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Correspondents writing over assumed signatures must make known their names to the Editor, or no attention will be given to their communications.

NO STORY THIS WEEK.

We regret to announce that Chapter VII. of "Edna and John" did not come to hand this week. We cannot understand the cause of the delay, as a letter from Mrs. Dunway, under date of November 8, states that she started the story at the same time. All we can do is to ask our readers to wait and have patience.

DRIVEN TO DEATH.

BY H. E. C.

Benjamin Duncan had at last retired from the bakery business in favor of his only son, Benjamin Duncan, Jr., a step he had long contemplated; but the youthful Benjamin had previously manifested matrimonial tendencies so startlingly peculiar to the steady-going, old-fashioned notions of his respected parents, that it had induced the old man to retain, under his own supervision, the long-established and well-known bakery until such signs of a change in his son's affections had become sufficiently apparent to deem his retirement prudent. Several generations of Duncans had dispensed the staff of life, not to mention other sundries, from these same portals wherein the youthful Benjamin was established.

Benjamin Duncan, Sr., from the hoards of his progenitors and his own hard labor, had amassed a considerable fortune, and as young Ben was his sole descendant, it was an understood thing that he would inherit all; consequently, the youth considered himself a very important member of society, and was looked upon as such by all his acquaintances. Ben was a jolly, good-natured country lad, up to all the "larks" the village offered, with a vast idea of his own experience, although he had never wandered beyond the limits of his native village.

But to come to Ben's love affair—the affair which had nearly proved fatal to his prospects in the bakery business. The youth had actually fallen in love with—of all beings in the world—a circus rider!—a girl who jumped through hoops and rode a horse bare-back round the circus ring!

No wonder the pious old Methodist baker and his wife, who had never attended anything more enlightening than a prayer meeting, were appalled and horror-stricken. They looked upon the circus as an institution of the Evil One—all actors therein his minions.

Ben's juvenile feet had never crossed such a profane threshold at any time when a circus company had visited his native village, and as this little village was far from any great metropolis, the advent of a circus was a rarity. Ben had but a faint recollection of the last which had appeared in the village in his boyhood. He dimly remembered the gorgeous pageant which passed through the streets with enlivening music, and his own piteous screams and entreaties to his inexorable parents who had kept guard over him lest his feet should find their way to the "tents of wickedness." But about a year previous to the retirement of B. Duncan, Sr., from the bakery, a circus company had again pitched their tents in the remote little village, preceded, as usual, by flaming hand-bills, announcing, in gorgeous red letters, marvelous wonders to be seen at "The Great World Renowned Circus," etc. Ben, with all the rest of the village youths, stared with wild excitement at the alluring advertisements, well knowing his parents' objections, but thinking himself perfectly capable of judging for himself now. He wisely kept silence while his parents piously groaned over the prospect of such an arrival to disturb the quiet of their little village.

On the eventful day, Ben left the parental roof, with its odor of sanctity and hot bread, and made directly for that "institution of the Evil One," namely, the gaily decorated tents of the circus. He entered. Never in all his simple imagination had he dreamed of such splendor! The tinsel and gold, the tawdry display, everything, seemed genuine magnificence to him; the music, the feats of horsemanship, all quite took poor country Ben's breath away; but to cap the climax and crown his day with bliss untold, there rode into the ring at last a pretty little blonde in fairy-like costume (if so small an amount of vesture might be called a costume) of gossamer-like material, with silver stars and fringes, standing in white satin slippers on a milk-white steed! Ben watched her spell-bound and with bated breath, as the novelists say, as she floated lightly through the uplifted hoops as the horse went round the ring in full career; descending, she danced on one foot and went through other wonderful performances. Ben could scarcely believe the bewitching creature to be real flesh and blood. He left the tent when the performance was ended in a maze of bewildering excitement. He could not tear himself from the place which contained the fairy-like being who had so entranced him; he lingered about the tents in everyone's way; was pushed about and sworn at by the men of the company, but was heedless of all, heedless even of his supper (for the first time in his life); he still clung to the spot until his watchings were rewarded, for after the gossamer and silver fairy had divested herself of

her ethereal vestments and had most humanly partaken of a substantial supper, she strolled outside the tent and along the green enclosure. She had not gone far when she met her rustic admirer. Ben recognized her in an instant, although clad in habiliments suitable to this mundane sphere, and not looking quite the child she had appeared before, but a really pretty girl of about sixteen years of age, and not at all resembling the scraggy, painted individuals who accompany these institutions as a rule.

When our hero saw her his heart took a sudden mighty stride into his throat, and when she approached and spoke to him, he felt as if he should choke to death with delight!

Ben's angel's salutation was in this wise: "Good gracious, Ben Duncan! what are you staring at?"

Though startled by her familiarity, which, though unexpected and decidedly brusque, was not coarse, and the light laugh which accompanied the words was musical and like a child's merriment, Ben's gallantry did not forsake him as he replied, ardently: "At you, most beautiful angel!"

This was a most novel beginning, but Mlle. Angela De Leon, which was her high-sounding title on the play-bills, laughed again merrily and said:

"I know you liked me; I saw you admiring my performance this afternoon." "Did you?" said Ben, eagerly; "but how did you know my name?"

"Oh, some of our fellows went to buy some supper at your father's bakery and they saw and heard all about you." "Did they?" responded Ben. "Well, there wasn't much to hear, was there?"

"Yes; I heard your father was very rich, and you are to have it all." Ben laughed. "Yes, and my father is going to give up the business to me," he added, confidentially, "and then—"

"What, the bakery?" interrupted the angel. "Isn't that awfully slow kind of living?"

"No, indeed," said Ben; "there is a kind of excitement about it at times." "Excitement about a bakery!" laughed the angel. "Impossible! If you call that exciting, what do you think of my life? Such wild riding and jumping and dancing! Oh, it is glorious! I wish you could try it!"

"I wish you would try mine!" said Ben, with a tender glance and persuasive accent which made the angel laugh again. Soon, however, they became very confidential, and the angel told Ben much of her past history; how her parents had belonged to a circus company, and she had always lived among these people, and been taught to ride, etc.; but sometimes, she confessed, she felt tired of this roving life and would like to settle down quietly; and then she gave Ben a tender and sly glance, which he returned with an ardent one, and in his turn told her he was a lonely bachelor, and sighed for some one to love him, etc.; and then more tender glances were exchanged, and shortly after Ben proposed a walk, and she consenting, Ben walked her past the bakery, but he did not invite her to enter. Fancy his parents' wrath should their saintly portals be desecrated by the feet of Mlle. Angela De Leon! Ben asked his angel's opinion of his home, and that young lady expressed herself highly delighted with the outside, and intimated that the inside might be even better; but poor Ben dared not take the bait. They returned to the circus barely in time for the evening performance, which put Mlle. Angela in a state of fluttering trepidation. Of course Ben went in again, and again watched her as she reappeared in her gossamer drapery, and was even more completely bewitched than before.

Again he lingered after the performance, and she rewarded him a second time with a *tele-a-tete*. Ben told her how his heart had been in his throat between pleasure and fear as she flew through the air, and, in fact, he added, it had left him altogether and she alone possessed it!

Mlle. Angela received the declaration with equanimity, remarked that it was rather sudden, but that she, too, had experienced as sudden and spontaneous an affection for him, and, although she was not yet quite prepared to relinquish her present occupation, whenever that time should arrive, when she would be willing to do so, no man would suit her as well as Ben Duncan, Jr., and she spoke she thought of Ben Duncan, Sr.'s, bank account; nor was she at all displeased with the honest, good-looking youth beside her, whose love was genuine, notwithstanding his sudden inspiration.

Before they parted, Ben had promised to make his appearance at another performance the following day given at an adjoining village, which promise he kept, and then his gossamer fairy floated away from his path of life and left him disconsolate.

A year had passed, and Ben had heard nothing from his angel, yet her memory was still fresh in his heart. The village maidens thought him singularly dull and uninteresting of late, but none suspected Ben's secret love.

When our hero's respected parents, through the medium of some kind, disinterested neighbors, heard that he had been to the circus, actually entered the

tents of ungodliness, not only twice in one day, but had gone the following day to attend two more performances in the next town, they were appalled at the enormity of his crime; but when Ben not only confessed his guilt, but gratefully offered the information that he not only loved but was loved by "The Great Equestrian Female Performer, Mlle. Angela De Leon," and that when she was ready to renounce her present occupation, he intended to make her his wife, the horror, the grief, the despair of his worthy parents knew no bounds. His mother with clasped hands and streaming eyes entreated him to spare them this disgrace. His father, in nearly as frantic a state, wondered why such pious parents were afflicted with so perverse and God-forsaken a son. They prayed, employed, and threatened Ben by every argument in their power to forsake his angel, but in vain. He held to his faith stoutly and said, "If they chose to disinherit him, he would turn circus rider himself!"

Whereupon his mother fainted, and his father went to seek counsel of the good old Methodist divine, who wisely told them not to turn a drift their only son, but to pray for the prodigal, which advice old Duncan consented to take, but commanded Ben never to mention in their presence the unworthy object of his affections, nor to let any one hear of it, for they would die of mortification if the villagers should become aware of his folly.

But because Ben was silenced, he only dreamed the more of his angel. However, after a few weeks' despair, at the separation and the silence of his beloved, he regained his spirits, and to all outward appearances seemed to have forgotten her. So the time passed on, and the old people congratulated themselves that in reality Ben had forgotten her, and Duncan, Sr., with many words of good advice and blessings for his son's future prosperity, resigned the bakery to his hopeful.

Old Duncan dared not so much as mention Ben's disgraceful love affair to that youth to warn him against it, fearing the mere mention would revive, it might be, forgotten memories. And Ben was therefore formally installed as his own master, did a famous business, drove a fast horse, and was quite a "swell" in the little village. The village belles were lavish of their smiles and glances whenever Ben appeared among them, but he was impervious to all.

Affairs were thus progressing most flourishingly, when one day, as old Duncan was walking down the village street, he descried a man standing before a tempting high board fence, with pail of paste and brush in hand, affixing upon the aforesaid fence a flaming circus advertisement! Poor old Duncan! Petrified he stood, betwixt fears for Ben and disgust at the whole affair. But soon, as well as his trembling legs would allow, he hurried home and poured into the ears of his confiding spouse the tale of woe! However, events must take their course. The circus company naturally would not forsake the village on Ben's account, and Ben could no longer be controlled, and so it came to pass that on the eventful day the tents were pitched on the same old grounds, and it proved itself to be the veritable company of the previous year.

Ben was among the first to welcome the troupe back to the village. Mlle. Angela was nowhere to be seen before the hour of the performance; but when the gay strains of music struck the ear, in due course of time Ben's gossamer angel again appeared and floated, with the same angelic grace, through hoops and over bars, to the intense delight of her adorer, who could with difficulty restrain his inclination to rush from his seat and clasp her in his arms as she floated along. However, he managed to control his ecstasies until the close of the performance, when a most affecting meeting took place between the lovers, the angel assuring Ben he had never been forgotten, and he, in turn, informing her of his improved condition, and begging her now to share the profits of the bakery with him.

Mlle. Angela replied that her circus life was drawing to a close, as she was about to enter upon an engagement to drive a chariot in the races at the famous Hippodrome in the city of New York.

Poor Ben was miserable, but no persuasion could induce her to relinquish her new engagement. "It will be such fun!" she said, "and it is but a short engagement at best." And at its conclusion she promised to consent to all he wished. Ben was obliged to be content, but made Angela promise to visit his home before she entered upon her new career. Ben knew his parents would almost expire at the idea, but if Angela was to be his wife, they might as well know her first as last and get used to her.

The circus left the village, and the time arrived for Angela's promised visit. Ben had not told his parents of his bride elect's coming, nor his still firmly determined purpose in regard to her; but now the time had come, he could no longer delay, and, although inwardly quaking, yet outwardly bold as a lion, he told them, and in a tone and manner that they saw would brook no dispute, all he had to say.

The feelings of the old people were much the same as they had experienced

the year before, only more so; and when the day dawned which was to bring Mlle. Angela to the house of the Duncans, Ben's mother took to her bed, overcome with grief and indignation, and his father was a most miserable specimen to behold from the same cause.

Ben drove his fast horse to the station to meet his beloved, who was very modestly and prettily attired and eagerly anticipating her visit to Ben's home. The poor fellow was obliged to warn her of no very cheerful reception.

"You see, the old people are queer," he explained, "awfully pious, and all that sort of thing. And they think the circus is—is—well, something very dreadful."

"Then, what do they think of me?" exclaimed the angel, anxiously. "Oh, they'll think you all right when they know you," said Ben, encouragingly.

On arriving, Ben conducted his angel into the presence of *pater familias*, and Angela, although disappointed at what she had just heard from Ben, determined to be friendly, and extended her little hand with a pleasant smile. The old man was at a loss to know how to act. He was surprised at Angela's very youthful, pretty, and modest appearance; yet when he thought of her as "a creature who wore tights and jumped through hoops," his sense of what was proper and becoming was so shocked that he could not endure to notice such a being, much less to take her hand; yet could he be so inhospitable as to say a word to her? It was a trying moment, but he finally compromised matters by pretending not to see the little hand, but bowing low, he said he "had no doubt it was a great pleasure to Ben to have her here!"

Ben asked for his mother. His father informed him, with a melancholy shake of the head, where she had taken herself. Ben swallowed his mortification and anger and devoted himself assiduously to his lady love. Supper was partaken of in absolute silence by all three, old Duncan steadfastly regarding his future daughter-in-law all the time with solemn eye. His conclusion was that she did not look so utterly God-forsaken as he had imagined her, and from a true sense of duty he determined to try to convert her, as from her profession she could, indeed, be nothing less than a heathen. Accordingly, as Ben and Angela were sitting snugly and affectionately together on the sofa in the little parlor after supper, old Duncan entered, and taking a chair and seating himself directly before them, commenced abruptly, looking at Angela:

"Have you ever attended divine service?" The young girl looked up astonished and rather frightened at the solemn aspect of her interlocutor, and replied: "Yes; but not often." "Indeed, I am relieved to hear you have been there," said the old man, with much emphasis and more condescension. "But as the future wife of my son, I feel it my duty to try to bring you to a knowledge of the evil of your life, and to entreat the Lord to change your heart and occupation. Let us pray."

The old man fell upon his knees and in all true sincerity poured forth a long and earnest petition for Mlle. Angela's conversion. Ben and Angela remained sitting, Ben with crimson face and biting his lips angrily, Angela bewildered and thoroughly embarrassed. The old man at length arose, and without further remark, wished them a solemn good-night.

The young girl was really touched with the genuine fervency of the old man's prayer. She and Ben sat for a few minutes silent after he had left the room, and at length Ben spoke in a consolatory and apologetic tone:

"You mustn't mind him, Angela. He don't mean anything. He often prays at me like that. He's a real good fellow, if you only knew him well."

In the meantime Ben's father had gone upstairs and was holding converse with his faithful spouse. The latter had aroused herself with much curiosity, despite her headache and heart-burning, on hearing the approach of the familiar footsteps, eager to know the report her husband had to bring. She was horrified and plunged in deeper distress when she found that a somewhat favorable impression had been made on her worthy partner's mind by his future daughter-in-law.

"Are you, too, going to side with the Evil One?" she groaned. "Oh, you men are all alike, young and old. A pretty face hides all disgrace. A circus woman to be upheld by you, Benjamin, and to think of your position in the church!"

"I do not uphold her profession," meekly remonstrated the old man; "but she certainly did seem impressed with my prayer, and she is a nice, modest little girl, and Ben might perhaps have done worse."

"That is downright vanity, husband," cried Mrs. Duncan, determined not to be run over. "You thought you prayed well, and she must necessarily have been impressed with your flow of language." Thereupon the old man nearly lost his temper, and for the first time in their lives some sharp words were uttered between this faithful old couple. But after the manner of Tennyson's "My

Wife and I," they soon "kissed again with tears," and Ben's maternal ancestor finally submissively and meekly atoned for her display of bitterness by appearing at the breakfast-table the next morning, and with most favorable results. Angela conducted herself with much credit, showed such amiability and evident desire to please, that in spite of herself the old lady could not but be friendly.

Ben was charmed beyond power of expression, and the few days of his angel's visit proved more of a success than all parties had deemed possible beforehand.

Angela and Ben parted in high spirits, and both more in love than ever, and looking forward to the conclusion of the former's engagement at the Hippodrome, at which time they were to be married without further delay.

It was the evening of the last appearance of Mlle. Angela De Leon in the chariot races at the Hippodrome, and Ben, according to a promise given to Angela at their last meeting, now made his first visit to the city to witness his angel's triumphs and last feats in horsemanship. The vast place was thronged to overflowing, its thousand lights flashing, the music inspiring! One brilliant display succeeded another, until the chariots with their fiery steeds dashed into the arena.

In blue and silver Mlle. Angela again appeared, standing in her chariot and firmly grasping the reins in her tiny hands, confident and happy as she glanced up at Ben.

Wild with excitement, the horses dashed with headlong speed along the course, passed and repassed each other, when suddenly there was a crash, a shriek, a groan, a cloud of dust, a rush of grooms and attendants, and then, as the whole of that vast assembly arose to their feet spell-bound and breathless with horror, the bloody and lifeless form of Mlle. Angela De Leon was carried from the scene.

Miss Eva Parker.

The following sketch of this fair daughter of Illinois, whom we remember years ago to have associated with in the traditional "red school-house," in Groveland township, we find in an Eastern exchange: Miss Eva Parker, the daughter of a farmer of Groveland, Taylor county, Ill., the wife of Robert Ingersoll, the great Republican orator, would be considered a rare woman in any age. An affectionate, tender, true-hearted, and loving woman, she transformed the rough, careless, heedless genius into a great-souled, strong-minded, versatile and pure-minded man. Two daughters are the result of this union. Few households equal this in strong but tender affection, manifested simply and naturally, without affectation and without concealment. When he goes on any long journey his family always accompany him. Together they went to Europe, together they made the campaign in Maine and New York. Nor is hers the masculine intellect that partakes of all impressions, and is ever forward because she is ambitious. Dress and society add place and position are things she cares as little for as he. In intellect she does not strive to be his peer, but in all womanly qualities, in devotion to him, in wisely regard, in the domestic calculus, she surpasses him. As women as much as in masculine strength and vigor he surpasses most men, and he repays this affection with a constancy, a care and attention, a delicate deference to her wishes, and a loyal devotion to her, that reveals the ideal lover of the romantic school. There is, however, in all this no sentimentality and no gush.

Good Living and Dyspepsia.

Good living is said to cause dyspepsia; but the most healthy people I have ever known have been among those who lived well—who ate freely several times a day of the most nutritious food. By some it is said that tobacco, snuff, tea, coffee, butter, and even bread, cause this complaint, but whoever will make inquiries on this subject throughout the community, will find that this is seldom true. In fact, dyspepsia prevails, according to my experience, altogether the most among the temperate and careful—among those who are careful as regards what they eat and drink, and the labor they put on the stomach, but exceedingly careless how much labor they put upon the brain. Such people often eat nothing but by the advice of a doctor or some treatise on dyspepsia, or by weight, nor drink anything that is not certainly harmless; they chew every mouthful until they are confident, on mature reflection, that it cannot hurt the stomach.

Why, then, are they dyspeptic? Because, with all their carefulness, they pay no attention to the excitement of the brain. They continue to write two or three sermons or essays every week, besides reading a volume or two, with magazines, reviews, newspapers, etc., and attending to much other business connected with the mind. To me it is not strange that such persons have nervous and stomachic affections. The constant excitement of the brain sends an excess of blood to the head, and, therefore, other organs are weakened, and morbid sensibility is produced, which renders the stomach liable to derangement from slight causes.—Dr. Holbrook's "Liver Complaint."

THE SOCIALISTS.—The vastness of the Socialist organization in Germany revealed itself at the congress held at Gotha, when 101 delegates, elected by 37,747 votes and sent by 284 districts, took part in the deliberations. There are 145 accomplished public speakers connected with the movement. The congress received communications from Socialist societies in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Brussels, London, and Paris, all urging the point that the interests of workingmen were everywhere identical.

Vice is sufficient of itself to make a man thoroughly unhappy.—Aristotle.

Professor Huxley on Evolution.

Professor Huxley, the distinguished English scientist, when in this country (which he has just left) gave a series of lectures in New York on "The Direct Evidence of Evolution." The following are the closing words of the last lecture of the series: "When an inductive hypothesis is demonstrated by facts in entire accordance with it, and such as might have been reached by deductive processes, it is firmly established; if the doctrine of evolution had not been fully established as firmly as and in the way that the Copernican system has been demonstrated, beyond the possibility of cavil, nothing has ever been or can be proved. The only escape is to say that all these different forms were each created separately and at separate epochs, a belief which can never be demonstrated, and is not supported by any other evidence or pretended evidence. The time will come when such endeavors to escape the conclusion will be looked upon as the views of those not yet wholly extinct writers who held the fossiliferous no indications of animals, but either the sports of nature, or, as has been recently gravely asserted, special creations to test our faith.

"All evidence favors evolution, and there is none against it. In the unforgotten it seems an insuperable objection that geologists, astronomers, and physicists say that not sufficient time has elapsed since the earth grew cool enough to support life for all these changes of form. We look to the geologists and physicists for information in regard to the time necessary for the production of these forms, the existence of which we absolutely know. Let them set the time; with that we have nothing to do. There is no foundation for the assertion that evolution demands an impossible time; the biologist has no way to judge of time; he takes his fact from the geologist, who tells how long it took to lay the rocky deposits. If he says 500,000,000 years, we suppose he has good grounds for saying so, and so long it took for the development of life. In 15,000,000 years, that was the time in which evolution performed its work. Suppose Sir William Thomson says that life could not have existed at such or such a time; evolutionists will tell him to discuss that question with the geologists—we take what they say; it does not concern us."

Health and Happiness.

Health and happiness go together. There is no use of talking about it, for the doctor. Not all the medicine or creeds in the world can make a bilious, nervous, sick person happy. He must be well before he can say, "I am in good condition in mind and body." There are a great many wrong notions in the world, and every one has his own set of them. All have prescriptions for whoever complains. Some take this or that nostrum; others lay all unhappiness to the heart or conscience, while the seat of trouble is the stomach or liver. And it will be so long as the world exists, unless a reform be made in our habits.

In the first place, a man's house should be the most healthful, quiet, restful spot on earth to him. The religion of a man's life should begin here; find its springs and nurture here. All the churches and meetings under the sun cannot do or undo what his home does. When he enters there, and shuts the door behind him, he should feel that the cares, duties, business, noise, smells, and everything else of the outside world are shut out. Here he is relaxed, at rest. He throws off his former life as he throws off his coat. When he sleeps, he should do it as going into the land of forgetfulness to come back refreshed and new. When he reads or chats with his family, it should be as if he were sitting in an orchard to enjoy its fruits or in a flower garden to be delighted and soothed by its beauty and fragrance.

Home should be the club, library, picture-gallery, and sanctuary. But there are material arrangements, connected with our social life, and not the least among them are cooking and breathing. Poor or partially cooked food will drive health out of the body and happiness out of the heart; and no ventilation will ruin the peace of any house. One of the best and greatest pleasures in a house is an open fireplace. It is where the members of the family mostly congregate, and are in the best spirits. The hearth-stone has witnessed more cheerfulness, and listened to more pleasant words, and seen brighter and happier faces than any other place in the world. The only prescription we give is, go and make your home bright and healthful, and it will be happy.

NOT ASHAMED OF WORK.—Two of the most agreeable girls we ever met kept a grocery store—yes, and kept it well, though they had been a rich man's daughters. When that father lost his wealth, and became a confirmed invalid, did they sit down and wring their hands? Did they groan all their days, begging men to give them a little sewing, a little teaching, a little copying? Not they. They began, in a small way, to keep a dry goods and grocery store. They gave fair measure and right change. They kept what people wanted; and if anything was called for which they had not, they put it down in the list of their purchases. They had the cleanest, the nicest grocery for miles around, hired a clerk, bought a horse, built a house, and are at this moment as pliant and agreeable women. It paid them to step out of the beaten track and find a new road to fortune.

A good old minister in the south of Scotland had a servant man, Sandy, who had an inveterate habit of either over or under comprehending the truth. The minister had labored long to convince Sandy that his conduct was sinful, but to no purpose. On a certain occasion, having been put to considerable inconvenience through Sandy's bad habit, he again lectured him about his besetting weakness, but utterly failed to convince Sandy as to his shortcoming. Still pressing the matter more closely home, he said, "Well, Sandy, if it's not a sin, what do you call it?" Sandy, shrugging his shoulders and looking very innocent, replied, "Well, 'deed sir, I think you may call it a moral squint."

Two things indispensable to success—knowledge of one's self and knowledge of the world.

Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving.

The first public Thanksgiving in New England was held in December, 1621, about a year after the landing of the Pilgrims. The harvest having been gathered, and the greatest labor of the year having ended, the Governor sent out four men, with guns, to procure material for a feast, that in a special manner they might rejoice and give thanks. The day was, as its name would indicate, a day of thanksgiving to God for his many mercies, and also a day of general rejoicing. In short, it was a religious festival, without the formality and restraint of the ordinary Puritan Sabbath—a festival in which religion did not exclude sociality, but in which the two were happily combined. It was the colonies grew in size and in numbers, and friends became scattered, Thanksgiving gradually came to be a day of reunion of families, a day when all the children returned to the old homestead to meet familiar faces and exchange friendly greetings. Still, it maintained the same general character. It was pre-eminently a day of public thanksgiving, a day when all united to praise the Lord and to return thanks for blessings, special or ordinary, for peace and prosperity, for abundant harvests, and for freedom from any public calamity.

It was customary also to remember, at this time, God's goodness to us as a nation. His providential guidance of the Pilgrims to our shores, and his merciful protection of their interests. They acknowledged also the blessing of good government, of free schools, and of liberty, equality and justice to all mankind—which blessings they fully enjoyed, as they supposed. It was also a day of private thanksgiving, when individuals called to mind whatever mercies they had received, and expressed their gratitude for the same.

All hasten to the village church, where the pastor directs their thoughts above, and urges upon them the duty of obedience to the "Father of all mercies." Then comes the dinner—the old New England dinner, so famed in song and story; the table filled with good things and surrounded by happy faces; for a moment, all voices are hushed, while the agonizing, with beautiful simplicity, invokes the Divine blessing. Again, at evening time, after the pleasures of the day, the whispered secrets, the delightful little chats, the romps and games of the children are ended, the grandfather calls them all together, and, taking down the old familiar Bible, reads therefrom a chapter, and, all kneeling, he pours out his soul in praise to God for his Thanksgiving day and all its privileges.

Such was the day to our fathers—a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing. Now what is it to us? Has its character changed; yes, to some extent. It is still a season of religious and social festivity, but the order is reversed. It is no longer thanksgiving and rejoicing, but rejoicing first, and thanksgiving something secondarily. The religious part of Thanksgiving day is gradually losing its old religious flavor. All the sociality is retained, as it should be; but the religious element is being slowly crowded out. Public services are, it is true, held in our churches; but too often for the preacher merely has occasion for expressing his political views or displaying his knowledge of the principles of government—all of which is entirely out of place in the pulpit, and the tendency of which is, not to awaken gratitude in the hearts of his hearers, but to engender strife among them. Furthermore, the custom of attending public services on this day is rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

Again Thanksgiving day is getting to be more of a nuisance than a reality, on the part of individuals. As the comforts of life have increased with the progress of civilization, we have learned to take them as a matter of course, without considering from whom they come, fathers, but the really healthy man is less faithfully observed by us than it was by them.—N. Y. Observer.

Idle Ladies.

It is a pity that so many young ladies look upon domestic service with marked contempt. Many of our social difficulties would be really but little to do but if young ladies would consent to become lady-helps in their own homes. Nothing can be more intolerable than the mismanagement and discomfort to be found in countless households, where there are plenty of grown-up daughters, who have really but little to do but grumble at the dreariness of their lives, and fret themselves into permanent ill-health. Perhaps they take sufficient interest in the house-keeping to wonder contemptuously how their mother can be troubled with so many ignorant servants, "creatures" who cannot even make palatable coffee, or keep the silver bright. They have no patience with the shortcomings of the over-worked household, from whom they expect as much attention as if she had only a lady's maid's duties to perform. However unreasonable their demands, they expect any servant in the house to be at all times in readiness to answer them. Half the young women one meets sink into a state of semi-imbecility, from idleness and want of interest in their surroundings. From mere thoughtlessness and ignorance they grow up exacting and unreasonable. From want of active exercise they become the prey of hysteria, dyspepsia, and spine complaint. They marry any one who will have them, simply because they are so bored that any change is welcome. They make bad wives, because they have never learned the rudiments of domestic economy. When the unfortunate mother of such daughters allows herself to be persuaded, against her will, to add a lady-help to the establishment, the height of absurdity is reached. Four or five comely, stupid girls may lounge about the house—one with a piece of soiled fancy-work, another playing snatches of dance music, a third reading French novels on the sofa, while perhaps a pretty, graceful lady lays the fire, dusts the room, and endeavors—probably in vain—to bring order into the uncomfortable and chaotic establishment.

Mr. Samuel Smiles says that "Those whom God has given a good matrimony, ill-cooked joints and ill-cooked potatoes have very often put asunder."

A Minnesota girl has been serving on a railroad for some time as a brakeman. She dressed in male attire, and was not suspected for some time.