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Legal Lore: The Fountain in the Court House Square

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Legal Lore

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE COURT HOUSE SQUARE*

I

The weather sharps are clever when they furnish prophecies:
 They'll tell you when the temperature is due to fall or rise:
 That tomorrow will be fair if it doesn't chance to rain:
 And, maybe, when the rain has stoped, the sun will shine again!
 But when it comes to winter-time we say to them "Pooh, Pooh!"
 The Bureau isn't in it, 'spite of all you say or do.
 With the certain indication that the winter's come for fair,
 When they cover up the Fountain in the Court House Square!

When from the Nor'-East, Sou'-by-West the winds of winter blow
 They'll say—"If it gets colder we shall possibly have snow!"
 And when the icicles have fringed the bare limbs of the trees
 They'll sapiently warn us that we may expect a freeze!
 Some people from the close of Navigation draw a line,
 And some take sales of overcoats and rubbers for a sign,
 But it's an indication with which none of them compare
 When they cover up the Fountain in the Court House Square!

They may fool us with a Spring that is the worst we ever saw,
 They may fool us with a Summer that is blizzardy and raw,
 They may fool us with a Fall that is too dry or else too wet,
 But the Winter—That's a different proposition, you can bet!
 For the Bureau never handed out a prophecy, you see,
 That's so absolutely positive as this one seems to be:
 For all know it is time to don their winter under-wear
 When they cover up the Fountain in the Court House Square!

II

The days are getting longer, as in Spring they're apt to do:
 The sun is getting stronger and the sky's a brighter blue:
 The girls are busy planning Easter frills and furbelows:
 The fellows bloom in gorgeous tinted ties and fancy hose.
 The stores trim up their windows with a flowery display,
 Reminding us it's drawing very near to Easter Day.
 But there's a surer sign than all that Spring has come, for fair:
 The cover's off the Fountain in the Court House Square!

They're taking up the board walks. The lawns are turning green.
 And midst the twigs upon the trees a fuzziness is seen.
 Seed catalogues become a favored study on the cars,
 And Bock Beer signs are greeting those who patronize the bars.
 Upon the vacant city lots the boys are playing ball,

*To recall Law School alumni who have left Milwaukee the scene of some of their legal studies—the Court House.

But there is not a single sign of Spring among them all
That's ever so reliable or positive as where
The cover's off the Fountain in the Court House Square!

The sparrows chirp and chatter and kick up an awful fuss:
The painters and the paper-hangers get things in a muss:
Your home's turned topsy-turvy and you're told you're "in the way"—
It's "Chaos" when spring cleaning is the order of the day!
They're taking the storm sashes out. Storm doors are taken down.
The signs confront you everywhere, that Spring has come to town.
But still you don't feel certain till you hear someone declare—
"The cover's off the Fountain in the Court House Square!"

MARK FORREST