

THE - - -
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JOSEPH PHILLIPS,

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The Sure Sign.

HAVE you ever had any-
 one say to you with
 almost convincing
 assurance, "Well,
 Spring is here at last," and
 a few days later had atmos-
 pheric evidence to the con-
 trary? If so, you will agree
 with me in treating the
 observation jokingly. How-
 ever, when a friend of more
 than usual caution made the
 statement this season, I felt
 compelled to prove to him
 his error. I said, "I, too,
 used to foretell the departure
 of winter, but, really, all the
 old signs and tests have
 failed. The robin has for-
 feited his old-time reputation
 of official announcer of
 Spring in trying to rush it
 along in February. April
 has evidently changed places
 with March on the yearly
 programme; the trees shoot forth their leaves one day and, on the next,
 wish to draw them in again; the weatherman is hopelessly at sea; the
 oldest inhabitant has fallen from his exalted position; and even your own
 senses cannot be trusted to—"

"True," he said, "all the old signs have failed; but there is a new and
 infallible sign. When the ambitious youngsters of the male persuasion
 arrange themselves on every field in positions mathematically correct and atti-
 tudes all but professional, and talk learnedly of balks and strikes—then, fail all
 other signs, Spring is here. These be the small brothers of the young men who,
 last season and for many seasons, sent floating over the well-trimmed ball-
 field that most characteristic of all summer sporting cries, 'You're rotten!' These
 be the youngsters that, in a few short years, if ambitions be not
 blasted, will stride forth leisurely to the home-plate, spit on their hands and
 rub them in the sand in that careless fashion which is at once the envy and
 ambition of every fifteen-cent admission. These be human barometers, and
 it is Spring, and Spring alone, which brings an aching for the feel of the
 bat and the slap of the ball."

I admitted that he might be right, but I insisted upon waiting for proof.
 Now, having waited from week to week without seeing Winter return, with
 him I say, "Heed not the feathered songster's advice to lay aside winter
 underwear; be not deceived by the speculative weather-man or his accom-
 plices; mistrust the painted calendar; place no faith in budding tree nor in
 the weather eye of the octogenarian; but when, at every vacant lot, your
 ear is greeted by the cry, 'Make him hit it!' or the earnest injunction, 'Get
 'em over, Skinny!' make haste to take up the carpets, for Spring has come."

An Insurmountable Obstacle.

Stapleton: "Women will never be successful as politicians."
 Caldecott: "Why not?"

Stapleton: "Not built that way. It is possible that a woman might saw
 wood—but she could never say nothing."

**AT THIS
 TIME OF
 THE YEAR**

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 to create and maintain
 strength for the daily
 round of duties.

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