

OLD MAN SUNSHINE IS BORN OPTIMIST

M. TIMBERLAKE CHEERFUL

Aged But Active Solicitor for the Press Has Fine Philosophy of Life; You All Know Him

Do you know Milton J. Timberlake? The name probably doesn't mean anything to us of the north shore, but the chances are that if you were asked if you knew "Old Man Sunshine" you'd immediately think of the man whose name is Milton J. Timberlake. The circumstances under which you've met M. J. aren't the important features of this story, so said circumstances will be reserved for a later paragraph.

But by way of preface it is necessary to say that Milton J. Timberlake probably has buzzed your doorbell more than once. If you don't answer the first time he rings again. If you don't answer the second ring he just keeps on ringing. Perhaps you come to the door a little warm under the collar. Milton J. stands there smiling. It's a winning smile that won't wear off and he combines it with conversation in soft tones that can't be resisted. He talks and he smiles and pretty soon you are talking and smiling too and whether or not he "sells" you "Old Man Sunshine" steps along to the next house. But he's left something behind. That smile is contagious and it lasts all day, perhaps longer. You think of his philosophy of life. And that is lasting, too.

Born Optimist

Milton J. doesn't look or act his eighty-six years. He doesn't resemble a man who went through a war more than sixty-two years ago; he doesn't look like a man who has made the fight to keep going and at times it has been rough. The vicissitudes of time—and 86 years is quite a span of years—have left no noticeable marks. He has health and a wealth of optimism. He steps along the street at a "flaming youth" gait that would leave many a man of half his age far in the rear.

The writer has spoken of Timberlake's philosophy and in a few short words it may be placed in type here: "The joy of living is mine," he says, and his smile evidences that he means it. "I draw my pension, which is enough to take care of me. I go to church every Sunday. Well, why shouldn't I be happy? Sure it's a joy to live."

Here's His History

But let's go back to the start of things. Milton J. says that back on a spring day—May 3, 1842—he was born in Hillsborough, O. He came of Quaker stock and in his early years was a member of the Society of Friends of that denomination. Afterwards there was no Quaker church and Milton became a Methodist and is now a Congregationalist.

There's a keen sense of humor about "Old Man Sunshine." Hear him tell this:

"My father, of course, was a singer as that was part of the Quaker service. Well, I wouldn't say he was much of a singer. He couldn't sing as a Quaker and he couldn't sing as a Methodist. But, believe me, he tried and no one could stop him."

The big wish of his father's life, "young" Milton says, was to live to see the end of slavery. And he got that wish and died happily.

Started as Teacher

After a common school education, Milton Timberlake became a school teacher. He taught at Bellefontaine and got \$40 a month, which was the first money he ever earned. Then came the Civil war. With the country torn by conflict between the North and South he and a brother, John, joined the army. When the war came to an end in 1866 they returned home.

He did not go back to teaching. He married a cousin of his aunt at Lafayette, Ind. The next few years found him in the grain business and for fourteen years he stuck to it. While selling grain there came an opportunity to come to Chicago. That's how it happens that he is now in this section of the country.

The years that followed were uneventful until he moved to the north shore. At present he is living with a daughter in Highland Park. But Wilmette, Kenilworth, Glencoe and Winnetka know him just as well as do the Highland Parkers.

"I'm a great grandfather," he says proudly. Then he goes on to tell about his brother John.

"John was in the manufacturing business in Jackson, Mich., until a few years ago. John was talking to me one day several years ago and said, 'Well, Milt, I'm 76 years old now and I guess it's time to start saving some money for a rainy day.' It wasn't long after that that John was forced to retire from business because of poor health."

But the reader probably is anxious to be let into a little secret. Here it is. Milton J. Timberlake, the young man of 86, who just has to be doing something, is the same man who has been at your door smiling and seeking subscriptions for the Highland Park Press. He's been on the job for

several years and expects to be at it for several more years.

"It's getting a little tougher all the time," says Timberlake in talking about the subscription business. "You see, pretty nearly everybody in my territory take the papers. But I keep an eye on the people who are moving in and after I talk with them they are subscribers."

But taking subscriptions isn't much of a task for Timberlake; it's fun. His experiences, as he relates them, are interesting and often humorous.

"Lots of times if I happen to call at a home around lunch time I'm invited in to have lunch," he remarked. "Often the women folks ask me in to have tea. But perhaps the funniest thing happened one day when I called at a house in Wilmette. After I rang several times the housewife came to the door, scowling mad. 'You've had some sort of misfortune this morning, and I'm sorry, but it will come out all right,' I told her.

"She looked at me a few seconds, then, instead of a scowl there was a smile on her face. She invited me to lunch and we talked about the paper and she signed a subscription blank. 'And finally she said: 'Yes, I did have a misfortune this morning. The stovepipe fell down.'"

Last winter Mr. Timberlake went to Florida for the colder months. But he didn't like it. "Nothing to do there," he said. "I've got to keep busy and so I was glad to get back to the north shore."

Milton J. doesn't smoke and never has because, as he says, "I never learned." No drinking either, for the same reason.

"I get my kick out of living and there's enough in it for me," he remarked as he set out to find out about a new family he'd heard had moved into his territory.

That's "Old Man Sunshine."



I heard Father say to Mother

that I was enough expense without Mother taking me to Pool & Piper's to get my new shoes. Father seemed to think a store as good as that must be awfully high priced.

But Mother spoke up and told him a thing or two. She said she'd see that I had Pool & Piper's Shoes if they cost fifty dollars a pair—and when she told Father what a teeny little bit my shoes really did cost there, he just looked funny and couldn't think of anything to say!

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