

T. Otto Fisk

# Doctor

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English novelists have so persistently misrepresented American dialect Americans and that turnabout is only fair play, yet Cockney Dialect in the interests of accuracy a letter written by an English correspondent of the New York Post may be cited in regard to an important matter of detail: "The efforts made on this side of the Atlantic to represent the cockney's misuse of 'h' are almost invariably grotesque failures, for the reason that no notice is taken of the difference between accented and unaccented syllables. For instance, the editor of a Boston magazine has lately been giving an account of his experiences in the London streets on Coronation day, and makes his policeman say: 'Hit's a Yank just harrived.' 'Hit's against horders,' 'You're one of those Hamerican newspaper chaps.' Now if any policeman really spoke in this fashion they were undoubtedly Americans, even though they lived in London, for no one but an American speaks so slowly and with such a lack of vocal inflection as to be able to take breath before an unaccented syllable. 'Horders' is good cockney, for the aspirate is prefixed to a syllable on which the stress falls, but every other example of the superfluous 'h' in these three quotations is an evidence of the reporter's deficiency in exact observation. In the sentence I have just written 'harrived,' 'hevery' 'hoth'er,' 'hevidence' and 'hobervation' would be possible to an uneducated Englishman; an American journalist would attribute to him also 'hexample' and 'hexact,' and in this would certainly be wrong. The London policeman himself could tell him that 'h' is used for 'emphasis.' 'Hit' for 'it' seems to be American 'cracker' rather than cockney dialect.

The only evidence of insanity that the attorney of William S. Vanderbilt conscience and Allen said he could discover in his client was that he was anxious to pay his debts. "It may be," says Mr. Lexow, his lawyer, "that in twentieth century times this is to be taken as an evidence of mental aberration." If this view were generally accepted it would be a relieving one. Conscience and debts are both monitors that it is painful to disregard; and in many instances the latter are more painful than the former. Unfortunately, as the St. Louis Globe-Democrat points out, we share the knowledge of our financial shortcomings with another, perhaps with many others; our consciences we may throttle with none to look upon the felonious act. They prod us ineffectively, but the prodding we get from our creditors is not so ineffective. A man who is anxious to pay his debts without outside prodding, as Mr. Vanderbilt Allen is said to be, may give cause for doubting his absolute sanity, but in a sane man liberation from an accusing conscience stands only next to freedom from dunning letters.

Dramatic taste in Boston may be deteriorating or it may not, but there is a certain satisfaction in the relation of an incident at the Castle Square theater by a Boston writer, who stood up in the foyer when Richard III. was being played. At the end of the third act a man in front of him turned to his companion and said: "This show is bum. The feller that wrote it ought to write another and then die." While this may be a verdict from only one of the masses, it is to be feared that the masses largely indorse it, and it is to be feared with equal certainty that many of those who affect to be cultured to a superior degree feel a responsive tingle to the amusing criticism, rough-hewn as it is. Murderous villainy of such continuous, unremitting, bald and deeply-dyed type as "Richard's" is portrayed is now seen only in the melodrama, and the melodrama grows more unpopular every year. It is not the unlettered Bostonian's worst fault, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, that he was unaware of the authorship of the play. To him it was only a noisy, ranting, blood-letting melodrama in which everybody talked in stilted and high-flown, often incomprehensible, words. Who could be expected to endure a murder in nearly every act, educated as the present generation has been to be sufficiently horrified

by one, and that one taking place in the wings? Unfortified by a literary education, how is one to appreciate the fine roaring in Richard III.? We grieve at this evidence of unappreciativeness in Boston, but cannot criticize this manifestation of taste as altogether wretched.

The big dam at Assouan, Egypt, has been completed and was formally opened. It is said to be one of the greatest engineering feats on record, and cost \$125,000,000. It is believed that the big barrier will soon pay for itself in the increased area of crops raised in the valley of the Nile. The dam will regulate the supply of water for irrigating purposes and make crop-raising more certain. Engineers in this country are much interested

in this dam and its results, for there are many places in the west where it would probably be practical for the government to construct a similar wall. We have the water, but it will require federal aid to store and supply it before the land will be fit for agricultural purposes.

Mr. Punch is proud to say that the only countries where the cartoonist and the caricaturist are safe are Great Britain and the United States. In France they must be duelists and defend themselves. In Germany they must measure swords with their subjects. The average life of the caricaturist in Turkey is one week. In China he is humorously dismembered, the occasion there being always made a public holiday, with fireworks in the evening.

The present methods of sending small sums of money through the mail are entirely inadequate to the mail order business of the country. Investigation shows that in every 1,000 money orders only 350 of them are for sums of \$5 or less; and it is estimated that money orders are used for only ten per cent. of the transmissions of small sums through the mails.

Glencyre, Pike county, Pa., has been sold at public auction for \$5,000, but the name of the duke who has thus secured an estate is not given. It is supposed, however, that he will at once proceed to erect an ancient family seat with all the modern conveniences on the adjacent demesne.

President Eliot, of Harvard, says the "scab" is a good type of an American. But he probably wouldn't feel that way about it if there were one or two hanging around all the time trying to take his job for less pay, says the Atlanta Journal.

The fact that all the fools are not yet dead is amply demonstrated by the further fact that a few of the people who are advocating the abolition of kissing actually believe they can achieve that result, says the Philadelphia Inquirer.

The stone ax that belonged to the man whose skeleton was found at Lansing, Kan., has been discovered in a clay bank near St. Louis. At any rate, if it wasn't his ax, there is nobody can establish whose ax it is.

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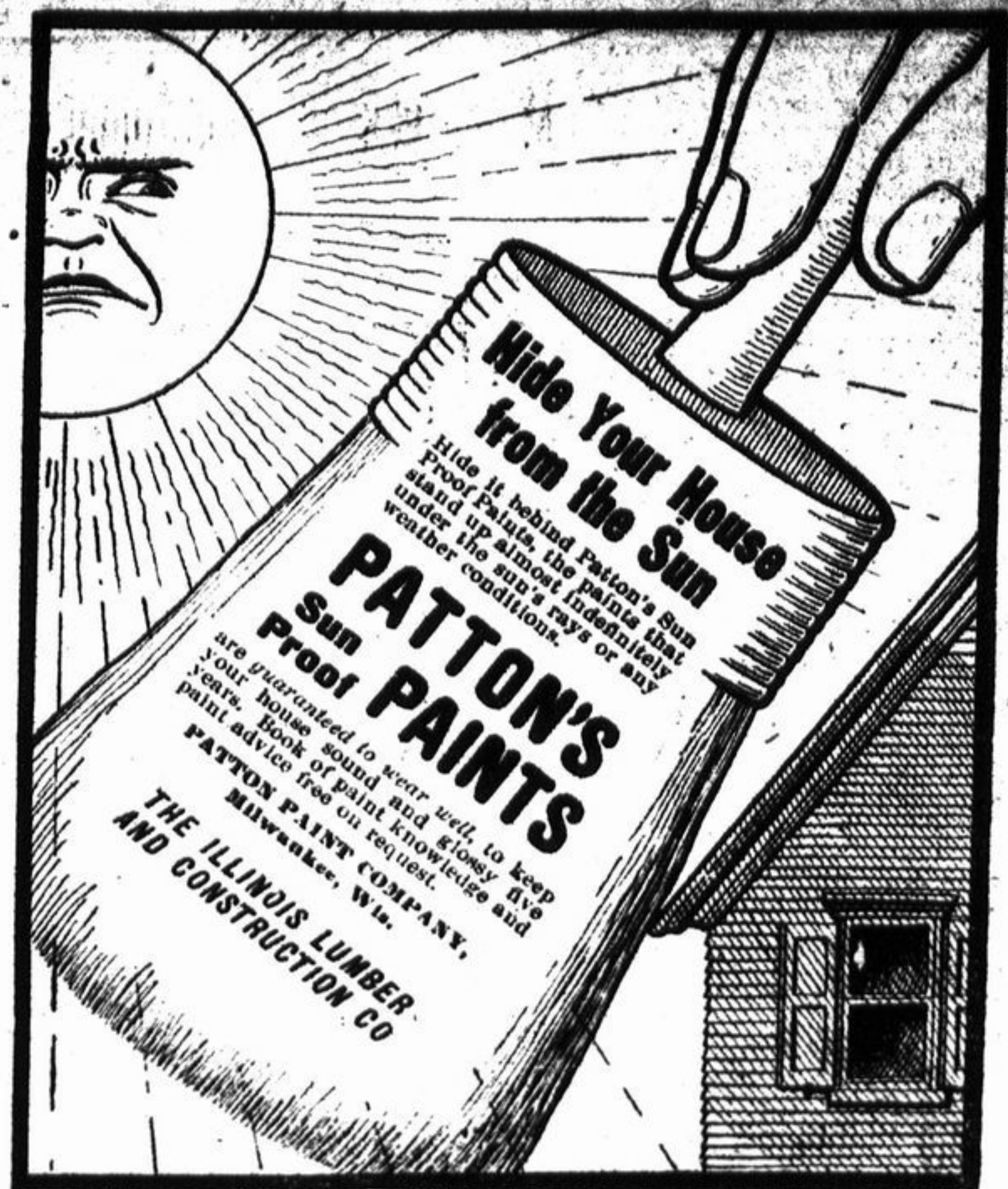
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