

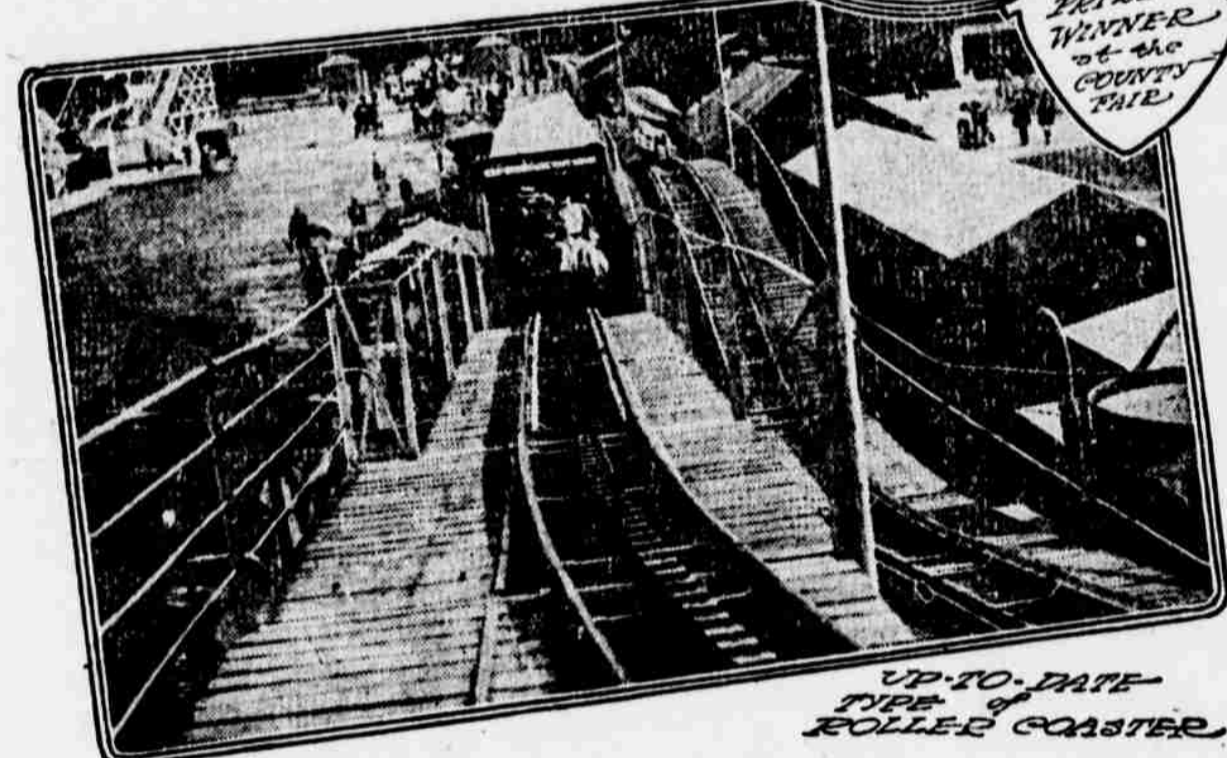
Getting Ready for the County Fair



It is a trifle early perhaps you are saying to begin talking about the county fair. Maybe so, if you are looking forward to the autumn event merely from the standpoint of a cold, calm, casually interested spectator. But just remember, please, that there are thousands upon thousands of people all over the country for whom the annual neighborhood fair means much more. They are the prospective exhibitors, and no wonder they begin to plan and speculate and anticipate almost from the time the snow is off the ground.

Indeed, if a person is ambitious for success in the competitions at the county fair, it is absolutely necessary to be forehanded in preparation. This applies with equal force whether it is a case of John seeking blue ribbons for his sheep and cattle or Mary seeking the grand prizes for her cakes and pies and preserves. And of course it is true in yet greater measure of Cousin Sue who has a plot to capture the diploma for the handsomest silk quilt or the most beautiful pillow top—for, be it known no prize-winning piece of fancy work, no more than Rome, was built in a day.

It is a matter of congratulation that the old-fashioned county fair has remained unchanged, in its main features, since the days of our grandfathers. It is one of the most cherished memories of every man whose boyhood was spent within lure of its magic—one of the memories that after residence in the city he half fears to rekindle by renewed association, lest the twentieth century



brand won't be the least bit like the old-time event that was awaited with more anticipation than was bestowed even upon the Fourth of July or the annual visit of the "monster and mastodontic united shows." Perhaps this cherished idol of youth may not have been a really and truly "county fair," for not all county fairs can enjoy the prestige of location at the county seat, but after all, that is a minor matter in the eyes of the outsider and no man can ever be convinced that the world ever held a more important "agricultural exposition" than the one at which as a youngster he exhibited his chickens or peddled peanuts or sold scorecards.

That, as has been said, the old-fashioned county fair hasn't been changed beyond recognition, even to this day, is all the more a matter of surprise when we take into account the revolutionary changes that have taken place in other phases of rural life. The introduction of rural free delivery, for instance, has done away with the necessity and the opportunity for those friendly gatherings at the cross-roads store when the farmers who drove over for the mail stole a little leisure in which to swap stories. Similarly a phonograph in every farm house has somewhat dulled the appetite for those periodic concerts at the little red school house, even as the presence on the roads of those sipping, screeching automobiles has knocked all the romance out of those buggy rides in the moonlight when old Dobbin was allowed to find his own way and set his own pace.

Not only has the county fair withstood the ravages of time and the onslaught of modern invention, but in some respects it has benefited by a lapse of time. That is, many a fair of the present day is vastly bigger and better than was the corresponding event on the same grounds a score or more of years ago. It is not due solely to the natural increase of population, either, nor yet to that "back-to-the-soil" crusade which has swept over the land. The latter has helped, however, because it has added to the population of many a rural district men and women who are engaging in farming for pleasure as well as for profit and who enter their products at the nearby fairs as a matter of pride just as a breeder of fine dogs will travel all over the country to display his blooded canines at the big dog shows, even though the prizes would not pay the express charges on the animals.

The automobile, despised though it be in many quarters, has had a big influence in bringing greater prosperity to our latter-day county fairs. The advent of the horseless vehicles and the fad for touring, taken in conjunction with that improvement of country roads which has been going on this past decade or so, has made it possible for farmers to travel greater distances to the fairs. The tiller of the soil who in the old days was content to take his family to one fair—the one nearest home, may now, if he has one of those automobiles that are constructed especially

for the use of farmers, "take in" anywhere from three to half a dozen fairs held within a radius of say twenty or thirty miles. Of course, this swells the gate receipts and it also results in the exhibit classes being better filled.

On the other hand, the motor car has brought to the county fairs a certain patronage from city folk who almost never attended these rural exhibitions in the old days. Some of the city folks are those who have friends or relatives in the country, with whom they hold a reunion at the fair. Others are one-time rural residents who, having gone to town and "made their pile," find that they can come back via the automobile when they would not take the trouble if it meant getting up early in the morning to catch an excursion train. And finally there are the city folk who have neither kith nor kin nor the ties of old associations to draw them to the fair, but who motor to the autumn mecca as a sort of "lark" and who find it quite as novel an experience in its way as the rural resident does to journey to the city to inspect an exposition or a great amusement park. This latter portion of the influx from the city may not add to the gaiety of the occasion, particularly, for the country people at the county fair, but their contributions at the ticket window are well worth having and generally appreciated, for, be it known, the average county fair is conducted by farmers and other members of the community who can't wholly overlook the financial side.

Yet another new influence that has helped the county fair in our time is the suppression of betting and the abandonment of racing at most of the race courses near the large cities. Racing of one kind or another goes on at almost all our county fairs and whereas it is not supposed to be accompanied by betting there are opportunities for quiet wagers, whereas the mere racing in itself is sufficient to attract horse owners and others who love the sport for itself. Just here, it may be added, that most fairs throughout the United States are now conducted on a clean, moral basis. Liquor selling on the grounds or nearby has long been prohibited in most localities and out-and-out gambling devices have been barred from many fair grounds these many years, but latterly, in response to the moral awakening that has swept over the country, fair managers are showing a disposition to keep out most of those raffles and games of chance which, perhaps innocent in themselves, might have a bad influence on the youthful mind.

This banishment of some of the old-time catch-penny schemes has not, however, so altered things that the man who has been out in the world cannot recognize the county fair of his youth when he comes back to it. He will see at the old stand all the weight-testing and lung-testing machines, the old-fashioned merry-go-round and the stands selling peanuts and sandwiches and red lemonade. He can test his skill, as of yore, in tossing rings over canes or trying to hit

the venturesome colored boy who pokes his head through a hole in a sheet. The time-honored "side show" or carnival is there with its snake charmers and giants and dwarfs and the fortune tellers and popcorn vendors have the old elusive way of inducing you to part with your coin. Even the fans and badges and tiny flags and "gold" medals of yesteryear look and cost the same as they did as far back as memory can carry you. About the only new things at the county fair, in fact, are the moving picture shows in their somber black tents and the ice cream cones that have supplanted the one-time "five-cent dish with two spoons."

The men who have been conducting county fairs long enough to make comparisons will tell you that, all in all, it costs just about as much to hold a fair nowadays as it did a decade or two ago, presuming, that is, that you "hang up" about as much in prizes for the show and speed classes. Some items have been cut over the expenses in the old days, whereas other outlays have increased, owing to the increased cost of living or some other new influence. For one thing, the fair managers save some money in heralding the fair. For the sentiment of the thing, they still have to make use of some of those gaudy posters in blue and red and yellow that from time out of mind have filled childish dreams every autumn, but they don't spend money to plaster these posters on every barn and fence and covered bridge in the county, as they were wont to do in the old days. As the number of country newspapers has increased they have provided a better and cheaper way of telling the people of the delights of the coming fair. On the other hand, the "star attraction," if the fair management wants to be right up to date and have an airship flight each day, will cost more than in the old days. A parachute jumper or an acrobat who did the thrilling "slide for life" did not demand half as much money, usually, as the expert aeroplanist who wants a fee of \$500 and upward.

A feature of the county fair that hasn't changed with the lapse of time is the season for holding the event. The conclusion of the harvest, which leaves the farmer comparatively care-free and, let us hope, with money in his pocket, dictates the date of this annual festival. In some parts of the country September is the favorite month for fairs, but elsewhere October has the call and quite a few of these agricultural shows and trotting meets are held in early November. Active preparations at the fair grounds begin a month or six weeks earlier for the up-to-date fair association repaints its buildings each summer and has everything spick and span for the three or four day attraction.

The Old Order Changeth

A critic declared that twentieth century people tell their private affairs much more readily than used to be the custom. If marriages turn out unfortunately the world learns it from the parties chiefly concerned, and what the old-fashioned woman would have called the secrets of her inner life, not to be confessed even to herself, the new woman tells boldly in order to surround her personality with a halo of interest, for it seems certain, if you do not say you have troubles, nobody will notice them. The instinct of family loyalty is diminishing, that clanish sentiment which caused relatives to hide their internal dissensions from others as carefully as they would bodily infirmities; children criticize their parents and vice versa; brothers and sisters quarrel in the street; the black sheep is openly discussed by his relations. No toleration is granted on the score of blood, and as all of us require as much toleration as we can get, it seems a pity so fruitful a means of supply is cut off. Yet, if a man has a brother a blackguard, why should he not say so, just as much as if he were a stranger? There seems no real reason, except that it does not sound nice, and public opinion long ago decided that a family disgrace must be shared by all the members.

Finding of the Book of the Law

Sunday School Lesson for July 30, 1911
Specially Arranged for This Paper

LESSON TEXT—II Chronicles 34:14-33.
MEMORY VERSE—21.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."—Psa. 119:11.
TIME—B. C. 621, in the 18th year of Josiah's reign, when he was 26 years old.
STAGE IV of the last lesson.
PLACE—The Temple and Palace at Jerusalem.
PERSONS—Josiah, the king. Huldah the prophetess. Hilkiah the high priest. Shaphan the scribe or secretary.

With hundreds of millions of Bibles in existence and several millions more printed every year, it is somewhat difficult for us to imagine how knowledge of the written Bible, and of the exact tenor of its teachings could be lost. Some facts will help us to understand. There were at that time very few copies of the sacred books in existence. They were very expensive. It was customary for these copies to be kept in the temple, while the copy which (according to the law) was made for the use of the king, would most certainly have perished under such kings as Manasseh and Amon. It is plain that the finding of this book "was not the discovery of something unknown before, but the rescuing of the temple copy of the law from the hiding place in which it had long lain." It must have been the ancient copy of the law, and not a book written, as some critics think, by unknown persons in the reign of Manasseh, never seen or used among the Jews before.

When they brought out from the old chests in the temple the money contributed for repairs, which had been deposited in the safest hiding place, Hilkiah the priest, who had charge of the money, in searching the chest found at the bottom a book of the law of the Lord, the law given by Moses. Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, King Josiah's secretary of state, as the fitting person to show it to the king. When Shaphan reported the contributions and the work on the temple, he brought the book with him, told how it had been found, and read it to the king.

The king heard the book read, and he assembled the elders and priests, and the Levites. They made a public covenant and pledge. The king himself first made a public covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, with all his heart.

This was very similar to the great meeting under Joshua on the slopes of Mount Ebal and Gerizim eight centuries before, on taking possession of the Promised Land. The same motives were presented, and the same covenant made.

The covenant was made under the power of the strongest and best motives that could be brought to bear upon them, when their minds were uplifted into clearest vision, above the smoke and clouds of earth. That was the right time to make a decision. God has given us feelings on purpose to move us to decide aright.

Josiah restored the regular temple services under the priests and Levites; and he celebrated a passover, such as had not been celebrated from the days of the judges that Judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah. From all parts of the land the people flocked up to the renovated temple and joined with every demonstration of gladness in the eight days' festivity prepared for them. Thirty thousand males of full age attended. During all these days the services of the temple choir were brought into requisition—the singers of the famous clan of Asaph chanting, in relays, the psalms for the season, appointed centuries before by David, Asaph and Jeduthun.

The Bible may be lost today by neglecting it—neglecting to read it daily. Neglecting family reading and prayers. Neglecting to read its stories to little children. By disobeying it. Disobeying its precepts dulls the conscience, and the whole moral nature, so that it may be said, "Eyes have they, but they see not, ears have they but they hear not."

By being so absorbed in worldly things that while he heareth the word with his ears, "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." By keeping the Word far from daily life, so that all its blessed truths are admired, but not geared on to right action.

By making the Bible unattractive. I have heard a number of ministers read the Bible so poorly that people were not interested in it, listened carelessly, and liked it less than if it had been unread. Then the printing of the Revised Version is so solid as to be unattractive and difficult to use. By lessening its authority. It makes a vast difference in the power of the Bible, whether it is received as only the thoughts of men, or as a message from God. By neglecting all the light that is shining upon it from many sources.

Find the Bible—Get acquainted with it. Read it. Study it. Know what is in it. One of the best things in the Sunday school, in the Epworth League and Christian Endeavor movement is their emphasis on the daily reading of the Bible. Practice its precepts. Only by doing God's will can one understand it. Use it as a guide book for daily life. Sometimes boys in school and college have little interest in their studies because they do not see any practical use in them. But as soon as they see how they guide to success, or are essential to their aims, they become full of enthusiasm.

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Mrs. Emeline Green, nurse, Osage, Iowa, says: "I have nursed many cases of terrible kidney disorders and have found Doan's Kidney Pills the best remedy for such troubles. In confinement when it is so necessary to have the kidneys in good condition, Doan's Kidney Pills are in a class alone. They are splendid also for backache, dizziness, bloating, retention and other kidney and bladder troubles."

Remember the name—Doan's.
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Polly—So Mrs. Highmere's husband has developed bad habits. How did you hear about it?
Dolly—Oh, Mrs. Highmere invited us all to an afternoon tea so she could tell us how she suffered in silence!

IN AGONY WITH ITCHING

"About four years ago I broke out with sores on my arms like boils. After two months they were all over my body, some coming, and some going away. In about six months the boils quit, but my arms, neck and body broke out with an itching, burning rash. It would burn and itch, and come out in pimples like grains of wheat. I was in a terrible condition; I could not sleep or rest. Parts of my flesh were raw, and I could scarcely bear my clothes on. I could not lie in bed in any position and rest. In about a year the sores extended down to my feet. Then I suffered agony with the burning, itching sores. I could hardly walk and for a long time I could not put on socks.

"All this time I was trying everything I could hear of, and had the skill of three doctors. They said it was eczema. I got no benefit from all this. I was nearly worn out, and had given up in despair of ever being cured when I was advised by a friend to try Cuticura Remedies. I purchased Cuticura Soap, Ointment, and Resolvent, and used exactly as directed. I used the Cuticura Remedies constantly for four months, and nothing else, and was perfectly cured. It is now a year, and I have not had the least bit since. I am ready to praise the Cuticura Remedies at any time. (Signed) E. L. Cate, Exile, Ky., Nov. 10, 1910.

Although Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold by druggists and dealers everywhere, a sample of each, with 32-page book, will be mailed free on application to "Cuticura," Dept. 21, K, Boston.

Grandfather's Fault.
Father—Why, when I was your age I didn't have as much money in a month as you spend in a day.

Son—Well, pa, don't scold me about it. Why don't you go for grandfater?—Silent Partner.

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Lewis' Single Binder, straight 5c—many smokers prefer them to 10c cigars.

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