

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

## MONEY.

To us in this year 1893 money suggests only coins of gold or silver or copper or nickel. Since the time of Abraham, when the first mention in history occurs of "current money with the merchant," the precious metals have been used as money. Abraham weighed to Ephron four hundred shekels of silver. If the shekels had been coined or stamped each with its value, he would have counted rather than weighed them. But this advance was not made until about 800 B.C., when, according to tradition, Pheidon, King of Argos, first struck coins in the Island of Ægina. The earliest coins extant are from Lydia, the home of Croesus, and are of gold. There is copper coin of Sparta with the head of Lycurgus upon it, which must have been struck long after the era of that famous lawgiver who allowed Sparta only iron for money.

That word coin has a history, and carries us back to the time of the early Romans when *cunei*, wedges of gold and silver bullion, were used as currency. The Egyptians kept their gold and silver in the form of rings, as shown on Egyptian monuments, and gold rings found in Celtic countries are supposed to have had the same use. (The first gold ring of which history gives any account is that placed on the hand of Joseph by Pharaoh, not as money, but as a signet.)

The Greek system of coinage, with modifications, spread all over the civilized world. The Roman coins were on Greek models, and probably executed by Greek artists. Their main characteristic is faithful portraiture. Many historic events are recorded upon them. Many different articles have been and are used by uncivilized and partially civilized nations as money. In Rome and Germany in ancient times cattle were used as currency, whence our word pecuniary, from from *pecus*, cattle. Cubes of pressed tea form a medium of exchange in Tartary, cowrie shells on the coast of Africa and in the East Indies, pieces of silk among the Chinese, and wampum among the Indians. Tin was money with our British forefathers, and was also employed for that purpose in ancient Syracuse.

No ancient die exists in any museum, and hence it is supposed that the metal was first formed in roundish lumps and hammered into shape, then engraved. The materials for coining—the hammer, the anvil, and the tongs—are still to be seen on an ancient Roman coin.

Until the time of Charles II. English coins were made by first dividing the metal with shears, then shaping and stamping it with the hammer. Few pieces were exactly round, and the rims were not marked. To "clip the coin" was very easy, and pining a pennyworth of silver from a crown seemed a very venial fault to many people, though it was by law a capital offence.

When a mill worked by horses was set up in the Tower of London which produced coins perfectly circular, with their edges inscribed with a legend, clipping was not to be apprehended, and it was confidently expected that the good money would drive the bad out of the market. For other-

wise. The good money was hoarded, and clipping went on worse than ever. It was all in vain that every month men were hanged and burned for clipping. The depreciation of the currency palsied trade and industry, and wrought more evils in one year than had been inflicted on the nation by twenty-five years of "bad kings, bad ministers, bad Parliaments, and bad judges."

At last Somers, Montague, Locke, and Newton devised a scheme, which was

Philadelphia is a very interesting collection of coins, and also one in the "Jewel Room" in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

## THE BABY AND THE SOLDIERS.

For two days and nights the men had been crowded in the grimy, ill-ventilated cars, and when they were marched out to be ferried across the river the tan on their

the grim-looking faces and dust covered uniforms. But not all were afraid.

One little white-haired youngster, a few months old, held in his mother's arms, watched the scene with wide-open black eyes. A friendly smile from a near-by soldier caught his eye, and with a responding smile he went into the outstretched arms, his cuddled face hiding the tears that came unbidden to the soldier's eyes at the recollection of a far-off home and loved ones.

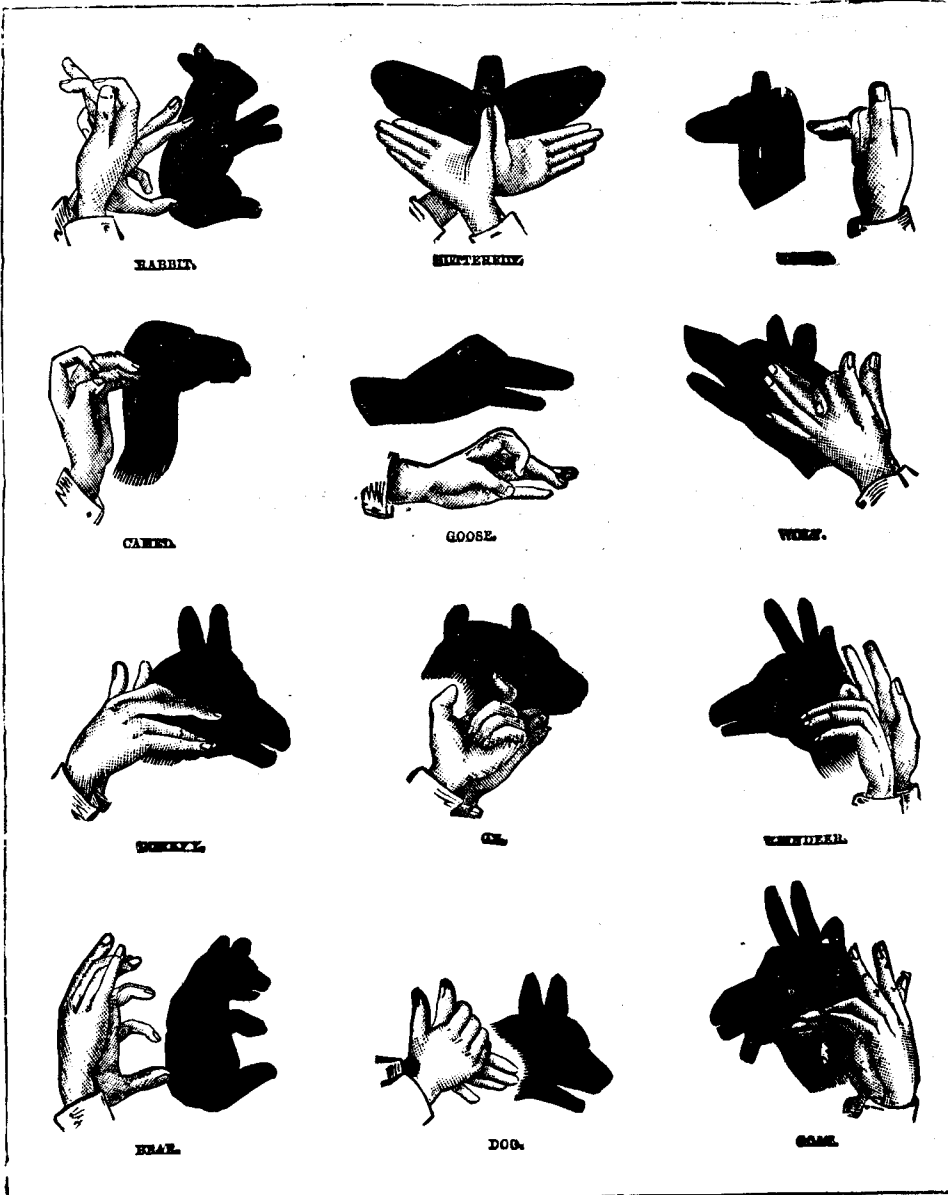
Then the others in the ranks, with brightening faces and glistening eyes, invited that blessed baby boy to come. And come he did from man to man, down the long and dusty line, with a smile and a kiss for each. Jest was forgotten, impatience curbed, and half uttered oaths hushed. Grim faces relaxed, and dusty cheeks were streaked at sight of the bright head and laughing eyes.

As he passed up and down the line, it seemed as if a breath of heaven had given new life to the weary and homesick "boys." Bent forms straightened, clouded faces cleared, and all forgot their weariness in watching that little white head passing over the upturned faces of the dusty host, or in listening to the gurgling laugh that came when one more venturesome than the rest tossed the chubby youngster in the air, as he was wont to do with his own baby when at home. They kissed him for himself, for wives and children, for mothers, for sweet-hearts and loved ones left behind.

It was but a brief rest and they were off, waving back a farewell to the crowning child. All faces were turned forward to duty and may be death, but all hearts were back at home with the loved ones.

## A HINT TO YOUNG MEN.

YOUNG man, do the other fellows make fun of you, now and then, because you blush easily and are, as they call it, a little green? And are you half inclined to be a trifle mad that what they say is true, and that you find it difficult to get seasoned and tough as they are? As well might August be ashamed that it preserved a handful of green on its parched bosom, or an apple be chagrined that it harbored no worm at its core, or a drop of rain be annoyed that it fell from heaven rather than from the gutter. Never be ashamed of being innocent and pure in a world where often served as fresh fallen snow is served that falls on a travelled highway. Be proud if you retain the ability to blush and to shrink from a hard story; to avoid the extenuation of dare-devil vice, and to turn from the allurements of so-called "fast-life;" while others no older than yourself have hardened in the process of living as clay bakes in a too-fervid sun. If I had a twenty-year-old boy who was bashful, and simple, and "green," as the world goes, I would rather call him my son than be the mother of a crowned prince shoe deep in diamonds with the ability to blush taken from him. — Roy's Lectures



SHADOW PICTURES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

finally embodied in a law, by which the debased coin was withdrawn from circulation and replaced by good coin without seriously interrupting trade or working hardship to the masses of the people. This law took effect on March 25, 1696.

The subject is a very interesting one, but we have not room for further remark. We will simply refer our readers to various articles in the encyclopedias on coins, money, numismatics, shekel (in the Bible Dictionary), and to Macaulay's account of the clipping of the coins in the fifth volume of his History of England. In the Mint at

cheeks was streaked with dust, cinders clung in hair and beards, the weather-worn uniforms were creased from constant wear, and faces and attitudes told of unrefreshing sleep.

As they stood at rest, wearily awaiting the labouring little ferryboat, hot cups of strong and fragrant coffee were served by the patriotic women of the struggling river town.

Groups of children, clean-faced and freshly dressed, grasping their mother's skirts, or clinging around their necks, gazed open-mouthed and half-abrighened at