

THE MEASURE OF OUR DAYS.

In all our walks, in all our ways,
Think not the measure of our days
Is gauged by figures and by rules,
As erst was taught us in the schools;
But, as we help a brother's needs
By noble acts and generous deeds,
By giving comfort where we may,
By lighting up a mourner's way,
The sum of means that we employ
To turn a fellow's ills to joy—
This is the measure of our days.

A veteran in the wars of life,
A prisoned soldier in the strife
Of soul with stingy, envious time
Is he who makes his actions rhyme
To universal brotherhood.
Though long or short hath been his road,
Centuries or decades his abode
Among his kind, it matters least
So follows by him have been blest.
His life is measured by his plan
Of dealing with his fellow man,
This is the measure of his days.

And much methinks of time he gains,
For all his labors, all his pains,
For reaching outward far and near
To succor want and shelter fear.
No stinging paddock hems him in
To mean desires or groveling sin,
A widow's blessing him avails,
An orphan's prayer some good entails,
While stretching outward over man
He converse holds with Nature's plan,
He solves life's deep mysteries,
He grasps eternal verities,
This is the measure of his days.

—T. C. Rice, in New York Press.

TED'S LAST TRICK.

JUST about everything had seemed to come to Ted by instinct until he was taught the great "ring trick." He had been born in the circus, and long before he could walk was used to riding round and round the ring on the "learned pony," swinging his bare legs and crowing with glee every time he passed the starting post. He climbed ladders and poles, holding on by his chubby little hands, as soon as he could toddle alone, and crept into risky places where, as the whole troupe used to say, watching him with joy and pride, he was obliged to "hang on by his eyelids."

When he was five years old he used to perform regularly with old Benny, the famous "bare-back" rider, in the "wild Indian" act. All the glitter, color, stir, life of the circus was the joy of the youngster's existence. He was so used to the sight of expert riders and acrobats going through their parts he had no thoughts of any possible danger attending their exploits, and all that others could do he felt he could do, and longed to do. His father had been the wonderful rider, Llewellen, killed, unluckily by a kick from his favorite horse's hoof just as he carelessly stooped to feel the fetlock. That was when Ted was but two years old, and Llewellen had been so much beloved that the company adopted the boy, as it were, and took pride in his cleverness and promise, for there could be no doubt that nature had given him the true eye, the steady hand, the indomitable nerve and the quick sense of the laws of balance which are needed by a man whose profession it is to dangle twixt heaven and earth. His mother was a farmer's daughter, who had made a romantic match by running away with the handsome Llewellen. She had remained in the community after her husband's early death as a sort of "wardrobe woman." It was she who refurbished the old costumes, braiding them with tinsel and sewing on fresh spangles. She was called Mrs. Llewellen, and she and her boy lived in a small compartment of the great property van, which, when the show moved from town to town, was drawn by six white horses. Few experiences pleased Ted better than this sort of royal progress, which, in spite of its grandeur, was extremely convenient, since his mother could cook their meals or go on with their sewing while they were in motion, and Ted could eat his bread and butter while he nodded and waved to the boys gathered at every corner to welcome the procession.

Ted had learned to read from the great garing hand-bills: "Greatest Show on the Universe," "The Unequaled and Matchless Troupe," etc., and his heart had thrilled with a sudden conviction of his own pre-eminence when he spelled out "Master Edward Llewellen, the Remarkable Infant Rider and Acrobat." But his pride was in the fact of his belonging to the circus, and not in himself. For all the members of the troupe were so interesting, so superior. There was old Benny—not that he was old but so-called to distinguish him from young Benny, the lion tamer. Actually there was nothing that old Benny could not do; it was he who performed the famous pumpkin trick, at which Ted was never tired of gazing; in the first place mounting the horse on the wrong side, and holding on by the mane as if he were going to fall off; then, after committing every possible blunder, suddenly showing his real powers and going through a series of dazzling transformations, until he emerged the inimitable Benny, the King of the Circus. Then there were the clown, a great friend of Ted's; a quiet melancholy fellow who played the banjo, and the lady riders, chief of whom were Mrs. Bill and Miss Fanny, rival queens of the circus. All were so accomplished, so splendid in their attire (at least on occasions), and so kind and tender to Ted, it was little wonder if he thought it the finest thing in the world. At times when his mother sighed over her work, it disturbed him to think she was not thoroughly happy and contented, but no doubt, he said to himself, she was thinking about his father.

Still, much as Ted delighted in the excitement of his life, the climbing, vaulting, balancing, and above all the riding when he leaned forward "drick-

ing in the wind of his own speed," he was happiest on Sundays, when it seemed to him in the sudden hush as if the very heart of the world stopped beating. Then in bad weather he and his mother could shut themselves up in their own little nest, or if it were fine were free to wander outside the town into the fields. It was only at such times that his mother really talked, but alone with her boy she would string out stories about the old farm where she had spent her happy, free girlhood. Ted heard about the old house with its pent-roof and gables; the well by its side, with its long sweep, which moved with a mournful musical creak when the bucket was lowered. He was used to lions and tigers, and there was satisfaction in the descriptions of the soft-eyed oxen and cows—all the tender, patient creatures of the farm, besides the fierce turkey gobblers, hens, and fluffy, downy chickens. Close by the farm ran a little river, where the geese and ducks paddled, and on the other side was the wood, where there were always rustles and murmurs, where nuts pattered down in the autumn and squirrels whisked their tails and chattered in defiance of the intruders who poached on their winter stores. The garden and the orchard, too, were something to hear about. Ted knew every flower which grew in the borders, and his mouth watered at the account of the apples, white and red, which ripened on the hillside. It is a great deal to know as much about the world as Ted did, so he used to tell old Benny about the farm which was to him such a wonderful fairy tale.

"Why now your mother couldn't go home and take you to see her folks," said Benny.
"Go home and take me," said Ted.
"Why, could she?"
"Why not?" said Benny.
This new and startling idea dawning on Ted's mind took his breath away.
"Mother," he cried, running to her, "why don't you take me down to see grandfather and grandmother and the flowers and the apples?"
"Ah, why not?" burst out the homesick woman with a bitter cry. "Because I gave all that up when I ran away with your father. Because they wouldn't speak to me; no, not if I went down on my knees to them."
"Why wouldn't they speak to you?" said Ted, aghast.
"Because I belong to a circus," she replied.

Ted comprehended the pain behind his mother's words, although he did not understand the words themselves. He was indeed really amazed that anybody should not be proud to know the distinguished people he was used to. But he realized now that the reason that his mother sighed sometimes was that she felt shut out from the old paradise, and he began to sigh, too. Perhaps he was tired; perhaps he had in his young energy gone a little beyond his childish strength, but he began to feel fretted by the noise of the circus, and a curious homesickness grew in him for the whisper of the forest, the early morning rush of the birds, and the sight of animals not trained and kept in cages, but playing about the fields. He longed to climb the hill and meet the wind, ready to buffet him when he reached the top, and to dabble his feet in the cool stream where his mother's brothers used to swim on summer afternoons. The season was hot, and on nights when the animals were restless, when the lions roared and lashed the bars with their tails, and the tiger snarling paced their cages, and the hyenas yelled and the elephant trumpeted, and the horses frightened, snorted and stamped in their stalls, Ted could not sleep. There was no air to breathe, and the many scents made him long for the fields of clover and the garden with its beds of mignonette.

"Mother," he burst out over, "why don't they like the circus?"
"Who?" said his mother, startled. She sat late on her sewing as usual, but she had supposed the boy was fast asleep.
"Why, grandfather and grandmother and the rest of them."
"Some people don't like a circus, Ted," she said gently. "It's just a feeling."
"But it's the greatest show on earth!"
"I know it's a great thing in its way," said Mrs. Llewellen, "but you see, Ted, my family are quiet people and their way is different. I suppose it is partly the spangles and the crowds, the gaudy, make-believe, which made father feel that nothing is modest and honest and real about anybody who belongs to a circus. But if father knew old Benny, if he knew him as you and I do, he would say he was a good man. And if he knew how everybody had to work, to go over every part again and again he would see that no good performer could be dissipated or lazy."

It was just at this time that Ted was learning the "ring trick" and certainly there was plenty of hard work about that. It was, as we have said, the first thing that Ted did not take to by natural instinct, as a duck to water. Never before had he shrunk back from what he was bidden to do, giving way to a fit of trembling. As old Benny said the new trick was no harder than the trapeze, and Ted liked of all things to go flying from rope to rope to the topmost ring, loving the idea that the heart of the spectators sometimes sank into their boots at the conviction that he was in danger. Now he suffered nameless terrors; he felt clumsy, he had lost faith in himself. The truth was up to the present he had gone on doing everything that came in his way without a thought of what might happen if he failed. Now he was like a somnambulist who awakens to find himself in a position of danger. It was as if he had to learn his tricks all over again, gaining again piece by piece by hard trial and proof instead of heretofore swiftly and innately by instinct. Old Benny was patient and tender with the little fellow.

"All you have to do is to catch hold of the ring and turn round on it," said he. "You know all the while there is a

cushion underneath you, and that if you were to fall you would not be hurt."

"I shan't fall," said Tom, "but I don't like it."

"You have not got used to it, and it's there that the fun comes in," said Benny. "You never had a stumble yet, not even a balk; you're like a bird."

Ted hung his head and confessed to himself that he no longer felt like a bird. He was so weary. There was a gray haze over all this narrow world of his, and each day it settled closer and closer. He felt dull, inert, as if he longed to sleep; at least to sit down aimlessly and dream wide awake about the hill and the river and the cool, quiet nights in the old place. "I myself have hated to do things that I grew mighty proud of when I had got at the knack of them," said Benny. "Come, now try again, Ted."

Ted braced himself up and went through the rehearsal, but when it was all over he burst out crying and sat down all in a tremble.
"It's a safe sign to be a little afraid," said Mrs. Bill. "It isn't the tricks one is afraid of that one trips in, but those one feels sure of."

They all flattered and encouraged him, and Ted felt ashamed of his faint-heartedness. A regular salary was promised him by the manager as soon as he had made a success of the ring trick, and this was what he and his mother had been looking forward to ever since he was ten years old.

It was odd how he disliked the ring trick, when it was simply a matter of swinging himself up to the top of a high, tall framework on rings which hung on horizontal bars. The supports below were twelve feet apart, but met with another transom beam and ring on the apex. The way was to catch the lower ring, swing round on it, then with the impetus gained to leap the gap, seize the opposite ring a little higher up, and so on from right and left and left and right to the top ring and down again. It was a pretty feat, and, perhaps, no harder than any other of the flying tricks, but it needed a clear head, and the trouble was that Ted had got into a dreamy mood. He was so homesick nowadays for the farm and for the different life. He liked better to brood over the idea of the bees humming over the flower beds and the doves and martins calling for the cows than to give his whole heart and mind to the actual things he saw and touched.

However, practice makes perfect, and by the time the new season opened in Brighton Ted had mastered the ring trick. There was a famous programme, and Ted had six different parts; in the Indian act, the buffalo hunt, the chariot race, and so on, finally to the wonderful ring trick, now exhibited for the first time. The excitement was good for Ted. The dull, weary feelings he had suffered from of late vanished, his blood warmed to his wish, he liked the mad gallop, he felt the joy of his own youth and strength and was ready to take wings and float in air. The tent was packed with admiring spectators, and all the performers were in high spirits. The ringmaster and clown cracked fresh jokes, at which even the members of the company could laugh. The horses were like the wind, the performing dogs and elephants and bears all seemed singularly intelligent, and all together it was one of the great days of the greatest show in the universe, and the "ring trick" was to be the grand climax.

"All right!" said old Benny to Ted as the little fellow ran out of the dressing-tent in his scarlet tights and cap.
He stood for a moment measuring the supports and frames with a knowing glance, then, with a bound, caught the lowest ring, spun round, and light as a squirrel leaped to the opposite one and thus zigzagging mounted to the upper ring. Here, just to rest and steady himself, he swung round twice, then reversed before he should begin the descent. He liked it up there. A cold blast of air freshened him. The middle flap of the tent was open for the sake of ventilation and light, and as he swung he caught glimpse of the sky dotted with tender, fleecy little clouds, like sheep in a pasture, as his mother once said. His thoughts wandered to the farm for a minute, then he suddenly remembered what he had to do, yes, he had to reverse.

He quite forgot that he had already reversed. What was this? Where was the ring? How still it was! How my family are quiet people and their way is different. I suppose it is partly the spangles and the crowds, the gaudy, make-believe, which made father feel that nothing is modest and honest and real about anybody who belongs to a circus. But if father knew old Benny, if he knew him as you and I do, he would say he was a good man. And if he knew how everybody had to work, to go over every part again and again he would see that no good performer could be dissipated or lazy."

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himself up. "It paid. It paid to have the fall. Perhaps we couldn't have come home if I had not been laid up."—
Courier-Journal.

Freaks of Human Nature.

"We doctors have a much better opportunity than most people for studying human nature," said a Washington physician to a Star reporter the other day. "Most patients do not consider it necessary to put on airs before their medical attendants. One thing that has often struck me is the disregard which young folks generally have for the old. I don't mean that they are not courteous to them, for courtesy to one's elders is a matter of ordinary education; but when it comes to really caring for them they are lacking as a rule."
"One is shocked to read of the manner in which savage tribes all over the world leave the old people to die neglected, even depriving them of shelter because they are no longer useful. Even in civilized countries the same thing is often done. Go to Savoy and you find that the aged and infirm are put out to beg on the public highways. It is commonly said that the love of the child for the parent is much less strong, even among the most enlightened people, than the affection of the parent for the child. There is a reason for this, which philosophers find in a natural law. The love and the care of the parent for the child is necessary to the perpetuation of the race, for which nature makes provision beyond all things else; but, on the other hand, there is no such reason of necessity for care taking on the part of the child in behalf of the parent."
"So I am not surprised to find in my practice ever so many instances where old people are neglected by their children, who are apt to regard them as a burden, considering often that they would be very much better out of the world any way. Another thing even more remarkable that I notice is that conjugal affection is very apt not to survive long illnesses. If the wife is an invalid the husband oftentimes becomes indifferent to her after a while. Or, if the husband is sickly, the wife finds it burdensome. In either case the well partner to the matrimonial bargain becomes, though unconsciously, resentful of the invalidism of the other, and in many cases seeks distractions outside of the home."
"On the other hand there are men and women so constituted as to be fitted as it were by nature for the duty of taking care of invalid wives or husbands. I have known a man to marry three times and on each occasion to select a bedridden spouse. There was in him evidently an exaggerated impulse to provide for and take care of a mate. Of course every one hears frequently of women who marry drunkards for the purpose of reforming them. Their impulse may be a similar one, arising from the desire to act the part at once of wife and rescuer."

A HELPFUL VIRGINIA GIRL.

In the family of George Munday, living between Waterford and Wheatland, the father, mother, a son, and daughter were all down with the grip, leaving only the youngest daughter, Florence, about eighteen years of age, to aid the rest. She attended to the household duties and the sick, and for two or three days fed and curried six horses, fed and milked six cows, and also walked through the snow about a quarter of a mile carrying corn, and when she reached them, feeding it with straw and fodder to thirty head of cattle. Having to go to a neighbor to send for a doctor for one of her sick, her condition was discovered, and of course there was plenty of help afterward.—Richmond Dispatch.

NEW MATERIAL FOR PETTICOATS.

There is a fabric for petticoats which on the surface is soft like lamb's wool, but the back shows it to be of a stockinet manufacture. It is admirably warm and soft, and is made in pure white, light pink and light blue and sometimes striped. Others of the more expensive flannel petticoats are worked nearly all over in an open gullupure pattern in silk; but beauty is thought of before utility, as the warmth of the petticoat is considerably diminished. The petticoats for wearing next the dresses are sufficiently beautiful to take the place of dresses altogether, for they are often made of the richest black silk, shot and brocaded with flowers and edged with black lace over a color and headed by ruchings.—St. Louis Republic.

FASHIONS IN MOURNING.

Deep mourning has but little to do with fashion and is subject to few changes. We have, therefore, not much to say about it, except that heavy English crepe is worn in larger quantities than ever, the whole front of the dress being frequently covered with it, while a very deep border goes around the foot, and that crepe veils are so long and ample they fall almost like a mantle at the back, nearly to the foot of the skirt. But in slight mourning many pretty novelties are to be noticed this season. A dress of black silk or woolen material may be rendered very elegant by a Gretchen belt and necklet of black velvet, studded all over with jet. The belt is peaked top and bottom and finished with a handsome jet fringe, deeper in front and at the back than at the sides. The necklet is a plain band of velvet, studded with jet and trimmed with a fringe like that of the belt. The two combined make any black dress look very stylish.—New York Herald.

TREND OF FEMALE THOUGHTS.

The latest index of the British Museum furnishes some interesting data as showing that while women, as a subject of interest, as a problem to be solved, as a possible outcome, was never of more importance than during the past ten years, the aspect of her case changed materially in that time. These indexes are issued every five years and include the subjects of all books published in every civilized country during the previous five years. A comparison of the two indexes issued during the past decade shows that works on the social position of women increased in the last half of the decade, as compared with the first, from fifty-four to seventy-two; on education of woman, from eighteen to twenty-five; on employments of women, from nineteen to twenty-seven; on women's clubs, from three to ten. Dress reform, on the contrary, decreased from seventeen to four, and works on dress, dressmaking, needlework and embroidery, seventy-eight to sixty-four. These figures are more significant from the fact that books on tailoring in its higher aspects, as indicated by such a title as "Philosophical Work of F. Pickle on Cutting Gentlemen's Dress," increased from twelve to twenty-three. Perhaps from the most significant decrease is that from the most significant increase in marriage. From this it may be argued that women of to-day are much more interested in questions of education and employment and of making for themselves a place in the world than they are in dress, fashion or any feminine vanities, and that marriage alas! difficult as it is to believe, is having less place in their thoughts than of yore.

ANGLO-SAXON GIRLS.

Few things are more noticeable at assemblies in these islands "of fair women and brave men," as the poet says, than the improving physique of the Anglo-Saxon girls. Whatever class may be the subject of observation in this regard, the same feature seems to prevail throughout. If Lord's cricket ground, for example, be visited at the time of a great gathering of the aristocracy, as on the Oxford and Cambridge cricket match, or the Eton and Harrow match, the one thing which cannot fail to attract attention is

immense flocks of crows have exterminated the grasshopper pest in some parts of California.



WOMAN'S WORLD.

the remarkable predominance of tall and divinely fair girls who are to be seen gracefully strolling over the grounds during the intervals between the innings. Then if the scene be changed and the observer makes his way into the parlor of middle-class persons, the same prevailing "tallness" of the fair attendants will again meet his gaze. Thus abundant evidence is forthcoming that this is by no means an isolated feature of the maidens of the United Kingdom, but that it prevails on the contrary, throughout all classes. Judging, however, from the prominence, which it has gained during the past three years, there is quite the possibility that it will develop in time into a racial characteristic. The women of ancient Lacedaemon, we are told, were specially instructed to "put on" as much muscle and as little clothing as possible. Each of these instructions, however, was given, so to speak, as a matter of business, in view of the warlike virtues which were required to be fostered by the race. But England is not Sparta, and the tallness and good physique of the girls in this country are features which are not wooded as the result of commands, from the Secretary of State for the War Department, but merely as the outcome of healthy exercise, indulged in for the sake of amusement. Thus lawn tennis and other outdoor games in this country are producing an effect upon our race which could scarcely have been anticipated.—British Medical Press and Circular.

FASHION NOTES.

It is no longer good form to wear black underclothing. Sleeves and collar of Persian lamb are seen with dresses of black cloth. The fashionable muff is very small, indeed, no larger than is absolutely necessary. Some very handsome sleeves and collars of sealskin are made for tailor costumes. Lace garniture and embroidery effects will not relax their hold upon public favor. For evening, wide strings of chiffon, tulle or crepe lisse are tied beneath the chin in a great fluffy bow. Tailors will again make a stand in favor of short skirts that escape the ground for all walking dresses. Long military capes of mink are very fashionable. They are made plain, or finished with a deep border of mink tails. Sealskin and Persian are very popular in combination. The sleeves and collar are made of one material, the body of the garment of another. A white enamel apple blossom, with the edge of the petals overlapped with frosted gold and a jeweled centre, is a new and pretty brooch. Pretty dresses of gray stuff are trimmed with shoulder frills, cuffs and collar of red chiffon. Chiffon is still the favorite material for bodice vests. The striped modes are still in demand, but for rich visiting and reception toilets uncut velvet is being depended upon more than for years back. A caprice of the mode is a walking dress, half cloth, half velvet, which, if the materials are both in the same shade, or in rare harmony, may pass with taste. The bowknot grows more and more coquettish. Surrounding a stickpin, with a jewel in one of its fluttering folds, it adds the last touch to the toilet. Yellow velvet pastiles and Van Dyke panels are on white tulle. This design is duplicated in black and in scarlet. Sapphires and pearls are diamonded over a white net. A butterfly screen for a chandelier globe or small lamp is made with a gilded clothe-pin. The rounded top serves for the head, and through the pin are crinkled two wide, pointed wings of tissue paper, flecked with gilt spots. It is extremely simple to make, and is useful and pretty. The very nearly tight-fitting jackets of seal, in three-quarter length, are the most popular garments for young ladies. They may be either all seal, or with Persian lamb sleeves and collar. The former is more favored by the ladies of quiet taste, while the latter is by many thought to be more dressy. Crepe-finished Indias are soft, and the shading rich. The bengaline weavers are numerous this winter. The all-silk bengaline is pliable and very lustrous, having much the effect of sicilienne. Victoria and cable cord bengaline are as artistic fabrics as have been seen on the silk counters for many a day. The close-clinging skirts still hold their own, especially for young women with good figures; a few add some ribbon streamers, or beaded waistbands, with falling fringe of the same on the hips. They are still made with the cross-wise seam at the back, and thus form the plaits gathered close together at the top; the skirt widens in descending into the fan-like form. It is seldom, indeed, that there is offered so pretty a fabric for so little money as the Yeddo crepe shown this season. The colors are varied and are all well produced. Even the black is not bad, and the white is prettier than any other white goods of like grade. The pale pink and blue are each excellent. This material makes pretty evening gowns for house wear, and will be a dainty addition to the list of simple summer dresses.