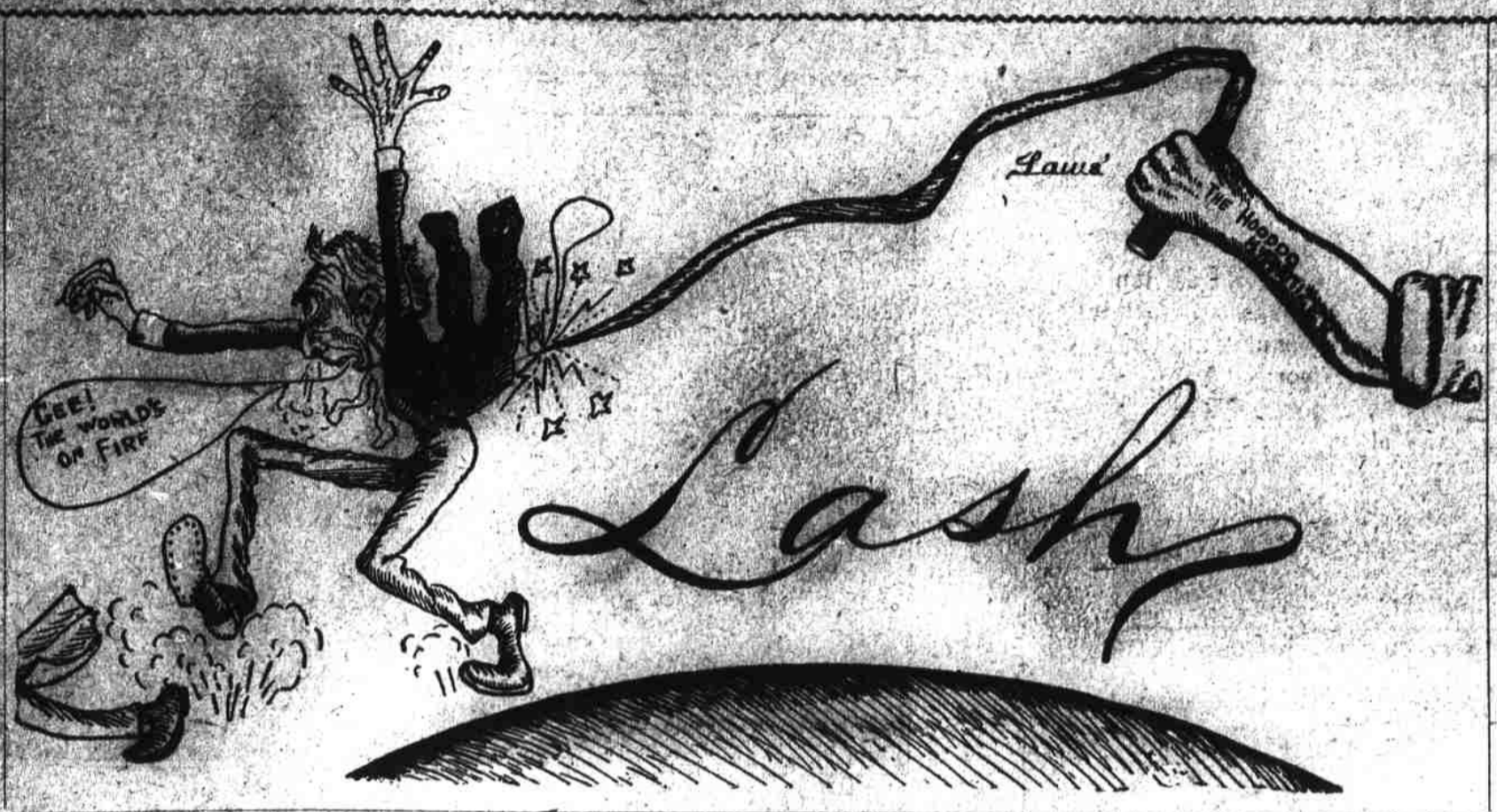


WORLD SUBSCRIPTION  
FALL 1911  
177



**BACK TO THE FARM.**

Well, sir, every week or so we see some big newspaper article urging folks to go back to the farm, and I just resisted as long as I could, till all at once like a muley steer, making a lunge over the garden fence into the bean patch, I yielded and marched off to the farm, brave as a township constable guarding a pound of mutton.

By gosh, you see a preacher came along with a coat buttoned clear up to the neck and a countenance like a funeral sermon, and being a slick duck at his job, he decoyed me off while he had me all wrapped up in farm devotion. I've spent one week among the grasshoppers and saw-briers down on that preacher's farm, and about another week would dissolve my physical manhood till I'd be too lean to make a decent funeral.

I tell you there's a heap of difference between a preacher at church telling about sowing wheat and tares, and getting out on the farm with him where there's corn to gather, kicking cows to milk and hay to get up all at the same time. I never knew a preacher could act so good at church and be so all-fired mean down on the farm. And it would surprise you how sassy they can talk to a kicking cow, and how near one can come swearing without using a single cuss word. That preacher would get in a hurry all over himself and just ball up and yell like he does at a revival, and say, "Come, come, boy; procrastination is the thief of time. Get a hump on yourself, you lazy heathen, and go feed the pigs, cut stove-wood, bring water, feed the chickens, and get ready for family prayer."

Now there's no one thing I was less mashed on than that evening prayer, but I was compelled to take a prayer half an hour long and a pint of skimmed milk to go to bed on. And that old salvation auctioneer put me clear up

in the garret, where that prayer or skimmed milk, or both, soured on my stomach and I was so sick I felt sure I would wake up a corpse the next morning. There I was up there all alone, with nothing to make my last hours pleasant but some rats playing with ears of seed corn, and mice jumping half-hammer thru some dry pea pods.

Now I have heard it said that "Death loves a shining mark," and right here I wish to remark that bed-bugs love a tender morsel and are splendid judges of youth. That night when I removed my celluloid collar and gently folded my Sunday breeches for a pillow, little did I know of the warm reception that was waiting for me in the person of about 1800 bed-bug in all stages and stations of life. No sooner had I stretched my tired limbs out on that 13-ounce quilt than these bugs all made a dash for me. I sprang off my bed, jumped up in a chair and swatted them over their heads with one of my socks, every time they tried to climb the chair legs. About two o'clock in the morning these bugs gave it up and retired behind the cracks and ceiling and I practiced awhile on a few melancholy notes of snoring, and failed to complete my dying, as that old minister resurrected me some time about four o'clock and squeezed over three hours of labor out of me before I could get my eyes to working good on their stems.

Now I tell you, you will think a lot more of a preacher if you don't ever work for him any, but only see him when he comes to church and hear him sing through his nose that "Heaven Is My Home."

Now all the folks who want to can obey that newspaper injunction, "Back to The Farm," but I've tried spreading it on my bread and the blamed thing tastes bad and grates on my nerves. I'd rather be a bow-legged girl with three sweathearts at a bean-stringing than to take my chances on the farm where

the cuckleburs and saw-briers don't have any more respect for a boy's bare shins than a politician does for the truth.

**GOOD-BYE OLD BROGAN, GOOD-BYE.**

Many of the old customs and things which were highly prized and essential to the well-being and comfort of our forefathers, are now fast fading from the memory of man.

fast-flying, pride-puffed commercial age, is the old easy, durable, economic weapon of life's warfare—the home-made shoe.

How tenderly my thoughts cling to the memory of the old brogan! I made its acquaintance early in life, and it serves as a link to connect my barefooted days with the present.

The first pair of shoes I ever had were home-made brogans, and I thought them noble companions. I was as proud of these shoes as a girl is of her first beau. I wore them for years and years, and I suspect if you would go and search in my father's old smoke-house today you'd find them there yet, nearly as good as ever. A brogan shoe was never known to wear out, but sometimes a fellow outgrew them and they had to be laid aside.

The home-made shoe was a most wonderfully wrought article, and was made to withstand the blighting hand of time. They differed in construction only in size, as they were made straight and would accommodate your big toe on either right or left.

But the days of the home-made shoe are numbered, and the dear old mud-splitter is rapidly passing out. There is a saying that all things must have an end, and the brogan is no exception to the rule. It came, flourished, and faded, and soon the last pair will have laid down in the old wood-house of oblivion to moulder and decay.