The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1922

DO IT WELL

If you have a song worth singing,
Put your whole soul in the song;
Put your pulse beat to its music,
It will help the song along.
For the hearer feels the keynote,
And the import it will tell,
And the song that's worth the singing
Is the song worth singing well.

If you have a task worth doing,
Though the humblest kind of work,
Put your whole thought in your labor,
Nor the slightest detail shirk.
If a thing is worth the doing,
It is worth the doing well,
And success will surely find you
And abroad your merit tell.

If you have an hour for idling,
Give the time to rest and play;
Aye, forget that work awaits you,
'Tis by far the better way.
For whate'er is worth the doing
It is worth the doing well,
Whether it is song or labor
Or an hour's resting spell.
—M. Winchester Adams.

The Sheffield Party

Anna Brownell Dunaway

"I SUPPOSE," Mrs. Sheffield said a bit doubtfully, "we could afford a simple party, Sara, but just now what with the business depression and the dentist's bill and the cost of everything—"

"The immortal Dickens," broke in Sara whimsically, "had nothing on us when he wrote Hard Times, mother, and I'm sick and tired of hearing about hard times. If we weren't so everlastingly-poor!"

Aunt Lib eyed her niece disapprovingly. "Poor!" she cried. "Poor! Think of the starving children in Russia and of bread lines a mile long. You ought to look at the other side, Sara."

"Now, auntie," said Sara, "don't be preachy. Why think about unpleasant things? There's another side. Take the girls over on Pershing Avenue where we used to live before we came down in the world. Why, they have everything. There's Evelyn, for instance. At her party they had a caterer and a decorator, and the favors were scrumptious, and the ices were moulded in the shape of doves. If I can't give a real party—"

Dorothy Ellen, who was undergoing martyrdom at the ironing board, burst out indignantly, "You think you're smart, Sara Sheffield, just because you're sixteen! If I were mother I shouldn't let you have a party!"

"Did you speak, Dot?" inquired Sara of her small sister.

"Smarty, smarty had a party;
Nobody came but a little fat darky!"

gibed Dorothy Ellen.

"There, there, Dorothy Ellen," interposed Mrs. Sheffield mildly. "Never mind; finish daddy's handkerchiefs. That's a good girl."

Dorothy Ellen picked up a fresh one and sighed. When it came to ironing the iron fairly entered her soul. "When I'm married," she announced positively, "my husband shan't use big handkerchiefs. He's got to have little ones like mine."

Sara giggled.

"Smarty, smarty," began Dorothy Ellen wrathfully, "had a party—"

But Sara, pencil in hand, was too much engrossed in sundry calculations to pay any attention. "Let me see," she said thoughtfully, "there would be only ten, mother, besides me; it ought not to cost very much."

"A simple party wouldn't," admitted her mother. "I think if you just informally invited the girls in and made fudge and toasted marshmallows—"

"Why, mother! You don't know Evelyn. She's the snippiest thing! She's all the time remarking, 'So-and-so is not in our class socially.' I can just imagine her say, 'Why our washwoman's daughter down in Clabber Alley could give a better party than that!'"

"I don't want my daughter to be a snob, Sara," said Mrs. Sheffield quietly. "Perhaps you judge Evelyn by your own standards. There is no aristocracy in mere wealth, but only in mind, and culture, in kind hearts and simple faith."

"Sari's so sal-fish," put in Dorothy Ellen, championing her mother's cause. "When I'm grown up I'm going to do just as mother says."

"And so am I, goosey," said Sara, laughing. Then she sighed. "Of course I can't have caterers and things, but I'll send formal invitations. And we'll borrow Mrs. Dooley's punch bowl and use the drawn-work lunch cloth father brought from Mexico. Dot can open the door and direct them upstairs—and, or, if we could only have an orchestra playing off in a conservatory as Evelyn—"

"Huh!" Jimmy roused himself from a dowdy study of plane geometry. "Maybe you'd like to have me battle—"

"Would you, Jimmy? The girls don't know you, and you'd look every inch a butler!"

"I should sa-ay not! Catch me! Girls," he added with brotherly candor, "give me a swift pain."

"Did you say I could open the door, Sara?" Dorothy Ellen broke in gleefully. True to feminine instinct, she had switched over to her sister's side. "D-o-oah, won't it be grand! And can I wear your blue sash?"

"If I weren't so sal-fish," Sara said gravely, "and so smarty—"

"You're not," declared Dorothy Ellen. "You're lovely."

Now that the die was cast, preparations for the party went merrily on. That evening Sara proceeded to write her invitations. After she had spoiled half a box of paper and written a number in a cramped, schoolgirl hand Dorothy Ellen came to her rescue with a red volume entitled the Uplift Manual for Home, School and Office.

"Here's some invitations and things," she announced importantly. With her finger on a page she intoned in her best class recitation manner, "Letter of sympathy on the death of an infant. Con-g-r-a—oh, yes, congratulations on an ap- ap—approaching marriage—"

"Heh, heh!" laughed Jimmy in an excess of mirth. "Haw, haw!"

"Well, that's what it says, smarty," cried Dorothy Ellen defensively. She continued to spell out slowly, "Letter r-e-q-u-e-s-t—requesting loan of money."

At that apparently unimportant statement Mr. Sheffield looked up from his paper and smiled.

"Never mind, Dot," said Sara. "Go on; that's a dear. You'll come to it."

"I-n, in—l-r-o-tro—introducing a gentleman to a lady," spelled Dorothy Ellen and hastened on. "Letters of c-o-n, con—condolence on the de—decease of a husband—" She glared at the writhing form of Jimmy. "Well, if you don't believe it—" Hastily she turned over several pages. "Invitation to dinner; invitation for evening—"

"That's it, Dot! That's what we want."

Dorothy Ellen read triumphantly: "Mr. and Mrs. William Howard Pickle. At Home—"

Sara snatched the book.

"Pickell, goosey, not Pickle." Thank goodness, at last!" She studied the form and after much effort wrote the following: "Miss Sara Sheffield requests the pleasure of your company at a party on Saturday evening—"

"I say, sis," Jimmy broke in, "what's the date of the senior play?"

"The twentieth," answered Sara absently, without looking up. She finished the copy and inspected it critically. "There, I think that will do. I'll just copy this card for all the invitations. Then I'll get them in the mail to-morrow. They'll receive them Friday. And then the next day"—she squeezed Dorothy Ellen ecstatically—"will be the party!"

Preparations for the event went on rapidly. Friday Mrs. Sheffield went to the city and bought nut cups and place cards and materials for favors. When she had bought mints and a few flowers and a new hair ribbon for Dorothy Ellen the amount reached an alarming total. She went home tired out, and her feet ached miserably. It seemed that the party was to be anything but simple, after all.

That night she and Aunt Lib and Sara worked on the favors and the decorations until almost twelve o'clock.

"If we are poor," declared Sara, "we can be artistic!"

"Humph!" Aunt Lib, ruffling a frill for a nut cup, tore the dainty paper in her exasperation. "When I was a girl we didn't have such highfalutin' ways. The best party I ever went to they had sausage and rhubarb pie."

"Why, Aunt Lib!" Sara was scandalized. "I'd like to see Evelyn—"

"It was good, too," Aunt Lib went on reminiscently. "They were plain folks, and they didn't put on. The memory of that rhubarb pie has made my mouth water these thirty years."

"Oh, you and your rhubarb!" Sara broke in, laughing. "Mother, are you going to order the 'lces?'"

"I'll freeze the cream myself," said Mrs. Sheffield wearily. "It's so much less expensive. We'd better get to bed now, for Nettie's coming early to clean."

"Then we'll leave this mess for her," said Sara, yawning. She gave her mother an affectionate hug. "Mother, I can hardly wait till to-morrow night."

"I can hardly wait till it's over," put in Aunt Lib grimly.

All day Saturday the house was in a state of upheaval. Nettie, the colored woman whom they occasionally hired for cleaning, polished and scrubbed until things fairly shone. Mrs. Sheffield baked two cakes and froze a freezer of cream. Sara polished the silver and the cut glass and arranged the small tables.

By six o'clock the house looked stately, cold and formal. The library table was crowded of books and papers and, draped in the drawn-work lunch cloth, supported a massive punch bowl in which mint leaves scattered between floating blocks of ice gleamed like little green islands. The tables were strewn with rose petals and fern leaves.

"It looks heathenish to me," said Aunt Lib critically. "Is it practical? Can a body eat 'em?"

She flounced into the kitchen, where she ate a cheese sandwich. Supper that evening was in the nature of a "hand-out." Nettie, who had remained, brewed tea and in the seclusion of the pantry nibbled surreptitiously at sundry toothsome edibles.

At eight o'clock everyone was in a state of painful expectancy. Mr. Sheffield in an uncomfortably stiff collar gave only divided attention to the evening paper. Mrs. Sheffield in her Sunday-go-to-meeting gown watched the clock nervously. Jimmy, chafing under parental authority, glowering applied polish to his best shoes; and Dorothy Ellen, a fairy like apparition, stood at attention at the front door. Sara, pale with excitement, flitted round like a bird on the wing. The moments seemed to drag. Aunt Lib with an eye on the door, lost count in her tatting. At a quarter past eight, Nettie broke the strained silence.

"Dey sho am late." Her approving glance fell on Dorothy Ellen, who with arms hanging primly was still patiently standing like a sentinel, and she burst out admiringly, "Ef dat ain't the cutenest young un. Talk about yo-all footmans! Dorothy Ellen, honey, yo is sho de most mannerable child!"

No one replied. At any other time such praise would have met with hearty response. It was as if nothing in life mattered except the ding of the doorbell. The silence grew oppressive. The ticking of th clock sounded like blows from a hammer. With a stentorian chime the half hour struck.

"Why don't they come?" burst out Sara.

"I can't imagine what's keeping them," said Mrs. Sheffield, anxiously.

The hands of the clock travelled on to nine, and still no guests came. Dorothy Ellen had slid to the floor, and her blue eyes were glued pathetically to the door knob. Nettie swayed rhythmically in the kitchen rocker. Tears stood in Sara's eyes.

"I don't know what to think," began Mrs. Sheffield. "It seems strange that none of them telephoned or sent any reply. Are you sure you gave the date? Of course the telephone has been out of order—"

"Mother!" Sara whirled round with eyes flashing. "They didn't try! They didn't want to come! It's all Evelyn. She was so snippy. Just because she lives on Pershing Avenue she thinks we are nobodies! She leads them all. She's done this just for spite—"

"They may have been delayed," Mr. Sheffield broke in hopefully. "It is only a quarter past nine."

But Sara answered in a heartbreaking voice, "They are not coming. And after all our work! O mother, mother—"

She fled blindly to her bedroom and flung herself on the bed, sobbing. From the kitchen came the sound of Nettie's snores in rhythmic time with the creak of her rocker. Dorothy Ellen's head had fallen on her breast. Another half hour rang out. Mr. Sheffield pushed back his paper. "Well!" he said helplessly.

"I call it a rotten shame," burst forth Jimmy.

From the bedroom came faint, stifled sobs. He flung his geometry at the unoffending cat. Mrs. Sheffield stooped and gathered Dorothy Ellen into her arms. Tears were in her eyes.

"Smarty, smarty, had a party," Dorothy Ellen mumbled sleepily; "nobody—"

Sara, lying in a white, inert heap, caught the muffled words, "Nobody came," and she finished the couplet and repeated it over and over monotonously. The ridiculous words had been prophetic. And after all the work and worry and expense, all her delightful anticipation, only Nettie—only Nettie!"

"Do you want some of the ice cream, dear?" It was her mother's voice.

"O mother, I couldn't—I couldn't—" Her voice broke in a sob.

"For thirty cents," exploded Jimmy, removing his pinching shoes, "I'd punch that Evelyn creature's head!"

"I'll tell her what I think of her," cried Sara to herself. "I will! I will!"

But as she grew calmer she decided to ignore the slight. She would not be obliged to see the girls. They attended a different school. It would be best, she thought, to go her separate way and forget them. She would neither telephone nor write to demand an explanation. She would no longer call them friends—girls who could do such a despicable thing.

A week went by, and no word of explanation came from the girls. The Sheffield family slipped back into its usual routine. The hurt lay deep in Sara's eyes, but out of the bitter experience she had learned something. It had taught her the value of sincerity. She had come to despise her old false standards.

"You had rhubarb, and I had rue," she told Aunt Lib laughingly the Saturday evening after the ill-fated party.

Mrs. Sheffield looked up quickly. "Something you can give another party, Sara. You can make new friends. Perhaps we could manage one this winter after we'—she sailed gracefully—"have recovered from the expense of the last one. With Nettie's bill and the favors and things it cost us fifteen dollars."

"Never again, mother," Sara cried. "Not that kind of party! But fifteen dollars is well lost in educating your ninnyhah daughter. My next party will be wholly without pretense. They can take us as we are. Just think of this time a week ago!"

"Gee, I'm glad we're not looking for that rabble to-night!" cried Jimmy, who was stretched out luxuriously on the floor. "This is something like it, this is!"

Sara looked round the pleasant room and laughed. "It is comfortable if it is inelegant," she said. "I wonder what Evelyn would say to father with his collar off; to mother paring watermelon rinds; to Dot putting doll clothes on the family cat. What's that?" She looked up, startled, and listened intently. There was the sound of trampling feet on the porch. The doorbell pealed loudly.

"Mercy on us!" cried Aunt Lib, hastily reaching under the table for her slippers.

Another peal sounded. Mr. Sheffield strode to the door and threw it open. A laughing, shouting group of girls pushed inside.

"Why, girls!" stammered Sara. "Why, girls! Why, Evelyn!"

"Many happy returns!" cried Evelyn gayly. "Come on, girls, with your peace offerings. Here's mine," she extended a dainty tissue-wrapper parcel.

Sara caught only the words, "peace offerings." They were trying to atone. "You should have let me know," she began stiffly, "if you had let mother know anyway—"

"But you invited us, didn't you? And we could hardly wait. Sending us invitations that day a week ahead of time! That's one way to torture your friends, Sara Sheffield."

"But!"—Sara was slowly grasping a possible explanation—"my birthday was last week. We looked for you last Saturday night, the thirteenth—"

"Thirteenth?" There was a shrill chorus of protests. "They read Saturday, the twentieth as plain as day."

With ready tact Mrs. Sheffield came quickly to the rescue. "Why, it's all right, girls, I'm sure. Dorothy Ellen, take their wraps into the guest room. Sara merely made a mistake in the date she probably got it mixed with the senior play. But we can have a party anyhow. Go right into the kitchen and make fudge, all you want. Jimmy will run down to the drug store and get some marshmallows. And there's plenty of cream and cheese for a what-you-may-call-it—a rick-tum-tiddy?"

"Oh," cried Evelyn; "isn't it just too lovely! Give me an apron, Sara. You were so high-toned with your formal old invites that we all had to wear our best bibs and tuckers. Lead me to the kitchen."

It was a hilarious party. Even Jimmy condescended to let Evelyn tie an apron on him. Dorothy Ellen asked nothing more of life. Since there was no rhubarb pie, Aunt Lib unearthed a crock of doughnuts, and Mrs. Sheffield cut innumerable substantial sandwiches that disappeared with lightninglike quickness. From his comfortable chair Mr. Sheffield looked on benignly and munched fudge and read the stock reports. And when they had stayed until the last possible moment, Jimmy gallantly escorted them to the car line and carried Evelyn's party bag. He returned to find the family in a state of musing elation.

"Reminds me of the parties they had when I was a girl," declared Aunt Lib.

"And it was so sweet of them to wash and wipe every dish," added Mrs. Sheffield.

"And, O, mother," exclaimed Sara, "I was all wrong about Evelyn! She's true blue!"

"I'll say she is," Jimmy averred with fervor and straightened his necktie.

NEW MOTOR FUELS

The number of motor vehicles is increasing so much faster than the supplies of gasoline that the fuel problem is all the time getting more serious. Alcohol has often been suggested; but it is not altogether satisfactory, and the supply is not great enough to enable it to take the place of gasoline.

Benzole has also been tried and while satisfactory, it too is not produced in sufficient quantities to become the universal fuel, and it would not be desirable to build several different kinds of motors to use the different fuels. A mixture of the available fuels naturally suggests itself, and experiments that have been made show that alcohol does not mix properly with gasoline, but benzole dissolves both alcohol and gasoline. It has been found that a mixture of twenty-five per cent. of each—of gasoline and of benzole—with fifty per cent. of alcohol works very satisfactory in our present vehicle motors, and as these proportions correspond fairly well with the output of the various ingredients that may be anticipated, this may prove to be the solution of the fuel problem—unless advances are made in the design of crude oil motors.

Corns are painful growths. Holloway's Corn Remover will remove them.

PREPARING FOR GARDENING

This month begins the active gardening work. Hot-beds should be made, and the seed of the early plants like cabbage, cauliflower, early celery, early beets, and the long season plants like tomatoes, egg plants and peppers, should be started. Many of these seeds for small gardening work may be started inside which will relieve the necessity of making hot-beds until the first part of next month. Manure for top-dressing the ground may be hauled out the latter part of this month.

Asthma No Longer Dreaded.—The dread of renewed attacks from asthma has no hold upon those who have learned to rely upon Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy. So safe do they feel that complete reliance is placed on this true specific with the certainty that it will always do all that its makers claim. If you have not yet learned how safe you are with this preparation at hand get it to-day and know for yourself.

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"GO WHERE HE WILL"

It was not a very pretty room. It would not be beautiful even after Sophia should have arranged her pictures on the walls, and made the most of every piece of furniture she possessed. It was, in fact, somewhat cramped, and with a sloping ceiling that seemed to cut off much of its space, and two windows which were correspondingly small—more "half windows" with sashes that swung outward and would not take kindly to the pretty draperies that had graced Sophia's room in the city home. Mother, to be sure, had promised to cut and fit and adjust the curtains to the little square spaces, and had called her daughter's attention to the hill view beyond those windows, and Sophia had politely but wearily assented. Mother had gone downstairs with feet that lagged and with a mouth that dropped at the corners. Somehow it did not occur to Sophia, yet, that mother and father, too, and the twelve-year-old sister, Madge, were doubtless finding this change to a small village a difficult one.

Sorrowfully Sophia looked down the unpaved street. It was winter and early evening. The snow glistening everywhere was doing its best to glorify the landscape. Lights were twinkling in all the small houses in sight. There is something wonderfully sweet and suggestive in this showing of the home lights in any city or village, each light standing as it does for family life and its own special interests. Downstairs Sophia could hear her mother and little sister moving about between the dining room and kitchen. She ought to be down helping them, she knew, and took a swift look at her reflection in the mirror—to see if her eyes were red. They were not, she decided; she had instead a sort of interesting pallor, and no wonder, when she was so desperately, desperately homesick! All her special girl friends so far away, and in spite of their vows of unchanging friendship, she would inevitably drop out of their thoughts, their plans, as time went on. She must be the one to remember, to cry her eyes out in the dark, reviewing her sad sweet memories. Sophia drew in her breath, sobbing, at the thought, and it was ten minutes later before she joined the two dour workers in the kitchen. Oh, to be young and blithe like Madge, thought Sophia, as she watched her little sister flitting between pantry and table. "How soon children forget!" sighed Sophia from her seventeen-year-old maturity—never dreaming that Madge was making the brave effort of her little life to keep mother and father from suspecting that she was homesick for the girls she had left so far away, for the dear, dear home itself. But mothers have an uncanny way of understanding things without being told! And once while Madge was arranging the cups and saucers, Mrs. Gould stopped to give the slender little shoulder a tender hug!

"Won't it be fine, mother, when we get everything straightened out?" Madge said, as she turned to give back the hug with interest. "And isn't it going to be wonderful to have such a great big yard as we have?"

"Happy, unthinkable child!" mused Sophia, as she indulged in an audible sigh.

"I'm afraid this is a rather cold, cheerless supper," mother ruminated. "Just the sliced meat and canned peaches, and nothing hot but the tea. But it's been such a strenuous day—and—"

"Oh, of course," said Sophia. "I'm ashamed not to have been down helping half an hour ago—but to tell the truth—I—"

What the truth she was going to tell, mother never would know, for just then came a knock at the side door, and opening it, Sophia confronted a sweet-faced girl about her own age, the wool scarf over her brown hair flecked with glistening snowflakes.

"Mother thought perhaps—" she began, then broke off smilingly. "Do pardon me, I haven't even introduced myself. I'm Laura Gregory, and your next door neighbor. No, thank you, I mustn't come in. Mother thought perhaps you'd like some hot corn pudding—so she made two of them tonight—and this is yours. You know we are not at all formal in little villages, or I wouldn't dare make such a 'first call' as this."

The corn pudding, bubbling hot, was in Sophia's hands, golden symbol of the sweet village friendliness that in time the girl would grow to prize so highly. "Do come in," she said, "just to let mother thank you anyway! It's so lovely of you to come!"

"What a beautiful friendly thing to do—and how delicious it looks. I was mourning that we had such an unappetizing cold supper," Mrs. Gould told the young visitor. "Do thank your mother, and thank you, for bringing it."

Madge had joined the group by this time, and her round little face grew bright as Laura told her she had a little sister "just about her age!"

"And we're all of us going to call just as soon as it's proper—as soon as you care to see visitors," she said laughingly.

"Come very soon, then," smiled Mrs. Gould. And "Yes, do please," added Sophia and Madge together.

"What a lovely neighborly thing it was to do for such perfect strangers as we are," Mrs. Gould remarked, as the family sat down at the table a few minutes later. "That is one beautiful thing about village life—such sweet friendliness! It goes a long way toward making up for the things we are going to miss!"

"Yes, indeed, it does," Mr. Gould said. "I've been having my share of depressed thought," he added, with a tender smile around his circle, "and a large share, for naturally I've felt distressed beyond words that I couldn't have spared you all the sorrow of moving from the old home, feeling, in fact," his voice dropped a bit, "that I've made a good deal of a failure of my affairs. Yes, yes," he persisted, as a loving clamor of protest arose from the others. "No matter how good my intentions and efforts were, the fact remains that I couldn't keep up and had to bring you all to this."

"Oh, Len, what an absurd way to feel—and this is going to be lovely, too—our home here and all of us together—and good neighbors. Why, we shall be so happy!" Mrs. Gould beamed around the little circle. "Do you know the words that have been ringing in my head to-day—something from Emerson—

"'Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
His hearth-the earth—his hall the azure dome;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.'"

"Good!" said Mr. Gould, his tired face alight, as he turned it to his wife. "No wonder they called him 'The Sage of Concord!'"

Sophia's eyes turned from one dear face to another. The gentle eyes of that new neighbor of theirs seemed to smile upon her, too. It came to her with a flash of understanding—this fact of the essential goodness and sweetness of life—where bravely lived, in whatever part of the world it might be. And when she had her dearest ones to walk the new paths with her, and "God's own light" to "illumine the road"—what right had she to ask for further blessedness!

Somehow the sweetness of it all seemed almost overpowering and she must hurry back to more commonplace ground or be in danger of breaking down before them all.

"When we know the Gregorys better we must ask them for their recipe for corn pudding—mustn't we, mother?" she asked practically. "It's the most delicious thing."

RUBBER FROM MAIZE

Have you ever used one of those red rubber bath sponges? They serve the purpose excellently. But they aren't rubber, really. They are made of a gum called "paragol," which is extracted from the germ of Indian corn.

Perhaps you wear shoes with rubber soles. If so, it is likely that 20 per cent. of their material—of the soles, that is—is this same corn-germ gum.

The eraser tips of millions of lead pencils are paragol, and not rubber at all.

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ESTABLISHED 1872

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