

is democracy. Only Back Bay children can supply the Back Bay school with democracy, and Back Bay children are not allowed to go to this Back Bay school. Eleven hundred children in the only Back Bay public school, and scarcely a Back Bay child among them!

As a nation, we understand the theory of democracy; collectively, we are eloquent preachers of the doctrine; but as individuals, we practise a different thing. We can die for democracy. Yet we cannot go to school for it; we cannot *be* democratic. We are sending democratic literature to the ends of the earth. Our Fourteen Peace Points were translated into three hundred native languages of India, whose millions of poor for the first time had the gospel of democracy preached to them. The isles of the sea heard, and the Japanese came seeking the truth of democracy, — in the only public school of the Back Bay of Boston!

'We will drop things German, and

take things American,' they say; but what do they find America doing? Dropping things American and adopting things German — the vocational in place of the liberal school, the private and the parochial in place of the common school. They find America fighting to make the world safe for democracy, and arraying her own citizens in warring camps of class and mass by a system of 'education for a living,' and by another system of 'education for life,' for place, and power, instead of for liberty, equality, fraternity.

I have four sons — one a politician, I hope; one a preacher; one a poet; one a combined farmer and a college professor, maybe! I am ambitious for them. But professor, or poet, or preacher, or politician, — I care not what, — one thing they shall be, if the public schools can make them: they shall be democratic citizens of this league of United States, and of the larger League of Nations which must unite the world.

BREAKFASTING AS A FINE ART

BY RICHARDSON WRIGHT

A CERTAIN wag once said (he has since died) that there are three things a man should do in private — washing, marrying, and eating breakfast. This is a solemn truth. Washing is an act of purification, marriage is an act of dedication, and breakfast is an act of contemplation. For the first two privacy is preferable; to contemplation it is necessary.

One cannot contemplate — and be polite — surrounded by a family. He

must have leisure and privacy. When a man props a newspaper before him at breakfast, he is rarely avid for news: the paper is merely a shield against intrusion. Wives should understand this. But because many of us do not appreciate leisure and privacy, we really do not value a meal devoted to such virtues.

All day we are too busy. At night we are too tired. It is only in justice to ourselves that we should lay claim to at

least one meal a day. This is no selfish premise: it is a fact that older people have proved — leisure and privacy are requisite for the development of self-respect, discernment, and poise.

So then —

Luncheon to business.

Dinner to the family.

Breakfast to one's personal thoughts.

That is the perfect day.

Eating breakfast is an art capable of infinite variations; in fact, to keep its stimulus fresh, both what we eat and how we eat it should be constantly changed. To look forward to a lifetime of orange-juice, medium boiled eggs, toast, and coffee is a dreary prospect. But the unexpected introduction of bacon or chops, or even oaten meal, is to the usual menu what a sudden brass note is in a monotony of plucked strings.

Yet even the unusual can become commonplace. One should therefore make his breakfast fit the occasion. 'Heavy' and 'light,' the only differentiations the ordinary mind recognizes, is a base manner of classifying so variable a subject. Breakfasts should be classed according to place and degree. In my own family (we are two) the following kinds are recognized: Ferial, Solemn, Pontifical, English Middle-Class, and breakfast in the Bois de Boulogne.

A Ferial breakfast is the usual weekly kind. It is a coffee-and-toast meal, eaten without servitor and in great haste, like the final meal of the Hebrew children, and in much the same style of costume — girded for departure, with our sandals on our feet and our staves in our hands.

A Solemn breakfast is eaten on a holiday, when there is no need for hurry. We wear the vestments of negligée and follow the ritual of grapefruit, poached eggs, bacon, toast, marmalade, and much coffee. It is usually interspersed

with choice bits read aloud from the editorial column of the newspaper.

A Pontifical breakfast is possible only when there is company, and comes mostly on Sundays. We are pompously garbed in Sunday clothes, and the servitor wears her best habit. All the dignity of polite manners is observed — the passing of dishes, the mysterious covering and uncovering of rare viands with silver domes, and that quaint rubric which requires finger-bowls with fruit. It is a meal, of course; one passes from stage to stage, from ecstasy to ecstasy, until an end is reached.

These are breakfasts of degrees. The others are breakfasts of places. For an English Middle-Class breakfast (which is eaten only in winter) you draw the table close to an open fire in which burns cannel coal, keep the coffee-pot on the hob, have Scotch marmalade instead of jam, tea instead of coffee, and finish with a pipe instead of a cigarette.

When spring comes, we have breakfast in the Bois de Boulogne. Our windows look over a park, and the trees are close by. A little table is spread by the window, and we eat crescent rolls with sweet butter, and have *café au lait* — and wish very hard that we were back in Paris.

Now, I have been married more years than I would confess, — blissfully married, — and still, when breakfast in the Bois is announced, I greet it with the real thrill of a lark. Still, when I sit down to a stuffy English Middle-Class breakfast, the day begins with an unwonted atmosphere.

Local custom, not personal preference, decides the manner and kind of breakfasts. Thus New England, despite its culture and independent ways, persists in that strange excrescence of pie, and even the 'Brahman caste' is addicted to crullers. And this merely because New England is in the pie-belt! Once, in a New England hotel, I was

offered the indignity of oyster stew for breakfast — but we shall not speak of that further.

In the South, I am told, breakfast is a great function. As I have never eaten below Mason and Dixon's line I cannot bear witness to this. They have, it is said, a remarkable kind of biscuit which is beaten to a flaky consistency. Moreover, they have a variety of foods irrespective of the days; which is a contrast to New England, where the natives know when Sunday comes because they have codfish balls for breakfast. I am told on good authority that in a well-ordered New England home it is quite impossible to get codfish balls except on Sundays.

The plainsman has bacon because bacon is easily carried, and because he has a fine olfactory appreciation of the aroma of bacon on still prairie air, which is like unto incense. The woodsman eats trout, because it is at hand. He will also indulge in blueberry flapjacks — a divine food not to be spoken of lightly.

The great all-Continental breakfast, including the Scandinavian, is in the manner of the French, the variant beverages being coffee or chocolate. The Russians sometimes drink tea and eat *sterelet* — a long, thin fish; but then, the Russians are given to strange ways. In England breakfast is a substantial meal of degrees and dignity. And since we took our early customs from the motherland, it was natural that the American breakfast for the first two centuries should have been a Gargantuan affair. Americans still talk about breakfast, but their conversation is an overshadowing of the past. It is like their boast of ancestry. Breakfast was once worth talking about. We have simply not stopped talking that is all.

During the course of my life I have eaten over two thousand breakfasts. Space and your patience will permit a

recountal of only three. But these were unforgettable meals.

The first was with a theologian, a white-haired divine of great repute. He was also very stout, and ate at a distance from the table. I have often since wondered why he did not follow the practice of an earlier divine, — Thomas à Kempis, — who, it is related, was so portly that he had a notch cut in his table in which he could snugly fit. This divine met me late one night on the street and deplored the fact that I was staying at a hotel. Still, as I had taken the room, I must use it — that was only common sense. But would I not breakfast with him at his house next morning?

(Right here let me say that an invitation to breakfast is a mark of real friendship. Never refuse one.)

I arrived at eight-thirty and went directly to the dining-room. The table was set for two (he was a bachelor), but it was quite the largest table for two I had ever seen. A great distance separated us. Before we sat down, he said grace — not one of those mumbled graces that ministers say when they come to dinner, but a full, man-sized grace, devoutly spoken. Then I began to see why he was so thankful — and so stout.

Fruit — endless varieties of it. Oaten meal, with cream that poured from the pitcher like molasses. Kippered herring, cooked dry. Bacon and eggs, the bacon also cooked dry. A huge basket of assorted rolls. An urn of coffee each. Hot cakes with maple syrup. Chops and fried potatoes. Stacks of buttered toast, with generous coatings of bitter marmalade. Cigarettes, pipes, cigars.

It was well on to eleven when we left the table — a shoal of empty dishes and books. Books? Yes, countless books. For we talked books, and between courses he would waddle out to

his library and return each time with half a dozen volumes. We read from Borrow, Dr. Pusey, Cardinal Manning, Arthur Guiterman, Mrs. Wharton, and several minor English poets.

When the meal was done, he said another long grace. Which leads me to observe that a full breakfast is a meal most devoutly to be thankful for.

The next breakfast was a chimera.

For a month we had been driving our punt, the *Why Not?* between the ice-jams of the Amur. At night we would stop and pitch camp and haul the boat high on the banks, for the river froze tight as a drum. Before dawn we awoke, unfroze ourselves, and then unfroze breakfast. But in these latter days the only provisions in the duffle-bag were sour black bread and tea. The prospect was not pleasant, and the nearest village lay forty versts down the river. Eventually we would come to it, but between then and now — black bread and tea. Also, my birthday.

A man should not have a birthday in a Siberian wilderness if he expects to celebrate it. But I could n't help having a birthday, and in a moment of confidence I told my pal the date.

Very early that morning I awoke to smell the sacramental aroma of bacon. It was unbelievable, but bacon, and you can't very well mistake it. I stuck my head through the tent-flap. Yes, it was bacon! He had secreted it against the day of my celebrating.

'It will be ready in a moment,' he announced.

And in a moment it was. I saw the bacon. I saw him take the four strips of it from the pan and lay them on a tin plate. The next moment I saw our fox-terrier dart at that plate. In less time than I can write it, he wolfed

down those four precious strips. Later in the morning he came back, licking his chops. We forgave him.

The third was a breakfast to a poet. This was in the lean days when any meal was a banquet.

The poet had been suffering from ennui and longed for fresh fields to pasture his Pegasus in. He tried the ordinary diversions of love and liquor which the city offered, and then resolved to go abroad. It was a brave resolve, for he had no money. But he did possess courage, and it would take courage to walk abroad a trans-Atlantic steamer as a stowaway. When detected, as he felt sure he would be, his passage could be worked out in heroic pentameters recited for the delectation of those abroad.

These things he confided to us, and we set about to make his passage easy. We decided on a farewell breakfast.

A great table was set in the studio. At either end stood immense golden Louis XVI candelabra, — borrowed from a rich friend, — each with seven tall candles, also borrowed. Midway down one side was placed a kingly chair draped with antique brocade. Sketching stools and studio flotsam formed the other thirty seats. The guests came in costume, and the models, who had volunteered to serve, wore the habiliments of hours.

When the dishes were in place and the shades drawn and the four and ten tall candles ablaze, we marched in, with the poet bringing up the rear and bearing himself nobly, like a great prelate.

Half an hour before noon he departed for his boat. As he left we gave him a dollar bill and a Chinese grammar.

He has since become well known.

SONNETS OF THE STRIKE

BY CHARLES NICHOLLS WEBB

I

THE MANAGER IS INTERVIEWED

'CONDITIONS in our mines are excellent;
Considering, of course, the industry
Is hazardous, at best, I think that we
Lost fewer men by fatal accident
Last season than one half of one per cent
Of those employed; and I will willingly
Go with you throughout any property;
Talk sanitation to you, wages, rent —'

The clear, dry voice, the steady, steel-gray eyes,
Icy alike, alike unwavering,
In sudden change took me by swift surprise;
The eyes flashed and the voice took on a ring:
'This Union fights us with the basest lies;
And so, by Heaven, we will crush the thing!'

II

AN EMPLOYEE TAKES ACTION

'Slave of Efficiency!' In deep disdain
The agitator sneered and walked away.
'You do not know your God has feet of clay.'
Haranguing loud and shrill, like one insane,
He urged the men to strike with might and main.
'Suffer the masters not another day;
Breaking the clouds of serfdom, one small ray
Predicts a sudden ending to their reign.'