

# THE SIMPLE PLEASURE

BY REV. CHARLES WAGNER

## CHAPTER VII. THE SIMPLE PLEASURE.

DO YOU find these times amusements? I find them rather more sad, myself.

I fear that my impression may be altogether personal. To see my contemporaries live, to hear them talk, I feel myself uncharitably confirmed in the sentiment that they do not amuse themselves very much. It is not, however, the fault of not having tried, but it must be admitted that they have had but a mediocre success. Now, how does it happen?

Some accuse politics, or business; others the social questions, or militarism. One has but an embarrassment of choice when one begins to tell the story of our great care. Go then after-ward and amuse yourself. There is too much power in our soup, for us to eat it with pleasure. We have our arms full of stuff of all sorts, any one of which would suffice to spoil our humor. From morning to night you will meet people in a hurry, worried and preoccupied. These have left all their good blood in the vicious conflicts of a noxious political movement. Those men have lost heart from the vile proceedings, the jealousies they have met with in the world of literature and art. Commercial oppositions also trouble many slumbers, programmes of too exacting studies and the careers too encumbered spoil the life of the young man; the working class suffers the consequences of an industrial struggle without intermission. It becomes disagreeable to command because the prestige is gone; to teach, because respect has diminished; wherever one looks there are subjects for anxiety. And yet history represents certain troubled epochs which lacked in idyllic tranquillity as much as ours and the gravest events did not hinder from knowing gaiety. It seems even that the gravity of the times, the insecurity of the morrow and the violence of the social commotion become the occasion of a new species of vitality. It is not rare to see soldiers sing between two battles, and I do not think I deceive myself in saying that human joy has celebrated some of its grandest triumphs in the hardest times, and in the midst of obstacles. But, to sleep peacefully before the battle or to sing in the whirlwind, they had motives of interest, order which today perhaps have not got. Joy is not in objects, it is in us. And I peral in believing that the causes of our present discomfort, of that contagious bad humor which invades us in at least as much as in external circumstances.

To amuse oneself with a free heart one must feel himself on a solid base; he must believe in life and possess it in himself. Many men, also, even among the young ones, are today disgruntled with life, and I do not speak of the philosophers only. How can you expect them to amuse themselves when they are hidden behind a thought that it had perhaps been better, after all, that nothing had ever existed? We observe, aside from that, in the vital forces of all parasites, a kind of depression which we must attribute to the abuse that man has made of his sensations. Too many excesses of all kinds have warped our senses and altered our faculty for being happy. Nature, with its cumbrous beneath the eccentricities with which they have afflicted her. Profoundly stricken in its very roots, the will to live in spite of all parasites, seeks to satisfy itself by fictitious means. In the medical domain they have recourse to artificial respiration, to artificial alimentation and to general anesthesia. In the domain of the soul, they have a multitude of beings bustling to awaken it and to reanimate it. The most ingenious means have been invented; it will not be said that they have been directed to trying the expenses. Everything has been tried—the possible and the impossible. But in all these complicated ailments they have never been able to find a cure, a drop of real joy. We must not confound pleasure and instruments of pleasure. Would it be enough to provide oneself with a brush to be a painter, or to buy at great cost a Stradivarius to be a musician? Even if you had external objects of the most perfect kind, and the most ingenious, for your amusement, you would be no farther advanced. But, with a simple and healthy life, authentic pleasure is its accompaniment, like the perfume of natural flowers. This life may have been difficult, shackled, deprived of what we generally consider as the very conditions of pleasure, but one sees flourish there that rare and delicate plant—joy. It pierces between two paving stones, a vine in a wall, or a flower in a rock. One asks oneself how or from whence it came. But it lives, while in the warm conservatories, with enriched soil, you cultivate it with all the means in your power to see it wither and die in your own hands.

Ask the actors of the theater what public amuses itself the most, with comedy, and they will tell you the same of people. The reason is not difficult to understand. For that class, comedy is an exception. It is not saturated with it by having too much of it. And it is, besides, a rest from its rude fatigues. The pleasure it finds in it has been honestly earned, and it knows the price of the little pennies earned by the sweat of the brow, and, moreover, it has not mingled with the intrigues of the artists; it does not know any of the illusions, and believes in it all. By all these means it enjoys an unmitigated pleasure. I see the same skeptic from here, with his eyes gleaming in that box, throwing a disdainful look at the laughing crowd: "Poor people, idiots, ignorant and clownish."

And yet it is they who are the really living beings, while he is an artificial being, a marionette, incapable of feeling the fine and beautiful intoxication of an hour of frank pleasure. Unfortunately, the unaffected artlessness is disappearing even from the popular places. Who sees the genuine, the peasant's attire, drink their native drinks, and seemed to completely enjoy themselves. They amused themselves like the blacksmith at his forge, as the cascade falls, as the coals burn in the meadow. It is contagious, and wins your heart. In spite of oneself one says:

"Bravo! children; that is just right. We would ask to be of the party."

On the other hand, I see villagers disguised in "citizens"; peasants rendered ugly by the dressmakers, and as a principal ornament of the festival a gathering of degenerates, who have concert-hall songs; and, sometimes, holding the place of honor, a few strolling actors of the tenth class come for the occasion, to smooth off the rougher points of these rural, and to permit them to taste of refined pleasures. For drinks, liquors based on alcohol made from potatoes, or absinthe. There is no originality or piqueness in all of it. Of gay abandon, perhaps, and vulgar, but not that absentminded which brings innocent pleasure.

This question of pleasure is a capital one. The most sedate persons neglect it in general as a futility, the utilitarians as a costly superfluity. These whom we designate men of pleasure lay waste so delicate a domain, like wild hogs in a garden. They do not seem to understand in the least degree the immense human interest which is attached to joy. It is a sacred flame which must be nourished, and which throws a dazzling light over life. He who determines to entertain it accomplishes a work as profitable to humanity as he who builds bridges, pierces tunnels, or cultivates the ground, to conduct oneself in such a way, that one maintains in himself, in the midst of his labors and the troubles of life, the faculty of being happy and of enjoying life in all its phases. The contagion of pleasure is contagious among his fellow-beings, to do a work of solidarity in the noblest signification of the term. To give a little pleasure, to smooth the careworn brow, throw a little light on dark paths, what a divine reality in the plan of this poor humanity. But, it is only by a great simplicity of heart that one can succeed in filling it.

We are not simple enough to be happy and to make others so. We lack kindness and self-forgetfulness. We spread joy as we spread consolation, by such processes as give but negative results. To console someone who is in pain, we take it upon us to deny his sufferings, to dispute them, and in persuading him that he is mistaken in believing himself unfortunate. At bottom, our language translated in truthful words, would be reduced to this: "You suffer, friend? That is strange; you must be mistaken, for I do not feel anything."

The only human means of solace to a suffering being is to partake of it in one's heart. What must an unhappy man feel consoled after this fashion. To divert our neighbor, and cause him to pass an agreeable moment, we take it to ourselves in the same way. We invite him to admire our wit, to laugh at our jokes, to frequent our house, to sit at our table, and everywhere glorify our desire to show off, remaining ignorant of the protecting liberality, offer him the aims of an amusement of our own choosing. At least let us not invite him to amuse himself with us, as we invite one to a game of cards, with the intention of exploiting it to our own profit.

Do you think that the greatest pleasure for others is to admire us, to recognize our superiority, or to serve us as an instrument? In these things, a kind of annoyance comparable to that of feeling that we have been exploited, protected or enrolled in a clique? To give pleasure to others, and to have it oneself, we must be able to give it to others, which is so beautiful, and to hold it enclosed during all these diversions. There is no greater joy than that. Be good fellows, amiable, enervated, hide our medals, our decorations, our titles, and put ourselves at the disposal of others with all our hearts. Let us live sometimes to make others smile, even if for an hour, forgetting all things else. The sacrifice is so apparent; for no one amuses himself better than those who know how to give themselves simply to procure a little happiness and forgiveness for those around them. When shall we be simple enough men

not to cease to be put forward to the first ranks in our reunions, all those things that ram on our nerves in every-day life? Can we not forget for one hour our pretensions, our divisions, our classifications, our persons; in short, to become children again, and laugh again with that hearty laughter which does so much good and makes men better?

I feel obliged here to make a remark of a particular kind, and to offer to my well-intentioned readers the occasions to harness themselves to a magnificent work. My object is to recommend to their attention several categories of people too much neglected from the point of view of pleasure. We think that a broom can only sweep, a watering-pot water the plants, a coffee-mill grind the coffee, and in the same way we think a nurse is made only to care for the ailing, a professor to instruct, a priest to preach, a soldier to fight, a sentinel to mount guard. And they decide that these, being delivered to the most serious occupations, are devoted to their functions as the ox to his labor. Diversions are incompatible with this kind of activity. Pushing this manner of seeing further forward, they believe, without knowing it, that the infirm, afflicted, ruined persons conquered by life, and all those who have a heavy burden to bear, are in the shadow, like the northern slopes of the mountains, and that it is necessary that it should be so. From this they conclude generally enough that these sedate men need no pleasure, and that it would be unbecomingly to offer it to them. As to those who are afflicted, it would be a lack of delicacy to break the thread of their sad thoughts. It seems thus to be admitted that certain persons, those whom we must meet them with an austere mien and speak only of austere things to them. And so they must leave smiles outside the door when they go to see the sick, the unhappy ones, and adopt a somber face, a lamentable air and those heart-breaking subjects of conversation. Thus they bring darkness to those who are in the black, shadow of those who are in the shade. They contribute to the isolation of the isolated, monotony to mournful lives. They ensure certain existences as in a dungeon because they grow sad around their desert asylums; they speak low when they approach them as though approaching a tomb. Who can guess the extent of the infernal work of depression which they accomplish thus daily in the world? It should not be thus.

When you see the men or women concentrated to severe tasks, or the painful office of visiting human misery, and binding wounds, remember that these beings are made like you, that they have the same needs, and that there are hours when they require pleasure and forgetfulness. You will not win them away from their mission by making them laugh sometimes—they who see so many tears and pains. On the contrary, you will give them new strength to better continue in their labors.

And when you know families in distress, or individuals in affliction, do not surround them like those with the plague, with a sanitary cordon, which you will cross only after taking precaution which recalls to them their unhappy lot. On the contrary, after having shown all your sympathy and all your respect for their suffering, comfort them, and do them to live, bring them a perfume from outside; something, in short, to show them that their misery has not excluded them from the world.

Offer your sympathy, also, to all who have absorbing occupations, and who are, so to speak, riveted to their places. The world is filled with sacrificed beings, who have never any rest or pleasure, and to whom the most modest respite does them an immense good. And it would be so easy to secure this minimum of alleviation for them if we only thought of it. But the broom is made to sweep with, and it seems that it cannot feel fatigue. We must get rid of that culpable blindness which hinders us from seeing the hap-

py of those who are always in the center. Let us not lose sight in their duty, procure an hour for Sisyphus to breathe in. Take, for a moment, the place of the mother of a family whom the cares of the home and children enervate, sacrifice a bit of your sleep to those who watch long hours by the bedside of the sick. Young girl, whom perhaps walking abroad does not always amuse, sacrifice a bit of your sleep to her the "key to the fields." Thus you will make others happy and be so yourself.

We walk forever by the side of beings loaded with burdens that we could take upon ourselves, even if only a little while. But this short respite would suffice to cure the evil, revive the joy almost stifled in many hearts, and open a large career to good will among men. How much better we should understand each other if we only knew how to put ourselves with a single heart in each other's place, and how much more pleasure we should find in living.

I have said too much elsewhere\* of the organization of pleasure among the young to return to it here in detail. But I am anxious to say in substance that which we cannot repeat often enough: If you wish that youth be moral, do not neglect its pleasures, and do not abandon the care of procuring them to hazard. You will, perhaps, reply that youth does not like to have its amusements governed by rule, and that in these days youth is spoiled by the amusements of the past. I will answer you, first, that we can suggest ideas, indicate directions, create occasions, are viewed to the extent of the care of procuring them to hazard. You will, perhaps, reply that youth does not like to have its amusements governed by rule, and that in these days youth is spoiled by the amusements of the past. I will answer you, first, that we can suggest ideas, indicate directions, create occasions, are viewed to the extent of the care of procuring them to hazard. You will, perhaps, reply that youth does not like to have its amusements governed by rule, and that in these days youth is spoiled by the amusements of the past. I will answer you, first, that we can suggest ideas, indicate directions, create occasions, are viewed to the extent of the care of procuring them to hazard.

In the youth of today, particularly among those who respect themselves, the lack of pleasure conditions them without their knowing it. We are not weaned without some inconvenience from this generous wine. It is impossible to prolong this state of things without depressing the shadow of death in the eyes of our young generations. We must come to their aid. Our children are the heirs of a world that is not gay. We give them the legacy of great care, embarrassing questions, a life loaded with shackles and complications. Let us at least make an effort to lighten the morning of their days. Let us organize pleasure, create shelters and open our hearts and our homes. Put the family into your game. Let gay cease to be an imported commodity. Reunite our sons whom our embarking in some practice gained in the streets, and our girls who grow weary of solitude. Let us multiply family gatherings, receptions and family excursions. Lift good humor among us to the heights of an institution. Let the school take its part. Let the masters and scholars, or students, meet oftener and amuse themselves together. That would advance serious work. There is nothing like having a good laugh with one's professor; and, reciprocally, to understand a student or scholar well, he must have been elsewhere than on the benches or the examination chair.

And who will furnish the money? What a question! That is indeed the central error. Pleasure and money—let us take those two the two wings of the same bird. And the bird is in the air! Pleasure, like all really precious things in this world, cannot be bought or sold. To amuse oneself one must pay with manners; that is the essential. You are not forbidden to open your purse if you can do it, and if you find it useful. But, I assure you, it is not indispensable. Pleasure and simplicity are two old acquaintances. Be content simply, reunite yourselves simply. Having worked hard first, be as amiable, as loyal as possible to your companions, and speak no evil of the absent; success will be certain.

\*In a book called "Youth," (Copyright, 1904, by the J. R. Ogilvie Publishing Company, and printed by arrangement with them.)

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# Cuticura for Skin-Tortured Babies



And Rest for Tired Mothers In Warm Baths with Cuticura Soap

And gentle anointings with CUTICURA Ointment, purest of emollients and greatest of skin cures. This is the purest, sweetest, most speedy, permanent, and economical treatment for torturing, disfiguring, itching, burning, bleeding, scaly, crusted, and pimply skin and scalp humors, rashes, irritations, and chafings, with loss of hair, of infants and children, and is sure to succeed when all other remedies fail.

Use CUTICURA SOAP, assisted by Cuticura Ointment, for preserving, purifying, and beautifying the skin, for cleansing the scalp of crusts, scales, and dandruff, and the stopping of falling hair, for softening, whitening, and soothing red, rough, and sore hands, for baby rashes, itchings, and chafings, in the form of baths for annoying irritations and inflammations, or too free or offensive perspiration, in the form of washes for ulcerative weaknesses, and many sanative, antiseptic purposes which readily suggest themselves to women and mothers, and for all the purposes of the toilet, bath, and nursery.

former articles, should be made first of pine, so that its construction will be understood from some practice gained in the use of the bow saw and cabinet file, before making it of quartered oak. As magnitudes are about seven inches wide, the rack may be made 27 inches or 28 inches over the two sides, or even longer if desired. Having decided on the length of the rack, a "stock list," or list of the pieces required, should be written out. This will prevent many mistakes and enable the worker to use greater economy in laying out and in cutting up his lumber. The projection of the front and back strips over the two sides, as shown in Fig. 65, is one-quarter inch, and the thickness of the sides and of the shelf is one-half inch. If the rack is to be 29 inches long inside, the stock list will read as follows—all sizes being in feet, and always in inches.

- 2 pieces 2x3x16 1/2—sides.
1 piece 2x3x16 1/2—shelf.
2 pieces 3/4x1 1/2x16 1/2—strips for back.
2 pieces 3/4x1 1/2x15 1/2 or 3/4—front strips.

When marking off the above pieces on the board, the following directions should be followed: Sawn and sawed, mark each piece one-quarter inch wider and one inch longer than the above sizes. This is the extra allowance for sawing and for planing the pieces. However well the lumber may have been planed by machine in the planing mill, it must be replaced by hand to remove the marks of the revolving cutters of the planer.

Having sawed out the nine pieces necessary for this rack, with a plane dress each piece to the size given in the stock list, then cut off each piece to the net length, and plane and smooth the ends of the pieces. Should any surface be cross-grained and rough, it must be scraped smooth.

The two sides must next be laid out as shown at A in Fig. 67. In this design we have purposely made all the curves of circular-arc, and, as all distances of centers and lengths of radii are given, the pattern, if studied carefully, can be easily reproduced full size. If a hand bow saw (Fig. 36) is used each piece must be marked out and saved separately, but if a scroll saw, such as shown in Fig. 25, is used, the two pieces can be taken together and both sawed as a single piece. Always nail in the outside wood, which will be cut away, and thus avoid marring the pieces with nail holes.

# TRAVELER'S GUIDE. OREGON SHORT LINE AND UNION PACIFIC 3 TRAINS TO THE EAST DAILY

Table with columns: UNION DEPT., Leaves, Arrives. Lists train schedules for various routes including Chicago-Portland, Sacramento, and Astoria.

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# EAST VIA SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY

Table with columns: Leaves, UNION DEPT., Arrives. Lists train schedules for routes to Sacramento, San Francisco, and other destinations.

THE DERMA-ROYALE CO., Cincinnati, O. Advertisement for skin care products, including Derma-Royale and Sunbright California Baby Food.

# TRAVELER'S GUIDE. COLUMBIA RIVER SCENERY PORTLAND TO THE DALLES

Table with columns: Leaves, UNION DEPT., Arrives. Lists train schedules for routes to Astoria, River Railroad Co., and other destinations.

THE GREAT NORTHERN. Advertisement for train services, including City Ticket Office and Overland Trains Daily.