

The Path the Calf Made*

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 two 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 bell-wether sheep
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep.

And drew his flocks behind him, too,
As good bell-wethers 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,
But still they followed - do not laugh -
The first migrations of that calf;

And through the 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 the zigzag calf about;

And o'er its crooked journey went
The traffic of a continent.
A hundred thousand men were led
By one calf near three centuries dead.

They followed still his crooked way.
And lost 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;

They follow in the beaten track,
And out and in and forth and back,
And work away from sun to sun
To do what other men have done.

They go two miles instead of one,
To follow a path that was begun
By one lone calf; and to this day
They follow this old crooked way.

If each and every wise M.D.
The wisdom of these lines could see,
They would look back along their path,
And see the folly of the calf.

Years and years, o'er tortuous way,
They've given physic - made it pay,
And our straight Chiropractic plan
They laugh at, to a single man.

Their noxious drugs, no more we'll drink,
But think we are the ones to wink,
When viewing this devious path,
Made by some medicinal calf.

We hail with most sincere delight,
The dawn of scientific light,
That leads us from the old, old way
To this, our **Chiropractic** day.

*Reprinted from Palmer DD. *The chiropractor's adjuster: the science, art and philosophy of chiropractic*. 1910, Portland Printing House, Portland OR, p. 291-2; authored by nineteenth century American poet, Sam Foss, and modified by Elizabeth Helfrich, D.C.