The Banner-Democrat.

L. S. U. Library Baton Rouge La.

VOLUME V. LAKE PROVIDENCE, EAST CARROLL PARISH, LA., SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1893. NO. 31.

THE EAR AND THE HUSK.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage Finds a New Parallel.

The Body and Soul of Man Typified by the Ear of Corn in the Husk—Is the Ear Ripe for the Master?

The following discourse was delivered by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage in the Brooklyn tabernacle from the text:

As a shock of corn cometh in in his season.—Job v., 26.

This is the time of the year for husking corn. If you have recently been in the fields of Pennsylvania, or New Jersey, or New York, or New England, or in any of the country districts, you know that the corn is all cut. The sharp knife stuck through the stalks and left them all along the fields until a man came with a bundle of straw and twisted a few of these wisps of straw into a band, and then, gathering up as much of the corn as he could compass with his arms, he bound it with this wisp of straw, and then stood it in the field in what is called a shock. There are now at least two billion bushels of corn either standing in the shock or having been already husked. The farmers gather, one day on one farm, and they put on their rough husking apron, and they take the husking peg, which is a piece of iron with a leathern loop fastened to the hand, and with it unsheath the corn from the husk and toss it into golden heap. Then the wagons come along and take it to the corn-crib.

About corn as an important cereal or corn as a metaphor the Bible is constantly speaking. You know about the people in famine coming to buy corn of Joseph, and the foxes on fire running into the "standing corn," and about the oxen treading out the corn, and about the seven thin ears of corn that in Pharaoh's dream devoured the seven good ears, and the "parched corn" handed to beautiful Ruth by the harvesters of Bethlehem, and Abigail's five measures of "parched corn" with which she hoped to appease the enemies of her drunken husband, and David's description of the valleys "covered over with corn," and "the handful of corn in the earth," and "the full corn in the ear," and Christ's Sabbath morning walk through corn fields, and the disciples "plucking ears of corn," and so I am not surprised to find corn-husking time referred to in my text: "As a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

How vividly to all those of us who were born in the country comes the remembrance of husking time. We waited for it as for a gala day of the year. It was called a frolic. The trees for the most part having shed their foliage, the farmers waded through the fallen leaves and came through the keen morning air to the gleeful company. The frosts which had silvered everything during the night began to melt off the top of the corn-shocks. While the farmers were waiting for others, they stood blowing their breath through their fingers, or thrasing their arms around their body to keep up warmth of circulation. Roaring mirth greeted the late farmer as he crawled over the fence. Joke and repartee and rustic salutation abounded. All ready, now! The men take hold of the shock of corn and hurl it prostrate, while the moles and mice which have secreted themselves there for warmth, attempt to escape. The withe of straw is unwound from the corn-shock, and the stalks, heavy with the wealth of grain, are rolled into two bundles, between which the husker sits down. The husking-peg is thrust in until it strikes the corn, and then the fingers rip off the sheathing of the ear, and there is a crack as the root of the corn is snapped off from the husk, and the grain disimprisoned is hurled up into the sunlight. The air is so tonic, the work is so very exhilarating, the company is so blithe, that some laugh, and some shout, and some sing, and some banter, and some tease a neighbor for a romantic ride along the edge of the woods in an eventide, in a carriage that holds but two, and some prophesy as to the number of bushels to the field, and others go into competition as to which shall rifle the most corn-shocks before sun-down. After a while the dinner-horn sounds from the farmhouse, and the table is surrounded by a group of jolly and hungry men. From all the pantries and cellars and the perches of fowl on the place the richest dainties come, and there is carnival and neighborhood reunion, and a scene which fills our memory, part with smiles, but more with tears, as we remember that the farm belongs now to other owners, and other hands gather in the fields, and many of those who mingled in that merry husking scene have themselves been reaped, "like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the Orientals knew anything about the corn as it now stands in our fields; but recent discoveries have found out that the Hebrews knew all about Indian maize, for there have been grains of corn picked up out of ancient crypts and exhumed from hiding places where they were put down many centuries ago, and they have been planted in our time and have come up just such Indian maize as we raise in New York and Ohio; so I am right when I say that my text may refer to a shock of corn just as you and I bound it, just as you and I threw it, just as you and I husked it. There may come some practical and useful and comforting lessons to all of our souls, while we think of coming in at last "like a shock of corn coming in in his season."

It is high time that the king of terrors were thrown out of the Christian vocabulary. A vast multude of people talk of death as though it were the disaster of disasters, instead of being to a good man the blessing of blessings. It is moving out of a cold vestibule into a warm temple. It is migrating into groves of redolence and perpetual fruitage. It is a change from bleak March to roseate June. It is a change of manacles for garlands. It is the transmuting of the iron handcuffs of earthly incarceration into the diamonded wristlets of a bridal party, or, to use the suggestion of my text, it is only husking time. It is the tearing off of the rough sheath of the body that the bright and the beautiful soul may go free. Coming in "like a shock of corn cometh in in his season." Christ broke up a funeral procession at the gate of Nain by making a resurrection day for a young man and his mother. And I would that I could break up your sadness and halt the long funeral procession of the world's grief by some cheering and cheerful and view of the last transition.

We all know that husking time was a time of frost. Frost on the fence. Frost on the stubble. Frost on the ground. First on the bare branches of the trees. Frost in the air. Frost on the hands of the huskers. You remember we used to hide between the corn stacks so as to keep off the wind, but you remember how shivering was the body and how painful was the cheek, and how benumbed were the hands. But after awhile the sun was high up and the frosts went out of the air, and hilarities awakened the echoes, and joy from one corn shock went up. "Aha, aha!" and was answered by joy from another corn shock, "Aha, aha!" So we all realize that the death of our friend is the nipping of many expectations, the freezing, the chilling, the frosting of many of our hopes. It is far from being a south wind. It comes out of the frigid north, and when they go away from us we stand benumbed in body and benumbed in mind and benumed in soul. We stand among our dead neighbors, our dead families, and we say: "Will we ever get over it?" Yes, we will get over it amid the shoutings of Heavenly reunion, and we will look back to all these distresses of bereavement only as the temporary distresses of husking time. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "Light, and but for a moment," said the apostle as he clasped his hands, "light, and but for a moment." The chill of the frosts followed by the gladness that cometh in "like a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

Of course, the husking time made rough work with the ear of corn. The husking peg had to be thrust in, and the hard thumb of the husker had to come down with the swathing of the ear, and then there was a pull and there was a ruthless tearing, and then a complete snapping off before the corn was free, and if the husk could have spoken it would have said: "Why do you lacerate me? Why do you wrench me?" Ah, my friends, that is the way God has arranged that the ear and the husk shall part, and that is the way He has arranged that the body and soul shall separate. You can afford to have your physical distresses when you know that they are only forwarding the soul to liberation. Every rheumatic pain is only a plunge of the husking peg. Every neuralgic twinge is only a twist by the husker. There is gold in you that must come out. Some way the shackle must be broken. Some way the ship must be launched for heavenly voyage. You must let the heavenly Husbandman husk off the mortality from the immortality. There ought to be great consolation in this for all who have chronic ailments, since the Lord is gradually and more mildly taking away from you that which hinders your soul's liberation, doing gradually for you what for many of us in robust health perhaps He will do in one fell blow at the last. At the close of every illness, at the close of every paroxysm, you ought to say: "Thank God, that is all past now; thank God, I will never have to suffer that again. Thank God, I am so much nearer the hour of liberation. You will never suffer the same pain twice. You may have a new pain in an old place, but never the same pain twice. The pain does its work and then it dies. Just so many plunges of the crowbar to free the quarrystone for the building. Just so many strokes of the chisel to complete the statue. Just so many pangs to separate the soul from the body. You who have chronic ailments and disorders are only paying installments that which some of us will have to pay in one payment when we pay the debt of nature. Thank God, therefore, ye who have chronic disorders that you have so much less suffering at the last. Thank God that you will have so much less to feel in the way of pain at the hands of the heavenly Husbandman when the "shock of corn cometh in his season."

Perhaps now this may be an answer to a question which I asked one Sabbath morning, but did not answer: Why is it that so many really good people have so dreadfully to suffer? You often find a good man with enough pains and aches and distresses, you would think, to discipline a whole colony, while you will find a man who is perfectly useless going about with easy digestion and steady nerves and shining health, and his exit from the world is comparatively painless. How do you explain that? Well, I noticed in the husking time that the husking-peg was thrust into the corn, and then there must be a stout pull before the swathing was taken off the ear and the full, round, healthy, luxurient corn was developed, while on the other hand, there was corn that hardly seemed worth husking. We threw that into a place all by itself, and we called it "nubbins." Some of it was mildewed, and some of it was mice-nibbled, and some of it was great promise and no fulfillment. All cobs and no corn. Nubbins! After the good corn had been driven up to the barn we came around with the corn-basket and we picked up these nubbins. They were worth saving, but not worth much. So all around us there are people who amount to comparatively nothing. They develop into no kind of usefulness. They are nibbled on one side by the world, and nibbled on the other side by the devil, and mildewed all over. Great promise and no fulfillment. All cobs and no corn. Nubbins! They are worth saving. I suppose many of them will get to Heaven, but they are not worthy to be mentioned in the same day with those who went through great tribulations into the kingdom of our God. Who would not rather have the pains of this life, the misfortunes of this life—who would not rather be torn, and wounded, and lacerated, and wrenched, and husked, and at last go in amid the very best grain of the granary, than to be pronounced not worth husking at all? Nubbins! In other words, I want to say to you people who have distress of body, and distress in business, and distress of all sorts, the Lord has not any grudge against you. It is not derogatory, it is complimentary. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and it is proof positive that there is something valuable in you, or the Lord would not have husked you.

"But," says someone, "do you really think I would be at home in that supernal society if I should reach it?" I think you would. I know you would. I remember that in the husking time there was great equality of feeling among the neighbors. There at one corn-shock a farmer would be at work who owned two hundred acres of ground. The man who he was talking to at the next corn-shock owned but thirty acres of ground, and perhaps all that covered by a mortgage. That evening, at the close of the husking day, one man drove home a roan span so frisky, so full of life, they got their feet over the traces. The other man walked home. Great difference in education, great difference in worldly means; but I noticed at the husking time they all seemed to enjoy each other's society. They did not ask any man how much property he owned or what his education had been. They all seemed to be happy together in those good times. And so it will be in Heaven. Our Father will gather His children around Him, and the neighbors will come in, and the past will be rehearsed. And some one will tell of victory, and we will all celebrate it. And some one will tell of great struggle, and we will all praise the grace that fetched him out of it. And some one will say: "Here is my old father that I put away with heart-break; just look at him, he is as young as any of us!" And some one will say: "Here is my darling child that I buried in Greenwood, and all the after years of my life were shadowed with desolation—just look at her. She doesn't seem as if she had been sick a minute." Great sociality. Great neighborhood kindness. Go in and dine. What though John Milton sit down on one side and John Howard sit down on the other side? No embarrassment. What though Charlotte Elizabeth sit down on one side and Hannah More sit down on the other side? No embarrassment. A monarch yourself, why be embarrassed among monarchs? A songster yourself, why be embarrassed among glorified songsters? Go in and dine.

You remember also, that in the time of husking it was a neighborhood reunion. By the great fireplace in the winter, the fires roaring around the glorious back-logs on an old-fashioned hearth, of which the modern stoves and registers are only the degenerate descendants, the farmers used to gather and spend the evening, and there would be much sociality; but it was not anything like the joy of the husking time, for then the farmers came, and they came in the very best humor, and they came from beyound the meadow, and they came from beyond the brook, and they came from regions two and three miles around. Good spirits reigned supreme, and there were great handshakings, and there was carnival, and there was the recital of the brightest experiences in all their lives, and there was a neighborhood reunion the memory of which makes all the nerves of my body tremble, with emotion as the strings of a harp when the fingers of the player have swept the chords. The husking time was the time of the neighborhood reunion, and so Heaven will be just that. There they could come up! They slept in the old village churchyard. There they come up! They reclined amid the fountains and the sculpture and the parterres of a city cemetery. There they come up! They went down when the ship foundered off Cape Hatteras. They come up from all sides—from Potter's field and out of the solid masonry of Westminster abbey. They come up! They come up! All the hindrances to their better nature husked off. All their spiritual despondencies husked off. All their hinderances to usefulness husked off. The grain, the golden grain, the God-fashioned grain, visible and conspicuous. Some of them on earth were such disagreeable Christians you could hardly stand it in their presence. Now in Heaven they are so radiant you hardly know them. The fact is all their imperfections have been husked off. They did not mean on earth to be disagreeable. They meant well enough, but they told you how sick you looked; and they told you how many hard things they heard about you; and they told you how often they had to stand up for you in some battles until you wished almost that they had been slain in some of the battles. Good, pious, consecrated, well-meaning disagreeables. Now, in Heaven all their offensiveness has been husked off. Each one is as happy as he can be. Everyone she meets as happy as he can be. Heaven one great neighborhood reunion. All kings and queens, all songsters, all millionaires, all banqueters. God, the Father, with His children all around Him. No "good-by" in all the air. No grave cut in all the hills. River of crystal rolling over bed of pearl, under arch of chrysoprase, into seas of glass mingled with fire. Stand at the gate of the granary and see the grain come in; out of the frosts into the sunshine, out of the darkness into the light, out of the tearing and the ripping and the twisting and the wrenching and lacerating and the husking time of earth into the wide-open door of the King's granery, "like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

—There are five thousand deaconesses in Germany who give their lives to nursing and teaching among the poor

A QUEER SYSTEM.

The Chinese Mat-and-Bedquilt Theory of Government.

The North China Herald of Shanghai, in a recent leading article, describes what it calls "the mat-and-bedquilt theory of government" in that country. It says that the traveler who is strolling about the principal thoroughfares of Pekin is liable at a crossing of two main streets, to find a huge piece of patchwork cloth suspended from poles in such a way as to obstruct the view from all sides, only a narrow opening being left for carts and pedestrians. Pursuing his way, he notices that the entrance to all the many alleys is barricaded with rush-mats, and that the same kind of screen is placed in front of ruined temples and vacant lots which have been used as the places of deposit of filth or rubbish. Whenever the emperor is about to make his exit from the city or is about to return criers announce that fact to the people, who then disappear not to emerge until the invisible monarch has passed, when things go on as usual until the next occasion of a like nature.

There are two main benefits supposed to be attached to this characteristically oriental proceeding—it helps to preserve the fiction of the sacredness of the person of the emperor, and of his being something other than an ordinary mortal, and it is a valuable check upon reckless assassins of the Guiteau type, whom China could easily furnish in unlimited numbers. A third result is incidental. As the people see nothing of the emperor, so he sees nothing of the people. He is probably the only man in China who is unable to form any idea of what the Chinese are like or what they are about. What is seen in the imperial courts is no type either of China or of the Chinese, but it must be a literal impossibility for the emperor to get anything else upon which to base a notion of his empire. What does the emperor think, how much does he know, what does he think that he knows, does he think at all, what is the specific gravity of the darkness in which he perpetually abides, and how many bent rays of light reach him through the opaque oyster-shells known as "boards"?

This mat-and-bedquilt theory of government is not confined to the emperor, but runs all the way through the ranks of officialdom. The district magistrate is supposed to be the man that knows his district, and the prefect the man that knows his prefecture; but these are mere figures of speech used in a purely ideal way. No one in a district knows less of what is going on within its boundaries than the chief officials; no one would have more trouble in finding out what is going on, supposing he really desired to know. As a rule there is no one who really cares less to know, or who considers it less his business to know, provided the taxes are paid and the people are "tranquilized." It is very difficult for most Chinese officials to come to any useful conclusion as to their duties, for the reason that they generally have too little interest in the matter, and are in reality almost as much pinioned in shackles as the prisoners at the doors of their yamens wearing wooden platforms about their necks, but with this diffeernce, that the sentence on the prisoner is for a definite term and end, while that of the official is too often limited only by his life. Chinese officialdom is largely shut up in a shell, just as it was a generation ago, and if we hear the hammering within it is much more likely to be a defense against those outside to prevent their breaking in than an effort on the part of the imprisoned to get out.—London Times.

MYTHS OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

Curious Folk Lore of the Natives of Pacific Islands.

The savage islanders of the south Pacific believe that the world is a cocoanut shell of enormous dimensions, at the top of which is a single aperture communicating with the upper air, where human beings dwell. At the very bottom of this imaginary shell is a stem gradually tapering to a point, which represents the beginning of all things. This point is a spirit, or demon, without human form, whose name is "Root of all Existence." By him the entire fabric of creation is sustained.

In the interior of the cocoanut shell, at its very bottom, lives a female demon. So narrow is the space into which she is crowded that she is obliged to sit forever with knees and chin touching. Her name is "The Very Beginning," and from her are sprung numerous spirits. They inhabit five different floors, into which the great cocoanut is divided. From certain of these spirits mankind is descended. The islanders, regarding themselves as the only real men and women, were formerly accustomed to regard strangers as evil spirits in the guise of humanity, whom they killed when they could, offering them as sacrifices.

According to their belief, the sky was a blue vault of solid stone, around the bottom of which were a number of holes. Through these the wind spirit blew. The gods first spoke to man through certain small birds, but, because of their indistinct voices, an order of priests had to be set apart, the gods taking up their abode in these sacred persons. Priests were accordingly named "god boxes." From the gluttonous habits in which they indulged the phrase "to gormandize like a god" is derived. Their power was well-nigh unlimited. Anybody whom they disliked they could designate for sacrifice. Human sacrifices were very common, some families being devoted for generation after generation to furnishing such offerings.

One popular myth expresses the very poetical belief that the island of Tongareva was flashed out of the bottom of the sea by a god, who used for the purpose the tail of the constellation "Scorpio," baiting this remarkable hook with a star. Another divinity accomplished a work of great beneficence by regulating the sun. The orb of day used to have a trick of setting almost as soon as it had risen, so that it was impossible to get through any work. Even an oven of food could not be prepared and cooked before darkness came on. So the deity Maui carefully plaited six great ropes of strong cocoanut fiber, making nooses in the hole at the edge of the sky through which the sun climbs up from the nether world each morning. At this point of exit from the land of ghosts into the heavens the six nooses were placed. They entrapped the sun and that luminary was glad to agree to be in future more deliberate in his movements, so as to enable the inhabitants of the earth to get through their employments.

Originally the heavens almost touched the earth, but Maui and another god named Ru pushed them up to their present lofty position. However, the work was not complete, for the surface of the sky was very irregular. So they each took a big stone adze and with them chipped off the rough parts of the sky, thus giving it a perfectly oval appearance. Then they procured finer adzes, chipping away with them at the vault of blue stone until it became faultlessly smooth and beautiful, as it is now. There are ten heavens, one above another, which are the abode of warriors who have perished in battle.

Giant killers and destroyers of monsters are found in the folk lore of these islands as well as in that of other people. In the fairyland of Kupolu lived the renowned chief, Rata, who started on an exploring expedition in a great double canoe. He took with him a youth, named Nganaoa, who was a famous hand at slaying monsters, and this was very fortunate, because on the third day of their voyage an enormous clam rose out of the deep, its shell wide open to grab them. One shell was ahead, the other astern—the canoe and all on board lying between. In another moment they would have been crushed between the two fearful valves, but Nganaoa quickly drove his spear down into the animal, so that it sank to the bottom. Soon afterward an octopus of extraordinary dimensions encircled the boat with its tentacles, but Nganaoa thrust his spear through its head and killed it. Next a mighty whale attempted to gulp down the canoe, but Nganaoa broke his long spear in two, and at the moment when the monster was about to crush them he inserted both sticks inside the gaping mouth so that the enemy could not close its jaws.

Having accomplished this feat Nganaoa nimbly jumped into the mouth of the whale and looked down into its stomach. Lo! there sat his long lost father and mother, who had been swallowed alive while fishing by the monster. The old lady and gentleman were busily engaged in plaiting palm leaves, and great was their joy at seeing their son. Nganaoa resolved while rescuing his parents to be revenged upon the whale. Accordingly he took out one of the sticks, the other sufficing to hold the whale's mouth open, and broke it into two pieces. These he rubbed together and thus obtained a flame, with which he set fire to the fatty part of the stomach of the monster. The latter, in agony, swam to the nearest land, where on the sandy beach father, mother and son all walked out.—N. Y. Telegram.

OLD MAIDS ALL RIGHT.

There Are Hundreds of Ladies Who Do Not Marry Because They Don't Wish To.

There never was a greater mistake than the prevailing notion that because a woman passes the first flush of youth without joining hands at the altar with some lord of creation she must be inevitably an undesirable creature that from henceforth will be called an old maid and made the subject of silly jest and thoughtless ridicule.

As a woman talking to women, and men as well, we give as our candid opinion a rather pronounced statement, but one nevertheless that we believe in, namely, that no woman lives to the age of 35 without at least having one offer of marriage; therefore the silly notion that is coupled with the term "old maid" is entirely wrong.

A woman has her own reasons for remaining single. It isn't because no man wants her, but rather because she does not perhaps choose to ally herself with such ones that have done her the honor to ask her, or maybe there has been in her life some great disappointment, or a finding out before it is too late how much better it is to be even called an old maid than an unhappy wife.

Charming, attractive women, many there who are still classed among the sour-visaged, vinegary, elderly maidens, whom we are accustomed to seeing on the comic valentines, yet who, perhaps, instead of being, according to the general notion, mourning over their fate because they are not matrons rather than maids, could unfold many a heart story of love and romance to the gushing youngsters who, just starting out in life, think that to be an old maid is to be on the human bargain counter waiting for any chance purchaser.—Philadelphia Times.

Preserved Citrons.

Pare the citrons, cut them into halves and remove the seeds; then cut each half into regular small pieces not more than a quarter of an inch thick. Put them in a stone jar, add a half cupful of salt to every five pounds of citron. Cover with cold water and leave for five hours, then drain and cover with fresh cold water. Soak two hours, changing the water several times. Dissolve a teaspoonful of powdered alum in two quarts of boiling water, add the citron, bring to boiling point and drain. Make a sirup from two and a half pounds of white sugar to three pints of boiling water, boil and skim. When the sirup is perfectly clear put in the citron and simmer gently until you can pierce it with a straw. Skim the pieces out carefully and put them on a large dish in the sun to harden. Peel the yellow rind from one large lemon, add it to the sirup, then add the juice of two lemons and a small piece of green ginger root cut in small slices. Boil gently for ten minutes. When the citron has hardened put it cold into jars, bring the sirup again to a boil and then strain it over the citron.—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

—Fannie—"Does your mother wear a switch?" Mamie—"Yes, but she always uses her slipper."

HOUSEHOLD BREVITIES.

—Broiled Tenderloins.—Cut a tenderloin into three long steaks, flatten them and put on a broiler which has been greased over a quick fire; have a saucepan ready over the fire with a little melted butter in it, sprinkle a little salt over the tenderloins, put them in the saucepan for two or three minutes, then serve.—N. Y. Observer.

—Green Tomato Soy.—Take green tomatoes just before frost. Slice them thin. Put a layer of tomatoes, chopped onions, celery and mustard seed, pepper and salt, and two tablespoonfuls of white sugar; mace and cloves if fancied. Fill the kettle; add vinegar enough to cook them; when tender, add more vinegar, and boil a few minutes.—Harper's Bazar.

—Apple Custard Pie.—Peel, core and stew sour apples. Mash them very fine, and for each pie allow the yolk of one egg, one cup of sugar, one-half cup of butter, one-quarter of a nutmeg, grated. Bake with only one crust, the same as pumpkin pie, and use the white of the egg as frosting, to be spread on after the pie is done. Brown it nicely, by returning it to the oven for a few minutes.—Boston Budget.

—Flannel Cakes.—Rub two ounces of butter into a quart of sifted flour with the hands until well mixed; add one teaspoonful of salt. Mix together the beaten yolks of three eggs and one pint and a half of milk; add this to the flour; beat hard until smooth. Next add the whites of the eggs beaten to a stiff froth and two tablespoonfuls of baking powder. Bake quickly on a hot griddle, greased with fat pork.—N. Y. Observer.

—Rolls.—Let one pint of milk come to a boil; then add one tablespoon of butter and one tablespoon of sugar; cool and add one-half cup of soft yeast and flour to make a soft sponge; let it rise several hours, or, if for breakfast, over night, then stir flour in until the dough is firm; knead thoroughly; let it rise again, cut with a biscuit cutter and fold half-way over. When light bake in a quick oven half an hour. Watch carefully that they bake evenly and are a golden brown.—Boston Budget.

—Chocolate caramels are great favorites; and although the word caramel really means burnt sugar, it is often applied where this ingredient is entirely lacking. To make this candy at its best, one cup of sugar and half a cup of butter are creamed well together as if for cake, adding by degrees a cup of molasses and one of cream, if it is to be had—if not, milk will make an inferior substitute. Put all these ingredients in a saucepan and let them boil fast. When nearly done, which will be in about half an hour, add a cup of grated chocolate and stir well. Drop a little of the caramel into cold water and have ready buttered pans into which it may be poured an inch thick. Mark into squares when cool with the back of a warm knife.—Harper's Bazar.

THE CHARM OF COURTESY.

Alleged Well-bred Reserve—The Woman Who Dares to Be Affable.

If women could ever learn that it is quite possible to combine affability with dignity in commonplace, daily intercourse with their fellow creatures, this would be a far brighter and more agreeable world. Nine-tenths of the gentlewomen one knows would no more address an unintroduced female than bite off a bit of their own tongues. Not once in a blue moon do they dare converse with their servants, the clerk behind the counter, the chance companion of a railway journey, or even the lady who has dropped in to call on a mutual friend.

Awkwardness and timidity, with a sense of alleged well-bred reserve, seal their lips to every form of communication. In their shyness and stupid fear of furnishing an opportunity for undue familiarity they go through life like oysters, as far as those outside their narrow circle are concerned. But, thank heaven, there is a woman, and her tribe is increasing, who realizes all of the beautiful opportunities and rights the gift of speech gives her. She can afford to talk to her domestics about any and everything, and cement their affectionate respect with every word uttered.

Her kindly recognition of the shop-girl and fragment of pleasant gossip across the yardstick is a wholesome break in a clerk's dull day. To sit beside a respectable female for an hour's train travel, and not exchange greetings as two human beings touching in their journey of life, would confound her kindly nature. She is sure of her dignity, and, strong in its integrity, affords to do what a less fine-grained nature shrinks to essay. Her friendly, well-chosen words are as far removed from volubility as her cordial manners are from gush.

Recognizing the power of speech as the most potent of spells for removing dull, unlovely discontent, embarrassment, and loneliness, she is free with worthy thoughts graciously expressed. It is noticeable that such women never leave drawing-room, kitchen, shop or coach that every other creature of her kind present does not acknowledge to herself the supreme excellence of courtesy above all other feminine charms.—Illustrated American.

Baked Potatoes.

A baked potato is most delicious when served alone. No knife must touch it; break it carefully and squeeze the contents of the jackets into a light heap on the plate. Then sprinkle it with salt and it is an exquisite dish, to be eaten alone. Asparagus spoils everything it touches unless it be a little bit of toast, to which it imparts its own flavor. Green corn eaten from the cob, or after a slight boiling cut off and baked in a dish, will not be enjoyed as it should be if mixed with other food. Roast beef will bear nothing but mushrooms with it, and in spite of all that epicures may say we like it best when its blushing face, half hidden in the red veil dipped from the drops that followed the knife, is all we can see on the plate before us.—Journal of Commerce.

Made Him Weary.

Aunty—I love flowers. Don't you?

Young Nephew—I used to till I commenced to study botany. Now I hate 'em.—Good News.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL.

—Asabel Thornburg, who died at Muncie, Ind., recently, within fifty days of being a centenarian, left 111 great-grandchildren and seventeen great-great-grandchildren to mourn his loss.

—An ex-mayor of Philadelphia loaned his umbrella to an old woman who was hobbling through the rain on crutches, and lately received from the woman, who has received a heavy award from the spoliation claims committee, a magnificent gold-handled silk umbrella.

—A wealthy Scotch gentleman, who had intended to give each of his daughters a legacy of her weight in one-pound bank notes, had an official of the bank of Scotland to figure on the matter for him. It was found that the larger would get as her share 53,344; the slimmer 51,200.

—A story is told of the actress Mlle. Marie Magnier and her pearls. One day, as she was about to appear on the scene, somebody made the remark that her pearls were really of an enormous size. "It is true," she replied; "the lady whom I represent on the stage no doubt wore smaller pearls in real life. But what can I do? I have no small pearls."

—Mrs. Elizabeth Osby-Hunter, an eccentric old lady who recently died in London, forgot to leave anything substantial for her relatives, but bequeathed £500 a year to be held in trust for her parrot. In a codicil £500 was added with which to buy the parrot a new cage. Evidently the parrot used its tongue more wisely than the relatives.

—Capt. Greig, a Scotchman, who was known as the "king of Fanning island," has just died. Many years ago he took possession of Fanning island, a coral reef, and supplied vessels with guano. Soon after settling there he made a journey of one thousand miles to Honolulu to find a wife. He returned with his bride, and brought up a family in his lonely island home.

—Prof. Hubert A. Newton, of Yale, has been elected a member of the Royal Philosophical society, formed in 1660, and of which Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Christopher Wren were presidents. The only other Americans who have received the honor, it is stated, are Prof. J. D. Dana, of Yale; Prof. Simon Newcomb, superintendent of the nautical almanac, and Prof. Henry A. Rowland, of John Hopkins university.

—Marshal MacMahon, who was reported recently to be in ill health, was found out shooting by a correspondent who hunted him up to confirm the rumor. The marshal and a servant had started out after a six o'clock breakfast to trudge through the stubble and along lanes, and returned at nightfall with a full bag. The ex-president of France is still, despite his age—he is eighty-four—a good shot. His hand is steady and his aim sure. He lives at Laforet, in an unpretending country house, the most attractive feature of which, externally at least, is the veranda overgrown with vines.

"A LITTLE NONSENSE."

—Customer (who had lost his teeth, to the landlord who had served him with a very tough steak)—"Landlord, you are a flatterer."—Humoristische Blatter.

—Cholly Chapleigh—"I don't care a rap for the girl, and I wish she'd drop me." Miss Quickwit—"Perhaps she has been trying to drop you, but you won't tumble."—N. Y. Herald.

—He that is down need fear no fall.
So he that's standing up already
Stands quit of fear of any call
To give his seat up to a lady.
—Harper's Bazar.

—This is the way she wound up her letter: "P. S.—If this letter never reaches you, you will know that it is not my fault, as I shall give it to my husband to mail."—Minneapolis Journal.

—Beaten at Last.—"I saw something harder than your biscuits while I was away, dear," said Mr. Darley, pleasantly, to his wife. "Indeed?" "Yes. A cake of hotel soap."—Detroit Free Press.

—Public Opinion.—"I wonder whether hanging is a painful death? Some people say it isn't at all so." "It must be. Doesn't everybody say that there's nothing so painful as suspense?"—Pick-Me-Up.

—Trustworthy.—Madison Squeers—"There goes a woman who has perfect confidence in her husband." William New—"How do you know?" Madison Squeers—"Why, she trusts him with her dog."—Puck.

—She (quizzingly)—"Nonsense! I'll wager you'll be tired of marriage within twenty-four hours after you've bought me my first new dress" He (heroically)—"Well, then, I'll never buy one for you."—Tit-Bits.

—"Life in this country," said the philosopher, "is a heap like going to the circus. Soon as a man gets to the front all the fellows on the back seats insist on him sitting down out of the way."—Indianapolis Journal.

—"'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour," she sighed romantically. "Great Scott, Miss Passeigh, said Billy Bliven with genuine sympathy, "you don't mean to say you have had trouble as long as all that!"—Washington Star.

—Suitor—"Madam, I love you!" Widow—"That's an old story." Suitor—"I adore you!" Widow—"A hackneyed phrase." Suitor—"I can not live without you and I wish to marry you." Widow—"An original idea at last; yes, I like that."—Der Floh.

—Mrs. Flutter—"I hear the dealers are going to raise the price of sealskin sacques this winter." Mrs. Slimpurse—"I hope they'll be more successful than I am. I've been trying to raise the price of one for the past three years."—Binghamton Republican.

—"Miss Myra, do you use cosmetics?" "No, George." "Do you dote on physical culture?" "No, George." "Are you fond of ice cream and confectionery?" "No, George." "Do you belong to a cooking class?" "No, George." "Priceless maid, will you link your fortunes with mine forever?" "No, George."—Pharmaceutical Era.