

than me? We'll say our guy's appeal to the girls of the female sex is terrific. Fan mail . . . why, we'll say he gets more letters per month than the complaint department of the O.P.A."

"That part would be true, but they are bills, not fan letters."

"Skip it. I write this stuff by ear. When shall I begin?"

"Never mind, Promotion," I said. "Let's let Kendall attack the Better-Mousetrap Problem and create his own following."

"Well, that's up to the mice," said Promotion, and hung up.

*Re-adjustment comes harder
for the civilian*

The Civilian Problem

By Henry McLemore

From his column in The Philadelphia Inquirer

IT is now a pretty well-known fact that all the tens of thousands of words, written and spoken, advising the returned soldier on how to adjust himself to civilian life, were as needless as a dentist on a poultry farm. All that the words, written and spoken, accomplished was to occupy the time and add to the bankroll of those civilians who wrote and spoke said words.

The soldier was so glad to get back to civilian life that he didn't need much counsel. Off with the khaki or blue, and on with the pin stripe and on with the powder gray, was his motto. Give him a roof that didn't leak, water that was hot or cold as he dictated, food off a table, the presence of those he loved, no necessity to salute, say "sir," or duck a bullet, and he said, "If this is adjustment, let me have it until I die. Let me have adjustment as long as there is any felt."

What really was needed, and still is needed, is tens of thousands of words, written or spoken, by soldiers advising businessmen on how to ad-

just themselves against that day when "normalcy" returns.

If I had the time, the energy, and a small printing press, I would give such publishing firms as Harper Bros., Simon and Schuster, Macmillan, a run for their money by announcing for publication books with such titles as:

1. Dry Cleaner, What Are You Going To Do When Things Get Normal?

2. Garageman, Watch Your Step, You Snooty Rascal You.

3. How To Be A Happy Contractor With No House To Build.

4. Ten Simple Ways In Which A Plumber Can Shoot Himself In Unwanted Bathroom Equipment.

5. How To Be A Cheerful Railroad Conductor When There Is No One To Slip You Ten Bucks For A Black Market Berth.

6. How To Act Like A Butcher Again After Five Years Of Playing Napoleon With An Apron And Cleaver.

7. How The Landlord May Be Full Of Poise And Nonchalance

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When No One Wants A Single Darn Apartment He Has In The Building.

Yes, there is a great need for such handbooks. I knew that when I took a suit to the dry cleaners. It was a shop where once they advertised curb service. You could sit and wait a few minutes and get your suit pressed. But no more. The place now has a bouncer, like a night club. Let someone get unruly, and he is thrown out.

The place has a captain, and you are supposed to call for appointments. By using a little pull—a friend of mine once lent the owner of the joint fifty cents to play a slot machine—I got extra service.

The garages are even more exclusive. I took my ancient machine down to get its points adjusted. After half an hour of waiting, a very bored gentleman said, "Yes, and what do you want?" When I told him he said, "I really don't think we can do that, but if you want to take a chance just drive the hack over in the corner and come back later."

"How much later?" I said.

"Oh, any day you have free in June," he said.

"That soon?" I replied.

But he was gone. And just as he was gone, days like these will be gone. Ah sweet tomorrow! I am practicing my frowns and snarls.

• A hopeful applicant was applying for a job. Asked his prospective employer: "Are you trust-worthy and responsible?"

"Well," said the applicant, scratching his head, "in the last place where I worked, whenever anything happened, I was responsible."

• Pat and Mike had just arrived from South Ireland, and they were not acquainted with our traffic signals. They were waiting at an intersection when the light turned from red to orange. Everyone but these two rushed across the street.

The orange light, of course, quickly turned green, and as the Irishmen started across, Pat observed to his partner, "Shure, an' they don't give the Protestants much time t' git across, do they?"

—*Novena Notes*

• In English III a fat student was a complete failure, "I declare, young man," complained the professor, "your body seems to be far better nourished than your mind."

"That's easy to understand, sir," the fat boy replied, a malicious glint in his eye. "You feed my mind, professor, but I feed my body!"

—*Wall Street Journal*

AIN'T LOVE GRAND

• The high cost of loving finally became too much for a Los Angeles man. In a divorce suit he charged that his wife's kisses cost him \$5 each. The little woman confirmed this statement of over-charging: "I did it to discourage him. He was always buzzing and pecking around. It was annoying. If he didn't have \$5 with him, I'd take what he had on account."

*The little man who wasn't
there is in again*

"And the Night Shall Be Filled . . ."

By Don Rose

From his column "Stuff and Nonsense" in The Evening Bulletin

NOW that the season is well past for singing about "silent night," it may be permissible to point out that it isn't. Night is not loudly noisy, but the smaller sounds of the night can be deafening. That is why there are circles under my eyes.

"The night shall be filled with music," said Longfellow. But it isn't music. It's a medley of mysterious noises, most of them insisting that a man get out of bed and discover what they are. Longfellow had another line, telling how he "heard the trailing of garments of the night sweep through her marble halls." Very poetic stuff, but did he ever hear cautious footsteps creeping up the stairs at 3:30 in the morning and go forth to find nobody there?

At 3:30 in the morning human courage is probably at its lowest ebb, but never shall it be said that I failed to protect sleeping women and children from prowlers by night. I did wish for something handy in the way of weapons. A hand grenade would do, or a sawed-off shotgun.

I'd march boldly out into the hall, armed with nothing and wearing not much more. The house is black as the pit and there's nobody in the

hall, nobody on the stairs, nobody anywhere. I lock all the doors so that nobody can get in. Comes the thought that if anybody is in already, I've locked him in. That's a cheerful thought to go back to sleep on. I'm not going to sleep. Nobody could sleep in this uproar.

The electric clock in the living room is thumping like a frightened heart. A spigot is leaking somewhere and it sounds like a steam hammer driving piles for a subway. What's that? Somebody turned over in bed upstairs and it sounded as though the roof were falling in.

The thing to do is to keep calm. All these are normal noises, easily explained by a few moment's reflection. That dull thud outside wasn't a dead body falling off the porch, but a broken branch dropping from the maple tree. Give me time and I'll figure out that faint gasping, like an old-fashioned gas engine. It might, for instance, be somebody dying horribly in the woods beyond the garden.

"Most glorious night, thou wert not sent for slumber!" said Byron, and I think he's got something. I'll give up and take a nap in the afternoon, when everything is quiet.