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Gordon Wilson

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TIDBITS OF KENTUCKY FOLKLORE

by

Gordon Wilson

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INTRODUCTION

Civilization, in spite of its blessings, is the enemy of most of the things that make up our cultural inheritance. With education comes sophistication, which rarely sees any value in customs that differ from standardized forms, which sells the old furniture and buys the new, which doubts the value of anything that has attained to a great age. Such rapid changes are taking place that a middle-aged man of our time finds it difficult to recreate the conditions of his childhood. The student of folk-lore, like the lover of antique furniture, sees a value in customs that are passing and tries to rescue them from oblivion. He has no desire to oppose inevitable change; he hopes, rather, to record what men have thought and done, so that students of other times may be able to visualize a little more accurately the conditions under which their ancestors lived.

Kentucky is rich in folk-lore. Because of the late development of our educational system and our still more backward transportation, we still have in many parts of the state almost primitive conditions. It is a challenge to the student of folk-lore to study vanishing manners and habits before they have utterly disappeared.

The pioneers came to Kentucky almost in a body. Within the lifetime of the earliest settlers the state grew from a few forts in the wilderness to a populous commonwealth occupying all of its present area. It was less than fifty years between the settlement of Harrodstown and Boonesborough and the complete occupancy of the Jackson Purchase, the "last West" of Kentucky. Most of the settlers were English, Scotch, and Scotch-Irish, but there were a few Germans from Pennsylvania and Huguenots from the Carolinas.
There is, then, a fairly close relationship between the folk customs of any two sections of the state. While numerous bodies of immigrants have settled in Kentucky since pioneer times, few of these have left any very noticeable influence, except in the coal-mining areas in the mountains and in the cities along the Ohio River. The early settlers and their descendants have always been dominant in determining the customs peculiar to our state.

Our folk-lore is largely that of the time of Queen Elizabeth, when the earliest settlements were being planned and when the Lowland Scotch were emigrating in large numbers to northern Ireland, taking with them their age-old customs and traditions. Potato famines and the lure of free land drove thousands of the Scotch-Irish to America. In language and traditions they were quite similar to the English of the tidewater areas of Virginia and the Carolinas. Conservative of their customs, language, and traditions, as all emigrants are, especially in places remote from the main lines of travel, these early settlers and their descendants have preserved almost intact what has elsewhere been wholly or partially lost.

For a long time Kentucky was the half-way house between the older settlements and the new. Before roads and railroads were built across Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, Kentucky, with its Wilderness Road and Ohio River, was the point of departure for the unsettled regions to the north, south, and west. Some of the pioneers on their way to the newer regions got only so far as Kentucky; others returned after a stay on the borders. In these ways we have received all sorts of stories, songs, and customs that owe their origin to regions far away, to supplement those brought by the first settlers.

From time to time I shall discuss briefly in this column various phases of Kentucky folk-lore: songs and ballads, superstitions,
folk customs, folk industries, language, and passing institutions. Various members of the Kentucky Folk-lore Society, who have done original investigations in these fields, will aid me in the preparation of such articles as are concerned with their individual researches. It is hoped that these brief sketches and essays will awaken Kentuckians to the value of our folk backgrounds and will promote further investigations by professional and amateur alike.
Incidents otherwise puzzling often seem clear when viewed in the light of folk-lore. A case in point is the Floyd Collins disaster. Many another man has lost his life in a cave or in a mine, but somehow no one else has appealed so strongly to the folk imagination as did this otherwise unknown Kentucky cave explorer. The tragedy appealed to all sorts of people, was soon interpreted in several ballads, and within a few years has acquired all the necessary elements to ally it with the deeds of bonnie Barbara Allen or of Robin Hood and his merry men.

In spite of education people are still of the folk when they fear. For a whole afternoon I rowed around in a boat searching for the body of one of my students who had lost his life while trying to save a young woman from drowning. On the seat in front of me lay the clothes of the young man, which had previously been cast into the turbulent river by some well-meaning person in the hope or belief that they would go down where the body was to be found. I need hardly say that the body was not found in this way, but I suspect that the person who tried the experiment will not remember this if fear again comes in this guise.

Scientists have always had trouble in getting a proper hearing for certain quadrupeds, birds, and plants. The pioneer seems to have regarded all nature as for him or against him. If a thing did not yield immediate assistance, it should be destroyed. The snake, for example, was and is only partially bad; most species that live in America are neutral or even beneficial. The terror inspired by the copperhead or the rattlesnake made all snakes venomous; anyway, did not Satan disguise himself in this form, and did not the Lord condemn him to be spurned by the heel of man? The
hawks in our own day are a race paying the penalty of a very few
species that are predatory. Sometimes one almost despair's of up-
rooting a prejudice against certain things of nature, so long have men
unreasoningly condemned whole species unheard.

Why do certain customs persist? For example, why do people
continue to practice charms against disease, or death, or the evil
eye, or wild animals? In spite of education and science we are still
more guided by primitive feelings than by thought. Since all of us
are likely to suffer certain ills, there has grown up a body of quack-
eries and nostrums that staggers belief. The charms of other days, like
the assafoetida bag, may not be so plentiful as they were; but patent
medicines are enriching their makers because of recurrent ills in
humanity and a consequent breakdown of acquired knowledge. Night
air is still feared, even though some of the people who pull their
windows down at night have gone to the trouble to have screens. And
though most people take the medicine left by the physician or sent from
the drugstore, other remedies, hallowed by memory and usage, are as
common as ever. Catnip tea has never lost its popularity; those
who have given it to their children probably have not reasoned that
some warm water might have done as well. Civilization is, after all,
pretty largely a matter of actions and thoughts that are constant
and persistent; when we become passive, we unconsciously fall back on
folk thinking and folk reasoning.
Breakdowns are of two kinds: those which are sung and played on some musical instrument and those which are played only. It is hard to tell which first came into use, but I am inclined to believe, from a study of the popular ballads of many countries, that the sung breakdown is the older, a species of popular ballad. In a few instances I have heard breakdowns that told stories in true ballad fashion and were used for the "words" in a "play party." Most sung breakdowns do not tell a connected story; if they ever did, the story has become so garbled that it now impossible for us to follow the plan or plot. Sometimes there are three or four stanzas in succession that relate to similar things and suggest a sort of connected story. In many sections of the state "The Girl I Left Behind Me" has become a play-party song, chiefly devoted to directions for the dance. In other places it is purely an instrumental number.

By far the greater number of the sung breakdowns are of the disconnected type. Many of them seem to record nearly every reaction of the community, and there will appear in the same ballad, or at least there will be sung to the same tune, stanzas ranging from the most ridiculous to the most serious, from emotions that are cultured to those that are most barbaric. The old breakdown ballad recently revived and made a song hit, "'Tain't Gwine Rain No More," illustrates this tendency of breakdown ballads to sing of everything, good and bad, respectable and shady. As a child I heard it, every hearing adding some new element from an adjoining neighborhood or some improvised stanza. Since the song has been revived, the same thing is true of it: everybody who sings it is tempted to add a stanza or two. Some of these are too obscene or inane to keep, but many are in accord with the original, so far as a popular ballad of any kind can be said to have an original. If one could live for a few
centuries, I wonder how many times "'Tain't Gwine to Rain," like Sir Roger de Coverley's coat, would be in or out of style.

One can hardly think of a breakdown ballad without its gags. Demijohns and jugs often figure in them, though in a very conventional way. Mothers-in-law, that great source of jokes, come in for their share of notice. The ballad-poet seems to have been quite a gallant in his day, to judge by his frequent references to "perty little girls," twinkling eyes, and similar things. Women are very often the victims of gags in the breakdowns, especially because of their ability to talk and to spread news. The sung breakdown is a sort of clearing-house for the poetry of the people, giving them a chance to take a satiric fling in conventional verse at what seems laughable in our common humanity.

Sung breakdowns are, after all, not the most typical ones. The singing of the words might interfere too much with the calling of the figures of the dance, and, besides, it takes too much breath to dance and sing at the same time, provided one wants to

"Dance all night till the broad daylight;
   Go home with the gals in the morning."

As "Turkey in the Straw" is the prince of sung breakdowns, so "Arkansaw Traveller" is the prince of instrumental ones. It is hard to think of "Arkansaw Traveller" without a fiddle, just as "Turkey in the Straw" suggests the banjo, or banjo and fiddle. The instrumental breakdowns are numerous, but my own favorites are the following: "Soldier's Joy," "Arkansaw Traveller," "Pop Goes the Weasel," and "Little Black Dog with a Green Toe-Nail." In true folk fashion nearly every neighborhood has its own variation in the air of these breakdowns. Every fiddler or banjo-picker adds the stamp of his own personality. That is as it should be, for whatever is of the folk belongs to every individual of the race.
PLAY-PARTY GAMES

Along with numerous other things once well-known everywhere, such as log-rollings, house-raisings, husking-bees, and quilting-parties, have passed the singing-games, or, as they were often called, "play-party games." Only rarely now, in some secluded section of the hills or mountains, or some other place still unaffected by sophistication, can one find remnants of this type of folk-lore. And even more rarely still, can a stranger, especially if he is from the city, get a glimpse of these plays as they were actually given by young and old.

Believing that young people would appreciate the old singing-games given under proper direction and beyond the range of their previous bad name, some years ago I revived many of these traditional games and directed them on our college campus during the summer terms. The response from the young people was in every way fine; many have helped reintroduce games from their own neighborhoods, with all the local touches that make anything of the folk pleasing. I began with about a dozen couples, to whom I taught the steps; they in turn became assistant directors of the games, in which dozens and even hundreds often participated in a single late afternoon. Those who took part in these time-honored games went into their own neighborhoods and reintroduced them. One of my students conducted a play-and-game period in his home town for five years as a result of his interest in these forms of entertainment. I have been delighted within the last few years to find that several of the mountain schools, with a desire to keep good things found in our state, have revived these games and have made them a part, along with ballad-singing, of their regular school activities.

Unlike ballads, singing-games are not interested in telling
a story. Not infrequently the words are mere directions, versified. Many of the singing-games imply a singing group and a dancing group. However, some of the most effective ones have the singing and dancing done by the same people, who, of course, must have plenty of breath. The words have a marked rhythm, which is usually based on four or eight counts. Usually a series of evolutions is given three times, after which another is introduced, and so on. The steps are very simple, usually a walk or a skip, with very marked rhythm. The rhythm is further intensified by hand-clapping by players or those standing in a ring awaiting their turn to dance. Sometimes there are two or more types of rhythm in a single game: one when the partner is being chosen or the whole group are marching or skipping, the other when the individual couples are performing their steps.

Though the "Virginia Reel" is a singing-game in parts of the state, in most places it is a sort of cross between the square dance and the singing-game, with a prompter to call the "figgers." Typical singing-games, known by different names in other parts of the state, are "Style of Army," "Lowly," "Skip to My Lou," "Pig in the Parlor," "Chase(or Shoot) the Buffalo," and "Susie in the Ring." A collection of the singing-games found in Kentucky, together with full directions and the endless local improvisations, would fill a large book. Some person seeking to do something distinctive could make a reputation delightful by collecting and preserving for the future these distinct old games.
Kentuckians have always been a singing people. A legend says that one of the companions of Daniel Boone, who became separated from him on a hunt, grew frightened at a strange noise in the forest. He looked to his priming and crept cautiously in the direction of the sound. Finally, when the hunter's nerves were frayed with uncertainty at the volume and harshness of the sound, he discovered that Boone was singing as he lay on his back on the leaves, either because of a wave of loneliness or because of a sense of joy in life.

Ballad-singing was one of the customs brought directly from the British Isles by the pioneers. Many of the old English and Scottish popular ballads have been discovered in Kentucky by Professor John F. Smith, of Berea College; Mr. H. H. Fuson, of Harlan; the musician Howard Brockway, of New York; and the late Miss Josephine McGill, of Louisville, to mention only a few of those who have found ballad-hunting fascinating. Most of this work, however, has been done in the mountains. The great central areas of the state and the Jackson Purchase are still practically untouched and would yield equally excellent material. In many remote communities there are still left some of the old-time ballads singers, unknown to talking machine companies and radio broadcasting systems.

Quite as interesting as the old English and Scottish popular ballads are the native ballads that Kentucky has produced or else has kept alive. The ballad-making impulse had weakened greatly before Kentucky was settled, but that it is still alive was shown by the numerous songs that grew up around the Floyd Collins disaster. Though these native ballads are the product of definite authors, they have usually been transmitted orally and have taken on the characteristics of the older ballads. From neighborhood to neighborhood they have
passed, sometimes acquiring accretions in the transmission. Hundreds of songs that tell a story and do not belong under the head of old ballads still exist. Occasionally one of them, like the "Prisoner's Song," is picked up and given a new life by some musician. The talking machine and the radio have been the means of reviving or recording some of these ballads, but the number thus rescued is probably smaller than that of ballads yet to be found and recorded.

Ballads are concerned primarily with telling a story; songs are lyrical rather than narrative. Many mountain songs have found their way into collections and published articles, but again the state as a whole has not been explored. Professors Odum and Johnson, of the University of North Carolina, have shown, by their survey of only two counties in the South, that Negro songs are largely uncollected. Our Kentucky Negro songs have been studied by Professor Karl J. Holtzknecht, while he was a member of the University of Louisville faculty, and Miss Mary Allan Grissom, of Columbia. Some of the teachers in the colored schools of Louisville have rescued from their students little-known or unknown songs. There are probably hosts of Negro songs peculiar to the Ohio River towns and to such areas as the Western Coalfields and the cotton patches around Hickman.

Though Negro songs are relatively more numerous than any other kind, there are many songs in the state sung by the whites that have never been printed in any form. The Jackson Purchase, judging by the songs there when I was a boy, ought to yield many cowboy songs and ballads; more than fifteen of those given in Dr. John A. Lomax's COWBOY SONGS AND BALLADS were sung in my neighborhood. Nearly all of the rhymes and songs found in Newell's PLAYS AND GAMES OF AMERICAN CHILDREN have appeared in Kentucky in some form. Some have found a place in songbooks, but others are circulating orally, in true folk-song fashion. All of these should be recorded in some accepted fashion.
THE VIRGINIA REEL

If people whose memories run back into the last century were asked to name the most enjoyable and distinctive dance they can remember having taken part in, I am sure most of them would vote for the Virginia Reel, just as their grandparents would have voted for the Minuet. Just when and where the Virginia Reel came from I do not know; in general form it resembles many of the country-dances of long ago. A country-dance, or contra-dance, is one in which the partners stand facing each other, thus forming two lines. Each couple in turn goes through the evolutions of the dance, until every couple has played. There are numerous variations in the Virginia Reel as I have seen it danced, either by traditional directions or by those set down at some definite time and place. The form that I have always taught to folk-dancers runs as follows:

1. Head gent and foot lady bow
2. Head lady and foot gent bow
3. Right-hand swing
4. Right-hand swing
5. Left-hand swing
6. Left-hand swing
7. Both-hands swing
8. Both hands swing
9. Dos a dos right
10. Dos a dos right
11. Dos a dos left
12. Dos a dos left
13. Head couple swing each other with right hands, opposite line with left hands, and partner with right again until all the people in the lines have swung.
14. Head couple promenades back to head
15. Thread the needle, that is, the head couple hold their hands up and each couple in turn goes through the needle. This leaves the head couple at the foot and another at the head.

In some sections of the state, notably in Edmonson County, I have found a singing-game version of the Virginia Reel, sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle." The steps are identical, however. Rarely have I seen the Virginia Reel played with fiddle and banjo music as accompaniment. The usual thing is merely to have someone, either in the game or out of it, call the figures.

Closely related to the Virginia Reel is "Lowly," a game I found in Warren and adjoining counties. The couples stand as in the Virginia Reel and make most of the steps. Some additional ones include three promenades: the men dance entirely around the women and return to their partners, whom they take on the same circle; the women repeat this step; and the men and women at the same time make a circle, meeting at the foot of the line to thread the needle. The head couple comes out at the head and must go down the lines before the next evolution occurs. This game is played to a singing-game song, again to the tune of "Yankee Doodle." One stanza, which is a sample of singing-games, runs thus:

"Lowly took his dog and gun;
Lowly went a-hunting;
Lowly fell over a high slat fence
And stuck his head in a punkin."

Some one has suggested that this game came from a folk version of the sacred dance of the Shakers, whose great settlement at South Union, in Logan County, was often visited by people of Warren and neighboring counties. Certainly some of the steps in "Lowly" are identical with these of the Shaker dances as they have been described to me.
FIDDLES AND VIOLINS

The fiddle is not a violin, whatever their superficial resemblances. In the first place, the violin is a high-brow instrument, one on which you take lessons under some famous musician at two dollars a lesson and on which you learn to play "Souvenir," and "Melody in F," and Mendelssohn's "Spring Song." A fiddle is a folk instrument on which one plays by ear the traditional numbers that cannot and should not be written down in musical notation. The violin knows how to wail, to dream, to lose itself in reverie; the fiddle knows how to set the feet a-patting, the hand a-clapping, the heart a-dancing for joy. The violin is often played by an aesthetic, bloodless young man who is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" and whose long locks overshadow a broad expanse of forehead, the badge of intellectuality. The fiddler is husky, red-faced, jolly, with locks that are long only because it has not yet come time for his annual spring haircut. The violin is often pedigreed like a Kentucky horse; the fiddle needs no pedigree; it is abundantly able to take care of itself.

But sentiment aside, the fiddle is not played as is a violin. The fiddle is tuned E, A, D, A. The primitive scale of music is the one most used, by far the most-frequently recurring notes being do, mi, so, do, as in the Negro spiritual. Triplets are common: they seem to quicken the feet. The fiddle must be around if there is to be a breakdown; a guitar, or box, will help it if necessary.

Not only is a violin pedigreed, but it also adds caste to its owner. Just to say he is a violinist adds a kind of halo even to the most commonplace boy. To call him a fiddler blasts his lineage up and down, according to some of the people I have met. A violin is a symbol of culture; the fiddle is a symbol of worldliness and
almost of sinfulness. Many a man of my older acquaintance laid away his fiddle when he joined a church and often testified in meeting to the sinful desires he sometimes had to get the old instrument out and strike up a "chune." One old fellow, testifying in a meeting, remarked that the preacher used to be a great fiddler and fiddled for him to dance; "Now," said he, poetically and prophetically, "he is fiddling again and I am dancing."

The violinist, if he becomes great enough, gets his portrait painted and ultimately appears on sheet music; the fiddler in the older times got his tintype "took," but it appears only in the old family albums that used to grace the marble-top center tables. And thus a slightly different tuning plus a different kind of sawing the bow makes all the difference in this chameleon-like world, where, as Longfellow would say, "Things are not what they seem." At the risk of being regarded as plebeian, however, let me utter one note of praise for the ruddy old fiddler, even at the expense of the aesthetic, wistful-eyed, lion-maned violinist.
Sir Roger de Coverley, in one of my favorite sketches in all literature, said that his style of dress, which had not changed since his being jilted by the widow, had been in and out of style twelve times. If one could live a few hundred years, he might find that styles in things to eat play just such pranks. Years ago it was supposed to be plebeian to eat greens, or wild sallet; to mention such a dish in polite society was thought to smack of ill breeding. The clock has gone round a few hours, and now greens, whether tame or wild, are just the thing. They contain vitamins, we are told, very necessary items in the daily food of any well-regulated home. The most fashionable private residences and the ultra-fashionable restaurants exhale an odor of cooking greens. My taste, always plebeian so far as \textit{life} is concerned, rejoices now at the exaltation of greens and the recrudescence—\textit{to use of big word}—of my old friend potlicker.

But even in the days when turnip greens or mustard or other greens were under the ban there was another near relative that suffered more from supercilious judges of good things to eat. I refer to wild greens or sallet. Somehow the springs seem truncated or otherwise choppy now, for I fail to see or hear of wild greens. It was otherwise in the consulship of Grover Cleveland, for my Scotch-Irish father celebrated the passing of dour winter by a feast of wild greens. No ancient Druid was more punctilious in his celebration of the return of winter than was my father in his annual spring festival. Bucket and knife in hand, I wandered along protecting fence-rows and cut the juicy young plants, a veritable herbarium. Poke and narrow-leaved dock formed the basis of this collection. Local tradition said that wide-leaved dock was poisonous, but I delighted in breaking local traditions, even in a matter quite so
settled as wild sallet. After a mess of wild greens, chiefly of the wide-leaved dock, no fatalities resulted; thereafter, much to my delight, for the wide-leaved species was far more plentiful than the other kinds, the taboo on this plant was lifted. Lamb's quarters, all too plentiful in gardens and around piles of manure, was another plant allowed, but the directions handed down by my parents said that the proportions of this plant to the entire mass must be small. Then there was speckled jack, whatever that is, and wild lettuce, and even young, tender blackberry briars. Some others I know there were, but I have forgotten them; anyway, we eked out what I had cut with mustard from the tobacco plantbeds and even radish tops, if such were to be had.

Properly cooked, with hog's jowl or side-bacon, this collection of wild plants furnished a dish worthy to be included in the list of Olympian goods. It is said on good authority that my great-grand sire once remarked that if the King of England should come as a visitor and find wild greens, the only things served for supper, he could eat these things or go hungry. I have often wondered what the King would have done or said on this embarrassing occasion, especially since this same ruler was the redoubtable George III. My liking other for wild greens, then, is, like so many things, hereditary. And after years of respectful silence in the presence of those who set the style in eating I can now speak out and praise the merits of greens in general and wild greens in particular.
The spectacle of anti-Semitic propaganda in Germany is rather hard for us to understand until we recall our own racial hatreds. How long it has taken the English and Irish to learn how to live together! How hard it is for Germanic and Latin races to agree for any length of time! To us on the other side of the Atlantic it seems foolish for two such near neighbors as the French and Germans to be hostile to each other. What we forget is that the racial prejudices of these two peoples in all probability are based on intangible things that are older than history. The very force that in far-away times caused the two language groups represented now by the French and the German to separate may be the basis for the modern inability of the two to understand each other. The French in Canada have known no other ruler but the King of England since 1763, but we witnessed the strange spectacle during the World War of riots on the part of French Canadians to resist conscription, even though France itself was the ally of the still-hated Great Britain.

Though we parade a little too obviously our American tolerance of every race and sect, racial prejudices are by no means dead. People with a mixed ancestry often find it difficult to know when to take sides. The bitterness of our own Civil War was engendered ages before a single slave was sold in Virginia; something of the passions set in motion by the Reformation had survived and still survives, even in the breasts of those who would like to forget. Kentuckians are especially puzzled in their prejudices. With relatives on both sides, with the state still in the Union and yet to all intents and purposes out of it, with first one army and then the other surging across our borders and making it hard for anybody with normal feelings to be neutral or even mildly partisan, our immediate ancestors must
have suffered in a way that people farther north or farther south could not understand. Even today the Civil War flames up in my classes, a spectacle that makes one wonder how long we must live to be able to forget.

Our later emigrants, though untouched by our Civil War prejudices, have a contempt, often, for those who have arrived in America still later than they. One of my students, with an unpronounceable name, spoke very slightingly of the newcomers in Chicago, even though his own Czech grandfather, who is still living, had come over as a common emigrant only fifty years ago. Somehow we sometimes hand on our own prejudices to those who have come to share America with us. Alexander Wilson, the Scotch weaver who came to America in 1794 and later became our greatest ornithologist, had become so Americanized, even in prospect, that he identified himself on the sailing vessel that brought him to Philadelphia with a wild-eyed advocate of democracy and wrote proudly back to Scotland as an American of long standing. One is reminded of the Irishman who landed in America the second of July, got on the New York police force the next day, met his brother at Ellis Island the next, and, when asked the reason for the fireworks, replied proudly: "This is the day we whipped youse." Prejudices, whether native or acquired, are unreasoning and inexplicable; we do not know enough about the early history of the race to explain them.
Passing Institutions

Chips

Coal has about routed wood as a fuel; this makes it possible that many people in this generation do not know much about chips. But we who are fossilized remains of remote geological ages recall with pleasurable emotions all sorts of things connected with chips.

First of all, chips were used for kindling. Since much of the wood was hauled to the woodpile in "three-stick" lengths, the actual chopping took place at the woodpile itself rather than in the woods. Consequently, there were chips. The larger ones were picked up by the younger members of the family and stored away for winter use as kindling or to help start the fire around the wash-kettle at all seasons. The larger boys carried in wood; it was the prerogative of these larger boys to domineer over boys who were just big enough to pick up chips. I never knew a big boy who failed in his duty. Chips were such a necessary commodity around the house that they gave rise to a proverbial comparison: "As handy as a basket of chips."

Along about the time that bacon was hung up there came another use for chips. On the ground in the smokehouse, if there were no floor, or in an old kettle or stove the chips were burned, green ones being most desired, as they produced the most smoke. It was great fun to roast dried beef over the chip fire or to throw into the fire a handful of the waste salt left from the meat being cured. Meanwhile we were hardly able to see because of the thick smoke. Tears and dried beef mingled as we dutifully attended to the fires that cured the meat and thus became, as it were, an annual incense to the gods of plenty and forethought.

After all the large chips had been picked up, there yet remained hosts of smaller ones and tiny slivers and pieces of bark.
This residue had its peculiar use, however, when mosquitoes and flies became common. We raked up small piles of these remnants and made smudge fires to drive away these pests from the cows at milking time. No odor has ever been quite so fragrant, either in the nostrils or in the memory, as the smoke from a smudge fire built at the woodpile. Not all chips were burned; some remained on the ground and gradually returned to earth, making a rich, loose dirt that found many uses. Sometimes we dug up some of it for the earliest plantings in the garden, to hasten along the peas and beets and radishes and to help dry out the soil. Regularly we filled our flower pots with this dirt. It was inclined to be drouthy but very fertile. However, we doused the flowers weekly with the water left from washday and managed to keep the flowers growing. Chip dirt also attracted fishing worms. To the woodpile we went in search of bait when the first warm days invited us to the creek to try our luck. Tin cans and quinine bottles were always easy to fill with worms from the woodpile. And what place could produce such rank jimson weeds and thorny careless and dog fennel? And what finer place for the hens to dust themselves all through the summer than the dirt we had disturbed in digging bait? The very soul of the old-fashioned farm, as I now remember it, seemed to have permeated the woodpile and its chips.
While a group of us were going along a country road to a camping place a few summers ago, the truck in which our equipment was being hauled needed some water. The driver stopped at a wayside spring and returned with a large gourd full of water. At once we followed him back to the spring, and each one, regardless of the germ theory of disease, took a deep draught from the gourd. And then we talked about gourds all the rest of the way, and while we cooked our supper over the open fire, and even after we had set up our tents and lain down for the night. By pooling our memories, we made out enough uses for gourds to justify their being ranked as one of the leading crops of Kentucky. Of course, all the younger readers of this column will wonder why such tender memories could cling to an object so crude and elemental as a gourd, but some others, not so young any longer, will understand.

The gourd used as a dipper will be a good enough place to start. Much as the tin dipper is now used, and much as the health authorities would like to give it up, there was a time when even the much-battered and abused tin dipper did not exist. Unless you wished to kneel down and take your drink, you had to dip it up in a gourd grown and cut for that very purpose. The bitter of the gourd gave a tang to the water that we never get now, better than the taste of chloride of lime by far and probably as deadly to germs, if any really existed in those days when we were younger and the constellations were nearer. A gourd dipper just fits a spring or a well but not a tap. If water must be drawn up from a well for a gourd to dip into it, let it be drawn in a wooden bucket like the one in Woodworth's famous song. If you can think of incongruities, imagine a sign in a railroad car reading thus: "Common drinking gourd prohibited by law."
Not all gourds have a dipper-like bowl and a long handle. Gourds grow in all sorts of interesting shapes. There are the dancing gourds beloved of our boyhood. And there are nest-egg gourds, formerly regarded as the very thing on the farm. I do not know whether they are stylish in the henhouse now. Probably they have been replaced by these glass contraptions that we used to see displayed by the washtubful in front of every store. And gourds, hard and dry, form excellent containers for all sorts of kitchen things. One such gourd, flat like a pumpkin and holding two gallons or more, used to be the egg-container in a farm home I knew. This old gourd had come all the way from North Carolina on a prairie schooner and had served all these years in this useful way. Other gourds were used to dip up home-made soap and others to contain salt and sugar and garden seeds. "The calabash," says an authority of seventy-five years ago, "is the sine qua non of a South Sea Islander's household equipment." In a very similar way the humble gourd served its time, until routed by germ-theories and a desire for cleanliness. Kitchen cabinets are well enough to hold food, but gourds were necessary when everybody ate victuals and thrived, too.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS

TREATS

Some institutions that have gone have left adequate successors, but no successor has yet been found for the old-time treat. Boys and girls of our time, who are used to having apples, oranges, and candy whenever they wish, can never know the rare and wonderful joy we experienced when the last day of school came and the teacher gave a treat. There were a few indications, even in those days, that the institution was passing, for some teachers in districts adjoining ours were said to be failing in their duty toward their pupils. We of our school frankly suggested that such teachers should not be allowed to keep school any longer.

No matter how bad the weather, every child appeared on the last day of school and was fully able to eat, though he may have been kept at home for a week or two previously on account of illness. Sometimes the parents and younger brothers or sisters also appeared on the last day. Usually there was a sort of closing exercise, such as the saying of pieces, but nobody paid any attention to pieces, for the whole school was consumed with hunger. While some of the Friday-afternoon classics were being given, the teacher gave a knowing wink at two of the larger boys, who forthwith disappeared out the door, while children and visitors strained their necks after them and left the poor little boy who was saying his piece to get through the best way he could. By the time the last piece was said, the boys returned with a candy bucket or a box or a sack or two. Wiggling youngsters could hardly wait until the packages were unwrapped. As I remember it now, there were three time-honored things in a treat: stick candy, candy in small bits, and apples. Not all appeared at any one time, but one or two of these had to be present to keep up the tradition. The candy
was passed around by two boys, who had previously been instructed
how many sticks or pieces each pupil might have. Peppermint was
the commonest flavor of the stick candy. The small bits were of
many varieties: gumdrops, mint hearts with sayings and verses stamped in
red on them, peppermint chunks, caramels, and kisses wrapped up in oiled
paper and containing a verse on a small slip of paper. Candy kisses
deserve a whole essay or even a volume, for they were remembered long
after the treat was eaten up. The apples were small and knotty, judged
by present standards, but no ambrosial food served on Mount Olympus
to grace a gathering of Greek gods ever tasted as they did to us. My,
how those gumdrops stuck to a fellow's teeth! And how rapidly the
apples were eaten to the core! And how easily the candy was crunched!
And how I wanted to murder the rowdy boys who took more than their
share of the treat! The happiest faces present were those of the
small children who were not old enough to come to school. No doubt
many of these youngsters right then and there resolved on a life of
learning if its course were to be punctuated with treats like this.

After the treat had been served, and while belated ones were
munching their last apple cores, it was the conventional things for the
teacher to make a brief speech of goodbyes, telling how much she had
enjoyed the term and how good the children had been. We pupils, still
smacking our mouths over the treat and also still as starved as when
we came to school, believed every word and forgot the whippings and
staying in and standing up, which had all been so poignant the day
or even the hour before. However, though we shed a few furtive tears
when the teacher's voice trembled, that did not keep us from yelling
like Indians the minute the school was over, for we all pretended that
we were glad the term was over.
Since those days I have tasted all sorts of candy: home-made, store-bought, and other sorts, but nothing has ever had the flavor of stick candy, and kisses, and gumdrops. Other candy melts in your mouth; good old gumdrops, or "tooth-pullers," had a way of staying put for a long time. And I have eaten bushels of Grimes' Golden and Stark's Delicious apples, but apples of all sorts are tasteless beside those knotty little ones we used to get on the last day of school.
Before the automobile has entirely routed the horse, and before the generation who knew the horse intimately has passed away, it would be well for us to pause long enough in our pursuit of elusive happiness to pay our belated respects to the old family nag. We are so constituted that we cannot see the poetry and romance of anything until it has ceased to be common and is already becoming for some people only a memory. The old family nag is one of the things bequeathed by our ancestors to us which we are not likely to pass on to our descendants. Unless the old nag lives on in poetry and romance, she is likely to become one of the lost institutions, or else a faint memory of former days.

On the old-time farm there was a vital need for the old family nag. The other horses were busily employed in the fields. Besides, the women and children needed some gentle animal to drive or ride to the country store, or to the postoffice, or to the homes of friends and neighbors. Then there were the colts to be mothered, and the old nag could not be expected to work very hard on the farm while she was raising a family. By degrees, then, the institution grew up and ultimately became as much a part of the well-ordered farm as the division of labor or the crops or the hired hands.

Generally the old family nag was a mare, and we shall so designate her in this paper and the following one. Though by no means decrepit with age, she was always called "Old Mag," or "Old Maud," or "Old Nell." It was her duty to initiate all the boys of the family into the thrilling sport of horseback riding. Gentle, motherly, she bore her childish burdens with a full realization of their importance.
Even though in their awkwardness the boys often fell off her friendly back, she tried to make amends for a fault she could not help by stopping until the frightened boy could regain his bravery and mount again to his perilous seat.

An adjunct to the old family nag was the old family buggy; I can hardly think of one without calling the other to mind. It was not the well-groomed, narrow-seated buggy which the young gallants drove, the buggy which acquired the title of H. M. T. (Hug-me-tight) because of its meager room. No, when the old nag was hitched to a vehicle, it was a buggy made to accommodate the family, or at least as great a part of the old-fashioned family as could be served even by such a vehicle. Spacious of seat, spacious of bed, blessed with plenty of room fore and aft, it was usually called upon to offer all its space to the traveling family. The seat had room enough for Father and Mother, with one of the youngsters tucked snugly between them, only his feet being visible. Another youngster, slightly larger, sat on the floor of the buggy, his feet extending under the seat. And frequently there was another child, a good-sized boy, standing up behind the seat, if the distance to be traveled were not too long. With this load the old family nag went on her way, not rapidly, for that was not her custom, but also hampered by the weight of her load. Or, probably, she was less burdened, if some of the older boys had become too large to ride in the old buggy and were, like so many outriders of a prince, forming a cordon at the head and the end of the procession, riding the grown and near-grown colts of the old family nag, while Father and Mother, a little the worse for wear, rode alone in the roomy old buggy.
I have stood on the steps of the old country church and watched the family cavalcades arrive on Sunday morning, the old family nag and the family buggy holding the place of honor in each group. One of the larger boys got off his steed, and, after tethering it to a sapling, aided Father in unhitching Old Maud from the buggy. Meanwhile the rest of the family had alighted from the buggy, the indispensable satchel containing teacakes to keep the smaller children quiet during "preaching" always in evidence. Mother and the children filed into the church, while Father and the boys joined the group of farmers seated at the roots of the big sugar maple tree in front of the church. Soon the whole crowd would go into the church and start services. Old Maud and the colt are forever getting lost from each other and indulging in every variety of nickering and chuckling, to keep in touch with each other. A neighbor's mule joins its voice to the commotion, giving vent to a sound that has always seemed to me a longing for human utterance. The meeting over, the reluctant throng breaks up, and the process of arriving at church is reversed: Mother and the younger children climb in, while Father and Big Brother round up the colt and hitch Old Maud to the buggy. If it is the season for the Quarterly Meeting, the family remain for dinner on the ground. Old Maud is fed at her hitching place, Father and one of the neighbors meanwhile discussing the tariff, or original sin, or the prospects for a good crop of wheat, or corn, or sorghum. Somehow, there has never been the same meaning to prayer in my grown-up days that those prayers in the back-country had, when Old Maud and the colt and the neighbor's mule punctuated the petitions of the local preacher with their voicing of inexpressible longings.

It was Old Maud that we rode when we went to the country store
for the weekly laying-in of sugar and coffee. And we got the mail, and indulged in a luxury or two, as some peppermint candy, or a stick of licorice, or some wax (chewing gum). On the way home we read the week-old news and felt the thrill of the big outside world. Old Maud "mosied" along, with her head low, her thoughts on the pastures she had known or the famous steeds she had mothered. Sometimes, just to show that she had not entirely forgotten her former mettle, she became frightened at some object of her dreams and left us lying on the sand, the incidents of the marvelous stories we were reading and those of the painful present badly scrambled. But she did not really mean to throw us and looked quite penitent, especially if we used the big words we had heard the older boys use when the unexpected happened. A few rubs on the skinned elbow, a taste of the licorice or the peppermint candy, and a resuming of our reading of the crumpled paper set all to rights, and we were ourselves once more.

When we got a half holiday on Saturday afternoon, it was Old Maud that bore us and our crude fishing-tackle to the creek, where the long, hot afternoon passed as a dream, when every bite portended the catching of that big fish that is in every pool. And Old Maud stood hitched to a sycamore and snorted at the scent of the scaly, bony little sunfish and hornheads that we threw excitedly out on the bank. And on the way home she pranced as if our catch, dangling from a twig, were in truth sharks or whales.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS
THE OLD FAMILY NAG
PART III

Every boy's training on the farm included the breaking of colts. Proud has always been the man who could point to some scar as an evidence of his having been kicked or thrown by some wild young colt he was breaking. It seems a bit queer that colts were so wild when Old Maud, the mother of so many, was always so tame. I wonder whether we have not overdrawn the trials we experienced while breaking these colts to be the civilized animals they usually proved to be.

By and by comes the time when a young fellow is large enough to have dim, unformed longings to "buggy-ride" the girls. After long trials, many of which go awry before they are put into execution, a fellow succeeds in making an engagement with his heart's desire. Since he cannot yet afford a buggy of his own, and since Big Brother will not trust him with his H. M. T. and high-mettled traveler, nothing remains but Old Maud and Father's roomy family buggy. And yet, from very personal memories, the capacious old vehicle seemed a bit crowded when the two new buggy-riders took their seats. And, an unforgivable thing, Father often insists on your letting the colt follow. Still, getting out of the buggy to chase the colt, which persists in getting lost or getting in the way so you cannot show how fast Old Maud can travel, gives some relief to your pent-up embarrassment. I wonder what Old Maud thought of our awkwardness and whether she did not indulge in a horse-laugh in the silence of her stall. For instance, how did she escape laughter when I awkwardly tried to "jump out" of the buggy a young lady, in the approved way in which young men jumped out young ladies. I must confess that the temperature of the day goes up slightly when
I remember this event, even now, after so long a time.

In every home there was a sentiment that opposed any mistreatment of Old Maud after she had passed beyond the days of her usefulness. For years she lived on, tenderly cared for as if she were a real member of the family. Other horses came and went, but it was regarded as sacrilegious to sell or dispose of one who had been so faithful. I have seen old family nags so helpless that they had to be lifted to their feet every morning and fed specially prepared food. And next to a death in the family proper was the passing of the faithful old animal. Without an effort to conceal their feelings, the household heard the news broken-hearted. Old Maud had gone, the Old Maud who as a colt had been the care of Father, or Uncle Ben, or Big Brother; who had been broken to the buggy and the saddle by these same boys; who had carried the family burdens to the mill or the country store; who had drawn the family in state to the country church or the graveyard; who had handed down to her numerous progeny the characteristics of her good, useful old life; who had given the boy his start toward matrimony; who had unconsciously become an integral part of the family circle; who had lived beyond the years of her usefulness but had never met any complaints about consuming food and rendering no service therefor. All her life a blessing, all her life an humble servant to her lord and master, would it be a sacrilege for us to think that she is reserved for a place in the Hereafter where those whom she served may see and know her, even quitting the chanting of hymns and the strumming on harps to climb once more on her ample back or feed her whatever food is most appropriate for sainted horses?
Medical men tell us that there are more diseases and disease germs now than formerly. We can believe this after remembering the old slate, which used to be a reputable and useful part of every "scholar's" outfit. Not to have a slate was to be wretchedly poor. To own a slate and a sponge attached to it was to be in the same style as one is now when he has a monogram painted on his car door or when he has an authentic coat of arms of the family (bought from some company for a dollar) engraved on all his stationery. The single slate gave distinction (cum laude); the double slate gave more than double distinction (magna cum laude). When sponges wore out or got lost, coat sleeves, handkerchiefs, or just plain grubby hands did quite as well as a sponge in erasing. I never heard of germs in those days: I do not suppose there were any.

No more useful thing than the slate ever existed. What would arithmetic have been without a slate? Just think of John Jones's Estate figured out on a tablet! I do remember that one boy in our school worked out this problem on a shingle, a fair substitute in this instance. Every time I hear of a man's dying and leaving his estate to his three sons and two daughters (or was it the other way?), I am reminded of John Jones, whoever he was. He must have been a close friend of Ray himself to have evolved such a complicated will. (I refer, of course, to Third-Part-Arithmetic Ray.) Recent editions of this old stand-by text are called Practical, or some such belittling title. And dear old John Jones is now called Gordon Appar. I attribute this degeneracy to the passing of the slate.

"All work and no play," my teachers used to quote, and you know the rest. Thus it was with the slate. It had many another use besides its invaluable assistance in arithmetic, and writing lessons, and
spelling. First, there were notes, easily erased if the teacher
got too inquisitive. Art such as the old slate often held is never
seen now on land or sea. "Teacher" often figured in these art exhi-
bitions, rarely to her own credit. Slates were, also, a powerful
means of defense, particularly when some larger boy failed to observe
that age-old maxim, "Jump on somebody your size."

Along about the time that teachers' institutes began dis-
cussing germs and diseases, it became fashionable to lay all sorts of
cries at the door of the slate. This occurred also about the time
that young ladies quit boasting about their being sixteen or eighteen
inches in the waist. So loud was the outcry that slates ceased to be
in a single decade, and today they are as unknown as side-saddles or
ox-wagons. I wonder what in the modern school takes the place of the
squeaking slate pencil, of the pictures drawn on the slate, of the
notes we used to write, and especially of John Jones's Estate. Some
cynic has said that if George Washington were to return to earth, he
would recognize alone of the institutions of his time the old school-
house. In shoe-box form and impossible location, yes; but poor
George would sadly miss the old slate and its pre-germ uses.
Hosts of things that are passing leave fragrant memories, but few leave a trail of satisfaction quite like preaching all day and dinner on the ground. This old custom, especially the latter half of it, connects the years of my youth much as the Romans computed time by naming the two reigning consuls. From Quarterly Meeting to Quarterly Meeting was a period of time, quite as definite as any astronomical computation. Quarterly Meetings came in the spring at my church; my birthday came in the fall; between them the year was a glorious memory or a still more glorious anticipation.

Now please do not attach too much importance to the preaching all day. It was necessary as a starter. It furnished the occasion. To come together without some religious purpose would have seemed wicked. After having some excuse for the gathering it was necessary for people to take the religious side of the matter seriously. In the morning the people assembled and, as if in real fervor, went inside the church, except, of course, a few bad boys, who represented the world, the flesh, and that other fellow. After a deal of lining and singing came the sermon, long, fiery, and loud. Everybody sat as if enthralled, for was not dinner to follow this sermon, however long it might be? Mules brayed in the woods around the church; horses nickered, and in the church the children who were not sufficiently supplied with teacakes cried and longed for dinner. The preacher had to raise his voice to auctioneer proportions to be heard above the noise. Sometimes the sermons were two or three in number; then we could not expect dinner until half past one or even two o'clock.

Be it said frankly, the dinner on the ground was the great thing; the sermons were only sauce to appetite. For days in advance every farmhouse was alive with labor, for people who went to Quarterly
Meetings and such like were always hungry, and it was considered cheap if any one, no matter how far he had come, went away unfilled. Some of the neighbors killed a beef or a mutton, and everybody slaughtered chickens wholesale. Cakes, pies, pickles, light bread,—but why bring up such a tantalizing array of good things to eat? Whatever doubts the preachers raised as to the fitness of things terrestrial were soon resolved when eating time came.

When the last bite had been swallowed and enough was left to feed another multitude, the crowd dispersed, some actually going home at once, feeling that the real event of the day was over. Others bunched together and discussed everything from original sin to politics. About an hour after dinner there was another "set-to" in the church, but the afternoon program was tame in comparison with the morning session. The preachers were often, quite literally, too full for utterance; the audience were listless and responded very little to harrowing stories of the worm that dieth not. Some time in the late afternoon the crowd broke up, no doubt feeling that religion is a good thing if it brings neighbors and friends together in such gastronomic revelry.

Such events are rapidly disappearing now, thanks to automobiles and better roads. Light bread is no longer a luxury to country people, and butcher shops in every small town make fresh meat much less a rarity than it formerly was. And thus do our cherished institutions pass away, for, as Oliver Wendell Holmes has said, "Grow we must, even if we outgrow all we love."
A few years ago, when I was on a visit to my old home, I knew as soon as I stepped in at the front door that something was wrong. It finally dawned on me that the old Seth Thomas clock had been replaced by a modern little clock without weights or striking apparatus. I was told that the old clock had worn its wheels so badly that it would no longer run; I remembered that it was necessary thirty years ago to prop it up on one side to make the wheels catch. I suspect that the old Seth Thomas was just lonesome for an old-fashioned clock tinker. Now back in the early days it would never have acted like this, for Mr. Mullins, the English peripatetic, would have taken out the wheels and weights, oiled and scrubbed them properly, and managed to get them back in running order. Besides, he would have stayed all night or all the week-end and regaled us hungry-eyed and hungry-minded children with tales of his life in England and later in America. I miss his philosophy, too, for he held that one should work seven days in the week and behave himself all the time, a doctrine that savored of atheism in our back-country neighborhood.

Mr. Mullins, or his counterpart elsewhere, was a great institution. The old Seth Thomas clocks somehow sensed the coming of these old wanderers and managed to get out of fix just a day or two before the plodding old clock-tinker-philosopher came along. Gun locks and watches also had sinking spells that only this doctor could cure. A whole neighborhood often needed the services of the tinker for a week or more at a time. And then he would wander away, like Halley's comet, into some strange regions beyond the farthest hills that we knew but would come back with a regularity that Halley's comet itself would not have been proud of. More than the clocks and watches and guns he mended were the boys and girls he entertained. He and the pack peddler
FOLK-ETYMOLOGY

Not all the words of the language have found their way into the dictionary. Every neighborhood, every person has words that have been overlooked. Some of these are actual words that have long persisted in the spoken language alone and have not risen into literary use. The chance author who uses them will be credited with introducing a word into the language, when in reality he may be wholly unconscious of having done anything unusual. Without doubt many of the words so credited to individuals in the Oxford Dictionary were unconsciously used by the authors. In addition to old words that survive in our speech, there are others that have been formed ignorantly on words already known. A new word is heard but not seen in writing or print. We come to associate it with something it seems to resemble in sound, especially if our dependence is chiefly on hearing rather than on sight, that is, if we are not book conscious. Nearly every person has kept, consciously or unconsciously, some of his own mispronunciations, words that he tried to say correctly as a child. Many a family holds sacred the baby talk of all its members; baby talk is chiefly a matter of pronunciation of words in terms of fancied resemblance to other known words. Besides, many children have difficulty with certain sounds. And this is not wholly a fault of children. The mayor of my town, Dr. Rutherford, is called by probably half the people of the town Rullerford; another group call him Rellerford. I suspect that most of those who pronounce the word incorrectly are not conscious of their error, just as people in Henry County call Eminence, Emilence. New names often bring humorous pronunciations. When Big Deal laundry soap was new, an ignorant boy of my acquaintance in Calloway County called it Dick Beale, probably thinking it named for a well-known Baptist preacher of our county. Through a sense of fun nearly
everybody still calls it Dick Beale soap. One of my students says that a woman in her home neighborhood was delighted with some Gladys Ola bulbs (gladiolus) that she had recently bought. The negroes of my town regularly call a crevice in the rocks a "clevis" and a garage a "gerard." The Gerard family, prominent in our county for several generations, have unconsciously given their name to a shed for an automobile, just as the clevis of the plow has got mixed up with a crevice in a rock. Rather oddly, many of our standard words have had a history similar to these misunderstood words. Words that seemed plural have reappeared in a fancied singular, just as many people make a singular for cheese, "chee," and for hose, "hoe." Not infrequently I have called for cheese at a grocery and have been asked how many I wanted. Mr. M. W. Crawley, for a long time a high-school teacher in the state, once replied to this question: "Show me one (chee), and I will tell you how many I want." It is a well-known fact that the sailors on the vessel that bore Napoleon to St. Helena, the Bellerophon, called it the Bully Ruffian. All of this reminds me of the classic story of the man who was watching the fishing vessels come into port: after spelling out the names of several, he was stumped at Psyche; he remarked, "That's a blank strange way to spell fish."
SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT BIRDS

There are enough superstitions about birds right here in Kentucky to fill a good-sized pamphlet. Some of these we share with English and Scotch-Irish people everywhere, but some of them are peculiarly our own. Nearly everybody shivers at the whining, spooky call of the screech owl, or, as Huey Long might call it, the "scrooch" owl. It portends death, sickness, bad luck generally. To run it away, burn an old shoe. (I must confess that I would not blame the screech owl for fleas, such an odor.) The other owls, being less common, are not regarded so superstitiously, but they are liked by few people. When the first whip-poor-will calls in the spring, you may obtain your wish if you will at once lie down, wherever you are and turn over three times, making your wish as you do so. Some people fear this call, though, when it is uttered from the ridgepole of the house. Of course, a raincrow's call portends rain, quite as accurately as does the croak of the treefrog. Blue jays are not to be seen on Friday mornings between nine o'clock and noon; they have gone to carry kindling wood to Satan. A kingbird (bee martin), in spite of all the investigations made by the United States Bureau of Biological Survey, is still regarded as a devourer of bees. I have had several fairly well-educated people ask me if it were really true that swallows and chimney swifts hibernate in the mud at the bottom of ponds and rivers. When I have explained how impossible it would be for warm-blooded, lung-breathing animals to do this, they have looked incredulous, being unable to see any difference between birds and reptiles in this particular. Cardinals are good birds with which to try your fortune: When you see a male cardinal sitting in a tree, begin saying the alphabet; it will fly on the initial of your true-love's name. One of the strangest superstitions I have ever
met is the one that regards green herons (shitepokes) as originating from bullfrogs. The superstition that has injured the hawks more than we can ever know is to the effect that all hawks are evil. The depredations of the Cooper's (blue-tailed) and the red-tailed have made nearly everybody hate the whole race. I can recall having heard a few people defend the marsh (rabbit) hawk for its catching field mice and other enemies of the crops. One of the queerest beliefs I know is the one that credits the hawks with ability to imitate people in calling "Chickee," and thus luring the young and unsuspecting fowls out into the open, where they will become an easy mark. A necklace made of the shells of bird eggs, particularly of catbird eggs, is supposed to bring good luck. I recall with what pride an elderly woman told me that her best beau gave her for a present a string of such shells, some twenty or thirty in number. I was too much disgusted to make any comment. Many innocent superstitions attach to what the birds say, such as the meadowlark's "Laziness will kill you." The first one who thought this was probably supposed to be hoeing corn but was really leaning rather heavily on the hoe handle. Sometimes very enthusiastic people rush into my office or call me by telephone to tell me that spring is here, because they have just seen a robin or a bluebird. It seems almost cruel to remind them that both species are permanent residents and are quite as obvious in January as in April, if one were really looking for them. Superstitions about birds range from cruel ones that cause people to take the lives of innocent or helpful birds to mere laughable ones that attribute strange powers to common species.
SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT ANIMALS

Nearly every animal is a sign of good or bad luck.

One of my graduate students, Mr. E. E. Fentress, of the Caneyville High School, in his master's thesis on "The Superstitions of Grayson County," found still alive dozens of superstitions that deal with animals, particularly cats. Undoubtedly the black cat might be regarded as the very symbol of bad luck. If one crosses your path, you will meet disappointment or accident or other calamity. To avoid this calamity, spit over your little finger toward the black cat, or turn around three times, or repeat some hocus-pocus rhyme. Killing a cat is regarded as even worse than killing a person, for the Law can prosecute you for the latter but not for the former. I recall how far my eyes bugged out when I was a small child and heard a little hillbilly tell how "Bubbah" killed a cat and was horribly scratched by the "hant" that very night. If any of you have had the unpleasant task of killing a cat, you will readily see why the animal is reputed to have nine lives. The tenacity of life manifested, even by the proverbial "sore-eyed kitten," makes one wonder whether there might not be a secret source of life where the bullet or ax or stove-wood stick cannot enter. Hair-raising stories are told of how cats seek out corpses and devour them and how cats also suck away the breath of sleeping persons. Black or gray or any other color, the cat holds terror for many people who are otherwise as bold as a lion.

The dog, on the contrary, is an animal of good luck, though his baying the moon is regarded as spooky by most people. He shares with many other animals the ability to detect witches or other supernatural characters. I have heard many a person,
who probably did not know that people had ever regarded dogs in this light, declare that a person that a dog dislikes is not to be trusted. It is considered bad luck to sell a young dog or $\&$ kill an old one. Be particular, also, about stepping over your dog while he is still a puppy; this will prevent his growing to maturity. Probably the greatest superstition about dogs is that of believing them endowed with all human characteristics except speech. I used to argue with some fond dog-owners; long ago I have ceased to do so, for nearly everybody thinks his dog the exception to any rule about dog-psychology.

Superstitions attach to nearly every animal. If a rabbit crosses your path while you are on your way fishing, you had better turn back, for you will have no luck. You had also better leave your dog at home when you wish to catch fish. It is bad luck to pass a load or drove of hogs on the highway. Twin calves born of a heifer bring a death in the family. The sight of a gray or white horse betokens bad luck for you. A terrapin in your garden will bring you good luck. To kill a toad will insure your cow's giving bloody milk. To prevent your dog from running away, pull three hairs from his tail and put them under the doorstep. For good luck catch a snail on the first day of May and throw it over your shoulder. Every time you kill a spider, you kill an enemy. Avoid killing a lady bug, since it is a lucky object. Similarly, do not kill a daddy-long-legs; doing so will prevent your cows from coming home. Be sure to drape the bee-hives in black when there is a death in the family and leave the black up until after the funeral; otherwise the bees will leave. These are just a few of the hundreds of superstitions that attach to cats, dogs, and other animals.
SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT LOVE

All of us have tried at Hallowe'en to determine the future, but many of the people in our state try charms at other times of the year. The business of finding one's mate is serious enough for us to be forever seeking. At any season the apple first peeling when thrown over the head will form the letter of your true-love's name. Similarly, the apple seeds properly counted will reveal whether she loves you or loves you not. At Christmas write under each spine on a holly leaf the name of one of your admirers and place this leaf under your pillow; you will dream about the one who will love you best. If you will remove the yolk from a hard-boiled egg, fill the place with salt, and eat the egg, salt and all, you will dream that night that your true love will bring you a drink of water; do not be so eager to get the water that you fail to recognize who brings it. The cardinal, or ordinary redbird, can tell your fortune quite as well as Madam Sanscharactere. When you see one sitting on a limb, begin saying the alphabet; it will fly when your own true-love's initial is called. Besides, it will fly in the direction in which he lives.

Try the following to avoid being an ungathered rose on your ancestral tree. Do not allow any one to sweep under your feet. If you find yourself fond of cats, break this habit, for it portends old maidenhood. Do not fail to take all of a piece of cake offered you; if you are so dainty that you take only the top layer, you are destined to be single. You young women must avoid soaking, or dunking, your bread of cake in coffee; the penalty is single blessedness. Do not allow your dish-water to come to the boiling point; otherwise you will be out of the matrimonial market for a year.
Lovers' quarrels and jealousies must be avoided at all costs. If you are doubtful about your lover's fidelity, tie a knot in a cedar limb; if the limb continues to grow, his love is sincere. If the fire you have built burns well, your lover is thinking about you. When you are fishing, name your bait; if you catch a fish with this bait, your lover is true. If you are slightly doubtful about your lover's affection, steal a hair from his head and bury it with one from your own; this will insure lifelong affection between you two. A love-vine, or dodder, placed by you on a plant will grow if your lover is true. Bend a stalk of mullein in the direction of your sweetheart's home; if the stalk regains its upright position, your lover is true.

Assuming that you have done all these and more, I suppose that you are now ready to contemplate matrimony. Watch your step, literally, when you march in to face the preacher; do not stand across the flooring planks from him. Watch the colors worn by brides if you wish to prophesy safely the happiness or sorrow of the match: blue-true, brown-town, etc. Avoid marrying on a stormy day, since that portends a stormy married life. If the wedding ring is dropped during the ceremony, look for bad luck. And after the ceremony, when the bride steps across the threshold of her new home, tell her to be sure to step across rather than on the threshold if she wishes to be happily married. If you are not one of the happy pair and wish to be especially lucky, kiss the bride before the husband has a chance. And, naturally, catch the bride's bouquet if you wish to be the next to go to the marriage altar.
SOME FOLK REMEDIES

Whether it is "rheumatiz" or hives or shingles or night sweats, the plain, common people have plenty of remedies for common diseases in Kentucky. A buckeye or a potato carried in the pocket or a ring made of a horseshoe nail worn on the finger will prevent rheumatism. A tub of water set under the bed is about of equal merit with sage tea as a panacea for night sweats. The good old asafoetida bag, worn around the neck, and incidentally gnawed on while you are bored with too much time, will keep away germs of disease—and people. A woman who lived in a good house in a college town seriously prescribed earthworm oil for my friend's rheumatism. Mr. Fentress, to whom I am indebted for many of the superstitions listed in this column, found 32 folk remedies for rheumatism in Grayson County alone. But he found nearly three times as many sure cures for warts and moles, from wiping a stolen dishrag on the offending wart or mole and burying it in an ash-hopper to having some charmer say a spell over the defect. If freckles interfere with you socially, bathe your face in the water collected in a stump, an oak stump preferably. If you are bitten by a snake, rub grease on the bite and have a dog lick off the grease. Of course, you could get a mad-stone in most neighborhoods. When colds bother you, tie a sow bug in a bit of cloth and wear it around your neck. A tooth worn the same way will keep down toothache. Of course, it is well-known that a person born after the death of his father has powers over throat diseases of very small children, by blowing his breath into the mouth of the unsuspecting infant. If you suffer from asthma, have some one clip a lock of your hair and insert it into an auger hole bored into a tree just at the exact level of the top of your
head. For ague tie nine kinds of weeds into a bundle and hang it in the chimney where it will not be disturbed. Medical men do not believe in specific remedies any more thoroughly after long years of experimentation than do the folk in such remedies as the ones I have enumerated.

And that reminds me that some of the readers of this column should have a dose of spring bitters. For fear that some of you do not know one of the approved methods of concocting this necessary adjunct of spring, I shall give a recipe of tried merit. First get a large-necked bottle and put into the bottom a layer of rock candy. Stand on end a goodly amount of the following: burdock roots, washed and sliced lengthwise; sarsaparilla roots; wild cherry bark; sassafras bark. Pour over this herbarium some corn liquor, and after the mixture has had time to ripen, take a big swallow or a tablespoonful each morning, or oftener if you feel the need of it. This will thin down your blood after the winter's cold. It will give you an appetite for wild greens and spring "fixin's."

Probably you need another prescription for chills and "agers." This one is a sure cure (or kill). To a pint of whiskey add an ounce of quinine and two tablespoonfuls of oil of black pepper. Take as much of this as you can bear without saying too many bad words. The ague germs will turn and flee without imitating Lot's wife.

And do not forget sulphur and molasses, that good old spring remedy for what ails you.
There was a time when the various stages in a boy's growth were obvious, when even the uninstructed could know where the boy had arrived in the serious business of growing up. The years between birth and grown-up life were divided, like Caesar's Gaul, into three distinct parts. Each age was guarded by tradition, which usually took the form of a senior court composed of the older boys. Since so many of my contemporaries were born after the boundaries of these three ages had disappeared or had become less obvious, I feel it a sort of religious duty to instruct the ignorant ones, born an age too late.

All children, then as now, wore dresses when they were babies, but dresses persisted long after the time of mere babyhood. Boys four and five years old wore dresses, sometimes boy dresses, but often the same short dresses worn by girls. If any one doubts my word, I can show him a little kilted skirt and coat to match that I wore in the winter and spring after I was four years old. I can even remember now how I looked in the old mahogany mirror when I was dressed up for Sunday School, after the usual weekly scrubbing of neck and ears. Often another custom was kept up, as a sort of badge of small boyhood; I refer to the habit of allowing the boy in dresses to wear his hair long. I have seen boys in school in dresses and with their hair done up in plaits, but ordinarily dresses and long hair were laid aside as symbols of the child's becoming large enough for school. On the other hand, I have seen boys in dresses chewing tobacco, real "hillside" tobacco, which is used in other parts of the world to spray on insects. But to most of the community a boy was still
a child and could be called "it" so long as he wore dresses. The real boy began with the donning of bodies and breeches.

Again I find myself not understood. All good writers of learned articles stop early in the game and explain terms, and so must I. "Bodies," then, were waists to which breeches were buttoned, waists on which were sewed large white buttons and which were decorated with sailor collars with lace or other adornment. Every boy who had graduated from dresses felt proud of himself when he donned bodies and breeches; the same boy long groaned under the tyranny of these same bodies and breeches, for it was a time-honored custom for the big boys, who had reached the third and last stage of boyhood, to make fun of them. There are several types of crooked noses and an equal number of causes for their crookedness. One cause not always mentioned is that the owner of the nose made caustic remarks about bodies, with their buttons and sailor collars.

During the latter part of the boy's subjection to bodies and breeches there was a period of ill adjustment between the boy and his clothes. Cottonmade in summer and jeans in winter had a way of shrinking, almost in proportion to the growth of the boy. Consequently, one could tell at a glance whether the breeches were new or old. If they reached halfway down to the ankles, they were new; if they came to the knees, they were in their second summer; if they were several inches above the knees and, in the lingo of the time, looked as if they had been cut in time of high water, they were some three years old and were about to be passed on to the next member of the family or to become carpet rags, that last refuge of clothes both good and bad.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS

DRESSES, BREECHES, AND PANTS

PART II

The Romans made a big to-do over a boy's becoming a man, but the boy himself probably got no bigger kick out of the experience than did the boys of my generation when they "put on" long pants, galluses, and shirts. Age-old custom had decreed, with the finality of a Mrs. Post, that long trousers or pants were to become a part of the boy's life along about the time he lost all power of calling hogs on any musical scale except the Chinese. Other indications of the approaching end of an era were the boy's efforts to black the toes and heels of his shoes without showing partiality to the toes; efforts to shave, in secret, with Father's Wade and Butcher razor, often with disastrous and even bloody results; efforts to summon courage enough to ask Father for the old family buggy and the old family nag some Sunday afternoon to "buggy-ride" the girls. The long-coveted shirt, pants, and galluses rather crowned the other signs that Nature was mutely giving, that boyhood in its earlier stages was passing away. The detested bodies and breeches were laid away; henceforth the lad was to be a man, capable of lifting under a handstick, of doing a man's share of work in the field, of setting tobacco instead of merely dropping plants for others to set. It was not always so pleasant an experience as one had anticipated. For instance, if the senior court, otherwise the big boys, felt that you were not big enough to be dressed like a man, then you had to prove your manhood by beating up two or three of your own size or a little larger. But that was not bad in comparison with having to wear bodies and breeches a whole season beyond the gosling age. I doubt whether I can ever again have the contempt
for a person that I felt for a boy friend of mine who wore breeches until he was all of sixteen. The very idea of a boy with a settled voice, even with permission to drive his father's buggy, walking around in decent company in the garb of a little fellow! Even yet I feel a sort of cold creep come over me, a feeling of profound pity for such a boy.

But now it is all changed. Boys no longer mark distinctive periods of their lives by acquiring new types of clothing. I have seen mere infants, not old enough in the old-day code to wear breeches, strutting around in longies. And knickers, that oddity that cannot be classified as pants or breeches, knows no age limit: little fellows wear them, usually with one leg longer than the other or both legs nearly reaching the shoes; young bucks try to look chic and sporty in them; and even old men, with a too-bulging waist line, blossom out in golf knickers and make blots on the green, big, roundish blots with tapering supports.

It is a degenerate age: just when we had got ourselves thoroughly encased in long trousers, here comes along a style that destroys all distinction and keeps us from knowing a fellow by his dress. Ability to call hogs has nothing to do with clothing now, no more than does blacking one's shoe heels. It is all too democratic, too leveling; not like the old times, when all the Gaul of boyhood was divided into three parts.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS

UP ON THE JOIST

Recently I ran across the word joist, or, rather, jice, and then a whole train of memories started. I was back as a boy in a log house, where space was at a premium, and where many an object was put up on the joist, away from the reach of the smaller children. There was the whetstone, worn into a mere cup by many an hour of sharpening pocket knives or butcher knives, just before the annual hog-killing. The tobacco knives were there, awaiting the brief but busy season when they would be called into use to harvest the one money crop of the farm. Keys and other valuables were there, forming a sort of cache of the family treasures. The front porch also had its joist, where bulkier things were kept and where the wrens built right among them. I just cannot help wondering where modern people keep their valuables. A safety-deposit box at the bank may be a better place to keep the very valuable things, but there is needed in every house a hidden storage space like the old joist.

The joist shared its ability to hold things with the Seth Thomas clock, which stood on the mantelpiece just above the big fireplace. The contents of the clock were also things to be kept out of reach of the children; the clock became, then, a sort of tabooed place. Small children would have sooner invaded the front room itself. Here the morphine or other poisonous medicine was kept, along with the key to the clock and even things like Grandma's false teeth. Hair-raising stories often scared us away from the clock, such as the one about old Mrs. Dunn, who lost her mind and committed suicide by purloining the morphine kept in the clock. When Father took out the key to wind the clock, I was almost afraid some visible or invisible thing would
fly out and disturb the peace of the family. How big I felt when Mother asked me to wind the clock one night when Father was away on his duties as a country doctor until after bedtime. I stood up in a chair and made the old rusty wheels fairly spin in my eagerness to get the ordeal over with before my fine nerve oozed away.

And where is the little trunk where we used to keep the clothes and relics of the sacred dead? And where is the old ketch-all? It is doubtful whether Noah’s ark contained such a collection as ours held. Twenty years after I had worn the little boy dress mentioned in another article of this series I was on a visit to my old home when I suddenly remembered this relic of my childhood. I walked straight to the closet in which the ketch-all had remained all these years and drew at once from its hiding place the very little dress I wanted. Patterns of dresses of several decades ago, scraps left from those same dresses, remnants of children’s belts and ties, small shoes that some of us had worn in our youthful days, all were there, reposing in that capacious old ketch-all. Dynasties might change in Europe, presidential campaigns might follow one another in America, but the ketch-all had kept alive for the future the stamp and image of the past, making it as real as contemporary history.

The joist has gone, along with the ketch-all and the Seth Thomas clock, but in other ways my contemporaries and I are keeping, on the back-closet shelf or in the baby books or elsewhere, other records of our ways and days. Palaces vanish, but human nature changes slowly, even though most of my younger friends do not know the significance of a joist.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS

THE HOME-KNIT YARN STOCKING

PART I

Some generations hence it may seem as strange to Bible readers to read about sheep as to hear of oxen hitched to a plow, but to us who have worn home-knit yarn stockings and have watched their development from the time the wool left the sheep's back, there will always be a romance about sheep quite as real as the Oriental poets themselves have felt. Many an upland field not good for cultivation formerly had its flock of sheep, browsing among the sassafras and persimmon bushes and sounding their appealing voices o'er field and woods. Practically unnoticed through the summer, they became the especial care of the younger children through the winter. Regardless of the calendar or later frosts, the day the sheep were sheared in the spring was the signal for the boys and girls to "pull off barefooted." Any boy would gladly hold a sheep's head while a man cut off the fleece, particularly if one's feet could feel a freedom not previously experienced in many months of hard winter. If sheep could stand the bleak late-spring days, so could boys and girls. And the boy had a distinct advantage over the sheep, for in a few days of going barefooted he acquired a toughened skin on his feet that could resist any ordinary frost. The Prisoner of Chillon could not have felt any greater freedom when he was released than did a boy's feet after their long confinement in brogans.

After the shearing came another interesting event, the washing of the wool. Father, Mother, and all the children were called into service, and when the day was over, all the sheds
were covered as if with a very-much-belated fall of snow. While most of the dirt was removed by this washing, the burrs and coarser particles of dirt remained. Thus it was necessary to have a wool-picking. This occasioned often a number of neighborly gatherings. Great art was shown in removing the worst burrs without resorting to the use of scissors. A big split basket in the corner received the cleaned wool; the same basket held the wool when it was taken to the carding mills and made into light, fluffy rolls. Farther back the rolls were made at home. I myself have made a few rolls with cotton cards, largely for the experience, though I had the satisfaction of seeing Mother spin these rolls along with those from the mills.

By the time the wool had been cleaned and made into rolls it was the season for Mother to start spinning. Early in the fall the spinning wheel was brought out from the shed or the attic, and, as the evening passed away, the subdued, musical sound of the wheel filled the house, lending a picturesque setting for the stories I read or the dreams I projected. Outside in the murky sky I sometimes heard passing a flock of wild geese; the music of the wheel and the stirring call of the birds of passage have so associated themselves in my memory that the one brings up the other. Though I hear each fall the same wild geese, it seems, passing over my house, I miss the whirr of the spinning wheel and the odor of fresh new rolls of wool.
Hank is not a dignified term in our day, but to me it suggests the hank of yarn thread I so often held while Mother wound the thread into large, soft balls. I was doing this very thing once when my big sister was reading aloud the passage in Longfellow's "The Courtship of Miles Standish" which tells how John Alden held the hank of yarn for Priscilla, "the beautiful maiden." And so wild geese and the glow of early autumn fires and "The Courtship of Miles Standish" and the sound of the spinning wheel are all mixed up in my memories, quite too tangled for me to separate or wish to separate.

Nearer and nearer comes the process of the actual making of the stockings. On some evening by the fireside Mother brought out her knitting needles and set to work. Faster than sight itself her fingers clicked the needles, the stocking growing visibly in a single evening. Even if she nodded, the knitting went on, we always maintained, and it is certain that she could knit without looking at her work. It was a great event when she reached the heel and doubled the thread. Up until that time the prospect for a stocking seemed very slender; now the completed article was almost in sight. A few more evenings, and the pair were complete, in form but not in color, for dye must be allowed its share in the stocking which was to have so great a history. By the time a new pair had been knit for each member of the family Christmas was near, the season created especially for the home-knit stocking. Just a few days before Christmas Mother dyed the whole output of her fall and winter
knitting and redyed the stockings that had had to be supplied with new feet. Initiation for the new stockings was then at hand. The snake has long had an undeserved reputation for his powers of distention; that honor should go to the home-knit yarn stocking. On Christmas morning my new pair would have more contents than would have comfortably filled a gallon bucket. In another way they resembled snakes, for there were startling knots scattered along the stockings, revealing the presence of an apple or an orange, fruits little seen except at Christmas. The smaller spaces were snugly full of candy, raisins, figs, nuts, and with the inevitable bale of firecrackers and a Roman candle sticking out at the top. Bulkier objects were laid in the chair on which the stockings were hung. Fortuna's horn may have been good enough for the over-aesthetic Greeks; I prefer as a symbol of plenty the Christmas stocking, and since the home-knit variety has the greatest powers of distention, then that one as the modern representative of abundance. For the greater part of Christmas morning I delved into those stockings, finding new treasures as I proceeded. I literally ate my way through. Occasionally I encountered days afterward a lump of something which proved on investigation to be a remnant of raisins or figs, overlooked in my early-morning search.
During Christmas week or later, whenever there was a snow, the new stockings were needed, even being reinforced by an old pair pulled on over the shoes and used for leggings. This was the regulation outfit for rabbit-hunting. Yarn stockings have a way of keeping the feet fairly warm, in spite of their being wet. Even "during books" in the subscription school which was often held after the holidays a fellow needed the warmth of wool stockings, for the two stoves, "with half a cord o' wood in," made little impression on the arctic temperature of our old nondescript schoolhouse. We welcomed a chance to get out into the snow to drag up saplings for wood, for by that means we kept our blood circulating and avoided the necessity of studying or of sitting quietly. What with rabbit-hunting, going to school, and doing the necessary chores about the farm, we soon needed repairs for our stockings. After supper, that busy time for Mother, the darning gourd was inserted into the worn stocking and the worn-out place mended. This repairing process had to be resorted to a number of times during the winter. By the second winter the foot was often too much worn to be darned; this necessitated a new foot. It was considered a mark of great shiftlessness in a family if a boy wore a stocking with a white foot. The old pair with the new feet was again subjected to dyeing, but even then the tops had a much darker color, revealing that they were second-season stockings. I recall how disappointed I was once when Mother was unable to get my new stockings dyed in time for me to hang them up, and I had to use a pair that had been redyed. Santa Claus seemed to know no difference between the new and the old, for his apples, oranges, figs, raisins, and nuts came true to form, and the Roman candles and firecrackers looked fully as good as at any other time.
After the days of the stocking as a useful object of apparel were over, it still had a history. It could be worn over the shoes in snowy weather, as I have already indicated, and in this capacity it often served through a long snow. But there was one use which was supposed to be the end of old stockings quite as appropriate as the end of old battle ships is said to be: from the worn toe we made the core of a ball and supplied the ball proper by unravelling the rest of the stocking and winding the thread until a good-sized ball was the result. Along toward the completion of the ball we threaded the yarn through a darning needle and sewed the ball thoroughly, so it could stand rough treatment. We had never seen a baseball, and seldom a rubber ball. For all our games of ball--cat ball, bat ball, town ball, shinny, "anty over," hat ball--we used the home-grown product. I tell you, nothing hurts quite so much as a yarn ball soaked in water before nailing some fellow to the cross in the game of hat ball. This was the name we applied to one of our ceremonies in this game. When we played "anty over," the ball regularly got lodged on the roof of the schoolhouse, which required a vast amount of climbing the bell-post to dislodge it. Like the deacon's masterpiece, the yarn ball does not wear out easily. Usually we threw it away too far and were never able to rediscover it.

The yarn stocking, particularly the home-knit yarn stocking, like the yarn ball, has got lost, never to be found again. A brief impulse to knitting was given by the World War, but it died down, just like many of the fine impulses of that same war. Machinery can do the work much more rapidly, but with little or no sentiment attached to its achievements. Mother deservedly turns her attention to other things, but I miss the music of the spinning wheel; I miss the feel of the hank of yarn in my hands;
I miss the yarn ball that I once regarded as the finest toy; but I miss most of all the sight of the new pair of stockings bulging with treasures greater than all the wealth of the Orient.
Friday afternoons in the old-fashioned school had been dedicated from time immemorial to what would now be called "extra-curricular" activities. Speaking pieces was the greatest feature. Practice on our pieces was usually private, though an occasional teacher would drill us on our voice and gestures. Even the tiniest little girls and boys could speak. Little-girl classics included:

"Here I stand on two little chips.
Come and kiss my sweet little lips!"
and

"Here I stand, all ragged and dirty;
If you don't come and kiss me, I'll run like a turkey."

Little boys spoke pieces even more time-honored:

"I had a little mule; his name was Jack;
I put him in the stable, and he crawled through a crack"

or

"I had a little dog; his name was Rover;
And when he died, he died all over."

Still larger children could say pieces from the school readers, such as "Little Gustave," and "Harry and the Guide-post," and "The Chickadee." Occasionally two grown boys would give that tragic dialogue in which one man tells gently how the second fellow has lost all his property and all his relatives. I believe it bore some such title as "Breaking the News Gently." It was an even greater event when one of us spoke a piece that nobody had ever heard before. No such fame can ever again come to any of the boys and girls of our school as I acquired when I gave first a piece in Negro dialect about a colored brother who stole some breeches to be baptized in.

Spelling-matches were next to speaking pieces, and some-
times even exceeded  this in popularity. First we used
the Blue-backed Speller; but, for the most part, we spelled from
McGuffey's Spelling Book. Two boys usually "choosed up," knowing
well who spelled best and running a race in choosing to get the
most of the good ones on a single side. The poor spellers were
often left until the very end, when they were taken so patronizingly
that tears often resulted, especially if these slighted ones
were large, overgrown girls with childish minds. Sometimes the
last two chosen spelled against each other, and so on back to head.
Sometimes the whole side spelled against the other one, each per-
son going down as he missed a word. It was great sport to be
left as the only one on a side, provided you knew you could spell
down the four or five remaining opponents. I am glad that
this fine sport is being revived in our time. Our children can
thus know a few of the real joys of the old one-roomed country
school.

Friday afternoons brought several other things, sometimes.
We might have a cyphering-match, when the familiar old slate did
valiant service and often got broken. We sometimes had a sentence-
match, really a fine drill on word order. And sometimes, but
very rarely, there was a treat, discussed elsewhere in this
column. Friday afternoons still come, but they rarely bring
the speaking of pieces. Pieces have gone out of style along with
dinner buckets and slates and bed-ticking book-satchels. How
great it would be to attend a genuine Friday-afternoon speaking of
pieces and hear once more the whole array of oratory from "I had
a little pig" through "Mary had a little lamb" to the heights of
Friday-afternoon achievement, "Curfew Shall not Ring Tonight"!
As a sample of interesting folk customs in every part of the state I want to tell you today about the homecoming celebration of the Negroes at Mt. Zion, a church in the Tennessee River hills some fifteen miles east of Murray. When "Marse Peter" Rowlett found he had more slaves than he could furnish work for, he established, in 1848, at his plantation a tobacco factory. After the war freed his slaves, none of them thought of leaving. Likewise the other ex-slaves of the neighborhood flocked to the factory to seek employment. In my boyhood "Marse Peter" died, and "Marse Jeffy" (Jefferson Davis, of course) succeeded to the ownership of the factory. He soon decided that his factory was too far inland and moved it shortly afterward to Murray, the county seat. By degrees most of the Negroes followed, and Mt. Zion, where they had worshiped for generations, was practically depopulated. Long before the factory was moved, there had been a custom of having a great spring meeting on the fourth Sunday in May. This custom has been continued to the present day.

Before the days of the automobile it was nearly impossible to get a carriage of any description in Murray on this particular Sunday; they had long been spoken for by the returning pilgrims. The few remaining Negroes in the old neighborhood slaughtered chickens, pigs, sheep, and goats in preparation for the big day. Now clothes were purchased and old ones washed and mended. You could tell by the tunefulness of the hired hands that they were anticipating great things on the fourth Sunday. I am told that it is still hard to find any car for rent on this particular Sunday, many of them having been spoken for months in advance.

"Bright and early," in a well-known phrase, on the
fourth Sunday in May the procession started down the "big road": pedestrians, buggies, horseback riders, surreys, "double rigs" from the livery stable, and farm wagons with spring seats and cane- or split-bottomed chairs, with hay and quilts in the back for the smaller members of the family. Of course, it is all motorized now, but with as many kinds of cars as there were formerly kinds of other vehicles. To give the occasion thorough respect and safety, some officer of the law was invited to be present, and he was always treated to the best of the fried chicken or barbecued lamb and other dainties. All day long the preaching went on, with a brief time out at noon for the dinner on the ground. And then the long line of vehicles, dust-covered and often rather shabby, filing back along the country road after the big day.

For a week or more after this event we heard various sidelights, if that is not mixing figures a bit too much, of the occasion. The hired hands imitated the various preachers or sneeringly told how some sister was dressed in much too woeful a fashion or made herself too obvious when she marched down the aisle to deposit her offering. Some of the less religious hands would shout like Sister Lucy or pray like Brother Blanton, much to the delight of us children, who were forbidden on pain of a dose of peach-tree tea to go near the Negro church on this day.

How often since I left the old community have I thought of the faithfulness of these black neighbors of ours to the "homecoming," which, in its way, represented all that we now mean by that term in colleges, and more. The older ones had grown up in slavery and had found in their church a way out. From the hard work of the newground and the tobacco patch they had come to the little old church to feel what can never be described or made plain to any one not gifted with the Negro's imagination.

This is only one of hundreds of interesting folk customs that are found in every part of the state.
Some years ago I collected a host of common by-words, not real cuss-words but modifications of them. It is an interesting fact that in all languages words that start as violent oaths soon lose some of their intensity and finally become as harmless as "Good gracious." It is equally apparent that what sounds like profanity in one language would, if translated into another, seem perfectly harmless. Even slang words on opposite sides of the Atlantic assume entirely different meanings: "bloody" in England is a bad word, a rather harmless one in America, as when some one screams "bloody murder." A young woman of my acquaintance greatly shocked her pastor, an Englishman, by declaring that the baby of the family where she stayed was yelling "bloody murder" at all times of the night.

A queer thing I found when I looked over my list of funny by-words was that some of them are peculiar to certain people or certain neighborhoods. One old fellow used to say "By Dal" on all occasions. I have not yet figured out where he got this expression. Most by-words, when traced to their origins, are modifications of expressions involving the words "God" and "Jesus," however mild the expressions may sound today. A survey of my list shows varying degrees of feeling, from the strongest oaths to mere punctuation of phrases by nothing stronger than "Ah." To avoid the word "damn" and its associations many people are forced to manufacture queer-sounding expressions: "condemn," formerly heard as a vile oath, has degenerated into "consarn" or even "ton son." Probably "dad burn" and "dad blame" show about how far a vile oath can go down hill. "I gannies" and "I golly" have a flavor all their own, especially
when given in the musical voice of some one who still keeps
some of the tone of speech as it was in the days of the
earliest settlement of Kentucky.

No writing system can represent the "words of miration"
the Negroes used in my neighborhood. Practically every
statement made by a white person was met with such replies as
"M-m-m-uh," or "Is that so, Miss Malindy?" or "Well, I do declare."
Speech for most of us has become rather business-like and staid;
it is still a living thing in the mouths of primitive people of
either race. It takes on a musical significance and would
have to be written on some sort of scale if it were actually
transcribed. The intensives, or by-words, especially are subject
to this "musical pitch," as it is called officially.

The by-words of children are a study in themselves.
Many of them are quite unconscious ejaculations and often hit
the center of things quite as well as time-honored grown-up words.
Others are manifestly efforts to say earth-shaking things
without arousing parental or other grown-up wrath. If I were
an artist, I think I could draw typical children for such
expressions as "Colly" and "O Gee" and "Good Granny." It is
obvious to any student of language that there has been felt in all
times and places a need for more expressive words than are to be
found in the dictionary. Most people feel a little restraint
when they use real cuss-words, but it is a rare person indeed
who does not purposely or accidentally interject into his
sentences some meaningless but intensifying word or words.
The more these smack of local conditions, the funnier they are
to the student of language.
FOLK SMILES

Some ten years ago Mr. Anthony Woodson, who conducted a column in the Courier-Journal called "Just among Home Folks," asked people all over the state to send him lists of Kentucky similes and offered a prize for the largest list. Miss Myra Sanders, formerly of Shepherdsville, the corresponding secretary of the Kentucky Folk-Lore Society, won the prize, a large box of candy. Both Mr. Woodson and Miss Sanders agreed that the subject had been only introduced, that there are still dozens of equally engaging similes in daily use among our people. For fear that your figurative language may be losing picturesqueness, I shall list some of the similes that have delighted me in my life in various parts of Kentucky:

Color: red as a beet, yellow as a pumpkin, green as grass, brown as a berry, black as your hat, pale as a sheet.

Taste: sour as a pickle, sweet as molasses, puckery as a persimmon.

Intelligence: sharp enough to stick in the ground and green enough to grow, smart as a whip, wise as an owl, sly as a fox, peart as a cricket, sharp as a hawk's eye.

Social standing: common as branch water, poor as Job's turkey, poor as a church mouse, rich as cream.

Size: large as a washing of soap, big as a yellow dog, big as all out-of-doors, big as a minute, big as a barn door.

Personal characteristics: honest as the day is long, pretty as a speckled puppy, ugly as home-made sin, dull as a frow,retty as a mud fence, weak as a kitten, game as a bantam rooster, tough as whang leather, freckled as a turkey egg, plump as a partridge, greedy as a hog, cross as two sticks, slow as molasses in winter.

Temperature: cold as a cucumber, warm as toast, hot as a fox, cold as kraut, cold as a dog's nose, hot as the hinges of Hades.
Sounds: loud as a pig under a gate, hoarse as a crow, noisy as a litter of pigs, still as a mouse.

Feeling: slick as a peeled onion, soft as dough, limber as a dishrag, sharp as a tack, hard as nails.

Time: quicker than you can say Jack Robinson, slow as a snail, as long again as half, as far as two whoops and a holler.

Shape: crooked as a gog's hind leg, flat as a flitter, thin as a wafer, crooked as a snake, straight as a string.

Insanity: crazy as a loon, buggy as potato vines, crazy as a bedbug.

Hunger: hungry as a she-wolf, hungry as a bear.

Industry: busy as a puddle duck catching wiggletails, busy as a bird dog, busy as a hound with fleas, busy as a squirrel in a cage.

Miscellaneous: plain as an old shoe, dressed up like a sore thumb, dead as a door nail, blue as an old maid at a wedding, snug as a bug in a rug, thick as the hair on a dog's back, independent as a hog on ice, fine as frog hair, drunk as a biled owl, sweating like a nigger going to an election, tight as Dick's hatband.

Surely any one could find analogies around him quite as effective as these traditional ones. I am sure every neighborhood has its own preferences, figures that express for the people what no amount of correct and formal speech can do. For example, if one is a pretty as a speckled puppy, she is distinctive-ly, not conventionally, pretty. Similarly, if a man is as stubborn as a mule, enough has been said to justify a whole character sketch. And when a woman gets as mad as a wet hen, few of us stop to quibble about language. But you will probably think me as crazy as a bedbug or dry as a sermon if I do not stop.
I have seen canopy beds, and tester beds, and four-posters, and iron beds, and many another kind, but the trundle bed beats them all. Architecturally it is not equal to most of the others, but it, like many of the things we love, is not famous for its size or splendor. Before the days of plenty of room it held a proud place in the household. But since a room for each person is the thing, the trundle bed has been taken down and removed to the lumber room or the attic, along with a lot of cast-off clothing and other things too sacred to be burned.

Some of you may not know what a trundle bed is, or, rather, was. I am more than pleased to tell you. Scarcity of room in the old-fashioned house made it imperative to have beds that could be easily removed during the day. The older beds were high, very much higher than our present ones. This was a condition just right to call forth a trundle bed, a low bed that could be pushed, or trundled, under the big bed. The earlier ones were made by hand, of course, by the local wood-turner or blacksmith. The trundle bed was the sleeping place, ex officio, of the smaller boys or girls, so they could be right at their mother during the night. Childhood knew in the old days two promotions: first, from the cradle to the trundle bed, occurring at no certain age but dependent largely on the need for the cradle for a younger brother or sister; and, secondly, from the trundle bed to a "big bed," also occurring at no special time but sometimes dependent on the ability of the family to buy enough beds to supply its needs. It was supposedly the proper thing to promote the boy from the trundle bed when he began to get a
trifle too long for it, but scarcity of beds often necessitated the keeping of the tall boy on the trundle bed, even though he had to curl up like a cat.

It was on the trundle bed that my brother and I were sleeping when we tried so hard to stay awake and see Santa Claus. At that time I was greatly disappointed at not being able to stay awake. I am glad now that nature's demands for slumber were stronger than natural curiosity. It was from the trundle bed that I got up early on Christmas morning and went to inspect my stockings and to begin to eat my way down its treasures. It was the trundle bed that received us again at the end of this great annual feast day, after we had devoured all our candy and and raisins and oranges and apples and had fired off all our firecrackers and Roman candles. The trundle bed was the scene of our frightful nightmares induced by too much birthday cake or too many cakes of smoked sausage. Even now I sometimes find myself calling in the midst of a nightmare for Mother, just as I used to do when I had eaten more than usual. It was the trundle bed, too, that made a good place to take a summer afternoon nap, by pushing the little bed so that a bit of it was exposed over behind the big bed. Every phase of boyhood slumber, summer and winter and spring and fall, is associated with the trundle bed, when we were still too small to feel ashamed at having to be so near Mother when everything was dark and still.

It was with reluctance that we gave up trundle-bed days, even if we were glad to be big boys. After the last boy was too long for the little bed, the much-battered old thing was taken down lovingly and carried to the garret, where, in many a house today, it still reposes, lost in the whirl of busy life, but not forgotten by hosts of people who still hold reverently this reminder of their childhood.
The purpose of this article is to call the attention of some bright young people to opportunities for reputation offered by a study of the folk industries of Kentucky. Mrs. W. A. Obenchain, known better as Eliza Calvert Hall, the creator of "Aunt Jane of Kentucky," did pioneer work in this field with her *Handbook of Home-woven Coverlets*, published in . She collected much material on our native basketry, but I do not know what has become of it. Some one could do our study of contemporary civilization a great service by writing authoritatively about the baskets made around Bonnieville, in Hart County. This area, it is said on good authority, has been noted for its baskets since the very earliest pioneer days. The pieced quilt, with its great variety of patterns, is a thesis in itself. Miss Bousman, formerly of Berea College, is right now doing a doctor's thesis on the cloth-weaving practiced in our Kentucky mountains. Ten minutes in her presence is sufficient to convince the most self-satisfied that here is a subject that challenges. Rag carpets, with all the industries that made them possible, are of equal interest as cloth-weaving. All of us know that the curing of country hams is an art that no packing house has yet mastered. The drying of fruit, the making of numerous varieties of jellies and jams and preserves, and the cooking of distinctive Kentucky dishes are all in danger of perishing as arts for want of an interested historian. In Calloway County, at a small village called Pottertown, there has existed a pottery for more than a century. Never trying to be fancy in their articles, the potters of the famous Russell family, so long identified with this old pottery, have turned out millions of plain, useful articles: jugs, churns, jars, flower pots.
Another phase of the challenge I am issuing in this article is a literary one. Why not interpret in some definite literary form these quaint industries as well as the numerous social customs I have mentioned as quaint and in danger of being forgotten? No amount of mere directions can ever recreate for future generations such distinctive things as "putting in" a carpet, or making soft soap, or curing meats. Necessity may have been the mother of invention, but poetry soon came to help her. Those who helped in hog-killings, house-raisings, wood-choppings, and similar community activities knew that labor alone is a dead thing; the social connections and the atmosphere of the occasion were the big things. So many of our actual customs have been so ignorantly handled by people who have come into the state for a few days and then written as if they knew all about us that most of us take with more than a grain of salt accounts of this or that way of doing things in the mountains, the Bluegrass, the Pennyroyal, or the Purchase. It is against such exploiters of our customs that I am particularly incensed, for it strikes me as wicked for those who merely want to spice up their works to picture inaccurately what we are and do. Much of what is called genuine Kentucky folk-lore is nothing but commercialized folk-customs picked up here and there in all parts of the world, and in published books, and palmed off on the unsuspecting public. If only some scholarly people would interpret real Kentucky folk-lore, it would not be long until the commercialized form would disappear.
NEGRO SPIRITUALS

PART I

Though much has been written in recent years about Negro spirituals, the Kentucky Negro has as yet attracted the attention of few folklorists or musicians. Professor Karl J. Holzknecht, now of New York University, collected many Negro songs in Louisville when he was teaching in the University of Louisville. Miss Mary Allan Grissom has published a delightful collection called *The Negro Sings a New Heaven*, discovered among the Negroes of Louisville and Columbia. In practically every part of the state there are equally rich resources of Negro songs, waiting the attention of those who know and care for these valuable contributions to folk-lore.

A phase of Negro music that has always been interesting to me is the "holler," or yodel. Since Swiss mountain music has become well-known everywhere, Negroes as well as whites know how to give these calls; but the distinctive "holler" is a thing entirely different. When I was a boy in the Jackson Purchase, every Negro had his individual holler. At almost any time of the day, particularly as we went to the field to work early in the morning, these inarticulate longings of primitive souls could be heard ringing across the fields. I early learned to express myself in this same fashion and could once imitate a dozen or so of the Negroes, for each one had a distinctive twist to his call. Nearly all the cries began far up the scale and, by two or three descents, came down to the bottom, with a great mixture of minors. I have heard several commercial exploiters of our folk fail as lamentably in trying to imitate these calls as to talk like an old-fashioned darky or to use "you-all" correctly.
Scholars have about agreed that the distinctive parts of Negro music owe their origin to the primitive chant of the savages of Africa. The characteristic Congo song has a leader who improvises stanzas or exclamations, while all the throng join in on the refrain. A good illustration of this can be heard now where a crew of Negroes are working. On a steamboat, when the deck hands are pulling in a rope, one Negro will make some melodious call as an order, while all the rest answer together as they pull, inserting many a quaint phrase or turn of expression. The hollers of the Negroes of my boyhood is a remnant of this primitive chant, still inarticulate, just as the so-called moaning at church. Practically all spirituals keep this elemental chant, a remnant of the half-barbaric life that Vachel Lindsay has tried to express in his The Congo.

Most of Negro music, of course, is merely a reworking of the music he heard in the early days of slavery, adapted to his own moods. Recent studies made by musicians of old songbooks used by the pioneers in Kentucky and the neighboring states show that all the Negro has added to some of his spirituals is the inimitable swing and harmony that the high-pitched voices of the whites seldom can acquire. In fact, I have myself heard in many a country church the songs that have since then been collected and published as Negro spirituals. When Mr. J. D. Rowlett, now of Murray, conducted his tobacco factory in the hills near Tennessee River, the Negroes, particularly the women, would sing at their work the very songs that we sang in our churches, but it would have taken a good musician to recognize in the rich Negro music the rather flat, bleak, rasping sounds we produced in our white churches. This factory became the show place, to which all visitors were taken, to see the Negroes at work and to hear them sing.
NEGRO SPIRITUALS
PART II

The droning chants of the primitive African still appear in many of our spirituals and are usually found in the communal part, the refrain. I know of no spiritual where this is more effective than in "Poor Mo'ner's Got a Home at Last," a combination of the ejaculations of primitive times, refrains, and a wordless hum or chant. Negroes are fond of humming and often resort to it when they do not know the words. This is quite common among the whites and was much more so in the days just after lining the hymns had gone out of style and a sufficient number of hymn books had not been acquired. Even when the words are perfectly known, the Negro often secures fine effects by having many hum while a few sing. The success some years ago of the Russian Symphonic Choir in America shows what can be done with humming.

Rhythm is the big thing in a spiritual. If there are not enough syllables for the melody, the Negro adds an "a," never troubling himself about its meaning. More than we would admit, we white people do the same thing. Nearly everybody says "a many a time" and "a many a man" and "a Sunday." All of these expressions have good ancestry, but the one who uses them is not aware of this. The rhythm of the Negro's songs differs from that of ours by being a rhythm of the whole body. A Negro does not have to beat time to keep up with rhythm of his song; his body does that for him.

Most Negro songs imply a leader, not necessarily out in plain view beating time. He adds the new stanzas or lines, while the throng sing the communal refrain. A good illustration
of this is found in the most famous spiritual of all, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." The leader sings, "I'm sometimes up, I'm sometimes down"; the refrain replies, "Coming for to carry me home"; and so on through the entire song, where every alternate phrase is sung by the leader, followed by a phrase sung by the crowd.

The innumerable spirituals divide themselves into several types. These are determined by the sentiment of the song, for the music differs very little in some of the songs of one kind from that of a wholly different kind. Many songs are joyful, based on the Negro's conception of what will bring satisfaction or happiness. The well-known 'I Got-a Shoes," or "Shout All Over God's Heaven," presents the hope of heaven, where the deficiencies of the present will be supplied. Feet which have often gone bare or cold will have shoes. Among the Negroes of my boyhood shoes were the badge of the dressed-up, the owner of property. I knew a half-witted Negro man to walk ten miles to the great annual meeting at the colored church near my home, stopping at a brook just before he got there to put on the shoes he had lovingly "toted" in his hands the whole journey. Other songs show the Negro in the depths, such as "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray."

Another type, and the number of kinds is endless, contains echoes of slavery. Two of the best known songs of this type are "Steal Away to Jesus" and "Go Down, Moses." The Negro early identified himself with the Hebrew children in Egypt. In "Go Down, Moses" we have the hope that a leader will come to "tell old Pharaoh to let my people go." When I was speaking to a group of Negro school children of Louisville a few years ago and then asked them to sing some spirituals for me, I caught anew the significance of this song, which even the smallest children sang with a fervor.
that showed that they knew its significance. "Steal Away to Jesus" is said to have originated on a plantation where the Negroes stole away in the night to a church across the river to keep their master from preventing their coming together.

As I have already said, there is an abundance of untouched material on Negro spirituals right here in Kentucky, awaiting the collector. And our spirituals may prove to be as unusual as those discovered in such numbers in Mississippi by Professors Odum and Johnson, of the University of North Carolina, a few years ago.
PASSING INSTITUTIONS

It would be hardly fair to you who have followed this column if I did not say that the passing institutions I have chronicled are only a few of the many that are rapidly going the way of all our hopes and dreams. I would like to tell of others, quite as interesting and quite as feelingly remembered as the old family neg, the home-knit yarn stocking, chips, and the rest, but the year is now up, and you need to read about some things that are not passing. But when we of this generation think of the many things that have changed within our lifetimes, we are reminded of Jacob at the court of Pharaoh:

"And Joseph brought Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, 'How old art thou?' And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the years of my life been and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.'"

We fathers and mothers of the present time feel rather kindly toward Jacob and his advanced age, though we have certainly not attained to such a ripe old age. We find ourselves in the predicament of being on more intimate terms with our great-grandparents than we are with our own children. We may sing to our babies the age-old lullabies that we learned in turn from our parents, but in few other ways are the new ones bound back to the days of the years of the pilgrimage of their fathers.

Customs that we have known and loved are going or gone. To name them would be like repeating at length a Homeric catalogue
of heroes. In mediaeval times there was a popular phrase that appeared sometimes hundreds of times in a single long poem on things long past: "Ubi sunt?" This means, of course, "Where are?" And then would follow the melancholy conclusion that these--David and Solomon and Pompey and Caesar and Abelard and Eloisa--and we, too, would die and take our places with things that used to be. How many "Ubi sunt?" I might ask! Where are the old country doctor, and the circuit rider, and the pack peddler? Where are preaching all day and dinner on the ground, and singing schools, and moonlight parties, and subscription schools, and molasses-candy pullings, and house raisings? Where are McGuffey's readers, and the the Blue-back Speller, and Ray's Third Part Arithmetic? And where are tidies, and jeans quilts, and cottonade trousers, and home-woven coverlets? Where are the square dance, and play-parties, and the string band? Where are the blackgum toothbrush and its more aristocratic relative, the hickory-bark toothbrush, and box cradles, and ovens to cook bread and sweet potatoes before the fire? One feels like answering all these queries in the words of the once popular old song "Where Now Are the Hebrew Children?" by replying "Gone to live with the angels."

The lion and lizard, in old Omar's words, may hold court where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep; the joist may be gone along with the old family nag and the family album, with the clock tinker and the old Seth Thomas; but, elsewhere, under more modern conditions, other Jamshyds are holding court, other joists or their successors are keeping the family's treasures. We laugh at the obsolete customs of our youth, but our children are getting ready for the same wholesome laugh at their habits. And down under the good-humored smile with which we greet the old-time things there is a tenderness that makes us feel kindly toward Jacob and his lengthy pilgrimage.
A Second Introduction

A year ago, when I started these series in Kentucky newspapers, I naturally supposed, as I said in my article of last week, that one year of thinking about passing institutions and of folk-lore would be enough for the numerous readers of the nearly eighty papers in which these articles appear. So many requests have come in for a second year of similar articles that I have consented to write them, relying, as I did last year, on memory and experience. As the year has gone on, dozens of people have commented on the articles and have suggested numerous customs and passing institutions that should be chronicled. From week to week I shall attempt to satisfy these requests, always hoping that my own personal experiences and memories are like yours.

A word should be said about the style I have adopted in these articles. Many people who write about folk-lore use a cold, methodical style that makes one wonder whether the authors actually experienced such things or are merely writing from cold facts and data. Still other people write about the customs and beliefs of the folk as if they were something to be ashamed of or to be laughed at. I have earnestly tried to give proper values to folk customs and even superstitions. All of us have been of the folk; most of us still are. To belittle what the majority of humanity does or has done is to put oneself in a holier-than-thou attitude that is neither courteous nor scholarly. My memories of past customs are tender; I have tried not to let the mere tenderness overcome the significance of the facts. I have tried equally hard to remember accurately, so that what I say will not be merely the ravings of a man
he tries to revivify for you.

Another thing I wish to say in this second bow to the readers of this column is that the response to my last year's articles was remarkable, more than any one could have expected. From every part of the state and from more than a dozen other states have come letters and cards and suggestions. I have answered every one of them and have in every instance thanked the writers for their interest in folk-lore presented in this half-serious, half-comic style. Numerous libraries in the state, hosts of teachers and friends, and even libraries in distant states have kept a scrapbook of the thirty-eight articles of the first series. I heartily thank them for this and hope that the people who may turn through these in future years will know that folk-lore is a thing that we all know something about and something that very quickly opens doors for us in almost any social situation.

I feel that I should add one other statement to this article. There is no superior age; all ages are interesting for themselves. My half-regretful remarks about those who have been born an age too late are stagey,—in part, at least. The youngsters who are now growing up are absorbing their stock of folk-lore, too, as a recent study by Dr. C. H. Jaggers, superintendent of the Franklin, Kentucky, schools has shown in his thesis on The Superstitions of Junior High School Pupils. Only two days before I wrote this very article a small boy endangered his life to touch my car while it was in motion, for it is a very live superstition that this is an act insuring good luck. A lot of sentimentality has been wasted
by speakers who assume that only the good old times were interesting. Many of you who read these articles are already of the older generation to most of the people of your neighborhood. As Ruth McKinney Stuart says in Sonny, we barely get accustomed to being descendants when some fine morning we discover that we are ancestors.

As we live over our old-time customs this year, suppose we keep our eyes open for the customs that are growing up and are just as vital as those that we enjoyed in the barefoot days of the country school and the country church, of the old family nag and the home-knit yarn stocking, of the slate and the treat and the spelling-match. I shall take you to the newground, to town on county court day, to the front room, to the family graveyard, and even to the smoke-house; you may meet the pack peddler and the country doctor; we shall eat at the second table and attend a singing school; I hope to treat you to cheese and crackers and half-moon pies; and toward the end of the year, instead of going to a meeting all day at Mount Zion, we shall have candy-pulling and probably a quilting party.
Passing Institutions

The Family Album

On a recent visit to an old-time friend of mine I ran across what I would have called an "anachronism" in one of my English classes, an old family album. Since I was "company," I was shown into the front room, or parlor, a sort of musty, coldish place, not very well acquainted with sunlight and fresh air. On the marble-topped table in the corner, right under the hanging lamp with its array of dazzling glass pendants, lay the album, looking just as fresh as it did when it came directly from the hands of Santa Claus. Red plush backs, a metal plate curiously wrought to spell A L B U M diagonally across the back, and the necessary clamps to fasten the treasures within all testified to the bona fide nature of my find. If any of these things had been lacking, I would have been certain that the object in question was spurious. None of my hosts could guess how dull the conversation seemed that evening while we discussed all the known varieties of weather, the present location and family responsibility of all the children, and the probable outcome of the tobacco crop. At any other time I would have regarded these topics as of boundless interest; just then I wanted to be alone with that old album.

When I was alone, I first reviewed my knowledge of what I should expect. You see, family albums were an institution; they existed long enough to become standardized. Even before I opened the magic clasps, which were broken, as a matter of course, I knew I would score 100. The first
picture, just as I had expected, was a family group, made some years ago, after all the children had arrived and before any of them had left home. Probably Daguerre himself posed the first family groups and copyrighted the method, for they are all alike. The family, if small and consisting merely of the parents and one child, are arranged as follows: the father is seated with his young hopeful on his knee, while the mother stands behind with her hand frozen to her husband's shoulder. The old-time time-exposure camera (judging by some very vivid and accurate memories, the time was about half an hour) made it necessary for the victims to assume a pose about as mobile as one's grandsire carved in alabaster; hence the mother's hand in its frozen condition while all were waiting for the birdie to fly out. When the family was larger grown, Father and Mother were both seated, with a child on each lap, or else the baby between them and the older children ranged at the back. The laws of the Medes and the Persians would have changed more readily than this arrangement. I have always wondered why the photographer requested us to look pleasant, especially when he fastened a contraption at the base of my skull to keep me from flinching at the ordeal and spoiling his plate. At best the family assumed a sort of resigned air, as if matters might have been conceivably worse.
The second picture in the album just had to be a separate one of Father, with one of Mother on the opposite page. Then followed Big Brother as he appeared, minus most of his baby clothes, and seated in the parlor washbowl. Many a nose now slightly out of plumb belongs to a man who as a boy made slighting remarks about this same picture. The victim hated the thing as much as he could, but, after a fellow has been caught and exposed in his innocence to the camera, there is nothing to do but defend oneself. Then followed all sorts of miscellaneous pictures of children, of relatives on both sides of the house, and of neighbors, all of the same impassive pose. One of the pictures in our album was of my sister's beau, made, I was told, on a very cold day; but, to save my life, I could not see that he appeared any more frozen than any of the others.

Over at the end of the album were little spaces, made especially for "tin-types." There some hard-featured ancestor, dead and gone for a generation, frowned at the camera, and consequently, at the beholder, ages after the frown had softened into a perpetual smile. There was always an element of fear in my young mind when I got this far over in the book, and I did not relish being alone in the room when looking at these pictures. Too often I had been reminded that these were of people now dead, and I had the strange notion that they had been photographed after death. Besides, I always
thought it queer that any one did not think it important enough to live till I got there. It seemed stupid in him to be in such a hurry to leave, especially when I was enjoying everything so much. I hope that ancestors in general will be forgiving if I say that I have often wondered how such hard-looking people could have such handsome descendants.

The album achieved, I sat for some time, lingering over memories, especially the agonies of being pictured. I could not help wondering why some one did not make a study to determine whether people who were often photographed usually turned out better than others. I should think that the harrowing experiences of having one's picture made by the time-exposure method would make the reputed punishments of the hereafter too real to be trifled with.

But the old family album is gone; as a live institution it vanished along with the front room, and even before buggies started down hill. There is no place for it today, for the marble-top center table is gone, too, and the hanging lamp and its pendants are as far away as tallow dips to most most of those who were born an age too late.
Passing Institutions
The Open Fireplace --Part I

Though many a house now being built has a fireplace, it is for looks and for occasional use. The fireplace that had a practical use in the house is practically gone, even in the remote country neighborhood. However wasteful it may have been as a means of heating, or rather, attempting to heat, it had a picturesqueness that no modern methods of heating have as yet acquired. You may have roasted on one side and frozen on the other, but you absorbed some poetry meanwhile that made up for a lack of bodily comfort.

Every great thing has at the fewest three aspects: backgrounds, the thing itself, and associations. Wood-cutting belongs to the first of these three things. Some users of the fireplace when it was at its best had forethought enough to prepare for winter by having wood stacked and corded for use, but very few ever had enough to last entirely through the winter. This lack of sufficient forethought caused the farmer boys to be forced to go out into the winter woods and cut wood, often on the severest winter days. All sympathy offered such boys, however, was wasted, for no grown man would give up the memories of such days for any amount of comfort. In open weather it was easy enough to haul wood in a farm wagon, but how much more picturesque to snake logs up when the ground was covered with snow? "Snake," as I should tell you, means to drag the logs up with the mules or horses, a poetic word, you will agree.
The man who buys his wood already cut has missed
the most poetic part of wood, whether the cutting up is done
with a saw or with an ax. Wood cut in poles "three lengths"
long is most typical. This gives plenty of work to be done
at the woodpile. Just think how many boys have been kept
out of mischief by being required to pick up chips! And think
of these same chips and their numerous uses! The smudge
fire to keep off the flies and gnats owed its origin to
these same chips, especially the smaller ones that could not
be used in the house or the smokehouse. Some years ago I was
driving in southern Indiana late in the afternoon and smelled
the fragrant wood smoke from a country home where the mother
was preparing supper for a hungry family. What visions of old-
time farm life I saw, almost visibly! Smoke is pretty to
look at and deserves all that Thoreau and others have said of
it. But some one ought to say something for the odor of
smoke and its many suggestions.

One other picturesque feature of the backgrounds of
the open fireplace was bringing in wood. We boys made a wagon,
with wheels sawed from a tree, or else a slide; for wood carried
into the house by these means was ever so much more poetic
than wood merely tooted in. I have worked twice as hard
to get my wood on and off a slide or a wobbly wagon and to keep
these contrivances from turning over as I would have had to
work to carry the same amount of fuel in my arms.
Since we no longer celebrate the coming of fall by building a fire in the fireplace, I am sometimes uncertain about the season. There used to be a revival of the poetic spirit at this annual fall ceremony. It was symbolic of the tightening of the bonds of home life. During the winter there was a reintegration of the family, which the warmer months had somewhat scattered.

Charles Dudley Warner, in his *Backlog Studies*, has given full directions as to how to build a fire, from backlog to kindling. How pleasant it is to read over again his intimate and loving directions! And it is not necessary to have directions about banking the fire at night and stirring up the coals in the morning. How much art we knew in those days without being conscious of it! Hundreds of little details about fires we knew, intimate scraps of knowledge that were not regarded highly because they were so common.

Now about the associations clustering around the open fireplace. All the elder race of poets saw dream pictures in the flames. Every hearth had a cricket that carried on, as Keats says in his famous sonnet, the songs of summer after the grasshopper had ceased to sing: "The poetry of earth is never dead." A fireplace is incomplete without a mantelpiece, with its old Seth Thomas clock and its bric-a-brac. A fireplace out by itself would look as impossible as a snowless winter. Around the fireplace clustered the family and all the chance callers and visitors. There the popcorn
was prepared and eaten, there age-old stories were told, on winter nights, and there still older riddles and games had sway. Odd and Even, Hull-Gull, William Trimbletoe, Club-Fist—still I could play them for the sake of the flickering firelight that exists only in the Limbo of Things That Were. In front of the fire we heard stories that made us draw up our feet into the chair for fear some invisible creature would bite them off. Some open fireplaces are associated in memory with plain but sincere family worship, a good place for one to bridge the gap between mere fire-worship and the worship of something of which fire is a creature.

In summer, after the season for fires was over, the fireplace was hidden by a fire-screen, often quite a work of art. Now in hundreds of old houses the old fireplace is concealed by a double screen of bricks and wallpaper, and the memory of the open fireplace is rapidly disappearing from among men. But the light from those old fireplaces means to most of us what fire means to the Parsees, a symbol of life and immortality.
A very popular medieval phrase was "Ubi sunt?" or "Where are?" The usual answer to this question was that all things pass, and that we, too, will soon disappear. François Villon, the famous French poet of the fifteenth century, immortalized this old query by stating it thus: "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" May I add another "Ubi sunt?" "Where are the front room and all its fixtures?" Combination guest room and parlor, entered only with ceremony, open only on Sundays or when there was company, a sort of Holy Place to all the household, especially the smaller children, who were not yet big enough to enter such a sacred place—my! what wasn't the front room? If the Greeks had had such an institution, they would have called it a thesaurus, for it certainly contained treasures. There was a suite of furniture: bed, dresser, and washstand to match; sometimes there was a center table with a marble top; whether there was a stove or a fireplace, there was sure to be a mantelpiece, with all of its treasures. Every part of the room had its appropriate furnishings. The washstand had a bowl and pitcher, the same bowl that the baby sat in when he had his picture taken. The dresser had pin-trays and pin-cushions, and a vase or two; the bed was covered with a fancy quilt or a tufted counterpane. Sometimes there were pillow-shams, with some embroidery, such as "I slept and dreamed that life was beauty" (dim lines supposed to represent a person sound asleep in bed); "I woke and found that life was duty" (the same person now wide awake and broom in hand). The center table was the time-honored
place for the family album, red or green plush, with
A L B U M in great staring letters diagonally across it.
Usually there was a fancy lamp on the center table or else a
hanging one with glass pendants. In later times there was a
stereoscope, with its array of pictures. The mantelpiece
had a couple of Dresden shepherdesses and some ornate vases.
On the walls were two or three enlarged pictures or some smaller
ones in little frames that suggested rough pieces of wood
tacked together. On the floor was the best rag carpet
owned by the family. Though the other carpets on the
place might have a hit-or-miss design, the one on the
front room floor was meticulously matched—hickory-bark
stripes often alternating with maple-bark stripes. There
were also rocking-chairs and cane-bottomed chairs. Straight-
backed, split-bottomed chairs were good enough for the living-
room or the dining-room, but not for the front room. And
the rocking-chairs had tidies, too. Some of these had
verses or mottoes on them, embroidered in the same fashion
as the pillow shams. In upper New York state last summer
I ran across a tidy with a German verse that greatly pleased
me:

"Rein wie eine helle Edelstein
Ist das Mutterherz nur ganz allein,"

"Pure as a bright precious stone
Is a mother's heart, only all alone."

My translation is a combination of the English and the
German, in order that I may preserve something of the
tang of the original. The front room was not only a
treasure-house; it was a veritable cross-section of the
civilization of the time.
The privacy of the front room was never violated by the family. It was distinctly a dress-up room. To have gone into it with everyday clothes and to have propped one's feet on the back of a chair would have been a sacrilege. Visitors were housed in the front room. That very fact made them superior beings; they still seem a little above the average run of human beings. When the circuit rider came, the front room was his room. He was too much company to wash his hands in the tin washtub and had to make his ablutions in the great white washbowl. I was often delegated to take the water and towel to him. No train-bearer of royalty ever felt any more important than I did. When company came, it was hard on the small boy, for he was not allowed to stay in the front room. He often looked longingly in and reflected on the inanity of life in general. How big the boy felt when he could sit or stand within the sacred precincts! That happy event came with long pants and a semi-mannish voice. Humiliation is never so keen as when a fellow whose voice is beginning to show some hints of a masculine tone is called out of the front room by Mother in some such insulting way as this: "Come here, Sugar-lump, and help your pappy get in the wood."

And then the front room was the place where all the daughters of the family entertained their beaux. On long, rainy afternoons the stereoscope was in constant use, especially when the conversation lagged. The family album and a lot of miscellaneous pictures stowed away in the family Bible on the
center table afforded amusement and sometimes laughter. One of the beaux might have a French harp or a jew's-harp or a fiddle. Of course, it was a little off color to play anything "quick and devilish" on Sunday afternoons, but hardly any one could object to "Sweet Bye and Bye" and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" when played properly, even on a fiddle. The nearest approach to anything worldly would be for the young people to gather around the organ, in homes where such a luxury could be found, and sing, in the midst of church hymns, such old favorites as "Gentle Annie," "Silver Threads among the Gold," and "Haggie." Games of any sort were taboo, except riddles or charades. But, restrained as all this sounds, courtship went right on, and this same front room soon became the scene of another event, a wedding.

The front room is now gone, with its hanging lamp, its family album, its Dresden shepherdesses, its washbowl and pitcher. It is no longer necessary to do your courting in a front room. And visitors are housed these days in a spare bedroom, spare of front-room ornaments quite as much as spare of regular occupants. There is no Holy Place in the house as it is now constructed, no musty odors in a room shut up from air and sunlight that might fade the carpet. But if the older generation should be called on to name the spot that seems brightest in their memories, I have no fear that the old front room would be slighted.
Passing Institutions

The Flybroom

Screens are fine things, but they have cheated the younger generation out of an acquaintance with the fly brush or broom. Before screens began to be, the flybroom was a part of every well-regulated home, as essential as the cooking stove or the spinning wheel. It was under the especial protection of the smaller ones of the family, who had to wait when company came. On ordinary occasions, when only the family were present, each one had to fight his own flies; but on special occasions, when company came of enough importance to warrant the opening of the Holy Place, the front room, then the flybroom was brought out and put to use. If any of you needs one, here are ample directions for making and using one: Get a straight young sprout, say of pawpaw, peel off the bark, and allow the stick to season thoroughly. Scrap it smooth and clean. Then sew along about a foot of the smaller end some wrapping paper—or a newspaper will do, though it is hardly so high-class—and then cut the hanging part into strips about as wide as two fingers. These will form the broom. To apply, station a small boy about midway of the table and have him wave this invention backwards and forwards the full length of the table, carefully but not boisterously, so as not to frighten the flies to death. If you want to be stylish in the extreme, suspend from the ceiling a swinging stick with a flybroom and then allow the boy to operate it by pulling a string. Sometimes, when company comes in unexpectedly, a long peach-tree limb, with the dangling leaves left on the last foot or two, will do almost as a regular flybroom. However, a limb like this is an admission that it is
only a makeshift. The peach-tree limb, though, has a certain use of its own, besides the one celebrated by poets and philosophers: when one is sick with chills and fever, a peach-tree limb with the leaves on is the appropriate thing to shoo the flies away, for it does not fan the fevered brow and does not make a rustling noise. A visiting neighbor always wields the peach-tree flybroom.

But back to the dinner and the small boy with the flybroom. Though it was so long ago, I cannot help right now having the odor of fried chicken in my nostrils, for we always feasted company on that delicacy every time the flybroom was used. You have heard of adding insult to injury, but I doubt whether you ever knew any greater instance of it than when the small boy, consumed with hunger, had to wait until the second table and meanwhile watch, as he jerkily waved the flybroom, the chicken fast disappearing, especially if the company was the Methodist preacher. One such boy that I know said audibly: "Well, goodbye, gizzard."

No wonder that I stoutly rapped Mrs. Walker three times with the flybroom during a single meal. She ate so long and consumed so many of my favorite pieces of chicken that I got nervous and was hardly responsible for my accident. As I remember it now, Mother did not scold me very severely; she must have understood and excused a boy in the last stages of starvation.

Just as there was style in the cut and kind of paper, so there was even greater style in the wielder of the flybroom. Company demanded that the flybroom be used, but it was in the hands of some member of the family. On great occasions, as when some
city visitor was present, some little Negro boy or girl was drafted. No greater honor could have been conferred on a pickaninny than this. White teeth, whiter eyes, and shining countenance all testified to the great honor and enjoyment of the occasion.

But the flybroom is gone. Even the unpoetic now believe in screens. Men who declared that screens would make the house too hot are now about all dead. And as the screens came, we have lost the picturesque flybroom, and some tell me that the second table is gone, too.
I do not wish to belittle the penances of the saints, but I do not remember just now that any of them ever had to endure the agony of waiting until the second table was ready. I must confess, however, that though many boys have feared starvation while waiting for the older ones to make an end of their meal, I have never heard of any actual case of a boy's dropping from exhaustion just when the long-waited invitation to dinner came.

Long ago I ceased to trust my memory too much when things of my childhood were concerned, but it seems to me that at least once a week we were subjected to the indignity of second table. Nothing ever provoked such a feeling of inferiority as having to wait. Circuit riders were the protagonists in the weekly drama; and they were always hungry, especially for fried chicken. And there were swarms of relatives, who may have seemed interesting to our parents, but who were like so many locusts in the land of Egypt. It is hard to keep separate in my mind yet weeks-ends, relatives, preachers, and second table. The whole thing is more like a nightmare. However much I may have simulated joy when the visitors came, I was secretly glad when they left, for the humiliation of waiting for them to eat would now be over until they, or some more like them, appeared again to mar my childish happiness.

Visitors talked even longer than they ate. A boy, as all of you know, does not like to spend a whole day on chewing a mouthful. If left alone, he does not talk while he is eating; he just accepts the responsibility of getting the job done in record time. No youngster ever advised us to eat deliberately;
if I am rightly informed, it was an elderly doctor, who forthwith gave credence to the strange belief that chewing the same mouthful several dozen times would bring about a wise old age and also exuberant health. I am not informed as to the life of the great inventor of taking time to eat, but I am willing to wager a lot that it never occurred to him or any one else to eat slowly until few teeth or false ones and a slowed-down appetite prompted him to announce what he fatuously thought was a new discovery. It sounds very much like "day by day in every way," and the rest of the equally fatuous philosophy. As for me, neither very old nor a philosopher with a creed to support, I rather honor that boyish idea that a biscuit was made for one bite and a piece of pie for two, while a glass of milk is good for just two gulps. Between the ideas that people must eat deliberately and must also talk but never with something in their mouths I was formerly greatly puzzled, and I fear I still am. A serious business like eating ought to be free from anything that doth so easily beset us as doth conversation or table manners.

After a while second table did not seem so bad. About this time it became the custom to have the little dears eat with grown-ups and parade their manners. I am beginning to wonder whether the youngsters have not fared pretty badly after all, for they do not have the joy of gobbling their food, even what the preachers and relatives have left.
When spring comes round, even though thirty years separate me from the farm, I feel I ought to be out in the new-ground burning brush or else following the coulter. Boys born after the clearing of the land and boys who knew only the prairie will never understand how much they missed by not having a new-ground to grow up in.

Though it was a barbarous sort of thing to do, there was much poetry in clearing a new-ground. All the valuable timber, or what was then regarded as valuable, was cut and sent to the sawmill. Sometimes it took a year or more to get this out. Meanwhile the ground was littered up with laps and refuse timber. When clearing started in earnest, these laps had to be cleared up, and the remaining trees to be cut. Some of the timber was converted into firewood for the fireplace or the kitchen stove. The rest was cut up ready for the annual log-rolling. The neighbors gathered and piled up the large logs and also spun the customary yarns. I shall probably remember longest of all that I have learned the yarns spun at log-rollings, though I would gladly trade a few of them for some of the things that I do not remember very well. After the log-rolling came the burning of the logs. I myself have applied the torch to logs that would now pay a king's ransom. For days and days the log piles burned, furnishing, in some instances, places for plant-beds. Now the ground was clear but not broken.

Coultering came after the burning of the logs and brush. Whoever has not felt the jerky handles of a coulter has missed a nerve-zacking experience. It takes an unusual
person to follow the coulter for a season or two without swearing. I have heard of such people, but those who mentioned such always added, "Poor fellow, he is dead now." In the days when I was very young it was the custom to use oxen to pull the coulter. Their slow, steady pull was much easier on the boy behind the handles than the sudden starting and stopping of mules. Even then, however, the valiant coulterer sustained many a bruise from the plow handles or from flying roots that he plowed up.

Such crops as the badly-plowed newground produced! All around the stumps there were areas that no coulter could invade, areas that we kept free from sprouts and weeds by a vigorous use of the hoe. But the rest of the soil was fertile past the dreams of the most grasping. Such corn, and such pumpkins! All pumpkin vines now seem puny when I compare them with the rich ones that used to grow in the newgrounds.

Plowing the crops in the newground was hard, but by degrees the stumps rotted out or were burned, and the soil lost much of its fertility.

Now—but why lament what is gone? I sigh for the newground, but I sigh even more for the woods it displaced, and I am ashamed to view the gullies that dissect the fields I once helped to clear. "It is best, I suppose, to let bygones be bygones, since I am supposed to be writing as a chronicler of passing institutions and not as a conservationist. The poetry of it all was just as great as it would have been if all this destruction of timber and soil were necessary. And the smell of wood smoke in the early spring days takes me back to the log-rolling and the coulter, to the beds of mayapples and bluebells and sweet williams that I plowed under.
Passing Institutions

The Old Rail Fence

Poetry and brawn combined made the old rail fence one of the most picturesque of the institutions that are now passing. Abe Lincoln was not the only great man or near-great who split rails or built worm fences. It fell to the lot of every farmer boy at some time of other to make rails and, after rails ceased to be customary, to split out fence-posts. Muscles and persistence made most of the rails of our time and formerly. It was not a task in which tangible results appeared any too quickly.

I have seen few sights more alluring than a new clearing with its fresh rail fence around it, every rail bright and new, almost alive. To make it all the more alluring, there must be a new log house properly chinked and daubed, with a stock barn, also of logs; a smokehouse, and a henhouse. In fact, everything has come from the clearing itself, a home carved out of the wilderness. The few chickens running around it still look a little strange, as if hardly yet domesticated. The dog can tree 'possums and 'coons without running far from home. And the boys and girls can pick up chestnuts and hickory nuts and gather wild grapes and never get out of sight of the house. The rail fence becomes a sort of symbol of man's possession of the earth.

But there is another rail fence, the one that has grown old in service. Chickens are covering many of the rails. Bushes have grown up so tall that they conceal the fence in many places, in spite of the spasmodic efforts the farmer boys make at cleaning them away. And thousands of wild flowers that love the protection of the rail fence and its bushes crouch low in the leaves
and bloom so early that one almost believes that the rail fence has some sort of special warmth. Between the rails there is often a dove's nest, and in the tangle of blackberry briars and bushes the brown thrasher builds, while on the ground in the fence corners are young towhees running around, followed by awkward but interested parents. The old fence has lain so long in the same place that the first two or three rails have become vegetable mould again. The whole fence is so low that only thoroughly domesticated animals would regard it as a barrier. It lies asleep in the sunlight, dreaming of the days when it encircled the clearing, when it and the old barn and the old house--now relegated to the position of smokehouse or lumber room--were in their youth together. And the half-grown boys who made a poem of action in laying the fence have long ago died of old age, and the very landscape has changed past recognition.

If you come back a year or two after the old fence has assumed this role of a long-ago institution, you will find the old worm fence gone, its lichen-covered rails made into kindling, and even the fence-row obliterated. The bushes have been cut down in the mistaken notion that a clean fence-row is a sign of thrift, and the wild flowers that sought refuge in the fence corner are gone forever, unable to stand the glaring light. The new wire fence that skirts the highway may be just as poetic, but it must wait for other generations to find it so.
Passing Institutions

Side Saddles

One of my students recently came into my class in great glee: she had seen, while visiting in a neighboring town, a well-dressed middle-aged woman ride into town on a side-saddle to do her Saturday afternoon shopping, or "trading," she might have called it. People forgot to look at the new cars in their eagerness to see this woman, who seemed to have stepped, or ridden, out of a story-book. Now some of us might reveal our ages if we told how many side saddles we have known, and some few of us could tell of going to camp meeting or other places with young ladies who rode gracefully on side saddles, and wore very proper riding-skirts, too. On a pole near the old stile-block at our country church an older member of my family counted thirty-one riding-skirts on a single Sunday morning, and it was not a special occasion, either.

Side saddles, above every other characteristic they may have had, were proper. They betokened helplessness and daintiness. I can almost imagine their having had a great increase in popularity during the reign of Queen Victoria, when so many of our habits acquired so much respectability. How far back they go I do not know. Chaucer's nun, who was above all else a lady of good manners, is pictured in the illustrated manuscript dating back more than four hundred years as riding on a side saddle, while the rather masculine Good Wife of Bath rode in mannish fashion.
But side saddles, and most other kinds, have practically ceased to be. Maidenly modesty now manages to maintain itself even without the side saddle. Saddles are seldom used except for pleasure, and riding habits these days are decidedly shocking as compared with the modest riding-skirts of a generation ago. Imagine some dashing young lady of our time, attired in the very latest cut of a mannish suit, still clinging to the badge of her former helplessness, a side saddle. And imagine her having to be helped on and off her steed.

An old lady I once knew, still living and not very old, used to shock our staid town by riding up and down our streets, even on county-court days, not on a side saddle but astride and with divided skirts! Tragic things were predicted of her, few of which seem to have yet come true. I wonder what she, who is not wholly modern, would say if she were to see the troops of middle-aged and even old women of the same town racing on the roads and dressed in the most modern riding habits.
Passing Institutions

Swapping Work

A custom once as permanent, it seemed, as the sun and the moon was that of swapping work. While it was supposed to be for the purpose of getting things done some of the things that the farmer and his family could not do alone, very little was actually accomplished when one considers the numbers engaged and the to-do made over the task. It was really a sort of social affair, to relieve the monotony of the daily grind of labor. Every season had its special labor that was supposed to be done en masse. Early spring brought barn-raisings and log-rollings; in summer there were wheat-threshings and cleaning off the graveyard; in fall and winter there were wood-choppings and corn-huskings and quiltings. Counting the amount of work necessary to make preparations and to feed the crowd that always assembled at such gatherings, I am doubtful whether any working paid for itself. But there were other values that were quite evident.

Take log-rollings, for instance. For days before such an event the owner of the newground and his regular hands cut handsticks and got the logs clear of brush and such like. Then came the day. All the young bucks of the neighborhood loved to try each other in feats of lifting. A dozen or so men would get on each side of a log and lift up on the handsticks. They would "tote" the log some distance and make a heap that was later set on fire. Between spells of this back-breaking labor the yarn-spinners entertained. I shall not repeat any of their yarns; few of them would look well in print; but I know enough to fill a book. After the morning work came dinner, in which all the neighborhood participated. If the crowd happened to
be very large, it was customary to set the tables in the yard.

Barns built by contract may be all right, but they lack the poetry of the old log barns that were raised in a single day. It took skill to carry a corner. Only the most agile young men could do this. The rabble could tote logs and push them up the skids. The old-timers were ex-officio makers of rafters. Small boys could get a place in the day by offering to carry water. (There ought to be a statue erected to the water boy of all times and places, from the building of the Pyramids to the construction of modern highways.) No young fellow who carried a corner ever felt larger than the water boy at a barn-raising. There was a long season's work after the framework of the barn was up, but the romantic part of the structure was community-built. I never heard of neighbors helping chink and daub a barn or nail on a roof. I knew one barn erected in a fit of enthusiasm to stand roofless until the rafters rotted away.

Wheat is now threshed by a crew that is quite independent of the farm itself, but in other days the whole process was of the community. Women came to help cook, neighbors brought teams and wagons and pitchforks, and the thresher crew and the farmer worked side by side. I always wanted to grow up and be the man that cut bundles, for he was as important as a pilot on a Mississippi River steamer. His ability was the gauge for the whole crew. The next fellow I envied was the man who drove the horses hitched to the "power." The whole day was one of adventure, not of dusty, grimy work.

Present-day houses may be more comfortable than houses used to be, but somehow they have become too personal and selfish. We actually go and get some fellow to bid on constructing them and leave the neighbors out. It would be unheard of to invite
a carpenter and his crew to share in the dinner of the owner of the house. Log barns and log houses have gone, too, except for a few that remain as smokehouses and henhouses and corncribs, quite a step-down from their former glory. And I am sure that many a youngster of this generation wonders what in the world a handstick is and why it used to be a symbol of a "good man."
However much a garage may mean today, it lacks some of the romance that used to attach to the livery stable. To begin with, a livery stable was a sort of symbol of the good-sized town; in many counties there would be one at the county seat and nowhere else. It was a great meeting place for the horses and vehicles from all over the county, and, incidentally, for their owners. Men coming to town to attend county court, or to bring a load of wheat or tobacco to market, or to attend a political rally left their horses and their vehicles at the livery stable and then attended to their business. It was a bit aristocratic to do this, for the less well-to-do merely parked their vehicles on some vacant lot and came back to the wagon and ate their lunch after feeding the stock. But to put your stock into the livery stable almost certainly meant that you would eat at a restaurant uptown. Restaurant keepers knew this and laid in fresh supplies of beefsteak and sausage, delicacies in the country in the summer. However, it was possible and permissible for you to go back to the livery stable and eat your lunch, though you very likely did so shamefacedly.

And what rows of buggies and wagons and surreys used to be lined up at the livery stable! Many times it was necessary to number them, so there would be no mistake about getting the right ones for their owners. Many a man of my acquaintance would leave the chalk mark on his buggy for weeks, for that would show the envious neighbors that
he had actually been to a livery stable and had had his horse fed there. Again I must make an exception, for some livery stables allowed the owner to hitch his horse for a dime and furnish the provender himself. There was no way of knowing whether you had paid for your horses' dinner or not, unless you tied a tell-tale bundle of fodder or oats on your buggy as you left home. Corn, you know, can easily lie hidden beneath the seat of the buggy.

All this talk about a livery stable is from one angle; there was another one even more famous. "Drummers" drove "double rigs" from the livery stables, and if they were exceptional, they had a driver, either black or white. To see a livery rig coming made all the farm hands stop work as if to pay courtesy to one who was rich enough to afford such a conveyance. On special occasions, when visitors had come from a long way off, we would have people come to our houses driving actual horses from the livery stable, sometimes with all sorts of paraphernalia, like horse blankets or even horse hats.

The livery stable was the official loafing place for all kinds of people. Men of the town who had no job or needed none congregated there to spin yarns and play checkers, seeming to revel in the strong odors always to be found. News-mongers came and went, so that you could hear of a thing probably first of all by going to the livery stable.

About a quarter of a century ago the livery stable began to lose prestige, for automobiles by that time had begun to increase in number. The lazy, easy-going days vanished, for nobody wants his garage to be a mere loafing place. As
cars have increased, the horse has come to occupy less and less prominence. Those who own horses contrive in some way or other to get to town without driving them. In just a few places there is left what was once a great institution, with a few rickety buggies and a few farm wagons lined up on the street in front of it and with a dozen or so horses inside, bravely trying to eat their fodder and forget the prominence they once had. And rarely you find two or three bearded old men in front who are passing out the same yarns they made famous when the county court brought hundreds of horses and buggies to town.
The Family Graveyard

Styles change. New things are forever coming into vogue to take the place of what used to be stylish. Right now, when so many things seem destined to be lost and forgotten, the family graveyard has lost its former prominence and is rapidly being covered by oblivion and Oblivion’s signs: elder bushes, blackberry briars, and burdock. When these burial places were started, family graveyards were in style. Not to be buried in one was to be denied the distinction of belonging to a family that had a fixed and settled abode, a "local habitation and a name." The Civil War changed much of this distinction. Even in our graveyards we are becoming democratic. In the same area are now laid to rest the distinguished and the unknown, the rich and the poor, the man who has a great family tree and the one whose family tree was at best only a bush. And out in the fields where cattle graze or in woods that have resumed their sway where they existed before the white men came, and even in the midst of cities and towns these old family graveyards still tell mutely of the days that used to be, of families that seemed as firmly fixed as the ancient patriarchs. These burial places are often grown over with vegetation; only a few of them are kept up by surviving members of the family once so proud and famous. Nearly every time I go out into remote places I see these neglected areas, fit subjects for another Gray.

On a high hill overlooking the Ohio River in a western Kentucky county is just such a reminder of times long past. Formerly the family held all the acres for miles around.
More than one member of this family owned a large brick house on the hills overlooking the Ohio River. Now the old weather-beaten houses stand lonely or else echo with voices other than those of descendants of the builders. The little graveyard itself is a wilderness of briars and bushes, the headstones are fallen down, the very walls around the sacred place are broken down, so that cattle and sheep can get in and trample on the graves. And what romance in the headstones, now so badly mutilated: "Born in Culpepper County, Virginia, 1784"; "Died in New Orleans of yellow fever, 1835"; "Killed at Shiloh." And as I raked away the vegetation from one such headstone, I felt a sort of cynicism steal over me, for I read: "Blessed are they that die in the Lord." Standing in that deserted place, I seemed to see roll by in pageantry the long history and civilization the family graveyard represented. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob seemed nearer than the night before, when the children of the neighboring high school, from ancient and from modern families, had been graduated. I could not keep old Omar's words out of my mind and could easily substitute sheep and cattle for the lion, the lizard, and the wild ass that stamp over the heads of ancient heroes but cannot break their sleep.
Passing Institutions
Subscription Schools

Before the days of public education there were schools supported by tuition, called "subscription schools."
My first day on the road to education was passed in just such a school. As the free schools, those supported by the state, were taught in the fall, spring was the time for subscription schools. Some time after Christmas these private terms began. In older times some teachers made their living by conducting free schools in the fall and subscription schools in the spring. One such educational pioneer was Uncle Spillman Washer, of Fidelity, who taught more than fifty years, covering many counties in that long period. He was well grounded in arithmetic, writing, grammar, and history.

Spelling, after the custom of the time, was taught by means of Webster's small dictionary and the Blue-back Speller. There were no grades as such, but one judged how far along he was by the length of the words being spelled. For instance, to be over to "baker" was as definite as saying "fifth grade" now.

Unlike the fall terms, the spring subscription schools attracted even grown people, in the months when farm work was slack. I have seen twenty or thirty full-grown young people, many of them past twenty, in these schools. My first introduction to "Evangeline" and "Snow-Bound" was through hearing the older boys and girls read them aloud in a subscription school. I also saw my first copy of Shakespeare at this same school and was allowed to touch the book.
These subscription schools were bound by no rules except the limitations of the teacher's knowledge. We sometimes had classes in rhetoric (periodic and loose sentences, similes and metaphors, grand and simple style), algebra, and even Latin. Really, I learned most of the algebra I have ever known in just such a school, where the teacher wanted to keep his learning polished up.

And it was great fun to have a few weeks devoted to a writing school. Sometimes we did nothing else for a week or two. I can recall right now some of the specimens we copied: "I will try has done wonders"; "This is a specimen of my penmanship"; and all sorts of Franklin's maxims. To this day Zipporah seems a name in a copy-book rather than the scolding wife of Socrates. Hold on! I mean Moses.

Subscription schools have gone since education has become democratic and universal. The private schools are having a hard time of it, since money is needed to run them, too. But in their day, from subscription schools to private colleges, they did a great work and stood as a bulwark against ignorance.
Recently I heard a small child coming home from school singing "Mi, mi, re, do"; I at once was back in memory at the old singing school in the country schoolhouse or church. It seems that history repeats itself every generation or two. The little child’s singing was just the fashion long ago, and is reappearing in our time, showing that Addison’s joke about Sir Roger de Coverley’s coat and its being in style and out of style twelve times was not to be taken too lightly.

All people like to sing; the more primitive they are, the more necessary is music. Into the remotest country neighborhoods come the singing school teacher, a professional almost as standardized as a pack paddler or the circuit rider. He was always tall and angular, as I remember him; he had a voice that was keen and a sad and lean countenance. He slightly nasalized his song, like Chaucer’s nun, whose singing was "Entuned through her nose full seemly." He went round over the community and got pupils for his "class." The school lasted a week or two, and sometimes several weeks, with singings on Sundays and on week-end nights. Sometimes there was an all-day sing on Sunday, with dinner on the ground. Commonly the teacher had some song book to sell and left the community supplied with materials for musical education until the next year. The only difference between these books that I ever detected was that each succeeding volume had songs pitched in higher keys.
The crowd gathered at the appointed place, not only the actual singers but also the rest of the neighborhood. The "class" occupied the "Amen corners" of the building. Patiently the leader taught each part its notes, singing them over carefully until everybody could carry his part without looking at his book. Then, striking an attitude, the leader repeated the beginning note of each part, the groups following him, sometimes making a wail of harmony that fairly shook the rafters. Then the four-part chorus began and sang all twelve or thirteen "verses" of the song. And such singing! The alto, especially clings in my memory. Only once in a while do I hear now a woman street preacher who can at all approach the altos I heard in the singing schools. And Jim Steele's bass is still lower than any I have since heard. It rumbled and roared until it made the floor quiver. Sometimes the class sat and sang; sometimes they stood and swayed to the music.

For days and weeks after each singing school we children reproduced its leading features in our playing at school. Tommie Cooper could sing exactly like the angular teacher who appeared every Saturday for a couple of months. I learned to beat time like another one, and still do. And now it seems possible that my memories of "Mi, mi, re, do" may get mixed up with a revival of these old methods of teaching singing.
When it is spring again, the season does not seem to be all here, for I still have on my shoes. When I drove away down South last summer, I saw dozens of grown people sitting in the open passages of their homes—"dog-trots," we used to call them—enjoying the freedom of bare feet. How homesick I got for the wild free days when sheep-shearing time brought the season for discarding shoes! Meanwhile, my own feet, cramped and hot, longed for other times, when stubble-fields and rocky slopes, to quote Whittier rather freely, did not daunt me.

Bear in mind, I am not merely wishing for youth. When I was a boy, hundreds of grown people went barefooted. And even those who felt called on to wear shoes often went without socks or stockings. Certain tasks called for bare feet, just as today we all believe in bathing suits or golf toggery or track clothes. Some of these tasks were as follows: working in the tobacco field, from the time when the plants were set—usually just after a rain, when the mud made shoes uncomfortable—to the actual harvesting of the crop; plowing corn, after the clods had become small or soft; or working in the garden. On Saturday afternoon, when the farm boys got an ex-officio half-holiday, it was great sport to go to the village store barefooted and exchange gossip and tobacco.

Long days of blistering sunshine and rough ground did their work well, and by frost time in the fall our feet would be tough enough to stamp a chestnut bur without any visible painful effect. In fact, this was a standard test of a boy's nerve, just as lifting a cat by the ear tested its grit. But after a winter of home-knit yarn stockings, I tell you, the stubbles and gravel felt big and pointed.

Nothing now can take the place of the agony we felt when real winter came on, and we had to don our shoes. I never saw a shoe big enough to fit a foot that had gone shoeless all summer. Only bitter winter weather could induce
us to wear shoes all day. I have known boys to go barefooted until heavy frosts came on; on cold mornings they would run to school to keep their feet warm. The agony of getting one's feet acclimated after the summer was matched by the joy of the next spring when the shoes were doffed for another season.

Now feet of all kinds, in our climate, are encased in shoes the year round. Some medical authorities even go so far as to claim that it is more healthful to wear shoes. But wouldn't it be fine if some reformer would bring back barefoot days? I hereby promise to embrace the style first of my contemporaries when any one dares to start it.
When spring comes, I feel that I ought to be out helping with the annual soap-making. For fear some of you have forgotten, let me help you to remember. Store up all through the winter the ashes removed from the fireplace and the kitchen stove. You will need a good many barrels and boxes for this. When it is time to begin soap-making, empty the ashes from the old ash-hopper and scatter them over the garden; they still contain a good deal of potash and will also help the physical condition of the soil. Now repair the old ash-hopper by replacing planks that have rotted out since last season. Uncover the barrels and boxes of ashes and shovel them into the ash-hopper, taking care to pack them down tightly so the water will not go through too quickly. Do not pour too much water in at first; allow the ashes to settle well. After the first lye starts, pour on bucket after bucket of water and keep one of the children handy to dip the lye from the little kettle and pour it into earthenware jars or the big kettle itself. (Of course, you have a little kettle to use on such occasions; not to have one would mean that you are not fully equipped for soap-making.) Now get out your soap grease from the smokehouse and carefully reject any lean meat that may have got into the jars or barrels. If you have been foresighted, you will have enough cracklings, scraps of fat, and miscellaneous bones and skins to make up all the lye from the ash-hopper. Use all your skill in getting the lye and grease in proper proportions; stir the mixture often.
to keep it from boiling over and to see how well the grease is being consumed by the lye. Remove the bones as they become clean. Try to get the boiling done before night, so the soap will be cool enough to remove to the old barrel in the smokehouse the next morning before you start to make the second batch of soap. Keep up the first day’s process until all the lye is used up. If the lye gets too weak to bite the tongue, buy some concentrated lye to finish up your soap grease; otherwise it is not regarded as good form to use store-bought lye.

Now you have a farmhouse necessity, soft soap. "In spite of all the learned have said, I still my old opinion keep" that there is no other soap like this. When hog-killing time comes round, no other soap can remove the black incrustations on the hands. When tobacco must be wormed and suckered, how will this pink, bought-on soap remove the gum? You must have home-made soap for these needs. And when the old farm wagon needs a treatment of axle grease, there is nothing like lye soap for removing stains from your hands. Accept no other.

But soft soap gradually lost its importance, especially when cheap soaps were offered for sale. The transition to pink, perfumed soap was through Big Deal and other laundry brands. We boys used to take along a small chunk of Big Deal when we took our Saturday afternoon bath in the creek. How we laughed at the sissy who brought along a cake of some scented, colored soap!

And now lye soap is going, along with the wash basin and the tin washpan. The old ash-hopper has fallen down and
been covered with a rank growth of jimson weeds. Now a boy comes home from work and is greeted with a washpan of porcelain ware or even the washbowl that formerly saw service in the front room. And the soap is likely to be scented and colored, and the towel is linen rather than half a mealsack. Alack and woe today, there is no lye in coal ashes. The process of making soft soap is becoming a lost art. The very name has ceased to mean the biting, strong grease-remover we used to know and now designates for most of us something decidedly lacking in biting qualities. Anyway, soap is one of the signs of civilization, and soft soap, because of its antiquity, deserves to rank along with the skillet and the teakettle as badges of man's triumph over his environment.
Passing Institutions

The Smokehouse --Part I

Armour, Swift, and others may have a knack at saving all the pig, including the squeal, but they have almost destroyed a great institution, the smokehouse. The old smokehouse has left a fragrant memory, literally. In some modern homes there is a special lumber room; we old-timers made the smokehouse bear the burden—along with the loft, or attic, the loft over the buggy-shed, and the large space under the corn-crib. Heat, of course, was the chief thing to be found in a smokehouse; that was its reason for being. But meat was not all. Soap grease in many a container, a barrel or two of lye soap, canned and preserved fruit, jars or cans of lard, sausage in sacks, sauerkraut in barrels or jars, and so on and on—these were the distinctive contents of the smokehouse. No hold of a sea-going vessel ever held a more motley or useful array of things to eat and use. And everything had its odor: the rank, acid odor of soap grease; the alkaline smell of lye soap, the thick, rich odor of sauerkraut; and the indescribably fine smell of ham and bacon and smoked sausage. And, from the wood smoke that had been used to cure the meat, everything had in addition that true, smoky, smokehousey odor that every farm boy knows.

How often the smokehouse figured in the life of the people! It was carefully locked up every night to keep its treasures from being stolen. It was a sort of sign that the day's work was over when Mother began to wash the supper dishes and called the youngest boy to see whether the smokehouse were locked. When bitter weather came on, nobody feared starvation, for the old smokehouse was at hand, stocked as for
a famine. Even if coffee and sugar did run low, when the roads were too bad for freight to be hauled, the old standby was always to be relied on.

Hog-killing was the great event in the life of the building. It then assumed a position worthy of a great institution. Long before day we were up heating water and irons for the great day. We planted the scalding barrel and made a platform on which to scrape the hogs after they had been scalded, not even forgetting the grass sack over the mouth of the barrel to keep in the heat of the water and that added by the red-hot irons. When everything was ready, the butchering began. You pale-faced and anaemic ones must not feel that there was anything brutal about this event; it was just a necessary thing, time-honored and romantic. By the time the hogs were killed, some of the older men took some irons from the fire and dashed them into the barrel. Such sizzling and popping; and how the steam rose into the cold winter air! Then came the scalding and scraping, followed by hanging up the heavy bodies. After these were thoroughly dressed, it was usually time for dinner. While we ate, the meat assumed a firmer condition, so that cutting out the pieces—a great art in those days—was greatly facilitated. During the afternoon the pieces of meat lay in the smokehouse, getting cold through and through, while the family busied itself with lard and sausage. The neighbors who had helped departed, carrying spare ribs, backbones, livers, and hearts.
Passing Institutions

The Smokehouse--Part II

I wish I were a poet, so that I could tell about the process of making sausage. The old sausage mill was a fearful thing, as many a man with whittled fingers can tell. These new-fangled food-choppers were then unknown. And how good the smell of sage and red pepper when they were ready to add to the tubful of sausage! And how opulent looked the house with its great sacks of sausage ready to be hung up in the smokehouse! And the strange mystery of cooking lard, and how much art it required to keep it from boiling over and scorching! And, my, again, how good cracklings and salt are, and crackling bread! But rhapsodies must stop, for the meat must be salted down!

Lantern in hand, the small boy accompanied his father to the smokehouse after supper and acted as helper by handing salt and joints of meat, while the father busied himself in burying each joint of meat in a great white bed of salt. Of course, the boy rained volleys of questions as he watched the dancing shadows from the old lantern. Anything took on greater poetry when lighted with a lantern, whether it was salting down the meat, or shucking corn after supper, or carrying slop to the pigs. This salting was another art, for it was regarded as almost shiftless when any one lost his meat after it had gone through all the interesting and standardized process of attendant upon hog-killing.

Six weeks or more the meat lay wrapped in salt. Then the old smokehouse took on some more importance; now the meat must be taken up from the salt, scalded to remove excess salt, and dusted with borax. Sometimes we did a fancy kind of curing by coating the hams with sorghum molasses and black pepper.
and then enclosing them in cloth sacks. Smoking the meat was now the thing for days. Chips again played a part. This chip fire was a sort of sacred thing; it betokened that the family was again provisioned for the winter, that starvation could not make any headway on this farm.

Heat now occupied its proportionate share of the building; by degrees the smoked sausage disappeared, and the less valuable pieces of meat. The hams, prized possessions then and now wherever the country ham is known, stayed on longest, cut into only for real company. Early in the spring the building had other uses. The soap grease was taken out, to return the next day as lye soap. In late summer the sauerkraut was made and brought in and stored in barrels or earthenware jars. And all through the summer we added jars of canned fruit and glasses of jelly and preserves. Every season was the season for the old smokehouse.

But where is the smokehouse? Gone with the ash-hopper and soft soap, gone with wood ashes and the open fireplace, gone with horse-and-buggy days, gone with preaching all day and dinner on the ground, gone with the front room and the family album. Milton imagined a place called the Limbo, where chimerical things went when they vanished from the earth. Why not a Limbo of Passing Institutions, where we shall see and know the things we have outlived, the things that are fragrant with memories of days long since vanished?
Cooking on the Fire

First the step stove, then the range, and finally the kerosene and gas stoves have about pushed into oblivion the old method of cooking on the fire. When I was a boy, though nearly every house had a step stove or a range, there were many left-over utensils from the early days. On Sunday nights in winter Mother got supper on the open fire. Some coals on one place of the hearth served the coffee pot; the teakettle sat in a corner with the coals raked around it; and the oven that used to be the only one of its kind on the place was brought out and coals placed under it and on the lid. No biscuits of our time can equal those that were baked in that oven; and no sweet potatoes, either, can acquire a flavor like that of oven-baked "'taters."

And how good was the pumpkin we used to cook in a big kettle on the fire in the kitchen! Though the family was large, we cooked enough for a good-sized neighborhood and kept it back in a jar, from which a quantity was taken each day for cooking down and sweetening with sorghum molasses. How eagerly we watched the cooking of lard on this same fireplace! Some poet might chant, with appropriateness, a hymn in praise of the old kettle, which did duty in many a way. It heated the water for the hog-killing, it boiled the weekly wash, it cooked down the pumpkin from watery masses of meat to slimy residue, it was the rendering vessel for the lard at hog-killing time, it was the chief vessel in the annual soap-making. Truly it was a practical vessel, called to good and useful service. What matter if some of these
uses seem slightly confused and confusing? Were they not all dignified and serious parts of farm life?

And what has taken the place of the old teakettle that boiled in front of the fire? The elder race of poets looked upon this vessel as a symbol of the household spirit. I fear the old teakettle is lost, along with andirons and ovens and coffee-boilers.

Modern means of cooking have many advantages, especially by their keeping the cooks from burning their faces, but the person on the sidelines, as I was in the older days and still am, misses some of the picturesqueness of the old, old cooking utensils and the flavor of the food prepared over the fire.
Rag Carpets

The making of rag carpets used to be an industry, the process a sort of life-history. From carpet rags to the completed product was a whole romance of industry. As I was frail and not able to stand the rough work of the farm when I was small, I learned many of the indoor tasks of the farm home, from cooking and washing to piecing quilts and tacking carpet rags. Hence I am speaking as "one to the manner born" and not as an outsider when I discuss rag carpets.

When clothing became too ragged to patch, it was not thrown away but was washed and mended for carpet rags. After school was out in the fall, rag carpet time began. Some natural colors were good enough, but, to add a little variety and cover up some dinginess, it was necessary to dye some of the rags before they were officially torn up and dyed. Maple bark, hickory bark, sumach berries, and all sorts of Diamond and Putnam dyes were used. All the rags were then torn, and each ball of rag strings was made one piece by tacking the fragments together. Ball after ball was added by each day's work, until Mother thought she had enough woof for a whole carpet.

Along in the spring, when keeping warm was no longer the major concern of the household, custom ordained that carpet weaving must begin. Connected with this major industry were a dozen smaller ones, each requiring skill and patience. Warping came first. Spools of colored thread made for this purpose were strung on holders. They were unwound in a big cable of twenty to fifty threads and placed deftly on a warping frame, made on the side of the house or smokehouse or else on an independent frame. This great array of threads, repeated until there were
several hundred the full length of the proposed carpet, was carefully removed from the frame and looped up in knots until the loom was ready. Usually the spare room or the shed of the smokehouse was the scene of the weaving. "Putting in the carpet," that is, putting the threads through the eyes connected with the treadles and through the slay, was a difficult and tedious process. I forgot to say that the eyes themselves were a home-made product. I have tied enough of them, on a little frame made for the purpose, to win some kind of star or laurel.

Now the weaving starts. Bobbins are wrapped with the rags and pushed forward and backward through the double lines of threads, which are worked by the two treadles. Skill is required at every step: in getting the stripes the proper width, in keeping the stretcher in place, in winding up on the beam the completed product. One extra hand is needed to act as general assistant in winding bobbins, in letting down the completed carpet, and in undoing any knots or kinks in the thread. I was usually the supernumerary.

The new carpet went, of course, on the floor of the front room, where it stayed for a year or two, or until the newness wore off. First, it was necessary to put down smoothly a layer of straw. Then you got down on your knees, and by violating all the rules of physics you lifted yourself and the carpet and put it where it belonged, tacking it securely in place. The resulting ache of the knees was formerly known as "housemaid's knee." After the carpet was securely tacked down, it was necessary to keep all sunlight and air away from it to prevent its bright stripes from fading; hence the stuffy atmosphere of the old-fashioned front room when it was opened for Sundays or guests.
Many a romantic thing will happen to the carpet before it is resolved into shreds. It will step down from its high place in the front room and will grace the living room, or Mother's room, until it is pretty threadbare. Then, in small lengths, representing the sections formerly under the beds, it will serve as rugs; after these are badly worn, they will be used to stuff under doors to keep out the cold air; some pieces will be used for saddle blankets and to wrap up small chickens when cold spring waves appear; some will serve to cover seed beds when frosts threaten. Every scrap and thread will long be serviceable. The rags that went into the making of this useful article were already nearly worn out; the addition of a few bright threads gave them an indefinite lease of life, a life full of romance and service.
Passing Institutions

Quilts

What Mrs. J. A. Ochsenhain did several years ago for the home-woven coverlet in her Handbook of Home-woven Coverlets ought to be done for the equally valuable and much more widely distributed quilt. Quilts go back far into the past, so far that no one I know of has yet traced them to their origin. One reason for their existence is simple: cloth of any kind was expensive, hard to make or to buy. The scraps left from making garments had to be saved. These were easily combined into coverlets which, with cotton batting and a lining, became quilts. This saving of pieces quite outlived its usefulness, as I have seen many a yard of goods bought to be cut up into quilt pieces.

Bigger than all efforts to save even scraps of cloth, however, is the universal desire of humanity for beauty. By combining scraps of different colors in certain patterns, our ancestresses found a way to express artistry. Opportunities for aesthetic enjoyment were poor enough in those days. Only the exceptional houses had musical instruments; painting and sculpture were virtually unknown; and the very desire for beauty was denounced by most of the religionists. By combining the useful and the beautiful, these mothers of ours were able to satisfy the soul while providing for the comfort of the body. A few women in each neighborhood dared also to embroider a quilt made of silk scraps for a covering for the bed in the parlor, or front room. This was a dangerous proceeding in some instances, as it might have drawn down on the maker the thunders of the church for such worldliness.

Quilts, like all other human institutions, had degrees of respectability. There were quilts that were used only when
company came. There were others that were a part of "Mother's room." Jeans quilts, made purely for warmth and not for show, made their way into the "office," or the attic, or wherever the boys slept. And, as quilts began to wear out, they went through a whole gamut of respectability, just as did the scraps of a home-made rag carpet. A quilt that had, in its brand-new life, been honored by a place in the front room came in its old age to be used to cover a load of tobacco, or to make a saddle blanket, or to provide a bed for the dog or the cat. Mrs. Obenheim tells how some of her most famous coverlets were bought right off a load of tobacco.

I wish I knew the names of all the patterns that delighted our ancestors, from "Nine Patch," the simplest of them all and the one on which most quilt-makers started, to something as elaborate as the "Lone Star," which might have taken all the time of a seamstress for a whole season. Even the standardized names are passing away.

Associated in memory with the quilt is the quilting, one of the numerous customs people had of making work seem a form of entertainment. A whole book might be written on ways of quilting, not to mention the "putting in" of the quilt and the shaking of the cat when the quilt was taken out. If the quilting ended with a party, so much the better. This was almost as good as a party following a log-rolling or a house-raising, where men were in the foreground as women were at the quilting.

Comforters bought at the store or from the mail-order house, even lamb's-wool comforters, those aristocrats of coverings, have about routed the old home-made quilts. Before they are entirely gone, let us hope that some antiquarian will give them a belated justice for their part in the life of the days before our age.
Ulysses, if we are to credit "Homer, must have started

great style. He was trying to dodge the draft, in modern terms, and
turned pack peddler after he was caught, in order to catch that other
slacker, Achilles. Achilles, you know, had learned from an oracle
that he would get killed if he went into the Trojan War; he took the
advice of friends and sought to conceal himself under feminine attire.
Ulysses suspected as much and brought in his wares at the home of
Achilles' uncle, who had a family made up chiefly of girls. One of
the girls, it is said, took a fancy to a dagger rather than to laces
and brooches. Ulysses thereby recognized the slacker and brought
him to Agamemnon's army.

Probably some of Ulysses' royalty and certainly much of his
ability as a salesman descended to our own times and endowed the modern
pack peddler, that interesting peripatetic of our childhood. I tell
you, the world I knew as a boy was hemmed in. The big hills beyond
Fidelity in one direction and the flinty Tennessee River hills in the
other just about bounded my little world. It was an event to be re-
membered when anyone strayed into this secluded nook among the hills,
especially if he could not speak our language well and could tell of
having crossed the ocean. Two or three times a year we saw the
pack peddler approaching, usually just before night or mealtime, for my
father was a follower of Abraham and assumed that any man who appeared
and demanded food and lodging might be an angel in disguise. Lining
up the road came the stranger with a foreign accent, and all the
children were happy for the rest of the day. Forthwith the pack had
to be opened, even though Mother stoutly maintained that she did not
wish to buy anything. Brilliant gongs and other unnecessary
things greeted our eyes. No auctioneer ever talked so eloquently
and with better effect than did the pack peddler, for Mother always
bought something, certainly enough to satisfy the peddler that he had
paid steep for his meals and lodging. I always liked the kind that
stayed all night. If it were summer, and it usually was, we made a
pallet on the floor in the room with the larger boys and slept with no
fear of such a poetic character. I never heard of any pack peddler's
having done a wrong to any person. His pack and his jollity reminded
me of my conceptions of Santa Claus, a sort of mysterious personage,
not precisely what his dress and speech would indicate. If he had
disappeared into thin air, like some of the Bible visitors that I
had read about and had seen in the pictures that I supposed were actual
photographs, I would not have been much surprised.

While he stayed, we kept him talking. Where had he come from?
Ireland, or Syria, or even Jerusalem itself. Had he found it hard to
learn the English language? What people did he have? One Irish ped-
ddler enumerated the members of his family by beginning: "I have one
mother." Ever afterward we children thought that the funniest thing
we had ever heard. Some of the peddlers told racy stories about their
experiences. I never tried to find out how many of these were purely
imaginative. To know would spoil the memory of these heroes of
my childhood.

But the pack peddler is gone. I do not know how he ever
made a living in his palmiest days. Many a pack peddler later
became a business man, with a store in some town. Some, no doubt,
learned the real value of American life while in intimate contact with
the great common people. And though these picturesque rovers were
just plain Jews or Syrians or Irishmen, please let me, who have
had to give up so many of my dreams, think that every one of them
was a Ulysses in disguise, still looking for the "skulking Achilles."
The Country Doctor

For years I have wanted to write and talk about the old country doctor, partly because my father was one and partly because the country doctor is a valuable institution that is rapidly passing away. When I visited my old home recently, I met the successor to my father and could not help noticing the new car and the shiny medicine case. I knew at once that the old-time doctor was gone forever.

Country doctors were of two kinds: licensed and graduate. How proud my father was of his diploma, all written in Latin and bearing the proud name of a great university! And how unusual we children felt when the old sheepskin was taken out of its metal case and exhibited to saucer-eyed boys, furtively, of course, for Father knew nothing about it! The other kind of doctor was one who felt called to practice medicine and who, consequently, bought a pair of saddlebags and a few bottles of medicine and set out as a professional, later—and usually much later—securing a certificate from the state or from some group of reputable physicians. But, aside from this difference between certificate and diploma, there was no other noticeable mark.

All country doctors in the good old days wore whiskers. For that matter, everybody else did, too, but doctors kept up the style long after clean-shaven faces became the rule, just as the country preacher has given up his linen duster and his clerical coat rather reluctantly. Some country doctors really set a standard for whiskers, my father among them. None of his numerous children had ever seen his upper lip or his chin. In his old days this mass of fiery red beard became gray and gave him an unusually patriarchal appearance. Somehow people asso-
ciated the idea of a beard with the canny knowledge of the doctor.

Pills are so numerous today and of so many sizes and colors that nobody but a druggist could keep up with them, and even a druggist must have them labelled. The old country doctor had no pills except of his own making. In his saddlebag he had a number of tin boxes and round and square bottles that contained a drug store in miniature. When he dosed out medicine, he ran the blade of his Russell Barlow knife into a bottle, took out a quantity of stuff, and spread it out on a piece of paper. Carefully, then, he divided it into as many doses as he wished, each dose being then wrapped up in a small piece of paper. Sometimes, of course, the medicine was liquid, in which case he poured from a larger bottle enough to last until the patient got well or until the next visit. Only rarely was it necessary to make pills. Blue mass was ready for pill-making without the addition of anything else. If quinine pills were required, a little sorghum molasses was added to the dry powder. In case more medicine was needed than the doctor could supply, he gave a prescription to be filled from the dusty bottles of the little village drugstore.
We have thousands of medicines now, both good and bad, but the old country doctor had and needed few. Quinine for chills and fevers, calomel and blue mass for biliousness, sweet spirits of nitre for high fevers, and assafoetida for small bags to tie around the necks of children to prevent them from catching contagious diseases were the chief staples. Since alcohol or corn liquor was always at hand, there was no need to take it along in the saddlebags. Every house had some morphine or laudanum in the clock, a bottle of burdock bitters, some limiment, and some paregoric, epsom salts, and castor oil. This is not a long list. I used to wonder why Father even asked about symptoms, for we lived at the edge of a swamp, where chills and fever were regarded as a part of each summer's events; hence a course of calomel followed by quinine was the standard prescription.

The old country doctor rode horseback, not from choice but from necessity. My father rode one old yellow horse nineteen years and another one almost exactly like it for nine years. We kept the first one until he died of old age, because we could not part with an old animal that had been so valuable. Just as the Canterbury pilgrims had a special gait, the canter, so the old country doctor rode his horse in a special gallop, midway between a lope and a walk. Something of the life of perpetual hurry and the need to hold out at the same time entered into the gallop of the old horse and the old country doctor, too. The doctor never seemed too busy to gossip a bit, but he could tarry only a short time beyond observing the symptoms and dosing out the medicine.

Like all good things, he was worn out in service. People seemed to think that he was in the business for the fun of it, and apparently that was almost so. I remember that Father often declared that he would
not go to see the family of some worthless fellow, but he went when the
time came. Of course, he gave all he had and got as a result only a bare
living. Every country doctor left a pile of accounts that are worthless.
Good things were said over his corpse, but there is no evidence that the
widow and orphans of any country doctor had money thrust upon them by
people eager to pay their debts.

And now the country doctor is gone, gone as completely as
the pack peddler and the home-knit yarn stocking and the rag carpet.
And it is hard to find a successor for him. Many a back-country neigh-
borhood is without medical attention except from the far-away county seat.
Even in towns, where most of the doctors live, we take pink and green and
red pills and get a lot of stuff fixed up at the drug store. No wonder so
many people die, when burdock bitters have gone out of style. The old
country doctors have small monuments, if any, but, in the words of Tacitus,
they live on "in animis hominum, in aeternitate temporum, in fama rerum":
"in the minds of men, in the annals of time, in the records of the world."
Sitting Till Bedtime

A good old custom now seldom used was the habit of sitting till bedtime. It took the place of clubs and other social entertainments. It was a species of neighborhood newspaper, for everybody’s business and everybody’s news. Sometimes it was an affair of young people, who would go in big groups, nor for a party, but just to spend the time from supper till bedtime in harmless chatter. Popcorn in season, or molasses candy, or music on the jew’s-harp or fiddle or banjo would always be in place. Whether there was an organ or not, there was sure to be some singing of church humns and sentimental songs. My first knowledge of breakdowns was gained from hearing the boys play on such occasions. Two of our neighbor boys, one of them still living, could make the fiddle and the guitar say everything from "Downfall of Paris" to "Pop Goes the Weasel." We used to gather at some farmhouse late in the fall and make molasses candy. I always started out in good order, but long before the candy was ready to make into plaits and lay out on greased plates, I had got the stuff all over my grubby paws and had eaten my share, largely by the old-fashioned method of licking fingers.

The most distinctive form of sitting till bedtime included the whole family. The smaller children told tales; played Hull Gull, William Trimbletoe, and club fist; or put on a first-class imitation of a protracted meeting. The older ones repeated stories of the Civil War that all of us knew by heart but wanted to hear again. Before the evening was over, ghost tales were started, and we children, who were usually worn out with our own devices by this time and were an open-mouthed audience for the yarn-spinners, were afraid to move. I have often drawn my feet up into my chair and sat on them to keep invisible things from biting them off. I once knew a grown man who got so scared at the yarns spun that he was afraid to go home alone, so that some of the big boys had to "go a piece of the way home with him." The discussions about religion and politics that I have heard on some of these after-supper forums would make theologians and political economists green with envy. Usually these topics were left, by tacit consent, to the group of men sitting around the stove at the country store or to the group gathered at some home on Sunday afternoons.
Several things have contributed to the passing of the custom of sitting till bedtime. First came the rural telephone, with numerous boxes on the party line. It was easier to stay at home and talk to all the neighborhood than to go to one certain place. The members of a party line were ex-officio members of a news club; it was hard to tell whose conversation it was, anyway, for the whole neighborhood joined in. If your ring did not get central some kind neighbor would ring for you assuming that your batteries might be weak. I recall having carried on an after supper flirtation with a girl on the party line for many weeks; of course, the whole neighborhood listened in, as a matter of custom. She would play sentimental tunes on the organ for me, I would play my French harp; but the odd thing is that I have never seen her to this day, though she lived across the creek bottom.

Now there are clubs galore and the local high school to attract the attention of the whole neighborhood. Only a few shut-ins now know the value of this old custom of gathering after supper to sit till bedtime.
As a teacher of English I am forever running into folk conceptions of grammar. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to say that folk conceptions have more weight with most people than learned conceptions. Generations have been taught, as if it were a maxim from Holy Writ, that a preposition must not stand at the end of a sentence. People who hold this rule in awe have read and heard thousands of sentences that violated this so-called rule, without ever being aware of it. No scholarly person could hold this doctrine if he would stop even for a minute to test it. Prepositions have stood at the end of sentences or of clauses since the very first written English and often save the sentence from appearing pedantic or stiff. Nearly every month some one asks me whether it is true that animate objects *lie* and inanimate ones *lay*. How such an idea got started I cannot guess, though it may have arisen from associating *lie* and *lay* with such expressions as "The sun *set,"" a usage of *set* unlike the more common one that means *to place*. For over a quarter of a century I have been trying to show how *sheep* and *deer* cannot be collective nouns, only to have each succeeding class name them in this category. Definitions and observations seem to mean nothing to the average mind, intent upon holding tenaciously to what it has learned, or thought it has learned, in another time and place.

One of the most laughable phases of the folk conception of language is the belief that what one naturally says is wrong. This conception causes the teacher of English more trouble than positive illiterate uses of language.
untaught person talks on, blissfully unconscious of his
efforts, if we can call his language capable of such. The
person who has heard a little about correct speech but has
not learned enough to be sure of himself begins to adjust
his language to what he conceives to be the correct patterns,
often with ludicrous results. He jumps to certain conclusions
such as believing that some forms are never right, merely be-
cause he has detected that the standard differs from what he
would normally say. A case in point is the use of I and me.
The educated talks glibly about how "He and I did it": the
illiterate, equally glibly about how "He and him done
it"; the puzzled half-educated says "He and myself did it" or even
"I and he did it." One of the queer rules that I have fought
all my life is that it is egotistic ever to use I. Hence
myself is supposed to be better. Rather oddly, not many
texts in grammar call sufficient attention to the precise
uses of I and me on the one hand and myself on the other.
The very exterior of the people who hold such rules in awe
often give English a bad reputation, a reputation deserved
by all forms of hypocrisy and affectation. Only a knowledge
of and tolerance for folk ways of thinking can save the
English teacher from cruelty to children.
FOLK TYPES

THE NEIGHBORHOOD BOASTER

Every neighborhood has its champion liar, a teller of tall tales. This sort of liar must not be confused with the kind that tells falsehoods to get people into trouble. The professional liar bears no malice toward anyone; he loves to tell impossible things just to keep in practice. Some of his yarns, though he would not like to admit it, are as old as the human race and have been merely reworked by him adroitly to fit local conditions. Occasionally, however, he makes up something that rings true.

In my earlier days the neighborhood yarn-spinner was likely to regale us youngsters with great tales of his prowess during the Civil War. One such fellow used to tell how he hummed up a whole passel of Yankees and captured them single-handed, "I gum." Another had a marvelous horse that could outdistance every other animal in our corner of the world. I suspect that he had seen a picture of General Putnam in the school readers of that time, or else he had studied the same picture as it appeared on Putnam's dye. One of the earliest literary characters connected with Kentucky fiction was Captain Ralph Stackpole, a brave, loud-mouthed horse-thief in Robert Montgomery Bird's Nick of the Woods, published in 1837. Captain Stackpole knew all the arts of the boaster, being as proficient as the contemporary, half-mythical Miko Fink. Each one, after giving a long rigmarole about his ability, declared himself to be a Salt River roarer, whatever that might be. Miko Fink's boast included these words: "I can out-run, out-hop, out-jump, throw down, drag out, and lick any man in this country. I love the women, and I am chock-full of fight."

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I recall having heard several other boasts, such as "I can lick my weight in wildcats," "I've got nine sets of jaw teeth, and I'm a man-eater," "I'm wild and wooly and full of floss; I've never been buried below the knees." Davy Crockett, of western Tennessee and later of Texas, declared himself "half horse, half alligator, with a little touch of snapping turtle."

Some of our neighborhood liars, however, do not rate themselves very highly. They quote eminent citizens, now fortunately dead and unable to contest the yarns, when they tell marvelous tales. Horrible crimes, miraculous happenings, ghosts, phantoms," and such like are their stock in trade. Some one could make himself a reputation for scholarship by collecting in a single county those marvelous tales, with all the local flavor imparted by the quaintness of the teller. Here is a sample: All of you, wherever you are, remember the story of the man who stopped in a country church during a rain storm and was grabbed by some invisible something which later proved to be a crazy woman who had taken refuge in the same church. That story has been told me in several different counties by the descendants of the man who had this hair-raising experience. Only the church changes its name and even its county rather frequently. One man stoutly maintained that his father was the one grabbed and that only by shucking his coat did he escape. Now where did that story start? If it were true, crazy women were once pretty common in country churches.
Folk Types

The Negro Uncle

Though there are many different types of Negroes, the one most of us remember with most pleasure is the old uncle, a left-over from days long past. Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom without his sorrows or Harris's Uncle Remus with a little less animal lore has lived in nearly every neighborhood that I have visited. Though he was usually an old-timer, he was rarely some younger Negro with oldish characteristics. This picturesque type is always a champion, generally an outspoken one, of the good old days before the war. If he cannot remember the actual times of slavery, he quotes his mammy. By constant telling and retelling stories of the fine old days he has convinced himself and most of his younger auditors of the truth of his wonderful yarns. The older white people have regarded the old fellow too highly to question his historical sketches; the younger ones prefer to think that whatever Uncle George tells must be true, because he lived a long time ago and knew plenty of our ancestors who are now dead.

Uncle Charlie represented to me in my childhood the whole romantic period that was terminated by the Civil War. He was old, it is true, but he made it appear that he was a contemporary of George Washington himself. There was nothing that he could not remember, that is, if you asked him about it and thus gave him a chance to get his bearings. He said that he was the body slave of his young master, who in my earliest days was about as old as any one could be and who stoutly maintained that Uncle Charlie was several years younger than he. Uncle Charlie had a marvelous war record, according
to his own account. I remember his saying that he enlisted in this fashion: "Charlie Stubblefield; in at any time and out at any time." I have sometimes wondered whether some of the white heroes of the same Civil War did not practice this agreement, whether regardless of their enlistment terms.

The thing that used to bother us children was Uncle Charlie's frankness with the white people, a frankness that would not have been tolerated in younger colored people. The old uncle was given a freedom never enjoyed by any one else; he was a privileged character like the court fools of the olden time.

The old uncle's moral lectures to black and white alike were free and sometimes remarkably wise. On one occasion when I went to the spring to water the horses, I met Uncle Ed, another ex-slave, who had come down to water his horses, too. The day before one of the Negro boys of our neighborhood had been killed in a brawl in a town forty miles away. That event gave Uncle Ed a chance to preach a bit on the general downward tendencies of the time. He said that no such things happened in slave times; the master valued his slaves too highly to have them shooting at each other. He then branched off into a discussion of the evils of freedom. When he was a slave, he said, he had plenty to eat, a good place to sleep, a doctor when he needed one, and he did not have to work too hard; now he could not afford a doctor, he worked himself nearly to death to get something to eat, and he moved from place to place nearly every year. The Israelites wandering in the wilderness never longed more for the fleshpots of Egypt than did Uncle Ed for the good old days.
Folk Types

Jim Crow

A little over a century ago the comic Negro was introduced to the American public in the character of Jim Crow. T. D. Rice, a Negro minstrel, won a great popularity in 1835 in this role and played several times in Kentucky. Too often since then this side of Negro life has been regarded as the only one. Black-face comedians have made this character known everywhere; it would be hard to separate the actual Negro comedian from the white man masquerading as such. These actors have chosen to reveal the high good humor of the Negro, usually the younger Negro, his fondness for gay attire, his innate love of music and dancing, his ability to wield a razor. The radio in our own time has many a black-face team, known all over the world, carrying on the Jim Crow tradition.

Though the professional actors and radio teams have caught much of the air of the Jim Crow type, there is still much to be learned from actual characters living in every part of the South. Every section has a comic Negro philosopher or clown. He does not seem quite aware how funny he is; it usually ruins his impression when he does learn that he is naturally comic. He sees the incongruities of his own time and place and almost unconsciously imitates them. I lost many a good lick with the hoe in the field listening to Curt imitate the various members of the Mt. Zion congregation. We hear a lot about one-man bands now; Curt was a one-man troupe of actors. From the pompous dignity of the preacher to the high-pitched wailing of a shouting auntie he could
change in a twinkling, keeping all the time a seriousness
that would be the envy of professional actors. You wouldn't
have called Curt irreverent; he just saw the comedy of his
life and expressed it with little or no effort.

Not so much has been made of the female comic Negro,
but Eda, one of our neighbor girls, was a match for Curt.
She could cakewalk like every person she knew, from the gayest
youngerster to the oldest victim of rheumatism. She could
shout on all the scales and reproduce all the effects of
sermon, song, and shout. She, too, seemed unaware of her
acting ability and was not trying to bring any of her church-
people into disrepute. She reminded me then of small children
who unconsciously repeat words or gestures of those around them.

Each new Sunday at Mt. Zion was enough to call into play her
acting ability. She interrupted the washing of dishes to
take a turn across the kitchen in the manner of some sister
marching up the aisle to deposit her weekly offering; she
would cakewalk from the dining room to the kitchen with an
armload of dishes, occasionally with disastrous results.

We children stood around in the way to see what new antics
she would try next, sometimes suggesting certain roles that
she had previously enacted.

Most of the Negroes we knew would not portray white
characters in our presence, though I am sure that they did this
in their own cabins. Sometimes we would persuade Curt or
Eda to talk and act like some eccentric white man or woman
and then double up with laughter at the accuracy of the acting.

When I used to work in the field with Spencer, I never knew
who he would be when he came in the morning to begin work.
He was likely to meet me in the guise of any one of a dozen
well-known white men of the neighborhood.
Passing Institutions--Children's Day

A good old custom that grew up in the Sunday School was Children's Day, a custom that I have not observed in many years, though I am told that it still exists in some parts of the state. I recently asked my freshman class how many had said pieces in a Children's Day exercise, only to discover that not one of the thirty-seven in the class had even seen such a program. Evidently the custom is going the way of many another fine thing. After it had been going for a generation or two, it broke into our small neighborhood. Of course, our little church had to celebrate. The teacher of the country school was instructed to plan a program and put it on. I was in the lanky, skinny age at that time and was fond of Sunday School because the church stood near a creek where I could play before and after the services. Some one thought I could sing and so put me up to lead the small children in a song called "Remember the Sabbath Day." In order to make it thoroughly in accord with the occasion, the director asked a little girl of the neighborhood to play the new organ as an accompaniment to the young choristers. She could play the song only in a very high key, a mile or so above where it was written. Consequently, I was the only one who could hit the high notes, but the others joined in after I shrieked a few bars alone. I can still do my part, nearly forty years after, and can still feel the rasping of my vocal chords when I shrieked out "And keep it holy, holy to the Lord." The second "holy" was in the range of the others, who, like me, had had abundant experience at calling hogs; hence that note got plenty of volume. As I recall it now, I tiptoed at the
highest part in order to get my voice up to the right pitch. I suppose this was as necessary as to work the tongue when one is writing with a slate pencil.

We also had an acrostic exercise in which children gave Bible verses that began with letters that spelled out CHILDREN'S DAY. And we all knelt in devotional attitudes while a little girl who lisped said the Twenty-third Psalm and a boy said the Lord's Prayer. When I think of that group kneeling in the country church, I do not know whether to laugh or cry. Many long ago joined other devotional groups in other worlds; only one or two still live in the old country community. Some of them have trodden the winepresses of suffering; one has traveled over much of America in search of health; the little girl who said the psalm died in adolescence. And the very program in which we participated seems to have departed as mysteriously as it came. Other things have taken its place, but somehow I still remember with joy the childish things we said and did in that long-ago time and place.
Folk Types--The Cornfield Philosopher

From the very earliest times the English people have liked a rustic philosopher; our earliest known poet, Caedmon, was reputed to have been an illiterate monk at Whitby, on the east coast of England, who retold in verse the stories of the Bible. Bede, the historian of Old English times, says that Caedmon's gift was divine, since he had no education and learning and could not even write his name. Ever since that time we have delighted to honor the wise man who somehow had acquired more wisdom than circumstances would seem to explain. Our earliest philosopher of this type was the stage Yankee, an awkward but wise young chap from the hills of New England. Just before the Civil War we had many ignorant wise men who laughed at our sectional foibles: John Phoenix, Artemus Ward, Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby. Mark Twain was a later product of this same tradition. Throughout his long literary career he drew on his knowledge of folk life; his greatest creation, Huckleberry Finn, is certainly a wise person who knows more than most of his contemporaries.

The folk philosopher of every section hates sham and often resorts to horse laughter to make all forms of hypocrisy ridiculous. In our own time no one has made more people laugh and think than Will Rogers. Until his death a few years ago Abe Martin brought us daily the thoughts and reactions of a southern Indiana farmer. Ring Lardner created a whole folk grammar for his numerous characters, many of whom could be regarded as philosophers.

Probably the wisest rustic philosophers have not yet got into print. Sitting by some village store today is a wisenacre who can ridicule sham as effectively and as
picturesquely as any literary character we have ever known. You and I have quoted these rural wiseacres all our lives, conscious that what they say in their own way is often the essence of wisdom. I can recall nothing funnier than the remarks I heard made around the stove of the general store nearly a half century ago. Few of the actual remarks would bear printing, but the wisdom behind the remarks stands out years after the philosopher has departed.

Efforts to convey the speech of the cornfield philosopher have usually resulted in unconvincing spelling. Nothing short of a recording device could catch the true tones of the philosopher. Nasal, drawling, full of picturesque and often ancient language, his sayings defy spelling and imitation. The literary characters that have been developed from this type are good, but they are still far below the reality.

Some of the wisest things I ever heard were said all unconsciously by people who were regarded as half-wits but who continued to say through a whole period of years things that probably were wiser than most of us could take in. Mark Twain's Pudd'nhead Wilson could be duplicated everywhere: his remarks were so much above the general level of intelligence that his neighbors thought him the half-wit. Tom Stone, dead now for several years, was a half-witted Negro of our neighborhood who stumbled sometimes into profound truths, apparently as blissfully unconscious of his performance as a bird is of its song. His naive remarks would fill many a column of this length and would be well worth saving from oblivion. Your neighborhood has a wise man--actual or accidental--whose words should be preserved for other people to ponder.
Folk Heroes

A whole book, and a very interesting one, could be written about the folk heroes of America as they have existed in tradition and even in literature. The frontier hunter and trapper is one of the few immortals in literature because Cooper created the Leatherstocking. But long before Cooper wrote his novels, this character had become a folk hero. Similarly, the Indian, even among the very men who had known the horrors of Indian warfare, had assumed the character of an idealized hero before he appeared in literature. Major Robert Rogers, who helped to put down Pontiac's conspiracy, wrote, within a year of that great outbreak of the Indians, a drama that glorifies the Indian almost as much as anything that has been written since then. The Pike, or professional pioneer, early became a type, though John Phoenix introduced him into literature when California was being settled. The loud-mouthed booster or teller of tall tales seems a part of the early pioneer days, so long has he been known. Early in the nineteenth century, before slavery assumed its uglier phases and before abolition was talked of, the Southern Colonel came into being and was soon turned to literary account in John Pendleton Kennedy's _Swallow Barn_. The bad man, or desperado, grew up on the borders of civilization; but he was merely a modernization of Robin Hood and many another likable outlaw. Jesse James has become for many a person in America a symbol of outraged manhood rather than outraged law. It is still easy to glorify the hunted men, regardless of his crimes. The twenty thousand people who went to "Pretty Boy" Floyd's funeral attest the appeal of this type in our own time. Our most persistent folk type is the poor boy who
overcome almost impossible conditions and become famous or rich or both. The rivers, when the steamboat or the flatboat or the raft held sway, contributed the rivermen, varying from picturesque fugitives from justice to a homely philosopher like Huckleberry Finn. And everywhere there is a typical Negro of the Jim Crow or Uncle Remus or Hammy kind, just as every neighborhood has its wiseacre. The prairies have contributed the cowboy, in many ways the best known of them all.

So much do people cherish these conceptions that it is nearly impossible to convince them that there might be a Negro unlike any of the literary portraits or a Southern plantation-owner that does not have a goatee and does not wear a slouch hat. Kentucky has several folk heroes, so far as many of the other states are concerned. Regardless of geography, Kentucky is made up of two distinct areas, if we are to believe the magazine writers; the Bluegrass, where everybody owns fine horses, and the mountains, where everybody is a hill-billy and has been a feudist. I have had considerable difficulty in trying to explain to people in distant states that these two areas are only the eastern part of a rather long state and that many Kentuckians have lived long lives without ever having seen a mountaineer or a horse race. Kentuckians themselves are often taken in by their beliefs in our typical folk conceptions. One of these folk beliefs is that Kentuckians are genuine Anglo-Saxons, whatever that might be. A very little reading of early history would show that Pennsylvania Germans and French Huguenots came in in large numbers at the very beginning of the history of our state and that any another racial element has been added since then. But history has a slight chance to overcome folk conceptions.
Folk Names for Birds

For many years I have enjoyed hearing the strange names that various birds are called in our state. Some of the queer names are just as good as the ones adopted by the American Ornithologists' Union but were rejected when that body very wisely chose popular names as well as scientific binomials and trinomials for every species of birds. The committee, I have read, had a list of over a hundred local names for the Flicker. Our own Kentucky "Yellow Hammer" is still used by many ornithologists. The whole family of Woodpeckers are called Peckerwoods throughout the state. That is the name we apply to certain inconsequential people; wouldn't it sound funny to say that some irresponsible fellow is a Woodpecker? Similarly, it is the folk name "Jaybird" that we use facetiously about people who are hardly normal. Every small yellow bird is a Wild Canary, whether it is a Goldfinch or a Yellow Warbler or many another species less well known.

Flycatchers are Pewees to the average person, just as Mynahawks are Bullbats and Chuck-will's-widows are Dutch Whip-poor-wills.

Long ago I ceased trying to keep track of folk names for Ducks. Sprigtail is a pretty good name for the Ruddy Duck, and Whistler is equally descriptive of the Wood Duck. But a Buttahall may be a dozen kinds of small, fat Ducks. I wonder how any game warden can enforce closed seasons on any species, so varying is the terminology used by hunters.

Owls and Hawks come in for many a local name. The Barred Owl, probably the most widely distributed species except the Screech Owl, is known as Hoot Owl, Laughing Owl, Hoo Owl, and so on. Even the Screech Owl appears as Scrooch and Scritch, neither a bad term when one considers its wild
notes. All large Hawks are called Hen Hawks or Rabbit Hawks. Smaller ones bear such titles as Blue Darter (Cooper's or Sharp-shinned), Little Chicken Hawk, and such like. The unfortunate thing is that all Hawks and Owls are condemned without trial and slaughtered mercilessly.

One of the astonishing things about the average person's reaction to birds is his ignoring of whole species that are often as abundant as all the other birds put together. Juncoes, commonly called Snowbirds, are usually recognized, for in earlier days they were trapped in deadfalls. The almost equally common white-throated and white-crowned Sparrows seem not to register on the average eye, or, if they do, they are called Sparrows or little brown birds. Practically everybody sees a Hawk whenever it appears; long association with the idea of Hawks and the barnyard poultry accounts for this. But on a single day one can see more Juncoes or Bluebirds or Mockingbirds than he would find Hawks in a whole season.

Besides general folk names for birds there are local or individual names that I like. One of my students did not know the Yellow-breasted Chat either by name or by sight, but because of having heard it while he was picking strawberries, he called it Strawberry Bird. Many people call any bird that makes sounds at night a Night Hawk, with no intention of confusing it with the real Nighthawk or any actual Hawk. In numerous parts of the state the Goldfinch is a Lettuce Bird; the Pied-billed Grebe is often called a Die-dapper or Die-dipper. After all, these local names are quite as good as the standard ones, but it certainly is confusing to call every small Woodpecker a Sapsucker, especially since one species already has that name officially.
Passing Institutions

Cheese and Crackers

You may talk about restaurants or cafeterias or grills or what not, but many old-timers would much prefer the county-seat grocery with its cheese and crackers, its canned oysters and pepper sauce. Now, of course, we usually took our lunch with us and ate it at the wagon on a vacant lot while the horses munched their fodder and corn; but sometimes we could spare a nickel or dime and could then indulge in a treat. Crackers were ordinarily thrown in with the purchase of cheese. One old man of my acquaintance got very angry with a grocer for charging extra for crackers. The cheese in those days, as you will still find it, came in large, round chunks; there was none of this modern stuff done up in tinfoil. It had a flavor and some body to it; disparaging critics of it sometimes called it rubber cheese, but they never knew the flavor imparted by hunger and by the rare privilege of eating what had been bought with their own money. And the crackers we used to eat differed materially from the ones we now buy; they were large, square fellows, lineal descendants of the hardtack of Civil War fame. A half dozen of these old-timers would furnish plenty of bread for a nickel's worth of cheese. This combination, with a few dipperfuls of water from the grocery bucket, furnished a square meal for any hungry boy or man. A little later a bottle of pop might be added, but I am now referring to the very old times when a nickel for cheese and crackers was great extravagance.
If one had a dime or fifteen cents to spend, the one thing he would want was a can of Cove oysters, little fellows about the size of dimes. The can was opened by the grocer and the contents poured into a deep, small bowl. Crackers were furnished free for this repast, also as was also the pepper sauce. So accustomed were we to the small canned oysters that it took me years to get accustomed to larger ones that were not canned. When I saw large shells the size of my hand, I did not believe they could have held oysters and was inclined to suspect that some one had misinformed me. But, aside from their size, there was nothing small about the ones we ate in the grocery store. The same big crackers did just as well here as when they were served with cheese; all the supply came out of a large wooden box, exposed to the elements and the insects. Somehow nothing brings up the past quite so quickly as the smell of a freshly-opened can of oysters. When we children, who were reared on chills and fever, felt a chill coming on, we knew that we could call for some delicacy of food and so used our sickest moments planning what we would ask for. One sure thing for some of us was a can of oysters, partly for the taste, I suppose, and partly because it signified luxury. The big boys might go to the county seat on court day and come back slightly puffed up with pride over having eaten a can of oysters; we who had to stay at home could get revenge by having a chill and getting our can of oysters, though I must confess I would have preferred a trip to the county seat.
Passing Institutions--Riding Behind

When riding horseback was the chief method of getting anywhere, it often fell to the lot of a younger brother or sister to ride behind an older brother or other member of the family. When one was very small, this was a thrilling experience; but after one could ride alone, it was nothing short of insult. Big Brother, with a scant two or three years start ahead of you, would be given the chief place in the saddle; you would have to cling on in your misery or stay at home. And when you got to the country store or to church, you had all the staring eyes turned in your direction. Big Brother frequently did something to attract attention to your helpless childishness, hoping thereby to attract attention to his own mature size and ways. If the saddle were one with a horn on it, after the Texas fashion, and brand-new, it was all the more humiliating to be seated behind it rather than in it.

Though greatly experienced, I still do not know the proper way to hold on while riding behind. When I got scared and grabbed my brother under the arms, I was threatened with annihilation; when I held on to the saddle, he accused me of pinching him. I felt I would surely fall if I did not hold to something. What I wanted was to reassure myself occasionally by placing my hands on the horn of the saddle in the way the big boys did.

Riding behind when the horse is smooth-gaited is not so bad; a hard-gaited horse, the kind we used to say could trot all day in the shade of a tree, just about ruined us. The big boy in the saddle could crook his legs and take out some of the jolts; our dangling legs were not braced against anything to relieve the jolt. The worst thing the rider-behind
could experience was a horse-race, in which Big Brother
desired to beat all the other boys. Though I never knew any
boy to get killed in such races, I have always feared for the
little fellows tightly clinging, regardless of the rules,
to the wild horseman in the saddle. Many a farm boy who
has never been to sea has experienced all the pitches and tosses
that a ship can make.

Pillions had disappeared before our time, I suppose,
but ladies still often rode behind, especially little girls
who accompanied their fathers to the country store. The
pillion had been replaced by an ordinary saddle blanket, but
I think that the girl who rode behind showed fine horsemanship
in being able to stay on. The rules about holding to the
prominent person in the saddle seem not to obtain here, as
something had to be allowed for womanly weakness. The
fine old custom of having the young lady ride behind her swain
was gone before our time, but I would like to have seen
it; I presume that is where back-seat driving got started.
The String Band

Since the radio has come into general use, there has been rescued from oblivion what was certainly heading in that direction, the string band. And it is gratifying to note that the bands now in existence are strikingly like those of other times. Some of the hillbilly bands that are appearing on programs are far from being the regular kind, however. A man in a distant state recently wrote me about hillbilly bands and the music to be played. He said that he had been elected the director of such a band but did not even know what instruments should be represented or what tunes should be played. He had written to several music companies but had been unable to secure any information. I sent him a list of well-known breakdowns and suggested the instruments for his band. I would like to listen in on a hillbilly band thus set up; I fear it would lack something of the twang of the old-fashioned kind that grew up spontaneously.

Now string bands may have all sorts of instruments, but the fiddle, the guitar, and the banjo are absolutely necessary. A bass viol is good, but I have seen many a string band without one. Other instruments that may be added are as follows: French harp, jews-harp, mandolin, washboard, bones, or anything else that you can find to blow or beat on. I have heard washboards that would make two or three drums ashamed of their tones; a wooden-handled fork can work wonders on a washboard. If real castanets are not available, two short sticks in the hands of an expert can keep time admirably. No hillbilly band should exist without some home-made instrument: a fiddle made from a /2 cigar box, or a banjo made from a cheese box, or some such instrument. That gives genuine flavor that "boughten" instruments sometimes fail
While breakdowns are the basic tunes to be played by a string band, any tune will do: sentimental songs, marches, patriotic airs, and religious hymns. In other words, the range of the string band is from "Pop Goes the Weasel" through "Silver Threads among the Gold" to "Sweet Bye and Bye." Every band needs a fiddler who can play his fiddle in every conceivable position, even to sawing it on the bow or playing it behind his back. He should also be able to imitate, more or less accurately, such things as chickens cackling, roosters crowing, babies crying, or cats caterwauling. One member should know how to do queer tricks; he is usually the fellow who plays the jew's-harp or knocks the bones. If he can play two or three instruments at a time, so much the better. The French-harp player ought to be able to make prolonged wails on his instrument by shifting his right hand properly. If some enthusiastic fellow forgets and calls figures for the square dance, no harm will be done.

Now you have the directions I sent the man in a distant state. How well he will succeed I do not know and am afraid to think. But the self-taught string-band virtuosos that you and I once knew and still know can take these instruments and these tunes and make our feet get "powerfully" restless and our memories amazingly accurate. New times have added a lot of high jinks to this program and have added several instruments, but these are the ones that smack of the puncheon floor or the barn dance or the picnic where a "swing," or merry-go-round, was the center of attraction.
A few weeks ago a colleague of mine celebrated
the marriage of her son by giving an infare, in the style
of long ago. Many of the guests came dressed in old-fashioned
clothing, but the one who received most attention was an
elderly gentleman who wore a linen duster and carried a cane.
The whole afternoon there flitted before my eyes visions of
of other men in linen dusters. Formerly all sorts of people
wore linen dusters to protect their Sunday-go-to-meeting
clothes, but by my time only preachers wore them. We children
had not seen any priests in robes, but the linen duster took
the place in our minds of all such regalia. We stood in
awe of this robe, probably regarding it as the badge of sanctity.
One retired preacher looked particularly patriarchal in his
duster, for he stood over six feet tall and had a long,
flowing, white beard like those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
in the big family Bible that was never read but did form a
decoration for the marble-topped center-top table and
was useful for holding pressed leaves and flowers. When the
presiding elder came, he was sure to be wearing a duster, too;
and he needed one, for the roads in summer or winter were
likely to be dangerous to the spotlessness of any kind of
dress-up clothes. I recall still the shock I felt when the
presiding elder, after an unusual denunciation of the Baptists,
rather hurried out of the church and lit a strong-smelling
pipe, to acquire a little more energy for the afternoon sermon.
It was quite the thing for the country doctor and everybody
else who represented the world, the flesh, and that other fellow
to pull on a cob pipe, but I failed to find any of the
patriarchs in the Bible pictures so engaged.
This mention of linen dusters reminds me of another institution that is passing, the circuit rider himself. Of course, the kind that rode over an area thousands of square miles in extent had practically disappeared before I could remember, but the holders of country charges still had some of the ways and illustrations of Lorenzo Dow and other famous wandering preachers. I suppose there were fat preachers, but I seem to remember only tall, angular ones, with flowing beards and piercing eyes. No wonder the wicked trembled when they spoke of the worm that dieth not! We hear much of having faith, but no group of people ever had depended more on faith than these traveling clergymen, who hardly knew a day ahead where they would be or what they should eat or what they should put on. They deserve some lasting memorial for the arduous work they did, often in rough pioneer settlements, where it was hardly safe to champion the right. Many a backwoodsman knew of the better things only through these picturesque missionaries of the faith. If they were at times rough-spoken, it seemed necessary to drive home their message to hardened hearts; if they probably affected a picturesque ness of gait or clothing, this helped to attract people to hear their messages. And thus a sight of a linen duster, lovingly preserved by the descendants of a clergyman, brought back memories of strange old times, full of dynamic forces and dynamic personalities.
Fried-Apple or Half-Moon Pies

A group of us who love to think of the old ways of doing things have worked out a menu for a dinner that certainly smacks of other times and places. Since it is not copyrighted as yet, I shall tell you about it and let you use it if you like. If there is to be soup, and of course high-class meals should have a soup course, let it be potlicker (something tells me this is not liquor, but that spelling does not seem vital). The chief course would contain turnip greens, hog's jowl, corn dodgers, home-made hominy, and buttermilk. For dessert there would be fried-apple or half-moon pies, with sauce. Now it would be proper, I know, to discuss all the dinner, but I prefer to dwell on the dessert.

Fried pies, like all good things, have a long history. First of all there is the gathering of the apples, paring them, slicing them, and laboriously drying them, by a species of foresight that can know in midsummer that fruit will be scarce in winter. After the drying season is over, little is known about the apples until late in the fall. As long as there is fresh fruit, it seems wasteful to use what is obviously for winter. Along about the time that pumpkin pies die for want of materials some fine day the family is greeted with the blessed sight of fried pies. I am not a cook and cannot tell how to prepare the apples, but I faintly remember that it is necessary to soak them over night before cooking them. After they are stewed properly, they are sweetened and seasoned. The dough is rolled out in large round pieces, just about the size of the skillet or frying pan that is to be used. The apples are placed on one side of
this dough, and the other side is folded over as a cover, the edges being pressed with the fingers or with a fork. Then two pies can be put into the skillet at once and fried in deep grease, so that the dough will be crisp. I do not know much about the cooking, but I am an expert on eating the finished product. It is not necessary to have any sauce for the first three or four; after they have been consumed, it may add a bit of enjoyment to douse the pie in some sort of spicy sweet sauce. The recipe for that is another dark secret that I do not share; my experience has always been with the finished sauce and not with its concoction. If any of you wish to revive this old delicacy, please do not write me for instructions, but you might let me know when everything is ready for action.

Now there are other kinds of fried pies, of course, for there are other dehydrated fruits, but apple pies seem to have set the standard for these things and are always to be named first. And these same pies can be baked in the oven instead of the skillet, with or without sauce to accompany them. Dried apples have other uses, too, such as furnishing after-school lunches for always-hungry children. I am not maintaining that fried pies have disappeared; I hope they have not. What I do know is that they could not occupy so prominent a place in the life of country children as they did in the time when it was nearly impossible to get fresh fruit after frost had come in the fall.
Passing Institutions--The Attic

By no means do I mean to contend that the modern home does not have several places that are gradually filling up with discarded or useless household plunder, but I think it obvious that the habit of saving everything is hardly so religiously followed as formerly. Sometimes it seems a pity that we do not recognize the value of what is now in existence and make efforts to save enough representative material to be able to reconstruct our past, whether near or remote. Every time we enter a museum, we are struck with the fact that we have let disappear many things that now would be priceless as exhibits of other times and places. It is the attic as an earlier form of museum that I wish to speak.

Some houses were large enough to afford a lumber room, where outdated things could slumber in dust and cobwebs, but for most houses this vacant space was "up in the loft." Lighted by a small window in the gable or not at all, all the things that we ought to have destroyed or given away, but didn't, live on until the old things wear out or have inroads made on them by antique hunters. Sick and afflicted furniture, clothes that have gone out of style but are still too good to burn, old files of magazines and newspapers, scraps of clothing saved from the original garments, discarded pictures in their frames and probably robbed of their protecting sheets of glass, empty fruit jars, extra quilts or blankets--but I am not called on to give an Homeric catalogue of heroes, however poetic it all might seem. Browning has Rabbi Ben Ezra say

"All that is at all lasts ever past recall."
I wonder whether Browning ever rummaged around in an old attic.

When days used to be gray, it was a habit of many children to play in the attic, among the discarded things. Dressing up in outmoded clothing was one of the surest ways to keep rainy days from becoming tiresome. Finding old mementoes often brought the whole family into the attic. The stuffy atmosphere all comes back when we remember the games of "going to see" that we played when we dressed up in Mother's or Father's old clothes and swaggered with a ponceous dignity that neither of them ever assumed during our times.

So economical were our immediate ancestors that they saved everything, regardless of its value. It has been easy, therefore, for museums and libraries to find all sorts of exhibits. Many a thing that seemingly has been lost to history in Europe has been turned up in America, where it had been lovingly preserved for a long time and then preserved, like a mummy, by being let alone for a few generations. I feel pretty certain that in Kentucky attics there are now enough authentic relics of the pioneers to make a museum larger and more interesting than any that have yet been built. Some one has laughingly said that if it were necessary to burn a witch, some one could be found who would know the correct procedure; I am equally certain that any event recorded in our history since the first days could be connected up with dust-covered but authentic things that have long reposéd in some old forsaken attic.
Folk Types--The Hillbilly

Please allow me today to defend and define the hillbilly. The radio, summer visitors to Kentucky who go away and write whole books on what the hillbilly is like, and notoriety-seekers have exploited the type until something should be done about it. That there is such a person as a hillbilly is obvious to everybody; that he is strictly a creature of our mountains or any other mountains is not true. Everywhere the type of lanky, somewhat shiftless "feller" is found. He is nowhere numerous, however, and has unfortunately been too much associated by our writers with the mountains, particularly in recent years. So eager are feature-article writers to find this strange creature that they create mountains to house him when they find him. Not long ago a metropolitan newspaper carried in its Sunday edition an account of picturesque hillbillies in the "mountains" just south of Louisville, in Hardin and Bullitt Counties. I cannot deny that the writer might have found his characters or assumed that he had found them in that area, but he needs a course in geography.

Early in our literary history this rural type of philosopher-professional pioneer received attention from several admirable writers. Baldwin and Longstreet found him in Georgia; Sidney Lanier knew him intimately in the foothills of the Great Smokies; George Horatio Derby found him plentiful on the West Coast and practically handed the type full drawn over to Bret Harte; John HAY found him in the Middle West. He has been called by numerous names: cracker, Pike, and what not. Derby's character was called a Pike, because many of the early settlers of California came from Pike County, Missouri, and
had brought their dust-covered families and possessions with them. They were nasal of talk, mighty chewers of tobacco, inclined to be lazy, in spite of their having endured the long trek from Pike. Many of Harter's characters are of this type, though most of his distinctive ones are single men, often with a past.

Since professional pioneering has ceased in the years 80s after the end of the frontier, our attention is now often directed toward the same type of person who no longer goes West or to the newest land but seeks instead the outskirts of centers of population, moving about once a year from one community to another. If there were another frontier, he would be right there with his household and his household gods; the romantic times for him must largely be a memory of what "Pop" of "Grandpa" did in the days when the West was calling.

The hillbilly may be a philosopher and often is. He has had his share of seeing the big old world and is entitled to his say. If he could really find a tongue, he could reveal why the restless of spirit have always been with us and have found new lands and new ideas on the borders of occupied territory. When the genuine hillbilly finds that life anywhere is a fine game of pioneering, he often becomes as genuine a part of our tradition as any one else; most of us have friends and relatives who have been hillbillies and who have waked up. Some of the wisest things I have ever heard were uttered, probably self-consciously, by men of this type, whose roving and shiftless habits belied the depth of their inner lives. Some day the hillbilly will discover himself in literature and will tell the world what has moved him along for ages of restless living.
Passing Institutions--Scythes and Cradles

In the summer of 1935 I visited many parts of New England and was greatly surprised to see people cutting grass with scythes and raking it with home-made wooden rakes. This experience brought back memories of other times in Kentucky, when Houd Muller might have been seen fairly often along the roads as she "raked the meadow sweet with hay." When I was a little boy, there came the first break in our neighborhood of the old-time method of cutting wheat with a cradle. Nearly every middle-aged or old man used to boast of his being able to wield the cradle gracefully or of the equally valuable ability to tie bundles behind the cradler. The break that came to our old custom occurred when a neighbor bought a reaper, with four fantastic rakes on a revolving rod, the fourth sweeping off the grain that had been cut by a moving device and that had fallen on a sort of table. Men followed along after these machines and tied the bundles. The novelty of the thing was so great that we boys trotted along after the machine until we had nearly worn out our feet on the stubbles. It was several years after this great event before any of us saw our first binder. The kind that tied the bundles with a wire had disappeared before my first experience with one, I suppose, for I recall the binder twine along with the first binder. Thus a few years in the life of one boy saw the change from the time of the patriarchs to the most modern era.

Probably a small percentage of the people now living in the state have been present at the wheat-threshing where the thresher was turned by horse power. The flail had
disappeared a generation before, as had also the custom of 
having cattle tread out the grain, as in Bible times. But 
the horse-drawn "power" was still in evidence long after I 
was old enough to teach school. I always wanted to drive the 
horses hitched to the power. The driver stood on a small 
platform, where all the beams to which the horses were hitched 
came together, and turned around and around with the machine. 
He was armed with a long blacksnake whip to urge on the less 
industrious and to give an air of activity and industry to 
the day. The speed of the power determined the speed of the 
whole thresher. The man who cut bundles was the other big 
man; it took a quick and sure hand to feed the machine and 
cut bundles at just the right speed. The man who measured 
out the cleaned wheat had a less spectacular job, and the boys 
or men who worked on the strawpile were the least envied of all. 
You see, the straw was carried away on a roller, but there was 
no way to move this around and place the straw where you wanted 
it. Men with pitchforks had to do that. If there is any 
dirtier task than working on the strawstack I have never found it. 
Hit our modern mowing machines and hayrakes we do 
in a few hours what it formerly took days of back-breaking 
labor to perform, but the picturesque land illers have dis- 
appeared. Judges can ride through the country now for days 
at a stretch without making some fair haymaker blush because 
she is barefooted at her work. And modern binders and 
threshers have destroyed the job of the driver of the power 
and the cutter of bundles, to say nothing of the fellows 
who pitch the straw as it comes from the thresher. It did 
my heart good to see that it is still possible to find the 
quint old customs of using the scythe and the cradle.
Passing Institutions--Outdated Jobs

When we consider passing institutions, we may remember only the picturesque side of customs that used to be, forgetting that every change in customs threw people out of jobs or else reduced them to a lower social rank. It is well to recall some of these important achievements that once loomed large but are now small or even forgotten. The man under a handstick at a log-rolling does not seem so important now as he did when a strong back was the measure of a man. Who of you could pilot a raft down a treacherous stream, or build an ark, or Kentucky boat? Who knows how to wield a cradle in cutting wheat or a flail in threshing it? Could you carry a corner at a house-raising or make correctly the main set of rafters for a house or barn? Can you rivet boards with a crow or hew logs for a house or other building? How many of you know how to make maple syrup or soft soap? I know that many people have lovingly kept alive the old-time processes of carrying on a house and farm, but most of us have been cut off from practice so long that we could not be sure of ourselves.

In home industries of all sorts there has been a shift of emphasis until many of the great arts of the world are likely to be forgotten by the average person. Cotton cards are museum things to nearly everybody now living; wool rolls to be spun on the spinning wheel would be a seven-days' wonder to many people under forty. Probably two-thirds of the population of the state at this very moment have never pieced quilts, and almost a hundred per cent could not know how to weave a coverlet. In other times these arts were necessities; today they are not for most of us; but there still lingers around these customs an enchantment that no amount
of modern conveniences can quite dispel.

Though almost all of our contemporaries can drive an automobile, the time was, only a few years ago, that a man who could run a steam engine was a wonder. How would you like to be called on to pilot a steamboat down the Ohio or the Mississippi, even though you may have been driving a car for years? Incidentally, wouldn't it be difficult to direct a caravan of prairie schooners across the plains in the style of the Forty-niners? A hundred years ago the clipper ship was just yielding to the steam ship, but very few are left today who could even understand the language of the old sailing vessels. To the average harbor comes occasionally a sailing vessel, often a trump $\text{??}$, smacking of the old, old times, but as strange to most of us as a raft of logs, such as the two huge ones I saw last winter.

Sometimes there are spasmodic attempts to reintroduce old-time arts, but at best we all know that these attempts are destined to a short life unless they are connected in some way with some permanent institution that can promote and protect them. I miss the sound of the spinning wheel, but I know that there is small likelihood of my hearing it again in the way I heard it as a boy. I like the taste of viens cooked on the fire, but I am content to eat what we cook when we camp out and then depend on the gas stove for the rest. One can become sentimental about these old things without losing sight of the advantages of their successors.
Folk Types--The Cowboy

Within the last few years, since the radio has assumed the role of one of the necessities in the average home, the cowboy has staged a comeback comparable with his revival a few years earlier in the movies. The actual cowboy as an institution started down hill many years ago, with the passing of free land and the making of fences on the plains. In his own time he acquired a picturesqueness that was not wholly due to his being such a prominent feature of the Wild West Circus. By the time he became a part of the circus he was already known far and wide, a quaint character who represented to thousands the very essence of romance. Cowboy songs, like "Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," were known quite as well east of the Mississippi as in actual cowboy country. Travellers to the West brought back Texas saddles, long cowhorns, and romantic stories of cowboy life. The ballad-singers and fiddlers lent their aid in making the cowboy a part of our folk music. There has probably not been a single year since the opening of the West when it would not have been possible to see a sombrero at any typical county court gathering in Kentucky and neighboring states. Even the smallest boys of my childhood had to have a Texas saddle.

During the heyday of the circus and the early forms of moving pictures the cowboy was effective chiefly as a picture, still or moving. The radio and the talking pictures have brought again the cowboy song, long known and loved by plain people before these inventions were made. Actual cowboy songs appear on many programs: "Roll On, Little Dogies," "Shoopse ti yi yo, Get Along Little Dogies," and the like.
Very rapidly there have grown up other songs based on these genuine cowboy ballads, so that it is already pretty hard to tell the one from the other. The way in which a cowboy song is given makes it effective or not; a too melodious rendition, as if it were an extract from grand opera, is too much. There should be enough freedom in a cowboy song to suggest, at least, something of the crude but genuine music of the cowhands.

By a process of selection and combination a modern musician has brought much of the spirit of cowboy songs into "I'm Heading for the Last Roundup." A casual turning through Dr. John A. Lomax's Cowboy Songs and Ballads, a collection of genuine songs made by the author some thirty years ago, will show that this now popular song echoes three well-known cowboy classics: "Goodbye, Old Paint, I'm Leaving Cheyenne," "Get Along Little Dogies," and "The Great Roundup." The cowboy yells or wails, resembling the "hollers" of the Negroes, appear in many of the actual and artificial songs.

The actual and literary cowboy have become so confused that it is difficult to distinguish them. Owen Wister's Virginian and Theodore Roosevelt are equally valid cowboys. Will Rogers for many years combined the achievements of the cowboy and the rustic philosopher and was about as typical a product of the frontier as any one can imagine. How long the cowboy will outlast the range there is no way of knowing, but right now he is one of our best-known and best-liked folk types and is acquiring permanence in song and story.
Folk Types--The Poor Boy Who Became Famous

Probably our most persistent folk type is the poor boy who became famous. Some of our great men have come from humble homes; that was a fact too good to be forgotten. The politician seized upon this and has used it effectively ever since our earliest days. Even scholarly people have been led to overlook the fact that many of our great men have been of excellent origin, financially and socially. Even Lincoln was never the very poor man he was pictured in the campaigns; he was of average origin and had made himself by middle life an equal in scholarship with the most highly favored. The fence rails used in his first campaign were so much political bunk; many another man, famous or not, had made rails, whether he was poor or rich. Many people who have had above-average backgrounds have preferred to be ranked among the very poor for the prestige it would give. The people of the South have sometimes met this strange difficulty by describing their poverty, in spite of their aristocratic talk, and then attributing it to the Civil War. There is certainly much truth in this, but the funny thing is the assumption that one must boast of the poverty from which he has risen to eminence in the business of professional world. This folk type has greatly captivated us and made us magnify poverty a bit too much.

The poor boy who became famous is another version of Cinderella; Lincoln studying by the fire is just another Cinderella among the ashes. A similar story found everywhere is the one that tells how a younger brother, inheriting nothing except hard luck, makes a way for himself, rescues his older brothers or other members of his family from disgrace.
or danger, and then marries a princess. Since America has had prominent people in every age who have risen much above their surroundings, it makes one think that the folk are not always wrong in their idealizations. From Alexander Hamilton down we have had great statesmen who inherited poor chances. In other spheres it is even more true: a Scotch immigrant grows up to be Andrew Carnegie, the multimillionaire philanthropist; another Scotch boy becomes John Muir, the great naturalist; a French lad turns out to be John James Audubon, the artist-ornithologist; a reckless boy from Hannibal, Missouri, becomes Mark Twain, a sort of glorification of the poor boy who became famous. Mark Twain walking down an aisle to have an honorary degree conferred by a great English university, or James Whitcomb Riley living to have his birthday celebrated in the schools of Indiana, is about the same of this tradition.

Not long ago I heard in a radio address Miss Selma Lagerlof, the aged Norwegian novelist, say that as a child she firmly believed that the rivers in America flow over sands of gold. Many another European believed things as wonderful of America, and for generations the poor immigrants came, expecting to find their pot of gold at the end of the American rainbow. It is a mistake to suppose that this dream has vanished. Within this very year I have had students whose parents came to America after 1900 in search of the same opportunity that drove the earlier generations across the Atlantic. The folk dream that we may seem a bit faded to us of long standing in America, but it is a dominating force right now in the lives of thousands who are seeing their children in America realize what Europe was unable to offer.
Some Burial Customs

Burial customs are among the most persistent things we know. Many people will not sweep under the bed of a sick or dying person, for fear that such a deed will hasten death. Mirrors are turned to the wall in the room or house where a dead body is lying, and a picture of the dead person is likely to be swathed in many layers of cloth or turned to the wall. It is thought that the person who sees himself in the mirror while the corpse is still in the house will be the next to follow. I have never known it to happen, but taking a corpse out of a house head first would be regarded by most people as a major calamity. Just how far back into the past this custom of removing the corpse from the house goes back no one knows; it is probably as old as any form of house.

In some Kentucky neighborhoods that I have known the pallbearers ride in the wagon with the coffin, seated three on each side. The custom of filling up the grave in the presence of the whole family is gradually disappearing in many sections; a few months ago I was present at a funeral where the family left, but the neighbors remained to help in their turn at filling the grave. On one occasion I saw the grave filled by the pallbearers: what makes me remember it is that I was one of them, and the day was exceedingly warm.

A custom that I have not heard of in recent years was that of having the funeral many months or even several years after the burial. I have attended such, but that was a long time ago. Just how this custom started I do not know; it probably grew out of pioneer times, when the roads were bad or the weather would not permit a long service in the open air.
or the poorly-heated churches. It was customary to hold a brief service when the burial took place, but the funeral often lasted a whole day, with dinner on the ground. Julie, a Negro who worked for us, came one Monday to do the washing. In a towering mood. The day before, the funeral of her mother, Aunt Nilly, had been held at Mt. Zion. Julie and Lucy, her sister, had made many preparations for the event, including the slaughter and barbecuing of a sheep. When the dinner was spread out, after the morning services, some rude boys of color made a dive for that mutton and soon had it reduced to bones. There was also some sliced-potato pie, a gallon and a half of it, said Julie, that disappeared quite as mysteriously. She and her sister, not to mention all the children and the relatives, were completely left out. That seems a comic version of a funeral, but those of white people sometimes were not vastly different.

Sitting up with the dead is still a live custom, though hardly so common as formerly. I have seen it made a delightful or even gay occasion, with plenty of food for a midnight lunch and a good yarn-spinner to enliven things. In some families I have known this custom has been given up very reluctantly. In its way it was a neighborly thing, designed to show respect. If the young people who came were not always sad, we must remember that it was not their sorrow. They often took this custom as well as others as their proportionate share of the responsibilities and duties of their neighborhood.
Everywhere the Southern Colonel is known; a few deft strokes of the pen can reveal him: slouch hat, goatee, mustache, dignity, love of good horses. I strongly suspect him a lineal descendant of Sir Roger de Coverley and of Uncle Sam, another folk type of ours. The type must have been known in the earliest years, when actual country gentlemen came from England to America and renewed their former life, this time along the James River rather than in rural England. The type does not seem to have been discovered by literary men until 1832, when John Pendleton Kennedy, a native of Maryland who often visited in Tidewater Virginia, created several Southerners in his novel Swallow Barn. Colonel Tracy, an easy-going, courteous gentleman, with a fondness for lawsuits, owns a plantation house near Swallow Barn and dispenses hospitality to the little world around him. Colonel Herewether, the other outstanding Southern gentleman of the book, is younger but has many of the same characteristics. There are also two old-fashioned lawyers who figure in the story, lawyers such as could be found only in the Old South. Since Kennedy's time the type has been so well known and regarded that it is almost dangerous for a literary man to assume that there might be other kinds of Southern gentlemen, before the war or since.

This early form of the Colonel was picturesque without being in any way pathetic; it remained for Thomas Nelson Page and other writers of a generation ago to add to this accepted portrait by showing the Colonel in his poverty and disappointment after the war. Page very deftly does this by having a faithful old slave tell how great a man his old master was. Irvin Russell, from the Far South, also let the
old slave tell of grand old times in the plantation house.
This variation of the type has now become the accustomed one.
The Colonel of our childhood had served in the Confederate
Army; he may have been an officer or not, but by my time all
living Confederates were regarded as officers. Almost before
we realized that a great institution was passing, the
Confederate soldier was almost non-existent.

But the type continues, in tradition and in literature.
Actual men who look like the conventional type are few
and have never been so numerous as people from other sections
would imagine. Somehow, however, most people ignore the
ninety and nine who have other features and recall only the
one that lives up to the type that tradition has built.

Occasionally we see a younger man, a generation or two
younger than the men who fought with Lee, who consciously or
unconsciously looks the part. Three days before I wrote
these very words I saw a man who could not have been born
earlier than 1870 who seemed to have stepped right off the
battlefield of Shiloh or Manassas. In a large public
assembly he attracted more attention than the occasion that
brought nearly a whole city together. I looked at him
when I should have been listening to a thrilling program;
he seemed to live up completely to the traditional
conception of the Southern Colonel, gaucho, slouch hat,
eagle eyes, and all.
What Is Folklore?

Often I am asked "What is folklore?" The term is capable of many interpretations, like the word literature. Folklore may mean, in a larger sense, any knowledge or learning pertaining to the folk, that is, to people collectively. The ordinary limitation placed on the term makes folklore relate to traditional customs, habits, language, songs, industries, and the like. That is, folklore is any knowledge that is transmitted unconsciously or unofficially from generation to generation. Many forms of learning have long been standardized, so that they are hardly to be called folklore any longer, but originally everything we knew could have been so classified.

When language, for instance, became standardized sufficiently for dictionaries to be made, the folk elements became less important than they were in the days when everything one knew about speech had been handed down traditionally by word of mouth. But even in language there are still many things that are of the folk. Not everybody is educated; not everybody knows or cares about a standardization of pronunciation. Hence mistaken notions, often rather naive ones, are forever at work, changing the nature even of language. Slang is one such thing forever influencing standard speech; memories of old words and old meanings also have much to do with the most up-to-date language. What used to be true in language is still forever shaping the effect of present-day language. Words that have long been used have meanings other than the standard ones, meanings that are forever coloring what we try to say. The poet knows this and has capitalized it as an idea; his words are quite often the ones that will bring most emotions to a large number of people.
Many people are wrong in supposing that folklore is wholly a part of ignorant or outlandish people. The reason why such people are often studied is that they preserve longer and more untouched the customs and traditions of an earlier age. Every custom, whatever its status today, was once held by the high and mighty as well as the lowly. The style that was the very latest thing in one generation remains in a remote place in the next generation as a leftover and comes to be regarded as folklore. Whatever becomes customary and is transmitted orally is folklore. If you would check up on your own customs, you would find that a large part of every one is traditional; that is, you did not consciously form your habits on certain standard types of conduct or action. You and I, regardless of our educational status, are daily shaping our lives by what is customary far more than by what we have read in books or thought out for ourselves.

In addition to oral transmission of what has never been written down there is another type of folklore that deals with knowledge that has been learned from books but reshaped by the folk. Many a song, in other days, was composed and published in the regular fashion; then it drifted away into the remote corners of the world without the aid of print and had an independent life for generations, just like other songs that were originally of the folk and were never printed. Learning could not be called universal even today; the opportunities for oral transmission of our knowledge are numerous. Folklore, then, includes both the original folk thinking and the reaction of the folk to what was originally conscious and deliberate learning.
Why Do Institutions Pass?

"The earth does move," said Galileo, and he was right. Just about the time we think everything is settled, Columbus, or some other dreamer, comes along and unsettles everything. Sometimes the change is for the better; sometimes it is not; usually it is merely different. There always comes a time of adjustment after each change, when some cling to the old, some accept the new, and the rest of us half between the new and the old, reluctant to change. Memory attaches to what we knew and did when we were young. Probably this causes most of the ache we feel at giving up the old for the new. At all ages of the world, because of the reactions to change, there have been left-overs from time long past. No new idea takes the world by storm; the world is too much accustomed to spell-binders of all sorts to accept all they say. Suppose, to borrow a geological figure, we could be living in a world where saurians were roaming the jungle, where saber-toothed tigers and mammoths were fighting for supremacy, where cave men abounded—and, at the same time, where aeroplanes were flying over the ocean, where scientific expeditions were setting out to hunt saurians and photograph them instead of merely finding their petrified eggs, and where kings of the Cannibal Islands were voyaging to distant lands in submarines. Though these things may not happen in a normal world, something similar is forever going on. There are living fossils in our language that were supposedly dead before William the Conqueror crossed the English Channel. There are customs so much older than recorded history that all of men's records look recent.

In spite of the numerous left-overs, we all can see that the years following the Civil War and our time brought
more changes than any similar period of history. The breakup of the old plantation system had much to do with this; the westward movement was another contributing cause. The industrial revolution, though older than Civil War times, did not make itself felt in every section until the end of free land, along about 1890. Popular education is also responsible for the rapid standardization of our lives. From one-room school, with a teacher barely an eighth-grade graduate, to the modern four-year high school and a college or university graduate for a teacher we have progressed in Kentucky within a quarter of a century. Then transportation has wiped out old lines, so that it is not at all unusual for the remotest country people to have traveled entirely across the continent, people, too, whose immediate ancestors did well to know places fifty or sixty miles away. Wherever people have gone, they have acquired new ideas and have thus loosened their hold on their old ways. Standardization of vehicles, of speech, of customs, of food, and almost of thought has made it rather hard on customs that were peculiar to a certain locality or to a certain family. The remotest places of the world are closer now by radio than the county seat used to be; it would be hard to find a neighborhood where some one could not tell you the very latest news, American or foreign. All of this conduces to a different set of habits, from wearing clothes like all the rest of the world to setting your clock with the time announced over the radio rather than by a shadow cast on the kitchen floor.
The house I live in is made of yellow poplar; the sills, the studding, the sheathing, the basic floors, the weatherboarding. Only such things as the window sashes and the doors are of any other wood. I need not tell you that my house is a left-over of other times, when good poplar lumber such as is found in this house was easy to buy; in fact, almost any community in most of the state could have built a house like this right from the woods around the house itself. Our tulip tree, commonly called yellow poplar, was and is one of our most distinctive trees. Everything pertaining to it brings pleasant memories: the beautiful leaves, the tulip-like flowers, the straight trunks, the gorgeous autumn colors, the freshly-sawed lumber, the smell of the sawdust, the shavings from the planing mill, the light sticks of stovewood, the finished planks. This sounds like a Walt Disney catalogue, but many of us have lived through that very range of knowing the tree and its wood. I believe most of us would agree that the yellow poplar is our most distinctive tree. It has played a very important part in the history of our state and ought to continue to do so.

But here comes a sad note that must creep in: most of our valuable tulip trees are gone, some to make lumber, others to furnish stovewood, and hundreds of others just to clear the land. Men of my generation have burned enough yellow poplar logs to suffer some sort of punishment in the hereafter. Nine, big logs were rolled together and burned just as readily as if they had been brush or stumps. And
as a result of this long-continued destruction, our
great groves of poplars are gone and are not likely to be
replaced in our time. Here and there in the state, largely
in inaccessible or almost inaccessible places, there are
still to be found some fine trees, but the modern methods of
destroying forests are quite as efficient as the older ways.
Not yet have we realized the greatness of our loss. If any
of you decided to build a house of yellow poplar, you would
soon find it almost as expensive as one of rosewood. Even
assuming that you might find the lumber, it would take a
king's ransom to pay for the material. A few days ago I
bought some yellow poplar to make a ladder and had to pay as
much as a load of sawed poplar planks would have cost when
the century was only a few years old. If a large number of
land-owners would resolve right now to protect their stands
of yellow poplar, twenty years from now there would be a
potential gold mine in even small groves of this excellent
tree. This passing-institution article has turned out to
be one on conservation, but it probably has shown why some of
our most valuable institutions have passed, when they should
have remained to bless us and our descendants.
Tourists who go to the North Woods to spend a summer vacation are always greatly impressed with the log cabins from these cabins for rent; they can never know, however, what our native log houses were like. For ages the log house was the standard American type; great English artists have declared that we have not yet developed a type of building so distinctive as this. It grew up as naturally as the sod or the adobe houses did in the West. Most of the eastern part of America was heavily wooded. The trees were in the way of farming operations and had to be removed. Other building materials were largely unknown. Hence the log house grew up right in the forest, about as much a part of the woods as the trees themselves.

The most primitive log cabin was a mere pen, with a pent roof or with a regular roof held down by poles. When time and energy permitted, other pens were added, until a whole series appeared. A primitive way of erecting these pens was one behind the other. A more pretentious house had a two-story front, with a one-story pen behind. In the milder climates it early became fashionable to build two pens some distance apart, leaving an open passage, or "dog trot." In recent years it had become fashionable to board up this passage and make another room. The standard aristocratic log house consisted of two rooms in front with a hall, closed or open, between, and with an L at the back, sometimes with another open passage between the front and the kitchen. Very aristocratic houses had an upstairs identical with the front, but I do not recall having ever seen a two-story L.
The log house touched on the grounds of poetry at many places. The very idea of a house built right from the forest was poetic; often the big woods came up literally to the door. The actual building of the log house brought neighbors together in a day or two of hard work seasoned with festivity. House-building came to be a community affair, full of the poetry of neighborliness. The chinking and daubing of the log house took a long time and again became poetic; the chinking came out of the woods; the daubing was mud from the immediate vicinity, with lime if it could be had. Hundreds of houses, though, were as innocent of line for the mud as they were of imported furniture. The roof was another product of the forest, rived out of blocks with a frow, another institution now strangely vanished for much of the state. The primitive furniture and the puncheon floor, later succeeded by one of sawed planks, again came out of the surrounding forest. Very old people used to tell me of what they called a "Jacob," a primitive bed made by driving a stake into the ground and building up a platform of poles, on which the straw bed and feather bed could be placed. A very old man used to tell how far his father and mother came up in the world by saying that they started housekeeping with only a Jacob for a bed. After the house was finished, the forest was called on again, this time to furnish wood to warm a small part of the area enclosed by the logs.

The old log house is among the treasures we have lost for more comfortable, if less picturesque, things. When you see an old tumbled-down shack today, try to remember how it must have looked when it rose like a new plant, right in the primitive woods.
Some years ago I heard a good actor give several readings from Abraham Lincoln's writings. In order to make the readings more effective, he dressed in clothing that was stylish at the time of the Civil War. The long shawl that he wore in lieu of an overcoat attracted more attention than any other feature of the performance. Few of us had seen a man dressed in a shawl, though many had seen an old shawl or two that had been worn by earlier men. If a man were to appear on our streets today with a huge shawl around his shoulders, we would call the health physician and see what new mental aberration had developed in our town. But there was a time when such a wrap was quite as stylish as the traditional raccoon coat of the Eastern colleges still is.

And there were shawls for ladies, too. Every old lady of my earliest memories wore a shawl folded over her shoulders in the cold weather. I have known some old ladies who had no other winter wrap. These shawls varied greatly in size, but most that I saw were black or dark in color.

The shawl that I recall with most pleasure was the one that had wrapped the babies for a big family. It was white, with occasional black threads. It could be folded until it would fit the snug little bundle popularly known as the young hopeful. Since it had kept ten children warm, it must have been made of good material. Long after the youngest was grown, the old shawl was still good, and, when I last saw it, it was serving in the place of a blanket for the eighth or tenth grandchild.
Baby blankets as we now them are of recent origin. I will admit that they are pretty things and of various designs. But they lack some of the lasting qualities of the old shawls.

Isn't it strange that about a generation ago we suddenly decided that what had been done was all wrong? We painted over the wood-carvings, utterly ruined the old Seth Thomas clock with varnish or paint, sold the beds we had inherited, and allowed to disappear without leaving a trace just about every distinctive thing that our ancestors had prized and had slaved to acquire. Then we gradually learned how foolish we had been. Now we run to sales and gather spider webs in attics to see old things that only the moneyed can afford. Some of these days, though, some of our descendants will start rummaging for the front-porch settees we used to the make of the headboard and footboard of a discarded bed. Who knows but that a reconditioned T model Ford may come to have the same kind of value as that we now associate with walnut and cherry furniture and old-fashioned mirrors?
Passing Institutions—Going to Town Oct. 10, 1936

No globe-trotter can ever know the thrill of travel that we experienced when we used to go to the county seat.

Measured by modern standards, the town was not far away, ten miles or so, but it was a major event in the farm home when we decided on making such an adventurous trip. If we were going in the wagon, it was necessary to rise before day, like the virtuous woman of the Proverbs, and make our preparations. Sometimes we would be a mile or so from home when the sun rose, eager to get into the strange lands beyond the range of hills that formed our usual boundaries.

The actual going was an adventure, though it seemed small in comparison with the arriving. There were strange people and horses along the way, there were crops to inspect, there were woods to drive through, where we might see and hear a ruffed neeze. We always stopped at the spring at the foot of the big hill to water the horses or at the church half way to town to get a drink from the cistern. After a few miles we would be in strange territory; from there on it was like travelling in another world. Six or eight miles from home we could hear the "cars," as older people called the train; the horses "picked up" their ears and proceeded along like the war horse of the Bible that senses battle from afar. By and by we topped the big hill and saw the county seat sprawled over a series of small hills, with the railroad at their base. Now we wished an "old train" would come by while we near it, though it scared us nearly as badly as it did the horses. The dog, if he had ventured along with us, discreetly got under the wagon as we drove across the railroad and up the street to the vacant lot where we were to leave.
our wagon and team. No brass band turned out to welcome us, but just such groups kept the town going, for every farmer and his family sooner or later drove in to buy such necessaries and luxuries as the farm could not produce.

Now the big day began. We unhitched our team and tied them to the wagon wheels. We joined other parties of shoppers and went "up town." We purchased repairs for the plows, extra horse collars or yokes, plowlines, and other farm necessities. If the women folks had come along, they bought shoes and clothes galore. If there was a stand being operated near the square, we indulged in the extravagance of a glass of pink lemonade around. At noon we strolled shame-facedly back to the wagon, fed our horses, and ate our lunch. Surely we stayed up town and ate cheese and crackers or oysters. After noon we put the finishing touches to our shopping, and then started home to tell of the great adventures. A last purchase was sure to be a sack of bananas as a sort of peace offering to those who could not come with us. Full of excitement and talking loudly, we drove out of town and on across the hills, keeping up our spirits as long as we were in strange territory but getting rather listless and sleepy after that until we saw home and began to organize the events of the day to overwhelm the others with envy. "And so to bed," as Pegs would say, to dream about the great things we had seen at town. And for weeks afterwards we would imitate some of the queer people we had seen and tell how Old Peg got scared at the train.
In the spring of 1931 I delivered a high school commencement address in a small town rather far away from the centers of population. At the conclusion of my address several people came around to speak to me, a custom that I greatly like. One sweet-faced old lady who greeted me wore a fancy bonnet, the first one I have seen since I was a child. Just what the other people looked like I have forgotten; that fancy bonnet brought back such a host of memories that I did not care to mar them by recalling how Amy or John was dressed or what Jim or Tom said. There passed before me in memory many other sweet-faced old ladies in fancy bonnets, old ladies who long ago left us for other worlds. Even when I was a child, the fancy bonnet was a sort of passing institution, since only a few women in any given neighborhood would own one. All the faces that I can recall under the fancy bonnets were peaceful and inclined to be sad, with a strange feminine elegance and grace not always found in people of any age. Life had dealt about all it was to deal to them; they had reared their families and had often buried the major portion of their sons and daughters; but life at its hardest could not take away the look of repose that they had inherited or had acquired. 

Many of you will not know what a fancy bonnet is or was. I fear I cannot describe one, as my knowledge of such things is hardly professional. Ask the oldest people you know to describe one or to get one from the treasure-chest in the family attic.

And the snow that is lying on the ground as I write
reminds me of another form of headgear that must have passed away in the last twenty years, the fascinator. When we used to go to the old country school in winter, every girl wore a fascinator, draped over her head and wound around her neck a time or two. When we boys went hunting in the snow, we often borrowed an old fascinator to keep our ears warm. I wonder now how my neck used to be tender when few people of our time wrap up so warmly. I suppose that since we have lost off red flannels, we have toughened up a bit.

The winter of 1933-36, as you know, was very severe. Ear-muffs appeared often, more than I had seen in the previous twenty years. Some of the college boys very appropriately went bareheaded in the zero weather, but sometimes they added a pair of ear-muffs to make up for the top exposure. I was reminded of the oldish boy when I used to go to school with, who used to wear his ear-muffs in any sort of winter weather, even when he walked across the campus with his girl. Some one suggested that these ear-muffs ought to be part of the museum of the school.

And that reminds me of another thing. Most of the men of my generation have ears that stand out to catch the passing breeze. Younger men rarely have such outstanding ears. If any one wishes to make an investigation of this strange phenomenon, let me answer all your questions at once. The boys wore caps that we pulled down over our ears, or with our ears, I had better say. A few months each year in such cramped positions would make any ears lean forward. Since caps that pull down have ceased to be common, ears have a tendency to stand in a less obvious position.
Superstitions about Modern Inventions

It is erroneous to suppose that superstitions adhere only to things that used to be; some of the most persistent ones I have known have grown up around our most modern things or were transferred from previous articles. Screens came slowly into use in rural Kentucky some thirty-five years ago. I have heard much discussion about the disadvantages of screens, such as their keeping out the air. One old man of Warren County said that if the Lord had wanted screens, He would have made them. For a long time many houses had screens only around the kitchen and dining room, leaving the bedrooms free for the air and the mosquitoes. The telephone also went into every community not long after 1900. A friend and neighbor of ours would not allow the telephone line to cross his farm for fear the electricity would injure his crops. Another one told me that thecorn under a telephone line was very poor; he forgot to notice that the soil in that area of the field was a poor kind of yellowish clay, good chiefly for brick-making or, less business-like, for making mud pies. An old lady I once knew thought the singing of the telephone wires was the sound of voices going over the wire and regretted that she did not have her telephone box so she could hear what was being said.

The automobile has brought along plenty of superstitions, probably the most used of which is the idea that it is good luck to touch one while it is motion. Then anti-freeze preparations were first introduced, dozens of people
refused to buy them, fearing they would ruin their cars. I have known many people to put their cars up for the winter or else drain the radiator after each necessary use of the car in bad weather.

The radio, the last great invention to attain to almost universal use, is already attracting to itself numerous superstitions. When there was a severe drought in 1950, a farmer who owns some three hundred acres of good land asked me seriously whether I supposed that radios had anything to do with the drought. What should I have told him? The very mystery of the radio accounts for some of this superstitious fear, but apparently that alone does not account for the queer ideas held everywhere about the invention.

A Negro woman whom we once employed, not many years ago, was afraid of the "electrous" iron; she would use it, but her eyes would bug out when it popped on or off. She much preferred one that had no machinery inside it. One old lady I have heard of swore she could smell the electricity and was afraid to touch the iron or the cord.

Checks are dangerous things to many ignorant people. It is nearly impossible to pay some hired people in anything but coin of the realm. But I have noticed that when a person has accepted a check and has successfully cashed it, he rather likes the idea of having another one. A check gives one an importance; it contains one's name and requires the same name written on the back. The man who merely makes his mark is seldom honored by having such attention paid him; hence the importance of having your name written in such a prominent place as on a check.
Stereotyped Habits

One of the distinctive things about civilization is its tendency to find new ways of saying and doing things. Primitive people everywhere do and say things according to formulas. While you and I have many set ways, such as our greetings, our farewells, our begging of pardons, our opening or closing letters, we are not hedged in with so many stereotyped customs as formerly. "I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same." "I sent myself and take my pen in hand to write you a few lines," etc. "I beg, Sir, to remain, Your most obedient servant." "Yours of the 5th inst. rec'd and contents duly noted." "Your esteemed favor at hand; will say in reply." How many stereotyped ways of expressing plain things all of us could name, such as the samples given here! So fixed were these ways that an acquaintance of mine wrote his aunt: "Dear Aunt Mary, I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know that we are well and hope you are the same except that Sister died last night and Mother is in the hospital with blood poison." That was the extreme of stereotyped expression, but it resembled many another experience I have had. A colored boy who used to take the mail passed the crew at work on the country road. There were five or six groups at various places. To each group he said, with exactly the same tone and with the same bow: "Good morning, gentlemen."

In other ways besides language we formerly had definite ways of doing things, so definite that one hardly
dared take any liberties with them. A certain thing called for a certain bow, a certain intonation, a certain facial expression. When we used to speak pieces in the country school, we started each speech and ended it with a bow, intended to be graceful. It has been ages since I saw such a bow. The bow at the end is now "I thank you," meaning little more or little less than the stiff bow we used to give.

The stereotyped order of doing things became habitual with most of us, so habitual that I still think when I try to peel an orange or an apple differently from the way I learned as a child. Oranges were cut around from stem to bloom and in six places, not five or four or seven. The peeling was removed by beginning at the stem end and peeling down. Then the sections were removed one at a time and eaten thus. I can recall how strange it seemed the first time I saw an orange cut crosswise; there seemed to be something radically wrong about the proceeding. In peeling an apple we were taught to start at the bloom end and peel around, not lengthwise. Then I tried to peel an apple otherwise, I was reminded that canned fruit did not look good unless it had been peeled around rather than from end to end. An apple, as every one knows, cannot keep its appearance, anyway, without some sort of treatment given it in canning. Why it was wicked to peel fruit otherwise I never learned; I strongly suspect that there was a superstition about a right and a wrong way of doing it. So common is this style of peeling apples and so unusual is it to cut an apple crosswise that

Not ten per cent of the people who read this column could be sure how many cells there are in an apple core; guess, and then see how accurate you have been.
Folk Types—The Scout

Very soon after the first colonies were planted along the Atlantic coast, daring men penetrated farther into the wilderness and became our first frontiersmen or scouts. We sometimes think that the frontier was a thing of the West, forgetting that upstate New York and the hill areas of New England were genuine frontiers long before Kentucky and Tennessee were known by name. The earliest frontiersmen were likely to be scouts, daring explorers or hunters or trappers off on the edge of civilization. James Fenimore Cooper drew this type from real life as it appeared in New York early in the 19th century. So nearly like the later Western scout was the Leatherstocking that it was easy to transfer this Easterner to the West to die in old age. Thus Cooper's scout lived long enough to typify the frontier from central New York to what is now Missouri and Iowa.

For years the attire of the scout was a thing that attracted attention, just as the later cowboy influenced the dress of many a person who had never seen a ranch. The scout's leather breeches, with fringe, his coonskin cap, his long rifle, his flowing locks—all appeared in real life on and off the frontier. Visitors to Kentucky within a few years after the early settlements always mentioned the long hair of the frontiersmen.

Very early the scout became a restless wanderer, appearing successively on the new frontiers. Many a man who was born in upstate New York migrated to the Ohio valley and then on to the Far West, stopping for a few years at practically every border line between the wild and the settlements. Daniel Boone was such a scout, dying in the country across the
The conventional scout and the actual often blended. Then the scout realized how much advertising value he had, he was not slow to take advantage of it. It is nearly impossible, in the autobiography of William H. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," to pick out the personal experiences of the author from what was expected of him by the admiring public. Buffalo Bill was in many ways the last of the long line of scouts, living down into our own time and reintroducing the scout to the places where he had vanished as a lost institution. Kit Carson was almost equally romantic but did not live to cash in on his picturesqueness. So typical were they of their class that one hardly knows whether to regard them as real men or as abstractions wrought out by more than two hundred years of the American imagination.

As the frontier vanished, even in the days of Cody and Carson, the type gradually blended with other types on or near the borders of civilization. In the plains country the scout easily became a cowboy; in thinly settled areas he often fell into the class of professional pioneers, or Pikes; his experience as a scout often helped him to be valuable in urban centers as a sort of business man. Today the real type is gone, never to return; his descendants may make good forest rangers or government surveyors or hunters in foreign lands for rare animals or plants. Not the scout of the Buffalo Bill type would seem as unreal today as a beaver den across the stream in your pasture.
Folk Typos--The Desperado

The American bad man is the lineal descendant of Robin Hood, Dick Sheppard, and Jack Hilton, all famous in English tradition and English literature. Often he is excused for his exploits, sometimes because he first suffered wrong at the hands of his neighbors or the government. It was a bold, bad man, even though a fanatic, who gave his name as a watchword to the Civil War. John Brown, trained on the frontier, became for millions the incarnation of the spirit of freedom; how deeply his "soul goes marching on" was shown by the great popularity of Benet's poem "John Brown's Body" a few years ago. Jesse James represented to many people all the attractiveness of desperado life, "life in the greenwood," as it would have been in Robin Hood's day. I fear that many identified him with the losing cause and glorified him accordingly. The folk ballads about Jesse James are a bit puzzling to us, with their account of Jesse's nobility and his exploits:

"Jesse was a man, a friend to the poor, He never would see a man suffer pain; And with his brother Frank he robbed the Chicago bank, And stopped the Glendale train."

Psychologically it has been easy for the Americans to find themselves in sympathy with such lawless men, for many of our earliest settlers were officially the enemies of the law and proud of the fact. The Pilgrim Fathers were certainly averse to being regarded as people whom the law had barred. It became for them and others a glory that they had suffered, like the early Christians, at the hands of cruel governors. But another group sought out the "land of the free" to escape
cruel punishments at the hands of constituted authority. Hosts of individual pioneers were sold outright for a period of slavery because of their political activities in several unsuccessful revolts against what they regarded as the tyranny of rulers. Redemptioners, as they were called, were common in many of the colonies. Every substantial family of later times owes its American origin to those men who worked out their term of servitude for opposing injustice. So eager have we been to make out a clean bill of health for all our pioneers that we have forgotten to be truthful and just when we consider this large element in our early national life. For instance, one of the proudest counties in the state bears the name of a pioneer who served out his term of slavery in New England, became prominent there, and then moved to Kentucky, where he rose to high office and wealth. His son served as a high officer in the Confederate Army; his original holdings are today still guarded in part to the tomb where he lived, since he gave land for the railroad depot and for a city park.

This hold, bad man is still alive as an influence, as was shown in recent times by the throng that crossed the plains to attend the funeral of Pretty Boy Floyd and the crowd that rushed up to dip their toes'kerchiefs in the blood of John Dillinger. I have no figures on the output of dime thrillers on Jesse James, Buffalo Bill, and others; but I imagine that any youth of today has lustfully read hair-raising tales of bad men and secretly resolved to steal away to Starwood Forest to join Robin Hood or else go out West and hunt a few buffaloes and Indians.
Parents and Children

It takes no inventive to tell us that children have called their parents by many names within the lifetime of the present generation. Nearly a century ago Pa and Ma, or Da and Da, probably would have had most votes. Father and Mother have had a steady group of adherents throughout several generations, but in general they have probably suggested more dignity than most children liked. The desire to be Frenchified brought Paps and Mammy, accented at first on the second syllable. Good Americans quickly changed the accent and developed the time-honored Pappy and Mammy, what hundreds of my generation called their parents.

With the growth in democracy has come a companionship between parents and children that is reflected in the term Daddy. No suitable opposite for this has been found as yet; many children who say Daddy say mother, others say Mama. There is needed a word that suggests a pal such as Daddy does.

Each of these words has or has had a series of connotations, so that hearing a person call his parents' names is usually sufficient to place him, in time if not otherwise. For instance, one could hardly expect Papa to have any dirty work to do. To say that "Papa chews tobacco" would be shocking. Now it would be different with Pappy. The Old Man is not degraded, but he is the parent, fond or otherwise, of a son who he supports at college or elsewhere. The Governor is likewise the parent of a sport, sometimes a good companion of his.

Speech, writing, and "every other creature," as St. Paul would say, is influenced by these terms of endearment.
In old lady who, like Holmes's aunt, has had all the fine training of a finishing school, always refers to her parents as Father and Mother, sometimes with "dear" in front of the word. The politician always refers to his parents, publicly, at least, as Daddy and Mama. They were always poor but honest and lived in a log cabin, where the future great man was born and raised. The boy away from home writes to Father or Daddy or Papa for some money and then tells the fellow that the Governor or the Old Man has shell out.

In looking back over our past, I wonder whether you share my feelings about the type of parent indicated by the title. Sometimes when I am about three-quarters blue, I want Mama; similarly, when I smart out a little too obviously, I begin to fear lest Pappy will appear, rod in hand, and give me a dose of what I so badly need. I have had Father and Mama and now come to see me about their children. Father and I got on without any hitch; sometimes Mama had difficulty in convincing me how very bright and angelic her darling child was; but when Mama arrived, I surrendered without firing a shot. Something in the look of her eye did the work, even without the use of language.
As I have written these hundred articles on Fidelity of Kentucky Folklore, I have drawn heavily on my memories of thirty and forty years ago, when I lived near the little village that used to bear the name of Fidelity. It name has long been something else, but I like to think of it always by its earlier name; for that suggests quaint people, old times, self-sufficient country life, and a little world in the hills almost untouched by what we sometimes call civilization but what could better be called standardization. It was and is a small place, perched on some hills that have not crumbled away with the sand. It grew up in the very earliest days of the Jackson Purchase and has had its proportionate share in carrying on the work of the world. Since my contemporaries at Fidelity were never ashamed of themselves and did not try to hide behind the county seat, why should I? I was not of or from the county seat and not even a resident of Fidelity itself, though we got the mail there twice a week and traded eggs and butter and fryer chickens for sugar and coffee there. There was the place to vote, and near there was the one-room country school that stood as a bulwark against ignorance. I know it did, for the county superintendent told us children when he visited our school and prophesied that one of us might become President or Governor. We are still waiting, hoping that a man so great as he would not have prophesied in vain.

But, when I come to think of it, Fidelity had about everything that any other place had. There were homes, not fine ones, it is true, or comfortable ones; but they sent
forth their quota of average citizens and an occasional one who rose above the average. There were food, clothing, shelter, romance, sorrow, religion, education, neighborliness; what more could you ask? The country doctor was there, and the blacksmith, and occasional pack peddlers and clock tinkers. There were two stores; one that contained drugs and sundries and the postoffice; the other was a general store, where you could buy a curry comb or a plow point or a hask-string or a yard of unbleached domestic or a package of sugar.

On the hill that rose above the other hills of the village stood a union church, open to every faith on the face of the globe and to every kind of public gathering from a clown's show to a political speaking, if these two are different things.

You who have been foolish enough to read all or some of these articles have known or may have lived in such places as Fidelity. You got some education in the rural school, but what probably has been of infinitely more worth to you as men was the education you acquired by just living among people, people of all sorts and conditions. You may not have had the experiences that I have told about, but yours were so similar that you have had no trouble in bridging the gap between your life and mine. And the beauty of our life is that others of younger generations are today acquiring, quite as painlessly as we did, the same fine store of ideas, to enjoy them in years that are yet to be.

Fidelity is still there, and other Fidelities are ready to equip boys and girls with experiences that made your childhood and mine not the empty things that top-lofty cynics would call them but treasure houses of poetic and adventurous life.