Mrs. Eleanor Risley, Well Known Writer, Dies September 6th

Friends of Eleanor Risley were saddened by the announcement of her death on September 5th. She had fallen and injured her hip at her home at Eureka prings, Arkansas. Her nephew and his wife had her removed to the University Hospital at Little Rock where she underwent an operation but survived only a few days.

Eleanor Risley and her husband Peter will be remembered living here in the early 1920's and taking a notable part in the intellectual life of the town. Both of them with keen, analytic minds, gathered about them a group whose discussions on economic and literary topics were of a high order. At their little home in the pine woods they organized the Sunday Breakfast Club, where simple food and high thoughts prevailed, while Mrs. Risley originated the Sribbler's

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MA

to Wildcat, as a picture of American folk life, was highly praised here and in England. A second book, another personal narrative, was An Abandoned Orchard. She continued writing short articles and sketches for various newspapers and magazines, but though urged to write other books, her health and her growing blindness stood in her way.

After leaving Fairhope, and spending some years on a small Arkansas farm, they settled eventually at Eureka Springs, where in 1943 Peter Risley died. As their companionship was very close and they were perhaps more than usually dependent on each other, her consequent loneliness was intense and was deepened by the total loss of sight that had come to her. Although her spontaneous wit was somewhat dimmed, her letters still showed her courage and deep seated philosophy.

In a poem she wrote a year or so ago which she called "a sort of Mrs. Milton thing," she says, "I must drink deep of patience, being nearly blind,' . . . . must drink from secret springs on this our lonely star."

Eleanor Risley

Real Fairhope Folks

REAL FAIRHOPE FOLKS

BY

ELEANOR RISLEY

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ALL too soon the village becomes the town, and our cherished local color, individuality and quaintnesses blend and tone down until little remains to distinguish us from our neighbors. Eleanor Risley, a member of the Scribblers' Club, caught and preserved for us some of these vanishing qualities and characteristics in the sketches here collected, which appeared at various times during the years 1921-4, in The Fairhope Courier. M. H. L.

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THE PINE TREE

The trees that love the rivers, they have water in their veins.
They stand with outstretched, leafy arms and pray to summer rains.
The pine tree of the gallant heart, beneath the southern sky,
Disdains the rain, and sun, and cold, nor is afraid to die.

The oak, the birch, and sycamore have garlands at their feet
Where children play and men may rest, and nesting robins meet.
The pine tree's children lift to him tall candles of pale gold.
The wild hawk swings about his head, where little cones sleep cold.

The Daphne road with red, red sands leads out to solemn aisles
Where grey moss hangs in spectral wreaths, and azure water smiles.
A white slab marks the pine tree's death along the silent lanes.
You break his heart to heal your wounds with slow drops from his veins.

Magnolia blooms stand heavy, white, too pure for touch of earth.
The downy, flushed mimosa smiles at yupon's Yuletide mirth.
The pine tree's body is broken for you, and with his latest breath
His stiffened fingers stab you back—he scorns a coward's death!

The willow weeps by cooling streams, rocked by every breeze.
The gnarled oak, with stout old heart, is loved beyond the seas.
The pine tree's love is not for you. How light he holds your sod!
He drains the earth of hidden fire, and lifts it straight to God.

THE SUNDAY FORUM

The old lady who has moved in next door, brought me a bottle of home brew liniment for my lame back.

"No I won't set down," she said. "I'm goin' to the Forum. There's a I. W. W. goin' to speak. I don't ricollect as I have seed one."

"Aren't you afraid of bombs and riots at the Forum?" I asked.

"Me?" cried Mrs. Brand, "I aint afraid of no Forum of no kind. Down in Ruskin, Florida, the Socialists had a Sunday Forum. They appointed the sheriff permanent chairman, and he kept order with a sawed off shot gun. But after the first fight it wasn't very interesting. Just a few rucuses. Goodbye. Rub in that liniment good and I'll stop in on the way home and tell you about it."

At half past four Mrs. Brand's sturdy figure tramped up the walk. I hastily poured some of the home brew liniment on my handkerchief, that I might emit an odor of home brew sanctity. I appreciated that liniment; but not enough to blister my back with a home brew that smelt like a venerable old egg fried in gasoline.

"Come in," I said. "How was the Forum? and who presided?"

"Twasn't much of a Forum," she replied. "But a smiley, white haired man presided, that put 'em all in a good humor to onct. But la, that little I. W. W. was the peacefullest critter there. He just told about workin' clubs the men got up so's when there wasn't nobody else to handle the work, the clubs could do it.

"As soon as the I. W. W. set down, a tall man with a round face and nice grin that wouldn't come off, he got up. It seemed like he was a pore man that run a grocery store, and worked harder than his clerk. I reckon he's only got one and it keeps 'em both hustlin'. He was peeved because he couldn't git into the clubs, and his clerk could; because he paid his clerk wages and didn't git none hisself, just run the store.

"Most of the men that spoke was peeved because they couldn't git in the clubs without workin' for somebody. They said it wa'n't an open organization. But one man got up and said it was alright. He said the Masons was a closed organization; and so was the church. I see that right away. You have to know how to ride a goat to git in with the Masons; and everybody knows that it takes a saved soul and a clean collar to stay in the church. I reckon every organization has to be a closed organization or it wouldn't be an organization at all. I sez to the man in front of me, 'I just come here. What does it take to get into your Single Tax organization? I aint in it.'

"He told me real polite that I couldn't git in it. It is closed now. It used to take a hundred dollars and bein' a Single Taxer. But it is plumb closed now.

"A eldish man with a pointed beard, waved his arms and jumped into the areny of the Forum and wrastled. Tom, that was my husband, used to read a magazine named 'The Areny.' It said on the back, that our ideas pushed us into the Areny. His'n must a pushed him mighty hard, and folks clapped him a lot. He searched that I. W. W. for dynamite; and him a settin' there as cam as a pan of milk. He was that cam the man forgot and called him a W. C. T. U.

"When he set down, a little highbrow lookin' man got up and talked about a monster he'd seed somewhere. He said hoeing your own row was full American, and he quoted that text from the Bible about every tub standing on its own bottom. He said that was full American too, and Jesus knew it.

"I forgot to tell you a preacher got up and asked questions. I know he was a preacher because he looked so good, and his voice was so kindly. He asked if the men in the I. W. W. was Catholic or Protestant. The I. W. W. said 'Neither one. But if a workin' man could find any time from his work, the clubs didn't care which he was.'

"After the High Brow set down a tall woman in a paper hat got up and started running down the monster the highbrow had seed. She said the building trade of America was busted because the men that did the work wanted to build good houses and git the fun out of it like children with blocks, and somebody prevented 'em.

"A man on the other side of the room that looked like the pictures of Roosians in the papers, got up and said that the bottom had just naturally dropped outen every thing in the hull world, and we might as well admit it.

"A big man with a boomin' voice riz up then and admitted it on the spot. He said after the whole thing was dead and done fer, if the I. W. W. man's clubs could ketch the remains, and bury 'em, then kinder keep things runnin' he thought the I. W. W. clubs was alright. He said he thought there was more heat than light generated in this meetin'. La, I wonder now how fer north that man come from! Why if them sparks had a shot off at Ruskin, we would a had two deputies to help the permanent chairman, or he wouldn't a been permanent long. Of course the man that wrastled in the Areny and the little highbrow was a tryin' to get at each other; but I saw 'em a shakin' hands as pleased as Punch after the meetin'. And the highbrow he leaned over to the woman in the paper hat after she made her speech and he said, 'Madam, you have no brains. Or if you have you've never used 'em.' If a man had leaned over to me and accused me of bein' a

igit—even if I had run down the monster he'd seed—right there, there would have been considerabul more heat than light generated. But the woman in the paper hat just giggled.

"Well at the very last a awful straight, solemn man, he strode to the Areny. The woman that set by me said he was the High Priest of Fairhope. I never saw a High Priest of no place. But he looked like one. He stood up mighty solemn, and he said, they was two things if you didn't have you was bad off. They was free speech and free land. But Fairhope had 'em both. And we all clapped like mad.

"As I went out I asked a man why every body argued so peppery, and yit didn't seem to need no permanent chairman with a sawed off shot gun. He said:

"Well you see we are all Single Taxers at heart. We only argue because some of us believe that the Single Tax road just runs to the next big town where we'll have to branch off at the cross roads. And some of us believe it runs plumb round the world.'

"I see," sez I—but I didn't—"which a way does the High Priest that spoke last believe?"

"Him?" he sez. 'I aint sure, but I think he believes it runs plumb frum Hell to breakfast.'

"Well I reckon I bout told it all. I'll be goin'. Did you rub in that linament good?"

"Don't you smell it?" I answered, as I rubbed the stem of my pipe with my handkerchief.

GRANDMA CAMERON

Fairhope seems to be given over to the young—to their education in winter, and their pleasures in summer. But Fairhope is none the less a delightful haven for the old. Why, I went to a delightful dance in Fairhope at Comings Hall, where the prettiest figure, and the lightest foot was a grandmother's.

However, there are grandmothers new, and grandmothers old. Grandmother Cameron is frankly an old grandmother. With Grandma Cameron I always feel as if I had opened the leaves of a forgotten book, and found therein a withered rose that still exhales its sweet and spicy fragrance.

Today she climbed my gallery steps a little wearily. For all our "eighty-five years young" philosophy, there comes a day when the grasshopper is a burden.

"All alone?" she said. "I guess I'll not come in then. It is so easy to make a scandal in Fairhope. Over in a town right by here the minister preached the other day about Fairhope. He said we were all headed straight for the bad place."

Grandma seated herself in a porch rocker, and removing her snowy sunbonnet, she carefully guided a strand of wayward hair back home to its shiny knob at her neck.

"As far as I can see," she went on, "it's mostly because we go to the bay in our bathing suits. I never did see the day when I thought my leg was so much worse than my arm. When folks talk about a limb, I always think of a tree."

"Some folks don't care for pines", she said. "But they tell better stories than most trees. If folks knew it they are Fairhope's historians. I went out to the cemetery yesterday. It is a sweet spot, but so neglected. I'd like to lie there some day. But I don't know as I will. The day I need to go there I probably can't express myself so I'll be heard"—and Grandma laughed. I would rather hear Grandma laugh than other people sing.—"Now there's Annie," she went on. "Annie wants them to take her thousands of miles away when she dies, so she can get up with her own folks on Resurrection Day. For me, I'd rather wait around a little spell and give them time to primp up their souls a bit. I'd kind of like to freshen up a little myself before I know as I am known, face to face. It's a solemn and embarrassing thought. But la, I do love Annie. It took me some years to find out what a mighty little thing a belief is between friends. I'm rested now." And she tied her sunbonnet securely under her chin. "I'll go on now and read Main Street to keep my mind off of these six million

unemployed in America. Funny they don't have any of the unemployed themselves in that conference to help find out what to do for themselves. I asked my son how he'd like a farmer's conference with not a single farmer to confer."

"But," said I "they are all right Grandma, there's Gomper's and Lewis you know."

"That's what my son said. Maybe Gompers and Lewis aren't employed, but I guess their salaries are running on. I haven't heard they were in any immediate distress. We avoid exciting topics at our house. That's why I like to come to your house. I kind of crave a little excitement. Once I had a chance to teach political economy in a school. Only I didn't think I knew enough. But la, now that Bryan is orating around about something he doesn't appear to understand, I'm not so sure. Maybe I knew as much about political economy as he does about Darwin and evolution. I'll be going now. I don't want to get het up over Fairhope again. Well, maybe you might help me down the steps. Good bye. Come over."

SMUT OF FAIRHOPE

Smut is dead. He was a little thing, scarcely as long perhaps, as the arm of his poisoner.

But Smut's tiny spark of life added to the Gayety of Nations.

Through the long hot summer he was Fairhope's ward. The Gaithers were away, and Smut was bored; and very, very lonely. Often I have seen him stand as still as a little stone dog gazing at the empty Gaither home. Then I have seen him turn slowly away, his ears a little lower, his step a little less jaunty.

But Smut asked for no sympathy, for no alms. If Smut were thirsty he trotted to your door and his black cynical eyes met your own a little contemptuously.

"You fraud they call a man, can't you understand that it is an unusually hot day and I need a cool drink? Even you should understand that." If you did understand, a little wag of his excuse for a tail was sufficient thanks. There was no undue demonstration. Smut was a gentleman, like Lord Chesterfield "A glance of the eye is sufficient, my boy."

Once he lay lazily watching another dog being trained to bring back a stick. Suddenly he arose with something like a sneer and returned the stick himself. Then he threw himself down on the porch with an air of nonchalance—as if to say, "So thats the game! Why any dog can do that!"

Smut loved his kind. While he was fiercely resentful of an offense to his dignity, I have known him to submit to outrageous insults from a foolish puppy he was patiently teaching to play and to run. Once I knew him to run two blocks in the night on hearing the S. O. S. of his youngster. After driving away the trespassing dog, he trotted home at once, waiting for no thanks. "A trifle! Don't mention it!" The youngster was his friend. It was noblesse oblige with Smut.

I wonder could Smut's poisoner meet that long, searching, contemptuous look in the little overwise eyes of his victim?

The Gaithers are on their way home. Has the welcome of your dog at your own home ever gone straight to your heart?

He was a dog but he had his legal rights. We laughed at Smut among ourselves and called him "Fairhope's Ward" this summer.

He was only a little dog, but he was brave and he was gentle.

Peace to his ashes.

MISS PAT

We call Patricia O'Neal Miss Pat, though she has been the devoted mother of seven children. Her beautiful hair is now snow white, but it still "bounds to her foot's glee." There is nothing matronly about Miss Pat. Instead there is a kind of virginal freshness, a sort of Irish breeziness about her that keeps her a sublimated, eternal maiden. Even her shy little smile when I tease her is wholly virginal. For instance, when in my blunt masculine way I misquote the I. W. W.'s, or question the omniscience of Lenine. When Miss Pat comes swaying through the pines, waving a "dirty radical sheet" in that hand so often modelled by St. Gaudens, I look for no Irish breeze. I prepare myself for a tropical storm. But Ye gods! how beautifully she walks on those number eight sandals. "Mary's feet are a blemish," I have heard her say. "They are too small. That is why she walks like a duck."

Beside being an Irish patriot, Miss Pat is one hundred per cent radical. With her own number eights she has set off stink bombs at the tables of elegant scab cafes during the waiter's strike. Who could suspect Patricia's calm beautiful face and grande dame manner?

Last month when she returned from the north, she traveled in the day coach. Why should she enrich a monopoly like the Pullman company? A Pullman—a contrivance that emphasizes the classes? Miss Pat, herself is class conscious. Finding her day coach stuffy and dull she took herself to the smoker. There the conductor gently reminded her that the smoker was for men. Miss Pat replied to the astonished Southron that when the railway company provided such perfectly equipped club rooms, where the women could foregather, and get acquainted and tell parlor stories she herself would cease to infest the smoker.

"But," said the conductor, "you must see that you are embarassing the men."

"Did you hold the fort?" I asked.

"No," she answered in that mellifluous Irish voice, as sweet and deep as a bell. "They smoked me out. 'Do you mean to lower every window,' I asked. 'We certainly do' they answered in chorus."

"You must stay in Fairhope," I said, "we pride ourselves on tolerance in Fairhope."

"Fairhope is home," she answered. "It is so calm and beautiful." "Mary," she cried, "I'm going to bob that scraggly hair of yours. You would look far more sensible."

I observe that Miss Pat's female friends retain their hats in her presence as rigorously as Jews in a synagogue.

Alas, Miss Pat is on the wing.

"You know back there we are establishing a free laundry where the hoboes can wash their own clothes. And there is our little theatre for radical plays. Get pinched? What if I do get pinched? It is an honor to go to jail these days. The free men are on the inside, and the willing slaves are on the outside now. Did I ever tell you how we communicated with those Irishmen in jail and planned their escape by singing Gaelic songs under their window?"

MRS. DeSNOB AND HUSBAND

I first met Mrs. deSnob coming over on the boat. Perhaps, to be accurate, I first encountered Mrs. deSnob. Unless, as the English say, the roof is an introduction,—and a boat does not acknowledge a roof. I could never really hope to meet Mrs. deSnob. I once heard a woman say "the sky is an introduction in Fairhope." It might help some if that were a motto for Fairhope.

Mary wanted a certain rare kind of tea kettle, and I wanted a certain hoe for my egg plant and butter beans. I succeeded in finding them in Mobile, and bore them to a secluded corner of the boat. Now the man with the hoe has acquired a safe dignity. But with a teakettle in the other hand it is different. Strange how a little rift within the lute, a kiss too long, or even the addition of a small object of hardware and the world is never the same again. Why I know a man who was making a competency out of a pop corn wagon. He put in peanuts and went broke.

Presently, from my retreat, I saw a tall, stout lady elegantly upholstered in dark green, bearing down upon me. Her supports were of pale grey, well turned and decorative. My mind, for an instant diverted to period furniture, I kept a careless hold on the hoe. As the lady seated herself in front of me the leg of her chair fell upon part of the hoe. Naturally my hoe handle gave her shiny green hat a smart blow. It listed to port, I must admit, for the remainder of the journey. It was at that moment, I may say, that I encountered Mrs. deSnob. But the fussy little man who had followed in her wake poured oil on the waters.

"No harm done, my man," he said. "Glad to see you with a hoe. That is what the country needs. More hoes! More hoes!" Did Mrs. deSnob's grey silk supports testify to her husband's patriotism?

At this instant Mrs. deSnob started across the deck in hot pursuit of what I saw at once was a veritable society prize on the high seas. She towed in a little woman in brown, with a high nose and a sweet expression. I believe it possible to estimate the exact worldly status of the person to whom Mrs. deSnob addresses herself, though the addressee be entirely obscured. She apportions with such nicety the exact amount of deference. She had but an hour to work; she was traveling in high, with her feet on the accelerator.

"You remember," she said, "we met last winter at Mrs. Will Rulehem's tea."

The lady in brown remembered.

A tired looking woman with a baby and a shopping bag, stopped to speak to Mrs. deSnob in a frank Fairhoper's manner! It was a delight to see the ease with which Mrs. deSnob dropped back into low, as she returned the greeting. She did not offer the tired woman with the baby the vacant chair. However, she went into second and introduced her to the prize. This is what she said:

"This is Mrs. Putman. She lives on our side of town. She bakes us the most delicious bread."

As the tired woman passed on Mrs. deSnob continued, "I'm such a democrat. My friends say, 'Ima deSnob, you do know the queerest people!' 'But Mr. deSnob and I are such democrats. You will be in Fairhope all winter? We have lived in Fairhope several years, but we are moving away soon. Really Fairhope is too remote. There is literally no society. Of course" she added hastily, "perfectly charming people come to Fairhope. But the Organic School teachers snap them up, and they see to it that outsiders have small chance of meeting them."

"But," said the lady with the high nose and the sweet expression, "there are interesting clubs in Fairhope I have understood."

"Well yes, but in a town like Fairhope it is so difficult to discriminate. Why when I was giving an afternoon of bridge one of my neighbors asked me to call and invite a woman I had never seen, who lived on our street. She was quite offended when I told her I must telephone the members of my club. I couldn't trust myself. Mr. deSnob and I are such democrats, you know, and I knew nothing of the woman, though I had seen her husband sawing wood for Judge Totten. Of course we found out later that the man was a rich man who was trying the simple life, and was starting in on Judge Totten's wood. How could one tell? He was wearing overalls."

"Humph", said Ima deSnob's husband "that is nothing. I havn't seen a man in the south who knows how to dress. They don't dress for dinner, much less for golf."

"No country club. No caddies," continued Mrs. deSnob's husband. "Very few women playing. The women in Fairhope are new women. You know the kind. Helping around and learning how to vote. All wrong. All wrong. If a woman doesn't know how to vote let her stay away from the polls. There is too much ignorant voting in the south."

"You have a delightful library in Fairhope," ventured the woman with the high nose, and the sweet expression. "So well selected and modern."

"I've never been to the public library," answered Mrs. deSnob. "It is a pretty little building, but you know we have our northern pa-

pers. You are going to the Colonial Inn? Do let us take you up in our car. Oh you have friends to meet you? By the way our club meets Friday. May I hope you will come? It meets at my house. I can send the car for you."

We were nearing Fairhope, and the lady in brown arose and made her adieux. Was it possible that the lady with the high nose and the sweet expression gave me the slightest possible wink. Surely nothing so vulgar. She blinked from the sun on Mary's aluminum kettle maybe. But I did see her carrying the shopping bag for the tired woman with the baby as they rode up together in the People's R. R. car.

MADAME

One day last winter, I stood idly lighting my pipe at the drug store corner, when I heard up in Wheeler's Hall, sounds indicating that old, familiar indoor sport of "Hunt the A." Say what you will about jazz, there is one thing in its favor. There is, apparently, no necessity to tune up. I am no musician, but I leave it to you, if in jazz, every musician doesn't go to it, and the Devil take the hindmost. Thus the nerve exhausting search for a common denomination is happily obviated. Once in a country orchestra I heard a man making a background of bass by dragging a broomstick across the floor.—Try it. It makes a fine bass. I give you my word they dismissed him because they said his "A" was too high.

I waited on the corner until every one but the flutist had achieved his "A." The flutist gave up in despair. Then I drifted up to Wheeler's Hall. There were half a dozen people there. Each, I suppose with the instrument he most desired to play. They were having a good time. Mr. Wheeler was waiting till they got in full swing. Then he would go out in the highways and byways and compel them to come in. For Mr. Wheeler is a passionate and sincere lover of music. He loves all music, but I have seen him walk the floor and wring his hands when Anacker was playing Schumann, just because every one outside was missing it

The musicians seemed to recognize no distinctive leader, and they drifted, one after the other, toward "The Mocking Bird." He proved a shy and elusive bird, so I leaned against the window and waited. Somehow I had faith that the violinist could put salt on the bird's tail in time, and the whole orchestra catch up with him.

Below the window a jaunty figure in corduroy knickers and a long French cape, was dismounting from her horse. It was Madame, Fairhope's veterinary. She ran lightly up the steps of Wheeler's Hall, and opened the door.

At this moment the mocking bird had fluttered up to the blue with the aid of the un-"A"-ed flute, and had refused either to sing or to come down. At least I observed all the other instruments were poised and waiting.

Madame walked to the piano. The mocking bird fluttered his wings and as Madame opened her lips we heard his first, faint, clear note. There he was. We saw him plainly as he perched on a red yupon tree, and sang his heart out to his mate high on a glistening pine. We all heard him. But perhaps he sang to each of us there at Wheeler's Hall, a different song. The boy flutist with his face like

a young saint, dropped the flute on his knee; and one could see his pure young eyes in their awful innocence, look out toward the long, long plains of the future. The violinist rested his bow, and his thin figure bent with a burden of the past—or thoughts I may never know. And I saw an old willow tree thousands of miles away. A mocking bird used to sing there above the stream where we fished—my little brother and I—and I thought of the long years of bitterness between us, and of the bleak December when they took him back there for the last time, and wondered "is the mocking bird still singing o'er his grave."

Now there was nothing in the darkening room, but the voice of Madame, and the sob of the cello. We watched the old lateen sails of a fishing boat—"a winged boat, a bird afloat, sail round the purple peaks remote" and heard, across the water, the Italian sailors chant their prayer to Santa Lucia.

Then on to the rocks of the Rhine where the Lorelei beckons to death. Suddenly the pianist plays a heavy chord, and Madame steps a little forward. There rings out, up in Wheeler's Hall, the song that has stirred more hearts to Liberty and to all the crimes committed in her name than any song in all the world. The immortal Marsellaise. An instant—and Madame throws her long French cape over her shoulders, and we watch the intimitable coquetry of "La Paloma" with its monotonous, rythmic accompainment as sad, and as inevitable as death.

With a wave of her hand she is gone as suddenly as she came; and there is Wheeler's Hall and plain daylight once more. The orchestra woke and began another search for the "A"—the "A" as elusive as the blue flower or the blue atom. I lighted my pipe and went down to walk by the bay. Madame rode on before me. She was on her way to Battles. It is not every town that can boast of a veterinary like Fairhope's. A veterinary that can, with-such careless abandon, sing five languages, and bring five nations before your eyes, as she waits, up in Wheeler's Hall, for a Fairhope druggist to prepare medicine for a sick cow.

FAIRHOPE FEATHERS

The last of Fairhope's Wednesday dinners! "The banquet hall deserted. The lights are out, the garlands dead." Strange that when we mark a day as festive, there is always a reference to a banquet. Emerson says we descend to meet. Well, why not? Why not descend to see if the basement is in order? The cellar is a comfortable place, cool in summer and warm in winter.—Though it may stretch your fancy to speak of Comings Hall in this connection. The truth seems to be that we meet most joyfully and naturally on the fundamental ground of our nature. We live by food, and when we share it with others we are basically friendly. In the evolution of the race, perhaps we should have progressed far enough to know that man does not live by bread alone. We should, today, be able to wax generous and even hilarious, on the food of the spirit. All I know is, that it is not done. The body still holds the soul as a slave. Though, secretly perhaps we are a little ashamed of it. The fact is, the human race seems to have got up from all fours too soon.

How proud we would be of our agonizedly evolved spiritual qualities if we were still frankly on all fours! Consider how we hail with delight any evidence of mind or soul in a dog or a horse; while were either on his hind legs and clothed, how much would be expected of him, and how much ashamed of his lapses we should be! Yes, we are still animals, constantly changing and adjusting our clothing to meet the demands of a fastidious public; and the best of us cheer up obviously in an assembly when the food appears.

Not long ago we attributed this cheer accompanying social gatherings, to wine. But the cold water drinkers at the Wednesday dinners,—no less than the imbibers of "hot poison" as Professor Nichols, the Ganymede of the Wednesday coffee cup calls it—appear dully exhilarated. The food does the trick. It is more difficult to get divinely intoxicated. One of the versifiers of the Scribbler's Club has used this idea for a song. I give it here.

Dinner on the Grounds

I

The elder first made mention of the dinner on the grounds.
He viewed the crowd from Hungry Ridge and prayed for burning words,
"Man does not live by bread alone" announced old Elder Downs,
And then divided up his text, in firsts and seconds, and thirds,
He spoke of living water and the manna 'that abounds.'
But all the congregation heard was—dinner on the grounds.

Chorus

Dinner on the grounds! Dinner on the grounds!
A-plenty for the chilluns and 'a-plenty for the houn's,
Dinner on the grounds! Dinner on the grounds!
Thar's chicken pie, and ham and cake, for dinner on the grounds.

II

And then he called attention to the settin' o' their crowns,
He tole 'em they was wabbly, and he whacked the book and hissed,
He yelled in high soprano and he let out awful sounds,
He called 'em weeked sinners and he stomped and shuck his fist,
He vowed he'd whup the devil ef it tuck him seven rounds,
But all the congregation thought was—dinner on the grounds.

Chorus

III

Old Hiram Jones took out his watch. This hurt old Elder Downs.
Of boiling coffee from without the people caught a whiff.
He told them they were cold and proud like folks from out the towns,
They only turned away their heads to get another sniff.
"Amen! I'm through! Go eat!" yelled maddened Elder Downs,
"And the Doxology will be jest Dinner On The Grounds!"

Chorus

Still, I knew a would-be painter in California who used to acquire a plain drunk on a green sea-sunset. The other day in Mobile, I stood at the "Poison counter" at Kress'. Near, at the left, after some noxious jazz, the Victrola glided into Drdla's "Souvenir." My mind flew back to Maude Powell, and I set my coffee down untouched, remembering how many times I had watched that frail arm of hers coax the clinging sweetness of the "Souvenir" from her violin. Instinctively my eyes dwelt on the Victrola as if there I saw her worn little fingers before it. Instead, my eyes met those of a hick in a blue shirt and clumpy shoes, who was walking up and down before the machine. My faith! He too was looking over the edge of the world! A hush had fallen on his spirit too, and as the hackneyed theme stole like a rare perfume on the stale vanityladen air of Kress' God knows what visions he saw before the Victrola! At noon I met my friend from Fairhope at the same counter. The man with the blue shirt and the clumpy shoes was there, staring into the machine while it ground out the "Rubenstein Melody in F," playing it vilely as a waltz. But it was a presence in the room nevertheless. For it is a mighty good tune—as well as good music. Just before the boat left for Fairhope, I waited there again for my campagnon de voyage. He was

there. It was evident now to any observer that the man was music-drunk. He was long past the melancholy stage—quite drunk and disorderly. His wide straw hat was on the back of his head, and he was tramping to and fro before the patient girl who wound the machine for No. 7. Brahm's Dance. Our eyes—mine and the inebriate's—met in a last goodbye. Oh yes, one can get exaltation out of other things than food for the body. However, my hick was drunk alone. It may be some time before we two-footed animals who stand erect with more or less difficulty will learn that the soul too has its basic ground of meeting, and that we may come together safely and hilariously on that natural plane. Yes, we descend to meet. The high towers and battlements where we get exaltation alone, make us too dizzy at present to trust each other.

But the Wednesday dinners were a move in the right direction—mental stimulus based on the race-memory of hunger for material food. Some day—oh Lord, how long!—we shall share our spiritual food with each other with much careless and generous joy. Hurrah for the Wednesday dinners!

GOOD BYE, LITTLE HOUSE

O little house, that shields my broken dreams
Gaunt pines still guard you. Round your lowly door
The shut-eyed moon vines sway, and wait the beams
Of night's first star—so, trembling sleep no more.

O little house that hides my secret dreams
Will careless hands disturb your drowsy vine,
As on dull ears each falling cone but seems
An ugly habit of a rugged pine?

O little house, I leave with you my dreams.
For daily, as I trudge to my small world
Fear creeps along my shadow, and Hope gleams
Beyond the dusty path with wings unfurled.

O little house, shield each forsaken dream-
(Poor shadow-weaving dreams and Love withdrawn-)
Lest far away, strange midnights I shall seem
To hear them gently weeping till the dawn.