OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AN

ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

FOR

BOYS AND GIRLS.

EDITED BY

J. T. TROWBRIDGE & GAIL HAMILTON

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BOSTON

TICKNOR & FIELDS

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1866.

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An Illustrated Magazine

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

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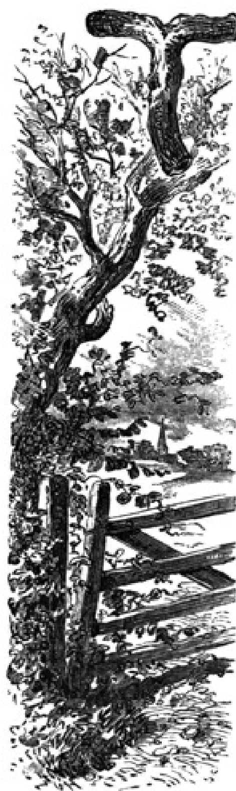
THE LITTLE SOUTHERNERS.



HERE were four great brown eyes peeping at us through the openings of the fence as we went up the avenue. Two of these were lower down by a bar's width than the others, so of course I knew which were Ella's and which Rosa's, because Ella had told me that she had a little sister.

But only the eyes were the same. Ella was a straight, slender little creature, carrying her head in a queenly way, and looking frankly and earnestly into your eyes with her own.

Rosa was just as round as anything could be, and be a little girl. Her face was round, her bright berry eyes were round, her cherry pouting mouth was round, and her little round body would have rolled either way, I believe.

In one hand, little round Rosa held her beloved "Ragdolly," as she called her whom she loved better than all her more elegant toys and treasures. This dear object had an extremely soiled and banged appearance, as if she had been used for polishing tables, sweeping carpets, and driving nails; and from what I saw afterward of Ragdolly, and the uses to which she was devoted, I don't doubt that her looks told the truth. Rosa usually carried her as Mother Cat does her kittens, only using her hands instead of her mouth, as she lifted Dolly by the back of the neck. I don't think Ragdolly minded it much; she looked to me like a doll of experience, who could bear anything.

Ella was nearly two years older than Rosa, so she had put all her dolls in bed in a very motherly way before she came out for her walk.

But I must tell you who these little people were. They had come all the way from their home in the Far South, to spend the summer among the Green Mountains. This happened six years ago, before the poor, angry South had filled up the road to us with blazing towns, and cruel prisons, and bloody battle-fields.

Ella and I had already met once, and had fallen desperately in love with each other as it seemed. So it happened that, as I caught sight of the brown eyes with which I began my story, Ella's pair, at least, twinkled with stars of happy light, as I said, "We've come for a walk with you."

Now there were the shining eyes, and there were the red lips, and there was a convenient break in the fence, so I naturally stooped to kiss the tempting mouth between the bars; but to my surprise Ella drew back, keeping her eyes fixed on mine, but with a shy glance from the corners at the strange lady. Although I was a little grieved at this sudden coolness in my new little love, I thought best to say nothing about it, as we set off for our walk, Ella taking possession of my hand without my asking.

I wish I could give you the sweet tones of these little girls, and their queer, pretty, Southern accent. They were as well-bred little bodies as I ever saw, but they had caught from the little blacks some odd turns of expression and pronunciation, which sounded strangely to our Northern ears.

"Why, Ella!" said I, "are you really going to walk with me?"

"Yes, Miss Katie, for I love ye! I loved ye just de first time I saw ye!"

"Did you, darling? I loved you then, too. But why wouldn't you kiss me to-night when I came up to you?"

"Don't you know de reason?"

"No indeed! How should I, little kitten?"

"Den I'll tell ye,"—and here Ella's voice sank into a very soft whisper. "*I don't like to kiss ones I love when other peoples are looking at me!*"

"Why not, darling?"

"O, I'm afraid they'll laugh," (*lawf* she called it,) "and that would spoil it."

Wasn't that thoughtful in a little girl only four years old?

All this time, the children's Aunt Hattie and I were walking on together, while round little Rosa rolled on by herself, clutching the throat of her forlorn old Dolly, who had spots added continually to her speckled complexion by the currants and raspberries which Rosa *pressed* upon her as she went.

Presently, as Rosa, who was our leader, was crossing the railway track, she made a discovery, and cried out, "O Ella! tome here twick!" Ella ran, and soon they both shouted together, "Come! see the *killed toad-frogs* in de hole!" And sure enough, there were half a dozen little dead toads.

I suppose they had, perhaps, been frightened to death by the terrible steam-engine, with its flaming eyes and fiery breath, as it came rushing furiously down the track above their snug little nursery.

The tender-hearted little sisters wanted very much to play they were good Samaritans, and try if they couldn't rub the poor "toad-frogs" back into noisy little jumpers again; but their legs looked so long and stiff that we thought they could never be drawn up into jumping order, so we left them.

Rosa's face really was a little longer than it was broad as she took her last look of the poor things; but she fixed her eyes upon Ragdolly with the most earnest, loving expression, as much as to say, "I am glad it isn't you who are dead!" and immediately rubbed a great red raspberry right across her inky lips to show her how much she loved her. This did not add to Dolly's beauty at all, but I hope she was bright enough to know it was done in love.

When we had found a good resting-place we all seated ourselves where we could see the gold and purple hills far away, upon which the sun shone long after he had hidden himself from us.

But Ella and Rosa could not sit still long. They tried all the big rocks and tree-roots about us for seats, one after the other, but found them either "too hard" or "too soft," as little *Silver Hair* in the story-book found the chairs of the "Big huge Bear" and the "Middle-sized Bear." So Ella and Rosa hopped around us like little birds.

Rosa tried to put Dolly up into a tree, but gave this plan up after the poor thing had tumbled down to the ground twenty times. She finally poked her head-first into a hole in a stone wall, leaving her forlorn legs sticking out toward us in the most pleading manner.

Then Rosa pulled a lapful of buttercups, and arranged the little green buds and yellow flowers around the largest blossom of all, with a great ado of baby-mother toil and anxiety.

"Dis is de mudder," said she, as she laid down the wide-awake, grown-up blossom, "and dese yere are de little babies," as she heaped into the broad lap of poor mother buttercup a pile of little green and yellow miniatures of herself. Finally, after playing with them a long while, she put them two by two into little green beds of grass, and, tucking them carefully in, she left them there for the night—and forever, I presume!

As for Miss Dolly, when she was dragged out of her stone prison she was a fearful object to see: there was a big rent (a fresh wound) in the side of her head, through which her woolly brains were coming out, and there was a big dent right where her nose used to be. One likes to see dimples in both cheeks and chin, but a dimpled nose, and particularly a nose all dimple, is very queer. But I am sure Rosa loved Ragdolly better and better for every spot and dent.

As for Ella, I could never tell you all the pretty, graceful things she did and said: and yet it was more her way of doing and saying, than the things themselves. As we walked toward home (after the gold and purple hills began to look dark and sulky because their playfellow the sun had gone to bed) Ella told me in confidence all about her "Paw" and her

“Maw,” as she called her papa and mamma, and about “Grondmammy,” her kind old black nurse, and about her baby-brother. Best of all, she told us that her brothers Fred and Arthur, and her sister Julia, were all coming, as soon as their school was over, to stay with us for the summer. “Sister Julia,” said little Ella very decidedly, “is just de puttiest girl in all de world, Miss Katie!—even more puttier dan you!” and I felt very warm and happy over my little piece of a compliment, I can tell you,—quite glad to be second to “sister Julia.”

We reached home that night with tired feet, but with a great store of what happy dreams are made of, and of plans for many days to be spent on the hills and in the beautiful woods after the older children should come.

But we were not idle while we waited for the Alabama school to close. I used to listen eagerly to the pattering of their feet on the walk, as they learned to come by themselves to see me, and I never could help laughing outright with joy as soon as I caught sight of the jaunty little brown hats which crowned their dear little figures as they came up to the old Parsonage. Their voices made the sweetest music I heard all that summer, although Phœbes, and Robins, and Bobolinks did their best all around me. Rosa’s talk was, to be sure, mostly to herself and to her Dolly (who became day by day more dimpled and distressed-looking, and was loved all the more), although she would sometimes speak of pictures which were shown her, or make some funny speech about “my buzzer Walter,” who was Ragdolly’s only rival. He was a very little “buzzer,” only a year old, and it was well for him that Rosa was away from him, if she had no other way of showing her love toward him than toward Dolly, or he wouldn’t have buzzed very much longer.

One day, as Ella and Rosa were in the Parsonage study, looking over some great books which tell all about that very odd country, Japan, they were greatly delighted with the pictures of rainbow-colored birds and fishes. When Rosa found a bird which had on as many gay colors as his little body would hold, she cried out, “O, dat looks just like my buzzer Walter!” Now of course she didn’t mean that her baby-brother had yellow wings, and blue legs, and a green tail, and a red beak,—not at all,—only the bird and “buzzer Walter” were both very beautiful in her eyes. But Ella felt somewhat mortified, and wanted to make an apology for her two-years-old sister. Said she, “Rosa doesn’t understand about pictures; she doesn’t know that dey are—that dey are”—(and here she hesitated, and her eyes grew very big and winked very fast, because she was afraid she could not get the big thought she had started with safely out)—“that dey are *the meanings of things what stay on earth*: she thinks dey are put in just because dey are pretty!” And after this Ella sat back in her little chair and fanned herself with her morsel of a pocket-handkerchief, very much relieved that her big speech in behalf of Rosa was over.

But Julia and Fred and Arthur came at last, and then the days were not half long enough for us! These older children proved to be as lovely in their way as were Ella and Rosa in theirs. This was the very best-trained family of five children that I ever saw, and Aunt Hattie, under whose care they were, had an easy task.

O, how we went gypsying that beautiful summer! There were never such beautiful days before, except those which stirred Mr. Lowell’s heart to the beautiful June song in “Sir Launfal”:—

> “Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it.
> We are happy now because God so wills it!”

So we found it. Every morning it was our custom to set forth for some pleasant spot which we had chosen the day before, and we were sure not to get home again till the dinner was cold!

The Parsonage was our trysting-place. Ella and Rosa were sure to come first, too impatient to wait for the older ones. Ella usually brought an old reading-book tucked under her arm, and held very fast. This was almost as great a pet with her as was Ragdolly with Rosa, and it was nearly as much battered. From it Ella used to read out in a very comical way. It really seemed to me, as I heard her, that I should not like to write poetry for Ella to read!

She would begin by saying, “Shall I read ye something from dis yere book?”

“O, yes! I would like you to read very much.”

“Well, I will: ‘The Dying Girl.’ ”

“No, Ella, don’t read that, please, this bright morning. I would rather hear something else.”

“But I must read dis, because you don’t want it! It will do you good!”

“Very well,—read on.”

“ ‘The dream is past!’ You don’t know what dat means!”

“No. Do you?”

“No, of tourse not; *he* doesn’t, either. Why, it’s *poetry*!”

I suppose that, when Ella said “he,” she meant the one who wrote the poem, and her idea seemed to be that poetry wasn’t to be understood even by the man that made it!—which was severe upon the poets, wasn’t it?

Of course Rosa always came trailing Dolly along. Later, Fred and Arthur, two as thorough *gentleboys* (why may not one say gentleboy as well as gentleman?) as I ever met, would make their appearance, and then close behind them Miss Hattie and Julia. Sometimes the lady of whom I spoke before would join us, and then there would be two story-tellers in the party! Our way was to select a good camping-place by the river-side or in the woods, and spread our plaids upon the rocks or grass in the shade of some great tree. This was our home, and from it the children made excursions, returning when they were tired, or when they had made any wonderful discoveries.

Julia and Ella would bring beautiful flowers and trailing vines, with which they delighted to dress the hair of the young ladies who sat crocheting, and reading or talking.

Fred and Arthur were more venturesome, and often treated us, after a long absence, to a feast of raspberries or blackberries, served in a “lordly dish,”—nothing more nor less than the crowns of their straw hats, which they had lined with fresh green leaves for the occasion.

When the berries were eaten they had games till they were tired, and then somebody would tell a story, in which Rosa would get so interested that she would roll up poor Dolly into a hard ball, with which she rubbed her own eyes and nose violently. This was always her way of showing deep feeling!

“Don’t rub your face so hard, Rosa! You will certainly screw that little round button of a nose right off, I am afraid.”

“O, no, she won’t, Miss Katie,” said Ella. “Dere’s meat dat holds it on her face!”

At which little Rosa piped up, with a most loving hug of her used-up pet, “My Dolly’s dot a heap of meat on de top of her nose!”

There must have been a “heap of meat” on the back of Dolly’s neck, or it never would have lasted so long.

When the story was ended, Rosa’s face always was scarlet, and shone as if it had been well waxed and polished, but Ragdolly was crumpled to that degree that nobody but Rosa would have known her as a doll at all. Being used as a handkerchief disagreed with her more than anything.

After the story came play again; and who can guess which enjoyed it most, the little or the more grown-up people?

Ella was as quick as a squirrel in her motion, and always liked to make her way to the top of things. “Wait, please,” she would say; “I want to show Miss Katie some of my climbings!”—and some of Ella’s climbings carried her lithe little body up among the birds’ nests and the ripe cherries. But she always came safely down, and not the slightest accident happened to spoil the pleasure of this merry little company during all that summer.

However, Ella had one great trial, which she had to bear many times in a day. It was Rosa’s persisting in seeing something like “buzzer Walter” in everything that caught her attention, as in the bird-story I have already told you. She would say of a horse, “Dis yere horse is just as big as my buzzer Walter”; and of a butterfly, “Dat’s just as little as my buzzer Walter”; and of everything, “Dat’s as putty as Walter!” At which Ella would almost lose patience, and say, “Why, how Rosa talks about Walter! She tells everything *what isn’t* about him, and doesn’t tell things what are!” Ella was as proud of baby Walter as was Rosa; but as he was not present to speak for himself, she did not like him to be misrepresented.

Mrs. Edward A. Walker.

THE VIOLETS' LESSON.

ONE bright day early in spring-time a cluster of timid little violets, which had pushed their way up through the damp mould, opened their eyes and looked out on the world around them. They found themselves just within the edge of a large wood, with noble old forest-trees lifting their heads in stately grace on every side, and vigorous young saplings shooting up here and there between. The whole wood was filled with the music of the birds, which had flown north from some sunny clime to herald the approach of summer. And close beside the timid violets, so near that they could lean over and look down into its clear waters, a bright stream went hurrying by, out into the meadows and fields beyond, and on, on, as far as the violets could see; how much farther they did not know. Everything about them was so grand or so beautiful, and so full of life, that the poor little violets felt themselves very insignificant beings indeed, in this strange, glad world into which they had entered. And they shrank closer together, as if each would shelter itself behind the other, when the golden April sunshine, glancing through the budding boughs above them, spied them out and sent a stray beam to cheer them and brighten up their delicate blue petals. Presently an oriole perched himself on one of the branches of a graceful elm close by, and warbled as if he would pour out his very heart in music,—such a song of life and gladness and love.

"Oh!" sighed one of the violets, when the strain paused for a moment, "if we could have voices like that to rejoice every living thing within hearing, it would indeed be something to live for. Would it not be a grand thing, sisters, if we could be of some use in this beautiful world!"

Low as the whisper was, the oriole, who was just poising himself on the bough above, preparatory to another outburst of melody, heard it, and, looking down, said: "Why, you are of use, little ones! It is your business here to grow up just as fresh and lovely as you can, and help to make the world more beautiful. Every one cannot sing, to be sure; but every one can do what is in his own power." And so, having answered the violet, he launched out into his song again exultingly, joining the chorus of woodland minstrels who were rejoicing on every side.

But the violet whispered to her sisters lower than before: "Ah, but I wish we could *do* something! It is all very well to be beautiful, although I doubt if such poor little tiny things as we are anything very wonderful in that way."

The April wind swept across them and bent their heads over the clear stream. "Look at yourselves in the water, and see if you have not been made beautiful enough to help to gladden the world, and do not sigh for more than has been given you. Live your own life to the utmost; be fragrant and blooming, and you do your part." And the stream looked up to them, and sang also in its low, murmurous ripple, "Everything has its own work to do in the world! Mine is to freshen the grass and flowers, that, like yourselves, grow near my green margin, and the lofty trees that mirror themselves in my waters; and after a while, when I have expanded into a broad river, to bear on my bosom noble ships that carry men whither they wish to go. Rejoice in the sunshine and soft air, and be as lovely as you can,—as lovely as you were designed to be,—and in time you will know for what use you are destined. Be content till then." So the April wind swept on to visit other flowers, and the brook flowed along its pebbly bed, singing low to itself as before.

And the violets still looked up timidly, but they welcomed the warm, bright sun-rays when they shone in upon them, bringing to them fresh life and color; they breathed out their delicate fragrance lovingly on the soft spring airs, which gently caressed them. And so they bloomed in perfect beauty, unseen for a while by human eyes. But on one sunny day two young girls came wandering through the wood, searching for wild-flowers, and listening to the birds. Presently one of them paused above the cluster of violets. "O Laura, see what lovely violets! I am going to paint them for mamma. If I should gather them, they would wither long before I could take them to her. But if I copy them as faithfully as I can, they will be the loveliest reminder of the spring that I can send to her in the close, built-up city." So she sat down on a fallen tree near by, and sketched and painted the delicate wee things in the book she carried with her, while the violets stood in an ecstasy of delight at finding how much joy they could give by their beauty. Then the young girls went on and left the wood to its solitude.

All things went on as before. The birds sang their love-songs, flitting to and fro; the trees put forth fresh leaves, and grew greener every day, and gave deeper shade; the stream rippled merrily on its way. Occasionally some careless woodsman strolled, whistling, along a faintly trodden path that led through the heart of the wood; or a troop of merry children, let loose for holiday, came seeking wild-flowers; but none of them found the violets, until one golden morning there came a little pale-faced, blue-eyed girl, drawn by her brothers in a light basket carriage. The little girl had been sick for weeks, but with the opening spring she had revived, and now on soft, sunny days she was able to go out in this way to take the air. As her brothers drew her along near the margin of the stream, she spied the violets, and the blue eyes grew bright with pleasure. "O Arty! Charlie!" she exclaimed, "won't you take up the violets very carefully for me, roots and all, with the earth around them? I want to carry them home and put them in a flower-pot in my room, where I can tend them myself, and see them whenever I wish, when I cannot run about to look for flowers." And Arty and Charlie, glad to please their darling sister, took up the delicate cluster with the greatest care, and, holding the earth in which it grew firmly together by means of paper wrapped around it, they laid the prize in Edith's lap, and drew her home.

And so the violets, transferred to Edith's room, bloomed as beautifully as in their native wood; for loving care never failed them; and day by day, while Edith gathered health and strength, the blue eyes shone down on them with an ever new delight. And Edith's visitors often smiled with pleasure as her flowers suggested to them some pleasant thought, or brought the brightness and freshness of nature, too often forgotten, into their daily lives.

So the violets found their use. And day after day, as they breathed out their lives in bloom and fragrance, the breeze that wandered in at the open windows heard the violet which had spoken before whisper to her sisters, "Ah, when I sighed to be of some use in the world, I little dreamed that we could do so much good just by growing up to be as lovely as we can,—as lovely as we are designed to be,—as the brook said to us. It was right. I am content." And her sister violets clustered around her answered softly together, "The brook was right. We are content."

Susan E. Dickinson.

THE BIRD'S QUESTION.

BEHIND us at our evening meal
The gray bird ate his fill,
Swung downward by a single claw,
And wiped his hookèd bill.

He shook his wings and crimson tail,
And set his head aslant,
And, in his sharp, impatient way,
Asked, "What does Charlie want?"

"Fie, silly bird!" I answered, "tuck
Your head beneath your wing
And go to sleep";—but o'er and o'er
He asked the self-same thing.

Then, smiling, to myself I said:
How like are men and birds!
We all are saying what he says
In action or in words.

The boy with whip and top and drum,
The girl with hoop and doll,
And men with lands and houses, ask
The question of Poor Poll.

However full, with something more
We fain the bag would cram;
We sigh above our crowded nets
For fish that never swam.

No bounty of indulgent Heaven
The vague desire can stay;
Self-love is still a Tartar mill
For grinding prayers alway.

The dear God hears and pities all;
He knoweth all our wants;
And what we blindly ask of Him
His love withholds or grants.

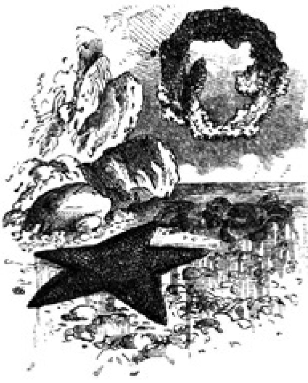
And so I sometimes think our prayers
Might well be merged in one;
And nest and perch and hearth and church
Repeat, "Thy will be done."

John G. Whittier.

SEA-LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE STAR-FISH TAKES A SUMMER JOURNEY.



NCE there was a little star-fish, and he had five fingers and five eyes, one at the end of each finger,—so that he might be said to have at least one power at his fingers' ends. And he had I can't tell you how many little feet; but being without legs, you see, he couldn't be expected to walk very fast. The feet couldn't move one before the other as yours do,—they could only cling like little suckers, by which he pulled himself slowly along from place to place; nevertheless, he was very proud of this accomplishment, and sometimes this pride led him to an unjust contempt for his neighbors, as you will see by and by. He was very particular about his eating; and, besides his mouth, which lay in the centre of his body, he had a little scarlet-colored sieve, through which he strained the water he drank; for he couldn't think of taking in common sea-water, with everything that might be floating in it,—that would do for crabs and lobsters and other common people; but anybody who wears such a lovely purple coat, and has brothers and sisters dressed in crimson, feels a little above such living.

Now, one day, this star-fish set out on a summer journey,—not to the sea-side, where you and I went last year; of course not, for he was there already; no, he thought he would go to the mountains. He could not go to the Rocky Mountains, nor to the Catskill Mountains, nor the White Mountains; for with all his accomplishments he had not yet learned to live in any drier place than a pool among the rocks, or the very wettest sand at low tide: so, if he travelled to the mountains, it must be to the mountains of the sea.

Perhaps you didn't know that there are mountains in the sea. I have seen them, however, and I think you have too,—at least their tops, if nothing more. What is that little rocky ledge, where the light-house stands, but the stony top of a hill rising from the bottom of the sea? And what are the pretty green islands, with their clusters of trees and grassy slopes, but the summits of hills lifted out of the water?

In many parts of the sea, where the water is deep, are hills, and even high mountains, whose tops do not reach the surface, and we should not know where they are, were it not that the sailors, in measuring the depth of the sea, sometimes sail right over these mountain-tops, and touch them with their sounding-lines.

The star-fish set out one day, about five hundred years ago, to visit some of these mountains of the sea. If he had depended upon his own feet for getting there, it would have taken him till this day, I verily believe; but he no more thought of walking than you or I should think of walking to China. You shall see how he travelled. A great train was coming down from the Northern seas; not a railroad train, but a water train, sweeping on like a river in the sea; its track lay along near the bottom of the ocean, and above you could see no sign of it, any more than you can see the cars while they go through the tunnel under the street. The principal passengers by this train were icebergs, who were in the habit of coming down on it every year, in order to reduce their weight by a little exercise; for they grow so very large and heavy up there in the North, every winter, that some sort of treatment is really necessary to them when summer comes. I only call the icebergs the principal passengers, because they take up so much room; for thousands and millions of other travellers come with them,—from the white bears asleep on the bergs, and brought away quite against their will, to the tiniest little creatures rocking in the cradles of the ripples or clinging to the delicate branches of the sea-mosses. I said you could see no sign of the great water train from above; that was not quite true, for many of the icebergs are tall enough to lift their heads far up into the air, and shine with a cold, glittering splendor in the sunlight; and you can tell, by the course in which they sail, which way the train is going deep down in the sea.

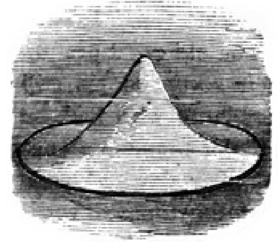
The star-fish took passage on this train. He didn't start at the beginning of the road, but got in at one of the way-stations, somewhere off Cape Cod,—fell in with some friends going south, and had altogether a pleasant trip of it. No wearisome stopping-places to feed either engine or passengers; for this train moves by a power that needs no feeding on the way, and the passengers are much in the habit of eating their fellow-travellers by way of frequent luncheons.

In the course of a few weeks, our five-fingered traveller is safely dropped in the Caribbean Sea; and if you do not know where that sea is, I wish you would take your map of North America and find it, and then you can see the course of the journey, and understand the story better. This Caribbean Sea is as full of mountains as New Hampshire and Vermont are, but none of them have caps of snow like that which Mount Washington sometimes wears, and some of them are built up in a very odd way, as you will presently see.

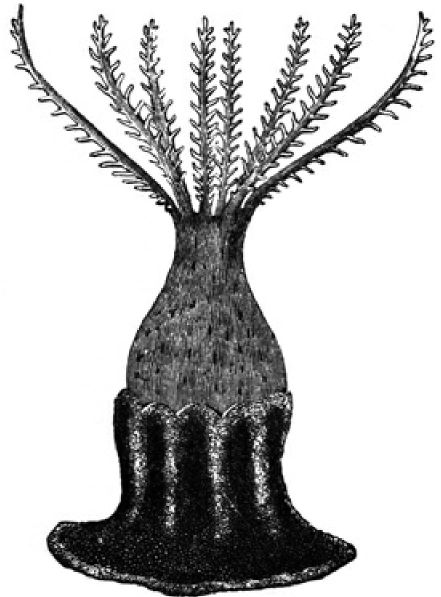
Now the star-fish is floating in the warm, soft water among the mountains, turning up first one eye and then another, to see the wonders about him, or looking all around, before and behind and both sides at once,—as you can't do if you try ever so hard,—while his fifth eye is on the look-out for sharks, besides; and he meets with a soft little body, much smaller than himself, and not half so handsomely dressed, who invites him to visit her relatives, who live, by millions, in this mountain region. "And come quickly, if you please," she says, "for I begin to feel as if I must fix myself somewhere, and I should like, if possible, to settle down near my brothers and sisters on the Roncador Bank."

CHAPTER II.

CORALTOWN ON RONCADOR BANK.



WHERE is Roncador Bank, and who are the little settlers there? If you want me to answer this question, you must go back with me, or rather think back with me, over many thousands of years, and, looking into this same Caribbean Sea, we shall find in its southwestern part a little hill formed of mud and sand, and reaching not nearly so high as the top of the water. Not far from it float some little, soft, jelly-like bodies, exactly resembling the one who spoke to the star-fish just now; they are emigrants looking for a new home; they seem to take a fancy to this hill, and fix themselves on bits of rock along its base; until, as more and more of them come, they form a circle around it, and the hill stands up in the middle like this, while far above the whole blue waves are tossing in the sunlight. How do you like this little circular town? It is the beginning of Coraltown; just as the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth was the beginning of Massachusetts. And now we will see how the little town grows. First of all notice this curious fact, that each settler, after once choosing a home, never after stirs from that spot, but from day to day fastens himself more and more firmly to the rock where he first stuck. The part of his body touching the rock hardens into stone, and, as the months and years go by, the sides of his body too turn to stone, and yet he is still alive, eating all the time with a little mouth at his top, taking in the sea-water without a strainer, and getting consequently tiny bits of lime in it which, once taken in, go to build up the little body into a sort of limestone castle; just as if one of the knights in armor, of whom we read in old stories, had, instead of putting on his steel corselet and helmet and breastplate, turned his own flesh and bones into armor. How safe he would be! So these inhabitants of Coraltown were safe from all the fishes and other fierce devourers of little sea creatures, (for who wants to swallow a mail-clad warrior, however small?) and their settlement was undisturbed, and grew from year to year, until it formed a pretty high wall.



But before going any further, you may like to know that these settlers were all of the polyp family; fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, all were polyps. And this is the way their families increased. After the first comers were fairly settled and pretty thoroughly turned to stone, little buds, looking somewhat like the smallest leaf-buds of the spring-time, began to grow out of their edges. These were their children, at least one kind of their children, for they had yet another kind also, coming from eggs and floating off in the water like the first settlers; these latter we might call the free children or wanderers, while the former could be named the fixed children. But even the wanderers come back after a short time and settle beside their parents, as you remember the one who met the star-fish was about to do.

It was not very easy for you and me to think back so many thousand years to the very beginning of Coraltown, nor is it less difficult to realize how many, many years were passing while the little town grew, even as far as I have told you.

The old great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers had died, but they left their stone bodies still standing, as a support and assistance to their descendants who had built above them,—and the walls had risen, not like walls of common stone or brick, but all alive and busy building themselves, day after day and year after year, until now, at the time of the star-fish's visit, the topmost towers could sometimes catch a gleam of sunlight when the tide was low; and when storms rolled the great waves that

way, they would dash against the little castles, breaking themselves into snowy spray, and crumbling away at the same time the tiny walls that had been the polyp's work of years. Do you think that was too bad and quite discouraging to the workers? It does seem so, but you will see how the good God, who is their loving father just the same as He is ours, had a grand purpose in letting the waves break down their houses, just as He always does in all the disappointments he sends to us. Wait till you finish the story, and tell me if you don't think so?

And now let us see what the star-fish thought of the little town and its inhabitants. "Ah, these are your houses," he said; "why don't you come out of them and travel about to see the world?" "These are not our houses, but *ourselves*," answered the polyps; "we can't come out, and we don't want to; we are here to build, and building is all we care to do; as for seeing the world, that is all very well for those who have eyes, but we have none." Then the star-fish turned away in contempt from such creatures,—"People of neither taste nor ability; no eyes, no feet, no water-strainers; poor little useless things, what good are they in the world, with their stupid, blind building of which they think so much?" And he worked himself off into a branch water train that was setting that way, and, without so much as bidding the polyps good by, turned his back upon Coraltown, and presently found a fellow-passenger fine enough to absorb all his attention. A passenger, I say, but we shall find it rather a group of passengers in their own pretty boat, some curled in spiral coils, some trailing like little swimmers behind, some snugly ensconced inside; but all of such brilliant colors and gay bearing that even the star-fish felt his inferiority, and, wishing to make friends with so fine a neighbor, he whirled a tempting morsel of food towards one of the swimming party, and politely offered it to him. "No, I thank you," replied the swimmer, "I don't eat; my sister does the eating, I only swim." Turning to another of the gay company with the same offer, he was answered, "Thank you, the eaters are at the other side; I only lay eggs." "What strange people!" thought the star-fish; but, with all his learning, he didn't know everything, and had never heard how people sometimes live in communities and divide the work as suits their fancy.

While we leave him wondering, let us go back to Coraltown. The crumbling bits beaten off by the waves floated about, filling all the chinks of the wall, while the rough edges at the top caught long ribbons of sea-weed, and sometimes drifting wood from wrecked vessels, and then the sea washed up sand in great heaps against the walls, building buttresses for them. Do you know what buttresses are? If you don't, I will leave you to find out. And the polyps who do not know how to live in the light and air had all died; or those who were wanderers had emigrated to some new place. Poor little things, their useless lives had ended, and what good had they done in the world?

CHAPTER III.

LITTLE SUNSHINE.

AND now let us look at Coraltown once more. It is the first day of June of the very last year, 1865. The sun is low in the west, and lights up the crests of the long lines of breakers that are everywhere curling and dashing among the topmost turrets of the coral walls. But here is something new and strange indeed for this region; along one of the ledges of rock, fitted as it were into a cradle, lies the great steamship Golden Rule, a vessel full two hundred and fifty feet long, and holding six or seven hundred people. Her masts are gone, and so are the tall chimneys from which the smoke of her engine used to rise like a cloud. The rocks have torn a great hole through her strong planks, and the water is washing in, while the biggest waves that roll that way lift themselves in mountainous curves, and sweep over the deck.

This fine, great vessel sailed out of New York harbor a week ago to carry all these people to Greytown, on their way to California; and here she is now at Coraltown instead of Greytown, and the poor people, nearly a hundred miles away from land, are waiting through the weary hours, while they see the ocean swallowing up their vessel, breaking it and tearing it to pieces, and they do not know how soon they may find themselves drifting in the sea. But although they may be a hundred miles from land, they are just as near to God as they ever were; and He is even at this moment taking most loving care of them.

On the more sheltered parts of the deck are men and women, holding on by ropes and bulwarks; they are all looking one way out over the water. What are they watching for? See, it comes now in sight,—only a black speck in the golden path of the sunlight? No, it is a boat, sent out two hours ago to search for some island where the people might find refuge when the ship should go to pieces. Do you wonder that the men and women are watching eagerly? Look, it has reached the outer ledge of rock; the men spring out of it waving their hats and shouting, "Success!" and the men on board answer with a loud hurrah, while the women cannot keep back their tears. What land have they discovered? You could hardly call it land; it is only a larger ledge of coral built up just out of reach of the waves, its crevices filled in firmly with broken bits of rock and drifts of sand, but it seems to-day, to these shipwrecked people, more beautiful than the loveliest woods and meadows do to you and me.

It would be too long a story, if I should tell you how the people were moved from the wreck to this little harbor of refuge,—lowered over the vessel's side with ropes, taken first to a raft which had been made of broken parts of the vessel, and the next day in little boats to the rocky island; but you can make a picture in your mind of the boats full of

people, and the sailors rowing through the breakers, and the great sea-birds coming to meet their strange visitors, peering curiously at them, as if they wondered what new kind of creatures were these without wings or beaks. And you must see, in the very first boat, little May Warner, three years and a half old, with her sunny hair all wet with spray, and her blue eyes wide open to see all the wonders about her. For May doesn't know what danger is;—even while on the wreck she clapped her little hands in delight to see the great, curling crests of the waves, and now she is singing her merry songs to the sea-birds, and laughing in their funny faces, and fairly shouting with joy, as at landing she rides to the shore perched high on the shoulder of Sailor Jack, while he wades knee-deep through the water.

So we have come to a second settlement of Coraltown,—first the polyps,—then the men, women, and children. Do you see how the good Father teaches all His creatures to help each other? Here the tiny polyps have built an island for people who are so much larger and stronger than themselves, and the seeming destruction of their upper walls was only a better preparation for the reception of these distinguished visitors; the birds too are helping them to food, for every little cave and shelf in the rock is full of eggs. And now should you like to see how little May Warner helps them in even a better way?

Did you ever fall asleep on the floor, and, waking, find yourself aching and stiff because it was so hard? Then you know in part what hard beds rocks make. And in a hot sunny day, haven't you often been glad to keep under the trees, or even to stay in the house for a shade? Then you can understand a little how hot it must have been on Roncador Island, where there were no trees or houses. And haven't you sometimes, when you were very hot and tired and hungry, and had perhaps also been kept waiting a long hour for somebody who didn't come,—haven't you felt a little cross and fretful and impatient, so that nothing seemed pleasant to you, and you seemed pleasant to nobody? Now shouldn't you think there was great danger that these people on the island, in the hot sun, tired, hungry, and waiting, waiting, day and night, for some vessel to come and take them to their homes again, and not feeling at all sure that any such vessel would ever come,—shouldn't you think there was danger of their becoming cross and fretful and impatient? And if one begins to say, "O, how tired I am, and how hard the rocks are, and how little dinner I have had, and how hot the sun is, and what shall we ever do waiting here so long, and how shall we ever get home again!" don't you see that all would begin to be discouraged? And sometimes on this island it did happen just so; first one would be discouraged, and then another; and as soon as you begin to feel in this way, you know at once everything grows even worse than it was before,—the sun feels hotter, the rocks harder, the water tastes more disagreeably, and the crabs' claws less palatable. But in the midst of all the trouble May would come tripping over the rocks, a little sun-burnt girl now, with tattered clothes and bare feet, and she would bring a pretty pink conch-shell, or the lovely rose-colored sea-mosses, and tell her funny little story of where she found them; the discontented people would gather around her, she would give a sailor kiss to one, and a French kiss to another, and, best of all, a Yankee kiss with both arms round his

neck to her own dear father, and then, somehow or other, the discontent and trouble would be gone, for a little while at least,—just as a cloud sometimes seems to melt away in the sunshine,—and so May Warner earned the name of "Little Sunshine."

If anybody had picked up driftwood enough to make a fire, and could get an old battered kettle and some water to make a soup of shell-fish, "Little Sunshine" must be invited to dinner; for half the enjoyment would be wanting without her. If a great black cloud came up, threatening a shower, the roughest man on the island forgot his own discomfort in making a tent to keep "Little Sunshine" safe from the rain. And so in a thousand ways she cheered the weary days, making everybody happier for having her there.

Do you think there are any children who would have made the people less happy by being there,—who would have complained and fretted and been selfish and disagreeable?

Ten days go by, so slowly that they seem more like weeks or months than like days. The people have suffered from the rain, from heat, from want of food; they are very weak now, some of them can hardly stand. Can you imagine how they feel, when, in the early morning, two great gunboats come in sight, making straight for their island as fast as the strong steam-engines will take them? Can you think how tenderly and carefully they are taken on board, fed with broth and wine, and nursed back into health and strength? And do not forget the little treasures that go in May's pocket,—the bits of coral, the tinted sea-shells and ruby-colored mosses, and, nested among them all and chief in her regard, a little five-fingered star, spiny and dry, but still showing a crimson coat, and dots which mark the places of five eyes, and a little scarlet water-strainer, now of no further use to the owner. Do you remember our old friend the star-fish? Well, this is his great-great-great-great-great-grandchild.

In a week or two more the rescued people have all reached California, and gone their separate ways, never to meet again; but all carry in their hearts the memory of "Little Sunshine," who lightened their troubles and cheered their darkest days.

Author of "Seven Little Sisters."

A SUMMER IN LESLIE GOLDTHWAITE'S LIFE.

VI.

AMONG the mountains, somewhere between the Androscoggin and the Saco,—I don't feel bound to tell you precisely where, and I have only a story-teller's word to give you for it at all,—lies the little neighborhood of Outledge. An odd corner of a great township such as they measure off in these wilds, where they take in, with some eligible "locations" of intervale land, miles also of pathless forest where the bear and the moose are wandering still, a pond, perhaps, filling up a basin of acres and acres in extent, and a good-sized mountain or two, thrown in to keep off the north wind,—a corner cut off, as its name indicates, by the outrunning of a precipitous ridge of granite, round which a handful of population had crept and built itself a group of dwellings,—this was the spot discovered and seized to themselves some four or five years since by certain migratory pioneers of fashion.

An old two-story farm-house, with four plain rooms of generous dimensions on each floor, in which the first delighted summer-party had divided itself, glad and grateful to occupy them double and even treble bedded, had become the "hotel," with a name up across the gable of the new wing,—"Giant's-Cairn House,"—and the eight original rooms made into fourteen. The wing was clapped on by its middle; rushing out at the front toward the road to meet the summer-tide of travel as it should surge by, and hold up to it, arrestively, its titular sign-board; the other half as expressively making its bee-line toward the river and the mountain-view at back,—just as each fresh arrival, seeking out the preferable rooms, inevitably did. Behind, upon the other side, an L provided new kitchens; and over these, within a year, had been carried up a second story, with a hall for dancing, tableaux, theatricals, and travelling jugglers.

Up to this hostelry whirled daily, from the southward, the great six-horse stage; and from the northward came thrice a week wagons or coaches "through the hills," besides such "extras" as might drive down at any hour of day or night.

Round the smooth curve of broad, level road that skirted the ledges from the upper village pranced four splendid bays; and after them rollicked and swayed, with a perfect delirium of wheels and springs, the great black and yellow-bodied vehicle, like a huge bumble-bee buzzing back with its spoil of a June day to the hive. The June sunset was golden and rosy upon the hills and cliffs, and Giant's Cairn stood burnished against the eastern blue. Gay companies, scattered about piazzas and greenswards, stopped in their talk, or their promenades, or their croquet, to watch the arrivals.

"It's stopping at the Green Cottage."

"It's the Haddens! Their rooms have been waiting since the twenty-third, and all the rest are full." And two or three young girls dropped mallets and ran over.

"Maud Walcott!" "Mattie Shannon!"

"Jeannie!" "Nell!"

"How came *you* here?"

"We've been here these ten days,—looking for you the last three."

"Why, I can't take it in! I'm so surprised!"

"Isn't it jolly, though?"

"Miss Goldthwaite,—Miss Walcott. Miss Shannon,—Miss Goldthwaite.—My sister, Mrs. Linceford."

"*Me voici!*" And a third came up, suddenly, laying a hand upon each of the Haddens from behind.

"You, Sin Saxon! How many more?"

"We're coming, Father Abraham! All of us, nearly; three hundred thousand more—or less; half the Routh girls, with Madam to the fore!"

"And we've got all the farther end of the wing, down stairs,—the garden bedrooms; you've no idea how scrumptious it is! You must come over after tea, and see."

"Not all, Mattie; you forget the solitary spinster."

"No, I don't; who ever does? But can't you ignore her for once?"

"Or let a fellow speak in the spirit of prophecy?" said Sin Saxon. "We're sure to get the better of Graywacke, and why not anticipate?"

"Graywacke?" said Jeannie Hadden. "Is that a name? It sounds like the side of a mountain."

"And acts like one," rejoined Sin Saxon. "Won't budge. But it isn't her name, exactly; only Saxon for Craydocke; suggestive of obstinacy and the Old Silurian. An ancient maiden who infests our half the wing. We've got all the rooms but hers, and we're bound to get her out. She's been there three years, in the same spot,—went in with the lath and plaster,—and it's *time* she started. Besides, haven't I got manifest destiny on my side? Ain't I a Saxon?" Sin Saxon tossed up a merry, bewitching, saucy glance out of her blue, starlike eyes, that shone under a fair, low brow touched and crowned lightly with the soft haze of gold-brown locks frizzed into a delicate mistiness after the ruling fashion of the hour.

“What a pretty thing she is!” said Mrs. Linceford, when, seeing her busy with her boxes, and the master of the house approaching to show the new arrivals to their rooms, Sin Saxon and her companions flitted away as they had come, with a few more sentences of bright girl-nonsense flung back at parting. “And a witty little minx, as well. Where did you know her, Jeannie? And what sort of a satanic name is that you call her by?”

“Just suits such a mischief, doesn’t it? Short for Asenath,—it was always her school-name. She’s just finished her last year at Madam Routh’s; she came there soon after we did. It’s a party of the graduates, and some younger ones left with Madam for the long holidays, that she’s travelling with. I wonder if she isn’t sick of her life, though, by this time! Fancy those girls, Nell, with a whole half-wing of the hotel to themselves, and Sin Saxon in the midst!”

“Poor ‘Graywacke’ in the midst, you mean,” said Nell.

“Like a respectable old grimalkin at the mercy of a crowd of boys and a tin kettle,” added Jeannie, laughing.

“I’ve no doubt she’s a very nice person, too. I only hope, if I come across her, I mayn’t call her Graywacke to her face,” said Mrs. Linceford.

“Just what you’ll be morally sure to do, Augusta!”

With this, they had come up the staircase and along a narrow passage leading down between a dozen or so of small bedrooms on either side,—for the Green Cottage also had run out its addition of two stories since summer guests had become many and importunate,—and stood now where three open doors, one at the right and two at the left, invited their entrance upon what was to be their own especial territory for the next two months. From one side they looked up the river along the face of the great ledges, and caught the grandeur of far-off Washington, Adams, and Madison, filling up the northward end of the long valley. The aspect of the other was toward the frowning glooms of Giant’s Cairn close by, and broadened then down over the pleasant subsidence of the southern country to where the hills grew less, and fair, small, modest peaks lifted themselves just into blue height and nothing more, smiling back with a contented deference toward the mightier majesties, as those who might say,—“We do our gentle best; it is not yours; yet we too are mountains, though but little ones.” From underneath spread the foreground of green, brilliant intervale, with the river flashing down between margins of sand and pebbles in the midst.

Here they put Leslie Goldthwaite; and here, somehow, her first sensation, as she threw back her blinds to let in all the twilight for her dressing, was a feeling of half relief from the strained awe and wonder of the last few days. Life would not seem so petty here as in the face of all that solemn stateliness. There was a reaction of respite and repose. And why not? The great emotions are not meant to come to us daily in their unqualified strength. God knows how to dilute His elixirs for the soul. His fine, impalpable air, spread round the earth, is not more cunningly mixed from pungent gases for our hourly breath, than life itself is thinned and toned that we may receive and bear it.

Leslie wondered if it were wrong that the high mountain-fervor let itself go from her so soon and easily; that the sweet pleasantness of this new resting-place should come to her *as* a rest; that the laughter and frolic of the school-girls made her glad with such sudden sympathy and foresight of enjoyment; that she should have “come down” all the way from Jefferson in Jeannie’s sense, and that she almost felt it a comfortable thing herself not to be kept always “up in the clouds.”

Sin Saxon, as they called her, was so bright and odd and fascinating; was there any harm—because no special, obvious good—in that? There was a little twinge of doubt, remembering poor Miss Craydocke; but that had seemed pure fun, not malice, after all,—and it was, hearing Sin Saxon tell it, very funny. She could imagine the life they led the quiet lady,—yet, if it were quite intolerable, why did she remain? Perhaps, after all, she saw through the fun of it. And I think, myself, perhaps she did.

The Marie Stuart net went on to-night; and then such a pretty muslin, white, with narrow mode-brown stripes, and small, bright leaves dropped over them, as if its wearer had stood out under a maple-tree in October, and all the tiniest and most radiant bits had fallen and fastened themselves about her. And, last of all, with her little hooded cape of scarlet cashmere over her arm, she went down to eat cream-biscuit and wood-strawberries for tea. Her summer life began with a charming freshness and dainty delight.

There were pleasant voices of happy people about them in hall and open parlor, as they sat at their late repast. Everything seemed indicative of abundant coming enjoyment; and the girls chatted gayly of all they had already discovered or conjectured, and began to talk of the ways of the place and the sojourners in it, quite like old *habituées*.

It was even more delightful yet, strolling out when tea was over, and meeting the Routh party again half-way between the cottage and the hotel, and sauntering on with them, insensibly, till they found themselves on the wide wing-piazza, upon which opened the garden bedrooms, and being persuaded after all to sit down since they had got there, though Mrs. Linceford had demurred at a too hasty rushing over, as new-comers, to begin visits.

“O, nobody knows when they *are* called upon here, or who comes first,” said Mattie Shannon. “We generally receive half-way across the green, and it’s a chance which turns back, or whether we get near either house again or not. Houses don’t signify, except when it rains.”

“But it just signifies that you should see how magnificently we have settled ourselves for nights, and dressing, and when it *does* rain,” said Sin Saxon, throwing back a door behind her, that stood a little ajar. It opened directly into a

small apartment, half parlor and half dressing-room, from which doors showed others, on either side, furnished as sleeping-rooms.

"It was Maud Walcott's, between the Arnalls' and mine; but, what with our trunks, and our beds, and our crinolines, and our towel-stands, we wanted a Bowditch's Navigator to steer clear of the reefs, and something was always getting knocked over; so, one night, we were seized simultaneously with an idea. We'd make a boudoir of this for the general good, and forth-with we fell upon the bed, and amongst us got it down. It was the greatest fun! We carried the pieces and the mattresses all off ourselves up to the attic, after ten o'clock, and we gave the chambermaid a dollar next morning, and nobody's been the wiser since. And then we walked to the upper village and bought that extraordinary chintz, and frilled and cushioned our trunks into ottomans, and curtained the dress-hooks; and Lucinda got us a rocking-chair, and Maud came in with me to sleep, and we kept our extra pillows, and we should be comfortable as queens if it wasn't for Graywacke."

"Now, Sin Saxon, you know Graywacke is just the life of the house. What would such a parcel of us do, if we hadn't something to run upon?"

"Only I'm afraid I shall get tired of it at last. She bears it so. It isn't exactly saintliness, nor Graywacke-iness, but it seems sometimes as if she took a quiet kind of fun out of it herself,—as if she were somehow laughing at us, after all, in her sleeve; and if she is, she's got the biggest end. *She's* bright enough."

"Don't we tree-toad her within an inch of her life, though, when we come home in the wagons at night? I shouldn't think she could stand that long. I guess she wants all her beauty-sleep. And Kate Arnall can tu-whit, tu-whoo! equal to Tennyson himself, or any great white *American* owl."

"Yes, but what do you think? As true as I live, I heard her answer back the other night with such a sly little 'Katy-did! she did! she did!' I thought at first it actually came from the great elm-trees. O, she's been a girl once, you may depend; and hasn't more than half got over it either. But wait till we have our 'howl'!"

What a "howl" was, superlative to "tree-toading," "owl-hooting," and other divertisements, did not appear at this time; for a young man did, approaching from the front of the hotel, and came up to the group on the piazza with the question, "At what time do we set off for Feather-Cap to-morrow?"

"O, early, Mr. Scherman; by nine o'clock."

"Earlier than you'll be ready," said Frank Scherman's sister, one of the "Routh" girls also.

"I sha'n't have any crimps to take down, that's one thing," Frank answered. And Sin Saxon, glancing at his handsome waving hair, whispered saucily to Jeannie Hadden, "I don't more than half believe that, either";—then, aloud, "You must join the party too, girls, by the way. It's one of the nicest excursions here. We've got two wagons, and they'll be full; but there's Holden's 'little red' will take six, and I don't believe anybody has spoken for it. Mr. Scherman! wouldn't it make you happy to go and see?"

"Most intensely!" and Frank Scherman bowed a low, graceful bow, settling back into his first attitude, however, as one who could quite willingly resign himself to his present comparative unhappiness awhile longer.

"Where is Feather-Cap?" asked Leslie Goldthwaite.

"It's the mountain you see there, peeping round the shoulder of Giant's Cairn; a comfortable little rudiment of a mountain, just enough for a primer-lesson in climbing. Don't you see how the crest drops over on one side, and that scrap of pine—which is really a huge gaunt thing a hundred years old—slants out from it with just a tuft of green at the very tip, like an old feather stuck in jauntily?"

"And the pine-woods round the foot of the Cairn are lovely," said Maud.

"Oh!" cried Leslie, drawing a long breath, as if their spicy smell were already about her, "there is nothing I delight in so as pines!"

"You'll have your fill to-morrow, then; for it's ten miles through nothing else, and the road is like a carpet with the soft brown needles."

"I hope Augusta won't be too tired to feel like going," said Elinor.

"We had better ask her soon, then; she is looking this way now. We ought to go, Sin; we've got all our settling to do for the night."

"We'll walk over with you," said Sin Saxon. "Then we shall have done up all the preliminaries nicely. We called on you—before you were off the stage-coach; you've returned it; and now we'll pay up and leave you owing us one. Come, Mr. Scherman; you'll be so far on your way to Holden's, and perhaps inertia will carry you through."

But a little girl presently appeared, running from the hotel portico at the front, as they came round to view from thence. Madam Routh was sitting in the open hall with some newly arrived friends, and sent one of her lambs, as Sin called them, to say to the older girls that she preferred they should not go away again to-night.

" 'Ruin seize thee, Routh—less king!' " quoted Sin Saxon, with an absurd air of declamation. " ''Twas ever thus from childhood's hour,'—and now, just as we thought childhood's hour was comfortably over,—that the clock had struck one, and down we might run, hickory, dickory, dock,—behold the lengthened sweetness long drawn out of school rule in vacation, even before the very face and eyes of Freedom on her mountain heights! Well, we must go, I

suppose. Mr. Scherman, you'll have to represent us to Mrs. Linceford, and persuade her to join us to Feather-Cap. And be sure you get the 'little red'!"

"It'll be all the worse for Graywacke, if we're kept in and sent off early," she continued, *sotto voce*, to her companions, as they turned away. "My! what *has* that boy got?"

After all this, I wonder if you wouldn't just like to look in at Miss Craydocke's room with me, who can give you a pass anywhere within the geography of my story?

She came in here "with the lath and plaster," as Sin Saxon had said. She had gathered little comforts and embellishments about her from summer to summer, until the room had a home-cheeriness, and even a look of luxury, contrasted with the bare dormitories around it. Over the straw matting, that soon grows shabby in a hotel, she had laid a large, nicely-bound square of soft, green carpet, in a little mossy pattern, that covered the middle of the floor, and was held tidily in place by a foot of the bedstead and two forward ones each of the table and washstand. On this little green stood her Shaker rocking-chair and a round white-pine light-stand with her work-basket and a few books. Against the wall hung some white-pine shelves with more books,—quite a little circulating library they were for invalids and read-out people, who came to the mountains, like foolish virgins, with scant supply of the oil of literature for the feeding of their brain-lamps. Besides these, there were engravings and photographs in *passe-partout* frames, that journeyed with her safely in the bottoms of her trunks. Also, the wall itself had been papered, at her own cost and providing, with a pretty pale-green hanging; and there were striped muslin curtains to the window, over which were caught the sprays of some light, wandering vine that sprung from a low-suspended terra cotta vase between.

She had everything pretty about her, this old Miss Craydocke. How many people do, that have not a bit of outward prettiness themselves! Not one cubit to the stature, not one hair white or black, can they add or change; and around them grow the lilies in the glory of Solomon, and a frosted leaf or a mossy twig, that they can pick up from under their feet and bring home from the commonest walk, comes in with them, bearing a brightness and a grace that seems sometimes almost like a satire! But in the midst grows silently the century-plant of the soul, absorbing to itself hourly that which feeds the beauty of the lily and the radiance of the leaf,—waiting only for the hundred years of its shrouding to be over!

Miss Craydocke never came in from the woods and rocks without her trophies. Rare, lovely mosses, and bits of most delicate ferns, maiden-hair and lady-bracken, tiny trails of wintergreen and arbutus, filled a great shallow Indian china dish upon her bureau-top, and grew, in their fairy fashion, in the clear, soft water she kept them freshened with.

Shining scraps of mountain minerals,—garnets and bright-tinted quartz and beryls, heaped artistically, rather than scientifically, on a base of jasper and malachite and dark basalt and glistening spar and curious fossils,—these not gathered by any means in a single summer or in ordinary ramblings, but treasured long, and standing, some of them, for friendly memories—balanced on the one side a like grouping of shells and corals and sea-mosses on the other, upon a broad bracket-mantel put up over a little corner fireplace; for Miss Craydocke's room, joining the main house, took the benefit of one of its old chimneys.

Above or about the pictures lay mossy, gnarled, and twisted branches, gray and green, framing them in a forest arabesque; and great pine cones, pendent from their boughs, crowned and canopied the mirror.

"What *do* you keep your kindling-wood up there for?" Sin Saxon had asked, with a grave, puzzled face, coming in, for pure mischief, on one of her frequent and ingenious errands.

"Why, where should I put a pile of wood or a basket? There's no room for things to lie round here; you have to hang everything up!"—was Miss Craydocke's answer, quick as a flash, her eyes twinkling comically with appreciation of the fun.

And Sin Saxon had gone away and told the girls that the old lady knew how to feather her nest better than any of them, and was sharp enough at a peck, too, upon occasion.

She found her again, one morning, sitting in the midst of a pile of home-spun, which she was cutting up with great shears into boys' blouses.

"There! that's the noise that has disturbed me so!" cried the girl. "I thought it was a hay-cutter, or a planing-machine, or that you had got the asthma awfully. I couldn't write my letter for listening to it, and came round to ask what *was* the matter!—Miss Craydocke, I don't see why you keep the door bolted on your side. It isn't any more fair for you than for me; and I'm sure I do all the visiting. Besides, its dangerous. What if anything should happen in the night? I couldn't get in to help you. Or there might be a fire in our room,—I'm sure I expect nothing else. We boiled eggs in the Etna the other night, and got too much alcohol in the saucer; and then, in the midst of the blaze and excitement, what should Madam Routh do but come knocking at the door! Of course we had to put it in the closet, and there were all our muslin dresses,—that weren't hanging on the hooks in Maud's room! I assure you I felt like the man sitting on the safety-valve, standing with my back against the door, and my clothes spread out for fear she would see the flash under the crack! For we'd nothing else but moonlight in the room.—But now tell me, please, what are all these things? Meal-bags?"

"Do you really want to know?"

“Of course I do. Now that I’ve got over my fright about your strangling with the asthma—those shears did wheeze so!—my curiosity is all alive again.”

“I’ve a cousin down in North Carolina teaching the little freedmen.”

“And she’s to have all these sacks to tie the naughty ones up in? What a bright idea! And then to whip them with rods as the Giant did his crockery, I suppose? Or perhaps—they can’t be petticoats! Won’t she be warm, though?”

“May be, if you were to take one and sew up the seams, you would be able to satisfy yourself.”

“I? Why, I never *could* put anything together! I tried once, with a pair of hospital drawers, and they were like Sam Hyde’s dog, that got cut in two, and clapped together again in a hurry, two legs up, and two legs down. Miss Craydocke, why don’t *you* go down among the freedmen? You haven’t half a sphere up here. Nothing but Hobbs’s Location, and the little Hoskinses.”

“I can’t organize and execute. Letitia can. It’s her gift. I can’t do great things. I can only just carry round my little cup of cold water.”

“But it gets so dreadfully joggled in such a place as this! Don’t we girls disturb you, Miss Craydocke? I should think you’d be quieter in the other wing, or up stairs.”

“Young folks are apt to think that old folks ought to go a story higher. But we’re content, and they must put up with us, until the proprietor orders a move.”

“Well, good by. But if ever you do smell smoke in the night, you’ll draw your bolt the first thing, won’t you?”

This evening,—upon which we have offered you your pass, reader,—Miss Craydocke is sitting with her mosquito bar up, and her candle alight, finishing some pretty thing that daylight has not been long enough for. A flag basket at her feet holds strips and rolls of delicate birch-bark, carefully split into filmy thinness, and heaps of star-mosses, cup-mosses, and those thick and crisp with clustering brown spires, as well as sheets of lichen silvery and pale green; and on the lap-board across her knees lies her work,—a graceful cross in perspective, put on card-board in birch shaded from faint buff to bistre, dashed with the detached lines that seem to have quilted the tree-teguments together. Around the foot of the cross rises a mound of lovely moss-work in relief, with feathery filaments creeping up and wreathing about the shaft and thwart-beam. Miss Craydocke is just dotting in some bits of slender coral-headed stems among little brown mushrooms and chalices, as there comes a sudden, imperative knocking at the door of communication, or defence, between her and Sin Saxon.

“You must just open this time, if you please! I’ve got my arms full, and I couldn’t come round.”

Miss Craydocke slipped her lap-board—work and all—under her bureau, upon the floor, for safety; and then, with her quaint, queer expression, in which curiosity, pluckiness, and a foretaste of amusement mingled so as to drive out annoyance, pushed back her bolt, and presented herself to the demand of her visitor, much as an undaunted man might fling open his door at the call of a mob.

Sin Saxon stood there, in the light of the good lady’s candle, making a pretty picture against the dim background of the unlighted room beyond. Her fair hair was tossed, and her cheeks flushed; her blue eyes bright with sauciness and fun. In her hands, or across her arms, rather, she held some huge, uncouth thing, that was not to the last degree dainty-smelling, either; something conglomerated rudely upon a great crooked log or branch, which, glanced at closer, proved to be a fragment of gray old pine. Sticks and roots and bark, straw and grass and locks of dirty sheep’s-wool, made up its bulk and its untidiness; and this thing Sin held out with glee, declaring she had brought a real treasure to add to Miss Craydocke’s collection.

“Such a chance!” she said, coming in. “One mightn’t have another in a dozen years. I have just given Jimmy Wigley a quarter for it, and he’d just all but broken his neck to get it. It’s a real crow’s nest. Corvinus something-else-us, I suppose. Where will you have it? I’m going to nail it up for you myself. Won’t it make a nice contrast to the hummingbird’s? Over the bed, shall I? But then, if it *should* drop down on your nose, you know! I think the corner over the fireplace will be best. Yes, we’ll have it right up perpendicular, in the angle. The branch twists a little, you see, and the nest will run out with its odds and ends like an old banner. Might I push up the washstand to get on to?”

“Suppose you lay it *in* the fireplace? It will just rest nicely across those evergreen boughs, and—be in the current of ventilation outward.”

“Well, that’s an idea, to be sure.—Miss Craydocke!”—Sin Saxon says this in a sudden interjectional way, as if it were with some quite fresh idea,—“I’m certain you play chess!”

“You’re mistaken. I don’t.”

“You would, then, by intuition. Your counter-moves are—so—triumphant. Why, it’s really an ornament!” With a little stress and strain that made her words interjectional, she had got it into place, thrusting one end up the throat of the chimney, and lodging the crotch that held the nest upon the stems of fresh pine that lay across the andirons; and the “odds and ends,” in safe position, and suggesting neither harm nor unsuitableness, looked unique and curious, and not so ugly.

“It’s really an ornament!” repeated Sin, shaking the dust off her dress.

“As you expected, of course,” replied Miss Craydocke.

“Well, I wasn’t—not to say—confident. I was afraid it mightn’t be much but scientific. But now—if you don’t

forget and light a fire under it some day, Miss Craydocke!"

"I sha'n't forget; and I'm very much obliged, really. Perhaps by and by I shall put it in a rough box and send it to a nephew of mine, with some other things, for his collection."

"Goodness, Miss Craydocke! They won't express it. They'll think it's an infernal machine, or a murder! But it's disposed of for the present, any way. The truth was, you know, twenty-five cents is a kind of a cup of cold water to Jimmy Wigley, and then there was the fun of bringing it in, and I didn't know anybody but you to offer it to; I'm so glad you like it; the girls thought you wouldn't. Perhaps I can get you another, or something else as curious, some day,—a moose's horns, or a bear-skin; there's no knowing. But now—apropos of the nest—I've a crow to *pick* with you. You gave me horrible dreams all night, the last time I came to see you. I don't know whether it was your little freedmen's meal-bags, or Miss Letitia's organizing and executive genius, or the cup of cold water you spoke of, or—it's just occurred to me—the fuss I had over my waterfall that day, trying to make it into a melon; but I had the most extraordinary time endeavoring to pay you a visit. Down South it was, and there you were, organizing and executing, after all, on the most tremendous scale, some kind of freedmen's institution. You were explaining to me and showing me all sorts of things, in such enormous bulk and extent and number! First I was to see your stables, where the cows were kept. A trillion of cows!—that was what you told me. And on the way we went down among such wood-piles!—whole forests cut up into kindlings and built into solid walls that reached up till the sky looked like a thread of blue sewing-silk between. And presently we came to a kind of opening and turned off to see the laundry (Mrs. Lisphin had just brought home my things at bedtime); and *there* was a place to do the world's washing in, or bleach out all the Ethiopians! Tubs like the hold of the Great Eastern, and spouts coming into them like the Staubbach! Clothes-lines like a parade-ground of telegraphs, fields like prairies, snow-patched, as far as you could see, with things laid out to whiten! And suddenly we came to what was like a pond of milk, with crowds of negro women stirring it with long poles; and all at once something came roaring behind and you called to me to jump aside,—that the hot water was let on to make the starch; and down it rushed, a cataract like Niagara, in clouds of steam! And then—well, it changed to something else, I suppose; but it was after that fashion all night long, and the last I remember, I was trying to climb up the Cairn with a cup of cold water set on atilt at the crown of my head, which I was to get to the sky-parlor without spilling a drop!"

"Nobody's brain but yours would have put it together like that," said Miss Craydocke, laughing till she had to feel for her pocket-handkerchief to wipe away the tears.

"Don't cry, Miss Craydocke," said Sin Saxon, changing suddenly to the most touching tone and expression of regretful concern. "I didn't mean to distress you. I don't think anything is really the matter with my brain!"

"But I'll tell you what it is," she went on presently, in her old manner, "I *am* in a dreadful way with that waterfall, and I wish you'd lend me one of your caps, or advise me what to do. It's an awful thing when the fashion alters, just as you've got used to the last one. You can't go back, and you don't dare to go forward. I wish hair was like noses, born in a shape, without giving you any responsibility. But we do have to finish ourselves, and that's just what makes us restless."

"You haven't come to the worst yet," said Miss Craydocke, significantly.

"What do you mean? What is the worst? Will it come all at once, or will it be broken to me?"

"It will be broken, and *that's* the worst. One of these years you'll find a little thin spot coming, may be, and spreading, over your forehead or on the top of your head; and it'll be the fashion to comb the hair just so as to show it off, and make it worse; and for a while that'll be your thorn in the flesh. And then you'll begin to wonder why the color isn't so bright as it used to be, but looks dingy, all you can do to it; and again, after a while, some day, in a strong light, you'll see there are white threads in it, and the rest is fading; and so by degrees, and the degrees all separate pains, you'll have to come to it and give up the crown of your youth, and take to scraps of lace and muslin, or a front, as I did a dozen years ago."

Sin Saxon had no sauciness to give back for that; it made her feel all at once that this old Miss Craydocke had really been a girl too, with golden hair like her own, perhaps,—and not so very far in the past either but that a like space in her own future could picture itself to her mind; and something, quite different in her mood from ordinary, made her say, with even an unconscious touch of reverence in her voice,—"I wonder if I shall bear it, when it comes, as well as you!"

"There's a recompense," said Miss Craydocke. "You'll have got it all then. You'll know there's never a fifty or a sixty years that doesn't hold the tens and the twenties."

"I've found out something," said Sin Saxon, as she came back to the girls again. "A picked-up dinner argues a fresh one some time. You can't have cold roast mutton unless it has once been hot!" And never a word more would she say to explain herself.

Author of "Faith Gartney's Girlhood."

THE FIRST MAY-FLOWERS.

SUPPOSE for a moment that, until this year, there had never been a May-flower at all, and imagine how it would seem to come suddenly upon a long trail of them, which, when pulled up, would fill both hands with a luxuriance of bloom sweetening every wind that blew. How people would crowd from far and near to gain a single glimpse of the wonder-blossoms for whose sake other flowers would seem poor and common! And it was with these feelings, doubtless, that the first finders long ago regarded their new treasure; for May-flowers, strange as it may appear, did not always blossom upon the earth. To be sure, they have been with us so long that probably not even the very oldest person you know could say in what year they came; but if the little brook that runs through the edge of the woods would only stop laughing until it could speak, I am sure it might tell of a time when its banks were not flushed with the sweet pink clusters. And so could I, for I learned the whole story one day in the pine-woods, where I had gone a-Maying. My basket was filled with a perfect garden of white and rosy buds, till it seemed to laugh all over; then the sun was so warm, and the sky so blue, that one could not help idling awhile; so, sitting down on an old green log, I began to watch a wee little snake trying to wriggle himself through the tangle of dead leaves and evergreen at my feet. He was half under, when, just beside my basket, there sounded a curious sort of hum, which made me look up expecting to see a great bee settling himself down comfortably among my honey-blossoms. But I could find nothing there, even though I shook the basket; yet, as soon as I resumed my seat, the humming began again, louder than ever. Then, of course, I

knew that something strange must be going to happen; and sure enough, after waiting a little, I began to understand the story which the wind was buzzing in my ears. And now I mean to repeat the tale to you, only hoping that you may find it one half as strange and beautiful as it seemed to me, that May morning. Only I advise you to have a cluster of the blossoms at hand, to help you fancy that you heard it as I did, with the sun and shadow chasing each other around the trees, and the wind talking softly, only stopping now and then to whisper to the buds peeping up at him. And now for the story.

Long ago the Queen of all the Fairies appointed for each month a guardian spirit. It is the office of these elves to repair and adorn this beautiful earthly house, where our dwelling must be until we are ready for a more glorious home, to which we shall some day be welcomed. Meantime the kindly sprites are always flitting hither and thither, busy with some scheme for our happiness. In the spring-time their deft little fingers lay, for our feet, a green carpet, softer and brighter than the richest velvet woven in our looms; or, in the long summer days, hang everywhere about us thick draperies of interwoven leaves and blossoms. For our delight, their tiny torches kindle the autumn woods into a blaze of scarlet and gold, and when the frost-wind sings in the air their work is everywhere visible, in snow-fringes tangled among the trees, in icicles flashing like great diamonds, and in the fretwork of bush and twig twinkling all over with frozen crystals that leap and shimmer in a ray of sunshine. All of these decorations are far more splendid than earthly fancy could devise, for they are fashioned by the Queen herself, who, sitting in state within her golden palace, is forever planning new beauties to be accomplished by the guardian elves in turn. For these come always singly, and each can remain upon earth only so long as her appointed month shall last. Floating down with the glimmering dawn of its first day, with its last waning hour comes the signal of return, and the obedient sprite, yielding place to a successor, hies to the golden palace, there to await the welcome call of another year. Ah, they dearly love our pleasant world, and value neither time nor trouble in decking it out! And O what untold labor it sometimes costs them! The June fairy, for instance, must care for all the blossoms that follow the feet of this rose-month; must see that each bud has sun and dew and shower, so that, day by day, its tints may deepen and its petals swell, until it bursts into perfect bloom. This is no light task, certainly; but love lightens labor, and the busy sprite is fully repaid when the whole earth is ablush, and all the air is sweet with rose-breath. Indeed, these fairy creatures seem to believe that one cannot do too much in a good cause, and that all strong, earnest work, however hard and long it may be, must find its reward at last.

But there was a time, long, long ago, when most of these wearisome cares were unnecessary. We know that now all things are uncertain and changeful. The grass-blades spring by myriads and stream up, long and bright; but they are always growing toward decay, and soon their heads droop, and they turn pale, until at length we sorrowfully see that the ground, once so fresh and green, is brown and dead, and covered with leaves that, robbed of their gorgeous hues, are sad and sober as the dark mould below. The roses redden day by day; but when they have unfolded to their fullest beauty, a breath of wind touches them, and they are gone. Yet it was not always so. In that lost time when the whole earth knew no death, the grass was always green, the leaves a shower of untarnished emeralds; or, if sometimes veined with gold and crimson, it was a gold that never dimmed, and a blush that could not fade,—the reflection, perhaps, of sunbeam and floating cloud. The flowers never withered and fell, only, in some marvellous way, changing into the newer beauty of young buds, which, born in a single night, scattered their morning dew-drops upon banks unstrewn by faded petals. All this, as I said, was very long ago. It might, perhaps, have been so still, but the people who inhabited the earth in that wonderful age grew wicked, and everything changed with them. It was a sad pity that they lost their innocence, for with it went much beauty and happiness. But as white lilies open out of the dark mould, even out of this consequent distress some blessings have sprung, yielding themselves to cheerful patience. So said the wind, which knew all about it.

When, for the first time after this terrible change, the guardian spirit of April descended to the earth, she could scarcely believe her own eyes,—fairy eyes though they were, and therefore better than ordinary ones. Where she had been wont to see soft green grass and bushes all in bud, she now found only dark, leaf-covered ground, dotted with patches of muddy snow. The meadows looked brown and desolate, and the trees stretched out gaunt, skeleton arms, that seemed asking help to avert an approaching death. The sky no longer wore its sunny blue, but, overcast and gray, gazed despondently down upon the dismal earth. This was all very sad for poor April, for you must know that winter is something which no amount of endurance can make these elves like, or even understand, although, making the best of it, they mould it into a thousand beautiful shapes. But it is utterly unknown in their Fairy-land, and was equally so upon earth until that wicked change; so that, with all their patience, they are very glad when it is gone. April gazed awhile wonderingly; then, in order to examine it, came nearer and nearer yet, until her tender little feet rested upon it, and found it very cold and disagreeable indeed. Lifting herself upon her light wings, she hung for a moment poised in air, considering where she could find refuge. Hard enough was the decision, certainly, for whatever was not snow was moist, dark mould, whose touch would only soil her delicate purity. She tried, now this place, now that, but always unsuccessfully, for the damp ground chilled her sadly, and the bare hard branches of the trees frightened her away. Now there happened to be standing, near by, a pine wood, towering in unwithered glory beside its leafless companions; for the evergreens in some strange way escaped the blight which fell upon the other trees. The poor sprite

in her trouble and bewilderment at length spied this wood, whose branches seemed to beckon to her with soft, pitying fingers. Drooping her tired wings, she nestled in those kind arms, and, while they folded about her their warm green drapery, her glance wandered eagerly around in search of some chance gleam of comfort. Alas! look where she might, it was all in vain; and, quite disheartened, she wept so bitterly that the tears streamed down like rain upon the snow. But very soon she raised her bowed head, quite ashamed of her momentary despair. Truly, this would never do! Queen Lula had not sent her to earth to spend the days in weeping and wailing. That could mend nothing, and only uselessly consume the precious time which ought to be spent in effort; for, the more out of joint things seemed, the greater would be the labor needed to restore them. So thinking, she bestirred herself, and, wiping away the still falling tears, sought some spot for the beginning of her toils. For that matter, it was soon evident that there was little choice, since all things were in the same miserable plight. But she went to work with a good will to bring back, so far as was possible, the beauty and life which had greeted her coming in past years. She breathed upon the brooks until the ice-crusts which yet bound them, here and there, were melted away, and the freed waters came dancing out to thank her, their sullen murmur changed to a laugh of delight. Floating hither and thither, she sang and trilled so merry a strain, that the birds came out from desolate bank and bush where they had been cowering in chilly discomfort, and, swelling the song with many a glad chorus gushing from their twittering throats, settled down to build in the trees, whose springing leaf-buds were already bursting and spreading into a soft mist of green beneath her sunny smiles. Then, sailing high among the clouds, she fanned them aside with her light wings, sending them racing and chasing to the farthest rim of her sky, so that the sun might have a chance to peep down at the earth. Occupied with so many labors she had scarcely time to grieve, and her spirits rose with every new achievement; yet now and then, as she paused in her wanderings, a few shining tears would involuntarily fall at the remembrance of what had been. They were hopeful tears, however, and not shed in bitterness or idle repining.

Of course all this improvement was not worked at once. Ah, no! poor little April was many a day in accomplishing the task she had undertaken. Sometimes a cold wind from the north would bring a snow-shower, or a sharp, sleety rain, that bit the opening leaves and froze the young grass-blades. That was a sore trial, surely; but the patient sprite, working and waiting, would smile even while she wept, until she looked like a flying rainbow. Then, after the first surprise, the leaves would whisper hopefully to her, and the grass laugh up in her face with a careless gayety that made it seem brighter than ever. At last the storm-spirits grew tired of such vain persecution, and sullenly gave up the contest; whereat the birds and the buds and the brooks held such a merry-making that nothing could be heard in all the land but a whistle and a trill and a light babbling murmur all blended in one long chorus of rejoicing. That was a blessed time for sweet April; her heart was so light that it seemed as if she had never been so happy before,—not even in those bygone springs when everything had been without imperfection. And perhaps she was right in thinking thus, for the beauty now surrounding her was the fruit of her own toil, by which alone the earth had been changed from a desert to a blossom-garden. Ah yes! very proudly was her gaze fixed upon our fair sunset land, while the last day of her earthly guardianship drew to a close. Perhaps there mingled with her pleasure some fond regrets at leaving the scene of her labors and triumphs; but, if so, she was soon consoled by the remembrance of her lovely fairy home, where Queen Lula sat waiting with words of welcome and praise. Certainly it must be a strange person who could grieve at thought of returning to such a delightful dwelling. When I tell you what the wind said of its wonders, you can judge if one would not long to live there forever.

The palace stood in a garden so large, that one might walk in it for a whole year without ever beginning to see its bounds. And this vast garden was musical with birds and bees and rivulets, talking and singing all the day. And such music! All the harps and pianos and flutes in the world were nothing to it. A perfect shower of sound, like a great, clear fountain, ringing in silver sprinkles as it fell. Then the wind, coming to scatter these music-drops, mingled there in wonderful voices, whose melody united the life of every land beneath the sun. For the music seemed really to make pictures in the air, unrolling, with each volume of sound, shifting lights and colors against the dark, bright skies beyond. Now it was the rank luxuriance, the intense green and gold and crimson of tropical forests, with tall fern-plumes waving over the slender grace of tigers couched in lengths of jungle-grass, and gorgeous snakes, looking, with their shining skins, as if they had crawled among rubies and emeralds and sapphires; now the icy blue skies and the white dazzle of wide Arctic snow-plains guarded by huge ice-towers, under whose walls the lonely seals lay listening to the screams of the clamorous sea-birds wheeling restlessly under the frozen splendor of sheets of light that flared a sudden lustre of pale rose and gold far across the heavens. So passed before the gaze the scenery of every land, in long succession. Still, without a pause, the music rippled and showered, and the listener at last found it answering all he had most longed to know. Every wish and question of his life was so woven into the strain, that by and by he wondered if the music were not, after all, in his own heart. To be sure that would be nothing so strange, for we know very well that, when our own hearts are in tune, the whole earth seems so too.

I might tell you of the flowers in this marvellous place,—of interwoven blossomy vines, lifting on the wind, like a rosy sunset cloud, or of great honey-hearted lilies, transparent as moonlight; but if you are curious upon the subject, I think it would be better to ask the next bee you find to give you a description; for, depend upon it, he will have come

straight from the Fairy Garden. But you must know something of the palace, which was no less beautiful than the grounds. It ran around a circular, central court, where a fountain, playing day and night, expanded into a lake whose waters were scarcely visible through the eddying network of water-lilies tangled whitely among their cool green leaves. On the edge of this basin the arching roof was held up by slender columns wreathed with honeysuckle, whose slender trumpets were blown by the breath of every idle wind; and the roof itself was so completely hidden by trailing masses of vines festooned from side to side, and studded with golden blossoms, that it looked like a soft, green cloud, with stars peeping through. The palace was lighted by rainbows that streamed from the fountain, and the doors, at a wish, swung open with the touch of a whispering breeze, that seemed to bring with it the sweetness of a whole garden. What wonder if April did not long grieve over her return to so much beauty?

The fairy May was much less sorrowful than her sister April had been at the first, so greatly was she cheered at sight of the wonders accomplished by that patient sprite. So the gladness of her heart beamed from her eyes, and the smiles that rippled over her mouth grew warmer and brighter, day by day. There seemed to her a sweetness in the air, unknown even in those beautiful vanished springs of her remembrance. The violets were purpling the sunny hollows, and the buttercups twinkled goldenly in the meadows, as of old; yet still that strange sweetness haunted her with invisible beauty, until one day the wind, stirring fitfully among the dry leaves, lifted one, like a lid, from a bright eye peeping up beneath. Then the frolicsome wind, with a whistle of delight, began a search for the hidden treasure; and presently beside the little mountain-brook appeared a second stream, this time of flowers, whose white and rosy waves ran wild through evergreen tangles and under fallen pine-branches, tumbling in a leafy cascade down moss-grown rocks, or making a brown old log an isle in a sea of sweetness. For what should it be but the very wood where poor April had wept so piteously, and where her streaming tears, taking root in the softened ground, had sprung up again in beauty,—a myriad blossoms for every drop! O the glad smile that shone upon the face of May, as she kissed their fragrant, blooming lips! It seemed to mortals wandering in the golden air that day that the sunshine was brighter than ever before; but the wind knew whence came the brightness.

When May was about to return to Fairy-Land, she gathered, from the clustered trails that had everywhere followed the feet of weeping April, a wreath for that gentle sister’s brow; but when she would fain have crowned her, Queen Lula, twining the buds in two garlands, placed one amid the locks of each. For, born of April’s patient, trustful sadness, nursed by the loving, sunny cheerfulness of May, they belong equally to both, and to this day their fairy-name is Tears-and-Smiles. And so it is that, ever since, they have been the children of sun and shower; even as our own best blessings have sprung from uncomplaining sorrow, bravely and hopefully borne.

Kate Putnam.

MOTHER MAGPIE'S MISCHIEF.

OLD MOTHER MAGPIE was about the busiest character in the forest. But you must know that there is a great difference between being busy and being industrious. One may be very busy all the time, and yet not in the least industrious; and this was the case with Mother Magpie.

She was always full of everybody's business but her own,—up and down, here and there, everywhere but in her own nest, knowing every one's affairs, telling what everybody had been doing or ought to do, and ready to cast her advice *gratis* at every bird and beast of the woods.

Now she bustled up to the parsonage at the top of the oak-tree, to tell old Parson Too-whit what she thought he ought to preach for his next sermon, and how dreadful the morals of the parish were becoming. Then, having perfectly bewildered the poor old gentleman, who was always sleepy of a Monday morning, Mother Magpie would take a peep into Mrs. Oriole's nest, sit chattering on a bough above, and pour forth floods of advice, which, poor little Mrs. Oriole used to say to her husband, bewildered her more than a hard northeast storm.

"Depend upon it, my dear," Mother Magpie would say, "that this way of building your nest, swinging like an old empty stocking from a bough, isn't at all the thing. I never built one so in my life, and I never have headaches. Now you complain always that your head aches whenever I call upon you. It's all on account of this way of swinging and swaying about in such an absurd manner."

"But, my dear," piped Mrs. Oriole, timidly, "the Orioles always have built in this manner, and it suits our constitution."

"A fiddle on your constitution! How can you tell what agrees with your constitution unless you try? You own you are not well; you are subject to headaches, and every physician will tell you that a tilting motion disorders the stomach and acts upon the brain. Ask old Dr. Kite. I was talking with him about your case only yesterday, and says he, 'Mrs. Magpie, I perfectly agree with you.' "

"But my husband prefers this style of building."

"That's only because he isn't properly instructed. Pray, did you ever attend Dr. Kite's lectures on the nervous system?"

"No, I have no time to attend lectures. Who would set on the eggs?"

"Why, your husband, to be sure; don't he take his turn in setting? If he don't, he ought to. I shall speak to him about it. My husband always set regularly half the time, that I might have time to go about and exercise."

"O Mrs. Magpie, pray don't speak to my husband; he will think I've been complaining."

"No, no, he won't! Let me alone. I understand just how to say the thing. I've advised hundreds of young husbands in my day, and I never give offence."

"But I tell you, Mrs. Magpie, I don't want any interference between my husband and me, and I will not have it," says Mrs. Oriole, with her little round eyes flashing with indignation.

"Don't put yourself in a passion, my dear; the more you talk, the more sure I am that your nervous system is running down, or you wouldn't forget good manners in this way. You'd better take my advice, for I understand just what to do,"—and away sails Mother Magpie; and presently young Oriole comes home, all in a flutter.

"I say, my dear, if you will persist in gossiping over our private family matters with that old Mother Magpie—"

"My dear, I don't gossip; she comes and bores me to death with talking, and then goes off and mistakes what she has been saying for what I said."

"But you must *cut* her."

"I try to, all I can; but she won't *be* cut."

"It's enough to make a bird swear," said Tommy Oriole.

Tommy Oriole, to say the truth, had as good a heart as ever beat under bird's feathers; but then he had a weakness for concerts and general society, because he was held to be, by all odds, the handsomest bird in the woods, and sung like an angel; and so the truth was he didn't confine himself so much to the domestic nest as Tom Titmouse or Billy Wren. But he determined that he wouldn't have old Mother Magpie interfering with his affairs.

"The fact is," quoth Tommy, "I am a society bird, and Nature has marked out for me a course beyond the range of the commonplace, and my wife must learn to accommodate. If she has a brilliant husband, whose success gratifies her ambition and places her in a distinguished public position, she must pay something for it. I'm sure Billy Wren's wife would give her very bill to see her husband in the circles where I am quite at home. To say the truth, my wife was all well enough content till old Mother Magpie interfered. It is quite my duty to take strong ground, and show that I cannot be dictated to."

So, after this, Tommy Oriole went to rather more concerts, and spent less time at home than ever he did before, which was all that Mother Magpie effected in that quarter. I confess this was very bad in Tommy; but then birds are no better than men in domestic matters, and sometimes will take the most unreasonable courses, if a meddlesome Magpie

gets her claw into their nest.

But old Mother Magpie had now got a new business in hand in another quarter. She bustled off down to Water-dock Lane, where, as we said in a former narrative, lived the old music-teacher, Dr. Bullfrog. The poor old Doctor was a simple-minded, good, amiable creature, who had played the double-bass and led the forest choir on all public occasions since nobody knows when. Latterly some youngsters had arisen who sneered at his performances as behind the age. In fact, since a great city had grown up in the vicinity of the forest, tribes of wandering boys broke up the simple tastes and quiet habits which old Mother Nature had always kept up in those parts. They pulled the young checkerberry before it even had time to blossom, rooted up the sassafras shrubs and gnawed their roots, fired off guns at the birds, and, on several occasions when old Dr. Bullfrog was leading a concert, had dashed in and broken up the choir by throwing stones.

This was not the worst of it. The little varlets had a way of jeering at the simple old Doctor and his concerts, and mimicking the tones of his bass-viol. “There you go, Paddy-go-donk, Paddy-go-donk—umph—chunk,” some rascal of a boy would shout, while poor old Bullfrog’s yellow spectacles would be bedewed with tears of honest indignation. In time, the jeers of these little savages began to tell on the society in the forest, and to corrupt their simple manners; and it was whispered among the younger and more heady birds and squirrels, that old Bullfrog was a bore, and that it was time to get up a new style of music in the parish, and to give the charge of it to some more modern performer.

Poor old Dr. Bullfrog knew nothing of this, however, and was doing his simple best, in peace, when Mother Magpie called in upon him, one morning.

“Well, neighbor, how unreasonable people are! Who would have thought that the youth of our generation should have no more consideration for established merit? Now, for my part, *I* think your music-teaching never was better; and as for our choir, I maintain constantly that it never was in better order, but—Well, one may wear her tongue out, but one can never make these young folks listen to reason.”

“I really don’t understand you, ma’am,” said poor Dr. Bullfrog.

“What! you haven’t heard of a committee that is going to call on you, to ask you to resign the care of the parish music?”

“Madam,” said Dr. Bullfrog, with all that energy of tone for which he was remarkable, “I don’t believe it,—I *can’t* believe it. You must have made a mistake.”

“I mistake! No, no, my good friend; I never make mistakes. What I know, I know certainly. Wasn’t it I that said I knew there was an engagement between Tim Chipmunk and Nancy Nibble, who are married this blessed day? I knew that thing six weeks before any bird or beast in our parts; and I can tell you, you are going to be scandalously and ungratefully treated, Dr. Bullfrog.”

“Bless me, we shall all be ruined!” said Mrs. Bullfrog; “my poor husband—”

“O, as to that, if you take things in time, and listen to my advice,” said Mother Magpie, “we may yet pull you through. You must alter your style a little,—adapt it to modern times. Everybody now is a little touched with the operatic fever, and there’s Tommy Oriole has been to New Orleans and brought back a touch of the artistic. If you would try his style a little,—something Tyrolean you see.”

“Dear madam, consider my voice. I never could hit the high notes.”

“How do you know? It’s all practice; Tommy Oriole says so. Just try the scales. As to your voice, your manner of living has a great deal to do with it. I always did tell you that your passion for water injured your singing. Suppose Tommy Oriole should sit half his days up to his hips in water, as you do,—his voice would be as hoarse and rough as yours. Come up on the bank, and learn to perch, as we birds do. We are the true musical race.”

And so, poor Mr. Bullfrog was persuaded to forego his pleasant little cottage under the cat-tails, where his green spectacles and honest round back had excited, even in the minds of the boys, sentiments of respect and compassion. He came up into the garden, and established himself under a burdock, and began to practise Italian scales.

The result was, that poor old Doctor Bullfrog, instead of being considered as a respectable old bore, got himself universally laughed at for aping fashionable manners. Every bird and beast in the forest had a gibe at him; and even old

Parson Too-whit thought it worth his while to make him a pastoral call, and admonish him about courses unbefitting his age and standing. As to Mother Magpie, you may be sure that she assured every one how sorry she was that dear old Dr. Bullfrog had made such a fool of himself; if he had taken her advice, he would have kept on respectably as a nice old Bullfrog should.

But the tragedy for the poor old music-teacher grew even more melancholy in its termination; for one day as he was sitting disconsolately under a currant-bush in the garden, practising his poor old notes in a quiet way, *thump* came a great blow of a hoe, which nearly broke his back.

“Hullo! what ugly beast have we got here?” said Tom Noakes, the gardener’s boy. “Here, here Wasp, my boy.”

What a fright for a poor, quiet, old Bullfrog, as little wiry, wicked Wasp came at him, barking and yelping. He jumped with all his force sheer over a patch of bushes into the river, and swam back to his old home among the cat-tails. And always after that it was observable that he was very low-spirited, and took very dark views of life; but nothing made him so angry as any allusion to Mother Magpie, of whom, from that time, he never spoke except as *Old Mother Mischief.*

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

SPRING SONG.

WHEN the soft winds blow,
And kiss away the snow,—
When bluebirds sing,
For the dear warm Spring,—
Then we'll go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

When the little brooks run,
And jump in the sun,
When the dandelions blow,
And the daisies grow,
Then we'll go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

When the sky is blue,
And the river too,—
When the grass is green
Where the drifts have been,—
Then we'll go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

When the lilacs bloom
In purple gloom,
And the south-wind smells
Of the lily-bells,
Then we'll go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

When the apple-trees blow
Like rosy snow,
And the humming-bird swings
On buzzing wings,
Then we'll go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

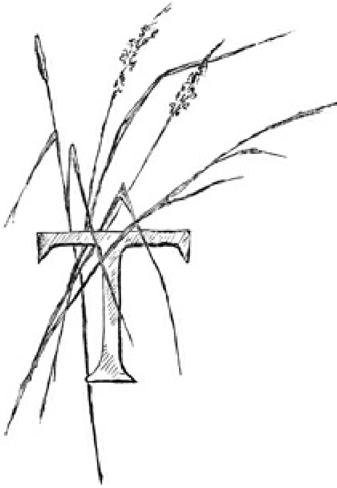
O soft winds, blow!
And kiss away the snow,
Till the bright brooks run,
And jump in the sun,
And we go a-Maying, Through the meadows straying,
Maying, Maying, Faith and I!

Rose Terry.

THE FOUR SEASONS,

AND A LITTLE ABOUT THEIR FLORA.

May and June.—Spring and Summer.



HERE is green grass again, fresh green in the meadows and along the hedges! The willows hang yellow by the water-courses, and there is a soft, feathery look to many of the shrubs, that shows they are venturing to look out into the world once more.

At the foot of the gray forest-trees, in among the leafless bushes, in the low grounds, rise up suddenly some tufts of green leaves. How welcome they are! The very first of the green herbs to appear, they seem to be singing to us with the Hyla and the early frogs. Our joy must content itself, however, with only the sight of it. Do not venture to pick its luxuriant bunch of leaves! As you approach, you will recognize it by its offensive smell. I will give you only its botanical name, *Symplocarpus*. You can easily tell what it is commonly called. In spite of its one unpleasant peculiarity, I am fond of it. I like it for its rank growth, after the seeming death of Winter. It is not pretty, nor delicate, nor sweet; we do not like to touch it; yet it is bold and brave. It is growing; it is alive; it is the first to lead in the summer greenness. By and by, grass, and matted vines, and high brakes, and rushes, and spreading low shrubs, will cover and hide it. Then we shall be used to green leaves and all kinds of growing things; then we shall be at liberty to turn up our nose at the *Symplocarpus fœtidus*, with its cluster of large veiny leaves, striped with purple and yellowish green!

At last the true May-day has come,—the day that is like no other,—when not a single child should stay in school or be shut up with a book,—when young and old should forget there are such things as close rooms and hot firesides,—when everything is freedom and joy,—the windows open, and the doors,—a sunny piazza, sunny door-steps, leading us away,—no one can stay at home. We all go trooping out to the meadow.

Yes, the days of the meadow have begun. What riches it contains! What mines of wealth! Where shall we begin? Where can we ever stop? We must begin with what we came for, for I see the white stars gleaming out on the green grass far away, and we cannot hurry fast enough in our joy to greet them; but at last, at last, after long and weary winter months, we pick our first *Sanguinaria*. Snow-white, in spite of its bloody, sanguinary name,—white, as though it had been saving up some of the winter flakes down in its blood-red root! Sometimes we find it in April. In regions where the Mayflower does not grow, it is our very first flower.

Where does it find its white petals? For when you break its stem, the blood-red drops that fall from it will show you with what juice it is fed. Sometimes we hear people complaining of not being able to do this or that, because they have not the right materials. If they had only had more money, more time, some silk for a fine dress, a new set of furs, better books, more friends, or a decent peg-top, they might have done more and appeared better than they ever have yet! Just let them look at the Sanguinaria: see what the little maiden has managed to make out of the jars of bitter blood-red sap, preserved all winter in her thick roots! Straight up from the root she sent her flower-stalk, without waiting for any branches. Such a stalk, coming from the ground or near it, is called a *scape*. See how this scape is shielded by a single rounded, lobed leaf. (And what is a *lobed* leaf? Please find out by looking at the leaf of our Bloodroot.) See how carefully at first this leaf wraps the stalk; it is rolled around it as tenderly as the blanket about your baby-brother. Then comes one flower, resting on a calyx, with two sepals. Her bud is white as any orange-blossom,—so delicate that at a touch the white petals drop away. They are very *deciduous*, the botanists say, and the sepals of the calyx fall when the flower opens.

A shout interrupts us. The first Dog's-tooth Violet is found, a little way up the slope, nearer the stone fence. "Why *violet*?" somebody asks; but everybody had rather pick than answer. It is of the Lily family,—it is even of a *class* different from that of the Violet. Its bulb resembles a dog's tooth in shape. There is a little forest of them; we can gather them by handfuls, and they will make a fine show to carry home. Our little Sanguinarias will hardly last as long. The Dog's-tooth Violet is sometimes called Adder's-Tongue; its botanical name is *Erythronium*. We shall have to wait before we look at it more carefully; for how can we stay in one place when there are violets to be found,—real violets? Yes, blue and *white* violets! Sit down by the little clumps and pick them one by one. "Leaves all long-petioled and upright, heart-shaped." "Leaves round-heart-shaped";—but no one can stop to study them. We will wait till we have

picked all that we can, and then sit down with our laps full, to find out to what family they belong.

In the shelter of the stone wall, on the slope leading to the meadow, here is a comfortable nook, where a gray old rock helps to support the stone fence. What a charming old wall it is! Great stones heaped up, moss and lichen creeping into all the corners, blackberry vines all in a tangle over and under it, bushes putting out some tender little buds to shelter it, a squirrel peeping here and there, tall grass hiding and smothering it,—who could wish for a lovelier border to the field than the old stone wall, with its wild hedge of brambles and shrubs?

Look down upon our field. How shall we ever begin to classify our flowers! For see how every family and race and class have come trooping in without any distinction of color. If we begin to study the few flowers we have spoken of,—those that we have before our eyes now,—we must meddle with every series and class and sub-class and order and tribe and genus and species! Such a terrible row of names! but the more closely we look behind them, the more shall we want to know of them.

In the first place, it is one *kingdom* we are talking about. And we must leave behind the others. These gray rocks would like to tell us of the *Mineral* Kingdom; and the frogs and the twittering birds are calling to us not to forget them; and the lemon-colored and green beetles, and spiders, and crowds of creeping things, besides many of your other friends of the *Animal* Kingdom, want you to see how much this meadow holds,—how, though we talk about classes and families in all these kingdoms, there is no dividing line here to shut one out from the other, but the lazy sheep nips off his blades of grass with his nose very near the tadpole, and great, rough leaves of the plantain get their food from the same soil that nourishes the delicate grass and the Sanguinaria.

A French botanist tells how, when he was a boy, he made for himself the discovery of the difference between these three kingdoms. One day the family had for dinner a very rare kind of fish, that pleased him much. As he was scraping its bones, it came into his head that it would be very fine if he could raise some fishes just like it, as the gardener raised his peas. So he cleaned the bone carefully, took it out into the garden border, and planted it in some rich mould. Day after day he watched it and watered it, but no fish-sprouts appeared. At last, tired of waiting, he determined to dig up his bone; but, alas! what was his horror to find, not only that it had not grown any, but that it had begun to decay, and was disgusting to look at. This, however, did not discourage him from making more experiments, though his older brothers and sisters had laughed at him very much for planting a fish. He had a lovely round pebble, which looked so much like the smooth seeds that he had seen sown in the earth, that he thought he would see if it would not grow, and if he could not have a tree of pebbles. So he dug a hole, and put it carefully into the earth, and waited day after day, but no stone-bush came up. So after a while he ventured to look after it, and was astonished to find that it looked just as it did when he planted it,—neither smaller nor larger. His next experiment was more successful, for this time he tried a bean, and that you all know is an admirable thing for children to plant. For it does not mind being dug up now and then for you to see how it is growing,—the little, fine, delicate fibres that form its root, and the two stout leaves that are to make their way up through the ground, the two *seed-leaves*,—*cotyledons*, as botanists call them. Only you must be careful, when you put your bean back again, not to set it into the ground root uppermost. Just think how you would feel if your father set you up to the dinner-table feet uppermost. And the poor little bean has no little hands or heels to help itself back again, though it does manage it by screwing round its fibres and finding its place once more. It loses time, however, and think how troubled it must be to be put back so long in reaching the dear sun!

Well, our French botanist, by these experiments, found out what was the difference between the *three kingdoms*. Can you, too, see it? Some of you can, and some of you cannot. Let those of you who have found out tell those who have not.

We are now busy with the *Vegetable* Kingdom, and let us see how this is divided. First, into *two* great *series*, one of plants with flowers that you can see, and another of plants with flowers you cannot see. This beautiful lichen on the rock we lean upon, these little mosses among the stones, the green slime around the pebbles in the brook, the toadstools,—all these, and their like, are called Flowerless or *Cryptogamous* plants, which means that you cannot see

their flowers. Yet they have most interesting ways of producing their *spores*, which is the name given to the fruit they bear. Many a little boy who has nothing better than a quill and a slice of potato for a popgun would like to shoot as well as a little plant that grows on wet splinters of wood. You would call it nothing but disagreeable mould, and would like to wipe it away; but if you had a microscope with which you could look at this *Cryptogamous* thing, you would see how, small as it is, it is furnished with machinery by which it can shoot its little spores into the world, all ready to grow into more such little plants. But, as it is, we have as much as we can do with our eyes, so we turn them from the *Flowerless* plants to the *Phænogamous* or Flowering plants. We have learned that these plants which we are to study do not belong to the second *series*, because we can see their flowers.

What *class* do they belong to? Our meadow has specimens of the two classes into which our first series is divided. It is a republican meadow, and we have both *Exogens* and *Endogens*. I have already spoken of these two classes, the difference between which is shown in their stems. The *Endogenous* stem is so called from a Greek word meaning "inside-growing," because, if it lasts more than a year, the new wood is added by threads coming down from the new growth inside, among the older threads, so that the youngest and softest are near the centre, and the harder wood near the surface. *Endogenous* stems have no separate pith in the centre, as you can see in the grasses around us, and in the Dog's-tooth Violet and some others. These plants are called also *Monocotyledonous* plants, because they have only one *cotyledon* or seed-leaf. You remember the beans have two; therefore they are *Dicotyledonous* plants, or *Exogens*. With the *Endogens* the leaf dies away upon the plant: it does not drop off, as it does with the *Exogens*.

Gray's Manual of Botany, to which we shall apply to help us *classify* our flowers, gives a description of these differences, and, in studying our flower, we can see if it answers any of these descriptions.

In taking up our Sanguinaria, you will need the help of some experience to decide you to place it among the *Exogens* in Class I. You will see from the description of *Endogenous* plants, that "the parts of the flower are in threes"; but here are two sepals, and an even number of petals; therefore, although you might be in doubt about its stem, which seems hollow like that of the grasses, we will place it in Class I.

Let me give you a full description of stamens and pistils.

A stamen has two parts, the stalk or *filament*, and the *anther*. The anther is the only essential part. It holds in its little cells a powder, generally of a yellow color; this is the *pollen*, the fertilizing matter which it is the office of the stamen to produce. The yellow pollen of the Pine is often blown a great distance by the wind, and people used to think the yellow dust was a shower of sulphur. The pistil has three parts, beginning from below, the *ovary*, the *style*, and the *stigma*. The *ovary* is a hollow pod, for holding the *ovules*, which are the young seeds. The *style* is the tapering part; this is not essential and is often wanting. Sometimes it is long and slender. The *stigma* is the tip or some other part of the style that receives the pollen which fertilizes the ovules in the ovary. The end of the flower-stalk, on which all these parts stand, is called the *receptacle*.

All this explanation I must give you to show you what are the peculiarities of the Sanguinaria.

Because its seed is in a closed ovary, not naked like the Pines, we can put it in Sub-class I. Because it has many petals, it must belong to the Polypetalous division, Division I. Because its stamens are numerous, because its calyx drops off, without tearing away the pistils and stamens with it, we find that it belongs to the *Papaveraceæ*, that is, to the *Poppy Family*. Read its description, "Sepals 2 or 3 in number, *caducous*." Yes, ours fell long ago. "Juice milky or colored." Going farther on, in this way, in our Gray's Manual of Botany, we should find an exact description of our Sanguinaria on page 26.

But you will begin to think that you have met with another quality of the Poppy Family. My long lecture makes you sleepy, and reminds you that from this family come our opiates and sleeping draughts.

I have been the more particular with this one flower, because, by the same method, we can place our Dog's-tooth Violet among the Endogenous plants and the flowers of the Lily Family. These have the *perianth* lily-like. The flower is called a perianth when it is difficult to say whether its leaves are those of the corolla or the calyx,—whether they are sepals or petals.

As for the real Violets, we will take them home, and, while the cherry-tree showers down its blossoms upon us, I will tell you a story to show why the Germans call the Violet the Stepmother. You must pick me a Heart's-ease from the garden, because this species of Violet best explains the reason.

You can see how the flower is what botanists call *irregular*. How different in form from the lily-like Dog's-Tooth, and the white petals of the Sanguinaria! Hold up the broad purple and yellow petal of the Heart's-ease. This is the Stepmother, dressed with a great deal of gold, with stripes of purple velvet. If you will look, you will see she is so grand that she is sitting on two green seats (two sepals of the calyx). Her own daughters sit, one on each side of her, dressed in purple and less gold than she has, but still very fine, and each has a seat to herself. But the two step-daughters have no gold in their dress, and they must both sit on one seat.

Our little wild Violets do not tell so plainly this story of the Stepmother. You can see, however, how they all have five petals, and how five green sepals grow below, to support them. It has five stamens, and does not thus come under the head of "numerous" stamens; but it can come among those described with "stamens the same number as the

petals." We shall thus trace it to the Violet family, and we shall find among the descriptions of these all our wild Violets, from the little, scented, white Violet, that grows in wet places in the meadows, and many different species, to the lonely *pedate* Violet, that comes later, with large pale lilac flower and yellow centre.

But the wild-flowers now are, day after day, increasing upon us. There is the day of the first Cowslips, who ought to have a whole day to themselves, they make the meadows look so sunny! If you were to look first for the Cowslips in the Index of your Botany, you would be disappointed to find the description of "a tubular calyx, and a pale lilac corolla," and you will have to examine its parts before you can find its place there.

You will find it is of the first sub-class, Division I. It has quickly-falling *petals*, you will say; but the yellow, shining leaves belong to the calyx, and are sepals, and the flower is one of the *Ranunculaceæ*, or *Crowfoot* family. Can you not see its resemblance to the Buttercup, that is of this family, and is a true Ranunculus? It is a *Caltha*, and our Botany tells us it should be called Marsh-Marigold, which is a pretty enough name; but who could give up the happy, childish associations that come up with the name of Cowslips?

Everywhere blossoms scattering down upon us, and the Anemones and the Columbines hurrying on! How we regret the many rainy days that intervene, when the fugitive wild-flowers appear, and hurry away again before we have time to pick them!

What days these are for the cascade! Who does not know the cascade, that tumbles down the steep rocks, over soft cushions of moss, rattling among pebbles, playing with the long grass? And the flowers are always on the other side! Which is well, because it gives us a chance for clambering across on the stones,—for stooping by the side of the stream, to see how the green ferns are beginning to unroll themselves.

Here, on the other side, is the *Arum*, with its queer striped green and brown hood. This plant belongs to the Second Class. Its stem is Endogenous. Its hood-like leaf is called a *spathe*; and this spike that holds the small flowers is called a *spadix*. It belongs to the same family as the beautiful Egyptian Calla of the greenhouse, and there is a little wild Calla, with a white spathe, to be found in Framingham (Mass.) and a few other places.

Farther in the woods we shall presently find the Anemones, drooping Anemones, some clear white, some purple, and some deeply tinged with red. These, too, are of the Crowfoot family, that has given us so many flowers. Like the Hepatica, these seeming petals are the sepals, and the flower has an *involucre* of two or three leaves below. Its name came from the wind, because the flower was thought to open only when the wind blows. The Wind-flower has one flower on its drooping stem, the Rue-Anemone has many star-shaped flowers.

The gay Columbines welcome in June. Would you guess that they too are of the Crowfoot family, the *Ranunculaceæ*? But they will answer the distinctive description,—only these *Aquilegia* are of a different tribe from the Anemones and Hepaticas. They are of the same tribe as the Cowslip, but a different genus. "Petals five, spur-shaped, longer than the five deciduous sepals; flower unsymmetrical and irregular." They are of the same genus as the Larkspur. The Columbine has a calyx with five sepals, colored like the petals, and five petals with hollow spurs that hold honey. As it droops upon its stalk its spurs turn upwards. Its Latin name of Aquilegia is given it from a fancied resemblance of these spurs to the talons of an eagle, *aquila*. How gayly they hang over the gray old rocks round which they cluster! How brilliant they look when they grow in troops, as they do near Lark's Shelf, and many other places where you will find them!

Then here is the "Solomon's Seal"! The *Polygonatum* is the true Solomon's Seal, for it is the root of this plant that bears the scar that gives it its name. It has a creeping, under-ground stem, which is called a *root-stock*, from which it sends up every spring a fresh stalk, that bears leaves and flowers, and dies away in the autumn. The *seal* is the round scar left by the dead stalk. The flower consists of a tubular perianth. The greenish-white bells hang, two or more together, all the way up the stem, in the axils of the leaves.

You will not find Solomon's monogram on the roots of the *Smilacina*, the False Solomon's Seal. The perianth is more spreading, and the white flowers are collected in a terminal *raceme*. This is a form of flower-cluster where each little flower has its own stalk or pedicel gathering round the end of the stem.

The *Convallaria bifolia* is sometimes called the wild Lily of the Valley. Its flowers are very small, in a terminal *raceme*, and its low stem rises between two oblong shiny leaves. The *Convallaria majalis* is the Lily of the Valley that grows in our gardens. The drooping stalk bearing its white bells comes up between two leaves that resemble those of the *bifolia*, but they are larger.

I wish I could give you in English verses the sad little piece of French poetry that tells how a poor mother goes out into the country with her little girl to pick the *muguet*, the lilies of the valley, for sale. The little child must set out early in the morning; not, as you do, for a day's pleasure, but working for her living, looking for flowers in the fields and under the hedges. Then, tired and hungry, she comes back with her mother into the great city, and must wander round the streets till they have sold the pretty white flowers, and have earned a little money to buy themselves some food. With this they must go home to their poor lodgings, and get what rest they can before they set out another day, at early sunrise, for another such day's work. Think how hard it must be to have to make a drudgery of the happy occupation of picking flowers! And don't you hope the tired little girl now and then has a chance to rest on a grassy bank, and that

the squirrels and the birds make her merry sometimes?

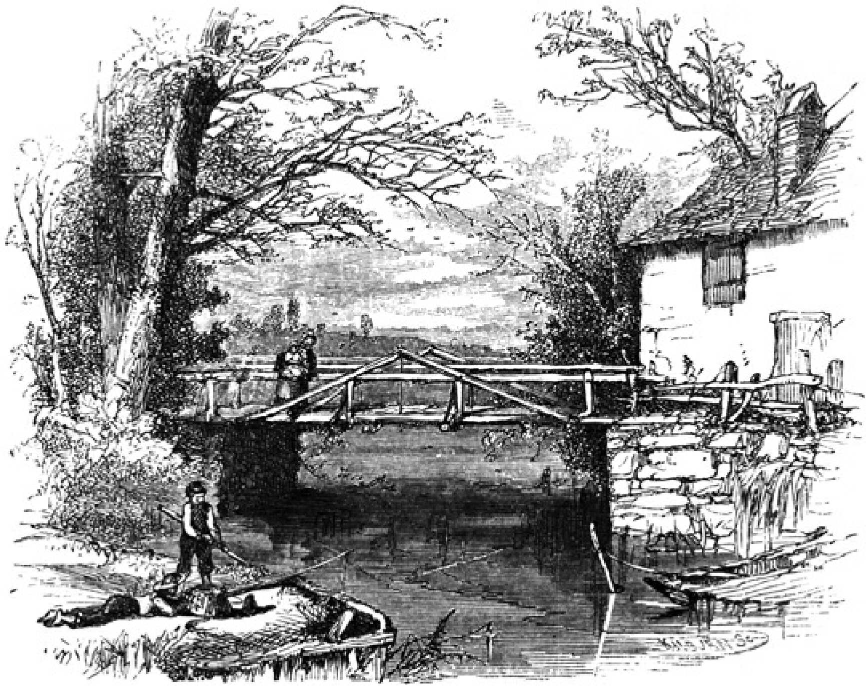
When you come back into town, after a hunt for flowers, with hands laden, think of the children in the close streets that have not seen a flower all summer long, and, when they come round you asking for "a posy," fill their hands with the gay columbines, or any of the freshest of those that it has given you such pleasure to pick!

The *Clintonia* has six separate sepals, bell-shaped and lily-like. Can you find it?

The *Uvularia*, sometimes called *Bellwort*, though it resembles the Solomon's Seal, comes into a different sub-order. What an exquisite creamy-white color it has, and lily-shaped, hanging flower! Its leaves are called *perfoliate*, as if bored through for the passage of the stem. It hangs most gracefully, and grows frequently in clusters, as at the mill, where a stream winds round a little peninsula, of which they have possession, and where they make a fairy grove.

On the opposite bank you will find the *Polygala*, with its "fringe-crested keel" of a rose-purple.

And this reminds us of the *Arethusa*, with its delicate stalk, and its irregular, rose-purple flower, and the *Pogonia*,—both of these of the beautiful *Orchis* family,—growing on the edges of the meadows, near the Side-saddle flowers. What strange flowers these are! Should you recognize in this reddish umbrella-shaped thing the top of the pistil? It belongs to the Pitcher-plants, and has a right to an order pretty much to itself,—not only on account of its odd, reddish-brown flower, but from its leaves, of a hollow, pitcher form. These are usually half filled with water and drowned insects.



But I have had to pass by so many flowers unspoken of, that you must find and study for yourselves!—the Early Saxifrage, the Trientalis, the Trilliums, the Claytonia. There is the lovely Houstonia, that is willing to blossom by the roadside. A little clump of it as it grows is a sight to make one happy for a year. Its pale blue cross-shaped flowers grow in low tufts. It is monopetalous: so it comes into the second division of the first sub-class of Class I. It has four stamens, and four lobes to its corolla, and we can bring it into the family of the *Rubiaceæ*. Some specimens were found by a German physician named Oldenland, and are called *Oldenlandia*; but these have received their name from a Dr. Houston, who collected them in Central America. It is allied to the pretty Mitchella, or Partridge-berry, that has twin-flowers on its creeping stalk, and red berries that last all winter, and that we still find when its fresh flowers are opening.

Then there is the Rhodora on the edges of the swamps,—flaming-purple flowers shining out on its leafless, dry-looking branches,—of the Heath family, with the rarer *Andromeda*.

There is the wilderness of tree-blossoms that have been showering down upon us from the shad-blossom to the apple-blossom, with the wonderful horse-chestnut, and the graceful willows.

There are the Lupines by the woodsides, purplish-blue, sometimes pink, sometimes white. Sometimes in the same field with the Lupine flashes out the Painted-Cup (*Castilleja*). Its bright scarlet belongs neither to the corolla nor to the calyx, but to the *bracts*,—the small leaves from which the flower rises, which are colored as if with a dash from a paint-brush. The corolla is of a greenish yellow.

And the broad field by which we pass into Silent Way sends us the sweet scent of the Purple Clover,—the flowers in heads, each little tubular corolla resting in a short, tubular calyx. It would lead me to give you some description of the differences found in the Papilionaceous flowers, but our road leads us into the SILENT WAY.

Lucretia P. Hale.

A TENNESSEE FARM-HOUSE.

ON a cold morning of last December, I started on horseback from Corinth, in Mississippi, to visit the battle-field of Shiloh, or Pittsburg Landing, in Tennessee. Crossing the State line, I fell in with a young fellow wearing a flapping gray blanket and riding a mule. On making his acquaintance, I learned that his name was Zeek, and that he lived on the western edge of the battle-field, to which he promised to guide me if I would go home with him to his father's house.

At about two o'clock, after a ride of twenty miles, we forded Owl Creek, a narrow, muddy stream. Zeek's home was in view from the farther bank,—a log-house, with the usual great opening through the middle,—situated on the edge of a pleasant oak-grove strewn with rustling leaves, and enclosed, with its yard and out-houses, by a Virginia rail-fence.

"Alight!" said Zeek, dismounting.

We were met inside the gate by a sister of the young man, a girl of fifteen, in a native Bloomer dress that fell just below the knees. As I entered the space between the two divisions of the house, I noticed that doors on both sides were open, one leading to the kitchen, where there was a great fire, and the other to the sitting-room, where there was another great fire, in large old-fashioned fireplaces.

Zeek took me into the sitting-room, and introduced me to his mother. There were two beds in the back corners of the room. The uncovered floor was of oak; the naked walls were of plain hewn logs; the sleepers and rough boards of the chamber floor constituted the ceiling. There were clothes drying on a pole stretched across the room, and hanks of dyed cotton thread on a bayonet thrust into a chink of the chimney. Cold as the day was, the door by which we entered was never shut, and sometimes another door was open, letting the wintry wind sweep through the house.

Zeek's mother went to see about getting us some dinner; and his father came in from the woods, where he had been chopping, and sat in the chimney-corner and talked with me,—a lean, bent, good-humored, hard-working, sensible sort of man. Zeek's mother came to announce our dinner. I crossed the open space, pausing only to wash my hands and face in a tin basin half filled with water and pieces of ice, and entered the kitchen. It was a less pretentious apartment than the sitting-room. There was no window in it; but wide chinks between the logs, and two open doors, let in a sufficiency of daylight, and more than a sufficiency of cold wind. There was a bed in one corner, and a little square pine table in the centre of the room.

The table was neatly set, with a goodly variety of dishes for a late dinner in a back-country farm-house. We could have dined very comfortably but for the open doors. Blowing in at one and out at the other, and circulating through numberless cracks between the logs, the gale frisked at will about our legs, and made our very hands numb and noses cold while we ate. The fire was of no more use to us than one built out of doors. The victuals that had come upon the table warm were cold before they reached our mouths. The river of pork-fat which the kind lady poured over my plate congealed at once into a brownish-gray deposit, like a spreading sand-bar. I enjoyed an advantage over Zeek, for I had taken the precaution to put on my over-coat and to secure a back seat. He sat opposite me, with his back towards the windward door, where the blast, pouncing in upon him, pierced and pinched him without mercy. He had not yet recovered from the chill of his long winter-day's ride; and his lank, shivering frame, and blue, narrow, puckered face under its thin thatch of tow (combed straight down, and cut square and short across his forehead from ear to ear), presented a picture at once astonishing and ludicrous.

"Have you got warm yet, Zeek?" I cheerfully inquired.

"No!"—shuddering. "I'm plumb chilly! I'm so kule I kain't eat."

"I should think you would be more comfortable with that door closed," I mildly suggested.

He slowly turned his head half round, and as slowly turned it back again, with another shiver. The possibility of actually shutting the door seemed scarcely to penetrate the tow-thatch.

Zeek begged to be excused, he was so "kule"; and, taking a piece of squirrel in one hand, and a biscuit in the other, went and stood by the fire. I found that he was averse to going out again that day: it was now late in the afternoon, and our poor animals had not yet been fed, or even taken in from where they stood curled up with the cold by the gate. I accordingly proposed to the old folks to spend the night with them, and to take Zeek with me over to the battle-field in the morning. This being agreed upon, the father invited me to go out and see his stock, and his two bags of cotton.

In the yard near the house was the smoke-house, or meat-house, a blind hut built of small logs, answering the purpose of a cellar,—for in that country cellars are unknown. In it the family provisions were stored. Under an improvised shelter at one corner was the cotton, neatly packed in two bales of five hundred pounds each, and looking handsome as a lady in its brown sacking and new hoops. The hoops were a sort of experiment, which it was thought would prove successful. Usually the sacking and ropes about a bale of cotton cost as much by the pound as the cotton itself; and, to economize that expense, planters were beginning to substitute hickory hoops for ropes. The owner was very proud of those two bales, picked by his own hands and his children's, and prepared for market at a gin and press in the neighborhood; and he hoped to realize five hundred dollars for them when thrown upon the market. A planter of a thousand bales, made by the hands of slaves he was supposed to own, and ginned and pressed on his own

plantation, could not have contemplated his crop with greater satisfaction, in King Cotton's haughtiest days.

Near the meat-house was a huge ash-leach. Then there was a simple horse-mill for crushing sorghum; for Mr. ——, like most Southern farmers, made sufficient syrup for home consumption, besides a little for market. Under a beech-tree was a beautiful spring of water. A rail-fence separated the door-yard from the cattle-yard, where were flocks of hens, geese, ducks, and turkeys, cackling, quacking, and gobbling in such old, familiar fashion that I was made to feel strangely at home in their company. There were bleating, hungry calves, and good-natured, surly bulls, and patient cows waiting to be milked and fed, and a family of uncurried colts and young mules, and beautiful spotted goats, with their kids, and, near by, a hog-lot full of lean and squealing swine. Speaking of the goats, Mr. —— said there was no money in them, but that he kept them for the curiosity of the thing.

There was no barn on the place. The nearest approach to it was the stable, or "mule-pen," constructed of logs with liberal openings between them, through one of which my lonesome iron-gray put his nose as I came near, and whinnied his humble petition for fodder. There he was, stabled with mules, unblanketed, and scarcely better off than when tied to the gate-post,—for the wind circulated almost as freely through the rude enclosure as it did in Mrs. ——'s kitchen. Such hospitalities were scarcely calculated to soothe the feelings of a proud and well-bred horse; but the iron-gray accepted them philosophically.

"Where is your hay?" I inquired.

"We make no hay in this country. Our stock feeds out on the hills, or browses in the woods or cane-brakes, all winter. When we have to feed 'em, we throw out a little corn, fodder, and shucks."

A loft over the mule-pen was filled with stalks and unhusked corn. Zeek went up into it, and threw down bundles of the former, and filled baskets of the latter, for his father to feed out to the multitude of waiting mouths.

We went into the house, and gathered around the sitting-room fire for a social evening's talk. As it grew dark, the doors were closed, and we sat in the beautiful fire-light. We talked of the depredations of the two armies.

"I never feared one party more than the other," said Mrs. ——. "If anything, the Rebels was worst."

"Both took hosses and mules," said Mr. ——. "At fust, I used to try to get my property back. I'd go to head-quarters and get authority to take it whur I could find it; but always by that time 't would be hocus-pocussed out of the way. It was all an understood thing. Aside from that, the regular armies, neither of them, didn't steal from us. But as soon as they'd passed, then the thieves would come in. They'd take what we had, and cus us for not having mo'e. Sheep, chickens, geese, corn, watches, and money,—whatever they could lay hands on suffered. Men never thought of carrying money about them, them times, but always give it to the weemun to hide.

"Thar was scouts belonging to both armies, but that was the scourge of the country. If a man had anything, they'd be sure to h'ist it. They'd pretend to come with an order to search for gov'ment arms. It was only an excuse for robbing. They'd search for gov'ment arms in a tin-cup. They had what they called a cash rope. That was a rope to slip about a man's neck, and swing him up with, till he'd tell whur his money was. They had a gimblet, which they said was for boring for treasures; and they always knew just where to bore to find 'em. That was right hyere" (in a man's temples). "They'd bore into him till he couldn't stand the pain; then, if he had any money, he'd be only too glad to give it up. These was generally Confederates. We was pestered powerful by 'em. But Harrison's scouts was as bad as any. They pretended to be acting on the Union side. They was made up of Southern men, mostly from Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessy.

"They was a torn-down bad set of men,—bad as the Rebs. They'd no respect for anybody or anything. One Sunday a neighbor of mine met them coming up the road. He knew them very well; and he said to them, it was Sunday, and he hoped thar'd be no disturbances that day; the people, he said, had all gone to preaching. That's right, they said; they believed in means of grace; and they asked whur the preaching was to be, and who was going to preach. He told them, and said he was going thar himself. They said they believed a man did right to go to preaching, though they was deprived of that privilege themselves. He told 'em he hoped they'd look more after their eternal interest in futur', and they said they intended to, and thanked him, and rode on. They then just went to plund'ring, cle'ring out his house about the fust one. Then they said they thought they'd take his advice, and look a little after their eternal interests, and go and hunt up the preaching. Then they just went over and robbed the meeting. There was seventeen horses with side-saddles on 'em; the men generally went on foot, but the weemun rode. They tuke every horse, and left the weemun to walk home, and carry their saddles, or leave 'em."

Both Zeek and his father kept out of the war. The latter was too old, and the former too young, to be swept in by the conscription act. "Zeek escaped well!" said the mother, with a gleam of exultation. "But I was just in dread he'd be taken!" And I gathered that a little innocent maternal fiction as to his years had been employed to shield him.

"Some of the hardest times we saw, hyere in the Union parts of Tennessy, was when they come hunting conscripts. They got up some dogs now that would track a man. One of my neighbors turned and shot a hound that was after him, and got away. The men come up, and they was torn-down mad when they saw the dog killed. They pressed a man and his wagon to take the carcass back to town; they lived in Adamsville, eight miles from hyere. They stopped to my house over night, going back."

"They just bemoaned the loss of that dog," said Mrs. ——. "They said they'd sooner have lost one of their company."

"They got back to town, and they buried that dog now with great solemnity. They put a monument over his grave, with an epitaph on it. But some of the conscripts they'd been hunting dug him up, and hung him to a tree, and shot him full of bullets, and made a writing which they pinned to the tree, with these words on it: '*We'll serve the owners of the dogs the same way next*.' "

"Was Owl Crick swimming to-day, Zeek?" Mrs. —— asked; meaning was it so high that our beasts had to swim. And that led to a remark as to the origin of the name.

"Thar's right smart of owls on this crick," said Mr. ——; "sometimes we're pestered powerful by 'em, they steal our chickens so."

Just then we heard a wild squawking in the direction of the hen-roost. "Thar's one catching a chicken now," quietly observed the farmer. I certainly expected to see either him or Zeek run out to the poor thing's rescue; but they sat unconcernedly in their chairs. It was the chicken's business, not theirs. The squawking grew fainter and fainter, and then ceased.

"The people all through this section I allow will never forget the battle," said Mr. ——. "Friday night Johnson's left wing was at Brooks's,—the last house you passed to-day befo'e you fo'ded Owl Crick. The woods was just full of men. They took Brooks, to make him show 'em the way. He said he didn't know the woods, and that was the fact; but they swo'e he lied, and he must go with 'em, and they'd shoot him, if he led 'em amiss. He was in a powerful bad fix; but, lucky for him, they hadn't gone fur when they met Dammern, an old hunter that knew every branch and thicket in the country. So they swapped off Brooks for Dammern. The Federals was on the other side of us, and I allowed there was going to be a battle. And it looked to me as if it was going to be right on my farm."

"That was the awfulest night I ever had in my life," said Mrs. ——. "My husband was for leaving at once. But it didn't appear like I could bear the idea of it. Though what to do with ourselves if we stayed? We've no cellar, and if we'd had one, and got into it, a shell might have set the house afire, and buried us under it. So I proposed we should

dig a hole to get into. He allowed that might be the best thing. So the next morning I got off betimes, and went over and counselled with our neighbors through the grove, and told 'em I thought it would be a grand idee to dig a pit for both our families; and so they come over hyere and went to digging."

"You never see men work so earnest as we did till about 'leven o'clock," said Mr. ——. "Finally we got the pit dug, between the house and the spring. But when it was done it looked so much like a grave the weemun dreaded to get into it, and so much like a breastwork we men was afraid both armies would just play their artilleries onto it. So my wife give her consent we should take to the swamps. But what to do with the pit? for if it got shelled, the house would be destroyed; and then thar was danger the armies would use the hole to bury their dead in, and the bodies would spoil our spring. And as we couldn't take the pit with us, it appeared like thar was but one thing to do. So we put in and worked right earnest till we'd filled it up again. A rain had come on Friday night, and bogged down some of Johnson's artillery between hyere and Corinth, and that's my understanding why the fight didn't come off Saturday. That give us time to git off. I took my family three miles back to a cabin in the swamp, and thar they stayed till it was all over; only Zeek and me come back for some loads of goods. We took one load Saturday, and come for another Monday. That was the second day of the fight. We found the place covered with Rebel soldiers. The battle was going on then. The roar of artillery was so loud you couldn't converse at one end of the house, where the echo was. The musketry sounded like a roaring wind; the artillery was like peals of thunder.

"Thar was one family caught on the battle-field. They had stayed, because the man was laying dangerously sick, and they dreaded to move him. After the fighting begun, they started to get away. The little boy was shot through the head, and the horse killed. The weemun then just took up the sick man and run with him down into the swamp."

"We had a nephew living on the battle-field," said Mrs. ——. "The family was down with the measles at the time. But when they see thar was to be a fight, they just moved a plank in the ceiling overhead, and hid up all their bacon, and lard, and corn-meal, and everything to eat they couldn't take with 'em. Then they tuke up a child apiece and come on for us; we'd done gone when they got hyere, and they come tearing through the swampy ground after us, toting their babes. They stayed with us in the cabin till after the battle. But by that time his house was occupied by soldiers. He'd been right ingenious hiding his provisions so nobody could find 'em, but the soldiers went to tearing off ceilings to get planks to make boxes, and down come the corn-meal and bacon; so they had a pretty rich supply."

"After that," said Mr. ——, "his house got burnt. Nearly all the houses and fences for miles, on the battle-field, was burnt; so that it was just one common. Thar was nobody left. You never see such desolation. Then the armies moved off, leaving a rich pasture. I had my cattle pastured thar all that summer."

Mrs. —— proposed that the children should sing for me a little piece called "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh." Her husband favored the suggestion, saying it was "a right nice composed little song."

"I've plumb forgotten it," said Zeek. And the little girls, who blushingly undertook it after much solicitation, could remember only a few lines here and there, greatly to the parents' chagrin.

At eight o'clock, Zeek, weary with his long ride that day, said, "I believe I'll lie down," and, without further ceremony, took off his clothes and got into one of the beds in the room. Mrs. —— thought I also must be tired, and said I could go to bed when I pleased. Thinking it possible I might be assigned to the same apartment, I concluded to sit up until the audience became somewhat smaller. The girls presently went up stairs, lighted to their beds by the fire, which shone up the stairway and through the cracks in the chamber floor. I took courage then to say that I was ready to retire; and, to my gratification, saw a candle lighted to show me to my chamber,—though I marvelled where that could be, for I supposed I had seen every room in the house, except the loft to which the girls had gone, when I had seen the sitting-room and kitchen.

Mr. —— took me first out-doors, to a porch on the side of the house opposite the great opening. Thence a door opened into a little framed box of a room built up against the log-house, as an addition. There was scarcely space to turn in it. The walls consisted of the naked, rough boards. There was not even a latch to the door, which opened into the universal night, and which the wind kept pushing in. Mr. —— advised me to place the chair against it, which I did. I set the candle in the chair, and blew it out after I had got into bed. Then, looking up, I saw with calm joy a star through the roof. The bed was deep and comfortable, and I did not suffer from cold, although I could feel the fingers of the wind toying with my hair. The night was full of noises, like the reports of pistols. It was the old house cracking its joints.

J. T. Trowbridge.

THE DEW-FAIRIES.

THERE had been a thunder-storm one afternoon, and Birdie had watched from the window how the great black clouds chased one another over the sky,—seeming to growl angrily when they met, and flashing lightning at each other, like the gleam of giant swords. The little boy fancied there might be giants living above the clouds, as there were when Jack climbed the bean-stalk, and that all the noise and tumult must be caused by a battle going on among them. But when the rain began to fall in great drops, and then in fast driving showers, Birdie thought the giants were sorry for their naughty behavior, and were "crying and making up," and he felt more friendly towards them, and hoped none of them had been hurt in the battle. Soon the rain stopped, the clouds floated away, leaving only a few white heaps, like mountains, against the blue sky; then the sun looked out from among the curtains he had hidden in from the storm, to have a peep at the world before he said "Good night," and everything seemed smiling and happy. Now that the storm was over, little Birdie trotted out to sit on the top step of the porch, and look about him; he thought the grass had never before looked so green, or the flowers so bright, and the very air seemed fresher and sweeter than usual. The birds were all singing their evening hymns, and the gentle cows were going slowly to the farm-yard to be milked, sorry to leave the sweet-scented clover-blossoms, where they had been resting in the shade of the trees. Altogether the little boy felt very happy; he looked around him with pleasure, drew in long breaths of the delicious air, and felt like saying, "Thank you" to God, who had made all these beautiful things. He began to think, and sat quite still, with his eyes fixed on the grass, waving just before him, and all shining with rain-drops. Suddenly he started, rubbed his eyes with his hands, and then stared at the grass harder than ever, for it seemed to him that something moved besides the grass,—something like one of the rose-fairies, only smaller, and dressed in a thin, floating dress of silvery green. "Can it be," said Birdie to himself, "that fairies live in the grass? I will be as still as a mouse and watch";—and he opened his blue eyes wide, and smiled with delight. Sure enough, there they were! Not only on one blade of grass, but on many, little fairies, light as thistle-down, were dancing and swaying about,—each one dressed in the same airy dress of shining green, with O *such* bright crowns on their heads, all made of dewdrops, which sparkled in the sunshine. Very merry they seemed, and very busy too, for they scattered handfuls of tiny dewdrops wherever they went, and the grass and flowers bent to meet them, as if glad to feel their cool touch.

Closely little Birdie watched the fairies, hardly daring to breathe lest he should frighten them away; and he was so quiet they did not know he was there, but danced about as if they had been all alone. At last, two or three of them, floating along, came to a spider's web, stretched from one tuft of grass to another, fine as lace, and yet strong enough to make a good carpet for their tiny feet. They seemed pleased at this, and began dancing merrily upon the web, all the while showering dewdrops from their hands and hair, until the web was strung with the shining beads, and glistened like silver. Was not that beautiful? Birdie was delighted, as he well might be, for it is not every little boy who can see such a wonderful sight as that; and if he had not been gentle and loving, I do not suppose he would have seen a single fairy.

Soon his bright eyes caught sight of an old black spider,—the owner of the web,—who was crouching in one corner, looking half frightened and very much puzzled at the strange insects that had taken possession of his home. Now and then the old fellow would dart out at them, as if to drive them away; but he was always met with such a shower of dewdrops that he crawled back to his corner in a hurry. There he sat, all drawn up in a heap, looking like an old colored man whom Birdie once saw playing the violin at a picnic, while the children danced. It was so comical that the little boy could keep still no longer, and burst into such a merry peal of laughter that he rolled over on the porch floor, and lay there laughing until his mother came out to see what had amused him so much. "O mamma!" said he, "if you were only a little boy like me, you could see the sweetest, most *weeniest* fairies; they dance on the grass, mamma, and on the cobwebs, and the old black spiders have to play the violin. O dear, it is *too* funny!"—and he danced up and down, and laughed as he thought of it. His mamma laughed too, and said she was very sorry she was too old to see the fairies, but she would like to hear about them; and Birdie told her, as well as such a wee boy could, all that he had seen. When his story was done, "Why, darling," said his mamma, "you must have seen the Dew-Fairies, who water the grass and flowers at night, to cool them after the heat of the day." Birdie nodded very wisely, and turned around to find his little friends; but they had all gone;—only the bright dew shining on the grass and flowers showed where they had been at work. He was half ready to cry when he missed them; but his mamma told him that the fairies had many fields and gardens to visit, and could not stay long in one place, even to please her good little boy. "And Birdie," she said, "as I cannot see the beautiful little things, won't *you* be my Dew-Fairy?" The little boy looked up in wonder, to see if his mother meant it, and said, very slowly and thoughtfully, "Birdie would like to, dear mamma, but he is too big to dance on a cobweb, and he has no pretty green dress." "No, dear," said his mamma, "but you can be one without that, by being kind and generous to all, and trying to make others happy";—and, kissing her little boy's red lips, she went into the house, leaving Birdie very busy thinking.

He had not been alone very long, when he heard the latch of the garden-gate rattle, once or twice. He looked up, and what do you think he saw? There stood the tame colt, Alice, with her head over the gate, looking at him with her large brown eyes. Birdie loved Alice, and had often patted her smooth face, and given her pieces of sugar or bread; so the colt had walked out of the meadow, when the bars were down, to look for her little friend. "Now," thought Birdie, "I can give Alice some sugar, and make *her* happy,"—and he bustled into the house to ask for it. His mother gave him some very willingly, and he carried it out to Alice. She took it gently from his little hand, for she was very tame, and rubbed her face against him lovingly, and Birdie was glad he had given her all of the sugar, instead of eating some himself, as he felt like doing at first, for he loved sweet things as much as any little boy, but he loved to be generous

still more. Then he gathered some grass, all cool with the dew, and gave it to Alice, and he would have given her more, but she heard the man calling her, "Cope, cope, cope!" She knew he had some salt for her, so she started, tossed her head as a good-by to kind little Birdie, and trotted away. The child opened the gate, and peeped out to watch the colt; he did not go outside, for he was not allowed to do so when alone. While he stood there leaning against the gate he heard a strange noise behind him, like something knocking against the stones, and he turned quickly to look up the road and find out what it was.

You see, Birdie always kept his eyes and ears open, (except when he was asleep,) and so he never missed anything; and now he saw, slowly coming down the road, a poor lame soldier, who had to walk on crutches. He knew the soldiers were fighting for their country and the flag, and that all good Union boys were kind to them, and he thought too of the fairies; and when the soldier came near enough, the kind little boy opened the gate wide, and propped it with his plump shoulders, while he called out, "Come in, soldier-boy, come! and I will give you some bread and milk to make you well." The man stopped, looked at Birdie for a minute, and then walked into the garden and sat down on the porch-steps, as if he were very tired. Birdie ran in too, but did not stop until he reached the dining-room, where his mamma had just made a bowlful of bread and milk for his supper. "O mamma," said the boy, "there's a poor, lame soldier-boy out on the porch, *so* lame,"—and he held up one little foot, and tried to walk like the soldier; "can't Birdie take him some bread and milk to make him well?" And seeing his mamma looked pleased, he took the bowl with both hands, and carried it out to his friend. His mamma followed him, bringing a spoon, which Birdie had forgotten in his haste; and when she had given it to the poor man, she sat down, took her little boy on her lap, and talked kindly to the soldier, asking him his name, and how he had been wounded. He said his name was John Wilson; that he had been shot by the Rebels at the battle of Gettysburg, and had been in hospital for some time, but now had leave to go home to see his mother. "But why do you walk so far, my poor fellow, when you are so lame and weak?" said Birdie's mamma. The soldier told her that he had come in the cars as far as he could, and expected his mother would send to the station to meet him. "But the wagon was not there," said he, "and I was in such a hurry to see my dear old mother that I started off to walk; but I was beginning to feel very weak and tired, and might have fallen by the roadside, if this kind little man had not asked me to rest, and given me this nice sweet bread and milk; I feel better already, and think I can walk home now." But Birdie's mother said she did not think it would be right for him to walk any more that night, and if he would wait until they had finished tea, her husband would take him home in the wagon. The poor soldier thanked her with tears in his eyes, and said he must get home, and would be glad of a lift; so the man was told to get the wagon ready, and they went in to tea. Birdie was so pleased that he had helped the poor soldier, that he could think of nothing else, and for a while he talked very merrily; but by the time he had finished his bread and milk he grew very quiet, and his mamma found him nodding in his highchair. She knew he was very tired, and, lifting him down gently, would have carried him up stairs, but the blue eyes opened a little way, and a sleepy voice said, "Where's my soldier-boy? did the fairies take him away?" His mamma laughed at the funny little boy, and took him out on the porch to say good night to the soldier, who kissed him, and said, "Birdie must come to see me some day." And then the soldier got into the wagon, and Birdie's papa drove away from the gate, kissing his hand to the little boy. Then Birdie climbed up stairs, and when his mamma had undressed him, and heard him say his little prayer, she kissed him many times, and told him he was her darling little Dew-Fairy; and Birdie went to sleep very happy, and had sweet dreams, I am sure.

Margaret T. Canby.

ROUND THE EVENING LAMP.

A TREASURY OF CHARADES, PUZZLES, PROBLEMS AND FUNNY THINGS.

CHARADES.

No. 11.

RED and white and black and yellow
Men have called my *first* for years;
Blue and green, in cloud and sunshine,
Tint the changing shapes it wears.
Many-babbling,—secret-hiding,—
Man is puny to its might.
Rending continents asunder,
It divides but to unite.

Part and parcel of old cities,
My *second's* still of tender age.
Stubborn bit of steel-cold metal,
In it direst fevers rage.
Prison-bolts fly back before it,
Though guarded close through all its life;
Scene of woman's tenderest mission,
'T is ruffled oft by party strife.

That which aimed the apple, falling
Straight at Isaac's learned poll,
Urges on the mountain streamlet
Whose swift course is still my *whole*.
From the crags to smiling valleys,
From the valleys to the shore,
Still my course runs ever downward
Lower still forevermore.

E.

No. 12.

THE glow was fading in the west,
As we wandered down the lane,
And my *first* rose, over the hill's dark crest,
And looked through the boughs as though it guessed
The secret I hid in vain.

How did it happen? I scarcely know,—
My pulses were throbbing fast,
My voice was faltering, weak and low,
As we wandered along, with footsteps slow,
From the shadow into my *last*.

As arm in arm we walked, I said,
"Let us wander through life thus, love."
Then on my shoulder she laid her head,
By my *whole* in her face the truth I read,
As my *first* shone clear above.

CARL.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 20.

H. P. G.

ILLUSTRATED REBUS.—No. 21.

PUZZLE.

No. 11.

In babbling brooks, in roaring falls,
  It is in vain to seek for me,
Though water claims me as its own
  In part, as river, lake, and sea.
In dark wild-wood or sylvan path
  I am unsought and unportrayed,
Though in each forest tree and flower,
  In scented groves, by breezes swayed.

Without me virtue were unknown,
  Although in vice an equal seen;
And though the very life of men,
  I serve to make the best man mean;
Though quite unknown where glory shines,
  In fame I hold an honored place;
And while rebellion claims my aid,
  I have as much to do with peace.

Where truth is there I am not found;
  Each lie reveals me softly sighing,
Though I'm the soul of verity
  And never yet was caught in lying.
In blinding storms I am unheard,
  Though loud in tempests as they rise;
You cannot find me in your form,
  Though laughing in your very eyes.

NILLOR.

ANSWERS.

CHARADE

10. Horse-man-ship.

ENIGMAS.

12. Baby-jumper.
13. Heliotrope.
14. With malice toward none.
15. Hatred stirreth up strifes; but love covereth all sins.

PUZZLE.

10. Coward.

ARITHMETICAL PUZZLES.

1. 99 + 99/99 = 100

2.

13
67
———
80
2
4
5
9
———

100

24
65

89
1
3
7

100

3. COMIC.

4.

9 + 8 + 7 + 6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 45.
1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 = 45.
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8 + 6 + 4 + 1 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 + 2 = 45.

Illustrated Rebuses.

16. A barefooted beggar cares not a fig for the income tax. [(A bear *footed*) (beggar) (car) es (knot) a (eff-i-gy) (fort) (he *in* comb) (tacks).]
17. Eighty armed Pottawattomie Indians surround a house and attack the inmates. [(A t *armed*) (pot o' water) me (*in* d n's) (S U R *round* a house and a tack) (the *in* mates).]
18. All's not gold that glitters. [(Awls) (knot) G (old) t (hat) G (litters).]
19. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. [(A bird *in* the hand) (eye) s w (earth) (2 *in* the bush).]

OUR LETTER BOX.

We have received a note asking for our opinion on a great subject,—so great, indeed, that we should be almost afraid to bring it into our little "Letter-Box," if there were any other way of giving our reply. But since it must come here, and since this subject concerns all children,—boys as well as girls, although girls are our querists,—we think best to print the note as we received it, (only omitting the initials which it gives,) and then to add a few plain words, frankly expressing our view of the case as it seems to us who look upon it through many years of experience in school-life, and in the more trying world-life for which the first should be a preparation:—

"School, March 23d, 1866.

"Dear Young Folks,—

"Will you be kind enough to favor us with your opinion of honor in school. The writers of this are two girls, not very old nor yet very young, belonging to a private school kept by Miss ——, within —— miles of ——. Miss —— has a way of resting everything on our honor, which we find very disagreeable; for instance, she trusts us not to speak of any thing in school hours that does not concern school affairs, which we find almost impossible; for when we get talking other things are sure to slip in, and this involves a confession after school. Don't you think it would be better to have a rule against speaking, and let her catch us at it if she can?

"Is it not consistent with honor, if we get into a scrape, to get out of it any way we can, provided we tell no fibs? We particularly want information on this point, for, sad to say, scrapes are not unknown to us.

"We hope this is not too confused to be understood, but the truth is we are writing this in school, and consequently under great difficulties. Hoping you will answer this, we remain

"Yours very truly

"M. & N."

Ah! dear girls, you have not considered well the meaning and the importance of the one word which is to determine this matter for you. *Honor!* Does not that little word include and signify all that is most precious, save true religion, in a good woman's character? What virtue can you set above it, or with what trait could you replace it? Even the gambler will pay the debts which he has contracted upon the faith of his word, and the desperado respects the pledge of his honor. Believe it, there is no characteristic more important to be cherished in man or woman than a high, pure sense of honor. When gold and jewels are to be weighed, the delicate scales must turn even "in the balance of a hair,"—much more when the fine gold of uprightness and truth is in the scale. If you cannot make the distinction between what is right and wrong in a matter comparatively of so small consequence as the words you speak in school, or if you are unwilling to make the effort, how can you hope to have the desire and the strength to make that distinction in after years, when temptations will be greater, resistance harder, and when honor may involve, not merely the strictness of your speech, but also the principles of your action, the value of your life, and your final destiny? A school misdemeanor may be no crime,—it is foolish or it is wrong, according as you commit it in carelessness or wilfulness;

but an evasion of responsibility for what you have done is both mean and wicked.

Here are a few words of advice which it will always be safe to follow, and which we offer to you with the earnestness of friends, who know by saddest observation that they who are heedless or self-willed in youth naturally grow up irreverent and untrustworthy men and women. *Always be ashamed to do that which you would be ashamed to confess having done; for if there is disgrace in the telling, there is more disgrace in the doing.* Despise and fret against no safeguard that is thrown about your honor, but second every effort which tends to increase its sensitiveness.

Remember that rules are only leading-strings for children who cannot see, and offenders who will not see for themselves that the right way is always the best way; and respect the teacher who helps you to cultivate your own self-respect, instead of establishing herself as a police-officer over you,—which is really the substance of your suggestion.

And as to getting out of "scrapes," provided you "tell no fibs,"—without the nicest sense of honor to guide you in that difficult process, you will be almost sure to act the falsehood you do not utter and so the same fatal injury is done to character, which is the precious ornament of your girlhood, as it will be the crown of your womanhood.

We suggest, dear girls, that the easiest way of settling the matter will be to lessen the number of "scrapes." The word itself is a dangerous one, besides being in worse than questionable taste; in "Webster's Unabridged" you will find it called "*a low word*"; and in Worcester's Dictionary it is defined as "a state of difficulty or trouble, *generally caused by ill conduct*." But the dangerous thing about it is that it may be applied alike to the results of a crime or a harmless frolic, and those who use it much are apt to hold very indistinct notions of right and wrong.

Better sacrifice a little girlish fun now and then, and save yourselves these knotty questions of conscience.

T. E., being ill, has amused himself with an attempt to make new words from the letters in "Manufactory," as suggested by a former correspondent. He has sent us a list of *five hundred*! In these he has used no letter twice except a, which occurs twice in the original word. It is but fair to say that many are not English, but words from other languages and proper names.

Edward A. J. sends from Cincinnati a capital inversion, which is the best yet:—

"Red rum did emit revel
Ere Lever time did murder."

And in a later letter he gives us this:—

"Now reknit a net;—for ages Selim & Miles' segar often a tinker won."

"*Flora*" is declined with thanks. We have had as many dog and cat stories as we wish for the present. Variety is what our little readers like.

H. P. McA. Thank you. Some such errors will creep in, in spite of the most careful watch. We are always glad to see such matters as you mention, and, if they are good enough, we print them.

Sweet Briar. Thank you for the pleasant assurance of the favor we find at your hands.

E. D. E. has been among the industrious who have tried their hands at "Manufactory," and sends us a list of two hundred and ninety-four words, all of which, he says, are to be found in Webster's Pictorial Dictionary.

E. F. S. You can learn all about the origin and history of the "Melodies" of Mother Goose, who was a real person, from Wheeler's "Dictionary of Noted Names of Fiction," which was printed not long ago by the Publishers of this magazine.

W. S. J. We hope to have something that will meet your wants by and by; having so many tastes to gratify, we cannot give what all desire at once.

Henry S. P., a thirteen-year-old correspondent, sends his first attempt at puzzle-making in the shape of this very good inversion: "Anna did I trap a rat & tar a part? I did Anna."

Frank W. Your "monument" is very ingenious, and we shall probably find a use for it.

Belle R. writes that she is fifteen years old, and has been for four years an invalid, and then she says thoughtfully: "I used to feel like Patty Mudge, how I would like to do some great thing for the world's good. But I think my *forte* is to try and be as patient as I can, so that I sha'n't drive every one away from me by my complainings." In this short sentence is a lesson for all the little people upon whom troubles or sufferings come,—to bear patiently, for so they will be happier-minded, while their gentleness will be some return for the comfort and help which they expect from others.

Emily A. N. Two dollars. Thanks for your note. Next year we hope you will succeed in getting up some "real big" clubs.

Shirley. Your enigma looks good. But we want a careful list of all the answers, with a numbered list of the letters, that it may be proved without too much trouble.

Caroline. The colored pictures have not been forgotten, although they will not appear just yet, because the experiments are not quite complete which we expect will give us the nicest illustrations of the kind that have ever been made.

Carl. Try the letter. If it is good, we shall like it.

Fred. D. Certainly, unless there is reason to believe that the first refusal was on account of some defect or lack of merit in the article offered.

N. E. W. No.

Mary B. Everett. We have a letter for you; will you send us your address, please?

Louis. Send us a full solution of your Arithmetical Problem.

Daisy has written us a very pleasant letter, from which we take a few gratifying lines about our magazine:—

> "You do not know how I enjoy reading it; it seems as if the days went more and more slowly as the time draws near for it to make its regular appearance. And after it gets here! First I have it, as I am the eldest; then Annie; and last of all Mamma reads the baby stories and explains the pictures to our three-year-old pet, Alice."

Like many others, Daisy sends a kind word for our little friend H. A. D., who has, we find, quite a number of companions in her trouble, who all wish her to know that they understand and sympathize.

Beckie McK. says she means to have us for her aunts and uncles, and all our countless readers for her cousins,—to whom she asks us to give her love, which we gladly do.

Josiah T. We are glad to hear from you. Will see about the puzzles.

Jean W. 1. Yes. 2. Not necessarily. 3. Yes. 4. Sometimes. 5. Yes.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

Obvious printer errors including punctuation have been silently corrected.
Inconsistencies, variations and possible errors in spelling have been retained.

[The end of *Our Young Folks, Volume 2, Number 6*, edited by J. T. Trowbridge, Gail Hamilton and Lucy Larcom.]