



STARS AND STRIPES 141 YEARS OLD.

Next Monday, June 14, has been designated as Flag day, and every patriotic citizen of Polk county should float Old Glory to the breeze on that occasion, thus teaching the rising generation to honor and revere the stars and stripes, the emblem of a united land. Next Monday the flag will be 141 years old, and the age of the flag, if nothing else, commands respect, and respect it receives—respect and consideration from all the world. The observance of the day is an institution of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Banded for patriotic purposes, they lose no opportunity to inspire the people and children with love of their country, reverence for its history and devotion to its interests. How many of the children of Dallas know that ours is the oldest flag in the civilized world?

Germany's flag dates back only to 1871; the Union Jack of England was floated first in 1801; France displayed her present colors in 1784; Spain in

1785, and so on down the line. But "Old Glory" has breathed the breezes and weathered the winds for more years than any other colors. When separately and then together, American colonies asserted their independence of England, separately first and then unitedly, they found that they needed flags for muster and rally purposes. Many curious devices were displayed as well as unique and beautiful designs. "Tarleton's Terror" was Col. William Washington's regimental flag; "The Pine Tree" flag of Massachusetts bore the inscription, "an appeal to heaven," and "The Rattlesnake" flag was a popular one through many colonies. The first American flag displayed in the south was the "Liberty," used by Col. Moultrie in Charleston, S. C., in 1775. In 1776 Gen. Washington raised the red and white, but the Canton bore the "Union Jack" of England.

In 1774 congress authorized Washington and Robert Morris, the financier of the revolution, to design a suit-

able flag for the nation. Washington's family coat-of-arms was decorated with the horizontal bars of red and white. Nothing suggested itself to the committee more beautiful than the red and white lines, symbolic of courage and integrity. Teach the children what these colors mean when they throw up their hats and give "three cheers for the red, white and blue." The blue of the field means loyalty. Washington and Morris found that they needed the intuitive taste and deft fingers of a woman for their work, and Mrs. Betsy Ross, a milliner of Philadelphia, was called in consultation. And it was she who suggested that "the stars of the heaven" be placed in the field of blue. We are told that there was discussion whether the stars should have five or six points, but Mrs. Ross was confident that "the stars of the heaven" had only five points, and five points won, probably because Mrs. Ross was a woman.

as among men, the law of labor holds good, and carries its reward or penalty. Among the ants laziness or idleness lead to mental lassitude and physical weakness—let the shiftless take warning, for labor has its discipline, and everywhere the law is inexorable.

The social existence of the ants exhibits many remarkable features. Among them are queens, and gentlemen, and tollers; there are home builders, hunters, nurses, watchmen, herdsmen, agriculturists, warriors—and each individual finds his proper task and station. They have a civilization all their own, and can teach us many things. In our social system every youth should find the trade or profession to which his talents adapt him if he would succeed. Formic acid, so important to vegetable growth, is largely derived from the ants.

Aesop related a fable. It seems the ants were engaged one fine winter day in drying their food which had been gathered in summer. A grasshopper came along who was lean and famished. He begged the ants for a little food. But they inquired, "Why did you not lay up food in summer?"

The grasshopper replied, "I did not have time; I was too busy singing." Then said the ants in derision, "If you were foolish enough to sing all summer—you must dance supperless to bed in winter." And so the humble, industrious little ants put many an improvident man to shame.

Henry Ward Beecher declared, "We are born into a world which pays few premiums to lazy men. Providence seems to design that no man shall gather who does not sow and tend his crop." The insignificant and despicable ants are held up to our attention, then, to teach us worthy lessons. "Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise."

They are examples to us of devotion and intelligence in providing homes and food and protection for their own. They exhibit ambition, and energy, and patriotism—which might well be emulated by every American youth.

Moreover they display the finer qualities of gentleness, sympathy, affection and courtesy. Did you never observe how the ants always stop and "speak" to each other when they meet?

Only the physical sluggard will turn away from mastering some useful trade or profession—to curse his poverty later in life.

Only the mental sluggard will daze and dawdle away youth and opportunity for mental equipment—to be at last, not a leader in anything, but in everything a tail-end.

And only the moral sluggard will refuse to assert his God-given rights and throw off the yoke of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I threw myself down in the grass one day in the shadow of a great oak. While resting in the cool shade, my attention was attracted to a little winged ant struggling among the blades of grass. It would spread its wings and attempt to rise, but its wings struck the tangled grass, and so it fell. Thus it struggled on, it

crept to the top of a leaning blade and opened its wings to fly, other blades of grass obstructed its flight. But after many failures, after a while, it seemed to discover a tall stem which towered above the others. It crept slowly towards it. It turned this way and that, and at last began creeping up the waving stalk. Soon it could look out over the little forest of grass blades, but it made its way upward still. It was then above all its obstacles, and in a moment it spread its gauzy wings—and then it soared away to the leafy treetop. How suggestive of human experience. But note well the wisdom of the ant. Would you enter the better life—first must you turn away from evil associates and corrupt habits which obstruct your way. Would you obtain a broad vision of the nobility of life and character—then must you rise above the impulses of an evil nature which hamper your powers. And having risen above things sensual and selfish, the way for you is open to the heights of usefulness and peace.

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The Ant and the Sluggard

(By Rev. George H. Bennett.)



with the fervent wish: "May the boy turn out clever and skillful."

The family of ants comprises more than three thousand species, and are very widely distributed. In their life history they pass through four stages, the egg, larva, chrysalis, and the perfect insect. They are found in various forms, much like the bees—the perfect females or queens, which are the mothers of the colonies; the males, which are short lived; and the workers which constitute the vast majority in every colony, and are imperfect females. A striking fact about the workers is they vary in size and form, but the work assigned them seems always to be well adapted to their strength. This fact has a very pointed lesson for the human employer, and for the laborer as well.

The minute eggs are deposited in the nest by the queen mother some time after the nuptial flight—for the perfect insects originally have wings. We have often noticed swarms of gnats and other small insects whirling in great agitation in the still air on a summer evening. It is their nuptial flight. The eggs of the ant hatch in from two to six weeks into the white, helpless larvae. Food in a prepared form is fed them by the faithful workers, who exhibit much affection and wisdom in caring for their little charges. They keep the nest clean—a virtue next to godliness, all housekeepers should practice. They carry the larvae out for fresh air and sunshine—a splendid hint to mothers of the human kind. And when danger threatens they hurry them into places of safety. The ant excels man in knowledge concerning the matter of food. They are able by the use of certain prepared foods to develop the larva into either a queen or a worker.

So the larva grows and enters the chrysalis stage. It now covers itself with a silken robe or cocoon. In course of time it becomes a full-fledged ant, ready to throw off its silken garment, a work in which the workers give careful and affectionate assistance. It is now fed and protected until strong enough to take its proper place in the colony—a thing which it does with promptness. In this the ant puts to shame many a pampered and petted youth. The queens and workers have been known to live for several years.

These little citizens have some pe-

cular and interesting habits. Certain species are known as agricultural ants, for it is said, they plant seeds and gather harvests. Other species are known as hunters, so characteristic is this habit among them. Many of the ants belong to the architectural class. Their nests are usually chambered structures, may be in stumps or logs, frequently under ground, and often consist of hillocks raised sometimes several feet above the ground. A species of ant builds a hillock with a thatched roof, and openings with shutters, and doors they close at night. The mason ant builds walls and ceilings and partitions of clay in her house. And so the homes of the ants have their halls and tunnels, food rooms, nurse rooms, and their living chambers.

But the pastoral ants are among the most interesting. They are all fond of sweets. Linnaeus has described how they care for the aphides or plant lice—like so many cows. The aphides secrete a sweet liquid or honey-dew. They are fondled or tickled (milked) by the ants, who thus obtain their favorite drink. The ants sometimes prepare shelters for the aphides, take care of their eggs, and even fight for their possession, like herdsmen for their cattle. A little brown ant is found in the corn fields, which gives every attention to the aphides. These aphides subsist on the juice of the corn roots. The ants thoughtfully place them on the roots of the knot weed, until the corn grows, when they transfer them to the roots of the corn. And so the hunter, pastoral, agricultural and architectural ants present a very curious and striking analogy to the great phases of human development and culture in the march of human progress. In all this we find a marvelous tribute to the creator who has made the ants our schoolmasters. Creatures, with us, of the same creator, they certainly remind us of the wonderful unity of nature, and command our admiration, if not our respect.

The ants are hard workers, good hunters, expert builders, and courageous warriors. Very destructive wars have been observed between the innumerable hosts of different species. So there are race hatreds even among the ants. They have their military formations, their tactics, and their commanders. The victors take the food supplies of their enemies, and also carry off the conquered, their eggs and young, into slavery. These press. In all this we find a marvelous work for their masters, gather their food, and even feed them. But slavery among the ants has its characteristic evil, as among men. Slavery leads to degeneracy. The masters become weak and voluptuous, listless parasites living off the unrequited labors of others. So among the ants,