WAYSIDE WISDOM

Much modesty is only skin deep.

We can't all be intellectual giants.

Ennui is the price we pay for knowledge.

Good intentions do not always do good.

To want little is always to have plenty.

It is better to borrow than to give trouble.

The average man's wit is always an hour too late.

The dressmaker's ideal is not always Nature's.

Women's rights are all that some women have left.

A silk hat, like charity, covers a multitude of sins.

Have you ever noticed how other people waste time?

You never heard of salary seeking the man, did you?

No man is really old until he has lost his prejudices.

A clever jester is one who never jokes with his wife.

It is a wise worm that turns no oftener than it has to.

Some men look ahead much better than they go ahead.

An artistic failure is almost as rare as a perfect success.

My idea of a liar is a man who says he is glad he is bald.

Alas, that even the artificial rose should have its thorns!

The people who throw stones usually live in glass houses.

A woman never feels fat when she can call it embonpoint.

There is no grave deep enough in which to bury the past.

It takes a post-mortem to bring out some men's good qualities.

A fault is never so offensive as when it is somebody else's.

Nobody believes the truth until he has found it out for himself.

The way to Easy Street runs right through Hard Work Avenue.

To decide which she shall marry—a rich sinner or a poor saint.

It is sometimes only a step from the ridiculous to the sublime.

There are some people to whom it is not courteous to be polite.

Some men are so shrewd that nobody can believe them honest.

It is not what you give, but the way you give it, that makes the gift.

A woman generally gains her point, unless it is the point of a joke.

Some self-made men look as though they forgot to sandpaper the joy.

The man who suffers from dyspepsia never dies of a broken heart.

Self-love is the only romance that enters into the average man's life.

There is a kind of fellow who would like to be kicked by a millionaire.

Many people are busy mortgaging the future in order to acquire the past.

Wisdom is more to be desired than riches—and a good deal easier to get.

Some people shake your hand as though they wanted to shake you.

To the paying guest at the boarding house, home is where the hash is.

Literature is the kind of printed matter that only posterity will read.

A woman can get more by her weakness than a man can by his strength.

If there is anybody who deserves sympathy it is the girl who is trying.

It hurts less to be cheated by a rogue than by a pillar of the church.

Why is it that the other fellow's errors always seem so funny to us?

Considering how good everybody says he is, this is a dreadfully wicked old world.

A woman's idea of fame is to refuse to let her name be mentioned in the newspapers.

Time flies, youth flies, money flies—and boarding-house flies are the worst of all.

With the average girl, father's front porch is merely a short cut to hubby's kitchen.

You would never suspect some people of being mean if they didn't try to conceal it.

Divorce represents a man's efforts to get out of the fire and back into the frying pan.

Just because a man is chicken-breasted it is no sign that he is chicken-hearted.

The funniest part of it is that the men who make fools of themselves seem to enjoy it.

Why is it that a man in his prime always thinks himself younger than a woman is here?

Some diseases are less fatal to the patient than to the people who have to live with him.

Perseverance sometimes wins a woman where true love wouldn't even touch her heart.

You may forget the man who helped you, but you will always remember the one who hindered.

It is a wise man who wants only what he can get, and a lucky one who gets only what he wants.

You never know how popular you can be until you have the only telephone in the neighborhood.

Many a man has asked a girl to share his lot in the hope that her father would build them a house on it.

A clever man never believes a woman when she tells him her age. And a cleverer man always believes her.

Even the most conservative of men doesn't mean all he says when he hits his thumb with the tack hammer.

It is a supremely honest girl who sends back the engagement ring every time she quarrels with her best fellow.

No matter how contemptible he may be, a woman always likes to think her husband isn't nearly as bad as he would have been if he hadn't married her.

Burning the Mortgage

At exactly 11 o'clock on New Year's morning there was a curious ceremony at "the old Edwards place" in Maine. The word ceremony, in fact, but faintly describes what happened. It was more like a jubilee, with the semblance of a barbaric rite added. All the Edwards kith and kin were there, with a goodly number of their friends and neighbors.

At the farther end of the garden, in front of the farmhouse, there is a knoll, at the top of which a mossy ledge crops out. On this ledge there was a pyre erected of dry wood, pitch and rolls of curvey birch bark—a fine pile of it. At the centre stood an iron rod, set in a hole, drilled in the ledge, and here an old oppressor of the Edwards homesteam was burned at the stake!

This sounds so savage that I make haste to say that the old oppressor was not an animate form of flesh and blood, but merely an effigy.

The effigy was a masterpiece in its way, the very simulacrum of rapacity, with a face like the fabled Harpies and hands like talons, hugging to its breast a folded, yellowed paper.

That yellowed paper was a mortgage, which had rested on the home farm for one entire generation.

The history of that mortgage is so much like thousands of others that it would hardly be worth relating if, at the last moment, a noble effort to lift it had not been crowned by success.

The Edwards farm adjoins the one where I lived when a boy. There were three hundred acres of tillage, pasture and woodland, with a well-built two-story house and two large barns. The Edwards children—Chester, Thomas, Catherine, Eunice—were my youthful neighbors.

In those days the farm was well-tilled, unencumbered and prosperous; but in an evil hour a traveling agent cajoled Jonas Edwards, the father, into buying the State right to make and sell a certain newly patented automatic farm gate, for the sum of two thousand dollars. Edwards had a thousand dollars in the savings bank; he drew out this and raised the other thousand by mortgaging the homestead.

It was the old story. The much-vaunted gate proved a gate to trouble for Edwards. He was never able to sell it. But if the gate proved illusory, the mortgage was tangible. The farmer spent the remaining fifteen years of his life paying interest on it.

After his father's death Chester Edwards "went home to live," as people say in Maine. The family then consisted of his mother, his sister Eunice, who was an invalid from spinal curvature, and his mother's brother, Uncle Horace, who had lost a leg in the Civil War, but for some reason did not draw a pension. Chester began by selling off the wood and timber on the old farm, thereby paying the accumulated interest. He then embarked in the dairy business, but did not prove a successful farmer, and during the fifth season lost almost his entire herd of cows from tuberculosis. Becoming discouraged, he gave up and set off suddenly for the Klondike gold region.

A nephew then carried on the farm for a year, but did not remain.

Meanwhile Thomas, the younger son, had become a Methodist minister. He was unable to do anything toward reducing the mortgage.

"The mortgage will get the old place now, and no help for it," the neighbors said.

But there was still another member of the family to be heard from—Catherine, the younger daughter.

Largely by her own efforts, Catherine Edwards had graduated from the State normal school, and obtained a position as instructor in another normal school at a good salary. We imagined that Catherine would aid her mother and sister, but never supposed that she would come home to care for them there.

But after Chester left, Catherine never hesitated for a moment. She resigned her position, bade farewell to all prospects of advancement as a teacher, and came home.

She had saved seven hundred dollars. With this she paid a year's interest, had the leaky roofs repaired, and hired such help as was necessary, indoors and out. Yet what could she do with that old farm and its mortgage?

That season, however—1903—the old place quietly put forward one of its natural assets.

Our county is in what is known as "the apple belt" of New England. Apple trees spring up everywhere here, and if grafted and trimmed, soon bear well. Although a cripple, Uncle Horace Flint had been in the habit every spring of hobbling about from one young apple tree to another, setting Baldwin scions and trimming the trees. He had not thought his work amounted to much, but he liked to be doing something.

The year 1903 was an "apple year." Every young tree on the farm was bending down under its load. A great crop with the farmers of the apple belt is far from being an unmixed blessing, however. They rarely get more than a dollar a barrel for their apples. The barrels cost them thirty-five cents each, and as the expense of hauling them is ten or fifteen cents a barrel more, there remains but fifty cents to pay for picking, sorting and barreling. If the farmer does this by hired labor he may clear ten cents a barrel, or he may not. For Catherine, therefore, a crop of seven or eight hundred barrels of apples on the trees meant little if gathered, barreled and sold in the usual way.

"It seems a shame," one neighbor said to her, "but it will be about as well for you to let those apples harvest themselves."

Against such waste of nature's bounty, however, Catherine's New England thrift revolted. She began to look into the apple problem; and the result of her study of it is worth recording.

She purchased no barrels, and the only help she hired was a boy to push a wheelbarrow. She herself, with Uncle Horace and Eunice, went out to the trees to gather up the fruit. The boy wheeled the apples in, two bushels at a load, and stowed them in bins, built up in two rooms in the house, where, later, they could be kept from freezing by means of a stove in the cellar beneath.

Catherine had thought this all out in advance, and she had sent off for four "evaporators," payment for which used nearly all her remaining money.

Carelessly dried apples, on strings, brings no more than six or eight cents a pound, but nicely sliced, "evaporated" apple always commands a much better price. She had resolved to put the whole crop of Baldwins into evaporated apple.

In almost every rural neighborhood, village or small town there is sure to be some old "aunty," "grandma" or widow in indigent circumstances, who has outlived the most of her earthly ties, and must go to the "town farm," or subsist on sufferance with some grudging relative. Life grows very dreary to these old persons. There seems to be no place for them. In cases where a few hundred dollars can be raised for them, they sometimes go to an "old ladies' home."

Within three miles of the Edwards homestead there were two of these old souls, "Aunt Netty" Stiles and "Grandma" Frost, who were by no means helpless or feeble, but had merely outlived their welcome on the earth.

Catherine first made the old farmhouse dining room cozy and warm, and then invited Aunt Netty and Grandma Frost to come and sit with her mother and Eunice and slice apples. She offered them seventy-five cents a week and board. Moreover, she took them all into her confidence, and told them her plans for saving the old homestead.

Uncle Horace peeled the apples on a paring machine, and the old women sliced them. Their tongues ran, they were as chipper as crickets. They had not had so good a time for years. Catherine had to look to it that they did not overwork. They produced more sliced apple than the four evaporators would dry. Uncle Horace had to contrive a fifth drier over a large stove out in the woodhouse. Two more forlorn old women from the town farm came on foot, begging for work. They were taken in.

Apple drying went on from the first of October till the middle of January, and the whole crop was dried. Before the first of March Catherine had sold the entire output at eleven cents a pound. The result was an object lesson to every apple farmer in that locality. She received fifteen hundred and sixty dollars; and owing to the skill with which she had managed the entire expenses of drying the apples were less than a hundred and seventy dollars.

There was also this other curious result: The old women did not want to go home! In fact, the two from the town farm cried when the last of the apples were cut.

Then Catherine determined to keep them all over for the next season. She bought a lot of yarn and set them to knitting socks and woolen gloves. In fact, she had started a happy old women's home before she knew it! And the number of applications which came to her from homeless old women and from those who had aged relatives on their hands whom they wished to be rid of would have been laughable, if it had not been pathetic. But for the time being Catherine could do no more than keep those whom she had.

The year 1904 also proved to be an apple year; and again the whole crop was put into evaporated apple, two other old women having been admitted to the "circle of slicers."

By this time, too, Catherine had come to realize the possibilities of her new business. All the apple trees were carefully looked after, and two hundred young trees set out. She planted, too, a hundred and fifty plum and pear trees, and an acre of blackberry shrubs; for now her design was to make a new venture, canning pears, plums and berries in glass jars. In fact, it would not surprise me if a few years hence this neglected old homestead were producing five thousand dollars' worth of fruit annually.

Catherine appears to have solved two important problems in social economy: First, how to make a run-out farm pay a handsome profit; and, second, how to utilize and make happy a class of homeless and forlorn old women who seem to have no place in the world. With their wages in their pockets, and the prospect of home and companionship ahead, it is quite remarkable how these old women have cheered up.

Of course there were many expenses for the first two years. The house and outbuildings had to be repaired and repainted; and it was not until this present autumn—three years from the time she came home—that Catherine saw her way clear to pay off the mortgage and free the old place from its twenty years of bondage.—C. A. Stephens, in Youth's Companion.

MYSTERY OF DEW-PONDS

It's a Fascinating Puzzle as to What Keeps Them Filled.

Dew-ponds are some of the most fascinating puzzles of all, for we may make our own dew-ponds to-day and still remain uncertain as to the precise cause which keeps them filled. Messrs. A. J. and G. Hubbard, in "Neolithic Dew-Ponds and Cattleways," tells us that at Alfriston, in Sussex, there is a family which has provided successful dew-pond makers for three or four generations.

Their method, if odd, is simple. A site is selected which must be distant even from the tiniest rivulet. That, for whatever reason, would spoil all. Then a hole with sloping sides is scooped much deeper than the pond is to be made. Then dry straw is laid over the whole bottom. Over that is placed a coat of well puddled clay. The clay next is thickly strewn with stones. The dry straw is said to be absolutely necessary, and the guess has been made that it is needed not only to supply elasticity so that the clay shall not creck, but chiefly to be a non-conducting barrier between the soil and the floor of the pond.

However the soil may be heated by the summer sun, the floor of the pond remains cold, and so the surface of the pond; as the coldest thing in the neighborhood, condenses on to its own surface quantities of steamy vapor which will not condense on the warmer grass and soil around.

The late Charles Cornish has described some experiments carried out at the suggestion of the Rev. J. G. Cornish on the Downs near Lockinge. When there were heavy dews expected or thick mists on the hills a notched stick was placed in the pond to measure the intake of moisture. Five nights of winter fog raised the pond eight inches. After a night of heavy dew on Jan. 18, 1901, there was a rise of one and a half inches, and on the next night two inches.

That is the manifestation; but the secret of the dew-pond remains untold. The straw is still an enigma, for dew-ponds can be and are made without straw.

The New Clergyman.

Isn't he lovely! I thought his first sermon was splendid!"

"Well, I did all I could to prevent his coming. You wait and see. He isn't at all the man for us."

"To bad, isn't it? Anyone can see at a glance that he has no manners."

"Charming, isn't he? I'm just in love with him. I think his reserve is, oh, so inspiring."

"Seems a pity he cannot preach a better sermon. Such a poor delivery."

"What a fine presence he has! And his sermons! I'm in love with them."

"You can tell he is a worker! Wonderful power!"

"Between you and me, I don't like him at all. I'm greatly surprised at the vestry getting such a man. Why, he's really quite common. And so brusque!"

"Don't you adore his sermons!"

"What wonderful eyes!"

"Not at all up to our standard. Oh, dear, and I did so hope that this time we would get some one really worth while."

"I shall give up my pew."

"I've taken another pew in front. I want to be as near to him as possible."

BLACK BUSINESS MEN.

The successful and honorable black business man stands beside the black scholar, the black poet, the black artist, in advancing the honor of his race. He is welcome in every community in which he stands, and in none more than in the metropolis of the nation, which confesses to an intense respect for material prosperity and to very little prejudice against the man who wins it.—New York Globe.