



# Whether Common or Not

By Will A. Napier.

## The Pessimist

The cold and biting wind gives me a feeling  
That I must ready be to pay the toll  
Which is imposed upon me when I'm dealing  
With those who hold me up for winter coal.  
The dead leaves lie upon my lawn, and shaking  
From off the trees in whirling clouds alight;  
And I must up at morn and set to raking  
To have a bonfire for the kids at night.

I sit me down to read the evening paper,  
And all I see upon the printed page  
Is some divorce news, tariff dope or football caper,  
Or else the words of big pugs in a rage.  
I dig up two big plunks at the theatre,  
And hope to see a drama worth my while;  
But find, alas, the play's by a creator  
Who thinks it best to picture all that's vile.

I think sometimes I'll go out for a season  
And talk with neighbors on some topics live;  
But find quite soon that he won't list to reason,  
But wants to play at "cinch" or else "high five."  
At noon I drop my work the briefest minute  
And hasten out to get a frugal lunch;  
Then all I hear is "Jeffries isn't in it!"  
Or "Jim'll put him out with just one punch!"

At eve I hasten homeward worn and weary,  
As hungry as a bear and rather late.  
I'm stopped by some wardworker, red and bleary,  
Who tells me all about his candidate.  
O, would that I with Cook or Peary's legions  
Had made a dash towards the frozen pole,  
And there, amidst those chilly polar regions,  
Found solitude to rest my weary soul.

## Hints on Christmas Shopping

Do your shopping whenever you feel like it.  
When you begin worrying about what to get, take it as a sign that you are not giving for love but from a sense of obligation.  
Half the fun of Christmas shopping is the crowd, the jam, the discomfort and the hurry.  
The price tag is not the right way to measure the gift.  
Some people can shed more joy with a dollar than other people can with a big bank account to draw on.  
Don't forget that the girls behind the counter are made of flesh and blood, and that they are quite as apt to become weary as you are.  
Do your shopping in the day time, and give the clerks a chance to rest up.  
Get through you day's shopping before the workingmen start home. In that way you will give the tired workers a chance to sit down in the

street cars. We never blame a tired shopman for not getting up in the car and giving some thoughtless woman shopper his seat.  
A cherry "hello" is the best Christmas gift you can give to some people.  
We'd give you a lot more helpful hints about Christmas shopping if it were not for the fact that we've got to hustle out and make some arrangements whereby we may be assured of a turkey for Thanksgiving.

## A Prospective Victim

"Maria!" exclaimed Farmer Turniptop, "where'n the world is that there gold brick I bought that time I went down to New York?"  
"Gracious me, Ezekiel!" cried Ma Turniptop, "I ain't seen nothin' o' that momentum of your greenness f'r months an' months. What'n th' world made you think of it?"  
"I got a chance to git rid of it, ma; an' I wish you'd hurry up an' help me find it."  
"Now who 'n the world can you swap that old thing off on, Ezekiel?"  
"I was just talkin' with Neighbor Softleigh, an' he actually believes that there new tariff law is a revision downward, an' any feller that is green enough to believe that is just th' feller to push that there gold brick off on. Now you hurry, ma!"

## The Little Ones

These two incidents are said to have happened in Lincoln. Anyhow they are good enough to repeat:  
One ten-year-old lad was being taunted by his playmate for having failed to pass his examinations.  
"Well," retorted the delinquent, "it takes one who can stand zero to get to the north pole."  
A teacher was striving to secure definitions from her pupils. She told a story:  
"A woman going home in the evening was attacked by a robber, and she defended herself with the best weapon she had. What is the meaning of 'weapon?'"  
"I dess she just sticked out her tongue," lisped a small girl in the class.

## Cautious

"What is that soft, whirring sound I hear?" queried Mr. Softleigh Spoonamore, sitting forward on the sofa.  
"O, that is merely a phonograph making a record," replied Miss Priscilla Sureuff.  
"What's it for?" asked Mr. Spoonamore.  
"Well," replied Miss Sureuff, "I was reading the other day about a new kind of ink that fades very rapidly, and in view of that I thought it best to fortify my epistolary accumulation by having some permanent records."  
Realizing the futility of trying to get away from it, Mr. Softleigh Spoonamore made arrangements to purchase the solitaire the next day.

## Where's the Joke?

Of course you have read about it many times, but honestly now, did your wife ever really try to open a can of tomatoes with your razor?  
It's a very familiar story, isn't it? But, on the square, did your wife ever crawl stealthily from bed in the still hours of the night and rifle your pockets of small change?  
When they have nothing else to write about the jokesmiths seize up-

her for a subject, but 'fess up, old man—isn't it the truth that your good old mother-in-law was about the most welcome person on earth on that momentous occasion when—o, pshaw! You know the occasion we have in mind.

It's been going the rounds ever since Hector was a pup, but—and tell the solemn truth now—did you ever really see a woman sharpen a lead pencil with her teeth?

## Explained

"I fail to understand your American joke about the darkey's con trap—set to catch them coming and going," remarked the Little Brown Man to his friend from over the sea.  
"Well, I'll explain," replied the friend from over seas. "It's something like this—see that newly arrived ship?"  
"Yes, I see it."  
"In the cabins are a dozen missionaries sent to enlighten you, and in the hold a cargo of rum to befuddle you. I hope I have made it clear."

Although a sadly benighted heathen, the Little Brown Man had to admit that the explanation was very lucid—and convincing.

## Literary Note

"Yes, I started this newspaper here twenty-three years ago to fill a long felt want."  
"What's the result?"  
"A want long felt—about twenty-three years."

## Brain Leaks

Envy is the tribute that mediocrity pays to ability.  
A bore is a man who insists upon talking about the north pole when you want to talk about the tariff.  
The best strikebreaker is arbitration.

Some of these days organized labor will realize that ignorance has cost it more than the oppression of capital.

The average girl learns to bake a fancy cake long before she learns to bake good biscuits—and too many of them stop at the fancy cake.

Our real friends gently tell us of our faults—and then we no longer consider them our friends.

Flattery is the food that fools fatten upon.  
When you begin forgetting the day of your birth it is a sign that you are growing old.

The man who quits when he has earned all he gets is forever getting no more than he earns.  
After all, is it really work when we take pleasure in a task?

Banks can afford to keep open short hours because the interest works all the time.  
The aeronaut is worthy of his higher.

What makes us tired when we go to a trained animal show is to see some lowbrowed trainer take all the applause we give for the brutes' cleverness.

The pathway is never dark to the traveler who goes forth with a heart full of hope.  
The average woman's idea of a good neighbor is one who always sends back a little more than she borrowed.

A man does not have to cringe in order to be humble.  
It isn't charity to give unless the giving entails a little bit of sacrifice.

We would gladly join in celebrating the anniversary of the good woman who invented the pumpkin pie.  
The job we haven't got is always the one we think we could perform the best.

A well trained conscience heeds no accuser.  
A lot of people who never practiced harmony on earth expect to play harps in heaven.

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