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Local Lyrics

By
Campbell



REPUBLISHED FROM
THE HALIFAX CHRONICLE
THE HALIFAX DAILY STAR

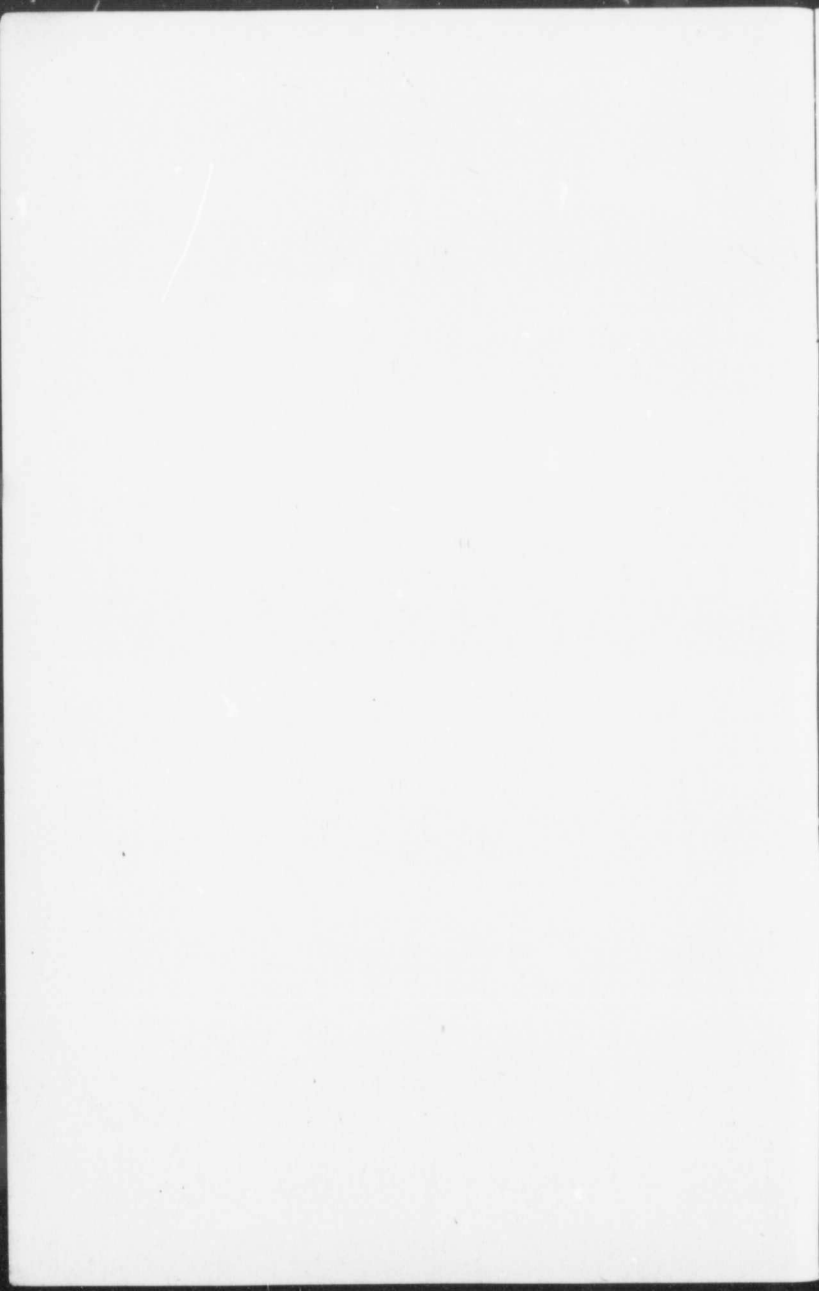
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FOREWORD

The writer of *Local Lyrics* has been asked by some of his readers to issue, in book form, some of his verses which have been published from day to day in the Halifax Chronicle and the Halifax Daily Star.

He has no inflated ideas of the merit of his rhymes, but is glad to know that they have given pleasure to many who have read them.

WOULD YOU LIKE THAT TO HAPPEN?

If you folks like this little tome and treat the same O. K.,
The wolf, perhaps, will quit my home and I'll eat three a day.
But if you coldly pass it by and say, "That guy's a flivver."
The writer, poor unhappy soul, will hop into the river.

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LOCAL LYRICS

SUGGESTION FOR MORAL IMPROVEMENT OF RACE

Which I harked a lad bemoaning; "I'm reforming," he was moaning,
I'm a sick man; ah, I could not be much sicker.
I will make whoopee no more, and I'm very very sure
That I'll never hoist another slug of liquor.

When a fellow's not so well, then his moral sense is swell
And he follows the Commandments to the letter.
Yes, when guys are off their feed, they're angelic things indeed—
But their conscience jumps it's timing when they're better.

So, to keep us at our best, I respectfully suggest
That we ruin our health and welcome pains and ills.
We can tread the narrow way and we see sin does not pay,
When we're full of patent medicines and pills.



PICTURE OF MECHANIC AT LABOR

Stands at distance and surveys the work he's been assigned.
Scratches head and looks at watch and fixes time in mind.
Wipes off hands on piece of waste; throws waste upon the floor.
Picks up wrench and lays it down then picks it up once more.

Wrench too big. Crawls fifty feet to bench and gets a smaller.
(How slow those birds can amble, too, when earning honest dollar.)
Loosens nut; heaves weary sigh; wipes non-existent sweat.
Sits heavily on running-board and lights a cigarette.

Up again; resumes his task; finds trouble; 'nother rest.
Short of tools; goes back to bench and rummages in chest.
Makes small repairs. Replaces parts. Slants at his watch and smiles.
One hour for ten minute job. We drivers have our trials!

LOCAL LYRICS

WHY NOT A COURSE—"HOW TO MAKE A LIVING"

The brats are back to slates and books again,
Wise teachers stuff each puzzled, childish brain
With dates and tables; languages and such—
Their mode of education gives me pain.

Myself, when young, did ardently pursue
The Path of Knowledge; ah, the things I knew!
Knew parrot-like—I lost them in a week—
The things that stuck were very, very few.

What cares the busy world for Latin, Greek?
What benefit to teach young limbs to speak
A language dead these thousand dusty years—
Such stuff won't bring in many bucks a week.

If you would be a lawyer or a Doc.,
'Tis nice to have such learned frills in stock.
But it were better if we'd teach our kids
The art of salting dollars in the sock.



I KNOW AN OLD LADY—

A remnant of the era of lavender and lace.
With snow-white hair for framing of faded wistful face.
Her inborn charm defying the years that dim her eye.
A Woman and a Lady in all those words imply.

A bit of wistful patience in a world that moves too fast,
A slender link to bind us to the manners of the Past:
To the chivalry and virtue that made living a romance,
In the days when life was graceful, not an aimless, break neck dance.

After which I am observing that our modern frails could stand
Lessons from this dear old lady as to how to play their hand.
They could emulate her sweetness; her unselfish, gracious style
And not look on "making whoopee" as the only thing worth while.

LOCAL LYRICS

PAPA WALKS

"You are old and decrepit," the young man said. "Both your hair and your whiskers are grey,
And yet you incessantly walk to your work. Do you think, at your age, it's O. K.?
A few months ago, sir, you purchased a car. In Heaven's name, why don't you use it?
I never see you in that bus that you bought. Did you sell it, or burn it, or lose it?"

That old guy replied, "I am aged and tired; ah, the joints they are weary and creaking,
But whenever I look for my auto it seems that the son has gone out in it, sheiking.
Or his mother is doing her shopping in style, or one of my daughters has got it—
I haven't been out for a drive in that boat since the day that I dug down and bought it.



SOME HAVE THEM—AND SOME ARE LUCKY

I know a man who sinks to rest with sin enough upon his chest,
Each night, to sink a ship or two, but, still, he sleeps as calm as you;
And should he toss and heave the sigh, such is not caused by conscience, guy,
But means that rich and plenteous fare was his before he pounded ear.

He daily grabs the poor man's bite and pockets, eke, the widow's mite—
An oily, easy, scoundrel, he, sunk fathoms in iniquity;
But if you think that grim remorse shares bed with him, you're off your course;
The only thing he's sorry for, is that he cannot wangle more.

A conscience is a stay to sin, it hurts you when you twist it—
But there be folks who'll never know that such a thing existed.

LOCAL LYRICS

"THE DOCTOR SAID IT WAS THE WORSE CASE—"

I know a quiet, retiring man—a silent mortal, he—
Most of the time, he sits apart, sunk in deep reverie.
"A total loss, this lad," you'd say, "in art of conversation"
But speak him some time, saying, "Tell me of your operation."

Ah, then the words will bounce and roll' round your defenceless head;
He'll tell you what his doctors thought and what his doctors said;
He'll speak, at length, of probes and knives—of horrid pains that filled him
The while you nod in sympathy (and wish that they had killed him).

He'll trace the path of every stitch they sewed into his hide;
He'll dwell upon each grim detail with relish and with pride;
And you will learn, in sorrow, ere he ends his recitation,
That you should never ask a guy about his operation.



REMARKS BY THE OBSERVANT BACHELOR

"Shot to death by angered wife;" "Woman takes her husband's life."
"Slays her mate with hammer blows;" "Wronged wife poisons erring spouse;"
I read such and guess that I'll dodge the altar yet awhile—
Single life may be maligned, but one keeps his peace of mind.

Females are a deadly crew, (per R. Kipling)—and it's true;
See it better every day, reading what the head-lines say.
Therefore shall I dwell alone—pay no bills except my own;
Take my share of wedded joy—you are welcome to it, boy.

LOCAL LYRICS

BLESS YOUR SWEET VOICES

They mumble, as with mouths packed tight with bread, or page you with uncouth,
ear-splitting roar;
And then, because you can't get what they said, they pan your service, saying
it is poor;
They knock you and they say that you are dense; they say wrong numbers are
your stock-in-trade,
But, girlies, you have loads and loads more sense than those dim-wits by whom
such kicks are made.

I oft-times think that switch-board girl's control of tongue and temper is a thing
of note;
I know your job would sear me to the soul and I might slit some dumb sub-
scriber's throat—
So, let the self-important birds condemn your works and cast reflections on your
skill;
Don't fret your pretty heads concerning them—just treat them as a necessary ill.



THESE THIRSTY TIMES

When I was young and in the pink, no decent lad would ever think
Of hoisting strong and raging drink, at house-parties or dinners;
And if he did, his goose was cooked; such conduct was not overlooked—
A man who acted thus was booked 'mongst publicans and sinners.

But now when youths awash with beer, invade our homes we do not care—
As long as they don't drink our share, we never raise objection.
"A freer, finer youth today"—"The modern youngster is O.K."—
But as I look them o'er, I'd say, "A pretty bum collection."

LOCAL LYRICS

AFTER BRET HARTE—A LONG WAY AFTER

Which I hope and I pray that I make myself plain—
I've said it before and I'll say it again,
That a guy who's in love acts peculiar—
Peculiar don't suit it—insane.

For a pal of mine, see, has been hit by the bug;
Dan Cupid has slapped him down flat like a rug—
A pitiful sight for to see, boys,
And it sure gives my heart-strings a tug.

His appetite's gone and he sighs and he groans;
When he ain't at her home then he's wearin' out phones—
An upstandin' feller he was, too,
But now there's just skin on his bones.

Myself, I have been through the mill once or twice
And I've found out that women is tricky, like dice—
And I've tried for to warn this poor dodo—
But him, he don't want my advice.



SILENCE IS GOLDEN—TRY AND CASH IN ON IT

My copy-book, in school-boy days, the weighty fact to me propounded,
That silence was a golden thing; that talkers always were confounded:
That he who kept the tongue in check would clean up big in life's endeavor
It seemed O. K. to childish ears, but now it does not seem so clever.

For I have watched the cocky lads take up the horn and loudly blow it;
And if such tooting slows their pace, well, son, statistics do not show it;
Check up the coupon-clipping boys—the ones who always seem to win
And you will find that most of them delight in shooting off the chin.

MORAL:

Perhaps your silence is a virtue—
But lots of lip will never hurt you.

LOCAL LYRICS

SHE'S A JOB FOR THE HANG-MAN

Today my luck was far away—upon a busy street I met
A lady, call her Mrs. A.—or better still the town gazette;
And she was full unto the chin of gossip and malicious chat—
She shook the skeletons within full many a local habitat.

She told me much of Mr. B.—a monster in his private life;
(He'd always seemed O. K. to me), but now I know he beats his wife;
And Mrs. C., a matron I had always thought of as a lady,
I see now with a cynic's eye—her past it seems was extra shady.

Oh, what a woman, Mrs. A.—how spreading scandal gives her pleasure;
Whate'er she hears she needs must say, and add a little for good
measure;
The reputations that she wrecks—the things she'll tell you if you let her—
The day she passes in her checks, this world will be a little better.



LOOK UNDER THE COVER, GUYS

"Is she not pretty?" the young man said, "see how those big eyes shine;
Look at that mouth and the tilt of that head—oh, that she would be mine;
Gaze on those teeth that dull the pearl—slant at that wondrous hair"—
His hearer yawned, "She's a pretty girl, but, fellow, you pain my ear."

"Grant her the grace of a running fawn; grant her a sparkling eye;
Granted—but give me the dope upon her disposition, guy.
Old Father Time will make a wreck of all those charms you mention—
So, ere you fall upon her neck, give character attention.

MORAL:

The contents oft belie the wrapper.
Which same applieth to the flapper.

LOCAL LYRICS

A TAIL TO TIE TO

I have a dog—an imp of sin—whose pedigree is shrouded in
Deep mystery;
A homely tike with cunning ways and loving eyes, who cheers my days
And comforts me.
His tail was clipped in puppy-hood, (whoever did it, did it good—
Close as the devil)
But when he wags that stump, I'm sure it's love of me the wagging's for—
He's on the level.

I've lots of friends 'mongst fellow-men, who slap my back (and borrow ten)
And flatter me;
But would they stick if I should slip and circumstance raised ready whip
To batter me?
Would vaunted friendship rally "round and make my fight it's battle-ground
Or would it fail?
I hate to say it, but I must—I'd whole lot rather put my trust
In my dog's tail.



ONE WAY OF LOOKING AT IT

Though I am short of worldly gear,
With but one suit (the one I wear)
I'm not forlorn;
For that is one more than I had,
The day I gratified my dad
By being born.
To rail upon your earthly lot—
Of what you have or haven't got,
Is not becoming;
For when you crashed this world of sin,
You didn't bring a darned thing in—
You've no kick coming.

LOCAL LYRICS

NO OVERHEAD IN THOSE DAYS

When a chappie in the Stone Age wished to take himself a mate.
He would place himself in ambush, with a knobby club, and wait
Till some female whose attractions took his fancy passed the spot—
Then he'd club that female, briskly,—thus he tied the wedding knot.

Now, a fellow has to court her, till his fortune's sadly bent;
He must beg her and implore her, ere she'll give him her consent.
Those old boys lived a backward and a hard exacting life—
But they surely knew their methods, when they hankered for a wife.



KEEP IT IN CIRCULATION

He worked from dawn till day was gone—he burnt the midnight oil;
No love had he for pleasure, his life was one of toil.
His one desire was to acquire a goodly bunch of pelf—
"Then I shall live," he said, "and give a good time to myself."

His labors brought a noble pot of gold to his account;
But still he slaved, because he craved to watch his assets mount.
One day his heart refused to start and Death obtained his measure—
It was a sin the way his kin blew in his earthly treasure.

So, listen guys, I'll moralize—it's no use piling shekels;
The coin you clutch won't help you much, when death has blanched your
freckles.

LOCAL LYRICS

"HELLO, SUCKER!"

A lad there was and he saved a few,
A little stake as a lad will do—
And he had a home and a wife in view,
When the roll waxed somewhat lusher;
But another boy said, "Harken, guy,
If you'd clean up big, I'll tip you—Buy
A bunch of Hokum stock for I
Have heard 'twill prove a gusher."

So the lad who'd slaved for the few he'd got,
Said: "I'm in luck, for that tip sounds hot;"
And he galloped down with his roll and bought
All the Hokum he could handle.
And it climbed for awhile, as the darn things do,
Then it fell down flat as a p'liceman's shoe:
And our lad was left with a dime or two—
A moth at the Market's candle.



ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN (THEY NEED IT.)

He hies unto the movie-show and there upon the screen,
He sees a dream of loveliness—a big-eyed dainty queen.
Demure and sweet she picks her way through traps and plots galore,
And as the villain does his stuff, he craves that villain's gore.

Next day the head-lines tell him that this vision of delight
Has shot her seventh husband dead, while she was extra tight—
Don't ever let those Movie queens entice you 'neath their sway—
It hurts too much to find, at last, they're very common clay.

LOCAL LYRICS

A FINANCIER'S FINISH

I scan the evening paper and it says, "Augustus Gluff
Will no longer shine among us. Death has called him—oh, how tough."
There I read that good Augustus was a splendid, loving type,
And I have to grin a little as my eyes take in that tripe.

For I knew that chap, Augustus, and he was a human blot;
Of all this sad world's villains, he was leader of the lot.
He never had a conscience and I think he lacked a soul—
His claim to recognition was the thickness of his roll.

Obituary columns oft' remind me of the fact,
That a little ready money keeps your character unblacked.
You cannot buy your passage into Heaven, so I'm told—
But you'll get a nifty send-off, if you're heavy-hung with gold.



WHY LANDLORDS HAVE THAT FED-UP LOOK

I can't say I remember the house where I was born.
The old man moved the household goods across the street next morn,
And I am rather hazy for some time after that;
Most every month my folks would pack and seek some other flat.

Yes, we were always moving—we never were at ease,
(This yen for shifting quarters is to some folks a disease).
We'd hardly get the carpets down before Ma would complain,
"I do not like this shack, it's damp. I'm going to move again."

And now I'm eighty-seven—an aged, weathered guy,
And pretty soon I wot that I will crash my home on high;
But this house I now dwell in won't see my spirit flit,
Because I'm going to pull my freight—I'm getting sick of it.

LOCAL LYRICS

BLUSHING—A LOST ART

When lovely woman stooped to folly, in older and more timid day,
She'd grab a load of melancholy and hide the blushing face away.
At least, the poet has thus written, and who are we to doubt that guy
But times have changed and girls are gittin' more thick-skinned as the
years roll by.

Suppose a charmer falls from virtue, does she now moan, "Ah, woe is me"
Not so—she says, "Some sin won't hurt you," and hollers for publicity.
The tabloids frame her sweet pan, daily, and movie-contracts fill her mail
A lot of girls are living gaily, who really ought to be in jail.



VANITY VICTORIOUS

Used to be a ladies'-man in the long ago.
Age has dimmed his roving eye and turned his hair to snow,
Gone are all the lures that called the girls in days gone by.
Still he promenades our streets, giving them the eye.

Once he was a ladies'-man; he's the same thing still.
Vanity's the only thing the crushing years can't kill.
See him—dressed and pressed and shined—shuffling 'bout the streets.
Watch him peer in women's eyes, ogling each he meets.

Girls, be kind to him and smile on his aged sheiking,
In his mind he's still a Beau, though his joints are creaking.
Who is once a ladies'-man he is always vain—
Give the poor old bird a chance to preen himself again.

LOCAL LYRICS

JUST FOR A CHANGE

Which Augustus A. Angora threw his hat into the ring
And announced, "Folks, if elected, I will not do one darn thing
For your comfort or convenience—you can all hop off the dock.
I have one desire in running—it's to stuff my own sweet sock.

If your pavements need repairing, better get yourself a pick.
Do not come to me complaining, you will only make me sick.
That's my platform. Take or leave it. Let me see you call my bluff."
All the burghers voted for him, saying, "Gus, that's fair enough."



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Oh thou who, at the show the other night,
Didst giggle, laugh and otherwise make light
Of what I thought a pretty darn good film—
Give this your eye and see you get it right.

Whene'er you find that entertainments pall
On you, why not don hat and coat and haul
Your useless freight unto some other scene.
I'm sure no one would feel the loss at all.

I warn the next offender—girl or male—
That, though I sleep, as penance, in the jail,
If but once more you spoil my joy for me—
I'm surely going to tramp upon your tail.

The woods are full of pests like you; a thought-
Less bunch of tramps and feather-heads who ought
To be impeached as blots upon the race—
And taken, silly grins and all, and shot.

LOCAL LYRICS

TAKE MY NAME OFF YOUR LISTS

My mail contains a pamphlet, "What the well-dressed man should wear."
And, ah, the trousers, coat and vests that they have pictured there.
The shoes, the nobby ties and shirts—canes—the ritzy hats—
The socks that shame the rainbow's gleam—the handkerchiefs—the spats.

I gaze upon my own poor stock of clothing with a sigh.
Enough to cover me, that's all—I'm not a well-dressed guy.
I wish those clothing firms would all forget my fine old name—
If I'm a bum, I do not wish reminding of the same.



FORTUNE'S FOOL

Which while touring in the suburbs, I was passed upon a curve
By a nit-wit going sixty and my friend observed, "Great nerve."
And I answered him in anger saying, "Pal you're far from right.
When you boost the nervous system of that lately passing blight."

"He was smashing regulations; he was gambling with his neck.
(And I hope he breaks it, shortly, in some self-inflicted wreck)
Men with nerve and self-possession do not act thus as a rule—
So, don't cheer such hare-brained actions. He's not nery—just a fool."

LOCAL LYRICS

BOWLING AND LIVING

He walks into the Alleys and he lays the coat aside.
He bares the mighty muscles and he views the same with pride.
He sees the pins before him, set up in fair array,
And chuckles to his neighbor, "Boy, this must be soft to play."

"Observe those ten pins clustered—what sap could miss the lot?
Just watch me clean the alley with my unerring shot."
He grips the ball with fervor and heaves it down the lane—
The pin-boys shout in raucous glee, "The gutter once again."

This Bowling calls for coaching—a fellow must be taught.
It looks real soft to tyros, until they find it's not.
It's like the game of living—real tough for any guy,
Unless he starts his innings by knowing How and Why.



SOME NOW AND THE REST PERHAPS

What would we struggling mortals do without the Credit System?
How nice that guys with coin on hand allow dead-beats to twist 'em.
Example one—observe A. Bluff appavelled in the best.
His motto is, "One dollar down and try and get the rest."

Or Mrs. Climber—view her home and marvel at it's fittings.
(But nine collectors, weekly, call and stage determined sittings.)
I think how handy Credit is, as I watch folks abuse it
And of what agony we'd know, if we should ever lose it.

LOCAL LYRICS

OWNERSHIP CHANGES THE VIEWPOINT

When he was a pedestrian, the curses that he cried
On motorists, piled end to end would reach away outside.
He thought of them as stiff-necked bums and life destroying germs—
He hated them and told them so in no uncertain terms.

When he became a motorist, he changed his point of view.
He cares not for pedestrians (he's cracked up one or two.)
He zooms past fear-blانched peasants frames and grins to see them quail—
Possession gives a different look—I never saw it fail.



PARENTS, GET TOUGH

I was reading of an item in a recent local daily,
Where a famous native statesman wished to have us understand,
That the present crop of young ones are a bunch of patent devils—
And he thinks the brats are getting altogether out of hand.

Which that statesman said a mouthful and I'm strongly in agreement,
But he gave us no solution to the problem—Here is mine.
Lick those youngsters on occasion—wheal their hard-boiled frames with gusto,
As parents pounded pesty kids in days of auld land syne.

LOCAL LYRICS

FREE ADVICE TO SMALL INVESTORS

A red-hot lass to her necking.
A poet-lad to his rhyme—
And a small-stake boy, with the Market craze, to the cleaners every
time.

A pretty maid to her mirror
A thirsty bird to his crock—
And a cold, stacked deck and a trimming, sure, to the
man who fools with stock.

A Tory-man to his Party.
A sailor-lad to the foam—
And a guy who plays with oils and ores, on the road to the
County Home.



DAY BY DAY, THAT'S MY WAY

A letter in my mail, today, "Old age is drawing nigh.
Will independence be your lot when you are sixty, guy?
Or will you be a homeless bum—a ward to Charity—
Be warned in time, my friend, and let Insurance make you free."

Insurance is a noble thing and it will help one much,
But oh, I wish those Companies would keep their tracts and such.
My motto is, "Why worry, Mac—'twill never make you bigger
And sixty is too far ahead for birds like me to figure.

LOCAL LYRICS

PERMANENTS

Four hours spent on a chair of pain,
While the muscles creak and the nerves complain—
And all for the sake of a waving mane
That the world will list as curly.
Ah, many a cunning, tangled mop,
At the sight of which male hearts turn and flop,
Is the cheating work of some Beauty Shoppe—
It didn't grow on the girlie.



IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY, NOW

Turn back the page of Time, ten years or so. 'Member the Sabbath days we
used to know?
Thing to do, Sunday, was hang 'round the house. Kid was supposed to be quiet
as a mouse.

Old folks were quiet too. Took them a rest. Let all the week's despairs roll
off the chest.
Dad with the Sunday sheets—Ma with the Book. Contentment and peace in
each family nook.

Now we are swimming or paddling the Arm; golfing or motoring—nothing to
harm.
Still, are we happier than we were then—Think this tired world could use Sunday
again?

LOCAL LYRICS

LONG-SIGHTED CHARITY

Came a lady to his door, saying, "Help the Missions;
Buy the Heathen coats and pants—better their conditions
Ah, those poor benighted lads; let us show them light.
"Lady," he replied, "here's ten—put those matters right."

Came a fellow to his door, whom the world had battered.
Whiskers grew upon his pan and his cloak was tattered.
"Mister, slip me rations, please," begged this toy of Fate—
"Outside bum," our friend replied, "hasten through that gate."

He'll buy pants for cannibals who neither want nor need them—
But when neighbors supplicate, he won't even heed them.



INFLATED CREDIT

See that fellow's nifty car; ah, such lines, what paint.
One would think that fellow rich—Folks, that fellow aint.
Hard times are quite close to him; they are drawing closer.
Ask his landlord if I'm right; quiz his cursing grocer.

They are sponsors for that bus with their stock in trade.
He is stalling them along—they're not getting paid.
Soon their patience will depart—they'll demand their due—
Then that guy you envy so will have to walk a few.

LOCAL LYRICS

IT'S NO USE WARNING THEM, EITHER

She is not fair to outward view, as other maidens be.
Her pan is bent and out of true; her trunk's not willowy.
But ah, that damsel cooks a steak
Would give the gods themselves a break.

She is not easy on the eyes; she has no "It" to lead you,
But let me stop to tell you, guys, that doll knows how to feed you.
No kitchen in the wide world boasts
A better judge of bakes and roasts.

Ah me, her pies; ye gods, her bread—a past-mistress of cooking.
Then why, you ask, is she not wed?—Because she ain't good-looking.
The boys today don't seek for cookers,
Those lame-brains tie their names on lookers.



TWO-INCH BRAINS AND TWELVE-INCH TONGUES

Which I harked a fellow panning of the "Talkies," yesternight—
"They are crude," he told me; "ragged—and they do not strike me right."
Me—I think they are delightful and I view them every week,
And the old soul turns in raptures when I hear those shadows speak.

He's entitled to his say-so, same as all you other guys,
But to hear that bird o'ating, one would think that he was wise.
Oh, those windy, ready knockers cut my patience like a knife—
Why, that ape has never been outside this city in his life.

If a chap is widely travelled and has broadened out the mind,
Then I'll hear his views with patience; I admire that fellow's kind;
But these small-town, lack-wit critics never will have my O. K.,
And I'd find the world much brighter if they locked such growths away.

LOCAL LYRICS

AFTER YOU'VE GOT WHAT YOU WANTED

My lady had a yearning for a golden coat of tan.
Did she get that longed-for sunburn? Did she get it—Heavens, man!
She is redder than the sunset. She is blistered. She is sore;
And the skin is peeling off her like the paint peels off a door.

With the bathing-suit upon her, on the beach she sat all day,
And the Sun, intent to please her, shed his brightest, hottest ray.
"Ah," she said at eve, "I've got it. What a pretty shade of red."
But that night she knew her folly as she tossed upon her bed.

Yes, my sweetie got her sunburn; she got service from Old Sol,
But, right now, I'll bet she'd swap it for most anything at all.
Life is thus—the things you wish for and the things you long to do
Prove to be not half so pleasing when they're realized by you.



I CAN'T GET USED TO IT

Or ever the knightly years were gone with the old world to the grave.
A guy who went to a barber-shop in search of a trim or shave,
Would go assured of a wait made short by a chat with his fellow-males—
But now he has to listen in to a bunch of dizzy frails.

One day last week, I viewed the chin and I thought of a hedge in bloom,
So I hied me down to my barber's dump; it looked like a school-girls' room
I waited hours ere a blade was laid on the line of my manly chops—
A hearty curse on the fad that sent the girls to the barber-shops.

LOCAL LYRICS

ONE OF THE PENALTIES

She was a back-seat driver, when first he bought his can,
With good advice and otherwise she'd persecute the man.
She'd pan his mode of steering; his style of shifting gears,
And move him to profanity and hot, unmanly tears.

At last, in desperation, he taught her how to drive,
And now he often wishes that he were not alive.
She drives with such abandon in traffic or on curves,
That he is just a bundle of bent and rusty nerves.

Which proves that when a guy is married,
There's no escaping being harried.



WHAT'S THE USE

He brushed his teeth three times a day; he slept his full eight hours.
He bathed his trunk with frequency and doted on cold showers.
With exercises, day and night, he limbered up the frame.
He chewed his fodder thirty chews, before he swallowed same.
He did not smoke. His only drinks were milk and Adam's ale;
No tea or coffee passed his lips; no rum e'er made him pale.
He followed every rule of health, but he forgot the Fates—
And yesterday a truck slapped him right through the Pearly Gates.

'Twas ever thus—A lad will try to better his life's chances,
And then his pains are gummed for fair by outside circumstances.

LOCAL LYRICS

FREE ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

Brush the teeth and shave the whisker; trim the moustache; grease the hair;
Shine the shoes and press the clothing; choose the shirt and tie with care;
Stock a line of honeyed phrases; give the sex-appeal a chance;
Study "It" in all its phases; bear down heavy on romance;
Tell the flappers of their beauty; hand the matrons out the same;
Waste no idle talk on Duty; speak not of your Country's fame;
Be a mould of Form and Fashion; be a shiek in word and deed—
And the women-folk will give you all the votes you'll ever need.



ANY CONFIRMED BACHELOR AT ANY WEDDING

What do they see in it, taking a wife?
Try and rope me in it—not on your life!
Look at him standing there; Oh, what a sap!
You think the bride is fair? don't like her map;
Don't like her old man's style; don't like her brother;
Don't like that prehensile jaw on her mother;
What a tough break he got—bet you he'll be
Sorry he ever sought matrimony—
Still, don't suppose that guy cares what we think—
What say we go and buy ourselves a drink?

LOCAL LYRICS

DISILLUSIONMENT

I saw her on the street, today, a girl with wide, blue eyes
In piquant face, that seemed to gaze in innocent surprise;
She stopped to greet some chaps she knew—I felt my envy rise.

At sight, she captivated me; I sought another glance,
But when she spoke, I sadly snapped from out my sudden trance;
Her language placed the skids beneath the Spirit of Romance.

Her voice was as a rusty saw upon a hard-pine knot;
She spoke those fellows, saying: "How's she goin'—Ain't it hot?"
And I shook the old head, sadly, as I ambled from the spot.



YOU'RE NOT THE MAN YOUR DADDY WAS

In days gone by the marriage-tie was honored and exalted;
A wedded pair would share and share—face Life and not default it;
They'd stick through years of joy and tears—they'd take the sweets and bitters—
As one they'd wend to journey's end—those old folks were no quitters.

But modern folk in marriage-yolk can seldom see much beauty;
They're long on play and ease today, but very short on duty;
Their union's tight while things are bright, but they have no resources—
When cares arrive they take a dive and holler for divorces.

Let wise guys sneer at yesterday-year, with lack of veneration.
Those folks they pan were squarer than this pampered generation.

LOCAL LYRICS

MAN TEACHING THE WIFE

You step upon the starter first—that button on the floor—
Don't keep your foot on it so long! What do you think it's for?
Now push that pedal in and haul the lever back to low
And let your foot out slowly—Oh, Good Heavens! I said slow;
All right then—use your foot again and shift to second gear;
Don't step so heavy on the gas and don't forget to steer;
Woman, that foot should come out slow! Oh, there you go again!
This car is doomed! no rear-end made would ever stand such strain;
Look out! Look out! I wish that you'd be careful where you're going;
Pull in and let that fellow pass—he must be tired of blowing;
Not so much gas! Oh, what's the use! G'wan then shift to high—
I won't shut up! no wonder I—now, that's right, start to cry.



JUST A SUGGESTION

I watched a bridal pair embark on matrimony's stormy seas;
I waited till the tumult died and then I thought such thoughts as these—
Why must folks pelt a bride and groom with rice, confetti, boots and such?
It is an ancient custom but it's one that does not please me much;
When friends and kin raise lusty cheer to mingle with the wedding chimes
And feel the urge for throwing things, why not throw dollars, quarters, dimes?
The friendly spirit they convey, by tossing boots on wedded necks
Could be as well expressed, I say, if they would toss some bonds and checks.
Now this suggestion's new, you see, and being thus, it will be ditched,
But it sounds rather good to me—try it on us when I get hitched.

LOCAL LYRICS

DARK MOMENTS IN FEMALE LIVES

Observe that lass who weeps alone:
Ah, folks, she pulled an awful bone
Small wonder that she maketh moan
And sinks 'neath seas of sorrow;
Remorse, tonight, will share her bed;
Salt tears will make her eyelids red;
She'd little care if she were dead,
Ere dawning of tomorrow.

Today, that girl observed a hat
In down-town store, priced—Six bucks flat,
And purchased, saying, "Gimme that—
I'm sure I'll do no better."
But, ah, next door, a bargain-sign—
She stopped to gaze; "A hat like mine!"
She scanned the price, Five, ninety-nine—
'Twas then that woe beset her.



GIVING THE OLD MAN A HAND

It's, "Please don't be so common, John" and "Heavens, what a hat!"
But it's, "John dear, write me out a check," when mother's purse is flat:
It's, "Father, nice folks don't act thus!" and "Father, you're absurd!"
But it's, "Daddy, dear," when daughter gets the bills that she's incurred.
It's, "Gee, you wear a leather vest!" when son would tap his roll,
But it's, "Pop, please get me out of this," when son gets in a hole.
It's, "Oh, he's way behind the times" and "Keep him out of sight"—
It's darned near time we saw his worth and used the old boy right.

LOCAL LYRICS

WEEK-ENDERS

He was fed up on the city—the eternal noise and fuss;
It pained his neck intensely, so he spoke his good wife thus:
"Let us pack the goods and chattels; let us shake this tumult, wife;
Let us swap it for the pleasures of a quiet, suburban life."

So they sought the open spaces and they pitched their household tent;
And the trees and flowers charmed them; for awhile they were content—
Till their friends and all their kinsmen, hearing they'd located there,
Swarmed upon them, every week-end, shouting praise of country air.

Down they trampled all their flowers: up they rooted all their trees;
Drank up all their precious water; ate up all their groceries;
Drove the couple to distraction; chased their peaceful joy away—
Now they've moved back to our city, vowing they are here to stay.



THOUGH THEIR SINS ARE AS SCARLET, THEIR CREDIT IS GOOD

Oh, there be lads with conscience numb, who travel crooked ways;
Who sell the red, illegal rum and find such selling pays—
For if those lads are not so dumb, they'll prosper all their days.

The butcher takes their coin at par—the baker takes it too;
Their shady rolls go just as far as honest coin takes you—
This may hand your ideals a jar, but, sadly, it is true.

May hap when they have finished here, their troubles will begin,
(Tis said that future ills will bear on fellows steeped in sin).
Saint Peter may remark, "The air! you are not coming in."

But whether evil men must pay a future price or not,
The wicked seem to get away, down here, with quite a lot—
The crime of all the crimes today, 'twould seem, is getting caught.

LOCAL LYRICS

DEPTH OF MISERY

A slave of Lady Nicotine
Is lost without the weed
And a drunk who cannot get it
Is a sorry sight, indeed;
A girl who lacks a mirror
Is a girl whose joy has fled
And a gourmand on a diet
Would be just as happy, dead.

An orator would not survive,
With nobody to heed him;
A journalist would starve to death,
If he had none to read him;
But of all men deserving pity
Of their fellow-man—
Consider a reformer,
With nothing left to ban.



SUBURBAN STUFF

"Who is the man who runs so fast—
Where is he going, daddy?"
"The man is a suburbanite,
That's why he's running, laddie;
He runs each morning for his train—
He runs for it at night;
Observe how he is loaded down—
(He rarely travels light)
He carries boxes, bags and tins—
He's loaded like a dray
And when he reaches journey's end,
It's time to hit the hay.
His life is one of ins and outs;
Of rushing up and down;
But he's content and pities folks
Who have to dwell in town."

LOCAL LYRICS

PROUD AND PESTY PAPPAS

He used to be a social hit—one of the very best;
His range of topics and his wit were listened to with zest—
But now he is a father and, I grieve to say, a pest.

Yes, he who was a likely guy, is now a human blot;
His friends, perceiving him drawn nigh, move quickly from the spot,
Lest he should tell them once again the marvels of his tot.

He lectures on it's several teeth and on it's cunning ways;
He says it is the perfect child and loudly sings it's praise—
And if you'd listen he would rave along such lines for days.

It's tough enough to have to hark concerning brats of others,
But if we must, we'd rather get the broadcast from the mothers—
The new-made father always is a pain unto his brothers.



BOYS, TAKE YOUR TIME

Sweet May has gone and now 'tis June, when lads grab blushing brides
And bravely fare on matrimony's waters;
While happy fathers laugh with joy until they pain their sides.
At being thus rid of expensive daughters.

Oh boys, before you sign them up to honor and obey,
I beg you heed self-preservation's law—
Because the price they ask for rent and groceries today
Is something to be spoken of with awe.

Reflect my sons upon the joys attending single life—
With days and nights and thoughts and actions free;
List to those poor saps saying, "I will have to ask the wife"—
Be strong and do not sell your liberty.

LOCAL LYRICS

SONG OF GARAGE-MAN OVERHAULING CAR

The hours I've spent on thee, dear heart,
In making sure you choose to run.
Have been a pleasure from the start:
The work I did was gladly done.

The brakes I lined; the valves I ground;
The carbon that I scraped away—
In all of these such joy I found,
As only a garage-man may.

For we who patch-up and replace
Are well rewarded for our skill—
I'd love to see your owner's face,
Just after he receives my bill.



HYPOCHONDRIA, BY MAIL

There came for me an almanac, within this sad day's mail—
A gift from Dr. Oscar Gook, who keepeth pills for sale;
Aghast, I read of divers ills and symptoms of the same,
Perceiving that I'd soon be benched in Life's tempestuous game.

For now I know my heart is weak and that my lungs are gone
My liver, once my pride, no more can be depended on;
I know my blood is coursing slow—that soon it will congeal—
Ah me! my friends, you wot not of the pains and aches I feel.

Yet, when I rose this morning, I was feeling really fit;
I fell upon a hearty meal and climbed outside of it;
I thought myself a lusty wight, with many years to go—
'Twas only self-deception—the booklet proves it so.

Would that the kindly doctor had not made mine eyes to see;
I was a whited sepulchre, but 'twas unknown to me;
Now, every symptom mentioned I can feel within my frame—
My few remaining breaths shall curse the day that pamphlet came.

LOCAL LYRICS

WILL-POWER, IN REVERSE

Said Hank, a local scoff-law, at a classy down-town still,
"If there's one thing I am proud of, it's my mighty strength of will;
Since I was a lad of twenty, folks have camped upon my trail
Saying, 'Hank, wine is a mocker; Hank, your course is set for jail.' "

"They have painted glowing pictures of the great rewards to come,
If I'd climb upon the wagon and forsake the demon rum—
And I've oft' been sorely tempted, as they sang their siren song,
But my will has always triumphed—as I said before, it's strong."

"Though they've warned me of the wrath to come, that will has never
cracked;
Through my sojourns in the hoosegow, I have kept my thirst intact;
I have never shirked my drinking, though at times it's been a strain—
What a wondrous thing the will is—let us fill them up again."



JOHN MAHONEY

The sponge of Fate on a bright life's slate and it's promise washed away.
In a twisted mass of steel and glass you quit your earthly clay.
You'd just begun; your best undone. A shining road ahead—
But we all must dance on the strings of Chance, nor know when she'll clip a thread.
A son of the crowd without the proud beginnings some men know.
Did you wail your lot? Not you! You fought till you walked where the
Great Ones go.
And now you've gone to the shadows, John, where ambitions never call.
May you win a Seat at the Leader's feet in the biggest House of all.