

gian. A neighbor of Barney's spelled his name Norlien, but pronounced it Nolan; another, Andrew Toohey, spelled his name Thue. Mike Phalen spelled his name Faloen; Tom Quealley spelled his name Kvalle; Oscar Dalley spelled his name Dahle. These people lived in Nora township, originally spelled Norre, meaning north. These names suggest that the sea-roving Vikings doubtless settled the south of Ireland as well as Normandy and the east coast of England. At any rate, Barney Burke was not Irish.

He was the son of Marin Bjerke, a well-to-do woman who owned a large wheat farm. Barney fell out with his mother and decided to farm on his own hook, so he rented a big wheat farm for cash rent in the spring of 1920, bought his farming outfit at the annual spring sales, on time, and borrowed money at the bank to buy seed. He got credit at the stores for his summer's supplies. When he threshed his wheat, his landlord was on the job and got the greater part of his rent from the wheat money. Then the prices of farm products fell so steadily that when Barney's crop was sold there wasn't enough to go round by \$1,500. He got only his food for his work and he was in debt. His mother was old and would soon be passing, so his creditors decided to wait until Barney got his share of the estate. Barney decided to forestall them and filed a petition in voluntary bankruptcy, naming them all and the amounts owed to

each. He played no favorites. There were *no* assets, and the liabilities totaled a little less than \$1,600. The banker and the business men—all Scandinavians—were up in arms. The village talked of nothing else for a week. Barney had suffered the losses common to all, due to the unfortunate decline in the price of farm products. Every one was sorry for him, but they deplored and condemned his seeking the bankruptcy route.

Honesty in paying bills was an unwritten law. One might not be able to pay to-day, but he paid as soon as he could. A bankrupt—a man who would never pay and who wouldn't try—was a pariah.

Three old heads gathered one morning at the post office, the town meeting-place. One said: "Barney is getting bad advice. Let us get him in and tell him he is making a mistake. Let us urge him to dismiss his bankruptcy petition and settle by giving long-time notes, payable a little each year, as the Allies are doing with the war indemnity."

Another wise head said: "You'll have to go back a generation if you want to instill that doctrine into Barney. Years ago, I used to be a grain buyer. Many's the time Marin Bjerke has tried to bluff me into giving her an extra bushel on the weight of her load of wheat by claiming she had weighed it at home and that I was trying to cheat her."

The third said: "She once brought a coop of chickens to my store to sell. I

weighed the chickens and dumped them into my coop. She promptly claimed the weight of the chickens on her scales was twenty pounds more than my weights showed. She tried to shame me by saying: 'You are trying to cheat a poor widow.' Fortunately, I hadn't mixed the chickens with any others. I told my clerk to go with her, catch the chickens, and take them across the street and have my competitor weigh them. She demurred at this, but I insisted; she had attacked my reputation for honest weight. I told her I couldn't and wouldn't stand for it; that my character was at stake. Reluctantly, she went along. My competitor found my weights were right."

A fourth man had by this time joined the three wise ones. He was the young manager of the Farmers' Co-operative Elevator. He laughed and said: "Only yesterday Marin Burke sent a load of her wheat to the elevator. I weighed it and she tried to beat me out of seventy pounds of wheat worth about two dollars. I just wouldn't let her beat her neighbors who own stock in our elevator out of even two dollars."

The three wise ones who had followed the star of Bethlehem known as common honesty, a guiding star among the wheat-field men for all these years, shook their gray heads.

"If we expected to get that bankruptcy petition dismissed, we should have started a generation ago."

THE MAN WHO SANG

BY HERMANN HAGEDORN

HE runs no more, light-footed, on high hills,
Where beautiful weeds bend with a laugh from the wind;
He has forsaken his dear fairy kind
And sharpens now no wild swan's magical quills.
He has rejected Music, and he fills
With a stern god the house where she was shrined;
He is a citizen, of sober mind,
And like a sober man he pays his bills.

But there are days—! Somewhere a flute starts in,
Somewhere a horn, somewhere a violin!
A lute, a harp, like silver waters falling!
Then through his ordered being sweeps unrest;
For when he hears his lost beloved calling
There is no peace for him save on her breast.



IN the Berryman household Malcolm Berryman and Arnold Adair were discussing with Malcolm's mother the high cost of food that since the war had threatened to upset the household budgets of every family in the land. Wage-earners were striking for higher pay, and by their strikes reducing the output and supply. Employers were charging more to meet this higher pay and the higher cost of their families' food. Consumers everywhere were compelled to pay more for everything they bought—all because everybody must have food, and it was costing more.

Experts and economists might argue all they pleased, legislators might enact restraining laws, individuals might continue to protest against imminent bankruptcy, yet remorselessly the price of food went up and other necessities of life kept pace with it. Even the people of California, the land of milk and honey, sea food, and fruit—even these lucky people of the land of plenty suffered unaccountably with the common distress of the Nation.

Like the competent housewife she was, Mrs. Berryman conducted all the affairs of their country place on a budget system, and she kept well within the allowance made for this purpose by the generous head of the Berryman family. Yet, try as she might, she could not make ends meet as they used to, nor could she conceal her irritation at the outrageous demands made upon her purse by the tradesmen in town for staple articles of food that were now double and treble their customary cost.

"I told the fish-market man he was a profiteer, and nothing less!" Mrs. Berryman said to her family in great indignation in relating the story of her morning marketing. "Mr. Parker owns the cannery here, and he operates his own fleet of fishing smacks off the coast. I've seen those boats loaded full of sardines and

salmon and herring and mackerel and tunny fish—caught in one day—yet he has the audacity to charge me thirty cents a pound for a mess for dinner. What the poor people do nowadays I am sure I do not know!"

"There are no poor people nowadays, mother," observed Oliver Berryman, smiling. "You never saw so many motor cars on the streets of San Diego as there are to-day. Probably every one of Parker's employees owns a Ford. Parker has to charge more for his fish to pay for the automobiles."

"I thought Parker had closed down his fish cannery," said Malcolm, turning to his older brother, who was a man of affairs in the city. "I saw something about it in the paper."

"Not altogether," returned Oliver. "There's been a slump in the run of fish this summer, and he operates the cannery on part time only. Parker's not a bad fellow, mother. You'd do the same if you were in business nowadays. You must charge your customers enough to pay your expenses or else you close your doors. He is not a profiteer. Didn't you find fish the same price all over town?"

Mrs. Berryman confessed rather reluctantly that Oliver was right. She had spoken her mind to each of them about the sin of profiteering, and each had protested that he made less profit to-day than he did a year ago, when fish were selling for half the present price. She resolutely advised them to bring down their prices at once if they wanted to sell her any more fish. She would boycott fish until they were again reasonable in their charges.

"That's the spirit, mother!" laughed Oliver. "If everybody boycotts fish, then there will be more fish than there are consumers, and the price will certainly go down. Supply and demand regulates prices, you know. If you can't

increase the supply, then reduce the demand, and the value of the commodity falls just the same."

Arnold Adair had been listening attentively to a discussion which interested him exceedingly. Here, three thousand miles away from New York, families were confronted with the same problems of living; they were exasperated by the same inexplicable outlay of income for simple items of food and clothing; they felt the same resentment, yet after consideration they came to the same conclusion. Supply and demand regulated prices. Increased demand invariably increased the supply where an increased supply was possible to obtain. If the supply could not be increased, high prices must continue.

"What's the matter with the Pacific fishes, Oliver?" inquired Arnold. "Isn't there an inexhaustible supply of fish in the sea, or have they become too wise to get caught?"

"I don't know anything about this wholesale catching of fish, Arnold," returned Oliver. "If it's a question of a brook trout, I can tell you where to drop your fly when you want one or two, but catching sardines by the boat-load—that's a science that never appealed to me. Perhaps they get boat-shy and beat it when they sight a sail. Anyway, Parker's boats cruise about week in and week out, he says, without finding a school of fish."

"Perhaps there's a war on," suggested Malcolm Berryman, "and the California sardines are over taking a fall out of the Japanese goldfish. If they all mobilize across the Pacific for any length of time, Parker and the cannery will be out of luck."

"How do the fishing smacks locate schools of fish?" demanded Arnold. "Do the fish gather around for bait, or how do the boats get a line on their whereabouts?"

"Oh, they swim about in great schools