THE NEGRO IS THE SOUTH'S DRAWBACK, SAYS HOKE SMITH

But, Adds the New Senator From Georgia, in Spite of the Burden Laid Upon It by the Black Man's Presence a Marvelous Agricultural New South is Springing Triumphantly Into Being.

HOKE SMITH.

How many Coatesville episodes would occur in the North if conditions like those in the South existed there?

The negro is the white man's burden, not his help, throughout the Southern States.

The New South being built not because of cheap negro labor, but in spite of it.

The farm and the farmer the most important subjects for the country now to study.

Less education in dead languages and more education in plain foods needed.

A National Divorce law necessary, and he favors a Constitutional amendment.

The importance of roads improvement emphasized. He, himself, is to go by auto from New York to Atlanta, and possibly, to Jacksonville.

By Edward Marshall.

HOKE SMITH—Gov. Hoke Smith—Senator-elect Hoke Smith of Georgia—ought to know the negro, ought to understand the negro problem. He was born and raised where it has risen and become serious.

"What is it, really!" I asked. "What is being done with it? What ought to be done with it?"

We were talking in a room of his suite at the Holland House, and he rose and walked from end to end of it half a dozen times before he formulated his reply. It is a fine sight to watch Hoke Smith walk. He is well over six feet tall, he is not fat, but he is on the verge of it, his feet and hands are large, his head is mighty, but his step is very light. The Georgia statesman thinks things out before he speaks them out. When he does speak it is with a delightful fluency, a charming Southern accent, no waste of words, invariably sequential thought. Presently he ceased his walking and stood looking at me with a slowly shaking head. When he began to speak he did not stop until he had completed what he had to say upon this topic.

He takes the negro and the problem which he offers very seriously. He is sorry we have either in this country. He refuses, as a Southerner, to let the blame be wholly laid upon the South. That he is very hopeful would be difficult to gather from his words; that he is hopeless is untrue.

"The negro problem," he said carefully, "is alive with difficulties, and no man familiar with it would undertake to formulate an exact solution of it. It is complicated by a thousand things of which one who does not live surrounded by it, as we do in the South, does not dream."

He took another ponderous but light-footed turn about the room.

"The enthusiasts of the East and North who believe that simply by education the negro's character can be changed have not given the subject that thorough investigation, and have not, therefore, that complete knowledge of it essential to the formation of a dependable opinion. To really grasp the problem you must go back of the negro in the United States—to the negro in Africa—and see what has been done there by the race—there where slavery in America has had no influence whatever.

"It is logical to ask the question: What have the negroes of Africa, after thousands of years of opportunity, in a country rich with possibilities, where they have had things their own way, free of the white man's control, accomplished for civilization and for themselves?

"This is a fair and pertinent question. Those who honestly consider it and as honestly reply to it, must cease to thrust back at our New England ancestors harsh criticism for having brought the negro to America and made of him a slave. They may, ever, admit that the negro was advanced from savagery to civilization during slavery—an enforced advancement, to be sure, but an advancement, which, where he has had the opportunity, he has not voluntarily made. We must keep these historic facts in mind as we consider the present and predict the future."

"Then the South did not, itself, conceive the slavery idea?"

"The origin of slavery in the United States is a matter of history. It is only with the historic facts in mind that in this country, where he was enslaved, he has advanced, and that in Africa, where he was not enslaved, he has not advanced, that we must consider his present and his future. It will be unwise to base a conclusion as to what may be accomplished upon what is known of a few thousands in this country of the most advanced of the race. The great problem must deal with the millions here who have made scarcely any progress and the millions elsewhere who have made none.

"Here, despite the days of slavery, they have made more progress than they have at home in freedom. They have made a little progress here and even those who have made least here have made more than the most progressive have in Africa, where they have been their own masters.

"I believe," he continued thoughtfully, "that it is a mistake for the negro to seek in any way to force himself into competition with the white man. His history and the history of his race should make his sympathizers hesitate about urging him to such a course. In Georgia there are more negroes than in any other State in the Union. We find that, with few exceptions, they succeed only in the simpler walks of life, and there only when they receive the benefit of kindly direction from the white man. We find that the negro does best in those communities in which the number of white men is comparatively large, and does worst in those communities where the population is most largely black."

"And this suggests, as the best way to solve the negro problem—what?" I asked.

"The logical conclusion to be derived from it is that to scatter the negroes throughout the Union as rapidly as possible if they are to remain in the Union is the best thing that can be done, not necessarily for the white man but for the negro."

"Is there any possibility of sending them outside of the United States? You imply such a possibility in what you say."

He shook his head a little but did not otherwise reply to this question. Instead he went on gravely with a sentence which had hidden in it a sharp sting for the Northerners who criticise the South, but a sting well hidden.

"Of course the plan of scattering the negroes is attended by the difficulty that it is hard to obtain for them, when they are located in any considerable numbers at any point outside the South, the same fair, kindly, and considerate treatment which they really receive from those who have known them for more than a hundred years, and, being familiar with their good qualities as well as with their bad qualities, treat them with forbearance and a comprehension of their limitations."

I had, earlier in the talk, asked the massive Governor to comment on the recent terrible affair at Coatesville, Penn., but he had passed the question over. Now he turned back to it, making of it, very ably, an illustration of his point.

"We were, throughout the South, distressed at the reports of the horrible Coatesville incident. There was a community in which were, comparatively, very few negroes and a large preponderance of whites. Suppose there were two negroes in Coatesville to every three whites. How many such incidents would take place there then?"

It was rather fine forbearance. He did not speak again of Coatesville.

"Race prejudice seems to be instinctive," he went on, instead. "The trouble is that as the negro begins to occupy in any section a position which a white man wants, friction becomes possible, at least. Still the negro problem must, in justice, be considered, here, the white man's burden—not the burden of the white men of the South alone, but the burden of the white men of the whole United States. It is illogical, it is unjust, to place it wholly on the South. The whole country should be willing to share it and to help bear it, and should be willing to help toward the distribution of the negro with something like equality throughout all the States of the whole Union."

"But has not cheap negro labor in the South been a tremendous advantage to the section?"

Gov. Smith stopped in his twisting march about the little hotel table and obstructing trunks, and, from his towering height, looked down quizzically at me. He has one of the most mobile and expressive faces I have ever seen, and its message now was that he understood but did not quite appreciate my joke. But, really, I had not aimed at humor.

"The South has carried a tremendous burden, far more than her proper burden, in being forced to bear, alone, the weight of negro labor," he said slowly. "The bad agricultural methods which for so many years checked the advancement of the very garden spot of this great continent have been due solely to the presence of the negro. During the days of slavery they were compelled to work, and thus accomplished something, possibly, toward the development of the South, but even then their work was performd under a system, encouraged by the existence of ample, splendid lands in the undeveloped country, which permitted the exhaustion of the fields. Other fields were waiting there ready to be broken up. The negroes could be moved into them and permitted to wear them out, also.

"This wasteful method of procedure has been followed even up to the last ten years. It is the outgrowth solely of reliance upon negro labor in the agricultural districts, and, under the circumstances, it has been inevitable. It has been the curse of the whole South."

"What is the change which has occurred during the last ten years?" I asked, expecting to hear about improvements in the methods of managing black labor.

"A change from reliance upon black labor to reliance upon white labor," said the Governor to my astonishment. "Fifteen years have seen a vast improvement in the agricultural methods of the South, made possible by more white and less black labor in proportion. The last five years have comprised a period almost of revolution. White men have been buying land in pieces small enough to permit personal supervision, living on it, and cultivating it. They have, frequently, hired a few negroes to do a part of the work—that part needing least exact intelligence—but they have done the major portion of the work themselves, or hired white laborers to do it.

"They have introduced scientific methods of soil study and plant culture and have heeded the great lessons which this research has revealed. When they have hired negro labor it has been because they were unable to get white labor, and they have met its dangers by personal presence in the fields and personal direction of each detail of the preparation of the soil, its fertilization, the planting of the crop and its subsequent cultivation.

"What is the result? In spite of negro labor, not because of it, lands which a few years ago were considered almost worthless for agriculture, which had been proved to be almost worthless under the old method of reliance on the negro, are producing to-day, under white man's labor and white man's direction, fifty to one hundred bushels of corn, and, in other instances, over a bale of cotton to the acre. The splendid agricultural resources of the Southern States were so repressed and hidden by the incubus of negro labor that they are not, even yet, really understood by people living in other sections of the country.

"In these days the majority of white farmers, instead of considering their land less valuable after it has been cultivated a few years, as it surely used to be, recognize that each year intelligent cultivation adds to the productiveness of the soil. While, a few years ago, under the old negro farm system, ten bushels of corn and a quarter of a bale of cotton to the acre were, in South Carolina, about the average, decreasing as the years passed, she has now beaten the world's record in corn production to the acre.

"One man—a white man—so prepared his land and so cultivated it that on one acre were produced 243 bushels of corn. Another white man, working with his own hands in his own field, just north of Atlanta, Ga., produced twelve bales of cotton from three acres of land.

"We have been handicapped, we are still handicapped, but we are determined that our section shall contribute its full part to the splendid growth of our native country and to the preparation of the United States for the vast population destined to live within its boundaries. We are establishing agricultural schools and colleges. We have eleven separate agricultural schools in my own State, for instance, and a splendid State College of Agriculture.

"We are having elaborate and comprehensive soil surveys made, so that the plant food naturally contained in each particular field may be understood and the lackings of the field may be made known and remedied intelligently. We are having the plants, themselves, scientifically studied, so that the food required by each one may be known with accuracy and be furnished to the men who cultivate the soil in all parts of the State.

"We are conducting university extension work from our State College of Agriculture and furnishing, to whomsoever wants them, bulletins of information upon almost every subject which can help the farmer. We are conducting experiments in seed selections; studies are being made of the diseases of the cotton plant, of fruit trees and in other lines. A majority of our white farmers, are, to-day, eager for information and ready to put into immediate practice what they learn."

Senator Hoke Smith.

"But you do not get as many requests for information from the negro farmers?"

"We get a few. A few of the negroes are willing to learn, but as an almost unbroken rule it is essential, for negro efficiency upon the farm, that the white man stay close by his side, direct him and control him. It may surprise some Northerners to know that fifty years of freedom have not, substantially, increased the efficiency of the negro even at farm labor.

"There are a few who have progressed, but their improvement is offset by the fact that many are far less efficient under freedom than they, or their forebears, were under slavery. Under slavery they were compelled to work and forced to learn within the limits of their capacity. Now there is no compulsion, and many of them neither work nor learn.

"We have scattered through the State a few negro farmers who have done exceptionally well, but the great bulk are, as I have stated, without progress or a tendency toward progress, save as they are compelled to make it under the direction of white men.

"We are doing fine things in the South. In the progress which we are making, and which can scarcely be imagined by one not familiar with its details, the entire elimination of sectionalism—of prejudice against the South among the people of the North and of prejudice against the North among the people of the South—is a substantial help. Even our greatest handicap, the presence of the negro, is lessening by the distribution of the negro population throughout the entire country, and through the realization on the part of the whole country that the Southern white man has no prejudide, peculiar to himself, against the negro race."

The Governor had come north to attend the conference of Governors at Spring Lake, N. J. In the minds of many these conferences are likely to result eventually in the adjustment of much of the conflicting legislation now existing in the various States and thus weld the Nation into a more homogeneous whole than it has been in the past.

"What common legislation do the States need?" I inquired.

"That is still a matter which must be discussed."

"Do we not need, for example, a general divorce law, regulating what may be termed inter-State matrimony, as much as we ever needed an inter-State commerce law?"

He answered with considerable emphasis. "Something of the sort must certainly be managed. I very cordially approve of the idea of an amendment to the Constitution providing for a National divorce law. The fact that so many men of eminence have already expressed themselves in favor of such legislation makes the hope that it will come without too much delay quite reasonable.

"It is absolutely inexcusable that a citizen of one State should be permitted to slip across a boundary into another State and there obtain annulment of a marital contract which he could not have obtained in his own State, the State in which the marriage ceremony was performed, and that then he should be able to go back to his own State, having, perhaps, remarried again contrary to that State's laws, and live there, undisturbed, with one whom, under that State's laws he could not marry, is all wrong. It amounts, often, to a willful, but unpunishable, defiance of the sentiment of the community and of the laws born of that sentiment and present on the statute books.

"There is no more vital error remaining now to be corrected in our national life than this one. The readiness with which divorces have been granted in some States has rightly become an international scandal. It might, if unchecked, lead to a disastrous deterioration of American appreciation of the holiness of the home tie, which is the most essential safeguard of our civilization.

"This whole matter, I am firmly convinced, must be transferred to the National from the State Governments. A constitutional amendment doing this should be supported by the best people of the Nation in all sections. It would be so plainly for the benefit of all the people of all the States, and it is so clearly the only way in which the matter can be handled properly that even an old-fashioned State's rights advocate ought not to hesitate about it.

"I believe in a constitutional government. I do not believe in breaking the Constitution at any time as a matter of expediency. But where the interests and the advantages of our people require it, as they do, undoubtedly, at present, in the face of the disgraceful state into which affairs have fallen, I think we should not hesitate. Conditions have changed greatly and the Constitution must be changed to meet them.

"We should be just as willing to add, to-day, by constitutional amendment, to the power of the National Government in this matter, when it will promote the interests of the people of the entire Nation, as we were, when the Constitution was first framed, to give to the National Government the power then placed in it. Nothing, of course, can come so close to the lives of all the people as this problem of marriage and divorce.

"It ranks in its importance with the problem of our agriculture, ranks even higher, for while the problem of our agriculture has a mighty bearing on our comfort and our National prosperity, the other has a mighty bearing on our morals and our spiritual and intellectual progress.

"Material, intellectual and spiritual comfort, are interdependent. The clear, although, perhaps, unavoidable mistake of concentration of our population in the cities, has been responsible for some of our worst errors and some of our greatest unhappiness.

"The loneliness of country life is as much of a mistake, far more easily corrected, and, further, when it is corrected, will itself correct the other. The advance of science has now made it wholly possible and it must be studied and worked out. The hard conditions of farm life must be ameliorated. Too little thought is given to rural problems. There must be a concentration upon investigation, both by Nation and by State, and upon the development of agriculture. It is of greater moment than the study of the industries of manufacture and mechanics.

The small farmer is the greatest citizen. His greatness must be recognized. One farmer cannot work out the great problems of his farm, alone. The cotton-problem, in the South, demanded the co-operation of the farmers with each other and the co-operation of both State and National Governments with them. There are many others, South and North, which must be solved by similar co-operation.

"The Government gets all it has, when we come down to facts, from the farmer. It should grudge him nothing, for, in grudging him, it is handicapping its own progress. But, in the United States, the Government has, to a large extent, ignored the farmer, thoughtless of the fact that he has been the source of all its wealth. The time will come, if attention is not given to these problems, when food will rise still higher and living be more difficult than it is now.

"Upon the other hand these troubles may be utterly avoided by intelligent co-operation between Government and the man who tills the soil. The days of waste in the South are passing faster than they are in other sections, although the Southern farmer has not had his share of help; they must cease everywhere if we desire to realize our possible destiny. Big crops are recognized as the best insurance against hard times. We have the soil here and the seed here and the labor here. Let them be taught to properly combine and disaster cannot overtake us.

"We have made serious mistakes. Eager, with an unprecedented eagerness, for knowledge, we have not always been wise in choosing just what knowledge to acquire or to impart. There has been too much Greek and Latin taught our boys in schools and colleges, and too little knowledge of plant-food. The great basic location of a nation's prosperity must be in its soil. How, then, can a nation prosper when the men who till its soil do not know the lands they cultivate?

"Vast sums are wasted, annually, in wrong fertilization. This, plainly, is a fault of our educational system, isn't it? Farming, if the country is to prosper to the height of its possibilities, must be made into a science as exact as any of the other industries which we have so intelligently developed. Farmers who do not know their land may be regarded as a National extravagance—and how many of our farmers know their land? We have waxed great in spite of this, because of the abundance of our fruitful soil.

"It was rich enough, at the beginning, to guarantee a crop to fools. The time when it could do that, though, passed with its virginity. It must be more than cropped, these days—it must be intelligently cultivated. And the Nation's need is for the men who can do this—for the educated, scientific farmer, rather than for the expert in dead languages."

Gov. Smith then told me of an experiment in his own experience. He is a lawyer by profession, a statesman by compulsion, and, by preference, (as may be judged by those who note how, in this interview, he steered every topic into agriculture,) a farmer. He believes in Georgia land, and, when he has the money, buys some. When he has more money, then he buys some mor

Well, he bought a piece on which there were four acres of waste area. He looked them over and determined to find out what could be done with them. The subsoil of this little tract was heavy clay and near the surface. Rains did not penetrate it. The plot was sticky with a gluey surface mud, its resultant sourness killed plant life, it was barren, useless, and unlovely.

He put men and teams at work on it and the farmers of the section turned their heads away as they passed by, so that they might not offer him the discourtesy of laughing in his face. They knew, by their traditions and the traditions of the good old South, that he was wasting money, wasting time, and waisting energy in trying to reclaim that hopeless land. They knew that for the moment their usually astute fellow-citizen was affected by the sillies. But he was not to be deterred.

He spent quite a lot of money in deep plowing, which transformed the land into large, hopeless-looking lumps. He spent more money on disintegration of those lumps. Indeed, before he finished spending money he had pulverized that land until it was as fine as flour. This done he planted what a chemical analysis, made by a high-browed scientist, determined was the proper thing to plant, after he had fertilized according to the same high-browed advice.

The crop came and was better than the neighborhood expected, for it just about paid for the labor. This confirmed the general predictions of financial loss, and there were now smiles of the kind that said: "I told you so." But he worked the land again and yet again and fertilized a little more, with careful science, giving to that land, in the fertilizer, those ingredients of plant food which analysis revealed it to have lacked. The second crop paid for the labor and the seed. And what did the third crop do?

His face as he told me about it would have pleased an able sculptor looking for a countenance with which to cap a rugged statue of complacent victory. The third crop paid for the labor and the seed, and, further, paid for the land itself. The third crop made the enterprise an investment which had yielded full 100 per cent. in three years' time.

It is that experience, he says, and countless others other men have had of similar character, which convince him that the Nation's greatest need is co-operation with and education for the farmer.

"The agricultural productiveness of our lands can be far more than doubled," he went on, "and a few years can see this done if the States and the United States contribute properly to the investigation of the problems of the farm and the better training of our boys and girls for agriculture. The doubling of our farm productiveness would go very far toward solving our most serious economic problems.

"The farmer's life can and should be the most attractive of all lives, his payment for his labor—his profits from his business, proportioned to his outlay of energy—should be very large, not very small, as they now too often are. We must enter on an era of Governmental study, local, State and National, of seeds and soils, of soil preparation and crop culture, of plant diseases and the enemies of trees and fruits, of cattle and all other stock. That will solve our economic difficulties so that they will stay solved. The area of our farm lands has been so great that our very wealth in them has bred our tragic carelessness of them. I am glad to note that a change has already begun.

"The conditions of farm life must and will be so completely metamorphosed that the country, not the city, will be regarded generally as the most delightful place of residence for rich and poor alike."

"It is the loneliness of farm life which appalls most people," I suggested.

"It has been in the past, but the telephone, which is developed now into almost as great perfection in the country as it is in the city, has already done much to correct that and will do more. Good roads are coming, have already come in many mighty sections of the country, and they will further help to remove the isolation of farm life.

"The inter-State-highway movement, now well under way, is a good sign. I cannot say that inter-State highways are as essential to the Nation's welfare as inter-State railways are, but they certainly are not far behind the railways in importance.

"I am intensely interested in the great highway which we are seeking to create by the improvement of a chain of roads and which will connect New York City by means of admirable highways with Atlanta in my State, and later with Jacksonville, Fla. I think it is quite safe to predict now that this enterprise will be carried to completion, and that will be a great step in advance. It will bring our people closer together; it will help us to know each other better.

"It will give us many opportunities of getting really acquainted which train-travel does not offer and cannot. The man who hurries through a section on a fast train sees really but little of a country, learns practically nothing of its people. The man who passes through it in a carriage on a public highway, be the carriage horse-drawn or propelled by gasoline, must, necessarily, see much of it and become acquainted with its people.

"This will do what other things have done during the past quarter of a century—it will continue the fine work of the railway, which was assisted and carried into detail by the telegraph and further in still greater detail by the telephone. It will teach us that the people of the North and South are essentially the same; it will help to add to common interests, and common interests mean common likes and dislikes and general, appreciative, tolerant understanding, one of the other. We shall see the actual conditions under which each other lives.

'The good-roads movement is of great importance to the welfare of the country. The automobile has, of course, helped greatly in encouraging our people to their building. The increase of inter-State roads is of more importance than that portion of the public which is not directly interested realizes.

"My interest in the highway from New York to Jacksonville is so acute that I shall take part in the long journey over the route which will leave New York Oct. 14. I hope that in each State which I pass through the Governor, or a Senator, or both will join me as my guest. I am arranging these meetings now.

"All these things help; this one will help tremendously toward the solution of what I have been forced to think is the very greatest problem of our National life—the problem of our farmers and their farms. The Federal and State Governments have, as I have said, no greater duty to perform than to promote the agricultural interests of the country. If you asked me what I think has been the greatest deficiency in the work of State and National government in this country during the past century I should unhesitatingly reply that it has been neglect of the farmer and the farm."

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ANOTHER VIEW OF PRECOCIOUS BOYS

Some Freshmen Who Figure in Magazine Articles Not What They Might Be.

THE young married sister of the college junior was sitting on a willow-shaded bench in Central Park. As her irreverent brother put it, "She was keeping track of the two-year-old with one hand, and reading a magazine article about precocious infants with the other." Every now and then she lifted a pair of troubled brown eyes and studied the actions of the roly-poly wee lad, who was pulling white-clover heads from the grass border and sitting down, not far, but emphatically, with each blossom secured.

The college junior sauntered up and dropped into the seat beside her. "What are you reading that stuff for?" he asked carelessly. "You wouldn't have the kid trot in the class with —— and ——, would you?" naming a couple of small boys who have been much written up, of late, for having attained college long before they were out of knickerbockers.

"Why—" she began, puzzled at his tone.

"If he ever could, think what a splendid start. But you ought to know about those two boys from the inside, Bob. You must see them every day."

"I do!" said the junior, grimly. "We've had several of these much exploited youths in the freshman class this last year. You know, from my personal experience, that a freshman gets a square show at our hang-out," he nodded his head in the general direction of New England, "and that right from the beginning, which is a thing that few colleges can boast—and prove. But even the members of their own class fight shy of those kids you've been reading about. Magazine writers take good care not to dwell on certain characteristics common to that brand of youngsters, when they're writing up their wonderful mental attainments and tender ages. But if they are the same nuisance home that they prove in college, Lord have mercy on their families! That's all!"

"Why, Bob!" remonstrated his sister. "In each case it speaks of the remarkable training they'd had at home. Isn't it true?"

"Well, yes, in a way!" admitted the junior. "But it wasn't the kind—if you judge by the results—to make them the sort of citizens you'd choose to have in the house with you. They may be useful to society, about as an adding machine is; but unless you particularly happen to need adding done, the machine is only an encumbrance. It's good for nothing else. Look here, Sis. Take that especial boy, for example." Bob laid his finger on the picture of an old-faced person in short trousers, with a self-conscious pose. "Like all of his kind—and we've four or five to average from, up there—he not only lacks all sense of humor and all sense of proportion, (which means his proportion to the rest of the universe,) but his temper is of the sort for which you'd spank Tommy soundly."

The little lady gasped. "But—why?"

The junior shrugged his broad, boyish shoulders. "It's a way Nature has of evening things up, and taking it out of the freaks. Why, this boy, whose name is a household word, is so obsessed by his reputation for stupendous knowledge that he's been known to stand up in the classroom and go into actual tantrums of resentment with the professors for differing with him! Pretty well for a kid not yet fifteen! Imagine Tommy, there, when he got to that age, calling down a splendid old mathematics professor, with gray hair, for having the temerity to correct his spelling of everyday words. He knew, absolutely, that 'separate' was the right spelling, and he argued about it until he made a holy show of himself! It would take the whole Faculty to convince a boy like that that having become a freshman before he was fourteen didn't make him infallible about everything, authorities or no authorities."

"Are—are they all like that?" wondered the college junior's sister.

"All that I've encountered seem to be tarred with the same stick. If they didn't take themselves so seriously there'd be some hope for them. This blooming cub over here [he turned a page] is a standing joke because of his habit of addressing entire strangers in the gym. and asking their class. When they answer, he demands to know their ages, and interrupts the reply with, 'Well, I'm only 15, and I'm a graduate of —— College! How's that?' Sometimes he forgets and asks the same thing twice of the same fellow! Another of the same species was in the freshman debating society, and made his appearance on the platform wearing a regular grown-up dress coat, low-cut vest, and stiff evening shirt, above his knee pants. He was so satisfied with the effect that it never occurred to him what the audience was laughing at!"

"Isn't there anybody to—to explain to them?"

"What'd be the use? They're quite sure they know it all. The normal freshman would have sense rubbed into him quickly enough if he happened to be that kind of an It when he arrived; but—there's the worst phase of it, Nan." The young man's face grew sober. "They haven't any friends, these freak infants. Folks may assert that they are the physical equals of good, sturdy youngsters of their own age, and so they may be. But they are not the physical equals of the big, husky fellows that they find as classmates. And they haven't had the everyday, knockabout, give-and-take experience that fits the average boy for college and the life after, or they wouldn't lose their heads as they do. Normal boys of their own age fight shy of them, because of their conceit, and the men don't want such undeveloped kids tagging them before they've had a little modesty knocked into their heads. Frats don't particularly covet them, and they're apt to be too jealous of each other to form a clan of their own. What will they know of the best side of college life when they graduate? Nothing at all!"

"Poor babies!" commented the little lady, picking up roly-poly. Tommy and giving him a refreshing hug. "What do you suppose they'll be, after?"

Bob shook his head. "They'll be freshmen in the life class, that's sure! Like sore thumbs, they'll stick out and be knocked all along the line. And they'll have to take all they've missed before they'll be fit for it—sig among everyday, wholesome men and women. Better let the kiddie be normal, little sister. A freak is a freak, however you label it."

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