

by the accounts of this most wonderful substance, I determined to make some ozone. I made some, a large bottle full, by no means without trouble or expense. Having taken the bottle full of oxygen and converted as much as possible into ozone, I tightly corked the bottle and took it out of my room into the sunlight so as to be better able to appreciate its "deep and beautiful azure colour." I must have made a mistake! It differed in no way from the air outside the bottle! Perhaps the quantity was insufficient to present the "deep azure colour."

Recollecting the story of the 'Efreet who was imprisoned in the copper bottle, I thought perhaps my ozone might treat me in the same manner as the above-mentioned 'Efreet did the fisherman. But this substance apparently only possessed good qualities, so curiosity got the better of prudence, and I returned to my room and opened the bottle.

A smell something between that of lucifer matches and chlorinated lime filled the room. I began to sneeze and cough. Tears rolled down my cheeks and I felt half suffocated. I opened the window and threw out the bottle. I must have made a mistake somewhere! But no, I took some of the ozone to one of the most celebrated chemists then alive, and was told "that is ozone sure enough."

I have never used ozone medicinally and I never shall.

Ozone is produced by lightning, and it is said to be the cause of the unpleasant feelings that distress so many people during a thunderstorm. Except at the seaside and during a storm, ozone is very rarely present in the air in an appreciable quantity.

The seaside is not the panacea for all conditions of mind and body that it is supposed to be. I like the seaside immensely myself, and like to see children paddling. But what-

ever may be said to the contrary, man is not a wader, and it can do children no good to paddle all day long—as most mothers consider essential when they take their children to the seaside. A physician once told me that he believed more harm than good resulted from allowing children to run about with their feet in the water. There is another danger in this amusement and one that I personally believe to be far more important; that is that broken bottles are by no means rare at the seaside, and they can inflict wounds of a most serious nature. Children who paddle ought to wear light boots or shoes to protect their feet. Sandals would be splendid things for the purpose. If this matter were seen to and visitors at the seaside would not be so wickedly thoughtless as to throw bottles, sardine-tins and other rubbish into the sea close to the shore half the disadvantages of a seaside holiday would be abolished.

A GROUP OF SCHOOL-BOYS.

By K. E. COLEMAN, Author of "Little Leo," "The Red Topaz," etc.

CHAPTER III.

THE END OF ROBIN KING.

It was the middle of July; it only wanted a week to the midsummer holidays, and the choicer spirits of the Paxton Grammar School were in more than their usual high spirits. Such boys as Robin King, for instance, seemed absolutely to suffer through the impossibility of finding sufficient vent for their exuberant youth.

It was one Saturday morning, and the great school-room was filled with a restless crowd who were counting the half-hours and even the minutes to twelve o'clock, when they would be released.

A sudden inspiration as to how to spend the afternoon came to Robin King as he sat with a sum in front of him, and his thoughts anywhere except with the problem in his exercise-book. The idea was too good to be kept to himself, so Robin surreptitiously tore a leaf from his book, scribbled down the message, wrapped it round a marble, and threw it dexterously across the room to Fergus Hume. Unfortunately Fergus did not see the missile, which, Robin's aim being good, hit him on the nose, and provoked a natural exclamation, which attracted the attention of the master, whose desk was nearest.

"What was that, Hume?" he asked sharply.

"I don't know, sir. Something hit me," replied Fergus; then, catching Robin's eye, he looked hastily round, spied the missile, which had rolled under the form, secreted the paper in his pocket, and innocently held up the marble for the master's inspection.

"Who threw that?" was the very natural inquiry. A dead silence was the only answer. Robin King would have scorned to tell a lie to save his skin; but his code of honour was not sufficiently quixotic to lead him to incriminate himself needlessly, so he fixed his attention on his sum with praiseworthy diligence.

"If I catch a boy throwing anything in school again, I shall cane him," said the master, and Robin winked at Fergus to emphasise the if.

How little did he or anyone think that that was the last prank he would ever play in school! Twelve o'clock struck at last, and the boys rushed out with shouts of glee.

"Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can."

It was a lovely morning, the first fine day after an unusually long spell of wet weather, so no wonder they were jubilant.

Robin linked his arm in that of Fergus. "Well," he inquired, "what do you think of it?"

"First rate. Who shall we ask to go with us?"

"Wilson, of course, and Jimmy Short, and Spider, and Percy Young, and Dobbie Mimor."

"No, not little Dobbie. He's sure to tell his brother, and, if that sneak comes, I for one won't go."

"We'll make him promise not to say anything about it. I like little Dobbie. If it hadn't been for him, I shoulda' be alive now, no more would Spider."

"All right, let him come, only mind you impress upon him that he's not to tell his brother. Hi there, Wilson!"

"What's up?"

"We're going to Bramstone Woods this afternoon. Will you come?"

"Rather! Which way shall we go—by the road or the cliffs?"

"The cliffs, the cliffs!" cried Robin excitedly. "It will be awful sport."

"They're awfully dangerous, you know, especially after rain. I think we had much better not," said Fergus.

"Rubbish! they're safe enough. And I say, boys, if we go that way we shall go through Bramstone, and there's the jolliest little inn, where you can get a ripping tea for ninnence."

That settled it. Six out of the seven boy-interested voted unanimously for the cliffs, and even Fergus gave way, only stipulating that they should go by the road so as to have a chance of reaching the woods alive.

"Mother," said Robin when he had reached home, "can you spare me ninnence? I'm going with some fellows to Bramstone Woods this afternoon, and we're going to have tea at the inn afterwards, and I haven't a penny."

His mother sighed a little as she handed him the desired amount. It was so very hard to make both ends meet, and Robin always spent the modest sum she allowed him for pocket-money the day he received it, so that these additional calls for sixpence here or a shilling there were frequent enough to be felt as a burden. But Robin pocketed the coins with a careless "thanks, mother," little

dreaming of the self-sacrifice which the gift entailed.

He was very much excited at dinner-time, and went off immediately afterwards in the highest spirits. His mother kissed him tenderly at parting. "Take care of yourself, my Robin," she said, little thinking that that was the last time she would see her darling in health and strength.

Robin ran whistling down the road to the appointed meeting-place, and the seven boys started off for their six miles walk in the most exuberant spirits, making the quiet country road echo with their mirth, so that everyone they passed turned to watch them with a smile.

Bramstone Woods were reached at last, and here the boys became riotous. The place was a rocky gorge cleft in two by a brawling little stream, and there were big rocks to scramble over, trees to climb, and here and there an adventurous leap over the foaming beck to be attempted. Robin, always the foremost in danger, insisted on risking his life by climbing an oak-tree, which his six companions all voted as impossible; however, he reached the ground in safety with no worse mishap than torn breeches, a catastrophe of too frequent occurrence to disturb him at all, though it might give his mother some hours of patient toil to mend them.

At length they grew tired of scrambling, and, with thoughts of tea in their minds, set off for the village of Bramstone, which lay a couple of miles distant on their homeward way.

"Tea for seven, with lots of jam and cake, and as quick as ever you can, please," was Fergus Hume's comprehensive order, and the landlady, who had some knowledge of the grammar-school boys, bustled about and did her best to satisfy her impatient guests.

They were so uproarious over their tea, that she put her head into the room more than once in fear for her crockery; but, wonderful to state, nothing was broken, and at last, their appetites satisfied, and full of the satisfaction which a full stomach affords to a boy all the world over, the party prepared to set out on their homeward journey, leaving the landlady to contemplate the ravages they had made in her provisions, and lament over the smallness of her profits.

"Now for the cliffs!" cried Percy Young, as they filed out of the doorway.

(To be concluded.)