

Tho your name is not in the above, I know that you are "in the woodpile" somewhere, and want to tell you exactly what I think about it.

The first hurried reading did not make me realize the full significance of the request; but the second attempt brought results, and I said a few choice words of annoyance, deciding, however, that I would "take a shot at it" anyway, since all I would have to do would be to interview a few of Badin's honest citizens, make out a kind of report, and put it into the BULLETIN box. But, alas, little did I know what was in store for me!

To the first man I tackled I gave the above letter, telling him that I wanted a little information on the subject. Well, he had no sooner finished reading it than he started swearing and saying awful things. From a few printable words that he accidentally got mixed with the "blue" ones, I gathered that he had a garden—or rather *had* had one. As everyone knows, the ground hereabouts is very hard, and, this garden being so centrally located, and so soft and inviting, all of the old dogs made daily visits there to bury bones—and other things—and the young ones to wallow on the vegetables, and chase one another up and down the rows. He said that he wouldn't mind them burying stuff there so much, if the ornery brutes would only remember where they put things, and not have to excavate the whole place to get a lost fish or a misplaced soup-bone. He cooled down enough finally to tell me the names of several who might be able to give me the information I was after.

Profiting by this experience, I tackled the next on the list in quite a different

manner. Him I adroitly led up to the fountain, bought him a drink and a smoke (which same by the way, I shall charge to the BULLETIN), and then casually remarked "Well, what do you know about the Dogs of Badin?" Phew! You'd have thought I had stepped on his corns or something, the way he took on. He threw away my smoke (*your* smoke, I mean), and started saying things, punctuating them with such bangs of his fist on the cigar case that I held my breath and began figuring up what a new glass would cost, and wondering whether the broken pieces would damage the twenty-five-centers or the twofers. And such things as he did say! And to me, who promised Mr. E. F. Smith two years ago to take charge of a Sunday School class. *To me*, mind you, who had been personally invited by Mrs. C. to take one also in her Sunday School (The reason I never took either was that I hate any showing of partiality. I once played the piano in church for three months, and quit on just this same account. The choir couldn't just seem to sing together with my music, and I hated to be partial and single out any particular one to keep up with); and who once won a gold cross for attendance, because Mother was so persistent.

Why, Mr. Cummings, did you pick on me for such a job? Why did you assign to J. G. T. such a sweet and beautiful subject—something into which a man could put his soul, and make a work of art, and win for himself fame in the Club House and Albemarle—and just let me go to the dogs with wasting my efforts on such a mongrel subject? *Cupid—Dogs!* Just look at them!

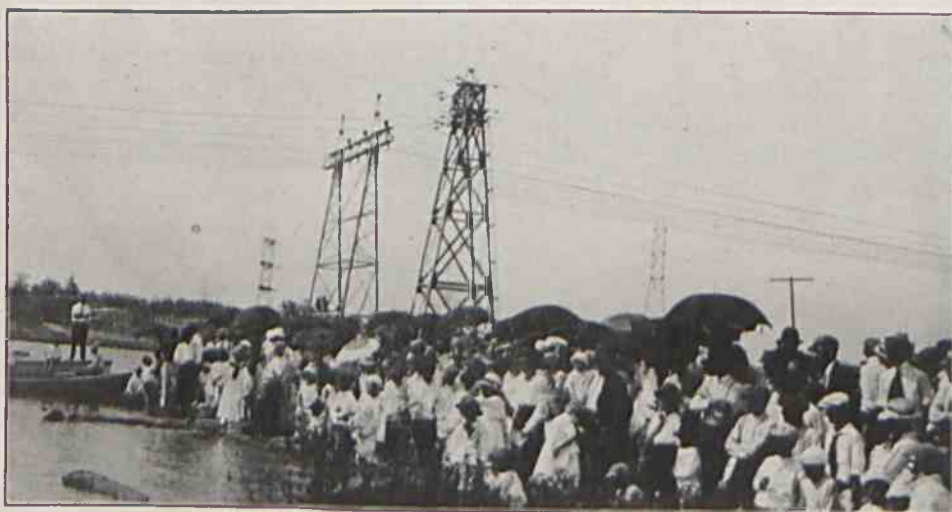
You know it wasn't fair.

One man I went to interview—rather to hear rave awhile—almost beat me up before I could explain that I had come to see him to make amends for some outrage my dog had perpetrated and with me not even owning a dog all, nor even wanting to.

Oh, Frederic C., why the devil do you do it? My reputation is "all shot" in this town all right, for everybody knows that I am, for some unknown reason, interested in dogs; and the half of the town who own the brutes think I am conspiring to murder the dears, and the other half, who wish the first hadn't own them, pester me with blood-curdling suggestions as to the best way to kill them all; and I just can't bear to be partial.

I was down by the lake the other day and there was a good-looking girl with something tied on the end of a string which I at first took to be some kind of insect, but, on looking closer found to be a dog. I was getting on finely, and she was smiling back, when she saw me looking at the end of the string, and became panic-stricken, and retreated.

This morning I thought that, as a farewell effort to do my duty by the home magazine, I'd interview the police force; so I picked out the biggest member of that organization, in hopes of getting a proportionate amount of information. As usual, when I mentioned the magic word "Dog" he started right off with no further prompting. But he seemed to be plumb full of venom, and fairly frothed at the mouth, just as if he had hydrophobia. "I'd just like to have every dog in Badin boiled down into one big dog, and have a chance to shoot him full of holes," he growled, and made a motion as if he really was going to shoot something. Now, Frederic, I suppose he had pulled that gun, and it had gone off, and I'd been in the way! It just wasn't right to wish all this danger and everything on me. You know nobody can do anything with a dog tale anyway. A "Badin Dog Tale" *Hell!* It's a Dog's Life in Badin it has made me live these last few long days—for I dream about them at night when they bark, shy at them in the street, my kid brother writes that his has seven puppies, the dog days are now on, and Jethro Almons' show is coming to see hot ones; and I am doggone tired of the whole thing, and refuse to try anything more on it. Dogs may have histories, but I doubt it. They may have commentaries tho; and I know of them having worms and distemper.



A SECTOR OF THE SHORE LINE