

YOUNG FOLKS.

STORIES FROM SAN FRANCISCO PAPERS.

The following very tough story is given "for what it is worth" by the San Francisco Post:—

"It is related that a Mr. S. M. was sitting in his backyard talking to some friends, when his attention was called to a hen with a brood of young chickens and a large rat that had emerged from its hole and was quietly regarding the young chickens with the prospect of a meal in view. As the rat came from its hole the house cat awoke from her afternoon nap and caught sight of the rat. Crouching low, she waited developments, and stood prepared to spring upon his ratship. At the appearance of his ancient enemy, the cat, a Scotch terrier, which had been sunning itself in the woodshed, pricked up its ears and quietly made for the place where the cat stood. At this moment a boy came upon the scene. The chickens were not cognizant of being watched by the rat, nor did the rat see the cat, nor the feline the dog, who had not noticed the coming of the boy.

A little chick wandered too nigh, and he was seized by the rat, which was in turn pounced upon by the cat, and the cat was caught in the mouth by the dog. The rat would not cease his hold on the chicken, and the cat, in spite of the shaking she was getting from the dog, did not let go the rat. It was fun for the boy, and in high glee he watched the contest and the struggle of each of the victims. It seemed to him that the rat was about to escape after a time, and getting a stone he hurled it at the rodent. The aim was not good, and the stone struck the dog right between the eyes. The terrier released its grip on the cat and fell over dead. It had breathed its last before the cat in turn let go the rat, and turned over and died. The rat did not long survive the enemy, and beside the already dead chicken he laid himself down and gave up the ghost. The owner of the dog was so angry at his death that he is said to have come near making the story complete by killing the boy that killed the dog that shook the cat that caught the rat that bit the chicken in the yard on — street.

The San Francisco *Alta* has this marvelous account of a New Zealand bird: "The bird which kills the sheep in New Zealand is the 'keas,' or a mountain parrot, and it has carried its depredations to such an extent in some parts, particularly in Canterbury, in the South Island, that when I was there, two years ago, men were engaged solely in hunting them, for which they were receiving from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per head from the farmers. These men attempt to shoot one bird without killing it, and when wounded it utters a cry which attracts all the 'keas' in the neighborhood, and they are easily shot. I believe that there are also recent cases where these birds have attacked and killed cattle. The birds are not much larger than a thrush.

Some people are positive that they are very good at seeing a joke, but when they have to repeat one they miss the point entirely. An instance is given of this in the following tale from the San Francisco *Chronicle*:—

Sam Ward was once seated opposite a well known senator at a dinner at Washington. This senator was very bald, and the light shining on the breadth of scalp attracted Ward's attention.

"Can you tell me," he asked his neighbor, "why the senator's head is like Alaska?"

"Because it is a great white bear place."

The neighbor was immensely tickled, and he hailed the senator across the table:

"Say, senator, Ward's just got off a very smart thing about you."

"What is it?"

"Do you know why your head is like Alaska?"

"No."

"Because it is a great place for white bears."

We are not told how the matter ended, but it would be interesting to know.

MARRIAGE AMONG FRENCH CANADIANS.

Among the *habitants* the great occasion for festivities is a wedding. Dancing is permitted by the priest and quite unusual expenses are incurred. The following incidents are illustrative of peculiarities of the French Canadian peasants, but few French Canadian young ladies would be as obliging as the one mentioned as having given up her lover to her sister.

A widower recently went to spend an evening with a neighbor who had a sister—a spinster whom no one had thought of marrying. When the visitor left the house the brother accompanied him, and suggested that he marry the spinster. They returned to the house, and went to the bedside of the lady, who was asleep. When she had been awakened, the visitor said to her,—

"Mademoiselle G—, take a good look at me; I am rather worse than I look by candle-light, and I've nine small children, and not much land. Will you marry me?"

The elderly maiden, still half-asleep rubbed her eyes, looked the frank suitor over for a moment, yawned, and replied, "Yes."

"Then be ready next Tuesday."

And that was all there was of that courtship, which was certainly brief, simple, and to the point.

In another case, the would-be bridegroom found his betrothed crying after the bans had been published.

"Whatever is the matter, Marie?" he asked.

"Well, Baptiste," she replied, "my sister Louise wants very much to marry, because she is older than I, and it is her turn first. And it makes me sad to see her disappointed. Now, if you would only marry her! Everything is ready, and it would be such a relief!"

"Well, well," cheerily replied the young man, "don't cry about a little thing like that. Louise will do; go and tell her to get ready."

LUCK OR PLUCK.

A great deal of what is called luck in this world is only the result of patient industry. A rich merchant at Liverpool, Sir Joseph Walmesley, began life as a clerk on about a hundred dollars a year. His employers were grain merchants, and the young man determined to learn all there was to know about grain. The man who had charge of the warehouse, 'Old Peter,' as he was called, saw that the boy was anxious to learn; so twice a week, in the morning before breakfast, the two would go together to the stores and ships, examining the different kinds of grain. Old Peter would take a handful of all sorts, English, Irish, Scotch, American, European, and spreading them on a table, would ask the boy to tell the characteristics of each sample. The pupil was bewildered at first, but he became an expert in the business. Very likely the people who knew nothing of those early morning lessons called the youth lucky as he began to amass wealth, but it is a kind of luck within the reach of every young person who is willing to work for it.

MID-OCEAN LIGHT STATIONS.

Mr. F. A. Cloudman of Rondout, N. Y., has revived in a new form an idea proposed some years ago for a series of lightships extending across the Atlantic Ocean from America to Great Britain connected by telegraph cables and lighted by electricity. Mr. Cloudman's suggestion is that these ships, powerful circular vessels with a strong convex roof and an iron framework to sustain the light, should be moored at intervals, say, of 200 miles. They would enable faring craft to know their exact latitude and longitude, would be points of communication and refuge in cases of disaster, and by their aid the movements of vessels at sea, the appearance of icebergs, etc., could be readily communicated to those interested. As an engineering project the thing is possible, but the enterprise would be so costly that it would scarcely be undertaken by any one nation. It is very possible that some such scheme may be tried, but for many years it is likely to remain a dream unrealized.

DOG AND SNAKE.

The ablest snake story of the season comes from Henderson, Houston county, Ga. It was a race between a fleet-footed dog and a black snake. The dog chased the snake three quarters of a mile down a lane. "It's a long lane that never turns," and the snake appeared in good spirits. Just at the end of the lane the snake made a sudden turn and found its hole under the bottom rail. The snake went down the hole head first, when the dog seized it by the tail. The snake was prepared for the emergency, and gave up its outside covering or skin, which peeled off as easily as the skin of a roasted potato. It is supposed that the snake suffered no inconvenience from the loss of its outside covering, as the shedding season had arrived.

REELATIO—GIRANARA.

Let our young friends try and see if they can put the letters contained in these two groups of letters in such an order as will make words out of them. The following sentence will be a help:—The giranara population of a certain district in Pennsylvania were much astonished the other day by the falling of a large R e e l a t i o .

POOR LITTLE FELLOW.

Arabella: "The poor little fellow is dreadfully sick. It makes my heart ache to watch him."

Josephine: "Does he grit his teeth and start in his sleep?"

"I haven't noticed. I am afraid it's some kind of fever, and it almost drives me to distraction. His eyes have a wild gleam in them—"

"Give him some sweet spirits of nitre."

"And yesterday I noticed he wagged his tail—"

"Good gracious, Arabella! what are you talking about?"

"About my poodle, of course."

"Oh! I thought you meant your baby."

HEALTHY GIRLS.

Nothing, says Dio Lewis, is so terrible as severe neuralgia; and beyond a doubt, girls acquire it often enough by the conditions of school life. Headache in a school girl usually means exhausted nerve power through overwork, over-excitement, over-anxiety, or bad air. Rest, a good laugh, a country walk, will usually cure it readily enough to begin with. But to become subject to headaches is a very serious matter; and all such

nervous diseases have a nasty tendency to recur, to become periodic, to be set up by the same causes, to become an organic habit of the body. For any woman to become liable to neuralgia is a most terrible thing. It means that while it lasts life is not worth having. It paralyzes the power to work, it deprives her of the power to enjoy anything it tends toward irritability of temper, it tempts to the use of narcotics and stimulants. So says Dr. Nelson, and so say I. A girl who finds herself subject to neuralgia should at once change her habits, if but to grow strong in body. Of what use is education with ill health? A happy girl must be a healthy one. The Greeks educated their girls physically; we educate ours mentally. The Greek mother bore the finest children the world ever produced. The Greek education of girls developed beautiful women, and their beauty lasted till old age. The beautiful Helen was as handsome at fifty as at "sweet sixteen."—*Every Other Saturday.*

CURIOSITIES.

Probably the strongest man in Georgia is Blacksmith Beasee, at Maxeys. He is about six feet ten inches tall, and raises and holds out straight with one hand for a minute a 120-pound anvil; he also holds out horizontally by one spoke a large cartwheel.

Bismarck's nerves feel the wear and tear of his multifarious duties. Recently a delegation of Lubek citizens, invited by him to a conference and subsequent dinner, were received by Princess Bismarck, who, after vainly waiting an entire hour for the appearance of her liege lord, entered his study on tip-toe, and found him fast asleep at his writing desk.

NOW IS THE TIME.

to subscribe for the WITNESS and get the numbers for the remainder of this year free! The subscription prices from now till December 31, 1886, are: *Daily Witness* \$3.00; *Weekly Witness* \$1.00. Every subscriber who renews his subscription before it runs out, and every new subscriber will receive a large and magnificent colored PICTURE, the work of a well-known Art Publishing House in London, Eng.

Send Samples of either or both papers sent with pleasure.

JOHN DOUGALL & SON.

"Witness" Office,
Montreal.

OUR TERMS.

The annual subscription price of the *Weekly Messenger* is fifty cents, except in Montreal city, where twenty-five cents extra is necessarily charged for delivery.

EPPS'S
GRATEFUL-COMFORTING.
COCOA

40 LARGE, Rich, Embossed Motto and Verse Chromes; or two alike; your name on each, only 10 cents. Each card is a perfect gem. Samples and private terms to canvassers in first order. Address CARD CO., Bolton, Que.

A BIG OFFER. To introduce them we will give away 1,000 Self-operating Washing Machines. If you want one send us your name, P.O. and express office at once. THE NATIONAL CO., 23 Day street, N.Y.

THE WEEKLY MESSENGER is printed and published at Nos. 221 and 223 St. James street, Montreal, by JOHN DOUGALL & SON, composed of John Dougall, and J. D. Dougall, of New York, and John Redpath Dougall, of Montreal.