The Somerset Herald.

ESTABLISHED 1827.

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The Somerset Herald.

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JUST COMMON FOLKS.

A hundred humble songsters trill
The notes that to their lays belong,
Where just one nightingale might fill
The place with its transcendent song,
And thus Fate comes, and with its smile
A soul with lasting greatness cloaks
And leaves a thousand else the while
To be for aye just common folks.

If only sweetest bells were rung,
How we should miss the minor chimes!
If only grandest poets sung
There'd be no humble little rhymes;
The modest clinging vines add grace
Unto the Forest's giant oaks,
And 'mid earth's mighty is a place
To people with just common folks.

Not they the warriors who shall win
Upon the battlefield a name
To sound above the awful din;
Not theirs the painter's deathless fame,
Nor theirs the poet's muse that brings
The rhythmic gift his soul invokes;
There's but to do the simple things
That Duty gives just common folks.

They are the multitudes of earth,
And mingle ever in the crowd,
Elbowing those of equal birth,
Where none because of caste is proud,
Bound by the meshes of a fate
That sometimes a decree revokes,
Above the lowly, 'neath the great,
Are millions of just common folks.

Fate has not lifted them above
The level of the human plain;
They share with men a brother love,
In touch with pleasure and with pain.
One great, far-reaching brotherhood
With common burdens, common yokes,
And common wrongs and common good,
God's army of just common folks.

—*Norris Wilderson.*

"BUSTED" BLAKE.

How a Fortune Fell to His Deserted Widow.

Harken to the tale of how fortune fell to the widow of "Busted" Blake.

The outcome has shown that "Busted" was not radically bad. But he was wretchedly weak of will to reject an opportunity of having another drink with the boys, or with the girls, or with anybody or nobody.

In the days of his ascendency, when he was a young and newly married architect, he was a buyer of drinks for others. Waiters in cafes vied with each other in showing readiness to take his orders. He was rated a jolly good fellow then. No one would have supposed it destined that some fine night a leering bar-room wit should reply to his whispered application for a small loan by pouring a half-glass of whisky on his head and saying:

"I hereby christen thee 'Busted.'"

The title stuck. Blake, through continued impecuniosity, lost all shame of it in time; lost, too, his self-respect and his wife. Mrs. Blake, a gentle and pretty little brunette, had wedded him against the will of her parents. She had trusted, for his safety to the allurements of his future, which everybody said was bright, and to his love for her.

The years of tearful nights, the pleadings, the reproaches, the seesaw of hope and despair, need not here be dwelt upon. They would make an old story, and some of the details might be shocking to the young person. They reached a culmination one day when she said to him:

"You love drink better than you love me. I have done with you!"

She was a woman and took a woman's view of the case.

When he came back to their rooms that night, neither she nor his two weeks' old baby girl were there. Then he knew how much he loved them and how much he had underestimated his love.

She did not go to her parents. There was a very musty proverb that she knew would meet her on their own threshold: "You made your bed; now lie on it." Her father was a man of no originality, hence he would have put it in that way.

She got employment in a photograph gallery, where she made herself useful by being ornamental, sitting behind a desk in the ante-room. I know not what duties devolve upon the woman who occupies that post in the average photographer's service; whatever they are, she performed them, and with the wages received managed to care for herself and child.

The next day he made a Herculean effort to pull himself together. He obtained a position as draughtsman from one who had known him in his respectable period, and he went trembling and sheepishly to call upon his wife and child.

The consequence of his visit was a reunion, which endured for two whole weeks. At the end of that time she cast him off in utter scorn.

How he lived for the next two years can be known only to those who are familiar through experience with the existence of people who ask other peopl on the street for a few cents toward the price of a night's lodging. By those who knew him he was said to be "no good to himself or anyone else." He acquired the raggedness, the impudence, the phraseology of the vagabond class. He would hang on the edge of a party of men drinking together in front of a bar on the slim chance of being "counted in" when the question went round, "what'll you have?" He was perpetually being impelled out of saloons at foot race speed by the officials whose function it is in bar-rooms to substitute an objectionable person's room for his company. One winter Sunday morning he slept late upon a bench in a public square. Awakened by an officer, he rose to go. Hazy in head and stiff in joints, he slightly staggered. He heard behind him the cooing laugh of a child. He looked around. It was himself that had awakened the infant's mirth—or that strange something which precedes the dawn of a sense of humor in children. The smiling babe was in a child's carriage, which a plainly dressed woman was pushing. He looked at the woman It was his wife, and the pretty child was his own.

He walked rapidly from the place, and on the same day he decided to leave the city. He had herded with vagrants of the touring class. The methods of free transportation by means of freight trains and free living by means of beggary and small thievery in country towns were no secret to him. He walked to the suburbs and at nightfall he scrambled up the side of a coal car in a train slowly moving westward.

What hunger he suffered, what cold he endured, what bread he begged, what police station cells he passed nights in, what human scum he associated with, what thirst he quenched, and with what incredibly bad whisky, are particulars not for this unobjectionable narrative, for do they not belong to low life? And who nowadays can tolerate low life in print unless it be redeemed by a rustic environment and a labored expression of clodhopper English and primitive expletives? Low life outside of a dialect story and a dreary village? Never!

Mrs. Blake and the child lived in a fair degree of comfort upon the mother's wages, but often the mother shuddered at thought of what might happen should she ever lose her situation at the photographer's.

Consumption had its hold on "Busted" Blake when he arrived in the mining town called Get-there City, in Kansas, one evening. Get-there City had not gotten there beyond a single straggling street of shanties, but it had acquired a saloon, although liquor selling had already been forbidden in Kansas.

"Busted" Blake, with ten cents in his clothes, entered the saloon and asked in an asthmatic voice for as much whisky as that sum was good for.

While awaiting a response his eyes turned toward the only other persons in the saloon—three burly, bearded miners, of the conventional big-hatted, big-booted and big-voiced type. Above their heads and against the wall was the sign, lettered roughly with charcoal under a crudely drawn death's head:

"Five thousand dollars will be paid by the undersigned to the widow of the sneaking hound that informs on this saloon. This is no mere bluff.

P. Gibbs."

Blake, after a brief coughing fit looked up at the man behind the bar, a great, thick-necked fellow, with a mien of authority and yet with a certain bluff honesty expressed about his eyes and lips. This man, whose air of proprietorship convinced Blake that he could be none other than P. Gibbs, had first looked sneeringly at the ten cents, but had shown some small sign of pity upon hearing the ominous cough of the attenuated vagrant. He set forth a bottle and glass,

"Help yerself," said P. Gibbs. While Blake was doing so, Mr. Gibbs went on: "Bad cough o' yourn. Y' mightn't guess it, but that same cough runs in my family. It took off a brother, but it skipped me."

Here was a bond of sympathy between the big law-defying saloon-keeper and the frail toper from the east. "Busted" Blake drained his glass and presently coughed again. P. Gibbs again set forth the bottle and this time he drank with Blake. Before long, by dint of repeated fits of coughing, on the part of Blake, the sympathy of P. Gibbs was worked upon that he invited the three miners in the saloon to join him and the stranger.

Blake slept in a corner of the saloon that night. He left there the next morning, a curious expression of resolution on his face.

During the next three weeks he was now and then alluded to in P. Gibbs' saloon as the "coughing stranger."

In the middle of the third week at nine o'clock in the evening, when the lamps in P. Gibbs' saloon were exerting their smallest degree of dimness, the door opened and in staggered "Busted" Blake. His staggering on this occasion was manifestly not due to drink. His face had the hideous concavities of a starved man, and the uncertainty of his gait was the token of a mortal feebleness. His emaciation was painful to behold. His eyes glowed like huge gems.

The crowd of miners looked at him with surprise as he entered.

"The coughing stranger!" cried one.

"The coffin stranger, you mean," said another.

"Busted" Blake hurried over to the bar. His eyes met those of P. Gibbs on the other side, and the latter reached for a whiskey bottle.

Blake fumbled in his pocket and brought forth a piece of soiled paper, which he laid on the bar under the glance of P. Gibbs.

"Keep that!" said Blake in a husky voice, whose service he compelled with much effort. "And keep your word, too. That's where you'll find her."

P. Gibbs picked up the paper.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"That woman's name there! Its name of my widow; the address, too, of a photograph man who will tell you where she is. Get all the money to her quick, before the governor comes down on you with the troops to close you up. And don't let her know how it comes about. Pick out a man to take it to her, let him pay his expenses out of it—a man you can trust—and make him tell her I made it somehow, mining or something, so she'll take it. You know."

P. Gibbs, who had listened with increasing amazement opened wide his eyes and drew his revolver. He spoke in a strangely low, repressed voice:

"Stranger, do you mean to say—"

"Yes, that's it," shrieked "Busted" Blake, turning toward the crowd of intensely interested on-lookers. "And I call on all of you here to witness, and to hold him to his word. That's no mere bluff, he says, in his novice there, and I'm the sneaking hound that informed. My widow's entitled to his five thousand dollars. I did it in Topeka, and for proof see this newspaper!"

P. Gibbs fired a shot from his revolver through the newspaper that Blake pulled from beneath his shirt. Then the saloon-keeper brought his weapon on a level with Blake's face.

"It's good your boots is on!" said P. Gibbs, ironically.

But he did not fire. Blake stood perfectly still, awaiting the shot, and feebly laughing.

So the two remained for some moments until Blake suddenly sank to the floor, quite exhausted. He died within a half hour, on the saloon floor, his head resting in the palm of P. Gibbs, who knelt by his side and tried to revive him.

At the next dawn, a man whom they called Big Andy started east; and the piece of paper that Blake had handed to P. Gibbs was not all that he took with him. The United States marshals arrived and duly closed Gibbs' saloon which reopened very shortly afterward, minus the five thousand dollar offer.

And Big Andy found the widow of "Busted" Blake, to whom he told a bit of fiction, in accounting for the legacy conveyed by him to her, that would have imposed upon the most incredulous legatee. When she had recovered from the surprise of finding herself and her child provided with the means of surviving the possible loss of her situation, she forgave the late "Busted," and there was a flow of tears unusual to a boarding house parlor, and unnerving to Big Andy.

Presently she asked Andy whether he knew what her husband's last words had been.

"Yep," said Andy, "I heard 'm plain and clear. Pete Gibbs, the other executors of the will, you know—Pete says: 'It's all right, partner, me an' Andy will see to it,' and then your husband says: 'Thank Gawd, I've been some good to her an' the child, at last.'"

Which account was entirely correct. When Big Andy had returned to Get-there City and related how he performed his mission, he added:

"I'd been such a lovely liar all through it's a shame I had to go an' spoil the story by puttin' in some truth at the finish."

They put up a wooden grave mark where Blake was buried, and after his name they cut in the wood this testimonial:

"A tenderfoot that was some good to his folks at last."—*R. N. Stephens, in Philadelphia Press.*

He Felt the Bullets Strike.

That was a good story which the Rev. C. J. K. Jones, of Louisville, told in a Boston pulpit the other day. He said:

"An alarmist always reminds me of a friend of mine who was a commander at the battle of Round Mountain. It was a hot fight—one of the hottest of the war. At a particularly intense part of the action my friend stood beside his horse scanning the field with his glass and directing the troops. He told me it seemed as if the fire of the whole Confederacy was centered on him, the bullets flying thick around him.

"Suddenly he heard a minie ball singing in the air and he felt something strike his leg. But the occasion was urgent and he kept up his glass. There was another 'ping-g-g,' and he felt another strike. And so it continued.

"The Captain at last lifted up his hand and prayed:

"'O, Lord, I can go home to my wife and family without either of my legs, but, O, Lord let me get home.'

"Finally there came the shouts of victory. The battle was won. With a long drawn sigh the Captain turned. He shouted to his orderly at a little distance, 'I'm wounded, Jim. Come and help me on my horse; I must go home. It's my last battle.

"'No, I guess not,' replied the orderly.

"'What's the matter? Come, hurry up. I'm wounded.'

"'If you want me to help you, come here,' sang out the orderly.

"'But what's the trouble? Why can't you come here? Don't you see I'm wounded and almost dying?'

"'O, no, you're not,' sang out the orderly again.

"'Come here instantly, you rascal,' shouted the commander.

"'No, I don't; that's the biggest nest of yellow jackets there I ever saw in my life,' was the final laughing reply of the orderly.

"The storming swarm of hornets were the only minie balls that had struck him."—*Boston Journal.*

Don'ts for Young People.

Don't forget that marriage is the foundation of a new family, not the union of two old ones.

Don't marry one whose tastes and ideals in life are so different from your own that there could never be singleness of aim and purpose in the home.

Don't marry anybody till satisfied that life together will be bearable and enjoyable, as long as both shall live.

Don't expect marriage to make a great change in the habits and aims of a young man—or a young woman either.

Don't try to win love by flattery.

Don't try to buy love by rich and numerous gifts; love got in that way is not worth the having, for it is not love at all.

Don't marry for physical beauty alone; for unless mated with beauty of mind and spirit, it is truly an apple of ashes.

Don't forget, when married, that mutual forbearance is the keynote of life long happiness.

Had a Good Hold.

I had stopped to smoke a pipe with a Georgia "cracker" on a log at his door, and noticing the general shiftlessness of the surroundings I finally asked:

"Why don't you fix the roof of your cabin?"

"Gwine ter some day," he replied.

"That chimney ought to be rebuilt."

"I'm a considerin' to do it."

"I should be afraid that stable would fall down and kill the mule."

"Reckon I've got to prop it."

"The weeds appear to be too much for your corn."

"Yes weeds is powerful around yere."

He was so placid and good-natured about it that I ventured further and said:

"It seems to me that with ambition and hard work you could not only make a good living on this place, but get something ahead."

"I could, for suah," he answered.

"Then why don't you do it?"

"Waitin'."

"Waiting for what?"

"Waitin' fur to git that ambishun you spoke of."

"And do you think you'll ever get it?"

He refilled his pipe, lighted it and slid off the log to get a brace for his back. When he had got comfortably settled he queried:

"Stranger, yo' doan' live around yere, I recken?"

"No."

"Cause if yo' did you'd diskiver that I hav a mighty good thing of it as it is, and would be a fool to let it go for somethin' new."

Neither—Mrs. Graynes—"James, do women ever speculate in corn and things of that sort?"

Mr. Graynes (of the Chicago Board of Trade)—"Sometimes, through agents."

"If I was an operator, James—that's what you call it, isn't?—would I be one or the other of those dreadful bulls or bears?"

"No, my dear. You'd be a pudding."

The Bachelor.

Not long since a country lyceum, not a thousand miles from Boston, discussed this question: "*Resolved*, That an old bachelor is of no use in the world, and that he cannot possibly be as happy as the married man." And it was decided that he might as well have been left out of the scheme of creation, and that he must necessarily be of all men the most miserable.

All of which is a mistake, as any of our bachelor friends will agree.

Why, the compensations of an old bachelor are multitudinous, if you once stop to think of it.

He is a free man. He can stay out till 3 o'clock at the club or lodge, and if the keyhole is lost when he gets to his boarding place there is nobody to find fault. If his breath smells of essence of peppermint or cardamon seeds nobody calls him to account. If he smiles on the widow Jones or looks sweet at the widow Brown he is all right—no exacting wife is watching him and getting ready to ask him, with tears in her eyes, if he is not ashamed to look her, the mother of his children and the wife of his bosom, in the face.

When he gets mad he can relieve his mind by a little strong language without being told that he is a member of this or that society, and that he is liable to die any minute and be called upon to give an account.

He can lie abed in the morning—on cold winter mornings—as long as he pleases. There is no one to remind him that it is time to get up and make the fire and thaw out the pump and see if the pipes are frozen, and shake the furnace, and wind up the clock, and let the cat out doors, and get the ice off from the back doorstep, and take in the milk, and put the bread card in the window.

He is not told the minute he comes home at night that Bridget has given notice, and the coal is out and the butcher has sent his bill and it is twice as much as it ought to be, and that the leak over the dining-room window must be seen to, and the stove lining is cracked, and the last barrel of flour is too dark-colored for anything, and there is an invitation to Robinson's silver wedding and it'll cost twenty dollars to get anything decent in silver, and the baby appears if she had got the measles or mumps, and there must be a knob put on that cellar door and there is a bill for ten dollars on that life insurance policy, and the hall lamp is broken, and the Jones' folks have got a new set of parlor curtains, and Smash & Crash are selling curtains for positively nothing.

The old bachelor has never to listen to such speeches as these:

"I wish I'd never seen you. I might have married twenty times better than I did! I was a fool once and everybody knows it! If I had only listened to my friends! If I had my days to live over again I wouldn't marry the best man that ever trod shoe leather! I wish I'd been an old maid!"

He may be a little lonely sometimes, but then, everybody is lonely. He may have to sew on a button now and then, but what of that?

There isn't a man living who does not entertain the opinion that he can do anything better than a woman can do it, if only he should put his mind to it, and the bachelor has lots of opportunities for putting his mind to it.

His nights are undisturbed by the social idiosyncracies of colicky babies, and he is never called upon to light out of bed in his bare feet and hunt around in the dark for a paregoric bottle, or to kindle a fire in the middle of the night to heat onion poultices for baby's croupy throat, or mustard plasters for baby's windy little stomach.

He is never expected to go into ecstacies over that beautiful "first tooth," which has at last, through untold agonies of crying and kicking, and peace destroying generally, burst into existence, and become visible to the naked eye.

The bachelor is, or ought to be, a happy man. All the unmarried ladies admire him and pity him, and want to make life sweet for him, and if his bank account be a large one, almost any of them will marry him if he will make the request properly—so who would not be a merry old bachelor?

The Coral Sea.

In no quarter of the world are the partly buried ocean wonders more lavishly displayed in all their endless variety than off this northeastern coast of Terra Australis, within the great barrier reef in the coral sea. As the boat is launched to take us ashore the wonders commence at once. It is surely some fairy forest, where elfin kings court princesses in fishly guise, or water babies sit and pout on some coral boulder. Or is it a submarine flower garden where the mermaids dwell.

Deep down in clear, bright water wondrous shapes and colors are seen, at first indistinctly, like a tinted photograph out of focus; then, as the water gets shallower and shallower, more and more distinctly flash the jewel fires, and the picture is complete. Large flat bowls of milk white coral first attract the eye. Then others with branching antlers like a fallen deer, only the fairy herd there are lying buried in a huge, confused mass. Some are covered with ten thousand sharp pinnacles of a light purply color, each pinnacle having a bright blue eye—or what looks like an eye—at the extremity.

All in a sea of emerald, this dream of enchantment. We fear before we see half the glory of it we might awake, and alas! forget to soon. There light and feathery branches of fern-like coral are blushing a soft pink or pale nasturtium yellow. Here large, solid masses of brain coral, round and white, the surface incrusted or engraved with the most delicate lace tracings, and others, green and shaped like coarse moss.

Now Try This.

It will cost you nothing and will surely do you good, if you have a cough, cold, or any trouble with throat, chest or lungs. Dr. King's New Discovery for consumption, coughs and colds is guaranteed to give relief, or money will be paid back. Sufferers from La Grippe found it just the thing and under its use had a speedy and perfect recovery. Try a sample bottle at our expense and learn for yourself just how good a thing it is.

A Substitute for Leather.

Leather possesses such excellent qualities for the many purposes to which it is put that it would seem idle to seek a substitute. Nevertheless, there are many persons who, while they find that leather serves as an effectual protective covering for the foot, find also that it is often obstinate in adapting itself to the requirements of individual feet or to the more or less physical abnormalities to which so many are subject. In such cases, if comfort is to be expected, only the most supple and yielding quality should be worn. At the same time, of course, it should be waterproof and durable. These qualities, so far as we have been able to judge, belong in a satisfactory degree, to an interesting and new material called "flexus fibra." It appears to be a flax-derived material, suitably prepared and oiled, so that to all appearance it is leather. It is particularly supple and flexible and takes a polish equally as well with the best kinds of calf.

We have recently had occasion to wear a boot of which the "vamp" or cut-front section consists entirely of flexus fibra, and have purposely submitted it to somewhat undue strain, in spite of which no cracking of the material was perceived, while the sense of comfort to the foot was very evident. Flexus fibra, being a material of vegetable origin, is calculated also to facilitate free ventilation and thereby to obviate the discomfort arising from what is called "drawing" the feet. Tests with a view to prove its damp-resisting power were made with the material by placing a small section over an open glass tube with true ends so that on applying pressure at the other end of the tube it was found to be practically air tight. This having been ascertained, a little water was placed in the tube resting on the flexus fibra and pressure once more applied. After some time traces only of liquid had oozed through; but of course, this was an exagerated state of things, and, as a matter of fact, no oozing of water took place at all when it was simply allowed to rest on the material for several hours. The structure of flexus fibra is better seen when the oil in it is removed with ether, to which it imparts distinct fluorescence, and when the black dye is washed out (being at the same time changed to red) by hydrochloric acid.

A Wonderful Volume.

The most beautiful volume among the half million in the congressional library in Washington is said to be a Bible which had been transcribed by a monk in the sixteenth century. It could not be matched to-day in the best printing office in the world. The parchment is in perfect preservation. Every one of its thousands pages is a study. The general lettering is German text, each letter perfect, as is every one, in cold black ink, without a scratch or blot from lid to lid. At the beginning of each chapter the first letter is very large usually two or three inches long, and brightly illuminated in red and blue ink. Within each of these capitals is drawn the figure of some saint, some incident of which the chapter tells is illustrated. There are two columns on a page, and nowhere is traceable the slightest irregularity of line, space or formation of the letters. Even under a magnifying glass they seem flawless. This precious volume is kept under a glass case, which is sometimes lifted to show that all the pages are as perfect as the two which lie open. A legend relates that a young man who had sinned deeply became a monk and resolved to do penance for his misdeeds. He determined to copy the Bible, that he might learn every letter of the Divine commands which he had violated. Every day for many years he patiently pursued his task. Each letter was wrought in reverence and love, and the patient soul found its only companionship in the saintly faces which were portrayed on these pages. When the last touch was given to the last letter the old man reverently kissed the page and folded the sheets together. The illustrated initials in perfection of form and brilliancy of color surpass anything produced in the present day. With all our boasted progress, nothing either in Europe or America equals it.

Longevity of Man.

It was Prof. Hufeland's opinion that the limit of possible human life may be set at two hundred years—this on the general principle, says the *St. Louis Republic*, that the life of nearly all living creatures is eight times the years, months or weeks of its period of growth. That which quickly comes to maturity quickly perishes, and the earlier complete development is reached the sooner bodily decay ensues. More women reach old age than men, but more men attain remarkable longevity than women.

Horned animals are shorter lived than those without horns, fierce longer than timid, and amphibious creatures longer than those which inhabit the air. The pike will continue to live for one hundred and fifty or one hundred and seventy-five years, and the common turtle is good for at least a century. Passing up the scale of life to man and skipping the patriarchs we find many recorded instances of extraordinary longevity.

The ancient Egyptians lived three times as long as the modern lotus eaters. Instances of surprising and authentic longevity among the classic Greeks and Romans are not at all rare. Pliny notes the fact that in the reign of Emperor Vespasin (73 A. D.) there were 124 men living in a limited area on the river Po who were 100 years old and upward.

Three of these were 140 and seven others over 130. Cicero's wife lived to be 103, and the Roman actress, Luceja, played in public after she had celebrated her one hundred and twelfth birthday.

Specimen Cases.

S. H. Clifford, New Cassel, Wisconsin, was troubled with Neuralgia and Rheumatism, his stomach was disordered, his liver was affected to an alarming degree, appetite fell away, and he was terribly reduced in flesh and strength. Three bottles of Electric Bitters cured him.

Edward Shepherd, Harrisburg, Ill., had a running sore on his leg of eight years' standing. Used three bottles of Electric Bitters and seven boxes of Bucklen's Arnica Salve, and his leg is sound and well.

The Old Hen Went Too.

The excuses which are given by children in order to escape from some distasteful duty are often exceedingly ingenious and even wit