

In the Lexicon of Duty
There Is No Such
Word as Choice.

Herbert Kaufman's Weekly Page

Most Men Would Get in
Oftener if They'd Get
Out Sooner.

Fortune Wears a Clock-Face

BY HERBERT KAUFMAN

Tomorrow isn't sizable enough to hold the shelved plans and postponed judgments and deferred decisions and neglected duties which the centuries have piled up against its arrival.

If you want plenty of room for action and lots of time to do big works, select the longest twenty-four hours in the entire year and get busy Today.

The right minute is worth a thousand wrong ones. There are no lucky moments—but there exists in each undertaking and in all problems a period especially propitious for happy results.

Opportuneness is the clincher of opportunity. The blow that shapes hot metal won't even dent cold iron. Promptness is an enormous saver of energy.

Conflagrations are sparks at the outset—watchful eyes can accomplish more than a whole fire battalion.

Disease is a manifestation of disregarded health rules—heed small pains and you won't have great ones.

Nature is a rattler—she doesn't strike without fair warning. Most of the rack and ruin and misery in sight was once quite preventable.

Loose habits finally get us all into tight corners.

Delay braves every golden sand in the hour glass.

The main difference between men is a matter of calendars—of forethought. Fortune wears a clock-face and never looks back.

There has been sufficient planning ability in the past to transform our universe into a miracle-ground, but most of it was and continues to be lost through hesitation.

Readiness is rare and correspondingly esteemed. The quick-to-think and swift-to-strike are eternal victors over the adverse chance.

Delay and decay are seldom found far apart. Nations, notions and numbers are rendered ineffective by unpreparedness.

Tardiness is guilty of half the hell on earth.

Providence didn't short-suit you. You haven't lacked many qualities of competence. You simply failed to act when your mind grasped facts which your hands wouldn't.

You're one of the late people—the chronic missers-out; you can't sense the importance of previousness.

You catch the train that barely misses the connection. You keep your appointments just close enough to find the deal closed. You put off the doctor until you're put to bed.

You finish a trifle behind schedule, but the hold-up, even though slight, confounds affairs and brands you for unreliability.

You're almost exact—but so is the bullet near the bullseye—which, like you, isn't heard from because it isn't a bell-ringer.

There are too many runners in the human race for any man to stand a show who doesn't toe the scratch.

With millions striving for the top places, there's no hope for folk who neglect their bodies, their businesses and their possibilities.

There is no margin of safety—the present alone holds all certainty.

Learn to be prompt and the world hasn't much more to teach you.

George and Joffre

BRASS may pass for gold until it encounters acid. Test is fatal to pretense.

The crucible discloses real mettle. History finds her immortals in the dark. Peril calls the bluffs of bombasts and inefficients.

When the world is poor in genius we spend responsibility with infinite caution. Men find their actual measure when menace rides in the horizon. Masks drop, the empty fopperies and dignities of undeserving are disregarded at the crisis. New leaders appear at the summons of necessity.

The guns of the enemy locate the best soldier in the opposing ranks. Given a great enough opportunity, genius will leap from the mud to mid-heaven.

Today, the son of a peasant and the ward of a cobbler are respectively supreme figures in the management of France and Great Britain. When Destiny has marked a man for greatness, all the barriers of caste and society are as grass blades under his tread.

Believe Me, Bo!

I BEEN readin' by the papers that there ain't a livin' chance

For the poor old Dove of Peace and her dinky olive branch.

As I gather from the things the kings have said, this is about

Where there won't be no decision 'till one bunch is counted out.

So they're goin' to rough it up some more, and just Believe Me, Bo,

Before it's through there'll be a few new features in the show.

The Swedes and Dutch just need a touch to shove them in the scrap—

If this keeps up much longer Europe won't be on the map.

Five million men they say have croaked and more than that are due

To bite the dust or go to bust before the year is through.

If they won't stop until they drop the last chip in the pot,

There'll be a lot left for the guys who win the battle—not.

I'd like to hear the women and the boys put on the blink,

The blind ginks and the cripples and the girls tell what they think.

If they and all the kids the war has hurt, could have their way

There wouldn't be another gun shot on the earth today.

I'm a hick, I don't know nothin' and I may be wrong or right—

But I'll bet when Peace does come again, they'll lock it in at night.

Prejudice and Sincerity

EVERY man must view according to his lights. We are not all responsible for short-sightedness, but exhibit the influence of parentage and circumstance.

Contacts, interests, education and occupation all tend to mould our opinions. Breed and creed play their part in the formation of character and mental characteristics. Only those who move on the same levels can have many coincident ideals.

To insist that any one course of procedure is solely proper—that any single method is exclusively correct—is to presume the possession of superiority which personal judgment is not entitled to grant.

It is the scheme of things that we must progress through disagreement and the rivalry which it incites, but however dear each may hold his principles, other folks are at least entitled to respect for any sincere conviction, even though it arouses our antagonism.

When It Pays to Advertise

IF ADVERTISING were an expedient for excess profits or a device to dispose of inferior goods, cheats and shysters would be the leading users of printers' ink.


But sincere advertising is primarily a challenge to comparisons, the last man possibly to benefit through its use is an unreliable merchant.

Honest men alone invite attention. In the business underworld, identifying marks are zealously avoided. From time to time knaves have unwisely attempted to prostitute publicity, but in the end the force they invoked against public interest invariably struck back and destroyed them.

Misrepresentation defeats its own object. When you see firms and products on record year after year in the same publications, be assured that they're giving full equivalent for the money they ask.

It pays to advertise—when you're right.

VERSES
by
Herbert Kaufman



Vim
Vigor
Victory

You think the other fellow wrong
Always; and so don't get along.
The time you take to justify Delinquencies—explaining why
You failed at this and missed at that—
Has held you back and kept you flat.
Confess your faults—they're very clear.
Conceit has made them doubly dear.
You won't acknowledge what is plain
To all the world—you're far too vain.
But we have eyes to measure facts,
And therefore know you by your acts.
O! ostrich, will you never lift Your head and look before you're bift?

What About Your Own Hospitals?

EXPERTS predict a recurrence of infantile paralysis this year. While every possible effort is being made to discover a remedy for the hideous blight, thus far practically no hope is offered humanity. Science continues to be baffled—the microscope has temporarily met its match. Of course, we shall eventually conquer the plague, but probably not before another multitude of little ones have been lost.

There are certain precautions which experience has proved exceedingly effective in containing the epidemic within bounds. Rigorous quarantine and the prompt disposal of infected and infectious matter are, above all, essential to public safety. It is, moreover, extremely advisable to investigate the status of local hospitals, otherwise one may suddenly discover that some of the home institutions, in return for a state subsidy, are at the disposal of the health officers, and even, if there are no cases in town, county patients may, under the law, be brought there for treatment. In which contingency considerable difficulty will be experienced in securing accommodations in safe centers, as certificates are required almost everywhere before families from danger points are permitted to enter other cities.

Very few citizens seem to be aware of this possibility. Be wise, be warned, be wary—in time.

"Lest You Forget"

HIGH prices won't come down if some high-binders are not "sent up." Fines will not discourage market manipulations. The food crowd won't miss any amount exacted by the courts. They're rich—your pocketbook proves it. Nothing less drastic than a few heavy jail sentences will bring these gentry to the mark. There are laws especially provided to check juggling in necessities. State and Government officers delegated to enforce them. But officials as a class are only active under the pressure of public demand. If you quit complaining and stop fighting the present cost of living, there will be no prosecution and no relief. Get your wife to show you last month's bills and get mad enough to write a letter to your Congressman which will make him take notice. He's the man who can change matters.