

DELIGHTS OF THE MAPLE SUGAR SEASON.



THE "Caw! Caw! Caw!" of a bunch of ever-hungry crowd, lazily flapping their way across the meadows and over the frozen honey-combed wheat fields; the bright plumaged bluejays, scolding among the bare tretops on the edge of the wood lot; the red-breasted robins, hopping around on the short, dull green grass, the sheep pasture; the bluebirds, chirping in the dead branches of an old beech tree, looking over a last year's nest; a red-headed woodpecker, rapping on the dead bark of a tall hickory tree on the edge of the clearing, where the swollen creek washes its muddy waters against the lower branches of the pussy willow, just beginning to show a faint tinge of green, and the skunk cabbage forcing its way through the thin ice in the marshland. Those are all signs of spring, but the surest signs, from a practical standpoint, is when the farmer and his boy and hired man first approach the sunny hillside of the old sugar bush, where the snow still stubbornly hangs in curious-looking wet patches among the dead leaves and branches. With auger and bit, spout and pail, they proceed to snare the crystal drops of sweet sap that spring from the roots of the maple at the first breath of spring.

When all the maples in the "bush" are tapped and the pails hung, "old Nell," the oldest horse in the stable, is hitched to the stoneboat or bobsled, with barrels staked on it, and the rounds of the camp are made, gathering the first run of sap.

The sap is dumped into a huge wooden trough, and from an iron pipe it runs into the evaporating pans over a brick furnace in the sugar house. When it freezes up hard at night, followed by a heavy thaw the next day, it produces a "big run" of sap. Then the farmer, his boys and hired man will have to stay up all night to boll down the sap before it gets sour.

Usually several neighbors will drop in during the evening, and while the boys tend the fire and skim the sap the

older men will smoke and tell stories that make the boys hug closer to the bright firelight and start at strange noises, or again the woods and hillsides will echo back the joyous laughter at a funny story and then come a midnight supper on ham and eggs, boiled in sweet sap, and potatoes baked in the ashes. Games and stories follow as the night wears on, till the sap is balled down and the fires banked, and the sleepy but happy crowd trudges homeward over the frozen stubble in the early dawn.

The last sugaring-off at the end of the season is the day of festivities and hard work combined. The neighbors' children are there, gathered around the steaming kettle of sirup with their dishes and little paddles whittled out of brass wood, eagerly waiting for the word when the sirup is thick enough to stir into sugar.

A patch of snow is found in a sheltered spot in the woods near by and a dipperful of thick liquid is thrown over it. It quickly cools into the form of taffy. It is fine.

That night the sticky sugar is washed from hands and faces of little children, the taffy is combed out of their hair, and they are put to bed full of sweet stuff and thoughts of an enjoyable day in the old "sugar bush."

The frost is all out of the ground on the hillside. The warm winds have dried up the sap. The soft maples are already in bud, and the pussy willows are in full bloom along the creek. The sap pails are all gathered in and stacked away. The fire in the furnace is flooded and the "sugar house" is locked up and the camp deserted.

The red squirrels chase each other over the roof and a restless bluejay scolds in the branches of the old birch tree. A flock of ducks splash noisily around in a shadowed pool of the creek trying to settle down for the night.

The full moon is rising above the swamp, while a two-horse wagon rumbles up the lane laden with the sweet spoils of the "sugar season."—E. A. Bushnell, in Cincinnati Post.

CRABBING IN MARYLAND.

An Ingenious Method by Which Many Are Caught for the Market.

Those who crab for market on the Choptank river, Maryland, have an ingenious method of catching crabs in quantity. A rope about the thickness of a clothesline, several hundred feet long, is kept coiled in a keg. The closer the cover the more pleasant the sail with the fisherman to the crabbing grounds, for at intervals of two feet along the entire length of the rope he has untwisted it and inserted between the strands short pieces of salted eels. The torsion of the strands holds them tightly in place. Each end of the rope has a keg buoy attached, together with a heavy stone.

Arriving at the favored place, usually on oyster beds, he throws a keg overboard and pays out his highly scented rope as he sails. When the other end is reached he anchors it with another stone and throws out another buoy.

After lowering his sail, he waits a few minutes, then takes his stand on the bow of his boat. Alongside of him is his landing net, with a handle six feet long. He raises the buoy and stone and, hand over hand, pulls his boat along the line. When a crab, clinging to its refreshment, comes in sight, he seizes his net, dashes it under the crab and flings it into the boat. The wary crab may loosen his hold and dive for the bottom, but such is the fisherman's dexterity that his net is swift to close on the crab. One seldom gets away.

Several hundreds of crabs are often taken at each overhauling of the rope. When he has caught all he wants, says the writer in Country Life in America, he packs them in barrels and sells them to a local dealer, who ships them to market.

HOW WOMEN STEP OFF CARS.

Few Understand the Art and Many Are Injured in Consequence.

All over the country the traction companies are being maled in heavy damages for personal injuries sustained by passengers who are thrown to the ground on alighting before the cars have fully stopped. The verdicts are exemplary in many instances, especially if the plaintiffs are women. The jurors rarely seem to concern themselves over the question whether the injured passengers of the precious sex get off with their faces or their back-hair turned toward the front of the car, which claims the attention of the masculine creature at the wheel. It is the proud privilege of the better half of humanity to descend from a car of any sort in just the way she prefers, with eyes to the front or retroactive vision and footsteps, and our transportation companies must revise their rules in accordance with feminine caprices and fancies.

Otherwise juries will deal unkindly with the owners of the trolley lines, whether their power is overhead or underground. The matron or maid who is interfered with in her choice of gracefully alighting from a car platform backward or forward or in any other way evidently has a sufficient basis for litigation if she suffers injury and the car is put in motion before she has taken her way in untrifled security. So the juries seem to think. The harassed and unfortunate male nonentities on the front or rear platforms of the cars who are distraught already over the uncertainty whether lovely women will make her exit without harm have even worse troubles ahead than any which have hitherto afflicted them.

GILDING REFINED FOLD.

Jefferson and Florence Criticizing Their Own Performance.

One night, some years ago, as I entered Dorlon's oyster house on West Twenty-third street, writes E. H. Sothorn in Leslie's Monthly, I saw Joseph Jefferson and W. J. Florence sitting at a table near the door. Jefferson was talking earnestly to Florence, who was looking very much ashamed of himself, with eyes cast down and fiddling with his oyster fork. Glancing up he saw me, and, as if glad to escape from a scolding, he cried, "Come over here and sit down with us."

"How do you do," said Jefferson. "Pardon me a moment. I am telling Billy about a point he spelled this evening." They were playing "The Rivals" at the Garden Theater.

"Well, I was thinking of something else," said Florence.

"Ah, that's it," said Jefferson, "but you missed the point, and let me tell you that you would have got a round of applause there—naming some other portion of the scene—"if you had made the pause in the right place."

"Look here," said Florence, suddenly, losing his remorseful expression, "you killed your own effect by speaking too quickly on that line," and he instanced one of Bob Acres' best moments.

Jefferson's face fell. "That's so, Billy, that's so; I spoiled that line. I was thinking how well I was playing, too, and I forgot my look before I spoke."

Florence became quite cheerful again. "He's been giving me fits," said he, "for the last ten minutes. He wasn't so devilish good himself to-night."

To see those two veterans polishing their work, to find them in their hour of recreation gilding refined gold was an object lesson of some value.

AMUSEMENTS OF YALE MEN.

Members of the Senior Class Take to Feeding Squirrels.

The establishment of a squirrel commons in the center of the Yale campus is the innovation that the present senior class has to its credit. Each class during its stay of four years on the campus plans to introduce some novel form of amusement which shall thrive after it leaves the university and which is always associated with its numerals.

In this year top-spinning, hoop-rolling, trap shooting and the several other amusements that have become part of the university undergraduate program have been introduced. The members of the class of 1903, however, have the honor of introducing the first amusement which has a tendency in the line of feeding the hungry and housing the homeless.

The Yale campus, with its beautiful elms, has always been an ideal home for the squirrels and the chipmunks and many years ago they, with their respective families, sought the peace supposed to be within the classic walls of Yale. But the introduction of the Boston terrier as a roomer there, as well as a frequent visitor, frightened away many of these lively little animals, until a couple of years ago the sight of a squirrel was most uncommon.

Then a reaction set in, the terrier was ostracized or at least was curtailed in his liberty, and the bright, busy little animals were encouraged to return to their abandoned farms by the Yale boys. Then plans were made to keep frisky chaps on the campus, with the result that what may very properly be termed a squirrel commons now exists.

All during the early fall the Yale men congregate in numbers on their respective fences, and with bags full of peanuts and walnuts, entice the squirrels and chipmunks to come down to supper.

Another amusement, which is said to have originated up near the Sheffield scientific school, is pitching pennies. Pitching pennies has been one of the frolics of the Yale campus since the introduction of the first monkey into New Haven. But the occupants of the freshmen dormitories have originated a feature which intensifies the fun to the Yale mind.

It took the Italian with the hurdy-gurdy less than twenty-four hours after his arrival in town to learn that the fertile field for his labors was in the region of the Yale campus. And

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

Indian Servant Girls.

A NEW solution of the servant girl problem is being discussed in the large cities of the West. Indian girls, from special training schools, are being employed as servant girls. It is said that the Indian girls who have been properly trained are found to be perfect embodiments of satisfactory domestic service. Five thousand or more Indian girls have been engaged from the various Indian schools of the Southwest to act as domestics in the homes of wealthy people in Kansas City, Chicago, St. Louis and Denver. Most of these girls are from the Chilocco and Haskell Indian schools. The Indian girls are physically strong. They are, as a rule, faithful, polite and unobtrusive. The idea of employing Indian girl domestics is now being seriously considered by some of the rich families of Eastern cities.—Buffalo Enquirer.

The Necessity of Courage.

WHEN a man is depressed he may be sure that the indulgence in physical actions characteristic of depression, such as moping and sighing, still more increase his depression, while his first attempt at more sensible conduct will prove that the deliberate and at first artificial assumption of cheerfulness and activity will, after a while, actually bring about a more cheerful frame of mind. Slow movements, slow speech, physical action of every kind deliberately rendered slow, is an antidote to the irritation of a man harassed and pressed with affairs, which good sense will suggest to him, although he may know nothing about the psychological theory of attaining a desired condition of mental quietude, at first, imitating the bodily gesture of a calm mind. On the other hand, the giving way to quick, irritated bodily movements is sure to cause an accession of irritability.—New York Daily News.

The Meat-Eater's Defence.

THERE are certain esthetic persons who quail before a luscious blood red steak. These persons are hardly abreast of scientific thought or else they would also quail before the corpse of the gentle asparagus. The asparagus is undoubtedly a form of life and the distinction between the higher vegetables and the lower animals is hard to make. Bacteria, for instance, though usually supposed to fall in the field of zoology, are said to belong of rights to botany. The fact is that the vegetarian agitation served its purpose in emphasizing the good there is in eating a fair proportion of vegetables and the evil there is in eating an unfair proportion of meat. This purpose being accomplished, exclusive devotion to a vegetable diet is perhaps no longer necessary except during sickness. No one, of course, can object to "an affection in a Potato" for a luscious young potato or a "French French bean" in a coquette opera, but an affection of the propagandist kind for fruits, cereals and vegetables as the antagonists of meats is happily no longer a desirable feature of modern life. We are now allowed by the highest authorities to enjoy the taste and stimulus of meat without compunction.—Chicago Tribune.

The Value of Spelling.

SOMEbody with views of spelling more original than orthodox has written to a Chicago paper to protest against the prominence given to this study in college examination papers. He contends that no professor or set of professors can justly condemn a freshman for being a poor speller, so long as no stress was laid on this branch of education before the days of Samuel Johnson. In other words, if so great a man as Shakespeare had a right to spell his own name in six different ways, and George Washington was shaky on orthography, a mere college student should be forgiven for not being able to master the intricacies of twentieth century spelling. This sound plausible, and, judging from the kind of work the pupils in American public schools turn out, there are many parents in this land who hold similar views. But the fallacy of the argument lies in the fact that the average high school graduate is not expected to be a Shakespeare or a George Washington, and that he is expected in most cases to be the clerk or bookkeeper of an ordinary business man.

His employer will not ask him if he can write immortal plays or lead an army. He will ask him to write a note to Mr. Smith at such and such a number, Broadway; and that note will look ridiculous if the name of the street is spelled phonetically. Of course there is no reason, logically, why the clerk should not introduce phonetic spelling in his office;

THE TRADELESS MAN.

Boys Should Not Grow Up Without Special Training.

When the first severe weather of the present winter struck London the dispatches from that city chronicled much suffering among the poor and an unusually large number of men out of work. Many of the unemployed were stated to be men discharged from the army because of the return of peace in South Africa. The facts were stated in such a way as to lead to the inference that British employers were somewhat heedless of the special claims of men who risked their lives in their country's cause. According to the statements of a society formed to secure employment for discharged soldiers such inference against the patriotism of British employers was not well founded.

This society states that employers show a preference for men who have served in the army, if only they know something about some trade. It states that its books prove that there is no lack of work for men who have even rudimentary training in some occupation calling for more

but there is a very good practical reason why he should not; he will lose his job.

It follows, therefore, that a branch of education so important that a man is judged by all the world as illiterate if he neglects it, should not be neglected in the schools. Our public schools and colleges are not Shakespeare factories. They are for the education of average people.—Washington Times.

The Use of Both Hands.

MUCH of the mechanical work that is now done with the right hand could be done as well with the left hand, if that member were sufficiently trained, and the division of labor thus made possible would not only result in more efficient work, but in an increased quantity of it. It is, of course, very evident that when both hands are equally dexterous, they may be used alternately, and the worker never need stop for rest; for as soon as one hand gets tired he can use the other.

Just why one employs the right arm in so many things in preference to the left is a question which has not yet received a conclusive answer. The more commonly accepted idea is that the habit is directly due to the fact that a mother invariably carries a child on her left arm, so that she, the carrier, may have the free use of her right arm. Then, again, there are those who say the physiological construction of the nerves and veins that enter the right arm is different to that of those which enter the left one, the nerves and veins of the right arm being more prominent. But, despite the fact that an examination of the left arm of a left-handed person reveals the fact that his left arm contains more prominent veins and nerves than his right, it is, nevertheless, impossible to say whether the phenomenon noticed is the effect of the habit or the habit the effect of the phenomenon.

Even a slight accident to the right hand incapacitates one nowadays from all manner of work, whereas, if the use of the left hand were cultivated as it should be, such misfortunes would lose much of their terror.—St. James' Budget.

Vast Increase of Wealth.

THE increase of wealth within the past twenty-five years, in this country, has been enormous. By this statement we mean that the country is richer in everything that makes a country rich, but also and chiefly that there are now multitudes of very rich men where a quarter of a century ago there were only a few. Fifty years ago it was easy to name the individuals who had an income of fifty thousand dollars a year. Such an income implied productive property of more than a million. The American style is the most extravagant in the world. It demands the best everywhere, and usually gets it, and pays the highest prices for it. * * * Are we then a nation of spendthrifts, the rich people setting the pace and the rest following as fast and as far as they can? We do not think so. We are called money worshippers by some; and reckless prodigals by others. Neither charge is correct. There is a new scale of wealth, and there are many more people who have large possessions than ever before in our history. But there is as large a proportion of sensible and thrifty persons in the country as ever. There are fewer reckless spendthrifts, and more rich men who are bestowing vast sums of money in philanthropic and charitable works. The wealth which is gathered is not hoarded. Much of it is distributed throughout the community, and a larger proportion than in former times is given away in charity and philanthropy. There is also self-denial and less saving, the severer virtues have been sent to the background, and charity and friendliness and hospitality are displayed and advertised. The good things which multi-millionaires are doing with their gold are published far and wide, and "the woman with two nines" has little chance of commendation in comparison with them. What the end will be it is impossible to predict. It is evident now that the rich are getting richer, that the cost of everything which rich people use and demand is growing greater every day, and that competition has stretched beyond business, and entered social and even church life, in ways that are offensive to good breeding and menacing to pure religion. Unless along with the new scale of living and personal expenditure comes a new standard of benevolence and self-sacrifice, we shall only repeat in this republic the experience of other ages, and reap an evil and painful harvest. Great wealth without mercy, charity and self-devotion is not a blessing but a curse.—New York Observer.

THE EMPEROR AND THE LITTLE BOY.

The Emperor Francis Joseph was leaving the Church of St. Antonio the other day after attending the ceremony of consecration, when a lad dressed as a baker's apprentice pushed his way through the crowd, evaded the swarms of detectives and ran right up to the emperor's carriage, which was already in motion. He held up a letter which he wanted to hand to the emperor, and Francis Joseph had the carriage stopped to take the missive. It ran as follows: "Dear Mr. Emperor: My mother has been very ill for many years and no hospital will admit her because she is incurable. I can earn enough for myself, but I cannot earn enough to give my sick mother the things she needs. I beg you, dear Mr. Emperor, to order that she shall be admitted to some hospital." Two hours later (says the Vienna correspondent of the Morning Leader) an ambulance arrived before the lad's house and conveyed his mother to a charitable institution, where she can end her days in peace.—Leslie's Weekly.

Don't have such a good time on your skates that you fail to watch for cracks in the ice.

WORLD'S A-GOIN' RIGHT.

Some people are a-growin' an' a-howlin' day an' night. An' a-rattin' an' a-rallin' 'cause the world ain't goin' right. They are weepin' 'o'er its sorrows an' they keep its woes in view, An' they never note the sweetness o' the roses droppin' dew.

Some people in their frettin' are forgettin' blessings rare, They fail to breathe the fragrance that is floatin' on the air. They keep the thorn an' thistle an' the nettles eye in view. They pass the bluish' roses in their haste to pluck the rue.

This world may have its fallin's, but there's good enough for all, An' we may choose the sweetness or bitterness an' gall. An' if we seek the shadows, an' if we shun the light, 'Tis we, an' not the world, friends, that ain't a-goin' right.

—Los Angeles Herald.

Won by Loyalty.

AT that time I was engaged (and very pleased to be) to a most enigmatical young person. She spoke rarely and in a way always a little mysteriously, making voluntary secrets of a hundred little actions of life, and loving solitude in an alarming manner.

All this was off-set by eyes so beautiful, by a coloring so marvellous, by an expression so divine, that I had not the courage to reflect on the singularity of her character. I loved her, and I often passed hours of the night sitting before her doorstep, simply dreaming "that she lived here," and meditating on her presence as does the believer on the transubstantiation.

I did not know, in the first place, whether she loved me or not; she always refused to answer that question, referring to the wishes of her parents and her confidence in their wisdom. If I insisted, she generally ended by saying "that she knew nothing about it, but that she felt no antipathy toward me, and that, according to her ideas, was enough to decide a young girl on marriage?" In vain I supplicated, in vain I tried to attain this enigmatical being; she remained as distant as the manner in which she loved, as unknown as she was dominating.

One evening as I was dreaming a little sadly of these things a commotion was heard in the house. I returned to the salon, where everything was in disorder, my hosts were distressed, their friends embarrassed and troubled, and old Mme. Laroche horribly pale and trembling.

"What in the world has happened?"

I asked. They explained incoherently that Mme. Laroche's diamonds were stolen—old family diamonds of great value. All the servants had been summoned into an adjoining room—in short, a formal search was to be instituted. An old gentleman, M. Coppe, had been unanimously selected to direct this investigation just as I was entering, and his first proposition was that everyone should submit, or, rather, offer himself to be searched. Although the thing was rather offensive, no one protested, and it was decided that, after the servants, each person present should be examined.

To tell the truth, all this seemed of small importance beside my personal cares; and, with several others, I awaited the end of the adventure, while M. Coppe, his two witnesses and our host, began the inspection of the domestics.

Very soon I fell again into my meditation, my eyes fixed on the fireplace as though there were a fire, when suddenly I felt a light touch on my elbow. I raised my head with a start, to see my fiancée looking at me most beseechingly. We were alone near the fireside and could talk in low tones without being overheard. She murmured very low:

"If you love me, arrange that they search you first; then try to be near me, and, without being seen, try to conceal the object that I shall pass you from behind."

My blood ran cold. This annoying incident became terrible, filling me with the most passionate trouble. I looked at the girl in agony, but forced myself to smile, and whispered:

"It shall be as you wish!"

My knees trembled, my mouth was hot and dry. The feeling that overwhelmed me was indescribable. It was a strange mingling of bitterness and pleasure, that my loved-one should be weak to such a degree. I forced myself to have a sort of disdainful pity, and in reality love beat ardent, strong, stern in my breast. I understood, in a flash, how beauty could become divine above baseness of soul, and how one could respect it even in dishonor—and a hundred other things in which were confused fervent love, devotion without limit, a desire noble and perverse.

Jeanne had thanked me with hardly perceptible movement of the lips; she stood by the wall with an air of indifference and pride!

"They are very long about it," she said sternly. "M. Coppe is a man of method," someone replied. And a silence followed which told more and more one's nerves, for even the waiting in a peaceful frame of mind finished by disturbing and emptying the brain, like a pump. However, the moment arrived when the searching of the servants ended, the door opened,

disclosing our host, the two witnesses, and the old gentleman.

My heart beat furiously. I felt myself become terribly pale, but, concealing my agitation and steadying my voice, I asked to be searched first.

M. Coppe smiled at what he considered the whim of a young man, and proceeded methodically to my examination. I blushed, I became pale, without anyone finding that peculiar under the circumstances. When it was over I made two or three steps backward and found myself near Jeanne. She lowered her fan and handed me something with a coolness that was only equalled by my calmness in seizing the object and placing it in a pocket of my coat. After which I leant against the fireplace, being now merely a witness and above all suspicious.

M. Coppe's search was unproductive of results. There remained nothing to do but to visit all the rooms and then inform the police.

Still my trouble of mind increased as I remained standing by the fireplace. My brain was in a whirl, and I felt the crime weigh on me as though I were indeed the thief.

Jeanne at last came toward me, with that undulating step of hers, and gave me a look of such passionate gratitude that it almost seemed to scorch me. Then in an imperative tone she said: "Do you still love me?"

I did not hesitate. I replied firmly: "Yes."

"In spite of all that I have done?"

"In spite of everything."

"Will you marry me?"

"I will marry you."

She enveloped me with the same look, still warmer and more lingering. I fully comprehended the power of woman, above all law, human or natural, drawn from the fountain head and against which nothing ought to prevail.

I felt strangely happy in this equivocal adventure, and I could not throw off this happiness for which I reproached myself and of which I was terribly ashamed.

As I was struggling with these conflicting emotions, exclamations were heard and I saw M. Coppe reappear holding a little box.

"We have the jewels and the guilty one!" he said very calmly.

I had only time to hear this much and to see the livid face of the guilty one—when I found that Jeanne was gently urging me out on the terrace where the shadows lay thickly. There I felt my head seized with two hands, while two pure lips were pressed to mine, as Jeanne murmured:

"The thief adores you! She has tricked you! To test your love she gave you her own jewel box!"—New York News.

Hearing of the Thrush.

The hearing of the common thrush is marvellously acute. It can hear a worm moving underground, locate the prey by the noise, and haul it out.

It is said that the Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, but this does not cut any ice.

Misfortunes usually come in pairs, but the first one came in an apple.