

The Trees We Climb.

We have often pointed out the fact that many a man is held down and fails to make good because of worry. He sees things that do not really exist—he conjures up all sorts of demons and allows them to ride him. It is all right to be cautious; it is perfectly proper to believe the impossible may happen and happen to you, but too many of us bring on unnecessary worry. The old lines often come in front of us, but we do not heed them. They read:

"Oh, I worry over this thing and I worry over that. But I notice when the atmosphere has cleared. That the bad luck I had looked for didn't come and knock me flat. And I didn't have the trouble that I feared."

Before, perhaps not in these columns but on other pages, we have pointed out how Old Robinson Crusoe, in that volume of delight to men and boys, spent a most wretched night on the island when he first landed after his ship wreck. He saw himself alone; he knew that he must fight his way, and the first thing he did was to spend many hours finding a tree in which he could sleep to be secure from an attack by Wild Beasts in the lonely land. Finally he found a tree passing good, and in it he spent a most wretched and miserable night. But he felt secure from the attack.

In the morning of the next day he traversed the entire island and found to his delight and surprise that there wasn't a wild beast on it. But he had climbed the tree—and in that Defoe perhaps handed us a moral that he felt it unnecessary to write. We all, always, are climbing trees to escape the wild beasts which do not exist. These wild beasts haunt us, but they do not attack us because they are nonexistent. How many of us worry. How many of us borrow trouble, and finally find, as the old verse reads, that the bad luck which we looked for never came to knock us flat, and we didn't find the trouble that we feared.

Human nature is for the most part the same. Some of us go further than others in conjuring up the demons; some of us are cocksure that something is going to happen before morning, and we waste mental energy and vital force preparing for something that was never destined to disturb us.

And how, might ask the stoic; and how, might ask the philosopher, shall we prevent this morbid condition? There is no way except this: Do your duty as you pass along; treat all men as you would have all men treat you, and then get the old, old truth firmly fixed in your mind that after all there is nothing in this world but to love one another.

Grasping, greedy, avaricious, envious, jealous, filled with a desire for revenge of something that never happened, many a man has been lighted to the dusty road of death, miserable, wretched and unhappy, whereas his path might have been one of roses and joy.

Don't worry—no, don't worry. Great propensities to hand down to the man who knows his creditors are after him; who knows a dear one lies at death's door; who knows that his dreams and ambitions have been unrealized; who knows that unmerciful disaster follows fast and follows faster; yet up bobs the other fellow with smiling countenance, well fed and well groomed, and says: "Old man, don't worry." And yet that is the true philosophy—that is the keystone and the keynote of success.

Sometimes we wonder if worry is a disease. We wonder if a man could, by some slow and patient process eradicate it from his system. We wonder if the proverbial tale of woe which we tell policemen is really a development of disease or is it just a piece of idiosyncrasy which we think should become current in the gossip of the town.

Take it today and men are worrying over the outcome of Germany's position—they are seriously preparing for the worst, if war comes. There are men who wonder if the money market will go to pieces, and mothers are wondering if their sons must go to war. Men are worrying over a thousand things which will never happen—and strange as it may seem, while they accept as true the Word of God, they do not seem to worry at all over their immortal souls. They do not seem to remember that in the twinkling of an eye they may be called upon to leave this theater of strife and the worry they generate, to be called to meet the one strange condition of a changed existence—that doesn't interest them. No worry about whether or not before the great white throne there will be an accounting—but much worry and much wonder whether eggs will be forty-five or fifty cents a dozen. Don't worry—no, don't worry. Just take things as they come, and don't try to make them come. But where is the man who can do the stunts? We have all sorts of magicians, men who can keep three plates up in the air; men who can juggle the market and make a million before breakfast; men who can almost turn water into wine; but show us, and our address is Missouri, where is the man who doesn't worry? A kingdom for his photograph and postoffice address, that from him we might learn the Great Secret of life.

After all is said and done, President Wilson is showing that he is big enough to hold down the man's job which is now his.

A Hundred Thousand.
It was a great uprising of the farmers. It was the chance of the Montgomery Ward & Co. concern to make the greatest mail order house of the day. It was the Grange that really started the mail order business—and put on the whole people a terrible burden. And yet the Grange was the thing that proposed to eliminate the middle man—forgetting that were he knocked out the Granger would have no market.

It seems a true bill that Germany doesn't intend to commit the overt act if it can keep away from it. There will be nothing premeditated.

As It Approaches.
As March approaches we understand that the O. Henry will take shape—at least the work will be commenced. When that building is about six stories high, with a roof on it, some of the doubting ones will commence to believe.

Where Germany Can Never Get Right.
It is pleasant to read all this peace food; it is pleasant to wonder why the allies didn't take Germany seriously in her suggestion of peace—but the Average Man wants to know, and will always want to know, about Belgium. There seems to be the one spot in all this world that Germany violated. The little country of Belgium was neutral. She had insisted that she be a neutral country, and her King and her people had believed their rights were not to be disturbed because her neutrality was understood.

Germany imagined, without thinking, that she could cross Belgium, go through her territory, and rip the very vitals out of France before breakfast. This was the program. It was well considered by Germany—and had that happened God only knows where the war would have ended or where Germany would have gone. But it didn't happen. That destiny which shapes our ends made it impossible for the German army to get into France that morning before breakfast. The Gates of Paris did not open, not because France was prepared, but because Belgium would not allow it.

That little country, today famished, bleeding, starving, made the one stand that made militarism impossible in the world. Had Belgium winked the other eye, nodded while they passed, Germany today would have been in the saddle dictating to a world astounded. But it didn't happen. And therefore the philosopher, the stoic, the man who denies, must somehow come out of his shell and take off his hat to the thing men call destiny. Some call it God. And it is God. There was the whole thing in a minute. It wasn't a grandstand play. It just happened. And when things just happen, take off your hat to that Higher Power which does shape things. Belgium is starving. Why, if it performed such an important part? Because all those who have worked for the goodness of the world have suffered. Throughout all the history, the road of those who have tried to bring us to better and higher things have suffered. This from Christ down—and this to show us that the road is hard to travel. Belgium will not be wiped off the earth. There will come a day of settlement. There will come a day when her travail will cease, and she will stand among the Nations of the earth glorified and resplendent. She carried the cross. She alone saved the world from a military despotism which would have meant untold misery and untold woe. That is why this country should open her purse; why this country should see to it that Belgium does not suffer the pangs of hunger. Her part was important—she played it and she stands today the brightest star in the firmament. Wrecked, crushed, bleeding, starving, she is yet on the map of the world, and she will remain there. Watch the end—see to it that this prediction is not in vain.

The Old School.
We have in this print shop a man who talks about Long Primer. Time was—happy were the days—when down the alley in the composing room Slug Two was setting Long Primer and Slug Six had a Nonpareil type. But when was that? In these new-fangled days of points—when ten point has supplanted Long Primer and six point has long been known as nonpareil—where is the man who used to set bourgeois and where is the man who had a brevier type? They have gone—or they have come—new fangled with their notions and their ways—and it really once in a while does this old man good to hear the printer with his gray beard and his spectacles and his painstaking care ask us if there is any more Long Primer on the book. Of course there is not. The Mergenthaler chews up copy like a hungry quartz crusher; it forgets that there was ever a human being in the equation—and they chime their chimes—and click along turning out their molten metal—Machinery that they are, and no-heed to human interest.

The Granger.
We were just reading of something that the state Grange of Pennsylvania had to do with something or other. The State Grange. Long ago—years back yonder when we were writing it 1872 or thereabouts—the State Grange was the fad. All states had the Grange, and Grangers were as thick as fleas on a country dog. But we thought it had gone down the flume of Time. We thought the Grange was numbered with the blest—but it seems that some states still have the order.

Quite True.
The Statesville Landmark, always broad and viewing both sides, and knowing there are two sides to most all questions, hands this down, and it is worth while.

His Hobbies.
The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, a paper which seems to have nothing but unkind words for Mr. Bryan, hands this down as one of its editorials under the heading "Died A-Bornin'". Mr. Bryan's scheme for a popular referendum has died "a-bornin'". Another little mound added to those dotting the graveyard of his hobbies. The abortion did not muster enough supporters in the senate to act as pallbearers at its funeral. And yet as we walk through the graveyard of the Bryan hobbies we see that the tombstones bear but few remarks sacred to any memories unless it be the immortal Sixteen to One. We see the two dominant parties of this country endorsing government control of railroads; we see them telling us that they favor universal suffrage under certain conditions; we see state after state endorsing and putting into effect stringent prohibition laws; we see the federal reserve banks; we see free trade in all its frightfulness; we see, in fact, nearly everything that Bryan introduced as a hobby in other years a Fixed Fact in our program of today.

Wondrous Wise.
The Wilmington Star, which hardly ever twinkles out of harmony, when other morning stars sing together, has this to say anent the bill fathered by the state pharmacists: The pharmacists, having representation in the legislature, proposed a bill which it has been passed, while the State Board of Health has been killed. The pharmacists become operative upon ratification of the sale, offering for sale any device purporting to cure any ailment for which the orthodox medical authorities declare no cure has been found. The penalty for violation is "not exceeding \$100 for each offense."

A Little Hasty.
We have half an idea that the verdict in San Francisco against Mooney, finding him guilty of first degree murder because of the explosion of a bomb thrown by somebody, was rather hasty. Mooney had been for years a labor agitator. He had thought dynamite, perhaps made dynamite, but there was no evidence that he had thrown dynamite. The theory of the prosecution was that Mooney brought the dynamite in a suit case; that he perhaps threw the deadly bomb that cost ten people their lives—but it was all circumstantial evidence, and to hang a man on that goes further than we would ever go.

The Thing.
Only a day or so ago we wrote, as we sang before the stars had set, that a man ought not worry. We quoted an old, familiar verse—we introduced some of our own home-spun philosophy—and several people have spoken to us about it and three different ones have written us. One letter, rather interesting, we quote:

"Mr. Editor: You say don't worry—and here I have a sick husband, a little child who cannot go to school, and the doctor tells me he thinks I have tuberculosis. Why shouldn't I worry, and what else can I do?"

This from a woman we know. And she asks what else can she do. Well, does it become us as a grave and careful chronicler of the things which happen as the busy world spins 'round to tell that lone woman what to do? Shall we, a stranger and not a professional, break in and say the word? We rather think it is up to us. And this is our dope:

Suppose that the end of the world were to come tomorrow. Suppose it was scheduled, and suppose you had to have an important part in the street parade. Could you help it—would you want to help it? And it comes back the same thing in the little family affair. Admitted that you have a sick husband; let us understand that the little child cannot go to school; and let us, and here with hesitancy, admit that maybe the Doodle bugs are dancing on your lungs, even with all this, why should one, accepting the inevitable, worry? Life doesn't hold all—the existence beyond the grave will have its rewards. Take things as they come, but do not let them come against your will, if you can help it. If you can't help it, and your friends can't help it, take what you get—take it cheerfully and bravely—be happy. It is easy, if you will that it shall be easy. The mind is master of the body—get it right and all will be well.

Of course, as we understand it, the City Planner could show us how to save the interest on the Million Dollars the city now owes. Let us hasten to the City Planner.

And then the City Planner might also tell us how about conserving the water supply. As it is now those with nice lawns generally use the squirt in the summer regardless of expense.

And then, as was written, the water pipes, they froze.

The Prison Reform.
The legislature is still considering, as we understand it, the question of prison reform. An investigation by the legislature reveals nothing except the doings of a day, a week, a month, a year.

It may happen that an investigation may be ordered, but it amounts to nothing after all is said and done. The man who must give his evidence is a convict, and the convict cannot stand up like one unconvicted and tell his story. Why? Because he has taken on the stripes. He is a self-confessed or a self-convicted trespasser, and the State has said he has transgressed.

Of course what he says is not given full credence, because he is without the pale. We get it this way, we take it this way, and we make up our report accordingly. But where we make the one sad mistake is in assuming that every man who happened to get caught is a criminal.

This theory will not go with many of the men outside the Walled City. This theory will not go with those who are yet walking free, but we make bold to say and have often said, and perhaps we could not furnish the direct proof, that many outside the prison are as guilty as many men inside the prison. This is a proposition that looks harsh, but we all know it is a fact. There are men today inside the Walled City who are guiltless of premeditated crime. That they are guilty of crime there is no doubt, but the law which presumes so much has never interested itself and does not and cannot make that delicate distinction which men know.

If it be charged that there are shortcomings in prison management; if it appears to those who have charge of those for the nonce held in subjection, it certainly looks like there should be an investigation of the charges preferred. Men are not telling tales out of school which they cannot with some degree of reasonableness substantiate. This paper is not saying that anything is wrong—but when men who are bearing the yoke; men who are subjected to prison rules; men who have been detected in crimes of one sort and another tell us that things are rotten—it looks like we owe it to ourselves to see if the truth has been told. And we say it for a fact that the truth can come out of a prison house as easily as it can come out of a church. Because it is our belief that because a man is in prison he is not necessarily lost to God or lost to Society. Let us investigate!

The prison investigation may amount to nothing—but it looks like there will be something doing.

While it hasn't said so, the State Board of Health in some of its Bulletins, printed at the state's expense, might explain that a bath is worth while.

It Is The Old, Old Story.
The Durham Sun urges support for a Salvation Army Rescue Home for young girls who are led astray. It speaks of the foolishness of a state law that makes the age of consent inadequate—but the real reason is not presented.

And it is this: If the people of North Carolina feel that a girl has the right to consent to sell herself at a tender age; if they feel that it makes no difference if she goes to hell before she knows what she is doing, why build homes to take care of them? Why not build the wall around them before they make the break? Why offer inducements to men to ruin them and then build homes to care for them after they are ruined? Isn't there something in this thought?

Of course we know that we delight in sending the nigger to the road because he has not and never had the moral courage to pass a hen roost—but should we deliberately say that an infant had a legal right to make a contract bartering her immortal soul at the age of sixteen—but before she could barter her house and lot, if she owned one, she must have reached further maturity?

These are the sad things, the blighting things which are—the things which are the laws of a commonwealth which now and then has the nerve to talk about its patriotism and its achievements.

As we view it, and as we have always viewed it, a girl should not be considered intellectually capable of parting with her virtue unless she was old enough, in law, to part with her property or make a contract for a piece of real estate. And the men who think otherwise think of lust and not of virtue. Are we right?

Mr. Cone suggests water metres for all who use water or no metres at all. But that would mean about fifty thousand a year deficit to the water fund.

It Accumulates.
The evidence that our prison system is as rotten as rot gets to be, accumulates. The legislature has a sacred and important duty to perform. There is no use to tell our readers that convicts have as many rights as a cur dog. But having them, they have not been accorded them. The story we printed the other day concerning the Caledonia farm is being proved true. And such horrors as were there depicted astounded the dullest mind. The legislature is now in session. No longer is the evidence that of a man with a grouch, but there is plenty to prove that the whole system must be changed, and a general weeding out must happen.

We do not want the prisoners to live on angel food; we do not want them to sleep on beds of down; we do not want them to be given special privileges, but we do insist that they should be treated as humanely as the average man treats his hogs. If this is done, and if reforms are made that should be made North Carolina can be proud of her legislature.

If we could get the Coler road it would help some. And we can get it if we go after it.

Gasoline goes up in price, but the joy rider doesn't seem to care. Automobiles multiply and people wonder where and how.

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The Southern Railway Company exhorts its employes to renewed efforts in the matter of courtesy to the public. There has been a very great change in the attitude of the railway people toward the public in recent years, but among some of the employes there is room for further improvement. Meanwhile the public, while demanding courtesy—which is its due—from the railroad folks, should make a special effort to return the consideration by refraining from asking foolish and useless questions and doing other unnecessary things which try the patience of those who deal with the public. Sometimes a railroad man, or any individual who comes in contact with the public, is provoked to discourtesy by lack of consideration from those with whom he deals.

The bell has rung. That is the milk in one of the cocoanuts. We exaggerate nothing when we say we have seen men deliberately walk into a little railway office and proceed to ask some of the most foolish questions ever propounded to mortal man. "Is that clock running?" "Is that the correct time?" "When will the train be here?" When will it reach Kalamazoo? or some other seaport town. Any fool could see that the clock was running; any fool knew the agent supposed it was correct in its time or he would have corrected it, and the blackboard in front perhaps conveyed the information sought—but idly sought.

And the agent, busy with his train orders, busy selling tickets, busy as a man can be just about train time, must answer courteously and civilly each fool question or be voted discourteous. We are glad that the Landmark has made the suggestion it made, and we are pleased to pass it along.

A Little Hasty.
We have half an idea that the verdict in San Francisco against Mooney, finding him guilty of first degree murder because of the explosion of a bomb thrown by somebody, was rather hasty. Mooney had been for years a labor agitator. He had thought dynamite, perhaps made dynamite, but there was no evidence that he had thrown dynamite. The theory of the prosecution was that Mooney brought the dynamite in a suit case; that he perhaps threw the deadly bomb that cost ten people their lives—but it was all circumstantial evidence, and to hang a man on that goes further than we would ever go.

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This may be a victory of the pharmacists against the state board of health, but it is just as dangerous as the original bill, which was a scheme to boost the doctors. Will the old Star which twinkles down Wilmington way tell us, in candor, what is the "orthodox medical authority?" Will it go back with us to fifty years ago—a bald head may yet be raked up in the office to answer—and explain what Stokes and Bell, perhaps the best authorities then, meant in telling us that water should not be administered to a typhoid fever patient, regardless of their physical condition, were bled, no matter when or how, but always bled because the letting of blood was the only thing? Will it tell us why now the ice bag is good for the typhoid fever patient and why they feed us on stuff to give us blood and not take it from us? Will it go back to the days of Aesculapeus and tell us when and how doctors have agreed? What is a medical authority and how many schools of doctors are there, and why should any of them be accredited? We are not particularly pessimistic tonight as we write, there is no tooth aching and no bunion palpitating—but tell us, pray, and prove to us what is an "orthodox medical authority" and who has defined the term? We would like to know. We would like to know if it isn't true and if it isn't a fact that medical authorities from the time medicine started—from the day of the apothecary—carrying the pot—all of them disagreed, and if it isn't true that every new theory that comes along has peopled the graveyards. If we are wrong, tell us so—but prove it.

Of course this wet weather isn't a part of the Glorious Climate—but it seems to be a part of the Climate. Just what you may conclude to do about it is problematical.

A Grouch.
Old Man Dan Coble of the Oxford Ledger, old enough to know better, and better than to be old enough, puts this into type:

You can almost always tell by looking at the girl whether she spells her name "Edith" or "Ethyte."

Oh, no, that will not do. We have known "Edith" and we have known "Ethyte," both of them sweet-faced girls, little earth angels they were, and whether one had a bad spell and the other didn't was no fault of the faultless clay. There is nothing in a name, the Master has so declared, and certainly it makes no difference how it is spelled. The parents may have indulged a fancy of a foolish girl in her teens, but Edith is always Edith, and if a few letters get there that should not be it is her own burden; in the brighter light she knows she made the mistake. Dan should not talk that way.

And just now the man who thinks about going fishing next summer buys a salt mackerel for breakfast and dreams pleasant dreams.