

## TADPOLES.

No one can say they are beautiful. A lot of unfinished looking, disproportioned, meaningless things wriggling about in the most absurd manner, and apparently doing nothing in the world of green waters to which they belong but create confusion and make a fuss—little beasts with big heads, frilled throats, pulpy bodies, and tapering tails. Who can say they are beautiful, who but people of exceptional faith can believe in their future use and dignity as frogs? Why, their very name is enough to set the aesthetic mind on edge! Tadpoles! Can anything less lovely be imagined? Is it not the very synonym for transitional unpleasantness—for contemptible no-meaningness? What can a tadpole do? Absolutely nothing. It cannot build like a bird, nor burrow like a rabbit; it cannot throw up earthworks like a mole, nor shape a cell like a bee; it cannot fly, it cannot walk, and its swimming is only make believe, after all; it only wriggles about, and calls it swimming, waiting on time for more perfect development and the fulfilment of its reason why.

Now, nothing in this great world of ours being single in its law, and all things owning some kind of analogy, tadpoles have been taken to typify boys. Those poor boys! No one has a good word to say for them, and no hand wants a stone to fling at them. Just as they themselves pelt the tadpoles and "fly" the cat, so are they pelted and flown, and cuffed and bullied on all sides, and made very plainly to understand that they are among the nonsensical nuisances of creation, and that no one thinks he does an ill turn when he fires a particularly good shot at some round bullet-head, or brings down his lash with a cut sharper than ordinary across some squared humped-up back. Parents groan over the return of their lively tadpoles from school; and write indignant letters to the newspapers, complaining that the schoolmaster cannot endure for all the year what they, the fathers and mothers, find so irksome to bear for six weeks at a stretch. and sisters look forward with mingled dread and pleasure to the day when Jack and Tom and Harry will swarm through the house with a multiplying power of noise and presence that might almost stand for miraculous. They know that if there will be more life for them, there will be no peace; that dolls will be broken and dolls' houses invaded, the pet kitten tormented, and Fido rendered savage by the compulsory education that will go on whenever the poor brute escapes from the safe asylum of mamma's lap; that the canary will be let to fly, and probably lost; that they will not be able to go into the yard and look at Bunny in his hutch, because of the nasty sights of skinned moles and nailed-up jays and weasels that will shock their sensibilities, and make them feel sick. To be sure, there will be lots of boating and riding in the summer, and fine fun with skating and snow-balling if it is a winter such as a winter should be; and there will be "jolly larks" with paintpots and burnt corks; and mamma's old wardrobe, tossed to them as *spolia magna* they may use as they will, and have no rebuke whatever they do; and there will be children's parties, which the girls will like but the boys—the tadpoles—will probably dislike, till the supper comes, when they will avenge their enforced quietness of behaviour by an onslaught that creates alarming visions of the family doctor in constant attendance for a week after. So that, on the whole, the girls will be divided in their sentiments when the time for the return of their brothers draws near; the tomboys inclining to jubilation, but the elder sister element breathing soft sighs to itself, and lamenting with mamma—if mamma will let her—the sure falling back of Ella and Ada and Jenny, and all the still less developed tadpoles of the nursery, when "the boys" come home; and how she wishes—staid, sweet elder sister!—that they were gentler than they are, and not so rude and rough! Perhaps mamma will coincide with the elder sister, and sight her sights too, as she thinks of her house turned into the metaphorical bear garden, whence peace and quiet and all sense of security will be banished till Dr. Swishtail's young friends are summoned to reassemble. Perhaps she will check her staid half-Puritan daughter with a light and tender hand, saying wise things about the need of patience in a family, and the value of liberal judgments, with affectionate appeals to such love as she may be fairly assumed to possess for her schoolboy brothers—the tadpoles of the parental pond; or, perhaps, she will say sharp, and therefore foolish things, and make our Eldest feel in disgrace and misunderstood, and a martyr and sacrificed—sacrificed to the tadpoles—all because the rollick of schoolboy health and spirits accord ill with her more responsible condition, and she wants to see Ella, and Ada, and Jenny, and all the rest of them well bred, and quiet, and kept out of mischief. In which case she, in her turn, cannot understand all poor mamma's embarrassments of thought and feeling, nor read the sympathy of disturbed fear in the very snappishness which seems to condemn her own. Anyhow the tadpoles come; they swarm through the rooms and passages, and are always on the stairs and wherever they should not be; and with their advent flies peace till the next term begins.

Now we have a fellow-feeling for the tadpoles. We sympathise with them, and think the horror in which their superabundant energies are held unreasonable, and not a little crude. If they are of the stuff which makes men worth their salt, they must necessarily be what a strictly regulated household call troublesome. What can you do with the seething, tumbling turbulent life that fills the soul of youth as wine fermenting in the cask? It must have vent, else the whole thing would go to the bad. Either the cask will split, or the wine was sour. The boy will burst his bonds while he is yet immature and needing direction—he will run away to sea, or maybe to Australia, and work off his ferment at the diggings after he has got rid of a little as a sailor before the mast, escaping from the narrow life of home and the hard hand of parents' authority—probably losing all the possibilities which lay in him by such premature escape, like the squandered wine that bursts the cask and floods the cellar. Or he will become toned down and subdued to the regulation pattern of the well-bred house; and the world may look in vain for generous deed or noble thought, for manliness, or daring, or aught that makes men worthy, from the thin and acid nature that was soured into what it is because denied all right to ferment, all room for expansion, all liberty of natural "working off." But while a youth he will be held up as a pattern to the unruly tadpoles of his acquaintance; and it will not shake the judgment of parents—who so miraculously forge their own boyhood—that no one of his age and kind loves him, that the very girls laugh at him as a prig and a milksop; that even our Eldest, sweet and staid,

thinks he might be just as good as he is, and yet have a little more manliness in him; and that all the tadpoles in a crowd—all, without excepting one—hold him to be the most awful snob, and sneak, and coward, and everything else dishonouring in schoolboy's morals; while fathers and mothers quote him as an example, and wish with many sighs that their own boys were like him! He never gets into trouble, because he never does anything wrong. Apples are as sacred as bank notes in his eyes; and he would as soon think of stealing a child as robbing a bird's nest of its eggs; while burglary itself would be no worse to him than taking off the nest itself. He never plays near the pond to the detriment of his fine velvet knickerbockers and smart purple hose; he never runs helter skelter through the wet grass, and so gets his feet wet and a bad cold in consequence; the most keen-eyed detective never spied him out in the process of making an apple-pie bed; of poking surreptitious caps into the nursery fire; of studying the problem of gaseous expansion by tying down the tea-kettle lid and stopping up the spout when in a state of boil; of cutting off his own long locks or his tiny brother's eye lashes; of punching in dolly's head or picking out her eyes; or joining in any of the many nefarious pastimes usually indulged in by tadpoles when practising "holiday larks" at home—larks only to themselves! Always neat and clean, and nicely brushed, and carefully got up, the pattern boy moves through his little world with the precision of a watch wheel, and the harmless niceness of a wax doll. He is the "best boy that ever lived," say his parents, and "never gave us an hour's anxiety;" with which they are perfectly satisfied. And it never occurs to them that the goodness which they praise so enthusiastically is due to a low condition of vitality for the one part, and the severity of their own compression for the other; and that what is now a tractable temper, perfect obedience, and no sign of an opposing will, will in all probability lead to priggishness and unmanliness hereafter. But, as tadpoles have before them the proud future of frogdom, so have boys the worth and weight and importance of manhood; and what they will be then is of vastly more moment than what they are now. For which cause it may be well that parents have a little patience with the unruly tempers and exuberant vitality of their offspring; that they allow youth to be youth and do not expect it to be age; and that even our sweet staid Eldest, with the quietness and modest responsibilities of young womanhood just dawning on her, understands the difference between disturbing energies and moral faults; and that when her tadpole brothers, home for the holidays, are troublesome after their kind, it is only after their kind, and not real sinfulness, and that she sees how that they are to be borne with generously.—Queen.

EXTRAORDINARY HALLUCINATION.—A writer in the *Journal des Débats*, tells of an extraordinary hallucination at present raging in many parts of Germany and France similar to those moral and mental epidemics which have at intervals broken out among mankind, and for which it is impossible to assign any reasonable cause. The superstitious mania in this case seems to have originated on the French borders, in the neighbourhood of Wissembourg, but first took solid root at Rastadt, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, and now embraces Strasburg and the whole of Alsace, besides many other districts both in Germany and France. For months past thousands of people—including many even of intelligence and education—have professed to see all sorts of strange characters traced upon the window-panes of their houses, especially those of public functionaries, the figures being generally of a religious or warlike character. Thus, for instance, Madonnas, Zouaves, Turcos, cannons, and iron-clad vessels of war seem to be the apparitions most commonly met with. Nothing can convince these people that it is nothing but a delusion. In most of the villages the inhabitants are sitting for long hours during the day anxiously watching their window-panes for these miraculous manifestations, while their fields are remaining uncultivated, and scarcely a day passes but some little village has its new apparition to publish to the world. To make matters worse a portion of the priesthood seem to be using this unhealthy excitement for enforcing the doctrines of faith in the miraculous. Alluding to this particular feature, the *Débats* says: "People speak of the necessity of restoring faith in order to restore France to the position of a great nation; but they need not, on that account, lead us back to the dark days of superstition."

Now that the hot days have come on the "scientists" are going mad again on the sunstroke question. Every year they would have us believe something new on the subject. First they told us sunstroke was caused by the rays of the sun beating on the head; then it was on the neck; and last year they said the stomach was at the bottom of it all. But now it appears we are all wrong, and must begin all over again. An exchange says: "According to a late writer sunstroke is due to the action of light upon the brain, exerted through the eye, and not, as generally believed, to an elevation of temperature; and it is asserted that if the eye be properly shaded from the glare of the sun, any extra or unusual precaution in the way of protecting the head and back of the neck may be dispensed with." We await with eager anticipation next year's theory.

The revision of the prayer-book seems to afford much cause for amusement to the Right Reverend Fathers in Synod assembled. One of the bishops recently quoted, in the midst of a grave debate on *Quicumque vult*, the advice of some friend of his, that over the Synod hall should be inscribed, "Mangling done here." A witty southern rector of strong anti-revision tendencies recommended that the debate on the revision report should be preceded by the prayer to be used by persons "at sea." Lastly, a prelate, on being told that the Synod would "sit for twenty-one days," replied that such was the exact period of incubation of a not over-brilliant member of the ornithological family.

"SHARP CONVERSATION."—"Are you really wet through?" "I was never wet through in my life—never beyond my skin." It is curious that in popular parlance the rain penetrates deeper the nearer one goes to the Equinoctial Line. Thus, for example, while the pachydermatous Briton says he is wet to the skin, the Frenchman affirms that he is wet to the bones, and the Spaniard, exaggerating yet more, says he is wet to the marrow.

## VARIETIES.

The "Rogue's March" has been foisted upon the innocent public of Davenport, Iowa, under the title of the "Greeley and Brown Polonaise."

An ironical story comes from St. Louis to the effect that a bar of iron fell on a man's head from a height of twenty feet and it didn't hurt the iron a bit.

A Californian jury, in a suicide case lately, found the following verdict:—"We, the jury, find that the deceased was a fool." They had it that time.

An exchange says that a member of Congress for a Western State, seeking re-election, and being taxed with intoxication, met the charge by stating that he was never too drunk to represent his constituents.

Considerable amusement has been created in certain social circles in London by some American families now residing there, who have printed on the back of their invitation cards a map of that part of London in which they live.

Stout ladies may take some comfort from this smart *bon mot*. A gentleman was praising the beauty of a rather meagre young lady, and in his polite frenzy he called her "a perfect Venus." A *Venus de mille os*, remarked a bystander.

Alas for the believers in the Munroe doctrine, and the upholders of Republicanism. An unregenerate son of America has written a book to prove that the United States is a Kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven. His name is Jones.

A Boston minister says that he once preached on "the recognition of friends in the future," and was told after service by a hearer that it would be more to the point to preach about the recognition of friends here, as he had been in the church 20 years and didn't know any of its members.

The Paducah *Kentuckian* tells this: "In one of our neighbouring towns, one evening, recently, some Good Templar posted up a notice, calling for a meeting at one of the churches in the place, for the purpose of organizing a lodge of Good Templars. In a few minutes after the notice had been put up, the saloon keepers stuck up, immediately under it, the following offset notice: "Attention!!! Free drinks to-night at all the saloons in town." No lodge was formed there that night."

A Hartford young lady engaged herself to nine young men living in that city, and also to a youth residing in New Haven. After a time she resolved to drop the Hartford group, and keep the New Haven. The rejected immediately sent the following telegram:—"Mr. —, New Haven: Your affianced known to be engaged to nine fellows. Rest of Trinity College not heard from. Come quick or you may lose her." The New Havener arrived on the first train, learned the situation of affairs, and then—well, he returned to the City of Elms a sadder and a wiser man.

At a party the other evening a young lady was standing in a draught, when an elderly gent in the law, and a bachelor, stepped up and remarked, "Miss —, I will protect you from the draught by standing between you and it." She replied, "Do you promise always thus to guard and protect me?" Through his proverbial gallantry, he replied, "I do." Extending her hand she remarked, "Dear sir, you will remember this is leap year." The man in the law was for a moment nonplussed, but finally he succeeded in saying, "You must ask my mother."

There was considerable fun at a representation of *Romeo and Juliet* in a little French theatre. Madame Deharme, the Juliet of the occasion, was lying dead on a tomb. It was raining torrents; a drop came through the roof and fell on Juliet's nose, she made a face; another drop fell on her eyelids, she winked. It was a facial expression not taught by Delsarte. Finally, she took to watching the drops and dodging them. The audience caught the idea and sympathised with her. "Look out, Mrs. Juliet," said one fellow; "there's a whopper a-comin'—I see it!" "Mind your eye!" said another. "Madame," said a third, rising, "will you accept the use of my umbrella?" Of course the tragedy ended.

That bank in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, will never buy another patent combination lock. And the reason why it never will is that they put one on their safe the other day, and placed their valuables within and went home. Next morning they were alarmed to find that the combination for the key had been forgotten. So they suspended business for a week while they worried that lock, and eventually they were compelled to take the whole bank building down in order to lift the safe out from the wall in which it was built, and then they had to blast that safe six or seven times with gunpowder before they reached the interior. So now they are disgusted, and they want to find the man who invented that lock and interview him.

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HOW THANKFUL WE SHOULD BE.—Almost all disorders of the human body are distinctly to be traced to impure blood. The purification of that fluid is the first step towards health. The Indian Medicine widely known as the Great Shoshonees Remedy and Pills commend themselves to the attention of all sufferers. No mistake can be made in their administration. In Scrofula, Bronchitis, Indigestion, Confirmed Dyspepsia, Liver and Lung Complaints, Rheumatism, &c., &c., the most beneficial effects have been and always must be obtained from the wholesome power exerted by this Indian Medicine over the system. Persons whose lives have been restored to ease, strength and perfect health by the Great Shoshonees Remedy and Pills, after fruitless trial of the whole pharmacopœia of physic, attest this fact. 5-22 e