

friends and family you can believe almost anything.

The worst act of callous brutality I witnessed in that jail was the treatment of "Pops." He was a very old man, 86 by his own admission, and he had been thrown into the jail for no other reason than the fact that he didn't like the Old Folks Home, and had wandered away from it.

"Pops" couldn't stomach the food at the jail, and he was rapidly wasting away. As a special concession, the county allowed him one quart of

milk a day. That was practically all he consumed, and he didn't always get that. No bottles were allowed in the jail (broken glass makes a good weapon), so "Pops" could get his milk only when one of the trustees happened to be around, and felt like filling the old man's cup.

It won't be a very long time before "Pops" dies, if he is not dead already. He will not be the first man in that institution to die from malnutrition, lack of medical attention, and all-around callousness.

PHRASE ORIGINS—42

WEASEL WORDS: Such words are especially in vogue at election time. They are designedly ambiguous and qualified, and the politician spouting weasel words is equivocating and straddling the fence. Theodore Roosevelt popularized the phrase in 1916 in a speech attacking President Wilson's stand on universal military training. Later, he explained the origin of the phrase as he had used it: "Thirty years ago," he said, "I knew an old guide and he told me about the habits of the weasel. If you placed a weasel alongside an egg, he told me, the weasel would bore a hole in it and suck out all the meat. That was exactly what President Wilson did. He favored universal training for military service, but not compulsory service. He used words in favor of a good thing, but he sucked all the meat out of them by the words which followed his declaration."

MORRIS ROSENBLUM



WATCH OUT FOR

COLDS should be treated *promptly!* They often occur when body resistance is low, due perhaps to insufficient sleep, lack of fresh air, improper nutrition, or exposure to changes in weather. The cold may lower resistance still further and, if neglected, may lead to influenza, pneumonia or other infections.

WINTER AILMENTS

INFLUENZA, while more serious than a cold, is not usually dangerous in itself. It may, however, weaken the system and pave the way for other illnesses. Fortunately, there is a new vaccine which has been used with considerable success against certain types of influenza. The doctor may recommend this vaccine if an epidemic threatens, if a person suffers from frequent colds, or if poor physical condition makes influenza a special danger.

PNEUMONIA is still a serious disease that calls for prompt diagnosis and treatment. The sulfa drugs and penicillin are highly effective in most cases, but they must be given early for best results. Your doctor now has a vaccine which provides protection against many of the most common types of pneumonia. One type of this disease, *virus pneumonia*, does not respond to the vaccine, sulfa drugs or penicillin. Although seldom fatal, it should have immediate medical attention.

The best protection against winter ailments is keeping in good physical condition. If you catch a cold, try to get all the rest you can, eat lightly, drink plenty of liquids, and cover your coughs and sneezes so that you will not infect others.

IF FEVER ACCOMPANIES A COLD, CALL A DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY!

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(A MUTUAL



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TO VETERANS—IF YOU HAVE NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE—KEEP IT!

THE VOICE-TEACHING RACKET

BY R. G. McDODD

IF THE United States continues to turn out good vocalists, it will not be because of the voice teachers. This active and growing body of business people has actually contributed much toward ruining the American larynx, though certainly not intentionally. To read some of their advertisements — “Beginners to highest artistic perfection”; “Many pupils in opera, concert and radio”; “Member of X Society”; etc. — you might think these voice teachers were persons of remarkable ability. The fact is that among the “maestros” and “voice authorities” who line the highways and byways of this country, perhaps one in ten does no damage to a student’s vocal cords and one in a hundred really knows what he is talking about.

Voice teaching is one of the easiest professions to slip into. No Federal, state or municipal license is required. It is not necessary to be a graduate of any reputable music school or prove adequate training. Nor can anyone call a voice teacher to task for gross ignorance or incompetence. And the profession pays well — far better, for instance, than school teaching, which

requires a diploma from a recognized teachers’ college.

Equipped with little more than obscure accompanying experience or a quick glance at some outmoded book on singing, thousands of shysters now dominate a highly specialized field without let or hindrance. Ex-church organists, ex-hoofers, piano coaches, broken-down *verein* “artists” and ex-nobodies of all sorts have become voice “experts” overnight. There is no check on the baseless encouragement and far-fetched rewards held out to the suckers, who number an estimated 2 million. Some of them cause no more harm than what is involved in mere tonsil-tickling. Others have been responsible for the rupture of blood vessels in the throat and permanent or temporary degeneration of the voice.

What makes this state of affairs possible, aside from the indifference of legislators and the general public is the immense gullibility and ignorance of the hordes who seek quick riches and fame in professional singing careers. Coming from offices, shops, farms, the smaller cities, ambitious poor homes and social-climbing mid

R. G. McDODD is himself a voice teacher, who has been practicing that profession for close to twenty-five years in New England. He has not heretofore done any writing.