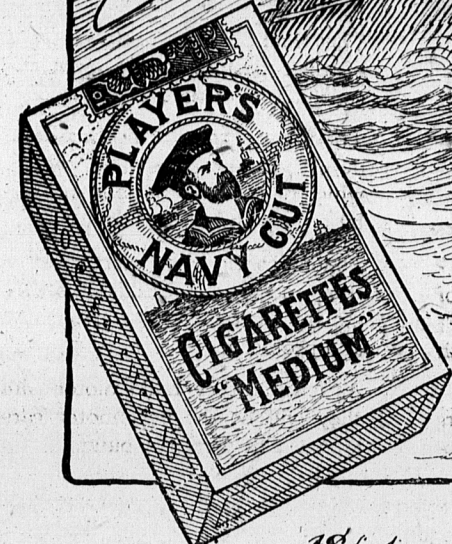


WALT MASON ON RHEUMATISM

PROSE POET SAYS IT IS PAINFUL, BUT MAKES GOOD WEATHER PROPHECIES.

Walt Mason, who makes his living by writing a daily "prose poem" which is read by some millions of people, a time ago was asked by the editor of The American Magazine to write an article of an uplifting character for that publication. He replied that he was suffering from rheumatism and was not in the mood to do any uplift work. The editor suggested brilliantly that he might write on the subject of rheumatism, and the "prose poet" thereupon produced an account of his own personal experiences with that malady, which, while it is not exactly in the same class with the standard "uplift" literature of commerce, is at least as edifying, and in the end will probably do just as much good.

When I woke one morning I had an unsightly pain in my right heel. When I put my foot to the floor I shrieked as Freedom did when Kosciusko fell. I thought at first it was a puncture and that I'd find a tack in the casing, but there was nothing of the kind visible. So I sent in a riot call to the doctor's office, and he came and asked a few leading questions, and said I had an attack of rheumatism. He said it smilingly. Somehow, people who haven't got it always see something humorous in rheumatism. Especially the doctors. They consider it a great joke. They can't cure it, so they try to laugh it into the disease.



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gested, doctors don't exactly understand rheumatism and can't cure it. They don't like to talk about it, he says, "and will try to switch the conversation off to seven-year-old information." In the manner of scientific men the world over, they have many theories regarding the malady, however, and he sets forth a few of these: They hold to the theory that the consumption of meat is largely responsible for the disease. Yet many of the worst sufferers are hard-working people who have meat only on Christmas, Ground-hog day, and other special occasions. In a Washington newspaper office I worked next to a man who had been a fierce vegetarian for twenty years. In that time he had never knowingly swallowed any flesh. Yet he had muscular rheumatism in a chronic form, and his joints were all wrenched out of shape and his body twisted.

ment yet invented, has consumed lagoon of dark-colored medicine which tasted like a crocodile's nest, has been a hopper for pills and a sepulcher for powders." And yet, he concludes, like a man resigned to an unkind fate, "at the hour of going to press the rheumatism in my back, if divided up, would furnish pain for a mass-meeting." In addition to all the cures he has tried, he has heard of many others, of which he mentions the following: Some people insist that bee-stings will cure rheumatism, and it seems that there is medical authority for the idea. The red-hot character of bee-stings is due to formic acid, and this acid is a specific for rheumatism. So runs the theory. If it be so, why don't the scientist put up some bottles? It would be more agreeable to take it with a spoon than have it administered by indignant bees. One man told me that he had rheumatism in his feet for years; after trying all the known remedies he heard about the bee-sting cure, so he enveloped himself, all but his feet, which were left bare, in horse blankets and things, then he crawled to a beehive and knocked it over with his feet. The bees held a mass-meeting on those feet, and exhausted their supply of formic acid on them, and then went away and died of rheumatism; but the man never had the disease again from that day to this.

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broken leg. This experience caused him to investigate, and he found that every disease can be read from a certain portion of the iris. When a disease is cured white lines enclose the dark spot that proclaimed the disease. From this the stage of the disease can be ascertained. If the white lines do not entirely surround the dark spot the disease is not completely cured. Drugs are always clearly shown on the iris—arsenic by white specks on the outer edge, morganic iron by brown marks around the pupil.

ident of it was F. C. Culver, who now is the head of the Beaver and Kirkland Lake mines. Mr. Culver was riding in a railway coach one day, beside a man who bragged about everything. "Some country this, you know," this man confided. "Got a great silver camp here now." "Yes." "Yep. And I got five thousand Nipissing, twenty thousand Silver Queen, an' a lot of La Rose, an' they all pay me big dividends. But—who you happen to be? You know anything o' Cobalt?" "Just a little. You get big dividends from Silver Queen?" "Yes sir. Some mine that. But who are you anyway?" "I? Oh, I am the man who signs the Silver Queen cheques." Mr. Boaster rushed out of sight to another car.

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