

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AN

ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR

BOYS AND GIRLS.

EDITED BY

J. T. TROWBRIDGE AND LUCY LARCOM.

VOL. V.



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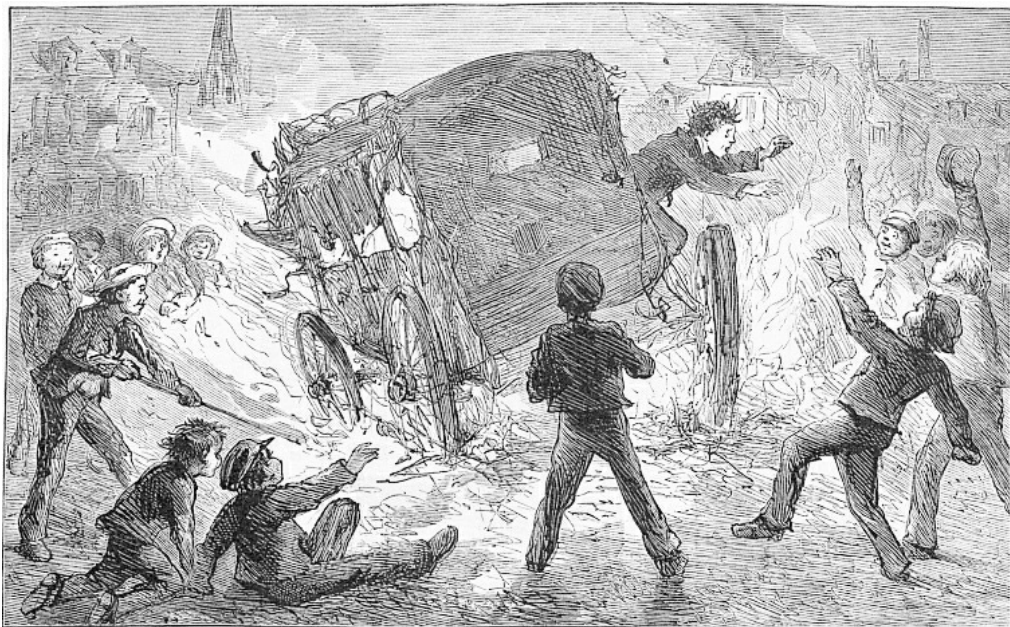
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“At this moment a figure was seen leaping wildlly from the inside of the blazing coach.”

DRAWN BY S. EYTINGE, JR.]

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VOL. V.

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THE STORY OF A BAD BOY.

CHAPTER VII. ONE MEMORABLE NIGHT.



Two months had elapsed since my arrival at Rivermouth, when the approach of an important celebration produced the greatest excitement among the juvenile population of the town.

There was very little hard study done in the Temple Grammar School the week

preceding the Fourth of July. For my part, my heart and brain were so full of fire-crackers, Roman-candles, rockets, pin-wheels, squibs, and gunpowder in various seductive forms, that I wonder I didn't explode under Mr. Grimshaw's very nose. I couldn't do a sum to save me; I couldn't tell, for love or money, whether Tallahassee was the capital of Tennessee or of Florida; the present and the pluperfect tenses were inextricably mixed in my memory, and I didn't know a verb from an adjective when I met one. This was not alone my condition, but that of every boy in the school.

Mr. Grimshaw considerably made allowances for our temporary distraction, and sought to fix our interest on the lessons by connecting them directly or indirectly with the coming Event. The class in arithmetic, for instance, was requested to state how many boxes of fire-crackers, each box measuring sixteen inches square, could be stored in a room of such and such dimensions. He gave us the Declaration of Independence for a parsing exercise, and in geography confined his questions almost exclusively to localities rendered famous in the Revolutionary war.

"What did the people of Boston do with the tea on board the English vessels?" asked our wily instructor.

"Threw it into the river!" shrieked the boys, with an impetuosity that made Mr. Grimshaw smile in spite of himself. One luckless urchin said, "Chucked it," for which happy expression he was kept in at recess.

Notwithstanding these clever stratagems, there was not much solid work done by anybody. The trail of the serpent (an inexpensive but dangerous fire-toy) was over us all. We went round deformed by quantities of Chinese crackers artlessly concealed in our trousers-pockets; and if a boy whipped out his handkerchief without proper precaution, he was sure to let off two or three torpedoes.

Even Mr. Grimshaw was made a sort of accessory to the universal demoralization. In calling the school to order, he always rapped on the table with a heavy ruler. Under the green baize table-cloth, on the exact spot where he usually struck, a certain boy, whose name I withhold, placed a fat torpedo. The result was a loud explosion, which caused Mr. Grimshaw to look queer. Charley Marden was at the water-pail, at the time, and directed general attention to himself by strangling for several seconds and then squirting a slender thread of water over the blackboard.

Mr. Grimshaw fixed his eyes reproachfully on Charley, but said nothing. The real culprit (it wasn't Charley Marden, but the boy whose name I withhold) instantly regretted his badness, and after school confessed the whole thing to Mr. Grimshaw, who heaped coals of fire upon the nameless boy's head by giving him five cents for the Fourth of July. If Mr. Grimshaw had caned this unknown youth, the punishment

would not have been half so severe.

On the last day of June, the Captain received a letter from my father, enclosing five dollars "for my son Tom," which enabled that young gentleman to make regal preparations for the celebration of our national independence. A portion of this money, two dollars, I hastened to invest in fireworks; the balance I put by for contingencies. In placing the fund in my possession, the Captain imposed one condition that dampened my ardor considerably,—I was to buy no gunpowder. I might have all the snapping-crackers and torpedoes I wanted; but gunpowder was out of the question.

I thought this rather hard, for all my young friends were provided with pistols of various sizes. Pepper Whitcomb had a horse-pistol nearly as large as himself, and Jack Harris, though he to be sure was a big boy, was going to have a real old-fashioned flint-lock musket. However, I didn't mean to let this drawback destroy my happiness. I had one charge of powder stowed away in the little brass pistol which I brought from New Orleans, and was bound to make a noise in the world once, if I never did again.

It was a custom observed from time immemorial for the towns-boys to have a bonfire on the Square on the midnight before the Fourth. I didn't ask the Captain's leave to attend this ceremony, for I had a general idea that he wouldn't give it. If the Captain, I reasoned, doesn't forbid me, I break no orders by going. Now this was a specious line of argument, and the mishaps that befell me in consequence of adopting it were richly deserved.

On the evening of the 3d I retired to bed very early, in order to disarm suspicion. I didn't sleep a wink, waiting for eleven o'clock to come round; and I thought it never would come round, as I lay counting from time to time the slow strokes of the ponderous bell in the steeple of the Old North Church. At length the laggard hour arrived. While the clock was striking I jumped out of bed and began dressing.

My grandfather and Miss Abigail were heavy sleepers, and I might have stolen down stairs and out at the front door undetected; but such a commonplace proceeding did not suit my adventurous disposition. I fastened one end of a rope (it was a few yards cut from Kitty Collins's clothes-line) to the bedpost nearest the window, and cautiously climbed out on the wide pediment over the hall door. I had neglected to knot the rope; the result was, that, the moment I swung clear of the pediment, I descended like a flash of lightning, and warmed both my hands smartly. The rope moreover was four or five feet too short; so I got a fall that would have proved serious had I not tumbled into the middle of one of the big rose-bushes growing on either side of the steps.

I scrambled out of that without delay, and was congratulating myself on my good luck, when I saw by the light of the setting moon the form of a man leaning over the garden gate. It was one of the town watch, who had probably been observing my operations with curiosity. Seeing no chance of escape, I put a bold face on the matter and walked directly up to him.

“What on airth air you a doin’?” asked the man, grasping the collar of my jacket.

“I live here, sir, if you please,” I replied, “and am going to the bonfire. I didn’t want to wake up the old folks, that’s all.”

The man cocked his eye at me in the most amiable manner, and released his hold.

“Boys is boys,” he muttered. He didn’t attempt to stop me as I slipped through the gate.

Once beyond his clutches, I took to my heels and soon reached the Square, where I found forty or fifty fellows assembled, engaged in building a pyramid of tar-barrels. The palms of my hands still tingled so that I couldn’t join in the sport. I stood in the doorway of the Nautalis Bank, watching the workers, among whom I recognized lots of my schoolmates. They looked like a legion of imps, coming and going in the twilight, busy in raising some infernal edifice. What a Babel of voices it was, everybody directing everybody else, and everybody doing everything wrong!

When all was prepared, somebody applied a match to the sombre pile. A fiery tongue thrust itself out here and there, then suddenly the whole fabric burst into flames, blazing and crackling beautifully. This was a signal for the boys to join hands and dance around the burning barrels, which they did shouting like mad creatures. When the fire had burnt down a little, fresh staves were brought and heaped on the pyre. In the excitement of the moment I forgot my tingling palms, and found myself in the thick of the carousal.

Before we were half ready, our combustible material was expended, and a disheartening kind of darkness settled down upon us. The boys collected together here and there in knots, consulting as to what should be done. It yet lacked four or five hours of daybreak, and none of us were in the humor to return to bed. I approached one of the groups standing near the town-pump, and discovered in the uncertain light of the dying brands the figures of Jack Harris, Phil Adams, Harry Blake, and Pepper Whitcomb, their faces streaked with perspiration and tar, and their whole appearance suggestive of New Zealand chiefs.

“Hullo! here’s Tom Bailey!” shouted Pepper Whitcomb; “he’ll join in!”

Of course he would. The sting had gone out of my hands, and I was ripe for anything,—none the less ripe for not knowing what was on the *tapis*. After

whispering together for a moment, the boys motioned me to follow them.

We glided out from the crowd and silently wended our way through a neighboring alley, at the head of which stood a tumble-down old barn, owned by one Ezra Wingate. In former days this was the stable of the mail-coach that ran between Rivermouth and Boston. When the railroad superseded that primitive mode of travel, the lumbering vehicle was rolled into the barn, and there it stayed. The stage-driver, after prophesying the immediate downfall of the nation, died of grief and apoplexy, and the old coach followed in his wake as fast as it could by quietly dropping to pieces. The barn had the reputation of being haunted, and I think we all kept very close together when we found ourselves standing in the black shadow cast by the tall gable. Here, in a low voice, Jack Harris laid bare his plan, which was to burn the ancient stage-coach.

"The old trundle-cart isn't worth twenty-five cents," said Jack Harris, "and Ezra Wingate ought to thank us for getting the rubbish out of the way. But if any fellow here doesn't want to have a hand in it, let him cut and run, and keep a quiet tongue in his head ever after."

With this he pulled out the staples that held the rusty padlock, and the big barn-door swung slowly open. The interior of the stable was pitch-dark, of course. As we made a movement to enter, a sudden scrambling, and the sound of heavy bodies leaping in all directions, caused us to start back in terror.

"Rats!" cried Phil Adams.

"Bats!" exclaimed Harry Blake.

"Cats!" suggested Jack Harris. "Who's afraid?"

Well, the truth is, we were all afraid; and if the pole of the stage had not been lying close to the threshold, I don't believe anything on earth would have induced us to cross it. We seized hold of the pole-straps and succeeded with great trouble in dragging the coach out. The two fore wheels had rusted to the axle-tree, and refused to revolve. It was the merest skeleton of a coach. The cushions had long since been removed, and the leather hangings had crumbled away from the worm-eaten frame. A load of ghosts and a span of phantom horses to drag them would have made the ghastly thing complete.

Luckily for our undertaking, the stable stood at the top of a very steep hill. With three boys to push behind, and two in front to steer, we started the old coach on its last trip with little or no difficulty. Our speed increased every moment, and, the fore wheels becoming unlocked as we arrived at the foot of the declivity, we charged upon the crowd like a regiment of cavalry, scattering the people right and left. Before reaching the bonfire, to which some one had added several bushels of shavings, Jack

Harris and Phil Adams, who were steering, dropped on the ground, and allowed the vehicle to pass over them, which it did without injuring them; but the boys who were clinging for dear life to the trunk-rack behind fell over the prostrate steersmen, and there we all lay in a heap, two or three of us quite picturesque with the nose-bleed.

The coach, with an intuitive perception of what was expected of it, plunged into the centre of the kindling shavings, and stopped. The flames sprung up and clung to the rotten woodwork, which burned like tinder. At this moment a figure was seen leaping wildly from the inside of the blazing coach. The figure made three bounds towards us, and tripped over Harry Blake. It was Pepper Whitcomb, with his hair somewhat singed, and his eyebrows completely scorched off!

Pepper had slyly ensconced himself on the back seat before we started, intending to have a neat little ride down hill, and a laugh at us afterwards. But the laugh, as it happened, was on our side, or would have been, if half a dozen watchmen had not suddenly pounced down upon us, as we lay scrambling on the ground, weak with our mirth over Pepper's misfortune. We were collared and marched off before we well knew what had happened.

The abrupt transition from the noise and light of the Square to the silent, gloomy brick room in the rear of the Meat Market seemed like the work of enchantment. We stared at each other aghast.

"Well," remarked Jack Harris, with a sickly smile, "*this* is a go!"

"No go, I should say," whimpered Harry Blake, glancing at the bare brick walls and the heavy iron-plated door.

"Never say die," muttered Phil Adams, dolefully.

The bridewell was a small, low-studded chamber built up against the rear end of the Meat Market, and approached from the Square by a narrow passage-way. A portion of the room was partitioned off into eight cells, numbered, each capable of holding two persons. The cells were full at the time, as we presently discovered by seeing several hideous faces leering out at us through the gratings of the doors.

A smoky oil-lamp in a lantern suspended from the ceiling threw a flickering light over the apartment, which contained no furniture excepting a couple of stout wooden benches. It was a dismal place by night, and only little less dismal by day, for the tall houses surrounding "the lock-up" prevented the faintest ray of sunshine from penetrating the ventilator over the door,—a long narrow window opening inward and propped up by a piece of lath.

As we seated ourselves in a row on one of the benches, I imagine that our aspect was anything but cheerful. Adams and Harris looked very anxious, and Harry Blake, whose nose had just stopped bleeding, was mournfully carving his name, by

sheer force of habit, on the prison-bench. I don't think I ever saw a more "wrecked" expression on any human countenance than Pepper Whitcomb's presented. His look of natural astonishment at finding himself incarcerated in a jail was considerably heightened by his lack of eyebrows. As for me, it was only by thinking how the late Baron Trenck would have conducted himself under similar circumstances that I was able to restrain my tears.

None of us were inclined to conversation. A deep silence, broken now and then by a startling snore from the cells, reigned throughout the chamber. By and by, Pepper Whitcomb glanced nervously towards Phil Adams and said, "Phil, do you think they will—*hang us?*"

"Hang your grandmother!" returned Adams, impatiently; "what I'm afraid of is that they'll keep us locked up until the Fourth is over."

"You ain't smart ef they do!" cried a voice from one of the cells. It was a deep bass voice that sent a chill through me.

"Who are you?" said Jack Harris, addressing the cells in general; for the echoing qualities of the room made it difficult to locate the voice.

"That don't matter," replied the speaker, putting his face close up to the gratings of No. 3, "but ef I was a youngster like you, free an' easy outside there, with no bracelets* on, this spot wouldn't hold *me* long."

"That's so!" chimed several of the prison-birds, wagging their heads behind the iron lattices.

"Hush!" whispered Jack Harris, rising from his seat and walking on tip-toe to the door of cell No. 3. "What would you do?"

"Do? Why, I'd pile them 'ere benches up agin that 'ere door, an' crawl out of that 'ere winder in no time. That's my advice."

"And wery good advice it is, Jim," said the occupant of No. 5, approvingly.

Jack Harris seemed to be of the same opinion, for he hastily placed the benches one on the top of another under the ventilator, and, climbing up on the highest bench, peeped out into the passage-way.

"If any gent happens to have a ninepence about him," said the man in cell No. 3, "there's a sufferin' family here as could make use of it. Smallest favors gratefully received, an' no questions axed."

This appeal touched a new silver quarter of a dollar in my trousers-pocket; I fished out the coin from a mass of fireworks, and gave it to the prisoner. He appeared to be such a good-natured fellow that I ventured to ask what he had done to get into jail.

"Intirely innocent. I was clapped in here by a rascally newew as wishes to enjoy

my wealth afore I'm dead."

"Your name, sir?" I inquired, with a view of reporting the outrage to my grandfather and having the injured person reinstated in society.

"Git out, you insolent young reptyle!" shouted the man, in a passion. I retreated precipitately, amid a roar of laughter from the other cells.

"Can't you keep still?" exclaimed Harris, withdrawing his head from the window.

A portly watchman usually sat on a stool outside the door day and night; but on this particular occasion, his services being required elsewhere, the bridewell had been left to guard itself.

"All clear," whispered Jack Harris, as he vanished through the aperture and dropped gently on the ground outside. We all followed him expeditiously,—Pepper Whitcomb and myself getting stuck in the window for a moment in our frantic efforts not to be last.

"Now, boys, everybody for himself!"

* Handcuffs.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF A FOURTH.

The sun cast a broad column of quivering gold across the river at the foot of our street, just as I reached the doorstep of the Nutter House. Kitty Collins, with her dress tucked about her so that she looked as if she had on a pair of calico trousers, was washing off the sidewalk.

"Arrah, you bad boy!" cried Kitty, leaning on the mop-handle, "the Capen has jist been askin' for you. He's gone up town, now. It's a nate thing you done with my clothes-line, and it's me you may thank for gettin' it out of the way before the Capen come down."

The kind creature had hauled in the rope, and my escapade had not been discovered by the family; but I knew very well that the burning of the stage-coach, and the arrest of the boys concerned in the mischief, were sure to reach my grandfather's ears sooner or later.

"Well, Thomas," said the old gentleman, an hour or so afterwards, beaming upon me benevolently across the breakfast-table, "you didn't wait to be called this morning."

"No, sir," I replied, growing very warm, "I took a little run up town to see what was going on."

I didn't say anything about the little run I took home again!

"They had quite a time on the Square last night," remarked Captain Nutter, looking up from the "Rivermouth Barnacle," which was always placed beside his coffee-cup at breakfast.

I felt that my hair was preparing to stand on end.

"Quite a time," continued my grandfather. "Some boys broke into Ezra Wingate's barn and carried off the old stage-coach. The young rascals! I do believe they'd burn up the whole town if they had their way."

With this he resumed the paper. After a long silence he exclaimed, "Hullo!"—upon which I nearly fell off the chair.

"Miscreants unknown," read my grandfather, following the paragraph with his forefinger; "'escaped from the bridewell, leaving no clew to their identity, except the letter H, cut on one of the benches.' 'Five dollars reward offered for the apprehension of the perpetrators.' Sho! I hope Wingate will catch them."

I don't see how I continued to live, for on hearing this the breath went entirely out of my body. I beat a retreat from the room as soon as I could, and flew to the

stable with a misty intention of mounting Gypsy and escaping from the place. I was pondering what steps to take, when Jack Harris and Charley Marden entered the yard.

"I say," said Harris, as blithe as a lark, "has old Wingate been here?"

"Been here?" I cried. "I should hope not!"

"The whole thing's out, you know," said Harris, pulling Gypsy's forelock over her eyes and blowing playfully into her nostrils.

"You don't mean it!" I gasped.

"Yes, I do, and we're to pay Wingate three dollars apiece. He'll make rather a good spec out of it."

"But how did he discover that we were the—the miscreants?" I asked, quoting mechanically from the "Rivermouth Barnacle."

"Why, he saw us take the old ark, confound him! He's been trying to sell it any time these ten years. Now he has sold it to us. When he found that we had slipped out of the Meat Market, he went right off and wrote the advertisement offering five dollars reward; though he knew well enough who had taken the coach, for he came round to my father's house before the paper was printed to talk the matter over. Wasn't the governor mad, though! But it's all settled, I tell you. We're to pay Wingate fifteen dollars for the old go-cart, which he wanted to sell the other day for seventy-five cents, and couldn't. It's a downright swindle. But the funny part of it is to come."

"O, there's a funny part to it, is there?" I remarked bitterly.

"Yes. The moment Bill Conway saw the advertisement, he knew it was Harry Blake who cut that letter H on the bench; so off he rushes up to Wingate—kind of him, wasn't it?—and claims the reward. 'Too late, young man,' says old Wingate, 'the culprits has been discovered.' You see Sly-boots hadn't any intention of paying that five dollars."

Jack Harris's statement lifted a weight from my bosom. The article in the "Rivermouth Barnacle" had placed the affair before me in a new light. I had thoughtlessly committed a grave offence. Though the property in question was valueless, we were clearly wrong in destroying it. At the same time Mr. Wingate *had* tacitly sanctioned the act by not preventing it when he might easily have done so. He had allowed his property to be destroyed in order that he might realize a large profit.

Without waiting to hear more, I went straight to Captain Nutter, and, laying my remaining three dollars on his knee, confessed my share in the previous night's transaction.

The Captain heard me through in profound silence, pocketed the bank-notes,

and walked off without speaking a word. He had punished me in his own whimsical fashion at the breakfast-table, for, at the very moment he was harrowing up my soul by reading the extracts from the "Rivermouth Barnacle," he not only knew all about the bonfire, but had paid Ezra Wingate his three dollars. Such was the duplicity of that aged impostor!

I think Captain Nutter was justified in retaining my pocket-money, as additional punishment, though the possession of it later in the day would have got me out of a difficult position, as the reader will see further on.

I returned with a light heart and a large piece of punk to my friends in the stable-yard, where we celebrated the termination of our trouble by setting off two packs of fire-crackers in an empty wine-cask. They made a prodigious racket, but failed somehow to fully express my feelings. The little brass pistol in my bedroom suddenly occurred to me. It had been loaded I don't know how many months, long before I left New Orleans, and now was the time, if ever, to fire it off. Muskets, blunderbusses, and pistols were banging away lively all over town, and the smell of gunpowder, floating on the air, set me wild to add something respectable to the universal din.

When the pistol was produced, Jack Harris examined the rusty cap and prophesied that it would not explode. "Never mind," said I, "let's try it."

I had fired the pistol once, secretly, in New Orleans, and, remembering the noise it gave birth to on that occasion, I shut both eyes tight as I pulled the trigger. The hammer clicked on the cap with a dull, dead sound. Then Harris tried it; then Charley Marden; then I took it again, and after three or four trials was on the point of giving it up as a bad job, when the obstinate thing went off with a tremendous explosion, nearly jerking my arm from the socket. The smoke cleared away, and there I stood with the stock of the pistol clutched convulsively in my hand,—the barrel, lock, trigger, and ramrod having vanished into thin air.

"Are you hurt?" cried the boys, in one breath.

"N—no," I replied, dubiously, for the concussion had bewildered me a little.

When I realized the nature of the calamity, my grief was excessive. I can't imagine what led me to do so ridiculous a thing, but I gravely buried the remains of my beloved pistol in our back garden, and erected over the mound a slate tablet to the effect that "Mr. Barker, formerly of new orleans, was Killed accidentally on the Fourth of july, 18— in the 2nd year of his Age."* Binny Wallace, arriving on the spot just after the disaster, and Charley Marden (who enjoyed the obsequies immensely), acted with me as chief mourners. I, for my part, was a very sincere one.

As I turned away in a disconsolate mood from the garden, Charley Marden

remarked that he shouldn't be surprised if the pistol-but took root and grew into a mahogany-tree or something. He said he once planted an old musket-stock, and shortly afterwards a lot of *shoots* sprung up! Jack Harris laughed; but neither I nor Binny Wallace saw Charley's wicked joke.

We were now joined by Pepper Whitcomb, Fred Langdon, and several other desperate characters, on their way to the Square, which was always a busy place when public festivities were going on. Feeling that I was still in disgrace with the Captain, I thought it politic to ask his consent before accompanying the boys. He gave it with some hesitation, advising me to be careful not to get in front of the firearms. Once he put his fingers mechanically into his vest-pocket and half drew forth some dollar-bills, then slowly thrust them back again as his sense of justice overcame his genial disposition. I guess it cut the old gentleman to the heart to be obliged to keep me out of my pocket-money. I know it did me. However, as I was passing through the hall, Miss Abigail, with a very severe cast of countenance, slipped a bran-new quarter into my hand. We had silver currency in those days, thank Heaven!

Great were the bustle and confusion on the Square. By the way, I don't know why they called this large open space a square, unless because it was an oval,—an oval formed by the confluence of half a dozen streets, now thronged by crowds of smartly dressed towns-people and country folks; for Rivermouth on the Fourth was the centre of attraction to the inhabitants of the neighboring villages.

On one side of the Square were twenty or thirty booths arranged in a semi-circle, gay with little flags, and seductive with lemonade, ginger-beer, and seed-cakes. Here and there were tables at which could be purchased the smaller sort of fireworks, such as pin-wheels, serpents, double-headers, and punk warranted not to go out. Many of the adjacent houses made a pretty display of bunting, and across each of the streets opening on the Square was an arch of spruce and evergreen, blossoming all over with patriotic mottoes and paper roses.

It was a noisy, merry, bewildering scene as we came upon the ground. The incessant rattle of small arms, the booming of the twelve-pounder firing on the Mill Dam, and the silvery clangor of the church-bells ringing simultaneously,—not to mention an ambitious brass-band that was blowing itself to pieces on a balcony,—were enough to drive one distracted. We amused ourselves for an hour or two, darting in and out among the crowd and setting off our crackers. At one o'clock the Hon. Hezekiah Elkins mounted a platform in the middle of the Square and delivered an oration, to which his fellow-citizens didn't pay much attention, having all they could do to dodge the squibs that were set loose upon them by mischievous boys

stationed on the surrounding house-tops.

Our little party, which had picked up recruits here and there, not being swayed by eloquence, withdrew to a booth on the outskirts of the crowd, where we regaled ourselves with root-beer at two cents a glass. I recollect being much struck by the placard surmounting this tent:—

ROOT BEER

SOLD HERE.

It seemed to me the perfection of pith and poetry. What could be more terse? Not a word to spare, and yet everything fully expressed. Rhyme and rhythm faultless. It was a delightful poet who made those verses. As for the beer itself,—that, I think, must have been made from the root of all evil! A single glass of it insured an uninterrupted pain for twenty-four hours. The influence of my liberality working on Charley Marden,—for it was I who paid for the beer,—he presently invited us all to take an ice-cream with him at Pettingil's saloon. Pettingil was the Delmonico of Rivermouth. He furnished ices and confectionery for aristocratic balls and parties, and didn't disdain to officiate as leader of the orchestra at the same; for Pettingil played on the violin, as Pepper Whitcomb described it, "like Old Scratch."

Pettingil's confectionery store was on the corner of Willow and High Streets. The saloon, separated from the shop by a flight of three steps leading to a door hung with faded red drapery, had about it an air of mystery and seclusion quite delightful. Four windows, also draped, faced the side-street, affording an unobstructed view of Marm Hatch's back yard, where a number of inexplicable garments on a clothes-line were always to be seen careering in the wind.

There was a lull just then in the ice-cream business, it being dinner-time, and we found the saloon unoccupied. When we had seated ourselves around the largest marble-topped table, Charley Marden in a manly voice ordered twelve sixpenny ice-creams, "strawberry and verneller mixed."

It was a magnificent sight, those twelve chilly glasses entering the room on a waiter, the red and white custard rising from each glass like a church-steeple, and the spoon-handle shooting up from the apex like a spire. I doubt if a person of the nicest palate could have distinguished, with his eyes shut, which was the vanilla and which the strawberry; but, if I could at this moment obtain a cream tasting as that did, I would give five dollars for a very small quantity.

We fell to with a will, and so evenly balanced were our capabilities that we finished our creams together, the spoons clinking in the glasses like one spoon.

“Let’s have some more!” cried Charley Marden, with the air of Aladdin ordering up a fresh hogshead of pearls and rubies. “Tom Bailey, tell Pettingil to send in another round.”

Could I credit my ears? I looked at him to see if he were in earnest. He meant it. In a moment more I was leaning over the counter giving directions for a second supply. Thinking it would make no difference to such a gorgeous young sybarite as Marden, I took the liberty of ordering ninepenny creams this time.

On returning to the saloon, what was my horror at finding it empty!

There were the twelve cloudy glasses, standing in a circle on the sticky marble slab, and not a boy to be seen. A pair of hands letting go their hold on the window-sill outside explained matters. I had been made a victim.

I couldn’t stay and face Pettingil, whose peppery temper was well known among the boys. I hadn’t a cent in the world to appease him. What should I do? I heard the clink of approaching glasses,—the ninepenny creams. I rushed to the nearest window. It was only five feet to the ground. I threw myself out as if I had been an old hat.



Landing on my feet, I fled breathlessly down High Street, through Willow, and was turning into Brierwood Place when the sound of several voices, calling to me in distress, stopped my progress.

“Look out, you fool! the mine! the mine!” yelled the warning voices.

Several men and boys were standing at the head of the street, making insane gestures to me to avoid something. But I saw no mine, only in the middle of the road in front of me was a common flour-barrel, which, as I gazed at it, suddenly rose into the air with a terrific explosion. I felt myself thrown violently off my feet. I remember nothing else, excepting that, as I went up, I caught a momentary glimpse of Ezra Wingate leering through his shop window like an avenging spirit.

For an account of what followed, I am indebted to hearsay, for I was insensible when the people picked me up and carried me home on a shutter borrowed from the proprietor of Pettingil’s saloon. I was supposed to be killed, but happily (happily for me, at least) I was merely stunned. I lay in a semi-unconscious state until eight o’clock that night, when I attempted to speak. Miss Abigail, who watched by the bedside, put her ear down to my lips and was saluted with these remarkable words:

“Root Beer
Sold Here!”

T. B. Aldrich.

* This inscription is copied from a triangular-shaped piece of slate, still preserved in the garret of the Nutter House, together with the pistol-but itself, which was subsequently dug up for a *post-mortem* examination.

THE WORLD WE LIVE ON.

WHAT ARE CORALS?

Before telling you what corals are, I will tell you what they are not, because a very mistaken impression prevails about their nature. It is common to hear people speak of coral insects; and coral stocks with their innumerable little pits and partitions have been compared to a honeycomb.* This is a mistake. There is no such animal as a coral insect; and the coral stock, instead of being, like the honeycomb, a kind of house so constructed that the creature inhabiting it can pass in and out at will, consists of the solid parts of the coral animals themselves. A coral can no more separate itself from the structure of which it forms a part than a bird can fly away from its bones.

But, though the coral is no insect, it resembles very closely a kind of animal which is familiar, I have no doubt, to such of my young readers as live on the sea-shore. To those whose home is in the inland country, or in the far West, where the prairie and its distant boundary line are the substitutes for our great ocean plain and its horizon, I shall find it more difficult to explain my subject. Yet even they may know the sea-anemone, at least by name.

It is not strange that this animal should have been called after a flower, though it bears no especial resemblance to an anemone. Yet when all its feelers are spread, forming a thick wreath around the summit of the body, it may well remind one of any cup-shaped flower surrounded by a crown of finely-cut colored leaves. In the different anemones these feelers are of very various tints; in some they are pure white, in others pink, orange, purple, violet, or variegated, as the case may be. They differ in intensity of color in proportion as they are more or less open.

I wish with all my heart that, instead of talking to you about them, I could take you to a grotto I know very well, on East Point, at Nahant. It is a little difficult of approach, only visible at low tide; and, to reach it, you must clamber over steep, slippery rocks, covered with sea-weed.

This grotto is a nook in the rocks, some five or six feet long, and perhaps about three feet in height, and open from end to end. In order to have a good view of the interior, you must stoop down in front of the opening, and then, if the sun is shining through, you will see a wonderful display of color. The walls and roof are closely studded with sea-anemones, and when they are all expanded the grotto seems lined with a close mosaic work of every hue. At first sight, you may think this living inlaid

work on wall and ceiling as motionless as the inanimate rock on which it rests. Watch it for a little while. You will find that these soft, many-colored wreaths of feelers stir: they contract and expand at the will of the animal, are sensitive to influences from without, feel the warmth of the sunshine and the coolness of the fresh wave as it breaks over them, are conscious of the approach of danger or of anything floating in the water which may serve them as food. When all the conditions are genial to them, and they feel animated and active, they stretch their bodies to their full height, expand all their feelers, and seem to enjoy their life.

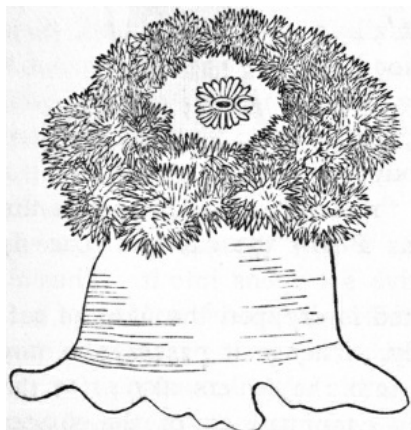


Figure 1. Sea-anemone, open.

In Figure 1 you have the picture of a sea-anemone when he looks his best. The centre of the space lying amid the wreath of feelers represents the mouth. Through that the animal receives its food, and drops it into a kind of sac which hangs in the middle of the body and into which the mouth opens. That sac has a hole in the bottom, through which the food then passes into the main body and circulates all through it, nourishing every part. This sac is called the digestive sac, and serves as a stomach.

In Figure 2 you have the same animal closed,—with all his feelers drawn in and snugly packed away. In the latter condition he is a very

ugly fellow, a dingy lump of jelly-like substance; but with his feelers expanded, and his body erect, he is, on the contrary, a very beautiful object, and well deserves his name.

The internal structure of this animal is very curious. He is divided from top to bottom by partitions, and, if you were to cut him across, you would find that these partitions extend from the centre of the body outward, like the spokes of a wheel. Imagine a wheel, instead of being a simple circle, to be a round box open at the top and standing on the lower end, the spokes dividing it just as they now do, except that they would also extend from the top to the bottom of the box. Such a figure gives you a rough idea of the internal structure of a sea-anemone, only that in the centre of the wheel, instead of what we call the hub, you must put an open-mouthed bag, hanging

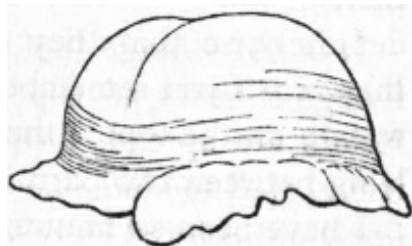


Figure 2. Sea-anemone, closed.

between the spokes or partitions.

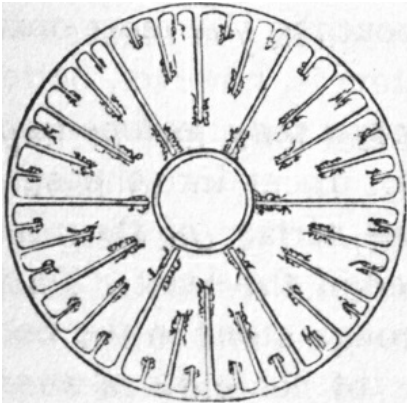


Figure 3. Transverse cut of Sea-anemone.

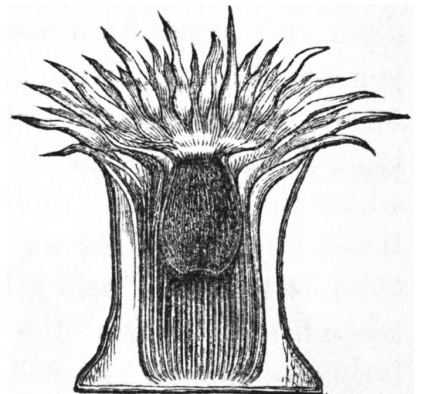
Figure 3 represents a cut across the body of a sea-anemone. The circular space in the centre represents the opening of the bag which is the digestive sac or stomach; the spokes represent the partitions which run from the summit to the base of the animal, and from his outer surface inward.

Figure 4 represents a cut through the body of the same animal, as seen from top to bottom; the lines continued from the feelers downward represent the partitions. In Figure 3 you see the thickness of the partitions, the width of the spaces between them, and the opening of the digestive sac; in Figure 4 you see the length of

the partitions and of the spaces between them, with the digestive sac hanging within. If you examine Figure 4 carefully, you will see that all parts of the body communicate, so that any food taken in at the mouth may circulate in every direction throughout the interior. The partitions do not start exactly from the middle of the body; they leave, on the contrary, a free space in the centre. In this space the sac hangs to a certain distance, as you see. Below the sac the space is quite unoccupied, and the hole in the digestive sac opens into it. Thus all food taken into the mouth after being digested is dropped through the bottom of the sac into the lower part of the body. Thence it passes, not only in and out between the partitions, but up into the feelers also; for the feelers are hollow, and are, indeed, merely continuations of the spaces divided off by the partitions.

In Figure 3 you see only a few partitions, and when the animal is young their number is very limited. But as he grows older they increase indefinitely, so that they cannot be counted. You may judge how numerous they are, if you remember that every feeler or tentacle composing the thick wreath on the top of the body is hollow, and opens into one of the spaces lying between two partitions.

I have been so minute in describing the sea-anemone because very few if any of you can



have seen a living coral, and I could think of no other animal, closely resembling the coral, with which some of my readers at least were likely to be familiar. I would advise those who live near the sea-shore, and can easily obtain specimens, to keep one or more sea-anemones alive during the summer, and watch them. Do not think that for this object it is necessary to have an elaborate aquarium: a glass bowl, of about the size of an ordinary salad-dish, is all you need. A jar with a flat bottom is, however, better than a bowl with sloping sides. You can easily separate a sea-anemone from the rock by passing a knife under him. Be careful not to cut into the substance of the animal; you can force the knife along the surface of the rock between it and the anemone without injuring the latter in the least. Then fill your glass jar with fresh sea-water, put a piece of rough stone in the bottom, and place your anemone upon it. Add a few bits of floating sea-weed, and you have all you need to keep your specimen alive for a number of days or even for weeks, if you change the water often enough. You can watch him as he contracts and expands his feelers. You can feed him with bits of oysters or mussels or common cockles, and see how he catches his food between his feelers, carries it to his mouth, and gradually absorbs it.

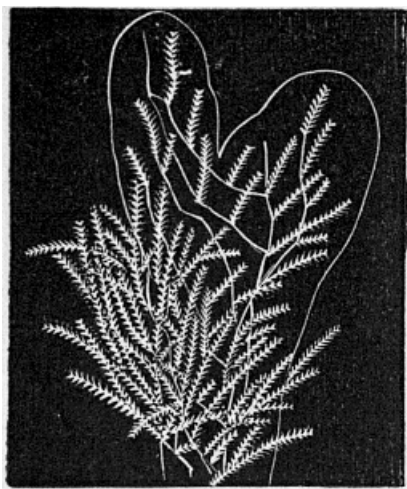


Figure 5. Branch from a colony of Sertularians, natural size.

Figure 4. View of the internal structure of a Sea-anemone, seen from base to summit.

There are a great many animals made upon the same plan as the sea-anemone,—most of them inhabiting the sea or living along the coast. They differ very much from one another in external appearance. Some of them you would hardly distinguish from sea-weeds; such is the little branch taken from a colony of sertularians represented in Figure 5.[†] These animals establish themselves on the broad blades of some of our common sea-weeds, where they grow and multiply with great rapidity. They are often found on those huge, ugly sea-weeds known as “the Devil’s apron-strings.” Their color is usually a pale yellow, though sometimes they are pure white; and when first taken from the water a fragment from such a colony has a

glittering look, such as a white frost leaves on a spray of grass.

This seeming branch, which looks so like a twig broken from some delicate plant, is made up of hundreds of living beings, who lead a common life, and whose

bodies open into each other. Tiny as they are, they all have their digestive sacs in the centre of the body, and their wreath of feelers above.

Figure 6 shows you a little piece, highly magnified, from the branch represented in Figure 5. These colonies have such a complicated existence that it would not be easy to make you understand all their parts without long and tiresome explanations. But if you will look at Figure 5 with me for a moment, I will say one word about it. Do you see that on the left-hand side is a cup-shaped bud (naturalists call them buds because they look like buds on a stem), and that it is filled with little round balls? Those are eggs; that bud will burst, the eggs will escape into the water, and will, in due time, develop into animals. On the right-hand side of the stem is another of the members of this little community, with all its feelers spread, while between the two, that is, between the one which holds the eggs and the one with its feelers extended, is the central animal into which both the others open. The last two, the central one, and the one with feelers, will never produce any eggs, because that work does not belong to them.

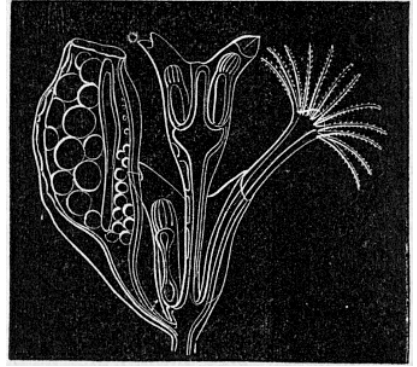


Figure 6. Fragment of the same colony, magnified.

It is a curious thing that in these communities the work of life is distributed among the different members. In some of them this division of work is carried very far; certain individuals lay the eggs, others seem to be chiefly mouths and stomachs, and they receive and digest the food, and circulate it among the rest; others catch the food and pass it on to the open-mouthed individuals. All have their special work, and no one interferes with his neighbor.

There are many such communities living about our sea-shore, differing somewhat in the little beings which compose them, but all agreeing in their general structure. I think it would interest those of you who like to watch animals to keep one or two such branches with your sea-anemone. Or it would be still better to have a fragment in a separate glass bowl; a white glass finger-bowl would be just the thing. It is easier to keep your specimens apart. If you combine them all in one aquarium, unless you understand perfectly how to arrange it, the water soon becomes thick, and then, in order to change it, you must move all your animals. We are apt to be too elaborate in our arrangements for studies of this kind. A table in a window, with a few glass jars upon it, gives you all you need for a summer's observation. If you can add a small

microscope to your establishment, and have some friend to teach you how to use it, it will be of great service. Without that, you cannot examine the different members of your community of sertularians, though you may be able to distinguish them from each other with the naked eye.

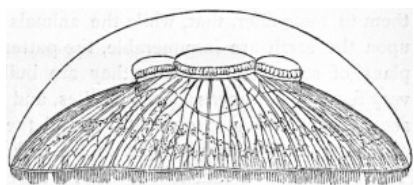


Figure 7. Jelly-Fish,—Aurelia.

Next among the animals which are allied to the sea-anemones by their structure are the jelly-fishes. They are not fishes, and do not resemble them in the least, but are so called because they consist of a jelly-like substance and live in the sea. They are semicircular or hemispherical in shape, their body forming a gelatinous transparent disk, from the margin of

which hang more or less numerous feelers. Sometimes these feelers grow so thickly that they resemble a delicate fringe all around the edge of the body. In other kinds they are not numerous, but they exist in all. In Figure 7 you have a picture of a jelly-fish which is very common in Massachusetts Bay. We have a great variety of jelly-fishes living about our coast; they differ greatly in size and general appearance. In some, the disk never grows to be larger than a thimble or a walnut; in others, it measures two or three feet across, and the feelers hanging from it are many yards in length. When bathing or swimming, it is sometimes dangerous to be caught in these long feelers; they have a stinging quality like nettles, and if entangled in them you may become so benumbed as to be unable to extricate yourself.

Curious to relate, these jelly-fishes, even the larger among them, are the offspring of small creatures similar to those which compose the communities we have been talking about. Do you remember the eggs with which one of the animals in Figure 5 is filled? Those eggs will not grow into beings like those from which they were born. They will develop into jelly-fishes,—the jelly-fishes in their turn will lay eggs, and those eggs will grow into communities like the one which produced the jelly-fishes.

Next comes a group of animals allied to all those described above, though so unlike in appearance that I dare say you will find it difficult to believe the statement. Some of them have the outline of a star; and perhaps you may know them as the so-called star-fishes.* We have a picture of one in Figure 8. Others are round, and from their shape are called sea-eggs. They are known also by the name of sea-urchins. Such an animal is represented in Figure 9.

You see from these few specimens how greatly these animals differ in aspect. But, however various their external appearance may be, they all agree in this; namely,

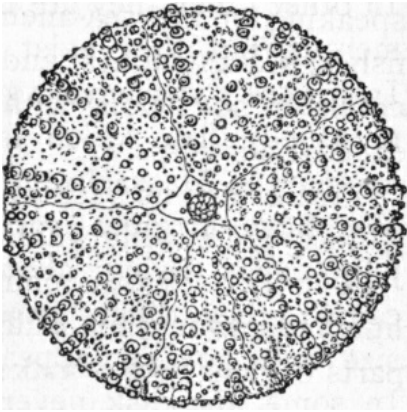


Figure 9. Sea-urchin.

that the different parts of the body spread or radiate from the centre outward, and for this reason all animals

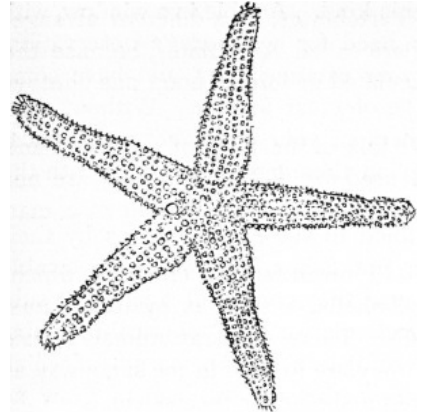


Figure 8. Star-fish.

constructed in this way are called Radiates.

One of these days some of my readers may be naturalists; at all events, I hope that many of them will care to know something of nature and of the animals by which they are surrounded. On this account, and because it will make the study much easier, I want them to remember, that, while the animals living upon the earth are innumerable, the patterns, or plans of structure on which they are built, are very few. Quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, and fishes are made according to one pattern, and the body of man himself is constructed in the same way. They all have a backbone, built of separate pieces called vertebræ, and for this reason naturalists call them Vertebrates. They all have a bony arch above and another below that backbone, enclosing cavities which contain certain organs.

If you compare these animals for yourselves, you will find that the resemblance is carried out in all the different parts,—that, for instance, the front fin of a fish, the front paw of a reptile, the wing of a bird, the fore limb of a quadruped, and the arm of a man, are built up of similar parts. These parts are differently put together,—they are shorter or longer, narrower or wider, and joined to each other in different ways, so as to be solid and immovable in some animals, jointed and flexible in others,—but they correspond nevertheless, their general relations to each other being the same.

There is another plan for all insects, lobsters, crabs, shrimps, and worms. The number of these animals can hardly be estimated,—of insects alone, we know about a hundred and fifty thousand kinds, and these kinds are represented by myriads of individuals. Yet all these animals, from the insect to the worm, are made in the same way. Their bodies consist of a number of rings movable upon one another. They may be, like the worms, destitute of limbs, or they may have a number of legs and feelers like the lobsters and crabs, or they may have wings and legs like the insects. They

may be as ugly as an earth-worm, or as beautiful and as gay in color as the brightest butterfly, but in one and all the whole body is built on the same pattern. The differences are produced, as in the Vertebrates, by a different arrangement of similar parts. All these animals are called Articulates, because the rings of which they are composed are articulated or jointed upon one another in such a way as to render them movable.

You must not be misled by names. We talk of the wing of an insect and the wing of a bird, because they are both used for flight. But they are not the same organs. The wing of a bird is much more like the arm of a man than like the wing of an insect.

There is another pattern for all shells,—I mean for the creatures which, on account of their hard envelope, we call shells,—such as oysters, clams, mussels, snails, nautili, conchs, and the like. There are many animals in this group which have no shelly covering, but they are formed in the same way as the soft bodies of those animals which build a shell over themselves.

Finally, there remains still another pattern,—the one I described when speaking of the sea-anemone. Upon this all star-fishes, sea-urchins, jelly-fishes, sea-anemones, and, lastly, corals, are constructed. Thus you see the corals do not belong with insects, but with a very different group of animals called Radiates.

This brings us back to our coral stock. As I must often use the word, I will explain exactly what I mean by stock in this sense.

A coral stock is a community of animals living together in a solid mass,—hundreds, thousands, millions, crowded together in a common life. The hard parts of their bodies make the whole mass as firm as rock, and, in the fragments of coral stock preserved in our museums or cabinets, we see only the hard parts; but when the creatures are living the surface of the community is soft and feathery,—each little animal, where it opens on the outside of the stock, being furnished, like the sea-anemone, with delicate feelers around the mouth.

On our coast we have but one species of coral. It is found about the shores of Long Island, and on the islands of Martha's Vineyard Sound; and though it is not one of the reef-building corals, and therefore not the same as those which compose the reef of Florida, I add its picture here, because I wish, whenever I can, to talk of things which some of you at least may have opportunities of seeing in nature.

Figure 10 shows you a community of *Astrangia*, as this coral is called. Each of the little circles on the surface marks a single animal. In some of them the feelers are drawn in, and then you see only the partitions dividing the interior of the animal, and radiating from the centre of each circle toward its outward edge. In others the feelers

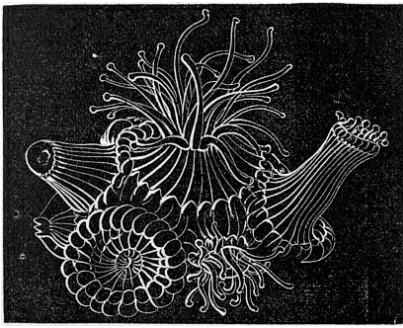


Figure 11. Portion of an Astrangia stock, magnified.

extended, and in real life, being of very soft and flexible texture, they give a downy look to the surface of the stock.

Figure 11 shows you several of the same animals magnified. The one placed uppermost in the group exhibits the summit of the body, where the mouth is placed. You see the feelers extended, and the partitions radiating from the central opening outward. The right-hand animal is drawn in profile, so that the partitions are seen running lengthwise from the base to the summit of the body. The feelers are almost hidden. The left-hand figure is nearly the same, except that the feelers have completely disappeared. Just below is another, which turns the summit of its body directly toward you, so that you look into the mouth; and, as the feelers are all drawn in, the radiation of the partitions is shown with remarkable distinctness.

In Figure 12 you have a single animal from an Astrangia stock, magnified, with all its tentacles spread.

If I have made my explanations clear, and if you have understood the different parts shown in the figures, I think you will see that corals and sea-anemones have the same kind of structure. But there is one point in which they differ essentially, and in that difference lies the secret of the important part played by corals in the physical history of the world. It requires, however, a good deal of explanation, and my lesson in Natural History has been long enough for to-day.

In the next chapter I will take this point up again in connection with the reef-

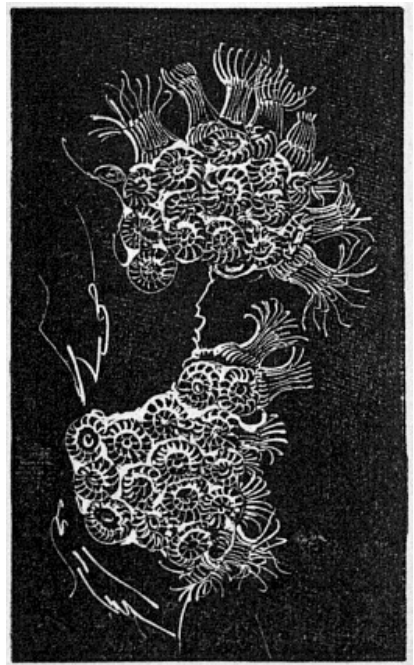


Figure 10. Astrangia stock.

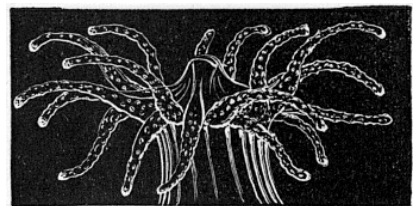


Figure 12. Single animal from an Astrangia stock, highly magnified.

building corals, and their relation to the growth and structure of Florida.

Elizabeth C. Agassiz.



* Even so learned an authority as Sir John Herschel, in his “Familiar Lectures on Scientific Subjects,” speaks of the work done by the “coral insects.” See Sec. I, p. 12.

† Colony of *Dynamena pumila*; natural size.

‡ They are not fishes any more than the jelly-fishes; but both received the name when their nature was not understood and all beings living in the sea were called alike.

WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME?

The buds grew green upon the boughs, the grass upon the hills,
And violets began to bud by all the brimming rills;
And a little brown sparrow came over the sea,
And another came flying his mate to be;
And they wooed and they wed, and they built a nest,
In the place which they thought was the pleasantest.
“Though any spot’s a pleasant one that’s shared with you,” said he.
“And any place where you may dwell is good enough for me,”
Said she,—
“Is good enough for me.”

But when the nest was fairly built, the violets fully blown,
A wandering cuckoo chanced that way, and spied the nest alone;
And she said to herself, “In the sunny spring,
To brood over a nest is a weary thing”;
So she went on her journey to steal and beg,
But behind in the nest left a foundling egg.
And when the sparrow-wife came back, the egg, whose could it be?
“It is not mine,” she said, “and yet it must belong to me;
’Tis here,
And must belong to me.”

So, full of patient mother-love, beneath her downy breast,
As fondly, gently as her own, the speckled egg she pressed,
Through the days with their marvellous unseen sights,
And the damp and the chill of the spring-time nights,
Until two little sparrows had burst the shell,
And the cuckoo had wakened to life as well.
His breast was bare, his wings were weak, his thoughts were only three:
“What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?”

He opened wide his bill, and cried, and called for food all day,

And from his foster-brothers' beaks he snatched their share away.
"Were there one, only one, to be warmed and fed,
And if *I* were that one," to himself he said,
"Then the doting old birds would have nothing to do
But to wait and to tend upon me! Cuckoo!
In such a close and narrow nest there is no room for three.
What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?"

He stretched his neck above the nest, he peered each way about,
If none could see, then none could say who pushed the nestlings out;
But the cuckoo was left in the nest alone,
And the share of his brothers was all his own,
And the sparrows were feeding him all day long,
And his feathers grew dark, and his wings grew strong,
And wearisome became the nest. "A stupid place!" said he.
"What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?"

The old birds called him to the bough, and taught him how to fly,
He spread his wings, and left them both without a last good-by;
And beyond the green meadow-lands wet with dew,
And the wood and the river, he passed from view.
And amid what scenes he may flit to-day,
Or his wings may rest, there is none to say;
But whereso'er that selfish heart, its thoughts are only three:
"What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?"

Marian Douglas.

WRECKS AND WRECKERS.

"Tell us, papa," exclaimed Willie Blake, rushing, followed by his sister, into his father's library,—“tell us, papa, aren't wreckers cruel people who murder and rob poor shipwrecked passengers who are washed ashore near where they live? Aren't they, papa?”

"Where in the world did you get that idea?" asked his father.

"I was reading a story full of large pictures, and one of them showed a sailor lying on the sea-shore, and a great, ugly, rough man was about to kill him with a long knife. And the story said the sailor was a great lord in disguise, and that the wicked man was a smuggler and wrecker."

"Ah, I see!" said his father. "You have been reading a forbidden book. From a novel, which did not profess to tell the truth, you have received a very wrong impression. I have often told you how careful you ought to be, not only as to what you learn, but from whom you learn. Books are often written by very ignorant persons. Now the one you read was written by a very ignorant person indeed, for he did not know the difference between a wrecker and a smuggler, and he has made you think them the same. If you had been older, and able to judge of what you ought to read, that mistake would have proved to you that the rest of the book was not worth reading. Smugglers and wreckers are really just as unlike in character and occupation as can be,—as different, in fact, as thieves and policemen."

"O papa!" exclaimed both the children, and even their mother looked up from her sewing in some surprise.

"Yes," continued Mr. Blake, "just as different. In some countries wreckers are really regular policemen. In England they are employed to watch the coast just as our policemen watch the streets. They are uniformed as policemen are, and are called 'Coast-Guards.' They are old sailors, and their uniform is very like a sailor's. They wear a loose jacket like a sailor's, and a sailor's hat with the word 'Coast-Guard' printed on the band, just as you sometimes see the name of his ship printed on the sailor's hat-band. They carry a cutlass and a pair of pistols; these are for use against smugglers. They also have a spy-glass to watch the ships at sea, and their principal duty in the day is to walk their beat on the sands or cliffs, and keep a sharp lookout to sea. We have no regular organized coast-guards in this country, the volunteer wreckers doing duty in that way. The government has at all times under pay a large force of special marine police, called revenue officers, to watch the smugglers; and they often detect and capture them in their attempts to take out or

bring in goods which have not paid government duty; that is, a fee or tax which is levied to support the government. Wreckers, on the contrary, are licensed by the government to save life and property, and they have courts established to settle their claims. The government officers do not watch for them as they do for smugglers, but on the other hand the government helps them by building houses and furnishing them with boats and ropes to save life, firewood to build fires for the purpose of lighting vessels in a storm, and medicines for the sick and half-drowned people whom they rescue. Then the wreckers are paid to spy upon the smugglers, and many of the rascals are detected through the aid of honest wreckers. Besides, smugglers and wreckers do not live on the same coasts. It is necessary to the wrecker's success in business that he should live on a dangerous coast, where wrecks are frequent. You see he lives by others' misfortunes, and he must be where the worst wrecks take place. The smuggler lives on a part of the coast where there are no dangerous shoals and sands and rocks, and where great winds which might wreck his boat and cargo do not usually prevail; he must have a good as well as a quiet and secluded place to land in, for he has to run his cargo of smuggled goods ashore at night. Now I hope you understand that smugglers and wreckers are very different people, and that Willie's story-telling friend was telling a huge story when he said that one man was both a smuggler and a wrecker."

"Then are smugglers all wicked men?" asked Willie.

"Exactly," said his papa; "they are all thieves."

"And are the wreckers all good men?" asked Minnie.

"No, no, Minnie, not so fast. It does not follow, because their business is recognized and licensed, and is a good and proper and honorable one, that all wreckers are good men. Many of them are bad men, but there are bad men in all ranks of life. There was the professor in the college who murdered his physician, don't you remember? And don't you recollect about the preacher who whipped his own child to death because he wouldn't say his prayers? They were bad men; but we must not say, therefore, that all professors and preachers are bad men. So, also, there are some bad wreckers, and as most of the people who follow that hard and dangerous life are rough, uneducated folks, I am afraid very many of them are wicked. But it does not follow that they are all so. The idea I wish to impress on you is, that the calling of the wreckers is respectable, and that the wrecking system of the country is wise and humane, whereas smuggling is in every respect disreputable and dishonest. But you will understand the character of wreckers better when I tell you where and how they live."

The children again expressed their interest and eagerness by more cries of "O,

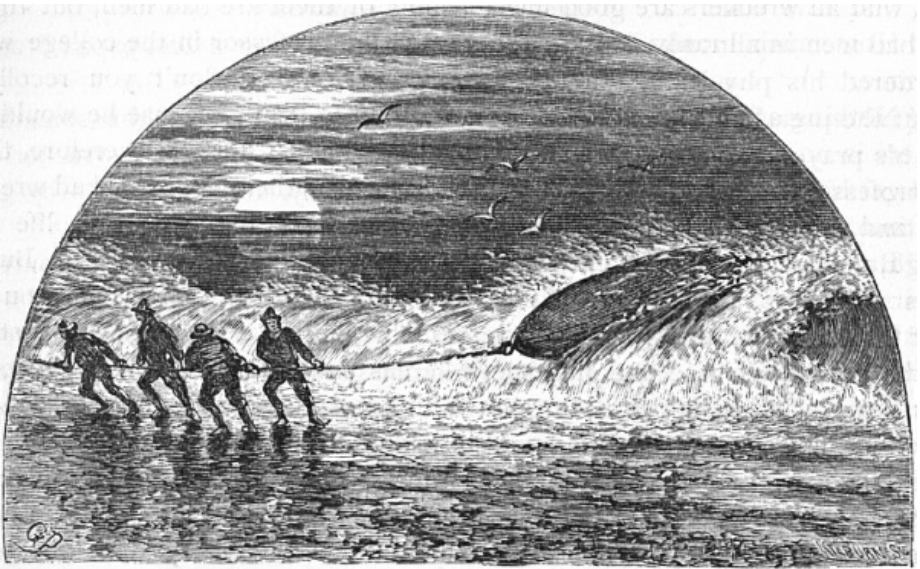
do, papa! please do!” and were now to all appearances deeply interested in the subject. Their father soon resumed his story.



Interior of Life-car.

“There are said to be about four thousand wreckers in the United States; the most of them live along the Atlantic coast, from Maine to the Florida reefs. They and their families will number twenty-five thousand souls, all of whom make their bread by saving property from

wrecked vessels. How they do this I now propose to tell you; and I can do it better with the pictures I have here than by mere words. Now here is a picture of wreckers saving life; that is, of course, the first thing they have to do when a wreck occurs.* The ship, you see, has gone ashore on the sand near the light-house, and the wreckers are preparing to give assistance to the passengers. Some of these have already been washed from the vessel, and have been thrown half alive on the beach by the great waves. Some of the wreckers are taking care of them, while others are catching a man whom a wave is washing ashore. A life-boat is ready manned to be launched as soon as the rope which a man is bringing can be attached to one end of the life-car,—the great boat-like object on the wagon with broad wheels, that will not sink in the soft, moist sand. When this is ready, the men will pull for the ship, and the rope will be taken on board. Then the life-car will be pulled through the water to the ship, while those on shore will hold on to a rope attached to *their* end of it. Then as many of the passengers as the life-car will hold will be put into it, and it will be closed up so that no water can get inside, and the wreckers on shore will haul it through the billows and release the poor passengers. Here is a picture of the life-car being hauled ashore, and also one showing the interior of it. It is air and water tight, but there is little danger that the inmates will smother or drown, as the boats contain air enough to last twenty-five minutes, and they are seldom in the water more than five minutes at a time.”



Hauling the Life-car ashore.

“What is the difference between a life-boat and a life-car, papa?” asked Willie, who had noticed the open boat in the picture.

“A life-car is closed,” answered his father, “while the life-boat is open. The car is a modern invention, but the life-boat is now nearly a hundred years old. The life-boat now in use is very nearly perfect, and can hardly be sunk. It is self-righting; that is, if turned over in the water, it won’t stay bottom up, but will immediately turn up all right again. Instances have been known in which sailors in a life-boat, seeing a great wave coming which was sure to upset them, have stowed themselves away under the sides or thwarts of the boat, and have come up again with the boat, having turned a summersault, and that almost without wetting their clothes!”



LAUNCHING THE LIFE-BOAT.

DRAWN BY GRANVILLE PERKINS.]

[See page [218](#) (See transcriber's note).]

“O papa, papa!” cried the children, looking as if they did not know whether to believe him or not.

“You don’t believe that, do you? Yet it is all true, and the Esquimaux Indians who live on the coast of Greenland practise the feat of turning summersaults in their boats as our necromancers do other juggling feats. It is very simple, and is on the principle of the diving-bell, in which, as you know, men go down to the bottom of the ocean without getting wet. The men in the life-boats are not always so fortunate as to cling to the boat, and are often thrown into the water. They do not sink, however, for most of the crews of life-boats wear cork-jackets, which save them from sinking, and, being good swimmers, they generally soon regain the boat. When the rescued passengers are taken ashore, they are removed to the nearest house. The government has established, at various points all along the coast, houses for the shelter of wrecked passengers. Here are kept medicines, firewood, and clothing, as I have before told you. But wreckers generally carry injured persons to their own houses, where their wives and children can nurse them. Their reason for doing this is, that often persons who recover give the wreckers who have taken care of them handsome rewards.”

"How much money does a wrecker get for saving a life, papa?" asked Minnie.

"Nothing at all, unless the person saved chooses to give him something. There is no reward held out or paid for the rescue of life, but a wrecker cannot get his pay from the court for saving property, until he proves by good testimony that he helped to save life before he tried to save property."

"But what do you mean by a court, papa? Have the wreckers courts of their own to divide the property which they save among themselves?"

"O no. You must not suppose that a wrecker is entitled to whatever he saves from a wreck. The plunder which he gets out of a wrecked ship does not belong to him, nor to the owner of the ship, nor to the men who hired the ship to carry it across the ocean. If I should send a hundred bales of cotton to Liverpool in the ship Scotia, and she should be wrecked, the cotton which the wreckers might get out of her would no longer belong to me, nor to the ship, nor to the wreckers who saved it, but to the insurance-company who insured its safe transit to Liverpool. They would pay me the whole amount of the insurance on the cotton, and then sell the damaged cotton for all they could get for it. But the wrecker would have to be paid for saving it, and the amount which would be allowed him would depend on the amount of labor and danger incurred. The United States courts would have to decide the amount, which would be called 'Salvage.' These courts are authorized to license wreckers and wrecking vessels, and before doing so the judges have to satisfy themselves that the person asking for a license is of good character, and that his vessel is sea-worthy; that is, a good strong one. If a wrecker embezzles any wrecked goods, or runs a vessel aground while acting as a pilot, or hires others to do it, his license may be taken away from him."

"But, papa, is looking after wrecks all that the wreckers do?"

"O no. Most of them are fishermen besides. Their homes are always near the beach, and they can watch for wrecks and fish at the same time. At Key West, Florida, where there are a great many wreckers, they catch fish for the Cuban markets, and almost wholly supply the city of Havana with fresh fish. There are many other things which they do at odd times. One of these I think you would never guess. They write for the newspapers."

"Write for the newspapers?"

"Or, rather, they tell others what to write. Many years ago, one of the large newspapers of the country offered to pay pilots, wreckers, and others a handsome sum for every wreck which they reported; and to this day, although the telegraph is the usual reporter, the wreckers occasionally go to the newspaper offices to give the news of a wreck. And now I believe I have told you all I know about the wreckers."

“But not about wrecks, papa!” said Willie. “*I* should not suppose that enough wrecks happened to support so many people.”

“I believe I said that there were about twenty-five thousand persons dependent on the wreckers in the United States,—didn’t I?”

“Yes, sir; that’s what you said.”

“I have no doubt that there are five or six times as many in the world, and that all of them get a good living by wrecking. Of course many wrecks must therefore happen. Now how many American vessels do you suppose are wrecked every year?”

The children made various guesses, but, as they had never studied the subject, their guesses were wide of the mark; it was only time lost, so they at length gave up. Their mother, who was also interested in the story, made a slight calculation and answered, “Not more than twenty, *I* should say.”

“Then you would be very wide of the mark, and if you stated that for a fact you would give these young folks a very false idea. More than that number occur every month.

“Your mother can perhaps recall twenty which occurred in one year, but they were the memorable and remarkable ones in which much property and many lives were lost. Minnie might count on her fingers, little as they are, the great wrecks which we hear fully related in the daily papers, appalling whole communities with the horrors which accompany them; but many more than these really occur. It is estimated that there are about four hundred wrecks and partial wrecks of American ships every year. Now how many do you think happen in the whole world? You need not guess, for I could not tell you if you were right or wrong, as I do not know myself; but I have seen it stated that twenty-three hundred wrecks occurred in 1867 on the English coast alone; and that the average loss there is about twenty-eight hundred a year. That is eight a day, or one every three hours in the day. But these are only a few among the vessels wrecked in all seas and oceans; for in 1866 the wrecks and partial wrecks amounted to 11,711, and in 1867 to 12,513 vessels.”

The children did not know what to say to this surprising statement, so they said nothing. Finding them silent, their father continued:—

“In the kingdom of Great Britain, there is an officer whose duty it is to keep an account of all the wrecks happening on the coast of that country. Now the kingdom of Great Britain, grand as its name sounds, is only about twice as large as the little State of Florida; and its coast is only three times as long. Yet every year there are about twenty-eight hundred ships lost on the shores of that country. About one thousand men and women and poor helpless children lose their lives; and if we had

all the money which is lost by these wrecks, we should have nearly twenty millions of dollars to spend every year.

“You would be puzzled,” continued their father, after the astonishment of the children had subsided, “if you could see one of the maps which the English officer makes out every year, showing the wrecks which have occurred. He calls it the ‘Wreck-chart,’ and the law requires him to publish a new one every year; and what do you suppose it is for? It is a guide-book for the pilots and captains of vessels, and for the wreckers and coast-guards and life-boatmen. On this map a little black dot is put down for every wreck, showing precisely on what part of the coast each of the lost vessels came ashore; and a red one to show the location of every life-boat station. You may believe that, when two thousand of these red and black dots are put down on the map, it has a funny look. Now how does that map guide and instruct the pilots and wreckers and others? The black dots point out the most dangerous parts of the coast,—for, of course, it is most dangerous where most vessels are lost,—and, looking at the map, the pilot and captain know what parts to avoid. It also tells the wreckers and life-boatmen and coast-guard that these dangerous points are where they ought to gather in the greatest numbers to save life and property. That is the use of the English ‘Wreck-chart.’ We do not have any in this country, though we are very much in need of one every year.”

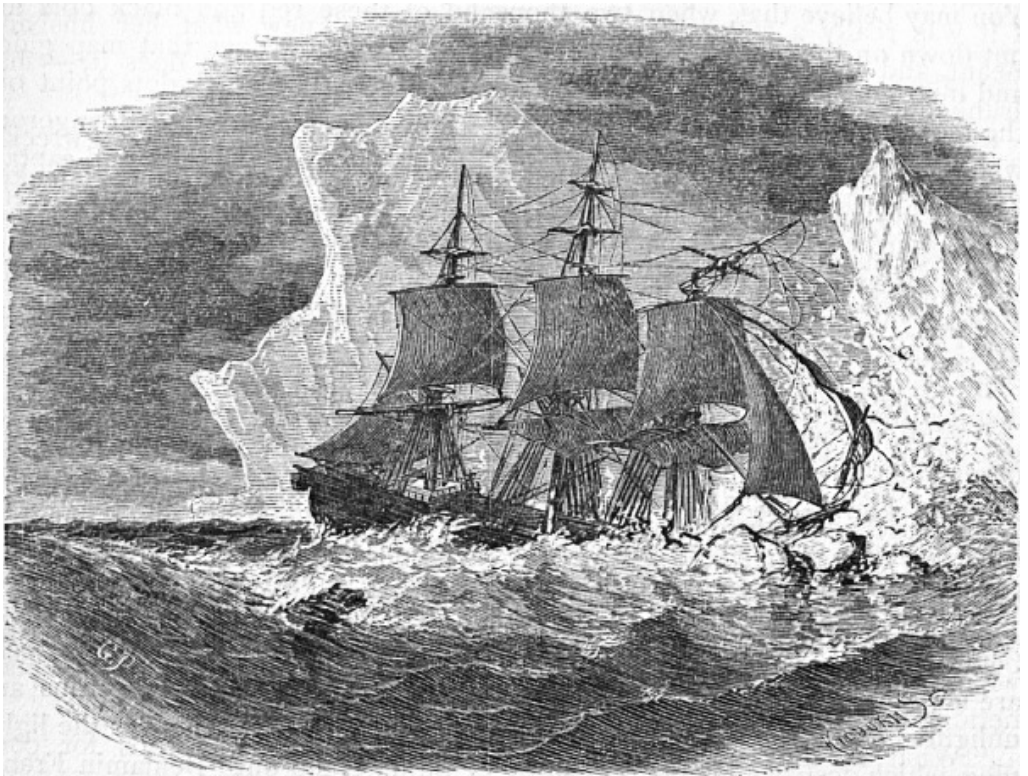
“But, papa,” asked Minnie, “what causes all these wrecks?”

“Why, the wind, Minnie, of course,” spoke up Willie, who, like many another elder brother, had a bad habit of displaying to his younger sister the superior knowledge which he possessed. “Why, the wind and storms,”—he continued, and, seeing his father smiling, Willie tried to think of other causes, and added, “and great rocks in the ocean,—and such things as that!”

“I am afraid, Willie,” said his father, “that you want to be a teacher before you have finished going to school. The natural causes of shipwrecks are very many more than those you have named. Besides dangerous and unlighted coasts, shifting sands, sudden squalls and storms, there is the lightning, which destroys many good ships, or rather it did until Benjamin Franklin taught us how to control and direct it, and Sir Henry Snow invented his lightning conductor for ships. You would not understand this instrument if I should describe it, but it is said, that, since it has been introduced into the British navy, not a single vessel has been lost by lightning. Then for the destruction of vessels there are the hurricanes and earthquakes which so often occur in the torrid zone, and the great icebergs of the frigid zone. In one day of the year 1857, fifty-eight vessels were destroyed in one little harbor in the West Indies, by one of these hurricanes; and in the same year a great United States ship-of-war

named the Monongahela was lifted out of the sea by a wave thirty feet high, and carried nearly over the town of St. Croix. The ship at one time was directly over the market-house! Then the wave receded, and the ship was carried back over the market-house and the town, nearly to the sea, and landed high and dry on a coral reef. Later still, as you may remember, the great iron-clad ship Wateree, the first iron war-vessel built by our government, was carried, by a wave which followed the great earthquake in Peru, half a mile inland and completely wrecked. During the year 1867, more than sixty other vessels were crushed to pieces by the ice in the White Sea. The great icebergs crushed the ships as if they were egg-shells, and the ice was packed around them to the depth of twenty feet, until nothing was to be seen but the masts.

“The icebergs which the sailors call the ‘Phantoms of the Sea,’ and which float down from the Arctic into the Atlantic Ocean, used to cause a great many wrecks, but mariners have learned how to ‘understand their ways’ and know how to avoid them.”



“How, papa, how?”

"I will tell you, but you must listen attentively, for it is not easy to understand. First of all, what do you say is the longest river in the world?"

"The Mississippi," answered Willie and Minnie in a breath.

"And which is the widest?"

"The Amazon."

"Well, you must know that there is a great river in the ocean which is longer than the Mississippi, and wider than the Amazon, and deeper and swifter than all other rivers. It is fifty miles wide! It is a great ocean current, and is called the Gulf Stream. It rises in the Gulf of Mexico, and runs along our Atlantic coast, until it gets about as far north as Boston. Then it turns and runs east until it nearly reaches the European shore, when it branches, one stream running northward to the northern seas, and the other southward towards the Mediterranean. This stream is much warmer than the rest of the ocean. The icebergs which come from the Polar Sea in summer move southward until they get into this current, when they flow east and rapidly melt away. As the sailors know the course of the Gulf Stream, and the season for the appearance of the icebergs, they are careful to keep a sharp lookout and thus avoid them. Still accidents do sometimes occur, and ships sometimes strike these icebergs and sink instantly.

"So you see that God in his wisdom, which we cannot always understand, but which we nevertheless know is always for the best, permits his agents to destroy many good vessels and valuable lives; but would it astonish you if I were to tell you that most shipwrecks are brought about by man's ignorance and wickedness?"

This did astonish the young folks very much, and they asked their father if it was really a fact. Mrs. Blake thought she knew what her husband meant, and she said to the children, "Papa means that rum does it,—that drunkenness is the cause of the evil."

"Not exactly. Drunkenness and avarice are the chief causes of wrecks, but avarice causes more wrecks than storms or hurricanes, or earthquakes or icebergs, or ignorance or rum. Do you know what this ignorance is that causes so much trouble?"

"No, papa,—but do tell us," pleaded Willie.

"There are very many ignorant seamen who are trusted to navigate vessels; many of them know little of the use of the compass, the simplest of all nautical instruments. The variation of the needle of the compass from the true point, in consequence of the magnetism of iron or steel which may be in the vessel to strengthen it, or as cargo, has caused the loss of many large vessels. There was once a large East India merchant-ship named the "Reliance," lost in consequence of the presence near the

compass-box of a large iron tank. The captain did not know how it influenced the needle, and thus the ship was run on the rocks and lost. Many seamen believe that when iron is covered by wood, or even by tarpaulins, it loses its magnetic power; but this, you know, is a great mistake.”

“What do they do, papa, on the great iron-clad war-ships for compasses?” asked Willie.

“Before every voyage, the iron-clads are ‘swung,’ and the compasses adjusted and compared with others. They thus find out how much the needle varies, and in their calculations at sea make allowance for the difference. A singular fact has lately been discovered with regard to iron-clad ships; and it is this. If built in such a way that the bow lies to the north and the stern to the south, an iron-clad ship itself becomes so highly magnetic that it is nearly a magnetic needle on a large scale, and if put afloat in a perfectly calm sea, it will turn its bow to the north without any other power than that of the magnetism of the poles. Now what do you think causes this? You will never guess, so I might as well tell you that the magnetism is given to the iron by the hammering of the men in putting on the iron plates. If you take that common iron poker with which you stir the fire, and will put it on an anvil so that one end points to the north, and hammer it for half an hour, it will become so highly magnetic that it will not only attract other bits of steel and iron, but if you balance it on some sharp-pointed article it will turn and point to the north, just like the needle of a compass. It is ignorance of these things and of others just as simple that causes the loss of many vessels; but more are lost from avarice. Do you know what avarice is?”

“Love of money,” cried Willie and Minnie, in a breath.

“Avarice is the *immoderate* love of money,—the love of money for its own sake. You may love to make money, and if you wisely use it for good, that love is no more an evil than loving to do good in any other way; but when you love to get it and keep it, and get more and keep that, too, and do no good with it, that is avarice, and it is a very grievous sin in the eyes of God. And now I will tell you how avarice causes many wrecks.

“The system of insurance affords many chances to make the wrecking of a vessel a source of profit. It often leads the captain of a vessel to convert a slight damage to his ship into a total loss; for if he wrecks the ship totally the owner gets all the insurance money, but if the ship is only partially wrecked, and gets afloat again, the owner has to pay part of the cost of repairs. Then ships coming from a long voyage, with cargoes of merchandise which are not likely to repay the owner if put in the market, are wrecked and the insurance is claimed. Then pilots are often hired to

run ships ashore, and light-house keepers are bribed not to keep their lights burning, so that ships may run aground unawares.”

“But who hires them, papa?” asked Minnie.

“Generally the rascally wreckers.”

“But I thought they were good people?”

“Not all of them. Don’t you remember I said there were many wicked ones among them. They live by saving property from wrecks; naturally they are anxious to have wrecks occur, and so the avariciousness of some of the most wicked ones leads them to conspire to wreck vessels and endanger life by bribing the pilots or the light-house keepers.

“It is a terrible life which the sailors lead,—full of excitement and danger,—and you should always remember them when you lie down at night, and never forget to pray, ‘God save our men at sea.’”

Major Traverse.

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See full-page illustration. The reference to the page is erroneous.

GARDENING FOR GIRLS.

CHAPTER I.

The family of Mr. Gray were city born and bred. They had lived between high brick walls all their lives, and had never known the happiness and freedom of a country life. Perhaps Mrs. Gray had never desired to live in the country; for she had always imagined it a very dull way of living, and as she was rather a gay little lady, who loved to visit and have company, she was quite well contented in her city home.

But that was not altogether the case with her husband, who, when the toils of business were over, often longed for a little home in the open country, where he might rest, and refresh himself with pure air and liberty from city rules. So his favorite promise to the children was, that when his ship came in he would take them all to live in a cottage in some lovely place, where there would be flowers and fruits, and all sorts of enjoyments such as children can best appreciate.

Mrs. Gray always smiled at these stories, and supposed it would be many years before that long-expected ship would arrive. But as the prospect pleased the children, she thought it but fair to let them enjoy it for the present, whether it was ever to be realized or not.

The family consisted of four girls and one boy, all under thirteen years of age. There was Maggie, the eldest, who would be thirteen on her next birthday; then Willie, a bright boy of eleven, who loved play quite as well as study; Susie, nearly nine, and Bessie, seven,—besides little Daisy, who was still called the baby, although she was really past four years old. It was a happy family, although the children had very different dispositions and tempers. Maggie was quite a little woman in her notions, and was really a great help to her mother in many ways; and Willie was so accustomed to his sisters' society that he always took part in their sports, and had learned to be as gentle as a girl, never displaying any rude behavior, or teasing them with pranks, as boys often do. Then Susie and Bessie kept the baby-house together, and spent the greater part of their time in dressing and undressing two greatly beloved dolls, whose toilets were exceedingly elaborate, and needed constant remodelling.

This left little Daisy to be her mother's companion; and so, whatever Mrs. Gray undertook to do, Daisy must of course do it too. If her mother was sewing, the little girl would sew, although it was sometimes very troublesome, for her needle kept coming unthreaded perpetually, and her rags managed to get sewed up into very strange shapes before she was ready; and then mother had to hunt up a fresh one.

In the summer-time, the children had each a little patch they called a garden; for

the little yard behind their dwelling was laid out into flower-beds; and, as there were so many gardeners in the family, of course it was well cultivated. As for Daisy's garden, it did not show quite as many flowers as her mother's, because she could not always wait for the seeds to come up, and every day she would dig up a few to see if they had sprouted. Indeed, under such treatment, I do not believe there would have been anything in it if her mother and Maggie had not transplanted a few of their own superfluous flowers into the bare patch, when she was out of sight. She only supposed that her seeds had come up very fast in the night, and never suspected the truth of the matter.

Now these little city gardens did not measure more than three square yards each, and it was only by planting the flowers very close together that they could find room for the variety they wanted. Willie had his garden as well as his sisters, but besides that, he was the carpenter who made all the little trellises and frames upon which were trained the vines and taller plants. These were placed at the back of the beds, and the low, creeping ones occupied the front spaces. There were purple and variegated petunias, spread out all over these little frames, and covered with blossoms during the whole season. Then Drummond phlox, with beautiful purple and crimson flowers, portulacas, mignonette, and verbenas, which, with white candy-tuft and sweet alyssum, made up a very showy garden.

Every day the children spent an hour in cultivating these little beds; for they had been told, that, by keeping the ground mellow and loose about the roots, the plants would do better, as the moisture would more easily penetrate the soil; so they used their little hoes and rakes with great advantage, and soon grew to be very expert gardeners.

Their father, who saw how pleasantly they were occupied with this work, and how well they had succeeded in everything they had attempted to cultivate, became every day more desirous of removing to a place where there would be room for them to exercise these wholesome fancies. He watched the newspapers in the hope of seeing a place advertised whose description suited in every respect; but he had thus far looked in vain. Some were too large,—real farms, which he knew would be more than a man in other business could manage; others were too far distant from the city; and many which suited quite well in these respects were too high-priced for him to purchase. So he had almost begun to despair of finding one, when a friend told him of a small place of some three acres, with a neat, newly built cottage, which came just within the limits of his means. He said nothing about it at home until he had been to see it, and had completed the purchase, and then he mentioned his venture to Mrs. Gray. She was rather surprised, and perhaps not very well pleased at the

news; but as she observed the delight of the children, who saw only the cheerful and flowery part of the picture, she gradually became satisfied, especially as Mr. Gray had promised that if, after a year's trial, they were not well pleased, they should return to the city.

The new place was about two miles from town, and could be reached very readily by the horse cars, which passed the door many times a day. The house was a plain wooden cottage, painted brown, and sanded, to look as much as possible like stone. There was a pretty piazza, with rustic supports of rough tree-trunks with the bark on; but, as it was entirely new, there was as yet nothing like grass or shrubbery to adorn the outside. All around were the remains of rubbish left from building, and there were few trees near the house to cast a cool shade when hot weather should come again. Many would have been quite discouraged at the first sight of so bare-looking a place; but Mrs. Gray knew just what it needed, and she could already fancy the piazza covered with vines, and a beautiful lawn stretching away towards the gate, with a winding walk up to the door, and plenty of ornamental trees in groups around the house. All this could be arranged and begun at once, and every year would make it more and more beautiful.

It was now early autumn, but they were not to take possession of the new place until spring. It was however decided to lay out the grounds, and plant the trees at once, so as to gain a season. An acre of ground was appropriated to the lawn, which was levelled and sown thickly with grass seed. Then a variety of trees were set out,—three times as many, too, as were really wanted, so as to allow for those which would die. They were quite large trees,—willows, ash, cedars, balm of Gilead, arbor-vitæ, locust, and maples of different kinds,—but as they were careful to take them with a good ball of earth fast to the lowest roots, and then to lop off from each tree a portion of the top limbs to correspond with the amount of roots it had lost, the greater part of the trees survived the winter. When spring came, the most of them budded, and were soon covered with leaves, whilst the dead ones were quickly removed.

At the old home, the children were busy all winter with their plans and prospects. The choicest flower-seeds and verbenas had been saved for planting in the new gardens, and about the first of February Willie contrived a box with sash lid, in which the phlox, mignonette, candytuft, zinnias, and other annuals were sown, it being desirable to have them up early, so that they might be ready for transplanting into the large beds, where there would be ample room for all they could produce.

Mrs. Gray had always been such a lover of house-plants, that her sitting-room windows were generally full of flowers in winter-time. She had ivy-vines in pots,

which climbed quite around the windows, and one of those delicate Fayal vines, with fine glossy leaves, and blossoms of the most exquisite perfume. Then there were seedling plants of the *Maurandia Barclayana*, with leaves like the ivy, and bearing a profusion of dark purple flowers. She knew that they would need all the vines they could obtain, to form a bower around the cottage, and these delicate runners, she thought, would fill up the interstices between those of a coarser description, after her winter's enjoyment of them was over. As time passed on, she grew quite impatient to begin the work of transforming the new place into the little Eden that she had pictured it.

Well, the first of April came at last,—very slowly, it seemed to the children,—and in a few days they were all moved, though by no means in order.

“Now, mother, show us where our gardens are to be!” exclaimed the children, as soon as they arrived in company with the last of the furniture.

“Not just now, children. Let us settle matters in the house, before we talk about the garden.”

“O, but I want to see mine so much!” said Susie to Bessie, as they looked out at the window upon what seemed to them an immense field.

“All in good time, children,” said the mother, who was indeed very tired with the moving, and still had a great deal to do before everything could be nicely arranged. “We shall have more snow-storms yet.”

“More snow, mother!” exclaimed Willie. “Why, I thought we were to begin our planting at once.”

“Certainly. You can plant peas and potatoes, and set out currant-bushes, blackberries, and the like,” she said, smiling at his horror of more snow,—“but of course not flowers.”

“But won't snow hurt the peas and potatoes?” he asked.

“O no, the peas are hardy, and even if they are up several inches a snowstorm won't hurt them.”

“Then why not try the flowers?” urged Susie, again. “Are not some of them hardy too? You know, mother, how long our verbenas and petunias kept on blooming in the fall, after there were a great many frosts.”

“Ah, that was different; they are quite hardy in the autumn; and then the cold weather comes on gradually: but remember that in the spring the young shoots and seedlings are very tender, and need protection from the frost; so there is nothing to be gained by being in too great a hurry.”

“How soon may we plant our seeds then?” inquired Maggie. “Do you think next week will do?”

“Not before the middle of April, little ones,” replied the mother; “but, if the weather is good, I will show you your gardens to-morrow, and you can begin to get them ready.”

With this gratifying promise, the children were amply satisfied, and thought and talked of little else than their gardens until bedtime.

There were many things to be done inside the house, in which Maggie Gray was able to assist her mother; and Willie, who was very handy with his tools, made good use of his holidays. There were so many little things wanting,—pegs in the presses, a shelf in the pantry, and another in the kitchen, besides fixing window-shades and stoves, which he seemed to understand about quite as well as a hired man would have done.

“All that we save in hiring, Willie, you shall have to buy plants with,” said his mother. So Willie worked on with fresh spirit, and before many days most of the indoor jobs were done.

In the mean time Mrs. Gray had kept her promise, and shown to each one of the girls a fine large bed cut out of the green lawn, into which they were to sow and transplant whatever they might choose, whilst the beds around the door, where the much-desired vines were to be placed, were reserved for the mother herself to manage. As for Mr. Gray and Willie, the fruit and vegetables were to be their peculiar charge. The early morning hours, before city business began, and the evenings, after their early tea, would afford considerable time for work, and they had laid plans for a wonderful amount of fruit and table vegetables, which would be much better, they knew, than any that could be bought in the city markets. So already, even in anticipation, they had begun to taste the benefits of their country home.

CHAPTER II.

Among other matters that had been attended to during the previous autumn, was the planting of some currant-bushes and a strawberry bed, which were now in promising order, and already began to show signs of blossoming. Of course these did not need any attention now, but a ploughman was employed to go over the rest of the plantation. Even between the lines of fruit-trees, the ground was turned up ready for planting, and a few rows of the large blackberry and raspberry bushes were to be put in at once; these would not produce fruit this season, but would be ready for next year.

As both Mr. Gray and Willie were altogether new at the business, they had to hire a few days' help in these first operations; but when the plants were once in the ground, and peas and potatoes also planted, they were resolved to do all the rest themselves. Willie took his first lesson in setting out a bed of onions, and his mother begged for a few parsley plants, with a little thyme, summer savory, and sage, which are so nice for seasoning dinner in the winter. All these were done in good time, leaving a little room yet for a few tomato-plants, and a row or two of pop-corn, which all the children knew how to pop, and still better how to eat.

The acre and a half which had been appropriated to these purposes was to be known as "the farm," while the girls' flower-beds would be "the garden." So, also, these busy workers would be hereafter classified as *farmers* and *gardeners*.

But, while the farmers have been so busy with their portion of the plantation, pray do not think that our young gardeners have been idle. No; the beds have all been dug and raked smoothly over, and many of the flower-seeds have been sown, with sticks put in to mark the places. That was a very necessary precaution indeed, as the busy little hands, with their rakes and hoes and trowels, would have made sad havoc with the poor seeds before they had time to show themselves above ground.

In Daisy's bed, her mother had sown pepper-grass seed in a curious style, and, by dint of close watching, it did not get disturbed. Upon the smooth ground were marked the letters of the word "DAISY," forming little furrows into which the fine seeds were thickly strewed, and then smoothed over. One day, to the little girl's great joy and astonishment, she beheld the green letters standing out in bold relief upon the dark ground. She was delighted beyond her powers of expression, and for some time it was a mystery she could not explain.

"How did it happen?" she kept asking them all; but all were as mysterious as the occasion demanded. At last, however, Willie revealed the secret, and Daisy's

wonder was relieved, although she ceased not to feel proud of her name growing every day greener and taller.



Ten days after the flower-seeds had been planted in the garden-beds, they began to peep up above the surface, and some of them even had the little empty shells of the gray seeds sticking to the pale leaves. It did seem so wonderful to these young students of nature to see that these flower-plants, which every day grew stronger and more vigorous, could actually come forth out of those thin and tiny seeds. Then another curious thing was that they never made a mistake, and came up something else; but a bean always produced a bean again, and not a lady-slipper. That was because God had ordered it, and kept it so ever since the creation of the world.

One of the greatest difficulties they had was to distinguish the new varieties of weeds from flowers. There had been a grand crop of rank nettles and pig-weed growing on the place for several years, and of course their seeds had been sown before the flowers. No wonder that these strange plants came up in great numbers all over the little gardens; they sometimes looked so much like the flowers that these

inexperienced florists could not distinguish between the true and the false. There was nothing to be done, then, but to let them all grow together for a while, until the plants were large enough to be plainly seen.

About the 10th of May, all danger of frost seemed past, and they set out their house-plants. The seedlings in the box that Willie made had grown to be several inches high. The phlox was already beginning to blossom, as well as the mignonette and a few scarlet geraniums which they had raised from cuttings. There were also some showy verbenas, all ready and in bloom, as well as several roses brought from their city garden. So there was no lack of flowers for a beginning; in a few weeks they would make a very gorgeous display.

Mrs. Gray was occupied chiefly with her vines. At every post of the piazza some hardy climbers were planted, which would not, it is true, make much shade or ornament the first season, but by another would completely cover the rustic pillars with a thick curtain of leaves. At one post she placed a large root of wistaria, an evergreen honeysuckle, and a clematis; at another, a climbing rose, and a wild creeper; and at the others glaucous, coral honeysuckles, other roses, and trumpet-creepers. These were to be the permanent ornaments, to last for years to come; but Mrs. Gray wanted to have the bare posts covered at once, so, in addition to the above, she put in scarlet and hyacinth beans,—at least half a dozen to each post. Then a few tubers of the Mexican vine were crowded in, and a plant or two of the luxuriant Australian ivy; thus there would be an abundance of rapidly growing vines, which would soon make a close bower about the doors and windows.

At the side of the house were planted grape-vines three feet high, which were to be trained upon frames against the building itself; and at the back of the establishment, where the kitchen was situated, and a rough lattice had been placed to conceal the domestic arrangements, a quantity of vigorous young creepers had been brought by Willie from the neighboring woods, and set out during a season of wet weather. They hardly seemed to show that they were moved, but went on growing as fast as ever, and by the first of July had covered the lattice almost entirely. That was because they had brought so large a number; for Mrs. Gray had wisely remarked, "If we have too many, it will be easy enough to root out a few of them." As it proved, however, there was not one too many; for a very close covering was more desirable than a scanty one, and certainly nothing could have been more beautiful than the appearance of these vines, which exhibited so many shades of green. The older leaves were dark and glossy, while the ends of the shoots were of a lighter and more delicate tint, and as they waved with the breeze the effect was truly elegant.

But I have only told you the pleasant part about getting these wild creepers, and now I will relate what befell poor Willie,—something that taught him a severe lesson, which he declared he should never forget. In going among the thickets of tangled vines in search of the young creepers, there were several varieties to be found; some had their leaves in fives, and others in threes. He thought it best to secure a few of each variety, especially as the reddish shoots of the three-leaved plants appeared to have fine, promising runners, and he knew that these were exactly what his mother desired. He therefore took up some very strong roots, and placed them in the basket with the others. But just as he was starting off on his homeward journey, a barefooted country boy came running along by the roadside and peeped into his basket with what Willie considered to be a good deal of impudence.

“Ha, ha!—pizen wines!” he exclaimed. “I wonder what you be goin’ to do with ’em? Pity yer hands and face bime by.”

Willie heard what he said, but did not quite understand at first; but the boy kept on: “I say, boy, ye’d better throw ’em out o’ yer basket, or ye’ll be sorry enough to-morrow.”

“What do you know about my business?” asked Willie, with as much dignity as he could muster.

“Well, I know them’s pizen wines, and I s’pect you’re pizened a’ready,—that’s all.”

Now Willie, with all his city education, had never once heard of poison vines, and began to look into his basket with doubt.

“They are creepers,” he said to the boy, who still looked into the basket, and pointed very cautiously to the reddish, three-leaved vines.

“Yes, these be creepers,” said the urchin, touching the five-fingered leaves, “but them’s rank pizen. Ye’d better throw ’em out as soon as ye kin.”

Willie felt rather uncomfortable about it, and yet hesitated to take the boy’s advice. Just then there came along a sturdy farmer, to whom Willie immediately appealed.

“Pray, sir,” he said, “will you tell me what these vines are?” at the same time holding up his basket to view.

“Well, I can tell you,” said the man, “the sooner you get rid of ’em the better; they’re rale pizen wines, and I reckon your hands’ll be in a purty state afore long.”

In an instant, out went the contents of the basket upon the ground, and Willie almost fancied that his hands tingled a little already.

“Them’s creepers,” said the man, separating the five fingers from the others with the end of his spade; “take them along, but always mind to keep clear of the *three*

fingers; them's al'ays pizen."

Willie gathered up the creepers, and replaced them in his basket, leaving the dreadful poison vines lying by the roadside; but all the way home his mind was in a state of considerable uneasiness about what had happened. However, he became so busy in planting the creepers, and then in arranging some other things on the farm, that for the time he almost forgot about it, and when it did occur to him again he could not perceive any appearance of damage to his hands; so finally he came to the conclusion that there was no harm done after all, and that maybe the two country fellows had been trying to deceive him, because they thought he was green in such matters.

He had not told of this adventure at home, for he did not choose to expose his ignorance, even to his mother, although he very much doubted whether she herself had ever heard of poison vines. But on awaking, a few mornings after that, he was conscious of a very peculiar feeling about the hands and between the fingers,—a burning, pricking sensation, which recalled very unpleasantly the affair of the vines. He tried to cool them in a basin of water, but all to no purpose; they grew worse instead of better.

"O dear!" he exclaimed, "if I had only known about the poison vines before I went out there; but who'd have dreamed of such a thing as that?"

Willie bore the pain as long as he could, and then his mother was informed of all that had happened, and indeed before night his poor hands had begun to swell and ache very much, while considerable inflammation appeared about the face and eyes. By another day he was quite feverish, and obliged to keep in bed, and at last they sent for a doctor, who pronounced it a serious case of poisoning. Then his hands puffed up in white blisters, and his eyes were nearly closed with the swelling. So poor Willie paid dearly for his experience, as it was more than a week before the disease was removed and the blisters had all healed.

"You'll know poison vines next time," said the doctor; "but there are several other poisonous plants in the woods, which I will show you some day, to put you on your guard against future mistakes."

Willie remembered the good doctor's promise, and some time afterwards they went together to see the swamp sumach and poison oak, both of which grew abundantly in the same woods. It was well he had done so, for when the sumach began to put forth its curious clusters of blossoms, Willie would surely have gathered some for his mother. Later yet, the leaves became so gorgeous in their brilliant autumn colors that it seemed hard not to be able to press a few sprays for the winter bouquet of grasses which always graced Mrs. Gray's parlor mantel.

There is no knowledge so valuable, or so likely to remain with us for life, as that which is learned by experience, and so it was with regard to the poison. Willie was a far wiser boy for these practical lessons than when he left the city, and would be cautious enough in the future.

Author of "Six Hundred Dollars a Year."



THE VIOLETS.

On a bright Sunday morning little Mary went out into the garden. She wore her new spring dress; she was almost afraid the dew would spoil it. A great noisy bee, out making honey on a Sunday,—or perhaps it was only a blue-bottle fly,—came buzzing round her head, and frightened her a little; but still she picked a bunch of violets for her friend, the oldish lady, who sits behind her in church.

She had given the lady, Mrs. Lane, a few geranium-leaves once before, and she had thanked her and looked pleased; and violets are even sweeter and fresher than geranium-leaves.

Little Mary lives with her papa and mamma, where the grass is green, and the flowers are sweet, and the trees full of birds. She is a happy little girl, and life is all before her.

But the oldish lady lives alone. Her hair is gray and faded, and the bright dreams of her youth are faded too.

She has not much money, so she lives in one room of an old-fashioned house, in a narrow street.

She does not so much mind being alone, but she remembers the dear friends who made life seem so bright, and she wonders now that she never used to think she might lose them. She knew we must all die; but that her friends could really leave her, and that she could live without them,—she never believed it till they were gone.

And now she lives alone; but the sun shines into her room, and she has there a picture of a lovely lady, with soft eyes. That is her mother. She is in heaven.

As she walked to church that bright Sunday morning, she looked up at the sky, and it was clear and blue. The sun shone warm. The soft wind brought the perfume of flowers from the hills, and the sound of the chimes from the distance.

And the little church was dressed with flowers, and the kind pastor was there, with cheering, helpful words for his people.

The lady's heart was full of thankfulness, though still she thought of the dear friends whose absence had changed the world for her.

Then the little girl came with the bouquet of violets, and leaned over the back of the pew, and gave them to the oldish lady, with a kind smile; and the kindness, or the perfume of the violets, or something else, made the tears come into the lady's eyes, so that she had to wipe first one, and then the other, behind her prayer-book, and her voice trembled so, she could hardly sing the hymn.

When the service was over, she took the little bouquet home, and it brightened

her lonely room, and warmed her heart, like the presence of an angel.

Annie Moore.



TOM TWIST.

Tom Twist was a wonderful fellow,
No boy was so nimble and strong;
He could turn ten somersets backward,
And stand on his head all day long.
No wrestling, or leaping, or running,
This tough little urchin could tire;
His muscles were all gutta-percha,
And his sinews bundles of wire.

Tom Twist liked the life of a sailor,
So off, with a hop and a skip,
He went to a Nantucket captain,
Who took him on board of his ship.
The vessel was crowded with seamen,
Young, old, stout and slim, short and tall,
But in climbing, swinging, and jumping,
Tom Twist was ahead of them all.

He could scamper all through the rigging,
As spry and as still as a cat,
While as for a leap from the maintop
To deck, he thought nothing of that;
He danced at the end of the yard-arm,
Slept sound in the bend of a sail,
And hung by his legs from the bowsprit,
When the wind was blowing a gale.



The vessel went down in a tempest,
A thousand fathoms or more;
But Tom Twist dived under the breakers,
And, swimming five miles, got ashore.
The shore was a cannibal island,
The natives were hungry enough;
But they felt of Tommy all over,
And found him entirely too tough.



So they put him into a boy-coop,—
Just to fatten him up, you see,—
But Tommy crept out, very slyly,
And climbed to the top of a tree.
The tree was the nest of a condor,
A bird with prodigious big wings,
Who lived upon boa-constrictors
And other digestible things.

The condor flew home in the evening,
And there lay friend Tommy so snug,
She thought she had pounced on a very
Remarkable species of bug;

She soon woke him up with her pecking,
But Tommy gave one of his springs,
And leaped on the back of the condor,
Between her long neck and her wings.

The condor tried plunging and pitching,
But Tommy held on with firm hand,
Then off, with a scream, flew the condor,
O'er forest and ocean and land.
By and by she got tired of her burden,
And flying quite close to the ground,
Tom untwisted his legs from the creature,
And quickly slipped off with a bound.

He landed all right, and feet foremost,
A little confused by his fall,
And then ascertained he had lighted
On top of the great Chinese Wall.
He walked to the city of Peking,
Where he made the Chinamen grin;
He turned ten somersets backward,
And they made him a Mandarin.

Then Tom had to play the Celestial
And to dangle a long pigtail;
And he dined on puppies and kittens,
Till his spirits began to fail.
He sighed for his native country,
And he longed for its ham and eggs;
And in turning somersets backward
His pigtail would catch in his legs.

He sailed for his dear home and harbor.
The house of his mother he knew;
He climbed up the lightning-rod quickly,
And came down the chimney-flue.
His mother in slumber lay dreaming

That she never would see him more,
When she opened her eyes, and Tommy
Stood there on the bedroom floor!

Her nightcap flew off in amazement,
Her hair stood on end with surprise.
“What kind of a ghost or a spirit
Is this that I see with my eyes?”
“I am your most dutiful Tommy.”
“I will not believe it,” she said,
“Till you turn ten somersets backward,
And stand half an hour on your head.”



“That thing I will do, dearest mother.”

At once, with a skip and a hop,
He turned the ten somersets backward,
But then was unable to stop!

The tenth took him out of the window,
His mother jumped from her bed,
To see his twentieth somerset
Take him over the kitchen shed;

Thence, across the patch of potatoes
And beyond the church on the hill;
She saw him, tumbling and turning,
Turning and tumbling still,—
Till Tommy’s body diminished
In size to the head of a pin,
Spinning away in the distance,
Where it still continues to spin!

William Allen Butler.



THE WILLIAM HENRY LETTERS. TENTH PACKET.

William Henry to his Sister.

MY DEAR LITTLE SISTER,—

I'm sorry your little birdie's dead! He was a nice singing birdie! But I wouldn't cry. Maybe you'll have another one some time, if you're a good little girl. Maybe father'll go to Boston and buy you one, or maybe Cousin Joe will send one home to you, in a vessel, or maybe I'll catch one, or maybe a man will come along with birds to sell, or maybe Aunt Phebe's bird will lay an egg and hatch one out. I wouldn't feel bad about it. It isn't any use to feel bad about it. Maybe, if he hadn't been killed, he'd 'a' died. Dorry says, "Tell her, 'Don't you cry,' and I'll give her something, catch her a rabbit or a squirrel!" Says he'll tease his sister for her white mice. Says he'll tease her with the tears in his eyes,—or else her Banties.

How do you like your teacher? Do you learn any lessons at school? You must try to get up above all the other ones. We've got two new teachers this year. One is clever, and we like that one, but the other one isn't very. We call the good one Wedding Cake, and we call the other one Brown Bread. Did grandmother tell you about the Fortune Tellers? We went to-day and she told mine true. She said my father was a very kind man, and said I was quick to get mad, and said I had just got something I'd wanted a long time (watch, you know), and said I should have something else that I wanted, but didn't say when. I wonder how she knew I wanted a gun. I thought perhaps somebody told her, and laid it to Old Wonder Boy, for we two had been talking about guns. But he flared up just like a flash of powder. "There. Now you needn't blame that on to me!" says he. "You fellers always do blame everything on to me!" Sometimes when somebody touches him he hollers out, "Leave me loose! Leave me loose!" Dorry says that's the way fellers talk down in Jersey. The Fortune Teller told W. B. that he came from a long way off, and that he wanted to be a soldier, but he'd better give up that, for he wouldn't dare to go to war, without he went behind to sell pies. All of us laughed to hear that, for Old Wonder Boy is quick to get scared. But he is always straightening himself up, and looking big, and talking about his native land, and what he would do for his native land, and how he would fight for his native land, and how he would die for his native land. He says that why she told him that kind of a fortune was because he gave her pennies and not silver money. His uncle that goes cap'n of a vessel has sent him a

letter, and in the letter it said that he had a sailor aboard his ship that used to come to this school.



I was going to tell you a funny story about W. B.'s getting scared, but Dorry he keeps teasing me to go somewhere. I made these jolly letters when he tickled my ears with his paint-brush. Has your pullet begun to lay yet? I hope my rooster won't be killed. Tell them not to. Benjie says he had a grand great rooster. It was white and had green and purple tail feathers, O, very long tail feathers, and stood

'most as high as a barrel of flour, with great yellow legs, and had a beautiful crow, and could drive away every other one that showed his head, and he set his eyes by that rooster, but when he got home they had killed him for broth, and when he asked 'em where his rooster was they brought out the wish-bone and two tail feathers, and that was all there was left of him. I wouldn't have poor little kittie drowned way down in the deep water 'cause to drown a kittie couldn't make a birdie alive again. Have your flowers bloomed out yet? You must be a good little girl, and try to please your grandmother all you can.

From your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM HENRY.

P. S. Now Dorry's run to head off a loose horse, and I'll tell you about Old Wonder Boy's getting scared. It was one night when— Now there comes Dorry back again! But next time I will.

W. H.

William Henry to his Sister, about Old Wonder Boy's Fright.

MY DEAR SISTER,—

I will put that little story I am going to tell you right at the beginning, before Dorry and Bubby Short get back. I mean about W. B.'s getting scared. But don't you be scared, for after all 'twas—no, I mean after all 'twasn't—but wait and you'll know by and by, when I tell you. 'Twas one night when Dorry and I and some more fellers were a sitting here together, and we all of us heard some thick boots coming a hurrying up the stairs, and the door came a banging open, and W. B. pitched in, just as pale as a sheet, and couldn't but just breathe. And he tried to speak, but couldn't, only one word at once, and catching his breath between, just so,—“Shut—the—door!—Do!—Do!—shut—the door!” Then we shut up the door, and Bubby Short

stood his back up against it because 'twouldn't quite latch, and now I will tell you what it was that scared him. Not at the first of it, but I shall tell it just the same way we found it out.

Says he, "I was making a box, and when I got it done 'twas dark, but I went to carry the carpenter's tools back to him, because I promised to. And going along," says he, "I thought I heard a funny noise behind me, but I didn't think very much about it, but I heard it again, and I looked over my shoulder, and I saw something white behind me, a chasing me. I went faster, and then that went faster. Then I went slower and then that went slower. And then I got scared and ran as fast as I could, and looked over my shoulder and 'twas keeping up. But it didn't run with feet, nor with legs, for then I shouldn't 'a' been scared. But it came—O, I don't know how it came, without anything to go on."

Dorry asked him, "How did it look?"

"O,—white. All over white," says W. B.

"How big was it?" Bubby Short asked him.

"O,—I don't know," says W. B. "First it looked about as big as a pigeon, but every time I looked round it seemed to grow bigger and bigger."

"Maybe 'twas a pigeon," says Dorry. "Did it have any wings?"

"Not a wing," says W. B.

"Maybe 'twas a white cat," says Mr. Augustus.

"O, poh, cat!" says W. B.

"Or a poodle dog," says Benjie.

"Nonsense, poodle dog!" says W. B.

"Or a rabbit," says Bubby Short.

"O, go 'way with your rabbit!" says W. B. "Didn't I tell you it hadn't any feet or legs to go with?"

"Then how could it go?" Mr. Augustus asked him.

"That's the very thing," said W. B.

"Snakes do," says Bubby Short.

"But a snake wouldn't look white," says Benjie.

"Without 'twas scared," says Dorry.

I said I guessed I knew. Like enough 'twas a ghost of something.

"Of what?" then they all asked me.

I said like enough of a robin or some kind of bird.

"That he'd stolen the eggs of," says Dorry.

"O yes!" says Old Wonder Boy. "It's easy enough to laugh, in the light here, but I guess you'd 'a' been scared, seeing something chasing you in the dark, and going

up and down, and going tick, tick, tick, every time it touched ground, and sometimes it touched my side too."

"For goodness gracious!" says Dorry. "Can't you tell what it seemed most like?"

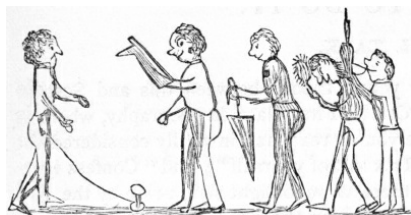
"I tell you it didn't seem most like anything. It didn't run, nor walk, nor fly, nor creep, nor glide along. And when I got to the Great Elm-Tree, I cut round that tree, and ran this way, and that did too."

"Where is it now?" Dorry asked him.

"O, don't!" says W. B. "Don't open the door. 'Tis out there."

"Come, fellers," Dorry said, "let's go find it!"

Benjie said, "Let's take something to hit it with!" And he took an umbrella, and I took the bootjack, and Bubby Short took the towel horse, and Mr. Augustus took a hair-brush, and Dorry took his boot with arm run down in it, and first we opened the door a crack and didn't go out, but peeped out, but didn't see anything there. Then we went out a little ways, and then we didn't see anything. And pretty soon, going along towards the stairs, Bubby Short stepped on something. "What's that?" says he. And he jumped, and we all flung our things at it. "Hold the light!" Dorry cried out.



Then W. B. brought out the light, and there wasn't anything there but a carpenter's reel, with a chalk line wound up on it, and they picked it up and began to wind up, and when they came to the end of it—where do you s'pose the other end was? In W. B.'s pocket! and his ball and some more things held it fast

there, and that chalk-line reel was what went bobbing up and down behind Old Wonder Boy every step he took,—bob, bob, bobbing up and down, for there was a hitch in the line and it couldn't unwind any more, and the line under the door was why 'twouldn't latch, and O, but you ought to've heard the fellers how they roared! and Bubby Short rolled over on the floor, and Dorry he tumbled heels over head on all the beds, and we all shouted and hurrahed so the other fellers came running to see what was up, and then the teachers came to see who was flinging things round so up here, and to see what was the matter, but there couldn't anybody tell what the matter was for laughing, and W. B. he looked so sheepish! O, if 'twasn't gay! How do you like this story? That part where it touched his side was when that reel caught on something and so jerked the string some. Now I must study my lesson.

Your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM HENRY.

P. S. When you send a box don't send very many clothes in it, but send goodies. I tell you things taste good when a feller's away from his folks. Dorry's father had a picture taken of Dorry's little dog and sent it to him, and it looks just as natural as some boys. Tell Aunt Phebe's little Tommy he may sail my boat once. 'Tis put away up garret in that corner where I keep things, side of that great long-handled thing, grandmother's warming-pan. I mean that little sloop boat I had when I's a little feller.

W. H.

Mrs. A. M. Diaz.



HOW TO DO IT.

II. TALK.

May I presume that all my young friends between this and Sceattle have read paper Number One? First class in geography, where is Sceattle? Right. Go up. Have you all read, and inwardly considered, the three rules, "Tell the truth"; "Talk not of yourself"; and "Confess ignorance"? Have you all practised them, in moonlight sleigh-ride by the Red River of the North,—in moonlight stroll on the beach by St. Augustine,—in evening party at Pottsville,—and at the parish sociable in Northfield? Then you are sure of the benefits which will crown your lives if you obey these three precepts; and you will, with unfaltering step, move quickly over the kettle-debenders of this broken essay, and from the thistle, danger, will pluck the three more flowers which I have promised. I am to teach you, fourth,—

TO TALK TO THE PERSON WHO IS TALKING TO YOU.

This rule is constantly violated by fools and snobs. Now you might as well turn your head away when you shoot at a bird, or look over your shoulder when you have opened a new book,—instead of looking at the bird, or looking at the book,—as lapse into any of the habits of a man who pretends to talk to one person while he is listening to another, or watching another, or wondering about another. If you really want to hear what Jo. Gresham is saying to Alice Faulconbridge, when they are standing next you in the dance, say so to Will Withers, who is trying to talk with you. You can say pleasantly, "Mr. Withers, I want very much to overhear what Mr. Gresham is saying, and if you will keep still a minute, I think I can." Then Will Withers will know what to do. You will not be preoccupied, and perhaps you may be able to hear something you were not meant to know.

At this you are disgusted. You throw down the magazine, and say you will not read any more. You cannot think why this hateful man supposes that you would do anything so mean.

Then why do you let Will Withers suppose so? All he can tell is what you show him. If you will listen while he speaks, so as to answer intelligently, and will then speak to him as if there were no other persons in the room, he will know fast enough that you are talking to him. But if you just say "yes," and "no," and "indeed," and "certainly," in that flabby, languid way in which some boys and girls I know pretend to talk sometimes, he will think that you are engaged in thinking of somebody else, or

something else,—unless, indeed, he supposes that you are not thinking of anything, and that you hardly know what thinking is.

It is just as bad, when you are talking to another girl, or another girl's mother, if you take to watching her hair, or the way she trimmed her frock, or anything else about her, instead of watching what she is saying as if that were really what you and she are talking for, I could name to you young women who seem to go into society for the purpose of studying the milliner's business. It is a very good business, and a very proper business to study in the right place. I know some very good girls who would be much improved, and whose husbands would be a great deal happier, if they would study it to more purpose than they do. But do not study it while you are talking. No,—not if the Empress Eugénie herself should be talking to you. Suppose, when General Dix has presented you and mamma, the Empress should see you in the crowd, afterwards, and should send that stiff-looking old gentleman in a court dress across the room, to ask you to come and talk to her, and should say to you, “*Mademoiselle, est-ce que les jeunes demoiselles en Amérique se promènent à cheval sans cavalier?*” Do you look her frankly in the face while she speaks, and when she stops, do you answer her as you would answer Leslie Goldthwaite if you were coming home from berrying. Don't you count those pearls that the Empress has tied round her head, nor think how you can make a necktie like hers out of that old bit of ribbon that you bought in Syracuse. Tell her, in as good French or as good English as you can muster, what she asks; and if, after you have answered her lead, she plays again, do you play again; and if she plays again, do you play again,—till one or other of you takes the trick. But do you think of nothing else, while the talk goes on, but the subject she has started, and of her; do not think of yourself, but address yourself to the single business of meeting her inquiry as well as you can. Then, if it becomes proper for you to ask her a question, you may. But remember that conversation is what you are there for,—not the study of millinery, or fashion, or jewelry, or politics.

Why, I have known men who, while they were smirking, and smiling, and telling other lies to their partners, were keeping the calendar of the whole room,—knew who was dancing with whom, and who was looking at pictures, and that Brown had sent up to the lady of the house to tell her that supper was served, and that she was just looking for her husband that he might offer Mrs. Grant his arm and take her down stairs. But do you think their partners liked to be treated so? Do you think their partners were worms, who liked to be trampled upon? Do you think they were pachydermatous coleoptera of the dor tribe, who had just fallen from red-oak trees, and did not know that they were trampled upon? You are wholly mistaken. Those

partners were of flesh and blood, like you,—of the same blood with you, cousins-german of yours on the Anglo-Saxon side,—and they felt just as badly as you would feel if anybody talked to you while he was thinking of the other side of the room.

And I know a man who is, it is true, one of the most noble and unselfish of men, but who had made troops of friends long before people had found that out. Long before he had made his present fame, he had found these troops of friends. When he was a green, uncouth, unlicked cub of a boy, like you, Stephen, he had made them. And do you ask how? He had made them by listening with all his might. Whoever sailed down on him at an evening party and engaged him—though it were the most weary of odd old ladies—was sure, while they were together, of her victim. He would look her right in the eye, would take in her every shrug and half-whisper, would enter into all her joys, and terrors, and hopes, would help her by his sympathy to find out what the trouble was, and, when it was his turn to answer, he would answer like her own son. Do you wonder that all the old ladies loved him? And it was no special court to old ladies. He talked so to school-boys, and to shy people who had just poked their heads out of their shells, and to all the awkward people, and to all the gay and easy people. And so he compelled them, by his magnetism, to talk so to him. That was the way he made his first friends,—and that was the way, I think, that he deserved them.

Did you notice how badly I violated this rule when Dr. Ollapod talked to me of the Gorges land grants, at Mrs. Pollexfen's? I got very badly punished, and I deserved what I got, for I had behaved very ill. I ought not to have known what Edmeston said, or what Will Hackmatack said. I ought to have been listening, and learning about the Lords sitting in Equity. Only the next day Dr. Ollapod left town without calling on me, he was so much displeased. And when, the next week, I was lecturing in Naguadavick, and the mayor of the town asked me a very simple question about the titles in the third range, I knew nothing about it and was disgraced. So much for being rude, and not attending to the man who was talking to me.

Now do not tell me that you cannot attend to stupid people, or long-winded people, or vulgar people. You can attend to anybody, if you will remember who he is. How do you suppose that Horace Felltham attends to these old ladies, and these shy boys? Why, he remembers that they are all of the blood-royal. To speak very seriously, he remembers whose children they are,—who is their Father. And that is worth remembering. It is not of much consequence, when you think of that, who made their clothes, or what sort of grammar they speak in. This rule of talk, indeed, leads to our next rule, which, as I said of the others, is as essential in conversation as

it is in war, in business, in criticism, or in any other affairs of men. It is based on the principle of rightly honoring all men. For talk, it may be stated thus:—

NEVER UNDERRATE YOUR INTERLOCUTOR.

In the conceit of early life, talking to a man of thrice my age, and of immense experience, I said, a little too flippantly, “Was it not the King of Wurtemberg whose people declined a constitution when he had offered it to them?”

“Yes,” said my friend, “the King told me the story himself.”

Observe what a rebuke this would have been to me, had I presumed to tell him the fact which he knew ten times as accurately as I. I was just saved from sinking into the earth by having couched my statement in the form of a question. The truth is, that we are all dealing with angels unawares, and we had best make up our minds to that, early in our interviews. One of the first of preachers once laid down the law of preaching thus: “Preach as if you were preaching to archangels.” This means, “Say the very best thing you know, and never condescend to your audience.” And I once heard Mr. William Hunt, who is one of the first of artists, say to a class of teachers, “I shall not try to adapt thyself to your various lines of teaching. I will tell you the best things I know, and you may make the adaptations.” If you will boldly try the experiment of entering, with anybody you have to talk with, on the thing which at the moment interests you most, you will find out that other people’s hearts are much like your heart, other people’s experiences much like yours, and even, my dear Justin, that some other people know as much as you know. In short, never talk down to people; but talk to them from your best thought and your best feeling, without trying for it on the one hand, but without rejecting it on the other.

You will be amazed, every time you try this experiment, to find how often the man or the woman whom you first happen to speak to is the very person who can tell you just what you want to know. My friend Haliburton, who is a working minister in a large town, says that when he comes from a house where everything is in a tangle, and all wrong, he knows no way of righting things but by telling the whole story, without the names, in the next house he happens to call at in his afternoon walk. He says that if the Windermers are all in tears because little Polly lost their grandmother’s miniature when she was out picking blueberries, and if he tells of their loss at the Ashteroths’ where he calls next, it will be sure that the daughter of the gardener of the Ashteroths will have found the picture of the Windermers. Remember what I have taught you,—that conversation is the providential arrangement for the relief of ignorance. Only, as in all medicine, the patient must admit that he is ill, or he can never be cured. It is only in “Patronage,”—which I am

so sorry you boys and girls will not read,—and in other poorer novels, that the leech cures, at a distance, patients who say they need no physician. Find out your ignorance, first; admit it frankly, second; be ready to recognize with true honor the next man you meet, third; and then, presto!—although it were needed that the floor of the parlor should open, and a little black-bearded Merlin be shot up like Jack in a box, as you saw in Humpty-Dumpty,—the right person, who knows the right thing, will appear, and your ignorance will be solved.

What happened to me last week when I was trying to find the History of Yankee Doodle? Did it come to me without my asking? Not a bit of it. Nothing that was true came without my asking. Without my asking, there came that stuff you saw in the newspapers, which said Yankee Doodle was a Spanish air. That was not true. This was the way I found out what was true. I confessed my ignorance; and, as Lewis at Bellombre said of that ill-mannered Power, I had a great deal to confess. What I knew was, that in “American Anecdotes” an anonymous writer said a friend of his had seen the air among some Roundhead songs in the collection of a friend of his at Cheltenham, and that this air was the basis of Yankee Doodle. What was more, there was the old air printed. But then that story was good for nothing till you could prove it. A Methodist minister came to Jeremiah Mason, and said, “I have seen an angel from heaven who told me that your client was innocent.” “Yes,” said Mr. Mason, “and did he tell you how to prove it?” Unfortunately, in the dear old “American Anecdotes,” there was not the name of any person, from one cover to the other, who would be responsible for one syllable of its charming stories. So there I was! And I went through library after library looking for that Roundhead song, and I could not find it. But when the time came that it was necessary I should know, I confessed ignorance. Well, after that, the first man I spoke to said, “No, I don’t know anything about it. It is not in my line. But our old friend Watson knew something about it, or said he did.” “Who is Watson?” said I. “O, he’s dead ten years ago. But there’s a letter by him in the Historical Proceedings, which tells what he knew.” So, indeed, there was a letter by Watson. Oddly enough it left out all that was of direct importance; but it left in this statement, that he, an authentic person, wrote the dear old “American Anecdote” story. That was something. So then I gratefully confessed ignorance again, and again, and again. And I have many friends, so that there were many brave men, and many fair women, who were extending the various tentacula of their feeling processes into the different realms of the known and the unknown, to find that lost scrap of a Roundhead song for me. And so, at last, it was a girl—as old, say, as the youngest who will struggle as far as this page, in the Cleveland High School—who said, “Why, there is something about it in that funny

English book, 'Gleanings for the Curious,' I found in the Boston Library." And sure enough, in an article perfectly worthless in itself, there were the two words which named the printed collection of music which the other people had forgotten to name. These three books were each useless alone; but, when brought together, they established a fact. It took three people in talk to bring the three books together. And if I had been such a fool that I could not confess ignorance, or such another fool as to have distrusted the people I met with, I should never have had the pleasure of my discovery.

Now I must not go into any more such stories as this, because you will say I am violating the sixth great rule of talk, which is

BE SHORT.

And, besides, you must know that "they say" (whoever *they* may be) that "young folks" like you skip such explanations, and hurry on to the stories. I do not believe a word of that, but I obey.

I know one Saint. We will call her Agatha. I used to think she could be painted for Mary Mother, her face is so passionless and pure and good. I used to want to make her wrap a blue cloth round her head, as if she were in a picture I have a print of, and then, if we could only find the painter who was as pure and good as she, she should be painted as Mary Mother. Well, this sweet Saint has done lovely things in life, and will do more, till she dies. And the people she deals with do many more than she. For her truth and gentleness and loveliness pass into them, and inspire them, and then, with the light and life they gain from her, they can do what, with her light and life, she cannot do. For she herself, like all of us, has her limitations. And I suppose the one reason why, with such serenity and energy and long-suffering and unselfishness as hers, she does not succeed better in her own person is that she does not know how to "be short." We cannot all be or do all things. First boy in Latin, you may translate that sentence back into Latin, and see how much better it sounds there than in English. Then send your version to the letter-box.

For instance, it may be Agatha's duty to come and tell me that—what shall we have it?—say that dinner is ready. Now really the best way but one to say that is, "Dinner is ready, sir." The best way is, "Dinner, sir"; for this age, observe, loves to omit the verb. Let it. But really if St. Agatha, of whom I speak,—the second of that name, and of the Protestant, not the Roman Canon,—had this to say, she would say: "I am so glad to see you! I do not want to take your time, I am sure, you have so many things to do, and you are so good to everybody, but I knew you would let me tell you this. I was coming up stairs, and I saw your cook, Florence, you know. I

always knew her; she used to live at Mrs. Cradock's before she started on her journey; and her sister lived with that friend of mine that I visited the summer Willie was so sick with the mumps, and she was so kind to him. She was a beautiful woman; her husband would be away all the day, and, when he came home, she would have a piece of mince-pie for him, and his slippers warmed and in front of the fire for him; and, when he was in Cayenne, he died, and they brought his body home in a ship Frederic Marsters was the captain of. It was there that I met Florence's sister,—not so pretty as Florence, but I think a nice girl. She is married now and lives at Ashland, and has two nice children, a boy and a girl. They are all coming to see us at Thanksgiving. I was so glad to see that Florence was with you, and I did not know it when I came in, and, when I met her in the entry, I was very much surprised, and she saw I was coming in here, and she said, 'Please, will you tell him that dinner is ready?'"

Now it is not simply, you see, that, while an announcement of that nature goes on, the mutton grows cold, your wife grows tired, the children grow cross, and that the subjugation of the world in general is set back, so far as you are all concerned, a perceptible space of time on The Great Dial. But the tale itself has a wearing and wearying perplexity about it. At the end you doubt if it is your dinner that is ready, or Fred Marsters's, or Florence's, or nobody's. Whether there is any real dinner, you doubt. For want of a vigorous nominative case, firmly governing the verb, whether that verb is seen or not, or because this firm nominative is masked and disguised behind clouds of drapery and other rubbish, the best of stories, thus told, loses all life, interest, and power.

Leave out then, resolutely. First omit "Speaking of hides," or "That reminds me of," or "What you say suggests," or "You make me think of," or any such introductions. Of course you remember what you are saying. You could not say it if you did not remember it. It is to be hoped, too, that you are thinking of what you are saying. If you are not, you will not help the matter by saying you are, no matter if the conversation do have firm and sharp edges. Conversation is not an essay. It has a right to many large letters, and many new paragraphs. That is what makes it so much more interesting than long, close paragraphs like this, which the printers hate as much as I do, and which they call "*solid matter*," as if to indicate that, in proportion, such paragraphs are apt to lack the light, ethereal spirit of all life.

Second, in conversation, you need not give authorities, if it be only clear that you are not pretending originality. Do not say, as dear Pemberton used to, "I have a book at home, which I bought at the sale of Byles's books, in which there is an account of Parry's first voyage, and an explanation of the red snow, which shows

that the red snow is," &c., &c., &c. Instead of this say, "Red snow is," &c., &c., &c. Nobody will think you are producing this as a discovery of your own. When the authority is asked for, there will be a fit time for you to tell.

Third, never explain, unless for extreme necessity, who people are. Let them come in as they do at the play, when you have no play-bill. If what you say is otherwise intelligible, the hearers will find out, *if it is necessary*, as perhaps it may not be. Go back, if you please, to my account of Agatha, and see how much sooner we should all have come to dinner if she had not tried to explain about all these people. The truth is, you cannot explain about them. You are led in farther and farther. Frank wants to say, "George went to the Stereopticon yesterday." Instead of that he says, "A fellow at our school named George, a brother of Tom Tileston who goes to the Dwight, and is in Miss Somerby's room,—not the Miss Somerby that has the class in the Sunday school,—she's at the Brimmer School,—but her sister,"—and already poor Frank is far from George, and far from the Stereopticon, and, as I observe, is wandering farther and farther. He began with George, but, George having suggested Tom and Miss Somerby, by the same law of thought each of them would have suggested two others. Poor Frank, who was quite master of his one theme, George, finds unawares that he is dealing with two, gets flurried, but plunges on, only to find, in his remembering, that these two have doubled into four, and then, conscious that in an instant they will be eight, and, which is worse, eight themes or subjects on which he is not prepared to speak at all, probably wishes he had never begun. It is certain that every one else wishes it, whether he does or not. You need not explain. People of sense understand something.

Do you remember the illustration of repartee in Miss Edgeworth? It is this:—

Mr. Pope, who was crooked and cross, was talking with a young officer. The officer said he thought that in a certain sentence an interrogation-mark was needed.

"Do you know what an interrogation-mark is?" snarled out the crooked, cross little man.

"It is a crooked little thing that asks questions," said the young man.

And he shut up Mr. Pope for that day.

But you can see that he would not have shut up Mr. Pope at all if he had had to introduce his answer and explain it from point to point. If he had said, "Do you really suppose I do not know? Why, really, as long ago as when I was at the Charter House School, old William Watrous, who was master there then,—he had been at the school himself, when he and Ezekiel Cheever were boys,—told me that a point of interrogation was a little crooked thing that asks questions."

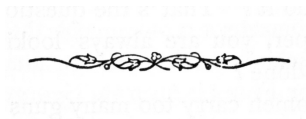
The repartee would have lost a good deal of its force, if this unknown young

officer had not learned, 1. not to introduce his remarks; 2. not to give authorities; and 3. not to explain who people are. These are, perhaps, enough instances in detail, though they do not in the least describe all the dangers that surround you. Speaking more generally, avoid parentheses as you would poison; and more generally yet, as I said at first, Be Short.

These six rules must suffice for the present. Observe, I am only speaking of methods. I take it for granted that you are not spiteful, hateful, or wicked otherwise. I do not tell you, therefore, never to talk scandal, because I hope you do not need to learn that. I do not tell you never to be sly, or mean, in talk. If you need to be told that, you are beyond such training as we can give here. Study well, and practise daily these six rules, and then you will be prepared for our next instructions,—which require attention to these rules, as all Life does,—when we shall consider

HOW TO WRITE.

Edward Everett Hale.



AT QUEEN MAUDE'S BANQUET.

She wears no crown
Save her own flossy curls,—
Rosiest, plumpest
Of pet baby-girls;
Blue-eyed and dimpled
And dignified she,
Pouring out for us
Invisible tea,—
Little Queen Maude.

Tiniest teacup
And saucer and spoon:—
Baby, your banquet
Has ended too soon.
Fancy's full cupboard
Unlocks to your hand;
We, your true subjects
Await your command,
Little Queen Maude.

Throned on the floor,
We must stoop to your state:
If a queen's little,
Can courtiers be great?
Now kiss us, dismiss us,
Red lips rosy-sweet,
For yonder's a poet
Chained fast to your feet,
Little Queen Maude.
Lucy Larcom.

THE EXCITEMENT AT KETTLEVILLE.

CHARACTERS.

BODKINS, *late in the employ of Messrs. Flimsy and Gauze,*
DITTO, *a Young Man about Town, famous in private theatricals,*
TINCTURE, *a Man with a Diploma,*
MOPER, *a Disappointed Candidate,*
PONDER, *a Man who thinks before he speaks,*
TOMMY, *a Youthful Bill-sticker,*
MISS HAVERWAY, *a Popular Young Lecturer.*

(Enter BODKINS and DITTO, right, and TINCTURE, MOPER, and PONDER, one after the other, from the opposite side.)

Bodkins. Well met, gentlemen, well met! We are all of one way of thinking, I presume, in regard to the business of to-night?

Ditto. I hope, gentlemen, that Kettleville will do her duty, and her whole duty, on this occasion.

Tincture. We must put a stop to this woman's rights movement, or it will put a stop to us. Action, heroic action, as we doctors say, is the only remedy. Now's the time.

Moper. How will you do it? That's the question. It can't be done.

Bodkins. Brother Moper, you are always looking on the dark side of things. Why can't it be done?

Moper. Because the women carry too many guns for us.

Bodkins. Guns? Guns? Does this little Miss Haverway carry a gun?

Moper. She doesn't carry anything else. That little morocco roll, or cylinder, in which she pretends to carry her lecture, is an air-gun,—a deadly weapon.

Bodkins. Possible? But that's a matter for the police to look into. Ha, ha! We are not to be intimidated, gentlemen,—eh? We are true Americans. No cowards among us,—eh? The blood of seventy-six does not,—does not—

Ditto. Stagnate in our veins.

Bodkins. Thank you, sir. Does not stagnate in our veins. Surely not in mine,—not in mine!

Ponder. May I be allowed to ask a question?

All. Certainly.

Ponder. What are we here for?

Bodkins. We are here, Mr. Ponder, to protest against allowing the town hall to be used to-night by one Miss Haverway for her lecture on woman's rights. I appeal to every young man in the land, ought it not to make our blood—our blood—

Ditto. Boil with indignation.

Bodkins. Thank you, sir. Boil with indignation, to see these attempts, on the part of certain audacious women, to oppress us, and take the bread out of our mouths, just as we are entering on our several careers?

Ditto. Gentlemen, what could be more—more—more—Excuse this burst of feeling. There *are* chords—Well, sir, go on.

Bodkins. Consider my own case, gentlemen. I had a snug situation in the store of Messrs. Flimsy and Gauze, the great dealers in muslins, laces, and such. An easy berth. All I had to do was to stand behind a counter and show the lady customers the newest styles of collars. All at once I am told that my services are not wanted. And, gentlemen, as if to add insult to injury, I am advised that the spade and the plough expect me,—me, with my delicate *physique*. Gentlemen, why, why were my services no longer required?

Ditto. Yes, why, gentlemen,—why,—why? If, gentlemen, one single reminiscence of Lexington and Bunker Hill lingers in your minds,—if—if—Excuse me. I was carried away by my feelings. Go on, Mr. Bodkins.

Bodkins. My dismissal was accompanied with the information that a young lady—a young lady (*sarcastically*)—had been selected to take my place.

Tincture and *Moper.* Shame! Shame! Too bad! Too bad!

Ditto. Atrocious! Yes, abominable!

Moper. I tell you we are all going to the *bad* just as fast as we can go. The world isn't the world it used to be.

Ditto. Gentlemen, there was a time when the whole business of making and trimming bonnets, and of making female dresses, was in the hands of men. Any reader of Shakespeare must be aware of this. That time must be revived. The case of my friend Bodkins calls for redress,—re-dress, gentlemen.

Tincture. Hear *me*, sir, and you will admit that *my* case still more eloquently cries—cries—

Ditto. Aloud for vengeance.

Tincture. Ay, that's it. I was, as you may be aware, bred a physician. My father, agent for the sale of Plantation Bitters, gave me a diploma. It hangs framed over my mantel-piece. You may see it, any of you, without charge. No sooner had I settled down in the flourishing village of Onward, no sooner had I begun to physic and

bleed the enterprising inhabitants, than a young woman calling herself a doctress—ha, ha! a doctress—made her appearance.

Ditto. Shame! Shame! Humbug, thy name is—woman!

Bodkins. There it is again! Woman! Always woman!

Moper. I tell you it's no use. We've got to come to it. We may as well be resigned, and put our noses peaceably down to the grindstone.

Ditto. Never! Never! No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no! False Douglas, thou hast lied.

Moper. You'll see, sir,—you'll see. Gentlemen, I can relate a still more exasperating case. The humble individual who addresses you studied for the ministry. I was a candidate to fill the pulpit in that same village of Onward. I had the reputation of being the most depressing preacher ever heard in those parts.

Ditto. Not poppy, nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy sirups of the East—Go on, sir, I was only musing aloud.

Moper. Everything looked encouraging. On one occasion, after I had preached, not a man, woman, or child of the congregation was seen to smile for a week. Everything, I say, looked encouraging, when, all at once—

Ditto. When all at once there appeared a woman!

Moper. You are right, sir; there appeared a woman. Will you believe it? The infatuated people of Onward have settled her over their first religious society. A woman!

Ditto. A female woman! Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts! Dash her in pieces! Must we endure all this?

Bodkins. Why, sir, in a degenerate city of degenerate New England, the city of Worcester—

Ditto. Three groans for Worcester!

Bodkins. They have actually elected women to serve on the school-committee.

Ditto. Enough! Enough! I have supped full of horrors.

Moper. O, that's nothing to what we shall have to swallow.

Ditto. Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind.

Bodkins. I had a brother—

Ditto. I had a brother once,—a gentle boy.

Bodkins. Mine went into a printing-office to learn to set type. He hadn't been there a week when a girl was admitted; and now—now—just because she can set type twice as fast as any of the men, she is allowed equal wages.

Ditto. There it is again! The irrepressible woman! Why didn't they tear down the printing-office? Equal wages indeed!

Bodkins. Well, my brother, who is a brave little fellow, did the best thing he could: he helped snow-ball the girl, and succeeded in hitting her on the head with a piece of ice.

Ditto. He shall have a pension. Served her right. Equal wages indeed!

Tincture. And yet there are men—fiends, rather, in human shape, libels on their sex—who pretend to see no reason why women shouldn't be doctors, ministers, lawyers, architects, builders, merchants, manufacturers,—in short, whatever they please, or chance to have a faculty for.

Bodkins. See how they are crowding us men out of the paths of literature and art! Look at Mrs. Stowe! She is paid more for a single page than my friend Vivid, author of "The Beauty of Broadway," gets for a whole volume.

Tincture. Look at Rosa Bonheur, painter of beasts!

Ditto. Let's all go and have her take our likenesses.

Tincture. See her rolling in wealth, while my friend Daub, with a family to support, sees his splendid productions, so rich in all the colors of the rainbow, unsold in the auction-rooms!

Moper. What are we going to do about it? That's the question.

Ditto. Awake, arise, or be forever fallen.

Bodkins. And they are talking now of giving women the suffrage,—letting them vote.

Ditto. When that time comes, find me on Torno's cliff or Pambamarca's side.

Ponder. May I be permitted to ask a question?

Bodkins. Certainly. We all go for free speech; that is, for free masculine speech.

Ponder. Aren't we all in favor of the principle of *no taxation without representation*? Answer me that.

All. Certainly. No doubt of it. Of course we are.

Ponder. Well, then, if women are taxed, ought they not—

Ditto. Gag him. Stop him. He has said enough.

Ponder. I say if women are taxed, ought they not—

Bodkins. Silence! We've had enough of that sort of talk.

Ditto. He's a woman's rights man. I thought as much. How like a fawning publican he looks!

Tincture. Kettleville is no place for you, sir.

Ditto. No, sir. Mount a velocipede and strike a bee-line for Worcester. That's your safe plan. Hence, horrible shadow! Unreal mockery, hence!

Ponder. Gentlemen, strike but hear. You'd admit, I suppose, that women must live. What, then, would you have them do?

Bodkins. Do? Why, tend the children, and wash clothes.

Tincture. I don't know about that. I don't like to see our primary schools kept by young women, whilst there are so many deserving young men out of employment.

Ditto. That's the talk. And as for washing clothes, how many good, honest fellows are hard pushed, through the absurd custom of giving these jobs of washing and ironing to women!

Ponder. But, gentlemen, be reasonable. Women must live,—must have some means of support,—must—

Ditto. Tr-r-r-raitor to thy sex! Don't we come first? Are they not our born thralls? Are not we their natural lords and masters? Wretch, whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance!

Ponder. Really, Mr. Ditto, I am not accustomed to be treated in this most extraordinary, most vituperative, most ungentlemanly—

Bodkins. Peace, gentlemen! Let everything be harmonious, I beg you, on this occasion. We have met informally to consider the means of preventing the spread in Kettleville of these wild, heretical notions concerning women's rights, now so prevalent. Miss Haverway shall not lecture in Kettleville. Are we all agreed upon that?

Ditto. Are we all agreed?

(Enter TOMMY, a bill-poster. TINCTURE takes one of the bills. TOMMY prepares to paste up another.)

Tincture. Ha! What have we here? A poster! An announcement of the lecture. *(Reads.)* "The celebrated Miss Haverway, lecturer on woman's rights—" *(To TOMMY)* Youth, forbear!

Tommy. I'm not a youth, and I'll not forbear. Touch me, and I'll daub you with paste.

Bodkins. Boy, stop that, or you'll rue the day. We shall tear down that bill.

Tincture. Save your paste, youth, and vanish.

(TOMMY threatens them with his brush; they retreat.)

Ditto. Punch him, jam him, down with him! He's nothing but an orphan, and there's no one to help him.

Moper. I think I may safely hit him with my cane.

(As he draws near to strike, enter MISS HAVERWAY with a cylindrical roll for papers in her hand. MOPER, BODKINS, and TINCTURE, show great

alarm as she points it at them.)

Miss H. What's all this? Tommy, what's the matter?

Tommy. These fellows talk of pitching into me. I should like to see them do it, that's all.

Miss H. So would I.

Tommy. They threaten to tear down your poster.

Miss H. Do they? We'll see.

Tommy. I'll paste 'em all up against the wall, if you say so, Miss.

Miss H. Leave them to me, Tommy, and proceed with your work.

(Exit TOMMY, singing "O, I wish I was in Dixie.")

Bodkins. (Aside.) I don't quite like the looks of things.

Miss H. (Approaching BODKINS.) Well, sir, have you any objection to my bill? Have you any objection to *me*, sir?

Bodkins. My dear lady—

Miss H. Don't dear *me*, sir; and don't *lady* me, sir. Call me plain woman.

(BODKINS, TINCTURE, and MOPER watch the roll in her hands, and manifest alarm when she points it at them.)

Bodkins. Well, then, plain woman, I—I—I—that is, *we*—my friends here—Moper, Tincture, and the rest—not being quite able to see this matter of woman's rights in the light that you—your ladyship—I mean you plain woman—see it in—

Miss H. (Explosively.) And why not, sir? Why not, I should like to know?

(BODKINS gets behind TINCTURE. MISS HAVERWAY paces the stage in an excited manner.)

Tincture. We only thought, madam, there would be no harm in ventilating—that is, discussing—the points at issue, and so—

Miss H. (Stopping suddenly before him.) Points? Points? *(Pointing the roll at him.)* Tell me the truth. What have you been plotting? No evasion!

(BODKINS and TINCTURE get behind MOPER.)

Tincture. (Thrusting MOPER forward.) This gentleman, madam, will explain.

Moper. If you'll have the goodness, madam, just to lower the point of your air-gun—

(She thrusts the roll at MOPER, and he retreats behind BODKINS and TINCTURE.)

Miss H. (To DITTO.) Well, sir,—and you?

Ditto. (Laughing.) I, Miss Haverway? In me behold your very humble servant. These gentlemen, conservative citizens of Kettleville, all except my friend Ponder here, I regret to say, have been making rare fools of themselves. They met for the preposterous purpose of devising some way of preventing you from lecturing this evening. To learn their plans, and, at the same time, to have some fun on my own account, I pretended to be one of the conspirators, and it is only now that I throw off the mask, and declare to them and to you that the booby who lifts a voice or a hand to prevent your lecturing as you propose will have to measure arms in set pugilistic encounter with your true knight to command, Mr. Frederick Ditto.

Miss H. Who says the days of chivalry are gone? Sir, I thank you.

Ditto. I have but one demand to make of these gentlemen, and that is, that they all attend your lecture. Mr. Ponder will come, I know.

Ponder. That was my intention from the first.

Miss H. (To BODKINS.) You will come, sir? *(As he hesitates, she lifts her roll.)*

Bodkins. Really—O yes, I'll come. Shall be most happy. *(Examining her collar.)* Real point lace, I declare!

Miss H. (To TINCTURE.) And you, sir?

Tincture. Unless my patients—

Miss H. No excuse, sir.

Tincture. I will come. *(Aside.)* I wish I could prescribe for her just once.

Miss H. (To MOPER.) You will follow their example, sir, of course.

Moper. Excuse me, but—*(seeing her roll levelled at him)*—I will not fail, madam, to be present.

Miss H. I thought so.

Ditto. Allow me to escort you, Miss Haverway, to your hotel. Mr. Ponder, will you join us? *(PONDER bows assent.)*

(As the three go off right, MISS H. turns, and goes toward the others with the roll extended, when BODKINS, TINCTURE, and MOPER go off abruptly left. Exeunt Omnes.)

Epes Sargent.

ROUND THE EVENING LAMP



FLORAL PUZZLES.

No. 26.

1. A familiar feminine name, and the miser's idol.
2. A confection, and a bunch of feathers.
3. A cry, and a vowel.
4. Half a musical instrument and a tree.
5. A prickly shrub and a Rhenish wine.
6. A hero's cry.
7. A title in Tartary, a vowel, and a measure.
8. An early bird, and part of a mountain.
9. Its master's pet.
10. An Eastern head-dress.
11. Three fifths of work, a vessel for hot water, and two thirds of a bee's song.
12. A great city, and a ruling passion.

M. B. G.

ENIGMAS.

No. 27.

I am composed of 9 letters.

My 1, 8, 3, is used in a hospital.

My 2, 7, 5, is used in a hospital.

My 6, 4, 9, 3, is used in a hospital.

My whole is the name of a dance.

HAUTBOY.

No. 28.

I am composed of 58 letters.

My 14, 3, 33, 40, 23, 48, 16, 12, is where our oldest ancestor lived before he met
with

My 10, 29, 6, 56, 46, 7, 27, 1, 24, 4, under the guise of

My 25, 50, 31, 20, 4.

My 11, 45, 52, 58, 29, 33, is suggestive of a fall.

My 2, 34, 54, 37, 23, 48, 55, 28, is suggestive of "Gloomy Dis."

My 42, 32, 22, 9, 19, was a favorite exclamation of the Psalmist.

My 13, 44, 8, 57, 15, 18, 26, 5, is a rhetorical fault.

My 23, 36, 43, 39, 41, 33, 29, 51, is a distinguished U. S. N. officer.

My 47, 30, 38, 17, is a handle.

My 49, 21, 35, 53, is more than a little.

My whole is a patriotic sentiment frequently repeated during the late war.

H. G. L.

RIDDLE.

No. 29.

I roll in the rivers, I rush with the years;
I have part in your sorrows, your cares, and your fears;
I sweep through the whirlwind, in thunder resound;
I linger in air; I am fixed in the ground.
The end of all laughter, the centre of mirth,
I hold my firm place in the midst of the earth.
I mingle with mourning; I echo in praise;
The whisper of terror my presence betrays.
I mutter where hatred and wrath are convened;
And the loss of me changes a friend to a fiend.

CHARADE.

No. 30.

Of all the curious creatures
That ever are chosen to pet,
Most mischievous, most provoking,
My *first* is the oddest yet.
He will tear up your choicest laces,
And drown your best Sunday shoes,
Put pepper and salt in your coffee,
And anything else he may choose.

Down from the ferny mountain,
'Mong the mosses cool and green,
Under the long birch-branches,
My shy little *second* is seen.
No bird can make sweeter music,
Robin, or bluebird, or wren,
As down o'er the yellow pebbles,
It dances into the glen.

My *whole*,—did you know there were fairies?—
She does such wonderful things,
That it must be she sees with their bright eyes,
And flies with their green-gold wings.
She has only to smile to the valleys,
And they blossom in fairest flowers;
And 'tis hard to tell which is sweeter,
Her sunshine or soft warm showers.

L. G. M.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 31.



ANSWERS.

15. Wheel-bar-row.
16. Behalf,
Rebel,
Anathema,
Narcissus,
Drink,
Yes.
17. Boast,
Arcadia,
Yesterday,
Aral,
Romeo,
Dnieper.
18. A still tongue makes a wise head. [(Ace) (tea) (ill) (tongue) (Mache) (saw) (eyes) (head).]
19. Pennsylvania.
20. Niagara Falls, Niagara County, New York.
21. Comb.
22. "For, of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"
23. Ptarmigan.
Some are worth millions; many are well to do; and thousands
24. can't e'en earn a living. [(Sum) R W (earth) (mill) (lions); (men) (knee) R (well) two (do); & (thousands) (canteen) (ear) (nail) (I V in G).]
25. Akers. [Achers.]
Saxe. [S (axe).]
T. Hughes. [T. h (u U yew).]
Lowell. [Lo (well).]

OUR LETTER BOX



April! the word brings a strain of bird-music in its very sound, although the days are gray and wintry yet. Those of you, dear readers, who live outside the city, where there are pleasant woods and orchards, long ago heard the song-sparrow's delicious trill, poured out of the vanishing snowdrifts. Dear little fellow! he is a persevering prophet, announcing to frozen ears the coming of anemones, violets, and columbines, and all the delicate troops of spring flowers that weave their fairy rings in the warm sunshine, over the green, velvety meadows.

Don't you know the song-sparrow, little boy or girl? You may not be able to distinguish him by sight from the other tiny brown sparrows, but you must have listened to him often. That was his note you heard on your way to school this morning,—that broke upon the air suddenly, so strong and clear and sweet, reminding you of one strain in a canary's song. But a song-sparrow in his freedom is far more cheery to hear than a canary in his cage.

Out in the country the bluebirds are singing, too. "The sea-blue bird of March," as Tennyson calls him,—shall we hear his low, gentle warble in the elms on Boston Common, by and by? He is a neighborly songster, so we shall be looking and listening for him soon, gladder to hear his music for the thought that he is singing the same tune to our young folks almost everywhere.

How social and cheerful the world feels after the birds begin to sing and the flowers to open! For birds and flowers are excellent companions, only next best to human friends. And if you live among friends who love all sweet and simple things in nature as you do, children, you are rich, though under the lowliest roof.

Wouldn't we like to go violet-hunting with you, little folks, some of these bright Saturday afternoons? What a scramble we would have for the earliest violet! Whose blue eyes or black eyes or gray eyes or hazel eyes would see it first? Ours will not this year, we are only too certain. But tell us about it, Blue Eyes and Hazel Eyes, if you go without us. To hear from you of the pussy-willows in bloom, and the houstonias and white mouse-ear tufts and early saxifrage sprinkling the mossy rocks with perfumed snow, will be almost as good as seeing them ourselves.

And here is a gem of a poem about April. If you little ones cannot quite understand it, some of the older children among you will like it, we are sure.

APRIL'S FREAK.

When April still was young,
And full of her tricks and wiles,—
Often frowning and sad,
Again all grace and smiles,—
One day to herself she said,
“I will feign that I am dead.

“The Sun and the Wind will mourn,
For they love me well, I know:
I will hear what they say of me
In my drapery of snow.”
So silently, in the night,
She clothed herself in white.

The Sun rose up in the morn
And looked from east to west;
And April lay still and white.
Then he called the wind from his rest.
“Sigh and lament,” he said;
“Sweet April, the child, is dead!

“She that was always fair,
Behold how white she lies!
Cover the golden hair,
Close down the beaming eyes;
One last time let us kiss thee;
Sweet April, we shall miss thee!”

The Sun touched his lips to her cheek,
And the color returned in a glow;
The Wind laid his hand on her hair,
And it glistened under the snow,
As, laughing aloud in her glee,
Sweet April shook herself free.

From long familiarity with the inside of a school-room, we know that it is hard to find a text-book in English literature suitable for beginners. Some are carefully

prepared, some are very useful to the mature student; but few that we know of are calculated to awaken and enchain the interest of the young.

A good library is, after all, better than any text-book. And such a volume is chiefly valuable as an introduction to standard authors. Not every one who attempts it, however, can introduce either books or persons well.

In "Home Pictures of English Poets, for Fireside and School-room," this is gracefully accomplished. The reader is introduced to fifteen leading poets, from Chaucer to Burns, inclusive, and is made to feel at home with them, through the vivacity and tact of the writer. She lets us shake hands with childlike old Chaucer, sit down and chat with gruff, kind-hearted Doctor Johnson and his queer friends, stand beside gentle, pensive Cowper while he plays with his tame hares, and get acquainted with the writings and ways of them all.

There are specimens of their verse, unusually well chosen, characteristic anecdotes, and the comments of such critics as Hazlitt, Thackeray, Lowell, Whipple, and Henry Reed.

The young student will find few story-books more interesting. We cannot help wishing that the writer would go on with her work and give us some sketches of the great poets of the present century. The book is published by D. Appleton & Co., of New York.

"E. W." may find the answer to her letter in a sermon by Rev. E. E. Hale, of Boston, which we will send to her if she desires it. We do not know her address. She will find there many kind and thoughtful suggestions; and so may others who are of a too self-conscious and self-analyzing turn. One of "E. W.'s" difficulties is a painful feeling of not being agreeable to others. Mr. Hale says: "The art of pleasing is one in which most women are of nature interested; and in which all women should be interested, and all men. True Christian society will never be established on the true basis of Christian love till all women and all men study with consecrated zeal the true method of giving pleasure to others. . . .

"But it is not only with reference to the great duty of pleasing others, but in reference to every duty and every experience, that this habit of self-torture needs to be controlled. . . .

"It is not thanks we are after, it is not entertainment, it is not variety, it is not fame; simply, it is life. And we gain that, not by fumbling in the ground, not by asking questions and scrutinizing the answers, but only by using the life we have."

As soon as "E." nobly takes the duty next her hand, all these little things—her own unconsciousness, her own ease, her own simplicity—will be added to her,—be

added without effort, or even desire, of her own.

Our offer for the Prize Puzzles closes with the publication of the present number. It will take some time to look over and compare them, but we hope to be able to announce the successful competitors in May. If possible, we shall also print some of the successful puzzles in the May number.

We have now another offer to make to our subscribers, this time only to those who are under fifteen years of age. We propose to give three prizes of twenty dollars each to any three boys or girls, under that age, who will send us the three best original compositions, in the form of a Story, Prose Sketch, or Dialogue, as the writers may choose. When finished, each must cover about one page of the Letter Box; at the longest, not more than two pages. They must be sent so as to reach us by the first day of October. The successful compositions will afterward be printed in the Letter Box.

Each paper must be written *on one side of the sheet only*, must be signed with the writer's own name, age, and post-office address, in full, and labelled on the outside "Prize Story," or "Prize Sketch," or "Prize Dialogue."

The different papers will of course be compared as to spelling, punctuation, grammar, and correct construction, and these matters will have weight in the final decision. But naturalness of style, and knowledge of the subject chosen, are what we deem especially desirable. Plenty of grown-up people write upon subjects they know almost nothing about,—that is why the world of books is so full of rubbish. It is better not to begin so, if one wishes to write what it will be worth while for others to read.

We make this offer, not because we are by any means in want of material for the Letter Box, but because we are sure it will be a good thing for the boys and girls themselves.

School compositions are usually too ambitious. Children try to write in the language of books, which is about the same thing as trying to write in a foreign tongue. If you live among tolerably refined and cultivated people, the language you hear every day is the best for you to write in. When you *think* book-words, it will be time enough to use them.

As to subjects, take something with which you feel perfectly at home. "Going a Berryng," "Picking up Shells," "What I saw in the Woods," "A Skating Adventure," "Out in the Street," "The Flowers Bessie and I love best," "Why Tom and I can't agree,"—something of this sort will do very well. Certainly it will be likely to turn out much better than an attempt at a romantic story or bookish essay. Use your eyes

first, and then your pen.

And pray do not *roll* your manuscripts, but *fold* them. If our correspondents knew the trials we have with rolled-up manuscripts, and into what unamiable moods we are put by the curling, flying sheets, they would send their articles in a different shape. As it is, we are in danger of liking *flat* contributions best.

Samson's Riddle, and the one put to Œdipus by the Sphinx, are the only two yet mentioned by our correspondents as being the most ancient on record. Since the date of neither of these is exactly known, it is impossible to say which is the older. But as far back in the ages as men have lived, guessing riddles must have been a common amusement, for they have always been written all over the earth and sky and sea. Perhaps the most perplexing enigmas have never found their way into books.

A subscriber informs us of a mistake in the proverb-puzzle in the last Letter Box, the answer to which is,

“Many hands make light work.”

He says, “The letter ‘I’ should have been made by extending the little instead of the fore finger; and in the ‘O’ the tips of the fingers should have been made to meet.” We are not familiar with deaf-mute signs, and gladly make these corrections.

Willy Wisp's article on “Rebus-Making” has called out another, from a Western correspondent. It will be seen that *Hitty Maginn's* rules are rather harder than *Willy Wisp's*, but these strictures need not discourage our young rebus-makers, since their aim is only to show that there is a *very best* way for this, as for all kinds of work.

MR. EDITOR:—

I have read with much interest the letter of your correspondent *Willy Wisp* on the subject of rebuses; and, differing from him in many particulars, I am induced to make two suggestions.

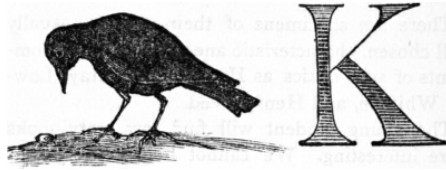
1. A perfect rebus must be so constructed that its solution is accomplished simply by the enunciation of the objects represented, whose names must be identical *in sound* with the words it is sought to express.

2. Its wit and ingenuity, as well as its value as a puzzle, depend upon the incongruity between the symbol and the word or words it represents.

My first rule discards at once all “baby methods,” as they are very

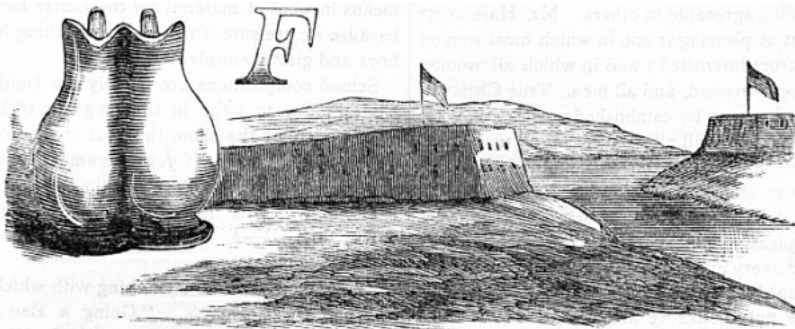
properly designated. It rejects all spelling, the use of the *minus* sign, and, strictly carried out, the use of letters except as pictorial characters: that is, as representing the name and not the sound of the letter.

The only latitude admissible is in this single respect, that we make use of letters indifferently to express either their sound or their names: for example, the following may be employed in a rebus either for the voice of an amphibious animal or a popular game:—



It should, however, be strictly adhered to, that, when a letter is used to express its sound, the letter itself should be employed instead of some invention identical with it in name. The first symbol in the Letter Box rebus for February can only be read, “Double you-hat”; not “What,” as intended. The only case I now think of in which such a symbol could be employed would be, if I were to say to *Willy Wisp*, If you hope to succeed in making a first-rate rebus, you must re-

[*Transcriber's Note: There appears to be a layout error in the original; this paragraph ends in mid-word.*]



A letter must express either its name or its sound in all cases. The use, for example, of the letter “T,” followed by a man, for the definite article, is entirely illegitimate. Admitting that the male of the human species represents the pronoun “he,” which it does not, the combination I speak of resolves itself only into “T-he,”—a word which may possibly be found

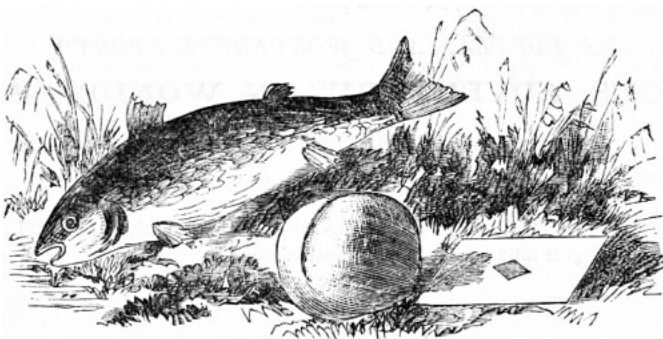
in Cherokee, but not, to my knowledge, in English.

In case it is necessary to make use of a syllable or word for which no pictorial symbol can be found, it is better to write it out boldly than to adopt some of the methods employed by rebus-writers.

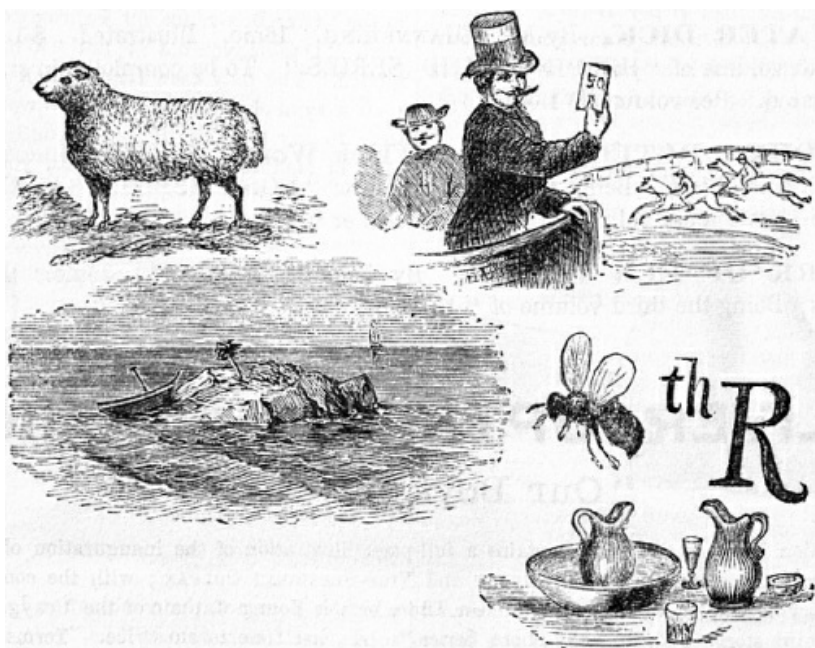
Figures, if employed, must express their names simply. The final symbols in the rebus above mentioned read plainly enough, "Acumen," since the figure may as well represent "Q" as "2,"—the letter as the numeral; but to make the symbols express "eight women" is impossible.

My second rule leads the maker of a rebus, when he has two symbols which equally express the sound, to employ the one most remote in meaning from the word he desires to represent. You might represent the word "children" by a group of boys and girls; but if you can delineate a poor little *wren* out in a storm, and apparently *chilled* to the marrow, it will be better. If you want the word "cataract," you can draw one; but the incongruity of representing it by a cat erect on its hind legs is so striking that it almost makes the symbol allowable in spite of the discrepancy in sound.

It adds greatly to the beauty of a rebus if you so select your symbols that they can be arranged in a single group, to make one picture; this is difficult, but is on that account the more worth striving for. Here is one. It looks as if a fishing-party were not far off, but represents the name of an American statesman, from which it does not vary perceptibly in sound.



Not to write too much, I close with another rebus, the answer to which will be given next month. It is the reply sent by a gentleman in North Carolina to a friend who invited him to a Thanksgiving dinner. If any bright-eyed reader objects to its bad English, or thinks it contains a trifling inaccuracy, he must remember where it originated.



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.

The caption *Launching the Life-Boat* was located between pages 236 and 237, and says to see page 218, both locations of which are clearly incorrect. It has been relocated to the middle of the *Wrecks and Wreckers*.

[The end of *Our Young Folks. An Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls. Volume 5, Issue 4* edited by John Townsend Trowbridge and Lucy Larcom]