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**After Every Meal**

**Literature And Leisure**

By Prof. J. F. Macdonald, Queen's University, Kingston, in "Social Welfare," Toronto.

"Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability."—Francis Bacon  
One Friday evening years ago, before the age of jazz and movies, a group of students, sprawled about in such comfortable postures as their host's bedroom permitted, had pretty well talked themselves out on the Darwinian theory, higher criticism, the possibility of prohibition and the chances of the hockey team. As they began to stretch themselves luxuriously, like the healthy young animals they really were, preparatory to leaving about 11 o'clock, the final year man, who had recently begun to realize how little he knew after four years' study and, as is usual his stage of education, was cynical about the use of it all, broke into passionate invective against the folly of studies, in general and the study of literature in particular. I can see him still propped on one elbow on the bed which he held by right of seniority, waving his curved pipe-stem as he preached on the age old theme, "this too is vanity and vexation of spirit." What did it do for you, he demanded. It just made you miserable. It put sand in your teeth when you heard some pretentious ignoramus say "infer" when he meant "imply" (even in the '90's editors understood that these words were co-relatives, and not synonyms as they seem to think to-day); it made you prefer "Tess of the D'Urbervilles to St. Elmo" and be thought a little "queer" and not quite "nice" by your girls' friends who "doted" on the "Idylls of the King." And we shook ourselves wide awake and joined in windy battle that lasted till long after midnight. The battle we waged that night is fought again each restless springtime in countless students' rooms at every university in Christendom.

The protagonist of that debate has long ago learned that studies, the study of literature above all, serve for delight. And of course there can be no enjoyment of literature without leisure. To me Bacon's aphorism always conjures up the vision of a pleasant room, a shaded light, an easy chair, and a plate of apples; for the limit of luxury a plate of Northern Spies. Then if a November wind raves outside and the rain beats in gusts on the window the setting is perfect. Only the proper book is lacking.

Such evenings are too rare to be decried by service to false gods. "This Freedom" lies invitingly at my elbow, much talked of and yet unread. In the hope that it may prove better than "If Winter Comes," I settle down to the opening chapter. It almost spoils my evening. But happily I have reached the stage where, except through the necessities of my profession, I read what I like and not what advertising publishers bawl about most loudly. "This Freedom" drops behind a stack of examination papers, there to "dry rot at ease till the judgment day" or at very least till the annual upheaval of housecleaning. Irritated by Hutchinson's rhetoric and cheap appeal to sex antagonism I reach for "The Cloister and the Hearth" to travel again the winding roads of medieval Europe with that lovable scamp Denys of Burgundy, and hear once more his cheery hail of "Courage, camarade, le diable est mort." One chapter soothes my ruffled feelings. My eye catches the title of a book that I had forgotten lay on my desk, "The Golden Hours of Kai Lung." The very title allures for these golden hours of my own.

The luxury of being a college professor is that one has a group of friends with interests as wide as the inquiring spirit of man. One cannot help learning in the manner of strange things, from the diameter of the star Betelgeuze to the significance of dreaming about snakes. My friend the lecturer in Hebrew has found Kai Lung's wisdom pleasant and wants to share it with me. One page and I know this is the book for tonight. I pick up again the apple whose flavour was spoiled by "This Freedom" and read on and on with many a quiet chuckle and an occasional roar of laughter. The book is perfect of its kind and its kind is good. The wisdom, the whimsicality, the skill of the story-telling, the strange exotic flavor of the delightful love story are all beguiling. Consider the power of suggestion in this description of a maiden's beauty which was such that (I quote from memory) "the most celebrated picturemaker of the province after watching unobserved the unstudied grace of her movements, in despair burned the implements of his craft and began life anew as a trainer of performing elephants." It is two o'clock in the morning and three apples are gone—three apple, one book, one golden book.

Once a year perhaps, comes such a night. I remember the night I read "The Diary of a Nobody," that profoundly moving picture of the passing away of the Victorian era, a book that has more of the essence of history than many a ponderous tome. And the night we laughed and cried over "Chapters from Childhood" by Mrs. Soskice. And that other night when I followed "The Exploits of Asaph Khan" to their glorious and triumphant end. The chapters that tell "How Asaph Khan came back to his village" and "How Asaph Khan came to love" are etched on my memory forever.

Readers of magazines have surely come across an advertisement that shows a young man standing awkwardly at the side of a room, quite by himself poor fellow, and gazing wistfully at another young man who stands firmly, with feet apart, in the middle of the floor and holds captive a bevy of young women who listen breathless with admiration to the latest topic of interest. Would you fain be like him? Read the advertisement and learn the secret. Subscribe for Mentor, the liter-

ary, scientific and political digest, and be up to the minute on all topics. It will make you popular, it will cause you to be admired and envied. Now as Bacon tells us in the second phrase of that famous sentence, studies serve "for ornament" but Bacon had no illusions about short cuts to knowledge. "Distilled books," as he calls them, are "flashy (that is flat, insipid) things." Moreover he warns us, that "to use studies too much for ornament," as the well-groomed young man in the picture seems to be doing, "is affectation." The "ornament," the distinction of word and phrase and thought that is born of much reading, comes, like character, as a by-product. Aim at producing it by direct methods and you get "affectation" just as you get a self-conscious prig when you set out to "form character" in a boy. But the ornament comes of itself to the one who reads good books. Often one sees it sparkle in a single word like the sudden gleam of a jewel. A friend said to me recently of a rather ponderous critic of our acquaintance, "He kept me shifting from one foot to the other for half an hour while he pontificated on Babbitt." One doesn't learn that choice of words from a monthly mentor.

Literature, like Bacon's studies in general, serves for ability if one stretches a little the meaning he gave to "ability." The wide reading of literature brings "wisdom" in the Biblical sense of that word, the knowledge and power to guide one's life so that he finds peace in his soul. I have never managed, save at rare moments, to be a Christian, that is, as I understand it, to feel such a glow of affection for my fellow men that I love each of them dearly as I do myself. No, that comes seldom and soon grows cold or at best lukewarm; but most of the time I can manage to be a fairly good pagan, supported by the fables of Aesop, the maxims of Epictetus, and the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius. The morning prayer of the Great Emperor keeps one calm even if his heart is not running over with love, till at last the long hard day nears to eventide.

Yes, and when middle age begins and the days fly faster past like posts seen from the window of a train that is gathering speed, it is well to have even the pagan philosophy of a modern poet to fall back on:

"Look thy last on all things lovely  
Every hour. Let no night  
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber  
Till to delight  
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing;  
Since that all things thou wouldst  
praise  
Beauty took from those who loved  
them  
In other days."  
For as Andrew Marvell put it long ago:

"At my back I always hear  
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;  
And yonder, all before me, lie  
Deserts of vast eternity."

But before the chariot comes up abreast I hope to spend a little more leisure in the delights that come from literature. "The Wallet of Kai Lung" is still to read. I am saving it for some rainy night in late November when the Northern Spies have grown mellow.

—J. F. MACDONALD,  
Queen's University.

Mrs. George Clarke and Master Ellard, Renfrew, are guests of her sister, Mrs. William Rockburn, Mabrey. They left on Tuesday for Smith's Falls and other points. Allan Edward Coates died in Brookville on Wednesday, aged thirty-four years. He was with his father in the jewelry business.

**ICED!**

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is always delightfully refreshing. The coolness of the mountain top is in every glass. So easily made --- Try it.

**HAD A FISH DINNER.**

An Enjoyable Outing Recently At Point Traverse.

Bongard's, Aug. 10. — Quarterly Sacramental Service will be held at Bongard's church on Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. The Ladies' Aid members with their husbands, were entertained at the parsonage at a social evening on Friday evening. Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Pierce and family motored to Trenton, on Sunday, and spent the day. Mr. and Mrs. D. T. McCornock, Picton, are this week visiting friends here.

attended camp meeting at Oak Lake, on Sunday. F. Graham and brother, Bancroft, were recent visitors at W. J. Hawker's, Misses Lillian and Helen Shepard, Lillian Thurston and Helen Bongard are camping at Indian Point. A number from here attended the fish dinner at Point Traverse on Thursday.

H. A. Powers, a former resident of Picton, passed away at his home in Toronto, on Aug. 6th, aged sixty-one years. Deceased had been ill for some time, due to paralysis. The funeral took place from the home of his brother, Albert Powers, born to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Van Gesen, a daughter.

Mary Helen, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Scott, Smith's Falls, Ont., and Mr. Jarvis Cunningham, youngest son of the late Rev. T. E. and Mrs. Cunningham, Montreal, were married on Aug. 8th at Smith's Falls.

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Windsor Bacon, machine sliced 45c.  
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Regular, 3c. 4-String Brooms—  
Special ..... 64c. each  
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