



A PSALM OF HARD TIMES.

Tell me not in hopeful ditties
That there are no idle men,
For the cry from all the cities
Proves you've lied and lied again.

Need is real! Men are earnest,
Hunting work the country through;
But the Cleveland time returnest,
And they find no work to do.

Not enjoyment—only sorrow
For poor families in distress;
How they'll get a meal tomorrow
None would even dare to guess.

Debts are large, and cash is fleeting,
And our hearts, once light and gay,
Now like courthouse bells are beating
For the sheriff's auction day.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In this hot commercial hell,
Poor folks are a helpless chattel
That the rich may buy and sell.

Trust no plute, however winning,
His fair promises may sound;
He'll be nice at the beginning
Just to get you gagged and bound.

Lives of rich men all remind us
That we poor men made it all—
Forging chains of wealth to bind us,
While at Mammon's feet we crawl.

Crawling that perhaps another,
Who may vote a few years hence—
Some forlorn and soup-fed brother—
Seeing us, shall learn some sense.
—James Larkin Pearson.

SPRING.

The Easter hats have blossomed,
Spring dresses have come in,
And the crop of politicians
Is big enough to thin.

Old cow has gone to shedding,
Calf's old enough to wean,
And over on the mountain-side
The trees are getting green.

The folks are planting taters
And tommy-toes and peas,
And the smell of fertilizer
Is wafted on the breeze.

"Spring fever" is sure to get you,
But when you don't feel right,
A pint of home-made bitters
Will mend you up a sight.

I dread the cold in Winter,
In Summer I dread the heat;
But dog my cats, beloved,
If Spring ain't hard to beat.
James Larkin Pearson.

LOOK OUT! LEMME AT 'EM!

You have noticed that for the past two or three months The Fool-Killer has not had very much to say on the Roman Catholic question. Not that there wasn't a-plenty to say, by any means, but so many other and more able editors were giving Romanism thunder and rubbing it in that I just thought I'd stand off to one side and watch the fun awhile.

But that don't satisfy me worth a hardly. I love to see the other fellows hard at it, but what they say don't relieve the tension of my feelings nary bit. There's just some things that I've got to say myself—or bust. Possibly I can prod the old Romish beast with a red-hot poker at some place where nobody else has touched it. And even if I hit a sore place that somebody else has been working on, I can at least make it hurt a little wusser.

And so, from now on, you can count on The Fool-Killer being right in the thickest of the fight against this great Howly Terror that comes wrapped in the cloak of religion, beneath which is hidden an awful political dagger that threatens the very life of our most cherished institutions.

Variety is needed in this fight as well as in other things, and so the ammunition that I shall use against the pappycrats will be largely burlesque and ridicule. You can sometimes floor an enemy by laughing at him quicker than any other way. The Fool-Killer is going to print another series of "Pappycratic Prayers" similar to the series that was so popular several months ago. They will be addressed to the old Dago Dad by Woodchuck Wilson, Secretary Backupity, and other members of the toe-kissing tribe. These prayers will be rich, rare and racy, and you don't want to let any of your friends miss a copy of The Fool-Killer from now on. If you want to see the Plutopappycrats dance jubber, right here is the place and the show is already open. Get your tickets and walk in. Room for everybody and then some. Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! Hoo-ray!

GOVERNMENT REPORTS.

I have already had my say on the battleship question, and now I want to call your attention to that thunderation, tarnal-nation howling humbug known as the Government Printing Office. It's a big establishment, and it costs millions of dollars to run it. I've been there and seen it—been all through the blamed thing. They boast of its being the largest printing office in the world, and maybe it is. I'm not disputing about its size, for goodness knows it's a whopper.

But what good is it?

What do they print there that is worth a dried-apple cuss to anybody?

They print the Congressional Record when congress is in session—and congress never adjourns any more since Tumulty became president.

The Congressional Record is the official cemetery where they bury the lifeless utterances of our clawhammer-coated congressional kangaroos. It is also useful for congressmen to slop over in when there is not room in the Capitol. Every word that is uttered in congress, as well as a lot of words that are not uttered, gets itself printed in the Record. If the nigger boy that runs the elevator happens to sneeze, you can read that sneeze in the Record the next day.

But nobody ever reads the Record, and it isn't worth half the white paper it is printed on.

And what else do they print at the G. P. O.?

Oh, they print Reports, Reports, Reports! Great big heavy, ponderous reports about this, that and the other—reports that nobody on earth is interested in. They use the finest grade of heavy book paper for these reports, and put them in expensive cloth bindings and send them broadcast over the country.

Nobody was ever known to read one of these government reports. They are dumped into the cellar with other rubbish and trash, and there they lie till they rot. I have about a wagon load

of them in my own cellar, and they are just now getting good and mellow.

If a man had a great secret that must be kept hid from all the world, the safest place to put it would be in a government report.

My Bow To Miss Spring.

The Fool-Killer hastens to take off its 17-jewelled rabbit-fur bonnet and make its manners to the gentle Queen of Spring as she comes toddling down the pike with her arms full of violets, peach blossoms, home-made bitters and plowed ground.

Behold the farmer as he getteth up before day and falleth over two chairs hunting for his breeches. Then he goeth to the barn to feed, and again he stumbleth over a new plowstock and sticketh his head into a bag of fertilizer.

Verily, this is the hustling season down on the farm. He that expects to have plenty of hoe-cake and something to sop it in next winter must pointedly get up and sift.

And the garden should not be neglected. Every family ought to raise its own cut-worms and potato-bugs. Some people have an idea that potato-bugs are hard to raise, but that is a mistake. I have raised them for a number of years, and I never fail to have a good crop. It is necessary, of course, to plant some Irish potatoes. You can't expect potato-bugs to live and fatten on rag-weeds.

The people of Virginia are expecting that state to be as "dry as a powder horn" inside of two years. What?—Virginia going to vote in prohibition? No, bless your soul, she don't need to go to that trouble. North Carolina is ordering so much booze from Virginia that the supply will soon run out.