

NOTED "B. L. T." IS DEAD.

"A Line o' Type or Two" Column Conductor Victim of Pneumonia.

[EXCLUSIVE DISPATCH]

"B. L. T." ended his last "A Line o' Type or Two," published last Sunday morning, with this paragraph, typical of his homely humor: "You know the infallible sign of spring—father on the back porch, cleaning last fall's mud from his golf shoes."

CHICAGO, March 19.—Bert Leston Taylor, "B. L. T.," editor of "A Line o' Type or Two" in the Tribune for nearly fifteen years, died early this morning of pneumonia at his home at 195 East Chestnut street. He had been ill for two weeks. Bronchial trouble was the original cause of his illness, but he continued at work until the danger of pneumonia developed.

Dr. T. B. Reed and other physicians had been in almost constant attendance at the bedside during the last week. Arrangements for the funeral have not yet been made.

The news of the death of Mr. Taylor came as a shock to thousands who had read his column daily. His announcement was followed by thousands of telephone calls to the Tribune for confirmation.

IN NEWSPAPER WORK.

At the time of his death, Mr. Taylor was 54 years old. He was born in Goshen, Mass., and was educated at the College of the City of New York. As soon as he was graduated he entered newspaper work, serving as a reporter and as a writer on several weeklies and dailies. Later he was an editor of a newspaper at Greenfield, N. H.

Readers throughout the world know Mr. Taylor as "B. L. T." The initials appended to his daily column of humor were more famous than the names of most authors. A legion of readers and a small army of "contributes" regarded "B. L. T." with an affection rarely bestowed upon any writing man.

To "make the line" was regarded as an honor, not only by obscure contributors, but by men and women famous as poets and authors. Under such pseudonyms as "Pan," "Riquarius," "P. D. N.," "Anchula" and "Laura Blackburn," distinguished writers won a sort of double fame with contributions to the "line."

To his "contributes" was due perhaps the fact that "B. L. T." was essentially not a funny man, but keen, cultured, social, philosopher using satire and wit as his media.

COLUMN ON COLDS.

Ten days ago, as a hundred thousand followers learned through whimsical comment in "The Line," "B. L. T." contracted bronchitis. For a few days there was little or no line on the misery of such colds.

Clipping from a little Wisconsin paper an advertisement in which a typographical error made a fairer advertise "A 3-year-old cold" for sale, "B. L. T." wrote in his last column but one.

"We have one we will dispose of at a sacrifice and throw in a prescription pint."

As a youngster, he became a newspaper man in rural New England, gaining an experience which was to give infinite material for his mild humor in later years. Subsequently, he attended and was graduated from the College of New York.

Moving westward after his marriage to Miss Emma Bonner of Providence, R. I., in 1895, he worked for Duluth newspapers for several years. In 1899 he came to Chicago and joined the staff of the Chicago Journal.

As a reporter on the Journal his humor became notorious, rather than famous. It is told of him that he wrote of a certain murder a story so funny that it went into the waste basket, while his author went into the managing editor's office for censure.

To keep the Taylor humor within bounds an editorial page column called "A Little About Everything" was established by the Journal and as its conductor B. L. T. began making his initials famous.

Two years later, at the beginning of the century, Mr. Taylor joined the Tribune staff and began the famous "line." In a year or two he had developed the column into

national.

Mr. Taylor reigned from the Tribune in 1903 to go to New York where for six years he was one of the editors of Puck and a contributor to the New York Sun. In 1910 he returned to Chicago and resumed the line.

Flubdub of all kinds was B. L. T.'s pet aversion, to use one of the phrases he made current. He assailed mush-thinking as heartily as he denounced that mushiest of American institutions — bread-pudding.

His quips, because of their circulation in a dozen or more newspapers, were on the tongues of thousands. (One of them—the famous answer to the "Thank God for Wilson" slogan — was quoted in Congress.

"Thank God for Carranza — he kept us out of Mexico."

Another famous Taylorism was this: "We've paid our debt to Lafayette. Whoinell do we owe now?"

Mr. Taylor is survived by his widow and two daughters, Alva and Barbara, the latter the object of B. L. T.'s charming "Babetto Bal-lads."