Simple Life of the Garden Home

OUR SERMON STORY by the "Highway and Byway" Preacher

(A Vision Between the Lines of God's Inspired Word.)

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Scripture Authority:—"And the Lord God planted a Garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed . . . to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. 2:8, 15, 16, 17.

NOT since the period which God's record gives us here has the earth known perfect peace and harmony and the conserving and economic power of the simple life. No misdirected energies where God's Spirit rules supreme, no wasted time, no neglected duties, no lost opportunities, no conflicting, jarring elements warring one against the other. In that Garden home before sin had entered to disrupt it and drive the guilty pair forth, it was God's will "done on earth as it is in Heaven." It was so then when time had first begun to count off its years for man, and it shall be so again when He comes to reign supreme. Then the "wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Do you know what it is to sit in sweet, silent fellowship with Nature alone? Away from every human sight and sound, lost for the moment in rapt contemplation, an exquisite influence has pervaded the soul. You have felt a commingling of your spirit with the spirit of Nature. A new bond of union and sympathy has been born. Perfect harmony and fellowship prevail. Do you know what it is to have the little songster in your home, which has been tamed by your loving care, perch contentedly and fearlessly upon your shoulder or finger, or with fluttering wings, as it rested on the buoyant air, take from your lips the dainty morsel you have temptingly placed there? Do you know what it is to have the faithful dog welcome your return with joyful bark and playful antic, to have him thrust his cold, wet nose within your palm in mute but expressive appeal for the affectionate caress, to have him lift his soulful eyes to yours and speak through them of love and devotion to you, receiving gratefully from you what you willed to give, and offering service and life itself in return? Do you know what it is thus to feel a bond of sympathy and fellowship between yourself and the dumb creature; a harmony which flows to the blessing of every living creature? There is such relationship, such experience, and it is but a pleasant echo, a blessed heritage coming down to us from that perfect harmony and unity and activity which marked the Garden life. For God's Spirit ruled there. Man and beast, and bird and every creature, and Nature, too, yielded sweet obedience to the Divine will.

We may not draw comparisons between the simple, natural, free life of the Garden and the complex life which has developed with the centuries, and which has come as man has advanced in the scale of civilization, but we may emphasize the perfect harmony which prevailed there under the ruling Spirit of God. We would not go back to that primitive state, and give up all the wonderful gifts which God has bestowed upon humanity through the study and achievement of man, but we would that we might bring down to this present age a consciousness of the power and blessing to be found in perfect obedience to the will and Spirit of God.

Another fair morning has broken over the teeming earth. All Nature is rejoicing in the returning light. Myriad sounds fill the air from the bird notes, dropping gently like messengers from Heaven, down to the cheery chirp of the cricket in the dewy grass. Off in the distance can be heard the lowing of the kine and the deep-toned roars of the beasts of the field, while the chatter of the squirrels in the tree tops and the rustle amidst the shrubs and bushes and ferns upon the ground tell the story of the smaller animal life that is astir in the early morning. Down at the foot of the verdant, flower-decked slope the broad, placid river flows, sending its waters rippling over the stones near the shore, and reflecting in its mirrored surface the overhanging trees and blue sky. The music of the waters as they play hide and seek among the rocks and stones can be heard through the open doorway of the bower home. The great towering trees stand sentinel at the rear and sides of the simple, humble abode. No marbled palace was ever so fair a home or dear a spot to its inmates as was that shelter which the friendly branches and intertwining vines willingly provided. Did happiness and contentment depend upon the elaborateness of the things possessed, then would they have been strangers in that first home on earth. It is not upon the external conditions but upon the internal consciousness of the presence of God that true happiness and contentment rest. About and in this first home the gentle touches of Nature were apparent. The softest of mosses carpeted the floor, and upon the walls there bloomed the most fragrant and beautiful of flowers. In the early morning light their petals were just opening prepared to give the sun smiling welcome as he rose above the trees and flashed his morning greetings upon them.

The call of the birds and the stir of Nature have awakened the inmates of the home, and their voices are heard in adoration and praise, for their first waking thought has been of Him Who made them and gave them the breath of life, and blessed them, and provided them with the shelter and bounty of the Garden.

The happy pair pause upon the threshold and drink in the beauty of the scene before them. Eve's face mirrors the joy that fills her soul, and she smiles up into the face of her husband, while he, with earnest, thoughtful look, watches the sun play his light upon the tall tree tops.

"The sun is at his post of duty, fulfilling the will of the Creator. He comes, bringing a new day. He has some new ministry to perform, some fresh task to work out. His coming stirs my heart," exclaimed Adam. "I can but feel that as he fulfills his mission from the heavens, so we may fulfill our mission upon the earth. As God has given him his appointed sphere in which to move, so He has given us ours. Is it not good to feel that our good, kind Creator has not left us in indifference, but waits for us to do His will?" So saying, Adam gently drew his companion towards him and they passed on down the pathway together.

The fruit-laden trees on either hand held out their tempting viands, and as they went they gathered and did eat. The birds flitted hither and thither in search of seed and berries, the animals great and small throughout the Garden were satisfying their hunger, for God in His Nature had spread a bountiful table for all, and none had reason to lack.

Without realizing the direction in which they were going, they came to the center of the Garden just as they had finished their simple but abundant repast. Before them stood the trees of mystery, the ones to which the Lord had made special reference in His talk with them. Right at hand the great spreading branches of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, ladened with fruit, swayed in the breeze. The sight gives a new direction to their thoughts, as they recall the Lord's solemn admonition and warning.

"Why should we wish to partake of the fruit of this tree when our Lord has given us freely of every other tree of the Garden?" both exclaimed, almost in the same breath.

"Yea, before we reached this point God had satisfied us with His good thing," Adam continued. "It were to take that for which we have no need, if we did eat of the fruit of this tree. We may well be content with the bounties on every hand." So spake Adam. And is it not always true that we have no need of the things which are contrary to the will of God for us?

"But why, I wonder, did God put this tree here? Why did He forbid our eating of it? What did He mean when He spoke of death?" Thus musing, Eve turned to her husband, but he shook his head in answer, and said: "I cannot tell. It is enough that God has spoken. We must wait to understand."

Poor Eve, little did she realize that day the bitter way which lay before her! And not until years later as she gazed in anguish upon the face of her dead boy, her beloved Abel, did she begin to know the penalty of disobedience and sin.

The days came and went in the Garden home. Peace and purity reigned supreme. The Lord came to visit and talk with them. The days of rest brought their sweet fellowship with the Heavenly hosts, and the harmony of their rich, full voices and harps. During the days of toil Adam labored faithfully in dressing the Garden and training the vines and branches. Each day found some new comfort added to the home, and brought some new discovery of the wealth and resources of the Garden. The creatures of the Garden yielded ready obedience to Adam's wise and kindly care. No task which he put upon them was beyond their strength or unnecessary to be done. All the activities of the beautiful place were but the expression of God's will. Man and beast and bird filled each his own allotted place, and delighted in the unity and peace and harmony which prevailed.

rest. The morning awaking with the birds, the songs of praise and the outgoing thoughts toward God, the bright greetings of the sun, the walk in the garden and the simple repast. Adam had gone forth to the work of the day, and Eve was busy at home. It seemed like all the other days, and gladness and peace were all about. Suddenly the darkness of midnight fell over the Garden, and Adam was heard rushing and stumbling down the pathway to the home. All in a tremble Eve threw herself into the arms of her husband and cried in terror: "What is it? What can it be?"

With effort Adam steadied his voice, and then replied: "I know not. As I worked out in the clearing I thought I heard a sound as of rumbling away off in the distant heavens, and then while yet the sun was flooding the earth with his light this awful blackness sped between. I know not what it can mean, but surely God is with us. We need not fear." As he ceased speaking, and while yet the blackness continued, there was a flash across the heavens as though some heavenly body sundered from its moorings had fallen. Then the darkness lifted and the day shone as brightly as before. The Garden in all its beauty was displayed and the birds took up the strain of their songs where a few moments before they had been rudely interrupted.

The days following this incident brought no explanation, and failed to dispel the feeling of impending trouble. As Adam and his wife walked through the Garden paths, though their eyes saw naught but the accustomed sights, though the birds sang overhead and the creatures all about them peacefully fed, still they had the feeling that other presence was there, that other eyes were upon them. But the questionings of their hearts found no answer.

Hardy Sleeper.

During a recent snowstorm a policeman found William Nuttall, of Accrington, at nearly midnight asleep in a field. At the Accrington police court the chief constable stated that Nuttall was a most extraordinary character. He could sleep standing and even while walking, but preferred the middle of an open field for his slumbers, caring nothing for rain or snow. The last time he was before the court he fell asleep in the dock. —London Tit-Bits.

THE INAUGURAL BALL

WASHINGTON SOCIETY UNCERTAIN WHERE TO HOLD IT.

"ARISTOCRACY" IN HOUSE

Rooster That Invaded the Capitol—The Swayne Impeachment Trial—President's Buckwheat and 'Lasses.

WASHINGTON. — In view of the controversy that has arisen over a place in which to hold the inaugural ball some good people are advocating that this part of the inauguration festivities be abandoned. This would be a striking innovation, as the induction into office of a president has been celebrated by dancing from time immemorial. In fact, the records show that only at Washington's first inaugural and at those of Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson and R. B. Hayes, a ball has always been given. Just prior to the celebration of Washington's second inauguration in Philadelphia the following card was issued which serves as authority for this form of inaugural functions:

"The members of the senate and of the house of representatives of the United States are respectfully invited to a ball on the 4th of March, to be given by the dancing assembly in honor of the unanimous reelection of George Washington, the president of the United States; the anniversary of the present form of government of the United States and a parting leave with the members of the present congress."

The first inaugural ball in Washington was held on March 4, 1809, in honor of President Madison. It was given at Long's hotel and was a grand affair, attended by ex-President Jefferson and the foreign ministers. Some 400 took part in the ball, although Mrs. Madison did not dance. For many years the inaugural ball was held in prominent hotels or public halls. Sometimes two or three balls were given on the night of the inauguration. Temporary buildings were used for balls on the inagural days of President Taylor, President Pierce, President Buchanan and on the second inaugural of President Grant. Grant's first inaugural dance was held in the north wing of the treasury department. This was a very crowded place, and it is recorded that Horace Greely had to wait two hours before he secured his old white overcoat, and he "swore a good deal in the oddest and most miscellaneous style." The custom of holding the ball in the pension office building began with Cleveland's first inauguration. It is likely that the coming ball will be held in the same building, but its use will be granted only after a pledge that in the future another building will be provided by the citizens of Washington.

Aristocracy in the House.

THERE is an aristocracy in the house of representatives despite the democratic character of that body. It is composed of members who have been fortunate enough by long service, experience and ability to secure appointments to the more important committees. These committees are those on rules, appropriations, ways and means, and judiciary. When a member is assigned to any one of these desirable committees he is looked upon as a house aristocrat and is an object of both admiration and envy. The honor of these positions is felt more in Washington than anywhere else, as a congressman's constituents do not, as a rule, appreciate the fine distinctions that obtain in the house organization. In fact, a member who has been made chairman of an obscure committee, one that has nothing to do and never meets, would be regarded by his folks at home as a much more important personage than if he were to be given a position on the committee on appropriations.

There are 62 committees in the house, and the majority of them are only known by their names. A great many of them never hold a session, but a comfortable committee room is provided for them, and there the chairman is located, virtually enjoying a well-furnished private office and reception room where he can meet and entertain friends.

To become a member of the house aristocracy means that the congressman must be a man of force and ability. The committee on rules is probably the highest, as in this small body under the present system is lodged the real power of legislation. When anything is to be put through the house that does not have the right of way under the regular rules, a special rule is reported from this committee. It consists of but five members, the chairman being the speaker of the house. Besides the chairman there are two majority and two minority members. It can be easily guessed that the speaker and the two majority members dominate the committee. The late Speaker Reed used to call in the minority members and declare to them: "We have decided to perpetrate another outrage, and here it is." Next to the committee on rules comes the appropriations and the ways and means, made up of old and distinguished men.

Rooster Invades Capitol.

SHORTLY after congress adjourned for the holidays a bit of excitement was created at the capitol by the performance of a big raucous voiced Plymouth Rock rooster which had been sent to the sergeant-at-arms of the house by a republican friend in Iowa as a token of his appreciation of the big republican victory. The bird was sent here to crow over this victory, and he did it in fine style. Mr. Casson, the sergeant-at-arms, placed the fowl in a barrel and secreted it in one of the corridors of the basement of the capitol. His roostership did not fancy confinement, managed to escape from the barrel and started on a tour of discovery through the historical capitol building.

After leaving the barrel he gave vent to an ear-splitting crow, and the capitol police started after him. The rooster ran upstairs and took refuge in the house interstate commerce committee room, where he made his presence known to Chairman Hepburn, of Iowa, by a series of tremendous roars. Col. Hepburn ordered the bird caught and dispatched, but some one told him that it was an Iowa bird, sent here to celebrate the republican victory. "If that is so," said Hepburn, "just kick him gently; don't wring his neck, and then drive him down to the committee on merchant marine and fisheries and let Gen. Grosvenor hear him crow."

The bird on being driven out of his refuge, scuttled downstairs to Speaker Cannon's room, but found that statesman had gone to his home in Illinois. He then darted into the house lobby and finally into the house itself, where he perched himself on the desk of Gen. Bingham, the father of the house, and emitted another patriotic shriek. From that point of vantage he flew to the speaker's chair, and was just preparing to give a sample of his vocal ability when he was captured by an active page, and now confines his songs of triumph to Sergeant-at-Arms Casson's back yard.

The Swayne Impeachment Trial.

ONE of the big attractions in the congressional show during the remaining two months of the session will be the impeachment trial of Judge Swayne, of the eastern district of Florida. In some ways this will be the most spectacular performance that has been witnessed in the halls of congress for many years. There has been no impeachment trial since that of Secretary of War Belknap, in President Grant's last administration. There has been no impeachment of a federal judge since that of Judge Peck in the famous trial of 1830. The matter-of-fact business methods of the present day congress will rob this trial of its most sensational features, as was shown when the committee of the house notified the senate the other day that the house impeached Judge Swayne. This notification required about three minutes and created scarcely a ripple in the senate proceedings.

Those who have in their mind the most noted of impeachment trials—that of Warren Hastings by the English parliament, will be disappointed in the coming trial of Judge Swayne; but there will still be enough of the unusual to attract much interest and attention. In former trials, in the early days of the government, the senate chamber was appropriately draped and the old ceremonials adhered to. To-day the senate will handle the case more as a matter of routine business. Judge Swayne will be present either personally, or by counsel, and there will be a committee of managers on the part of the house, who will conduct the trial, much as a case is tried in court.

Noted men were engaged in former impeachment trials. James Buchanan, of Pennsylvania, afterwards president of the United States, was one of the managers on the part of the house in the case against Judge Peck. In the impeachment proceedings against President Andrew Johnson, James F. Wilson, of Iowa; Henry L. Dawes, of Massachusetts; Charles Sumner, Senators Conkling, Morton, Ben Wade, of Ohio; Benjamin F. Butler, and other statesmen of great fame were engaged.

Buckwheat Cakes and 'Lases.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT bids fair to start a demand for an old fashioned southern delicacy. He is now using on his buckwheat cakes, served at the white house breakfasts, a fine quality of Alabama sirup which has been presented to him by a southern admirer. This sirup is made from cane juice, is a clear white color, a little thicker than maple sirup, and the president says is just the thing for buckwheat cakes. The cane from which this article is manufactured is grown on the gray hammock soil, near the coast, and partakes of the color of this soil.

The grinding of the cane and the evaporation of the juice to a sirup is an industry of the southern upland planter which is growing in importance. The old-fashioned New Orleans molasses and clear sirup have gone out of fashion somewhat, but the taste for the juice of the cane is now liable to be revived on account of the use of the article by the president of the United States.

Senator Proctor, of Vermont, is a little jealous of the efforts to popularize the treacle from the south, as he wants the genuine, old-fashioned maple sirup from the granite hills of his state to hold first place in the affections of the officials in Washington. He has made it a practice for some years to keep the president's table and those of his official friends in Washington well supplied with this toothsome delicacy, and he laughs to scorn the idea that the southern sirup can take the place of the aromatic maple as an accompaniment to the president's natutinal dish of buttercakes.

Pure Spite.

First Domestic (who had been out four nights that week)—I'm sorry, but I can't go to Lannigan's ball to-night. The missus won't let me.

Second Domestic—An' why won't she?

First Domestic—I dunno. Mebby she's mad because she wasn't invited. —N. Y. Weekly.

Had His Own Doubts.

"Say, ma," asked little Willie, after he had been in conjunction with the paternal slipper, "did anybody besides pa ever ask you to be their wife?"

"Oh, yes. I had lots of proposals before your father came along."

"Well, do you think you gained anything by waiting?"—Chicago Record Herald.

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