

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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Back when I was a teenager I used to love going into old abandoned houses. There was an old such house down the road from my best friend, Glen Babbs, in

Newton, Illinois. We went nosing into it.

It was full of interesting old things strewn all over the floor. The furniture was all gone but there was an old suitcase full of cylinder type records. (They would be worth a fortune today). I didn't take anything but I did copy the following from an old book lying on the floor. I've used it in a few of my sermons and it is very thought provoking.

The Calf-Path

By Sam Walter Foss (1858 - 1911)

One day, through the primeval wood, A calf walked home, as good calves should: But made a trail all bent askew. A crooked trail, as all calves do. Since then three hundred years have fled. And, I infer, the calf is dead. But still he left behind his trail, And thereby hangs my moral tale. The trail was taken up next day By a lone dog that passed that way: And then a wise bellwether sheep Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep, And drew the flock behind him, too, As good bellwethers always do. And from that day, o'er hill and glade, Through those old woods a path was made. And many men wound in and out, And dodged and turned and bent about, And uttered words of righteous wrath Because 'twas such a crooked path; But still they followed — do not laugh — The first migrations of that calf. And through this winding wood-way stalked Because he wobbled when he walked. This forest path became a lane, That bent, and turned, and turned again. This crooked lane became a road,

Where many a poor horse with his load Toiled on beneath the burning sun. And traveled some three miles in one. And thus a century and a half They trod the footsteps of that calf. The years passed on in swiftness fleet. The road became a village street, And this, before men were aware, A city's crowded thoroughfare, And soon the central street was this Of a renowned metropolis; And men two centuries and a half Trod in the footsteps of that calf. Each day a hundred thousand rout Followed that zigzag calf about, And o'er his crooked journey went The traffic of a continent. A hundred thousand men were led By one calf near three centuries dead. They follow still his crooked way, And lose one hundred years a day, For thus such reverence is lent To well-established precedent. A moral lesson this might teach Were I ordained and called to preach; For men are prone to go it blind Along the calf-paths of the mind, And work away from sun to sun To do what other men have done. They follow in the beaten track, And out and in, and forth and back, And still their devious course pursue, To keep the path that others do. They keep the path a sacred groove, Along which all their lives they move: But how the wise old wood-gods laugh, Who saw the first primeval calf! Ah, many things this tale might teach — But I am not ordained to preach.