

**Summing Up—A Sermonette in Verse.**

BY CRAWF-C. SLACK.

*Text—Afflictions are sometimes benefits in disguise.*

How I wish the calculations of my dad had gone adrift.  
That in planning my vocation he had made another shift,  
Just because I took to drawing, had some scrawly pictures made,  
Why, said he, "You have a genius for some high artistic trade,"  
And said he, "I've made a study of life's places where you'll fit,  
But I've come to the conclusion that he made a miss of it.  
Joe was born to be a preacher for he loved a collar high,  
Bill was born to be a lawyer for he naturally was sly,  
Hiram was the politician, father said he'd make a peach,  
For he had the gift to gobble every blooming thing in reach,  
Mary was cut out for nursing, all vocations had but Jim,  
He was kind of slow and backward, so he gave the farm to him.  
I took up the trade of painting, now I'm cleaning tar and mud  
Just to get a thread-bare living and a Sheeny cut-rate dud.  
With the price of farm stuff soaring, butter, eggs and pork and beef,  
And in looking to the future there's no hope for a relief,  
When I pay for food undated (and I'm glad to get that kind),  
Then my thoughts wing to Plum Hollow and the farm I left behind.  
By the post there comes a wailing from the preacher and the nurse,  
That their present situation is as bad as mine or worse,  
Mary writes she's often hungry and bewails the ways of fate,  
Preacher Joe reports a shortage on the church collection plate,  
Once I thought that skill and learning led to plenty and to ease,  
But I long ago discovered, you can't live on skilled degrees.  
Now when lawyer Bill is making on an average ten per day,  
Jim is getting thirty dollars for a load of marshy hay,  
And while sister Mary's nursing, nearly running off her legs,  
Jim's wife drives her car to market and gets sixty cents for eggs,  
And while I've been making sketches, and been rather shy of food,  
Jim's been roping in the shekels selling bacon hogs and wood.  
'Bout the only one that's thrifty of the whole outside of Jim,  
Is the scheming politician, Hiram's in the vested swim,  
Hi by shrewd manipulation has been favored in the deal,  
For he's always held positions, where there's chances been to steal,  
But I'll bet while he is fretting and a-fuming by the hour,  
Jim has got Hi's profits stunted, by the price he got for flour.  
Now you cannot tell for certain 'bout the wisdom of a chump,  
Nor tell by looking at a toad, how far the toad would jump,  
Sometimes the brightest scholars in the primary schools  
When they arrive to manhood turn out the greatest fools.  
The dough-head of the family sometimes when put to test,  
May have more real ability than all the favored rest.  
I would like to swap my brushes and my trained artistic skill,  
For a good productive acre of land that I could till,  
I'd go in for milk and honey, bacon hogs, and beans and spuds,  
Soon like Jim I'd own an auto and be wearing tailored duds,  
I've a lot of poems and pictures, which the critics say are good,  
But when it comes to eating they're of little use as food.  
The family all had sympathy for slow and backward Jim,  
But things have changed materially and now we envy him,  
Let me here convey the moral, skill don't fashion beds of ease,  
Colleges are most important but you can't eat their degrees,  
And I wish the calculations of my dad had gone adrift,  
That in planning my vocation he had made another shift.



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