

MAGIC BAKING POWDER

THE STANDARD AND FAVORITE BRAND



Children's Department

ALPINE SCENERY.

No other system of mountains on the earth presents such variations of beautiful scenery as the Alps, and no other system can be so easily penetrated to its very heart by the tourist who has the strength and the will. Covering an area of ninety thousand square miles, all the picturesque scenery of the surrounding countries, France, Italy, Switzerland and Germany, seems concentrated here. Taking its name from the Celtic Alb, signifying white, its eternally snow-capped peaks are in striking contrast with the green of the valleys, or projected against the blue Italian sky, or the varying hues of the northern clouds.

While the ranges preserve a general direction, they are divided into innumerable short spurs and interspersed by valleys, which furnish as great variety as the elevations. Many of them are but enormous crevices, with steep, rocky sides, cut through by irresistible mountain streams, whose roar, as they whirl and toss and tumble, is still heard below. Others are verdure-clad basins, sloping gracefully from the bases of the mountains to peaceful, gurgling rivulets flowing through the centre, on their way to the cold North Sea, or the warmer Mediterranean, or perhaps to the Black Sea. Sometimes the green fields become transformed in a single day into impassable masses of ice and snow, and the

pretty mountain side becomes a glacial wall, for, while the valleys lie basking in the sun, perpetual winter reigns within sight, and the Frost King has only to loosen his grasp to send an avalanche of ice down the mountain side.

It is the presence, in close proximity, of these powers of nature in all the grandeur of their power for good or ill, that gives to Alpine travel its zest, and to the Alpine farmer his strange blending of courage and simplicity.

HABITS.

For one who is born careless and procrastinating, it is exceedingly difficult to be methodical and prompt. The instinct is not to do to-day what can by any possibility be put off till to-morrow; and trying to take time by the forelock involves a struggle and much exertion. Yet both method and promptitude are to be learnt; and, human nature being on one side of it automatic, habits are formed whereby that which was in the beginning beyond measure distasteful, becomes comparatively easy.

THE GIRAFFE.

The giraffe is the tallest of all quadrupeds, its head being sometimes eighteen feet from the ground. Its great height, however, is due to its long neck, and it can feed as well from the ground as from the high branches of trees. It is a native of Africa, and is found in all parts of that continent south of the Sahara, but nowhere in great numbers. In its wild state it is very shy, and easily runs away from any other animal, its speed being greater than that of the fastest horse. It is, how-

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ever, easily tamed, and now it is bred in the zoological gardens of this country and Europe. Though its safety lies chiefly in its facility for flight, it can defend itself very well, when pushed to extremity, by kicking with its hind legs. In this manner it has been known to drive off a lion. It has beautiful eyes and a graceful neck, which it turns like a bird, of which it reminds us in its movements.

THE AMUSEMENTS OF HINDOO CHILDREN.

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are much fonder of what we would call sights, or shows, and they call by the general name of tamasha, than of games. Other great sources of entertainment are jugglers and snake-charmers; the former certainly do most wonderful things, such as the mango trick, and many others not so famous, but quite as curious.

To return, however, to the "amusements" of Hindoo children, sights such as those described are a very great delight to them; then there are the festivals, which are constantly occurring. Just before the Dasserah festival, which is celebrated by the burning of innumerable tiny lamps, the girls destroy their dolls, and this is a great gala day. The children dress themselves in their brightest colours, and, followed by a crowd of men and women, march through the busy bazaars of the city and along roads shaded by overarching mango or sissoo-trees, till they come to the nearest water—probably a tank built by some pious Hindoo. Round the tank are feathery bamboos, plantains with their broad, pendulous leaves, and mango trees crowned in the season with spikes of blossom, and on every side are flights of steps leading down to the water. The children descend these, singing all the time, and throw their beloved dolls into the water. Owing to this custom no Hindoo girl can show the collection of dolls, which some girls in this country have. They are, however, easily replaced, being made either of mud, rudely daubed with paint, or of cloth. The delight of a Hindoo child over an English doll with fair hair, blue eyes, pretty face, and "clothes that come off and on," is something very wonderful; and in the girls' schools in connection with the Church of Scot-

land, in Calcutta, it has become the custom to give each child a doll at Christmas. As these schools contain seven or eight hundred children, the amount of work required to dress these dolls may be imagined, but kind friends at home do the greater part of it.

While the Dasserah festival is going on, the boys make of mud the head and shoulders of Tesu, one of their idols, and put it on a stick, and the girls have a little earthen vessel full of holes, which looks rather pretty when the tiny lamp is placed inside at night. It may be mentioned in passing that during the Dasserah the children often scoop the heart out of gourds, make holes in the rind, and carry them about at night with a light inside, reminding one forcibly of the "turnip lanterns" which flit about the village streets in Scotland on Hallowe'en.

The children play with these toys—the image of Tesu, and the vessel with holes—for nine days, begging money all the time from their friends and relatives, or, in fact, from anyone who will give it to them. On the tenth day they go in procession as before, singing all the while rhymes in praise of their heathen gods, and when they come to the nearest river or tank they throw in the toys. Then, when the children go home, they expend the money they have collected in a grand feast of sweets.

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