

Eccentricities of Famous People

Boys and girls are not the only members of the human race that have their little queeriness. Some of the greatest men the world has known have had the queerest habits, habits alongside of which the whims and oddities of children seem as natural as that the sun should rise in the morning. Among these are to be noted the whimsick behavior of Augustus Hare, one of the cleverest divines in the English Church, who when he had ended a train of hard thinking, would rise from the desk and spin round on his heel for a few seconds, and then resume his studies.

The Earl of Chatham was most peculiar in his habits: these, no doubt, were engendered by his hypochondriacal nature. On one occasion in midsummer he wished to have snow, and adopted the following rather curious method of having his wish realized. The servants were ordered to have large fires in every room, the walks outside were covered with salt to make things have a wintry appearance, and doors and windows were kept shut to keep out the biting cold. How long this whim lasted the historian does not record.

Of William Wilberforce it is narrated that he frequently became so absorbed in conversation in evening companies as wholly to forget himself. He would lift himself from his chair in his earnestness, move forward a little, and gradually approach perilously near the edge. It was the tradition in fashionable English circles that he had fallen several times to the floor; but in families where he was he was loved it was the custom to station one of the older children behind his chair to move it forward as he moved, and guard him against peril. Some who afterwards became leaders in English society retained amongst the pleasant memories of their childhood the recollection of such services rendered to this brilliant and eloquent converser.

Rossini, the composer, when engaged with any great composition, invariably shaved himself in the most fantastic way to prevent his going out of doors.

Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest and most logical thinkers of his time, was yet one of the most absent-minded of men. This latter habit led him into many curious mistakes. At times he fancied he had dined, while as a matter of fact he had not left his room for hours. Once he boiled his watch instead of an egg; and on another occasion while sitting close to the fire, he ordered it to be removed, owing to the heat, but the thought never occurred to him that he would be cooler if he would but move his chair backwards.

In addition to these we are told that Humbolt generally wrote while holding the paper on his knee; that Schiller was fond of the perfume of decayed apples; that Goethe admired the flavor of fried beet-root. Mendelssohn, when pleased with anything, used to hew the corner of his pocket-handkerchief. Coleridge always held the person with whom he was conversing by a button of his coat; hence, he was called the great "button-holer." Marie Antoinette, when eating bread-and-butter, kept a nose gay by her side, which she smelled from time to time, while Madame de Stael, when busy sewing, always twirled a green leaf between her fingers.

Rosy-Cheek and Curly-Head.

BY EDGAR WADE ABBOT.

When I go home, this welcome waits
Each evening when the day is fled:
The pattering of little feet;
Then clinging arm and kisses sweet
From Rosy-cheek and Curly-head.

They come with shouts of rioting;
They're laughing so they scarce can speak!
A pair of highwaymen are they;
And I, an easy yielding prey
To Curly-head and Rosy-cheek.

But curly heads will sometimes ache,
And fill our souls with sudden dread;
And roses fade, while hearts stand still,
Oh, may there come no touch of ill
To Rosy-cheek and Curly-head!

God bless all little cheeks of rose!
Where'er they bloom, thy sunlight shed!
Bless little heads of rippling hair!
Oh, take into thy tender care
Each Rosy-cheek and Curly-head!

—The Outlook.

REASON ENOUGH—"Mike what makes you talk so much?"

"Shure, an' I coom by it natural, scr."

"How's that?"

"Faith, an' was n't me father an Oirishman, and me mother a woman?"—Journal of Education.

A HINT.—"Have you got a collection of any kind," asked Ucle Mar, "that I can help you with?"

"Yes, sir," replied Ned; "I've got a collection of United States coins in my bank but nothing larger than a dime."—Harper's Young People.

Exactng Father—James, how are you getting along with that job of wood-splitting? Rebellious Son—I'm making about three knots an hour.—Detroit Free Press.