

FOLK FESTIVALS, THEIR GROWTH AND HOW TO GIVE THEM

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Folk festivals, their growth and how to give them by Mary Master Needham

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MARY MASTER NEEDHAM

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HOW TO GIVE THEM**

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Their Growth and How to Give Them

BY

MARY MASTER NEEDHAM

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TO
MY MOTHER
IN GRATITUDE
FOR HER ETERNAL YOUTH
AND UNFAILING UNDERSTANDING,
I PLACE THIS GIFT
UPON HER ALTAR

PREFACE

It is with the hope that this fruit of my own experiences may inspire others to blaze trails, that I send out *Folk Festivals*. Not in any way does it aim to be exhaustive. Rather the material has been chosen with the idea that it may create a desire to give festivals, and at the same time furnish a working basis for them. Because I firmly believe that the value of this movement must be in its research, its spontaneity, and its creativeness, I have so limited the material. At the same time I have tried to make the book practical for those who are pioneers both in their interest and in their work on festivals.

To my pupils to whom I went to school, I owe much. To Miss Esther Braley and to Mr. Frank A. Manny, I am indebted for help in blazing my own trail. Not only did they give me courage at the start, but they have stayed by me along the path. Without the active and faithful interest of Mr. William Hard the book would not have been written. For the great task of reading

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my manuscript I owe a commensurate gratitude to Mr. H. K. Bassett and to Mr. Manny. And for the encouragement and interest which made the daily work in it possible, I am indebted to my husband.

M. M. N.

Evanston, Ill.
February 1, 1912.

FOREWORD

A barber in a Philadelphia club sighed as he said to me recently, "The World's great events are all over!" It took me a moment to regain myself sufficiently to realize that he was discussing baseball! Few interests and activities are so thoroughly social as some of the popular sports and games. Within a few hours after a great contest a hundred thousand people are awakened and thrilled as little else could stir them, so dependent upon others have they become for opportunities for experiences which carry with them strong emotions.

This widespread common interest is a great gain but we need much more general participation. Children and adults alike must be active themselves to gain the re-creation and growth of imagination and invention they require. It is this that gives to them that prolongation of the period of growth so necessary to give balance and meaning to the specialization necessary in earning a living.

FOREWORD

Man playing is needed as well as man thinking and man working. The stress upon thought and work in the development of modern life led for a time to an undervaluation of many social tools, as the festival and the game, which had been of great significance in earlier periods. Man lightens his baggage as new needs arise and supposes that he is through with whatever of impedimenta he has cast aside. Sooner or later, however, he or his descendants learn that one reason for lessening the load is that, by this means, strength and experience may be secured to regain and use more adequately some of the material which was considered at one time a hindrance.

The pioneer who carries the seeds of progress to a new frontier must select his pack with care. He finds an art joy in his new labors without recognizing it as an art and he has little regret for the carnivals and feast days he has left behind. But as his work becomes more social and involves wider relationships the simple individual machinery is insufficient and he must have communication or his task will fail. In the life that "no man liveth unto himself alone," the means of communication make him social and give him art.