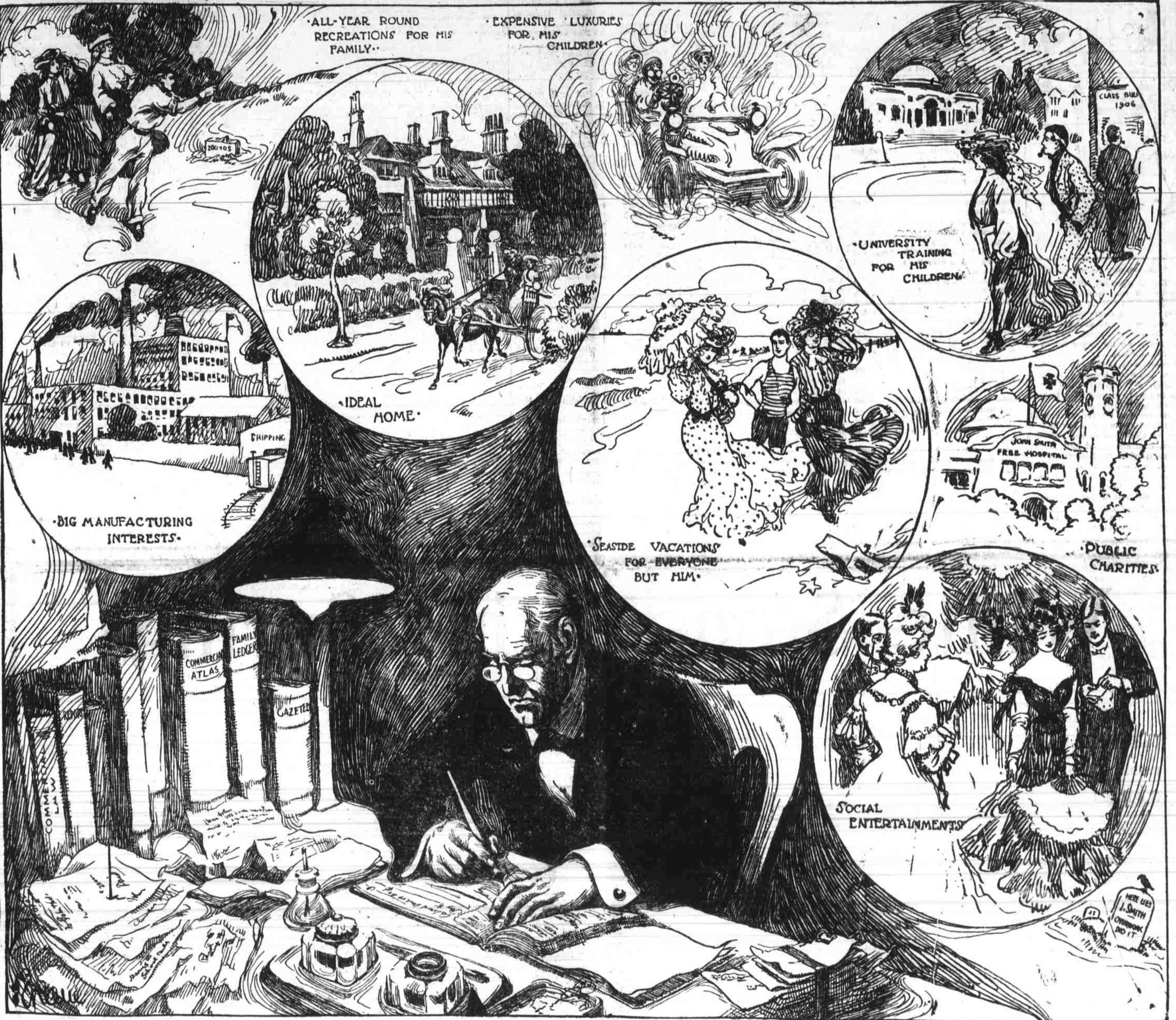


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An Humble Tribute to Dad.



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Americans, who lead the world in industry are particularly industrious in the manufacture of phrases, and it must be said that in the nicknames which they originate they are not over-particular from the standpoint either of dignity or of propriety.

One individual who has suffered severely is he who stands at the head of the household; the wage-earner on whom depends the support of the family and on whose shoulders most of the burdens fall.

Unquestionably, Father is the strongest, surest and most satisfactory title for him. There is a certain deference in the pronunciation of the word which admirably fits the subject. It is almost reverent in its sound. But the number of children who call him Father would make a pitiful minority if they should line themselves up for counting, and it is to the discredit of children that the number is as small as it is.

Papa has never been satisfactory. It is too mushy. Some will say that by calling him Pa the objections to Papa will be cut in half, but to the strong, virile and full-voiced age it has a soft and insufficient tone.

come to the front in spite of the heroic contest that has been made against their use. They will remain because they have good blood in them, but somehow they do not quite fill the bill.

We shall not rush into trouble by selecting the best designation, for each family has a choice and each has reasons for its selection. If we should say that Dad somehow carries a little further and combines a little more closely filial devotion, filial respect and filial pride, it is likely that we should not go very far wrong.

According to the dictionary, Dad is used only by children and rustics, but the point we wish to reach here is to get something that has in it the absolute note of sincerity. If we should make a canvass for sincere people we should be more apt to find them among children and rustics than any other classes, because there the impulse is genuine, and the result is not spoiled by affectation.

So it is to Dad that we want to pay a modest tribute. Essentially, he is a great and abiding necessity, which we recognize without feeling obliged to burn to him. We admit him just as we do the West Indian.

Washington or any other evident thing, and we do not usually realize that a few complimentary remarks are due.

In fact, Dad is so much of a good thing that he gets our acknowledgments in a reversed form. We do not hesitate to make fun of him. We forget that he has claims to our admiration, to our patience or to our reverence. It is his privilege to work, to make the money, to pay the bills, to combat the difficulties, to buy the tickets, to check the baggage, to find the seats in the railroad car, to wave a goodbye to the family and afterward to sign checks for as much as may be necessary for the journey and the outfit.

Then when he goes back to his toil and has a hard time killing the evening dullness, we laugh at the comic pictures showing him enjoying himself as though no domestic ties bound him to duty and to solitude.

There are exceptions in all cases, and there are married men and fathers who sometimes sit at small tables opposite smiling females who have no right to be there. But these are the proverbial exceptions.

loyalty in every walk of life.

It is no exaggeration to say that the American father represents the highest and best type of manhood that the world has ever seen.

There is in his character an element of unselfishness which shows the magnificent courage of his soul. It has, of course, its more dramatic manifestations in the crises of life. We read almost daily of husbands who gave themselves to save their wives, of fathers who made the supreme sacrifice for the rescue of their children.

The other day there was a news item in the papers telling of a father, who, although weak from a recent illness, went into a burning house three times until he brought forth his wife and his two children, only to succumb when all were saved and to struggle a few hours longer in the hospital.

There was no particular praise for his heroism. Many regarded it as a matter of course; he would have been a coward not to have done it. Nevertheless, he was as genuine a hero as ever figured on the battlefield.

That kind of fidelity, however, is not his greater heroism. The con-

demands upon his bravery than sudden catastrophes and occasional perils. It means the steady grind; the fight with the elements of business, of competition, of social perplexity, of increasing responsibility and, as a rule, of the most inadequate appreciation of that which is due to him for what he does and the way he does it.

With the American father, his wife and his children come first, and he thinks of himself last in almost every situation. He works overtime to make them comfortable. He strives for wealth that they may dress well. He plans years ahead so that his children may have the best educational advantages. He slaves to build a home, not so much for his own pride in the house as for the joy of having it occupied by those nearest and dearest to him.

One of the solid facts about American development is the increase of homes. When a family has its own home it becomes a very safe factor in the affairs of government as well as a material part of a nation's prosperity. Every year there are more homes in proportion to the population than there were the year before, and the standard

of these homes is being raised at a wonderful rate. In all this elevation, Dad is at work at the lever, and his good right arm never tires and his fine old heart never wears so long as he is raising his family to better things in life.

There is another point about Dad which no mere words of eulogy can over-estimate. That is his splendid common sense. He has a level head. He is not led astray by fashion's foibles, and he surrenders to them only when the conflicts in the family become too great a strain on his affection.

You do not find Dad encouraging his daughters to buy foreign titles by marrying bankrupt noblemen. We have in Dad a mortal enemy to cigarettes and duceism and idleness. Dad sometimes has to lag miserably behind a wife who wants to give everything to society, but it is because he has to and not because he wishes to.

A philosopher has said "Maids want nothing but husbands, and when they have them, they want everything." Dad does his best to supply everything and in all his indulgence in the whims of his family there is an obliteration of self which is sometimes pathetic.

Then there is Dad's love. We hear much of the mother, and every beautiful thing said about her is deserved. Great men have left the credit of their greatness to her. Pope Leo, who died the other day, said that he owed all that he was to his mother. Lincoln made a similar declaration. So the list might be extended through columns.

Just here is where Dad shows his metal again. He not only acknowledges the superiority of the mother, but he demands that it shall be recognized. He will be faithful to her in every thought, in every word and in every deed, and with this fidelity he forgets himself and he claims for his children all he can get for them. He is prouder of anything they do than he is of the best he has ever done. And thus he remembers them all while forgetting himself, and he keeps on his way with a stout heart and an undiminished soul.

And, somehow, as we look through the years and see the old fellow working away and smiling at Yortune, whichever way it turns, we are very proud of him and are sorry that he is not able to take a longer vacation when the hot days