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Nov. 9, '06.

The Fountain of Youth.

Like pretty much everything else, this matter of having children has two sides to it. As a great many children are failures and as children are the joint product of heredity and environment, both elements preponderantly under parental control, it would seem more sensible to say that there were too many people undertaking parental responsibility instead of too few. And, further, parenthood has many cares and sorrows and exasperations. Still, when all is said, how many persons who have found themselves childless at forty-five have been able honestly to congratulate themselves?

Children have a use as an assurance against destitution and loneliness in old age. They are satisfactory to the vanity for family immortality. But more than these and all other advantages is the advantage of prolonging one's life. Growing children will keep any proper man or woman young in spirit and in mind, will retard the development of that sour yet complacent cynicism which courses old age both for oneself and for those about one.

The man or the woman—again, the right sort of man or woman—who has children drinks every day a deep draft at the fountain of eternal youth.

The Dammaras of Africa.

In Galton's "Tropical South Africa" it is stated that the Dammaras use no term beyond three and that when they wish to express four they take to their fingers. Beyond five they cannot count at all. It is seldom, however, that they lose in a bargain through their inability to count. When bartering, each sheep or ox or whatever they may be selling must be paid for separately. If this rate of exchange were at the rate of two sticks of tobacco for one sheep it would greatly puzzle a Dammarra to accept four sticks for two sheep. Galton says that he several times paid them in that way and that the Dammarra forthwith set aside two sticks for one of the sheep, and even when he found that he had two sticks left for the other sheep he still had his doubts as to the genuineness of the transaction and was not satisfied until two sticks were put into his hand and two sheep driven away and then another two sticks given to him for the other sheep.

The Flight of the Locust.

Writing in the Empire Review on the locust in South Africa, S. B. Kitchen says: Locusts are very tiny creatures, at most two or three inches long, yet giant jawed and shelled in a grain brown mail so hard that as they strike it causes a sharp smart. They travel in such numbers that it takes them four or five days to pass over. The locusts alone, hovering in patches like red dust clouds, are numerous enough to destroy the vegetation of a district, while the main body, high up in the air, a host of little black specks, stretches out into an interminable screen between heaven and earth. The fanning of their wings brings a fresh coolness over the hot earth even in the depths of summer. There seems to be a fresh breath of ozone as of the sea.

The Laughing Hyena.

Although the hysterical laughter of the laughing hyena is not, as was once supposed, the outcome of a deliberate attempt to decoy unwary travelers to their doom, this strange animal is, nevertheless, one of the most cunning of dumb animals. He is so suspicious of everything he does not understand that the sight of even a bit of string at once puts him on his guard. Trappers are aware of this fact and generally use the stems of creeping plants instead of string of any kind in setting their spring traps.

Preserving the Traditions.

"Yes, I have launched my new yacht," said Muchpop.
"What do you call her?" asked the friend.
"Named her for my native city—Brooklyn."
"And did you smash a bottle of wine across her bow when she was christened?"
"No, indeed! We broke a nursing-bottle full of milk."—Judge.

Father and Son.

Little Bobby—I can't find my hat and coat.
Father (rushing about)—I can't find mine either. I don't see what your mother does with things. She's gone out, and there's nothing for us to do but hunt till we find 'em or else stay in.
Little Bobby (after long thought)—Let's look on the hall rack.

Imposing.

She (at the review grounds)—What an imposing figure Captain Borrowes has!
He—Yes; naturally so.
She—And why naturally, pray?
He—Oh, he's always imposing on his friends.

Called Him Brother.

Harlow—I noticed you called Fred "brother." Does he belong to some secret society that you do?
Shallop—I don't belong to any secret society. I call him brother because my wife once promised to be a sister to him.

Like a Charm.

Customer (angrily)—You said that hair restorer you sold me a couple of weeks ago would work like a charm, and it didn't do any good at all.
Druggist—But, my dear sir, no one in this enlightened age believes in the efficacy of charms.

Ambiguities of Parrot Talk.

Ida—That parrot is always saying, "Sit close."
May—Yes. It's hard to say whether his former owner was a street car conductor or a young lady keeping regular company.—St. Louis Star.

A Backwoods Sunday

By Opie Read

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A SUNDAY in the backwoods of Tennessee, viewed by one whose feet rarely stray from the worn paths of active life, may hold nothing attractive, but to the old men and women—the youth and maiden of the soil—it is a poem that comes once a week to encourage young love with its soft sentiment and soothe old labor with its words of promise. In the country where the streams are so pure that they look like strips of sunshine, where the trees are so ancient that one almost stands in awe of them, where the moss, so old that it is gray and, hanging from the rocks in the ravine, looks like venerable beards growing on faces that have been hardened by years of trouble—in such a country even the most slouching clown, walking as though stepping over clods when plowing where the ground breaks up hard, has in his untutored heart a love of poetry. He may not be able to read, may never have heard the name of a son of genius, but in the evening, when he stands on a purple "knob" watching the soul of day sink out of sight in a faraway valley, he is a poet.

When the shadow of Saturday night falls upon a backwoods community in Tennessee, a quiet joy seems to lurk in the atmosphere. The whippoorwill has sung unheeded every night during the week, but tonight his song brings a promise of rest. The tired boy sits in the door and, taking off his shoes, strikes them against the log doorstep to knock the dirt out, and the cat that has followed the women when they went to milk the cows comes and rubs against him. The humming bird, looking for a late supper, buzzes among the honeysuckle blossoms, and the tree



"Anybody goin home with you, Liza?"
Liza cries in the locust tree. The boy goes to bed thrilled with an expectation. He muses, "I will see somebody tomorrow."

On the morrow the woods are full of music. The great soul of day rises with a burst of glory, and the streams, bounding over the rocks or dreaming among the ferns, laugh more merrily and seem to be brighter than they were yesterday. Horses neigh near an old log church, and a swelling hymn is borne away on the blossom scented air. The plowboy, sitting near the spring, heeds not the sacred music, but gazes intently down the shady road. He sees some one coming—sees the fluttering of a gaudy ribbon—and is thrilled. A young woman comes up the road, coyly tapping an old mare with a dogwood switch, and, eager lest some one else may perform the endearing office, he hastens to help the young woman to alight. He tries to appear unconcerned as he takes hold of the bride rein, but he stumbles awkwardly as he leads the animal toward the horse block. When he has helped her down and has tied the horse, it is his blessed privilege to walk with the girl as far as the church door.

"What's Jim a-doin?" he asks as they walk along under the embarrassing gaze of a score of men.
"Plowed yistidy; ain't doin nothin today."
"Be here today, I reckon," he rejoins.
"He went to preachin at Ebenezer."
"What's Tom a-doin?"
"Went to mill yistidy; ain't doin nothin today."
"Be here today, I reckon."
"He loved her most, but I don't know whether he will or not."
"What's Alf a-doin?"
"Cut sprouts on denuded trees yistidy; ain't doin nothin today."
"Be here today, I reckon."
"Yes, 'lowed he was comin with Sue Prior."
"Anybody goin home with you, Liza?"
"Not that I know of."
"Waal, if nobody else ain't spoke, I'd like to go."
"We'll see about it," she answers and then enters the church. He saunters off and sits down under a tree where a number of young men are wallowing on shawls spread on the grass. The preacher becomes warm in his work, and the plowboy hears him exclaim, "What can a man give in exchange for his own soul?" But he is not thinking of souls or of any existence beyond the horizon of this life. His mind is on the girl with the gaudy ribbon, and

he is asking his heart if she loves him. The shadows are now shorter, and hungry men cast glances at the sun, but the preacher, shouting in broken accents, appears not to have reached the first milestone of his text, and it is evident that he started out with the intention of going a "Sabbath day's journey." One young fellow places his straw hat over his face and tries to sleep, but some one tickles him with a spear of grass. An old man who has stood it as long as he could in the house and who has come out and lain down gets up, stretches himself, brushes a clinging leaf off his gray jeans trousers and declares: "A bite to eat would hit me harder than a sermon writ on a rock. Don't see why a man wants to talk all day."
"Thought you was mighty fond of preachin, Uncle John?" some one remarks.

"Ain't but I don't want a man to go over an over what he has already done said. If my folks wa'n't in thar I'd mos'ly of home an git suthin to eat."

"Good book says a man don't live by bread alone, Uncle John."

"Yes; but it don't say that he lives by preachin alone, nuther. Hol' on; they are singin the doxology now, an I reckon she will soon be busted."

The plowboy goes home with his divinity, Uncle John's daughter. "Reckon Jim will be at home?" he asks as they ride along.

"He mout be. Air you awful anxious to see him?"
"Not so powerful. Jest 'lowed I'd ask. I know who's yo' sweetheart," he says after a pause.

"Bet you don't."
"Bet I do."
"Who is it, then, Mr. Smarty?"
"Alec Jones."

"Who, hm? Think I'd have that freckle faced thing?"
"Waal, if he ain't, I know who is."
"Bet you couldn't think of his name in a hundred years."

"You mout think I can't, but I can."
"Waal, who, then, since you air so smart?"
"Morg Atcherson."

"Ho! I wouldn't speak to him if I was to meet him in the road."
"But you'd speak to some people if you was to meet them in the road, wouldn't you?"
"Yes, of course I would."
"Who would you speak to?"
"Oh, lots of folks. Did you see that bird almost hit me?" she suddenly exclaims.

"I reckon he 'lowed you was a flower."
"Oh, he didn't, no such of a thing. You ought to be ashamed of yo'self to make fun of me that way."
"I wa'n't makin fun of you. Ho! If I was to ketch anybody makin fun of you it wouldn't be good for him."
"What would you do?"
"I'd whale him."
"You air awful brave, ain't you?"
"Never mind what I am. I know that if any man was to make fun of you I'd have me to whup."

A number of people have stopped at Uncle John's house. They sit in the large passageway running between the two sections of the log building, and the men, who have not heard the sermon, discuss it with the women, who were compelled to hear it from halting start to excited finish. The sun is blazing out in the fields, and the June bugs are buzzing in the yard. It is indeed a day of rest for the young and old, but is it a restful time for the housewife? Does that woman, with flushed face, running from the kitchen to the dining room and then to the springhouse for the crock jar of milk, appear to be resting? Do the young men and women that are lolling in the passage realize that they are making a slave of her? Probably not, for she assures them that it is not a bit of trouble, yet when night comes—when the company is gone—she sinks down, almost afraid to wish that Sunday might never come again, yet knowing that it is the day of her heavy bondage. Old labor has been soothed, and young love has been encouraged, but her trials and anxieties have been more than doubled.

It is night, and the boy sits in the door, taking off his shoes. Tomorrow he must go into the hot field, but he does not think of that. His soul is full of a buoyant love—buoyant, for the girl with the gaudy ribbon has promised to be his wife.

A Bold Reporter.

Reporters sometimes report speeches they do not hear and bad work they make of it. An enthusiastic Irishman was once hoaxed by a wag to reporting a speech in parliament by Edmund Burke on the merits of the potato as an article of diet. The wag reported the speech apparently from his notes, and the reporter, never doubting his good faith, handed in a report. The next morning all London was laughing over the speech, which made Mr. Burke attribute the superior virtue of the Irish people to the fact that they eat so many potatoes.

Another reporter fared better who made up a speech from his own imagination. It was a bold act, for the speech was from the throne, George III being the monarch. The ministers were indignant at his impudence and were eager to punish him with the severest penalties of the law. But the good natured monarch interposed with a quiet joke at the expense of the minister who had prepared the speech read by the king. "I hope the man's punishment will be of the mildest sort," said King George, "because I have read both, and, so far as I can understand either of them, I like the reporter's speech better than my own."

A Bachelor's Comment.

"A great German doctor advises men to wed and not die young."
"Yes, but sensible men prefer a quick death to slow torture."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

WEAKNESS

PECULIAR TO MEN AND WOMEN

It is sad to contemplate the unfortunate condition of so many men of our day and generation. At 30 they feel 50; at 40 they feel 60, and at 50 when they should be in the very prime of life, they are almost ready for the grave. The fire of youth has gone out, the fountain of vitality is exhausted. Premature old age! No matter what produced it, whether evil habits in youth, later excesses, or business worries, the one thing for you to do is to get back the vim, the vigor and vivacity of manhood. Don't lose your grip on life. There are yet many happy, golden years for you if you only get help. We can and will not only help you, but cure you to stay cured. Curing diseases and weaknesses of the nervous and sexual system has been our exclusive business for the past 30 years, during which time we have cured enough fallen men to make an army. OUR NEW METHOD TREATMENT will restore to you what you have lost. It purifies and enriches the BLOOD, strengthens the NERVES, vitalizes the sexual organs, checks all unnatural drains and losses and fits a man for the active duties of life.

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