OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AN

ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR

BOYS AND GIRLS.

EDITED BY

J. T. TROWBRIDGE AND LUCY LARCOM.

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GOING TO SLEEP.

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An Illustrated Magazine

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

VOL. V. August, 1869. NO. VIII.

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CHAPTER XV.
AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE TURNS UP.

A year had stolen by since the death of Binny Wallace,—a year of which I have nothing important to record.

The loss of our little playmate threw a shadow over our young lives for many and many a month. The Dolphin rose and fell with the tide at the foot of the slippery steps, unused, the rest of the summer. At the close of November we hauled her sadly into the boathouse for the winter; but when spring came round we launched the Dolphin again, and often went down to the wharf and looked at her lying in the tangled eel-grass, without much inclination to take a row. The associations connected with the boat were too painful as yet; but time, which wears the sharp edge from everything, softened this feeling, and one afternoon we brought out the

cobwebbed oars.

The ice once broken, brief trips along the wharves—we seldom cared to go out into the river now—became one of our chief amusements. Meanwhile Gypsy was not forgotten. Every clear morning I was in the saddle before breakfast, and there are few roads or lanes within ten miles of Rivermouth that have not borne the print of her vagrant hoof.

I studied like a good fellow this quarter, carrying off a couple of first prizes. The Captain expressed his gratification by presenting me with a new silver dollar. If a dollar in his eyes was smaller than a cart-wheel, it wasn't so very much smaller. I redeemed my pencil-case from the treasurer of the Centipedes, and felt that I was getting on in the world.

It was at this time I was greatly cast down by a letter from my father saying that he should be unable to visit Rivermouth until the following year. With that letter came another to Captain Nutter, which he did not read aloud to the family, as usual. It was on business, he said, folding it up in his wallet. He received several of these business letters from time to time, and I noticed that they always made him silent and moody.

The fact is, my father's banking-house was not thriving. The unlooked-for failure of a firm largely indebted to him had crippled "the house." When the Captain imparted this information to me, I didn't trouble myself over the matter. I supposed—if I supposed anything—that all grown-up people had more or less money, when they wanted it. Whether they inherited it, or whether government supplied them, was not clear to me. A loose idea that my father had a private gold-mine somewhere or other relieved me of all uneasiness.

I was not far from right. Every man has within himself a gold-mine whose riches are limited only by his own industry. It is true, it sometimes happens that industry does not avail, if a man lacks that something which, for want of a better name, we call Luck. My father was a person of untiring energy and ability; but he had no luck. To use a Rivermouth saying, he was always catching sculpins when every one else with the same bait was catching mackerel.

It was more than two years since I had seen my parents. I felt that I could not bear a longer separation. Every letter from New Orleans—we got two or three a month—gave me a fit of homesickness; and when it was definitely settled that my father and mother were to remain in the South another twelvemonth, I resolved to go to them.

Since Binny Wallace's death, Pepper Whitcomb had been my *fidus Achates*; we occupied desks near each other at school, and were always together in play hours. We shared our pocket-money and our secrets,—those amazing secrets which

boys have. We met in lonely places by stealth, and parted like conspirators; we couldn't buy a jackknife or build a kite without throwing an air of mystery and guilt over the transaction.

I naturally hastened to lay my New Orleans project before Pepper Whitcomb, having dragged him for that purpose to a secluded spot in the dark pine woods outside the town. Pepper listened to me with a gravity which he will not be able to surpass when he becomes Chief Justice, and strongly advised me to go.

"The summer vacation," said Pepper, "lasts six weeks; that will give you a fortnight to spend in New Orleans, allowing two weeks each way for the journey."

I wrung his hand and begged him to accompany me, offering to defray all the expenses. I wasn't anything, if I wasn't princely, in those days. After considerable urging, he consented to go on terms so liberal. The whole thing was arranged; there was nothing to do now but to advise Captain Nutter of my plan.

The possibility that he might oppose the tour never entered my head. I was therefore totally unprepared for the vigorous negative which met my proposal. I was deeply mortified, moreover, for there was Pepper Whitcomb on the wharf, at the foot of the street, waiting for me to come and let him know what day we were to start.

"Go to New Orleans? Go to Jericho!" exclaimed Captain Nutter. "You'd look pretty, you two, philandering off, like the babes in the wood, twenty-five hundred miles, 'with all the world before you where to choose'!"

And the Captain's features, which had worn an indignant air as he began the sentence, relaxed into a broad smile. Whether it was at the felicity of his own quotation, or at the mental picture he drew of Pepper and myself on our travels, I couldn't tell, and I didn't care. I was heart-broken. I felt a trifle sheepish, too, about facing my chum after all the dazzling inducements I had held out to him.

My grandfather, seeing that I took the matter seriously, pointed out the difficulties of such a journey and the great expense involved. He entered into the details of my father's money troubles, and succeeded in making it plain to me that my wishes, under the circumstances, were somewhat unreasonable. It was in no cheerful mood that I joined Pepper at the end of the wharf.

I found that young gentleman leaning against the bulkhead gazing intently towards the islands in the harbor. He had formed a telescope of his hands, and was so occupied with his observations as to be oblivious of my approach.

"Hullo!" cried Pepper, dropping his hands. "Look there! isn't that a bark coming up the Narrows?"

"Where?"

"Just at the left of Fishcrate Island. Don't you see the foremast peeping above the old derrick?"

Sure enough it was a vessel of considerable size, slowly beating up to town. In a few moments more the other two masts were visible above the green hillocks.

"Fore-topmasts blown away," said Pepper. "Putting in for repairs, I guess."

As the bark lazily crept from behind the last of the islands, she let go her anchors and swung round with the tide. Then the gleeful chant of the sailors at the capstan came to us pleasantly across the water. The vessel lay within three quarters of a mile of us, and we could plainly see the men at the davits lowering the starboard long-boat. It no sooner touched the stream than a dozen of the crew scrambled like mice over the side of the merchantman.

In a neglected seaport like Rivermouth the arrival of a large ship is an event of moment. The prospect of having twenty or thirty jolly tars let loose on the peaceful town excites divers emotions among the inhabitants. The small shopkeepers along the wharves anticipate a thriving trade: the proprietors of the two rival boarding-houses—the "Wee Drop" and the "Mariner's Home"—hasten down to the landing to secure lodgers; and the female population of Anchor Lane turn out to a woman, for a ship fresh from sea is always full of possible husbands and long-lost prodigal sons.

But, aside from this, there is scant welcome given to a ship's crew in Rivermouth. The toil-worn mariner is a sad fellow ashore, judging him by a severe moral standard.

Once, I remember, a United States frigate came into port for repairs after a storm. She lay in the river a fortnight or more, and every day sent us a gang of sixty or seventy of our country's gallant defenders, who spread themselves over the town, doing all sorts of mad things. They were good-natured enough, but full of old Sancho. The "Wee Drop" proved a drop too much for many of them. They went singing through the streets at midnight, wringing off door-knockers, shinning up water-spouts, and frightening the Oldest Inhabitant nearly to death by popping their heads into his second-story window, and shouting "Fire!" One morning a blue-jacket was discovered in a perilous plight, half-way up the steeple of the South Church, clinging to the lightning-rod. How he got there nobody could tell, not even blue-jacket himself. All he knew was, that the leg of his trousers had caught on a nail, and there he stuck, unable to move either way. It cost the town twenty dollars to get him down again. He directed the workmen how to splice the ladders brought to his assistance, and called his rescuers "butter-fingered land-lubbers" with delicious coolness.

But those were man-of-war's men. The sedate-looking craft now lying off Fishcrate Island wasn't likely to carry any such cargo. Nevertheless, we watched the coming in of the long-boat with considerable interest.

As it drew near, the figure of the man pulling the stroke-oar seemed oddly familiar to me. Where could I have seen him before? When and where? His back was towards me, but there was something about that closely cropped head that I recognized instantly.

"Way enough!" cried the steersman, and all the oars stood upright in the air. The man in the bow seized the boat-hook, and, turning round quickly, showed me the honest face of Sailor Ben of the Typhoon.

"It's Sailor Ben!" I cried, nearly pushing Pepper Whitcomb overboard in my excitement.

Sailor Ben, with the wonderful pink lady on his arm, and the ships and stars and anchors tattooed all over him, was a well-known hero among my playmates. And there he was, like something in a dream come true!

I didn't wait for my old acquaintance to get firmly on the wharf, before I grasped his hand in both of mine.

"Sailor Ben, don't you remember me?"

He evidently did not. He shifted his quid from one cheek to the other, and looked at me meditatively.

"Lord luv ye, lad, I don't know you. I was never here afore in my life."

"What!" I cried, enjoying his perplexity, "have you forgotten the voyage from New Orleans in the Typhoon, two years ago, you lovely old picture-book?"

Ah! then he knew me, and in token of the recollection gave my hand such a squeeze that I am sure an unpleasant change came over my countenance.

"Bless my eyes, but you have growed so! I shouldn't have knowed you if I had met you in Singapore!"

Without stopping to inquire, as I was tempted to do, why he was more likely to recognize me in Singapore than anywhere else, I invited him to come at once up to the Nutter House, where I insured him a warm welcome from the Captain.

"Hold steady, Master Tom," said Sailor Ben, slipping the painter through the ring-bolt and tying the loveliest knot you ever saw; "hold steady till I see if the mate can let me off. If you please, sir," he continued, addressing the steersman, a very red-faced, bow-legged person, "this here is a little shipmate o' mine as wants to talk over back times along of me, if so it's convenient."

"All right, Ben," returned the mate, "sha'n't want you for an hour."

Leaving one man in charge of the boat, the mate and the rest of the crew went

off together. In the mean while Pepper Whitcomb had got out his cunner-line, and was quietly fishing at the end of the wharf, as if to give me the idea that he wasn't so very much impressed by my intimacy with so renowned a character as Sailor Ben. Perhaps Pepper was a little jealous. At any rate, he refused to go with us to the house.

Captain Nutter was at home reading the Rivermouth Barnacle. He was a reader to do an editor's heart good; he never skipped over an advertisement, even if he had read it fifty times before. Then the paper went the rounds of the neighborhood, among the poor people, like the single portable eye which the three blind crones passed to each other in the legend of King Acrisius. The Captain, I repeat, was wandering in the labyrinths of the Rivermouth Barnacle when I led Sailor Ben into the sitting-room.

My grandfather, whose inborn courtesy knew no distinctions, received my nautical friend as if he had been an admiral instead of a common forecastle-hand. Sailor Ben pulled an imaginary tuft of hair on his forehead, and bowed clumsily. Sailors have a way of using their forelock as a sort of handle to bow with.

The old tar had probably never been in so handsome an apartment in all his days, and nothing could induce him to take the inviting mahogany chair which the Captain wheeled out from the corner.

The abashed mariner stood up against the wall, twirling his tarpaulin in his two hands and looking extremely silly. He made a poor show in a gentleman's drawing-room, but what a fellow he had been in his day, when the gale blew great guns and the topsails wanted reefing! I thought of him with the Mexican squadron off Vera Cruz, where

"The ringing battle-bolt sung from the three-decker out of the foam,"

and he didn't seem awkward or ignoble to me, for all his shyness.

As Sailor Ben declined to sit down, the Captain did not resume his seat; so we three stood in a constrained manner until my grandfather went to the door and called to Kitty to bring in a decanter of Madeira and two glasses.

"My grandson, here, has talked so much about you," said the Captain, pleasantly, "that you seem quite like an old acquaintance to me."

"Thankee, sir, thankee," returned Sailor Ben, looking as guilty as if he had been detected in picking a pocket.

"And I'm very glad to see you, Mr.—Mr.—"

"Sailor Ben," suggested that worthy.

"Mr. Sailor Ben," added the Captain, smiling. "Tom, open the door, there's Kitty

with the glasses."

I opened the door, and Kitty entered the room bringing the things on a waiter, which she was about to set on the table, when suddenly she uttered a loud shriek; the decanter and glasses fell with a crash to the floor, and Kitty, as white as a sheet, was seen flying through the hall.

"It's his wraith! It's his wraith*!" we heard Kitty shrieking, in the kitchen.

My grandfather and I turned with amazement to Sailor Ben. His eyes were standing out of his head like a lobster's.

"It's my own little Irish lass!" shouted the sailor, and he darted into the hall after her.

Even then we scarcely caught the meaning of his words, but when we saw Sailor Ben and Kitty sobbing on each other's shoulder in the kitchen, we understood it all.

"I begs your honor's parden, sir," said Sailor Ben, lifting his tear-stained face above Kitty's tumbled hair; "I begs your honor's parden for kicking up a rumpus in the house, but it's my own little Irish lass as I lost so long ago!"

"Heaven preserve us!" cried the Captain, blowing his nose violently,—a transparent dodge to hide his emotion.

Miss Abigail was in an upper chamber, sweeping; but on hearing the unusual racket below, she scented an accident and came ambling down stairs with a bottle of the infallible hot-drops in her hand. Nothing but the firmness of my grandfather prevented her from giving Sailor Ben a table-spoonful on the spot. But when she learned what had come about,—that this was Kitty's husband, that Kitty Collins wasn't Kitty Collins now, but Mrs. Benjamin Watson, of Nantucket,—the good soul sat down on the meal-chest and sobbed as if—to quote from Captain Nutter—as if a husband of her own had turned up!

A happier set of people than we were never met together in a dingy kitchen or anywhere else. The Captain ordered a fresh decanter of Madeira, and made all hands, excepting myself, drink a cup to the return of "the prodigal sea-son," as he persisted in calling Sailor Ben.

When Sailor Ben's hour had expired, we walked with him down to the wharf, where the Captain held a consultation with the mate, which resulted in an extension of Mr. Watson's leave of absence, and afterwards in his discharge from his ship. We then went to the "Mariner's Home" to engage a room for him, as he wouldn't hear of accepting the hospitalities of the Nutter House.

"You see, I'm only an uneddicated man," he remarked to my grandfather, by way of explanation.

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* Ghost, spirit.

CHAPTER XVI.
IN WHICH SAILOR BEN SPINS A YARN.

Of course we were all very curious to learn what had befallen Sailor Ben that morning long ago, when he bade his little bride good by, and disappeared so mysteriously.

After tea, that same evening, we assembled around the table in the kitchen,—the only place where Sailor Ben felt at home,—to hear what he had to say for himself.

The candles were snuffed, and a pitcher of foaming nut-brown ale was set at the elbow of the speaker, who was evidently embarrassed by the respectability of his audience, consisting of Captain Nutter, Miss Abigail, myself, and Kitty, whose face shone with happiness like one of the polished tin platters on the dresser.

"Well, my hearties," commenced Sailor Ben,—then he stopped short and turned very red, as it struck him that maybe this was not quite the proper way to address a dignitary like the Captain and a severe elderly lady like Miss Abigail Nutter, who sat bolt upright staring at him as she would have stared at the Tycoon of Japan himself.

"I ain't much of a hand at spinnin' a yarn," remarked Sailor Ben, apologetically, "'specially when the yarn is all about a man as has made a fool of hisself, an' 'specially when that man's name is Benjamin Watson."

"Bravo!" cried Captain Nutter, rapping on the table encouragingly.

"Thankee, sir, thankee. I go back to the time when Kitty an' me was livin' in lodgin's by the dock in New York. We was as happy, sir, as two porpusses, which they toil not neither do they spin. But when I seed the money gittin' low in the locker,—Kitty's starboard stockin', savin' your presence, marm,—I got down-hearted like, seein' as I should be obleeged to ship agin, for it didn't seem as I could do much ashore. An' then the sea was my nat'ral spear of action. I wasn't exactly born on it, look you, but I fell into it the fust time I was let out arter my birth. My mother slipped her cable for a heavenly port afore I was old enough to hail her; so I larnt to look on the ocean for a sort of stepmother,—an' a precious hard one she has been to me.

"The idee of leavin' Kitty so soon arter our marriage went agin my grain considerable. I cruised along the docks for somethin' to do in the way of stevedore: an' though I picked up a stray job here and there, I didn't arn enough to buy ship-bisket for a rat, let alone feedin' two human mouths. There wasn't nothin' honest I wouldn't have turned a hand to; but the 'longshoremen gobbled up all the work, an' a outsider like me didn't stand a show.

"Things got from bad to worse; the month's rent took all our cash except a dollar or so, an' the sky looked kind o' squally fore an' aft. Well, I set out one mornin',—that identical unlucky mornin',—determined to come back an' toss some pay into Kitty's lap, if I had to sell my jacket for it. I spied a brig unloadin' coal at pier No. 47,—how well I remembers it! I hailed the mate, an' offered myself for a coal-heaver. But I wasn't wanted, as he told me civilly enough, which was better treatment than usual. As I turned off rather glum I was signalled by one of them sleek, smooth-spoken rascals with a white hat an' a weed on it, as is always goin' about the piers a-seekin' who they may devower.

"We sailors know 'em for rascals from stern to starn, but somehow every fresh one fleeces us jest as his mate did afore him. We don't larn nothin' by exper'ence; we're jest no better than a lot of babbys with no brains.

"'Good mornin', my man,' sez the chap, as iley as you please.

"'Mornin', sir,' sez I.

"'Lookin' for a job?' sez he.

"'Through the big end of a telescope,' sez I,—meanin' that the chances for a job looked very small from my pint of view.

"'You're the man for my money,' sez the sharper, smilin' as innocent as a cherubim; 'jest step in here, till we talk it over.'

"So I goes with him, like a nat'ral-born idiot, into a little grocery-shop near by, where we sets down at a table with a bottle atween us. Then it comes out as there is a New Bedford whaler about to start for the fishin' grounds, an' jest one able-bodied sailor like me is wanted to make up the crew. Would I go? Yes, I wouldn't, on no terms.

"'I'll bet you fifty dollars,' sez he, 'that you'll come back fust mate.'

"'I'll bet you a hundred,' sez I, 'that I don't, for I've signed papers as keeps me ashore, an' the parson has witnessed the deed.'

"So we sat there, he urgin' me to ship, an' I chaffin' him cheerful over the bottle.

"Arter awhile I begun to feel a little queer; things got foggy in my upper works, an' I remembers, faint-like, of signin' a paper; then I remembers bein' in a small boat; an' then I remembers nothin' until I heard the mate's whistle pipin' all hands on deck. I tumbled up with the rest, an' there I was,—on board of a whaler outward bound for a three years' cruise, an' my dear little lass ashore awaitin' for me."

"Miserable wretch!" said Miss Abigail, in a voice that vibrated among the tin platters on the dresser. This was Miss Abigail's way of testifying her sympathy.

"Thankee, marm," returned Sailor Ben, doubtfully.

"No talking to the man at the wheel," cried the Captain. Upon which we all laughed. "Spin!" added my grandfather.

Sailor Ben resumed:—

"I leave you to guess the wretchedness as fell upon me, for I've not got the gift

to tell you. There I was down on the ship's books for a three years' viage, an' no help for it. I feel nigh to six hundred years old when I think how long that viage was. There isn't no hour-glass as runs slow enough to keep a tally of the slowness of them fust hours. But I done my duty like a man, seem' there wasn't no way of gittin' out of it. I told my shipmates of the trick as had been played on me, an' they tried to cheer me up a bit; but I was sore sorrowful for a long spell. Many a night on watch I put my face in my hands and sobbed for thinkin' of the little woman left among the land-sharks, an' no man to have an eye on her, God bless her!"

Here Kitty softly drew her chair nearer to Sailor Ben, and rested one hand on his arm.

"Our adventures among the whales, I take it, doesn't consarn the present company here assembled. So I give that the go by. There's an end to everything even to a whalin' viage. My heart all but choked me the day we put into New Bedford with our cargo of ile. I got my three years' pay in a lump, an' made for New York like a flash of lightnin'. The people hove to and looked at me, as I rushed through the streets like a madman, until I came to the spot where the lodgin'-house stood on West Street. But, Lord luv ye, there wasn't no sech lodgin'-house there, but a great new brick shop.

"I made bold to go in an' ask arter the old place, but nobody knowed nothin' about it, save as it had been torn down two years or more. I *was* adrift now, for I had reckoned all them days and nights on gittin' word of Kitty from Dan Shackford, the man as kept the lodgin'.

"As I stood there, with all the wind knocked out of my sails, the idee of runnin' alongside the perlice-station popped into my head. The perlice was likely to know the latitude of a man like Dan Shackford, who wasn't over an' above respecktible. They did know,—he had died in the Tombs jail that day twelvemonth. A coincydunce, wasn't it? I was ready to drop when they told me this; howsomever, I bore up an' give the chief a notion of the fix I was in. He writ a notice which I put into the newspapers every day for three months; but nothin' come of it. I cruised over the city week in and week out; I went to every sort of place where they hired women hands; I didn't leave a think undone that a uneddicated man could do. But nothin' come of it. I don't believe there was a wretcheder soul in that big city of wretchedness than me. Sometimes I wanted to lay down in the streets and die.

"Driftin' disconsolate one day among the shippin', who should I overhaul but the identical smooth-spoken chap with the white hat an' a weed on it! I didn't know if there was any sperit left in me, till I clapped eye on his very onpleasant countenance. 'You villain!' sez I, 'where's my little Irish lass as you dragged me away from?' an' I

lighted on him, hat and all, like that!"

Here Sailor Ben brought his fist down on the deal table with the force of a sledge-hammer. Miss Abigail gave a start, and the ale leaped up in the pitcher like a miniature fountain.

"I begs your parden, ladies and gentlemen all; but the thought of that feller with his ring an' his watch-chain an' his walrus face, is alus too many for me. I was for pitchin' him into the North River, when a perliceman prevented me from benefitin' the human family. I had to pay five dollars for hittin' the chap (they said it was salt an' buttery), an' that's what I call a neat, genteel luxury. It was worth double the money jest to see that white hat, with a weed on it, layin' on the wharf like a busted accordiun.

"Arter months of useless sarch, I went to sea agin. I never got into a foren port but I kept a watch out for Kitty. Once I thought I seed her in Liverpool, but it was only a gal as looked like her. The numbers of women in different parts of the world as looked like her was amazin'. So a good many years crawled by, an' I wandered from place to place, never givin' up the sarch. I might have been chief mate scores of times, maybe master; but I hadn't no ambition. I seed many strange things in them years,—outlandish people an' cities, storms, shipwracks, an' battles. I seed many a true mate go down, an' sometimes I envied them what went to their rest. But these things is neither here nor there.

"About a year ago I shipped on board the Bellephœbe yonder, an' of all the strange winds as ever blowed, the strangest an' the best was the wind as blowed me to this here blessed spot. I can't be too thankful. That I'm as thankful as it is possible for an uneddicated man to be, He knows as reads the hearts of all."

Here ended Sailor Ben's yarn, which I have written down in his own homely words as nearly as I can recall them. After he had finished, the Captain shook hands with him and served out the ale.

It was a pleasant sight to see the two old lovers sitting side by side, in spite of all, drinking from the same little cup,—a battered zinc dipper which Sailor Ben had unslung from a strap round his waist. I think I never saw him without this dipper and a sheath-knife suspended just back of his hip, ready for any convivial occasion.

We had a merry time of it. The Captain was in great force this evening, and not only related his famous exploit in the war of 1812, but regaled the company with a dashing sea-song from Mr. Shakespeare's play of The Tempest. He had a mellow tenor voice (not Shakespeare, but the Captain), and rolled out the verse with a will:—

"The master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I,
The gunner, and his mate,
Lov'd Mall, Meg, and Marian, and Margery,
But none of us car'd for Kate."

"A very good song and very well sung," says Sailor Ben; "but some of us *does* care for Kate. Is this Mr. Shawkspear a sea-farin' man, sir?"

"Not at present," replied the Captain, with a monstrous twinkle in his eye.

The clock was striking ten when the party broke up. The Captain walked to the "Mariner's Home" with his guest, in order to question him regarding his future movements.

"Well, sir," said he, "I ain't as young as I was, an' I don't cal'ulate to go to sea no more. I proposes to drop anchor here, an' hug the land until the old hulk goes to pieces. I've got two or three thousand dollars in the locker, an' expects to git on uncommon comfortable without askin' no odds from the Assylum for Decayed Mariners."

My grandfather indorsed the plan warmly, and Sailor Ben did drop anchor in Rivermouth, where he speedily became one of the institutions of the town.

His first step was to buy a small one-story cottage located at the head of the wharf, within gun-shot of the Nutter House. To the great amusement of my grandfather, Sailor Ben painted the cottage a light sky-blue, and ran a broad black stripe around it just under the eaves. In this stripe he painted white port-holes, at regular distances, making his residence look as much like a man-of-war as possible. With a short flag-staff projecting over the door like a bowsprit, the effect was quite magical. My description of the exterior of this palatial residence is complete when I add that the proprietor nailed a horseshoe against the front-door to keep off the witches,—a very necessary precaution in these latitudes.

The inside of Sailor Ben's abode was not less striking than the outside. The cottage contained two rooms: the one opening on the wharf he called his cabin; here he ate and slept. His few tumblers and a frugal collection of crockery were set in a rack suspended over the table, which had a cleat of wood nailed round the edge to prevent the dishes from sliding off in case of a heavy sea. Hanging against the walls were three or four highly-colored prints of celebrated frigates, and a lithograph picture of a young woman insufficiently clad in the American flag. This was labelled "Kitty," though I'm sure it looked no more like her than I did. A walrus-tooth with an Esquimaux engraved on it, a shark's jaw, and the blade of a sword-fish were among the enviable decorations of this apartment. In one corner stood his bunk, or bed, and

in the other his well-worn sea-chest, a perfect Pandora's box of mysteries. You would have thought yourself in the cabin of a real ship.

The little room aft, separated from the cabin by a sliding door, was the caboose. It held a cooking-stove, pots, pans, and groceries; also a lot of fishing-lines and coils of tarred twine, which made the place smell like a forecastle, and a delightful smell it is—to those who fancy it.

Kitty didn't leave our service, but played housekeeper for both establishments, returning at night to Sailor Ben's. He shortly added a wherry to his worldly goods, and in the fishing season made a very handsome income. During the winter he employed himself manufacturing crab-nets, for which he found no lack of customers.

His popularity among the boys was immense. A jackknife in his expert hand was a whole chest of tools. He could whittle out anything from a wooden chain to a Chinese pagoda, or a full-rigged seventy-four a foot long. To own a ship of Sailor Ben's building was to be exalted above your fellow-creatures. He didn't carve many, and those he refused to sell, choosing to present them to his young friends, of whom Tom Bailey, you may be sure, was one.

How delightful it was of winter nights to sit in his cosey cabin, close to the ship's stove (he wouldn't hear of having a fireplace), and listen to Sailor Ben's yarns! In the early summer twilights, when he sat on the door-step splicing a rope or mending a net, he always had a bevy of blooming young faces alongside.

The dear old fellow! How tenderly the years touched him after this!—all the more tenderly, it seemed, for having roughed him so cruelly in other days.

T. B. Aldrich.

LAWRENCE AMONG THE COAL-MINES.

In the next chamber they found two men and a boy. The miner, whom they had already heard at his work, through the immense partition-wall—or "pillar," as it is called,—was standing on a pile of rubbish driving his drill horizontally into the face of the coal-seam near the top. The laborer was separating the large fragments of coal from the slate, and the boy was sitting on a heap, separating the smaller pieces. They cast the slate aside, and threw the coal into a car, which had been drawn in on the track to the end of the chamber to be loaded.

In another chamber they found the miner working in under the seam. He was several feet beyond the face of it, and the top part hung over him and his little lamp like a tremendous ledge of black rock. It was so low that he could not stand erect. The boys, stooping, went in where he was at work.

"I have just this corner to blow out," he told them; "then I shall put in a charge under the roof, and bring down all this coal overhead."

Lawrence asked if he didn't find it hard work to drill where he had to stoop so low.

"This is nothing," said the man. And he went on to tell how he had worked in coal-seams so thin that the miner could never stand upright, from the moment he entered his chamber till he left it. "I mined in one such," said he, "that pitched like the roof of a house. Imagine two steep roofs, one four feet above the other, and yourself getting out coal between them."

"How did you manage it? Did you work down from the top?"

"We worked up from the bottom. We kept the gangway below us, and run the coal down to it in chutes."

In another chamber they found the miner just preparing to blast. The boys retreated around the curve at the entrance, and waited for the fire to eat its way up through the fuse into the powder. Then came the explosion. Lawrence was expecting it, this time, and was not frightened; yet there was to his inexperienced nerves something painful in the sudden concussion of air, which seemed to smite him with an angry buffet in the face and breast. The vast pillars of coal that upheld the hill seemed to tremble; and the roaring gust of sound swept on through the recesses of the mines.

In traversing the gangways and chambers, Lawrence noticed many places where there had evidently once been openings in the walls, but which were now closed.

Some were boarded up, and some were built up with slabs of slate. Those on one side of the gangway, Owen said, were the entrances to old chambers that had been worked out and closed up. "Those on the other side are air-courses. They go through into another gangway, parallel to this. Wherever we run one gangway, look, we run another alongside of it. They are thirty feet apart. The chambers branch off to the right from the gangway we are in; and they branch off to the left from the other."

"Why do you run two gangways?"

"To get ventilation. You don't understand." Owen, in his eagerness to explain, dropped down in a half-sitting posture against the coal-pillar, and, taking a piece of chalk from his pocket, drew a white line down a leg of his trousers, while Lawrence held his little lamp, and Mr. Clarence and Muff looked on. "Now this is the gangway, look. Now this is the other gangway, look"; and he drew a parallel line. "Now these are the cross-cuts, or air-passages"; and he united the two with short chalk-lines drawn across from one to the other at intervals. "They are a hundred and twenty feet

apart. Now here, on the opposite side from the air-courses, are the chambers. They sweep round the way they do, for the car-track must be curved; the cars couldn't very well turn a square corner, look. The openings to the chambers are fifteen feet wide, with fifty-four feet of pillar between."

"Why so thick a pillar?"

"To hold the roof up. But the chambers branch out, as you go in, till they leave only twenty foot of pillar between them. That's as little as it is safe to leave. The wooden props just keep the roof of the chamber from falling; but the pillars are the main support. Rob them, and your whole roof is coming down, look!"

Lawrence did look, with a slight start, but perceived that his roof was safe and that Owen was merely illustrating a possibility.

"Now about the ventilation. Miners couldn't live a day without that. The fire-damp would fill up the mines, and cause explosions. Then the powder-smoke and the breaths of so many men and mules would be stifling. So, in driving a gangway, you shall drive an air-course all the way beside it,—as they do in some mines,—or drive a parallel gangway, so as to send the air-current up one and down the other. You make this cross-cut, look, to let the air pass through. Then, when you get much beyond that, you open a new cross-cut, and close up the last one. In this way you keep on, closing up the cross-cuts behind you, so as to force the air always through the new one, near where you are at work. Then there are cross-cuts from one chamber to another, and the air is driven through them by shutting a door in the gangway. When the miner gets much beyond a cross-cut, he begins to suffer for air; so he opens another, and stops the last one."

Owen had by this time a rude diagram on his trousers, the black surface of which represented the coal, while the white lines and filling represented gangways, air-courses, and chambers. He now proceeded to show how the currents of air circulated through the mines, and were drawn out by means of the ventilating fan in the air-shaft.

Mr. Clarence meanwhile looked on somewhat superciliously. "Just lend me your trousers-leg and piece of chalk a minute," he said, giving his cane to Muff to hold. "That"—pointing at Owen's diagram—"is an absurd system of mining and ventilation. Now this is my uncle's system." Using the Welsh boy's patches for a blackboard, he prepared to demonstrate. "It saves a large part of this astonishing waste of coal left in the pillars for one thing. And besides—"

At that moment Muff dropped the cane and darted with wild yelps into the darkness.

"What's that?" cried Mr. Clarence, jumping up. "It must be a cat! He's a terrible

fellow for cats, if I don't look out, I shall lose him!"

"If he follows the cat, I know just where she'll go," said Owen, putting his blackboards in lively motion, and following the dog that had followed the cat, while Lawrence and Mr. Clarence followed him.

He soon brought them to what Lawrence at first thought was a coal-chamber; but, on entering it, he found it was a stable. The floor was littered, and, ranged along by the wall, was a row of mangers, under one of which they found Muff, sure enough, barking at a hole where his game had found refuge.

"The cats down here are used to dogs," said Owen. "Here's where they generally hide from 'em."

"Cats and dogs in the mines!" exclaimed Lawrence. "That is what I never expected to see."

"One of our miners has a dog that brings him his dinner. He comes to the head of the shaft at noon, with the pail in his mouth, and waits till a car is stopped for somebody going down; then he jumps aboard, and jumps out again at the foot of the shaft, and finds his way to the chamber where his master is, without any light, unless the mule-teams happen to be passing."

Lawrence was much interested in this and other dog-stories Owen and Clarence had to tell. "But what was the use of cats in the mines?"

"To kill off the rats," said Owen.

"You have rats down here too?"

"We used to have thousands of 'em. They got so thick one time, before we had cats, that they had no fear of you at all. They would fill a manger soon as ever you fed a mule, and go to eating right at his nose. You could take up a shovelful of 'em. You might kill as many as you pleased, there'd be more the next time. They robbed the mules. So Mr. Lewis says one day,—he's the inside foreman; the superintendent you saw we call the outside foreman; Mr. Lewis manages all the work in the mines,—he says one day, 'Boys,' he says, 'I'll give any one of you a quarter, look, that will bring me a cat to-morrow.' So the next morning I puts a cat in a basket and ties the cover on, and comes down with her to see the fun when we let her out. At first she didn't know what to make of the strange place. But all at once she smells a rat, and gives a pounce, and comes out from under a manger growling and scuffling with a monstrous big rat in her mouth. Some other boys brought cats, and I bet the rats suffered! Now the cats are as much at home here as ever you saw cats anywhere. They seem to like the mines. They come purring and rubbing themselves around the miners, who always give 'em bits of their dinner. But the rats have just about disappeared."

Lawrence noticed that the mangers were covered with sheet-iron, which had been put on, Owen said, to prevent, not the rats, but the mules themselves, from gnawing the wood. "They'd eat the mangers all up in a little while, if we didn't sheathe 'em. Look at this prop."

It was an oaken post as thick as Owen's body; and it had been so nearly gnawed in two, that a smart push with the hand might have broken it quite off. Several other props were in almost as bad a condition.

"I advise your foreman to have these props ironed," said Mr. Clarence. "If he don't, some of your uneasy mules will be playing the part of blind Samson, and pulling your house down."

Lawrence asked whether the stables were intended merely as a dining-hall for the mules, or whether they were kept in them over night.

"We stable them here all winter," said Owen. "The hostler comes down and feeds 'em. The blacksmith comes down and shoes 'em. The doctor comes down and doctors 'em, if they are sick. But in summer we stable 'em outside. They are going out now," said Owen, leading the way back to the gangway.

A train of mules was passing, with boys on their backs, stooping on the animals' necks as they passed under low portions of the roof. Other boys—door-keepers or slate-pickers—were following on foot, calling out, "Wait and give me a ride!" "Take me on, after you get outside!" with other like hopeful phrases, all aiming to establish comfortable relations between the mules' backs and the legs of the pursuing boys.

Owen described the characters of some of the mules as they passed. "That one with the muzzle on bites. That other one kicks—look out! That last one kicked up and threw three boys over his head the other day; he thought two on his back was enough."

"How many mules are there?"

"Twenty, besides them that belong to the water-cars."

"Now my young friend will want to know what water-cars are for," said Mr. Clarence, bringing Muff away in his arms.

Owen soon had an opportunity of showing. They came to what he called a "basin," where the coal-bed lay lower than the foot of the shaft and the main gangways. It was like a hollow between hills, in which a pond of water settles, too low to be drained off. Here some men and boys were at work bailing. They dipped up the water into cars having tank-like boxes, which, when filled, were drawn up to "the top of the hill," as Owen said,—properly enough, though it sounded oddly to Lawrence to hear him talk of a hill two hundred and fifty feet below the surface of the ground. The water was there emptied out, where it would flow down the other

slope of the gangway towards the shaft.

"Drainage," observed Mr. Clarence, "is of quite as much importance in coal-mining as ventilation. If it wasn't for that, all these drifts and chambers would soon be full of water. I wish I had time, and I'd show you my uncle's beautiful system!" He felt in his pocket for the piece of chalk, at the same time casting wistful glances at Owen's inviting trousers-legs. But it was getting too late for demonstrations on the blackboard.

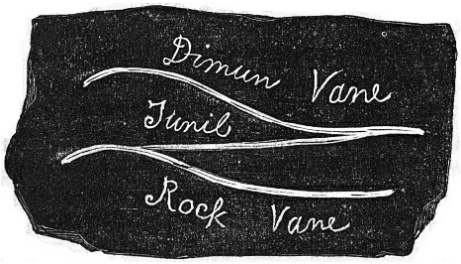
"Mr. Lewis is going to rig a little steam pump, and force the water up the hill," said Owen. "He'll bring the steam all the way from the engine-room in pipes, and run a little bit of an engine down here, that will save the labor of four men and four mules, day and night."

"But we are a long way from the shaft, aren't we?" said Lawrence, who thought, by the distance they had travelled, they must be at least a mile from it.

"Only about six hundred feet," said Owen. "The gangways make a circuit. We have been coming round towards the point we started from. Now you shall go up into the diamond vein, and see how Mr. Lewis is managing to drain the low part of that."

"How do we get into it?" Lawrence asked, remembering that it was thirty feet above their heads.

Owen answered by leading the way to a low, narrow passage, which sloped up from the gangway and the lower coal-seam into strata of clear slate. This, Owen said, was a tunnel which Mr. Lewis had lately had constructed, as an avenue of communication between the two coal-beds. It started from what he called the top of the hill, in the lower bed, and went across, by a gentle ascent, to the bottom of the corresponding hill in the upper bed. To explain this, Owen had to stop and chalk out a diagram on a slab of slate; by which means he succeeded in conveying the idea quite clearly, although, when he came to write in words to indicate the places of the *tunnel*, and the *Diamond* and *Rock Veins*, he showed himself somewhat less familiar with the spelling-book than with the mines.



"Look here," said Mr. Clarence, examining the jagged walls of the tunnel, which were pure argillaceous slate (or slate that had once been clay), beneath the Diamond Vein. "You can see the broken ends of fossil roots."

"The slate here was full of such," said Owen. "Sometimes great big roots—only

not roots, look, but stone—would come out, all perfect."

Lawrence had thought that he already understood how the forests which made the coal-beds had their roots in underlying beds of clay; but now the fact became as it were a visible reality to him, and he was for a moment lost in wonder at Nature's vast and mysterious operations. "How long ago," thought he, "these immense forests must have been growing and decaying! How useless they must have seemed,—if there had been anybody on the earth then to think about them! And now, after ages and ages, here they are in great, thick layers of coal, for the use of man, at a time when he needs it, and couldn't, as I see, do without it." Lawrence was not a particularly pious boy, but somehow a deep, still sense of Infinite Love and Wisdom, —a Divine Providence,—forming and governing the world, stole over him, like a shadow of invisible wings.

He inquired if the coal of the two veins was of precisely the same quality. Owen said not quite, though they were both first-rate white-ash veins. Mr. Clarence said that the coal of no two beds anywhere was precisely the same,—though anthracite didn't show, by any means, such decided differences as the soft kinds did. "Some anthracite is very gassy, and some makes clinkers, or is full of slate and bone; while some burns without throwing off much gas, and leaves little besides ashes in the grate."

Then Lawrence wished to know the difference between white and red ash coal; and Mr. Clarence replied that red-ash was simply anthracite containing a small percentage of oxide of iron, or iron rust, which gave to its ashes their peculiar color. He went on to discourse in a quite learned way about the widely different varieties of bituminous coal,—how some would melt and run together, or "cake," in the fire; how some, containing perhaps quite as much bitumen, would not "cake," and were consequently considered more valuable for most purposes; how one sort yielded the largest amount of coal-oil, and another the largest amount of illuminating gas; how cannel-coal was probably so named because it burned with such a beautiful, clear flame, like a candle, or *cannel*,—as the word is pronounced in the Lancashire dialect, in England, and so forth,—the young gentleman talking loudly amidst the noise of a torrent that poured down through the tunnel from the upper coal vein.

"It was mostly for the water that Mr. Lewis had this tunnel cut through," said Owen, as soon as he could get a chance to slip in a word. "When he first took charge of the mines, a few years ago, he found twenty-six men bailing water, up in this Diamond Vein, like those you saw below. The first thing he said was, 'Stop spending so much money that way.' Of course he knew the chambers would fill with water; but he said, 'Let 'em fill.' He just stopped work in 'em, and blew out the

tunnel, look; and now he is driving a new gangway around behind the chambers, to tap 'em."

Into this new gangway Owen conducted his friends, after having shown them the old gangway and the chambers filled with water.

They had not proceeded far when they saw a lamp moving through the darkness before them.

"There's Mr. Lewis himself!" cried Owen. "Quick! and you'll see him tap a chamber."

Eager to know what tapping a chamber was, Lawrence hurried on with Mr. Clarence after their guide, and soon came up with the "inside foreman," just as he was entering a short new chamber which had been driven up from the new gangway so as to strike the end of one of the old chambers.

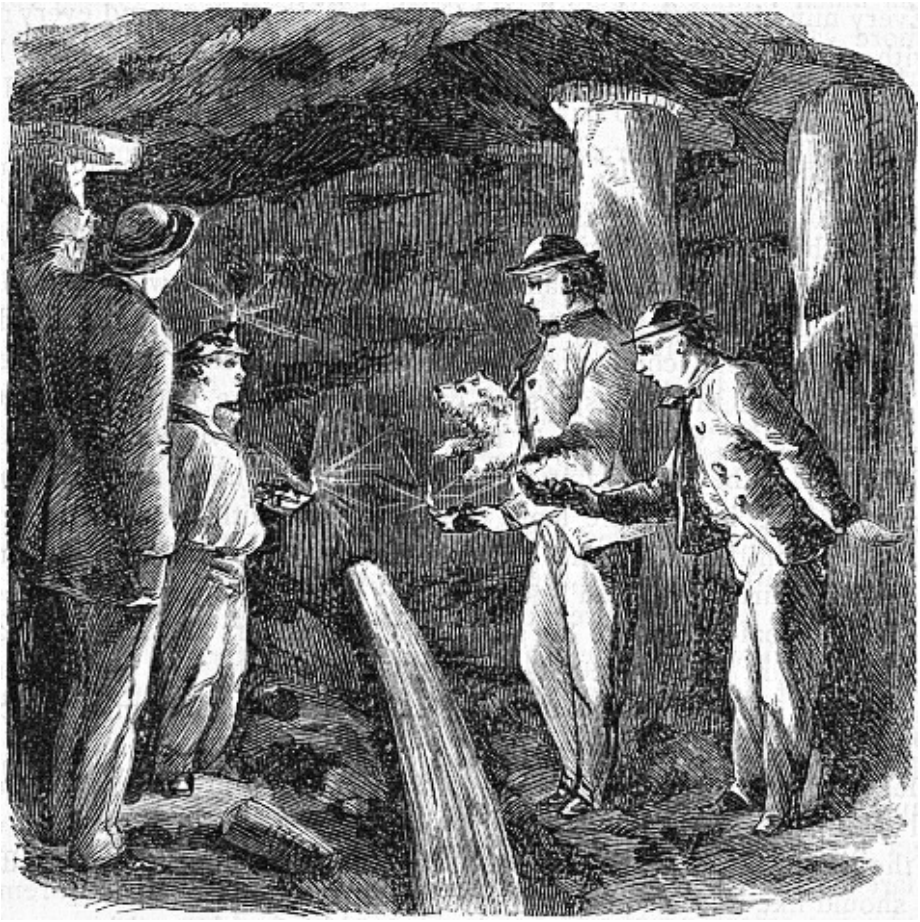
They found him to be a plain, sensible, pleasant Welshman; and he took a good deal of pains to explain to them what he was going to do.

"The old chambers, understand, are full of water. They pitch towards the bottom of the basin; and as soon as we stopped bailing they filled. Now I come directly to the bottom of the basin with the tunnel, and work this new gangway around by the lower end of the drowned chambers. Before, the water had to be drawn in cars up one slope, and poured down another; but now I make it travel with its own legs, down through the tunnel and the Rock Vein, direct to the shaft. That saves the work of many men and mules. You see this plug."

The boys saw it,—a large round stick of wood, driven near the bottom of the wall of coal, at the end of the new chamber.

"It stops a hole that has been drilled through into one of the drowned chambers. It wouldn't do, understand, to break through and let all the water out at once; it would flood everything. So we drill holes, and plug 'em, and then draw off the water by degrees. Now I unplug this. In a day or two I unplug another; and so on, till we get rid of all the water, without giving the pump at the shaft too much to do at once. Step back, or you'll be spattered."

So saying, he loosened the plug with his foot, and pulled it out. It was followed by a jet of water, the gushing force of which indicated the powerful pressure on the other side. It shot out horizontally from the aperture, fell in a gentle curve, and, plashing into a channel cut for it, added its tribute to the torrent pouring down through the tunnel.



Returning from the Diamond Vein, Lawrence asked why they could not go up by one of the shaft-cars, which Owen had said stopped there.

"Because the cars have done running by this time," replied the little Welshman.

"Then how are we to get out of the mines, if we can't go up the shaft?"

"I'll show you," said Owen, mysteriously.

Lawrence reflected that there must be a way out for the mules, besides the shaft, and said nothing.

They were in the Rock Vein again, passing an air-course, when Owen stopped.

"Here was a man killed the other day," said he. "There was fire-damp here; and he went in with his lamp."

"Fire-damp," said Mr. Clarence, anticipating Lawrence's question, "is what men of science" ("like myself," his manner seemed to say) "call light carburetted hydrogen; it is a gas composed of one part carbon and two parts hydrogen. The

fissures of the coal formation are full of it. It shoots out of what we call blowers. It is much more plentiful and dangerous in the soft-coal mines than it is here; but one has to be careful about it here."

"Every mine has a fire-boss," said Owen. "He goes around every morning with a safety-lamp, and tests all the places where the fire-damp is likely to be. If he finds it safe to go in, he marks on the pillar with chalk. Here's one of his marks, now."

"The safety-lamp"—Mr. Clarence took Lawrence's lamp in his hand to illustrate —"is constructed on the principle that flame will not pass through very small holes. It is simply a lamp surrounded by a fine wire gauze. This the gas-inspector, as we call him,—or fire-boss, as Owen calls him,—carries through the mines, holding it up under the roof where the fire-damp, which is lighter than common air, is always to be found, if anywhere. It goes to the top of the mines, just as water goes to the bottom, and stands in inverted puddles, where it can't flow away. It is invisible, of course, till you light it. If the safety-lamp passes through it, it takes fire inside of the wire; sometimes it puts the lamp out, and burns with a curious flame by itself, floating on the top of the gauze covering. The gas that gets in will burn, but the burning gas can't get out; it is caged. Some mines, especially some British coal-mines, are so gassy that the miners have to use safety-lamps altogether, and protect themselves still further, by very ingenious arrangements, against other deadly gases that fall to the bottom of the chambers."*

"Our men won't work where there's fire-damp," said Owen. "They're afraid of it as they are of lightning. When they find it they beat it down from the roof with old coats, or bags; then the air-current carries it off."

"I should like to see some of it burn," said Lawrence.

"That's what a man said the other day. My father knew where there was just about a hatful of it in a little hollow of the roof, in an old air-course. So he says, 'You take the lamp, and put it up there, and you'll find some.' So the man went feeling along with the lamp, till, the first thing he knew, the whole air before his eyes burst into a blaze; it knocked him down, and skinned his nose for him."

"A little hatful of gas expands like that!" cried Lawrence.

"That's the danger," said Owen. "Suppose there is a foot of fire-damp up there now. You shall put up your lamp, look! It catches, and you shall multiply it by seven; it makes seven foot of solid blaze, look!

"In the Mount Pleasant Mine, over here," Owen went on, "there was lately a terrible explosion. One morning the miners wouldn't wait for the fire-boss, and they went into a drift where there was gas. Eleven boys and eleven mules got killed. The fire-damp blowed 'em out of the drift, just like it had been a keg of powder. Then

the air rushing back, blowed 'em in again. They were all torn to pieces, so you couldn't tell one from another."

"Accidents are the constant dread of miners' families," said Mr. Clarence.

"Just along here," said Owen, as they travelled on, "a boy got hurted the other day. He fell under a car. I was outside at the time. As soon as it got out that there had been an accident, you should have seen! The way the women and children came running to the shaft was something pitiful. There was hundreds there in a few minutes, wringing their hands, asking questions,—'Who is it? who is it?' for every one thought it might be her own husband, or son, or father, till the boy was brought out."

"Was he badly hurt?"

"He died in a few days. He was a poor woman's only son. Mr. Lewis got up a subscription for her, and every miner gave something. It was very sad," said Owen, his voice choking a little. "Though sometimes there's a funny accident, look!" he added, making haste to be cheerful again. "At the Mount Pleasant Mine they have a slope twelve hundred feet long. An engine draws up the cars out of the mines by a rope. The other day a boy wanted to go down and carry his father's dinner. He pushed off a car, and got into it; but he had forgot to hook the rope to it first. The car went like lightning, after it got well started, run off the track, and smashed all to bits. But the boy wasn't hurted scarcely any. When the men picked him up all he said was,—he stuttered a little, look,—'The engineer l-l-let me down too f-f-fast!'"

"Look here, young man," said Mr. Clarence. "Your lamps are almost out."

"So are we," said Owen. "Here's the mules' gangway. This is a new thing, too. Mr. Lewis had it cut through, because he thought if the shaft should get afire, the men would all perish, if they didn't have some way to get out. Then it helps ventilation, and is handy for the mules. Before this was cut, every mule had to be brought down the shaft; and there was always danger of the colts breaking loose and jumping out of the cars."

Lawrence's lamp was burning so low that now the current of fresh air rushing down the gangway blew it out. The oil was getting low in Owen's lamp too; it scarcely lighted their way.

"What if we had lost our lights somewhere away off in the mines?" said Lawrence.

"I did so once," said Owen. "I was on my way to the shaft, to take the last car up. I came to some water so deep I didn't like to walk through it. So I got some stones and threw in, to step on. As I was throwing the last one, I gave my head a

toss, look! and off went my lamp into the water. The mines were full of rats, and I was scared. I thought I might have to spend the night with 'em; and I knew they were hungry enough to eat me. I began to travel. I didn't mind stepping into the water, then. I shouted, but couldn't make anybody hear. I thought the last men must be going up the shaft by that time; and of course they wouldn't think to ask for me. That was before this gangway was cut through. I felt my way, and got along as fast as I could. All to once I saw a light. It was Mr. Lewis; he was around, looking after things, as he always is. So I went out with him, and bid good-night to the rats."

"How cool the fresh air is!" said Lawrence. "I hadn't thought of the mines being so warm. We shall see daylight soon."

"No, you won't," said Owen,—"though you may see starlight."

He was right. The in-rushing draught of air grew colder and colder, as they went up through the mule-trampled mud of the low, narrow, ascending gangway; and at last a faint light shone in at the entrance, which reminded Lawrence of the light Sindbad the sailor saw at the end of his cavern. But it was not the light of day. The sun had gone down, and evening had come on, since they entered the mines.

They emerged from the low-roofed passage,—which was supported by a cribbing of timber, beyond the natural roof of rock,—and came out in the shadow of a bleak hillside. There was a noise of murmuring waters,—a dark river rushed by at their feet. Lights twinkled in the city beyond, and above them the stars shone.

"Here's the Lackawanna. We have come out on its banks," said Owen. "The colliery building, where you went into the shaft, is away up on the hill yonder."

"I can't tell you how much obliged I am to you, Owen!" said Lawrence. "If you ever come to Massachusetts, I'll try and do as much for you. In the mean time, I want to give you something to remember me by. I haven't anything but this pocket-knife; it's small, but there's first-rate stuff in the blades."

"I shall not take that from you!" said Owen; yet his hand opened involuntarily as the knife approached it, and closed again very quickly the moment it touched his palm,—for Owen was but a boy, and it was not in boy-nature to refuse such a gift.

"Now I wish I could see the superintendent and thank him," said Lawrence.

But Owen said it was too late to find him at the office. Then Lawrence remembered his uncle, who he feared might be growing anxious about him; and Mr. Clarence said they ought to be on their way back to the hotel. So Owen piloted them up the hill to the track of the street-cars, where they took leave of him, as if they three had been old friends,—Mr. Clarence also slipping something into the willing Welsh palm.

A street-car came along, and stopped for them; and Lawrence, getting into it,

with Mr. Clarence and Muff, rode back to the hotel, where the two boys found their respective uncles, just returned, stepping out of the buggy at the door.

J. T. Trowbridge.

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* We shall soon publish a very interesting little sketch, entitled "The Ghosts of the Mines," by one of our ablest contributors, illustrating this subject still further.—EDITORS.

GOING TO SLEEP.

Happy stars, in pleasant places,
Will you turn your happy faces,
So that I can see you shine,
In this little bed of mine?

When the shades begin to fall,
You come flocking, one and all,
Up the pathway of the skies,
With a smile in your sweet eyes.

And I wonder where you stay,
All the bright and tender day;
Why you never linger long,
When the bird begins his song;

If you hear the sweet brown thrush
Break the morning's early hush,
If the sparrow's "chip che char"
Reaches up to where you are?

While I go to sleep, dear star,
Will you stay just where you are?
So that I may find you there,
Not the sky all blue and bare?

With my little prayers all said,—
Prayers for love and daily bread,—
I may hear the songs you sung,
When the Heavenly Child was young.

Mary N. Prescott.

GOING UP IN A BALLOON.

There are few people, especially little people, who have not had, at some time, a strong desire to go up in a balloon.

I always had a curiosity to make a voyage into the clouds, and my curiosity grew greater with my years. I never failed to see all the balloon ascensions that were made in any of the cities where I happened to be; and I travelled about a great deal when I was a youngster, or rather was carried about by a very indulgent father. I dreamed of balloon trips constantly. Some of them ended very sadly. I used to be tumbling out of the car, or be in a balloon that exploded, or get caught in the netting and be carried into the air head downward, every few weeks. The excitement would be so great that I would start, and wake up to find out I had not been in a balloon after all.

At other times I would have delightful sails in my sleep, far above the tallest mountains and the highest clouds; and now and then I would go way up, up, up, until I saw the rivers and hills and valleys in the moon, and heard the noise of cities there.

How I did enjoy it! Then I would come down very safely, and, jumping out of the balloon, I would start to run home, and tell of all the wonderful things I had seen, when the corner of the pillow would stick into my face, and wake me.

I was very little then, and I could have cried with vexation at my disappointment. I would have cried, too, if I had not been so sleepy. My eyes would shut so quickly, that the tears could not get out, and I'd be off in another dream-world before I could think how unhappy I was.

Several times I urged my father to ask the men who were to go up in the balloons if they would not take me with them. He said they did not take little boys, which made me think them very unkind. I felt sure they would be glad of my company if they knew how much I wanted to go; but I did not like to say so. Then I begged my father to buy me a balloon; but he told me there were not any to be had big enough to carry me; that the men who went up made their own balloons, and no one else knew how.

I was very sorry when I learned that; but my father comforted me by saying that he had no doubt I could go in a balloon when I grew up. I remembered that; and one of the first things I intended to do when I became a man was to have a balloon of my own, and travel in that way altogether, instead of going on boats and cars as I had been in the habit of doing.

After I had left school, and believed myself quite a man, I still wanted to go up in a balloon. I had ceased long before to care for rocking-horses and velocipedes, for

playing "pussy-wants-the-corner," "last-tag," and all such games. They seemed very foolish to me then; but a balloon was just as nice as ever, and I felt I should not be content until I had made a voyage in one.

Whenever any balloon-man came where I was—I was twenty-one, and my own master then—I made an effort, through my friends and by writing letters, to get a chance to make an ascension. Some of the balloon people promised to take me out of good-will, and others for money; but when the time came something always happened to prevent my going.

I remember Monsieur Godard, a little Frenchman, who had made many ascensions in Paris, and who had gone up in this country on horseback, with a small house attached to the car, and in various novel ways, agreed to take me on two or three occasions. One time I particularly recall. He promised a voyage to a party of three or four newspaper-writers, myself among them, after he should come down and unfasten the pony he was to take up from the balloon-yard. He took up the pony about half a mile, and, alighting in the upper part of the city, where we journalists drove in a great hurry, disappointed us dreadfully by saying he had not gas enough to carry anybody but himself.

After the little horse had been detached—he seemed very glad to get loose, and I believe he was, for he seemed terribly frightened as he looked down at the earth, and kept rising above the houses—all preparations were made for going up again. We four disappointed young men stood around the car, thinking Godard might change his mind, and take one of us up at the last moment. But he shook his head, and again declared there was hardly gas enough for him alone. We helped him to get ready. He was in the car, and cried out, "All right, all right!" The car had just risen a few feet from the earth, when one of our number, a young fellow almost crazy about balloons, plunged headforemost into the netting, and half his body disappeared. It was too late for Godard to put him out without breaking his neck; for, before the Frenchman had an idea what had been done, the balloon was above the highest house in the neighborhood. We could not help laughing to see the fellow's legs hanging over the side of the car, and his boots waving us good-by as the large ball rose rapidly over our heads. In a few minutes we saw the legs disappear, and the young man's head, with his hat in his hand, looking down at us. He was going, after all. The Frenchman was afraid to throw him out; and we walked home feeling cheated out of the voyage we had hoped so much pleasure from.

A few weeks after, Godard made another voyage from the same city. Again he agreed to take four of the writers for the press, and again I was one of them. I was in the balloon-yard promptly; so were the others. Before going up the sky looked

dark, the thunder muttered in the east, and everything told of a storm. Once more there wasn't gas enough, and Godard said one of the party must be left out. I said I did not want it to be myself; but he assured me he had promised the others before he had me, and that I must wait till the next time.

Wait till the next time? I had been waiting for twenty years, and I half concluded it was not to be my good fortune ever to go up in a balloon. I would not complain, however. So I kept silent, and had the disappointment of seeing my companions step into the car, and leave me behind.

There was no time to be lost, for the sky was growing blacker, and the thunder louder. The storm was likely to come at any time, and it isn't safe for a balloon to be caught in a storm. Godard thought he could get above the black clouds before they broke, for they were hardly half a mile high. He ordered the three who were to go with him to jump in, and they did so.

The big bag was loosened, and shot up into the air like an arrow. It seemed as if it would easily have carried another, particularly if he did not weigh any more than I. The heavens were so threatening, that I felt sure the trip would be an exciting one, and I watched the balloon with interest. It went so rapidly, and the clouds were so dark and low, that it was soon out of sight. Godard did not get above the storm, however. When he was a little over a third of a mile high (I heard the story afterward from one of the voyagers) the tempest burst in all its fury, and it was a violent tempest indeed.

The balloon was in the very track of the wind, and it was carried along at the rate of nearly two miles a minute in the midst of thunder, lightning, and rain. The darkness increased every minute until it became like ink. The persons in the car had no idea where they were going. They could see nothing, and hear nothing but the fury of the storm. They expected to be dashed to pieces every second. Every few minutes the glare of the lightning showed that they were whirling through a vapory mist, neither the sky nor the earth visible. Godard in broken English urged them to be cool and quiet, since everything depended on their keeping perfectly still. They were so. They sat in the corners of the car, and trusted to fortune. Godard wanted to rise higher, and threw out the sand-bags one after the other. But the wind was too strong, and drove them along wherever it willed. If he could keep out of the way of the trees or of any high object, he would be able to outride the storm. He believed he should do so, but he could not; his balloon was entirely beyond his control.

In less than twenty minutes after the tempest had broken he found the balloon crashing into a forest. He told his companions to cling to the car. They did, and they needed to; for the car bounded about like an India-rubber ball. They struck trees

and snapped the branches like twigs. Boughs hit them in the face, hurled off their hats, scratched their bodies, and tore their clothes. Their path through the woods roared like the thunder, for everything seemed breaking and cracking above, around, and below them. Godard thought he could secure the balloon by throwing out the anchor. He threw it out; it caught in a tree, and snapped at once.

"My God, my God," he muttered, "we are lost!"

The balloon darted up again to a great height; then came down once more into the trees. Having lost their anchor, they had no protection, no means of alighting. They were crashing into the woods again, bounding from trunk to trunk and bough to bough when the car struck something with such violence that Godard was thrown out. The balloon whirled up and then down, and one of the party, seeing by the lightning a flash of green just below, thought they were on the ground and jumped out. Instead of the grass, as he had supposed, it was the top of a tall oak, and he fell through the foliage a distance of over a hundred feet. The limbs partially saved him, but even as it was, he broke three of his ribs against a stump.

The car had but two persons in it now. The balloon again darted above the trees, and was in danger of going off into unknown space, for, strange to say, the balloon had not been torn enough to permit the escape of the gas, and the valve-rope had been broken long before. While the air-ship was ascending, a blast struck it, and carried it down again. Ploughing among the trees, the netting became entangled in a beech, and actually dragged it up by the roots. The beech fell upon the balloon, and its lower part lay across the car, and pressed the two inmates close to the ground. That held the balloon firm, and they were safe at last. They crawled out with skinned noses, blackened eyes, and torn clothes, but were otherwise unhurt.

The first thing they did was to try to find their companions. They halloed very loud, and after five or ten minutes their cry was answered by some one, who proved to be the man that had broken his ribs. Soon after, they discovered the Frenchman, who was not injured,—he had fallen on a hay-stack,—but who had gone about wringing his hands, and moaning over the death, as he supposed, of his dearest friends, whom he had known only about two hours.

The balloon was secure enough till morning. The party, the storm being nearly over, made their way to a farm-house, where they were directed to a surgeon in a village five miles off. After the broken ribs were set, they had a good supper, went to bed, and forgot their adventures in a sound and refreshing sleep.

The next morning Godard bundled up his damaged balloon, and they all returned to the city. Their account of the trip was very interesting to me, and I really envied them their exciting experience. I was more desirous than ever to make a balloon

voyage. The danger of it often had made it attractive, apart from the pleasure I expected it to give.

About that time several balloons had met with accidents. One from St. Louis was caught in a storm, blown into Lake Erie, and the persons in it had a very narrow escape. Another that went up from a town in Michigan was never heard of; but the supposed skeleton of the man who made the voyage was discovered long after in the woods of Northern Ohio. It was thought his body had fallen from the balloon into the forest, the balloon having exploded when it was several miles in the air.

All this had the effect of increasing my wish for a voyage among the clouds; and I made more efforts than ever to accomplish it. I had tried so long that it seemed as if much of my life would be wasted if I did not go up.

There was a lull in balloon ascensions for some time; but early in the spring, just before the war, Professor Lowe was to make a voyage from Cincinnati. I was there at the time, and as soon as I heard of it I wrote him a note telling him of my earnest wish and frequent attempts to make an ascension. He told me in a personal interview that I should have the first chance, and on the afternoon of the day advertised I was in the enclosure very early, resolved not to be cheated again out of my airy ride, coveted in vain since childhood.

The number of people in the enclosure was quite large, and on the outside immense. The balloon was filled from the city gas-pipes,—it used to be necessary to make the gas for the purpose, which was troublesome and expensive, and three or four hours were needed to fill the great globe.

Balloons are usually supposed to be made of silk, but those which take men up very rarely are. Silk would cost a great deal, and be hardly strong enough. Coarse linen or cotton cloth is cut in long strips, and sewed together (imagine a melon cut in pieces, and then put together again, and you will have an idea of the process) until the whole is in the shape of an egg. The balloon must be so tight that the gas with which it is filled cannot escape. To effect this the pieces are varnished over and over again, particularly where the seams are. The varnish makes the cloth lighter and more yielding, and after layer upon layer has been put on, one drying before another is given, the balloon is found to be air-tight. Then a hole is cut in the top, and a thin block of wood, but somewhat larger than the hole, fitted to it. To the block a cord is fastened, and run through the inside of the balloon down within reach of the man in the car. A netting of strong linen cord, diamond-shaped, is thrown over the balloon, and the ends of the cord below are fastened to a hoop of iron. The car, a large basket usually, is also fastened to the hoop by ropes, and the ball being filled with gas, it is all ready for the voyage. The lower end of the balloon is not tied very tight,

for the gas always rises to the top, and there is no danger, therefore, of its escaping at the bottom.

Three or four hours before the balloon is to go up, the process of filling the balloon begins. A large cylinder, generally made of varnished cloth, is attached to the gas-pipes in the street, and the other end is introduced into the mouth of the balloon, which at first lies along the earth on thick canvas to prevent its getting moist. The balloon puffs up a little at first, looking like a great blister on the ground. But as it gets fuller and fuller, it swells and swells until at last it rises up straight. It is of a light yellow color, and resembles a huge pumpkin made so thin that you can nearly see through it. It is kept down by small bags of sand which are tied to the netting I have mentioned. But for them it would dart off, and be lost, for the gas is constantly pushing upward, and struggling to carry it into the air.

When the balloon is full of gas, the ends of the twine are untied from the sand-bags, and fastened to the iron hoop of the car. A number of men cling to the balloon, let it up a little way to see how much power it has, and then pull it down. A portion of the bags of sand, and an iron anchor attached to a strong rope, with a thermometer and barometer, are placed in the car. If the day is windy, the ascension is generally delayed till about sundown, as the wind is apt to die away at that hour.

When I was going up there was quite a gale. The balloon swayed to and fro, and I was afraid the attempt would not be made; for there was danger that the wind would blow the big ball into the trees and houses before it could get above them. Having been disappointed so often, I got into the car as soon as it was fastened to the balloon, and would not get out. That balloon, at least, should not go up without me.

Professor Lowe had much doubt about the voyage, and kept watching the sky and clouds closely. I expected to hear him say every minute, "We can't go. The weather won't allow it. I must put it off." But at last, about six o'clock, the wind lulled, and he whispered to me that we should start in a few minutes. I was very glad. I could hardly believe it was real. I sat down in a corner of the car, and was very quiet, but anxious to be off. Many of my acquaintances came up and shook hands with me, and wished me a pleasant voyage. Some urged me not to go; said it was foolish and dangerous; while others envied me and wanted to be my companions. Some would have given hundreds of dollars to be in my place, and others would not have been there for any sum of money. I heeded little what was said. All I thought about was going up.

At last, after examining everything, the Professor stepped into the car. At a given signal the men let go of the balloon, which rose very slowly. A sudden gust of wind

caught us, and we should have struck the chimney of a building near the enclosure, had we not quickly thrown out a bag of sand, which carried us just above the roof. We missed the chimney by three or four inches, which was fortunate; for we should probably have been hurled out if the car had hit it, and had our necks broken at the very outset of the voyage. We threw out another sand-bag, and we went up rapidly. We were far above all the houses, even above the spire of the Cathedral, one of the highest churches in the city.

There was no consciousness of motion. The city seemed to have dropped away from us just as the houses and woods seem to run from you on a railway train. Looking over the side of the car,—it was necessary to keep very quiet, for the smallest movement made the car and the whole balloon rock,—we appeared to be standing still, and the earth slipping away faster and faster. It impressed me as if I were in a balcony and seeing the ground fall farther and farther from me.

The journey was very pleasant, and I enjoyed it greatly; but it lacked the excitement I had expected. I had supposed my blood would move rapidly, and my pulses throb as we whirled through the air. I had fancied the feeling would be something like riding on a locomotive with the wind singing through my hair, and all objects flying past me as if vast giants were throwing the world at my head. It was not, though. It was a very calm and restful feeling. I could have gone to sleep in the car, and believed I was lying on a sofa at home, so quiet was the journey.

After we had been up five or ten minutes, the view was very grand. We saw the whole city, the Ohio River, the Mill-Creek Valley, the hills about Cincinnati, and those in Kentucky, with the Licking River and the towns of Newport and Covington, all spread out below us. The cities looked exactly like the little wooden houses and trees that children have for playthings. The men and women in the streets, and the horses and wagons, seemed like ants and mice, and soon disappeared altogether. We could hear voices and all sounds very plainly, though we had no idea where they came from. The wind changed our course from the northeast to the southeast, and as we passed over the Newport barracks the military band was playing, and we recognized the tunes very distinctly. They were much sweeter than they would have been otherwise, for the distance softened them.

We crossed and recrossed the Ohio River several times, and when we were three quarters of a mile high the water seemed corrugated, to have a thick oily surface as if it were boiling oil. All the fields appeared very regularly laid out, and the rail-fences looked like lattice-work. The whole country was a garden to the eye. We still sailed on and sailed higher, and fifteen minutes after we had left the earth we were a mile above it. We could not tell when we were going up or going down,

except by dropping out pieces of tissue-paper we had brought along. If we were ascending, the bits of paper would fall like lead. If we were descending, they would fly up like feathers. When we were going down we would throw out a little sand from one of the open bags. Even a handful would change our direction, and three or four handfuls would send us up rapidly.

At a mile and a half's distance we felt chilly, and the air became rarefied. We lost all trace of objects on the earth, whose roundness began to be visible. We could see greenness of color and uneven places and hollows in the soil, when the clouds did not interfere. The clouds did interfere, though, very often, and everything below looked misty. The Professor had with him some bottles of soda, and, cutting the strings, the corks flew out with a noise that sounded loud as a musket in the rarefied atmosphere. Our lowest voices seemed like huzzahs at a political meeting, and so strange that I could hardly recognize my own.

The Professor wanted to go still higher, and we threw out a whole bag of sand. Then the pieces of tissue-paper dropped out of the car fell so fast we could hardly see them after they left our hands. It grew very cold. The mercury in the thermometer was down to 30°, and I felt a pressure upon my lungs. The air was so thin I could not breathe easily. The sun had set twice already, and we now saw it set a third time, for the higher we went, of course, the better view we got of the horizon. The red globe of fire once more sank in the gray sea-like haze of the far west, and the Professor thought we had better descend before it was dark.

I wanted to stay up all night; but he said he hadn't made preparations for doing so, and it was safest to go down while it was yet light. I was very sorry, for I knew it would be pleasant to be up when the stars came out, and the moon, which was already hanging very pale in the sky, had brightened into shining silver. I had often fancied myself floating through the heavens in this way, in the quiet night at the rate of a mile a minute, out of the world actually, but still a part of it, the globe revolving under my feet, as if I were a spirit that had left it, and yet breathed, and retained my consciousness and memory.

The Professor pulled the rope that was fastened to the hole in the top of the balloon,—the valve they call it,—and we began to descend. I soon saw the gas escaping like smoke. We threw out the tissue-paper, and it flew up in a straight line. We were going down too fast. At that rate, we should be dashed to pieces against the earth. So he let go of the valve, and we went slower. The clouds flitted by us, and sometimes were in our faces. We were still descending rapidly and continued until we were only about a mile high, as we knew from the state of the barometer, the pressure of the atmosphere on the mercury giving us the means of judging. We

could see the various farms below us, and we heard persons shouting to us, as we had the first half-hour of our ascension.

Some of the country people brought out their guns and fired at us as they had before. There was little danger of their hitting anybody at that distance, or of injuring the balloon, though I couldn't see any special fitness in their making targets of us. The Professor said they always amused themselves in that way; that it was their manner of showing us welcome and of celebrating the event of seeing a balloon.

"Come down to supper," they cried, and "How are you?" "How do you feel up there?" "Do you like your ride?"

By this time we were not more than half a mile up, and in a few minutes we had diminished the distance to a quarter of a mile. We were now looking for a good place to alight. A large open field was the best place, as trees were dangerous, and likely to tear the balloon. We found just such a field while we were scudding along. The Professor threw out the anchor, and it caught in a fence, but the rail slipped, and we lost our security. Next we noticed two or three persons, one a woman, in the field,—they were evidently farm-hands,—and we shouted to them to catch hold of the anchor. They were afraid; but they ran after us, and after telling them a number of times to seize the anchor all together—it was dragging on the ground—they obeyed in part by striking one end of the iron into a stump, and then clutching the rope.

"Pull!" we cried, and they pulled with all their might. The balloon went down violently—we were holding to the car, and crouching so as not to be jarred too much by the shock—and bounded up a hundred feet. Then they pulled it again. Down it went; bounded about fifty feet, and was at last on the earth, the farm-hands holding it firmly until we got out.

They had never seen a balloon before, but had heard of one often. When they first noticed it in the air they were alarmed, fancying it some monster. But they concluded in a few minutes it must be a balloon. They were afraid it would take them up if they caught the rope; but one said he would if the other would, and so they gave each other courage. They were very proud of what they had done. The entire neighborhood had been watching us, and in a short time men, women, and children were on the spot, gazing with open eyes and mouths at the wonderful balloon.

The Professor determined to wait till the next morning, and make another ascent. The people brought large stones, and filled the car. Several intelligent and wealthy farmers invited us to their houses in the vicinity to take supper and spend the night. We accepted one of the invitations, for there was no hotel thereabout, and we were five or six miles from any town or village. The farmer who had secured us seemed to be happy. We went to his house and were kindly and generously treated. The next

morning the Professor—he said he wanted to go alone—went up again, but landed within two hours, finding he was sailing in a direction he didn't like.

Our journey had lasted an hour and a half only, and in that time we had gone two miles and a half high, and about seventy from the point from which we had started.

I went back to Cincinnati by stage and railway, and found the travel very dull after the balloon.

I was very glad to have made the trip I had dreamed of and wished for so long, and have felt quite satisfied on that one subject ever since. It was good for me; it made me believe we can do almost anything we keep trying to do.

Junius Henri Browne.

MORNING-GLORY.

MORNING-GLORY.

WONDROUS interlacement !
Holding fast to threads by green and silky rings,
With the dawn it spreads its white and purple wings ;
Generous in its bloom, and sheltering while it clings,
Sturdy morning-glory.

Creeping through the casement,
Slanting to the floor in dusty, shining beams,
Dancing on the door, in quick fantastic gleams
Comes the new day's light, and pours in tideless streams,
Golden morning-glory.

In the lowly basement,
Rocking in the sun, the baby's cradle stands.
Now the little one thrusts out his rosy hands ;
Soon his eyes will open ; then in all the lands
No such morning-glory.

MORNING-GLORY.

[Drawn by Miss Lucy Gibbons.] [The Poem by H. H.

A STRANGE DISH OF FRUITS.

"We must all eat our peck of dirt at some time in our lives," laughingly said Mr. Blake one day to his wife, as they were looking at a neighbor's child playing in the dirt at making "mud-pies," as children will sometimes do, and who had very much soiled his face as well as his clothes. "I suppose Tommy wants to finish his meal early," Mr. Blake added, and his wife and he had a good laugh to themselves, for the children who were standing by them did not understand his meaning, and did not see what there was to laugh at.

"What do you mean by eating a peck of dirt, papa?" said Minnie, looking up at Mr. Blake, as did also her brother Willie, whom I hope our Young Folks will remember as having asked a great many questions about wrecks and wreckers. But Willie did not say anything, though he was much puzzled by what his father had said. He was a little more considerate than his sister,—probably because he was a little older,—and he did not ask questions of other people without first trying to think out the answers for himself.

I hope all who read this are like him in this regard, for there is nothing more unpleasant or wrong in young people and old than the asking of questions unnecessarily,—that is, such as a little thought would have found an answer for. Very few young persons ever think of asking their friends or parents to make out their sums for them without having first tried to do them alone; but they often ask the meaning of things they hear and read, before they have tried to understand them. It is wrong to be too quick in asking questions, because it is not just to ask people to spend their time in giving you knowledge you have not tried to earn for yourself; it is just the same as beggary. It is often impolite, because you sometimes interrupt others' conversation by asking them to explain what they say, when, if you listen patiently until they finish talking, you will probably learn, by what is afterwards said, the meaning of what you did not at first understand. It is a bad habit for another reason; it robs the many children who have it of a very large part of their schooling, by making them thoughtless. There is no use in listening or reading about anything, if

you do not think about what you hear and read afterwards. You may not understand this now, but when you get older, you will find out that, after all that is said about education and its advantages, its best purpose is to make you think for yourself. It is not necessary only that you should read books to be wise, but you must think over what you read, and find out something new on the same subject. The wisest men and women have been those who thought and observed for themselves, not mere readers of books. If you have a habit of asking questions as Minnie did, without first thinking about the matter, you ought for all these reasons to break yourself of it at once.

Mr. Blake told his little daughter something of this sort in a much kinder and pleasanter way than I have perhaps, and then he said to her,—

"Now, Minnie, I want you and Willie to think over this until I come home to dinner this afternoon. If you do not understand it, and cannot tell me what I meant, I will explain it to you after we have finished dinner."

And, bidding the children and his wife good by, Mr. Blake went to his office and the children to their school.

Willie and Minnie thought all day very intently over what their father had said, and wondered if and how and why we must all eat a peck of dirt in our lives; but when they came home to dinner they were no wiser than before. How many of those who read this can explain the remark of Mr. Blake before reading any further, and can write it out? They may thus do themselves a benefit by giving their brains a little exercise; for thought is the exercise which is as necessary to the health and strength of the mind as walking and leaping and running and all the gymnastic exercises are to the body; and as, in the one case, the more exercise you take, the bigger the "dumb-bells" and "Indian clubs" which you can handle, so the more you think and study, the greater the ideas which you will be able to comprehend.

But if you write out your explanation of the words which Mr. Blake used on the margin of this page, be sure to do it with a lead pencil, for the paper used in this and most books is soft, and ink will spread and blot. But as pencil-marks will soil the page, I would advise you to write your ideas in ink on a separate sheet of paper, and when you read further you can compare your explanation with that which Mr. Blake is going to give his children. And I advise you, in *all* your reading, to pursue this same plan. When you come across anything which you do not clearly understand, stop and think and write about it. The habit of thinking can be cultivated in this way, just as well as many others,—such as habits of temperance and industry,—and you can strengthen your mind by this sort of wrestling with ideas, as well as you can strengthen your muscles by wrestling with other boys.

Willie and Minnie were unable to find any satisfactory explanation of the remark, though it puzzled them all through school-hours, and the words seemed to stare up at them from their books. As soon as the dinner was over and the family had gathered around the table in the sitting-room, they told their father that they were very curious to know his meaning. Mr. Blake had not been unmindful of his promise, and during the day had drawn some pictures and made a few notes which he now took out of his pocket and laid on the table, before beginning to explain to the children what he had meant.

"I am afraid," he began, "that you have taken the expression which I used too literally,—that is, as if it meant precisely what was said, and that each and every person in the world has really to eat a peck of earth in his or her lifetime. I do not know who first used it, but the expression is a sort of proverb now. The idea that is meant is, that there is nothing we use which does not contain some matter in itself dirty and unfit for food,—that we cannot have anything good without some dross. When your mother cooks a round of beef you would hardly suppose that it is chiefly water she is cooking. You would not eat starch if it was put on the table in the shape of the dry, white, tasteless particles that you see the laundress use, yet every time you eat flour biscuit, or baker's bread, or hot rolls, you are simply eating what is more than half starch, partly gum, and some sugar. The delicious honey which mother gives you occasionally would in many instances poison you, if somebody or something had not already eaten it, and taken away the poison or foul matter. Whom do you suppose that somebody is?"

And Mr. Blake stopped to give the children an opportunity to guess at the mysterious personage; but they only looked up at their mother as if they suspected her.

"It is the bee who makes the honey, of course," said their father. "The bees often suck the sugar or sweet matter from very poisonous and offensive flowers, that you could not think of putting to your mouth or even your nose; but after they have stowed it away in their honey-bags, and worked it over, it becomes sweet and fit for use. But even then it is not entirely pure, for with the sweet part there is a tasteless wax and some very unpleasant acid; but this *dirt* is so small a part of the honey that you do not taste it. You would naturally suppose that an egg was very clean eating, but it contains a very large quantity of dirt, or at least substances which you would not think of eating, if given to you in the shape you usually see them in. You would not think of going to where the lime men have burned stones into white lime and eating a piece of that, would you? Yet in the yolk or yellow of every egg there is a piece of lime."

"Lime in eggs!" exclaimed Minnie. "How does it get there, papa?"

"Ah! that is one of the things I shall have to let you find out for yourselves, for I do not know. Besides these there are many other kinds of food which we eat that contain dirt or unclean and unnutritious properties. I will tell you of some of the most singular of them. If at dinner I had asked you if you would have another dish of poison, you would have been very much shocked, and would, perhaps, have lost your appetite. Yet I saw you eat, as if you liked it, a very good dish of poisoned pudding."

"Poisoned pudding!" exclaimed Minnie. "Why, papa, it was tapioca!"

"So you call it now, because it has been given a new name and shape, but in the West Indies and South America, where it grows, it is known to be one of the most poisonous as well as most pleasant of vegetables. It is the root of a tree called Manioc, and the juice of the root, if pressed on your hands, will stain them. If you drink this juice, it will kill you. Yet these roots are not only prepared and sold to us as tapioca for making puddings, but they are also made into bread by the natives who grow them. They dig up a root five or six times as big as your head, and carefully scrape the bark off, and then crush it as we would apples in a cider-press until the juice is pressed out. What is left looks like white sawdust. This is put in an oven or on a gridiron, and baked as if it were bread. The little poisonous juice left after the pressing dries up in the baking, and the remainder, in the baked state, is sold to us as tapioca, or eaten as bread."

"I never heard of tapioca bread," said Minnie.

"Yet it is a very delicious bread," said their father, "and quite a luxury to the natives of the countries where it grows, and who have no other bread than that which grows on trees. In the country where tapioca is found there is also a bread-fruit tree, on which the bread grows in loaves, and which is capital eating. And the same people regularly grow their butter on trees."

"Butter growing on trees!" exclaimed Willie. "I have heard of bread-trees, papa, but never of butter-trees."

"Oh! I can tell you of others which grow pots and kettles and dishes and spoons. But first about the butter-trees. We would not call it very good butter, but it is the best they have in their country. It is what we would call, from its shape, a pear, only that its meat is so soft. It grows in five or six pound lumps, as large as your head, and is a soft yellow substance under a green leathery sort of skin. It is called the Avocado pear. And the cabbages of the same people are another curious dish. You have often seen cabbage-heads growing on a short stalk not longer than your hand. Well, the cabbages of the West Indians grow on the top of palm-trees fifty feet

high. The leaves are eaten just as ours are, but the palm cabbage-heads of the West Indies are two or three times larger than ours. The trees which grow pots and kettles are called calabash-trees. The fruit is larger than our pumpkin or watermelon, and has a hard rind something like that of a cocoanut. Out of this rind the natives make all their cooking utensils, which are as useful to them, and a great deal cheaper, than ours are to us."

"I thought, papa," said Willie, "that the fruits which grow in the hot countries were different from ours."

"So they are,—always different either in kind or quality. The people who live in the torrid or hot zone do not know what raspberries, cherries, apples, peaches, or strawberries are, just as we know nothing of many of their fruits except in a preserved state. But there are many fruits which both countries have in common, but of a very different quality and size. We have quinces, and the hot countries grow guave, which are the same in kind, but smaller in size. They have bananas, while we have a very inferior fruit of the same kind growing wild in the woods, and called pawpaws. You have often eaten apricots, and you remember what a delicious fruit they are. They also grow in the hot countries, but are very much larger than our apricots, growing to the size of a man's head. At the same time they are not so sweet and eatable as ours. The trees form most beautiful shades, as ours do; but they are not used as such because it is dangerous to sit under them. Can you tell why?"

"For fear the fruit might fall on you," suggested Willie.

"Yes, partly, but also for another reason which you will never guess. It is for fear that the parrots will throw the big apricots at you."

The children did not know what to think of this, and said nothing while they waited for their father to explain.

"You know what a mischievous bird the parrot is," he said, after a moment's search among his papers. "Well, parrots are as plentiful in the West Indies as blackbirds and sparrows are here. In the towns almost every house has a parrot or two, and they fly in the woods in great flocks. If you go into a town in Hayti, or St. Domingo, or Jamaica, you will hear yourself so often greeted from the houses with "Good day, sir," spoken in very good French, that you will think the people whom you cannot see are the most polite in the world; but after a visit or two you will find that it is the parrots from their perches in the windows who greet you so politely. But in the woods the wild parrots are more mischievous than polite; and if a traveller is unlucky enough to get under an apricot-tree, they will go in flocks to the tree and shake and bite off the fruit until it falls down upon him, and he is compelled to run away for safety."

"While I was down town to-day," resumed their father, "thinking about what I was to tell you, I saw a wagon loaded with nice articles which I thought you might like to eat, and which I could tell you something interesting about. And so I bought you each a—but you must promise me to eat it."

"O, we will, we will!" exclaimed the children, seeing their father hesitate.

"What is it, papa?" asked Willie, eagerly.

"Do tell us what it is, papa," begged Minnie, impatiently.

"A nice round cake of the best natural soap!" answered their father.

"Soap! Soap to eat?"

"Certainly. Why not? It is a little sour, but I know of children who are fond of soap-pies,—of the kind I mean. Here is a small cake for each of you"; and Mr. Blake handed them each a small yellow ball.

"Why, papa, they are lemons!" said Willie.

"Exactly. But they are also excellent soap, and are used for that purpose in many countries where they grow. When a gentleman in the West Indies wants to wash his hands, he squeezes the juice of the lemon on them and rubs them briskly in water until they are clean. There is an acid in the lemon similar to that used in soap, and hence it is a sort of natural soap. I see you do not like soap even in that shape, and I won't ask you to keep your promise to eat yours, but you may try to wash your hands with them. I thought you would find them too sour, so I bought you a sweeter parcel which you must promise me not to eat until morning. I have in my pocket, and am going to give you each, a nice, large, sweet, and wholesome box of blacking!"

"Eat blacking!" exclaimed Minnie.

"O papa, you are making fun of us now," said Willie.

"If you do not like shoe-blacking, I'll eat it," said Mr. Blake, as he pulled from his pockets two yellow balls, larger than the others which he had called cakes of soap. "There," he said, holding them up, "what do you think of that sort of blacking?"

"They're oranges!"

"Of course they are, but they are also very good for blacking your boots, though rather expensive. But in the countries where they grow in great plenty country gentlemen use the worst kinds for blacking their boots. The orange is cut in two, and the juicy side of one half is rubbed on the soot of an iron pot and then on the boot. Then it is rubbed with a soft brush, and a bright polish at once appears."

The children did not object to eating this sort of blacking, and laid their oranges away to eat, and their lemons were put aside to wash their hands with. They had not done wondering at the strange stories their father had told them, when he began again.

"You did not much relish the idea of eating after the bee, when I spoke about honey. How would you like to eat your food after the rats and serpents?"

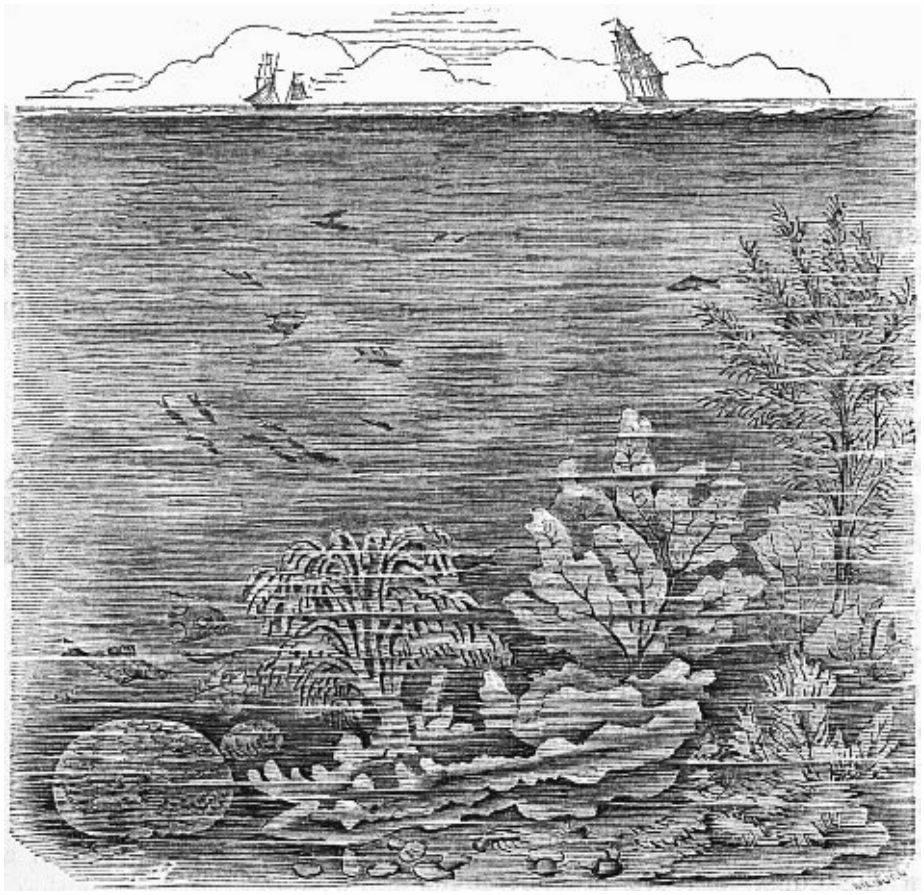
"Eat after rats and serpents!"

"Yes; many people do. There is a fruit which is often found pickled on our tables in this country called the mango. It grows in the West Indies on what may be called a rat's nest and serpent's den. The mango is a large tree, with long branches and wide leaves, and in the West Indies, where it grows, it is the usual hiding-place of rats and serpents. The rats build their nests by pasting the leaves together in the strange ways which certain little animals and birds have, and here they live and hatch their young. The serpents live in the hollow places, like squirrels; and though serpents and rats are sometimes in the same trees, they do not fight and quarrel, but live like peaceful neighbors or a happy family. Of course they do not injure the fruit, but it is not always pleasant to reflect when eating a mango, even after it has been pickled, that the rats may have had a taste of it first, or that the serpents may have crawled over it."

The children looked at their father when he had finished this story, as if they did not know whether he was joking or not; but Mr. Blake, when trying to interest his children in any subject, did not tell them anything untrue. Nor, strange as all these stories may have seemed to them, were they the strangest things which he might have told them. If any young readers of this should get interested in the study of botany,—that is, of plants and flowers, and trees and vegetables,—they will find that there are a great many more curious things to be learned than Mr. Blake has told his children. They can learn from the study of botany how flowers breathe and sleep, and how their blood or sap circulates in their veins; how they mark time like a clock; how they travel from country to country; how they kiss and caress each other; and how and why some of them carry umbrellas over their pretty little heads, or wear hoods; and many other strange things, which they will find much pleasure in studying, and which will make them wiser and also better men and women; for the wiser one gets by study, the more he learns to love his fellow-creatures and the God who made them all.

Major Traverse.

A DAY ON CARYSFORT REEF.



Sea bottom covered with corals.

I promised to write you, my young friends, from the Florida Reefs, and perhaps I cannot do better than to give you the narrative of a single excursion,—one which you would have enjoyed as much as we did, could I have invited you to share our holiday. Do you remember that in a former chapter I spoke of a channel lying between the Reef and the Keys, called the "Ship Channel"? I told you that it made a very quiet anchorage, and that, when there was a storm in the Gulf of Mexico, vessels were very glad to find shelter in this channel, and wait till the blow was over.

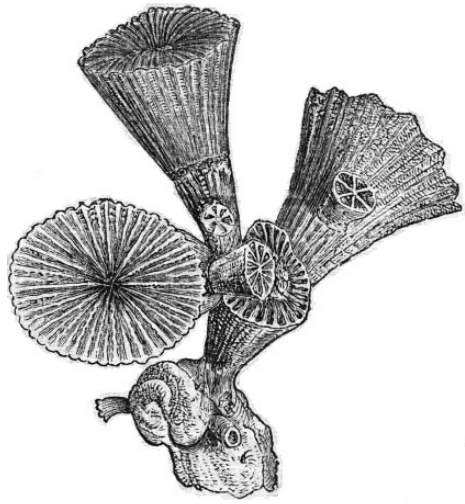
This was our case. We had started from Key West some days before, on board the steamer Bibb, for a cruise in the Gulf Stream off the Florida coast. We were intending to make soundings,—that is, to ascertain the depth of the water in certain

parts of the Stream, and to see what was the strength and direction of the currents, and at the same time to dredge on the ocean bottom for any animals which might be living there.

I say *we*, because I was looking on, and so it seemed to me as if I were helping, which is the way with a great many people who stand and look on and feel as if they did all the work. But in truth I did nothing at all, except to follow the operations with a great deal of interest, as I dare say you would have done; watching, especially when the dredge came up, to see what beautiful things it brought from the ocean depth. The dredge is a strong net fastened upon an iron frame, so heavy that it will sink very far in the water, and when loaded may fall even to a depth of several thousand feet. Being thrown over the side of the vessel it drags on the bottom, and scoops up whatever comes in its way.

I wish you could have taken a peep with me sometimes into the glass bowls, where, after the contents of the dredge were assorted, we kept the living animals. Sometimes you would have seen corals which you would surely have taken for flowers rather than animals. Their pure white cups, occasionally mounted on shells, were so frail and delicate that you would scarcely believe them to be hard till you touched them. Their soft tentacles gently stirring in the water only confirmed the deception. Here you have a picture of some of them, but you do not see their tentacles, because all their soft parts die and shrivel up when they are taken from the water. When the tentacles are spread out in the living animal they form a delicate fringe, extending beyond the edge of the cups, and are in constant motion. When drawn in, they lie folded like a colored lining against the inner side of the cup.

Then I should have shown you little shrimps of a bright red color, with large blue eyes, and tiny cuttle-fishes, and crimson, orange, or purple sponges, and feather stars as many tinted as the rainbow. Or look at this minute sea-urchin who has come up in a bit of rock, where he just fits into a little hole which he has worn for himself. That is the way he makes his house. I wonder whether when he grows bigger, as all young folks must do, he will enlarge his house to suit his dimensions. Now he is packed into it so snugly that there is no room to spare.



We had often beautiful sea-anemones also, though these did not usually come up in the dredge, but were caught when we made boating excursions to the land or to the shoals of the reef. Sometimes the body was orange color, while the tentacles were bright green; in other cases the whole animal was green; in others, pink or red. I remember two crimson ones which interested us especially, because they lived for many days, and we used to watch them. One day, some exceedingly small fishes, not more than a third of an inch in length, were caught in the hand-net, and chanced to be thrown alive into the glass bowl where these anemones were kept. They had not had anything to eat for some time, and I suppose they felt hungry, for presently I saw one of the anemones spread out his soft, treacherous feelers. Instantly one of the little fishes seemed to be stranded against them, entangled, no doubt, in the web of invisible cords thrown out from their lasso cells. I do not remember whether I told you about these singular weapons of theirs, when explaining the structure of the sea-anemone. Their tentacles are covered with little cells in which threads or whips, so delicate that they cannot be seen by the naked eye, are coiled up. When they desire to catch any prey they throw out these whips by hundreds, and no doubt the poor little fish was caught among them. At all events, it lay for a moment upon the tentacles, a slight quiver showing once or twice that it was not quite dead, and presently the tentacles closed in with it and drew it down to the mouth, where it soon disappeared. The other sea-anemone, observing that his companion was dining so sumptuously, followed his example and also helped himself to a fish, which disappeared after the same fashion. For some days after that our anemones looked remarkably well and thriving. Evidently their hearty meal agreed with them. Such were a few of our specimens, but indeed there was no end to the pretty things which we collected daily.

Rhizotrochus.

Unfortunately, however, our work was interrupted by what is called a "norther" in these regions; that is, a very strong blow from the north. We were very glad to take shelter behind the reef, in a harbor called "The old Rhodes," which is entirely shut in by keys, as all islands about the Florida coast are called, and is therefore very quiet. We had been prisoners here for several days; we had exhausted all the excursions which could be undertaken in small boats in the neighborhood, and therefore we were delighted to wake up one morning after a heavy rain, and find that the sea had gone down, the sun was shining brightly, and the surface of the water was without a ripple. Glad to be once more on our way, we left old Rhodes, and, proceeding down the reef, anchored before Carysfort Lighthouse.

You must know that the Carysfort Light is a beacon famous on the reef, partly

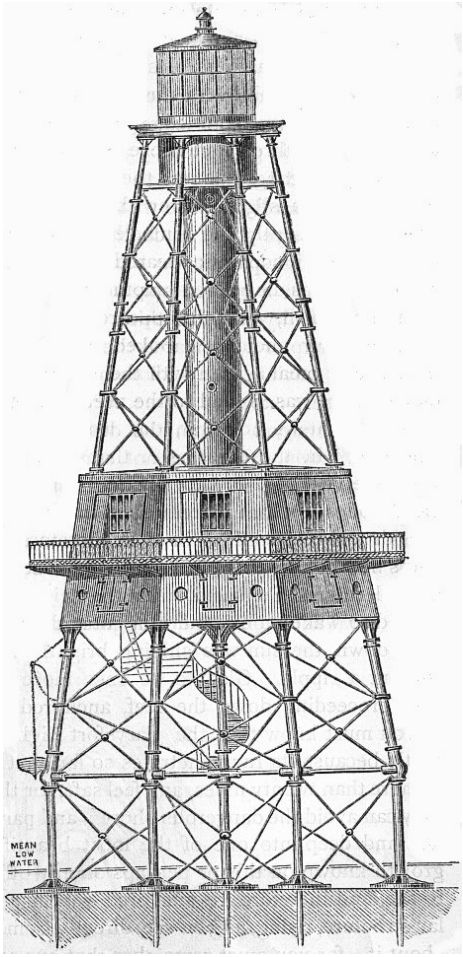
because its ray penetrates so far that sailors recognize it at a distance of more than twenty miles, and feel safe, for they know that, guided by its light, they can avoid the dangerous shore; and partly because its foundations strike fast and deep into one of the most beautiful and extensive fields of coral growth known on this or perhaps on any other coast. This field we wanted to see, and therefore we anchored very near the lighthouse. It is a singular structure, rising, as you see, directly from the ocean, without a foot of land about it; for you must remember that our coral field is under the sea. The light is lifted on a solid shaft a hundred feet above the surface of the water. This shaft is strengthened on the outside by an iron framework of columns slanting outward, and the rooms occupied by the keeper are built in between the shaft and the outside columns at about half height, standing perhaps some forty or fifty feet above the water.

After breakfast we rowed to the lighthouse, and, arriving under the columns, stepped from our boat on to a perpendicular ladder somewhat steep to climb, which brought us to a rough flooring. From this point there was a spiral staircase, by which we reached the rooms of the lighthouse-keeper. He was glad enough to see us, for he and his two assistants live a lonely life out on the reef, with no soul to speak to except each other, and nothing to do but to trim and feed the lamp on which so many lives depend, and watch the sails go by. He was an old man, who had led a seafaring life himself, and he told us that forty years ago he was wrecked on the very spot where Carysfort Light now stands. I dare say that sometimes, when he lights up huge lantern at dusk, and sets the lamp revolving within the great glass lenses which multiply its brilliancy a hundred-fold, he remembers the night when, if such a glowing eye had shone upon his track, he would have been saved from great disaster and loss.

This was not the only lighthouse we had visited on our cruise. A few weeks before we had stopped at one was built on a rock in ocean, so barren that Carysfort itself, with no land at all about it, seemed to me cheerful in comparison. I mention it because I think you will be surprised to hear that on this desolate rock there lived a family of children with their father and mother. Do you not think it must be a sad life? And yet they looked bright and happy, though they never have any other children to come and play with them, never see a green field or a flower, and never know what it is to run and play at will as children do on land, because the rock is so small, and is pierced with so many holes and caverns, that their parents fear to let them go about alone. I wished I had had some playthings, some pretty books or pictures, for them. But as it was, instead of my giving them anything, they loaded me with presents, bringing me, in a shy, affectionate way, all

the pretty shells and stones which are their substitutes for playthings, and insisting upon my accepting them. But let us go back to Carysfort. I am forgetting the subject of our talk in telling you about those solitary little people anchored so far away from all your amusements and pleasures.

After we had talked with the lighthouse-keeper for a while, he invited us to step out upon a sort of ledge or balcony which runs around his rooms on the outside, and is protected by a railing. From this perch we looked down into the sea, and I want you to look down with me. If you do not, I am afraid you will hardly believe what I tell you.



Carysfort Lighthouse.*

As far as the eye could reach, the coral field stretched out around the lighthouse, and so transparent was the water, that we saw the ocean bottom as we might have seen a garden spread out beneath us. This comparison may, however, mislead you, and I think I have perhaps misled you already, when in a former chapter I compared the appearance of a growing coral reef to a shrubbery of waving, many-colored plants. When I wrote that I had never seen, and hardly expected to see, a coral reef, and I described its appearance as I had understood it from the descriptions of others. But Nature is not poor in invention. She does not simply repeat the grace and loveliness of her fields when she spreads her ocean floor with a beauty all its own. And though I confess that there is something in the branching, leaf-like growth of the corals, as well as in their motion and color, which reminds one of plants, yet I think there is a glory of the sea as there is a glory of the land, and they are not the same.

Leaf-Coral (Madrepora palmata), with a Sea-fan (Gorgonia) growing upon it.

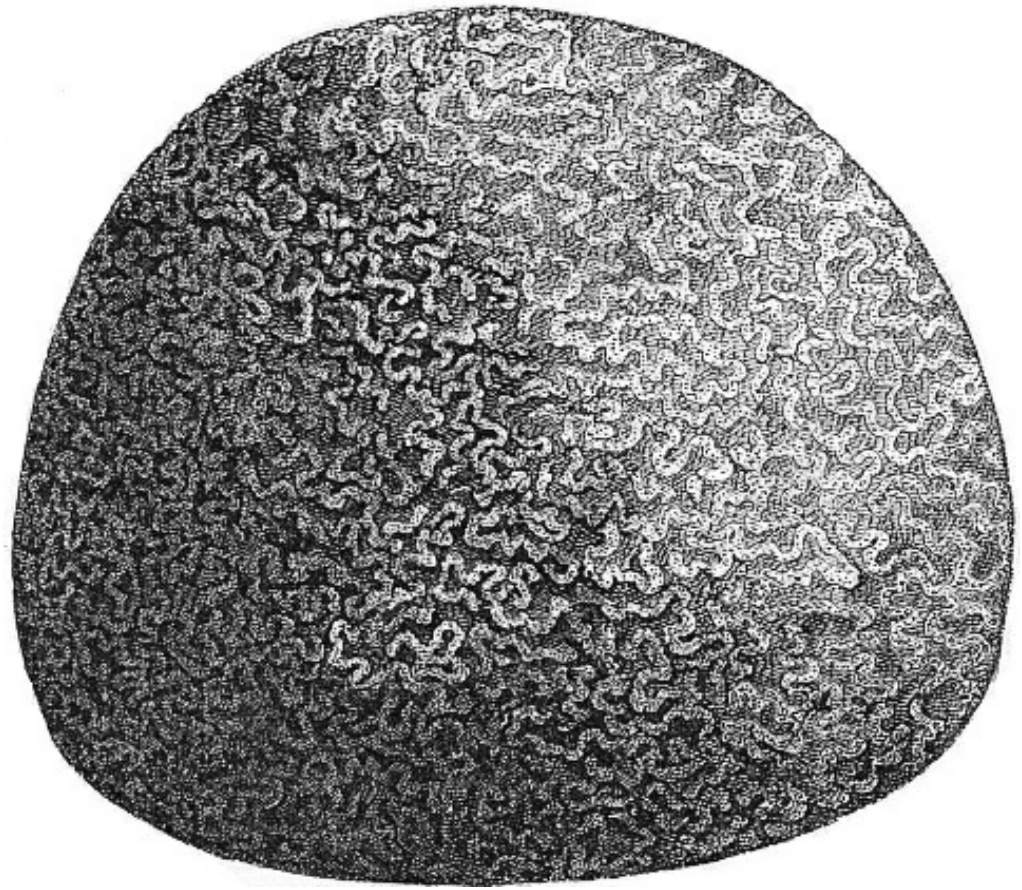
The coral field consisted, in a great degree, of what are called leaf-corals (*Madrepora palmata*). They often, though not always, grow in spirals, their broad, flat branches rising tier upon tier, one above the other. Looking down upon them, I understood where the animals living upon the reef make their homes and find a shelter. Between the almost level floors of these expansions, which often stretch for many yards in circumference on one single stock, there are hundreds of protected recesses, little holes and shady nooks and corners, which seem, I dare say, like large caves to the small animals which inhabit them.

Numbers of fishes were playing among these spreading branches. Darting, shooting, winding in and out between the corals, seen one moment, hidden the next, chasing one another as if in a game of hide-and-seek, or following in shoals of twenty or thirty, as if bound on some special errand, they all seemed as busy and as happy as birds in a wood. Most of them were very brilliant in color. In some, the whole body was of the most vivid blue, others were blue and black, others, again, red and green, others black banded with yellow, and one, the most beautiful of all, was a bright canary color on the lower side, and dark violet above. Now and then

some large fish, a garupa or a barracuda, or even a shark, would pass by, and then all the smaller fry scattered, hiding themselves under the coral, and were seen no more till their enemy was out of sight.

We passed a couple of hours in the lighthouse, watching this strange and beautiful spectacle. We then returned to the ship for lunch, but started again in boats in the afternoon, for the purpose of floating over the whole expanse of the reef, and collecting coral. This was, if possible, more interesting, for, being almost on a level with the water, we could see every object beneath it with even greater distinctness than from the lighthouse, though at that height we had, of course, a more extensive view.

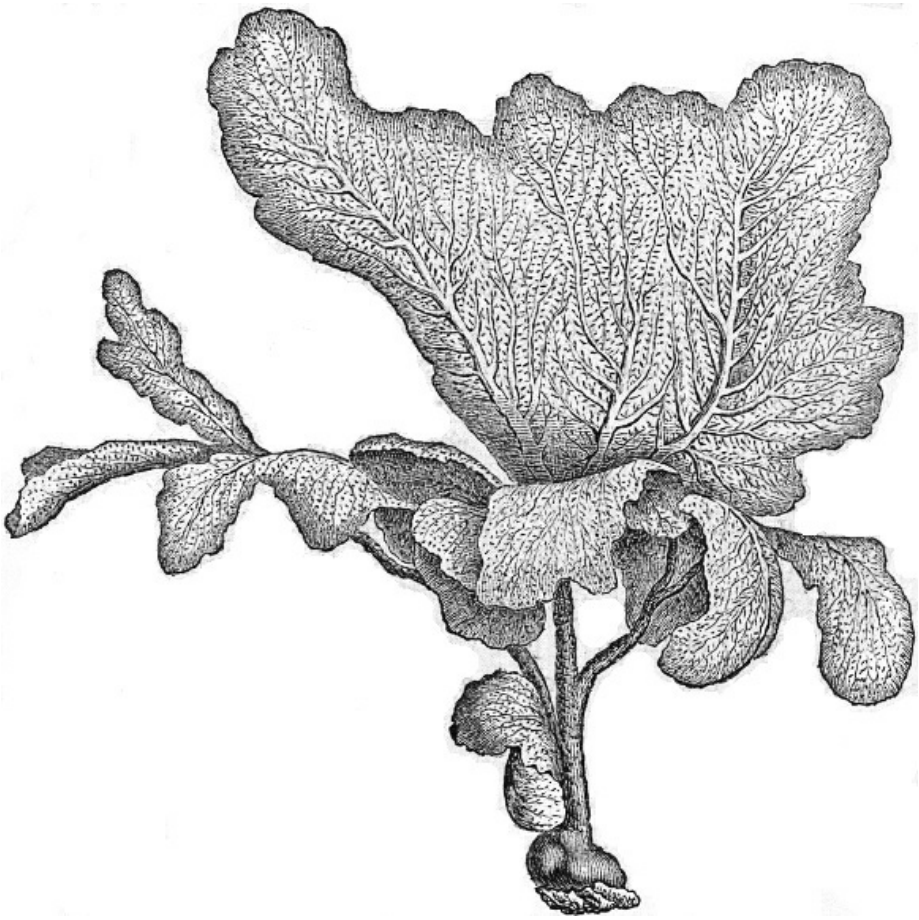
I have mentioned especially the leaf-coral, because that was the most conspicuous at first sight; but there were many heads of brain-coral, or Mæandrina, of Astræa, commonly called Star Coral, and of Porites, ranging in size from little tufts not bigger than your fist to enormous masses from six to ten feet in diameter. There were many also of the more delicate branching kinds, known as finger-corals, and great numbers of the so-called sea-fans. These latter resemble plants so much, that in seeing them you cease to wonder at the frequent comparison of coral-beds to gardens or shrubbery. The broad expansions of the leaf-coral spread horizontally, and are perfectly rigid and motionless, the soft parts of the animals composing the mass being very small in comparison to the solid portions of which the whole structure is built. The fan-corals, on the contrary, are elastic and flexible. They stand upon the ocean bottom on a sort of root, or at least upon a solid base which resembles a root, and their spreading leaves rise lightly in the water and wave with its motion as if stirred by the wind. They are of many colors,—various shades of brown, green, and purple, the latter being especially predominant. Mingled as they often are with a kind of vegetable coral called coralline, resembling sea-weed, and with the bright red, purple, or orange-colored sponges which abound along the Florida coast, you may well be reminded, when looking down upon them, of a brilliant flower-bed.



Head of Brain-Coral (Mæandrina).

We could not have had a better day for our excursion than the one we had chosen. It happened to be a season of spring tides, so that the ebb tide was remarkably low. In some places large masses of coral were left exposed, and indeed there were portions of the reef over which one might walk, not dry shod certainly, but springing from one coral stock to another. Other portions were still covered, even at the lowest tide, by six or eight feet or even three or four fathoms of water. I am sure that all the boys who read this would gladly have shared in the fun of that afternoon. We had three or four boats, and the greater part of the ship's company were in them. All had come dressed for aquatic adventures, and soon there was scarcely a man left in the boats. In every variety of rough and picturesque costume, they were stalking about on the reef,—sometimes wading up to their waists or their shoulders, sometimes swimming in the deeper places, sometimes diving after a desirable specimen. Armed with boat-hooks, crow-bars, logs of wood, or whatever

else they could lay their hands upon, all were engaged in dislodging the more solid and heavier masses, or in breaking off the delicate fans and the finger-corals. It was a play-day for all. I doubt if ever before the reef had resounded to such gayety,—the shouts and laughter of the men echoing on every side as they plunged and tumbled about in the water. Now and then the mirth was varied by cries of another kind, when some one, by mistake, laid hold of the sharp spines of a sea urchin, or got a sting from the so-called sea-worm. But these incidents were not numerous, and, after all, raised a laugh in the end.



Fan-Coral (Rhipidigorgia flabellum).

At last, when all were fairly tired out with work and play, we returned to the vessel, rowing back in the sunset over a sea so calm that no ripple, except those made by our oars, broke its surface. Such was our day at Carysfort Reef, and if I

have told my story well, I think you will admit that it was one to be pleasantly remembered. In my next article I shall tell you something of the different kinds of coral when alive, as I saw them during our cruise, and explain the reefs and keys of Florida more at length.

Elizabeth C. Agassiz.

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* I owe this sketch to the courtesy of Colonel Blunt, of the U. S. Corps of Engineers.

IV. HOW TO READ.

1. *The Choice of Books.*

You are not to expect any stories this time. There will be very few words about Stephen, or Sibyl, or Sarah. My business now is rather to answer, as well as I can, such questions as young people ask who are beginning to have their time at their own command, and can make their own selection of the books they are to read. I have before me, as I write, a handful of letters which have been written to the office of "The Young Folks" asking such questions. And all my intelligent young friends are asking each other such questions, and so ask them of me every day. I shall answer these questions by laying down some general rules, just as I have done before; but I shall try to put you into the way of choosing your own books, rather than choosing for you a long, defined list of them.

I believe very thoroughly in courses of reading, because I believe in having one book lead to another. But, after the beginning, these courses for different persons will vary very much from each other. You all go out to a great picnic, and meet together in some pleasant place in the woods, and you put down the baskets there, and leave the pail with the ice in the shadiest place you can find, and cover it up with the blanket. Then you all set out in this great forest, which we call Literature. But it is only a few of the party, who choose to start hand in hand along a gravel-path there is, which leads straight to the Burgesses' well, and probably those few enjoy less and gain less from the day's excursion than any of the rest. The rest break up into different knots, and go some here and some there, as their occasion and their genius call them. Some go after flowers, some after berries, some after butterflies; some knock the rocks to pieces, some get up where there is a fine view, some sit down and sketch the stumps, some go into water, some make a fire, some find a camp of Indians and learn how to make baskets. Then they all come back to the picnic in good spirits and with good appetites, each eager to tell the others what he has seen and heard, each having satisfied his own taste and genius, and each and all having made vastly more out of the day than if they had all held to the gravel-path and walked in column to the Burgesses' well and back again.

This, you see, is a long parable for the purpose of making you remember that there are but few books which it is necessary for every intelligent boy and girl, man

and woman, to have read. Of those few, I had as lief give the list here.

First is the Bible, of which not only is an intelligent knowledge necessary for your healthy growth in religious life, but—which is of less consequence, indeed—it is as necessary for your tolerable understanding of the literature, or even science, of a world which for eighteen centuries has been under the steady influence of the Bible. Around the English version of it as Mr. Marsh* shows so well, the English language of the last three centuries has revolved, as the earth revolves around the sun. He means, that although the language of one time differs from that of another, it is always at about the same distance from the language of King James's Bible.

Second, every one ought to be quite well informed as to the history of the country in which he lives. All of you should know the general history of the United States well. You should know the history of your own State in more detail, and of your own town in the most detail of all.

Third, an American needs to have a clear knowledge of the general features of the history of England.

Now it does not make so much difference how you compass this general historical knowledge, if, in its main features, you do compass it. When Mr. Lincoln went down to Norfolk to see the rebel commissioners, Mr. Hunter, on their side, cited, as a precedent for the action which he wanted the President to pursue, the negotiations between Charles the First and his Parliament. Mr. Lincoln's eyes twinkled, and he said, "Upon questions of history I must refer you to Mr. Seward, for he is posted upon such things, and I do not profess to be. My only distinct recollection of the matter is, that Charles lost his head." Now you see it is of no sort of consequence how Mr. Lincoln got his thoroughly sound knowledge of the history of England,—in which, by the way, he was entirely at home,—and he had a perfect right to pay the compliment he did to Mr. Seward; but it was of great importance to him that he should not be haunted with the fear that the other man did know, really, of some important piece of negotiation of which he was ignorant. It was important to him to know that, so that he might be sure that his joke was—as it was—exactly the fitting answer.

Fourth, it is necessary that every intelligent American or Englishman should have read carefully most of Shakespeare's plays. Most people would have named them before the history, but I do not. I do not care, however, how early you read them in life, and, as we shall see, they will be among your best guides for the history of England.

Lastly, it is a disgrace to read even the newspaper, without knowing where the places are which are spoken of. You need, therefore, the very best atlas you can

provide yourself with. The atlas you had when you studied geography at school is better than none. But if you can compass any more precise and full, so much the better. Colton's American Atlas is good. The large cheap maps, published two on one roller by Lloyd, are good; if you can give but five dollars for your maps, perhaps this is the best investment. For the other hemisphere, Black's Atlas is good. Rogers's, published in Edinburgh, is very complete in its American maps. Stieler's is cheap and reliable.

When people talk of the "books which no gentleman's library should be without," the list may be boiled down, I think—if in any stress we should be reduced to the bread-and-water diet—to such books as will cover these five fundamental necessities. If you cannot buy the Bible, the agent of the County Bible Society will give you one. You can buy the whole of Shakespeare for fifty cents in Dicks's edition. And, within two miles of the place where you live, there are books enough for all the historical study I have prescribed. So, in what I now go on to say, I shall take it for granted that we have all of us made thus much preparation, or can make it. These are the central stores of the picnic, which we can fall back upon, after our explorations in our various lines of literature.

Now for our several courses of reading. How am I to know what are your several tastes, or the several lines of your genius? Here are, as I learn from Mr. Osgood, some seventy-six thousand five hundred and forty-three Young Folks, be the same more or less, who are reading this paper. How am I to tell what are their seventy-six thousand five hundred and forty-three tastes, dispositions, or lines of genius? I cannot tell. Perhaps they could not tell themselves, not being skilled in self-analysis; and it is by no means necessary that they should be able to tell. Perhaps we can set down on paper what will be much better, the rules or the system by which each of them may read well in the line of his own genius, and so find out, before he has done with this life, what the line of that genius is, as far as there is any occasion.

Do not try to read Everything.

That is the first rule. Do not think you must be a Universal Genius. Do not "read all Reviews," as an old code I had bade young men do. And give up, as early as you can, the passion, with which all young people naturally begin, of "keeping up with the literature of the time." As for the literature of the time, if one were to adopt any extreme rule, Mr. Emerson's would be the better of the two possible extremes. He says it is wise to read no book till it has been printed a year; that, before the year is well over, many of those books drift out of sight, which just now all the newspapers are telling you to read. But then, seriously, I do not suppose he acts on that rule

himself. Nor need you and I. Only, we will not try to read them all.

Here I must warn my young friend Jamie not to go on talking about renouncing "nineteenth century trash." It will not do to use such words about a century in which have written Goethe, Fichte, Cuvier, Schleiermacher, Martineau, Scott, Tennyson, Thackeray, Browning, and Dickens, not to mention a hundred others whom Jamie likes to read, as much as I do.

No. We will trust to conversation with the others, who have had their different paths in this picnic party of ours, to learn from them just the brightest and best things that they have seen and heard. And we will try to be able to tell them, simply and truly, the best things we find on our own paths. Now, for selecting the path, what shall we do,—since one cannot in one little life attempt them all?

You can select for yourself, if you will only keep a cool head, and have your eyes open. First of all, remember that what you want from books is the information in them, and the stimulus they give to you, and the amusement for your recreation. You do not read for the poor pleasure of saying you have read them. You are reading for the subject, much more than for the particular book, and if you find that you have exhausted all the book has on your subject, then you are to leave that book, whether you have read it through or not. In some cases you read because the author's own mind is worth knowing; and then the more you read the better you know him. But these cases do not affect the rule. You read for what is in the books, not that you may mark such a book off from a "course of reading," or say at the next meeting of the "Philogabblian Society" that you "have just been reading Kant or Godwin." What is the subject, then, which you want to read upon?

Half the boys and girls who read this have been so well trained that they know. They know what they want to know. One is sure that she wants to know more about Mary Queen of Scots; another, that he wants to know more about fly-fishing; another, that she wants to know more about the Egyptian hieroglyphics; another, that he wants to know more about propagating new varieties of pansies; another, that she wants to know more about "The Ring and the Book"; another, that he wants to know more about the "Tenure of Office bill." Happy is this half. To know your ignorance is the great first step to its relief. To confess it, as has been said before, is the second. In a minute I will be ready to say what I can to this happy half; but one minute first for the less happy half, who know they want to read something because it is so nice to read a pleasant book, but who do not know what that something is. They come to us, as their ancestors came to a relative of mine who was librarian of a town library sixty years ago; "Please, sir, mother wants a sermon book, and another book."

To these undecided ones I simply say, now has the time come for decision. Your school studies have undoubtedly opened up so many subjects to you that you very naturally find it hard to select between them. Shall you keep up your drawing, or your music, or your history, or your botany, or your chemistry? Very well in the schools, my dear Alice, to have started you in these things, but now you are coming to be a woman, it is for you to decide which shall go forward; it is not for Miss Winstanley, far less for me, who never saw your face, and know nothing of what you can or cannot do.

Now you can decide in this way. Tell me, or tell yourself, what is the passage in your reading or in your life for the last week which rests on your memory. Let us see if we thoroughly understand that passage. If we do not, we will see if we cannot learn to. That will give us a "course of reading" for the next twelve months, or if we choose, for the rest of our lives. There is no end, you will see, to a true course of reading; and, on the other hand, you may about as well begin at one place as another. Remember that you have infinite lives before you, so you need not hurry in the details for fear the work should be never done.

Now I must show you how to go to work, by supposing you have been interested in some particular passage. Let us take a passage from Macaulay, which I marked in the Edinburgh Review for Sydney to speak, twenty-nine years ago,—I think before I had ever heard Macaulay's name. A great many of you boys have spoken it at school since then, and many of you girls have heard scraps from it. It is a brilliant passage, rather too ornate for daily food, but not amiss for a luxury, more than candied orange is after a state dinner. He is speaking of the worldly wisdom and skilful human policy of the method of organization of the Roman Catholic Church. He says:—

> "The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The Republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the Republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the

> Republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin; and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. . . . .
>
> "She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor, when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

I. We will not begin by considering the wisdom or the mistake of the general opinion here laid down. We will begin by trying to make out what is the real meaning of the leading words employed. Look carefully along the sentence, and see if you are quite sure of what is meant by such terms as "The Roman Catholic Church," "the Pantheon," "the Flavian amphitheatre," "the Supreme Pontiffs," "the Pope who crowned Napoleon," "the Pope who crowned Pepin," "the Republic of Venice," "the missionaries who landed in Kent," "Augustin," "the Saxon had set foot in Britain," "the Frank had passed the Rhine," "Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch," "idols in Mecca," "New Zealand," "London Bridge," "St. Paul's."

For really working up a subject—and this sentence now is to be our subject—I advise a blank book, and, for my part, I like to write down the key words or questions, in a vertical line, quite far apart from each other, on the first pages. You will see why, if you will read on.

II. Now go to work on this list. What do you really know about the organization of the Roman Catholic Church? If you find you are vague about it, that such knowledge as you have is only half knowledge, which is no knowledge, read till you are clear. Much information is not necessary, but good, as far as it goes, is necessary on any subject. This is a controverted subject. You ought to try, therefore, to read some statement by a Catholic author, and some statement by a Protestant. To find out what to read, on this or any subject, there are different clews.

1. Any encyclopædia, good or bad, will set you on the trail. Most of you have or can have an encyclopædia at command. There are one-volume encyclopædias better than nothing, which are very cheap. You can pick up an edition of the old

Encyclopædia Americana, in twelve volumes, for ten or twelve dollars. Or you can buy Appleton's, which is really quite good, for sixty dollars a set. I do not mean to have you rest on any encyclopædia, but you will find one at the start an excellent guide-post. Suppose you have the old Encyclopædia Americana. You will find there that the "Roman Catholic Church" is treated by two writers,—one a Protestant, and one a Catholic. Read both, and note in your book such allusions as interest you, which you want more light upon. Do not note everything which you do not know, for then you cannot get forward. But note all that specially interests you. For instance, it seems that the Roman Catholic Church is not so called by that church itself. The officers of that church might call it the Roman church, or the Catholic church, but would not call it the Roman Catholic church. At the Congress of Vienna, Cardinal Consalvi objected to the joint use of the words Roman Catholic church. Do you know what the Congress of Vienna was? No? then make a memorandum, if you want to know. We might put in another for Cardinal Consalvi. He was a man, who had a father and mother, perhaps brothers and sisters. He will give us a little human interest, if we stop to look him up. But do not stop for him now. Work through "Roman Catholic Church," and keep these memoranda in your book for another day.

2. Quite different from the encyclopædia is another book of reference, "Poole's Index." This is a general index to seventy-three magazines and reviews, which were published between the years 1802 and 1852. Now a great deal of the best work of this century has been put into such journals. A reference, then, to "Poole's Index" is a reference to some of the best separate papers on the subjects which for fifty years had most interest for the world of reading men and women. Let us try "Poole's Index" on "The Republic of Venice." There are references to articles on Venice, in the New England Magazine, in the Pamphleteer, in the Monthly Review, Edinburgh, Quarterly, Westminster and De Bow's Reviews. Copy all these references carefully, if you have any chance at any time, of access to any of these journals. It is not, you know, at all necessary to have them in the house. Probably there is some friend's collection or public library where you can find one or more of them. If you live in or near Boston, or New York, or Philadelphia, or Charleston, or New Orleans, or Cincinnati, or St. Louis, or Ithaca, you can find every one.

When you have carefully gone down this original list, and made your memoranda for it, you are prepared to work out these memoranda. You begin now to see how many there are. You must be guided, of course, in your reading, by the time you have, and by the opportunity for getting the books. But, aside from that, you may choose what you like best, for a beginning. To make this simple by an illustration, I

will suppose you have been using the old Encyclopædia Americana, or Appleton's Cyclopædia and Poole's Index only, for your first list. As I should draw it up, it would look like this:—

Cyclopædia.	Poole's Index.
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.	
See (for instance)	Eclectic Rev., 4th S. 13, 485.
Council of Trent.	Quart. Rev., 71, 108.
Chrysostom.	For. Quart. Rev., 27, 184.
Congress of Vienna.	Brownson's Rev., 2d S. 1, 413; 3, 309.
Cardinal Consalvi.	N. Brit. Rev., 10, 21.
THE PANTHEON.	
Built by Agrippa. Consecrated, 607, to St. Mary ad Martyros. Called Rotunda.	
THE FLAVIAN AMPHITHEATRE.	
The Coliseum, *b.* by T. Flavius Vespasian.	
SUPREME PONTIFFS.	
Popes. The line begins with St. Peter, A. D. 42. Ends with Pius IX., 1846.	New-Englander, 7, 169.
	N. Brit. Rev., 11, 135.
POPE WHO CROWNED NAPOLEON.	
Pius VII., at Notre Dame, in Paris, Dec. 2, 1804.	For. Quar. Rev., 20, 54.
POPE WHO CROWNED PEPIN.	
Probably Pepin le Bref is meant. But he was not crowned by a Pope. Crowned by Archbishop Boniface of Mayence, at the advice of Pope Zachary. *b.* @ 715. *d.* 768.	

REPUBLIC OF VENICE.

452 to 1815. St. Real's History.	Quart. Rev., 31, 420.
Otway's Tragedy, Venice Preserved.	Month. Rev., 90, 525.
Hazlitt's Hist. of Venice.	West. Rev., 23, 38.
Ruskin's Stones of Venice.	

MISSIONARIES IN KENT.

Dublin Univ. Mag., 21, 212.

AUGUSTIN.

There are two Augustins. This is St. Austin, *b.* in 5th century, *d.* 604-614.
Southey's Book of Church.
Sharon Turner's Anglo-Saxons.
Wm. of Malmesbury.
Bede's Ecc. History.

SAXON IN BRITAIN.

Turner as above.	Edin. Rev., 89, 79.
Ang.-Saxon Chronicle.	Quart. Rev., 7, 92.
Six old Eng. Chronicles.	Eclect. Rev., 25, 669.

FRANK PASSED THE RHINE.

Well established on west side, at the beginning of 5th century. For. Quart. Rev., 17, 139.

GREEK ELOQUENCE AT ANTIOCH.

Muller's Antiquitates Antiochianæ.	Greek Orators. Ed. Rev., 36, 62.

IDOLS IN MECCA.

Burckhardt's Travels.
Burton's Travels.

NEW ZEALAND.

3 islands, as large as Italy. Discovered, 1642: taken by Cook for England, 1769.	N. Am. Rev., 18, 328.
Gov. sent out, 1838.	West. Rev., 45, 133.
Thomson's Story of N. Z.	Edin. Rev., 91, 231; 56, 333.
Cook's Voyages.	N. Brit. Rev., 16, 176.
Sir G. Gray's Poems, &c. of Maoris.	Living Age,

LONDON BRIDGE.

5 elliptical arches. "Presents an aspect unequalled for interest and animation."

ST. PAUL'S.

Built in 30 years between 1675 and 1705, by Christ. Wren.

Now I am by no means going to leave you to the reading of cyclopædias. The vice of cyclopædias is that they are dull. What is done for this passage of Macaulay in the lists above is only preliminary. It could be easily done in three hours' time, if you went carefully to work. And when you have done it, you have taught yourself a good deal about your own knowledge and your own ignorance,—about what you should read and what you should not attempt. So far it fits you for selecting your own course of reading.

I have arranged this only by way of illustration. I do not mean that I think these a particularly interesting or particularly important series of subjects. I do mean, however, to show you that the moment you will sift any book or any series of subjects, you will be finding out where your ignorance is, and what you want to know.

Supposing you belong to the fortunate half of people who know what they need, I should advise you to begin in just the same way.

For instance, Walter, to whom I alluded above, wants to know about *Fly-Fishing*. This is the way his list looks.

FLY-FISHING.

Cyclopædia.	Poole's Index.
(For instance)	Quart. Rev., 69, 121; 37, 345.

W. Scott, Redgauntlet.	Edin. Rev., 78, 46, or 87; 93, 174, or 340.
Dr. Davy's Researches, 1839.	Am. Whig. Rev., 6, 490.
Cuvier and Valenciennes, Hist. Naturelle des Poissons, Vol. XXI.	N. Brit. Rev., 11, 32, or 95: 1, 326; 8, 160; or Liv. Age, 2, 291; 17, 1.
	Blackwood, 51, 296.
Richardson's Fauna Bor. Amer.	Quar. Rev., 67, 98, or 332; 69, 226.
	Blackwood, 10, 249; 49, 302; 21, 815; 24, 248; 35, 775; 38, 119; 63, 673; 5, 123; 5, 281; 7, 137.
De Kay, Zoölogy of N. Y.	
Agassiz, Lake Superior.	
	Fraser, 42, 136.

See also,

Izaak Walton, Compleat Angler. (Walton and Cotton first appeared, 1750.)

Humphrey Day's Salmonia, or The Days of Fly-Fishing.

Blakey, History of Angling Literature.

Oppianus, De Venatione, Piscatione et Aucupio. (Halieutica translated.) Jones's English translation was published in Oxford, 1722.

Bronner, Fischergedichte und Erzählungen (Fishermen's Songs and Stories).

Norris, T., American Angler's Book.

Zouch, Life of Iz. Walton.

Salmon Fisheries. Parliamentary Reports. Annual.

"Blackwood's Magazine, an important landmark in English angling literature." See Noctes Ambrosianæ.

H. W. Beecher, N. Y. Independent, 1853.

In the New York edition of Walton and Cotton is a list of books on Angling, which Blakey enlarges. His list contains four hundred and fifty titles.

American Angler's Guide, 1849.

Storer, D. H., Fishes of Massachusetts.

Storer, D. H., Fishes of N. America.

Girard, Fresh-Water Fishes of N. America (Smithsonian Contributions, Vol. III.).

Richard Penn, Maxims and Hints for an Angler, and Miseries of Fishing, 1839.

James Wilson, The Rod and the Gun, 1840.

Herbert, Frank Forester's Fish of N. America.

Yarrel's British Fishes.

The same, on the Growth of Salmon.

Boy's Own Book.

Please to observe, now, that nobody is obliged to read up all the authorities that we have lighted on. What the lists mean are this;—that you have made the inquiry for "a sermon book and another book," and you are now thus far on your way toward an answer. These are the first answers that come to hand. Work on and you will have more. I cannot pretend to give that answer for any one of you,—far less for all those who would be likely to be interested in all the subjects which are named here. But with such clews as are given above, you will soon find your ways into the different parts that interest you of our great picnic grove.

Remember, however, that there are no royal roads. The difference between a well-educated person and one not well educated is, that the first knows how to find what he needs, and the other does not. It is not so much that the first is better informed on details than the second, though he probably is. But his power to collect the details at short notice is vastly greater than is that of the uneducated or unlearned man.

In different homes, the resources at command are so different that I must not try to advise much as to your next step beyond the lists above. There are many good catalogues of books, with indexes to subjects. In the Congressional Library, my friend Mr. Vinton is preparing a magnificent "Index of Subjects," which will be of great use to the whole nation. In Harvard College Library they have a manuscript catalogue referring to the subjects described in the books of that collection. The "Cross-References" of the Astor Catalogue, and of the Boston Library Catalogue, are invaluable to all readers, young or old. Your teacher at school can help you in nothing more than in directing you to the books you need on any subject. Do not go and say, "Miss Winstanley, or Miss Parsons, I want a nice book"; but have sense enough to know what you want it to be about. Be able to say,—"Miss Parsons, I should like to know about heraldry," or "about butterflies," or "about water-color

painting," or "about Robert Browning," or "about the Mysteries of Udolpho." Miss Parsons will tell you what to read. And she will be very glad to tell you. Or if you are not at school, this very thing among others is what the minister is for. Do not be frightened. He will be very glad to see you. Go round to his house, not on Saturday, but at the time he receives guests, and say to him: "Mr. Ingham, we girls have made quite a collection of old porcelain, and we want to know more about it. Will you be kind enough to tell us where we can find anything about porcelain. We have read Miss Edgeworth's 'Prussian Vase' and we have read 'Palissy the Potter,' and we should like to know more about Sevres, and Dresden, and Palissy." Ingham will be delighted, and in a fortnight, if you will go to work, you will know more about what you ask for than any one person knows in America.

And I do not mean that all your reading is to be digging or hard work. I can show that I do not, by supposing that we carry out the plan of the list above,—on any one of its details, and write down the books which that detail suggests to us. Perhaps VENICE has seemed to you the most interesting head of these which we have named. If we follow that up only in the references given above, we shall find our book list for Venice, just as it comes, in no order but that of accident, is:—

St. Real, Relation des Espagnols contre Venise.
Otway's Venice Preserved.
Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice.
Howells's Venetian Life.
Blondus. De Origine Venetorum.
Muratori's Annals.
Ruskin's Stones of Venice.
D'Israeli's Contarin Flemiing.
Contarina, Della Republica di Vinetia.
Flagg, Venice from 1797 to 1849.
Crassus, De Republica Veneta.
Jarmot, De Republica Veneta.
Voltaire's General History.
Sismondi's History of Italy.
Lord Byron's Letters.
Sketches of Venetian History, Fam. Library, 26, 27.
Venetian History, Hazlitt.

Dandolo, G. La Caduta della Republica di Venezia (The Fall of the Republic of Venice).

Ridolfi, C., Lives of the Venetian Painters.

Monagas, J. T., Late Events in Venice.

Delavigne, Marino Faliero, a Historical Drama.

Lord Byron, The same.

Smedley's Sketches from Venetian History.

Daru, Hist. de la Republique de Venise.

So much for the way in which to choose your books. As to the choice, you will make it, not I. If you are a goose, cackling a great deal, silly at heart and wholly indifferent about to-morrow, you will choose just what you call the interesting titles. If you are a girl of sense, or a boy of sense, you will choose, when you have made your list, at least two books, determined to master them. You will choose one on the side of information, and one for the purpose of amusement, on the side of fancy. If you choose in "*Venice*" the "Merchant of Venice," you will not add to it "Venice Preserved," but you will add to it, say the Venetian chapters of "Sismondi's Italy." You will read every day; and you will divide your reading time into the two departments,—you will read for fact and you will read for fancy. Roots must have leaves, you know, and leaves must have roots. Bodies must have spirits, and, for this world at least, spirits must have bodies. Fact must be lighted by fancy, and fancy must be balanced by fact. Making this the principle of your selection, you may, nay, you must, select for yourselves your books. And in our next paper I will do my best to teach you

HOW TO READ THEM.

Edward E. Hale.

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* Marsh's Lectures on the English Language: very entertaining books.

GARDENING FOR GIRLS.
CHAPTER IX.

Willie's strawberry-patch had done remarkably well this year, and as soon as the bearing was over the plants began to put out long runners, which took root at every joint. Had the Grays desired to raise more plants, they would have had sufficient to stock several acres; but the bed they had was large enough for all their present purposes; so these strong runners were cut off, like the robbers or unfruitful branches of the grape-vines which take too much strength and sap from the fruit-bearing ones.

Both Willie and his father had learned a great deal about the treatment of these fruits from agricultural books and papers. It was somewhat bewildering, it is true, to beginners. One gardener would recommend that the strawberry-beds should be carefully weeded the first thing in the spring, so as to be clean and nice before fruit time, while another would advise having the grass and weeds remain until after the crop was over. Now this was very puzzling, for who shall venture to decide when farmers disagree? but Mr. Gray thought the best way would be for them to experiment for themselves. This year they had followed the first rule, and nowhere around was there a cleaner bed to be found than this little patch, which did as well as need be, and paid for all the labor bestowed upon it; then, when the runners had been cut off, and a second weeding was accomplished, the bed needed no further attention. Next year they intended to try the other plan, and see which worked best.

The dwarf pear-trees had been planted last year, and were now so full of fruit, that it soon became necessary to prop them up in order to prevent the limbs from breaking. It was strange to see these little trees bearing so much, and such large fruit. As the season advanced it grew round and mellow, and, had they wished to sell their pears, they would have brought from ten to twenty cents apiece.

The cherry-trees were of the white or amber variety, and furnished enough both for eating and preserving. Then there were the grape-vines, which shaded the sunny side of the house so delightfully, and in the spring sent forth a delicious perfume, which pervaded every room in the cottage. Soon little clusters were seen on the vines, at first only about the size of small beads; but they grew very fast, and by the Fourth of July they began to look like real bunches of grapes.

While they were very small, Willie determined to try an experiment of which he had read. Having procured a large-sized bottle with a short, narrow neck, he

selected one of the most compact, and perfectly shaped clusters, and without much trouble pushed it into the bottle, the stem being just long enough to allow the bunch to reach into the bulging part. The bottle itself was then suspended by strong pieces of twine tied around the neck, and fastened to the wood-work of the trellis, so as not to press or weigh upon the imprisoned cluster.

Of course, the grapes grew rapidly, and even in a few days it would have been impossible to remove them without breaking off the berries; indeed, the grapes in the bottle, like all fruit raised under glass, grew faster and finer than those upon the open vine. When the grapes attained their full size and color they completely filled the bottle; and then the stem was cut, and the strings also. Willie felt quite proud of his success, and carried the grapes into the city, and around amongst his acquaintances, who were amazed at the sight of a large cluster enclosed in a narrow-necked bottle. To those who could not guess how it had been done he did not feel bound to explain the secret.

About midsummer there came a long season of dry weather; the sky was clear and cloudless, the sun rose red and hot, and shone with such power that everything in farm or garden became scorched and withered. The little girls walked around the flower-beds night and morning, bewailing the unpromising appearance of their favorite plants, and wished and longed for rain; but for three weeks no rain came. With watering-pots they could not do more than moisten the surface, and revive the drooping leaves for the time, next day the sun baked the ground harder than ever.

At length one evening they spied a few little clouds, light and fleecy overhead, and as Daisy was looking up at them with many anxious longings for a shower, she thought she felt a drop on her nose; then presently another and another. In half an hour other clouds came following up after the first one, and the drops began to fall faster and faster, until everything was thoroughly watered.

"This reminds me of the story we read the other day," said Daisy, "about the rain-drops whose example the rest all followed."

"What story's that?" asked Willie, who came in just then, pretty wet, and caught his little sister's words.

"I'll go and get the paper," answered Daisy, and up she ran to where it lay folded on her mother's work-basket. "Here it is," she cried; "and I will read it to you."

"There was once a farmer who had a large field of corn; he ploughed it, and planted the corn, and harrowed it, and weeded it with great care, and on his field he depended for the support of his family. But after he had worked hard he saw the corn begin to wither and droop for rain, and he thought he should lose his crop. He felt very sad, and went out every day to look at his corn, and see if there was any

hope of rain.

"One day, as he stood, almost in despair, looking at the sky, two little rain-drops up in the clouds over his head saw him, and one said to the other, 'Look at that poor farmer; I feel sorry for him; he has taken so much pains with his field of corn, and now it is all drying up; I wish I could do him some good.'

"'Yes,' said the other, 'but you are only a little rain-drop; what can you do? You can't even wet one hillock.'

"'Well,' said the first, 'I can't do much, but I can cheer the farmer a little, at any rate, and I'm resolved to do my best. I'll try. I'll run to the field to show my good-will, if I can do no more; so here I go!' And down went the rain-drop, and came pat on the farmer's nose. 'Dear me,' said the farmer, putting his finger to his nose, 'what's that? A rain-drop. Where did that come from? I do believe we shall have a shower.'

"The first rain-drop had no sooner started for the field than the second one said, 'Well, if you are going down, I believe I will go too. Here I come,' and down dropped the rain-drop on a stalk of corn.

"By this time a great many rain-drops had come together to hear what their companions were talking about, and when they heard, and saw them going to cheer the farmer, and water the corn, 'If you're going on so good an errand,' said one, 'I'll go too'; and down he came. 'And I,' said another, 'And I,' 'And I,' and so on till a whole shower of them came; and the corn was watered, and it grew, and ripened, all because that first little rain-drop determined to do what it could."

"Sensible little rain-drops!" remarked Willie. "And the improvement in our own gardens will be seen very plainly by to-morrow morning; and then pretty soon, girls, we shall have some work to do, for the weeds will grow again faster than ever."

"And so will the flowers," said Bessie, who generally saw the bright side; "weeds are not the only things to grow, that's a comfort. And there's my new rose-bush, that beautiful white mycrophylla, that I have watered so carefully, how it will grow after this! I wish I had thought of measuring it just before it began to rain."

"I don't believe anything will show it sooner than my pop-corn," said Willie. "Look, I can see it nodding away in the rain, even from here, and the long leaves look clean and glossy already. By the by, Daisy, I wonder if that was pop-corn that the farmer had in the story."

"I don't know," answered Daisy; "I'm watching my cypress-vines now. I know they like it; see how green they look, and the flowers are all shut up to keep the inside dry till the rain is done."

"It seems we're all interested in this shower," exclaimed Maggie; "my grafts will

be likely to succeed splendidly, and the cuttings too; I was afraid they would be lost."

"Yes," said Mr. Gray, "it is a merciful rain, and we are indeed favored to have it come so gently, and yet so copiously; it will increase the harvest of many a poor man, and keep his family from want."

They watched the rain from the windows until it grew dark, and then heard it pattering steadily down upon the roof as long as they were awake, after which they dreamed of their refreshed gardens, and saw all sorts of flowers and fruits. Next morning, although it was not quite clear, everything looked refreshed. Instead of baked and dried-up ground, the earth was dark and moist, and the leaves were glossy and fresh. A few of the taller plants were drooping with the weight of water, and required to be raised and tied to stronger sticks, but these matters were soon attended to, and then all looked right again.

As the summer went on, there was a succession of fruits as well as flowers, for the raspberries produced enough for their own table, and the Lawton blackberries even more. The grape-vines hung full of clusters, and by the first of September began to grow purple and juicy.

"What a fine crop we shall have!" said Mrs. Gray, as she counted the bunches, —"at least a dozen for each vine. By next year they will be in perfection."

Thus the season drew toward its close, yet the interest in gardening increased rather than abated.

At the time that Willie trimmed his strawberries, and took off the runners, he had hesitated about throwing them quite away. He knew they were fine plants of an excellent kind, and had he then known any one to whom he might give them, he would have done so freely. But they had been covered up in a shady place, where the rains could water them occasionally, and that had kept them quite fresh. He had no present plan in regard to them, yet as they were in nobody's way, they still remained safe and snug in the corner unnoticed and forgotten. The time was approaching, however, when they would come into use.

Before the middle of October an incident occurred which wrought some important changes in the neighborhood, and greatly interested the Grays. A gentleman from the city, in search of a pleasant and convenient home for his family, came out to see this section of the country. First, he called at Mr. Gray's, and inquired very civilly whether they were willing to sell their establishment; he admired it more than any of the neighboring cottages, and said that if they were disposed to sell, he was ready to purchase it, at the same time offering a price which was more than double the original cost. As the gentleman talked with Mrs. Gray, and

persuaded her to consider the offer, tears came into the children's eyes.

"O mother," cried Daisy, "I don't want to go away from all our pretty flowers."

"No, indeed," added Bessie and Susie together, "we should not like to leave our vines and roses now. Next year they'll look so beautiful."

Just at this juncture Maggie came in with her garden hat and gloves, and her hands full of cuttings, which she was preparing to set out in her little box-bed of sand, that Willie had only yesterday fitted up with a nice sash covering. "Maggie," said her mother, "this is Mr. Fisher, from Philadelphia, who would like to buy our place and come here to live. Would you be willing to part with it and go back to town again?"

Maggie's countenance fell as she heard this. "Dear mother," she exclaimed, "you certainly do not mean it; you would not wish to part with all these pleasant things, would you?"

"I only wanted to know how you felt about it," was the answer; "I know it is a hard thing to propose to you young gardeners, and as the thought of parting with our little home has come upon us so unexpectedly, suppose we reserve our decision until we have taken time to think of it, and consult with your father."

"Certainly," said Mr. Fisher, "I will wait with pleasure as long as you say. The fact is, my family are all anxious for a little more elbow-room, and my children, two little girls about the ages of these two of your own,"—pointing to Susie and Daisy,—"are growing so pale and puny that I think a home in the country, where they can have plenty of out-door exercise and fresh air, is just what is needed to make them as rosy and chubby as these. If you are willing to sell, I am prepared to conclude the purchase and take possession at once: if not, I will look elsewhere."

"How would the next cottage answer?" suggested Mrs. Gray, pointing to Mr. Patton's; "that is for sale."

"O, that is too bare and desolate looking," he answered; "the house looks very much like this, but the surroundings are so very different, so barren and unattractive."

"And yet, Mr. Fisher, two years ago ours looked quite as unpromising as that does now."

"Impossible!" he exclaimed in surprise. "And have all these vines and this shrubbery grown since then?"

"Yes, we have planted and trained them as you see, and have taken great delight in the work, I do assure you, while it has given us health and pleasure."

"But it has probably cost you a large sum of money in addition to the work you have done yourselves."

"No, indeed; you would be surprised to learn how little we have expended, and

really we have received it all back again in the fruit and flowers already enjoyed."

"And has all this taken but *two* years to accomplish?" he asked.

"Precisely two years ago we came out to look at this place. It was then just finished, with the remains of the builders' rubbish still visible. It did not look very inviting *then*, I can assure you; but I knew very well how soon we could bring it into shape, and so we bought it, and now you see it as it is. Had the Pattons done the same with theirs, it would have looked as well as ours."

Mr. Fisher began to look more attentively at the house in question. Much to the relief of the children, he took up his hat, saying that he would step over to look at it, and return again to report his decision.

"He's a nice-looking man," remarked Maggie, as he closed the gate, "and perhaps they'd be pleasant neighbors for us; but O, don't let him have our place! I'd rather work hard to help him fix that one up, than to part with all we've done here."

"Well, Maggie," said her mother, "I don't think we'll do it. At first I was struck with his liberal offer, and of course we must speak to your father about it; but don't be distressed until there is occasion."

Smiles came back to the children's faces as they heard this, and they watched eagerly for Mr. Fisher's return call.

He came at last. Mrs. Patton, who had determined to sell at a very moderate price, was so glad to see a cash purchaser actually within reach, that she did her best to recommend the place, and finally offered to sell at a price that astonished her visitor. If he had not first heard Mrs. Gray's experience and felt sure that time would improve the looks of the bare spot, he would never have thought of taking it. As it was, he asked the favor of a few days' refusal, and, wishing her a good morning, came back to see Mrs. Gray once more; and after another brief conversation with her, he decided to purchase the Pattons' place.

CHAPTER X.

Before the day was over, Mr. Fisher had called upon Mr. Patton at his office in the city, and concluded the purchase, possession to be given at once. Next day he brought his wife to view the premises, and in less than two weeks there were men at work, laying out the grounds, and ploughing up the portions that were to be planted in fruit.

Willie's strawberry-plants now found a customer, and were soon transplanted into their new places. As the Grays' had been two years before, the bed was made ready in the autumn, so that the plants would be nicely settled and rooted by spring.

Mr. Fisher did not propose to remove his family to the country until April, for he knew how lonely his wife would be during the winter; but they came out now very often, to direct the workmen, who were planting a large number of ornamental trees. He was resolved upon following the advice of the Grays, and under their instruction much of the planning was settled. The lawn was marked out very much like theirs, and groups of evergreens, purple beech and laburnum, weeping willows, and maples were planted. Then flower-beds, with box edgings, were laid out, and made ready for spring, while carpenters were busy in the various repairs needed about the house, and in adding grape-arbors and lattice-screens wherever they seemed to be appropriate. The dilapidated fence was replaced by another, very neat and pretty, and a pigeon-house was built just over the barn-door. So matters progressed rapidly, and before the weather became really wintry all was completed. A coat of light-brown paint, to cover up the glaring white of former days, was to finish the transformation, and that would be done before moving time.

Now all these matters were subjects of interest to the Grays. They seemed as much pleased with the changed appearance and prospects of that place as if they held some kind of ownership in it themselves. Their plants, seeds, and cuttings were to be divided with the Fishers, and all sorts of prospective experiments were talked of in connection with the new place. In fact, it seemed almost as if they had increased the size of their own grounds by the embellishment of these adjoining ones.

November is generally a dark and dreary month, with cold winds whistling among the trees, and whirling the dry leaves in all directions. Frosts come at night that kill the tender plants, and make even the roses look pinched and pale. But prudent gardeners do not wait for these signs before taking up their house-plants, and preparing their winter gardens. By the 10th of October the Grays had begun to pot such of the geraniums and verbenas as they wished to keep in the house, and

thus the plants had ample time to recover themselves before being brought in-doors. Besides these, there were pots planted with oxalis-bulbs, and a few hyacinths in glasses, while the beautiful ferns and lycopodiums were green and vigorous under a large bell shade. Then the hanging-baskets were replenished and renovated, and, with the addition of a few choice plants, looked as fresh as ever. Thus the wide bay-window of the south parlor would be quite well furnished with flowers; the approach of winter would not deprive them entirely of their favorite pursuits.

There were, however, several large plants—geraniums, scarlet sages, and pomegranates—for which it was impossible to find accommodation in the parlor or sitting-room; yet it was hard to see them die, when they would be so valuable for another summer, so these were taken up just before the first heavy frosts, and placed in boxes, the roots well covered with earth, and then carried to the cellar, where there would be sufficient light and warmth to keep them alive, an occasional watering being all the further care required.

But Maggie Gray was resolved upon an experiment with some of her large geraniums. She had read of another way to keep such plants, and meant to test it for herself; and as they had at least a dozen of the large scarlet varieties, she could easily afford to lose a few in case of failure. She therefore took them up, and tying up the roots in large cloths, with a ball of earth attached, they were suspended from the cellar ceiling, top downwards. By this method the sap is thus sent down into the branches, and the plant nourished by its own juices until spring, an occasional sprinkling being all that is necessary. Most of the leaves drop off in course of time, and nothing but bare sticks remain; but there is still life in the dry stalks, and when planted in the ground again they revive and flourish.

"There's nothing like trying," said Maggie, as the wiseacres shook their heads at her experiment; "one wants to know whether these things are actually true; and if I do succeed the laugh will be on my side."

The love of flowers brought with it a love of all beautiful things. The bright autumn leaves that fall in such endless variety at our feet, how many pretty fancies do they suggest to an ingenious mind! Then the wood lichens and mosses that grow in such perfection in every shady nook, on trees and stumps and fences,—what exquisite beauty they possess for eyes delicate enough to perceive it.

"Little wild-wood mosses, springing by the way,
Threads from Nature's carpet, beautiful and gay;
Growing by the hedges,—how we pass them by;
Yet to make the smallest, could not, if we try."

The Grays had collected quite a choice variety of all these things, and they were very busy, just before Christmas, making pretty gifts for their friends. The brilliant leaves had been pressed in large books and then laid carefully into boxes ready for use. A coat of thin white varnish, applied with a camel's-hair brush, brought out the colors beautifully, and then by tying them to long stems, they were easily disposed among the dried grasses, that had been preserved for a winter bouquet. A few scarlet berries of the mountain-ash were interspersed, and also a few grasses crystallized with alum to look like frozen dew-drops.

The little Grays were quite expert at that, and produced beautiful sprays by merely suspending the stems from a stick laid across the top of a deep, wide-mouthed jar, in which was a very strong solution of alum in water. The water was hot when the grass was put in, and the tops extending downward were entirely covered. Soon the little crystals began to form upon every part, and by the time the water had grown cold the sprays were withdrawn and placed where they could dry. If laid before the fire they dried white like frost or snow, but if left in a cold place became transparent like ice; thus there was quite a pretty variety among them.

There were also many graceful designs of crosses, baskets, and cornucopias, composed of fine mosses with bright miniature leaves, and delicate seed-vessels and grasses variously arranged, all of which formed very pretty and appropriate gifts. Then on Christmas eve the house was dressed with evergreens, festooned in tasteful wreaths from window to window, and around the pictures and door-frames. This year, the words "A MERRY CHRISTMAS," formed of ferns and green mosses, were placed upon the wall opposite the hall-door, and seemed to breathe a spirit of good-will and welcome to every one who entered, while the usual Christmas-tree, upon which were hung all sorts of offerings, small and great, superseded the stockings in the chimney-corner. Thus their holidays were indeed a very happy, merry season, and the parents enjoyed their children's pleasures as highly as if they were themselves still young.

But the winter wore on, the short days grew longer, and, almost before they knew it, spring drew near. The first of April brought a few warm, open days, and the snow-drops and crocuses began to blossom among the rubbish and dead leaves that still covered the garden-beds; bluebirds made their accustomed appearance upon the trees and trellises near the house; frogs croaked merrily in the ditches around, and down in the garden was heard the buzzing sound of bees,—all announcing that spring had come again.

Mr. Fisher had been out with painters and paper-hangers, to put everything into proper order for the moving, which was now near at hand. In a day or two, all the

household goods were brought out, and before long things were quite in order. The pretty furniture and neat curtains made everything look very tasteful, and, even on her first visit to Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Gray saw that she was a person of refinement and good taste. Pictures upon the walls, and many odd and original conceits in fancy-work attracted her attention, and as Mrs. Fisher was very cordial, and inclined to be communicative, they formed very pleasant impressions of their new neighbors.

Before they had been long settled Maggie discovered that Mrs. Fisher was quite an adept in various kinds of beautiful work. The elegant bouquet of skeleton leaves that graced her parlor table was of her own arrangement, and no sooner had she perceived Maggie's desire and interest in regard to it, than she promised to instruct her in the difficult art. "Only wait, Maggie," she said, "until the leaves are matured, and then we will begin the business."

In the Grays' garden, the same routine of spring work was to be accomplished this year as in the last, and although they had heretofore found employment enough in their own garden-work, yet this season they lent a helping hand to their neighbors besides. The generous always have time to spare for their friends; and the Grays were also free in sharing their seeds and plants with Mrs. Fisher and her little girls, who were but beginners at the business, and needed considerable instruction. They did not know when or where they had better plant certain flowers, or which were tall, and which creeping; so the advice and experience of the others were very useful, and as gladly accepted as they were freely given.

Maggie's roses were in fine order for bedding, and as Mr. Fisher was about to buy twenty or thirty plants for his new beds, he made her a liberal offer for an assortment of her choice ones. She consented to part with as many as he might want, and they were accordingly distributed over the smooth new beds of that once-neglected garden. So matters prospered on both sides of the hedge, and by the first of June the Pattons would not have recognized their former habitation, so great was the change wrought by a little taste and judicious labor.

Author of "Six Hundred Dollars a Year."

BERRYING SONG.

BERRYING SONG.

Words by LUCY LARCOM. Music by F. BOOTT.

Allegretto.

mf

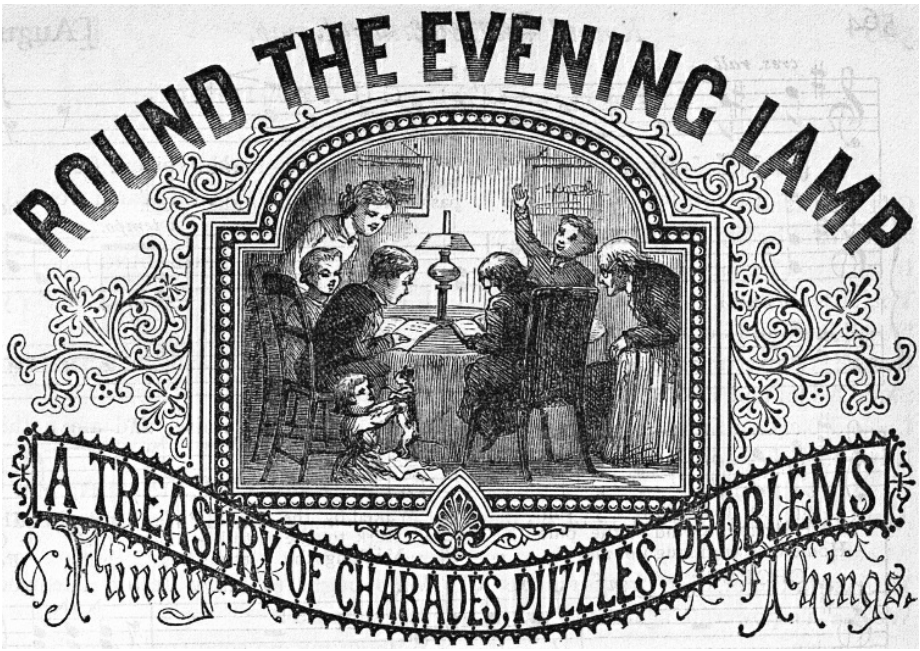
1. Ho! for the hills in summer! Ho! for the rock - y
2. Red lil - ies blaze out of the thicket Wild ro - ses blush here and
3. We'll garland our baskets with blossoms, And sit on the rocks and

shade, Where the ground-pine trails under the fern - leaves,
there: There's sweetness in all the breezes, There's
sing, And tell one an - other old sto - ries, Till the

Deep in the moss - y glade. Up in the dew - y sun - rise,
health in each breath of air. Hark to the wind in the pine - trees!
trees long shad - ows fling. Then homeward with laughter and car - ol,

Waked by the rob - in's trill; Up and a - way a
Hark to the tink - ling rill! O pleasant it is a
Mocking the ech - oes shrill; For mer - ry it is a


cres. rall.
f
ber - ry - ing To the pas - tures on the hill.
ber - ry - ing In the pas - tures on the hill.
ber - ry - ing In the pas - tures on the hill. Then
a tempo.
col canto.
sf
tr
up in the dew - y sun - rise, Waked by the rob - in's trill; Then
Hark to the wind in the pine - trees! Hark to the tink - ling rill! O
Homeward with laughter and car - ol, Mocking the ech - oes shrill; For
CHORUS.
mf
dewy sunrise,
in the pine-trees!
laughter and carol,
robin's trill Then
tinkling rill! O
echoes shrill, For
up and a - way a ber - ry - ing To the pastures on the hill.
pleasant it is a per - ry - ing In the pastures on the hill.
mer - ry it is a ber - ry - ing In the pastures on the hill.
up and a - way a ber - ry - ing To the pastures on the hill.
cres.
f
rall.
sf
sf
a tempo.
sf
sf
rall.



CHARADES.

No. 48.

I pray to good St. Francis,
And I pray on bended knee,
Till in midnight dreams and trances
The saint appears to me.
By scourging and by fasting,
By penance and by prayer,
For glory everlasting
My spirit I prepare.
If fasts and flagellations
Have power to save the soul,
If there's virtue in half-rations,
Then happy is my *whole*.

Though friends at home who love thee

Though friends at home who love thee
Breathe frequent, earnest prayer,
Though my *first* is blue above thee,
Young soldier, still beware!
And fear my *first* in battle
More than cannon's blighting breath,
When the volleying muskets rattle
And it sends the wingéd death,
While I pray to good St. Francis
That thy foes may be accursed,
For I do not like war's chances,
And I rather fear my *first*.

I do not know my *second*,
But you, kind reader, do;
And if its years were reckoned,
I think you'd find them few.
Although of toil and trouble
It has had but little share,
It is bent completely double,
As if by age and care.
But I pray to good St. Francis
That it never may be vexed,
But that merriment and dances
Be the portion of my *next*.

Perhaps my *last* you're stroking
As you rack your puzzled head;
And wasn't it provoking
When you cut it and it bled?
Perhaps this latter distich
May lack meaning to a few,
But if it is not mystic
I'll tell you what to do.
Give thanks to good St. Francis,
That the work of guessing's past,
And that your prying glances
Have puzzled out my *last*.

Have pulled out my hair.

CARL.

No. 49.

My *first* is a sailor; a *stick*;
To my *second* a perfect match,
From my *whole* (O so sour!) hasten quick,
It is something you'd rather not catch.

MINNIE MAY.

A BEHEADED CHARADE.
No. 50.

(BEFORE BEHEADING.)

O, I'm a tender little thing!
Sometimes I roll, sometimes I spring.
If once you let me drop, in vain
You strive to pick me up again.
"Us," it should be, instead of "me,"
For we've always travelled in company,
Since Adam and Eve, with weeping eyes,
Looked back on the gates of Paradise!
Now, though we're so tender, so weak, and so small,
And philosophers say we're of no use at all,
Yet just in the melting process alone
We're as powerful agents as anything known.
For when running together so gently and still,
We work just like magic, if managed with skill!
Quite plentiful are we always found,
And in time of the war still more did abound.
Ah, if from us mankind were free,
What a blissful spot this earth would be!

(AFTER BEHEADING.)

I'm of various tints,—white, black, yellow, brown.
In some places I stand, in others droop down.
I'm at home in a noise, and am nothing loath
To carry a drum and a trumpet both.
'Tis a shame, but I'm often stabbed by those
Who ought to know better, one would suppose!
Without me, no song could ever be sung,
And the beautiful harps would all be unstrung.
Even the cannon would cease to roar,
And the thunder's roll be heard no more.
And yet some people make of me
A place to hang their jewelry!

A. M. D.

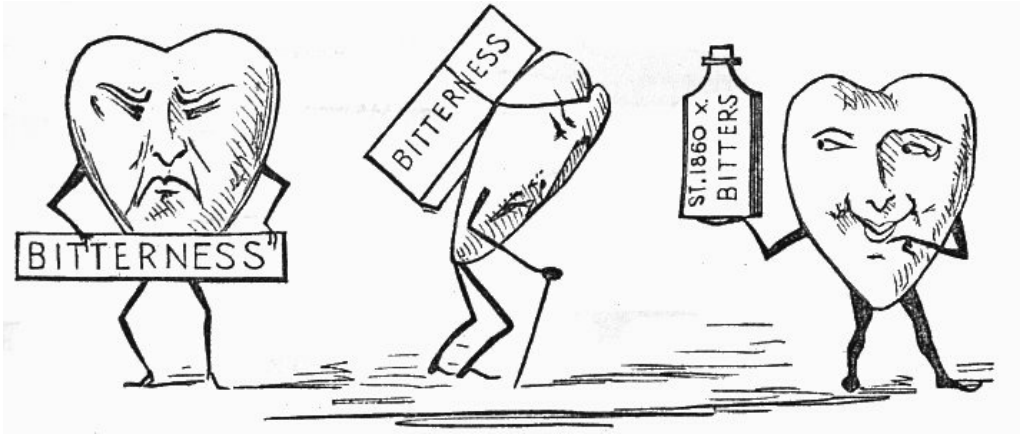
SUBSTITUTIONS.
No. 51.

(*Change a letter in the first word required, making the second.*)

1. Change to disprove, leaving to reject.
2. Change an enemy, leaving a dandy.
3. Change a farming tool, leaving a part of a ship.
4. Change a heathen god, leaving a market.
5. Change to commit, leaving to make enduring.
6. Change a haven, leaving a prop.

EMPIRE STATE.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 52.



42. He who is far from home is near to harm.
43. Murmur.
44. Humbug.
45. Timepiece.
46. The Alphabet.
47. Y (why). B (bee). E E (ease). G (gee). P (pea). T (tea). Q (queue).

Rebus in Letter Box.—

A race of (pail) pale-faces.

OUR LETTER BOX

Only one month after this, boys and girls, for preparing your prize-compositions. You remember that they were all to be in by the first of October.

The following is the *verbatim* production of a young man in one of the Freedmen's schools at the Southwest. It is not offered as a specimen which our young competitors must equal, but merely to show them that it is better to begin early than late to learn how to write.

"TRUTH.

"I will commence by saying i do not tell the truth as often as i would like to but i do try sometimes to tell the truism. And i think that a truism is an undoubted truth while it is truly certain really that there are some right thruthful people in the world. Schoolmates why cant we be truthfull as other truthfull people are. You are none to young to tell the truth—for please look at george washington when his father ask him who cut that beautifull apple tree there in the garden then george ponder for a moment and respond in answer to reply a short anthem and said father you know i cant tell a lie i cut it now dont you know that done his father good from the end of his toe to the crown of his head. i think schoolmates that truth always shames the devil so if you want to shame the devil tell the truth and it make him run. I think truth posesses great fackleties."

Editors of "Our Young Folks":—

In answer to a request in your "Letter Box" I send the following descriptions of two interesting and instructive games. Both of them develop the bodily and strategic powers of boys. In "Prison Bar," particularly, a boy's abilities to obey and to command are equally brought into play.

In England, after the Wars of the Roses, the people were so much taken up with "Prison Bar" and similar games, that Parliament passed a law compelling them to exercise in Archery. This was about the year 1500.

Prison Bar is quite a complicated game, but can be readily learned.

"Yard the Sheep,"* commonly called "Yard Sheep," is commenced by choosing a boy by lot. There are several ways of doing this, familiar to "Our Young Folks." This boy is the shepherd, generally called the one that's *it*. He takes care of the "yard," which is a stick two or three feet long, to be set on end against the side of a building or fence. The play is commenced by one of the sheep, or those who are *out*, throwing the stick (yard) to a distance. The one who is *it* gets the stick and replaces it as soon as possible, while those who are *out* endeavor to hide before the yard is in its place. As soon as the yard is replaced, the shepherd tries to find a sheep; to do which he needs only to see him. When he sees one, he cries, "I yard John Smith,"—calling the name of the one he sees. Then he runs and touches the yard, and John Smith is "yarded" or "caught"; but if John Smith can touch the yard first, he is not "caught," but throws the stick, crying, "Yard's down," and the game commences again with the same one for shepherd. At any time any one who is *out* can run in and "put the yard down," crying, "Yard's down," and throwing as above.

The shepherd can "yard" any number at a time. But it is always necessary that he should see and call by the right name those whom he "yards." Of this rule advantage is sometimes taken by those who are *out* exchanging hats or coats. If the shepherd calls the wrong name it is the same as if the yard was down.

When the yard is down all can hide, those who are "yarded" as well as others. When the shepherd succeeds in yarding all, the game commences again with the one who was first yarded, *since the yard was down last*, as shepherd,—that is, one may be yarded first after the game commences; but if the yard is put down he will not have to be shepherd.

When the number of those playing is large, it is almost impossible to yard all the sheep. In this case a certain number of sheep to be yarded before there shall be a change of shepherds is agreed upon,—generally five.

Prison Bar, Prison Bars, Prisoners' Base, or "Goal" (pronounced "gool" by some boys), is played by "sides," and can be played on the ground or in skates on the ice. On a large pond, with quite a number of players, it is most exciting, as one

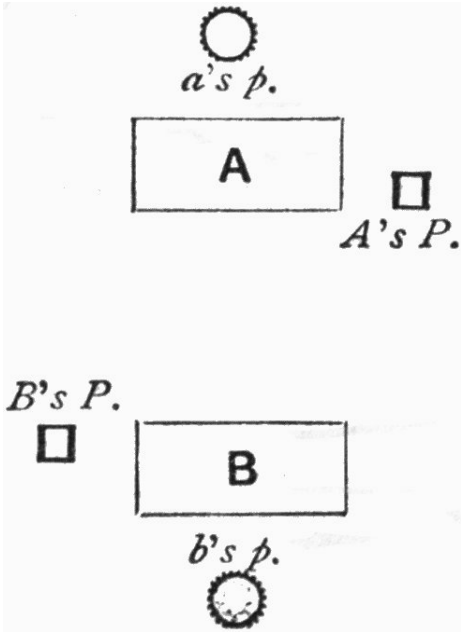
can skate much faster than he can run.

All "young folks" know how to "choose sides." In Prisoners' Base it is almost absolutely necessary that each side should have a captain to direct the movements of the members of his force. A good captain, by well-directed movements of a small or inferior force, can capture a much larger one not so well managed. And if it is necessary to have a captain, it is equally necessary that his orders should be implicitly obeyed.

The sides being chosen, two *Goals* are made. The lines of the goals should be well defined, that there may arise no dispute as to one's being in or out of his goal. The distance of the goals apart should depend upon the size of the boys and the nature of the ground. The goals should not be too large, for, when the number on one side has been reduced by capture, a large goal will be difficult to defend from "goaling." There are also two prisons to be made (though these are sometimes dispensed with, as I shall explain before I close), one for each side; these can either be made like the goals, or a tree or corner of a fence will answer. The prisons should not be too far from their goals. Generally, a prison is put no farther from the opposite goal than the goals are apart. Sometimes the prisons are placed directly behind the goal, but always at a little distance. If from the nature of the ground there should be an advantage in favor of one goal, the choice can be tossed-up for between the captains. The following diagram will show the position of the goals and the prisons:—

A and B are the two sides and their goals. The usual place for the prisons is at *A's P.* and *B's P.* (A's prison and B's prison), while they may be placed at *a's p.* and *b's p.*

Now for the game. Each side being in its goal, the captain of one side sends out a boy towards the other goal. He may either be a slow runner, and instructed to return, as soon as chased, to his own goal, or he may be a fast runner, who will run off and lead a long chase. Suppose this boy to be sent from A,—Captain B then sends a boy to catch him, which he must do before a boy from A, leaving A after he left B, catches *him*. If he cannot catch the boy from A he should return to his goal B. A boy from A can only be caught by a boy who left B after he left A and *vice versa*. When a boy is caught, he cannot be rescued till he has been imprisoned, and the captor can return without being liable to be caught until he has again left his goal. A captive being imprisoned can be rescued by a boy who comes over and touches his hand, when they are both at liberty to return without being liable to be caught. Of course a boy attempting to rescue a prisoner can be chased and caught by one of the other side. A boy who has left his goal



can catch but one or rescue but one prisoner before returning. When there are no prisons a boy being caught becomes one of the other side. It is difficult to play in this way, as there are always some boys who will not play as well on one side as the other, and will allow themselves to be caught so as to return to their own side. A boy doing this should, by common consent or the decision of an umpire, be ruled out of the game. Should a captain be caught, he sends any one of his side that he pleases to the other's side or prison. If a boy can get into the other goal without getting caught, he is as safe as if he was in his own goal, and has a chance to catch one of the other side returning or just leaving his goal.

Thus, suppose a boy to have left A, he must be caught outside of either A or B, and can go into either. Suppose he goes into B, when a boy belonging to B attempts to come in, he can catch him; but he must do so while that boy is outside of his goal.

Or suppose a B boy should start out from B, the A boy, starting from B after the B boy did, can catch him; but the A boy is himself liable to be caught by one of the other side leaving B (or even A, if he should happen to be there) after he did, and he cannot again enter B until after he has returned to his own goal. When he attempts to go into B it is not necessary for a boy to leave B in order to catch him. He can do so by reaching outside of the goal; so a boy being in another's goal can reach out to catch a boy returning. That is, a boy *must* be caught *outside* a goal, while his captor *may* be *inside*. He can either rescue a prisoner, catch one of the enemy, or return to his own goal after leaving the enemy's goal. This occupying the enemy's goal is called "goaling them."

ROSLICHEN.

We have two other descriptions of the above games, by "M." and "Puer." "Roslichen's" is more complete than either of them, however.

* There is a game somewhat like this which I have played in Brooklyn, N. Y., but have not seen elsewhere, neither have I ever seen a description of it. I must spell the name after my own fancy; although I think the first two words must be a corruption, I have been unable to satisfy myself of what. The game is called Woolly Woolly Wolf.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

Illustrations have been relocated due to using a non-page layout.

Some photographs have been enhanced to be more legible.

Page 551, How to do it., New Zealand., Living Age ends in a comma with no page numbers.

The poem *Morning-Glory* was between pages 528 and 529 but was not itself on a numbered page. It has been relocated to the end of *Going Up in a Balloon*.

[The end of *Our Young Folks. An Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls. Volume 5, Issue 8* edited by John Townsend Trowbridge and Lucy Larcom]