

Doubting men are not
achievers; those who win
are self-believers.

Herbert Kaufman's Weekly Page

We can't prolong life, so
we must accomplish more
with our lives.

To a Snob:

By HERBERT KAUFMAN

Why talk so much about your *ancestors*? It's a very *ordinary* experience to own a string of *forebears*. You seem to forget that *everybody* has them. And, averaging up the lots, *one* set is probably about as *good* as the *next*.

Here we find an outfit of "rich men, poor men, beggar men, thieves;"—there a group of "doctors, merchants, lawyers, chiefs." Don't bother to produce a *special* genealogical chart, the old *nursery rhyme* is apt to prove a far more *accurate* one.

All folks experience their *ups* and *downs*: The tides of success and failure *ebb* and *flow* through the centuries; fortunes *rise* and *fall* and *mount* again.

A certain number of *shady* and rotten branches are to be found on *each* family tree. Time *prunes* and *grafts* them back to *vitality*. The process is *ceaseless* and *unvarying*—the *fruitage* utterly *unreliable*.

Weaklings, poltroons, cringers, wantons and wastrels are *behind* and *before* you.

There were *undesirable* progenitors among your *grandparents* and there will be as *many* among your *offspring*.

Future collaterals will wait upon the unborn progeny of your *domestics*, nor will they be the *first* of the lineage to serve in *humble* capacities.

Even *kings* have closets-ful of such skeletons. The Obrenovitches were formerly *swine herds* and the Hapsburgs were the most prominent *butchers* of their day.

Of whatever *present social* position, the Smiths, the Taylors, the Wrights, the Carpenters, the Chapmans, the Millers, *all sprang* from folk who followed the occupations *indicated* by their *names*. Nomenclature *invariably* discloses *origin*.

The various tides of immigration which populated this continent chiefly brought *peasants* and *artisans*—doers and darers—builders, *nation-makers*.

America was *settled* by farmers, petty tradesmen, plantation hands and tickets o' leave.

They were *forced* to *make good*; without resources, there was no *alternative* but the development of the *resources* about them.

The *Knickerbockers* were *mainly* shopmen, cobblers, chandlers, furriers and peddlers—decent, earnest citizens, orderly, God-fearing people.

They made no *pretense* to *caste*; they knew *too much* about *themselves*.

As *good metal* is *now* simmering in the *Melting Pot* to strengthen the *national alloy*.

They *too* will have their opportunities in the Republic—the offspring of *Greeks* and *Italians* and *Scandinavians*.

Guisseppes, Estrates and Oles are *destined* to wed your *kin*. Don't sniff. Sparta, Norseland and Rome were *proud* breeders.

Who knows *what* valorous lymph surges in the *bootblack* at the corner or the *fruit dealer* across the way?

They've forgotten what they *were*, to concentrate *hope* and *ambition* upon what they mean to *be*. Still, if occasion *called* and *ancestors* were *matched*, it's *dollars* to *crullers* that your bunch wouldn't have the *best* of it by a long sight.

(INCIDENTALLY, IT MAY BE PERTINENT TO INQUIRE WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED. THAT TICKET OF ADMISSION TO SELECT CIRCLES WAS ISSUED TO YOUR GRANDFATHER FOR SERVICES RENDERED. WHERE'S YOUR OWN?)

James Whitcomb Riley

HE didn't write of gods and kings
And all such highfalutin' things;
But folks and boys and bumblebees.
And when he talked of Summer, say,
The printing smelled of clover hay.
And you could see the lazy breeze
Go nosin' through the locust trees
Around the house where you were born.
And hear the old tin dinner horn.

He didn't read up Persian tales,
Of these bul-buls and nightingales;
But went and sat out on the rails
And listened to the thrush and wren
Cheep in the meadow brambles, when
The song of birds was in his pen;
The whippoorwill and bobolink
Gave music lessons to his ink.

He turned words into wishing rings
That made forgotten memories start
Tears trickling in your lonely heart;
And painted signposts all the way
Along the pike to Yesterday.

God must be feeling mighty good
To have him 'round (I know I would)
A-telling tales of lazy scamps
And run-aways and dogs and tramps.

It don't seem queer to picture him
All fussed with golden robes and wings
Up there upon an armchair cloud
Inventing stories for a crowd
Of breathless little Cherubim—
Of fairy, goblin, witch and elf.
When he rode by the other days,
There wasn't anything to say
But "Good-bye, Jim, take keer yourself."

His First Trip

HE CAME rolling down the avenue in an old, high-wheel, solid-tire machine—one of the things they called an automobile back yonder in the primitive ages of the industry.

Rims, dashboard and hubs were caked with mud—a leatherette suitcase was roped on the back.

Everybody turned to look. But he was looking too, and had a great deal more to see.

Passing chauffeurs, in fine frenzy of inspiration, rose delightfully to the occasion and delivered expert opinions to the chaffing sidewalk crowd.

But the boy from the country chugged ahead—he didn't give a hang about appearances—didn't know there were any. The banter and ridicule didn't feaze him. These city folk couldn't understand what it meant to coax and cozen that creaking ramshackle into town.

The Lord only knows how far he had come or how much farther he'll go. Men who can make the best of the best at hand are bound to ride far.

They use a special quality of gasoline—the "Determination Brand."

One of these days he'll come back and in style. This was just a survey; he wanted to size up the fighting ground. And when he does return watch out for him. He has acquired the habit of surmounting difficulties—of getting where he wants to go. He'll laugh last.

"Nil Desperandum"

LAST Fall a wind storm uprooted the big willow. They sawed off the trunk and carted it away but, by some freak of chance, left the ugly stump behind. All Winter long, it lay in the yard—bottom up, broken roots in the air. Then Spring came pulsing through the earth and found one slender rootlet fighting for survival. Now a score of valiant young shoots are waving their fronds above the wreck. Soon a clump of verdure will mask the spot, then lusty trunks will push up in the sun—the dead wood will rot away and all trace of the disaster be wiped out.

Why aren't you still doing business at the old stand? What more can you ask of Providence than the right to keep on while there is a chance to sprout again?

New successes obliterate the memory of old failures. Be a willing willow, not a weeping one.

"V" VERSES
by Herbert Kaufman

Vim Vigor Victory



You haven't ever done your best;
You've still to meet the telling
test.
Keep battling, make another try;
Don't let your faith and courage
die.
Existence is a finish fight
In which each man exerts his
might,
And by sheer strength attains his
right.
Fate does not tell us in advance
When we have faced the final
chance.
'Tis not our privilege to know
How often we must undergo
Defeat before the winning bout.
Ambition can't and won't stay
out.
But rises groggy from the
ground:
And comes back for another
round;
It won't lie still, it can't be
downed.
So long as you give blow for blow
And do not seek to strike too low,
You stand a show.

IT CAN'T BE DONE

THE quart undertook a gallon job and immediately disclosed its real measure. Those who do not recognize their own limits soon betray them to their fellows. Bluff loses every position it wins. Promises will open the door of opportunity, but only performance will turn the lock on the other side.

Time trails the cleverest pretender and exposes his record. The only employees who are constantly sure of their posts are "delivery men."

John H. Patterson once turned over the details of an approaching banquet to an individual whose glib tongue won an executive responsibility. The following morning he interrupted an important conference to ask the President if he preferred to have ice cream or water ice served on the aforesaid occasion.

"Both. Your resignation is accepted," was the instant response.

Patterson had gauged his man in a flash. Only a congenial idiot would intrude with such a trivial consideration upon a vital board meeting.

They're all discovered in time.

Masquerading asses will bray in the neighborhood of lions.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

A CHILD first learns the sound of a word—its meaning comes to him afterwards. There's an appreciable distance between the two periods. The reasoning faculty develops slowly. Therefore, don't expect obedience too early. Nature knows nothing of behavior; man invented all the rules of restraint.

Goody-goody little boys and girls are abnormal types. Kids should tumble about, knock things over and raise a bit of dickens. Worry if they don't rollic and romp and occasionally rob the jam pot and raid the pie pans. It indicates something wrong in them—or you.