roomed country school in Edmonson County, my second home in the last half century, closed at the end of the 1963-64 school term. Anderson School, at Jock, not far from the new Nolin River Dam, was the last of its kind in that county and in many neighboring counties. The new road being built across the dam and connecting with other roads on the northern side of Green River will enable busses to bring the whole group of high school students to Brownsville and to deliver the grade children to Kyrock Grade School. This passes a landmark, a symbol. Boys born in late 1964 and hereafter in Edmonson County cannot begin their political speeches by announcing themselves as the products of the one-roomed country school. Just what can take the place of this vote-drawing appeal?

When I first knew Edmonson County, more than a half century ago, there was a one-roomed country school just about every three or four miles along what then went for roads. School buses were unknown; sturdy youthful legs furnished the only transportation, but they were equal to that plus exciting games like Hare and Hounds, which often took them much farther across the sinkholes and hollows and ridges. Many changes have taken place in the number of such schools, but there must have been 80 or more in the small county as far back as 1918. I used to speak to the teachers in that county and can recall that there was a whole county-court-room full of them, nearly all from schools that had only one teacher. Slowly, after World War I, some of the smaller schools were closed; in fairly recent years all the rest have gone except Anderson School. The Mammoth Cave National Park absorbed the areas of ten complete schools and much of the area of schools just outside the boundaries. Highways slowly came into even the remote places, so that a school bus could make its way to just about everybody. Long ago some of the neighboring counties had closed their small schools and had concentrated on some half

dozen centrally-located and modern graded schools.

As an old-timer I must not let myself see only the advantages of the one-roomed school, certainly as they appear through some rosy mists that nearly always dance before old eyes. But I would not be worthy of having spent my whole life in the schoolroom if I did not say that these tiny, poorly-equipped little buindings represented for millions of people the one outlet from rather narrow, humdrum lives. And I have known hundreds of dedicated teachers, many of them my own students, who brought to the one-roomed school all the verve of inspired teachers. And many of the boys and girls, too, got their first impulse to make a place for them-selves in a rather cold world from the years spent in the one-roomed Temples of Learning, as poetic people might have called them.

On the other hand, I would not be worthy of having been a teacher of teachers if I failed to see that times change and that what was sufficient for my generation is hardly good enough for the ones who are now in school. I was born in horse-and-buggy days, almost at the beginning of that era in our neck of the woods; lots of things have happened since then. In spite of lingering memories of the good side of that early life, we oldsters know full well that we want out descendants to be a part of their own times. A few old fellows whom I know spend most of their time proclaiming the merits of horse-and-buggy days, without ever mentioning any defects of that time. But these same old fellows have all the modern necessities, such as electricity and automobiles and advanced medical science, and sometimes interrupt their paeans of praise for old times by turning on their TV's to see what is happening in Viet Nam or some other place that is slightly farther away than the neighboring country school that seems so perfect. Old-timers should be consistent, especially in order to make their praise of other times effective; why modernize? And yet I have not lately heard any suggestions of oldsters trading in their slightly used cars for a good old rubber-tired buggy, such as they used to drive to Podunk or Rabbit Ridge.

T+C

D-DAY PLUS ONE

In early June, 1964, I was the special guest of the 1914 class at Western at the fiftieth reunion. Believe it or not, I had taught most of that class, since many of them took Latin under me in 1912 and 1913, the first years of my teaching at Western. Though saddened by the death of more than a third of the class, a good-sized group of us sat around a table as we ate our noonday meal and talked over old times. For many of us they were pretty hazy old times, for so many things have happened since then that the near and the far get strangely mixed.

The occasion brought back to our minds how far the attitude toward public education has come in the half century since 1914. Public colleges were still decidedly on the defensive then, and we students and teachers in a state-supported college were hardly on the top rung of any ladder. High schools were so new that thousands of our students, up until 1922, when Western and Eastern were made four-year colleges, were doing high-school work. Probably 90% of my students in my first five years of teaching were grown men and women doing high-school courses. Some counties were rather slow about establishing county high schools; some counties that I knew well put the first schools away over on the border of the county, in an enthusiastic neighborhood, but hardly within reach of very many students. Roads were mere trails then, and cars were very, very scarce. By degrees high schools grew up at most of the cross roads, but that was a long way off when I began my teaching at Western.

It would be unkind in me if I did not mention the tremendous sacrifices that were necessary for a whole generation to acquire an education that included high school and two years of college. Hundreds, maybe thousands, of my earliest students just could not raise the money or the resistance to popular apathy to stay in school until a complete college degree was in their possession. We hear a lot today about

dropouts, and what we hear is true and bad enough. But I can remember, all too clearly, how the number of students leaving school without finishing anything far exceeded in percentage ~~anything~~ what ~~that~~ is happening now. To be able to have half of one's class present on the last day of the term was, in the more elementary courses, looked upon as rather good. I have taught many classes that fell far below that lamentable average. Some of these dropouts finally managed to get back into college again and add some more credits; some were like the poet's daffodils, "ne'er to be found again." It is astonishing that some stayed on and went so far in education.

There was a time, not too long ago, when a large percentage of humanity regarded advanced education, maybe even beyond the grade school, as a sort of luxury, certainly not a necessity. In recent years even the most callous opponents of education have had to admit that nearly all jobs of any consequence are open only to those who have some sort of education beyond the mere fundamentals. The conception that enough zeal could overcome even the handicap of illiteracy has been a long time dying, and it is hardly dead yet. In our efforts to relieve poverty we seem to forget sometimes that unless the unfortunates are given some education, so they can take care of themselves, our efforts to help become a mere dole, only enough to keep people from starving but not enough to help them help themselves. Recently an official of a large coal-mining company told me that the company had no notion of turning over expensive machinery to some fellow who had no education. A machine costing dozens of thousands of dollars is too much to let someone with only brawn tinker with it; only a trained mechanic would do. And long ago the farmers, who are really contributing to our better living conditions, learned that it takes somewhat more ability to run a tractor than to drive a mule; farming is decidedly big business now, with investments that must not be squandered on inefficient hands. It has taken this practical application of education to convince some people, and many have been convinced.

A FOLK DRUGSTORE

In many of the restorations of older types of stores just about everything has been attempted. But I want to suggest something that I have not seen tried as yet, a folk drugstore. I do not mean just a reconstruction of an old-fashioned apothecary shop, as older people would have called it, folkish as that would have been. My type of store would include some of the items of such a store but also many other things that even these quaint establishments did not have.

Suppose we start out with bottled stuff. There would be a bottle of burdock bitters, another one of wild-cherry-bark bitters, another of sulphur and molasses, and on and on, not forgetting pokeberry wine and pokeberry bitters(one pokeberry to a quart of whiskey). But there would also be a bottle of stump water, with elaborate directions of how to apply it to freckles, pimples, and other blemishes on the skin. And there would be a good-sized bottle of branch water, so that the visitors could see just how weak said branch water was and is. A bottle or jar of home-made soap would be on hand, to show how common and ugly it is and what the simile means when used about it. Since I do not know just how to arrange a display of home-made sin, also used in a simile, I do not know whether to put it among the bottles or elsewhere. Judging by the simile, I must think it pretty ugly. Maybe I'd have to have a photograph of someone who was just that ugly.

Among the dried specimens would be some mullein leaves, used for smokes and for the treatment of nasal troubles. And good old rabbit tobacco would be on hand, too, with its ever-present attack on catarrh. A package of the dried inside linings of chicken gizzards would assure tiny babies of a remedy for bad digestion, and even older people could find in this package a relief from their dyspepsia. Some Indian turnip roots, properly dried and ready to be grated, would suggest

treatment for cramp colic.

It would be necessary to have some growing things, too, so that this folk drugstore would have to have, in a back garden, a sort of thriving herbarium rather than a dried one. There would be milkweed, with its astringent juice to put on warts; and Osage orange to furnish sap for the same remedy. Some healthy elder stalks could supply leaves to put into your hat to prevent sunstroke and some berries for elderberry tea, useful in the treatment of many diseases. Of course, some slippery ellum trees would be necessary, to supply that sticky inner bark that cyores just about everything. And it would be necessary for me, or some other Doctor of Folk Medicine, to be on hand to see that slippery elm and other barks are peeled downward if they are to relieve troubles of the abdomen and upward if they are bring comfort to a patient suffering from lung or other troubles that affect the chest and throat. Imagine the tragedy of having some ignoramus peeling the bark the wrong way; he ought to be sued for malpractice. This same arboretum should have some peachtrees, for the bark of those trees and the gum exuding from them work wonders and near miracles. In a sort of kitchen garden you could have tansy, and ground ivy, and parsley, and horseradish, and plenty of onions(for poultices). If you were a heathen, you could erect a small monument or bust to some Greek god of health, who saw to it that poor human beings had, right in the woods and gardens, remedies that assure health and long life.

Inside the drugstore there would be cans and jars and packages of other standbys: sulphur, lard, mutton tallow, cornsilks, red-oak bark, white walnut bark, poke roots(shredded), dock seeds, turpentine, bees-wax, salt, pepper(red and black), snuff, tobacco(to be chewed and placed on insect bites), and dozens more of the remedies that our ancestors practiced and had complete faith in. I am afraid that my suggested drugstore has grown so big by now that I will have to solicit the financial aid of some philanthropic millionaire to help me make it a reality. Anyway, wouldn't you like to see just such a store?

T & C

THAT DRUGSTORE AGAIN

The only trouble about being old is that one thing suggests another, and most old codgers like me, when they get an idea started, just talk on and on, whether anybody listens or not. Now that folk drugstore has me raving. In the previous essay I mentioned a whole host of things that should be in such a museum piece; now I must continue with some more suggestions, in order that the folk drugstore and its supplies may be sufficient to "keep the doctor away."

Not all remedies are as tangible as sulphur and molasses or poke-berry wine or mullein leaves. Many remedies are somewhat intangible. This folk drugstore should help sufferers from ills that do not yield to mere stuff like the things mentioned in the earlier essay. Available for all visitors should be directions, properly written or printed, for the proper order of events in treating diseases. A full account of the effects of the moon would make a handy little booklet, which could be hung up at the end of the mantel in one's home, along with the Ladies' Birthday Almanac or some other well-known treastise on human ills. Now, for instance, how would you go about cutting open a chicken to put the bleeding carcass on some aching rheumatic joints? How would you know how to prepare a flaxseed-and-mustard poultice for the chest of a pneumonia patient? And how would a mere ten-thumbed fellow like me know how to get the right proportions of herbs and salt and sugar and garlic?

Some remedies are in the form of rhymes or spells. Some properly printed rhymes should be available for those who wish to get rid of a sty by going to the nearest crossroads and wishing said sty on the next unlucky fellow who chances to come by. Full directions about saying the right hocus-pocus as the wart-rubber does his work might raise the social standing of this benefactor of the human race; I am sure that he needs to have his memory refreshed by having some

printed directions. However, some wart-rubbers and blood-stoppers declare that what they say has been handed down in the family and must not be reduced to writing; that would destroy the power of the faith-doctor.

Also in this drugstore-museum should be some flint rocks, properly placed, to show just how they can be used to remove warts. First you find a flint rock and carefully see which way it is lying; then you pick a wart until it bleeds; next you take the flint rock and rub some of the blood on it; finally, and here is the rub, you replace it exactly as it was; otherwise, all your labors have been in vain and your faith has been vain, too. You see, in folk remedies, as in heathen prayers, it is absolutely esssntial to get everything in the right place, with the exact timing that folk remedies demand.

Thousands of us are always getting into trouble, even getting sick, because we do not observe the good and bad luck signs. There ought to be another booklet in this model drugstore that will tell how to keep well as well as how to make friends and influence people. Not knowing the correct time to take one's bitters might render said bitters ineffective or, worse still, make them(or it) completely dangerous, so that a big swallow of your favorite bitters might land you in the family graveyard. And not knowing when and how to gather your herbs will result in similar ills; imagine gathering sage in Dog Days, for instance. And imagine trying to feed some poor sick person some meat of a rabbit killed in a month that does not have an "r" in the name. You see, this business of being a Doctor of Folk Medicine(D. F. M) entails fearful responsibilities. In older days, when few people could read and just had to have better memories than we have now, it was not too hard for Grandma or Uncle Sam to remember all the intricacies of keeping the doctor away or of relieving the patient until the medical mnn got there. But with reading has come lack of memory. Young upstarts just can't keep in mind the standardized ways of making or administering folk remedies.

THE HOOTENANNY AND THE FOLKLORIST

Folklorists, in general, do not seem to have become too excited about the tremendous popularity of so-called folk programs, especially the more sensational ones. Such things could be worse, but they could be much better. Assuredly, if they were much better, the financial success of the whole scheme would be less. Maybe it is best to let this wave of popularity of folk and folkish and so-called folk have its day. It may bring some good results, such as making the genuine folklorists somewhat shy about lending their aid to what may or may not be folklore. Frankly, some of the material is as good as can be found and is performed in the genuine traditional ways; other numbers are no more folkish than the latest hit from Broadway.

Pageants, local plays, historical presentations are now a dime a dozen. It is a poor place that does not have one such event annually. And, to make it appealing, it must have queens and princesses and the rest, just like a homecoming or a big annual dance. Locally this is fine, but it may not add very much to the actual knowledge of folklore. It is too easy to assume that people of other times should have acted in this or that manner; trying to be accurate would take more time and a bit of learning. Far too often our pictures of other days are romanticized, so that actual historical characters would feel like completely strangers if they could suddenly come back and see themselves on the stage. In the same way, the unaffected folk singers would shudder at the ultra-modern way in which some of their favorite sad songs are jazzed up and often made into a kind of comedy that only sophisticates can enjoy.

Efforts to prepare for permanent exhibit relics of other times have the support, always, of folklorists. And dozens of state parks in many states are doing a fine bit of work in making our ancestors seem like people rather than like made-up characters in a comedy show.

Spring Mill State Park, near Mitchell, Indiana, has an excellent display of genuine relics of earlier days. The very simple way in which these museum pieces are arranged adds to the effectiveness and appeal of the place. Our own Levi Jackson State Park, near London, has an assembly of millstones that is justly famous among all sorts of visitors; the pioneer village there is good, too, in giving moderns a chance to see what their forebears were like. On a different level but authentic are such places as the Old Kentucky Home. No genuine folklorist would take exceptions to local shows, either, so long as they have as a core historical or even probable events. It does not hurt to mix a bit of comedy, even low comedy, with history, for the two have always been pretty mixed up. The folklorist resents the show that tries to make laughable what was never funny, what was often the most serious portion of good men's lives. In order to draw visitors who will spend some money locally, it may be good business, but ultimately the lasting show will be the one that, through all sorts of trial and error, sticks best to historical facts and attitudes.

Crazes, as so often occur in entertainment, are generally short-lived, even though they may fill erstwhile empty pocketbooks. The tourist who comes by once to see a show is the one who furnishes the most ready money, but the person who returns and brings some people with him will finally determine the value of the show. It is true that even approximations of folk music sometimes open new worlds to music-lovers, but to have the genuine folk music is no more difficult than to have some approximation or some burlesque of it.

Very naturally, the folklorist is conservative, as are folk customs. What is now folklore was once quite the thing, as a serious part of every life; it was not to be taken lightly, either. Ages of waves of new things left their imprint on this system of beliefs and then were gone. The hootenanny is merely a modern freak that has had hundreds of ancestors in older days of historic time, and maybe long before man had a history.

CATS AND SAURIANS

On the block where I have lived for forty-six years there is a long stretch of brick side walk, something that is now a passing institution. In one of the bricks, which must have been laid three quarters of a century and more ago, are some very plain cat tracks. When those bricks had been removed from their forms, a long times ago, and were lying in a shed to dry out before being burned, some adventurous cat, out to see what was going on the world, at night, probably, stepped on the wet brick-to-be and thus gave himself a much longer earthly life than all of his nine cat lives must have brought. Even allowing a very long life for each of his reincarnations, the original cat of the bricks and all his later selves must have been gone for a good many years. But there is his track, as plain as if he had been trained to step just so and leave a sort of signature for future generations to marvel at. He probably was no more active or any more purposeful than some saurian that walked around in the mud of prehistoric swamps and left his huge track for us little mortals to marvel at. But since cats are contemporary and seem not to have changed any in the ages that have come and gone since cats were worshiped as gods or symbols of Egyptian gods, we pass the cat track by and do not wonder. What did that cat look like? Was it an alley cat or a spoiled pet? Was it a fastidious cat that cleaned its paw after stepping into the wet mud? Or was it a fierce and disreputable cat that did not mind a little clean dirt so long as it did not interfere with its nightly prowlings?

Cats and saurians and people leave tracks here and there at which we marvel and sometimes probably misinterpret. Someone who was, or who became, famous made a track on some soft mud of human institutions, and ever after we seek out the track and even set up a school of thought based on it. More modern versions have some such form as "George

Washington slept here," "Two hundreds yards from this marker Andrew Jackson killed a man in a duel," "Right here the Pilgrims landed,"

"On this green bank, by this still stream,
We set today a votive stone,
That memory may their deeds redeem
When, like our sires, our sons are gone."

And sometimes that track in the mud of a human institution becomes a bit too great for just a track; as long as it is a symbol, well and good; but when it ceases to be merely a track of a man, it may have a bad influence on human thinking.

Folklore is a study of tracks in the mud. Sometimes the track is of something that is of no more importance than an alley cat; sometimes it is that of a gigantic saurian, looming like a mountain of matter beside an ordinary house cat. Around the track grows up legends and traditions; people come from distances to see the track and to wonder whether any such creature exists today or ever will exist again. And some doubt the actual existence of any such creature to begin with and suggest that the others who believe that it once roamed our swamps are primitive and that only what makes decent and small tracks can be believed in and trusted. And people have, on too many occasions, fought each other in words and with swords and guns to prove the value of these tracks that link us back to remote, unimaginable times.

Not every saurian found a place that retained its footprints; hence saurian tracks in stone are not too plentiful. Some would argue that there just weren't many saurians around and that these tracks may be just accidents anyway. But everybody knows a cat track when he sees it and does not need to cut someone's throat for not accepting it for what it is. "I know that this is a cat track; any fool can recognize it. But those old track-like things in stone, they must be fakes, for nobody now living and none of our immediate ancestors ever saw an animal that could make tracks like that."

"MEET ME IN THE FORUM"

Humanity changes the names for things, but some of our institutions remain strikingly the same through long generations. One place we seem to have always needed and still need is a gathering place, where, in an informal way, we can learn what is going on, which way the wind is blowing. The Romans had, among other such places, the Forum, which, no matter how dignified a spot it ultimately came to be, so far as buildings are concerned, must have been comically like some of the other loafing places of humanity.

Our forum at Fidelity and Flat Creek and Rabbit Ridge and similar places was the Loafers' J'int, usually a country general store or a similar place, where men could congregate inside around a pot-bellied stove in winter or outside on the porch or under a big tree or in the shade of the store in summer. And every interest that humanity has had since it first became humanity had its place in that throng ultimately: life and death and birth and marriage and politics and crops and scandal and horse play. Every local event got a workout there, and it was a poor sport who did not contribute his share to the droll or risque stories that enlivened the exciting tasks of whittling goodsboxes to shavings.

There were other less standardized forums, like the town livery stable, beloved of the country trade; the saloon, where old pals met and put their feet on the railing; the country church before meeting time, where crops were ironed out and even some more risque stories appeared, a rather naughty practice at such a place. And when relatives or friends and neighbors got together for a Sunday dinner or a Sunday-afternoon chat out in the yard, there the Roman forum had another modern reincarnation.

The loafers' j{int is hardly so alive today as it used to be,

but it still lingers on, with such outside rivals as the county courthouse, now so easily reached by car; the farm store, with its bright new gadgets that every respectable farmer should own; the dime store, the very essence of democracy, where high and low stand in line to be waited on. Before the ball game begins, there is often a chance to learn some new gossip, even some news that is not in the county paper and on the radio or TV broadcasts.

In my older years there has grown up another modern forum that I greatly enjoy, really two of them. The super-market is a fine place to meet old pals and carry on a sort of desultory conversation while you are trying to fill out the grocery list your wife gave you and your friend is equally nonplussed at the queer crooked marks on his list. Hosts of old friends are thus seen and greeted in a single visit to the supermarket. My wife has laughingly said that I get to such places and hold court, especially when I am waiting for her to fill up the cart and be ready to go back home. The other forum, one that has become a great one for many old codgers like me, is the launderette. Retired men for husbands can be a nuisance and should be given, as small, wiggly boys are given, some regular task to keep their old hands from getting into mischief. What is there that is better than a self-service or other launderette? Old fellows or their wives and children are there, proud to be a part of keeping the world clean. And younger people of both sexes come in, plainly envious of us because we have time to sit down and wait for the machines to convert our dirty clothes into something very clean and sweet-smelling. Sometimes, if we have a regular day for this weekly duty, we see the same old boys or old ladies and greet each other like members of an exclusive club. Not long ago I had just put my washing into the correct number of machines when in bounced a youngish old fellow who, though eighty-eight, had come to see that his household linens were again presentable. We called each other some such pert names as "young feller" and "son" and felt that it was good to have a forum all our own. Why envy the Romans?

7 & C

1528

Home-made Playthings

If you are sophisticated(but imagine a sophisticated person with this column open before him), be wise and choose some other bit of reading. My column today is for the unsophisticated older people who were once children and are not ashamed to recall with pleasure the simple playthings we used to have. In spite of our having few store-bought toys and such, we had an abundance of playthings, many of which we made for ourselves.

Acorn Cups.--When we played house, we found that acorn cups were handy for all sorts of dishes; some of the big burr-oak acorn cups were big enough for play-like plates; smaller acorn cups were cups and other necessary dishes in our imaginary meals.

Balls.--I was almost grown before I ever saw a baseball, and had taught some schools before I saw a football or a basketball. But we had home-made yarn balls. We ravelled out a yarn sock, often using some worn portion of the sock for a center. When the ball was big enough, we or our more-skilled mothers or sisters would sew the ball, over and over, with a darning needle and some of the yarn. My, what a ball that made!

Peach-seed baskets.--We ten-thumbed children rarely made peach-seed baskets, but some skilled older person, like the hired man, would carefully carve out real works of art, which became treasured possessions in our play-like world.

Corn-ear Babies.--When a nubbin(our folks were a bit too Scotchy to allow us to use a real ear of corn) is in full silk, carefully remove the shuck and do not disturb the silks. There you have a delicate, tender little baby, especially if you make a cap of some sort to make its head a little more real.

Corn-stalk Fiddles.--Not to have made or played a cornstalk fiddle should disqualify any old-timer from bragging about being a regular fellow. I have heard better and worse music made by renowned fiddlers than the squeaky sounds we could evoke with a little practice.

Popguns.--Whether you use a joint of cane or a section of elder stalk, a good gun can be made by even the clumsiest user of a Russell Barlow. For ammunition, paper wads are around in all seasons. But the foreordained bullets for cane popguns are dogwood berries.

Cornstalk Horses.--A good horse can be made from dry cornstalks by cutting around the hard shell and gently pulling the pith loose, so that you have a ready-made tail for the animal. With some pith you can make a neck and ears; with some of the tough covering of the stalk you can add legs. There is your horse, prancing or just standing still! And you can add a mane if you like.

Hog-bladder rattles.--If you will save a bladder at hog-killing time, blow it up, and then let it dry, you will have a good noise-maker. Before blowing it up, put some peas or small pebbles inside, to furnish the noise.

Bark whistles.--Papaw or hickory will furnish the raw materials; your Barlow knife can do the rest. Don't be silly and try to remove the bark backwards, that is, by trying to pull it over the big end.

Bark Whips.--When the sap comes up, you can make a bark whip, too, using tough hickory switches for your material.

Bean-shooters.--A forked dogwood or other tough limb, a pocket knife, and a bit of rubber band will soon result in a bean-shooter that can raise bumps on the fellows that get shot.

Spools..--Many a plaything can be made from spools, small or large. A big spool split lengthwise and with two ends tacked or glued on makes a perfect pig trough. A small spool seemed designed for bubble-blowing. And a half of a big spool is just aching to become a top.

How Did We Survive?

Almost a fifth of the beliefs about good and bad luck that I have collected deal with babies and small children. In looking over this formidable list, I wondered how we of other times ever survived. We must be of pretty tough stock to have done so.

First of all, there were dozens of pre-natal chances we ran. Just anything at all out of the ordinary might have marked us for life: Fright, fears, longing for unseasonable foods, sight of blood, hearing of bad news--it was a brave baby who survived without being a horrible-looking-and-acting creature.

Then the actual arrival in the world was so beset with dangers, sanitary and psychological, and others, that again toughness was essential. The day or hour of arrival, about which the innocent victim would be ignorant, predetermined his goodness or badness, his usefulness or his laziness, his good looks or his ugliness. "Monday's child is fair of face," you know, and all the rest of the days of the week and their blessings or curses.

Then began the youngster's struggle with ancient customs that controlled his having a bath, his having his taggy hair cut, his fingernails with their hidden curse if they were cut too soon, his being taken first upstairs or downstairs, his looking like the first person who came to see him. And the medication or hocus-pocus practiced on the red little fellow seemed designed to make his entry into the world a series of tests of his mettle. It is well that we cannot recall these early days, with their home-made medicines and traditional customs of dress(shades of red flannels!).

And then come the complicated processes of growing up. Children's diseases, each with a dozen sure-shot remedies, must come along in the natural course of events. Not to have measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, and all the many kinds of colic would brand a fellow

as not belonging to the human race. "Man that is born of woman is [redacted] of few days and full of trouble."

The second summer, in the lives of us who are now old, was the great danger spot of our young lives. It was then that we were supposed to begin eating like folks and not like babies. And lots of us almost threw in the sponge because we found our new food a bit too strong for our small tummies. But some of us survived this hurdle and could start sampling everything edible or even that looked edible.

My own liking has always leaned toward sour food. I don't mean soured, but acid. Consequently, I ate green apples before the last petal of the bloom had dropped, I fairly devoured green gooseberries, I downed sour grass(sheep sorrel) until my jaws ache right now in memory of the experiment. And lots of the garden vegetables, raw or cooked, tasted better if drowned in apple-cider vinegar. What would turnip greens or wild greens or cabbage taste like, anyway, without this sour addition? Dr. Jarvis, who has made such a reputation with his apple-cider-honey remedies for all human ills, would have had a very excellent illustration of the worth of his nostrums if I had been around.

If we did not suffer too many attacks of stomach ache, cramp colic, and kindred illnesses, we kept on growing. Then we branched out and endangered our lives by adventuring. I climbed trees, just as you did. And I played with the farm animals and ran a good chance of getting butted or hocked or bitten; but here I am, still in one piece. And I waded through whole bottom fields of poison ivy and collected enough chiggers and ticks to start a menagerie. Maybe the poisonous kinds saw me coming and hid out, for, as I said before, here I am.

And then there were medicines that all the folks in those days took, especially for chills and fevers and for stomach troubles. Some were flavored, some were raw(I can still taste raw cod-liver oil in memory), some were no better than branch water. But we survived, tough customers that we were.

THE OLD MAID

In primitive societies, even in such groups as those in which many of us were reared, the woman who did not marry came in for a lot of teasing. In fact, it was not until fairly recent times that a young woman who did not choose to marry could find very many ways to make a living. I have known several girls, especially in the last years of the 1800's and the early 1900's, who wanted to study medicine but were dissuaded from such a horrible life work for a woman. Bright girls could teach school, and many of the best teachers I ever knew were "old-maid schoolteachers," as they were called by those men and women who were supposedly happily married.

Similes by the dozen arose about old maids: fixy as an old maid, prim as an old maid, blue as an old maid at a wedding, cross as an old maid; cranky, independent, lonesome, nosey, proud, silly, stingy, touchy; and on and on we could go, with a large percentage of the similes being uncomplimentary.

And there developed some capital stories as to why Aunt Sally did not marry. I have heard several of the old maids get even with their detractors by reminding them that single life is much better than being married to just such husbands as some women have. I like best the traditional answer as to her single blessedness: "The one I wanted, I couldn't get; the ones I could get the devil wouldn't have." Or the old maid's saying that when she was young, she said again and again, in looking over the prospects for a husband: "Just whom will I have?" The desirables soon were gobbled up, and then she said, "Just who would have me?" Most of the old maids whom I knew at the turn of the century could take good care of themselves in a wit combat, whether they were being ~~teasing~~ teased by a man, a woman, or a child.

During World War I many British and other soldiers felt that,

in some of the most deadly engagements, they had seen visions of famous people or of dead relatives that seemed sent to cheer them. And many newspapers carried items about the "Angels of...." Then a British soldier, asked whether he had had any such vision, eagerly said that he had had a vision of an old maid aunt, and that set people to laughing at a very solemn time. He did not elaborate; probably he knew that the old-maid aunt is so widely known that no remarks are needed. And this type of old maid has appeared in hundreds of stories and comic writings. She is a folk character of long ancestry.

Probably most of the characteristics of the typical old maid are as old as the human race, reflecting, as they do, the attitude of the rest of us toward someone who seems immune to our own way of thinking. Occasionally I have known some women who did not marry who could have posed for a portrait of the comic, traditional old maid. Just why we always associate slenderness almost to the point of emaciation with this type of woman, I do not know. Certainly the type used by many writers is the traditional one, for a survey of the unmarried women would show that they are as varying as the rest of humanity. But folkish ~~loves~~ appeals, here as elsewhere, have a way of making many people have biassed ideas.

It is but a step from an actual old maid, who may or may not fit the traditional pattern, to some other woman(or even a man) who has some of the prim, cranky, nosey traits of the type. Many times I have told my students that the most typical old maid of my entire experience is a man who is now oldish and distinguished as a scholar. He looks masculine enough, he has a man's voice, but his meticulousness, his rage for accuracy of speech or conduct, his nosiness belong with the type figure of which folk tales and comic songs make so much. In spite of the modern woman, who seems perfectly able to take care of herself, this folk conception of an unmarried woman and those who resemble her lingers on.

THE NIGHT, UP AND DOWN

A whole book could be written about the attitudes toward night that have succeeded each other in human history. Apparently primitive man was afraid of the dark, and well he might be, for wild animals and other primitive creatures were after him. Until fire was discovered, night must have been one long horror. Children in my younger days were not too far from this cave-man feeling toward night. Boogers seemed everywhere: actual snakes and wild animals generally but, far more scary, invisible things that lurked in the shadows and were always seeking whom they might devour. Slightly larger boys and girls took advantage of this primitive fear and saw to it that we got all the possible thrills out of night. And older people, who had come to sit till bedtime, repeated the age-old yarns about scary things until I, for one, used to sit on my feet to keep invisible things from biting them off. By degrees this primitive feeling wore off, but I am glad that I had it, for it ties me back to the earliest human beings and helps me to understand other children around me.

Since night was a fearful time, there was something decidedly brave about walking or riding out into it. Many a boy whom I knew would ride his mule miles on end to some place at night when he would have been very indifferent about going there in daylight. If the road led by a church--always a fearful place, even when no graveyard was adjacent--or some locally haunted spot, his being able to go and come back alive gave him a feeling of great bravery. Brave boys and young men disdained the use of a lantern; that invention was for women and children and older men. After all, it would be a strange booger that would get up close enough to a lantern to be seen; sure-nuff boogers do not so violate their code of manners and morals. I can recall, unashamedly, how as a child I loved to be the lantern-bearer myself; it seemed to confer some sort of dignity

on the person who was allowed this privilege. But, be it said in truth, the lantern-bearer was closer to the lantern than anybody else and did not run the risk of being devoured by some invisible thing when someone came between him and the light from the dim little lantern.

Before gas lights and electric lights and car lights and all sorts of other lights became numerous, night was indeed dark. But, as lights got more numerous, it became a mark of being a regular fellow if you could stay up late, at home or abroad. College songs stress this "turning of night-time into daytime." The fellow who did not do this, even in my early college days, was a sissy. The reason I know is that I broke down in health when I was quite young and had to sleep many hours or else throw in the sponge; I wish I had kept a list of the names I was called and remind the other fellows of them now, provided any of the night owls are still able to hoot.

When industry and other phases of modern life grew up, night shifts became so common that they soon passed unnoticed. But, until I was quite mature as a man, any one who worked at night was regarded as somewhat queer. Many a person whom I knew then apologized for not going to bed with the chickens.

In the old days early rising was regarded as one of the better virtues, to be ranked with keeping the Sabbath and honoring father and mother. It would have been impossible to convince some of the graybeards that I used to know that any one whom the sun found in bed could ever amount to anything; most such wiseacres doubted whether any such person could even be moral. "Early to bed and early to rise" sounded almost like "Thus saith the Lord." Many of our institutions, especially in the country and in smallish towns, are still geared to rising with the lark and with the lark to bed. After a whole lifetime of teaching early classes, I am geared to this old-time schedule, not because of any moral fixation but from sheer habit. And thousands of others, some younger than I, would have to admit that they, too, follow the older custom of early rising.

7 y c

"THERE AIN'T NO SICH ANIMAL"

Folklore collections from everywhere retell the story of the old lady who, after looking at a giraffe(or an elephant or a kangaroo or a rhinoceros), said, in the emphatic way that old ladies in stories use: "There ain't no sich animal." And all of us laugh, a sort of holier-than-thou laugh that shows how much we have "growed" since we may have believed such nonsense. But it might pay us to take stock a bit before we laugh too unrestrainedly.

From my earliest days I was taught, on the say-so of our local weather savant, that it does not rain at night in July. And who was I to question the owner of the best farm in our immediate area, Uncle Simeon Knight, our oracle? Secretly I watched nights in July and was soon able to find some rainy ones, which, strangely, just did not register, for Uncle Simeon's saying rather than one's own observation ruled our neighborhood. When I got to be a big boy, I actually set down the rains that came at night in July and sometimes endangered my neighborhood standing by declaring that the old saying was not always true. But I got ugly looks or even some pretty severe reproofs. On the night of July 3, 1964, we had, at least in my part of the world, a refreshing shower of nearly three-fourths of an inch that broke a long drought. Old and young rejoiced and wished for more; the shower, not at all a heavy rain, furnished a subject for conversation for days. Now here is a safe bet I want to lay with anybody who would be wicked enough to match my dime or quarter: I will bet that dozens of people, as intelligent as you and I, will keep on repeating the old saying and declaring that it is true. What is a mere matter of experience when it runs counter to folk sayings?

In one of the forums that I mentioned some weeks back--launderette, supermarket, barbershop, dime store--I have several times lately run into the same old fellow, who, like me, is retired and is useful to run er-

rands for the family and thus stay out from under foot. On one of our recent meetings we compared notes on our descendants, for his son is tall and big like mine(mine is more than eight inches taller than his father). And yet, the very next time we met, the old boy was lamenting how weak and puny humanity is getting to be; the earlier people in this part of the state were tall and big and tough. I kept my counsel, but the next time we meet, I intend to slyly ask him how old his ancestors lived to be. Again I would wager a dime or even a quarter that he is already many years older than most of his ancestors lived to be and is still as hale and hearty as a fifty-year-old. But old-timers used to talk about the weakness and degeneracy of the younger generation, and my acquaintance in the forum listened well to their philosophy.

Among old, old people I rather like a faith in what the tribe or the neighborhood, without ever testing it, had come to believe and had incorporated into maxims. It would be rather strange if most old, old people rebelled against such traditional lore, when the world they knew maybe extended only from one hilltop to another or was bounded on the north by Blood River, on the south by the Tennessee line, and on the east by Tennessee River, with a narrow escape route to Murray and the whole world. That was Fidelity, and could be forgiven, I suppose, for its knowing no better. But, with radios and TV's announcing every few minutes the weather picture, how can the most ordinary fellow turn a deaf ear and go look at the almanac that he got last Christmas that tells in intimate detail the weather to expect every day of this year? It has not been long since I knew a fairly well-to-do farmer who refused to spend even a dollar for certified seed corn, even though he could see, on farms he had to pass to get to his own, the advantage of planting only the best. People had planted corn in their own way long before any of these upstart new farmers were born; so why should he change? Not long ago I walked across part of this old fellow's farm and marveled at the modernness of everything; but meanwhile the old man who knew best has gone, and a young farmer runs the farm now.

"Small potatoes and few in the hill" used to be a very effective way of appraising some upstart fellow who was a bit too obvious in his self-advertisement. There was something pretty shameful about the fellow who could not raise good-sized potatoes; I have seen lots of perfectly sound, though small, potatoes left in the patch at digging time. I suppose that if someone had given away some small potatoes, he would have been locally disgraced for life. Taters, to be real taters, must be <u>big 'uns</u>.

Yesterday, when I sat down to a good dinner at my own table, there before me were some unusually good mixed vegetables, which had been cooked with some roast. I waded into my big plateful and came back for a second or maybe a third helping. One of the vegetables represented was the potato; and every potato in the lot would have been left in the patch at Fidelity or elsewhere. But here they were, mouth-watering, and just as nourishing as anybody's big taters. What with modern methods of freezing, a package of vegetables bought at the supermarket had utilized what would once have been wasted. Social status, on our part, did not demand that the little fellows be left outside; mixed with green beans and carrots and several other fresh vegetables, those little taters were good enough for a king or a queen.

All my life I have liked greens--sallet, we used to say. There was a time when we plain country folks hardly dared to mention our favorite vegetable, for high-brows would have laughed at us. We once had a rather poor neighbor, but with aristocratic ways, who would have starved to death before she would have eaten turnip greens and other such plebian stuff. Fortunately, long before she died of old age, all the health columns were praising greens of all sorts. And I, wickedly, had my revenge. I could not help boasting before this shocked old lady that I had been vindicated, that even the

wealthy, the aristocratic were eating my favorite vegetable. I probably lost all of my boasting, however, for she still clung to an imagined great era of which she felt herself a decided part.

A well-educated friend of mine and I went into a highly-advertised restaurant in Louisville some forty years ago. There, as big as life and twice as natural, was a huge bowl of plain old turnip greens, just like the ones that used to grace the table when the wheat-threshing crew had to be fed or some other group of hungry fellows. My friend, dropping his years of being a high school teacher, called for some "turnip sallet," much to the amusement of the somewhat haughty woman who was serving the foods. But he got what he ordered and fairly smacked his lips as we ate that day. Taking a leaf from his book, many years later, in a far western state, I went into a supermarket to replenish my camping supplies. After an unsuccessful search for corn, I asked the well-dressed young lady at the checking desk about the corn; but, in a sudden burst of plain badness, boyish badness, I asked for "roasting-ears," knowing full well that the very modern clerk would think me a fellow from away back east, probably from back of somebody's field. I should have paid double for the corn that she found for me; she was very pronounced in her calling it "corn," too, not plebeian, corny, country "roasting-ears."

Social status is pretty hard to get and to keep. But we natural ones, who have never tried to get above plain foods and plain manners, rarely have to fight very hard to get or keep our standing. The rest of humanity probably say of us as we used to say of some ornery fellow who had spouted off a bit too much; we just "consider the source." And for sallet and roasting-ears it would be worth all the aristocratic snubbing we might get.

T & C

WHAT IS A WEED?--I

Somebody--probably several people--said that a weed is "a plant for which man has found no use." If that definition is taken seriously, there were very few weeds in the old-fashioned community, for nearly every plant or part of a plant had one or more serious uses. Some of the uses might seem pretty far-fetched now, but even the oddest of these appeared as sensible to our ancestors as the most recent additions to our list of wonder drugs.

In working over my files of folk remedies lately and trying to bring them up to date, so far as my collecting is concerned, I discovered that 135 plants are represented in my files. And for many of these plants there should be some more categories for different parts of the plant, the seeds, the flowers, the fruits, the roots, and even the bark when it is peeled up or down or when the plant is gathered or processed according to the phases of the moon.

Sir Francis Bacon, in his well-known essay on books says that "some books are to be tasted, some chewed, and some swallowed and digested." Many of the plants used in folk medicine follow this same scheme and also include another category or two: some must be rubbed on, some worn around the neck or the waist or even the thumb, some carried in the pocket, some worn in the hat, and so on and on. In fact, there is scarcely a way in which man has used plants that I have not found a record of in the memories of the people whom I have interviewed in the general Mammoth Cave area. And for a very large percentage of the plants, I have testimony, on tape, as to the remedy having been used on the person interviewed, or at least in his presence.

Since talismans go away back into human history and beyond most of it, there would be a good place to start in talking about folk

remedies. Probably the buckeye is the most widely-used talisman in America, not merely by the people in the region that I have studied. Dozens of even distinguished people love to pull a buckeye out of their pockets and say, "I'm not superstitious, but." Allan Trout has distributed a great many buckeyes, and President Thompson, of Western, in a ~~sort of~~ goodwill greeting to friends and alumni of the college, has sent out dozens of buckeyes from trees that grow on the campus, each buckeye guaranteed to cure anything that interferes with college spirit. Not nearly so romantic as the buckeye is the plain nutmeg, which for many generations has found itself tied to a string and worn around the neck to keep off diseases. But both the buckeye and the nutmeg ball are few as compared, in the Good Old Days, with the asafetida bag. Not to have worn one at Fidelity and similar places branded a child or his parents as far to the left; there might be all sorts of things wrong with people who did not believe in the smelly little bag that nearly every child of a generation ago wore in the winter, when catching diseases are most common and when people live indoors more and are therefore likely to transmit their ills to others. If any of the people who read this column have never stood around a hot stove in a one-roomed schoolhouse when every child was properly immunized because of his asafetida bag, then it is impossible to describe the odor of this old, old standby in folk medicine. Some brats would wear a bag of camphor, but few of us ever believed that anything that smelled that good would chase away disease germs. All of the talismans I have mentioned were of plant origin and had to hold their own with such widely varying animal and mineral tokens as a rabbit's foot, a penny in the shoe, brass earrings, a mole's foot around the neck of a teething baby, a horseshoe nail made into a ring for the little finger, and amber beads to keep off asthma and many another ill. But these plant objects could and did keep their prominence.

WHAT IS A WEED?--II

Of the 135 plants that I have found in use in folk remedies, only 14 were bought at the store; the other 121 were nature's own bounty, ready to be gathered or picked or dug. All that was necessary was a knowledge of plants and their place in the healing of human ills.

It is significant that many of the plants that grow in great profusion, and are even regarded by many hard-hearted folks as pests, are among the most-often used in folk medicine. Catnip, horehound, jimson leaves, burdock roots, wormseed(or vermifuge), poke--leave these out of folk medicines and there would be lots of suffering. And not too far behind them in abundance of growth and also in the power of healing would come mullein, life everlasting(rabbit tobacco), goldenrod, broomsage, etc., etc. Jimson leaves, properly wilted, take out the swelling from sprains or bruises. And dried jimson leaves, when powdered and smoked, drive away lots of nasal infections. Catnip was foreordained, it would seem, to relieve small tummies when they ache, and I have heard of a good many grown people who have sipped some catnip tea for similar adult ills. Horehound is the perennial enemy of coughs and colds; when reduced to a tea and properly combined with sorghum molasses, this old-time remedy offers some joy to the youngsters who have to be doctored. Horehound candy, as we used to eat it, might seem to the sophisticated, who have been brought up on sugar-coated pills, pretty vile stuff; but think how delightful this candy is when compared with raw cod-liver oil taken directly out of a spoon or of castor oil, another plant product, without anything to weaken its taste or its feeling in the mouth. Some of these plants were so well-set around old house sites that twenty and more years after the houses disappeared, there are still beds of wormseed and healthy growths of horehoud and catnip and burdock.

Poke, in the form of leaves (poke sallet), berries, roots, and stalks, is and was highly praised for its efficacy, especially in the treatment of rheumatism and all its attendant aches and pains. Poke berries in whiskey furnish the time-honored preventive of rheumatism, as effective, say some, as a buckeye in the pocket. Though there is a variety of opinions as to how many berries should be in the whiskey, from one per quart to whole handfuls, no one doubts the efficacy of the plant, in whatever form it is used.

Bitters, a word I have not heard except in folklore groups for many years, used to be standard remedies. Every respectable home had one or more bottles of bitters, all of them bad-tasting and all of them sure-shot cures for whatever causes pain or fatigue or night sweats of blood too thick or too thin. Good old sassafras tea is widely used, as all good people know, to thin the blood down after a cold winter has thickened it. Besides the familiar sassafras tea, famous in all the literature of our race since sassafras was discovered in America, the bark and the roots are used in combination with other plant products to form bitters, or cordials, or tonics. I could not divide properly these remedies into their distinctive areas, but all of them are good, I am told. Sassafras combines well with wild cherry bark and sarsaparilla roots and burdock roots, plus rock candy and whiskey, to form a sort of omnibus cure-all. Puny little fellows who somehow did not eat their vittles properly could soon be brought around with some of these bitters and tonics and cordials. Maybe the cordials had more whiskey than the rest, but that was just to preserve the magic powers of the plants. Nobody ever felt that taking a drink of this bitter stuff was the equal of a pretty good snifter of booze. The magic of the plant did the work.

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WHAT IS A WEED?--III

Already a good many byproducts of plants have been mentioned as effective in treating disease. Let's look at some more. Wood ashes, besides having quantities of lye in them for the sole purpose of making soft soap, also had powers in poultices to aching joints and aching ears. Just spread some hot ashes on a cloth and wrap it around a rheumatic knee and notice the relief. Good old soot, too, does its part. Smear some on the next cut you have; it will cause the blood to clot, and soon your wound will heal. If you are tattooed for life, at least you can testify to the power of soot. Some people like to take a tea made of soot, for internal troubles. The spores of puffball fungus(otherwise devil's snuffbox) are quite as effective as soot in stopping blood, as are also cob ebs with enough soot on them. Some fresh cow manure, I hear, will do wonders in causing healing, whether there is a bad bruise or a stone bruise or an open cut.

In areas where pines grow, pine tar is almost as much a favorite remedy as turpentine everywhere. Some of my oldest informers prescribe turpentine for all ills, external or internal. Sugar plays a big part in many remedies, such as sugar moistened with kerosene or with turpemtine and swallowed for all sorts of throat troubles. Sweets in the form of molasses or sugar candy, properly blended with horehound or vermifuge appear on many lists of old-time medicines. One of the pine remedies is simple enough: swallow pills of pine resin, picked yourself from the tree where it is oozing out.

Smoking always appealed to small boys, for they did not mind bad-tasting smoke if if would make them feel like big men who smoked tobacco. Hence life everlasting and mullein leaves and cornsilks and coffee were said to be very effective in treating nasal troubles.

I cannot recall having ever found any medicinal value in smoking grapevines, another of the favorite smokes of my own boyhood. Since grape sap helps one's hair to be beautiful and also promotes a handsome and stylish crop of whiskers, surely the grapevine cigar has some medicinal value.

There used to be lots of ague or plain chills and fever, in spite of dozens of plants at hand to "squench" them. Why, feverweed is still grown, but as a flower and not for medicinal purposes. Of course, quinine was especially designed to cure ague and ~~used~~ was to be used by the quart, it seems to me now. In case the supply ran out at the store, there was always dogwood tea to take its place.

A lot of people needed, in other times, to be told what not to do to avoid sickness. Everybody knows that eating watermelons after frost is sure to bring malaria. And washing one's hands where potatoes have been cooked can bring warts to some people, though others say that this very washing will remove whatever warts you have accumulated. Mulberries were often thought to be loaded with bugs, which made mulberries as a fruit taboo. I am sorry to say that this scared me away from one of our fine native fruits; I just never developed any liking for mulberries.

Counting all the repetitions for various diseases, my 135 plants and their derivatives are good for more than half of the twelve hundred human ills listed in my files. The three diseases or ills that have the most remedies are rheumatism, snakebite, and warts; but freckles, boils, hiccoughs, ague, and nosebleed are not too far behind. If I or some other folklorist would get enough nerve to advertize our cures, we might soon be as famous as Dr. Jarvis, who, with his Vermont use of vinegar and honey for everything, has made himself a fortune with his writings. Some of us folklorists are just not very good financiers.

SUBURBS

If a theme song had been needed for this column, away back in 1935, when it started, probably "The Old Gray Mare She Ain't What She Used to Be" would have just about prophesied what was to follow. If there is any human institution that has not changed in my seventy-six years, I cannot right now recall that it is. Outward forms have changed, we are always adding new words to our vocabulary, basic things may still be basic; but the outward appearance of just any institution has undergone so many changes that the younger generation needs an explanatory glossary when Grandpap begins to talk.

In the summer of 1964 I interviewed more than seventy people in my folklore study, people who ranged in age from seventeen to ninety-eight years old. Thus I got a pretty good cross section of all the generations that have grown up in the last century. Hosts of similar words and beliefs cross all age lines, but nearly all of them love to be expressed in a new vocabulary, to make it appear that the younger ones are far ahead of the quaint old people who lived long before 1900 came around. Rather oddly, my most old-fashioned words and grammar and expressions and remedies were taken down on an electrical tape-recorder, plugged into an outlet in a home or a country store or a community house. Once the plug-in was right by a meat counter, where every sort of modern meat was lying in its cold place, waiting to be bought by the customers who thronged the store. And, an added attraction, an air-conditioner was keeping the store so comfortable that I wondered whether all the customers had really come to buy their week-end groceries or had come to keep cool on a very hot summer day. But these modern gadgets did not stop the flow of memory, for some of my friends interviewed that day could think back a long way toward the more primitive times. The electric lines into the store merely offered a means of reviewwing some of the things that used to be.

was a hero. The tragedy of it all was that a great many people believed it and acted accordingly. Why try to stem the tide when the whole human race is so obviously coasting down hill to ignominy? Some of the most pathetic young people I have ever known took this doctrine so seriously that they seemed to regret having been born after the times of their ancestors. And, I suppose, every neighborhood has had similar tragedies, for blindness to the greatness of the present seems a universal disease. Some years ago, while I was waiting in the office of the president of a great university to meet a young man whom I wanted to offer a job, the president reached into a drawer in his desk and pulled out a manuscript. Asking the pardon of the four of us who were his guests, he read a very serious condemnation of the worldliness of the present moment, the steady decline in public and private morals, the utter lack of ambition on the part of the young. When he had finished this diatribe, he said, with twinkling eyes: "My grandfather wrote that as a part of a sermon in 1835." It sounded so much like the doleful laments of old people at Fidelity or, for that matter, many larger places, that I would have recognized the tone if it had been in a foreign language.

Pollyanna would blissfully glorify the present and find everything perfectly lovely, and most of us experienced people would laugh at her idiocy. But a startlingly large number of these same people have so glorified some moment in their history, usually some phase of their young lives, that they are no better and no more to be admired than Pollyanna and her tribe.

Painful though it may be to some of us rheumatic old codgers, if we are to retain any respect for the long time we have lived around here, we, just like the youngsters who are growing up around us, must live now and not long too tearfully for the Good Old Days on either side of this narrow peninsula that connects the Past and the Future.

ADJUSTING TO OUR TIMES

Studying old-fashioned customs and words and folk remedies has, in no way, I am sure, ever made me imagine that the thing for all of us to do is to go back to our older times and try to be living anachronisms. It is no feeling of superiority to what we used to be that makes a folklorist accept his own time; he can appreciate the Here and Now and also the Then and There. There was something slightly funny in the summer of 1964 when I would go into a modern house, no matter how far it may be from an actual town or city, plug in an electrical connection, turn on the tape-recorder, and then begin to ask questions about customs and beliefs and words that were a long way from paved roads and R. E. A. and TV. In nearly every instance the radio or the TV had to be turned off while I reviewed with some older person, or some younger one who used to visit at Grandma's, the ways of fifty to seventy-five years ago. In no instance do I recall having heard a person, even the very oldest, sigh for the Good Old Days. They were days not to be ashamed of, of course, but they are gone never to come back, and only a senile old codger could or would believe otherwise.

It is a strange feature of some older people's philosophy that it is obvious that things now are not so good as they once were. That was apparently just as true of generations of old people centuries ago as it is now. The world, according to ancient wisdom as incarnated in old and artery-hardened people, has been steadily going down hill. When I was a boy at Fidelity, there was no week when I did not hear, from our elderly citizens, how far we had gone down hill since the glorious days before the Civil War. Some of these oldsters were told, in my earliest days, by still older people, that even Civil War days were tame as compared with the ~~pioneering~~ pioneering time, when every man

These mid-summer recordings brought very forcibly to my mind that what we used to call the country should now be called the suburbs. Even the most snazzy suburbs not too long ago lacked many of the modern things that were everywhere that I set up my recorder. In most homes the TV or the radio had to be turned off while my friends and I talked into a microphone, reliving some ancient weather signs and folk remedies and quaint customs. And, immediately after I had disconnected the recorder, the radio or TV came on again, and the most modest cottage was right in the midst of political conventions or Viet Nam wars or Florida hurricanes or the activities of the Beatles.

Around all our good-sized towns the suburbs extend on and on. As everybody knows, every town with any considerable industry draws its workers from a wide radius. And, as time has gone by, these people, who live in what used to be the country, acquire more city conveniences, more universal ways; so that the old lines of demarkation between the city and the country have practically ceased to be. In fact, hosts of these far-flung ~~suburbanites~~ suburbanites are better fixed than hosts of the people of the same income bracket in the cities. With a school bus stopping in front of the house, with daily mail at your mailbox, with electrical equipment all over the place, with an abundance of water and all of its uses around a house--and with a garden and flowers and the family car, this combined city-country setup has become a way of life that is enviable to thousands who do not have it.

All over our end of the state there are being formed water districts that are assuring a plentiful and pure supply of water to whole areas that have suffered from lack of water for many years. And there is hardly a season when some new addition to the comforts of civilization is not made in dozens of areas that I personally know about. And, along with these changes in physical things there is coming, very noticeably, an adjustment to all phases of modern life. Thousands of people are learning how to be parts of a much bigger world than any of us knew not too long ago.

"SONGS OF MY OWN CHILDHOOD"

There came to my desk in late September, 1964, two double records of folksongs as sung by our own Bradley Kincaid. Playing them took me straight back to Fidelity in the late 1800's and very early 1900's. Aunt Jane Underwood, our local singer, knew nearly all of these songs and sang them as only she and her type of folk singer could. Some of them I learned from one of our neighbor girls who spent some time in the Baptist Orphans' Home and would come badk in the summer to visit her sister, our nearest neighbor. This little girl owned a stringed instrument of some sort, which she used to accompany her songs. But Aunt Jane and her daughter Mary sang without accompaniment, gliding from one song into another like experienced musicians. I never knew Aunt Jane to pitch a song too high for her rich voice; every tone was clear, every word pronounced as faithfully as a good reader would have done; some singers, then and now, sing with little thought that the listeners might want to know what it is all about, especially a ballad, with its reference to old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago." And we loved as children to listen to our playmate's singing, for she had picked up, in her larger world than we had known, many a popular and traditional song that came to us as brand-new and was all the better for being understood and understandable.

In 1924 Bradley Kincaid made his first appearance before the Kentucky Folklore Society and was immediately popular. I did not know until long afterwards that this was also his first public appearance before any group of listeners except as he had joined in with other students in the songfests at Berea College. Years later, after he had become a household word among people who love to listen to folksongs, I was instumental in having him return to our society and give our annual spring program at Louisville. In 1962 Dr. D. K. Wilgus, at that time

the moving spirit of our society, secured Bradley again, and all of us were glad. Kincaid had about decided that his career as a folk singer had been overshadowed by more modern singers and had to be begged to appear again before our society. Dr. Wilgus, with his vast knowledge of folksongs, has always appreciated Kincaid's way of singing, his naturalness, his wholesome entering into his songs as if he were the first singer of them. From this 1962 appearance which Kincaid made so reluctantly have resulted these two large records, with some 30 of the songs that all of us of thirty to sixty years ago loved to hear and to sing, in our own way. So far as I can detect, Kincaid's voice, though forty years older than it was when I first heard it, still has the same clear tones, the sincere ring that captivated us a whole generation ago. Like me, he is not young any more, but he has the marvelous gift of song that mere age cannot destroy. I hope that many more records of his will appear and that I will be privileged to hear them.

Thirty and more years ago, when he was so well known on the radio, I came to know almost all of his songs, especially the ones that he does best, the sentimental songs that gladdened and saddened me as a child, when grateful tears seemed to be one's best way of showing his deep joy. Sophisticated listeners, then to some extent, and much more now, wondered why he could be such a wholesome citizen, a fine family man, a good business man, too, and still not let these sad songs get him down. Right there is where the average listener needs some enlightenment, for it is true and seems to have always been true that sorrowful songs have most appealed to us and our ancestors. "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought," as Shelley says. Not to have known these songs in their own time is a tragedy for the younger generation; but dedicated musicians like Bradley Kincaid can restore some of the appeal of these records of our youth.

TKC

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PROFESSOR OF THINGS IN GENERAL

Thomas Carlyle created for his spokesman in SARTOR RESARTUS a professor and philosopher who was the head of the department of THINGS IN GENERAL in the University of Weissnichtwo, which, being translated, is Nowhere. It has been my contention ever since I first got acquainted with Carlyle that every college needs just such a professor, one who can bring all the discordant elements of a college together. Specialization has become so rampant that a scholar sometimes is disdainful even of areas of thought not too far from his own field. Our university organization has made it necessary to do much of this, but, in most lives, there is still room enough for some outside interests. One of my physician friends has just completed building a piano, and he is far from being a mechanical genius. But from the cares of his immense practice as a pediatrician he has found in his workshop a way to know some other things that seem pretty far from children's diseases. One of my best teachers, who was Shakespeare scholar, became as a hobbyist a photographer of wide reputation; my folklorist teacher, known all over the world, took up the cello and, though not so famous as a musician as he is as a folklorist, is respected by the artists. And at one time one of the foremost scholars in mathematics was, as a hobbyist, equally well known for his bees.

With the specialization and standardization of our modern world, we need some ways out, some understanding of things in general. Years ago I knew a great biologist who was equally at home in ornithology, in zoology, in entomology, and in ichthyology. When he talked about birds, even the experts listened and marveled, for he had a phenomenal memory of little distinctive behavior of birds and could, with a word, bring the bird to us in his audience. My German professor friend

has so dedicated his apare moments to studying the warbler family that every squeak and lisp and song registers on his mind like more noisy noises on the average mind. Just this week I read a tribute paid this friend of mine by the most able illustrator of birds we have ever produced; he was as amazed as I have always been when I have shared a hike in some wild area of Kentucky or Tennessee with the German scholar.

It is not alone the hobbyist that we need but also a sort of super-understander of whole fields of human thought. I realize that Albert Einsteins are rare, but we need some lesser Einsteins who can tie up our scattered bits of knowledge and help us to understand what is being sought, in science, in literature, in philosophy, in religion. I cannot pretend to understand all I read in the works of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, but the intellectual thrill of reading the writings of a man who is in many ways an epitome of our culture keeps me, at least, from going to sleep in solid satisfaction at the great knowledge that we have. Schweitzer, for one, arouses a desire to know, to get at least an acquaintance with his own great fields: medicine, religion, and music.

Once, many years ago, I suggested that one of my colleagues in college was worth all of his salary if he did nothing but walk across the campus a few times daily and talk to students and teachers. He was in no sense a great scholar, his mind was not too much above average, his early handicaps had kept him from having the social ease that we like to have in our leaders. But he knew people and loved them. Each student whom he knew seemed to him a reincarnation of his own youth, when he worked as a day laborer and made enough money to buy some books and start to grade school after he was in the late teens. He had the zeal of a convert to a new religion; he had found everything in books and college and in learning in general as inviting, appealing. In many ways he was my idea of a professor of things in general, a sort of man that every college and every church and every social unit needs.

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RECREATION, THEN AND NOW

Nearly everything has changed since I could first remember, and that is perfectly normal, for my memory runs a long way back. Nearly every day I am reminded of some startling change in human thinking since I was a boy at Fidelity. One thing that has undergone marvelous, and, in the main, sensible changes is the attitude toward recreation.

Our older philosophy held that work was an end in itself, that anything that did not in some way relate itself to work was dangerous and wicked. Thus fishing had to justify itself by the string of fish brought home; and the boys who went hunting at night or in the daytime felt less guilty for having had a great time if they could add some tasty game to the monotony of pork and beef. Even when we went to the creek on a Saturday afternoon to be wild men, we had to tote along a towel and a cake of laundry soap to make it appear that our only purpose was to remove some layers of sweat and dirt from our bodies that had accumulated since our last trip to the creek or since we had bathed in the family washpan. It would have been almost wicked to have admitted that only a fear that some other boy might tell on us kept us from leaving the soap and towel behind a bush and taking them back home as unused as they had been.

When we held picnics, we had to have a program, to pretend that it rather than the dinner on the ground and the chance to live for a few hours in the woods along the creek furnished the main reason for our coming together. Many times a religious occasion furnished a good excuse, such as Quarterly Meetings at Sulphur Springs Church, where a small portion of the crowd actually reported the doings of their churches, but the rest of us waited impatiently until it was time to eat or to play, somewhat furtively, in the creek.

Recreation, wholesome recreation, is now big business. If you think otherwise, come with me some summer day to any of our numerous state parks and recreation areas. Often it is impossible, even in mid-week, to find a camp site; and, I have been told over and over, it is imperative, if one wishes to have a room in a lodge, to make reservations well in advance. Every form of recreation offered in state or national parks is enjoyed by hordes of people, from our own state and from everywhere else. Our own Mammoth Cave National Park opened a new campground in the summer of 1964 and outgrew it within a few days, so that the old campground had to be roped in again for use.

The family vacation, formerly limited to visiting relatives, has widened out into a series of summer trips that furnish relaxation and education for all the group. I know of no finer type of knowing the basic good people of America than by traveling across country and visiting state and national parks. I have discovered that some of the finest friendships among like-minded people thus grow up, tying people from remote places together. Some groups arrange to meet every summer in a different park, so that they can add to their store of knowledge and keep up their campground friendships. I have been the beneficiary of some of these groups and have come to have a great respect for the American family on its annual vacation trip.

The thing I most admire about this annual traveling by the American people is that it is now a part of the plan of the family budget, looked upon as valid and necessary. There is no longer any need to feel guilty when one goes in his car to see the mountains or the seashore or some historic or scenic place. And the wholesomeness of the average family group that I have known makes me feel that recreation for its own sake is well worth the attention it is now getting from state and national groups. As I am on the mailing list of the National Park Service, I get, almost every day, some new reminder of new places that are being added to our vacationing spots, where history and scenery and rest can all play their parts.

GIVING UP THE PAST

In recent folklore collecting I have on several occasions run across a sort of guilty feeling on the part of the people I have interviewed because they have so completely departed from some of their early experiences. I believe that this is most obvious in the realm of folk remedies and practices. Though nearly everybody whom I have talked to now patronizes the drugstore or the family doctor and talks about his stay in the hospital very much as old-timers mentioned their war service, sometimes there creeps in a note of sadness or wonder when the old remedy, the old practice is mentioned.

Basically, a great many of the old remedies had some sense in them, but the best of them were likely to be no more believed in and no more practiced than some hocus-pocus that was no more valuable than branch water. The very day that I am writing this article, an eminent physician, who runs a highly-respected column in a state paper, talked about remedies for warts and made it plain that not all the old practices were silly and certainly not harmful. Since warts are the result of viruses, whatever starves or smothers or deadens a virus is a good remedy. Some of the juices smeared on warts, some of the oils, some of the sticky stuff resorted to as by magic maybe did some good. Of, course, the physician had to insist that warts come and go, whether they are charged with stuff or not. And, since this is true, some seeming magic gets the credit for the disappearance of a pesky wart. If the physician had said in his column that all folk remedies are silly, he would have shown himself to be not educated but merely trained in a special field.

Poultices have greatly appealed to me all my life. I, quite frankly, never attributed any unusual magic to them but felt that some substance that would hold heat would be good to put on a swelling or sprain or boil. The poultices that I knew best were pretty simple

things: cornmeal heated in a pan and then put inside a cloth bag and laid on the suffering portion of one's anatomy, usually the tummy; or it might be ordinary salt heated in the same way. But, once or twice in my boyhood, I heard of a poultice made of cooked onions, but I cannot recall having seen one of this type. Poultices made of beet leaves, or jimson leaves, or babbage leaves just did not enter into my early experience; however, I can see how they might do as well as the salt and meal poultices that I knew from quite personal experience.

Devotion by one parents or one's family to some patent medicine is pretty hard to shake off. Thousands of people who were raised in homes where a patent-medicine almanac hung at the side of the fireplace and a big patent-medicine calendar covered a big place on the wall somehow felt a sort of allegiance to these time-honored remedies and resorted to them as to some trusted friends. A good many people whom I have known, before and since my folklore collecting, may have called a doctor and may have taken faithfully the prescriptions advised by him; but they kept in their medicine chests some of their remedies that they were fairly raised on.

Hospitalization is now so nearly universal that many people will soon be grown without knowing any other form of treatment of serious illnesses. And the undertaker has almost completely taken over the preparation of the dead for burial; some of the people whom I have talked to lately have never seen the neighbors do this necessary work. And digging a grave by neighbors and friends of the deceased is fast becoming an unknown institution. Within the last twenty years many of these folk practices that I have mentioned have almost disappeared in many communities. I can see why some of my friends, in talking about older practices, sometimes get a little sentimental in telling about the ways that used to be.

THE COUNTRY STORE AGAIN

Some of the people who study folkways felt that, with automobiles and TV and radios and all sorts of new gadgets that REA brings, the old country store would just about pass out of the picture. But folklorists sometimes fail to remember that the country store is deeply imbedded in our national life and is not so easily scared away by modern things.

In my folklore collecting I have had occasion lately to know that the country store is still doing business at the same old stand. In fact, it has often so modernized that it would take somebody better informed than I to tell when a country store is a country store, so far as the stock is concerned. And I often see a host of cars lined up where the hitching racks used to be, for the store is a community club, older than any other one of its type. I have known country people to go to town on Saturday morning to do some necessary shopping, but they would manage to come back in time to spend an hour or two with the group at the neighborhood store, making a few purchaes for good manners or because they liked the stuff the store had in stock.

Lots of country people that I know are so busy for five days of the week in their work in town that Saturday, especially Saturday afternoon, is the time to be good neighbors. Politics and religion can take time off for that period, especially religion, which may separate the community slightly on Sunday morning unless the churches are like several that I know, on adjoining lots, even away out in the country. The country store cannot afford to be one-sided, and so everybody is welcome. Some stores have TV's now, and that can provided a continuing attraction for those who wish to relax and just live a while. Probably whittling is hardly so nearly universal as it once was, and the country-store stove is often considerably tidier than those at Fidelity, at least, where everybody chewed tobacco.

On one of the hottest days in the summer of 1964 I arranged to be at a country store for the afternoon, to record the voices of old and young people who had lived in that area all their lives. The owners of the store are old friends of mine, one of them being a student in my classes not long before I retired. Back near the meat section of the store I plugged in the recorder and, with the help of my former student, kept up a continuous series of interviews all afternoon. The very day before my recording trip to the store, air-conditioning had been installed. That furnished an added attraction, but, from a long acquaintance with that store, I know that there would have been a sizable crowd in spite of the heat. Lots of soft drinks were consumed, neighbors greeted each other pleasantly, some purchases of groceries were made. And, as I took down the interviews, you could hear in the background the hum of activities in the country store. I quizzed the ten people whom I interviewed that afternoon about many folk things: remedies, good and bad luck signs, weather, local names for things, comparisons with a farm flavor. Two elderly men gave me in their interviews a very large number of folk remedies as they remembered them from a half century to seventy-odd years ago. And even the youngest person on my tapes, a girl of seventeen, with no priming on my part, just rattled off similes about farm life. Though I had to devote most of my time to my recording and make every person interviewed at ease, I could not help feeling the charm of the quite modernized country store. Air-conditioning, radio, and all the other gadgets could not take away the flavor of just such places that I had known. People of all ages had Saturday afternoon to spend as they pleased, and a trip to the crossroads store, a real institution for generations, was just to their liking. My one big regret is that I could not also have had a moving picture of the group whom I talked to, to show that moderns still like the country store, the forum so long famous in our American life.

FOLKISHNESS IN THE SUBURBS

When the old-fashioned country type of living began to lose some of its traditional force, I began to wonder what could or would take its place. I hated to see old-fashioned gatherings lose out, such as the ones I fairly grew up on, at Fidelity and at Sulphur Springs. Hosts of counyry people like me have long lived in towns and cities and have rarely kept up much of their former folkishness.

But suburban life has been quite active lately and is somehow reviving older social customs or adjusting to newer ones. It seems to me that suburbanites are now having or can have far more wholesome social life than has ever been possible for me and my generation of ex-patriates from the small village or the open country. Cookouts, potluck meals, and plain neighborhood get-togethers to talk seem quite common in our town. Hosts of young college people and business people are everywhere. Active in church affairs, in service clubs, in all sorts of community activities, they also find time to exchange meals with neighbors or with people of their social groups. And it does my heart good to see how many different types of people these suburbanites come to know well. With no special desire or effort to climb socially, and with no need to do so, they enjoy humanity as it is and find life very worth while, right here and now.

The most unhappy people whom I have ever known have been those who did not know what to do with themselves when they had left a country home and moved to town. Feeling somewhat out of place for a long time, they sometimes never quite attained to the same social standing that they had had, almost ex officio, back in their smaller population units. Be it said truthfully, both the city and the country were to blame for this, for those who really wanted to fit in soon found opportunities to do so. Churches, the PTA, various sorts of clubs--all offered and

still offer opportunities for recreation and wholesome neighborliness. Though many people who think that the activities of the County Home Demonstration Agent is wholly with country people need only to go, as I so often have gone, to group meetings of the clubs sponsored by the agent. A large percentage of the women in Homemakers' Clubs are city or suburban so far as their actual living is concerned; but they welcome the opportunity to affiliate with the forward-looking organizations that are doing so much to make life enjoyable and many-sided. Education, travel, broader views of life--these have destroyed many or even most of the old hard-and-fast lines between country and city. In my part of the state better farming methods have brought about a prosperity, in normal years, that has enabled country men and women to have advantages that even the rich people of the cities did not or could not have just a few years ago. In fact, most country people in my area are living on a higher level economically and socially than a very large proportion of the people in the city. In the words of the old-timers at Fidelity, most country people have "been about." That is, they have been to great conventions of their organizations, have mingled with high-type people from everywhere, have kept in the thick of things.

Undoubtedly some of this modern ease of manner of the suburbanite was forced upon him by the great immobility of our population. One neighbor may have moved here from Pennsylvania, another from Alabama, another from Kansas; business and education and the church have brought all these people--preponderantly young--to live in the same general section of the suburbs. Old social restrictions that had grown out of a stable population, of old families, have just about gone; with no very vocal objection to the older ways, the suburbanite is making a new series of customs, many of them firmly based on good old folkways and just as wholesome and satisfying as any of the older ways ever were.

LEAVES, BARKS, ROOTS

In October, 1964, I lectured to the class in Folklore at Morehead State College, using my Mammoth Cave regional study as a basis. On the same evening a student of last year had been asked to return and give her review of the project she worked out for the course. It was a large biscuit board, containing some sixty specimens of leaves, barks, and roots used in folk medicine in her own mountain county and, usually, by some relative or neighbor of hers. Her arrangement was clever, with fresh leaves at the top of the exhibit board, strips of bark in the middle, and roots at the bottom, all wired securely to the board. When she was asked why this arrangement, she said there was nothing secret about it: leaves grow from stems, and stems have roots. In my lifetime of attending folklore meetings I do not recall any more effective arrangement and presentation.

Each specimen was named, usually with the folk name, which, fortunately, has become well known scientifically. As there was not enough room for the uses of the specimen on the board, the lady student explained how pokeberries were good for rheumatism, horehound for coughs and sore throat, catnip tea for colic, etc., pointing out each time to the group of listeners the actual specimen. I was so impressed with her project that I urged her to give her talk and exhibit her specimens at our state folklore society meeting next spring or some other time. Before and after her talk and my speech she and I discussed my half-serious, half-comic idea of a folk drugstore. Her exhibit would certainly represent a big section of what I had thought of. Both of us wished that it were possible to have the actual teas and salves and poultices and candy and pills that these leaves and barks and roots could make. I suggested, of course, some branch water and some stump water, which are two of my trademarks as a folk medicine man.

One of the surprises this exhibit gave me was that in nearly every instance these same remedies of the Kentucky mountains were identical with those at Mammoth Cave, but they varied widely from the ones I knew in Calloway County as a child. You see, as I so often have said in this column, Fidelity and much of the Jackson Purchase had a great many early settlers from North Carolina, many of them descendants of families who were not FFV's but relatively late comers to America from Northern Ireland. In the numerous studies of folk language made in our mountains there is a considerable gap between the usage there and the usage in the Mammoth Cave area. The mountains have far more left-over words from older periods of English, but, apparently, the folk remedies stuck better.

It has been a source of great satisfaction to me that the older people whom I have been interviewing seem to recognize the importance of getting some sort of record of these earlier words and practices. I still think the best comment I have heard was made on the day when I made my first recordings of voices. I was interviewing a guide at Mammoth Cave who was soon to retire. I took some time, before turning on the machine, to explain what my purpose was. "Sure, I understand," said the man; "when we old codgers are gone, lots of this stuff will be gone with us." An elderly woman, one of the oldest persons whom I have recorded, thanked me heartily for coming to see her and her husband, who, not long after my visit, celebrated their sistieth wedding anniversary. She, too, stated as plainly as could be that old customs, old beliefs, old folk practices are going away so fast that it is wise to keep some sort of accurate record of them. Even the youngest person interviewed so far, only seventeen years old, was full of information about older customs and words, for she had been often to her grandmother's house and had grown up with a feeling that there was something good about Grandma and her ways.

TNC

STATUS SYMBOLS AGAIN

If we would be honest with ourselves, we would have to admit that a very large part of what we do, or eat, or wear, or say has to do with keeping up appearances. In more recent years this is called using certain status symbols. The most interesting phase of this tireless effort to keep up with the Joneses is that what puts us into the first place in one generation usually brands us as far below first in the next generation or even a period of time much shorter than that. In my three quarters of a century I have seen probably a dozen genuine periods of change in symbols. In fact, nearly all of these nearly 1550 articles in this column could be cladded under this heading.

Living in a remote, back-country section, I was acquainted with customs that had become somewhat old-fashioned elsewhere. Since vehicles have long branded us as to our social positions, that would be a good place to begin. People who owned buggies at Fidelity felt sorry for the poorer folks who had to travel by wagon, even when they went to Quarterly Meeting at Sulphur Springs. Hosts of people whom I had known in my earliest years did not own buggies until well after 1900. And some owned brand-new buggies as late as the 1920's. The mere buggy got a terrible jolt not long before 1906, the year I left home to go to school: the rubber-tired buggy came in and made the old steel-rimmed buggy look antiquated and tacky. The boy with the rubber-tired buggy certainly knew that he was up in the world, even though the dusty-muddy roads were the same that they had been back in wagon days. I did not get to witness the coming of the automobile at Fidelity, for I was living elsewhere; however, I can recall how big a splash the T-model made in Bowling Green and how envious the mere rubber-tired-buggy owners were. And, good psychologists that they were and are, the makers of cars soon developed the car as a status symbol and changed it so fast that many people felt disgraced when they were still seen driving a car a few

years old. And that changing status symbol still is with us, so much so that some people have to strain their bank accounts to keep up with the very latest. A friend of mine said, truly, about her father that he was the very type of fellow who thought that smoking a certain brand of tobacco or driving a certain type of car brought distinction. Shades of the rubber-tired buggy that drove in state up to Sulphur Springs Church along about 1903!

Since I, like all human beings, have to eat several times a day to keep going, I often find myself laughing at the social status given by one's eating or serving his guests certain foods. W. brats at Fidelity School used to look down our dirty noses at the children who brought some food to school to eat at the noon recess that did not match up to what we had in our buckets or baskets. In fact, a basket was ever so much more aristocratic than a mere bucket. When Mark and Elmus appeared one day with some fried bread, we thought the end of things had come, little realizing that they and their folks were eating doughnuts. The rest of us had not known the taste of doughnuts and supposed them something fancy or fancier than the fried cakes the boys had. W. were queer brats ourselves, but how much queerer were we than some of the grown-ups I have known, even lately, who railed against pasteurized milk and fairly raised the roof when it was suggested that margarine was good? Years ago I ~~fairly~~ exulted when the doctors said good words for turnip greens; I am afraid that I guyed my aristocratic neighbor a bit too much when I told her that I had been justified at last, for I had always eaten greens of all kinds unashamedly. If you have tried in recent years to get some good souse at the supermarket, you will know that lots of folks nowadays buy up the good souse almost at once, people whose immediate forebears would have died of starvation before they would have been caught buying souse or, especially, eating it. Ho, hum! What next?

"THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH"

It is understandable that every generation imagines itself as different from the one just preceding it. Here in America, from the earliest times, these differences have been striking. From the most primitive log or sod house or even a hole dug into a bank, many a family ultimately advanced to life in a frame or even a brick or stone house. In fact, the type of house, and often its size, became a sort of social-status symbol. To be born in a log cabin and then to live in one's mature years in a palace was so common that it seemed logical rather than illogical.

But many other phases of our civilization besides houses advanced rather slowly. Roads, for example, were little better for the flashy carriage than they had been for the ox wagon. Sanitation was a long time in changing from none to some. And, a corollary, health remained among the well-to-do often little or no better than it had been among the most primitive. Formal education was slow about advancing; a few individuals rose above the low average, but a feeling that academic training for everybody was a long time coming, if it has wholly arrived yet.

A consciousness of history has been slow to develop. It is easier to imagine great ancestors than it is to prove that they were, or were not, actually much above the average. In many areas the sense of actual backgrounds is still vague; almost anything can be told or written about and be accepted. Rather ridiculously, many Kentuckians have spent most of their historical interest on the very earliest pioneers in central Kentucky and know and care little about the actual first settlers in other areas. Even now there seems too little interest, on the part of scholars and writers, in the immediate area in which they live; too often they love to fall back on traditional grandeur.

Some phases of our folkways have revolutionized within my lifetime. Probably the one most obvious is travel and transportation. In Fidelity, and in thousands of other places, when I was a boy, even the buggy had hardly arrived in numbers. Dozens of families that I knew, good average families, had no buggy; and, a little before my own time, the log wagons often came in pretty good numbers to church at Sulphur Springs. When I left home, in 1906, the rubber-tired buggy was still a rather new gadget; only social-climbing mature people and romantic young bucks owned such worldly things as a rubber-tired buggy. I have been told by reputable people that some families in the Fidelity area graduated from wagon to automobile, with no intermediate stage of buggies. Of course, if you could have seen the roads around Fidelity, especially in winter, you might have wondered how even a double rig--a two-horse buggy--could manage to get from A to B. Cars arrived, at Fidelity and elsewhere, slightly ahead of good roads. When I used to speak at Brownsville, forty-off years ago, I would go by train to Rocky Hill and then go by T-Model the rest of the way. Nearly always there was a driver and a supernumerary, for it often took an extra fellow to help get the car out of the mudholes along the way. A strong pair of rubber boots nearly always formed part of the driver's extra equipment, just in case. And I have seen them used effectively when we got to a very muddy hill on the way.

The attitude toward education has gone hand in hand with the development of roads and cars. At eighteen I had never seen an automobile---or anyone who had finished a four-year high school course. To most of the people of Kentucky in that year--1906--both a diploma and a car seemed like expensive luxuries that few would waste their money on. Long after 1906 it was difficult to get much enthusiasm for a county high school, and only pressure finally caused some counties to establish such an institution. Our generation has certainly had more than its share of changes.

THE WASHBOARD

Recently Joe Creason, in his COURIER-JOURNAL column told about a student at Western who had written back to her mother about a very unusual new invention that she had found by going away to college, a corrugated piece of metal on a board, on which you could smear some soap and scrub clothes and make them clean, even cleaner than the washer at home could do it. Shades of Mondays of the long ago! Now Monday was foreordained as wash day, or the people at Fidelity seemed to think so. Early Monday morning we got up with washing in our minds. Water had to be drawn from a cistern or well or brought from a spring, and it took a lot of water for a wash day in a big family like mine. If it was in school time, I knew I must get this part of the weekly washing done before I took off for the Fidelity school, over in the woods near the village. If the cistern was running low, I would make several trips to the spring down the road, with a metal tank that just fit into the buggy bed. Then, with kettle and supernumerary tubs or barrels filled, I could put on my school clothes and hurry away across the fields to school. If it were not school time--and most of my life school meant five months, the minimum prescribed by the state--, I could help still further by building and keeping up the fire under the big kettle, by helping hang out the clothes, and by doing my share in disposing of the tubs of water. One tub always, in summer, went on my prized morning glories, for I got more compliments on them than on anything else that I was interested in. It took lots of clotheslines to hold the weekly wash; the garden fence had its share, too. And I always felt somehow cleansed in spirit when I helped Mother and my sisters bring in the clean clothes for another week of cleanliness and respectability.

But what about the washboard? It played a very important part in this weekly sacrifice to the gods of cleanliness. As the modern student write her mother, this corrugated piece of metal fastened to a board could work some strange wonders. With strong lye soap and an equally strong arm, some judicious rubbing brought cleanliness again. And when I recall how many shirts and pairs of pants practically coverd with dirt and tobacco gum a single week would bring, I want to chant a paean of praise to the washboard, the symbol of man's winning fight against dirt.

A less practical side of the washboard's use was the strange series of sounds that were produced by the rubbing of clothes on the corrugated metal. It seems now, ages after I have heard such a sound, that each washerwoman had a different rhythm of rubbing clothes and thus produced a different tune, One of our washerwomen would sing or hum and keep time with the rubbing; sometimes we suggested that she might put a little more quick step into her singing and rubbing, but she kept to the rhythm that had been her special way of dealing with clothes on Monday morning for much longer than we mere children could remember or even imagine. I recall now that the tunes were church tunes, slow and impressive, but they progressed, and so did the rubbing; and the dirty water rolled down the corrugations into the tub, and at last cleared up enough to warrant a change to some other dirty garment. If I were a musician, which I fear I am not, I would like to write a piece that I might call the "Washboard Blues." I do not know just how I would get some of the effects that I can imagine unless I had an actual washboard as a part of the orchestra and let someone hum and scrub to the same rhythm. All honor to the freshman girl who has found a washboard; I hope her further schooling will be equally successful.

THE HOMELY APPEAL

In spite of its being abused by people who hope thereby to catch attention, when in reality there is no deep-dyed liking for it all, a homely style or one that is rooted in plain, simple living is always appealing. Merely trying to be homely is always obvious to those to the manner born. A log-cabin approach worked in some cases in our comic-opera presidential campaigns, but it was never so badly misplaced as when it was the very essence of the campaign of William Henry Harrison. General Harrison was anything but a log-cabin person, being of even aristocratic origins and in no sense a mere plain man of the people. But that made good campaign appeal, and he was elected. Unfortunately, he caught pneumonia on his inauguration day and lived as president only a month; whether his log-cabin approach would have been a part of his term of office remains one of the guesses of history. My guess, more than a century later, is that he would have dropped the campaign froth and goo and been, as he was born, a Virginia aristocrat, whom the fortunes of pioneering had taken to Indiana.

This effort by the actual log-cabin politicians themselves rather than their followers has about played out in most of our really big campaigns; and peace to its ashes. It now has too much of the sound of Tin Pan Alley or some other place that shows how we as Americans outside New York City are supposed to live and act and talk. It is as real as Dogpatch and no more so.

But I love the appeal of the homely that is ingrown, not smeared or grafted on. Joe Creason, for example, in his inimitable column, is a real lover of the ordinary, the local, the homely. His formal education merely strengthened his love for things like those of his quaint little town of Benton. No toplofty attitude is ever found

in his column. If something has happened in Kentucky, "Joe Creason's Kentucky," it is worthy of retelling, as only Joe Creason can tell it. Those of us who know him well realize that this feeling of his is natural, not acquired. His Benton, his Marshall County, his little neck of the woods may not be as great as yours,—maybe, I say,—, but it is "powerfully" like it; and we who read his column six days a week know that he has got better acquainted with every little corner of the state than any one else. He has not capitalized on this knowledge; he is not trying to get you to vote for him for anything or to use Benton in others days as a symbol of what everybody ought to be. After all, we all have our own Benstons, except that I call mine Fidelity, and you call yours something else.

Years ago, when I was studying folksongs and ballads pretty steadily, I began to sense a vast difference between natural and unnatural singing of these songs. Once, as I have told about often, I was on a program to discuss ballads, and the audience was a very well-educated, cultured one, too. I knew that I would be received as I should be as a fellow who had better watch his step and not impose on the good sense of the hearers. To illustrate the ballad, the same committee that invited me invited a really excellent singer—of grand opera—to sing ballads; and she did, in the manner of a heroine right off the Metropolitan stage. It was good music, of its sort, but it was not ballad-singing by any stretch of the imagination. She knew more about music than a dozen people like me, but she would have stuffed her ears with cotton, I suspect, if she had been forced to listen to some actual ballads as they are and were sung by genuine rather than artificial singers. I am sure that the audience long ago forgot what I said, and I sincerely hope that they recall only the beautiful operatic voice of the singer rather than her presentation of hard-hearted Barbara Allen and Lord Thomas and Fair Annette.

"SEEING LIFE STEADILY"

Matthew Arnold says a really great poet "sees life steadily and sees it whole." Lesser poets often see small areas of life; some see the whole area of life only in glimpses. When a poet lets his lesser self color his conception of all of his life, he is marking himself down as a poet and will never be a great one.

A genuine folklorist, while he may never be ranked by critics as the equal of a first-rate poet, must be willing and even eager to see life as it is and start from there. In my long life as a teacher I listened to a lot of drivel about the ordinary people who are so numerous that we all know them and are of them. Some wild-eyed reformer would suddenly announce that only his special kind of quackery would redeem humanity from ignorance, intolerance, and general cussedness. Sometimes he would get a tremendous ovation and have a movement named for him. Sometimes he would sparkle like a Fourth of July sparkler for a short time and then be all dark. He was likely to be followed by an equally loud-mouthed reformer who proclaimed that all is well as it is; why worry? "We live in the best of all possible worlds; everything is lovely and the goose hangs high." There is just enough lazy-mindedness in the world for this sort of fellow to get a following, even for a time. Once, a long time ago, a college professor in Kentucky declared in his announcement as a candidate for superintendent of public instruction of the state that, if elected, he would take away the requirements for certificates to teach that were based on a certain number of college or even high school credits. Each applicant for a certificate would take a set of questions sent out from the state superintendent's office, just as was the rule in 1907, when I passed that set of questions and got a second-class certificate. Believe it or not, some teachers

voted for this wild-eyed fellow who wanted to turn the clock back a half century or so. Fortunately, there were not enough votes to seat the candidate in the state office; many of us believed then and still believe that the man was senile, for we wondered and still wonder how any person could have said the things he said and wrote.

Movements have come and gone. Nearly every year has brought some self-appointed bringer of new tidings. And the burial place of these heroes, if they could all be placed side by side at one spot, would rival the rows and rows of crosses in national cemeteries. In the meanwhile some solid teachers, seeing life pretty steadily and a very large part of it, too, kept on teaching as faithfully as they could, always open to suggestions but not swept off their feet by every would-be rescuer of the whole human race.

There has been nothing unusual in all this so far as its occurring in our own time. Our history is crammed with examples of the same thing. One of the standard ways to attract attention is to announce with no preliminaries that everything is on its way down and then prescribe one's own nostrum for the cure of our ills. To a folklorist these spurts of enthusiasm that go beyond bounds are part of the game; the steady growth and advancement of our race can and does go on in spite of all this. Sometimes, I will admit, the folk way out is a little primitive, but the catnip tea will probably help the child or certainly not harm it until the doctor can get there and give an approved shot or pill. And some of the same so-called folk stolidness will find a way after the collapse of great booms, and land, like the proverbial cat, on its feet. To active people like you and me some folk acceptance of what cannot be helped seems a little too mild; we want people to rage against tyrants and drouths and floods and anything else that stands in our way. "It always has rained," says the local folk prophet, and he stakes his whole life on that philosophy. Maybe he has something.

CHORES

In spite of our rich store of folk words at Fidelity, we did not have, in common use, the word chores. We knew the word, but it, like lots of other things we knew, was just in a book. We could "feed the stock," "milk the cows," "slop the pigs," "do up the dishes," "sweep the floors," "bring in wood," but we had no word to include all of them. One humorous fellow used to talk about having to get home to "milk up the things."

In general, nobody regarded all these duties as work. Getting up on cold mornings and, after feeding all the stock, milking a cow that slaps a cuckle-bur-filled tail against near-frozen ears ought to have a poet and interpreter. Somehow the poets love to picture milking a cow as highly poetic, and we readers of poetry wonder how much these poets knew about cows.

Watering the stock could be somewhat romantic when we would round up the horses, mules, and colts--and drive the herd to the spring or the creek. There we might meet some other young chaps on a similar mission. We could have impromptu bareback horse races on the dusty road as well as get caught up on neighborhood news or gossip. Most of my own childhood had passed before the telephone came in and superseded most of the news-spreading agencies that had had a long and useful life; hence driving the stock to be watered often became a very thrilling encounter with what was going on, openly or secretly, in the Fidelity area. But drawing endless bucketfuls of water from a well or cistern to water the cows and calves soon became real toil, no more poetic than hoeing tobacco or working in the newground. When we boys on the farm read about how much water a camel could drink, we strongly suspected that our thirsty old cows must be part camel.

Feeding the chickens was not especially difficult, but sometimes

we tried, usually with scant success, to break some of our hens from roosting in apple and peach trees and run the risk of freezing themselves. Climbing into a tree after dark, blinding a hen with light from the lantern, and then seizing her by the legs and removing her, squawking, to the henhouse got pretty boring after several nights with the same experience.

Bringing in wood can be work, too, if it is done mechanically by gathering up an armload and wagging it in. But, with a little home-made wagon to load and unload and act the part of mule and driver all at the same time, this chore was play. It often took twice as long and used up five times as much energy as the regular way of carrying it in the arms; but think of losing all the excitement of the wagon and acting as mule! Somehow picking up chips did not seem quite so poetic, for that involved carrying a basket that steadily got heavier and heavier. But most boys, mothers at Fidelity insisted on having a basket of chips handy to kindle fires or to encourage fires that were not doing their duty by wet or green wood. So we picked up chips, whether the act was poetic or not.

The girls often made a rite of lighting the lamps at nightfall. From infancy they had been trained to trim the wicks and to clean the lamp chimneys. As the littlest boy I had to learn a lot of girlish duties and secretly rejoiced when my boy hands got too big to insert into a lamp chimney; henceforth I could help with more mannish duties.

Those of us who are not ashamed to recall a good many years can look back to the chores attendant upon opening or closing the day and thus tie ourselves back to a simpler, more primitive time, when gadgets had not been invented to do some of our necessary work. Imagine drawing water now for a whole herd of dairy cattle, and imagine what a bevy of country lassies would be necessary to milk these same well-fed and well-nourished cows!

POETIC JUSTICE

There used to be a notion, at least among some of my early teachers, that "Whatever is, is wrong," so far as language is concerned. That is, if you said something naturally, then it was wrong. And, I must confess, learned books and THE dictionary--Webster's--kept this attitude alive. If our pronunciation or meaning just did not happen to be in Webster, then it was wrong, even though generations of good people had used it with no evil consequences. And, even in graduate school, I had one teacher who still held this idea of what constitutes good and bad English. He utterly ignored regionalisms, unless, of course, they were immortalized in Webster. He had grown up, like me, on a farm--he in Ohio, I in Fidelity; but he had gone East to school and had forgotten that any other speech except New England existed. Hence, in his class your pronunciation of a word often caused more comment than the ideas you were expounding. If his--and Webster's--favorite ~~pronunciation~~ accent of a word was on the second syllable, even though ninety-nine people of real education out of a hundred ~~pronounced~~ accented the first syllable, he called your attention to your error almost as if it had been a misdemeanor worthy of a jury trial. Some of his students tried to accord their pronunciations with his, but most of us did not, for side by side in his revered Webster would occur his pet sounds and ours, often with ours given first place.

Before me lies WEBSTER'S SEVENTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY, bearing the date of 1963. Only reverence for my former teachers, all of whom have long ago joined the choir invisible, I might let out a great-big "I told you so." Why, the teacher who actually scolded me, away back in 1909 for saying "strip-ed" might turn over in his grave if he could see that word with my pronunciation given as the second accepted one, on p. 870. And, on p. 793, "service", as in "service tree," is "sarvis," just what all of us at Fidelity used to call it, and

that pronunciation is the first one given. I regret that "cowcumber" does not appear for the wild magnolia, for that is widely used, too, and it represents what the big-bugs in learning used to call the garden vegetable. And(see p. 921) "thresher" is given "thrasher" for the first pronunciation, again agreeing with Fidelity and its benighted citizens, as we were probably thought to be.

And on and on I could go, citing page and word, for this new dictionary goes as far toward liberalizing pronunciation and meaning as its predecessors stood pat for generations, as if the language were dead and laid out, never to change again. Of course, the whole learned world needs a dictionary that takes more into consideration regional words, words that are perfectly good in their own sphere, no better and certainly no worse than those of some other region. Imagine trying to teach Fidelity boys and girls about "haydoodles," when we always said "hayshocks," and why not? Imagine, too, trying to make a boy with his fishing equipment ready to go to the creek talk about "angle worms." How much better is that word than "fishing worm"? And imagine wading in a "brook" when a "spring branch" would do as well? Many people confuse regional words with bad grammar or even with obscenity. I am perfectly willing to let the Westerner have his distinctive vocabulary for his distinctive sights and sounds and actions; I like to hear a New Englander "cal'late" that it is about to rain when I know he means "reckon." But he must let me "reckon" while I tolerate his "cal'late." Fortunately the latest Webster often removes a tell-tale "c" after a word that was formerly so marked; it used to mean that the word was "colloquial," that is, good in informal speech but not dignified enough for literary or formal style. And, for many words, even "you-all," there is no attempt to ignore what ~~is one~~ are some of our most useful words. Dictionary-makers are beginning to show some signs of being recorders of speech rather than dictators of speech. And I hear a mighty rumbling as some of my former English teachers change positions in their graves.

The very proper dictionaries, and equally proper English teachers, say it is kinsfolk, but I like the folksy way of calling it kinfolks. Just imagine asking some feller of your tribe: "How's all the kinsfolk?" He probably might answer properly, but he would imitate you for weeks on end when he was among his kinfolks.

Anyway, we all have them--and they have us, which is a horse of another color. Some of the haughtiest people I have ever known were only two or three removes from some of the most ordinary, or ornery, relatives I ever saw. And all of us come under this category, too, for it is a strange array of kinfolks when they are up to snuff or when all toe the line or when there are not a few black sheep among them.

Somehow, as time has gone on and our horizons have widened, kinfolks do not seem as important as they once did. When our world was a very small corner of the county or a portion of a creek bottom or a ridge, it was great to have Uncle George and Aunt Mary to depend on. None of us in those days had any friends at court, in the English way of saying it. We were from Fidelity or some other Podunkish place and could not present a whole ream of properly written recommendations. Since all the ridge or the hollow or the nook where we lived knew our relatives, it was quite handy to capitalize a bit on them. Even people from a distance, say, ten or twelve miles away, might know Uncle Bill and thus have a connection with us if business for the church or for politics took us into this far-distant area.

Having kinfolks assured almost any of us some good square meals when we would stray a few miles away, and we certainly returned this favor, a hundredfold, it seems in memory. You see, I did not get to know kinfolks as next-farm neighbors; we lived half a county from a relative. That meant fewer and longer visits, especially in the summer.

But the few times that I invaded the areas where the Robertsons and the Wilsons lived stand out in memory, for they were all great eaters and felt hurt if visitors did not stuff themselves. I was never criticized for not doing my duty by the piles of food trotted out three times a day during my infrequent visits.

It has been a great satisfaction to most people when some relative, maybe not a very near one but one anyway, attained to some distinction. Some third or fourth cousin, such as I have by the dozens, just must be doing pretty well; hence it is easy to remark, as casually as possible, that "my cousin" is now thus and so. I rarely take time to explain how far away the cousinship may be. You see, I was born so far down the line that, on one side of my family, there are only two of my first cousins of the thirty-two, all told, who arrived in the world somewhat later than I did. As a result of my being so far removed from most of my first cousins, it is natural, I hope, for me to claim cousinship with some remote descendant of a collateral ancestor when that descendant gets to be Somebody. You see, it relieves me from any suspicion of trying to use some famous older person as collateral when I want to borrow money or sympathy or support.

The old-time claiming of kin to the tenth or twelfth remove seems now out of order among the people whom I know. But when Cousin Arch, a 300-pound tobacco buyer, used to come into the Fidelity area on business, he nearly always remembered his dear cousin, my mother, and came to see her and all of us still-more-distant cousins. The small hotel at Fidelity thus lost a customer, a brave Rebel soldier who still felt called on to administer a few blows on the nose to any fellow who even remotely suggested that there were brave men on both sides in the Civil War. I once could recall just how much relationship there was between my mother and Cousin Arch; I think now that they were sixth cousins, close enough when that relationship would save a few dollars of board and lodging and horse feed.

QUOTING THE BIBLE

Fidelity folks and plenty of others used to read or hear head many passages from the Bible. Some of the people I knew were looking for quotations to fortify their particular brand of religion and could spout off verses by the dozen, some of them not even remotely bearing on the argument in question. These quoters were often to be found at the store. Sometimes the ablest quoters were the least educated and, also quite often, the least tidy as to hair or beard or clothes. Somehow, even in my childhood, there was something slightly comic about this series of quotes, however accurately the quoters usually were.

But the amazing thing to me in my collecting of proverbs is that a very large percentage of the well-known proverbs are accurate quotations or adapted ones from the Bible. Just about everything that humanity thinks about can be topped with a quotation from the group at the country store or the less warlike crowd at the big Sunday dinner or in the front yard after dinner. In going over a list of some 1500 sayings in my files lately, I began to set down the ones that echo the Bible in some way. Sometimes they are very pat, too.

A soft answer turns away wrath.

If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.

Put a bridle on your tongue.

He sticks closer than a brother.

Everybody has a cross to bear.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

Strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

To blow hot and cold.

No man can serve two masters.

Money is the root of all evil.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

Don't cast your pearls before swine.

A comic aspect of many attempted quotations from the Bible is that the quoter, who is often trying to silence his opponent, would not know how to find a quotation in his Bible even if given plenty of time. He, therefore, often utters some age-old saying and says, "As the Bible says." It is amazing how many of these quotations are directly from Poor Richard, where they became a part of whole generations of people. Franklin's sayings were copied endlessly, even in the patent-medicine almanacs that graced all the homes at Fidelity half a century ago. A good deal of fudging occurred when men sat down to make these almanacs, for they had a way of changing the proverb to suit the occasion and sometimes thus started a whole new evolution in the life of the proverb. A slight misunderstanding of some older word or a defective memory made a proverb that was printed in a book become again a proverb handed down by word of mouth, just as folk versions of songs have gradually recreated whole stanzas of ballads.

One of my helpers said that she had never tried to memorize sayings and, therefore, knew very few of them. I took issue at once and told her that she probably knew hundreds. I started the tape recorder and began to quiz her. She scored above 90% on the hundred and more proverbial sayings that I read off to her and grew more and more amazed that she knew so many.

Maybe we are not so fond of proverbs, Biblical or others, as we used to be. For one thing, I am told that children are not made to memorize so many lines of verse as they once did. Why, some of my teachers expected us to know hundreds of quotations, and some of us knew them and hundreds more not required. Though mere memorization is questionable as such, for some of us these treasures, meticulously memorized, reappear almost daily in our lives, long after we got a star or some other mark for having mastered the great saying. Maybe the old-fashioned traditional way of learning was not so bad after all.

REGIONAL WORDS

The most misunderstood group of words in our language are what are now called regional words. For generations English teachers have somewhat ignored or even condemned these distinctive words, classifying them with barbarisms and other recognized forms of substandard English. The dictionaries have often omitted words that have a perfect right to be known for what they are. Later dictionaries have somewhat opened the way for regional words, but there is still much to be done before they are set down for what they are--recognized words in certain areas, understood and useful.

Some time ago I mentioned our regional foods and how they are often used to attract tourists. Though there is no money in it, a use of regional words can and does add distinction to an area quite as much as do regional foods.

In a winter-long search for certain words of a regional nature, I have been given some queer experiences. I have found in certain studies that a shedroom is called a linter, apparently a dictionary spelling for the word, which is widely known as a lean-to. Our good old friend ambeer, maybe a bit too well known around the stove in the country store, does not yet rate in the college dictionaries; it must be rudely shocking to the makers of such texts. If it were limited to a very small area, as up some hollow or out on some ridge, then, to save space, the dictionarry might leave it out: but ambeer is known over a very wide area, probably too wide.

Some students of language are perfectly willing to unlearn their own regional words and pronunciations for everyday things and acquire, often with great effort, the regional words, and especially pronunciations, of New England, seeming to believe that what the New Englanders say is always right. I have no prejudice against the New Englanders and

their language; in fact, I love to hear it when it is genuine and not acquired by somebody who spent a few years in some New England college, or by somebody who hopes to raise his social image by dropping a few New England words into his ordinary conversation. These same seekers after distinction in speech would resent hearing some outsider butcher the idiom of Kentucky. Time and again, just for fun, while I have been collecting words, I have somewhat innocently suggested some word as a substitute for, let's say, hay shock; I got the sort of laugh I expected and felt even more than ever a respect for the people whom I have studied so long.

Years ago two teachers came to Western, one from Michigan, the other from Wisconsin. In formal speech they and I talked the same language; we never seemed to need any footnotes. But in ordinary chatter or informal conversation, I often got lost when the Michigan professor was speaking; he would often have to offer some substitute words for his first usages; I would have to do the same thing when I was talking with him. The Wisconsin professor and I rarely had to stop long enough to insert a better-known word--that is, better-known to me. I was surprised until I learned that the original settlers in southwest Wisconsin, where he came from, arrived there from Cave City, Kentucky. After I learned that, neither of us felt any strain on our normal everyday speech when we were just "passing the time of day." I deeply regret that I do not know more of the native Michigan speech, though, from several summer vacations spent in central Michigan, I did learn what a swalehole is. That is a marsh or swamp in Kentucky lingo, a slightly different one, maybe, as most Michigan swaleholes are shallow glacial lakes that have filled up with silt and vegetation. But imagine my calling one of our too-numerous sinkholes a swalehole or my friend's telling me about the sinkholes in his area in Michigan! Each one is good in its place and would be ridiculous if used elsewhere.

TO BACK A LETTER

As far back as I can remember, everybody at Fidelity said "to back a letter" when ~~they~~ he meant to write the name and address on the envelope. Everybody knew ~~the~~ "address," but that was one of the many expressions that seemed slightly strange to us. When I grew up and went away from Fidelity, I soon found that most people whom I met said "address," though some older ones would still cling to the former usage. Like so many young people who imagine that what ~~is~~ is, is always bad, I soon broke my habit of saying "back" and said "address" like outsiders. Today it is an effort to return to my old-time usage.

For years I have tried to tell my students, especially the upperclassmen, that regional speech is no disgrace and is often appropriate and full of flavor. Too many pseudo-educated folks imagine that they must often talk like a book, even in every-day chatter and gossip. They remind me of Thomas Babington Macaulay, who as a child, when asked about his toothache, is said to have replied, "The malady has somewhat abated." I have had teachers who would have applauded that brat for talking so much like a book, even about a toothache.

Just for fun I recently went over all the references that I have found for "to back a letter" and was amazed at how widespread the word was and, in many places, still is. First of all, it is still heard often in my Mammoth Cave region and sounds just as it should. It has been reported from nearly every section of Kentucky, that is, wherever ~~language~~ students have taken the time and trouble to set down some observations on language. Virginia and North Carolina, of course, as the parent states of Kentucky, used and use it. And states that show a marked Scotch-Irish element in their earlier populations have it: western New York, Pennsylvania. Since Virginia and North Carolina expanded into Kentucky and Tennessee, into southwestern Ohio,

into southern Indiana and Illinois, into eastern Missouri and Arkansas, it is easy to see why people in all these areas have known "to back a letter." And states that received a large group of settlers from these middle states have the word among the descendants of such pioneers as those from Kentucky and Tennessee: Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma. The ENGLISH DIALECT DICTIONARY lists the word as Scotch in origin; therefore it is expected and found wherever a sizable Scotch-Irish group of settlers were found, particularly in the South, the older West--now called Middle West, and spots in the Far West. All told, I have found records of the word in lists ~~words~~ from 20 states, and I am sure that there must be some Scotch-Irish areas in other states that have still not been surveyed by word-hunters.

This is just one word among several hundred that show definitely our Scotch-Irish usages. Earlier historians somewhat played down this element in our population, as if there were something hardly worthy of praise in these hardy pioneers who had come from Northern Ireland in later times than had come the settlers from England. So eager have some writers been to claim only Tidewater origins for their families that they have ignored three-fourths of their ancestors and picked out the other fourth as giving the family its distinction. Fortunately, more recent historians have shown us how the areas where "to back a letter" was the normal usage are all related linguistically. The next time you hear some older person use this ancient expression, do not laugh, but wonder at the persistence of it and dozens of other words since the hardy, self-sufficient Scotch-Irish came to America, found the coastal areas all taken up, and moved on to the frontiers of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and then, in due time, into the areas beyond the mountains.

THE BOOGERMAN

All the bad little boys and girls at Fidelity and in hundreds of other places used to be told that the Boogerman would get them if they didn't behave. It has been a long time since I have heard of the Boogerman by name, but I am sure that he is still around. Some writers identify him with Satan, but he was hardly that important in my childhood; he was just some invisible power that watched for bad children to entrap. I never heard of his being caught in the act, but he was supposed to "get you," whatever that means. Maybe he got us and we did not know it.

Our Boogerman was in no sense local. I recently found him mentioned--as "Booger" or "Boogerman," with many spellings--in nine states, as far apart as Maryland and Colorado; however, he is most often referred to in North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Maybe we live in his special area, where he is always at hand to grab any bad brat. James Whitcomb Riley's "Gobbleuns," in "Little Orphant Annie," just didn't live down around Fidelity except in that poem. They were indefinite critters anyway and probably were no worse than ordinary "ghostes" and queer wild animals like a "guyascutus." But the Boogerman seemed real, almost like an acquaintance; we certainly heard his name called often enough to know him. And, according to the word-lists that I have so recently gone over, he was also standing by in Missouri and Iowa, in Colorado and Maryland.

Not having qualified as an adviser of parents, I cannot say what ogre should be used to frighten children into behaving themselves. More than all the Boogermen, if there are more than one, was my own fear of a rather stern father and his heavy hands, for he rarely took time to cut a switch, and a razor strap was not needed at our house, for Father wore a full beard always. And I never saw a slipper used on even a small child; hands were made before slippers and switches.

Many of our neighbors' children seemed to fear the Boogerman more than I did, that is, until night came on and darkness gave its invitation for boogers and other bad things to prowl around until sunup. In spite of my mother's reassurance that there were no boogers, I sometimes found considerable comfort in wrapping up, head and ears, in a jeans quilt to keep them or other invisible prowlers from eating me alive. Just why a jeans quilt would make them think twice before devouring a scared brat I have never worked out. When daylight came again, I wondered why I had been so afraid. But regularly the shades of night signaled the return of wild, creeping things that might gobble us up.

In our home I doubt whether the Boogerman was identified with the devil, for the latter gentleman, as the kind old lady in the folk story called him, seemed much bigger than a Boogerman and all the other scary things put together. Somehow Mother, with her almost-whispered voice, scared most of our naughtinesses away. She had another sure way of getting us to mind our p's and q's; she threatened to tell our father. He would be away on a call as a country doctor and would be coming home at any moment. No matter how tired he was after riding over our dusty-muddy roads, he was never too tired that he let justice wait. We knew that and usually acted accordingly, but we were never model children by any means, for we had inherited some of the determined ways of that same red-headed father and could not be lined up and counted any too easily. As long as we were our father's small children, it was not necessary to call in the services of a Boogerman or any other scary keeper of the peace. In our childhood it seemed pretty severe discipline sometimes that we had to face daily and even hourly; but those childhood days have been succeeded by sixty-odd years of maturity, and it is with a decent respect for discipline, even harsh discipline, that I pay my respects to the father who did not need the services of any outsider, Boogerman or otherwise, to keep order in our big, nervous family.

THE FEIST DOG

At Fidelity, when I was a boy, a smallish, skinny, nosey little dog was called a "feist(or fice)." Since pure-bred dogs of any kind or size were unknown, our animals were just plain dogs, with no aristocratic backgrounds. "Feist dog," then,did not designate a breed so much as a type, a variety. And there were, first and last, lots of dogs I knew that could have been called feists.

Long before my time the word was a sort of dirty one. I have known a few people who still feel that it is not exactly nice to call a dog by this name, but nobody of this group of nice people has ever told me why. I have pretended ignorance in order to find out, if possible, why there is a sort of hush-hush about feists.

But, aside from the dirty suggestion about the name originally, a feist dog in my youth was always a bit too friendly, too show-off. Rarely did it have any merits to justify its wanting to be noticed; it was just a smallish dog, with nothing to recommend it. I like the adjective applied to it, "feisty." That word, if understood, says more than dozen of sentences strung together. Some elderly women used the word to mean that a feisty girl was flirting with her reputation, if she were not pretty far gone in breaking some of the commandments. In general, however, a feisty girl was just a playful one, not necessarily a bad one. She had, often, more social grace than some of the others; she did not seem afraid of strangers and could hold her own in the wit combats of her own group, too. Very rarely did I hear the word applied to boys, but there were a few who were so called, and rightly so. Some boys, at Fidelity, at least, could soon be the life of the party, either intentionally or because the average boy was pretty lumpish in society. It happened that one or two such easy-going fellows were not too good morally and thus caused a slight renewal of the older ugly meaning of the word.

Recently, in looking over my files, I found that the word "feist" as applied to the sort of dog I have been talking about has been recorded in eleven states, from Virginia and North Carolina on the east to Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska on the west, with all the intermediate states. That spread would indicate to me that the word was brought over by the English and Scotch-Irish and kept because of its usefulness. Besides the solid group of states in the South and lower Middle West, some far-away places like Colorado and Oregon know the word and its adjective. It would be a safe bet that some Virginia-North Carolina stock took the word into their Far Western homes, and their descendants still know and use the words. And, it is good to know, "feisty" appears in all these areas, too. Frankly, just what word would you use to mean feisty except the word itself. If you have never known it, you have missed a descriptive word that should, even now, be added to your vocabulary.

Away back in the early days of World War II I was on my way to a speaking appointment in Tennessee. Gasoline was too scarce to use; I was riding a bus. Fortunately, nearly everybody on the bus when I boarded it seemed to know everybody else; therefore there was a lot of good-humored talking among the crowd aboard. One very attractive young woman seemed to get most of the attention; everybody called her "Feisty," and nothing else. It seemed to me as I listened to the banter that she must have been a Democrat in the Republican stronghold where most of the travelers got on. Several persons, men and women, assured her that she had lost her vote, for it was Election Day, and she had said she voted before starting on her journey. I have never heard the word "feisty" used naturally since then, even though it is so useful. That forty-mile bus ride brought back a whole volume of memories, for I saw the Fidelity feisties on parade. Most of them are now, like the ones of us who weren't feisty, pretty old; I wonder whether any of the ugly things prophesied about a few of them ever came true.

GALLUSES

It is likely that many of the readers of this column, assuming that there are many, will wonder what, possibly, could be interesting about galluses. Well, you are just admitting that you are younger than some of the rest of us. We can remember when galluses were the symbol of being a grown man. Little boys wore bodies, to which their skimpy short pants were buttoned; only grown-up or boys whose voiced were on the way to stabilization wore galluses. Putting on long pants, with their accompanying galluses, was a memorable event in the life of any fellow. Until he wore long pants and galluses, he was a child; after that, he was a man.

Don't imagine that the word is the peculiar property of us Kentuckians. It is very widely scattered in its use, though its homeland seems to be the big cultural area in which Kentucky and its bordering states are located. Maybe it likes our Scotch-Irish nature and persists in spite of such substitutes as "Suspenders," which is fairly decent; to "Braces," which ought to be outlawed, for that is modern British, it seems, and not so suggestive of the hardy pioneers as is "galluses." But galluses are known in Newfoundland, in New Brunswick, in staid old Massachusetts, in Maine--in twenty-three states that have reported the word. And, besides, it appears in lists from 24 counties in Great Britain. And it is supposed to be still alive in just about every place where it was once used.

But "galluses" often is used to denote a certain type of fellow who is growing less common, the gaunt, backcountry fellow who has never allowed himself to be starched and ironed in language and in personality. In some places he is the "one gallus" guy, but the fellow whom I knew best wore regular galluses without losing his individuality.

Galluses as the badge of the grown man, the fellow who could stand

on his own feet, chew his own hillside tobacco, have suffered from some great inroads in my time. When belts first appeared at Fidelity, most older men felt that degeneration of the species was setting in fast. A fellow who wore a belt was likely to own a high-stepping horse and a very narrow buggy("hug-me-tight" was the official name among us). He had probably been as far away as Paducah once or twice, and he did not try to hide this significant fact. He may have had the best-fitting clothes in the whole area, which certainly would have branded him as someone who had "been about." The other fellows, really envious of him because of his fine airs and his horse and buggy, pretended that they disliked his showiness and wished all sorts of dire things to happen to him. You see, when some human custom, no matter how insignificant, is changing, prophets of calamity rise up in their mightiness and tell what disasters await us. I cannot recall that I ever heard a preacher declaim ~~declaim~~ about belts, but I am sure that, if he had done so, many of the tobacco-chewing older men in the amen-corned would have said "amen" fervently.

Now what does a small boy wish for when he gets to be a big boy? Why, he has worn long pants ever since he was a baby. Galluses are old stuff and would subject him to plenty of fist-and-skull fights at school. Who wants a rubber-tired buggy or a horse with its head reined up until the animal seems to be walking on tiptoe? And no one cares whether you wear a belt or not, so long as you can keep your pants up. There are other tests of being a grown-up, tests that seem to the younger generation as final as the laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not. But some of these days, long after we oldsters are gone, some of these tests will seem as outdated as galluses and rubber-tired buggies and high-stepping horses. I am not prophet enough to say just what they will be, but a long life of watching the passing of customs assures me that such changes will arrive, wanted or not.

THAT FRONT ROOM AGAIN

Away back in the early days of this colum I paid a half-tearful tribute to the front room as I knew it at Fidelity long, long ago. In the many years since then I have been told, in person or by letter, that my front room at Fidelity was almost identical to the front room in every other part of the state and in neighboring states. And hundreds of people, who, like me, are no longer young, have said that this room was the most distinctive part of the old-fashioned house. Some people were well-to-do enough to have a parlor as such and a guestroom besides; but a large percentage have said that their "best room" was a combination parlor and guest room. It was the place where company of distinction were entertained, where the visiting preacher slept. It was not just another bedroom, for it had all the fixtures of the parlor, too.

In the summer of 1963 I interviewed one of my former students about the front room at her grandma's as she remembered it. If you were to listen to the tape-recording of that leisurely interview, you would declare that I had been prompting her, for her grandma's front room, though a hundred a fifty miles east of Fidelity, had somehow been preserved down into the time of my student, who is still only a little past thirty years old.

For fear you have forgotten, or never known, the front room, let me sketch it, partly from memory and chiefly from this tape-recording. The furniture matched--bed, dresser, washstand. The chairs had home-made cushions. The stove was a vast improvement over the older fireplace. (Incidentally, we bricked in our fireplace when we bought the Wilson heater for our front room.) The dresser was high, with a hairbrush and comb to match; on it sat a coal-oil lamp, with a tinted shade. Over in the corner was a so-called center table, with a marble top. On that table stood or lay the old family Bible, stuffed with pictures and pressed flowers. And every picture in the album and inside the

Bible was personal and also standardized, so much so that you might guess in advance just what you would find. And the records in the old Bible, which formed, for most people, the official history of the tribe, looked and sounded like the ones in our big Bible at Fidelity.

On the floor was the best rag carpet that belonged to the family, protected, except on Sundays, by pulling down the shades to keep the sunlight from fading the various stripes of colored strands. And, at the windows, there were lace curtains, too, strikingly like the ones I knew. Lace curtains, you younger people, were curtains to you; but we, and my student's grandma, called shades curtains, too; hence the need for an additional word in lace curtains. At the door was a padded brick, with colored silk-scraps cover, and briar-stitching around each scrap. And, my student told me, there was the typical musty odor over everything, for the room was shut up six out of seven days and had had time to accumulate this front-room odor.

The longer I live, the more amazed I become that our most ordinary customs were so much alike in large areas of our country. Somehow it seems natural for language to keep some of its oddities, but why should the way a house is decorated survive over areas thousands of times bigger than the Fidelity area or the larger area around Mammoth Cave National Park? Ages ago the pioneers left Virginia and North Carolina and came into what was then called the West. And, in every such settlement, traditional ways were kept up, long after the older generation had passed away. Some places in southern Illinois and southern Indiana are so much like our own western Kentucky that the Ohio River seems like a mistake or, at best, a branch.

SOME BELIEFS ABOUT PLANTS AND ANIMALS

In my years of collecting and many longer periods of observation in my special territory I have not yet decided when a folk belief is to be taken seriously, or half-seriously, or nonchalantly. Certainly many older people planted their crops, butchered their animals, cut board timber, and planned every activity according to traditional beliefs. But undoubtedly many inroads had been made into this system of beliefs long before the oldest people I know were born. Therefore, there are varying degrees of acceptance of these age-old beliefs, which have been, usually, summed up in actual sayings and phrases.

Here are some examples of these sayings.

It is bad luck if an animal that has been injured by a hunter die in his hands.

It is equally bad luck to eat the flesh of any animal that was killed by lightning. This same belief carries over to plants, for it is bad luck to burn wood from a tree so stricken. And, incidentally, a fire started by lightning cannot be put out with water.

When animals of any type are unusually active and busy, look for a weather change, like a heavy rain or a snow. Hogs are likely to be carrying leaves or shucks in their mouths in anticipation of a cold spell.

Domestic animals are said to kneel on Christmas Eve(older people said Old Christmas Eve); but it is very bad luck, maybe fatal, to observe this annual rite of the creatures; hence nobody can be found who has been a witness to this.

Animals, fur-bearers and others--horses, etc.--, have a heavier coat of hair or fur before a severe winter, just as all sorts of plants set a heavy crops of seeds or nuts, in anticipation of the hard times ahead for the animals.

Even though wood was for ages the one fuel of the cottage or the cabin, several species of wood were supposedly not to be used in this fashion. Applewood, for example, if burned, was sure to bring disaster to the one who burned it. Sassafras was rarely used in some families, but regularly used in others for stovewood.

Everybody knows how apple seeds, named for your lovers, will reveal which one is best. One method is to place the seeds on your forehead, or, if you have only two lovers, one seed on each eyelid; the one that hangs on longest is the true one. If apple seeds are named and placed on a hot shovel, the first one to drop off will be the one you should choose. Rather oddly, each of these beliefs exists in the reverse form.

Though it is better known to decide who is your lover or whether he actually loves you by pulling off daisy petals and chanting the old rhyme: "One, I love," etc., this same rigmarole is used with apple seeds. Statistics are not available as to their accuracy; now wouldn't it be pitiful if they were?

Ashes--wood ashes, of course--are mixed up with human happiness, too. It is positively dangerous to babe and mother to remove any ashes from the house where there is a new baby until the youngster is nine days old. And it is equally tragic to take up ashes on Friday or at any time between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

When I first saw an actual grown man spit on his fishbait, I almost was too much amused to drop my own plain bait into the same pond. But any sportsman will tell you that it is absurd not to recognize the common sense in this practice. Certainly I have seen in stores the very thing to drop on bait to make it sure to attract the fish. I do not know whether it has the essence of ambeer or some other magic in it.

Mites are bad to have in a henhouse. To get rid of them, get a banana stalk and hang it in the henhouse. The children of the family would approve of this if the stalk was covered with fruit when it was bought.

T & C

SOME MORE PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Prejudices against certain animals are among the most folkish things we have inherited. Take the bat, for instance, an excellent bug-catcher; most people are positively alarmed when one gets into a house. Other people declare that a bite of a bat is deadly. And many assert that every bat is swarming with vermin that will get all over you if you so much as touch it. But, with all these horrible feelings concerning a bat, many people in my area say it is bad luck to kill a bat.

Though bees are respected for their honey-making, many people seem as afraid of a bee as of a snake. If you hold your breath, they say, however, no bee can sting you. It is bad luck to sell a beehive. If bees, in swarming from the hive, pass over a house, that is proof positive that a death will soon occur in that house. Bees are good weather prophets: when you see them clustering around a hive, look for rain.

Plants and animals are often connected in traditional sayings. Plant corn when oak leaves are as big as squirrel ears; or when the first whippoorwill calls. Whenever you plant your corn, remember not to burn the cobs of your seed-corn; throw them away, if you like, but burning them will assure you a bad corn yield that year. Certainly the cooing of the first dove in spring is a good reminder to the farmer to plant his corn. Even if doves coo all winter long, nobody seems to remember that and goes ahead with his planting as scheduled.

Trees have some strange magic about them. A beech tree is never struck by lightning, even one that stands alone out in a field. But walnut trees and wild cherry trees are likely to succumb to lightning. Sassafras, though not good for firewood, is especially designed to make paddles to stir home-made soap or lard. Cedar is both good and bad.

Drinking water is best if kept in a cedar bucket. It is bad luck to plant a cedar tree, for, when it has grown to the length of your coffin, you will pass away; or, when its longest limb is the length of your coffin, the same melancholy event will come to pass. It is all right to bring in a small cedar branch to rub the smoothing iron on to keep it just right for ironing or to bring in cedar branches at Christmas for decorations, but any other bringing in of cedar boughs is bad luck. It is all right to plant a weeping willow in a cemetery but dangerous elsewhere.

There are almost dozens of beliefs about birds. Of course, the most persistent one is that all hawks are harmful. But even smaller birds can bring some fears. Almost any bird except the whippoorwill is suspected of being an ill omen if it sings at night. I have known people who admitted that they were alarmed when a mockingbird sang at night. Any strange bird sound at night is made by a night hawk, not the bullbat, but some odd creature that is rarely seen in the daytime. But birds know their weather. Noticeable flocks of water birds in flight in the fall portend cold weather. Like all other animals, birds are very active just before a storm. A bluebird brings good luck and also promise of rain tomorrow. In spite of the positive abundance in most winters of robins and bluebirds and their presence always, both species are still the signs of spring, for the books say so, books written by people several hundred miles northeast of here.

Some plants require an upset of weather in order that they may bloom, notably the dogwood, with its accompanying dogwood winter, and blackberries, with blackberry winter. And good old cuckleburs are so wise that they are never caught napping: they always mature their seeds before frost, no matter how late the actual plants come up.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider his ways and be wise." And folkish people are forever doing just that and have been doing that for untold generations.

T x C

"KNOWING" ANIMALS

If we would only admit it, animals know lots of things that are rarely known by people, or, at least, so say many common folk sayings. Animals, in folk beliefs, have two existences: one is the plain critter itself, just a pig or a horse or a chicken; the other animal is a living bit of startling knowledge or a warning against certain ornery ways that human beings have. In the Middle Ages people almost forgot the first type of animal, for moralists were always searching for some good moral to be derived from the most ordinary animal.

Birds, and other animals, for example, know a lot about weather. When birds are unusually active, look for rain. When swallows, for example, which build their nests in banks, build lower than usual, especially in stream banks, there will be no overflow to harm them. Hogs can see the wind, anyway, and often get afraid because of this ability: when pigs squeal for no apparent reason, they are seeing the wind and are afraid, as they well might be. Cats know a thing or two: when one washes around its ears, that means rain soon. Hogs, again, know when cold weather is coming and pick up mouthfuls of leaves, shucks, and the like to make their beds. Chickens that ordinarily roost indoors sense the coming of a storm and prefer trees. The humble crawfish, by building a low chimney, shows us that we can expect dry weather.

Nearly all animals can recognize the presence of spirits that are hanging around. When a horse snorts, especially at night, and seems to lose his horse sense, he knows that spirits are near and acts accordingly. Dogs, lying passively by the fire, often awake from their naps, growl savagely, raise their fur, and show that they, too, are hearing sounds of boogers and such that we poor mortals, with our inadequate ears, cannot detect. Locusts and jarflies sense when summer is at hand and speed up their raucous singing, if that is the right word for it. Even glow-worms shine more brightly when there is about to be a subtle

change in weather. I suppose that these weather prognostications are, somehow, connected with seeing spirits or hearing inaudible voices.

The champion prognosticator, of course, is the Groundhog. We honor him by naming a day for him. Whether he knows that older people, like the oldest inhabitants at Fidelity when I was a boy, regarded February 14 as his day I have never found out. Since we had never seen a groundhog at Fidelity, we had to assume that he actually came out of his burrow on St. Valentine's Day, saw or didn't see his shadow, and acted accordingly. I am sorry that neither the groundhog nor the skunk was a part of the fauna around Fidelity; I sometimes doubted the strange stories told about these two varmints by older people, who had known both of them in North Carolina. I suspected that these animals were like some of the famous relatives these same ex-Carolinians talked about endlessly. Fortunately, my mature years have been spent with skunks and groundhogs, but I am no wiser as to the adjustment to February 2 that I used to be.

We had snake doctors(dragonflies) by the thousands in my childhood. We heard, as you did, that they not only ate lots of mosquitoes and other insects but stood by on poised wings to administer to the needs of injured snakes. However, we did not, like so many people, believe that there was a snake near by when a snake doctor appeared. Thus I escaped some of the fears that I have found in many other people; we just took our snake doctors as ready physicians for hurt snakes and let it go at that; they seemed to have sense enough to know when their professional services were needed.

If we were as smart as the animals, or the folk versions of them, how many ills we could escape! We would know when to plant, when to harvest, when to go on a journey, when to stay at home, when to prepare for severe weather. If we would only read our Bestiaries, medieval books on animals, we would know what they know and be prepared.

T & C

SCARY CRITTERS

Not only are there wise animals, such as the ones I discussed in a previous article, but there are scary ones, critters that often make our hair rise or our flesh creep.

Take owls, for instance, which are regarded by hosts of people as birds of ill omen. Hoot owls, the larger species like the barred and the great horned, scare some people, but the little screech owl, with its quivering note, scares nearly everybody. Many times I have been asked, as a student of birds, whether I even count these weird owls as birds. I suppose that they may be, like Shelley's skylark, only wandering voices.

Poor, helpless little salamanders--waterdogs or mud puppies--scare some people half out of their skins. Somehow their bright eyes seem just too knowing to be the eyes of a small cold-blooded little fellow. They look to many people as if they might be transformed human beings, bewitched and waiting to be released. Maybe those bright eyes are trying to communicate the strange miseries of being changed from a lovely maiden or a gallant gentleman to a lizard-like little cold creature.

It seems to me that the many-legged critters come in for the most misunderstanding. I have seen brave men and women scream when they even saw a thousand-legs. I do hope they did not show their teeth when they screamed, for, if the thousand-legs sees your teeth, they will drop out. The cow centipede, a fine creature to have around to eat up destructive insects, sets up some strange feelings on the part of many people. I have seen grown-ups run and stamp (I really mean stomp) a helpless centipede as if they were doing a very virtuous act and should have a star or two in their crowns for thus killing a helpful animal.

As everybody knows, snakes create panic among many sorts of people.

Fortunately, there is a growing group of people, men and women and especially younger people, who know about harmless and harmful snakes. When I attended a lecture on snakes not long ago, the lecturer, one of the great scholars in that field, assured the listeners that most snakes were harmless and that they would not harm anyone. After his lecture nearly everybody, men and women alike, went up and handled some of his prize snakes. Most of the people so doing did not show any exultant look, for they had done just that thing before. Imagine, however, a group of old women and men who would do such things. Snakes were bad to them, and no amount of talking by a learned herpetologist could have convinced them otherwise. It is still hard, in places, to convince people that only a few types of snakes are poisonous; I have been told within this twelvemonth how poisonous were black and chicken snakes. Old fears are slow to die.

Our striped lizards are among the most beautiful of the harmless creatures. But thousands of people in my part of the world still regard them as deadly poisonous, even though they admit that the scaly, less beautiful lizard is harmless. These striped lizards are scorpions to nearly everybody; and all the stories of the actual scorpion, which few people ever saw, have been transferred to the harmless striped little creatures.

An unknown night sound becomes for many people still, even campers, a warning that something pretty bad is around. When I was a child, some wild bird note, maybe given by some bird that we did not fear by day, made us tingle with fear. We talked, sometimes in whispers, about a Night Hawk, not the bullbat so well known by day but some bird that did not show itself by day but was waiting in the anterooms of our world to charge in and take the stage.

It has taken a long time for some of nature to be known and appreciated for what it really is. Folk animals still stalk the world at night.

T & C

HOGS AND HORSES

There are many widely-scattered beliefs about Hogs and Horses. Some of them are pretty sound, scientifically, but many others are pure superstition. However, I have found the least plausible ones believed as firmly as the ones that have some basis in fact. Since the folk make no distinction in their beliefs, neither will I; you can do your own choosing from the many items that I have collected.

It is good luck to carry as a talisman a tusk or a wisdom tooth of a hog. It seems to be as potent as a buckeye.

If a hog finds your extracted tooth and swallows it, you will have a hog tooth to replace your former one.

Hogs fed on apples will have sweet meat.

If hogs are fattened on beechnuts, the lean meat will be fattish and never firm.

Fattening hogs must be kept away from garlic; one bite of garlic will spoil the taste of a whole fattening hog's flesh.

Butcher hogs in the light of the moon.

Home-made lye soap is an excellent tonic for hogs.

Frostbitten corn will kill hogs if it is fed to them.

Hogs can see the wind.

When hogs carry leaves, shucks, and such like, expect very cold weather.

It is bad luck to pass a drove of hogs.

There are even more folk beliefs about horses than about hogs. In general, the horse is a far more romantic creature than the hog; hence there are a good many beliefs that indicate his worth.

If a horse lies down and rolls over completely, he is worth a hundred dollars. Naturally, if he repeats this complete flop, add a hundred dollars for each one.

It is good luck to see white horses, especially good luck when you have seen a hundred. Just where you are to go to see these I do not

know. Maybe younger people will have to settle for ten or five.

Unfortunately, like cats, horses draw lightning.

When horses and mules quit eating to scratch themselves on a tree or fence, look for rain.

Also when the hairs on a horse's tail stand out, look for rain.

Apparently horses know that white horses are lucky, for they and mules will follow a white horse any time, anywhere.

If a horse has distemper, smoke him with burning feathers or an old felt hat or an old shoe.

If a horse snorts at night, a stranger is near.

Hair clipped from a horse's mane or tail and cut up into fine bits and fed with bran to the horse will destroy intestinal worms.

If a horse is foundered, stand him in water to keep his hoofs from coming off.

Horseshoes play a big part in folk beliefs. It almost seems that they are more important than the horses they are made for.

Everybody knows it is good luck to hang up a horseshoe, but there are two schools of thought as to whether the points should be up or down.

It is very bad luck to take down a horseshoe that someone else has hung up.

And, by the way, it is bad luck to find a horseshoe with its points away from you.

It is equally bad luck to find or pick up a broken horseshoe.

If you find a horseshoe, pointed right, spit on it, ~~and throw it~~ and throw it without seeing where it lands; that will bring unusually good luck.

Why, even a horseshoe nail carried in the pocket will bring good luck, and one made into a ring for the left little finger will prevent rheumatism quite as well as will carrying a buckeye or an acorn in your pocket.

May 17

CONTRADICTORY SIGNS

In the fall of 1964 the local weather prophets--and I am not one of this group but an interested sideliner--told us that the winter of 1964-65 would be mild. Every well-known sign phophesied this. Why, cornshucks were almost paper thin. Lots of seed-producing plants had few seeds to help birds and other animals through a hard winter. Frogs and snakes stayed out in the open until far along in the fall; and they always know what is what. Salt away your red-hot flannels in the old family trunk, some said; they won't be needed. Don't run away to Florida; good old Kentucky will be warm enough for you this time. And look at those daffodils, already up and growing in Christmas week, 1964. Signs must be trusted, they said.

It is hardly necessary to add anything, for I wouldn't be believed except right here in the midst of things, while the weather has slapped all the signs down with a wallop. Just wait, though, and the next time the signs seem right, the prophets will rise and shine, forgetting how their faces got frostbitten in the winter of 1964-65. Those old cornshucks ought to be ashamed of themselves; of course, an exceedingly dry summer starved the poor things so that they couldn't be thick; but weather prophets never think of that. If cornshucks are thin, it is to be a mild winter, even if we have zero weather for several nights in a row, and the thermometer never rises as high as freezing for a whole week, and school busses did not run for a week in the counties here in southern Kentucky. All of that will be forgotten, and dear old Grandpa's saying about signs will be accepted as indisputable fact. Or, at least, this has been true in the past. You would think that there might be some respect for the hourly weather reports, ~~that~~ which ninety-nine per cent of the people are exposed to, might undermine this faith in traditional lore; but you just don't know how weather-wise many people are.

Maybe I am growing old and ignorant, but I cannot recall when I ever saw one of the old-fashioned calendars that used to grace the walls of most homes around Fidelity. Why, every day in the year had a weather flag that showed exactly what to expect: rain, hail, snow, drought, storms; and most of the people I knew swore by that calendar in the same way that they swore, in a slightly different key, against the people who doubted it. Once, after I had gone away from home to attend school and was thus suspected of being biggity, I remarked that such a calendar, made in Chattanooga, Tennessee, certainly could not anticipate what showers might slip up some hollow and miss the one next to it. The looks I got from some of the weather prophets of Fidelity shut my mouth henceforth.

One of the folkish phases of all this is that lots of people are overawed by something in print. I have often read that a devout Moslem will pick up and save any chance piece of paper he finds blowing along the street; he says the name of Allah might be on it. I used to laughingly tell my students how I ~~used to hear~~ heard a congregation up the creek from Fidelity sing a misprinted word with all the fervor of a Mohammedan saving his scrap of sacred paper. In the beautiful old song "My Jesus, I Love Thee" occurs this line: "I'm raised to a rapture while praising thy name." The printer of a songbook that we used printed that word as "rupture." Maybe he had heard some of our loudest singers singing, about two keys too high, some of our songs. I had difficulty in getting a song leader, our next neighbor's hired man, who read music easily and often conducted singing schools, to put back the original word. I fear he regarded me as downright sacrilegious in taking issue with a word in a songbook that he had bought from an itinerant singing-school master. Dear old weather calendar, I just wonder whether it is still worshiped as it hangs on the wall of some Fidelity home and predicts every possible day in the year, long before the year itself begins.

SIDE BY SIDE

The longer I study folklore, the more puzzled I become with folk thinking. Lately I have been working with folk beliefs regarding folk remedies, weather, good and bad luck, and plants and animals. Side by side are found beliefs that are contradictory, often with rather ardent partisans on both sides. Or at different times the same person may champion each side of a belief in turn.

The winter of 1964-65 is a case in point. Late last fall weather prophets fairly strutted their stuff in proclaiming that the winter would be mild: all the signs pointed to this conclusion. Why, corn-shucks were tissue-paper thin in some places, a sure sign. The crops of seeds were small; therefore animals would make out without the usual abundance. Rather oddly, some plants, like cedar trees and wild grape vines, had not heard of the weather prophets' decree; there were huge crops of seeds or fruits on these trees and vines. As a result we bird observers found more individual birds of several species than ever before at Christmas, especially in Mammoth Cave National Park. In fact, our finds there not only put most of our previous bird counts to shame but exceeded the finds in all other parts of the state. If there were such short crops of such things as acorns, why did we see more woodpeckers of four species than any other group in Kentucky? Our Myrtle Warblers exceeded in number those found in all the rest of the state put together. And this in spite of the prophecy that was based on scarcity. The weather prophets seemed to forget how dry much of 1964 was; that certainly could have accounted for some thinner than usual cornshucks and many other things by which weather prophets judge.

It is really astounding to see how many folk remedies have a sound basis. Many folk medicines are good as far as they go; the drug companies learned that a long time ago; however, side by side are found these simple but rather sensible remedies and others that are pure hokum.

Rarely do I find some believer in folk remedies who challenges some perfectly silly stuff or practice. If it was believed by Grandpap, it must have had some value. In working with elderly people in tape-recording of interviews about all sorts of folklore, I often find that there is still a reverence for some absurd practice of long ago, even among people who discarded the practice forty and fifty years ago. Someone who buys only what the doctor prescribes often clings to a belief that something dug or pulled up in the woods and made into a bitter tea has all the virtues of drugs carefully wrought by the best companies. In order not to antagonize anyone, I let such people talk on, for I want to get their point of view down on tape anyway and can let someone else do my arguing for me. Nearly always someone who is sitting by as I ask some older person about older ways will comment, often getting put into his place pretty soon by an older person who has not lost his reverence for the old days.

In asking about good and bad luck I have run into some funny contradictions. One old lady solemnly said that she would freeze to death before she would knowingly build a fire of wood from a tree struck by lightning. Some others, equally old, have laughed at this, though not in her presence. One old man swore that there was nothing to the bad luck of a two-dollar bill, provided you tore off a corner of it. But another old fellow sitting by declared that he would not take a two-dollar bil straight or lopeared. As to the time to get married I have found many contradictions. One old boy said that the only bad luck attached to the time to get married would be for the girl to change her mind and marry the other fellow. When I asked about the color of the bride's dress, very few of the oldsters, proudly talking about having celebrated their fortieth or fiftieth or even sixtieth wedding anniversary, could remember any such thing; they got their gals, didn't they, and isn't that the best luck of all? A few said, however, that they would have been afraid to marry any girl dressed in red or black.

May 31

CASH ON THE BARREL HEAD 1568

A long study of some of the aspects of folk medicine has brought this rather startling fact to light: most of the practitioners of folk medicine do not charge for their services. Of course, some nosey folks who patronize these upstart fellows who have gone away to medical colleges might stir up some trouble if any charging were done. But the folk doctors themselves declare that they would lose their powers, especially those of a magical nature, if they accepted anything so earthy as cash.

There is, however, a hitch in this altruistic attitude. No folk doctor seems averse to accepting a good square meal, or many, for his services, or anything that is presented to him, just so it isn't money. A few of the more Scotchy kind have been known to suggest that they wouldn't mind having this or that of the patient's possessions. Of course, when a fellow is sick, he is glad to promise a simple thing like this. Ordinarily, I have heard and read, the folk doctor takes no chances and gets his present even before the patient finally snaps out of his disease or passes to his reward.

Being a folk doctor, you see, is not just another job. A fellow is called to it. For example, he is born with a caul, a piece of membrane that sticks to his forehead when he is born. If his parents are wise, they dry this membrane and save it for him, as a sure warrant of his being called to practice certain mysteries of folk medicine and hocus pocus. If he is the seventh son, he is thus pointed out as an ex officio curer of thrush(usually called thrash), that disease that makes small children so miserable. Merely by blowing his breath into the child's mouth, he brings about a cure. And that breath in no way takes his own appetite for some good victuals served by the child's mother. Any seventh son can do this; and any seventh daughter, too.

But if you are the seventh son of a seventh son, you are a doctor in spite of yourself; you just can't help curing babies of thrush and hives. However, this marvelous native power must be shared with any one born after the death of his father, with any ordained minister, and any confirmed old maid(age not specified).

Most of this knowledge about medicine is inherited or passed on from parent to child as a sort of favor after the skilled parent knows the general ability and nature of the girl or boy who is to carry on the family tradition of being a faith doctor. I have had a good many people tell me of their being so chosen and their feeling that they had been ordained, as it were, to heal the sick. What is diploma as compared with that?

In my many years of studying folk medicine I have never had a chance to learn any of the language of the trade. I have been told that the words uttered by healers is not necessarily from the Bible and may not concern religion. I have read many recorded rigmaroles, but most of them sounded about like the counting-out games of children, and rarely had any recognizable English word in them. Maybe these are merely the audible charms; I have heard that the healer says most of his spells to himself, and I hope that he understands them; maybe they have more sense than the ones that inquisitive fellows have set down. So far, however, I have not been guilty of putting down a charm; maybe I might run afoul of the charmer's charm.

Not only doctoring is passed on thus; so is water-witching. It runs in families. Either a fellow inherits the ability from his parents or is given it after proper observation of the stability of his character and his ability to keep a secret. You see, this sort of thing just must not be trifled with. If the fellow who practices it should be frivolous enough to let some uninitiated person in on the secret, it might spoil the whole works, and then where would you dig a well, anyway?

"When Us Old Codgers Are Gone"

In one of my very earliest tape recordings, I asked the man to be interviewed, a longtime friend, whether he understood what I was trying to do in thus setting down all sorts of old customs, beliefs, and words. "Sure," he said, "When us old codgers are gone, this stuff will be gone with us unless somebody sets it down." There is my justification for the dozens of interviews that I have had and dozens more that are planned. It is not wholly a matter of getting the oldsters alone; I like, also, to see how much of the old-time series of belief has come on down into the younger generations. The youngest person interviewed thus far, only seventeen, fairly bristled with old-time similes from farm life, probably half of them about things that she knew only what had been handed down to her: "Dumb as an ox," "Tough as whitleather," "Slow as the seven-year itch." Many other young folks have given me, through their teachers, remedies that were dropped in my study area before these youngsters were born. Asafetida bags seem to have taken hold on the imagination of people, both the ones who wore them or associated with brats who wore them and the ones who merely heard Grandpa talk about having seen them in his day.

Among the many phases of folklore that I have collected, I suspect that folk remedies, as I have so often said, are dying faster than anything else. Not long ago, after interviewing an old fellow who certainly seems to have bathed in the Fountain of Youth and who knows many sure-shot folk remedies that are worth more than a dozen drugstore, I asked his druggist whether this fellow was a customer. "Yes, for castor oil, and two highly advertized patent medicines whose names I had better not mention publicly for fear I would be accused of recommending them rather than a dozen others equally good that I sell." The patent medicines, I learned, privately, are very closely related to the natural herb remedies for which the old fellow is famous.

When I went to record folk remedies as remembered by a very old man, I found him barely back from a hospital, where he had had every type of modern treatment. He is completely sold to his doctors, too. When I later called on him and made a long recording of folk remedies, he often would chuckle when he mentioned what he doctored his son with fifty or sixty years ago. The son would have snorted rather than chuckled if he had heard our conversation, for he long ago discarded whatever home-made remedies there were still around and felt considerable disdain for the whole field of folk medicine. I think the old, old man was glad to know that at least one other old man knew about these old remedies and wanted to learn more, not to use them but to hear the truth about them "before us old codgers are gone."

The biggest trouble with lots of ancestors is that they leave so few things by which we can reconstruct their times. It is easy, therefore, to imagine just about anything, especially if it is favorable. Even historical markers sometimes help this development of legends rather than history. Why, a great-great-great grandfather of mine was important enough to have a county in Tennessee named for him. Some years ago a group of history-minded people decided that a marker should be erected in the courthouse yard to his memory. Apparently nobody though about checking legal papers to find out when the old fellow died. And so, as a result, a mistake of thirty-seven years is made in his age. Instead of living ninety-eight years, as the tablet says, he lived sixty-one. If the tablet were to a folk hero, what would a few years matter? But the old fellow actually lived and died, and records prove it. It is a pity that certain old codgers, some of them distinguished scholars in Tennessee history, were not consulted before the dates were cut into the modest but highly appropriate monument in memory of the old soldier whose name was given to a county. Long since the marker was erected, a very distant relative of mine, dug among some historical documents and came up with the correct dates; but the monument remains untouched.

June 14

WEREN'T THERE ANY ORDINARY FOLKS?

Nobody respects famous people any more than I do. Our whole history seems to have been built around them, or, at least, Carlyle and Emerson preached that doctrine a century and more ago: "Every institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.". In the efforts to preserve the famous homes of still-more-famous people I concur heartily, not that any one ever asked me or cared what my opinion might be. I have gone to many such shrines and hope to visit as many others as time and age will permit. It is great to stand where a great man stood and wonder how he arrived at his greatness, to see the objects that have outlived him and marvel at their fine workmanship, to try to connect the present with the time of the great man without doing injustice to either. I feel sorry for anyone who can visit such shrines as our own Lincoln's Birthplace or the stately home of George Washington without feeling a bit of pride in a nation that has such varying origins: palace or cabin, each housed a man.

It is not, then, any feeling of dislike of the great ones that prompts me to write this. I am on the regular mailing list of the National Park Service and get, almost every day, some account of another famous house or area added to the system or some projected additions and improvements. In the last ten years literally dozens of historic sites have been proposed and many of them made a permanent part of the National Park Service. And, I am glad to say, a very wide range of background influences are shown in the choices of the commission: historical places connected with politics, religion, education, literature, as well as places of natural beauty, often as nearly untouched by man as is possible. There will be thousands of such places ultimately, whether protected by the national or the local government.

Now here is something for the commission to think about. Weren't

there any ordinary fellows in our country before our time? A very large percentage of our memorials are to prominent people, as is right, I suppose, provided there is also something done to show how the average, not-widely-known person lived. Such memorials would not necessarily be to a person otherwise unknown but to a stage of civilization. In a good many state parks such things are being attempted, and in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park are some remnants of the stable civilization of Cade's Cove before it became a part of the park. We need more such. I have often told National Park Service people that there should have been left some typical houses in the Mammoth Cave National Park area, maybe reassembled in a small area, to show what manner of people lived there, from the late 1700's until the 1930's and later. Among the collections that I have enjoyed that help to reestablish our connections with the past are the millstones and reconstructed houses in Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park in Kentucky and Spring Mill State Park in Indiana. We ought to have many more such, on even larger plans than have yet been worked out.

Years ago I urged this very thing and spoke of Skansen, a reconstructed village in Sweden, where actual families spend a portion of their time doing exactly what they would be doing in their homes back in the mountains or along the coast or out in the agricultural regions. The Cherokee Village at Cherokee, North Carolina, is doing this for the tribal life of the Eastern Cherokees, a very excellent reminder that the area had a history that was worth saving.

Washington lived in a palace, Lincoln was born in a cabin, but most of us had an intermediate condition, neither wealthy nor poverty-stricken. How did we live? What did we eat? What did we wear? What did we read? What were our interests? And how did we spend our leisure time? Were we just folks and not important, or did we represent a very solid portion of our time and place? Maybe having lived is sufficient, but other generations are entitled to some knowledge of how we did.

WALLINK AND GUMBO-WHACKUM

In the course of collecting folklore in the Mammoth Cave region I have often run across two very strange words: "wallink" and "gumbo-whackum," both of which appear in a good many folk remedies. I asked several pharmacists about them but got nowhere. Both seem to have been excellent in curing nasal and stomach troubles. A liberal dose of gumbo-whackum, pokeroot, and whiskey every time you felt the need of it kept rheumatism under control or prevented your ever getting it. The size of the dose was not given me, but I suppose that you were guided by the size of the ache or the fear of becoming crippled up with the disease. Wallink helped clear up the nasal and throat passages when you suffered with colds. In fact, it seemed especially designed to do just this, according to my informants.

Remembering my Great-aunt Mary and her taking what she called gwack or gwakum, I guessed that gumbo-whackum was related to guaiacum, listed in the dictionaries as a resin from two tropical trees. But wallink stumped me. One day, while working over some items in the ENGLISH DIALECT DICTIONARY, I accidentally stumbled upon wallink or wellink and found my problem solved for that word. It is a drug made from walking fern. One of my later helpers told me, after I had identified wallink properly, that the really valuable part of the plant is found on the under side of the leaves, "them little brownish balls," that is, spore cases. As yet I have not seen the medicine, but I know now what the herbalists of long ago meant when they spoke of wallink. And I felt elated that my folk-medicine education was advancing.

To run down gumbo-whackum I consulted several pharmacists, but they, poor fellows, were as ignorant as I. I still clung to my belief that guaiacum was somehow connected with this cure-all. In late February, 1965, I was interviewing some elderly men and women about

folk remedies of all sorts, in the drugstore of Paul Brooks, at Brownsville. Gumbo-whackum suddenly reared its head again, and I turned to Mr. Brooks for some help. He and his father before him had owned that drugstore for seventy-five years and had had rural trade from the beginning. Mr. Brooks disappeared into the other end of the store and came back with a box with the label--Guaiacum gum. He told me that nearly everybody in the circle of his customers, especially of some years ago, bought this resin to use in making their own medicines and regularly called for gumbo-whackum or gumbo-gwackum. Here was the solution to my problem and a verification of my guess. He presented me a small cake or gumbo-whackum or guaiacum gum, which will ultimately find its place in the folk medicine project being worked out for a feature of the Kentucky Museum at Western. And, to make amends to me for all these years of trying to find out about the magic drug, I have learned through my son, an organic chemist, that this same resin is now used in a good many things, like cosmetics. And so good old gumbo-whackum of folk fame is a part of the exquisite lady's jars and bottles and such, not only in the Mammoth Cave region but everywhere.

Now if any one ever questions me about some of my folk remedies, I can telephone Paul Brooks and some other fellows who are not ashamed to keep asafetida in stock and find out whether I have a real lead or am being baited by skeptics. And, also, if you need my professional services as Doctor of Folk Medicine(a degree self-imposed), just remember that I am not allowed to charge for my services, since the regular M.D's might get me, but a few square meals won't be turned down. And there is no telling how many of your queer aches and pains I can relieve by knowing about wallink and gumbo-whackum, not to mention jimson leaves, and yellowroot, and snakeroot, and slippery elm.

June 28

THERE ARE TWO OF US 1572

Several years ago a man whose actual name was William Shakespeare was interviewed by some radio announcer. Probably coached a bit before the program began, Mr. Shakespeare said in answer to the announeer's question as to his relationship with the "other one": "Was there another one?" In this field of chronicling folkways there is and has long been another one, one far better known than this one, if by "this one" you mean me. The "other one" is Professor John W. Allen, emeritus professor of Southern Illinois University, at Carbondale, a veritable encyclopedia of local history and folklore and humor of southern Illinois, "Egypt," if you like that term better for the name of the area.

By a strange coincidence, he was born on October 14, just exactly one year before I appeared, some eighty miles to the south of his southern Illinois home. His career has been varied and fascinating, from a one-roomed school as his first alma mater, then as a teacher of a similar school, as a principal of a two-room school, as a principal of a larger school, as a city superintendent, as a Marine who got a close-up view of World War I notables, as a scholar in history, as a leader in just about every type of scholarly and patriotic organization in his native state, and as a tireless writer of articles for newspapers, articles that show the folkish backgrounds of that whole interesting area of southern Illinois that has been home to him, no matter where he roamed.

In the winter of 1964-65 a friend of mine who knows Professor Allen ~~well~~ sent me his book LEGENDS AND LORE OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS, a publication of the Area Services Division of Southern Illinois University. More than any other regional book that I have read in my years-long interest in folklore this one records folkways that are almost identical with those of my own Fidelity. I am personally acquainted with Professor Allen, and we have exchanged comments on our various passing institutions.

The largest single section of the good-sized volume deals with folklore. Just about every type of superstition that we knew in western

Kentucky was just as vigorous not too far away to the north of us, for similar people had settled both places. The customs that were once almost universal have declined, at Carbondale and at Fidelity, and only someone with a liking for this type of research seems to be trying to put down on paper some of the ways we used to have before all traces are gone. Professor Allen's remedies are so much like mine at Fidelity and at Mammoth Cave that I believe we could exchange our bottles and dried roots and leaves and syrups and cordials and never miss a dose.

As in nearly all areas, there have occurred many changes in farming, in business, in daily living. His area once was a great cotton-raising section, especially in the years when cotton was tied up in the Civil War farther down south. And tobacco was once a big crop in Egypt, too. Both of these crops have now run their course, so far as the present is concerned. Scattered all over the area are remains of once-prosperous businesses that remind me of Marse Peter's tobacco factory, away out in the country from where the railroad later came. And prominent businesses along the rivers are often now only nostalgic memories. In some of our Kentucky counties that face Egypt across the Ohio River there are very similar reminders of former grandeur, now growing over with vegetation or bypassed by more modern roads than were the muddy-dusty trails that once connected thriving villages or boat-landings or small factories with the rest of the world.

Through the whole book there runs a thread of understanding of folk psychology. The author never looks down his nose at any custom that had a respectable following: people may have had different enthusiasms in other times, but they were remarkably like us, their descendants. And there is no effort to glorify the Good Old Days merely because they are gone or to belittle them because automobiles and airplanes have taken the places if oxcarts and wagons and fashionable surreys.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

As a lifetime reader of American literature and a teacher in that field for a half century, I have often loved to trace the influence of some wise person who found something good in our plain folk life and thus formed, unconsciously, a new school of thinkers and writers. Many of the people who lived before our time have been so idealized that they could not possibly recognize their portraits as painted by some of our romantic writers. Good was good and bad was bad to many of our earlier writers, so that any variation from what the author conceived to be the thinking of people would be hard to find. I am afraid that the Pilgrims, as an example, have suffered far more from their interpreters than from the Church of England.

Among scholars James Russell Lowell has come to have a place much higher for his scholarly knowledge of New England local speech than for his poems that are pretty far removed from New England as a whole. It was not merely a writer making up an ignorant dialect that Lowell used when he wrote poems in the manner of a back-country fellow like Hosea Biglow. For years Lowell had studied the quaint substandard but very natural language of the uneducated but not necessarily dumb back-countryman. Harvard speech, no matter how ardently the educated tried to preserve it and teach it, was merely a dialect that had been elevated to standard usage, not a foreordained way for all people who speak English to follow. Back in the hills people talked naturally and never knew it. They had inherited from their ancestors some words and meanings and intonations that were unconsciously transmitted to their children and children's children. But, to a narrowly-educated person, then and now, they spoke a debased speech, one that social climbers shunned as they shunned any suggestion of being inferior in any way to their imagined London English as spoken by the court and the universities. Lowell, though an aristocrat of long standing and a third-generation graduate

of Harvard, saw in this natural speech of New England some very forceful ways to say some eternal truths. And thus Hosea Biglow becomes the mouthpiece of the common New Englander and the back-country philosopher.

A long time after Lowell arose Edward Eggleston, who found in the backwoods of Indiana a vigorous speech, no less genuine than Lowell's New England dialect. A scholar in history and, therefore, learned in the waves of migration that settled southern Indiana, Eggleston loved to register, conscientiously, the language as he heard it, with no apology for its rudeness or lack of polish. His study of Indiana dialect was merely a part of his whole grasp of the history of the early Middle West. He sensed how language is to be considered when we are to know a people; documents are always necessary, even the most abstruse; but no very good historian ever stops with written records, especially formal ones. People of all sorts are behind the most casual statement of some historic fact. Eggleston recognized the difference between the speech of the pioneers in Indiana and that of Tidewater Virginia and of New England. Here was, from the earliest frontier days, a new group of speakers, a melting pot of cultures that has been too often ignored or played down rather than up. Scotch-Irish and Pennsylvania Germans, with French Huguenots in smaller numbers, and a fair mixture of immigrants from nearly everywhere from North Carolina northward, poured into the newer lands north of the Ohio River and somehow evolved a type of speech that differed then and still differs from that of any other region. Fortunately, Eggleston, in reissuing his THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER after it had astonished him and everybody else with its wide popularity among people of all degrees of culture, wrote, with plenty of learning, about the speech of his area, one of the best essays on regional speech we have ever had. It and Lowell's introduction to a later edition of THE BIGLOW PAPERS constitute two excellent starting places for earnest scholars of regional speech. When they wrote dialect, they tried to make it true in every way to the areas they knew best.

LETTING GO

There is something about the folk mind that dreads change. First of all, folk thinking is largely based on what used to be; that would naturally make the folk apprehensive when any great inroad is made on the ways made sacred by Pappy and Grandpa. In my many years of studying birds and people I have seen hundreds of illustrations of how reluctantly all of us change our ways.

When you come to think of it, it has been a big jump for my generation to make the successive adjustments from oxcarts to jet planes. When I was a mere fifty and was asked my age, I said I was a hundred and fifty years old, for more things had changed in my lifetime than it any previous century and a half. Now I suppose I would have to raise my age to 200, at least, for certainly things have changed even faster since I turned fifty than before. Unless just any of us take time to think things over, we are likely to drop back into older ways and maybe should be excused for doing so.

Farming has revolutionized in the last quarter of a century, for example. Intensive cultivation, Green Pastures programs, farm ponds, planting trees, retiring thousands of acres from cultivation--these and other practices have made the farming methods that I used as a boy seem almost as far away as the days of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Some fifteen years ago I was impressed with the refusal of some farmers to adjust to modern conditions. In one of the areas where I study birds I had to walk across three farms to get to some overflowed cornfields where there were thousands of water birds. The farm where I parked my car had modernized and was producing more on a single acre than it had formerly produced on four or five. The farm where I finally stopped to study my birds was equally up-to-date. But the farm between the two was still being run just as it had been run in the days of the grandparents of the owners, except that the soil had been much better

when Grandpap planted his row crops, up hill and down, and started the hosts of gullies. This middle farm was still planting the fields, year after year, in corn, just as did Grandpap. The poor stalks showed that they had grown in badly treated soil, and the little nubbins reminded me of the poorest ones on the sandy hillsides around Fidelity when I was very young. That farm is still far below the level of its neighbors in fertility and productiveness, even though it passed, some years ago, into the hands of a more modern farmer, one who had learned modern ways of farming.

Medicine, maybe because I was raised in a doctor's home, has always intrigued me. Already in my earliest youth some progress had been made, in most families around Fidelity, from the home-remedy stage of doctoring. A good many minor remedies still prevailed, but they were largely stop-gaps until a doctor could be called. Various methods of stopping nosebleed, for example, were practiced, usually with such success that no doctor was called. And a bit of warm catnip tea eased many a small tummy until night was over and the doctor could be reached if needed. But some people then and now very reluctantly gave up their whole drugstore of home remedies and folk practices, though the most primitive ones were usually laughed out of existence. Spring tonics still remained and probably did as much good as harm; anyway, they made their users feel that they were on the way to health again, and that is a big part of getting well and staying well. But if someone had failed to call for help when a bone was broken or some similar tragedy, the whole neighborhood would have revolted. Of course, after my father had arrived and done what medical practice of that time approved, there is no sure way of knowing how well his directions were followed and how soon they were ignored if they failed to agree with what the neighborhood granny believed in. It would be snooping, but I wish I had a search warrant that would allow me to find out how many people, with good houses, good salaries, and a good car still have a batch of folk-medicine stuff stashed away somewhere in their up-to-date houses.

"OLD, UNHAPPY, FAR-OFF THINGS"

Wordsworth, while listening to a Highland girl singing as she worked in a field, wondered what her Gaelic songs were about, since he did not know that language:

"Will no one tell me what she sings?--
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago."

Every time I have heard a genuine folk singer perform, I have thought of Wordsworth's solitary reaper and wondered at the great appeal of the songs that somehow last on and on. When we gathered around the open fireplace at Fidelity and listened to Aunt Jane and her daughter Mary sing all sorts of folk and traditional songs, we lived the events of the songs and felt that they were about people that we had known. Barbara Allen was not merely someone who inspired a tearful ballad; she might have lived at Fidelity or up the creek or out in the Flatwoods.

Ballads and similar songs go back to an age when ability to read was pretty rare, when much of what we now hear on the radio or see on TV or read in books and magazines came to people in an unbroken chain of traditional transmission. Long after a large percentage of the population had learned to read, this old appeal still existed, tying us of my generation far back to "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago." Even the songs that had grown up around the Civil War were about events that seemed as far away as Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh. To see, every time I went to Fidelity, from one to a dozen old fellows who as boys had worn the Gray made me feel as if I were under some magic spell that had enabled me to travel away back into history, when even these brave old fellows were young, and they assured us youngsters that they were far below the average in bravery. And even older people lived among us, men and women who had left their long-settled homes in North Carolina and, six weeks of toil

and travel behind them, arrived in their new home in the Jackson Purchase, none of them, so far as I know, ever traveling back, when means of transportation were better, to see the strange, wonderful God's Country that they had left.

We youngsters never tired of questioning the oldsters of both generations--the pioneers and the Civil War veterans--about the great events that they had been a part of. And every one of the old-timers entered into the romance of story-telling, rarely making themselves more than they were, the average run of respectable, honest people who sought, in every generation, a newer home and outlook in an ever-newer West. Unfortunately, we had among us no poet who could tell in rhyme the appealing stories of other times; we repeated the ones that these same pioneers and veterans had told until they became the bases for our education. And we sat entranced when some old song told of still more ancient days than those in North Carolina, of days when Englishman and Scotchman fought each other in a sort of story-book fighting that seemed far less bloody than it was and certainly far more heroic. My father was an avid reader of Sir Walter Scott's novels and often mingled accounts of his own boyhood in Middle Tennessee with similar stories in Scott's novels, until it was not clear to us whether Robin Hood was from Marshall County, Tennessee, a compeer of Nathan Bedford Forrest and Sam Davis or whether these two heroes and many others were really story-book heroes who lived in Scotland or Northern Ireland and knew everybody from Robert Bruce down.

Remember, there were no picture shows then. And novels, except historical novels with a few people and some sugary love stories with many, were somewhat frowned upon by the more religious people at Fidelity. But we could listen without a twinge of conscience when Aunt Jane took us back to remote and romantic times with her ballads and with such songs as "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls" and "The Last Rose of Summer," and, in the same evening's entertainment, to the times of lords and ladies, across the ocean.

THE LION AND THE LIZARD

As far back as I can remember, I was attracted by old-house sites, where a few stones or bricks and maybe a cellar remained of what used to be somebody's home. Though the Jackson Purchase was not open to settlement until 1819, by the time I arrived, in 1888, already there were dozens of old-house places in the Fidelity area. The earlier inhabitants usually built log cabins, often very simple ones, and then, as better times and a larger family came along, built a larger log house or made a tremendous step forward and built a frame house. Why, across the broad creek bottom, in plain sight from our tobacco barn on the hill south of our house, stood the first brick house on the whole side of our county. Two years ago, when I went by the old place, I found it deserted and gradually becoming a haunt for bats and lizards and snakes, our American denizens of deserted places.

In our small field just south of our house had stood, at some time before my time, a cabin that had been home for a family or more since quite early Purchase days. In addition to the remains of the chimney there was, all my childhood, a fine wild plum thicket there, descended from the trees or maybe a single tree that the former owners had set out. In broad open daylight I was not afraid to go to that thicket in season and gather plums, or blackberries in neighboring abandoned areas of the field. But there was something slightly weird about the place when night began to come on. There were no graves near our farm; hence I never learned to be much afraid of graveyards. But the sites of old houses seemed haunted.

Just to the side of our orchard had been an Indian encampment, for there were thousands of flint chips and some pretty well-preserved arrows and other Indian relics. Long before my own time, a cabin had stood at the same place, so that chips of flint, broken bits of old blue china, and rusting pieces of metal were all together, especially

after a hard rain had removed some of the poor soil from them. And across the creek had been a large Indian mound, near which an ancient house stood down into my own time. That old mound was in a pretty bushy place and seemed a little too scary to visit alone. Only after I was nearly grown did I venture across the creek to probe in the rich soil of the old mound, hoping to find some arrowheads or other relics. But long cultivation of that mound had almost leveled it down, and apparently this plowing and burning for years had also destroyed the artifacts that I was seeking.

When I grew up and bought WALDEN, I was intrigued always with the chapter called "Former Inhabitants; and Winter Visitors," for I discovered that Thoreau had felt romantically toward these old house sites, even though they had sheltered only humble or transient people. His own cabin at Walden Pond had been built largely from a dismantled shack that had been the successive home for Irish railroad workers, a very humble and inadequate shelter but home, nevertheless, to some pioneers in our strange America.

My study of ornithology has taken me across hundreds of farms in south-central Kentucky, nearly all of which, certainly the larger ones, have, somewhere in a neglected spot, a deserted graveyard. Early white settlers, slaves, or prominent big land-owners all lie now away over in the pastures or in a young forest, far from the modern homes and the highways. Since 1938, when I began my study of the changing bird life of the Mammoth Cave National Park, I have been more and more impressed with the signs of people who used to live where now the wild is taking over again. Alone or with companions, I cannot help repeopling the young forests with the boys and girls who made that area their homes, and sometimes I feel almost as spooky as I did when I visited the old house site in the pasture south of my boyhood home or dug in the broken flint and pottery over by the orchard.

"NEVER BEFORE"

In my long years of teaching I warned my students against starting a speech on any subject with the time-worn "Never before in the history of the world." Nine times out of ten the incident that a student would relate after such a sweeping statement was so commonplace that anyone who had lived two doaen years or had read a very little bit would have known better than to place the happening as something phenomenal. After many of our modern inventions came to be, I relented somewhat and allowed my students to use the famous phrase when talking about these gadgets but not about human thinking in general. It is typical of the folk to imagine that whatever happens up some hollow, the one where they and their ancestors have lived for years, is universal; and, conversely, if it didn't happen up Greasy Creek Hollow, then it just didn't happen.

Human history has repeated itself so many times that any statement about it is liable to error, even if the speaker or writer is widely read and eager to chronicle only historical fact. When younger people have said that modern politics have gone beyond all bounds, I have often told the story that a prominent edicator in Kentucky told many years ago about this very subject. He said that some pious person, not too well read, had said that in older times elections were ever so much cleaner than they now are. "My grandfather," said this friend of mine, "used to boast that he voted seventeen times in one election for Andy Jackson." I doubt whether the person who was praising the glorious past was convinced, even though the educator had somewhat marked down his own stock to tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

Here is another phase of life today that should make us think twice before we make some of our generalizations. I have always opposed juvenile delinquency and expect to keep on doing it. But I have no

Good Old Days to quote, for my memory is long. In a small village where I taught, very early in this century, Halloween was a terror, for not merely horse play but serious damage to property was regular. And the mature inhabitants of the place who would be truthful said that it was equally bad as far back as they could remember. A middle-aged man of property in the village was said as a boy to have led a gang of Halloween pranksters for years, one of whose acts was to cut down all the trees that had been planted around the railroad station; and not a single arm was raised by any one to apprehend the rascals, the "juvenal delinquents," if you like that better.

Horse play at Fidelity in my youth was bad enough, but my parents said it was ever so much rougher and more destructive of property ~~XXX~~ in the years before my day. And some very stern fathers, like mine, didn't waste any words in announcing what might happen to us boys if we sneaked out, under the guise of Halloween or Christmas, the great time for pranks at Fidelity, and injured someone's property. And we boys, whether we wanted to or not, knew that our fathers were not "just fooling."

In our very stirred-up times I am hearing again and again that this is it: we've never had such times before. Maybe not with the specific slant that modern times can give to events, but, fundamentally, the same stir-ups of human emotion, the same wild feelings that are as much a part of human nature as hunger and sleep. Of course, we need to watch ourselves to keep from going too far off the reservation, but we ought to tell ourselves again that our conceptions of history need some revisions. It is downright ammic to find well-heeled folks prating about the marvelous poise and morality of times that they know nothing about and have made no effort to know about.

T.C

VOICES IN THE WILDERNESS

Long before this essay sees print, I will have been a part of a program to honor a pioneer in conservation in the state, a sympathetic but hard-hitting man who suffered when he saw his poor county getting poorer because of a changeless system of cutting down trees to make new farming land, wearing out the soil, and repeating the process until there are few fairly-level places that could now be cleared and brought under cultivation. Pap and Grandpap and their ancestors had done just that, and few people seemed to realize that something ought to be done before gullies and worn-out fields were all the county had to show for its better-than-average soils and farms of even a generation ago. This conservation friend of mine allied himself with every movement that promoted the setting out of trees in areas where trees should always have been, with measures that were concerned with stopping gullies, with the planting of grasses and clovers and such like to start the rehabilitation of the damaged soil. At first he had few very active followers; many people thought him queer; but they respected his honesty in trying to bring about a saner use of the soil, anyway. And his sterling, quaint character ultimately made many converts to his point of view. When he died, in 1964, he was being recognized for his valuable work, and the program that is to be will show that he lived to see some of his philosophy accepted and made a part of his county's philosophy.

Just the day before I wrote this essay, I had a long talk with one of the teachers of Western, whose ancestors used to be "land poor." For generations, in one of the older states, the family had acquired, by any means, more land. And, for some generations, the descendants inherited land and did little or nothing to make it worth anything. Thus the immense estates of the once-famous family dwindled, much of the land ultimately being sold for taxes. Our teacher's grandfather was the first of the family since pioneer times to make his living; he was

forced by declining revenues and the vanishing of the family estates to enter a profession. The family has not yet regained much of its land-holding fame and seems not to be interested in this as an ideal. This story could be repeated over and over without exaggeration. It is a bit sickening to hear someone dwell on the greatness of one's family when everyone who cares to know can find that that greatness was based on the exploitation of natural resources, on the depletion of the soil, on the assumption that posterity didn't matter anyway.

Some years ago I went to give a commencement address at a rural high school. The principal, a very devoted friend of conservation, told me as we drove from the railroad station, where he had met me, to his village, that many of the farmers in his area had learned the wastefulness involved in burning off fields. He hoped that there would come a time when everybody would know that we must protect and build up our soils. About a mile before we reached his school building, we had to hold our hands over our noses and drive fast; some farmer was burning off his fields right in the edge of the village, as if to show that young upstart that Grandpap did that and knew more than any college-trained smart-alec that had tried to show him how to farm. I wish I had the remarks of that high school principal on tape; they could not be printed in this newspaper, but they would wake up in other conservationists some zeal to fight on in this continuous battle.

The late Tom Wallace, in his lifelong struggle for protecting nature, cannot be praised too highly. He had a direct, forthright style that provoked thought and often some anger, too. But his earnestness, his persistence over many years of writing and speaking brought hundreds of converts to the cause. It will be a real joy to speak at this program, which, if he were still alive, would be a part of his own experience, for it is to be in his own area, the one he loved to the end of his long and useful life. It is wonderful that a worthy cause like this is gaining momentum in many places, thanks to the voices that cried in the wilderness.

"NO SHAVES ON SATURDAY" 1579

When I went for a haircut, early in July, 1965, I noticed a sign on the wall facing me as I sat in the barber's chair: "No shaves on Saturday." It has taken me several days to get adjusted to this new world of which I am a sort of dragging anchor. No shaves on Saturday? What in the world is a barbershop coming to? Don't barbers know that their very name comes from the same word as beard? I must confess that my own trade at a barbershop has been, with probably a half dozen exceptions, in haircuts. A very few times, when away from home without my razor, I have actually had a shave given me in a barbershop; but I just supposed that I was somewhat exceptional these days.

While I sat and had my gray hair cut, and many times since then, I have thought back to the old barbershops, with their rows of shaving mugs, each one with the name of its owner proudly on it, or maybe my figure should be turned around--with the proud owner's name on it. You see, getting a shave in a barbershop was ritzy in older days. I have known some men who never shaved themselves but regularly patronized a shop. Many times I have laughed, in this column and in my classes, about the lecturer who, in introducing himself to an audience, remarked, as a sign that he was democratic, that he shaved himself. In the remote county where he thus bared his regular feller ways, nobody seemed the least impressed, for probably not ten fellows there had ever been shaved by a barber. If he were to make that statement now(he would be considerably past 100 now), there would be the blank silence that he found away back in 1908. Who doesn't shave himself now? That is what my barber asked me, too, for his busy life is now devoted almost entirely to hair, with all the many ways men and boys and some women wear their locks. It must be as difficult to be a barber now as to be a specialist on foreign cars.

With a little remembering I finally could recall just who was the last man I saw being shaved by my own barber. It was years ago. The subject, or victim, or whatever you call him, was just 95 years old and had got a little too shaky to risk handling a razor. Consequently, he came, once a week, to have his heavy beard removed. And, when he had had the week's accumulation cut and shaved off(for the barber had ~~first~~ first to run his clippers over the stubble), he looked like a very spry young fellow and could hold his own in banter with the rest of us, who ranged from middle-aged to quite young. You see, having a shave gives a fellow some vim; the sweet-smelling stuff the barber puts on may have a smidgen of water from the Fountain of Youth in it. And it used to be a mark of being somebody to smell as if you had been to a barber and had your whiskers trimmed or even shaved off.

The world has come a long way since my first adventure in barber shops. Until I was old enough to go away from home and make my own way, my hair was cut--shingled--occasionally, but not often enough, by my older sister or, after I got to be a little bigger, by a neighboring hired man, who had no set charges and rarely was overpaid. It was a sort of neighborhood disgrace for it to leak out that a fully-grown man had his locks trimmed by his wife; some people said that this was stinginess, but Fidelity men had a way of saving, somewhat as ~~Whittie~~ Whittier's neighbors did, their souls and winter pork with "the least outlay of salt and sanctity." Growing up in such an atmosphere, I was properly impressed when I went to live in town and to have my hair cut, henceforth, in a very masculine barbershop, where risque tales often were spun and where copies of magazines, often several months or years after they had been issued, were lying around to be read or just looked at while the fellow waiting could listen in on the man talk. Then the women invaded the shops, and the language was considerably dry-cleaned And gradually shaving ceased to be the chief purpose of a barber shop. And men began to take more and more pride in whatever hair nature had given or left them. So here we are, with no shaves on Saturday.

TO WATCH THE CARS GO BY

Away back when I first left home and, somewhat surprisingly, saw the very next day an automobile, it would have seemed nothing short of sacrilege if someone had suggested that a time would come when people would try to live as far back from the highway as possible, to keep from seeing the cars go by. Long after I saw my first car, a man who lived not too far from my future wife's home got tired of living down under a hill, where, in spite of his having a fine house for that time, there was no way of seeing the cars go by. His farm extended to the big road, now a part of US 60; he and his wife built a brand-new house by the side of the road and fairly reveled in the traffic that came by. But their joy was short-lived, for a new survey placed the modern highway clear across a big field and even behind a small grove. The poor family, in their good new home, did not have the money or the nerve to build again, out nearer the traffic. And, so far as I know, they lived out their lives in a sort of disappointment at not being on a main road. How much they would be envied today!

When we bought our house at 1434 Chestnut Street, away back in 1919, it was the last house in town and remained so for a good many years. People so regarded it as the edge of the country that they dumped their supernumerary kittens and puppies in front of my house; for years I was a sort of unpaid undertaker for the maimed and flattened-out animals that had been given their freedom a little too early. If ever the contents of a big sinkhole behind my lot, where I was told to dump ashes and rocks, should be examined, it will be a great surprise to find so many kitten and dog bones in such an unexpected place.

For years I had my desk by the front window of our living room. It was so handy, when tired from grading papers and writing letters, to glance up to see what manner of carriages were passing. In those days there were still buggies, wagons, and , in one very severe winter, carts.

I sat down one day and wrote a whole series of articles about the Open Road, with my eye right on that road in front of my own house. Reading these essays now, which appeared in one of my numerous columns, I wonder nearly as much as I would have wondered if I had written them in Fidelity itself, not long after the 1900's started. You see, traffic was extremely poetic in those days; it was good to look out my window and see a big drove of cattle being driven by, unless they broke ranks and decided to browse in my yard. And the cars moved slowly, partly because of the animal hazards and chiefly because of the rough road. Some remnants of former grandeur, like the matched pair of horses hitched to what had been an eye-opener in its day, would come by; even a single electric automobile could make the grade by my house at some five or six miles an hour. But all this was long before the hectic activity of my town--and yours--following World War II. US 31W ran by my house then, with no Bypass. For some years after the Bypass was opened, there was a sort of lull in the traffic, sure enough; and the street, even then occupied for a mile and more beyond my house, the former edge of town, had some of the appearance of itself in the 1920's. But the population explosion, the tremendous growth in our school population, and the quadrupling of our town's regular population made the Business Route, the road in front of my house, seem as crowded as on its very busiest days before the Bypass came to be.

My chief occupation now is trying to find enough lull in the traffic to back my own car into the street. I certainly have to watch the cars go by, sometimes as many as 25, before I dare risk my car and my pudgy body on the street that used to be so serene and country-lane-like.

This is no special lament for the Good Old Days of Horses and Buggies, but I cannot help envying Mr. Graves, the man who was left with his new house out by the side of what had been the Big Road until a short cut was built so far away that he could not hear much of the traffic and could see none of it.

When this article reaches the newspapers that use it, thirty years will have passed since the first article appeared, in early September, 1935. In distance, that would be a fur piece; in a lifetime, it is a pretty good-sized time. But somehow, in folklore that does not seem long. You see, most of our customs are so ancient that a mere thirty years are but as a yesterday when it is past or as a watch in the night. Hundreds, almost thousands of our everyday words were in the language so long ago that all our fine literature seems like something brand-new. Just the day before I wrote this essay, a college professor's wife told me how she used to be embarrassed when her grandmother said "holp" for "helped." But that good old word was being used so long before Columbus discovered us that history since his day is a mere period like the time in "books" after the afternoon recess at the one-roomed country school. And, I suspect, mothers religiously put their children into summer underwear on May 1 a long time before Chaucer wrote and laughed and Columbus sailed.

But, after all, thirty years can seem pretty long when you stop to think about some changes that have come in that time. If a well-qualified folklorist had applied for a job in the average college in 1935, he would have been put into the same class as the atomic physicist. A few higher-ups would have known what it was all about but would not have wanted to stake their reputations on anything so far-fetched as studying quaint old customs, left-over language, folk remedies, and such other nonsense. And now it it not at all unusual for an applicant to parade his work in folklore and, often, with excellent results.

Among actual folklorists thirty years ago the emphasis was almost wholly on two phases of the study: folk songs and ballads on one hand and folktales on the other. Many of the things now being studied were even regarded as outside the whole field, anyway, such as customs,

industries, characters or types. Now the trained folklorist is a broadly-educated person who knows a good deal about many phases of traditional life and culture. Nothing is too obscure or taken-for-granted to escape the sympathetic but prying eyes of people who would like to know as much as possible about what makes any community tick, what keeps going the very customs and thinking by which we live.

Folklore, I must say, has not profited every time in the years that it has been studied or dug into. Faddists have tried to capitalize on certain phases of it, so that, to many people, folklore is anything that sounds queer or is slightly off key or maybe a little crude or risque. There have been many types of fakelore produced under the name of folklore, often by perfectly honest but ignorant people who would like to become famous folklorists. Some of our American so-called folk heroes have been made almost wholly from the whole cloth by a few writers, and somehow these machine-made heroes do not stack up with our scouts, our cowboys, our Southern colonels, and the rest of our distinctly American folk characters. Once, some years ago I was sent a book for review that was obviously an effort to make some modern child folklore, the sort of stuff that middle-aged theorists imagine children would believe or ought to believe. In many ways that was the sorriest book I ever tried to read, for the author apparently knew nothing about children of today and very little about children at any time. I never knew what happened to this aspiring author, who fairly overwhelmed me for years with fly-by-night stories, essays, rhymes, and made-up fakes that got pretty awful.

But, down under all the froth of efforts to commercial folklore and make reputations for rather ineffective folklorists, there has steadily developed a surer touch that is apparently leading us to a better understanding of our cultural history, to a fairer appraisal of the generations immediately behind us in America at least. All honor to every sincere folklorist who has helped to achieve this result.

WHERE IS FIDELITY?

For years, almost since my first appearance in this column, I have been asked, "Where is Fidelity?" Just a few days ago an elderly gentleman from Atlanta, with connections in south-central Kentucky, wrote to ask me to locate the village for him, for he had thumbed through atlases and encyclopedias trying to find it. Imagine Fidelity in an encyclopedia! At a fashionable wedding, some few years back, almost as soon as the married couple had taken off from the church in a shower of rice, one of the guests, an old schoolmate of mine whom I had not seen in forty years, hastened over to where I was standing watching the fine young couple drive away and begged to be shown on a highway map where Fidelity is or was. I carefully outlined the ways to reach it, and she said that she and her husband would be driving right down to find the place. I felt lifted up, and I wonder whether the little place satisfied her longing to see it.

Yes, there is a Fidelity, Virginia, just as there is a Santa Claus. And it is about the size it was in 1835, when it was incorporated under its present name, New Concord. Before that date it had been just Concord, but every county has a Concord Church or Concord School; apparently that determined the attaching of the New to the older name. Away back before its Concord days, however, it had been named or called Humility! Imagine my Fidelity with such a belittling name! Felix Holt, when he wrote THE GABRIEL HORN, which A. B. Guthrie made into the movie called THE KENTUCKIAN, adopted the old name and wound his pioneer story around the small village. Fortunately, Guthrie kept the old name and made a really impressive play and picture out of the novel. And, I like to add, the boy character of the novel and the picture, Little Eli, lived on down into my own time, say, about 1903, dying as a very old man, not too far from Holt's Humility, my Fidelity.

In the fall of 1918, while the infulenza epidemic was raging, just about everything at our college stopped except the classes offered for the S. A. T. C., the predecessor of the R. O. T. C. With more time on my hands than I usually had in October and November, I began to write some stories, with their setting at my own village. By some strange freak of memory or lack of it, I called the place Fidelity and not Humility, for I had known all my life that Humility was its ancient name. My stories made several trips to magazines, two-way trips at that, but I liked my new name for my village and kept it. From time to time for the years between 1918 and 1935, when this column started, I used the word, especially when I wanted to mention some custom or personality that I used to know. A whole series of articles on "Passing Institutions," interrupted by my having to devote all my time to getting my doctor's degree, appeared in one of our local papers, by the request of the city editor. Then, in 1935, I was asked to write, for a year, for a column that the various Kentucky newspapers had opened to members of our faculty who wished to write about some phases of Kentucky history or education. And, every week since then, there has been sent out an article to as many papers as wished to have it; and that is that.

Oh, I almost forgot to tell you how to find Fidelity. If you live in the Jackson Purchase, go to Murray, take Ky 121, and in ten delightful miles you will be there. If you live elsewhere, follow US 68 across Kentucky Lake, turn on Ky 94 to Murray, and on to Fidelity. Or, a very picturesque way, take US 68 to Russellville, US 79 until you cross Kentucky Lake, then follow Tenn 119 to where it becomes Ky 121, and you'll soon be there. En route either way you will get to see some of the best scenery in the state and can stop at far more historical spots going or coming: Jefferson Davis's birthplace at Fairview, Kentucky, or Fort Donelson, at Dover, Tennessee, and many more spots. If you should be so foolish as to visit the actual Fidelity--New Concord on the map--, let me know your impression.

In the article immediately before this one I told how I accidentally invented the name Fidelity for the small village near which I spent the first eighteen years of my life and even mapped out a route or two by which it can be reached, provided anybody would like to see the place. Today I want to tell the readers, the gentle readers, as quaint old-time writers called them, about the two Fidelities. The one listed on the map is quite tangible, though it has never been a large place. It came into existence immediately after the Jackson Purchase was opened for settlement in 1819; far more than a century ago it had about a hundred inhabitants; there are just about that many there now, unless you take in the "suburbs," for Fidelity, like your town or city and mine, feathers out in several directions. Ages ago the village ceased to be incorporated or let the incorporation status lapse, I do not know which. Consequently, there is no actual way of knowing where the village begins or ends. Since Kentucky Lake came to be, a little more than twenty years ago, houses have sprung up at rather frequent times along the road from the village to the lake itself; in fact, where my own house used to be could now be called a part of Fidelity, though a good half mile, air line, used to separate us from the village. With the appeal of fishing and camping and boating and just driving around, the village is probably better off financially now than it ever was in its nearly a century and a half of life; tourists and fishermen just have to eat and to sleep. And there is the Fidelity that is on the map, now on a good state highway, though formerly regarded as being away off the other side of nowhere.

Without marking down the physical village in any way, I must say that this Fidelity is hardly as real to me, and to people like me, as the other village, a sort of Dream Fidelity, an epitome of

a whole era in our American history following pioneer days. The greatest compliments that have come to me from readers of this column have been in the form of questions as to what place in the writers' home counties I am writing about. One of the earliest questions came from an elderly woman who had left a western Kentucky county not long after the end of the Civil War but still took her home-county paper. She wanted to know whether I was one of the Wilsons of Sassafras Ridge. I immediately wrote her and thanked her for identifying me with her old county, for I somehow felt that my little village and its customs and people were strikingly like those of her county and I hoped that the Wilsons of Sassafras Ridge would not be ashamed to own me as "one of them."

You see, life in the period from early pioneer times until the first decade of the twentieth century went along in a fairly ordinary channel, so much so that it would have been possible to transfer, by some sort of magic, a whole neighborhood into other sections of the state and sister states without doing violence to language and customs and even names. Farming was pretty much as it started out to be when the first settlers entered the land. Newgrounds, log-rollings, house-raisings, wheat-threshings, quiltings, protracted meetings, dinner on the ground, and on and on I could go, for there was a family resemblance among neighborhoods, even some of them far apart geographically. Why, we children at Fidelity, back in the late 1800's and early 1900's, played the same traditional games, with the same terms for them, as the youngsters around Mammoth Cave, 150 miles east and settled long before Fidelity was ever heard of. We even used the same rhymes in counting out when we played Hide and Go Seek, we had Town Ball, and Mumblepeg, and Stink Base. The only merit claimed for this column is that it early recognized this great similarity between your place and kine. There was nothing unusual about Fidelity, this Fidelity; it was a sort of standardized small village and its hinterland, just like your own Rabbit Ridge or Twin Branch or the Crossroads.

Some ten years ago my camping partner and I were visiting some of the places where he had played as a child. On the way he spoke time and again about the big cave that was only a few yards behind his schoolhouse. On a very rainy morning we stopped near the place and went to see his cave. The entrance was probably big enough to admit a ten-year-old boy, but my partner, a very big man, would have got stuck long before he got one shoulder inside. He seemed surprised and disappointed: that cave used to be a big one; limestone does not shrink; but there was the insignificant hole in the ground that no ordinary grown man could squeeze through. I tried to console him by telling of the big hill, near Fidelity, which seemed, before I had seen bigger ones, just about second only to some famous mountain. Long ago I walked up and down that hill and barely sensed that I was changing altitude. You see, when I had whizzed down that hill on my home-made sled--or slide--, it seemed gigantic.

Sometimes I fear that we do ourselves and our memories wrong by trying to revisit the scenes of our earlier lives. We need some idealistic places to which we can run away in memory, places that are Never-Never Lands. Of course, if we get too offensive in our bragging about our great places, some kind soul might do us--and humanity--a favor by taking us back to our idealized places and making us see how ordinary they were. And cynics are forever doing just that. Some decades ago nearly every novelist tried to undermine some hero of ours by showing that he was not perfect, maybe a little earthy. It may have helped some of us to value people as people and not as demigods, but it certainly made some sad readers. When a reader is not sufficiently grounded in history and comes upon one of these so-called historical novels, he is likely to become a cheap cynic, just as the typical Pudd'nhead Wilsons of all time are regarded by their more philosophical friends.

Every year there is some sort of centennial or sesquicentennial to which all the old-timers are invited to come back and renew the experiences of their youth. I sometimes wonder whether there is not more disillusionment in such celebrations than in any other type of programs. Again, if the returnees have kept an eye on history, they may escape unharmed; if they have refused to accept their own backgrounds for exactly what they were, then any interference with this glorifying their past causes trouble. On a very hot day, many years ago, my camping partner and I, urged on by an elderly man who had been reared in an out-of-the-way place in southern Kebtucky, decided to camp at the famous spring that the old fellow often mentioned. We turned off the hard road, drove up a dusty lane, with the temperature growing higher by the minute, and finally found the spring, a weak little trickle in a cow pasture, fairly covered, in the air above it, with mosquitoes that were ready for us. There was not a shade tree big enough to shade our tent, we had no water supply except the famous spring; wisely we turned back by the dusty road and the highway and failed to camp by the great spring. Neither of us ever had the nerve to disillusion the fine old man who had told us about his spring; I hope that he, in the many years he had to live, made no attempt to seek out the Fountain of Perpetual Youth that the spring seemed to him. If he did this, I fear he lost one more dream, one more intangible connection with his childhood in a remote area.

When I retired, six years ago, many of my friends wondered whether I might not return to Fidelity or near it, build or buy a rustic house, and relive my early days. Since I left that area in 1906 and retired in 1959, you can imagine how many ties still draw me back. I prefer to keep Fidelity as a Green Isle in a Far-away Sea, to which I can return at will, not a place, however pastoral and beautiful, where I try to be my older self again. Meanwhile I sit in the house where I have lived for forty-seven years, across the ~~campus~~ street from the college where I taught forty-seven and a half years, and also have another "escape" house, down not far from Fidelity.

SIDEBOARDS

At a recent potluck supper at a community house in a neighborhood that I have long known, I heard a visiting young woman, who has spent most of her days since childhood in a northern city, tell her husband that he was so piling food on his plate that he would have to put on the sideboards. Somehow that struck me as very folksy, and I told the young woman that she had remained true to her early life in this once-remote neighborhood. Then, to test my memory of that word's being slightly out of date, I asked some younger people, even some small children, about sideboards and found that the word has apparently disappeared among the present generation in that area. Imagine not knowing how much honor it used to give a fellow who put on the sideboards when he went to gather corn and sometimes propped them up still farther by putting an ear of corn under each. Why, at the present rate of change in farm machinery, it may soon be necessary to explain such a term as gathering corn. Already I find lots of youngsters talking about picking corn; when I first heard that term, I could think of nothing appropriate to say. You used to pick blackberries or flowers, or ticks when you had been out picking blackberries. But picking corn sounded like some sort of foreign importation, but I began to remember that corn-pickers do the work now that was formerly done by two men and a boy, with the boy, as I said some time ago, taking the down row, the one pushed down by the mules and the wagon.

Back in my early boyhood we bought a new wagon, all painted up, and with sideboards to match. We felt several degrees above where we had been with our older wagon, one made by a pretty good local mechanic who thus had paid some debts to his doctor, my father. That

home-made wagon was a good one that lasted on and on, but it did not have much style. The new one, with its green paint and a border of yellow or gold really looked like something special. In ordinary hauling we left the sideboards off, but, with corn-gathering and such like, we put them on and felt that much bigger. You see, in older times it did not take much to make us feel big; life was fairly drab and, of necessity, pretty inexpensive. To get a new wagon, then, put us in a higher social scale, as it were, among the better-fixed farmers in the neighborhood.

Naturally, with the ordinary wagonbed and the extra sideboards, there were different things meant when you talked about a wagonload. Sometimes it was necessary to explain that the term meant with the sideboards on, too. That was about all that could be expected; the wagonload of this sort became for many of us a symbol of plenty, of distinction. We somehow associated this type of wagonbed with what the preachers meant when they spoke of measure pressed down and running over. We did not know then, and I was middle-aged before I knew, the French word lagniappe, which is so colorful and which means that extra that shows abundance or generosity, the extra potato or apple added to the basket, the sideboards with the ear of corn to prop up each corner. When a measure such as this disappears, how can the younger generation tell how generous someone was, how the buyer got his money's worth and more, too? Since many people at Fidelity were Methodists, this lagniappe was known as Methodist measure, but I am sure that the members of this faith were no more noted for giving this sort of extra service than were the Baptists up Beechy Fork and the Christians over on Dog Creek.

A TATER ON THE SPOUT

We old-timers used coal-oil long before we knew it was kerosene; many of us still feel a little biggity when we say kerosene or hear some other back-country-bred people say it. When we went to the store at Fidelity on Saturday afternoon, we sometimes took along an empty coal-oil can to get a new supply. When the merchant had turned the spigot on the coal-oil barrel and filled our can, he obligingly stuck a small potato on the spout to keep the smelly liquid from spilling all over our clothes or on our mules as we rode back home. The same custom was kept up as long as coal-oil was a standard item in country stores; I have had many a can delivered to me by the devlivery boy from the grocer, and every time the spout had the necessary potato. As I told about many articles back, my wife needed a quart of coal-oil for some special cleaning she was doing; I fairly bounced into the car and went after that good old standby. I have forgotten now, but I must have visited five or six stores and garages before I found even one drop of coal-oil. One of the supermarket managers told me that he used to keep 500 gallons as a sort of emergency supply but that he had not bought or sold a gallon in ten years.

And then there is that potato, ruined with the coal-oil smell and taste. It would seem that, with so many taters saved now , the price of spuds would be away down. Certainly our town once used dozens to put on coal-oil cans. But the humble tater is far from humble now. If a typical housewife could see, on a coal-oil can, some of the taters that I have seen in just such spots, she might want to call out the riot squad to prevent such waste. We used to accept potatoes as a sort of filler, especially for growing children, who have such unfillable tummies. Try buying potatoes now for a family of, say, six boys. Unless you have grown some potatoes in your own garden and guarded

them with your own life, you would soon find yourself bankrupt. The lowly potato, lineal descendant of the very ones that might wind up on a coal-oil can, is now served in the ritziest eating places, sometimes with a flourish, and why not? If you get a big potato with your meal, and butter or sour-cream it up properly, you can somewhat salve your conscience for being so extravagant. In older times I saw hundreds of potatoes rejected at digging or grabbling time because they were so small; and now it makes me hungry and somewhat shamed-faced to think about having wasted such valuable food.

Away back in the earliest days of the column I stuck out my neck and praised turnip greens and have been justified by the doctors and other people who like to talk about what we should eat. One of the elderly ladies, of that long-ago time, would not have touched turnip greens with a ten-foot pole, for they suggested plain, country, somewhat boorish folk; and she always saw to it that she left the impression that she was of far higher status. But good old green-sallet to dozens of generations living and dead--need no apology now. I just love to walk down the line in a big-city cafeteria and see how many people, obviously of country origin, sometimes, but not necessarily so, choose as one of their vegetables greens, especially the prince of all the greens, turnip greens. Sometimes I love to hear these very people call the dish turnip sallet, accidentally or on purpose.

In Fidelity, and around Mammoth Cave, too, people used to look down their noses at cottage cheese. Our local Fidelity name for it was poor-folks cheese. We felt that when milk was sour and had had the butter removed or the cream skimmed off the top of the clabber, the rest was pig food and nothing else. Not long ago, in a wayside eating place where hundreds of tourists stop, one of the managers told me that cottage cheese was the item most often ordered as a single dish by hungry people, especially in the afternoon. And she agreed with me that there was nothing better to eat in the whole place in spite of her and my having been reared without cottage cheese.

~~1586~~ 1587

EXPLAINING A FIGURE OF SPEECH

There was a time, not too long ago for us old-timers, when there were so many phases of our lives that were like those of everywhere else that even our figures of speech and our refernnces were understandable over a very wide portion of America. Along about 1910, when various members of the Western faculty were giving some of their favorite quotations from well-known literature, the time came for one of our teachers, a born humorist, to give his quotation. He began by saying that just about all of his favorites had already been given; there was nothing left but to quote from "Harry and the Guide-post," a selection in our old school readers that everybody remembered. The audience fairly roared applause when he quoted some of the lines and ended up with Harry's conclusion to walk straight up to anything that seemed scary. If I were to try that tack now, it would take me twice my allotted time to prepare the audience for the quotation. There was also a time when just any speaker could give an oblique reference to some well-known Scripture verse or situation, without having to spend some time in teaching the audience what to expect. All of us old-timers of any memory had learned thousands of quotations, good and bad, and loved to inject them into our daily speech. It is too bad that we mixed good and bad a bit too much, for some of our stuff was pretty puny, and some was of the very best.

Just as quotations seem not so necessary now, so do figures of speech. In my collection of more than 3,500 similes and sayings there are hundreds that would be apparent to anybody who was raised on the old-fashioned farm. But the old-fashioned farm is a passing, almost a past, institution; and it is often pretty hard to get over a picturesque simile that Grandpa would have enjoyed. I was surprised recently to find that even some small boys, though, who knew farm life only as related to tractors, mentioned how somebody laughed so loudly

that he almost busted a hamestring. When I asked one such boy what a hamestring is or was, he said he didn't know but that Dad used that expression, and it sounded good. He guessed it meant something like busting a gut with laughter or anger. In that long-planned and never-realized Folk Museum that I am always talking about, there ought to be a hamestring and some attention given to how it might be busted by a horse or a man, figuratively, at least.

So many of our early farm figures were pat that I hate to see them lose their potency, but that is what will happen to many of them. If the object to which something or somebody is compared is nowhere to be seen, then how can the speaker get his figure across? Often I told my students how inadequate their feeling for the Twenty-third Psalm must be if they had never known sheep as we farm boys knew them. Imagine trying to get the true feeling of this beautiful poem across to a group of city children who never saw a sheep; and it would not be hard to imagine a teacher who wouldn't know a sheep if she saw one.

It is hard to speak factually, except in scientific ways. No tomfoolery must enter into mathematics and its allied subjects. But daily, momently, in a course in literature there is poetic language, picturesque simile, open and hidden references to other poems and books and characters. Maybe that is one reason why I, after a whole lifetime of teaching literature, never felt satisfied with any day's work. Maybe I failed to see that some very simple thing, so far as I could see, was veiled in poetic figures and, therefore, may not have found its place in the lives of my students, certainly not in the same way as it became of my own early life. No explanatory notes can ever make it certain that the author's feelings get across to us of a later time and of a different background. But, as a teacher, I loved and love to go again and again into the effectiveness of figures of speech, crude ones or dainty ones, that the authors use to get their ideas across to the rest of us.

BAREFOOT BOY

At the end of summer, 1965, a news item announced, as only news items can, that going barefooted is very rapidly becoming a passing institution. Now, isn't that something? Why, some snooty schools won't allow a barefoot boy or girl to enter the sacred hhalls of learning," as political candidates used to call our rather tacky little one-roomed schoolhouses. As Will Parker, the engaging clown in OKLAHOMA, might ask: "Whut next?"

I'm a fellow who went barefooted from my first learning to walk until I got to be eighteen and, therefore, old enough to begin teaching school. But, before July 1, 1907, the day I first began teaching, barefootedness and I were boon companions. And often since that date I have wished that enough solid citizens would start going barefooted so that I might follow suit. I am a bit too old to start such a style but game enough to be a follower.

What I most wonder about is how boys, especially, are going to grow up and be great men without having had all the exquisite experiences of going barefooted. In early spring, when home-knit yarn stockings came off on May 1 or on the day sheep were sheared, our feet, swathed so long in our heavy stockings, were very tender. Usually we wore some shabby stockings for a while to get our feet used to the rough ways of going barefooted. By degrees our feet toughened to the season, and we always swore that they were so tough that we could stomp a chestnut bur without hurting ourselves. Frankly, I never saw this done, but it was a supposed test, just like lifting a cat by its ears to see whether it(and President Johnson's dog) had any grit.

Along the way, from tender, whitish feet to tough, gingerbread-brown feet there were lots of adventures for feet, which had already come a long way from the adorable footsies of baby days. Walking in soft

dust in the road, wading mud wherever mud was to be found, wading in the cold spring branch, going in a-washing, drawing a starting line with the big toe for a game of marbles, drawing another line to double-dog dare some fellow to cross it, stumping off toenails when the boy trusted too much to the toughness of his feet--and on and on I could go, for I "was once a barefoot boy," as Whittier said in his famous poem. If any grown man now living and wearing shoes never got a splinter in his foot or even under a toenail, he ought to be ashamed of himself; I almost said he ought to get out right now and have this ennobling experience. Just last night I had to wrestle with a toenail of mine that is still too big for a toenail and almost big enough for a small-sized Shetland pony. You see, that toenail shows how I tore it or its long-ago predecessor off while playing "I Spy" and trying to cut through a dog-trot to home base; but the steps up and down into and out of that dog-trot were of heavy, rough-sawed oak. And thereby hangs a tale and hung my toenail; I haven't got to home base yet, even though that sudden tearing away of my nail took place along about 1898.

One of the best pictures of a one-roomed school I have ever seen is of the Maple Springs School, now long gone and its former glory swallowed up in the Mammoth Cave National Park. The striking thing is that every child was barefooted. No snooty little boy was done up in dress-up clothes, either; every boy sported his overalls, just as boys of the time should have been dressed. The teacher, now a National Park Ranger, gave me the picture, which I used in my booklet FOLKWAYS OF THE MAMMOTH CAVE REGION. In all probability some people will look at that picture and wonder whether the whole thing wasn't posed for some sort of publicity. But feet were made long before shoes, and these barefooted young chaps knew all the strange freedom that bare feet can have. I fear their descendants have not known so well the true barefoot-day joys and sorrows.

"All too soon those feet shall hid
In the prison cells of pride."

COUNTRY-SCHOOL ALUMNI

Soon it will be an aging group of people who talk about their days in a one-room country school. Already I know hundreds of country boys and girls, some of them now thoroughly grown and making their own ways in the world, who seem as puzzled over the old-fashioned school as about ox teams. And this is not merely true of school boys and girls in well-to-do and easily-accessible counties but of even the most rugged ones. When my mother used to tell us children of her school days in a log schoolhouse, with some slabs with pegs for legs as the only available seats, we got a big laugh, for we just knew that she had forgotten her earlier days and maybe was telling us some older history than she could have experienced. Why, as far back as I can remember, Fidelity School had "fetched-on" desks, just like the ones unnumbered thousands of my contemporaries sat in. We had heard that some schools farther up the creek our out toward the Flatwoods still had home-made desks, but curiosity never made us go a few miles to see. Of course, Sulphur Springs Church had home-made pews, but they were works of art, make of very wide yellow- poplar planks, planed and smooth.

"Men must be taught as if you taught them not," says Alexander Pope. I am sure he did not know what a country school was like, for he had a private tutor. But I often think of his words when I recall how much learning there was in the one-roomed school besides the regular recitations from books. Little fellows, scared to death because of older children's stories about punishments at school, could hear bigger children saying their lessons, or working problems on the board, or saying pieces on Friday afternoons; little boys, such I as once was, could resolve to grow up and be one of the big boys in that same school, with all the ease of manner the big boys had when they put all of John Jones's Estate on the blackboard in the arithmetic class. And a little fellow could resolve to be one of the best spellers some day, away off in the future,

and tower above some of these big lads, who towered above us in learning and in solid, though gawky, bodies. And, when we got a little older, we could sit and watch the teacher and the little fellows, the best course in pedagogy I have as yet had. Bashful little children would be learning new words and, under a very skilled teacher, acting them out, too. I can still remember how I closed my books, folded my arms on the top of my desk, and just watched the whole process of learning. I love to think that I unconsciously followed up some of the suggestions of these one-roomed country schoolteachers when I was teaching my own 36,000 college students.

Of course, I am not so old-fashioned as to proclaim the one-roomed school as the last word in teaching, but I do not want the memory of those earlier days to be hidden away merely because the schoolhouse is gone and the descendants of the barefoot boys and girls I once knew are riding each day by school bus to a much larger, more varied school. Two schools of thought have often done everything except pull hair over the merits or faults of the old-fashioned school. Some would see everything in terms of present-day conceptions of cleanliness, convenience, health, better-trained teachers; therefore, the little shabby old school seems pretty puny. Others, gradually losing their accurate memories as they grow older, recall only the better phases of the schools of their youth and pretend that everything was even better than any modern school can offer. As a lifelong school teacher I have been thrown into the very midst of these irreconcilables and have had to adjust to the world I have had to live in since I left Fidelity at eighteen to begin my career as a teacher. To give the older schools their just dues as openers of new doors for millions of people and still remember how inadequate, especially for our own families, they were or would have been if they had remained--that has seemed to me one of the hardest and most constant struggles I have had to face. One old man, when he comically put his arm around his old, old wife, said a mouthful for his own or our own day: "She ain't much to look, but she's all I've got." And this could be transferred to Fidelity School and all of its many contemporaries.

T & C

TIMES AND SEASONS

Recently, in preparing to write an article for a folklore journal on folk beliefs, I have gone over my files to check on times and seasons and the part they play in folkways. Just about every month and week and day of the week and special day has some belief attached to it. To try to remember all of them would tax any mind that I have ever become acquainted with. Maybe that is the reason that there are many contradictory beliefs as I said in an article some months ago.

January is a good place to start. The first twelve days of the month summarize, in brief, the weather for the following twelve months. Of course, temperature cannot enter this picture, but clear or clouded skies will prophesy the weather accurately enough. Of course, another school of thought says that the twelve days between Old Christmas and New Christmas are the ones to watch for prophecies of the weather for the next season. Take your choice, but be sure to watch both of them.

February brings one valuable bit of weather lore: if it thunders in that month, there will be frost on the corresponding day of April (or May, say some). That same thunder is hard on gooseeggs, killing the embryos in the shell. Maybe most geese in Kentucky are not laying eggs quite that early.

March is running-over full of portents and luck signs. For every fog in March there is a frost in May. Everybody knows about March starting off like a lion or a lamb and ending the other way. Except for March 27, the whole month is a bad-luck time to get married. Just why that day is a lucky one I cannot find out. There are some secrets that I, as an investigator, just cannot unravel. One old man that I have asked about this refuses to get a haircut in March; my informant says the old fellow will get rather taggy, but April 1 will be lucky enough to have his locks trimmed down to size.

April usually brings Easter, about which all sorts of beliefs have grown up. If Easter is early, spring itself will be early. If April is rainy, that means a good crop yeat to follow. A cow, in Kentucky, at least, can make her own living after Easter, whether it comes early or late. And all gardeners know that beans planted on Good Friday will not be in danger of frost. If a storm or squall did not occur at Easter or near it, all of us would decide the calendar-makers had got their calculations all mixed up.

May 1 is a sacred folk day. On that day you can remove your winter underwear, the children can start going barefooted, you can shine a mirror over a well and see your lover's face in the water, away down there. But this mirror business is tricky, for, instead of the face, you might see the dim outlines of a coffin. If your bees swarm in May, that's fine:

"A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay."

However, if they decide to wait a little while, they become less valuable:

"A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
But a swarm of bees in July
Isn't worth a fly."

June, says the poets and lots of society editors, is marriage month. Apparently a good many romantic people plan their marriages then. When I asked one elderly fellow whether he got married in June, he said he chose March instead, or, rather, the girl did. And he was after the girl and not after June or a society-column write-up.

July is the time to finish laying-by your corn. And July 4 should bring you some good roasting-ears from your earliest corn. Watch July 2, for the weather for the following six weeks will be prophesied by that day's weather. Some farmers refuse to plant corn on July 1, 2, or 3; they say, when cornered, that the corn will not have time to mature; but I have seen corn planted several days later than these dates.

SOME MORE TIMES AND SEASONS

The article preceding this one, in trying to bring the readers up to date on times and seasons, got only through July. Now it is time to continue, for everybody ought to know what to do and when to do it.

August brings one prophecy: for every fog in August there will be a snow in winter. With Dog Days hanging over us along about then, watch your calendar and your health. Stay out of ponds and running streams in Dog Days; the water is poisonous then. You are likely to have toe-itch, too, if you go barefooted.

September must be a dull month, for I failed to find any belief about it. Maybe it is just lucky in being ignored.

But October brings Halloween, around which all sorts of beliefs cluster. If you did not see your lover's face in the well on May 1, try midnight of Halloween, for it is even more highly recommended by those who say they know.

November, with the rounding out of the crops, seems just another good time to be alive, for no fearful things seem prophesied by any of its events or days.

December, with Christmas as its big time, is full of portents. A snowy Christmas, now called a white Christmas, means a good crop year. An open, mild Christmas is to be feared: "A green Christmas, a fat graveyard." Everybody seems to know that animals kneel at midnight on Christmas Eve, but old-timers say that the December 24 date is wrong; it is Old Christmas Eve, now January 5 by the Gregorian Calendar. Be sure to get your Christmas decorations down before New Year's Day is over; otherwise the following year may bring tragedy to you and yours.

The days of the week have their own ups and downs, too. Since ancient times, Friday, Venus's Day, has been changeable: "Friday is the fairest or foulest." It is decidedly the worst day of all for luck. You had better avoid starting anything new on that day, like planting corn or

building a house or cutting out a dress to be made. There are two schools of thought about fingernails and Friday; one group believe that it is the best day of all for this chore, for cutting the nails then will prevent toothache. The other group merely shake their heads and declare that the day is bad; let your nails alone. And don't pay any debts that day, either, or receive any payments from theother fellow. And don't fish or move or even carry out your ashes on Friday.

Everybody knows the old rhyme about being born on a certain day. My birthday, I have been told, was on Sunday, at ~~5:00~~ 5:00 A. M. At least I missed being an example of "Monday's child is fair of face." Whether I am the good child mentioned in the rhyme about Sunday I doubt quite often, and I am sure I am merely joining a large group of doubters.

There seems no present-day fear of consequences to postpone wash day from Monday to some later day. But, by and large, in the country and in Suburbia Monday is still wash day, Tuesday is ironing day, and the other days follow as they do in the child rhyme about "Here we go round the mulberry bush."

The rhymes for that game that I have on tape has Saturday for the day to go to town. And certainly that custom is still kept up, in spite of cars and the shortening of distances. Even my good-big town is decidedly rural on Saturdays, especially Saturday afternoons. And many a country store, air-conditioned and selling homegenized milk and icecream and stuff, is crowded, as in older times, when Saturday afternoon rolls round.

"This is the way we go to town, go to town, go to town;
This is the way we go to town, early Saturday morning."

T&C

SAME OLD ACHES AND PAINS

Recently I had the good fortune to interview, for my folklore study, two of my former students who are now druggists, he a graduate in pharmacy. After we had gone over a whole series of questions about words, I discovered that there was still a lot of unused tape that should be filled. Both of my visitors were in no hurry, and thus we had a good time contrasting medicines of other days and now.

Every generation has its pet diseases. In older times any undue worry or nervousness was called "the vapors." Now it is "allergy." And, say my druggist friends, there is more of it all the time. People just love to take medicine and receive treatments, especially if it is something new or is known by a new name. When I asked about bread pills, the old standby for people who have nothing wrong with them, I was told that placebos, the learned name for harmless pills, are always in demand. That word means "I will please," and a bit of bicarbonate of soda and some mint will not harm anyone. The funniest thing, however, is the belief that the color of a pill is a sign of its being more or less potent. Thus hundreds of colored aspirin tablets are sold, with only some vegetable dye added. But customers swear by the green or red or yellow ones and say that the white ones give them all sorts of digestive troubles. Innocent capsules are the popular placebos now.

Asthma--phthisic, if you like what older people called and call it--is on the increase, in spite of all the two dozen remedies that I have collected. And asthma dogs, too, are getting more numerous. Witness the "For sale" items in our local paper, if you doubt my word and that of my former students.

Even in a drugstore the customers often declare how effective folk remedies are and, of course, were. Good old smelly garlic still has defenders; less smelly onions have more friends than ever, if that is possible. Eating either one will help ward off disease. Can

disease germs smell? Maybe so.

My good old friend gumbo-whackum is still very much alive. Not all drugstores have the "gum guaiacum" that was corrupted in name to the folk name given above; but a good many remedies utilize the same gum and even keep part of the "guaiacum" name. The druggist in a neighboring county seat town who gave me a lump of guaiacum gum says he has many requests for it locally and even orders from ritzy drugstores in Louisville who have rural or ex-rural customers who want good old gumbo-whackum or gumbo-gwackum. As in the old religious folkish song:

"It was good for our fathers; it's good enough for me."

Emetics, once a very big part of medicine, are rarely heard of now, but ipecac, the best of the lot, is still on the shelves. If you have swallowed something accidentally or tried to commit suicide by taking some remnants of medicine stored in the family clock, call for some ipecac to relieve you and, if necessary, allow your final departure from this world to be a little more orderly.

Malaria, once so common that everybody had had third-day chills, seems, in my area of the state, a lost disease. And I hope that it will remain that. I have too many memories of chills and fever, and lots of other old folks have told me that they, too, cannot forget the agonies of long-ago summers, when just about everybody had "agers." Good old quinine is still here, of course; but most people, especially old people, buy it to relieve cramps in the legs.

My druggist friends have never known anybody who had smallpox, even though they are old enough to have a grown daughter who is now a senior pharmacy student. And neither of them can recall when anyone of their acquaintances had typhoid. Maybe the liking to complain on the part of so many people will be satisfied with colored aspirin tablets, with placebos, and other relatively harmless medicines; let us hope that many other diseases will some day be as unremembered as are chills and fevers and smallpox and typhoid.

"THAT AIN'T THE WAY I HEERED IT"

One of the greatest joys of a folklorist is to hear someone use an expression, give a folk remedy, or tell some yarn and then be challenged by somone else, who says, in substance: "That ain't the way I heered it." Of course it isn't. If all such things appeared in only one form, it would prove that the users had had the same background of experiences, the same education, the same traditional training. And, because folklore, no matter what its subject, is traditional and takes on the characteristics of the time and of the person who knows and believes in it, there are infinite possibilities of variation. For example, Mrs. Helen Hartness Flanders, of Vermont, got interested in the variations in the text and tune of the ancient ballad "Barbara Allen." The last report from her investigations revealed some 95 variations. It takes several good phonograph records to chronicle all the differences between one version and another.

Just as surely, other folk things have many forms. I have had some great fun hearing the merits or demerits of pokeberries as a remedy argued, almost to the point of being embarrassing. One fellow could swear that there is nothing like these bad-tasting berries for rheumatism; another fellow, equally ardent, says that the berries are poisonous; only the roots are to be used in medicine.

Weather signs have two sides, nearly always, and strong defenders. Katydids and cuckleburs as prophets of frost are like gospel truth to many people; but others pay no attention to such foolish things but consult cornshucks and their thickness or thinness. Still others think that plants know nothing about the weather; only celestial signs--like moons and stars and haloes and sundogs are to be trusted.

Good and bad luck signs have a few areas where just about everybody agrees with everybody else. Black cats, walking under ladders, Friday the thirteenth, beginning some task that cannot be completed before the

end of the week--these are a few of the beliefs that are almost universal, at least in speech if not in practice. But one middle-aged man whom I was talking to about good and bad luck, said, "When is Friday?" My, that would have subjected him to some persecution a few decades or even years ago. But I soon found out that he knew about the change in the calendar, which the British were so long in adopting; he knew that the calendar said that George Washingtonwas born on February 11, and that only the change to the Gregorian calendar made February 22 the day we observe. He also mentioned Old Christmas and spoke of the belief that the cattle kneel exactly at midnight then; some old people still refuse to change this custom of the beasts to the Gregorian calendar. Fortunately, nobody was listening in on our skeptical discussion; no harm will come, I hope, to my friend from his neighbors, who believe, or say they believe, many traditional things that got mixed up by the calendar a long time ago.

Over and over I have been told that hair that is shaved will be coarser than it would be if clipped with shears. I have known lots of people who forbade the barber to shave the back of a child's neck, fearing the worst for the hairs thus inspired to grow coarse. The best remark on this I ever heard came from a boy in his early teens: "How does a hair know when it is being cut with shears or with a razor?" It was felt by some of the people who heard that bit of blasphemy that the boy would grow up to be a bad fellow; believing in such cynical stuff as he talked about could bring only disaster. I have lost sight of him in recent years, but if he is to become a bad one, he had better get busy, for he was a very proud grandfather the last time I saw him.

Planting according to the phases of the moon gets a workout often, and, I fear, is losing many of its followers. When I asked a man what determined his planting his crops, he said he planted his corn in the ground, not in the moon; that was all he said. I drew my own conclusions. Again, we were alone, or he might have lost some of his neighborhood standing.

AUTUMNS OF LONG AGO

As I write, the leaves are all colored up, and we have had some big frosts. This season often takes me back to our more primitive times, when most of the population of the country were rural or only a bit removed from rural living.

After going barefooted all summer, except for the torture of putting on shoes and socks to go to Sunday School and church, it became necessary to shut the feet up for the winter. But that was no easy job. Going barefooted makes a foot spread out; shoes remain as they were, and feet have to be squeezed into them. But it was a fairly gradual process to resume shoes after a gloriously barefooted summer. We would wear our shoes to school on the cold mornings, glad to have even home-knit stockings to protect the feet. But, as the day got warmer, we would remove our shoes and stockings and, usually, remain barefooted until we got home, dangling our shoes in our arms as we trudged homeward after school. As the weather got colder, however, we kept the shoes on, by degrees getting accustomed once more to the prisons that shoes always seemed to be.

If your mother was like mine, winter underwear reappeared along about the time of the first frost. But we had no especial day to resume our warm clothes. In the spring, sheep-shearing day was officially our day to start going barefooted; in other parts of the state it was May 1, hot or cold. When I remember the winter underwear I used to live in, my temperature goes up, even in cold weather. But I seem to forget how cold were the houses and the schoolhouses in the old days. It was necessary to have most of one's protection against cold on his own body, for the schoolhouse stove or the fireplace at home warmed only one side at a time. And, at school, at least, it was not always possible to push one's way through the gang who shivered around the stove.

Around Fidelity there were lots of hickory trees. And picking up nuts was as much a part of fall weather as the coloring of leaves. When I went away to Hickman County to teach, when I was barely old enough, the boy that I was rejoiced at finding even more hickory trees and nuts. Each of the three fall terms that I taught down in that county brought hours after school, and Saturdays galore, to pick up nuts. In and around Fidelity hazelnuts had never been very common, but near my first Hickman County school were the finest hazelnut thickets I have ever seen. The children in my school would offer to give me toll of their gathered nuts if I would let them spend their noon recess in the hazelnut patches. It got to be a comic after-recess rite for me to go around with my hand-ball inverted as a holder for the two or three hazelnuts that each little fellow would offer. I cannot recall now what I did with these nuts, but I suspect that I gave them to smaller children not old enough to attend school.

Though removed from my last year on the farm by fifty-nine years, I still remember how active were the weeks that saw the distinctly fall chores done: corn-gathering, hog-killing, and the rest. Fortunately, for the record, I still have the diaries I kept in 1905 and 1906, my last years on the farm. It is almost comic to see how many neighborhood workings I attended in those years: log-rollings, barn-raisings, tobacco-cuttings, hog-killings. And, with a boyish fondness for statistics, I set down just how many sticks of tobacco we "housed," just what each hog weighed, just how many "barrels" of corn we gathered. It all looks pretty puny now, for my whole corn crop would not amount to more than two acres of yield as the farms are cultivated now. But I did not anticipate any such improvement in farming and meticulously kept my records, for the mere joy of keeping them.

CALLING ANIMALS

Though animals are called in many ways across the country, our culture area has a number of traditional ways that seem universal among us. In recording folklore on tape I have quite often called for ways to call the various farm animals and have very rarely found any variations. Nine-nine out of a hundred per cent of the ways are identical with ours at Fidelity, a hundred and fifty miles farther west and in an area settled two generations later than was Mammoth Cave and its region.

The identical whistle to call horses appears in both areas. And "quope" or "quup" is standard, too. All the language used to make a horse go right or left, to increase his speed, or to stop are equally standard. Horses seem to demand "gee," "haw,""whoa,""Get up" (and its variants); and cows come up from the pasture when they hear "sook." "Saw" may not be understood by the cow herself, but every fellow who has milked a cow knows what it means. And, so far as I know, there is only one way to tell a cow to go on down the lane to the pasture: "Huhy" (and its variant spellings or forms). Pigs will come when "OO" is combined with "pig" or "pig-ee" and will scram when you say "soo-ey." Dogs come a-running when a certain whistle is given or when you say "here," except that just about everybody says "he-uh." I suppose dogs like a Southern pronunciation better. Chickens know that food is available when you say "chick-chick" or some such rigmarole; and well-bred chickens know that "shoo" means "git."

Now isn't it funny that the identical sounds are used over such wide areas? So far as I can find out, the sounds I have mentioned are used over most of the South, the southern Middle West, and, many of them, elsewhere.

A few people whom I have known have devised their own ways of calling animals, but they have not interfered much with the traditional folk ways that everybody knows. A friend of mine honks his car horn to call his numerous beef cattle, and the cattle have learned to associate that sound with food or salt. One man I knew would merely call the name of his dog, pretty loudly, and the dog came instantly. A little boy would call his cat "Here, kitty," and the cat came a-running. I have always loved the story of the deaf man who accustomed his hogs to coming to be fed when he would rap on a tree with a stick. But these hogs got a great workout when a company of woodpeckers moved in and started work.

A common characteristic in nearly all words or expressions used to call animals is the falsetto tone. Imagine calling a cat in a perfectly normal voice. Some of the callers whom I have known improved on this by making the whole call musical and sonorous. Long ago in this column I praised the hog-calling of a man who lived a mile and more from my boarding-house in Hickman County, but his hog-calling sounded out across the big bottoms where the hogs roamed and brought them safely back home.

With a hundred cows in a pasture now, how could you call them except collectively. I know one farm-worker who keeps up the old custom, however, and his far-reaching call seems to remind the cows that it is milking-time. You should hear him driving a few dozen big Holsteins to pasture. Somehow it seems like a nostalgic reminder of driving Old Jerse down the lane rather than a herd of cattle with pedigrees like a royal family. But what would an old-fashioned country home have been like if late afternoon came and no sonorous animal-calling could be heard?

TJC

"DON'T"

Recently, in preparing an article on good and bad luck, I was impressed again at the number of "Don't" signs. In this very puzzled world there are six or eight times as many warnings as good signs. Just how we all have survived, hemmed in as we are with dangers, is a sad thing to brood over. Even when there is a good side to luck signs, it is rarely mentioned until after the bad side is emphasized. In my collections I have more than 600 luck signs, enough to have kept whole generations guessing about what would happen next because of some sign that was improperly interpreted.

These bad signs start even before we are born and last on down until after we are laid in our graves. A dozen different things may mark an unborn infant or otherwise start him off wrongly. Fears may leave marks upon him; cravings for unattainable food may do an equally thorough job of marking. The day or hour or month of his birth is all mixed up in signs, so that he enters this world with several strikes against him.

Here are some signs and portents about him when he is very small:

1. Do not take up any ashes in the house until the baby is nine days old.
2. His mother's hair must not be cut in any way until these same nine days have passed.
3. His hair must not be cut until a year has gone by; his fingernails likewise must not be removed by cutting but by biting.
4. It is dangerous to pull a dress on over his head until this same dangerous first year has gone.
5. He must not see himself in a mirror until he is good-sized, from six months to a year old.
6. Some visitor may cause him to be cross-eyed by standing at the head of his cradle or crib.

7. Unless his father's hats were all burned on the day of his birth, all sorts of evils may befall him.

8. If he lies on a pallet, some ignorant or unwise person may step over him and thus make him undersized when he grows up.

9. If he is a good-humored , somebody is sure to tickle him to hear him laugh, and thus he will stammer and stutter to the end of his days.

10. And then comes teething, with evils galore unless he wears a mole's foot on a string around his neck or a wool string as a necklace.

11. Worst of all, if he is precocious, he is sure to die young. Thus only the inferior ones of us lived to be old. One of my ex-neighbors used to say that it was strange that so many babies were so smart and so many grown-ups were so stupid.

Just think how many bad-luck signs he will have to meet after he starts growing up: all the children's diseases unless he is properly immunized by wearing an asafetida bag around his neck, black cats that stray across his path, crossroads to pass where somebody has left a small bag of pebbles that have been rubbed on warts and will infect some innocent wayfarer, this same crossroads where someone has wished a sty on "the next one passing by," hoop snakes and similar varmints to escape if possible, unfortunate happenings from standing under a walnut tree in a thundershower, troubles of all sorts because someone has stepped in his tracks. If the little red fellow could know all of these as he takes his first breath, he might decide that one breath was enough.

T+C

FRIDAY

Friday, among many civilizations, has been regarded as the one unlucky day of the week for everybody. "Friday is the fairest or the foulest" can be matched in sentiment if not in actual words in many lands. Venus, you know, was the patron goddess of the day, and she was changeable, fickle, unpredictable. When Friday happens to be the thirteenth day of the month, all the evils of the day seem to threaten us.

Weather changes seem to take place on Friday. A long cold spell sets in about that time. Fortunately, occasionally a long drought breaks up on Friday, maybe as a sort of atonement for all the bad things that the day brings.

1. Don't begin some task on Friday that cannot be finished before the end of the week.
2. For example, don't start planting a field crop on that day, for there will have to be many days for this task.
3. Don't cut out a dress that cannot be finished by Saturday night.
4. Don't pay any debts on Friday or Saturday. Some people would add several more days to this list.
5. It is very bad luck to move on Friday.
6. Don't cut your fingernails on Friday, many people of my region say; however, there is another school of thought that regard Friday as the very best day to cut your nails, for you this prevent toothache.
7. Don't kiss your sweetheart on Friday. Just why this is true is still a mystery.
8. Fish don't bite well on Friday; stay away from the streams on that day.
9. Don't carry out ashes on Friday. I am afraid that a great many people now, what with gas and electricity, will hardly know about such menial services as taking up ashes.

In spite of all these bad things associated with Friday, some of us old-timers have quite pleasant memories of the day. You see, before ball games and picture-shows and other forms of entertainment got started, Friday was entertainment day for us in the one-roomed country school. And the period from the afternoon recess until time for school to close was often--nearly always, it seems now--dedicated to extra-curricular activities. We might have a spelling match, a great place for some of us with good memories to spell down the whole school. I still wonder, though, whether the poor spellers and many of the very small children got much satisfaction out of being mowed down on the first round of spelling and could find no pleasure from then on unless their side won. Speaking pieces opened a sphere for children of all ages. The tiniest little girl or boy probably got as much applause as the longest, lankiest adolescent boy. And, in the course of the years spent in the same room with the same children, we came to know lots of rhymes and even some fine literature, no matter how improperly some of it may have been given. I can still recite dozens of Friday-afternoon "pieces" that I heard from sixty to seventy-odd years ago and can hardly believe that the youngsters who spoke are now great-grandparents. Then there was the arithmetic or cyphering match, when the good old unsanitary slate had its inning. I have found, in the Mammoth Cave Region, the same type of match, down to the minutest detail, as our mode of operation in the Fidelity School, some two hundred miles farther west. But the best Friday afternoon of all was the one when school closed, for we fairly heaped up the events, with singing, speaking pieces, and having the annual treat. Somehow it is impossible now to find candy and apples and oranges that have a taste like those of the treats given by Miss Mary or Mr. Sam, the teacher. The ancient Greeks said their gods ate ambrosia; we Fidelity boys and girls had apples and oranges and stick candy; who cares about ambrosia when such good old earthly food is around?

And maybe Friday was not so bad after all.

QUEER PEOPLE

One of the ways we show our being just plain human beings and not some breed of heroes is our attitude now and formerly toward any one of our race that is not quite like the rest of us. I have read that Eskimo dogs soon get rid of a dog that seems a weakling. The ancient Greeks, with all their great ideas, sometimes exposed some malformed or unwanted child to whatever fate might come to him. A wild beast might devour him, or, strangely, adopt him; some passer-by, attracted by the child's crying, might rescue him and rear him as his own, as in the case of Oedipus.

Not all humanity has been as cruel as some of these old tales would indicate. But it has not always been easy to be slightly different from what is felt to be the correct type of person. Once, many years ago, I taught a class of boys in their early teens in a Sunday School. It would be hard to find a better group of boys anywhere, but they called a cross-eyed boy of their group "Bad Eye"; frankly, I cannot now rememmebr what his real name was. "Red" as a nickname for a boy with red hair is now untinged with bad feeling, but it was always so. And to be "Towhead" or "Cottontop" was decidedly no honor. I know; I was there.

When I was a boy and long afterwards a left-handed person was out of luck. No schoolroom treated him rightly. He was made to write, usually very poorly, with his right hand. And most of the others, just because he was not like them, reminded him often of his being an oddity. "South paw" is common enough today and bears no stigma; but being left-handed used to subject a fellow to all sorts of bad notice. Even I, a sort of double-handed person always, got some strange looks when a group of us would be hoeing tobacco, for I grasped my hoe handle in a left-handed way and still keep that ancient and natural habi I never could do much with our long-handled briar-hook, for it was right-handed. When I first came to college left-h

who had been allowed to learn to write naturally were so few that I think I could still call them by name, after nearly sixty years. In my later years as a teacher I had difficulty in getting myself understood when I mentioned this earlier attitude toward left-handed people.

Having a red head, as I said earlier, is not regarded as especially bad now, but every person who has red hair is still said to be hot-tempered, sometimes being, actually, the mildest, softest-tempered person around. A squint-eyed person cannot be trusted, say the folk sayings. And gray-eyed children, like me, got lots of ribbing, especially with the rhyme

"Gray-eyed, greedy gut;
Run around and eat the world up."

To be nearly left-handed, to have colorless hair, and then gray eyes to boot nearly ruined my lot as a boy. I regret that I did not have more spunk and make some eyes black in those days. The old eyes are a little too glazed or dazed now for me to get rambunctious in my old age.

Most of the people, as I have so often said, in Fidelity and its adjoining areas, were relatively short. A mere six-footer was powerfully tall. My father was regarded as almost a giant, for he stood an even six feet. Only two or three men whom I knew personally before I left home were more than that tall. Some years after I came to Western, the six or seven boys who were gigantic, that is, six feet or more, got together one morning and walked down the aisle at chapel. They attracted almost as much attention as if they had been elephants. Now most of them could be called "Shorty" by some of our basketball squad. And being short got its bad attention, too. Fortunately, I grew up before the long-legged ones became so common; now I can look straight into the eyes of a few of my contemporaries but have to rear back and sight through the nearer part of my bifocals to see the top of many of the younger ones. Maybe my being an old man keeps me from acquiring the name "Shorty" or some other belittling term. At least, being off [illegible] did not subject my

"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

Our names are among our most folkish traits. And, let me hasten to add, most people with two names hate at least one of them. Not long ago I mentioned this persistent trait to a very pretty college girl. When I asked her what name most disgusted her, she replied at once that Ann, her own name, was decidedly the worst in the world. I still do not know why that girl hated that name. But, in general, there are some strange reasons behind our hatreds, reasons, that is, that seem perfectly sensible to the haters.

Poor little fellows come into the world unnamed and are saddled with some odd assortments of words, often comic ones. The father may have political heroes that he must honor by naming his boys for them. One such boy used to get a lot of ribbing at Western because he was named for a prominent Tennessee politician who, some years after the boy was born, "turned out bad" and spent some years in the state penitentiary. But the boy kept his name, and younger people do not know about the discredited politician, that is, unless they have been reading some Tennessee history. Some religious groups, I am told, do not name any child for a living person; I suppose that there is always the possibility that something unfortunate might occur.

In the Fidelity area a careful scholar would have found names to illustrate just about every phase of our American history: political, religious, military, even literary. Our Scotch-Irish neighbors and friends knew a little about great Scottish and English days and showed it in the names of the children. My sister's husband is named Robert Bruce; five of the nine members of my family bore one or more names straight out of Sir Walter Scott's novels. My own name came from General John B. Gordon of Georgia, whom my father greatly admired; one of my playmates was named for another famous Georgian, Henry Grady. The wealthiest man in our area was named Jefferson Davis, an ex-Con-

federate soldier was Henry Clay; my best boy friend had as a father Napoleon Bonaparte; and, just as I was big enough to read about the Spanish-American War, Deweys sprang up all over the area. In my early days as a teacher at Western I rarely taught a class without a Dewey in it, boys born in 1898 or thereabouts.

We used to tease Father about his namesakes. His name was Marquis, but everybody called him Mark. There used to be a custom of naming children for the doctor who brought them into the world; therefore a good many Marks, mostly among the rather poor element at Fidelity, attended Fidelity and neighboring schools. This same custom prevailed elsewhere; only after his death did I know that one of my friends of many years was called "Doc" because he bore the name of the family doctor.

Candidates had lots of namesakes in Fidelity and elsewhere. One old fellow ran for jailer indefinitely in my native county. Though he never was elected, boys with his name appeared in just about all the rural schools. Often they were called by the candidate's full name. But that is not queer. I often get a good laugh by telling someone whom I meet that his name gives his age away; his family supported some candidate who did or did not win, and the boy takes the name on down through time. Many times I have laughed at fellows whose names belied their political affiliation but very plainly told how their fathers voted: when you know someone named Alton B., ask him whether his daddy voted for Alton B. Parker for President in 1904; or if he is named Willson (with two l's), be sure to remind him that his father voted for Augustus E. Willson for Governor of Kentucky in 1907 or thereabouts. Rather oddly, only a few Pershings appeared in my classes, one DeLano, but a good many Woodrows. And, before I retired, Dewey, Jr., or William Jennings Vryan, Jr., enrolled. You see, a name takes on lots of other ideas besides the one that prompted its original use.

JUNIOR

Away back in my boyhood we never heard "Junior" used as a name. Some boys were named for their fathers, then as now. But it was easy to designate the boy by some other way than the term so common now. Usually the boy was "Little Sam" or "Little John," even though he grew up to be twice as large as his daddy. Occasionally he might be, as an infant, "Baby John" and remain this among his friends until he was an old man. Just before I left Fidelity, a boy was named for his father and was actually called "Arthur, Junior." But lots of people refused to modernize, and I suspect that, if he is still living, most of his older friends still know him as "Little Arthur." If a father bore the name of "William," it was easy to pass the name along without any "Junior" being added; thus three generations whom I knew with this name were "Bill," "Will," and "Willie." To the matriarch of the family, however, they were not so obvious; she would talk about "My Bill's William's wife," and we had to guess that she was speaking about her grandson's wife.

"Father calls me William, Mother calls me Will,
Sister calls me Willie, but the fellows call me Bill."

That is the way Eugene Field began his poem on Christmas, when the boy, apparently what would now be called a juvenile delinquent, tells how he reforms annually, "just 'fore Christmas." I do not recall, after all these years, whether anybody who was called "Bill" or "Willie" was any better or any worse than the one called "William" or "Will."

In earlier times in America the boy named for his father was "William the Younger." Somehow it must have been hard for such a fellow to take life whole-heartedly. The lifelong suggestion of inferiority in the name must have caused many bad words first and last. I do not know whether any such taint attaches to "Junior" as apparently often did to "Younger."

It was long after I left Fidelity before I heard a boy named for his father regularly and even seriously called "Junior," with no prefix. In a few minutes I could recall forty such younger men now living who are rarely called by their given names at all. Some are "Sonny," some are "Buddy," some are "Bud," some are "Brother," some are even "J. R.," as if the fellow were named a double name and not merely for his father.

Several very funny stories have come to me about misunderstandings of names. My nephew, who bore his father's name, was known by a number of his schoolmates when he first started to school, as "that little Junior boy." In my present county a family named a daughter "Mary Junior," not for her mother, whose name was "Sally," but "for the little Smith boy." Many of the small children at Fidelity thought "Doctor" was my father's given name and thus called him "Mr. Doctor Wilson," just like "Mr. Joe Montgomery" or some other well-known citizen.

All of this use of names is by no means modern. The Romans certainly used names in a funny fashion. A fifth son might have been named Quintus, but somebody else, named for him, might be an only son. Some Roman families used only a limited number of given names; if the family got larger than their list of names, some later boy might be named "Aulus Junior" or "Gaius Junior," to use English words for theirs. And that reminds me of a custom that I have read much about and actually known a few times: when some child was given a name and then died young, the family gave a later child the same name. In fact, my father's parents gave the name "Ann" to their first-born daughter, who died as an infant; their youngest child was given the same name. I never knew this until Ann's son was showing me the quaint old family Bible in which the family records were kept. That made me remember some other instances of this same custom.