

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Climbing the Coconut Palm

(By J. K. Bloomfield.)

In the genial climate of the Pacific, in and about the Marquesas Islands, coconut palms grow in abundance and are in a very flourishing state. Their tall and stately columns reach often more than a hundred feet from the ground, and without a single limb or protuberance to assist in mounting, it would seem almost impossible to secure the much desired fruit. Certainly the simple, indolent appearing natives would lead one to suppose they must wait until the ripened fruit drops of its own accord.

And this possibly would be the case were it not that the young fruit, encased in a soft green husk with the tender meat adhering to it, contains in this state a soft jelly-like substance which the natives greatly

in which Naranee, a noble young chief, sometimes performs this feat for my particular gratification. But his preliminary performance must also be given you.

'Upon my signifying my desire that he should pluck the young fruit of some tall tree for me, the handsome savage, throwing himself into a sudden attitude of surprise, feigns astonishment at the apparent absurdity of the request. Maintaining this position for a moment, a strange emotion depicted on his countenance softened down into one of humorous resignation to my will, and then looking wistfully up to the tufted top of the tree he stands on tip-toe, stretching his neck and elevating his arms as though endeavoring to reach the fruit from the ground where he stands.

'After continuing this performance for a moment or two, as if in expectation that

the cradle and embowered nest of nuts, and with boisterous glee flings the fruit to the ground.'

This mode of walking the tree is only practicable where the trunk declines somewhat from the perpendicular. This, however, is almost always the case, some of the apparently straight shafts of the tree leaning at an angle of 30 degrees. The less active among the men and many children of the valley, we are told, have another method of climbing. They take a broad and stout piece of bark and secure each end of it to their ankles, so that when the feet, thus confined, are extended apart, a space of a little more than ten inches is left between them. This contrivance greatly facilitates the art of climbing. The band, pressed against the tree and closely embracing it, yields a pretty firm support.

'In this way,' says a traveller, 'I have seen little children scarcely six years old fearlessly climbing the slender pole of a young coconut tree, and while hanging, perhaps fifty feet from the ground, receiving the plaudits of their parents beneath, clapping their hands and encouraging them to mount still higher. I remember an adventurous little fellow, Too Too, who had built for himself in the picturesque tuft of a tree adjoining a native's habitation, a sort of aerial baby-house. He used to spend hours there rustling among the branches and shouting with delight every time the strong gusts of wind, rushing down from the mountain-side, swayed to and fro the tall, feeble column on which he perched.—'Child's Paper.'



prize. We, who get the coconut in a hard, dry form, have no idea of the fruit in this delicious creamy state, though we have heard of it as being eaten by travellers from the shell with a spoon, as we would eat soft-custard from a cup.

A traveller, in describing how some young natives with perhaps more flexible frames than their comrades, or a more courageous spirit, have a way of walking up the trunk of a coconut tree, says: 'To me it seemed a little less than miraculous, and when looking at them in the act, I experienced that curious perplexity a child feels when he beholds a fly moving feet uppermost along a ceiling. I will endeavor to describe the way

the fruit was going to be tossed down to him by some good spirit in the tree-top, he scampers off the distance of thirty or forty yards. Here he remains a while eyeing the tree, the very picture of misery, but the next moment, receiving as it were a flash of inspiration, he rushes again toward it and clasping both arms about the trunk, with one elevated a little above the other, he presses the soles of his feet close together against the tree, extending his legs from it until they are nearly horizontal, and his body becomes doubled into an arch. Hand over hand and foot over foot Narnee then rises from the earth with steady rapidity, and almost before I am aware of it he gains

## A New Use for a Pin-Cushion

In the room of a girl friend the other day we noticed something which especially interested us. To the pin-cushion, which occupied the central position on the dresser, was pinned a short poem, evidently clipped from some newspaper. And the poem happened to be the 'Recessional,' which everybody knows about, but comparatively few people know.

Now, a pin-cushion is not the place where one expects to find a poem, however grand or beautiful, and we looked to our friend for an explanation.

'I always have something I especially want to know pinned to my cushion,' she said, smiling, 'and when I'm brushing my hair or adjusting a collar-button, I just glance over the lines. Before I know it I have the whole committed to memory, and then I remove it and place something else in its stead.'

Now this girl, as we happen to know, is a very busy girl, a stenographer in a law office, an earnest church worker, a favorite with other young people, and we had been surprised to hear her spoken of as 'so well-informed.' We wondered how she found time to acquire her information, but the pin-cushion revealed the mystery. She had learned the art of utilizing the minutes.—'English Paper.'

The use of tobacco leads, generally, into the degrading habits of intoxication, drunkenness and ruin, as naturally as the streams flow to the ocean. The violation of one of our physical laws, those of the body, creating an abnormal state of the system, is followed by a series of violations, each exceeding its predecessor in turpitude, almost or quite of necessity, leading to the worst possible consequences.—Dr. J. H. Hanaford.